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***** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK SAWDUST & SPANGLES: STORIES & SECRETS OF THE CIRCUS *****



SAWDUST & SPANGLES

STORIES & SECRETS OF THE CIRCUS

BY

W. C. COUP



Herbert S. Stone and Company
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MDCCCCI

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FOREWORD

The notes from which the following narrative was drawn were dictated by Mr. W. C. Coup at odd moments in the big show tent, the special car or the hotel where he chanced to find himself with a half-hour at his disposal. The manner and the motive of their writing unite to contribute to their charm and effectiveness. His unbounded enthusiasm for his peculiar calling and his desire so to state the facts of his experience as to give the general public a fairer and fuller understanding of its real conditions inspired him to the labor of crowding into his busy life the pleasant task of putting upon paper the main points of his interesting career.

Nothing could have been more fortunate than the fact that he was compelled to do this in a manner wholly informal,—intending later to put his haphazard notes into good literary form. His recollections fell from his lips as they came into his mind, in the forceful and picturesque phraseology of the typical showman. To preserve this original quality has been the effort constantly held in view in grouping these notes for publication. The terse idiom of the offhand dictation has been consistently retained and gives the true "show" color and flavor to the stirring scenes, adventures and incidents with which the book deals.

Of Mr. Coup's prominence in his profession it is scarcely necessary to speak, and I think none will venture to question the statement that he was the founder and pioneer in America of the circus business pure and simple, as distinguished from other lines of show enterprise, and that the story of his life would incidentally furnish a concise history of the circus on this continent. His name was a family word in homes of the people of every part of the United States during the period of his greatest activity. The main incidents of his career may be tersely stated as follows:

William Cameron Coup was born in Mount Pleasant, Ind., in 1837. While he was still a boy, his father bought the local tavern in a small country village. The business of hotel keeping did not commend itself to the future showman, who left home and took the position of "devil" in a country newspaper office. Soon, however, he became dissatisfied with the opportunities which the printing craft seemed to present, and started out to find something which better suited his unformed and perhaps romantic ideas of a profession. After a hard tramp of several miles he chanced to encounter a show, and immediately determined that this was the field to which he would devote his energies and in which he would make for himself a name and a fortune. With this show he served an apprenticeship, in a humble capacity, and gained a clear idea of the essentials of the business.

In 1861 he secured the side-show privileges of the E. F. & J. Mabie Circus, then the largest show in America. He remained with this firm until 1866, when he secured similar privileges with the Yankee Robinson Circus, with which he allied himself until 1869. In the latter year he formed a co-partnership with the celebrated Dan Costello and entered upon the first of the original ventures marking as many distinct epochs in the history of the circus in America. This departure was the organization of a show which traveled by boat and stopped at all the principal lake ports of the great inland seas. This enterprise was a decided success.

At that time Mr. P. T. Barnum had never been in the circus business, and Mr. Coup had not personally met this king of showmen. He keenly appreciated, however, the prestige which Mr. Barnum's name would give to a circus enterprise, and went to New York for the purpose of interesting Mr. Barnum in an enterprise of this character. This object he had no difficulty in accomplishing, and in the Spring of 1870 they put an immense show on the road, which toured the eastern States and was highly successful.

The next year marked a turning point in the career of Mr. Coup and also in that of the

traveling show business. He was the first man who ever called the railroad into service for the purpose of moving a circus and menagerie. This significant step was taken in opposition to the judgment of his partner, P. T. Barnum, and in the face of the doubts and objections of the leading railroad officials of the country. But Mr. Coup's faith in the results of this "rapid transportation movement" was firm, and he astonished Mr. Barnum and the entire public by the phenomenal success of this venture, which brought a rich harvest of money and reputation.

The project of building a permanent amusement palace in New York came to Mr. Coup in 1874. Under his supervision, and while Mr. Barnum was in Europe, he erected, on the present site of the Madison Square Garden, the famous New York Hippodrome. His labors in this connection were so arduous that, when the great enterprise was thoroughly established, he felt obliged to take a long rest. To this end he severed his partnership with Mr. Barnum, and in 1875 took his family to Europe.

Immediately following his return to America, in the spring of 1876, Mr. Coup announced that he had formed a new co-partnership with Mr. Charles Reiche, for the purpose of starting another mammoth enterprise to be known as the New York Aquarium. A large building especially designed for this purpose was erected at the corner of Thirty-fifth Street and Broadway, and was opened October 11, 1876. Into this enterprise Mr. Coup threw the energies and ambitions of a lifetime, and so long as he retained its management the great undertaking was notably successful.

His labors in this connection brought him into relationship with the most celebrated scientists of the world, and many of them became his personal friends. Scribner's Magazine devoted many pages to an article describing the Aquarium, and referred to Mr. Coup as a benefactor of science and as a valued contributor to a more popular knowledge of biology. Probably no other recognition ever received by Mr. Coup from the press gave him the satisfaction which he gained from this magazine article.

Because of disagreements with his partner, who was determined to open the Aquarium Sundays, for the patronage of the public, he disposed of his business at a great sacrifice, and started out on the road with the "Equescurriculum," an entirely novel and original exhibition consisting of trained bronchos, performing dogs, goats, giraffes, etc., and troupes of Japanese acrobats. Each year new attractions were added to this show, and, in 1879, the New United Monster Shows were organized by Mr. Coup and developed into one of the largest consolidated circuses in the United States.

Four year later, he established the Chicago Museum in the building then known as McCormick Hall and located at the corner of Kinzie and Clark streets, Chicago. Wild West shows and trained animal exhibitions engaged his energies from 1884 to 1890.

The "Enchanted Rolling Palaces" were put out in 1891 and created a profound sensation throughout the entire country. This show was a popular museum housed in an expensive and elaborate train of cars especially constructed for the purpose. With this enterprise he toured the southern and eastern States. This was practically his last important undertaking, and his latest years were spent in practical retirement, although he occasionally varied the monotony of life at his country seat at Delavan, Wis., by engaging in new ventures and making short tours with trained animal exhibitions. His death occurred at Jacksonville, Fla., March 4, 1895.

SAWDUST AND SPANGLES

I

BOYHOOD WITH THE OLD-TIME WAGON SHOW

As many a boy has come into the circus business in much the same manner that I entered it (at the age of fourteen years), this start in show life may be of some interest because typical of the way in which young lads drift into this wandering existence. Doing chores about my father's tavern in a little southern Indiana town brought me in contact with such travelers as visited our quiet community. Listening to their talk and stories naturally inspired me with a desire to see something of the big and wonderful world outside our village. As this was impossible at the time, I did what seemed the next best thing so far as getting in touch with the world was concerned. When only twelve years old I took the position of "devil" in the country newspaper office, and for years worked at the printer's case, helped "run off" the

paper on the old Franklin press and did almost every disagreeable task that could be put on the shoulders of a boy.

This seemed quite exciting at the start, but it finally grew monotonous, and the boyish longing for travel and adventure came back to me with redoubled force. As my mother had died when I was very young, and father had married again, surrounding himself with a second family, my home ties, though pleasant enough, were not what they might have been had my own mother lived. The printer in the little newspaper office who was dignified by the title of foreman had seemed to take quite a fancy to me, and we became rather close companions. One day when the spirit of restlessness and adventure was strong upon me I confided to him that I was tired of our slow old town and suggested that we pack our few belongings in bundles and start out for some place which would offer us a bigger chance to get on. This proposal, with the beautiful summer weather, started the slumbering tendency to wander that lurks in the heart of every true printer.

Placing a few necessaries in two bundles, we quietly left the village in regulation tramp-printer style. At length we reached Terre Haute, where I was offered employment in a newspaper office. I realized that I knew very little of the printing craft, and that it would take many years of hard, up-hill work to make me a master of the art. Consequently I determined to find some other line of employment more exciting than that of "sticking type." The first thing we heard was that a circus was showing in the town. This caught my fancy, and I told my companion that I was going to join the circus and see something of the world. He was disgusted at this proposal, and very plainly warned me that if I took such a course I would make a worthless loafer of myself. But my circus blood was up, and I put my resolve into immediate action, little dreaming that I was taking the first step in a career that was to become a part of the history of the show business in America.

The show which I joined was one of the largest then in existence, having more than a hundred horses, ten fine Ceylon elephants, a gorgeously carved and painted "Car of Juggernaut," and many other "attractions" which seemed marvelous in my boyish eyes. Not the least of these in point of attractiveness and popularity was General "Tom" Thumb, who was petted and feasted wherever he went. But Nellis, the man without arms who could paint pictures and shoot pennies from the fingers of the manager, claimed a large share of my silent admiration.

MY FIRST EXCITING EXPERIENCE

My first exciting experience came very early in my service. I had learned that the very best use to which I could put my time when not actually engaged in work was to throw myself on the nearest bunch of hay and sleep until awakened by the "boss." Having a boy's natural affinity for an elephant I chose, on this particular day, the hay near which the Ceylon drove was staked. In the midst of my dreams I was suddenly awakened by a strange sensation—a peculiar sense of motion that had something startling and uncanny about it. Then I realized that I was being lifted in the coils of an elephant's trunk. So intense was my horror at awakening to find myself in this position that I had strength neither to resist nor to cry out. My helplessness was my greatest protection. From sheer inability to do otherwise I remained entirely passive, and Old Romeo, the king of the drove, laid me gently down a little distance from the hay on which I had been sleeping. Then I understood the intelligence of the elephant and the harmlessness of his intentions. He had eaten all the hay save that on which I was stretched, and to get at this he had lifted me with as much care as a mother takes up a sleeping child whom she does not wish to waken.

THE INTELLIGENCE OF ELEPHANTS

Only one other instance of elephant intelligence ever impressed me more than this awakening in the grasp of Old Romeo. One of the small members of the drove was trained to walk a rope—or more properly a belt—the width of his foot. This performance attracted the attention of the baby elephant, and one day I noticed the little fellow stealthily unhooking the chain by which he was tethered. Then he boldly attempted to walk the guard chain which surrounds the drove in every menagerie. The same baby elephant, one day seeing the men shoveling to throw up a ring embankment, contrived to get a shovel in his trunk. At once he attempted to stab the blade into the earth. Failing in this effort to imitate the men he flew into a passion and threw the tool to the ground, trampling on it and breaking the handle.

In those first days of my novitiate I found the people almost as interesting as the elephants—which is saying much from the point of view of a boy. The crudity of society at that period is vividly illustrated by an incident which occurred soon after we had crossed over into Illinois. We were showing at the little town of Oquawka and "put up" at the only tavern there. The dining-room of this hostelry was papered with circus bills. Our first meal introduced me to a scene so outlandish that I shall never forget it. Shortly after we had seated ourselves at the rough board table, the kitchen door was pushed open by a tall, lank young countryman of a

fierce and forbidding countenance. He wore a broad-brimmed hat, heavy cowhide boots—in the tops of which were buried the ends of his trouser legs—and a red flannel shirt. From his belt protruded a huge bowie knife. In his hand he carried a sixteen-quart pan heaped with steaming potatoes. As he strode across the room he shouted: "Who in hell wants pertaters?"

FIGHTS WITH THE GRANGERS

The novelty of all these curious and wonderful sights wore away after awhile, and then began my circus life in all its stern reality. The hardships and trials and the rough attachés of that "vast aggregation" can never be forgotten. If the showmen were rough, so also were our patrons. The sturdy sons of toil came to the show eager to resent any imagined insult; and failing to fight with the showmen, would often fight among themselves; for in the days of Abraham Lincoln's childhood the people divided themselves into cliques, and county-seats were often the arenas selected to settle family feuds. In other words, "fighting was in the air," and, as may be imagined, the showmen received their full share of it. It was no infrequent occurrence to be set upon by a party of roughs, who were determined to show their prowess and skill as marksmen with fists and clubs if required. As a consequence showmen went armed, prepared to hold their own against any odds. Not once a month, or even once a week, but almost daily, would these fights occur, and so desperately were they entered into that they resembled pitched battles more than anything else. Many years later, when describing this part of my career and later battles and circus fights to General Grant and Governor Crittenden at St. Louis, in which city my show was exhibiting, they admitted that my experience in thrilling and startling incidents compared favorably with their own, the difference being that they had perfect discipline and were backed by a powerful government, whilst for showmen there seemed to be little sympathy.

The roads at that time were in a terrible condition—so bad that slight rains would convert them into seas of mud, and a continued rainstorm would make them impassable.

One day one of our men became so immersed in quicksand that he sunk up to his armpits, and would have been very quickly swallowed up entirely had not some of his old comrades come to his rescue. Fastening one end of a long rope around his body, they drew him from his perilous position with the aid of a team of horses, and with so much force that a very necessary part of his attire was left completely behind him. These and other rigorous scenes were occurrences to which I became inured.

In these peaceful days it is almost impossible to realize the rough and desperate character of the people in the backwoods districts from which the old-time wagon shows drew their principal patronage. Even the latter-day circus men have no adequate conception of the improvement which time has wrought in the general character of the show-going public in the country communities. There is no denying the fact that then, as now, the attachés of the big circus were rather poor specimens of humanity; but in common justice it must be said that some of their pioneer patrons were more than a match for them. Never shall I forget the awful impression made upon my boyish mind by the first combat of this kind which I witnessed. Although I had not been long with the show, I had caught the prevailing sentiment that we were constantly in the "land of the Philistines," that the hand of every man was against us, and that our only safety was in perpetual alertness and the ready determination to stand together and fight for our rights on the slightest signal of disturbance.

"DOC" BAIRD AND THE BULLY

Connected with the side-show of the circus was a quiet inoffensive little man known as "Doc" Baird. While we were showing in a county-seat, the bully of the community, who was evidently bent upon displaying his courage, singled out the little "doctor" as his victim and proceeded to pick a quarrel with him. This proved a difficult thing to do, for Baird was decidedly pacific in his disposition and preferred to stand abuse rather than fight. I was among the attachés of the show who witnessed the trouble, and it seemed to me a shame that a big fellow like the bully should be permitted to terrorize the most inoffensive of all the showmen. Suddenly the altercation grew warmer, the bully's arm shot forward and the little doctor was knocked to the ground. Instantly, however, he was on his feet, and the next moment I heard the sharp report of a pistol, saw the smoke curl from the muzzle of the arm and watched the fall of the bully. This was the first time in my life that I ever looked upon the face of the dead or witnessed any affray of a fatal character. The shock and shuddering which it caused me were so great that I actually attempted to leave the show business, but was soon back again into the "current of destiny" and became inured to these exciting scenes.

TEASING OLD ROMEO

The circus grounds appeared to be the favorite arena for the settlement of the neighborhood

feuds that were then characteristic of backwoods communities. Weapons of every sort, from fists to pistols, were employed and bloodshed was the rule rather than the exception. But the belligerent spirit of the pioneer yeomen was sometimes displayed in ludicrous ways. An instance of this character came near having a tragic ending. A party of young people halted before the elephant drove and amused themselves in teasing old Romeo. The ringleader in this reckless sport was a veritable young Amazon. For a time the patriarch of the drove, who had more good common sense than all his tormentors, stood the annoyance with dignified forbearance. But at last the big country girl succeeded in arousing his ire, and the huge elephant raised his trunk and gave her as dainty a slap, by way of warning, as was ever administered by a mother or school mistress to an unruly child. But the young woman would not take this hint that would have sent the most reckless animal-keeper of the show to a discreet retreat. Her pride was wounded before her companions. With her face flaming with anger, she leaped over the guard chain and made a vicious lunge at the shoulder of the elephant with the point of her gaudy parasol. Fortunately an attaché of the show leaped forward in time to save her. This was one of the most foolhardy displays of animal courage that I ever saw—and it was thoroughly typical of the circus-going public of the West at an early day.

THE STORY OF A STOLEN NEGRO

The sectional feeling between the North and South was also a constant menace to the showmen when traveling in the slave States, for the circus men were universally regarded as "Yankees." The exciting episodes growing out of this sentiment were numbered by the score, but the one which gave me the greatest fright was encountered in Missouri in an initial chapter of my experience.

As the caravan pulled into Booneville, early one morning, after a wearing night of marching, we found ourselves suddenly surrounded, not by the usual welcoming party of children of all colors and sizes, but by a band of lank Missourians, armed to the teeth. By this time I had developed a very respectable amount of courage for a lad; but the sight of this posse made me decidedly uncomfortable, and I'm afraid my whole body shook as badly as the voice of Mr. Butler, the manager, when he inquired the cause of our hostile reception.

"You've got a stolen nigger in your outfit, and you're our prisoners—that's what's the matter!" was the rough answer of the leader of the posse.

The gravity of our situation was at once grasped by every man who heard this announcement, for the stealing of a slave was then a far greater crime in the eyes of the community than unprovoked murder would now be. A desperate and bloody battle in which every follower of the show must look out for his own life as best he could seemed inevitable. We all kept our eyes on the manager, who was cool and of impressive manners. In those moments of breathless waiting for the fight to begin, I wished myself with the vehemence of despair safely back in the quiet little Hoosier office.

Then Mr. Butler made a plucky appeal to all reasonable men who might be in the posse. Was it not fair, he argued, that the man who had brought this accusation should come forward and make himself and his standing known? Was he a planter, the owner of slaves and a substantial citizen of the great commonwealth of Missouri? This kind of ready eloquence took with the crowd, and it was soon found that the man who had brought the report was unknown to the people of Booneville. He was unable to give a satisfactory account of himself or to prove that he ever owned a slave.

Our trouble seemed to be rapidly clearing away when one of the natives, who had been quietly investigating the caravan, brought the stirring news that he had discovered the stolen negro. Then all was excitement again, and the strain was even more intense than before, for, hidden away in one of the wagons was a black man! This mysterious evidence of guilt dumbfounded every attaché of the show save the manager, who continued to maintain his splendid nerve in the presence of a half a hundred rifles. Every instant I expected the shooting to begin.

Once more, however, Mr. Butler caught the attention of the leader and fired at the man claiming the negro a question which made the fellow turn pale. On his answer depended the issues of peace or conflict. To the surprise of the Missourians, our accuser broke down and confessed that the affair was a scheme laid by himself and the negro to blackmail from the circus manager a large sum of money. They planned that the negro should make his presence known to some citizen while the white man should circulate the rumor that his slave had been stolen by the showman. Then the white man was to go to Mr. Butler and threaten him with the wrath of the people unless a large sum was paid him to quiet the matter and make his peaceable departure with the slave. But the would-be blackmailer had started a larger fire than he had counted on and had become frightened at his own work. The moment his confession was made the mob turned upon him as fiercely as it had first started for us. Then our manager once more stepped forward and urged the cooler members of the posse to hasten the white man and negro inside the protecting walls of the jail. This

they did in a hurry—and just in the nick of time, too; for the delay of a moment would have resulted in a lynching. This episode won us the admiration and respect of the rough men who had met us with loaded rifles, and we were feasted on yellow-leg chickens, hickory-cured ham, wild honey and all the delicacies that the southern planters "set out" for their guests.

HORSE THIEVES IN THE CIRCUS

It was on this trip into Missouri that we met with a very serious loss which almost crippled us for a time. The baggage train had passed en route to the city where we were to exhibit, leaving the performers, the band and ring horses, as is the custom, to follow in the rear. We had about twenty horses and ponies of great value, and of invaluable use in the show. One morning, just at daylight, the men who had charge of these horses were attacked by a gang of horse thieves, and the entire lot was taken from them. Our men were left wounded and bound with cords, lying by the wayside. Meanwhile, the tents and other paraphernalia were already in the village, awaiting the arrival of the horses. The time for the show to begin came, but still no horses appeared, and the crowds, assembled to see the performing animals, were growing impatient.

While we were in this embarrassing predicament, a citizen came riding up in hot haste, stating that he had seen and released some men who had said their horses had been stolen and who begged him to come into town and report the loss to the managers. When this news was received, it was immediately communicated to the expectant, impatient audience; but being naturally suspicious of all mankind, and especially of circus men, they thought it was a "sell" and a "Yankee trick"; but when once they were made to believe the true facts of the case they rose as one man and mounted their horses to overtake the marauders and punish them. But the thieves, having had several hours start, escaped, and after several days' search the chase was finally abandoned, and we were obliged to proceed on our way without our horses. Horse thieves in those days were very common, and were a continual annoyance to the planters and farmers, and had our thieves been captured, they would have been summarily dealt with.

Naturally, we were very much crippled with our loss; but soon the fertile brain of some of our performers secured us a means of recovering from this calamity, and we were provided with other horses which we used as substitutes for the beautiful and (for those days) highly-trained animals which had been stolen.

II

THE PERILOUS BUSINESS OF STOCKING A MENAGERIE

There are at least two features of the show business which are seldom exaggerated, no matter how capable the showman may be at blowing his own horn or how brilliant may be the accomplishments of his advertising man as a professional prevaricator. These features are the great cost of stocking a menagerie and the danger attending the capture and handling of the savage creatures. Few people not in the business have any idea what it costs to get together and maintain a large collection of animals.

Perhaps the only reason why these phases of the business have not been magnified by the eloquent pens and tongues of the advance men is because they are well-nigh incapable of exaggeration. The plain truth concerning them is as astonishing and sensational as would be any addition thereto, and consequently the advertising men have been tempted to regard this as a field which does not invite a display of their special talents.

I know of one showman who paid \$10,000 for a hippopotamus. This figure would have been as effective for advertising purposes as twice that amount—and yet I do not recall that this price was made much of in the advertising put out by the proprietor. At the time I went into the great New York Aquarium enterprise I remember having one day figured up the amount which I had paid Reiche Brothers, then the leading animal dealers of the world. It reached the neat sum of half a million dollars. This, however, was but a fraction of the fortune I had been called upon to invest in wild animals. Besides buying from other dealers, I had been interested in several independent animal hunting expeditions to Africa. This was a tremendously expensive experience, and led me to a willingness to pay the very large profits demanded by the established animal houses rather than attempt to go into the forests and jungles with my own expeditions. These houses were able to employ educated Germans who delighted in the adventure, and they saved us time, anxiety and money.

BEASTS AT WHOLESALE

In this particular branch of trade Germans take the lead. Charles Reiche, the New York partner, came to this country a very poor boy, and began peddling canaries, bullfinches, and other songbirds. He made his start in 1851 when he went to California by way of the Isthmus of Panama, and employed natives to carry the living freight on their backs. He marched with his men and carried a heavier burden than any servant in the caravan. His only great competitors were the Hagenbacks, of Hamburg. Since the death of the Reiche Brothers, the Hagenbacks have almost monopolized the trade, supplying the menageries and zoological gardens of the world. The Reiche Brothers left an enormous fortune made from this humble beginning.

There is something thrilling in the thought of the lives that have been lost, the sufferings and hardships endured, the perils encountered, and the vast sums of money expended in the capture and transportation of wild animals for the menageries, museums and zoological gardens. Indeed, the business has been so exclusively in the hands of two very quiet gentlemen, whose agencies cover nearly half the globe, that beyond the managers of gardens and shows, only a very limited number of persons have any conception of the extent of their operations.

THE PROFESSIONAL ANIMAL HUNTER

The head of the Reiche firm, and its directing spirit, was Mr. Charles Reiche, who was well educated and had traveled widely. His New York establishment was each day passed unnoticed by thousands of pedestrians, yet from it wild animals were supplied to almost every traveling show in the United States. The great supply depot for this country was in Hoboken. Henry Reiche, his brother, lived in Germany, where they had a large supply farm for all the world, with accommodations and appliances for keeping almost every bird, beast and reptile produced by any country or clime of the world. They were ready at any time to fill an order for anything, from a single canary to a flock of ostriches, or from a field-mouse to an elephant.

Africa, the home of the most fiercely voracious animals, was their most extensive field for operations. In it they had many stations, with sheiks or chiefs in their employ, and standing rewards offered to natives for choice specimens of rare birds or beasts. During nine months of every year they had a band of experienced white African hunters traveling from station to station, overseeing and directing the work of the natives, and capturing elephants, lions, leopards, tigers and such other beasts as they might be instructed to obtain. The company, usually composed of four or six, and never more than eight, was under the command of Charles Lohse, a veteran hunter and trapper, and started from Germany about the first of September and generally returned from Africa early in June. During the remaining three months of the year, the rainy season, the climate is so unhealthful that it is almost certain death for a white man to remain in Africa.

STRIKING INTO THE INTERIOR

Starting from Germany, the hunters used to take a complete outfit of clothing and firearms, gifts for the chiefs, and from seven to twelve thousand dollars in drafts and letters of credit. They would go to Trieste, thence to Corfu, in Greece, thence to Alexandria, and by rail to Suez. There they would exchange their money for Austrian silver dollars, the only coin known to the Arabs and sheiks of Africa. A Bank of England note was valueless to them, and the brightest specimen of an American gold eagle would not buy the meanest ring-tailed monkey. They next took the Turkish steamer to Judda and thence to Sarachin, the last station before they commenced their long, tiresome and dangerous march across the Nubian Desert. For this undertaking they bought camels, water and provisions, and hired such of the sheiks and other natives as they needed, the latter being cheap enough, generally costing five dollars, and occasionally seven dollars, each for the trip across the desert. When the caravan arrived at its destination the poor fellows were left to get back as best they could. In this manner they traveled to Honiahn, the principal station of the company in Africa, where the distinctions of caste are strictly maintained.

HUNTERS' LIFE IN THE JUNGLE

Every white man had a "mansion," which consisted of a straw house about twenty feet wide by thirty feet deep, and was divided into two rooms. In such houses they lived and slept, and in one of them they kept the money which had been brought across the desert in trunks on the backs of camels.

No attempt was made to hide it, nor was there any secrecy as to where it was packed during the long journey. So honest were the native blacks that not a dollar was lost by carelessness or theft. Frequently there would be ten thousand of these silver dollars in the hut, with only one or two white men in camp, surrounded by negroes, Arabs and half-breeds; yet no attempt at robbery was ever made. The half-civilized natives, knowing they were not entitled

to a dollar until they had earned it, never tried to get it in any other way. The natives slept where and as they pleased, and three times a day were given a fair supply of Indian corn, which they would grind and, after adding a little water, would cook over their own fires, making a sort of biscuit. The white men had negro cooks and lived luxuriously. They had eggs, coffee and Indian corn biscuit for breakfast, with a broiled chicken for a relish whenever desired. For dinner, maize and beef or mutton made up the usual bill of fare. A well-conditioned ox cost only four dollars, and a "good eating-goat" was to be had for fifty cents. No meal was complete without plenty of onions. After supper, the German hunter's inseparable evening friend, his long-stemmed china pipe, invariably appeared.



CAPTURING WILD ANIMALS FOR THE SHOW.

The interior of the huts would have charmed an artist. Elephant tusks, lion and leopard skins, hunting-hats and coats, tall wading-boots, rifles and pistols, bright-colored flannel shirts and bits of harness were scattered about in picturesque confusion. In a safe place, where it could not possibly be scratched or disfigured, was the choicest treasure within the four strong walls, a large German accordion. In the long evenings, after the perils and labors of the hunt, Lohse played this instrument by the hour to his hunters as they puffed great clouds of smoke and dreamed of the Fatherland.

The camp was pitched in a clearing on the bank of a little river and was closed by a high and thick hedge of a native thorn. At night, after the pack animals had been fed, watered and housed or tethered, great fires were built at irregular intervals about the grounds to scare off wild beasts, and the watch was set. Then began the dismal howl of the hyena, the roar of the lion, and the shriek of the wildcat. About five o'clock in the morning the camp was again astir and the business of the day was begun. The native hunters formed in companies of about twenty, with a white leader, and started off in different directions. Those left in camp put in the time cleaning it, caring for the beasts, and making boxes for transportation of the animals, and cages for the reception of freshly captured beasts.

In capturing wild animals the rule is to kill the old ones and secure the young; for after any of the beasts have grown old enough to become accustomed to the free life of the forests, and to hunt their own food, they are treacherous and worth little for purposes of exhibition.

WHY BABY ELEPHANTS ARE HARD TO CAPTURE

Paul Tuhe, one of the ablest master-hunters in the service of the Reiche Brothers, who has brought from Africa hundreds of rare birds and animals, gives me this account of the methods and perils of the hunt:

"Though the lion is a fierce creature, the lioness, when protecting her young, is very much more ferocious. From long practice, however, we know how to go after them. A good rifle, firm hands and steady eyes and we can soon topple the old king over. The old lady, however, may make a better fight, but in the end we are sure to kill her. Then it is no trouble to pick up the cubs. We try to get these little fellows when they are about three or four weeks old.

They are then like young puppies, easily managed, and soon know their keepers. Leopards, tigers and all animals of that kind we get in the same way and at about the same age.

"Baby elephants are hard to capture, and the hunt is very dangerous. The old ones seem to know instinctively when we are after their young, and their rage is something terrible. The trumpeting of the parents can be heard a long distance, and quickly alarms the whole herd. The rifle is comparatively useless, and trying to approach them is particularly hazardous; yet it has to be done.

"First, we try to distract the attention of the female from her young. Then a native creeps cautiously in from behind and with one cut of a heavy broad-bladed knife severs the tendons of her hind legs. She is then disabled and falls to the ground. We promptly kill her, secure the ivory and capture the little one. Of course we sometimes have a native or two killed in this kind of a hunt; but they don't cost much—only five to six dollars apiece. The sheiks are paid in advance, and do not care whether the poor huntsmen get out of the chase alive or not. We like to capture the baby elephants when they are about one year old. Younger ones are too tender and older ones know too much. They soon get acquainted with all the camp and we have lots of fun with them. They are kindly, docile, and as full of pranks as the little black babies who play with them.

"Of all fierce, ungovernable, lusty brutes, the hippopotamus with young is the very worst; and whenever we start off to get a baby 'hip' we calculate to come back with one or more men missing. In water they will fight like devils, and will crush the strongest boat to pieces in five minutes. They are quick as a flash, too, notwithstanding their clumsy appearance, and the oarsmen have to be wide-awake to keep out of their way. On shore they are just as ferocious, and the way they hurry their stumpy little legs over the ground would astonish you. They die hard, and take 'a heap of killing.' When such a job is over you may be sure there is great rejoicing among us; but as one little hippopotamus is worth as much as half a dozen little lions, tigers and such truck, we are well content to take the risk. We cannot get these babies too young to suit. One, I remember, was captured the very day it was born, and the hunters and attendants brought it up on a bottle.

"Ostriches we run down on horseback, and then catch with a lasso. It is an exciting chase, but not particularly dangerous. On these hunts we are entitled only to the young ones we capture. The beautiful skins of the leopards, lions, and other animals we kill, the tusks of the elephant, the feathers of the ostrich, and all other similar spoils, go to the native chiefs and sheiks, and these old rascals are as sharp at a trade as the shrewdest 'old clo' merchant in Chatham Street.

"In the encampments the natives assist in taking care of the animals and do general work, but the menial duties are performed by Nubian slaves, who are very cheap and can be bought in numbers to suit. Among the natives the women are looked upon as inferior. Women never eat with their husbands. The husband is allowed four wives, and as many slaves as he can corral."

ACROSS THE DESERT WITH CAPTIVE BEASTS

A sufficient number and variety of animals having been secured, a caravan is formed to take them across the desert for shipment to Germany or America. This usually consists of about one hundred camels, each having its native driver; thirty or forty horses for the white men, and the Arab hunters and their attendants; a flock of from one hundred and fifty to two hundred goats, for their milk and also for food; and black slaves to look out for the goats. The wild animals are secured in strong boxes and carried on the camels' backs. They are all young, and fed with goats' milk principally, although occasionally, to keep them in good spirits, they are given raw goats' meat. Horses are very cheap there, ranging in price from fifteen to twenty dollars each. Natives are even cheaper, seven dollars each being thought an extravagant price for the trip.

The journey ordinarily occupies from thirty to forty days, and all traveling is done between three and eleven in the morning and five and eleven in the evening. During mid-day the sun's rays are so fiercely hot as to make labor or travel hazardous, and none is attempted. The route home is much the same as that taken out, and in due time the beasts are landed, usually with very little loss, in Germany. There they remain until needed to fill orders of showmen in either Europe or America, while their hardy captors take three months of rest and recreation before starting on another trip.

THE ADVENTURES OF SPECIMEN HUNTERS

Several men of scientific attainments are always to be depended on for novelties in the way of monsters from the deep. Some of these "professors," as they are generally termed by showmen, are given salaries to go out on special expeditions, while others make an excellent living by pursuing this peculiar craft independently. Often these men have adventures quite

as exciting as those which befall the hunters in the wilds of the jungles.

While on an expedition to the Bermuda coast one of our professors had a decidedly interesting experience with a small octopus. He had been towing about in his little boat in search of the beautiful colored fish with which this coast abounds, when there was a sudden lurch of the boat followed by a constant thumping against its bottom. Thinking the skiff had met with an obstruction of the ordinary kind, the professor thrust his arm into the water, at the stern of the boat, where he felt a moving mass which was indistinctly seen, and caught hold of the slimy thing. He then found that his arm was being encircled by what he believed to be a sea serpent. Then he felt a sensation that, according to his description, was like a hundred sucking leeches. This strange and powerful animal was trying to pull him overboard. With a desperate effort he separated the tentacled part that encircled his arm from the body of the devil-fish, and the creature fell back into the water. On the professor's arm were several sores where the suckers had been applied, and he was as thoroughly frightened as a man could be and live.

One of the most pathetic subjects which can be proposed to a proprietary showman of wide experience is that of "wild goose" expeditions. Experiences of this kind are so costly that they are not easily forgotten. I spent thousands of dollars on an expedition sent to the coast of Alaska for the purpose of capturing a live walrus. The man in charge of this undertaking had been with my menagerie for several years, and I knew him to be courageous, capable and determined. He had plenty of assistance, the best equipment in the way of boats, wire nets and other paraphernalia that could be devised, and still he returned empty-handed from a shore that abounded with those ugly monsters. The failure of the expedition and the loss of the heavy investment which it represented all hinged on the fact that, unlike the seals we had taken by nets, the walrus could not be found on the shore. What was still more tantalizing was that they would permit their pursuers to approach within a hundred feet of the ice blocks on which they discreetly held forth.

After he had abandoned all hope of capturing them alive, he determined to have some sport shooting them. As before stated, the walruses would remain on the ice until the party came within one hundred feet of them, resting all the time in perfect silence and raising their enormous heads as if curious to see what manner of men had the temerity to invade their dominion. In that position they were, of course, perfect targets for the bullets. When wounded they would collect in a group, and then, as if by a preconceived signal, they would rush for the boats, and their retaliation would be furious and the attacking party was usually wholly unprepared for the onslaught. As a walrus frequently weighs nearly a ton, and sometimes more, the hunters were in imminent danger of being tipped over into the cold waves—a catastrophe which would be almost certain to result fatally; and as the movement of the walrus is very swift, the only alternative left the party was to empty their guns on the foremost of the creatures. This would break the force of the onslaught, the killed and wounded forming a barrier to those coming on behind. On one of these excursions the hunters killed a baby walrus, and while using the oars to reach the ice floe whereon the baby lay dead, they were astonished to see a grown walrus jump to the little one's side and, taking it in its mouth, disappear with it into the icy water.

If the countryman who finds undisguised delight in "seeing the animals" of the big show could only realize the money, the perils and hardships and the disappointments which a good collection of animals represents he would marvel the more at the spectacle.

III

FREAKS AND FAKES

No saying attributed to P. T. Barnum has been more widely quoted than the remark that "the public likes to be humbugged." Certainly this comment on the credulity of the masses opens up a most curious and entertaining field, and its mention in a company of old showmen is sure to provoke a flood of reminiscences on the subject of fakes, freaks and fakers. There is scarcely another line of experience concerning which veteran showmen more enjoy comparing notes—possibly because it touches on the secrets of the craft. Though it is true that Mr. Barnum was a master in the science of humbugging the public, and did not disclaim that distinction, it must be said in justice to him that in the course of his long professional career he gave the people more for their money than any other showman, living or dead.

A little inside information on this hidden side of the showman's business may be entertaining to a public which has often experienced the pleasure of being humbugged. Certainly no fake is entitled to take precedence over the celebrated "Cardiff Giant." This was the invention of a certain George Hull. He lived, I think, at Binghamton, New York, and manufactured the

giant in a rude shop on the small farm which he worked. Hull was shrewd, energetic and very persistent, as may be seen by the fact that the elaboration of the idea of his fake and its execution occupied him more than four years. He thought the whole matter out, even to the most minute details, before beginning work on it. Without any knowledge of the art of sculpture or the science of anatomy, he set himself resolutely at work to remedy these defects of education. He had considerable aptitude with the chisel, and gradually developed the skill necessary to hew out a figure that was to be put before the public as a relic of an age so remote that no person would be likely closely to criticise its proportions. Hull also knew that, no matter what the age in which his giant was supposed to have lived, the "remains" must show pores in the skin to pass the scrutiny of even the unlearned. The making of these pores required more time and labor than all the other work of making the "Cardiff Giant." The work occupied many months, and was all performed in the "studio" or shop where it was at last finished to Hull's satisfaction.

THE BURIAL AND RESURRECTION OF THE "CARDIFF GIANT"

Preparations were then made for the giant's burial in order that when brought to public view it might show the proper evidence of antiquity. It was buried in the side of a hill only a few rods from the outbuilding, where it had been chiseled from a huge block of stone taken from that very hill. In all this work, huge and heavy as the uncut stone and the giant hewn out of it were, Hull had only the assistance of one man, a sled and a yoke of oxen in moving them. This helper was a green and stolid German immigrant, utterly devoid of curiosity, and the man who helped to bury the giant was another of the same description.

The statue was allowed to remain more than two years in the ground before its maker considered it to be in proper condition for "accidental" discovery. Hull then promptly "discovered" and dug out the "petrification," and placed it on public view to amaze and perplex people generally and to delight the antiquarians, who found it an argument to uphold some of their most cherished theories. It took its name from the fact that near the spot where it was buried and resurrected was a small hamlet called Cardiff. The public career of the "Cardiff Giant" was not of long continuance, however, but was sufficiently lengthy to enable Mr. Hull to make considerable money out of his clever conception. He declared, however, that he might have made much more money if he had accepted Mr. Barnum's offer made at the time of the giant's first appearance in public. Mr. Hull knew, too, that exposure was bound to come in the end, but that mattered not to him. For many years thereafter the "Cardiff Giant" reposed neglected in the very shop in which it was made; but its owner and inventor averred that he was entirely content with the financial result of his ingenuity.

"Bridgeport, Oct. 8, 1870.

"My Dear Coup: Yours received. I will join you in a show for next spring and will probably have Admiral Dot well trained this winter and have him and Harrison in the show. Wood will sell all his animals right, and will furnish several tip-top museum curiosities. You need to spend several months in New York arranging for curiosities, cuts, cages, bills, etc. All things got from Wood I will settle for with him and give the concern credit. We can make a stunning museum department. If you want to call it *my* museum and use my name it may be used by allowing me the same very small percentage that Wood allows for calling himself my successor (3 per cent on receipts). You can have a Cardiff Giant that won't crack, also a moving figure, Sleeping Beauty or Dying Zouave—a big Gymnastic figure like that in Wood's museum, and lots of other good things, only you need time to look them up and prepare wagons, etc., etc.

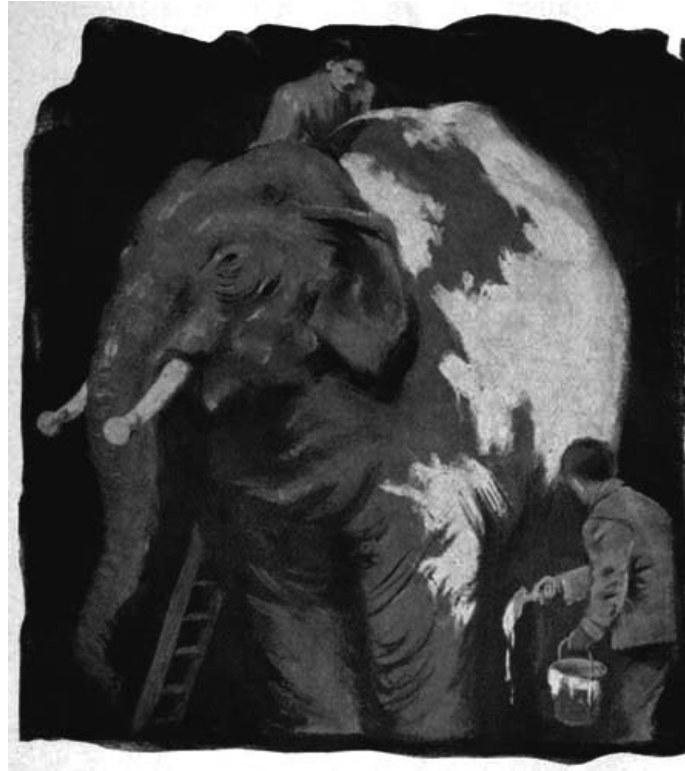
"Yours truly,

"P. T. BARNUM."

"I will spare time to cook up the show in New York when you come. I think Siamese Twins would pay."

The year 1884 is a memorable one in the annals of circus history, and circus men remember it as the "White Elephant Year." For many years persistent attempts had been made by enterprising showmen to secure for exhibition purposes a sacred white elephant. Schemes by the score had been discussed in the confidential councils of the showmen in winter quarters, with a view to faking a black elephant into a white one, but without satisfactory results. In the winter of 1883, however, it was given out by Mr. Barnum's manager that he had positively succeeded in purchasing from the King of Siam a sacred white elephant. The press was splendidly "worked" in advance, and the sacred white elephant monopolized the gossip of circus circles.

A great rivalry had for some years existed between Mr. Barnum and a Philadelphia circus man, and the public was greatly surprised, just before the opening of the season, to find that, according to newspaper report, the latter also had quietly and unostentatiously imported a sacred white elephant known as the "Light of Asia," which, from the descriptions of the few favored scribes who had seen it, was a marvel of beauty and color. Rumors also were circulated that Barnum's white elephant was not genuine, but only a diseased or leprous elephant with a "blaze" of cream color down its trunk, and discolored or spotted legs, while the Philadelphia showman's animal was of snowy whiteness, without spot or blemish. Public sentiment ran high, especially in Philadelphia, where the shows were to exhibit simultaneously. While public opinion was divided as to the genuineness of these "sacred" animals, it may be well to say that the Barnum animal was as good a specimen of the genuine white elephant as could be procured, while the Philadelphia elephant, pretty as a picture and superbly snow white in color, was supposed to be a lively "fake."



WHEN A "WHITE ELEPHANT" WAS NEEDED.

While on exhibition, this "Light of Asia" was almost entirely covered with a black velvet-spangled cloth, and the trunk had been manipulated in such a way that visitors could touch it, and as no coloring matter came off on their hands I presume that part of the body had in some way been "sized" or enameled.

HOW THE "LIGHT OF ASIA" EMBARRASSED THE LECTURER

During the performance the white elephant would be introduced and stripped of its velvet trappings on the elevated stage between the two rings, while a learned "professor" descanted eloquently on opposition in general and the genuineness of this white elephant in particular. So well was this part of the program carried out that popular opinion was at least equally divided regarding the genuineness of the competing white elephants. Long afterward the "lecturer" told me that this white elephant, having learned to recognize and like him, would endeavor to salute him by rubbing up against him after the manner of elephants. Had the animal succeeded, the effect would have been to leave white marks on the black coat of the lecturer, who had all he could do to continue his lecture and at the same time dodge the friendly advance of the white elephant. About the middle of the season, after getting all the benefit they could out of the white elephant war, Barnum and his rival came to an amicable understanding, and divided territory with each other, and the "Light of Asia" was withdrawn.

The following winter it was given out that the animal had taken cold and died in Philadelphia, but there are plenty of showmen who aver that the animal is as lively and healthy as ever, though wearing black instead of chalky white. A somewhat significant fact regarding this fake was that during the previous summer its owners had been annoyed on arrival in various towns to find an opposition sideshow, with its canvas already up. It belonged to an Englishman whose sole attraction was a yellow horse. No one had ever heard of a yellow horse before, and the farmers for miles around came in and eagerly paid ten

cents to see this wonder. The animal was not particularly beautiful, but was certainly a bright yellow, as were also the hands of his master. In fact, there was no doubt but that its owner had rubbed the animal well with yellow ochre. The proprietor of the "Light of Asia" paid the show a visit and laughed heartily at the deception. After looking at the horse a little while, he remarked to its owner: "Well, if you can turn a gray horse yellow, you should be able to turn an elephant white." What happened afterward I am unable to say, but, singular to relate, the following spring, when the "Light of Asia" was "imported," a special trainer was brought with it from Siam who gave the animal his exclusive care and attention. This trainer was an Englishman, and many of the circus attachés thought they had seen the man exhibiting the yellow horse.

In 1883, while passing down the Bowery in New York, I heard my name loudly shouted. Turning around I met an English showman who was just then managing one of the many dime museums then established in that thoroughfare.

"Come inside, Mr. Coup," said he, "and I will show you my latest."

"Your latest what?" said I.

"Fake," he answered. "These freaks want too much money, and are nearly played out, anyway, so I'm making fresh ones now."

THE WILD CAVE-DWELLER OF KENTUCKY

The place was packed with people, and an enormous banner on the outside depicted a savage-looking wild man. He was described as having been captured in the caves of Kentucky. I followed my acquaintance upstairs, and in due time, after a preliminary lecture, a door was thrown open, disclosing what looked like a prison cell, in which, chained to an iron grating, stood a man closely resembling the one represented in the picture. His skin was of a tawny yellow, his body was covered with hair, and he ravenously snapped at and ate the lumps of raw beef which an attendant threw to him.

I cannot say that it was a pleasant sight, but from its effect on the spectators it was undoubtedly a satisfactory one, and as the door closed on it I said to my acquaintance:

"Where did you get him?"

He replied: "Why, you know the man well. He traveled with you two seasons. Come inside and talk with him."

I followed him, and no sooner were we in the cage than the terrible "wild man" held out his hand to me and said, "How do you do, Mr. Coup?" The voice was strangely familiar. I scrutinized the fellow's features and recognized in him a Russian who had been exhibited in our sideshow as a "hairy man." He had allowed his skin to be dyed yellow and his whiskers and hair black, and, for a consideration of about four times his usual salary, was now posing as a wild man. He afterward went West and continued this mode of exhibition for several months, until he was played out in that capacity, whereupon a few warm baths enabled him to resume his former employment as "Ivanovitch, the hairy man."

Another celebrated fake which met with success in the East was the "dog-faced man." The Englishman before spoken of engaged a variety performer who was an adept at imitating the barking of dogs. The manager had in his possession an old photograph of "Jo-jo, the dog-faced boy," and was resolved to place a good imitation of this freak before the American public. He accordingly had made a very expensive wig which covered completely the head, face and shoulders. Dressing the man in the garb of a Russian peasant, he advertised him as "Nicolai Jacobi, the Russian dog-faced man." So good was the disguise that they exhibited an entire week at a Jersey City museum, deceiving even the astute proprietor. Next they went to Boston, where they played to the most phenomenal business on record. The proprietor of the museum had a very clever cartoonist in his employ, and as the Englishman and his dog-faced friend walked from the station to the museum they saw nothing but pictures of dog-faced men. In front of the museum, in a large cage, was one of the fiercest wildcats they had even seen, labeled,

"The pet of the dog-faced man."

They played, as I have said, to phenomenal business. For two weeks thousands of persons daily struggled for the privilege of paying ten cents to see this amusing fake. At the end of that time one of the employés betrayed the secret to a reporter and the attraction was rendered valueless. Strange to relate, the success of this "fake" was the means of bringing from Europe the original dog-faced boy, "Jo-jo," who for several years drew a good salary at the various dime museums, but never created so much excitement by virtue of his genuineness as the "fake" did.

THE TWO-HEADED GIRL'S THREE-HEADED RIVAL

Millie Christine, the "two-headed nightingale," had been exhibiting in New York City, and public attention was called, shortly afterward, to the fact that a lady with three perfect heads would be exhibited on a certain day. Now, this strange being was really an optical illusion, built on the same lines as the ghost show invented by Professor Pepper. Three girls were used, and all portions of their figures not intended to be shown were covered with a black cloth. The whole illusion is merely an effect of light and shade.

Still another "fake" that not only "drew" well but positively deceived the whole New York press, was the "Dahomey Giant." About 1882 a very tall specimen of the African race walked into an Eastern museum looking for work. He was actually over seven feet in height, and had never been on exhibition. Knowing that his value as a negro giant would be but little, the proprietors resolved to introduce him as a monster wild African. After consulting Rev. J. G. Woods' Illustrated History of the Uncivilized Races, it was determined to make a Dahomey of the tall North Carolinian. A theatrical costumer was set to work to make him a picturesque garb. A spurious cablegram was issued, purporting to be from Farini, of London, stating that the Dahomey giant had sailed with his interpreter from London and would arrive in Boston on or about a certain date.

The man, with his interpreter, was then taken by train to Boston, from which city they, in due time, wired the museum proprietor of their arrival. That telegram was answered by another telling them to take the first Fall River boat for New York City. The press was then notified, and the representatives of five New York papers were actually sent to the pier the following morning to interview the distinguished stranger from Dahomey. The man had been well schooled, and pretending not to know a word of the English language, could not, of course, converse with the reporters. But his interpreter managed to fill them up very comfortably. At all events, long and interesting accounts of the "snuff-colored giant from Dahomey" appeared in most of the dailies, and for several weeks this Dahomey was the stellar attraction at that particular dime museum. The advent of summer and its consequent circus season closing the city museums, the Dahomey "joined out" with a side show in which, for successive seasons, he posed as a Dahomey giant, a Maori from New Zealand, an Australian aborigine and a Kaffir. This man's success was the initiative for a score of other negroes, who posed as representatives of any foreign races the side-show proprietor wished to exhibit.

MISSING LINKS AND DANCING TURKEYS

Krao, the "missing link," as she was called, was simply a hairy child, and almost exactly like Annie Jones, who was exhibited by Barnum as the "Esau Child." A great card for museums at one time was the "human-faced chicken." The first one placed on exhibition was purchased in good faith by an acquaintance of mine, and proved a good attraction. A visiting farmer, however, declared that it was nothing but an ordinary chicken which had had its bill frozen off, and so it proved.

Dancing turkeys were then introduced and caused great amusement. The awkward birds would walk onto their exhibition stage and go through a decidedly grotesque dance, their mode of lifting their feet being highly laughable. The truth was that the stage on which they danced was a piece of sheet-iron covered with a cloth. The iron was heated to an uncomfortable degree by gas jets underneath. What the public accepted as dancing was really the efforts made by the birds to prevent their feet from being burned.

THE SALARIES PAID TO FREAKS

The spread of the dime museum craze created a great demand for freaks and a consequent rise in their salaries. I know I am violating no confidence when I say that at various times the following freaks have drawn weekly the sums set opposite their names:

"La Tocci Twins,"	\$1,000.00
"Millie Christine,"	600.00
"Wild Man of Borneo,"	300.00
"Chang, the Chinese Giant,"	400.00
"Chemah, the Chinese Dwarf,"	300.00
Ordinary giants and midgets,	30.00 to 100.00
Bearded ladies,	30.00 to 75.00
Living skeletons,	30.00 to 75.00
Armless men,	30.00 to 100.00
Ossified men,	30.00 to 200.00

And as an offset to the above figures, I have heard of a tattooed man who would talk outside, exhibit himself inside, do a turn of magic, lift barrels of water with his teeth, and, as boss canvasman, superintend the putting up and pulling down of the show, all for six dollars a

week. He must have been first cousin to the man who traveled with the circus simply to be able to sit on the fence and hear the band play.

It will doubtless seem incredible to the person unused to the society of freaks that these unfortunates should take a seeming pride in their distinguishing misfortunes and be jealous of their reputations; this, however, is one of the strongest traits of the typical freak. In our show at one time we carried two giants, a Captain Benhein, a Frenchman, and Colonel Goshin, an Arabian. These two fellows were almost insanely jealous of each other, and it was ludicrous to hear the threats which they exchanged; many times it seemed that a personal encounter was imminent, but the Arabian's courage seemed in inverse proportion to his size.

THE LOVE-MAKING AND MERRY-MAKING OF THE FREAKS

Referring to Goshin as an Arabian brings to light a curious fact with regard to freaks of great size. He was not an Arabian, but a negro picked up by "Yank Robinson" in Kentucky. So confirmed is the habit of speaking of him as an Arabian that it has become second nature with me, and I think that this tendency is almost universal with showmen; they become so accustomed to enlarging on the fictitious characters for which their freaks are played that I sometimes think they almost get to believe these stories themselves.

Among the freaks the women were almost universally jealous of their professional reputations. Hannah Battersbey, who weighed more than four hundred pounds, recognized Kate Heathley as her particular rival, and either of these women could be instantly thrown into a jealous passion at the mention of the other's claim to superiority in the matter of weight. The strange alliances which sometimes took place in the freak world are well illustrated by the marriage of the weighty Hannah to a living skeleton who touched the scales at sixty-five pounds.

Before leaving the subject of freaks I must mention the strangest sight that it was ever my fortune to look upon in the course of a life spent in association with human novelties. Early in my career I was fortunate enough to secure the show rights for a fair in Montgomery, Ala., which was held just at the end of the northern show season. This circumstance resulted in bringing to the fair a most unusual number of small shows, the main attractions of which were freaks of every kind and color. My royalties were very large, and I was naturally expected to do something handsome by the people who had contributed to this success; consequently I gave a dinner to the "freaks," and that banquet table presented a scene probably unrivaled in history. I only wish I were able to give anything approaching an adequate description of that festal board. At the head of the table was the towering figure of an eight-foot giant, while at the other extremity of the board sat a thirty-six-inch dwarf. The jests which were bandied between the banqueters are worthy a place in a history of wit. A single instance, however, will give an idea of the peculiar terms with which these people enlivened the occasion. As the "Armless Man" helped himself to potatoes, the "Bearded Lady" opposite him called out, "Hands off!" and the whole company shouted with laughter.

The famous "Australian Children," who made several fortunes for their exhibitors, came from Circleville, Ohio, and were the children of a mulatto. Occasionally the showman met with distressing but amusing experiences resulting from the identification of his freaks on the part of the public.

THE EXPOSURE OF THE "AZTEC CHILDREN"

While I was absent from my show my manager once engaged two boys with heads little larger than teacups; one of them had a club foot and had some little claim to intelligence. Our people had painted them to look like savages, and they were exhibited as the "Aztec Children." One day when the lecturer was expatiating upon these remarkable children a burlo countryman shouted:

"Hello, John Evans, I know you; I worked in the harvest field with you many a day; oh, you can't fool me."

The "Aztec child" had been taught to make no reply to anything said to him, and the lecturer paid no attention to anything said to the countryman's interruption, but the countryman was not to be put down, and once more he shouted:

"Say, Bill Evans, maybe you think I don't know that club foot; just come off, now."

The audience was greatly amused at this, and the lecturer saw that he had plenty of trouble on hand; consequently he called the countryman aside and told him that he was certainly mistaken as to the identity of the freak. "Oh, no, I ain't," replied the obdurate fellow; "and what is more, you and your whole shebang are frauds and humbugs." Then the lecturer took another tack, gave the countryman five dollars, and thought the incident closed; but it was not, for the fellow proceeded to spend his money on whisky and tell his friends of his discovery, with the result that the business at that point was ruined.

From the viewpoint of the showmen there are "fakers" and "fakirs." Under the former head we class the men who conceive and manufacture fakes of the kind already described. The fakirs are altogether of a different kind, being the camp-followers who hang on the heels of a circus for the purpose of swindling the public by every variety of device known to the "blackleg fraternity."

Frequently a number of illegitimate shows start out, and, before doing so, announce that faking privileges are to be leased. The leaders of the various gangs make the arrangements with the circus proprietors, depositing a sum of money in the ticket wagon with which to "square squeals," then the tribe of showmen and fakirs start out on their nefarious pilgrimages, the shows furnishing the transportation for the fakirs. One of the fakirs in connection with each show is selected as the "squarer." He is generally a member of various secret societies and orders, and his particular duty is to bribe the petty officers of the towns visited, to secure immunity from arrest. Lottery schemes, gambling games of every sort, pocket-picking and robbing are among the methods by which these fakirs reap their harvest.

AN ADVENTURE WITH A CIRCUS SHARP

My life has been frequently threatened and twice attempted because of my persistent determination to drive this thieving fraternity from my shows. One day in a small western town a man introduced himself to me as the brother of a very respectable Chicagoan and explained that he was on his way to Texas to join in certain speculations. I at once suspected him of being a fakir and gave orders to the manager of the side-show to get rid of him and all his kind. A little later the landlord came to me and said: "Mr. Coup, there is a fellow out here who says he will shoot you on sight; he is one of the men traveling with you." On investigation I found that he was not the man who had introduced himself to me, but was one of the gang attempting to work the show: he bore a desperate reputation, and was popularly credited with having killed several men; all of my employes stood in fear of him, and I concluded to appeal to the mayor of the town for necessary protection and assistance. Before doing so, however, I put on a heavy ulster, in each side-pocket of which I placed a loaded six-shooter. With a finger on the trigger of each revolver I started out to find the mayor. While crossing the public square I met the man who had threatened to shoot me. Stopping squarely in front of him I said: "I believe you have threatened and intend to kill me, and I want to say to you that you will never find a better opportunity to do so than right now." He proposed to argue the question with me, but I simply insisted that he should leave town at once. The outlaw began a tirade of abuse, and remarked that he was a southern man. "Well," I answered, "if you wish to bring that question into the argument, I am a northern man, and you may tell this to all of your tribe." That ended the matter, and he left town that afternoon; but if he had not known that I had two six-shooters pointed directly at him, I would probably not have been left to tell the tale.

In my battles against the fakirs I have universally relied upon the strong arms of my husky "canvasmen," and more than once I have armed them with clubs concealed under their coats, with the result that the fakirs were driven from the field with broken arms and noses. It is a lamentable fact that not a few of the wealthiest showmen in this country have swelled their fortunes by the "rake-off" from the despicable gains of these blacklegs and tricksters.

IV

MOVING THE BIG SHOW

It requires several months of hard labor to prepare any show for the road, even those already organized, for, as a rule, all shows "lay off" during the winter. With few exceptions the horses are allowed to "run out," and all the wagons and paraphernalia are stored in convenient winter quarters provided for the purpose. The wild animals are taken from their traveling cages and placed in more commodious ones. The manager then decides on his route for the coming season. This, in itself, is an arduous labor, for the cost of transportation becomes, necessarily, a most important consideration in his calculations.

The manager of a large show, however, can do this with comparative ease, since he does not fear opposition so much as does the manager of the small show and, consequently, may choose his own territory, while his small opponent must skirmish around to get out of the way of the larger show.

Therefore, the route of the big show is completed on paper not later than the first of February, and the first agent, usually the railroad contractor, begins his duties. Such a show as I am describing is perfectly safe in laying out its route thus early and advertising its days and dates for months in advance. And, having done this, woe betide any smaller concern

which elects to show in the same neighborhood, for the larger show will immediately send an advance brigade and literally flood the country with their bills. Brigades of this kind are called "skirmishers," and are kept in readiness to jump to any point where their services are needed to fight any kind of opposition. They thus uphold a sort of monarchical right in the territory and prevent, if possible, the success of the lesser attraction. This makes it really far more difficult to manage a small show than a large one, as the latter has "the right of might," while the lesser shows are continually forced in each other's way, to their own detriment and often to their complete financial disaster. A large concern in a prosperous season clears an immense amount of money, but, on the other hand, a disastrous season is bound to result in an enormous loss.

THE FIRST ATTEMPT TO MOVE A CIRCUS BY RAIL

A few weeks before the time for opening the circus season the horses are taken in, stabled, groomed and fed with grain to get them "hard" and in good condition for work. The wagons are overhauled, painted and gilded, and, if necessary, new ones are built. The various agents are by this time hard at work, each having his particular duties to perform.

Previous to 1872 the "railroad circus" was an unknown quantity. Like all other circuses of that day, the big show of which I was the manager traveled by wagon. During our first season our receipts amounted in round numbers to \$400,000, exclusive of side shows, concerts and candy stands. Of course we showed in towns of all sizes and our daily receipts ranged from \$1,000 to \$7,000. Finding that the receipts in the larger towns were frequently twice and three times as much as in the smaller ones, I became convinced that we could at least double our receipts if we could ignore the small places and travel only from one big town to another, thereby drawing the cream of the trade from the adjacent small towns instead of trying to give a separate exhibition in each. This was my reason for determining to move the show by rail the following season.

To this end, therefore, I at once telegraphed to the superintendents of the different railroads asking if they could accommodate us and guarantee to get us to the various towns in time to give the exhibitions as advertised; and in order for us to do that it was necessary, I informed them, that we be landed in a town as early as six A.M. From some of the railroad superintendents came the reply, "Cannot furnish switch room," and from others, "Give further particulars." After a great deal of correspondence I went to Philadelphia and interviewed the officials of the Pennsylvania Company. I urged and argued and argued and urged, until they said I was the most persistent man they had ever seen, and even told me they would pay me if I would leave them in peace. This, however, did not suit my purpose, and I hung on until I finally made arrangements with them.

After much preparation we eventually fixed upon New Brunswick, N.J., as our first loading place. We were new at the work and so commenced loading at eight P.M. and finished the job at eight A.M., with no extraordinary incidents except the breaking of one camel's back—the creature having the misfortune to slip off the "runs." From New Brunswick we went to Trenton, where I had hired Pullman cars for our performers and band, and cheaper cars for our laborers and other attachés.

THE SPARTAN HABITS OF THE OLD-TIMERS

Our experience with the vast crowds of the season before had given us the idea of building two rings and giving a double performance. This, of course, doubled our company, but it kept the audience in their seats, since they were precisely as well off in one part of the canvas as in another, whereas in the old one-ring show we found it impossible to prevent the people who were farthest from the ring from standing up. They would rush to the front and thus interfere with many other people. This two-ring arrangement seemed to obviate this difficulty, and, as it at once hit the popular fancy, it proved a great drawing card for us and others, for within a few months smaller showmen all over the country began to give two-ring performances. Indeed, from that time it seemed to me that the old one-ring show was entirely forgotten.

It was quite laughable, during the earlier portion of the season, to watch the expression on the faces of our performers when they came on to join us and were shown the Pullman cars which were to be their homes for the next six months. "It is too good to last," remarked one. "The expense will break the show," said another. To their surprise, however, it lasted that season and has lasted ever since. Previous to that they had been in the habit of taking breakfast at any hour from midnight to four P.M., according to the number of miles they had to travel; but now all is changed, and an era of luxuriant comfort has become established for them. For many months, however, at the dawn of this epoch, the performers viewed their regular meals and sumptuous surroundings with a comical seriousness most ludicrous to behold.

Small shows had, prior to this time, traveled to a limited extent by rail; but not with

accommodations like ours. Such shows consisted of seven or eight cars, whereas ours numbered sixty-one. All of these, with the exception of the sleeping cars, we had hired from the railroad company.

SEVEN HEARTBREAKING DAYS ON THE LONG ROAD

It has always been a mystery to me why the railroads build themselves cars scarcely any two of which are of uniform height. Our heavy wagons would be pushed up on "runs," and, on being pushed from one car to another, would frequently crash through the rotten boards composing the bed of the car. This would cause vexatious delays.

The reader cannot possibly form any idea of the amount of labor involved in teaching our men to become proficient in loading and unloading. It is a positive fact that I never took the clothes from my back from the time of first loading until we reached Philadelphia, our seventh stop! During all that time I was constantly teaching the men the art of loading and unloading, giving attention to the moving of all the wagons, chariots, horses, camels, elephants, etc. We reached Philadelphia tired and exhausted with the seven days' hard work.

I was also mentally fatigued by my partner's opposition and his requests to abandon the scheme; but at this point I realized more than ever the benefits that would accrue from this great departure, and I determined to stick it out to the end. I went to the superintendent of one of the railroads on which we were to travel to Baltimore and Washington and told him I must have a lot of cars of uniform construction at any price. These he succeeded in getting after considerable trouble. I then made up my mind to try it as far as Washington, and if I could not by that time get everything to run smoothly I would abandon it. We reached Wilmington without mishap and gave our exhibitions—three each day. It must be remembered that we had advertised three shows daily, and so far had given them; indeed, we did throughout the season, but that was the first and only year that such a feat was attempted.

I told the railroad superintendent that if we could manage to load in Wilmington by two A.M. and reach Baltimore at five A.M. it would be a success. He ordered the road cleared, and we arrived in Baltimore with the first section only a little late, and, with a little extra energy, we had the parade out on time and opened the doors to the morning performance at ten A.M. The trip from Baltimore was easily made, but from there we had to run over heavy grades up and down to Frederick, Md. In order to load we had to remove all the brakes, and this the yardmaster refused to do. I showed him my contract, wherein the company had agreed to remove all brakes, but he still refused, so I finally resorted to strategy.

I invited him to a restaurant, and while we were absent, by a prearranged movement, Baker, the boss canvas-man, wrenched the brakes off, and by the time the yardmaster and I returned the train was almost loaded. Of course I pretended to be very angry at such conduct, but our point was gained. As the brakes were easily replaced we made the next stop all right.

PERFORMING BY DAY AND TRAVELING BY NIGHT

I determined to have a train of cars built for our special purpose, and accordingly visited all the shops in the east; but I could find no one willing to undertake the job on such short notice. Finally, at Columbus, Ohio, I made the acquaintance of a thorough man of business. He was conducting the car shops there and was prepared to execute any order I might give him. In a short time I had made a contract with him, and in thirty days a train of cars was built. They were of uniform height, with iron extensions reaching from one car to another. These improvements made the loading and unloading mere play. I then heard of some palace horse cars at Cleveland. These I bought. I had them freshly painted and lettered, "P. T. Barnum's World's Fair."

When our men, as they came into Columbus to exhibit, saw that train awaiting them, they sent up such a shout as has seldom been heard. Now we had Pullman cars for the artists, sleeping cars for the laborers, box cars for the extra stuff, palace cars for the horses and other large animals, such as were required for teaming, parades, etc., and platform cars for wagons, chariots, cages and carriages. Thus the Herculean task of putting the first railroad show of any magnitude on its own cars was successfully accomplished.

Little, indeed, do the managers of the present day know of the untiring energy and indomitable perseverance necessary to accomplish that feat. The railroad people themselves were utterly ignorant of our wants, as we ourselves were in the beginning. Frequently, as at Washington, the yardmaster would order us to load one car at a time, then switch it away and commence on another. To load a train in this way would have taken us twenty-four hours! Finally, however, system and good order came out of chaos. Once properly launched on our season, we were able to give three performances daily, and quite often made jumps of one hundred miles in one night. The scheme, as I had predicted, completely

revolutionized the show business, and has been adopted since, not only in this country, but by the French and English circus proprietors in their travels in Germany. It also greatly advertised us, vast crowds assembling at the depots to see us load and unload.

ON A RUNAWAY CIRCUS TRAIN

I once had a very thrilling experience while riding in the cab of the locomotive pulling our train from Indiana, Pa. This station is on one of the branches of the Pennsylvania Railroad, high up on the mountain, the grade there being exceedingly heavy. It is, I believe, conceded to be one of the steepest grades on that system. There is also a horse-shoe bend, or curve, similar to the well-known one on the main line. While standing on the platform, about the time the last car was being loaded, I was accosted by the engineer, who inquired if I had ever traveled on a locomotive and if I would like to take such a trip. I replied that I would like to do so, and boarded the engine with him. A few moments later the signal bell was rung and we pulled out into the darkness. I placed myself so as not to be in the way of the engineer and fireman and was soon lost in meditation.

The sensation was indescribably weird and thrilling. The scene was shrouded in darkness, and, as we flew along the road, the only discernible objects were the trees, which seemed to me like giant sentinels saluting as we flew past. Now and then we caught glimpses of lights in the mountain valleys, but they passed by like a streak of lightning, so rapidly were we going.

"How far can your practiced eye discern objects on a night like this?" I asked the engineer.

"Only a rod or two," he answered.

"In that case," said I, "you could never stop the train to prevent a collision should an obstruction present itself?"

"No—not with these brakes," he replied.

As he said this his face blanched and he whistled hard for down brakes. Finally I heard him exclaim: "God help us! We're running away!"

On, on we sped down the decline at a speed that was something frightful. The engine rattled and shook, and several times appeared to be almost toppling over. It was impossible to stand, and I held on by the window ledge for dear life. Down the mountain we sped altogether helpless! We had no control over the train, loaded down, as it was, with toppling chariots, with horses, animals, elephants, camels and human freight.

PANIC AMONG THE ANIMALS

Evidently the animals instinctively knew the danger, for above the rattle and roar of the train could occasionally be heard some of those strange trumpeting which proceed from an animal only in moments of danger—often just before a storm or cyclone. Momentarily I expected the whole train to be thrown from the tracks and down the mountain side. By the occasional streaks of light that flew past us I could see the blanched faces of both the engineer and fireman, and knew that they fully realized our awful danger. Both of them, however, kept perfectly cool, and I tried to imitate their example. How far I succeeded I do not know, but I do know that my nerves were strung to a higher pitch than they ever were before.

A blinding rainstorm added to the horror of the situation, and, with the speed at which we were traveling, each drop seemed to have the penetrating power of a shot. Quick as a flash the thought passed through my head: What if we meet a train? Just at that moment we sped past Blairsville at the junction of the branch road and the main line. The station lights seemed mere specks. As we struck the switch the engine jumped and almost left the track. Looking back we could see the rear lights of our train swaying in the path like a ship tempest-tossed at sea. Our speed seemed to increase as we flew along the main line.

We had gone twenty miles when a whistle was heard ahead.

"What is it?" I asked.

"Another train," replied the engineer; "it will pass us now," and as he was speaking the reflecting lights of its engine appeared, apparently not six rods from us. With lightning rapidity the trains passed each other and the "windage," to use a nautical term, nearly took my breath.

During all this time, which positively seemed hours, my thoughts were not of the pleasantest. On, on we dashed, the engine frequently jumping as it struck something on the track. It seemed to me a miracle that the train did not lurch sheer over some one of the terrible embankments. The fireman was not engaged in tending the fire. It was unnecessary.

We were all mute spectators of the scene being enacted by this silent machine—the marvelous and lifelike invention of man. Gradually, at last, our speed began to slacken. We had reached a grade. The danger was past and our lives were saved!

A SINGLE TRACK AND A BROKEN RAIL

We were still moving ahead at the rate of thirty miles an hour when—crash! through the window came some object. Once more the whistle sounded "down brakes," and in less than a mile the train came to a stop. Shortly afterward we heard shouts in our rear, and the man who had flung the missile through the cab window came running breathlessly, and said that less than a mile ahead of us was a broken rail that would undoubtedly have wrecked our train. Knowing that the express train was due in about an hour he had been running back to the station to detain it, when he had met our "wild" train and, realizing the danger, had done all he could to prevent a catastrophe.

Back sped the man to the station to warn the express, leaving us between what were undoubtedly two horrors. The station was fully a mile away. Suppose he could not reach there in time! There we were on a single track, a broken rail ahead of us, an express train due at any moment behind us. Slowly we pulled up to the broken rail and at once replaced it with a new one, for we always carried extra rails on our train for cases of emergency. The track walker succeeded in getting to the station in time to stop the express, though luckily it was not quite due. We ran back to Blairsville and switched on to a side track.

There we found that the second section of our circus train was due at nearly the same time as the express train, and it was an anxious quarter of an hour that we spent in righting things. When, however, the second section did come in, I found they had been more fortunate than the first section. They had taken the precaution to add to their train several cars belonging to the railroad company, which were fitted up with better brakes than ours, some of them being supplied with both new air and common brakes. Then as a consequence of these precautions the train had descended the mountain under perfect control. I learned a lesson from that experience, and lost no time in fitting all our cars with air-brakes. I wish I could remember the name of the engineer. A braver man never handled an engine or went into a battle.

It may not be generally known that all well-regulated roads employ a certain number of men as track walkers, whose constant duty it is to patrol every inch of the road and report the slightest irregularity of rails, road-bed, etc. On this particular night the track-walker's lantern had gone out, and the only expedient he could think of was to throw a stone through the cab window. I have often shuddered to think of what the consequences might have been had not his aim been a true one.

THE BRONCHOS' CHARMED LIFE

On another occasion, while going into Clinton, Iowa, with the biggest show I ever owned, we were running about twenty miles an hour, when the locomotive jumped the track and struck a tree. The shock threw all the cars of that section on their ends. The Mississippi River was on one side of us and a springy hill on the other. Here in this narrow place stood the cars, laden with animals of all kinds. It was truly an awful situation. We began to break up the cars in order to extricate the poor dumb brutes. We were compelled to hitch ropes about the horses' necks and pull them out, only to find perhaps that their legs were broken or that they were otherwise hopelessly injured. No fewer than thirty-five of my best horses were thus lost. The reader must remember that, as the cars had been thrown on their ends, in each horse car twenty horses were thrown into a struggling heap. Strange to say, the bronchos seemed to have charmed lives, for not one of them was hurt, and I was enabled to give a performance that day in spite of the accident.

The elephants were piled up in much the same way as the horses, and in order to extricate them it was necessary to strip the cars completely—a labor in which those huge animals assisted us. The camels were unhurt. The loss, in crippled animals and destruction of cars, amounted to several thousand dollars.

I cannot leave the subject of moving the big show without going back to some of my earliest pioneer experiences.

No other human being can realize like the showman the volume of dread hardship and disaster held by those two small words, "bad roads." At the time of my breaking-in we were passing through a section of the country in the southwest, over such wretchedly constructed highways that the slightest fall of rain was sufficient to convert them into rivers of mud. The heavy wagons would sink to their hubs in the mire and the whole train would be stopped.

Then followed a scene too picturesque to escape the attention of even the poor fellows who were half dead from lack of sleep. By the light of flaring torches a dozen big draft horses would be hitched to the refractory wagon. Inspired by the shouts, curses and sometimes the

blows of the teamsters, the animals would join in a concerted pull that made their muscles stand out like knotted ropes. But often a battalion of six teams would fail to start a wagon.

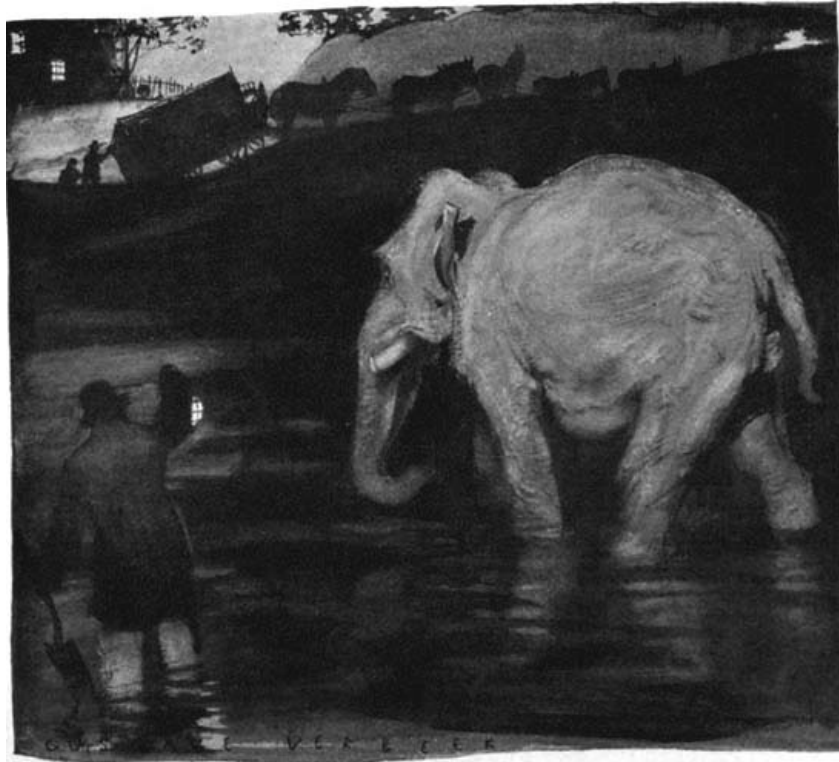
OLD ROMEO TO THE RESCUE

Then the shout would go down the line for Romeo. In a few minutes the wise old elephant would come splashing through the mud with an air that seemed to say, "I thought you'd have to call on me!" He knew his place and would instantly take his stand behind the mired wagon. After he had carefully adjusted his huge frontal against the rear end of the vehicle the driver would give the command, "Mile up!" Gently, but with a tremendous power, Romeo would push forward, the wagon would start, and lo! the pasty mud would close in behind the wheels like the Red Sea.

So vividly did this oft-repeated picture impress me that it is as clearly before me now as it was forty years ago. Sometimes, when an elephant was not available, the wagons would be literally pulled apart, and when the break came the horses would fall sprawling into the mire, only their heads visible above the surface of the mud.

But the poor horses were not the only sufferers from bad roads. The men came in for their share. Very distinctly do I remember the night when we were about to cross a slough. Some of us were dozing in our saddles, others sleeping soundly on the tops of the wagons which carried the tents. Suddenly the shout was heard from the man in the lead, "Help, there, boys! I'm going down in the quicksands! Throw out a line, lively!"

We knew the voice. It belonged to Hickey, the wagon boss, who was a favorite with the men. Instantly the fellows tumbled from the wagons and rushed forward. The torches showed Hickey sunk to his armpits. A man of ready wit and action threw a rope and the sinking man caught it and passed the noose over his head and under his arms, knotting it so that it could not slip and cut him in two. By that time a team of horses had been hitched to the other end of the rope.



"THEN THE SHOUT WOULD GO DOWN THE LINE FOR ROMEO."

"All right! Easy, now!" came the order from Hickey, and the team was carefully started. Watching those horses strain on the rope made me hold my breath in expectation that the poor fellow would be actually drawn in two. But, finally, the grip of the mire loosened and he was hauled out to safety.

AN UNEXPECTED MIDNIGHT BATH

Perhaps the most disheartening of all bad-road experiences is that of losing the way—a thing which happened with perverse frequency. Just imagine yourself a member of such a caravan. You have slept four hours out of sixteen and are crawling along in the face of a drenching, blinding rainstorm—soaked, hungry and dazed. The caravan has halted a dozen times in the forepart of the night to pull out wagons and repair breakdowns. But it halts

again, and the word "lost" is passed back along the line of wagons. This means retracing the route back to the forks of the road miles in the rear. Many an old circus man has wished himself dead on hearing the word "lost" under these conditions.

After one of these disheartening experiences, when we were obliged to "right about face" and drive the poor, jaded horses back over the same road along which they had made their useless but painful pilgrimage, I clambered up to the top of the tent wagon, stretched out on the jolting, shaking heap of canvas, and was soon oblivious to fatigue and discouragement. My next conscious impression was that of a sudden crashing of timbers, the squealing of frightened horses and the sensation of falling. Then I felt myself plunging into the icy waters of a little stream into which the heavy show wagon and all its contents had been precipitated by the breaking of a bridge. It seems almost miraculous that I should have escaped falling under the mass of tents on which I had been sleeping, but in some way I was thrown to one side and contrived to reach the shore in safety.

It is usual, in arranging the season's route, for a circus to make all the "big jumps" on Sundays; and it not infrequently happens that from three hundred to five hundred miles are covered between Saturday and Monday. This arrangement is very convenient in many ways. It may take you out of a country that is overrun with opposition shows into one where you may have the whole field to yourself, or it may take you to a part of the country where the climate has forced the harvests and therefore placed more money in circulation than usual.

As a general thing circus employés are not in love with Sunday runs for, commodious as their cars are, they are not exactly fitted up to enable all occupants to loll lazily around and enjoy a luxurious ride. If the day happens to be rainy, most of them lie in their beds and content themselves with reading, with an occasional chat, argument or light lunch, and in this way endeavor to pass the time as best they can. If, however, the day happens to be a fine one, then at daybreak comes a mighty exodus from the sleeping cars. Cozy nooks are singled out and made comfortable by pressing into service all available shawls, rugs, etc. Those physically strong enough to brave the exposure make for the tops of stock and box cars where, lolling at ease, they discuss sundry topics of interest and revel in the ride through the country. Others select places underneath the chariots and cages which are loaded on the flat cars, and thus, sheltered from the sun, spend a delightful time. Once, at least, during the day, a stop of a couple of hours is made to enable the horses and animals to be fed and watered, and advantage is taken of this interval by the performers and other attachés to stretch themselves and also to cater to their own personal wants. Both comic and serious accidents are frequently the result of carelessness during these runs, as the following examples prove:

In one long run between Springfield, Mo., and Mattoon, Ill., one of our men was standing erect on the top of a car, when a telegraph wire caught him under his chin and cut his head completely off, as though done by the surgeon's knife. On that same trip my watchman, Nelse, had the misfortune to have his straw hat blow off his head. The hat rolled gently along the top of the flat car and finally rolled off and fell on the side track. Immediately the watchman jumped to the ground, snatched up the hat, and leaped unhurt on the last car, although the train was making nearly twenty miles an hour. Probably the hat cost him originally fifty cents.

Of all the Sunday runs I ever took, however, I recall one that was especially pleasant. It took place back in the seventies, and was a run of some three hundred miles across an Indian reservation between a town in Kansas and another in southern Texas. The day was beautiful, and as we bowled along the prairie I felt that the "stillness"—comparatively speaking—(so seldom enjoyed by circus people) was most refreshing. I don't suppose there ever was a country-bred boy who lived long enough to forget how, in his younger days, the Sabbath seemed, always, a day of stillness and quiet. The cessation of all business and the chiming of church bells produced an effect that could not fail of indelible impression; and that Sunday morning ride over the reservation brought back the scenes of childhood to many a rough and rugged circus man. Towards noon we halted and erected cooking tents and stables. The horses and animals were looked after and a dinner was cooked by the attachés. After dinner they formed congenial knots and strolled around while the "hash slingers" washed the dishes and the men once more loaded up. We carried at that time an excellent troupe of Jubilee singers, and with the light heart and impressionable feelings of their race, they burst into song, alternating their quaint camp meeting songs with others in which the majority of the attachés could join. The band, too, caught the infection and produced their instruments and we enjoyed a vocal and instrumental feast. Just at dusk, when the stars were beginning to appear, before starting for the night's run, the "Jubes" sang "Nearer, My God, to Thee" to the full accompaniment of the band and with a refrain swelled by every one able to sing. I have, in the course of my travels, visited many grand concerts and operas, but their most solemn and sacred effects are dwarfed into absolute insignificance compared with that of this impromptu performance. The rolling prairie, the beautiful trees, the perfect weather, the joyous spirits of every one present, the melodious voices of the Jubilee singers, and the grand strains produced by thirty skilled musicians, combined to produce music such as man

seldom hears—that, on account of its spontaneity, thrilled the hearts of all present, then seemed to go right up to heaven, and "die amid the stars."

"All aboard!" is shouted, and every one climbs into the car. The whistle sounds and off you go, past miles of beautiful scenery and occasional Indian villages. Everything is quiet and every one seems to be "drinking in" the beauty of the scene or sits lost in thought. No more singing or playing. All seem to be so solemnly impressed with that last grand hymn that the silence is unbroken. That Sunday run will always stay in my memory! With quiet "good-nights" one after another slipped off to bed to awake to another day's hurry and bustle.

V

THE PRAIRIE FIRE

One of the most terrible and impressive experiences of my entire career came to me very shortly after I had become well settled in the circus harness. Sleep was the dragon which pursued me then with a relentless and irresistible power. There was scarcely a moment when I was not under its spell, at least to some degree. It was like a vampire that took the zest and vitality out of my very life sources and I went about almost as one walking in a dream. This condition arose from the fact that under the best of weather luck, a showman's hours are very long. But when roads were bad and journeys long, the poor wretch attached to the old wagon show had practically no sleep at all. After a stretch of hard traveling I was for weeks like a person drugged. My mind seemed in a state of miserable torpor, while my body went about in a mechanical way and did its work. The change from a regular life, which saw me snugly in the same bed at nearly the same hour every night of the year, to the painful excesses of a circus man's hours told on me very severely and I was long in becoming acclimated.

At the painful period of which I speak my main object in life was to sleep. For this I lived, and my idea of Paradise then was a consciousness that I was in the act of falling asleep in bed with clean sheets, and that I would not be awakened until the end of eternity unless I should chance to get my sleep out before then—and this possibility seemed deliciously remote.

While I suffered more keenly than the others from the tortures of longing for sleep, all the men who had anything whatever to do with the moving of the show were under the spell of this dragon. They, however, rallied more quickly than I, when dry roads and good weather fell to our lot for any length of time.

Well, weeks of terrible traveling, of getting lost, of fighting our way through the mire and floods, was followed by a fortnight of fair weather. My associates had "caught up" in the matter of sleep, but I was still in a half torpid state and thought only of the blessed privilege of closing my eyes for an hour or two at a stretch.

But, one morning as we started north from the small Missouri town in which we had given a very successful performance, the scene was so novel and impressive that I held out for a few minutes against the demon that was pulling my eyelids together, and really aroused to the picturesque features of the scene.

We were winding our way to the northward, our caravan being fully a mile in length and stretched out like a long serpent. The elaborate and gilded chariots, the piebald Arabian horses, the drove of shambling camels and the huge swaying elephants gave a touch of genuine oriental picturesqueness to the scene strangely out of keeping with the wild western landscape and surroundings.

On every hand the prairies were carpeted with wild flowers in the greatest variety and profusion. Their fragrance even reached me as I stretched out at full length on the top of a lumbering chariot. The almost endless vista of prairie, the serpent caravan, the gay colors and the fragrance of the flowers all combined to refresh and impress me, and to give me more cheer and courage than hours of sleep. The pleasant picture haunted me after I closed my eyes and mixed in my dreams after I dozed off into a half conscious slumber.

Later the lurch of the wagon aroused me, and I started up with a sense of unaccountable alarm. The first object which met my eyes was a jackrabbit, sitting on his haunches not more than two rods from the trail we were following. Knowing the habitual timidity of these creatures the boldness of this one surprised me greatly. He sat there with his ears cocked straight up, his nose working nervously and his heart pounding so heavily that its pulsations shook his gray sides. Not until the wagon had passed did the rabbit stir. Then he dropped upon all fours and vanished in a gray streak traveling in a line parallel with the course of the caravan and keeping only a few rods from our trail. While I was still pondering over the

strange conduct of the animal I saw a "rattler" emerge from the grass into the beaten trail only a few feet in front of the "off leader" of our four-horse team. Naturally I expected to see the snake coil and strike the horse, but he did nothing of the kind—simply avoided the horse's hoofs and then slipped away into the grass beyond. What was the meaning of the strange spell which seemed suddenly to have taken possession of the wild animals and reptiles of the plain through which we were traveling? There was no escape from the conclusion that some peculiar influence had seized upon them, blunting their ordinary sense of fear and precaution. Had I been more accustomed to prairie life I would probably have realized at once the nature of the trouble; like all of the men on the wagon with me I was a rank tenderfoot.

In the course of the next ten minutes several flocks of birds passed over us, flying low but very rapidly. The grass on both sides of the trail seemed suddenly to swarm with animal life.

Before I had arrived at any conclusions regarding the peculiar actions of the prairie creatures the captive animals in the darkened cages began to show signs of unusual restlessness. The lions and tigers began a strange moaning unlike their ordinary roars and growls. From the monkey cages came plaintive, half-human cries. These sounds were taken up by all the animals big and little. The elephants trumpeted, the camels screamed, and every animal took part in the weird chorus, which rapidly increased in volume. Then the air seemed to take on a hazy appearance, particularly in the direction from which we had come.

Finally the truth dawned upon me—the prairie was on fire! By turning backward and straining my eyes I fancied I could make out a cloud of smoke far in the rear of the caravan. In a few moments this dim vision became clear and tangible. I told my fears to the driver, who laughed at me for my pains. Then I caught sight of a man on horseback on the crest of rise in the prairie. He was riding towards us as fast as his horse could carry him. Passing us like a whirlwind, he shouted: "Whip up, man! The prairie's on fire! Move for the river straight ahead!" In a second he was gone, shouting the same word to every startled driver he passed. His approach had been noted by the boss, who was at the head of the entire procession. That grand marshal of the day, for that was substantially his position, came riding back to meet the courier. Instantly, on learning the tidings, he wheeled about and rode like the wind for the chariot in the lead, drawn by six splendid horses white as milk.

Sharp orders emphasized by a liberal sprinkling of profanity were sufficient to impress the driver of the magnificent leaders with the awful gravity of the situation and with the fact that he must set the pace for the remainder of the caravan. It might be thought that the greatest drag on the speed of the terrified procession would have been the camels and elephants. So thought the boss, but no sooner did the driver of the elephants get into position on the back of old Romeo and give that knowing creature an idea of what was expected, than he saw his mistake.

The way in which both the elephants and camels swung themselves over the ground was a revelation to all who saw them. Which was the more pitiful and terrifying, the trumpeting of the elephants or the squealing of the camels, was difficult to tell.

As the awful scroll of the fire rolled closer upon us the ungainly bodies of the camels and elephants swayed from one side to the other until they seemed fairly to vibrate.

"Where is the river? Are we nearing the stream? Can we make the water?" These were the questions in the mind of every person in that long wagon train. Sometimes they were yelled from one driver to another, but the only answer was to lay the lash harder on the backs of the poor horses pulling the heavy wagons and chariots—leaping and straining like so many modern fire department animals responding to an alarm. It was a genuine chariot race—in which the stake was life and the fine death by flames. Nearly every vehicle was drawn by either four or six horses, and the scene was one of the grandest and most terrible that human eye ever looked upon.

Suddenly I saw the boss put his horse into its highest speed, leading on ahead of the six whites. Then he leaped from the saddle, struck a match to the grass, remounted and rode back a short distance. As each team approached he ordered: "Wait till the flames spread a little and then break through the line of the back fire I've started and form a circle."

The grass which he had fired was considerably shorter than the general growth of the prairies; then, the fire it made had not acquired the volume, intensity and sweep of that hurricane of flame from which we were fleeing. One after another of the teams reared, pitched and plunged, only to find that the back fire had gone under their feet leaving them inside a charred, blackened circle fringed with flame.

No sound I have ever heard approached in abject terror the awful symphony of roars, growls, screams, wails and screeches that went up from the maddened beasts in that caravan as the great sky-reaching cylinder of flame and smoke rolled down upon us and was met barely forty rods away by the rapidly spreading line of our own back fire.

Just as we were wondering if our next breath would be flame or air, the leaders of the white chariot horses leaped into the air like rockets. Instantly the whole six stallions became absolutely crazed with fear and made a plunge directly for the oncoming storm of fire and smoke. On toward the furnace of fire they ran, the driver tugging with might and main on the reins.

"Jump!" yelled the boss. And jump the driver did. He was not a second too soon, for an instant later the white charioteers had disappeared under the great red and black barrel that was rolling upon us. Then came a moment which was a dizzy blank to most of us, I guess. The fearful strain of the long race, the moments of awful suspense after the charred ground had been reached—it was enough to have dethroned the reason of every man and woman in the charmed circle! Small wonder that a few fainted dead away and the rest of us were stunned into momentary confusion.

But we had scarcely recovered the use of our faculties when the wag of the circus broke the long strain of the flight and escape by the remark: "I reckon there's been more genuine praying done in circus circles in the last hour than since Noah let the elephants out of the Ark!" The truthfulness of the remark hit home to every one in the whole group. Probably there was not a choicer collection of "unbelievers" on the face of the civilized earth than our company contained—yet only a few moments before every man, woman and child had been praying for dear life—some fairly shouting their supplications, others kneeling quietly in the wagons, and still others mumbling their petitions as they helped to hold the horses in check or performed some other imperative duty. But there was not a single individual in the whole wagon train who had not, under the awful pressure of the trial through which we passed, put up some kind of a petition to the Almighty for deliverance from the devouring flames.

One of the first things we did, when the burning ground became cool enough, after the tornado of fire had swept around our little oasis of burned ground and passed on towards the river, was to go out and look for the remains of the chariot and the six white stallions. We had not far to go before we came to a heap of wheel tires and other ironwork from the big vehicle. A little beyond it were the blackened remains of the splendid horses which had dashed into an unnecessary death. These animals had been the pride of the show, and there was scarcely a man connected with the equestrian department of the circus who did not deeply lament the loss of the noble creatures. As for myself, I could hardly keep back the tears, for my fondness for the beautiful, intelligent horses amounted to a passion.

Slowly we made our way to the river. On the other bank were gathered the inhabitants of the prairies who had been fortunate enough to reach this refuge. They had immediately extinguished the fires started on the far side of the river by the sparks which the wind carried across the stream. Some of them were almost raving with grief over the fate which they firmly believed had overtaken their relatives and friends, while others put their whole energies into caring for all who needed help—thus forgetting their own distress and afflictions in ministering to others.

A CHANCE MEETING WITH A GREAT MAN

After relating one of the most stirring and tragic episodes of my life as a showman, my thought turns instinctively to the other extreme—to an experience quite as typical of the wandering existence of the pioneer showman of the old wagon days. I refer to a chance meeting with one of the greatest men who helped to make the history of the United States, a splendid, picturesque giant of the pioneer type whose life was an unbroken romance. It may be asked, What has this kind of thing to do with circus life? I answer: Everything! Much of the success which I have achieved in this peculiar field of effort I owe to the contact with men of large capacity with whom I chanced to "fall in," as it were, while on the road. These meetings were as bread to my mind. They made the bright spots in my life, and, from the very beginning of my career, gave me the inspiration which helped me to see things in a larger way, to persevere in the face of all obstacles and to take advantage of every opportunity. Of the hundreds of experiences in this line, no other approached in romantic interest that which came to me very early in my southwestern tour.

I was then a young man and was traveling in Louisiana. I put up at a hotel in a rather small town, where hotels were as rare as other evidences of civilization. I had just gone to my room on the night succeeding my arrival when I was honored with a call from the landlord.

"Mr. Coup," he said, "there'll be another feller up to bunk with you in a few minutes. You'd better wait up and arrange with him about the side of the bed you are to sleep on. If he walks in and finds you sleepin' on his side, there might be a coolness spring up between you."

At that time I was a stranger to southern customs, and their manner of doing things struck me as being a trifle irregular. However, I offered no objection. It has always been a rule with me to maintain the silence which is said to be golden when I am among strangers in a strange land. I afterwards discovered that it was customary for this landlord to put as many

as three in one bed when he happened to be cramped for room. In about ten minutes my bedfellow came up. He was an elderly man with eyes which seemed to pierce one.

His bedroom candle lighted up a face which I have never since been able to eradicate from my memory. It was one of the most interesting faces it has ever been my good fortune to gaze upon. When he smiled, I was somehow irresistibly drawn towards him. It was the saddest, tenderest, sweetest smile that I have ever seen upon a man's face. He spoke to me kindly as he placed his candle upon the little table, then drew his chair up close beside me in front of the open, wood fire. Twenty minutes afterward I could have sworn that I had known the man all my life. He was a brilliant talker; and his stock of knowledge regarding men and affairs of that day seemed to be inexhaustible.

"By the way," I said, after we had talked well into the night, "I see Gen. Sam Houston is billed to speak here to-morrow night. I shall certainly go to hear him." He glanced up at me quickly.

"Are you an admirer of him?" he asked.

"I will answer that question by saying both yes and no," I replied. "I greatly admire him for his sturdy independence, his political ability, and his apparent hatred for all shams. But there seems to be another side to his character which I do not admire. The manner in which he deserted his Cherokee wife after he had left the nation and returned to civilization, I regard as wholly contemptible. Do you know him?"

"I have seen him," he replied, quietly, smiling the sad smile which had before struck me so forcibly.

"Well, don't you agree with me?" I asked.

"Before I reply to that question I would like to tell you a little story," my roommate replied, and it seemed to me that his voice trembled a little.

"I once knew a man who held a prominent office in the State of Tennessee. He was a young man then—not older than yourself, and with just as quick a tongue when it came to condemning all sorts of wrong and injustice. His position gave him admission to the best social circles, and he wooed and married a beautiful girl. On his part it was wholly a love match. He worshiped her as he had never before worshiped anything on earth. For a time he was happy—after the manner of men who place their entire lives in the hands of one woman. By and by he noticed that his beautiful young wife was growing dejected and unhappy. Often, when he spoke to her in terms of endearment when they were alone, she would burst into tears, tear herself out of his arms and escape from the room. On one of these occasions he followed her to her room and insisted upon an explanation. At first she refused, but finally yielded, telling him a story which crushed him to the very dust. She said she had never loved him, but had been persuaded by friends to marry him on account of his position. She told him more than that. She told him that long before the marriage occurred she had loved another man.

"That night the husband left his home and his high official position and disappeared. Shaving the hair from his head and tearing the broadcloth garments into shreds, he donned the scanty apparel of the savage and became a member of the Cherokee nation. The members of the tribe treated him with the greatest consideration and respect, and he became a sort of oracle among them. In time he married an Indian maiden, thereby widening the breach between himself and the past. After a number of years had passed, however, he grew weary of savagery and his mind often reverted to the life which had been his before his great trouble came upon him. Finally he bade his wife and her untutored friends a temporary farewell and drifted into Texas. Here he soon rose to recognition, and in a comparatively brief space of time once more held an important official position. But he had not deserted his Indian wife. On several occasions he returned to the tribe to see her and tried to induce her to return with him to civilization. But the poor, untutored Indian squaw was a thousand times nobler than the beautiful society woman who had ruined his life in early manhood. She loved him passionately, but positively refused to accede to his requests. 'I would only disgrace you,' she said. 'I am not fit to go out into your world.' Finally the husband returned without her—very much against his wishes, remember—and a few months later word reached him that his Indian wife was dead. She had loved him too well to accompany him into his changed life for fear of disgracing him, and had loved him too well to wish to live without him. She was found, said the messenger, at the bottom of a cliff, and the manner of her death was only too apparent. The white wife represented what is popularly called the highest type of civilization and social culture—the poor Indian girl what is best known by the name of savagery. That, young man, is how General Houston came to desert his Indian bride."

I had been deeply interested in the old man's story, and when he had finished I thought that his keen eyes were filled with tears as he sat gazing into the dying embers of our fire. I hastened to assure him that I was glad to be set right regarding General Houston's

character. "I shall listen to his speech with renewed interest to-morrow night," I said. "You must have known him well?"

"Yes," was the reply, "I have seen a good deal of him. But, my young friend, don't let your enthusiasm run away with your discretion. General Houston has his faults like the rest of the world—plenty of them."

"By the way," I said, as we pushed back our chairs and prepared for bed, "I believe you have omitted telling me your name. I have spent such a pleasant evening that I would really like to know to whom I am indebted for it."

"Ah," he said, with the same smile, "I believe I did omit that little formality. My name is Sam Houston."

We did not quarrel regarding the side of the bed he was to occupy. General Houston could have had both sides had he expressed a wish for them.

VI

BOOMING THE BIG SHOW

It may not be generally known to the public, but it is a fact, that nearly one-half of the entire expenditure of a circus is incurred in the work of the advance brigades. The advertising material, its distribution, express, freight and cartage, together with the salaries, transportation and living expenses of seventy-five to one hundred men, amount to vast sums of money. The largest number of men I ever used in advance of my show was seventy-five, and for this people called me crazy.

Though, of course, there is a limit to possible receipts, there is no doubt that the business secured is in proportion to the sum used in advertising, and it is almost impossible to draw the line at which judicious advertising should stop. This is demonstrated by the fact that the dressing-room tents of the present day are larger than were the entire old-time circus canvases, when the advertising was done by one man on horseback and all the paper used was carried in his saddle-bags, and the salary of any star advertiser now is as much as was required to run the entire show of years ago.

NOVEL ADVERTISING FEATURES

I early learned, by experience, that big receipts at the ticket wagon followed big advertising expenditures. In 1880, in order to boom the "Newly United Monster Shows," I arranged some very peculiar and novel advertising features in the way of three cars especially fitted out for the use of my advance agents. The first brigade was accompanied by an enormous organ, for which a car was built, the latter being drawn through the streets by an elephant. This organ was a masterpiece of mechanism and was specially built by Professor Jukes. Its tones resembled the music of a brass band and could be heard at a great distance. This, of course, attracted the people, and the brigade would then advertise the show by a lavish distribution of hand-bills.

Unfortunately the elephant and the music combined to frighten many horses, and I soon found myself defendant in numerous damage suits. Indeed, that single elephant seemed to frighten more horses than did the entire herd with the show.

At one place temporary quarters for the elephant were secured in a stable which could be reached only through a private alley. When we came to take possession of the barn, the owner of the alley, with several policemen, stood on guard and undertook to stop the progress of the huge animal. Their efforts, however, met with no success, for, with the most sublime indifference, the beast moved quietly forward. For this I was sued for "trespass" and "injured feelings." As the elephant was the offender, my lawyer proposed to bring him into court as the principal witness, a proposition which caused considerable amusement. As no damage had been done, the "laugh" was decidedly on the owner of the alley.

THE "DEVIL'S WHISTLE"

My second advertising car was fitted up with another enormous organ of far-reaching power, and attracted much attention, while my third and last advertising brigade rejoiced in the possession of an engine to which was attached a steam whistle of such power and discordant tone that it could be heard for miles. This the men would blow while going through the country. Professor Jukes had christened this diabolical invention the "Devil's Whistle," and so well did its sound fit the name that the people must have frequently thought

His Satanic Majesty was near by.

As that car with its whistle would steam into a town, the inhabitants would flock as one man to see what it was that had so disturbed their peace, and thus we were enabled to advertise more thoroughly than any show before or since. I have often thought that I really deserved punishment for thus outraging the public ear.

Between these three advertising brigades I had smaller companies, accompanied by a colored brass band, which discoursed pleasant music while my bill posters decorated the dead walls and boards. The band also gave concerts at night upon the public square and, between pieces, a good speaker would draw attention to the excellences of the coming show.

A uniformed brigade of trumpeters was also sent through the country on horseback, and a band of Jubilee singers marched through the streets singing the praises of the "Newly United Shows." Added to these attractions were two stereopticons that pictured, from some house-top or window, the main features of the show. This, together with perhaps the most liberal newspaper advertising that ever had been done, made the whole advance work as near absolute perfection in show advertising as possible.

One of the picturesque features with the advance show was Gilmore's "Jubilee Anvil Chorus." The anvils were made of wood with a piece of toned steel fastened at the top in a manner which secured a volume and resonance of tone that could be heard much further than that of an ordinary anvil. At intervals, to strengthen the chorus, cannon were fired off. This, though a great novelty, caused some dissatisfaction, especially amid crowded surroundings. My excuse was that the chorus was a free feature furnished by my friend Gilmore, and that, as it cost the public nothing, the latter should be satisfied. Never before nor since was a country so startled and excited over the coming of a show.

"SPOTTERS"

A great circus uses large quantities of advertising paper—so much, in fact, that it is difficult to keep track of it. True, the superintendent of the advertising car gives each man so many "sheets" in the morning and the man at night hands in a statement which is supposed to show where and how he has placed the paper. These brigades are followed by "watchers," or, as the railroad men term them, "spotters," who look carefully over the ground. But the impossibility of detecting all crooked work may be readily understood when I say that from eight to twelve wagons containing bill-posters and paper start out on country routes in as many different directions, so the "spotter," not being ubiquitous, cannot follow every trail. One of my "spotters," however, did once ascertain that a party of my men had driven into the country and dozed comfortably in the shade all day, had not put up any paper and had not fed the hired horses, although they did not forget to charge for the "feeds." The horses were thus made to suffer and the men pocketed the money which should have gone for oats. Of course my superintendent discharged the entire brigade, although, when the season is well under way, it is very difficult to obtain skilled bill-posters, for it is quite a difficult craft and experts are in good demand.

The reader, however, can easily see what a great loss such doings entail on a show, considering the cost of the paper at the printer's, the freight or expressage, the cartage, and the money paid the men for putting up the sheets. The printing bills of a first-class show are enormous. My lithograph bill alone, the last successful season of my show, amounted to \$40,000, and this was before the days of extensive lithographing. I believe I ordered the first three-sheet lithograph ever made, and also the first ten-sheet lithograph. This was considered a piece of foolishness; but when I ordered a hundred-sheet bill and first used it in Brooklyn it was considered such a curiosity that show people visited the City of Churches for the express purpose of looking at this advertising marvel. How things have changed! The Barnum and one or two other shows now use nothing but lithographs, and many of their bills are beautiful works of art, some of them being copies of really great pictures.

I can remember when one-sheet lithographs cost one dollar each, and for several years later they could not be bought for less than fifty to seventy-five cents apiece. They can be had now in large quantities for about five cents or less the sheet. As shows nowadays frequently use hundreds of sheets in a day, imagine what would be their cost at the price paid in the pioneer show period.

The circus of the present day is judged by the quality of its paper. One season I arranged with a publisher to use a folded quarter sheet, three sides of which advertised our show and the fourth side contained the first chapter of a story about to be published in his magazine. These were furnished to us in enormous quantities and our agents distributed them. In Boston we had four four-horse wagons full and these followed our parade. The men tossed the folders high in the air and the wind carried them in all directions. While this style of advertising surprised the people, it was soon stopped, and properly, too, by city ordinance. I think circus people would be better off if ordinances were passed wholly prohibiting bill posting; but unfortunately such a movement would go far toward breaking up a profitable

industry, since many of the bill posters are rich men, some making as much as \$25,000 a year and a few fully \$50,000. I believe Mr. Seth B. Howes, the veteran circus manager, was the first one to order a billboard made or paste paper on the outside. Previous to this all bills were hung or fastened up with tacks.

RIVALRY IN EXPLOITING OPPOSITION SHOWS

There was always a sharp rivalry between the advance brigades of opposition shows, and many are the tricks which they play upon each other. Perhaps the most serious and daring trick played on me was when the agent of an opposition show actually went to the railroad office and ordered a carload of my paper, which was on the sidetrack there waiting for our man, to be shipped to California. Believing him to be representing me, the freight agent did as requested, and my advance brigade was delayed until a fresh carload could be sent on from New York, which could be done in less time than it would have taken to have brought the original carload back from San Francisco. After accomplishing this contemptible trick the fellow escaped, and, although I had Pinkerton men closely on his trail, I was never able to get service on him. Of course the scamp's employers were legally responsible; but in those days we never thought of bringing suit in cases of that kind, although I was strongly tempted to do so in one place, where an opposition show had covered my dates with their own and had greatly damaged us by misleading the people.

Of the many other sharp tricks played on me by opposition shows, one of the best, or worst, was that of equipping men with sample cases, and sending them in advance of my show in the rôle of commercial salesmen. These men would step into prominent stores and, after a short business talk, incidentally mention my name and then impart the information that my show had disbanded and gone to pieces. This, of course, would set the whole town talking, and the news would soon spread over the entire country, thus doing me irreparable harm.

COSTLY RIVALRY

The general public has very little idea of the extent to which opposition tactics are carried by the representatives of circuses and menageries. The rivalry between two shows often costs thousands of dollars and is sometimes kept up by the agents long after the proprietors have become reconciled. Once we became involved in one of these contests, and the opposition, in order to harass us, actually had four of our men arrested in different States on a charge of libel. The Indiana libel laws were very severe, and in each instance we were compelled to give a heavy bond for the release of our man.

That year the train of a rival outfit ran off the track, and one of the proprietors, in the course of time, became my agent. One day, in a confidential chat, he alluded to the mishap, and told me that at the time it occurred he fully intended accusing us of having had the switches turned, thus causing the disaster. To that end he had even gone to the length of swearing out warrants for our arrest. They knew that we were perfectly innocent, but their object was to gain notoriety and sympathy. At the last moment, it is to be presumed, their better natures asserted themselves; at all events, they weakened.



"WHEN RIVAL SHOWMEN BURNED A BRIDGE TO PREVENT THEIR KEEPING A DATE."

Another party in opposition warfare copied our money orders. Orders of this kind were given by our agents and paid by our treasurer on arrival of the show. They were given for services rendered or goods bought, and covered the expenses of livery teams, distributing bills, flour, feed, advance brigade supplies, newspaper advertising, etc. They were made out something after this style:

"On presentation of this order and ten issues of — Newspaper, containing advertisements of the Coup Show to exhibit at — on the — day of — pay Mr. — \$—, amount due him.

"(Signed) — —, Agent."

These orders were extensively used by the opposition for some time before we discovered it. Its object, of course, was to make the newspaper proprietors and the public think they were advertising the Coup show, while of course their own dates would be inserted instead of ours.

At a certain place in Ohio a bridge was burned in advance of us and entailed the loss of our next "stand," or date. We could not safely accuse any of our competitors of this contemptible and incendiary trick; but we knew they were driven to desperation and were capable of resorting to any such outrage.

There were agents so utterly unscrupulous as to receive pay from opposition shows for disclosing to them information that should have been jealously guarded, even betraying the advance route. I knew one agent who was an expert telegraph operator and able to take messages by sound. He would scrape acquaintance with the regular operator and pass his spare time in the telegraph office secretly taking our messages as the latter were being sent over the wire, the local operator being ignorant of the loafer's telegraphic skill.

IDLE BILL POSTERS

These opposition fights greatly benefited the local bill posters and were frequently urged on by them. Sometimes a show would send a brigade over the country at night, placing its own dates on the paper of its rival, thus getting all the advantages of the first show's paper. Sometimes the indolence and laziness of my own men have annoyed me greatly. I am reminded that, while my advance brigade was billing Texas, one of my agents became utterly disgusted with the sleepiness of his men. They were mainly of corpulent build, and their captain actually sent me this message:

"WACO, Texas, July, 1881.

"W. C. COUP,

"There is one more shade tree in Texas; send another fat man to sit under it."

On numerous occasions I have had to pay dearly as a result of the sharp practices of unscrupulous people, and it is a well-known fact that a circus man has to deal with a great many of this class. Our advance agent always engaged the lots on which we were to exhibit, and he did so at Austin, Texas, renting the necessary ground at a most exorbitant figure. As usual, he gave an order on the company which was to be paid immediately on our arrival. But the owner, or pretended owner, inserted a clause in the agreement that the lots were to be used if still in the possession of the signer. Immediately on our arrival the bill was presented, and as promptly paid. Imagine my surprise when, as the show opened at night, another bill was presented for \$150. It seems that this sharper had made a fraudulent sale of one of the center lots on purpose to swindle me. Of course I paid it, under protest, in order to enable the performance to proceed, as, anticipating a refusal on my part, they had illegally attached some valuable ring stock.

Some years ago when George Peck was struggling with Peck's Sun, long before it had been recognized as a "leading comic paper," I visited Milwaukee with my show. My invariable instructions to my agents were to advertise in every paper, but especially to place an extra advertisement in all young papers struggling for recognition, provided, of course, that they had merit. For some reason, or through oversight, George Peck's Sun had been entirely forgotten. Nevertheless, I found on reaching Milwaukee that Peck had, on several occasions, good-humoredly alluded in his columns to my coming, and had not "roasted" me, as many other editors so slighted would have done. Accordingly I sent him a check which would have more than paid for the advertising he should have had but did not get. To my surprise he returned the check, saying I owed him nothing. I declined to receive it, and once more sent it to him, telling him not to come any of his "funny business over me," and to reserve his jokes for his paper. This brought him around to my hotel, and I was delighted to become acquainted with one of the cleverest men I have ever met. Later he became Governor of his State.

COURTESY OF EDITORS

As an example of the courteous treatment I have invariably received at the hands of the newspaper editors I cannot refrain from giving the following incident which occurred when the show was in North Carolina. In a town in that State one paper, through an oversight, had been skipped altogether in the distribution of the advertising. When the second brigade of the advertising army arrived in town, it found that the issue of this paper had already been mailed to its subscribers. Nothing daunted, however, this agent arranged with the publishers for a special issue which, teeming with praises of the Coup show, was issued and mailed to all subscribers. As a result excellent houses greeted us when we exhibited in the place.

The rivalry between the great shows extended to the newspaper advertising as well as bill-posting department. I remember that once, at Pittsburg, the opposition was very strong, and I had as press agent a brother of the man who held the same position in the employ of my rival. They were both excellent newspaper men and thoroughly understood their business. We would take whole columns in the newspapers, and my men with the show would telegraph to the papers at Pittsburg after this manner:

"WILKESBARRE, Pa.

"The W. C. Coup show did a tremendous business here to-day; the largest and best show ever seen here."

These telegrams would be used to head our other notices in the Pittsburg papers, and whole columns would follow, setting forth the merits of the show. With more solid indorsements these telegrams so worried my agent's brother that he was at a loss to know how to overcome them. He finally hit upon a novel and dashing plan. After our columns had been set up in the various papers, he would then engage the adjoining columns. In this space, in display type, he denounced our telegrams as bogus, stating that he had seen his own brother write them at the hotel. This announcement completely took the wind out of our sails.

JUMBO'S FREE ADVERTISING

Many amusing things of this sort occurred in the war of opposition, but others of a more serious nature would, of course, come up.

The greatest amount of free advertising ever received by a big show, within my knowledge, for any one thing, was that which was incident upon the purchase of "Jumbo." The elephant

was bought by Barnum, Bailey & Hutchinson from the Zoological Gardens in London. When the day arrived for his removal, the elephant lay down and refused to leave his old home. This created a sympathy for the dumb creature, and the children became so interested that petitions were signed by hundreds—yes, thousands—of children and adults of Great Britain, protesting against the delivery of the animal to its new owners. Jumbo's stubbornness proved a fortune to his new owners. Taking advantage of the opportunity they began to work upon the sympathies of the Humane Society, which made every effort to prevent Jumbo from being sent to this country. The news was cabled to America by the column. I happened to be in the editor's room of a daily paper in New York when one of these cables came into the office. The editor laughingly called my attention to it and threw it into the waste basket. I said: "What, are you not going to use this?" He said: "No, of course not."

"Well," said I, "you will use Jumbo matter before the excitement is over."

I saw how the excitement could, and surely would, in such able hands, be kept up. I left that night for St. Louis, where my educated horses were being exhibited, and made a call on my old friend Col. John A. Cockrill, then editor of the Post Dispatch—when another associated press Jumbo dispatch came in, with which they were delighted. I then related my experience with the New York editor who had refused to use the cable that came into the office while I was sitting there. The colonel and Mr. Pulitzer said: "Well, we are glad to use it—this and future dispatches."

The next day the colonel handed me a New York paper, which proved to be the same that I had mentioned, and in it appeared a double leaded account on the Jumbo excitement. Their show agents in London did wonderful work in keeping the associated press filled with new matter, and the free advertising they secured would have cost at regular rates a half million of dollars and even then would not have been as effective.

The agents succeeded in working up this opposition to Jumbo's removal until they induced the editor of the London Telegraph to cable Barnum, asking what price he would take to leave Jumbo in his own home, explaining the feeling of the people, especially the children. This editor had no idea then and perhaps does not even now know that he was made an innocent agent in the big advertising scheme. The children of Great Britain had ridden on Jumbo's back, fed and fondled him for years, so that it was easy to arouse this feeling of indignation and sympathy. The multitude even threatened violence if he was removed. The excitement had purposely been kept up to such a pitch by these people that it became international.

There was also much excitement about Jumbo's wife, Alice. Elaborately written articles were cabled over, expressing the sorrow of Alice at the enforced departure of Jumbo and her consequent separation from her husband. The feelings of the people were so worked upon that sympathy for Alice and Jumbo almost equaled that aroused for the slave by the description of Uncle Tom in "Uncle Tom's Cabin." The advertising matter for Jumbo—the lithographs, etc.—had already been printed, and in them he was called "Mastodon." When he refused to be moved his right name, Jumbo, was used, as the dispatches had gone out in that name. The strategy used by these managers and their agents to get all this notoriety did no one any harm and made good sensational reading for the newspapers.

VII

PARADES AND BAND WAGONS

Shows thrive best on bluster and buncombe. Years of experience have taught me that the traveling show business handled by capitalists who have been trained in other lines of enterprise can never succeed. I have often been reproved by business men who were astounded at the lavish and apparently wasteful expenditures of the circus for "show and blow," and who have insisted that these expenses should be cut in half. It is true that such reckless expenditures in any ordinary commercial undertaking would be disastrous, but it is the life of a big show. When it is possible thoroughly to arouse the curiosity of the public, expense should be a secondary consideration.

THE FIFTY-CENT RIVALS OF THE \$10,000 HIPPOS

I recall an incident, however, which goes to show that the most expensive attractions do not necessarily prove the greatest drawing cards. Among the rare animals which I had one season were some Memiponias, or tiny deerlets—"hell benders," as they were commonly called. One of the opposition shows was making a great feature of a pair of hippopotami, or river horses, from the Nile. I had made arrangements to receive, at stated intervals, regular numbers of "hell benders," and I would wire my agents ahead, "Another living hell bender

arrived to-day." This he would advertise with great gusto, getting out special bills and keeping up the excitement.

One day, while one of my agents, who happened to be back with the show, was sitting in my office, a bill to the amount of six dollars was presented for "One dozen hell benders." Seeing this he inquired what it meant.

"Don't you see?" said I. "One dozen hell benders, six dollars."

"Do you mean to say," my agent exclaimed, "that I have been advertising fifty-cent hell benders?"

"You have," I laughingly replied.

"Well," said he, "if that doesn't beat the deuce! These fifty-cent hell benders have knocked \$10,000 worth of hippos higher than a kite!" It certainly was a fact that our fifty-cent articles had been so judiciously advertised as to create more excitement than the costly "hippos" of the opposition.

In the course of the same season I made a discovery which proved to be a valuable drawing card. I owned some young elephants which I had lent to a showman on the Bowery. On going to see them one day I noticed a man holding his finger in the mouth of one of the smaller ones. I placed my finger in the mouth of another and found that the creatures seemed to derive pleasure from the action of sucking. Immediately I sent out for an ordinary infant's nursing bottle. The young elephant drained the bottle as if to the manner born. It was passed from one to another of the infant class. Finally they fought in the most indescribably comical manner for possession of the bottle.

A SKILLFUL APPEAL TO PUBLIC SYMPATHY

Then I fitted a large glass jar, holding a gallon, with rubber tubes, so that all could use it at the same time. Invariably they would empty this bottle before loosening their hold on the nipples. They had doubtless been taken from their mother when too young, or perhaps she had been killed at the time the young were captured. So effectively did they appeal to public interest and sentiment that by dint of skillful advertising the celebrated "sucking baby elephants" made quite a fortune in a single season. They would be led into the ring, where they would take their nourishment like human babies, their over-grown size making this infantile operation very comical and absurd. The sight captivated the heart of every woman who attended the show.



THE HERD OF YOUNG ELEPHANTS.

The eagerness of circus proprietors to procure animal monstrosities for exhibition purposes has called forth many laughable communications from persons who have curiosities of this kind to sell. I remember going one morning into the office and reading a telegram which came to Mr. Barnum. It was as follows:

"To P. T. BARNUM: I have a four-legged chicken. *Come quick.*"

The circus of the present day is not complete without the side shows and the after concerts. For my own part I can honestly say that I never in my life heard a concert announcement made in my show without feeling like getting up and leaving in disgust; but all classes of show-goers must be pleased, and there is one class which demands the concert and another class that wants the side shows.

A SILENT PARADE FROM ALBANY TO THE STATE LINE

I am glad to know that the circus man who speaks of his patrons as "gillies," and who endeavors to obtain his wealth by fair or foul means, is becoming more and more rare. I recall an illiterate circus man of this description who employed every "privilege" known to the circus world. For example: when traveling by wagon the whole caravan would pass through a toll-gate, stating that the "boss" was behind and would pay the toll. The last vehicle to go through would contain this dignitary and his treasurer, who, when confronted with the long list of vehicles on which he ought to pay toll, would declare that the toll-keeper had been imposed upon, and that half of those vehicles belonged to a gang of gypsies having no connection whatever with the show. He would then cut the bill down according to the easy or hard nature of the custodian of the toll-gate, and in this manner evade payment of what, in a whole season, would aggregate a large sum of money.

On one occasion, when about to exhibit in Albany, and knowing that his whole outfit would that day be attached for debt, he ordered the parade to start early, as he intended to give them a "long ride." The procession accordingly started on what has passed into circus history as the "silent parade," for, leaving the city in all the glory of spangle and tinsel, the showmen never rested until they had reached the State line, while the sheriffs, waiting at the tents in Albany for the parade to return, had the poor satisfaction of attaching the almost worn-out and quite worthless canvas.

I have often been asked what it costs to start a circus and menagerie. This is a most difficult question to answer, since it depends entirely upon the size and pretensions of the enterprise in question. Shows vary in size from cheap affairs, capable of being carried in three railroad cars, to the elaborate institutions which require two long special trains for their transportation. The expense of running a large show is enormous, although in advertising this expense is usually exaggerated. There are a great many traveling tented exhibitions which "bill," or advertise, like a circus, and in the eyes of the general public pass for circuses, but which, in reality, are variety exhibitions given under canvas.

THE FLUCTUATING LEVELS OF CIRCUS VALUES

In the eye of the law a circus must have feats of horsemanship in its program, and such shows have to pay a "circus" license, which in some States and cities is very high. If, however, the shows do not give any riding, their performance simply consisting of leaping, tumbling, and athletic feats, then a license may be taken out at a greatly reduced price; and this accounts for the almost numberless small shows which annually tour the country. Of the circus and menagerie show proper I do not think there are more than twenty in America; but of tented exhibitions, billed as "railroad shows," there are several hundred. The tented exhibitions employ from fifty to six hundred men each, and the capital invested in them runs from \$5,000 to \$250,000.

Many of the smaller shows are fitted out economically by purchasing from the larger ones paraphernalia that has been used a season or two. For example: the canvases used an entire season by a large show may be purchased cheaply, because it is essential to the attractiveness of a really great amusement institution to have each season a new, white "spread." The old canvas, if not sold to the smaller showmen, is disposed of to the paper manufacturers at about one and one-half cents the pound.

The same rule of enforced replenishment applies to wardrobe and general paraphernalia. In this way a beginner in the circus business may, by judicious investment in second-hand bargains, start out with a very fair outfit secured at a much smaller cost than if he were compelled to purchase everything new. And, in this connection, let me say that I know of no other business enterprise in which new material costs so much, and when sold at second-hand realizes so little. One of the largest shows ever organized in this country, and which was reputed to be worth more than half a million dollars, was inventoried on the death of one of the proprietors, with a view to selling the estate of the deceased, and, to the great surprise of the executors, was found to reach in value only about \$200,000.

Twenty years ago a show with a daily expenditure of \$250 was thought extravagant, while

fifty years ago a circus whose receipts averaged sixty dollars a day was considered to be doing a good business. To-day there is one show the expenses of which are undoubtedly more than \$3,500 a day, although it is surprising what wonderful displays are made by others at a cost of less than \$1,000 a day. The reason for this is that, above a certain amount, the expenses depend largely upon the amount of advertising done. It is amusing, however, to note the manner in which all of them, big and little, claim to be the largest and most expensive attractions in the country. Many smaller showmen use the same billing matter as the largest ones, and scores of lines can be read in the circus advertisements of to-day that have done duty for many years.

WHAT IT COSTS TO RIDE WITH THE BAND WAGON

It is almost impossible to give an intelligent idea of the cost of wild animals, since this depends entirely upon the operation of the law of supply and demand. The cost of cages varies, of course, according to size and decorations, and the same observation applies to the railroad cars. The most expensive of the latter are the highly ornamental cars used for advance advertising. These are comfortably, and even elaborately, fitted, and are provided with a huge paste boiler and other conveniences. They cost anywhere from \$3,000 to \$7,000. The flat and stock cars used by circuses are much more substantially constructed than the ordinary ones used in the railroad freight business, and are considerably larger, most of them being sixty feet in length and fitted with springs similar to those of passenger coaches. Cars of this description cost from \$500 to \$800 each; passenger coaches from \$1,500 upward, according to the quality of interior, fittings and decorations.

Some circus proprietors also have their own private cars, fitted with every imaginable convenience and luxury, and such a car costs high in the thousands. The expense of the wardrobe depends, of course, on the amount used and its quality, and whether the costumes are intended for a spectacular show or for an ordinary circus. The wardrobe and papier mâché chariots used in the production of our "Congress of Nations" cost Mr. Barnum and myself more than \$40,000, and I am told that Mr. Bailey expended a like amount on his "Columbian" display.

The price of the canvas has been wonderfully reduced within the last few years. We paid \$10,000 for our first hippodrome tent alone, and this did not include dressing-room tents, horse tents and camp tents. Afterward, however, we had a larger one made for very much less money. The small circuses that hover around Chicago and the larger cities of the West in summer usually use a tent about eighty feet across, with two thirty-foot middle pieces. This, equipped with poles, seats and lights, costs about \$800. These tents are made of light material. The larger canvases have to be made of stouter stuff, and a tent suitable for hippodrome or spectacular shows, which must be about 225 feet in width and 425 or 450 feet in length, would cost about \$7,000.

REQUIREMENTS AND COST OF THE CIRCUS HORSE

As an evidence of how circuses have increased in size, I will say that the seventy or eighty *quarter* poles which hold up the main tent of the Barnum & Bailey shows are each larger than the *main* pole used years ago. The present system of lighting, which, by the way, I was the first to use, is the patent of an Englishman, improved by an American named Gale. It first took the place of kerosene lights, so far as circus illumination is concerned, in 1870. In experimenting with these lights, when I first introduced them, I several times met with accidents which threatened to terminate my career. Once I purchased an electric light plant with the intention of doing away with all gasoline illumination, but was compelled to abandon the attempt after expending \$8,000 for a portable electric plant.

The item of tent stakes is quite a formidable one. Fitted with iron rings, they cost about fifty cents each, and hundreds of them are required by every circus. Harnesses require an outlay of from ten to twenty-five dollars each, according to decoration and material.

The draught horses used by circuses vary in price, some of them being purchased cheap from horse markets; but I have always found that the best I could get were the most economical. Those bought by me averaged \$200 each; the usual circus horse, however, costs much less, and so long as it does its work all right the main purpose is answered, for, in passing through the streets, its faults do not attract the attention of the ordinary observer, but only that of the typical horseman. Ring horses, whether for a "pad" or a "bare-back" act, must have a regular gait, as without it the rider is liable to be thrown. They are frequently and generally owned by the performers themselves, and I have known a crack rider to pay as high as \$2,000 for one whose gait exactly suited him. The performing "trakene" stallions brought from Germany by Mr. Barnum cost \$10,000, and my first troupe of educated horses, ten in number, were purchased at the same figure. These, however, were unquestionably the best and most valuable ever seen in a circus.

A PAGE FROM THE INVOICE BOOK OF A BIG SHOW

Though it would be comparatively easy to start a circus and menagerie equipped almost entirely with second-hand paraphernalia, the reader will see from the following figures that the cost of starting a new first-class circus and menagerie is another proposition. Here are a few official figures on the cost of a first-class circus and menagerie which have never before been made public. They are taken from my private record, or invoice book:

20 Cages at \$350,	\$7,000.00
2 Band wagons at \$1,500 each,	3,000.00
3 Chariots at \$3,000 each,	9,000.00
1 Wardrobe wagon,	800.00
1 Ticket wagon,	400.00

The above for the parade.

Animals to fill these cages will average about:

2 Lions,	\$2,000.00
2 Royal Tigers,	2,000.00
2 Leopards,	400.00
1 Yak,	150.00
1 Horned Horse,	500.00
2 Camels,	300.00
2 Elephants,	3,000.00

(As small elephants have been delivered here for \$1,000 each, this is probably a fair average.)

1 Hippopotamus,	\$5,000.00
1 Rhinoceros,	5,000.00
2 Cages of monkeys,	1,000.00
1 Kangaroo,	200.00
1 Cassowary,	200.00
1 Ostrich,	500.00
1 Giraffe,	1,500.00

Other small animals including hyenas, bears, ichneumon, birds, etc., \$2,000.00

12 Baggage wagons at \$200,	\$ 2,400.00
4 Roman chariots,	1,000.00
125 Horses at \$125 each,	15,625.00

This price is above the average.

125 Harnesses at \$15,	\$ 1,875.00
2 Advertising cars,	5,000.00
Wardrobe,	3,000.00
2 Sleepers,	5,000.00
10 Flat cars at \$400,	4,000.00
6 Horse cars at \$400,	2,400.00
Elephant car,	500.00
Tents,	<u>4,000.00</u>
	\$88,750.00

This could be reduced by eliminating the rhinoceros, hippopotamus, giraffe and other very expensive animals, but to this must be added considerable money for stakes, shovels, picks, stake pullers, extra ropes, tickets, blank contracts and all necessary printing, which would bring the cost of the usual "million dollar" circus and menagerie up to about \$86,000.

On all this property there is not one dollar of insurance. Once, when on the road, a live stock insurance company came to me to insure our horses, but at the rate at which they wanted to insure them I soon convinced them that we could not make any money.

I might add that a circus and menagerie at the figures I have given would be far better and

larger than the average "million dollar show" now on the road, there being certainly not more than three aggregations that cost more than the amount I have given. No man should attempt the show business who has not a fortune, and also plenty of that other kind of capital quite as essential to his success—long experience on the road.

VIII

ANECDOTES OF MEN AND ANIMALS

ORIGIN OF THE AMERICAN CIRCUS

The first circus in America was started by Nathan A. Howes and Aaron Turner under a top canvas in 1826. Previous to that time others had shows in frame buildings and some simply with side canvas in hotel yards, and in theaters in New York City. The full tent circus originated in the towns of Somers and North Salem, Westchester County, New York, and Southeast and Carmel, Putnam County, New York. The original showmen were Raymond, Titus, June, Quick, Angevine, Crane, Smith and Nathans, and so far as I have been able to ascertain, June, Titus and Angevine were the first to import wild animals on their own account.

Previous to this the Raymond and Titus companies were in the habit of purchasing wild animals from sea captains who, in a spirit of speculation, would bring them to our shores. There existed a great rivalry between these companies and they soon became possessed of more animals than they needed. They toured the East during the period from about 1826 to 1834, with but indifferent success, and then Titus & Company took their show to England, where John June had preceded them.

The circus and menagerie in those days were separate and distinct attractions and, while the menagerie had the greater drawing power, it was only exhibited in the daytime. In the case of an opposition circus the attendance would generally split up, but would result in a benefit to each attraction, for the same crowd which gazed at the menagerie during the day would also be able to enjoy the circus which exhibited at night. It was not until 1851 that a circus and a menagerie were exhibited together, at one price of admission and owned by the same proprietors.

At that time George F. Bailey induced Turner, who was his father-in-law, to purchase an elephant and some other animals from Titus & Company, and others from incoming vessels at New York, Boston and Charleston. Mr. Bailey had six cages built, and these, together with the elephants, he added to the circus in order to reach the church-going element which would go to see the "menagerie only," but invariably remained, when the band commenced to play, "because the children wanted to see the circus."

To Mr. George F. Bailey must also be given the credit of devising a tank on wheels in which could be exhibited the hippopotamus. This animal proved a wonderful drawing card, and was then advertised as it sometimes is to-day as "the blood-sweating Behemoth of Holy Writ." This animal made several men wealthy. L. B. Lent, the well-known circus man, afterwards hired it and paid for its use no less than twenty-five per cent of the gross receipts of his show. From the death of this hippopotamus until 1873 there was none in the country; but in that year Mr. Barnum and I secured one from Reiche Brothers, whose men had captured it from a school on the river Nile. It cost us \$10,000, and we had previously spent several thousand dollars in sending our own men to Egypt on a similar errand that proved fruitless.

THE FIRST ELEPHANT BROUGHT TO AMERICA

I am informed by the best living authority that the first elephant brought to this country was imported by Hackaliah Bailey, an uncle of George F. Bailey, the retired circus manager. It was exhibited in barns in the eastern country and was considered a great curiosity and sufficient in itself to constitute a whole show and satisfy the people. It traveled altogether at night—principally that the country people should not get a free glimpse of the wonderful animal, and also because, in Connecticut, there was a law prohibiting the driving of elephants through that State during the daytime without a license, the neglect to obtain which entailed a fine of \$100, half of that going to the informer and half to the State. The law was passed in 1828, and, so far as I know, has never been repealed. This piece of information will doubtless astonish a good many showmen.

At some place in Rhode Island this elephant was fatally shot by some malicious person, and no one at the present day seems able to explain the wanton outrage. It may be that it was done out of curiosity, to see whether a bullet would penetrate the skin, but I think it is more

likely to have been the spite of some countryman who was disappointed at not being able to obtain a free glimpse of the animal. I am encouraged in this opinion because it is a matter of record that the farmers would gather on the road over which the elephant was to pass at night and build huge stacks of faggots, straw and brushwood which they would ignite on the approach of the beast in order to secure a distinct view of the wonder; but the showmen would blanket a horse and send him ahead, shouting "Mile up! Mile up!" when approaching a party of nocturnal spectators. This command has been used in handling elephants as long as these creatures have served the white race. On hearing this call the farmers would light their bonfires only to discover, on the approach of the draped horse, that they had been fooled. And bitter would be their disappointment when, after the last flickering ember of their fire had died out, the huge object of their curiosity would pass unseen in the darkness. At the death of this elephant Hackaliah Bailey went into the hotel business at Somers, N.Y., and erected, outside of his tavern, the cast of an elephant in bronze, mounted on a stone pedestal more than twelve feet in height. The elephant monument may to this day be seen in perfect condition, although placed there nearly seventy years ago. The first drove of elephants seen in this country were brought from Ceylon to America by Mr. S. B. Howes and P. T. Barnum in 1850. The exhibition was in charge of George Nutter, and the expedition was about six months en voyage. After losing one or two on the way they finally landed in New York, about 1850, with ten elephants, and they proved a very great attraction.

THE FIRST DROVE OF CAMELS

The first drove of camels was, likewise, brought into this country by S. B. Howes, and, being broken to drive in harness, they also proved a powerful drawing card. This first drove he imported in 1847 from Cairo, Egypt. Mr. Howes then sent Augustus Crane to the Canary Islands, in 1848, in search of camels, and in 1849 he landed in Baltimore with a drove of eleven. No more camels were brought in after this for several years, until a lady in Texas, the owner of a "slaver" or slave ship, brought some over as a subterfuge. Her excuse was that she wanted them to use as beasts of burden on her plantation; but, although the camels were on deck, she had a lower deck on which were huddled together, after the inhuman fashion of the time, many poor blacks, who were really the "beasts of burden" of greatest value to this feminine slave trader.

The government also imported a lot of camels and made the experiment of carrying the mails from Texas to California by "Camel Post"; but, this proving unsuccessful, the animals were turned loose to shift for themselves until showmen created a demand for them and bought most of them for very little money, in some cases paying only \$80 apiece for them. It is said that even now there are a few camels running wild in Western Texas and Mexico.

THE FIGHT OF THE OSTRICHES

For the opening of the Hippodrome we had imported a drove of nearly forty ostriches and had quartered them at the American Institute. The birds attracted a great deal of attention, not only on account of their rarity, but also on account of their magnificent plumage, some of them being marvels of natural splendor. They would walk around their enclosure with the most majestic gait imaginable. Among the professional spectators one morning was Mr. J. J. Nathans, a retired circus proprietor. Mr. Nathans wore in his scarf a very valuable diamond stud, and the stone evidently attracted a great deal of the attention of the birds. They would turn their heads around and the gleam in their small eyes would rival that of the stone. Suddenly one of the ostriches made a vicious peck at Mr. Nathans. That gentleman immediately drew back, but too late to save the precious stone. The bird had swallowed a \$400 solitaire! Mr. Nathans ever afterwards admired ostriches from a distance.

At the American Institute we had placed the ostriches in charge of an old employé named Delaney. This man had noticed that for some time two of the male birds had been pecking at each other and, to use his own expression, were "spoiling for a fight." This increasing viciousness one day culminated in a battle royal.

The morning of that day both seemed to be in a particularly ugly mood, and the rest of the drove gave them a wide berth. Every now and then one of them would stretch out his long neck and, with head uplifted, give vent to a sharp hissing sound. This was evidently a challenge, for it would be immediately taken up and answered by the other. They would follow each other around the wooden enclosure, striking viciously at each other. As by concerted action all the female birds huddled themselves together at one end of the enclosure and eight or ten males took up positions just in front as if to protect them. This left the enclosure almost clear for the two belligerents, and they went at it in fearful earnest.

Word was immediately sent me, but neither I nor any of my employés were on terms of sufficient intimacy with them to justify a personal attempt at arbitration. Delaney, however, armed himself with a stout club, deliberately threw himself into the breach and attempted to separate them. In doing so he only exposed himself to the risk of sustaining severe bodily injuries. The birds took no notice of him whatever, but continued to fight, uttering at times a

series of piercing screams and hisses, They would swing around each other and land fearful blows.

Their mouths were wide open, their eyes red and hideous, and their magnificent plumage ruffled, until the spectators, while deploring the fight, could not help admiring the splendid appearance of the birds in their rage. The smaller of the two was the more cautious. After a severe blow he would with some difficulty recover his equilibrium and, running off a little distance would suddenly wheel about and deal the big fellow two or three blows in rapid succession.

Delaney jumped between them and used his club on their long necks, but without any effect, for the birds seemed tireless. Their cries grew harsher and louder and the resounding blows fell like the beats of an automatic sledgehammer. Suddenly a most peculiar cry was heard. The others of the herd seemed to manifest more attention; and the two principals spread their wings, like the dragons of old, and made the final onslaught. Screaming with frightful shrillness and with their little bloodshot eyes gleaming hideously they made the crucial rush. Just as they were within a few feet of each other, Delaney managed to strike the larger bird a severe blow on the neck. The creature wavered for a moment and then fell prostrate. Another peculiar cry came from the smaller bird and both principals receded from each other. They were about to resume hostilities when a second blow brought the larger bird to the floor and the other one seeing this, evidently adjudged himself the victor, for he walked proudly away, followed by many of the admiring female birds. We immediately took steps to prevent a repetition of this remarkable fight by keeping the combatants in separate pens.

The fight, however, was most stirring and splendid, and the birds themselves seemed to be the very embodiment of knightly pride, so manifestly aggressive did they look in their ruffled plumage. Alas for vanity! Scarcely twelve hours had passed when a message was brought me from Delaney to come at once to the ostrich pen. I did so, expecting to hear of another combat of feathered gladiators. Instead a sorry sight met my eyes. During the night some vandal had plucked the brilliant plumage from the birds and left them miserable and dejected specimens of despoiled pride. I would cheerfully have given \$1,000 to have discovered the miscreant. As for the birds, the life seemed to have left them. They would gaze sadly at each other, peer at their own denuded bodies, and with an indescribably piteous expression, slink away into corners as if inexpressibly ashamed of their appearance.

Every possible inquiry was made in the hope of finding out the vandals who had plucked their feathers, but in vain. I dare say, if the truth were known, some of our own men secured the plumes. The birds did not regain their beauty for many moons, and all we got that season for our big outlay was the thrilling spectacle of the ostrich fight.

THE BELLIGERENT ALLIGATORS

During the whale season we utilized the whale tank, which was empty owing to the death of the whale, by placing in it a number of alligators from Florida. Our agent had just returned from an expedition, with forty of these creatures ranging in length from one to twelve feet. Although the tank was an immense one, these forty saurians did not have as much room as they would have liked. This overcrowding was doubtless the cause of a most terrible fight between them, which occurred very soon after they were installed in their new quarters. It is impossible for me to describe this conflict. Nearly all the larger "gators" took part in it, springing at each other and locking their jaws with a resounding, crashing noise that could be heard all over the building.

While thus locked together they would toss each other about and swish their tails with such vigor as to completely destroy the tank, breaking the thick glass. Our attendants were almost paralyzed with fear and confusion at the strange battle, and vainly endeavored to separate the combatants. There seemed, however, to be no way of doing this, as they would snap at each other so violently as to break each other's jaws, and this horrible snap really sounded like the report of a gun. To prevent their escape into the exhibition room a temporary barrier was soon erected and, when they became exhausted in attempting to kill each other, we determined, for fear that returning strength would bring about a repetition of the horrible scene, to dispatch all save the smaller ones. This was done by sending bullets into their eyes. We buried the carcasses on Long Island, much to the regret of an eminent taxidermist, who would have been glad to have secured them; but we were eager to be rid of the monsters. The fight was not down on the bills and was one we were entirely unprepared for; but it was the most exciting and at the same time most terrifying combat I ever saw. Had it not been so horrible and could it have been advertised, I am sure it would have drawn together more people than a Spanish bull fight. The tank, which was totally destroyed, was made of glass one and one-fourth inches thick, embedded in cement and bound with solid iron columns. It was erected at a cost of \$4,500, and yet was destroyed in ten minutes by these vicious alligators from the slimy depths of southern swamps.

I remember vividly the time when (in Winchester, Va.) Charles Dayton, the Herculean cannon ball performer and general gymnast, was attacked by hyenas just after entering the

den for the street parade. Only such a man of strength, undeniable courage and great presence of mind would ever have escaped from the cage alive. Apparently for no reason whatever and without the slightest warning these hideous creatures sprang upon Dayton on this particular occasion, though he had been in the cage many times. The expression of mingled hope, fear and determination depicted on Dayton's countenance as he nobly fought his way to the rear of the cage can never be forgotten by any witness of the thrilling scene. Death stared him in the face and blood flowed in streams from his frightful wounds. Seemingly every portion of his body was lacerated. At last after a fearful battle he reached the rear of the cage and the door. The latter was quickly opened, and the brave fellow fell bleeding and exhausted into the arms of his attendants, narrowly escaping a death too horrible to contemplate. We succeeded in getting him to his hotel, where physicians were called, but they gave no hope of poor Charlie's recovery. They said the hyenas had done their awful work too thoroughly. The citizens, especially the noble women of Winchester, volunteered their aid and did everything in their power for him. We left him with our own doctor and in the hands of these good people, as we thought, to die. Notwithstanding the fact that his body was so terribly lacerated, however, in a few days Dayton gave signs of improvement and he eventually recovered. Ultimately he returned to the show.

PARROTS AND COCKATOOS

I have always watched animals with a great deal of interest, from the bulky but docile elephant to the smallest bird that flies; indeed, I believe my love for animals, especially the horse, was the incentive that led me to continue so many years in the circus business. Although I never had a natural taste for the circus, and for the details connected therewith, still I always enjoyed organizing and putting together different drawing attractions. All my other work was given to the care of assistants.

During our exhibitions in Fourteenth Street, New York, I became very much attached to many of the birds and animals, and would spend my leisure time in playing with and feeding them, besides studying their characters and dispositions, for even among the lower animals there is character just as there is in mortals.

Among my collection of parrots, there was a white cockatoo. When I entered the building in the morning he would set up such a noise and racket, unless I came immediately to speak to him for a few minutes, that he would soon have the entire menagerie in an uproar—the monkeys chattering, the lions roaring, and, in fact, a regular pandemonium. But as soon as I had complied with the wishes of the cockatoo, quiet would be restored. Some time later when I was in New Orleans, I received a telegram announcing the Fourteenth Street fire and the complete destruction of the menagerie.

These beautiful birds are very easily taught. I once knew a man named Prescott who had trained one of these white beauties to sing the Star Spangled Banner, to crow like a rooster, bark like a dog, cry like a child, and so on; and in this way he could entertain a crowd of people for hours together. Unlike most of its feathered brothers, this bird enjoyed pleasing its master, and would repeat his performance whenever called upon to do so, and he seemed to take a pride in his wonderful acts.

EDUCATED DOGS

At one time in Fourteenth Street, I had a troop of educated dogs; one of their acts was in the nature of a mock trial. One dog, a very little fellow, steals a collar of another. A trial takes place, in which there are judge, and jury advocates. The little culprit is convicted and condemned to be hung—which the dogs proceed to do. The little fellow is hung and drops apparently dead, is placed in a hearse and rolled away to the music of the "Dead March." Several complaints were made against this by citizens and kind-hearted women; and Professor Bergh, president of the Humane Society, came to me about it. I had the performance repeated for his benefit, and further said that it had been repeated twice a day for several months. After the professor saw that the dogs enjoyed it, he laughed and said no more about it, and nothing more was heard from the Humane Society.

I have seen many acts done by dogs; and, as a rule, there is nothing to appeal to their intelligence; but in this case they certainly showed reasoning powers. I wish space would permit me to give my experience with the canine family. A short time before I left the show business I heard of a dog in California that could talk. I sent for the owner, Professor Madden, and bargained for this dog. When he reached Chicago I found he could actually say, "Oh, no." Sometimes it was easier for him to speak than at others, and invariably he would have some trouble in talking the first time.

Of all the dumb creatures the dog is by far the most faithful to his master, and it is said to be the only animal that has ever died of grief on his master's grave.

A WOUNDED HORSE IN THE GRAND MARCH

In 1880 I met with a very severe railroad accident, in which many of my valuable horses were injured; and among them an "entry" horse which, being of considerable value, I ordered to be taken on the train again, after the wreck was cleared away; but we could not use him for several days as he was so bruised that he presented a horrible appearance. One day, however, just as the "grand entry" was going into the ring, our head groom was surprised at the entrance of this horse. The creature had dashed into the ring with the others of his companions, and without bridle, saddle or halter, he went through the figures as he had been in the habit of doing before he was injured. The music was stopped, and our groom wanted to have the horse taken out, but I refused. Hearing the familiar music by which he had always entered the ring and performed his acts, habit was stronger than bodily pain, and, unfastening his rope in some unaccountable way, he had burst upon us. There is no doubt that a horse does know when his particular music strikes up, for I have often watched them at that time. They will rear and prance and if secured will make every endeavor to get loose. I lost this horse later in a wreck and few similar losses have grieved me more.

Hearing once that Professor Bartholomew had some wonderful horses I determined to purchase them, although I had really retired from the circus business. I saw the owner and paid him \$10,000 for the horses and exhibited them in the New York Aquarium, where they drew great crowds. Among this troupe was the well-known Nettle, the most beautiful animal I ever saw, being of a cream color and about fourteen hands high. He was remarkable more particularly for his jumping feats, being able to jump over an eight-foot gate and six horses, doing this act twice a day for four years. Finally he was able to jump over a gate and eight horses: but this feat was too great a strain and I would not allow it to be repeated. Like a human being he would never undertake this jump until he had first examined the horses carefully to see that all was as it should be, and then, with apparent pride and confidence, he would make his leap. The act performed, he would trot to his trainer with all the pride of one who had accomplished what had been expected of him.

INTELLIGENT BRONCHOS

I once concluded that it would be good policy to buy a herd of untamed bronchos and educate them for the circus business. Thereupon I hired a young fellow named George Costello and sent him to Colorado, Texas and New Mexico in search of handsome bronchos and Pintos, as this was the same breed of horses that I first owned. They are certainly the wildest and hardest to break, but with these untamed animals I concluded to make a start. It was more difficult work to find exactly what I wanted than we had hoped. Finally, at Pendleton, Oregon, we found a herd of about 3,000 head that were white and spotted and belonged to a tribe of Indians. We bought about forty of them and then shipped them to Chicago, where we sold all but sixteen. We engaged a celebrated trainer and built a training stable, where we watched them work.

The bronchos at first refused to take the food which we gave them, and would blow the oats out of the trough; but hunger finally subdued them. They were very curious, investigating everything around them, and it did not take long to learn the customs of civilization. They not only learned to eat tame hay, and whinny for their food, but each horse also learned to know his own name and those of his companions. We would place these horses in a row and call out the name of one of them. If he did not immediately respond the other bronchos would bite him to remind him that he should obey orders.

As is usual to a herd, this band of ponies looked to one of their number as the leader. The leader's name was Duke, and when the herd was turned loose in the yard for exercise Duke was evidently commander. In my experience with these wild animals I became convinced that they had different intonations to express different feelings—that they have a language of their own. Their whinnys when happy, when frightened, when angry and as a warning differed greatly, and by careful study could be easily distinguished.

THE KING OF THE HERD

Mr. Cross, a celebrated animal painter, who owns a ranch in Montana, told me that his horses had, at one time, disappeared in great numbers, much to his astonishment and wonder. He finally discovered that whenever a herd of wild horses, headed by a certain spirited stallion, came near the ranch, some of his own horses were sure to be missed. Setting a watch over them he found that the big handsome stallion was the thief. This magnificent animal would approach the tame horses and by some mute eloquence would induce them to follow him. Mr. Cross determined to capture this noble beast and thief, and procured the best lasso throwers. After following the stallion for many days they were compelled to give up the chase. Finally they decided to shoot the animal if he again interfered with the tame animals. Some weeks passed, but no more horses were lost. Suddenly, however, a number were again gone. With great compunctions of conscience, Mr. Cross at length decided that the leader must be shot. His death struggles were noble—he

died as befitted a great chief whose power, strength and beauty had made him the leader of his kind. Next to the dog I believe the horse to be the most intelligent of creatures.

AN ELEPHANT'S HUMOR

The humor of elephants is sometimes almost as remarkable as their intelligence. In 1887 I purchased an elephant in New York to send to Australia, and as we were in a great hurry to catch the steamer from San Francisco, I arranged to have the animal brought as far west as Chicago by passenger train instead of freight. He was loaded in a special car which was placed just behind the baggage car, and in due time started from the depot in New York. Shortly after leaving Albany the conductor was surprised to have the bell rope pulled violently. The train, of course, stopped, but the conductor could not find that anything was wrong or discover the man who had pulled the rope. Another start was made, and when nearing Syracuse a second violent tugging brought the train to a stop. The conductor instructed the brakeman to keep strict watch on the passengers, thinking all the time that some one had been playing a joke on him. Nearing Rochester, however, the same thing occurred again, to the great fright of some of the passengers, notably one old lady, who declared the train to be haunted, and averred that spirit forms were tugging at the rope. As the rope continued to be pulled thorough investigations were now made and the train crew experienced little difficulty in tracing the cause of the trouble to the elephant. On opening the door of the last car that animal was discovered sitting on his haunches and deliberately pulling the cord, and the elephant seemed to derive as much pleasure from it as a child would from a new toy. The passengers were reassured and the old lady was convinced of her error when she learned that the spirit form that pulled the cord weighed about three tons.

In India where elephants are kept at all military barracks for transportation purposes, it is no uncommon thing for the officers to leave their children in the elephants' charge for hours together, the huge animals taking the most tender care of their little friends. Elephants have a great dread of rodents and even insects. The presence of a rat or mouse will greatly excite them, and even the gnats or fleas annoy them exceedingly.

One of our largest elephants took quite a fancy to the son of a rider, and the boy used to spend every afternoon in the menagerie lying on the hay close to the animal. The lad never displayed the slightest fear, and the elephant invariably showed its pleasure when its pet came inside the inclosure. It would entwine its trunk around him and gently draw him close, then settle back in a recumbent position, allowing the child to take whatever liberty he liked. The pair attracted great attention and were called "Beauty and the Beast."

ZULUS IN LONDON

But it is not always animals that make the success of a circus. An unfamiliar type of the human species will occasionally make the fortune of a showman. Mr. N. Berhens, one of my ablest agents and a great traveler, at the time of the breaking out of the Zulu war was connected with the Royal Westminster Aquarium in London, an institution at that time celebrated. These Zulus had made such a bold resistance to the British government that the excitement ran high and the press of the world contained daily reports of England's conflict with this now subdued people. Their bravery in battle and gallant defense of their homes attracted widespread attention and made them objects of deep interest and curiosity. Being satisfied that their exhibition would be everywhere heralded with approval, he determined to visit Africa, although at the risk of his life, and secure a band of these sable sons of the tropics, that the world might know more of their laws, customs and characteristics. He reached Africa after a very perilous voyage early in the spring of 1878, first visiting Durban, the headquarters of the English army and the coast outlet to Zululand. Letters of introduction to the British officers and the experience of three previous trips to that country soon placed him in the way of attaining his object. First securing the services of an interpreter and buying his horses and supplies he followed in the rear of the columns of the British army en route for "Ulundi," the royal Kraal of King Cetewayo of Zululand.

When the Tugela river was reached he was surprised by the sudden appearance of what proved to be a band of about four hundred Zulu men, women and children, under the leadership of Oham, brother of King Cetewayo and lieutenant-general of the Zulu army. They had come to surrender to the British authorities, having rebelled against the rule of King Cetewayo, who was then in the British prison at Cape Town, Africa. This surrender was instigated for revenge growing out of the subjugation of Oham, by the Zulu king in a strife for the rulership of the Zulu people.

This band of natives contained three genuine Zulu princesses and the daring chief Incomo. Negotiations were at once begun, and through the influence of the British officers were finally concluded. Being at the mercy of their captors a reasonable consideration was agreed upon. The following day the Prince Imperial of France was slain by the formidable assigais only a few miles from where he was stationed. On hearing of his death the Zulus exhibited signs of sincere sorrow, as he was regarded with great admiration on account of his valor. It

is characteristic of this tribe to admire and applaud courage in their opponents, so much so, indeed, that they seem to take pleasure in acknowledging their masters after defeat.

Arrangements were at once made for their voyage. At first the Zulus were frightened at the idea of going on board a ship and refused to go to the "white man's country" unless they could walk. Further persuasion, however, induced them to yield, and they agreed to undertake the voyage. They embarked at Durban in May, 1878, on board the royal mail steamer "Balmoral Castle," en route for London. The length of the voyage and the absence of land filled them with superstition and fear, and they insisted that the captain had lost his way; that their food would soon be gone and themselves thrown into the sea. Indeed, so excited did they become that they visited the ship officers in a body and insisted on knowing their whereabouts. It was with great difficulty that they were pacified; they were all violently seasick and believed they were under the influence of the "evil one."

This embassy consisted of three Zulu princesses, a Zulu baby, the celebrated chief Incomo and twenty-three swarthy warriors. Their arrival in London was greeted by over one hundred thousand people on the docks and as far up the street as the eye could reach. Deafening cheers ascended as they passed through the crowd, many going so far as to pat them on the back in recognition of their bravery. Anonymous letters were received threatening death if they were exhibited.

Mr. Cross, Home Secretary of England, issued an order prohibiting their exhibition, but public opinion was so much in favor of their being shown that the authorities were defied, and they were placed on exhibition at the Royal Westminster Aquarium, London, three times a day for two years and four months. All London came to see them. Their performance consisted of songs and dances commemorative of marriage, death, hunting, joy and sorrow, changes of the moon, rain, sunshine and war. They gave exhibitions of the throwing of the assagais, that formidable weapon which is thrown with unerring precision and with a force capable of penetrating a horse at a distance of four hundred yards.

The making of fire by means of friction, produced by rubbing together two pieces of wood, was practiced nightly. Here one could see the exhibitions of the witch doctor, his means of ascertaining disease and his method of curing. They showed also their methods of fencing and of conducting battles, their sports, pastimes and strange characteristics. Among their strange customs was that of offering prayer to their king every time they smoked. Their marriage relations are strange. When a man becomes enamored of a girl he immediately begins negotiations with the parents for her purchase, the price being from six to ten cows, according to her beauty and age. A cow is worth about five dollars in our money, so a pretty and attractive Zulu maiden is worth from forty to fifty dollars. A man of any other nationality is at liberty to buy them as if he were a Zulu. A man may have as many wives as he has cows to purchase them with. Their marital laws are very strict and worthy the recognition of many races graded higher in the scale of civilization.

It was the intention to bring this group to America to join my show, but owing to their enormous success in London they were not brought until early in the spring of 1881. After their arrival in this country they were visited by many African missionaries. In this way the whereabouts of two missionary families supposed to have been killed during their war were ascertained.

IX

TRAINING ANIMALS AND PERFORMERS

The awe inspired in the breast of the average countryman by the "daring act" of the lion-tamer is well founded. Long years of familiarity with this feature of the show business have not served to dampen my sense of admiration for the grit of a man who does not flinch to enter the cage of any fierce animal and prove man's mastery over the brute creation. In justification of this sentiment I have only to point to the professional animal-trainers of long experience. If there is one of them who does not bear on his body the marks of his encounters with his savage pupils he is a rare exception to the rule. The whole fraternity is physically ragged and tattered—torn and mutilated by the teeth of beasts they have trained. I have never ceased to marvel that men will deliberately choose to follow the subjugation of animals as a profession, particularly when they have only to look upon the veterans in the business to behold a ghastly and discouraging array of ragged ears, of split noses, of shredded limbs and lacerated trunks. But at these substantial warnings the novice and the past-master in the art of "working" animals alike only laugh and scout the idea of danger or dread. At least, this is their attitude in private conversation, when not attempting to make an impression on the minds of their auditors.

If all animals subjected to training were even in disposition, and did not have their ugly moods, the same as their human lords, the principal element of danger to trainers would be removed. Unfortunately, it is the universal testimony of the men who have devoted their lives to the training of fierce creatures that the most docile, obedient and friendly carnivorous creature is sure to be in an ugly humor sooner or later, and then is the great time of test. These sudden, unexpected and abnormal moods in the animals handled are responsible for having sent scores of good trainers to early graves.

THE PERILS OF A TRAINER'S LIFE

Let us suppose an animal to be even-tempered. This means he is always at his maximum of ugliness. He shows every day the worst that is in him, and the trainer knows the limit of what to expect in that direction. But animals are not constituted that way. They are generally on their good behavior, or at least have an astonishing reserve of ferocity to be vented on the hapless trainer when the day of abnormal ill-humor comes—provided, of course, the trainer is not discerning enough to detect the gathering storm.

In no other profession is eternal vigilance so surely the price of safety. There is nothing more certain than the fate of the trainer who once relaxes the intensity of his vigilance. Just as surely as he throws himself off guard the animal he is working will get him. This is an accepted rule among those who train and perform with animals. Of course, it often appears to the outsider that the men handling ferocious animals are off their guard and nonchalantly indifferent to the creatures in the cage. But the experienced animal-man knows better. The fact that a trainer or performer allows two or three lions to pass behind his back might seem to indicate that watchfulness is not necessary, and that creatures naturally ferocious may at least sometimes be put absolutely on their good behavior—trusted with a man's life without being subjected to the slightest surveillance. In nine cases of every ten a momentary adherence to this departure would result in disaster.

WHERE STEADY NERVES ARE IN DEMAND

The best men of the profession I have ever known have all assured me that the stupidest animal is quicker to detect the slightest relaxation of a trainer's watchfulness than is the keenest trainer to observe the abnormal and hostile mood of his pupils. For this reason no trainer or performer should be allowed to enter a cage unless he is in a normal frame of mind—sober, in full command of all his faculties, and not subject to any distracting influence.

Most of the tragedies of the profession are chargeable to a disobedience to this rule. The unflinching brute instinct at once detects the fact that the trainer has let down the bars of his mind, and then comes the long-delayed attack!

Never do I tire of watching a good trainer work his animals, especially those fresh from their native wilds and full of snap and spirit. What sport more splendid and royal can man imagine than that of placing his life in imminent peril for the purpose of putting a wild beast—a creature far his superior in strength, in swiftness of movement, and in all-round fighting power—in complete subjection to his will! It is truly a sport for a king!

CAPTURED ANIMALS PREFERRED TO CAGE-BORN

The only universal rule for working animals recognized by all trainers is this: First, *show* the creature what you wish done; then *make* him do it. Easily said, but sometimes almost impossible in practice. I have yet to find any other line of human effort demanding such unwearying patience and application, shifty tact and unflagging alertness. All of these mental qualities are brought into activity during every moment that a trainer is working his animals. And not for an instant may he safely slacken his courage or control. A stout heart is his only safety. To go into a cage in a state of fear is recognized among these men as a foolhardy undertaking.

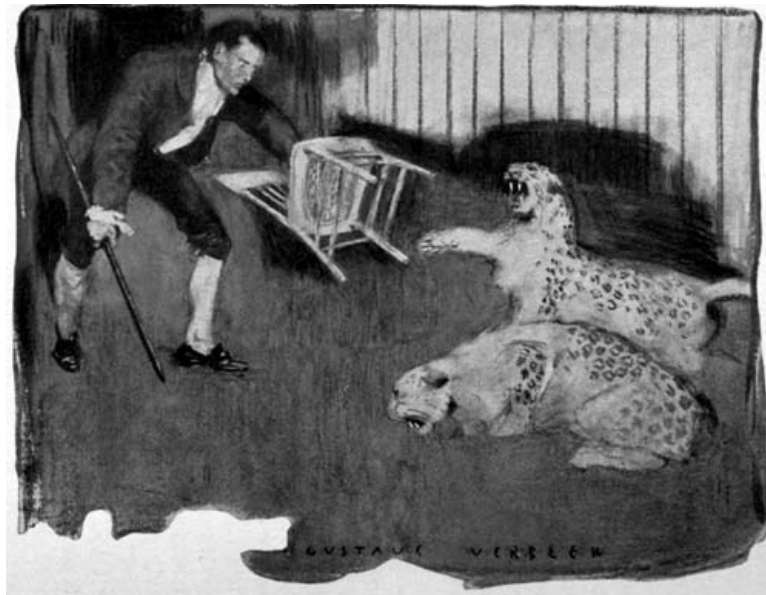
My observation is that trainers almost universally prefer captured animals to those born in captivity, so far as working purposes are concerned. This preference is founded on practical experience—for your animal trainer is little inclined to theorize or experiment in his work. The answer which my trainers have invariably returned to questions on this point of animal nature has been: The wild animal is afraid of man, recognizes him as a strange, dangerous enemy, and is willing to make a safe retreat from him. The carnivorous beast born in captivity is accustomed to the daily sight of man, and has not the wholesome and instinctive fear of him that dwells in the breast of the free-born denizen of the jungle. On the other hand, the cage-born creature seems to retain all the mean, treacherous and savage traits of its race.

Then the trainers declare that the jungle-reared animals are more intelligent and active, and therefore make better performers. This I have no reason to doubt. Leopards are the least in

favor among trainers, and the latter prefer to undertake the education of lions rather than tigers, as the former have more stability of disposition, and lack the element of treachery which seems so universally a characteristic of cat nature.

THE EDUCATION OF A YOUNG JAGUAR

The first active step which a trainer takes in the education of an animal which has never been handled is to test its temper. I recall very distinctly watching an excellent trainer working a leopard and a jaguar from start to finish. No man had ever been into the cage along with these vicious brutes before "Frenchy," as we called this crack trainer, laughingly took up his tools and slipped gracefully through the iron door which closed behind him with a sharp bang. Realizing that these animals, which were full grown, belonged to the most spiteful and treacherous of the cat kind, I scrutinized the face of Frenchy to see if I could possibly detect the slightest sign of inward anxiety or disturbance. Not the slightest evidence could I see to indicate that he approached his dangerous task with a particle more excitement than any business man feels in going to his daily work.



THE EARLY STEPS IN TRAINING WILD ANIMALS.

As he slipped into the cage he thrust before him an ordinary kitchen chair of light, hard wood. This was held in his left hand by gripping two of the central spindles of the back, thereby obtaining an excellent purchase which enabled him easily to hold the chair outstretched with its legs pointed directly at the animals. In his right hand he carried a short iron training-rod. The only other article which he used in his first lesson was a stout, movable bracket, which could be instantly hooked upon any of the horizontal bars which extended the length of the cage in front.

The instant the trainer faced his pupils there was a regular feline explosion—a medley of snarls, growls and hisses. And the way those spotted paws slapped and cuffed the rounds of the extended chair which served as a shield to Frenchy's legs was something to be remembered. Never before had I seen such a startling exhibition of feline quickness as in this preliminary skirmish between master and pupils. The latter's claws seemed to be everywhere in a moment and played a lively tattoo on the shield and against the point of the rod with which the trainer protected himself. During all this excitement the trainer was as calm as if standing safely outside the cage. However, he did make some lively thrusts with his rod as the leopard attempted to dash under the legs of the chair.

While one of the beasts was engaged in carrying on an offensive warfare, the other would invariably attempt to sneak behind the trainer. How alert the latter was to the movements of the creature which apparently claimed little of his attention was impressed on me by the fact that every time the crouching animal attempted to steal past the trainer he was met with the quick, sidewise thrusts of the prod, which sent him back spitting and hissing into the corner.

THE LEOPARDS AT KINDERGARTEN

In less than half an hour the leopard and the jaguar seemed to realize that they, and not the man, were on the defensive. Their savage dashes were less frequent, and they were more inclined to crouch close to the floor and lash their tails in sullen defiance. Then it was that Frenchy began his first attempt at teaching them. Hooking the movable bracket upon one of the lower rounds about three feet from the floor of the cage, he made a forward movement

toward the animals, veering a little to the side opposite the bracket. The creatures had long been attempting to get past him, and now their opportunity had apparently come.

Together they made a rush to run under the projecting bracket. Quick as a flash, however, the trainer was back again in his old place, and the head of the foremost animal struck the rounds of the chair. This checked the leopard's progress for a moment, but the creature was not given a jab of the rod as before. Instead, the chair was slightly withdrawn, with the result that the spotted cat instantly bounded upon the narrow bracket—precisely the result at which the trainer had been aiming.

Before the leopard was fully aware of what was transpiring, Frenchy reached forth his training-rod and rubbed it caressingly along the creature's back from head to tail. Of course the animal struck out spitefully with its paw, but the blows were received by the chair and did no harm, while the trainer had been able to bestow upon his ferocious pupil a caressing touch of approval.

Even at that early stage in the education of the animal I fancied I could see an understanding of this commendatory stroke. Certainly within a week this sign was clearly understood, and never did one of the animals leap upon the bracket without receiving this token of approval. Before Frenchy came out of the cage on the occasion of this first experience with these two creatures his chair was splintered beyond repair. Backing out as deftly as he had entered, he leaned up against one of the posts in the winter quarters and remarked:

"Those cats will make good performers. They've got just enough fight in them. I don't mind working a leopard that's been captured, but I don't want anything to do with cats that have been born in a cage. By the time an animal has cuffed one chair to pieces I can generally size him up and get at his disposition. I don't mind a creature that's ready for war right at the start. The sulky, sullen brutes are the ones that keep a trainer in a perpetual state of suspicion."

HOW THEY PUNISH UNRULY PUPILS

Most of the training is done while the animals are in winter quarters, the cages being generally arranged in a semicircle or along the wall, while the center of the main room is occupied by a big ring or circular space inclosed by a very strong and high fence of iron bars. At first the animals are worked in their cages, later in the ring. Lounging about in front of the cages is a man with a long iron rod having a sharp point. The duty of this guard is to keep watch of all the cages where animals are being worked, and to be ready to come to the instant relief of any of the trainers who happen to get into trouble. Occasionally he assists them from the outside in various ways; as, for instance, by slipping his rod between the bars and heading off an animal which is attempting to sneak out of doing his trick. In the main, however, he is there to do heroic service in times of emergency.

Should a lion, tiger or any other savage creature get a trainer down or fasten its teeth or claws into his body, the watchful guard on the outside is expected to plunge his spear into the animal, or get into the cage with hot irons, if necessary. The use of heated irons is, of course, only justifiable in cases of extreme peril, but more than one trainer's life has been saved by recourse to this weapon, which quickly cows an infuriated creature which has had a taste of blood when nothing else will avail.

PUNISHMENT OF TREACHEROUS BEASTS

I have already cited one cardinal rule recognized by all animal workers. There is one other just as universally accepted by the fraternity of trainers. This is, that any animal which has inflicted injury on a trainer must be punished until completely subjugated. This punishment must be given, if possible, by the one whom the creature has injured.

No doubt more than one trainer who has been half killed by a treacherous animal has been inclined to overlook this chastisement after recovering from his injuries. This, however, is regarded as professional treachery, for it is practically certain that the rebellious animal that is not chastised in this manner will kill the next man who enters its cage. To neglect to show the brute which has injured you that you are its master is therefore, according to the ethics of the profession, a deed of cowardice, and a sure way of bringing disaster upon any other person having the hardihood to trust himself in the power of an animal that has "downed" its trainer.

Of course some trainers are killed outright, and others are so disabled in severe encounters that they are absolutely unable to continue in the service. Then the duty of inflicting the chastisement falls upon a new man, and you may rest assured he never looks forward to the job with any particular pleasure. There is but one course, however, and that is to beat the creature until it howls for mercy. Occasionally an animal famed for its splendid performances is suddenly and without any apparent reason retired from the program. As a

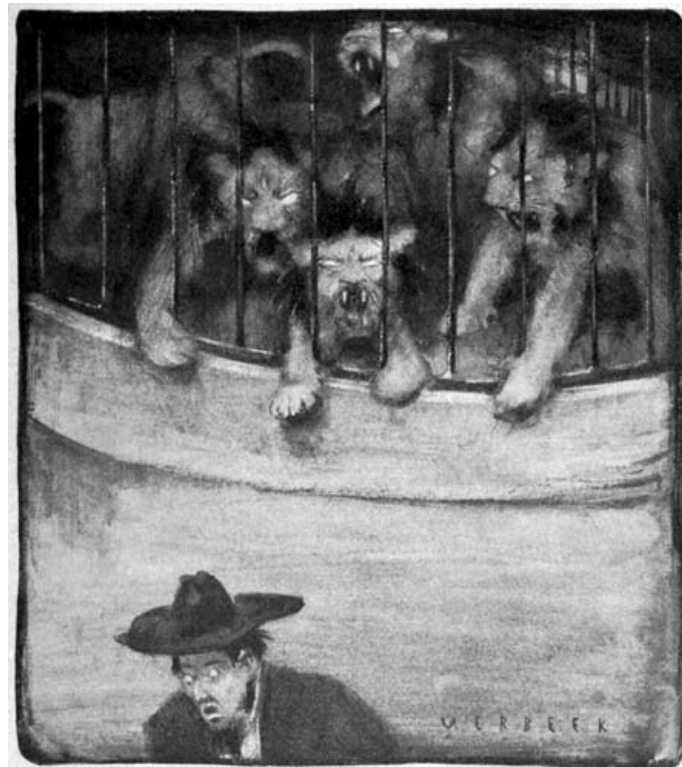
performing animal is worth many times as much as one that has not been trained, this would seem a strange and unbusinesslike course on the part of the management.

The outsider would immediately ask: "Why not continue the performance with this animal so long as it does not kill a man or conduct itself more savagely than many others of its kind which have the confidence of trainers and performers?"

The answer is very simple: The man handling the animal and knowing well its character has been able to discern a radical change in its disposition. He declares that the brute is no longer to be trusted, and any wise and humane showman who receives this kind of a warning from a reliable and efficient trainer or performer will retire the brute in question to a cage and leave it there. On the other hand, some animals which have tasted blood, and even "killed their man," are continued in the service. Why? Because the trainer who goes in to chastise them believes that he has been able to beat the animal into a permanent state of penitence, humility and wholesome fear, and to effectually obliterate the sense of triumph in the mind of the creature.

A SINGLE-HAND FIGHT WITH FIVE LIONS

Occasionally a foolish and intermeddling spectator will endeavor to show his brilliancy by experimenting with the animals. More than once this tendency has well-nigh cost a performer his life. I recall one instance when a performer was doing an act in a cage containing five lions. He had just begun his work, and the lions had taken their positions. In the middle of the cage, facing him, was one large lion, and at either end sat two others. Of course a big crowd had collected in front of the cage and was pressing heavily against the guard ropes. Suddenly a countryman of the smart kind was seized with a desire to distinguish himself and attract a little attention. Slipping inside the ropes, he stooped down and took up the ragged little dog that was crouching at his heels. The instant he lifted the cur up to the level of the cage every lion gave out a roar and made a wild leap for the yellow mongrel.



"EVERY LION GAVE A ROAR AND MADE A WILD LEAP."

For a few moments the performer was completely lost to view, buried underneath the writhing bodies of the infuriated lions. Of course the animal men outside made a rush for the cage door, but before they could reach it with their irons in hand the plucky performer was on his feet again and fighting his own battle. A tooth or a claw had split his nose and upper lip, and the tattered condition of his clothing indicated that he had suffered severely. Although his face was bathed in blood, he stood his ground and plied his rod on the heads and noses of the growling beasts until they were momentarily driven back. But they had tasted blood and were furious. Before he could reach the door they were at him again, and in the onslaught his right arm and hip were frightfully lacerated. His grit, however, was indomitable, and he struck and jabbed right and left like a gladiator. Finally the howls of pain from the lions revealed the fact that he was getting the upper hand of them, and at last they were driven howling and whining into the corners of the cage and he backed out of the

door. No sooner was he safely outside the cage than he became unconscious.

It was a good thing for the countryman whose folly had stirred up the lions that he contrived to make his escape from the grounds before the circus men got hold of him. This incident is simply typical of hundreds of others perhaps more interesting and exciting. It will, however, serve to indicate the constant perils that surround the trainer or performer, many of which arise from sources over which he has no control.

I have often been asked if the training of animals does not quite generally involve considerable cruelty. This, it seems to me, may fairly be answered in the negative, although one exception should be made. Though great firmness must be shown in working wild animals, and frequent and severe chastisements are called for, there is nothing essentially cruel in the method of training. This, however, cannot be said of the methods generally followed by the trainers of horses.

I can never forget how forcibly and painfully this exception was brought home to me. In company with Mr. Costello I had brought from Texas and New Mexico a herd of beautiful pinto ponies, or bronchos. They were handsome piebald creatures, and apparently very intelligent, although desperately wild. From a herd of about forty we picked out sixteen to be educated for the ring. About ten miles out of Chicago we put up a convenient stable and engaged one of the most celebrated trainers in the United States. In the course of a few weeks the animals became accustomed to having men about them, and then I told the trainer to begin his work.

I had never watched a trainer work horses for the ring, and I was greatly interested to see how it was done. The method was so cruel that I told the trainer if he could not invent a method which inflicted less torture he might quit and we would have the horses sold. He had not the ingenuity or patience to devise a more humane method, and consequently retired from the field, leaving his assistant to work out the problem under my directions. This we finally succeeded in doing with fair results, but the method followed by the trainer is a more general one.

TEACHING A HORSE THE TWO-STEP

In teaching a horse to dance, the master would strike the poor animal above the fetlock, and this would produce a painful swelling. The result was that in a very short time the motion of the stick, in time with the music, would cause the horse to raise its foot. Before the swollen limb was healed the performance was repeated so frequently that the animal did not need the incentives of fear and pain to cause him to keep step with the music.

Jumping the rope is taught in nearly the same manner, a chain being attached to two long sticks swinging back and forth, striking the horse just below the knee. As a man was stationed on each side of him, the poor horse had no way of retreat, and was compelled to jump in order to escape the blow from the swinging bar. A horse is taught to roll an object or to push open a door in a very simple manner, and without cruelty. One man stands in front of the horse and another behind him, the three being stationed in a passageway too narrow for the horse to turn. After standing a bit in this way, the man behind the horse gently slaps him on the back and urges him forward. Instinctively the horse pushes against the man in front, and the latter quickly moves along. In this manner the horse soon learns that by pushing against an object in front of him it may readily be forced out of his way. An intelligent spectator can always tell by the attitude of a horse toward its master whether it has been ill treated. If fear seems to be the governing motive it may be depended upon that the horse has been harshly dealt with; on the other hand, the very nature of the trick performed by the animal goes far to indicate whether fear or intelligence has been the main factor in acquiring the accomplishment displayed. If you see an animal open a trunk or drawer and pick out some article for which it has been sent, you may know that this feat is the result of an appeal to the creature's intelligence and not to its fear, for no amount of punishment could ever teach a thing of this kind.

RING PERFORMERS TRAINED WITH A DERRICK

Ring horses are generally irritated when the rider first stands upon their backs. Probably the action of the foot pulls the short hair; but the irritation ceases in a short time. Riders are first trained to do their tricks on the ground. When complete masters of themselves on the ground they are put upon the back of a horse having an even gait and a reliable disposition. To the performer's belt, at the back, is attached a stout rope which runs to the end of a strong arm or beam running out from a post set in the center of the ring. This arm is swung around by a helper, who keeps the loose end of the rope in his hand in order to regulate the slack and prevent the young performer from having a heavy fall should he lose his footing. Again and again the rider is pulled up just in time to prevent him from falling under the hoofs of his horse. He is swung forward, dangling from the arm of the derrick, until he regains his balance and his footing upon the back of his horse.

To describe in detail how every feat and specialty is taught would require a volume, but on general principles it may be said that all tricks are first learned on the ground, or at a safe and minimum elevation. Then when the performer has attained absolute self-confidence and is wholly without fear he is allowed to swing higher, until he finally reaches the height required in the public performance.

CIRCUS PEOPLE A LONG-LIVED CLASS

In the old days it was the general custom for the circus proprietors to put their own children into the business, teaching them to do everything in the acrobatic line, from bare-back riding to trapeze and bar work and slack-rope and tight-rope walking. Many of them were also skilled musicians and could play several instruments in the band.

At the present day many persons not familiar with the inside life of the circus will no doubt be horrified to think that a man wealthy enough to own a big circus and menagerie would train his sons, and particularly his daughters, for the ring. Let me say on this score that I could name a long list of families in which this custom prevailed, and must say that the private and domestic life of these people was far above that of the average families in fashionable society. Almost invariably the members of each family were devoted to each other and were refined and intelligent. Many of the young women of these families married wealthy and cultured men, and retired from the circus business to become the mistresses of refined and happy homes. Many old showmen whose children were star performers carried accomplished teachers with them on the road, and the children were as well educated as if the entire time had been spent attending school.

Their training and work in the ring not only afforded them splendid physical exercise, but taught them patience, application, alertness, and many other valuable lessons which made their progress very rapid when it came to their lessons from books. It is a fact worthy of notice that the circus people are a long-lived race. I can name almost a score of famous performers who have attained an age of more than eighty years. This would tend to show that circus work is quite as healthy as any other. I may add that the charge so frequently brought against showmen, that the training of children for the circus ring is cruel, is not well founded.

While I have seen many instances of cruelty in this connection, there is nothing in the work itself which necessitates hardship or harshness. In fact, quite the reverse is true.

The child is the sooner trained into an ability to do a dangerous and daring feat through gentleness and encouragement. In other words, the more they overcome their fear in every direction the better able are they to swing from one trapeze to another, to walk the tight rope at a dizzy height, or to turn somersaults from the back of a galloping horse.

X

MOBS, CYCLONES AND ADVENTURES

In a lifetime spent with the circus I have learned the heart of the people. I have felt the pulse of the multitudes who have made the history of the West. This insight into conditions of things in the West brought me many and varied experiences, some of which were rough and severe. They had their interesting sides, however, and many of them are worth the telling, if for no other reason than to throw light upon the character of the people with whom we had to deal. That the show was appreciated by these frontiersmen there can be no doubt.

In the earlier days it was the custom to have a concert in a side tent before and after the regular performance in the circus. At one place where we stopped the people paid their money and went in and enjoyed the concert; but so well pleased were they that they insisted upon a repetition of the performance. At the point of their pistols they compelled the poor minstrels to continue their antics nearly all night, until ready to drop from sheer exhaustion.

FORCIBLE ARGUMENT WITH A CITY MARSHAL

At one time, while in Texas, we were doing an act called An Indian Chase for a Wife, in which we used several guns with blank cartridges. The act opened with a lively fusillade and the reports brought a great crowd to the tent. The Texans appeared to come from every direction, many of them with revolvers ready cocked. The fact that many of them had been drinking greatly increased the perils of our situation. After careful consideration of these facts I decided not to give a night performance, and ordered an early supper so as to be able to load by daylight and, if possible, get out of town before nightfall. The seats were soon

taken out and the side wall was dropped.

I sat in the cook tent, eating dinner, when a great crowd suddenly surrounded us. The leader, who claimed to be the town marshal, had his revolver pointed directly at my head, and I could see by the inflamed condition of his features that he, like the rest, had been drinking heavily. Realizing my danger, I knocked the pistol down and it went off between my feet. This was taken as the signal for a rush toward me, the crowd evidently thinking I had shot at the marshal. The noise attracted the concourse that had just left the circus and they drew up in line with revolvers cocked. A slaughter of showmen was clearly imminent.

I leaped upon a box and tried to pacify the infuriated Texans, while receiving, at the same time, their abuse. I was entirely ignorant of the cause of the disturbance and demanded to be informed of the reason of the uprising. Getting no reply, I appealed to them as law-abiding citizens, and for the first time in my life this appeal was useless.

By this time our entire force had collected, and as the show was the "First Hippodrome" and altogether the largest circus ever in the south, we had at least five hundred attachés, three hundred of whom were powerful fellows and well armed. This was the first time that I had ever thought of permitting my people to fight. Our gang was headed by my boss canvasman, "Put." I momentarily expected the attack, but just as I got down from the box a detective who was hired to travel with the show rushed upon the scene and yelled: "In the name of the United States Government, whose officer I am, I command peace!" It was surprising to see that crowd scatter, and certainly this was a master-stroke on the part of the detective. He earned more that day than I ever paid the agency for his services. In ten minutes all was calm and peaceful.

BREAKING CAMP UNDER A HOT RIFLE FIRE

In 1859 two Philadelphia friends of mine were going to make a trip South, and offered me big inducements to join them, which I accepted. We started from Philadelphia, making our way slowly through the different States, with the usual routine of wagon-show life. No event of importance occurred until we reached Missouri. It was a most foolish trip to undertake, for the people were then so embittered by the John Brown raid that we were in constant danger. First came a tirade of the fiercest abuse and this soon led into a regular knock-down fight, which speedily developed into a shooting-scraper lasting several hours. We were compelled to defend ourselves by every method at our command. Our men were marshalled inside the tent and armed with long, heavy stakes which looked like guns and were really formidable weapons. The wagons and other available goods were grouped in a circle, and behind this pioneer fortification the men paced with their long stakes at their shoulders like the guns of sentries. In the dim light thrown by the torches they certainly looked like armed men. So formidable was our appearance the enemy thought us armed with Winchesters. By putting on this bold front the canvasmen were able to get all the loose stuff into the wagons, leaving the tents standing until the last. Finally these also were taken down and loaded. Then came the most perilous undertaking of all. To get our horses from the stables seemed at first an absolute impossibility. It was the custom, at that time, to stable our horses wherever space could be found for them, and as Granby was only a small village, nearly every stable contained one or more of our horses. We divided the men into two gangs, one of which was left to guard the property on the grounds.

Our show was situated in the public square and was thus surrounded by houses and stores, all of which were filled with armed men. By the dim light we could see our enemies running from house to house with guns in their hands. The second detachment of our men was sent to gather in the scattered horses. And a lively time they had accomplishing that business! Shot after shot was fired at them while the horses were being driven into the corral. Fortunately, however, neither man nor horse was hit.

AMBUSHED AND SHOT AT ON THE ROAD

We remained quiet until daylight, keeping constant guard, for we feared an attack at any moment; but toward daybreak we could see that the ranks of our enemy were thinning out. After careful deliberation I gave the order to march. Just as the first team was leaving the square the sharpshooters opened a vicious fire from the windows and doors of houses and stores. Practically every shot brought down a horse. Strange to say, we could not discover that a single man had been struck. Our men instantly fell into line and began firing together, but as we had only pistols the fight was against us. As our enemies were safely concealed in stores and buildings, only a few exposing themselves to our pistols, we fought at great odds. However, we kept up a rapid fusillade, and under this heavy fire we managed to get out into the open country, leaving our dead horses on the village square. Once safely outside and beyond the range of the enemy we paused for roll-call and found that three of our men were dead. This put the spirit of fight into every man in the company, and there was almost an eagerness to have another encounter.

Proceeding cautiously on our way, we came to a stream spanned by an old-fashioned bridge. The first chariot being a very heavy one, the bridge was carried down, throwing the wagon, horses, driver and men into the water twenty feet below. Soon firing was again heard, and two more horses fell. This proved my suspicion that the beams had been cut for the purpose of wrecking us and of trapping us where we could be slaughtered. The next shots brought several of my brave men to the ground—dead in their tracks! The enemy, being in ambush, had us at great disadvantage; but my men were so thoroughly aroused and so fearless that we soon drove our assailants back. This last plucky onslaught won the day for us, although at sad cost.

After a delay of several hours, during which we repaired the bridge, we were again able to proceed on our way. Hardly were we fairly started when a new difficulty was encountered in the form of big trees felled across the roadway. This work had been cleverly done by the enemy in order to retard our progress, and we had to stop and remove these obstacles before we could pass. The time lost by the first attack, by the bridge engagement and subsequent delay threw us behind a whole day.

Although the people were all anxious to see our show they had not a friendly word for us. Frequently large crowds would force their way into the tents, pointing a cocked revolver at the doorkeeper's head. Finally, however, we managed to reach the Arkansas line with comparatively small loss of life. I am surprised that we were ever able to do so, because of the extreme bitterness which then prevailed toward all Northerners.

At length we came to a town called Bucksport, the scene of the hanging described in one of Mr. Opie Read's short stories. Nearly every man at the tavern was ready for any kind of excitement. They started the quarrel by accusing our men of stealing their hats. A fight quickly ensued; and we were forced again to defend ourselves by resort to arms. At that time we were playing Mazeppa in which we used a number of dull swords. These were instantly placed in the hands of performers and canvassmen who knew how to wield them, and the result was a terrific hand-to-hand encounter in which we came off victorious.

At Licksillet, another place on our line, the principal building was a log tavern. We put up our tents, but shortly afterward noticed several old men with long-bladed knives cutting slits in the canvas. The canvassmen, on seeing the tent walls slashed, vigorously protested. At once bullets began to fly from the corner of the tavern. One of our men was killed at the outset of this mêlée.

Previous to this episode our men had become pretty well discouraged and would gladly have had peace, but this last outrage seemed to arouse them to a perfect frenzy. Instead of shooting they went for the gang of roughs with clubs, stakes and every other kind of weapon they could find. The encounter was a terrific one. Our men knocked the desperadoes senseless and seized their guns, and in a very few minutes we were much better prepared to defend ourselves. I think during the battle our men seized fully thirty rifles. Shotguns were seldom used in this section of the country. Most unexpectedly we succeeded in getting some recruits. A few Northern men who had come into the place to settle permanently offered their services for our protection.

THE STUDIES OF THE STUDENT TO THE CLOWN

In early days many of the young countrymen would be seized with a desire to become "actors," as they called the acrobats. This led the circus performers into the scheme of selling the ambitious wights something to make them limber. A big trade of this kind was carried on by selling an oil made from very cheap grease, the innocent victims being thoroughly convinced that they would come out full-fledged "actors" by the use of this lubricant. Frequently some young fellow would apply for the position of student to the clown. When he presented himself for tuition, the paint prepared for his make-up would be mixed with grease and thoroughly rubbed on his face and limbs. He would then be dressed in an old pair of tights and made to enter the ring, where he would be ordered by the ringmaster to "act up." He would be so embarrassed at this demand that he could not speak, whereupon the ringmaster would lay the whip upon his practically naked limbs, telling him that it was the only way by which to learn the acrobatic art.

Another trick was to toss the students to the clown in a strong blanket of canvas. I can now point to an ex-member of Congress who was thus tossed until sore and exhausted.

Among the various performances on our circus program one feat was that of placing a large stone on a man's breast, as he lay on his back, and then striking the stone with a sledge-hammer so as to break the rock. The audience was invited to furnish a man to break this stone, and although one would naturally suppose that such an act would hurt the performer on whose breast the stone rested, he would, in fact, receive no shock whatever. But one day, while exhibiting at a small town, a drunken countryman, in attempting to break the stone with a sledge-hammer, missed his mark entirely, and the poor fellow received a blow that nearly killed him. He was obliged to lie in bed and have medical aid.

The following day we were compelled to move on to the next town, as advertised, which was a keen rival of the village we were just leaving. Our principal actor being unable to perform, we came near being mobbed, for this rival town did not relish the idea that its competitor had witnessed features which it could not see. All our remonstrances were in vain; and we were finally compelled to allow the injured man to quit his bed and actually go through the performance. These rough countrymen would certainly have kept their word had we not complied with their wishes, and it would have fared very badly with us. However, the sick man went through his part as well as he could, and received the full approbation of the audience.

From this town we proceeded to a large Indian encampment. There we obtained permits from John Ross, Chief of the Cherokee Nation, and erected our tents. The government had just made an Indian payment to this tribe, all the money being in twenty-dollar gold pieces. Neither the circus treasurer nor any one in the community could change these coins for money of smaller denomination, and we were almost in despair. Meantime some of the Indians climbed into a tree, seated themselves comfortably in the branches, and prepared to witness the entire performance free of charge. This exasperated me, and, seizing an ax, I commenced hewing at the tree. Instantly I found myself the center of an incipient riot, as there was a law in the Territory forbidding a white person to cut down a tree. John Ross, however, quickly came to my rescue and saved my scalp by an adroit appeal to his people.

We adopted the plan of admitting the Indians in squads, charging them a dollar each and taking a double-eagle from every twentieth man. The Indians seemed to enjoy the performance hugely, but were highly excited by the tricks of the magician, whom they regarded as a supernatural being.

DEVOTIONAL SERVICES UPSET BY A DEMON

At a certain town in Missouri a laughable circumstance occurred. Here, for some time, a revival had been in progress. The revivalists had been abusing the circus, its surroundings and influences, and had tried to prevent us from exhibiting. However, we secured a lot adjoining the church and opened our doors. John Robinson, the chief proprietor of our show, was one of the best equestrians that ever lived, and at that time was introducing what he called his Demon Act. In this act he dressed and made up as nearly as possible like a demon. While riding his four horses at breakneck pace around the ring, he would utter a series of the most ferocious yells imaginable, at the same time working himself up to a great pitch of excitement, until, as the auditors frequently expressed it, he "looked like his Satanic Majesty himself."

On this occasion, at the close of his act, he jumped from his horses, ran out of the dressing-room and boldly entered the church, exclaiming in the stentorian voice for which he was famed: "I am victorious! I am victorious!" The effect was magical. The revivalist had been eloquently exhorting on the subject of the Prince of Darkness, and the overwrought congregation took but one glance at the theatrical Satan, and then, leaping madly through the windows and doors of the little church, broke for the woods.

At Council Bluffs, Iowa, we had exhibited to a large afternoon audience. The day was extremely hot and sultry, and in the evening, just as the people were seating themselves on the benches, a cyclone struck us without the slightest warning. In a twinkling the poles, seats and canvas were being hurled through the air in all directions. At that time we used an inflammable liquid for illuminating the tent, and this ignited and added the horror of fire to the scene.

THE WILD BEASTS LOOSE IN THE BIG CROWD

In those days our menagerie was exhibited in the same tent used for our circus performance, the seats being arranged on one side and the animal cages on the other. Imagine the scene! Several thousand terrorized and screaming men, women and children rushed wildly in all directions, the combustible tents and paraphernalia were in flames, and above all could be heard the roar of the terror-stricken animals, beating madly against their iron bars. Two of the largest dens had been placed together and the partition bars withdrawn, so as to form one big cage, wherein the lions and tigers were exercised by their keepers. The fire burned the woodwork so that this double cage came apart and liberated the ferocious animals. These lions and tigers escaped among the people and added a new element to the general pandemonium of terror. Words cannot convey an adequate idea of that awful moment.

As the tents and cages slowly burned out, total darkness came upon us. In the excitement, one of the men in the audience happened to jump on a crouching lion and yelled that he was in the clutches of the beast; however, the animal was as thoroughly frightened as the man. Some of the animals were loose all night, and one Royal Bengal tiger disappeared altogether. No trace whatever was found of his remains when the debris was examined, and

he probably escaped to the nearest woods.

Near to the tent was one of those prickly osage hedges, and into this hundreds of people ran, becoming so entangled in the thorny network that it was almost impossible for them to extricate themselves. Many were badly lacerated by the brambles. There was no sleep in Council Bluffs that night.

Several of our wagons disappeared and one carriage was never afterward found. Four or five horses were lifted and blown into a lot some distance from where they had been stabled. To add still further to the misery that prevailed, the catastrophe ended with a cloud-burst and the earth was fairly deluged, so that in a short time what little remained undestroyed by wind and flame was floating around in a sea of water. Dense darkness prevailed and nothing could be done till dawn. It was then found that the cyclone had done even more damage to the city than we had at first supposed. Though the circus was a complete wreck, it was learned that both the city and its suburbs had suffered severely, and it was considered providential that the performance had attracted so great a concourse of the people from their homes.

THE MIDNIGHT STAMPEDE OF THE ELEPHANTS

When we exhibited in Kansas the country was in such a state of terror, resulting from the "border warfare," that all the towns and villages had organized military companies. At each camping place we were obliged to join these home guards, for protection. One day, while we were exhibiting at Lawrence, a detachment of militia encamped about a mile from us, the posts and guards surrounding the entire city. I had with me a friend from my old home at Delavan, Wisconsin. He was a merchant and had never seen any of the hardships of the camp or of circus life, and all this rough experience was new to him.

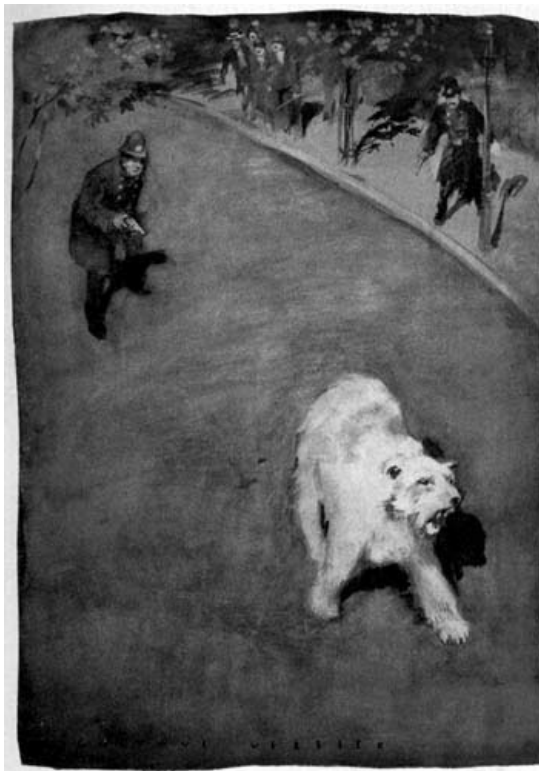
As we were obliged to travel through the country for weeks without daring to take off our clothes, I had a wagon snugly covered and this served as a sort of sleeping berth. In this wagon my friend and I spent our nights. At our feet slept a faithful watch dog. On this particular night we were sound asleep, when the dog made a sudden lunge, jumping upon us and instantly awakening us. The moon was hid behind a cloud, and it was, for the moment, very dark. As I jumped to my feet, I indistinctly saw what appeared to me to be a body of men coming towards us. I fired several shots from the big pistols I always carried swung from my belt; but still the mass came forward. I soon heard a most pitiful wail of grief, and then I discovered that I had shot into a herd of elephants which had stampeded.

The firing, together with the noise, alarmed the militia around the city, who, thinking the border ruffians were upon us, came to our assistance. It was some time before I could convince them of the real state of affairs, as the elephants had made a wild escape and consternation reigned. The militia hunted for the men who fired the guns, threatening dire vengeance for alarming the post, but after a full explanation we succeeded in pacifying them. Then we had a long chase after the stampeded elephants, which were finally captured.

A POLAR BEAR HUNT ON FIFTH AVENUE

One of the most exciting and amusing episodes connected with my career as a showman is that which passed into Gotham history as "the bear hunt on Fifth Avenue." And certainly nothing could be more strange and picturesque than a hot chase after a ferocious polar bear along this aristocratic thoroughfare!

In 1873 there were no polar bears in America, and I thought it would be a good stroke of business to obtain some of these beautiful and imposing animals for my menagerie. Therefore I sent an expedition to the Arctic waters to capture a pair. My men finally succeeded in landing two enormous polars in New York. In the process of shifting them from the shipping-box one of these monsters made his escape, and started on a run down the middle of Fifth Avenue. His course was marked by general consternation. Children playing on the streets, seeing an immense white bear lumbering toward them at full speed, screamed and fled in every direction for shelter; horses, frightened at this unusual spectacle, became unmanageable and ran away; nurse-maids, wheeling their small charges, were stricken helpless with terror, and even the street dogs fled howling down the cross streets and into business houses. Everywhere disorder and terror reigned supreme; the streets became suddenly deserted, and one would have supposed that a plague had instantly depopulated the city. The police were called out from every adjacent station as soon as it became known that a white bear was loose in the streets of New York. The poor animal, unaccustomed to the strange medley of metropolitan civilization, was more frightened than those who fled before him.



A BEAR LOOSE IN FIFTH AVENUE.

Finally, by the aid of the police and some of the braver citizens, the beast was driven into a basement of a private residence, and there shot. Had the people only realized it, the creature could easily have been captured alive; but fear reigned in every heart, from the child to the policeman, and the latter would not consider anything save instant death to the bear. The animal was very valuable and had cost me a large sum of money, not only for its capture but also for its transportation, and I was exceedingly sorry to lose him in this way. I considered myself exceedingly fortunate, however, to escape as easily as I did, for had the bear done any harm I should have had to pay heavy damages. No person fortunate enough to witness the tumult of that exciting scene can ever forget the bear hunt on Fifth Avenue!

AN EQUINE OFFICER OF ARTILLERY

At one time certain towns in Pennsylvania were greatly dreaded by all showmen, from the fact that the "tough" element there predominated, and rarely did a circus escape without a pitched battle with these desperadoes. Mahanoy City was one of the worst of these towns, and on my last visit there nothing but the sound "horse sense" of one of our trained animals saved the show from a conflict the result of which might have been deplorable. I had wired my agent, weeks before, to drop this town from the list, but he had written back that, under favorable circumstances, we were sure of taking about \$10,000 there, and therefore, in accordance with my instructions, the town had been billed.

We had a fair afternoon's business, and at night, judging from the appearance of the house, we ought to have had at least \$5,000 in the treasury. But, as usual in that town, the toughs had simply forced their way in without paying, and, as a consequence, only about \$800 had been taken. On the outside were several hundred hoodlums clamoring for a fight, and I am bound to say that "Old Put," our boss canvasman, and his faithful followers were anxious for the same means of satisfaction, and only refrained from an outbreak because they knew that instant dismissal from my employ would follow any attempt on their part to take the initiative in any trouble.

At last, however, a fight did come off, and a hot one it was, too! Right in the midst of it one of my horses, which had been trained to fire off a cannon from its back, got loose and, fully accoutred, galloped into the thick of the *mélée*. The creature seized the strap which operated the trigger and began firing blank cartridges in every direction. If ever a mob of toughs was frightened it was then! They stopped not upon the order of their going, but fairly flew in all directions.

One of them afterward told a policeman that they could fight any gang of showmen that ever traveled, but when a horse commenced to unload on them with a cannon, he knew it was time to quit.

STORIES OF OLD-TIME SHOWS AND SHOWMEN

Nothing can afford a better idea of the variety and picturesqueness of a showman's life than the medley of odd incidents, of strange experiences and homely happenings that crowd the thought of a veteran when in a reminiscent mood. It is under this kind of inspiration that I have jotted down, in this scrappy and haphazard way, the episodes which sufficiently impressed me at the time of their occurrence to claim frequent rehearsal when talking over the "old days" with other pioneers of the tent and the ring. It is the clowns who in one way or another furnish most material for anecdotes, and the greatest clown America ever saw was Dan Rice, who at one time was the most famous circus performer in America, and, with the exception of John Robinson, the most daring. I have never met a more nervy man; he was without an equal in trying emergencies. He would face a mob at any time and under any circumstances. Besides being a natural fighter he was a natural orator. He had a sonorous, penetrating voice, his enunciation was clear and distinct, and he knew the secret of flattering and delighting his auditors. Dan had many competitors for the patronage of the river towns, the most prominent of whom were two veteran showmen who owned a floating palace. The "Palace" was simply a large boat fitted up as an opera house with the most elegant appointments. It would seat several hundred people and was provided with a complete stage and elaborate sets of scenery. This was towed by a tug called the "James Raymond," on which all the performers roomed and took their meals. They had, besides, a steamer called the "Banjo," on which they gave a minstrel performance.

DAN RICE'S ONE-HORSE SHOW

Dan had formerly been "featured" as one of their attractions; but, some trouble arising, he had left them and started in business on his own account. He experienced the usual ups and downs of a showman's life, finally "went broke," and was at last cleaned out to what he boldly announced as "Dan Rice's One-Horse Show." With this little affair he courageously fought his former associates and did a large business. During the performances he was in the habit of singing a song entitled My One-Horse Show, which took the popular fancy and materially helped him. In this song he told how the opposition had placed false buoys in the river, thereby misleading his pilots and throwing him on sand bars where his craft stuck for days.

For the information of those unacquainted with river travel I will say that buoys are placed by the government in dangerous parts of the river to point out the only safe channel. Now, whether or not the opposition was really guilty of this trick, Dan's verses gained him the sympathy of the people, and with that sympathy came their dollars. In fact, to such an extent did Dan work upon the sympathies of the people that, at many points, they actually refused to allow the opposition boats to land. At some of these places the opposition had themselves incurred the displeasure of the people by touching at the landing only long enough to receive their audiences, and then going into the middle of the river to give their performances, thus avoiding the payment of the license fee.

This lasted through the winter, and when summer came both shows took to their tents and traveled toward New York State. There Dan's enemies succeeded on some charge or other in getting him in jail. While in his cell he composed the song "Blue Eagle Jail," in which he described the jailer, whom he disliked, as "Dot-and-Go-One," from the fact of his having a wooden leg. This song made the one-legged jailer notorious all over the country.

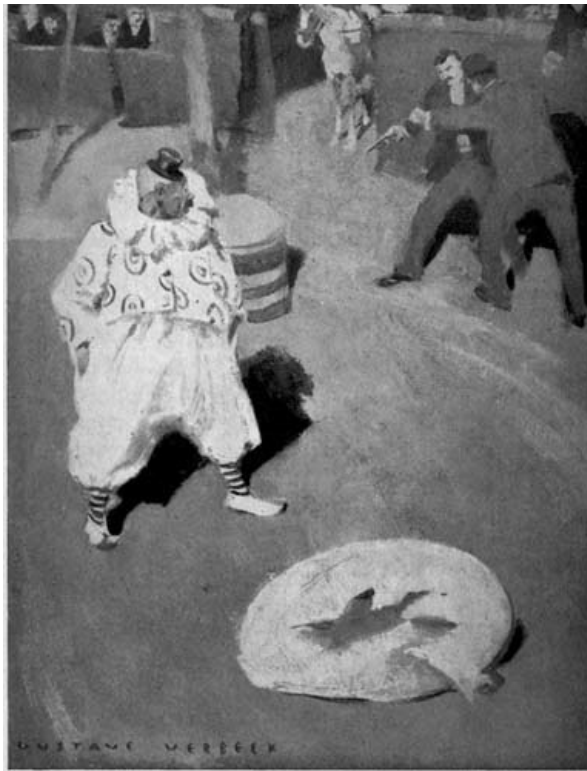
One thing I must say for Dan Rice: He was the only original clown I ever heard—with the single exception of Dilly Fay. The latter was an erratic individual who actually became a clown that he might save money to complete his studies in Paris. Fay was educated and original, but lacked the physical power and deep voice of Rice. I never heard of Fay after he started for Paris, but presume he never reëntered the ring.

TAN-BARK ORATORY AND HARLEQUIN PLUCK

Once when I was with Dan Rice on the river circus we showed at Memphis. At this place a certain fellow was loud in his denunciation of Dan and the show. He was a source of great annoyance to the showman and had also made himself very unpopular by declaiming against slavery. In retaliation Dan entered the ring and returned the compliment in kind. He capped the climax by singing a song in which he described his enemy as playing cards with a negro on a log, and so boldly was this done that the people believed it and the fellow became so exasperated that he threatened to shoot Dan. The clown, however, defied him, and continued ridiculing him until the man was actually obliged to leave the city in a hurry.

Dan also had trouble at Yazoo City, Mississippi. He had, it appears, on a former visit, flogged a prominent man there, and the latter had sworn to shoot him on sight. One night when Dan was clowning in the ring the prominent citizen entered and drew his revolver to kill. A

plucky bystander, however, knocked the iron from his hand and prevented bloodshed. The scene that followed I shall never forget. Dan stood undaunted in the ring, called the man a coward and dared him to shoot. His audience went into ecstasies over such an exhibition of bravery and applauded to the echo. Whereupon Dan, stimulated to further efforts, poured forth a torrent of the most stinging denunciation of cowards that ever fell from mortal lips. I have often wondered where Dan picked up such a command of language.



"A SPECTATOR JUMPED INTO THE RING AND TRIED TO SHOOT THE CLOWN."

At that time he was not an educated man, although years after, when visiting him at his magnificent house at Girard, Pa., I found that he had a well-stocked private library, and he had certainly become an exceedingly well-read man.

AN IMITATION PATRIOT SHOWN UP

My last experience with Dan Rice when he was in the circus business was at Elkhart, Ind. It was a very stormy day during the war. The weather was too windy to permit the hoisting of the usual flags, and one pompous young fellow, inflated with conceit, appointed himself a committee and visited Dan, demanding that the flags be hoisted. He charged that Dan had made secession speeches in the South. With an ugly mob at his heels the fellow declared that if the flags were not hoisted he would burn the whole outfit. Dan truthfully told the crowd that he had already erected, at Girard, Pa., a monument to the Union soldiers; that he owned more flags than the whole city of Elkhart, and that he would show them if they desired; but he absolutely refused to hoist a stitch of bunting upon such a demand. Threats and arguments were alike powerless to move him from his stand. I thought him rather foolish, in those exciting times, and there appeared to me great danger in his action.

Dan, however, mastered the situation. He publicly announced that at the night show he would give a full history of the leader of the mob, and did so with a vengeance. He had learned by careful inquiries something of the character of this fellow, who was a cashier in a bank, and at the evening performance, and in the actual presence of the man and his associates, Dan mounted a stool and gave his enemy such a verbal castigation as few persons have ever received. As he progressed in his speech he waxed eloquent, and in a marvelously deep, clear and penetrating voice pictured the vices and foibles of this "patriotic" cashier, until the audience was ready to mob the man. Suddenly a rush was made to where he had been sitting. But he was gone and the eloquent showman was a complete victor.

That night I roomed at the hotel where Rice was stopping, and in the morning he accompanied me to the depot, to see me off for my home in the West. While waiting there the cashier appeared and begged Dan to retract his assertions of the night before, declaring that otherwise he would be run out of town. Dan replied that if he did not immediately leave him he would receive the worst thrashing of his life—and Dan would have kept his word, to the letter, had not the fellow beat a quick retreat. I saw Rice but once after that time, but always regarded him as a prince of the circus ring.

At one time we started our show through Kentucky, where we did a splendid business. On this journey through the South our horses were all caught in a fire and so charred and burned that we had to shoot many of them. In Mississippi we were greatly troubled and delayed by the muddy roads. We were three days going a distance of only eighteen miles. At one point, where there was only one house, our tent was delayed on account of the deep mud, and we were forced to show without it, putting up the seats in the form of a circle, thus making a ring in which the performance was given. The people could see the performance without paying, but nearly all of them had principle enough to pay. A few ruffians, however, began abusing the showmen, and a genuine fight ensued, which was a repetition of most of the others, and some of the toughs were badly hurt. Our men had all gone to the farmhouse to bed, and I was alone on the grounds to look after my property, when, after midnight, a crowd began to gather and suddenly surrounded me, shoving the muzzles of their pistols and guns in my face. This crowd hung about until daylight, and I pleaded so heartily that they did not shoot. The fact that I was then little more than a boy in years was, I think, the only reason I was not instantly shot by the ruffians.

When our company began to gather in the morning these ruffians left, but I shall never forget that night sitting there surrounded by a half-drunken mob, in a drizzling fall of rain. I was completely exhausted and half frozen, and never before nor since was I so glad to see daylight come.

This trip led us through Georgia, Alabama, Florida and North Carolina. In those States we frequently traveled at night, and sometimes all night, illuminating our way by setting fire to the patches of gum on the pine trees at the spots where they had been "blazed" for their sap. In the mountains of North Carolina we encountered the "clay eaters." I was assured that they subsisted to a great extent upon a certain kind of clay which appears to be able to sustain life. The reader can imagine the character and intelligence of these beings. There was also, in a certain region, a strange people who held regular monthly fairs where they met to barter. They were said to be descendants of a certain Scottish clan, who, when they first came to this country, were fairly well civilized, but instead of settling in the fertile soils and lowlands, took up their homes in the mountains, because the latter reminded them of their native country. Here they became more and more isolated until, at length, they were governed solely by their own outlandish laws and customs, knowing nothing of the usages of civilization. Outside of the clay-eating districts these mountain people grew to an enormous stature and possessed great strength. I found them very hospitable, always treating their guests with marked kindness.

IN WHICH CUPID WAS MASTER OF THE RING

When we went to New Orleans to close up and pay off a show that had been "flooded out" in one of my earliest ventures, it was our intention to take the New Orleans company to New York, but I found it impracticable. I thereupon called all the members to my rooms at the hotel and explained to them the situation. I proposed to pay them all off and let them remain idle until the opening in the following spring. To this all agreed save two, our principal riders, a woman and a man. These positively refused to make any compromise. The woman snapped her fingers in my face and said: "No, I was engaged for a year and you will have to pay me my salary just the same. You are able to do it, and do it you shall." The man took precisely the same stand, and as they were not only our star riders, but also the best equestrians in America, I was at a loss to know what to do.

I took a little time for deliberation, and learned that both malcontents were very much in love with each other. This immediately helped me to determine what course to pursue. I first sent for the woman and told her to get ready at once to go to my farm in Wisconsin, where I intended to build a ring around a tree, to furnish her with a ringmaster, and to allow her to earn her salary by giving two performances daily to the birds and squirrels. She claimed that her contract did not call for such performances, but a reference to the contract proved that she was to ride in any part of America I might designate. Then I sent for the man and told him that he and his horses must take the next steamer for New York City. He refused to do this, but I quickly proved to him that his contract with us, though calling for transportation for himself and horses, did not specify of what nature that transportation should be; I had a perfect right to send him by sailing vessel if I chose. His refusal to go of course canceled his contract, and I accordingly left him. The woman expressed her willingness to go to Wisconsin, but I knew she could not leave her sweetheart—and I was right. In less than half an hour they proposed a compromise, but I refused. Finally I agreed to take the woman to New York and pay her half salary until the season opened.

Among the many men employed with the Barnum show was one large, handsome fellow who was superintendent of the equestrian department. As showmen are fond of having nicknames, some one called this man "Barnum." The poor fellow was wholly illiterate and tolerably fond of whisky, consequently the name was decidedly inappropriate, but, as a nickname will, it stuck to him hard and fast. One day, while Mr. Barnum was visiting the show, his namesake was lying asleep outside one of the horse tents on a pile of hay, and one

of the hands, desiring to waken him, shouted at the top of his voice: "Barnum! Barnum! Wake up!" Mr. Barnum had been a witness to this scene and he came to me in a tremendous rage, saying: "Have you no respect for me at all?"

"What do you mean, Mr. Barnum?"

"What do I mean?" he replied. "Why, I wish to know your intent in calling that drunken, illiterate brute by my name."

Of course, after an explanation, Mr. Barnum's rage cooled, but I think he was never so much annoyed in his life. It well illustrates how thoroughly he hated the vice of drunkenness. After that episode strict injunctions were given to refrain from calling the man "Barnum."

On one occasion when we had run to Joplin, Mo., the train was divided into three sections, the first having been switched on a siding to wait for the other two. I was sitting at the hotel, eating breakfast, when the superintendent of the road came in and announced, "I am afraid you will not show to-day."

"Why not?" I replied.

"Well," said he, "the section of your train that has already pulled out has run wild down a steep grade over an immense trestle with nothing but zigzags and reverse curves. We have to run over them with our passenger trains at a very slow speed, and, as your cars are top-heavy, I can see nothing but complete destruction for them."

"Well," said I, "can't you send an engine after the runaway section?"

He promised to do this and, as there was nothing more I could do, I finished my breakfast at leisure.

BARNUM'S ONE UNCONQUERABLE SUPERSTITION

The locomotive went out and caught the train. It had passed safely over the trestle and had reached a heavy ascending grade. Here it naturally lost its momentum and began to back down the grade toward the city. I was unaware, at that time, that a passenger train was then due and that the superintendent fully expected a collision to take place. I can assure my readers that I drew a long breath when the operator looked up from his key and remarked: "Thank the Lord! Number Six, the passenger, is an hour late!" Thus a dreadful catastrophe was prevented. Two men were asleep on one of the platform cars of the circus train, and one of them, in the stress of excitement, jumped off and was instantly dashed to pieces one hundred feet below. The man who stuck to the train was saved, although nearly frightened to death.

Mr. Barnum, although never particularly nervous about accidents, usually refused to travel in the same train with me, giving as his reason that should we both be killed the show would be without a head. Really he regarded me as something of a "hoodoo." In the course of one trip from New Orleans to New York we were compelled to ride together, and on that occasion the sleeper caught fire and was very nearly destroyed. Fortunately this happened in the daytime.

Not only was Mr. Barnum quick to grasp a situation, but was also ready at repartee. Once, at the hotel at Block Island, the dining-room was crowded with people from all over America. One of the guests was a somewhat notorious Mayor of a well-known Western city. During a partial lull in the conversation, this politician had the temerity to bawl out: "Barnum, what is going to be your next humbug? Your last one, the White Elephant, was a failure!" Mr. Barnum, in a voice equally loud and without a moment's hesitation, replied:

"I think my next humbug will be the present Mayor of your city! I have been twice Senator of my State and three times Mayor of Bridgeport; but from what I have learned of politicians and their methods in the West I have come to the conclusion that I am now in a far more respectable business—that of showman—in which no man is either corrupted or injured."

GULLIBLE PATRONS IN EARLY DAYS

The people who were patrons of the circus in early days were very "gullible." Every showman of ripe years has in his memory incidents from his own experience which fully corroborate this statement. The old-time show was an "event" of large importance in the life of the small village, no matter whether that village were hid among the hills or were a landmark upon the open plains—in either instance it was as effectually separated from the rest of mankind as if it had been an isle at sea. The circus, to the villagers and the farmers, was an unending cause of wonder and curiosity.

Strange reports floated ahead and behind the circus—and, for the most part, were believed. The exact size of the coming wonder was a subject for animated discussion. Of course the

people did not believe all that the billboards said; but they believed enough to credit the coming show with being two or three times as large as it really was in fact. When a circus proved to be smaller than the popular estimate, it was said to have split or divided, one section going to some other "small" place. As these rumors were never contradicted by the showmen they spread rapidly and the circus became near kin to some fabulous, hydra-headed sea serpent—a creature which has a habit of taking on more heads and bristling manes every time it is seen. As a matter of fact it would have been exceedingly impracticable to have divided a show and, so far as my knowledge goes this was never done. Showmen did not deny these reports for the simple reason that they had no time to answer questions. Many inquiries had hardened them, and, if they ever relented in this particular it was only to fill their auditors' ears with bigger yarns because that course was the easiest way to get rid of the questioners. In explanation of this I may say that the questions which are "fired" at showmen in every town would go a long way toward filling a volume. Showmen in the early days had a habit of agreeing, without hesitation, to every story advanced by patrons. For example, I remember that, on coming into a certain town we selected our lot and began to pitch our tent. During the process of the work one of our men—a strong, burly Irishman—was approached by an angry countryman who demanded to know what had become of his calf which, it appeared, had been stolen from him during the run of the last circus which had stopped at the town. Of course the countryman had laid the blame at the door of the circus men and, although ours was an entirely different show, it was evident that all circuses looked alike to him, and that he believed them all to belong to a strongly knit brotherhood whose mission was for the accumulation of dollars and, incidentally, the promotion of general deviltry. He threatened our men with many things if they did not disclose the whereabouts of his lost calf. "Well," said big Pat, when the countryman had ceased his tirade; "now you spake av it, Oi balave Oi do remember thot calf. We took her down here to Jonesville and—domn me—she's a foine big cow now."

EXPEDIENTS OF ADVANCE AGENTS

In the days of the wagon shows—particularly before and just after the war—the advance agent of the show usually had many experiences to relate. Sometimes, when the show was traveling in the South, this genius would come upon some old negro who, with ax over his shoulder, was on his way to the woods to cut timber. When the agent came up he would call out to the negro:

"Uncle, where you going?"

"Ise gwine to chop fiah wood, boss," would be the reply.

Then the agent would say: "Did you hear about the fire last night? We had a big fire last night, and all our animals got away from us and took to the woods. They're running wild down there now, elephants, tigers, lions—they all got away."

Having finished relating this alarming bit of news the agent would reach under the seat of his buggy, take up the halter and say: "Here, Uncle, take this halter and if you see any of those animals catch them and take them to the tent—we will pay you a good reward for each and every animal." By this time the whites of the negro's eyes were the most prominent parts of his countenance.

"No, sah," he always managed to say as he backed off; "Ise not gwine t' dem woods dis day."

"All right," the agent would respond, and, taking the reins, would start on his way. One of our agents had reached this point in the program when he heard the negro calling to him. He immediately reined in his horse and looked back.

"Say, boss," called the old uncle, "what animal have de mos' preference fo' a colored man—a lion or a tiger?"

Whenever our advance wagons came upon a field in which the negroes were picking cotton the negroes would immediately be observed to edge toward the fence so that they could see the show go by. Then our men would advance on horseback and cry out lustily:

"Look out boys, de elephants am comin'; climb yore trees—dem elephants get you shore!" The cotton-pickers seldom needed a second warning, but, as one man, they would turn and make for the other end of the field as if they were possessed of demons. They were a very superstitious and impressionable race. The managers of our show had great difficulty in preventing the candy boys from filling the negroes up with ghost stories, hoodoo stories and the like, a course that tended to scare them away and reduce our receipts. One day a young fellow, an attaché of our show, went up to a group of plantation negroes and commenced to go through a series of outlandish contortions and crazy antics. Finally one of the negroes asked:

"What you all doin'?"

"Now keep still," he replied, "I'm hoodooin' that girl there." Finally the girl herself thought she was hoodooed and fell to the ground kicking and screaming. The rest of the negroes did not care to linger in so dangerous a quarter.

PLANTATION SHOWS

In the early days in the South the country was so sparsely settled that we did not content ourselves with showing in the towns, but were in the habit of putting our tents up on any large plantation which appeared to be centrally located for a region in which we believed we could make a good "stand." It was invariably our custom to show in the afternoon. In the evening the attachés of the show were quite apt to be invited to a plantation dance or "hoedown." The "acting" at these impromptu gatherings was of no mean order. The negroes would bring out all their finery and there was sure to be a "Miss Sue" or a "Miss Lucinda" to carry off the honors.

Many people—and this was particularly true in the South—entertained the notion that circuses secured most of their performers by stealing children. One time when we were showing down in Texas an incident occurred which will illustrate under what strong suspicion we were held in certain localities. It so happened that at the time we were showing in a certain Texas town, a little colored chap named "Josh" became lost. Of course there was a great hubbub over this incident, and we were immediately blamed for having a hand in the matter. A thorough search of all our belongings, however, failed to reveal to the angry inhabitants the whereabouts of the missing boy. At intervals during the excitement the boy's mother, a great negro "Mammy," went about among her people moaning and wailing:

"Ain't dat horrible, ain't dat sorrowful, the old showman done stole little Josh away from his paw an' his maw." This incensed the crowd and for the time being we were in imminent danger of being torn limb from limb by the enraged crowd. Finally, however, the missing boy turned up, and, to make amends, the old negress went about exclaiming: "Little Josh done got home; little Josh done got home!"

EXHIBITING "YANKEES" IN THE SOUTH

Just after the war many of the Southern people regarded a "Yankee" as an unending wonder. They had heard so much of Yankee ingenuity that they came to regard a Northerner as a curiosity. We conceived the scheme of utilizing our knowledge of this fact to swell our receipts. We advertised that we had with our show a number of Yankees from various States. The crier dilated upon the wonderful ingenuity of the Yankee and told the people that if they had any old clocks or other things which needed fixing that they might bring them and watch the Yankees fix them. Our first attempt to put this scheme into operation turned out somewhat disastrously. It was Saturday and the people flocked to see the Yankees. When they saw, however, that Yankees are a good deal like other people we narrowly escaped a riot. The attachés of our show got into trouble with the quarrelsome element of the crowd and ended by boasting that they were all Yankees. Only by the exercise of great diplomacy was a combat avoided.

SLEEPING IN STRANGE ATTITUDES

As I stated in the beginning of this chapter, our patrons at this early day were very gullible. At one place the people had a great curiosity to know how the circus performers slept at night. After filling these questioners up with outlandish stories the attachés of the show decided to have a little fun at their expense. To bring this about they bribed the hotel keeper to let them have for a sleeping room one of the front rooms which faced the streets. When it became rumored about the town that the circus men would occupy this room a crowd composed of the curious assembled on the sidewalk outside. When night came each and every showman stood on his head. They ranged themselves in rows and the countrymen who caught glimpses of them were told that this was the way all showmen slept.

The advertising agents for a large circus of the present day would, no doubt, get a good deal of amusement from the tales of the experiences of the advertising men who traveled in advance of the old-time wagon show. One time when I was traveling with a show owned by a man named Yankee Robinson we discovered that we were almost entirely out of show-bills. We were for a time in a serious quandary—but we were not to be downed in this manner. We finally hired a "democrat" wagon and with a single bill in our possession started out to bill the country from which we hoped to draw our patrons. At the gate of every farmer we stopped and called loudly. When the king of the soil appeared we would hand him the bill and allow him to read it; then we would take the bill and ride on to the next house. It was tedious work, but we succeeded in drawing our crowd and felt repaid for our efforts.

THE CIRCUS "CRIER"

It is doubtful if there was to be found a more interesting character than the circus crier in the days of the wagon shows. He was often a man of ability—many men who were circus criers have attained substantial success in the world of affairs. They were chosen for this position largely on account of their good "talking" qualities, and were, as a rule, resourceful and given to witty jests. The show once had a "Little Man" whom they exhibited as Tom Thumb. He was in reality a boy of about eleven years of age. But he was fitted out with a little carriage and ponies, and filled the bill very well. When the crier took his stand in front of the tent he would call out:

"Ladies and gentlemen; we have little Tom Thumb inside. More than this, we have the carriage which was presented to him by her Majesty, Queen Victoria of England. Ladies and gentlemen, Queen Victoria gave this superb outfit to him with the words: 'Here, Tom Thumb, is the little carriage, together with the horses, together with the harness—here, Thomas, take it. Take these to America; show it to your countrymen. Tell the people of America that it cost three thousand pounds in our money or \$15,000 in their money. Take it, Thomas, take it.'"

SHOWMEN'S NAMES

Showmen were often given names for the city or county in which they were hired. Thus "Cincinnati Bill" or "Chicago Jim" would not only serve as well as any other name, but they possessed this advantage, that they indicated in a breath where Bill or Jim had been picked up by the circus. When the show was touring Texas we chanced to hire a man in Bastrop county. Of course we called him Bastrop. He proved to be an "all around" handy man, and, while he had no professional training for any particular feat or "turn," he proved a capable man in whatever position he was placed. One of his early duties was that of driving; but there came a time when he was given a chance to distinguish himself. After we had "opened our doors" for business in a certain town our crier was taken sick and we could think of no better man to take his place than Bastrop. Our position was particularly trying from the fact that an opposition show had started up soon after we had got under way, and there promised to be some lively music between us before we left the town. For some reason or other the opposition show seemed to be doing the biggest business and we were unable to account for it save by the fact that they had a big snake which seemed to attract the crowds. In every crowd of countrymen visiting a circus there is sure to be some sympathetic chap who is quick to catch the pathos of a thing of this kind and try to console the one that is being worsted. There was such an one in this crowd. This man came over to Bastrop, stood watching the latter's lips and drinking in the marvelous flow of words that proceeded therefrom. Finally he blurted out: "Wall, you don't appear to be gettin' em as fast as that young man over there."

"No," replied Bastrop, "I don't because I'm no d— Yankee liar. But I've got the best show. I am from Bastrop, Bastrop County, Texas. I have got a human family—Master Eastwood of Ohio, the lonely star that is now shining for you. If I had the merits and qualifications of Master Eastwood [Eastwood could write and Bastrop couldn't] I would now fill the President's chair. Then I have the "Little Man" with the chariot and horses presented by Queen Victoria. Then I have the tall man. The great curiosity is why one should *grow* so small and the other *remain* so large. Why, ever since Adam, people have been of the human family, and if it were not for the human family where would the show be?" This sort of talk given out with a showman's gusto would be sure to draw a crowd.

THE ESCAPE OF A LEOPARD

In the days when one large tent answered for both the circus and menagerie we once met with an experience that seemed to reverse all the laws relative to the handling of animals. We were stopping at a small place in Indiana. The crowd which we had managed to get under the canvas was a large one, and they were taking in the show with all the eyes they had. Suddenly one of our leopards, made uneasy by something or other, managed to make his escape from the cage. With a snarling cry the creature ran into the ring where the ponies were doing their "turn." The presence of this ferocious animal almost threw the crowd into hysterics—women screamed and men shouted; some of them made a hasty exit under the canvas wall. Meanwhile the leopard had crouched for a spring. All the wildness of the jungles seemed to have returned to his veins and shone out in the flashes from his cat-like eyes in a way to send terror to the heart of the veteran trainer. The crowd seemed to hold its breath for an instant as the critical moment came. With a peculiar scream the creature leaped into the air and landed squarely upon the back of the nearest pony. At this exciting juncture a drunken countryman was seen making his way toward the ring. People shouted to him, but to no avail; the fellow swaggered on into the ring and made straight for the leopard. The pony was rearing frantically and crying piteously. As the madman ran he grabbed up a whip which had been lying in the ring and approached the leopard with upraised hand. The creature was too busily engaged with the pony to take notice of its new enemy. Soon the air was filled with the sound of resounding blows, that fell upon the back of

the leopard. Soon the creature was compelled to loosen its hold; but the man did not stop. With an awful frenzy he rained the blows upon the creature until the animal whined with terror. By this time the trainers had arrived on the scene and the creature was driven back to its cage thoroughly cowed. But the madman was not satisfied. He continued to prance about in the ring, kicked up his heels and shouted: "Turn yer elephants and lions loose!" Of course he was the hero of the hour.

HOTEL KEEPERS

We used to have many amusing experiences with hotel proprietors, particularly when we were showing in regions in which the Irish or Germans comprised the greater part of the population. For policy we made a practice of humoring these peoples and made it a rule always to be friendly with them.

One of our showmen once had an educated pig that he had named Bismarck. The pig was carried in a sort of box cage on the side of which was printed "Hotel de Bismarck." Coming into one town the population of which was largely German we found that we had pulled a storm over our heads. The German residents were insulted that a pig should be named after the beloved founder of their empire, and threatened summary vengeance. It was only by making many promises that we escaped with whole skins. But speaking of hotels: In billing a town in which there were several hotels run by Irishmen our advance agent usually promised each hotel proprietor that his particular hotel should be patronized by the show. As a result of this I usually found myself in an extremely embarrassing position when the show arrived at the town. Of course I could not patronize all of the hotels, and, at the same time, it was necessary for us to keep the good will of the proprietors. I usually went around to all of the disappointed ones, gave them free tickets, praised their children, their wives; berated our advance agent and promised better things for next time. In the end I managed to make friends with them and left them with no bad tastes in their mouths. I have always found them a jovial and reasonable people. Of course the hotel that did secure our patronage always had something to look back upon. It was a day of hustling, of real business, that came only once or twice in a lifetime. In those days napkins were entirely unknown. At one place some of our showmen asked the waitress to bring them napkins, and she answered: "I am sorry, sirs, but the last show that was here ate them all up."

EARLY BREAKFASTS

It was often necessary for the showmen to have their breakfast at three o'clock in the morning, and this, as the reader may well imagine, made it impracticable for the keeper of the little country hotel to go to bed at all. He usually stayed up all night on a "star" occasion of this kind and cooked for his deluge of boarders. The following little incident may illustrate the situation better, perhaps, than I can tell it: We had just hired a man to travel with our wagons. He was a "green" hand; but he felt it necessary, of course, to fill the proprietor of the little hotel where we stopped with an appreciation of a showman's importance. He got up about two o'clock to attend to the horses. As he passed out he came upon the hotel keeper who, with sleeves rolled up, was working for all he was worth.

The new attaché stretched himself, yawned and said: "I'll tell you what, this is the last season that I'm goin' to travel with a show." "Yes," replied the other, "I guess—next to keeping a tavern—the circus business is about the hardest goin'."

We once had with our show a woman whom we were exhibiting for her immense size. To enhance her value as a feature in the eyes of the countrymen she wore a gorgeous crown set with cheap but flashy stones. The crier would tell the people that the crown had been presented to the woman by the Prince of Wales and that it cost, in England, 5,000 pounds. Then the people would go in, examine it, and exclaim: "See the green diamonds and the blue diamonds and the red diamonds!" Once, when I was in a hotel in Wisconsin, I heard two waitresses talking about the show. One said she did not believe the crown cost such an amount. The other said:

"Well; we can't tell, of course; we only know what we hear—but wasn't it beautiful!"

XII

HOW THE GREAT NEW YORK AQUARIUM WAS MADE AND LOST

Every prominent showman has had some venture into which he has put his whole heart. Nothing in my career touched and moved me like the great New York Aquarium enterprise. Into this I not only put a fortune—more hundreds of thousands of dollars than were ever put

into anything of the kind before or since—but I also invested the ambitions of my life.

I was inspired by a profound desire to promote the interests of natural science in what appeared to me its most picturesque and attractive field—the marine world; and everything concerned in this mammoth undertaking exercised a strange fascination over me. All commercialism vanished, and I was as true and devoted a student of the wonders which I had collected as was the most erudite scientist that had ever looked upon that strange assemblage of creatures from the depths of arctic and torrid oceans.

Night after night I remained alone in the great museum for the purpose of studying the habits of those fishes which displayed their most peculiar traits while the world slept. The finale of this enterprise was, it seems to me, in keeping with its remarkable character, and anything less picturesque than that which actually transpired in this connection would have fallen short of poetic justice. It is not too much to say that never before had the scientific world been permitted to view so comprehensive a collection of the varied and almost numberless types of deep sea life.

Neither money nor pains was spared to the end of maintaining an aquarium approximating that of my fondest dreams. Early in the history of this gigantic enterprise I became associated with a member of one of the great animal importing houses, a German, my partner, although I undertook the active management of the institution.

The Aquarium was first opened in October, 1876, the year of the Centennial, and I think I may truthfully say that the former received as frequent mention in the press of the day as did the latter.

My connection with the Aquarium afforded me an opportunity to meet and become acquainted with the leading scientists and literary people of the day. I know of no institution of the kind that has been opened to the public under more favorable auspices. It was looked upon as an institution of education, and public and private schools attended in bodies. Men who have grown rich in the dime-museum business believe that the public do not wish instruction, but prefer to be amused with fakes. Nevertheless, the financial success of the New York Aquarium, during the period when it received its strongest support from the clergy and the men of science, has proved the allegation of the fake museum proprietors to be false.

THE QUEST OF THE THREE-TAILED KINGIO

On the first opening of the New York Aquarium I exhibited a fish from Japanese waters which was no larger than a man's hand. The Japanese name of this species is *kingio*, and the fish is very handsome in appearance, having three perfect tails, and is so graceful in its movements that these tails resemble folds of beautiful lace. It was presented to me by a friend of mine in Baltimore, who was in the habit of spending a portion of each year in Japan. Knowing how far advanced are the Japanese in pisciculture, this gentleman succeeded in persuading me to interest myself in their methods. I soon learned that these three-tailed fishes were the result of the Japanese system of breeding, of which they alone knew the secret, and when, on investigation, I learned that their waters contain many varieties of fish of gorgeous colors, I determined to spare no expense to possess a collection from this coast, especially after I learned that even Nature itself seemed reversed there, and that there are fishes in those waters that swim on their backs.

Supplying a trusty agent with the necessary money, I first sent him to Yokohama, with letters of introduction to some friends of mine. Here, assisted by the natives, he commenced forming his collection. The captured fish were placed in a series of tanks swung from the deck of the steamer, and so arranged that a constant flow of water from a cheaply improvised reservoir should keep the fish in a healthy condition. However, the use of this device proved the inexperience of the agent, for, although the fish managed to thrive for about twenty days' time, one after another died until, on the twenty-eighth day of the voyage, on landing in San Francisco, he was obliged to wire me that not a single fish had survived the passage. My answer was: "Take the same steamer back to Japan and try again." This he did, with somewhat better success, reaching San Francisco with eighteen live fish belonging to rare and beautiful species. From his description I judged that they could not be worth less than \$1,000 each. My hopes were high for the ultimate success of the undertaking. But my pleasure was destined to be short-lived, as my agent arrived at the Aquarium with only one living fish. The changeable climate and the overland journey had been too much for the delicate beauties from Oriental waters, and one by one they had expired, leaving "a sole survivor to tell the tale."

Just as a matter of personal curiosity I figured up the cost of this precious member of the finny tribe from far-away Japan. He cost me more than \$2,200 in gold. This may be scoffed at by some as a very fishy fish story, but when it is remembered that this specimen represented the outlay of two expeditions from America to Japan, including expenses for tanks, Japanese assistance, and all the ocean transportation, it will easily be realized that

this statement is within reasonable limits.

HALF-HOURS WITH BASHFUL WHALES

We were equally zealous in our efforts to obtain the largest living creatures of the deep; and the fact that we exhibited live whales from the Isle Aux Condries was proof of our enterprise in this direction. Whales are timid, stupid creatures; in pursuit of small fish they run up close to the shore, and are captured by a comparatively simple method. Across the mouth of some deep bay a line of piles is driven when the water is at low tide; then the fishing fleet only awaits the arrival of a school of cetacea. These will sooner or later be seen rushing madly shoreward in pursuit of the schools of smaller fish on which they feed. When the whales are sighted the fishing vessels separate and endeavor to surround the assemblage of marine monsters. At high tide, when the line of piles is deeply submerged, the fleet crowds in toward the shore, and the frightened whales take refuge in the bay. Here they remain undisturbed, and are generally quiet until they feel the tide receding. Then they become restless, and finally make a dash for deep water, only to run against the line of piles. It would be comparatively easy for a big whale to batter a great gap in the improvised fence, and, in fact, there is frequently room enough between certain piles for him to pass through unharmed, but he is naturally timid and cowardly, and when within a yard or two of the piles, wheels about and darts back in terror toward the shore. This fruitless and exhausting manœuvre is kept up until the tide has completely gone out and he is left helpless and stranded. In all my experience in this peculiar line of live fishing I have never known a whale to break through the barrier of piles and make his escape.

The boxing and transportation to New York of these big fish was a great labor, and it often took fifty strong men several hours to get one of the monsters into its traveling case. Once in its box, water had to be poured over the back and blowholes of the imprisoned whale. The water pouring, by the way, was a monotonous and tiresome job which had to be continued without intermission during the subsequent ninety hours while the whale was being carried by vessel to Quebec, thence by rail via Montreal and Albany to New York. The water in which they lie must not cover their blow-holes, for, having no room to move they would be unable to rise and breathe and consequently would drown. Their boxes, therefore, were tight from the bottom up only as far as their eyes. Above that line there were cracks for the surplus water to flow off, and it was necessary for a man to stand over the whale and constantly drench him until the receiving tank was reached,—a difficult undertaking.

I contracted to send a living whale to A. A. Stewart, of the Ætna Insurance Company, a speculator, who with others in Cincinnati decided they wanted a whale. For a certain sum of money, therefore, I agreed to land one alive in that city. This venture made me much trouble and great expense, for, notwithstanding the great care exercised the animal died en route, and it was not until three had been lost that I succeeded, June 26, 1877, in landing one alive. This was considered a great achievement and was telegraphed all over the nation.

A SLIPPERY DEAL IN SEA-LIONS

In 1870 my men captured the first seals, or "sea-lions," as we termed them. The hunters experienced no difficulty in ensnaring these creatures by means of wire nets. This observation is a most interesting one in view of the fact that later we found it impossible to procure them by this method, showing that their intuitive sense of self-protection had taught them to fear man and to avoid his devices. No sooner did we find that these curious creatures had learned wisdom from the experience of their unfortunate fellows than we set about to originate some other plan by which we might make captives.

Each of our first seals cost more than would five good specimens to-day, and they died before we could perfect our arrangements for exhibiting them. This was very discouraging, but we determined to try again, and our renewed efforts were rewarded with better success. One of the captives was an enormous creature and lived until the Fourteenth Street fire, when he was burned, together with \$300,000 worth of other personal property.

Some of these monster sea-lions are very deceiving when seen in their native element and surroundings. At a little distance they do not appear larger than an ordinary Newfoundland dog, but when captured are found to weigh from twelve hundred to two thousand pounds, and to measure from thirteen to fifteen feet in length. It is a splendid sight to see these glossy creatures leap from overhanging cliffs into the water fully fifty feet below.

After our first capture there was a great demand for these animals from superintendents of zoölogical gardens in all the large cities of this and foreign countries. Realizing the large profits to be acquired by meeting this demand, I greatly desired to replenish our stock of sea-lions, and made an arrangement to that end with a man in California. We supplied him with all the money he required, which mounted high in the thousands of dollars by the time he had captured about three carloads of the interesting creatures. The man then came on to New York and delivered ten of the animals to us, stating that the others were en route. We

at once wrote to the zoölogical gardens at Cincinnati and Philadelphia, offering to supply them with these rare animals. Imagine my surprise and indignation when I received answers to these communications, stating that the gardens had already procured sea-lions—from our agent! Of course we instantly made an investigation, and discovered that this crafty hunter had also supplied various European institutions with sea-lions, for the capture of which we had furnished the money. The fellow disappeared before we were thoroughly alive to the extent of the swindle which he had carried forward to such a brilliant success, and I have never seen him since. As he was "a canny Scot," he probably retired to his native heath and purchased himself a castle in the Highlands. Certainly he could easily have done this on the proceeds of his nefarious enterprise, for at that time the sea-lions commanded from \$2,000 to \$2,500 each in the European cities, and the market could not be satisfied even at that price. Take several carloads of sea-lions at these figures and the total would represent a snug little fortune.

Afterwards when I opened the New York Aquarium, I bought a large sea lion, had an immense tank built, and a rock cliff made for him so he could jump into the water and sport around; but he kept up such a constant barking that he became a great nuisance. Having a showman friend who intended to spend the winter in Bermuda I permitted him to take the animal for exhibition purposes. Some few weeks afterwards I was surprised to receive a note from my friend saying he had returned the sea-lion and that he would follow on the next boat. No sooner was the sea-lion comfortably ensconced in his old quarters than he again began barking to such an extent that I heartily wished him in the Atlantic. His appetite, too, was most voracious, and we could scarcely get enough live fish to satisfy him. The strange thing about it was, as I learned on the arrival of my showman friend from Bermuda, the old fellow had refused food during the whole trip, and instead of barking and attracting attention, as we had hoped he would do, he had silently sulked until once more in the old home in the Aquarium. From this I gather that the barking which was so disagreeable to us must have been his expression of joy. The fact that he lived so long without food is most remarkable.

AN EVENTFUL MONDAY MORNING AT THE AQUARIUM

So far as I am able to learn, no enterprise of the magnitude of the New York Aquarium was ever disposed of on the flip of a penny. This transaction may not, at first thought, appeal to the church people of the country as being right, and the average business man will doubtless condemn it as unbusinesslike. The attending circumstances, however, were peculiar. This true story was never made public by my partner or myself, and the transaction always had a touch of mystery in the eyes of the showmen of the country.

From the opening of the Aquarium until a certain eventful day its success, financially, scientifically and morally, was unqualified. This, as I have already intimated, was in large measure due to the enthusiastic support of clergymen, scientists and educators, whose commendations brought us the patronage of the intelligent masses with whom these eminent leaders of thought had the greatest influence.

I received scores of letters from celebrated divines indorsing the Aquarium, and these were, of course, made use of in the way of advertising. My partner was a German and could not appreciate the American feeling for the Sabbath.

He was determined to open the doors of the museum for Sunday patronage, declaring that this would bring in a very large number of people who were naturally inclined to Sabbath-day pleasure-seeking, and were quite generally interested in things of a scientific nature. He continued this campaign of argument for two years, during which I steadfastly urged that such a step would be an offense to the belief of the majority of our patrons; that it would bring into the place an undesirable element, from which it had been entirely free, and that the enterprise was enjoying a steady prosperity with which it would be wise to remain content.

Then I repeatedly tried to buy his interest in the Aquarium, but he steadfastly refused to yield a single point, and became more imperative in his demands for Sunday opening. This persistency and increasing aggressiveness at last wore me out. One Monday morning, as he dropped in at the office and once more brought up the old contention, I determined that it should be settled, in one way or another, before he left the room. Instinctively I felt there was no use offering to purchase his interest, for I had previously gone to the limit of reason in that direction.

THE ULTIMATE FATE OF THE AQUARIUM

Calmly and coolly I took a mental survey of the whole situation during a moment of silence between his arguments for Sunday opening. In addition to the Aquarium, we also had a joint interest in four giraffes and five small elephants. The Aquarium was worth at least half a million dollars, as it included the two acres of land at Coney Island, on which was located

our storage and supply aquarium, from which the exhibition house was replenished with attractions.

Suddenly, as if waking out of a reverie, I fairly startled my partner with the exclamation:

"See here! we can never agree on this Sunday business in the world. I'll stump you to flip a penny to see which one of us shall take those giraffes and elephants as his portion and walk out of this place next Saturday night, leaving the other in full possession of all the Aquarium property."

"All right," he calmly answered, and led the way into the private office. There he drew up a brief statement embodying my proposition. We both signed it, and then I reached into my pocket and drew forth an old-fashioned copper cent.

"Heads I win, tails you win," said the German, as I poised the coin on the nail of my thumb. As I nodded assent to this I realized that not only my fortune, but the dearest dreams of my life depended upon the fall of that copper. More to me than this, however, was the thought that my wife had become intensely interested and strongly attached to this undertaking—so much so that it was her personal pride and joy. Still another consideration which flashed through my mind at that instant was the realization that if I lost it would mean months and years of the same sort of homeless wandering life that I had lived while building up the fortune invested in the Aquarium. These thoughts and many others flashed through my mind in less time than it takes to tell them. After scarcely a moment's hesitation I sent the coin spinning into the air. It dropped upon the desk, and I can now see just how the light fell upon the fateful "head" which transferred my fortune to my partner! Instantly I executed to him a bill of sale, covering my entire interest in the concern.

THE END

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK SAWDUST & SPANGLES: STORIES &
SECRETS OF THE CIRCUS ***

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