

# AUNT SERENA'S SALT BAG

"What makes the trunk so heavy?" asked Paul, as he lifted the old-fashioned leather-covered box from the wagon at the ranch house.

"Gold and precious stones, likely. You know folks are all rich down in New England," replied Theo.

"Aunt Serena wouldn't bring those."

"Of course she wouldn't," put in that lady herself, coming from the dwelling which was to be her home for a year. I guess I know better than to bring anything like that out here—why don't you have a board walk instead of a dirt path to your house?"

"This isn't Connecticut, Aunt; it's Texas, an' mighty near the Panhandle," replied Paul. "If you visit the Texans do as the Texans do; you know the proverb."

"It is not a proverb, and you did not quote it correctly; but hurry in with the trunk."

So the heavy burden was, with much straining of muscles on the part of the two nephews, carried inside; but the youths' curiosity remained unsatisfied.

"I've brought this twenty miles in a wagon today, an' I ought to be told what's in it," insisted Paul.

So they waited while Aunt Serena unpacked.

Dresses, aprons, a few keepsakes—out the articles came, all light of weight and furnishing no explanation of the mystery. But before the bottom was reached the lid slammed shut and no more was to be seen.

"Mighty funny she's so particular," commented Paul, as Theo and himself sat on their ponies the following day, a couple of miles from the cabin, watching the big cattle herd. "I'm going to find out, an' right soon, too."

"Make a raid on the trunk?"

"Don't know; but I guess so. Father and mother are going to take her over to the school director's this afternoon. I'll make a hunt then."

And he did. When he came back his face was a study.

"What'd ye find?" asked Theo.

"Couldn't guess it in a thousand years."

"Gold, silver, iron, horseshoes, beans, bullets?"

"Your trail ain't even warm—it's salt."

"What for?"

"How do you suppose I know? I'm goin' to ask her."

But Paul did not need to ask. Aunt Serena suspected that her belongings had been searched, and forestalled any comments by remarking at the breakfast table: "It's the purest, finest salt I could get—a hundred pounds of it. I've lived too long within smelling distance of salt water to risk having things fresh. Even for a visit I wanted to be prepared for emergencies, and besides, I suppose you use stock salt in lumps here."

Paul admitted that she was partly right, and from that time the ranch table was not without the flour-like, refined product of the eastern salt works. The sack was set inside the storeroom door, and was the subject of many a joke in the family as well as among the herders.

Even the sturdy nephews were not above referring to the "freshness" that their aunt expect to see in the southwest.

"But then it's just what you'd allow to find a school teacher doing," said Paul. His contempt for school teachers was, however, largely assumed, and he often wished he were capable of teaching the neighborhood school, as his aunt was doing. He longed for his knowledge of books every time he saw her crossing the prairie to the school house, a mile or more from the ranch, where all the settlers' children gathered.

But something else was of more pressing importance. The grass on the range was becoming short, and the severe drought had prevented the starting of a new growth.

"We must move the stock down nearer the ranch house," ordered the chief herder; and the men allowed the cattle to graze closer to the corral.

Five thousand head of Texas cattle! A little sea of horns, thin nervous faces sharp backs and switching tails—it was a difficult thing to manage, an army that skill alone could control. For man nor horse singly they had neither respect nor fear; but a man on a horse could rule them, provided there were enough men on horses.

As the hot summer days merged into autumn, no rain came to start the grass—something unexampled in the history of the ranch. Two or three times the herders found it necessary to drive the cattle several miles to water; but the grass near the ranch house was largest because through the earlier part of the season the stock had been kept at some distance from the home headquarters.

"It seems like being outside of civilization," said Aunt Serena, coming home from her school one day, and looking out over the vast plains on which were feeding the excitable longhorns.

"Never mind," said Paul, who came in just then clad in his herder costume; "if we don't have any bad luck, and get the stock to market all right, it'll take me into civilization. I've got a share in the herd, and am going to college."

Paul, indeed, was growing exceedingly nervous over the cattle's condition. A few weeks' longer of short feed would, he feared, make them unsalable at the high price on which he had counted.

The next day there was another drive to water, and a tiresome one it was. Twice the herd broke into an awkward trot, and it required all the herders' ingenuity and efforts to restrain it.

The crackling of a stick, the call of a quail, the sudden starting of a jack rabbit—nothing seemed too trivial for the cattle in their present condition.

"Watch 'em mighty close, boys," was the chief herder's orders, when, after much difficulty, they were safely returned to the "house range," as the feeding grounds near the home were called.

And they were watched close. All day an endless procession of herders rode round

and round the restless creatures, turning back the stragglers.

On the second day the atmosphere seemed more oppressive than in weeks. It was "headache weather," according to Aunt Serena, and she found the mile walk to the school house a wearisome one.

"I shall dismiss school early this afternoon," she remarked, on leaving home. "The children can't stand it to keep such long hours. I've invited the first reader class to come to tea with me. There are eight of them."

Theo and Paul saw their aunt as she walked slowly through the close pastured bunch grass, far on the opposite side of the ranch house.

"I wish," spoke the latter anxiously, that aunt wouldn't carry that bright yellow parasol. I'm afraid it will make us trouble some day."

"Nonsense!" was the reply; "we always have the herd on this side of the range while she goes and comes. She can't be hurt."

"But the critters might stampede on us."

"What's going to make 'em? Besides, it ain't likely they'll go in that direction, anyhow."

But Theo did not know as much about the ways of cattle as did his older brother; nor was he animated by the same personal interest in the herd's welfare.

It was three o'clock when the brothers met again.

"Say, Theo," were Paul's words as he rode close to his companion, "I'm awful thirsty. I wish you'd ride over to the house and bring out a can of water. The cattle are a little quieter now, and I'll watch for both of us."

Without a word Theo was off, glad of a respite, and enjoying the brisk canter to which he spurred his willing pony.

Nor did he lessen his pace on his return. Racing swiftly along he approached Paul and the herd, carrying the can of water and thrilled by the exercise of the half-mile ride.

As he drew near the pony braced itself for the sudden stopping; but before the halt came there was an accident. Into one of the numerous gopher holes, which dot the prairies of the west, went one of the horse's forefeet.

In an instant Theo was hurled headlong from the deep-seated saddle and went, as did the pony, rolling on the sod. The water can broke as it fell, and the clink of its smashing could be heard for a long way.

Paul heard it and, pressing the spur to his pony's flank, hurried toward the victims of the mishap. But that was not all. Before Theo and his horse had regained their feet, each bruised and limping, every grazing steer had lifted its branching-horned head and was staring at the unwanted spectacle. Then as if moved by a common impulse, every animal took a few steps away. A loud bellow from some of the more powerful ones followed, and the walk of the herd became a trot. The alarm increased as they moved—the trot was a canter—the canter a run; and by the time Paul had returned from inspecting the fallen boy and horse the dreadful stampede was in progress.

The young man's face grew white, even through the generous coat of sunburn, as he fiercely urged his pony forward. Other herders were likewise riding fast; but the mass of horns and hairy backs was like an avalanche, plunging ahead regardless of what was before, blind to any danger, to all intents an unreasoning, insane mob.

The herd was headed toward the ranch house and would go near it, then on across the path leading to the school. It all passed through Paul's mind in an instant, and mingling with the thought of injury to the cattle, was that of danger to the school children or their teacher. The ranch house hid his view of the familiar path at first; but as he pushed ahead in a frantic hope of being able to turn the leaders, on whom he was rapidly gaining, it was fully revealed.

Midway between house and school, directly in the course of the now infuriated beasts, was a group, the very sight of which thrilled the hurrying rider. In its midst was a woman carrying a yellow parasol, and around her were some little folks—not many; but to Paul's alarmed gaze it seemed a multitude.

Aunt Serena and her tiny party of tea guests had just become aware of what was occurring a half-mile away. They could hear and almost feel the thousands of heavy hoofs beating on the dry prairie. The shouting cowboys, the bellowing steers the dust—it was all a frightful menace. Uncertain which way to turn, and deeming it impossible to escape from the wide sweep on which the cattle were coming, they simply stood silent and terrified. But as they waited they saw one rider leave the group of half-dozen herders whose ponies had carried them near the leaders of the herd.

"Paul is deserting us!" passed through Aunt Serena's mind, and her heart sank as she spoke the words more to herself than to the children.

It seemed so. Reining his pony aside he was riding like mad toward the ranch house, which was but a little out of the herd's course. Theo saw it, as he stood helpless beside his lamed pony, and wondered. The other herders saw it and yelled frantically to him to return. But Paul headed them not. Like a flash in his mind had come the words of an old cattleman who had given him advice in the art of managing a herd.

"Yeh kin do more with a bunch of cattle by their likes and their dislikes," had been a part of his philosophy; "and I 'spect they're a good bit likes humans in that."

Already Paul was near the ranch house, and the anxious watchers saw him stop his horse with a severity which nearly brought the faithful creature to his knees, dismount dash in through the open door, reappear with something in his arms, leap to the saddle and race pell-mell, fast as the pony's feet could carry him, toward the head of the herd again.

The cattle were running no faster than at the start, but neither had the cowboy's efforts been able to check them. Moreover

the angry eyes of the leaders appeared to have been fascinated by the yellow parasol which shone brightly in the sunlight, and were taking their way, followed by the whole frantic mass, directly toward it. In the air was an odor of bruised horns and in the track of the herd was more than one struggling beast which had fallen in the race and been trampled to death by its companions.

But Paul was well in advance of even the foremost, and a gap of many rods intervened between even himself and the school party.

"Git! Prince—Git!" he was saying, as he leaned low on his pony's neck and pressed the spurs harder and harder on the steaming flanks.

Then suddenly the watchers saw Paul turn sharply and ride directly in front of the oncoming herd, scarce a dozen yards away.

But they saw something more. As he rode a fine, white stream poured from his saddle bow, and a flour-like trail was left behind him, showing clearly on the brown grass and barren spots of earth.

"What crazy thing!" began the chief herder, who had been far in the rear, but was now riding near the front.

The cowboy riding next him did not wait for the conclusion of the sentence. His quick mind had solved the problem, and above the roar the chief caught the single word, "Salt!"

Before the first of the cattle had reached the white line Paul was across the herd's track and was trimming to come back further on. But it was unnecessary. As the first rank reached the seemingly slight barrier a familiar and appetizing odor reached the distended nostrils. Forgetting their impatience, the strong beaves slackened their pace. The crowding hundreds behind pushed them forward, but these, too, caught the scent and in a moment the whole herd was looking and striving for a taste of the animal's greatest luxury. Paul, seeing what would happen, rode on, still doing out the salt until he had a line long enough to engage the greater part of the herd and prevent any being crushed in the throng.

As he looked back and saw the lately stampeded brutes, sinking here and there to their knees to lick up the feast he had spread, he laughed aloud.

"The old cattlemen," he thought, "was right—was their 'likes' that caught 'em."

"Hope you won't feel sorry for the loss of your fine salt, Aunt Serena," remarked Theo, roguishly the following day.

"Not at all," was the reply; "but I shall send for some more at once, and Paul can't pour it out as he did the other. This kind of weather will settle that," looking from the window at the driving rain which had come at last. "Perhaps it was luck that we had a dry spell, after all—so that the salt was not damp."—The Independent.

## A LABORING MAN'S LEG.

A RUNNING SORE RENDERED IT USELESS. HE COULDN'T WORK TILL HE HAD IT CURED BY KOOTENAY WHICH CONTAINS THE NEW INGREDIENT.

It goes without saying that the average working man finds it difficult to ply his daily avocation without the aid of a pair of good sound legs. To have either of his lower extremities incapacitated by disease is a serious matter. It means inability to provide for himself and those depending on him for support, to which is added the distress and suffering both mental and physical he is called upon in consequence to endure.

Mr. John Dawson, a respectable laborer living at 77 Jones St., Hamilton, Ont., states under oath that about seven years ago an inflammation appeared upon his knee, which continued to grow worse until about three years ago when it got so bad he was unable to work. He tried ointments and various remedies, but the sore continued discharging and the pains in his back were very severe. Last winter he commenced taking Ryckman's Kootenay Cure and in a comparatively short time the sore healed up, the pain disappeared from his back and he was able to resume his work. He thinks there's nothing can beat Kootenay, and he's right.

The whole secret of the cure lies in the thorough blood cleansing properties of the "new ingredient," which is the essential element of Kootenay.

It goes right through the system and eradicates all humors from the blood and in consequence there is a rapid replacing of diseased or decaying tissue by a healthy healing process. Don't be cajoled into taking any substitute for Ryckman's Kootenay Cure. If your druggist does not keep it, send \$1.50 for a bottle to the Ryckman Medicine Co., Hamilton, Ont. Chart book sent free to any address. One bottle lasts over a month.

## SMOKED THEMSELVES OUT.

They Tried to Haze a Fellow Student; but Were Fald in Similar Coin.

The New York Sun lately obtained reports from the different Eastern universities and colleges as to the question of hazing. It appears that in most if not all of the larger institutions, the old semi-barbarous practice has become a thing of the past. In the smaller colleges, here and there, it still lingers, though in a milder and less brutal form than in earlier years. In the report from Dartmouth there is recounted a more or less amusing episode of the present hazing season.

A half-dozen or so of sophomores assembled in the room of one of the most innocent and harmless appearing men of the freshman class. He was very tall, pale and "soft-looking." He had been seen attending the meetings of the Young Men's Christian Association, and it was decided to smoke him out.

As the sophomores entered the room



they turned the key on the inside, but neglected to take it from the lock. They nailed board over the windows, and put everything in snug shape. The freshman backed toward the door, not knowing what to think of the actions of his company. He leaned against the panels with his hands behind his back. Soon he was made to stand on a box in the centre of the room.

The air became denser and hotter. Clouds of smoke rolled upward. The man next you could not be seen. The smoke almost beat into bars and cakes. The sophomore puffed in silence.

Presently from one corner came a noise as of a man in distress. A try was made at the door. It was locked. Now from different parts of the room came strange sounds. A rush was made for the door. The key had disappeared. The windows were boarded. There was no exit for the sophomores, who were in severe distress. Almost the only composed individual was the freshman.

He had descended from his position, and was seated in his chair puffing an old corn-cob pipe. A hunt was made for the key by those who were still well enough, and it was finally found where the freshman had thrown it when he had his back against the door.

## MAGIC AT THE BANK.

Some of the Famous Herrmann's Strange Tricks on Friends.

The death of Herrmann, the famous magician, has called out many stories of the pranks he was accustomed to play in the course of his travels about the world. One of these, related by the New York Sun, has to do with a visit of his to a bank, where he, accompanied by two friends, had an interview with the cashier.

The talk had hardly begun before the visitor drew a cigar out of the cashier's Vandyke beard. The cigar he quickly multiplied into enough to go round. The cashier had been busy clipping new bank-notes from printed sheets issued by the Treasury.

"I see you are a magician, too," said Herrmann jocularly. "You're making money. That's something I can do myself at all times."

He asked to be allowed to examine the sheet of bank-notes, and while looking at it he rattled off one of his pet stories, and got the cashier and his friend and the stranger all interested. In the midst of the story some heavy object fell from a desk and apparently startled the magician, who in his fright, tore the sheet of notes in half.

The magician seemed angered at his clumsiness, and in a rage tore the sheet into small fragments. Then he offered to make good the loss with money from his own pocket. The cashier protested that this was needless.

Herrmann then declared that perhaps the accident might not be so bad after all. He rolled the torn bits into a ball in the palms of his hands, blew in them, and then unrolling the ball, spread out the sheet unharmed.

In another bank he performed a trick that was always a favorite of his. He wore upon the little finger of his left hand a striking-looking ring with a heavy setting. The president of the bank commented upon the odd appearance of the ring.

"Yes," the magician said, "that is an odd ring. It was given to me by the Emperor of Austria. But you can have it if you will accept it."

Thereupon he drew the ring from his finger, and slipped it upon the bank president's little finger. But it wasn't there when the latter looked at his hand. Instead, it glittered upon the little finger of the professor's left hand. The change had been effected by a skillful bit of palming.

Itching, Barning Skin Disease Cured for 35 Cents.

Dr. Agnew's Ointment relieves in one day, cures tetter, salt rheum, piles, scald head, eczema, barbers' itch, ulcers, blotches and all eruptions of the skin. It is soothing and quieting, and acts like magic in the cure of all baby humors. 35 cents.

## STRATFORD SAYINGS.

Five Years Fearful Suffering.

Stratford, Ont.

"Five years ago I began to suffer from symptoms of kidney trouble, such as acute pain across the small of my back, dizzy spells, pains in my limbs, palpitation of the heart and restlessness at night. These symptoms, together with others of a distressing nature, proved beyond doubt that my kidneys were not performing their proper functions, consequently the poisonous matter was disturbed through my entire system. My appetite was poor. I became very weak and lost flesh rapidly. In fact I felt generally miserable, both in health and spirits. When I stooped it was with painful exertion that I again stood erect."

"I received no practical benefit from any of the remedies I took until five weeks ago, when I commenced taking Doan's Kidney Pills. They seemed to go right to the seat of the disease, restoring my kidneys to a healthy condition, so that they performed their natural office in removing the poison from my system. As a result my back troubles and all other distressing ailments I have mentioned are gone. I have gained in strength and weight, my appetite is good, and I can truly say that I feel splendid, all being the result of taking Doan's Kidney Pills, and all having been done in five weeks."

"I saw by the papers that the agent for Doan's Kidney Pills was to be at Messrs. J. H. Masmyth & Co.'s drug store on the 27th inst., and so left my work expressly on purpose to see him and give this voluntary statement as a small return for the benefit I have received, as I consider it only my duty to make others acquainted with a remedy so efficient and prompt to relieve sufferers from kidney complaint. (Signed) J. A. Watson, Huron-street, Stratford, Ont."

Lax Liver Pills cure constipation, biliousness and sick headache, 25c.

## Reversible Lock.

A new invention is a reversible lock, which may be applied to either edge of any door, the lock having a movable key-socket, which may be reversed without detaching the lock-case, from the door. The lockcase is provided with a rotatable portion having a keyhole at one side only, which hole may be brought either inside or outside the door by a rotation, thus adapting the lock to be worked from either side of the door, but when the keyhole is on one side of the door the lock cannot be worked from the opposite side.



One Dose Relieves—A few Bottles Always Cures.

"For ten years I have suffered greatly from heart disease. Fluttering of the heart, palpitations and smothering spells have made my life miserable. When dropsy set in my physician said I must prepare my family for the worst. All this time I had seen Dr. Agnew's Heart Cure advertised. As a last resort, I tried it, and think of my joy when I received great relief from one dose. One bottle cured my dropsy, and brought me out of bed, and five bottles have completely cured my heart. If you are troubled with any heart affection, and are in despair, as I was, use this remedy, for I know it will cure you.—Mrs. James Adams, Syracuse, N. Y."

The handsome bronze drinking fountain presented to the city of Savannah by Mayor Myers will soon be placed in position in Forsyth park.