

SQUIRE RUFUS SANDERS

With a Batch of Lively Stories From "The Folks."

A Yaller Dog Trick—A Winner in Politics—The Spirit of Persecution—The Elder Had to Shoot But He Felt Like a Fool.

(Copyright 1895.)

The last time I was in Texas I was riding along the big road in Hill county one day, and I met a man. The man was walking and driving a pair of mules to a covered wagon. The women and children were stowed away under the cover. A little scrubby looking longhorn cow was tied to the back axle and following a long behind the wagon.

We both pulled up, and after passing some stragglers in regard to the weather, I asked him where he came from and where he was going.

A Yaller Dog Trick. "I come from way up in the Pan Handle, stranger, and I am now on my return back home," said the man, and went on.

"Year before last the big Pan Handle boom hit middle Texas, and I reckon there never was such a country in the whole discovered world as the Pan Handle was struck up in that time. Well, stranger, I caught the fever, and I had an almighty darn bad case of it. I sold out where I was then living down here in Hill county and we moved our washin into the great and glorious Pan Handle country."

I bought a hundred and sixty acres of land up there and set down to beat some farmer. I got to claim up on the lot fence and look around. I reckon no doubts, stranger, I had the prittiest looking farm that a crow ever flew over, which it then seems to me like I ought to get rich and start a bank account the first year. But I couldn't so much as raise a difficulty on that land, stranger, and when I planted what I could raise when but sand. So finally at last I threw down my hand and pulled out of the game, and I am now on my return back to God's country."

"It is none of my business maybe," says I, "but I would like to hear from the cattle trade in the Pan Handle. What did you give for that cow?"

"It was a rare, low down, yaller dog trick the way I got that cow," said the man, "and I don't love to talk about it. But when as you are a stranger in these parts I will tell you how it come to pass. It might make me feel a little more easier and better to let somebody know. I swapped eighty acres of Pan Handle land for that cow. That was the trade as I made it, and it was perfectly fair and square so far as I was to give the other man eighty acres of land, and he was to give me the cow. But when it come to fix up the deeds and titles I found out that the poor devil couldn't neither read nor write, and I jest took and unloaded both eighty—a hundred and sixty acres of Pan Handle land on him and kept the cow. It was mean as any trick I ever struck, but times are hard and somebody had to own that land."

Free to His Friends. My friend and fellow servant, Blev Scroggins, has held every office in the county, off and on, from constable to high sheriff. He never has been beat in an open field and a flat-footed race before the people. If you would like to know the whereabouts and the whereabouts thereof, I can tell you. With all his faults—and everybody has his faults—Blev Scroggins is true to his friends. I remember a sad and funny story—which, you understand, was the old and sober truth—they use to tell on Blev and Andy Lucas, and it shows up the mainest strong point in the Scroggins character.

Blev and Andy had went to town one cool and rainy day along in the fall of the year. It was way up in the night before they started home, and by that time, you understand, they had both tanked up most too free and liberal with "white ink" and "spirits-of-cats-fightin'." On their way home they had to cross a big deep gully and walk a single plank in crossin. Andy he was on ahead, and when he started across he lost his balance and went down headforemost in the mud and water. About that time Blev come up and heard a monstrous fuss and a funderin' goin' on down in the gully.

"Hello Andy," says Blev, "is that you down there?"

"That's me to a dead certainty," says Blev, "and it's wet and cold as fluggins down here. Can't you help a fellow out here?"

"I am sorry I can't Andy, but I can't," says Blev, "cause I am drunker'n seven fools myself. I doubt don't serious if I can come across, Andy, not to speak of helpin' you out. But whilst I can't help you out by gattins I'll tell you what I can do. I am a friend of yours in many old days and my side partner in many old days and hand rubbed—durned if I can't pile in and stay with you."

And into the gully Blev went, and there they stayed till day light come and they got together enough to crawl out and go home together.

The Spirit of Persecution. Everybody has their own notions more or less in regard to religion and the scriptures, but old Parson Urah Bietins use to have some of the blindest notions I ever heard tell of in that particular line. Old man Urah lived way over

somewhere in the hill country, but he use to preach reglar once a month at Yellow Jacket church, and I have heard him many and many a time when I was a boy.

I recollect once upon a time when he took his text from the good book where it tells about how the savior went up to Jerusalem ridin of a mule, and how the people met him and throwed their garments and limbs and branches of trees in the road. Most everybody would think from that text that the old man Urah didn't think that by a whole lot.

"Now brethren and sisters, and at my first congregatin," says he at the first of start, "what did them wicked people of Jerusalem mean by flingin their clothes and the limbs and branches of trees down in the big road right before that mule? Let me tell you, according to the holy scriptures, what they meant. It was the same old spirit of persecution, brethren and sisters and dear dein congregatin—persecution, persecution, nothin but persecutin—tryin to make the creeter fling him!"

He Felt Like a Fool. Good preachin moves some people one way and some another way, and makes some folks laugh and some other folks cry. I have seen Elder Newton cover all the ground and go all the gates in one spell.

One upon a time a powerful smart and flowery young preacher come down into the settlement and held a big meeting over at Back Log church, and naturally of course Elder Newton was on hand with every foot up and coat tails a flyin. The young preacher was a reglar sky scraper, and when he got in one of his weavin ways he could fairly make you hair curl and your blood run cold.

On the first day of the meetin the Elder took the preacher off down to the spring and told him he hoped he wouldn't try to preach about Heaven. "I believe everything in the Bible," says the Elder, "but it never was give unto us weak and wicked human beings to know anything for certain about Heaven till we die. When you preachers get up and go on to tell us all about what sort of a place it is I don't believe a word of what you say, and yet still if you was to preach one of your hair-raisin sermons on the subject of Heaven I reckon I would shout in spite of all I could do. I don't want to eat a plum fool and I hope you won't preach on that subject."

The preacher wouldn't say, but it seems like from the way things turned out afterwards that about the best sermon he had along with him was in regards to Heaven, and on the third day and in preached it. He took his text from the place where the good book says "We shall know as we are known," if I remember right. He pictured forth Heaven in general and in particular—that other land of light and sunshine and flowers—where all the good people go when we die—where there is no night but all day time—where everybody will know everybody, and we will meet their friends and kinfolks that have gone on before. It was a powerful, stririn sermon, and when at last the preacher started in to sing the song that was cryin and Elder Newton was shoutin to beat six bits.

Presently the preacher come down out of the pulpit and went around shaking hands and talkin with the people. By this time, you understand, the Elder had shouted himself down and was now cryin like as if his heart would break.

"And how do you feel today, my dear Brother?" says the preacher to Elder Newton. And the Elder, between his tears and sobs, answered back:

"I feel like a daddurn fool."

Elder Newton was as honest as the sunshine in the fall, and he said, you understand, but he come mighty, yuh bustin up the meetin right then and there.

DANGER IN TOYS. Those Sold on the Street May Convey Infection. The reading public is by this time fairly conversant with the ordinary sources of danger from contagion to which it is exposed, and it has been daily warned by the medical press of the use of ear-pieces and towels, and of the ear-pieces of the phonograph; to touch not with unglazed hand the brass guiding rail of the street car, and to be suspicious even of the telephone transmitter. But, according to a medical journal, the latest hazard in infection is coming to children. Many ingenious toys are now offered on the sidewalks of city streets by itinerant venders. One of these is a tube of paper, furnished with a short piece of bamboo at one end, up to which it is rolled by the action of a slight spring. On blowing into the bamboo the coil is unrolled and shoots out nearly a yard, and the sudden extension has a comical effect, very entertaining to the youthful mind. Another form of toy is the miniature bagpipe, which is made to emit its characteristic sounds by the pressure of air from the small rubber ball which has been inflated by air blown from the mouth. Attention is called to the possible consequences of buying these toys, which are presented to a child after being inflated by questionable breath, and perhaps wetted with the moisture of the still more questionable hand of the vender. An infected mouthpiece has been known to be the origin of grave constitutional troubles, and it seems strange that persons who would hesitate to drink out of a glass that has been used will buy these toys and take them to their children without thought of the disease by which they may have been contaminated. Among the impoverished makers and venders, sore throats, diphtheria and contagious fevers in very early stages may be raging, and children may contract fatal diseases of even a worse character than any of these by using these toys.

CATCHING BIG BASS. How the Black Monsters Are Caught in Southern California. "It is entertaining to watch San Diegans catch sea bass," says a traveler. "First, they bait a minnow bucket with a bit of worm, and catch a minnow. Then they hold the minnow on a larger hook, and fish with it to capture a smelt. When they get the smelt they take their heavy sea-fishing tackle, place the smelt on the hook, and go to angling for a halibut or sea bass. After they get their halibut or sea bass, and the fisher either is the better, they bait it on a hook which is as big as a small anchor with only one fluke. This hook is attached to a line a quarter of an inch in diameter. When all is ready the fisherman whirls the big hook with the halibut on it several times around his head, and then gives it a toss out into the water. Away it sails thirty or forty feet.

"Say, for instance, that this black bass fishing is being done from the long dock at San Diego, San Diego bays is about the best place for this fishing along the coast, although the fish are plentiful at other places. After the baited end of the line is cast the other end is coiled on the dock, and an empty keg or quarter barrel, or something like that, is tied to it. Then the fisherman gets in his rowboat, taking a harpoon with him, and waits for a bite.

Seems queer, here in the east, doesn't it, to go out after black bass? The trouble is, you see, that the black bass of those southern California waters weigh from three hundred to one thousand pounds, and it wouldn't be much use to go out after them with fly tackle and an eight-ounce reel. That's what I said. Thousand pounds. And it's true, every word of it. It isn't often as large as that is taken, but they have been, and will be again. I helped kill one once that weighed six hundred pounds. It took over five hours to do it, but that was nothing extraordinary. For a two hundred pounder will give his captors a good three hours' fight any time.

"Sometimes one of these monster bass will be ready at hand when the halibut or sea bass bait goes sailing through the air and lands with a splash in the water, and will seize it immediately, but more frequently there is more or less of a wait for the big fish to bite. When he takes the bait, true to bass nature, away he goes with a rush. Instantly as many persons on the dock as can get a hold on the line seize it and slacken the tension of their own part of the line. If he doesn't happen to be too big for me generally fetch him to, but that is a rare occurrence. Usually the line whizzes through their fingers at a rate that makes more than one of those having hold of the line reel it quickly to save their hands from blistering. The shore end of the line is soon reached, and it is dropped, for those handling it would be pulled head first off the dock if they held it to. Then the empty keg or barrel plumps overboard, and the water chase is on. Fishermen on the dock take their barrels as it is towed swiftly over the surface, and if the fish is a particularly large one it frequently happens that there will be a long stern chase of the barrel before the boat overtakes it, that being the object of the men in the boat."

ARE BIRDS GUIDED BY STARS? An Attempt to Solve the Great Mystery of Bird Migration. In an article on "Birds of Passage" the Chautauquin says if one desires an explanation for the great mystery of bird migration, there being nothing else that will answer, he will have to accept the theory of hereditary knowledge, a knowledge of the unerring stars. The Great Bear and Orion appeared at the same time in our region, even when the divisions of land and water were very different than they are to-day. That the stars are the guides for birds agrees with the fact that they fly at remarkable heights, often above the clouds, and that wanderers lose their way when they stray into clouds and mists.

On starlight nights straggling birds are seldom noticed. When the sky is overcast, when the night is dark, but especially when a fine rain is falling, multitudes of traveling birds are heard. Then they call often, doubtless for the purpose of keeping near each other; and often great numbers of them bound against the windows of light-houses. Thus Gattie has observed that on October 28, 1882, from ten o'clock at night till the next morning golden-crowned wrens buzzed like snail-shells against the lighthouse of Heligoland, and that on the following day golden-crowned wrens sat on every square foot of Heligoland.

Toward the end of the summer, along into the fall, it was not a rare occurrence on dark nights to see, through the light of street lamps, big, over-flying cities. The observer recognizes by the low and the strand-shine and seagull, occasional

the flap of their wings. But no bird is visible in the darkness. On dark nights no stars appear; then it is that the straying bird loses his way. The stars are the most plausible guides to birds in their migrations. But only the future can tell us whether they really serve in that capacity.

What Queen Victoria Said. An amusing example of Queen Victoria's precocious wit is going the rounds of the English press. While but a mere child she used to delight George IV. by her quaint remarks. One day when staying at the royal lodge the king entered the drawing-room leading his little niece by the hand. The hand was stationed as usual in the adjoining conservatory. "Now, Victoria," said his majesty, "the hand is in the next room and shall play any tune you please; what shall it be?" "O, uncle," replied the princess, with great readiness, "I should like God Save the King better than anything else." The little princess at that time, it must be remembered, was but once removed in the line of succession.

It May Do as Much for You Mr. Fred Miller, of Irving, Ill., writes that he had a Severe Kidney trouble for many years, with severe pains in his back and also that his bladder was affected. He tried many so called Kidney cures but without any good result. About a year ago he began use of Electric Bitters and found relief at once. Electric Bitters is especially adapted to cure of all Kidney and Liver troubles often gives almost instant relief. One trial will prove the statement. Price only 50 cents for large bottle, at the Bazaar.

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How the Black Monsters Are Caught in Southern California. "It is entertaining to watch San Diegans catch sea bass," says a traveler. "First, they bait a minnow bucket with a bit of worm, and catch a minnow. Then they hold the minnow on a larger hook, and fish with it to capture a smelt. When they get the smelt they take their heavy sea-fishing tackle, place the smelt on the hook, and go to angling for a halibut or sea bass. After they get their halibut or sea bass, and the fisher either is the better, they bait it on a hook which is as big as a small anchor with only one fluke. This hook is attached to a line a quarter of an inch in diameter. When all is ready the fisherman whirls the big hook with the halibut on it several times around his head, and then gives it a toss out into the water. Away it sails thirty or forty feet.

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