

A horse does not buck until it sees the man on its back, and feels his weight, and fear and ignorance bid him strive to rid himself of the unaccustomed encumbrance. Once the animal loses its fear it will not bother to buck. If plenty of time is taken with the preliminary handling, the first shock is lessened. With this in mind, but without the time, some owners tie a large sack securely in the saddle, and let the pony work off its first energy on that. All these methods are short cuts, however, and a horse broken this way will buck when it has the chance until the fire of youth is out of its veins.

The shepherd approaches the task in a dual spirit. To him the pony is a necessity and a means of earning a livelihood, and the breaking in is a commercial venture as well as a trial of riding skill. A pony which thinks it is boss is a confounded nuisance, and liable to buck at the wrong moment. So the shepherd takes precautions.

A colonial stock saddle is the most favoured. Some use the Mexican type, but not many. The horn on the pommel is dangerous if the pony falls or goes so far as to roll. Stirrups are tied under the horse's belly. This gives purchase and grip for the knees, and, incidentally, means that the feet will come clear if you are thrown. A "monkey," a strap looped several times through the dees on the pommel of the saddle, is fitted on. That completes the preparations for the



fray. Some make assurance doubly sure by strapping a surcingle over their thighs and round the horse's barrel. These are the "bushies" and "sailors" on horse back who have no idea of riding, but simply mean to stick there by brute force.

And if a shepherd graduates in that school and fancies his chances, he can try a hand at riding the outlaws at the agricultural shows which are held in every district in the spring-time. He will have a monkey, but no stirrups, and a halter and reins instead of bridle. *Then*, if he can ride, is the chance to show it. Not brute force, but balance and skill, will keep him in the saddle.

And if he wants to learn how it's done, let him visit the circus next time it comes round, and watch a rider of the calibre of "Snowy" Thomson. With a sack across the horse's back, and another rolled up across his withers and only a halter on his mount he's there for good, no matter what trick the outlaw pulls. "Oh, stay a very long time, cowboy!"

