Program

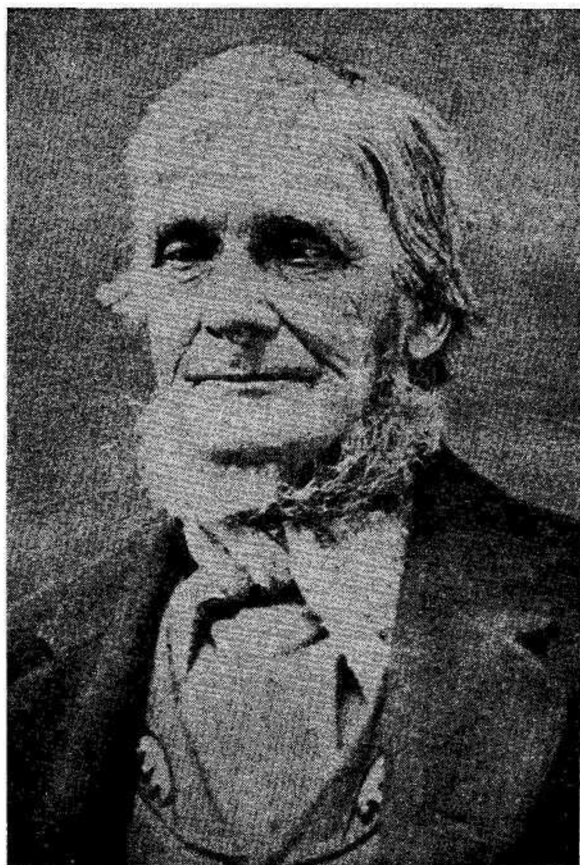
The Old Country Circus
The Passing Parade
Riders
He Scares the Lions
Severance's Sirkussy Subjects
Hagenbeck, Hamburg
Side Show Freaks and Barkers
Answers to Correspondents
Men-and-Animal Shows and How They
Are Moved About

April 1931 Number 10

41 WOODLAWN AVENUE
JERSEY CITY, N. J.

APR 1931

THE CIRCUS SCRAP BOOK'S PORTRAIT GALLERY
OF CIRCUS CELEBRITIES



10. HIRAM ORTON

Born: Portage City, Wisconsin, August 10, 1811
Died: Norris, Michigan, September 4, 1884

The Old Country Circus

(Morning Journal, N. Y., 1883)

How dear to my heart is the show of my childhood,
  The old country circus my infancy knew!
In these days of three rings, of hippodromes, railroads,
  How fond recollection presents them to view!
For weeks, while the posters on fences and church sheds
  Portrayed to my young eyes the scenes that should be,
No soft thrill of love—no throb of ambition,
  Has since equalled the bliss I gained dreaming of thee.
The old country circus, the shabby old circus,
The wandering old circus my infancy knew.

How faithful I worked in the ways that presented,
  To gain the few pennies my ticket should buy!
No toil was so sweetened—no reward so stupendous—
  No miser e'er cherished his hoard as did I.
How fair the sun shone on the glad day appointed!
  How rife with strange bustle the sleepy old town!
And when o'er the hill came the rumble of wagons,
  The bound of my heart said: "The circus has come!"
The old country circus, the faded old circus,
The one-horse old circus my infancy knew.

What pageant of now can that "grand entry" compass?
  What wit of today like those old jokes of the ring?
And those divans of pine boards—such ease Oriental,
  No reserved cushioned chairs of the present can bring.
One elephant only, satisfying, majestic,
  Not Jumbo, nor sacred, neither painted nor white—
Take them all, and the whole gilded fraudulent humbug,
  For a single return of that honest delight,
The old country circus, the wondering old circus,
The shabby old circus my infancy knew.

P. H. WELCH.

APR 1931

The Circus Scrap Book

(Reg. U. S. Patent Office)

APRIL, 1931 **Number 10**

Address: 41 Woodlawn Avenue...........Jersey City, N. J.
Subscription Price: One Year $1.00. Single Copy: 35 Cents

Application for second-class matter pending Post Office, Jersey City.

NOTE: We are in the market for old scrap-books, clippings, articles, etc., having to do with the Circus. Postage must be enclosed in order to assure the return of unavailable material. Suitable material will be paid for on acceptance.

The Passing Parade

At a second-hand book store recently we discovered a copy of Collier's Weekly, dated March 21, 1903, containing a story by Charles H. Day, entitled "The Wonderful Performing Elephant Bolivar." We have put this in our portfolio to be published in THE CIRCUS SCRAP BOOK some time in the future. This is the third story of a series entitled "True Tales of the Sawdust Ring." In the same issue of Collier's Weekly we find the following about an elephant getting intoxicated. It is written by Ellen Velvin, F. Z. S.:

> "Although it has often been said, when speaking of drunkenness, that even the beasts of the field do not get drunk, it is, nevertheless, a fact that a great many animals do get intoxicated. Take the elephant, for instance. He is particularly fond of the fruit of the Unganu tree, and though he appears to have some idea that it is not good for him, he will go on eating, when he has once begun, until he is wildly excited, and so intoxicated that he will stagger from side to side. Every now and then he will pull himself up,

shake his huge head, and tear madly through the forest trumpeting at the top of his voice, and terrifying every living creature. It is said that he will even dare and defy his most dreaded enemy, the tiger, when in this condition, but we have no means of verifying this. It is well known, however, that an elephant is in a most dangerous condition when suffering from the effects of eating this beautiful fruit, and all who can take care to keep out of his way as much as possible."

The reason aerialists seem so smart is because they always get the hang of things.

On May 18, 1930, the Associated Press released the following item:

Moscow, May 17 (AP).—Soviet Russia claims to be the only country in the world which has a school for clowns. It also boasts of a school for training acrobats, jugglers, tight-rope walkers, bareback riders, magicians and other circus performers.

The school for clowns, which gives instruction in the art of being funny and grotesque to both sexes, is located in Moscow and furnishes clowns, male and female, to hundreds of theatres and circuses in the Soviet Union.

One of the oddest things about the school is that it was founded by a woman, the first wife of Anatole Lunacharsky, formerly Commissar of Education. Students of both sexes between the ages of fourteen and twenty who are thought to have special aptitude for buffoonery are accepted.

They pay nothing for their education, the Soviet Government considering that clowns are good not only for spreading merriment, but in disseminating through their "white-face art" Communist doctrines and proletarian ideology.

There are now in the Soviet Union 100 pairs of musical clowns, 150 solo trick clowns and fifty "rug," or tumbling clowns, many of them having been trained by the Moscow school.

After a three-year course of instruction in acrobatics, music, dancing, singing, juggling, mimicry,

pantomime and the art of facial makeup and bizarre dress, students are awarded diplomas as "certified clowns." Students also are given instruction in political economy, social and labor movements, revolutionary subjects and the history of the Communist Party.

The director of the school is Oskar Gustav Lindner, a thick, heavy-set athletic man of German origin, who was formerly a circus acrobat and clown himself.

It is the Living Pin-Cushion that seems to be stuck on himself.

Miss S. Kight, a friend of this little magazine, is always on the lookout for circusy things for its pages. The following item which she culled from the thirty-eighth chapter of Harry A. Franck's book of travel entitled "A Scandinavian Summer," is of great interest, for we remember well the great work of Josefsson who fought away a half dozen men who came at him with drawn daggers, stilettoes, dirks or what have you. Here is the extract:

"Far be it from me to give Reykjavik's new hotel any free advertising, particularly as it will probably be filled to overflowing from the opening day until it is scrapped in some future age. But, perhaps because I am perverse, I found the man responsible for it the most interesting fellow in Reykjavik. Moreover, the chances are that you have seen him, so you may be interested in hearing the sequel of his circus and vaudeville life in the United States.

"Johannes Josefsson (that is John the son of Joseph, as the Icelandic still naively have it) was the son of a cod-fisher-man, born in a tiny house on the edge of Akureyri, the little metropolis of Northern Iceland, and as a boy gutted herring and laid split codfish out to dry. In 1908 he was Olympic champion of glima, a kind of wrestling confined to Iceland and reputed the oldest surviving national athletic sport in the world, except the games of ancient Greece. He began his professional career in Berlin, did his stuff in most of Europe, and finally landed in New York on *March 16th, 1913*, with a two-year Barnum & Bailey contract in his pocket, though of course at what he has come to recognize as an absurdly low salary.

"He remained with us until 1927, circussing in the summer, vaudeviling in the winter, even lecturing to Rotary Clubs. In the end he was pulling down twelve hundred dollars a week, with seven people in his act, an Indian sketch called 'The Pioneer.' Married before he left, he added to Iceland's meagre population two Americanized daughters.

"But though I found him interesting and obliging, it is not

so much as an individual that I bring the Icelandic son of Joseph into this yard as because he personifies several striking Icelandic characteristics. A Viking in more than appearance, apparently; for though he traveled and hobnobbed with many a prize-fighter and circus and vaudeville performer who has long since gone to the dogs, he saved not only his money but, more to the point, his health; still looks quite capable of going back and making a new fortune in the ring and on the stage if he fails as a hotel-keeper, which is not likely. It goes without saying that, being an Icelander, he is a man of education and hard common sense, whose mind has improved rather than deteriorated with time; a man who knows the history of his native land as thoroughly as any saga-writer of ancient days, who knows English as few except professional writers or speakers usually know it. Another Icelandic trait is that, having played to large and applauding audiences and enjoyed the comforts and diversions of American life for fifteen years, he is content while still young to live in Iceland. A strong feeling for their native land is common to almost all Icelanders."

I wonder will we ever stop finding new Barnumiana. Sometimes I am certain I have everything, then I run against something like this:

Mr. P. T. Barnum told the following in his lecture in Chicago: "In his museum, a gentleman and daughter stood gazing at the Siamese Twins. The showman said they were the most remarkable phenomenon in the known world, were born in Siam, &c. 'Brothers, I suppose?' remarked the gentleman, interrogatively, still looking with wonder at the tied-ups. 'Yes, sir, brothers; natural brothers, too,' said the showman. 'My dear,' said the visitor, religiously turning to his daughter, 'think of the goodness of Providence in linking two natural brothers together, instead of two strangers.'"

It is the circus acrobat who is able to make both ends meet.

From various sources, we cull the following information. It interests us and we feel sure it will interest you. It is the number of cars that were necessary to move the Big Circuses in 1891:

Barnum and Bailey, 65; Adam Forepaugh, 52; Sells Bros., 42; John Robinson, 35; Ringling Bros., 27; Walter L. Main, 27; Great Wallace, 20.

Is it proper to refer to the Ossified Man in the Side Show as a boney fide freak?

F. P. PITZER.

APR 1931

Riders

(N. Y. Dramatic News, 1891)

The following questions were recently put to Charles W. Fish, the world-renowned bareback rider, and the answers will be found most interesting: Who are the male riders who do somersaults on a bareback horse? I presume you mean those who are now doing them. They are: Willie Marks, Johnnie Davenport, "Stick" Davenport, Archie O'Brien, Willie Demott, Frank Melville, William Dutton, Peter Barlow (English), George Hernandez (also English), Orrin Hollis, Willie O'Dale, William Showles and myself.—Who do "forwards"? George Hernandez, Orrin Hollis, William Showles and myself.—Who do "backwards"? I believe I am the only one doing a "backward-back" regularly, or in other words, daily, with the possible exception of George Hernandez. A number of others do it occasionally.—Who do clean jumps up from the ground? The names are too numerous to mention, and while it is one of the most effective tricks in equestrianism, yet it is one of the easiest to learn. There are many doing it who do not even know how to stand correctly on a horse.—Who was the first bareback rider? The credit of being the first bareback rider lays between an Englishman named Jack Hunter and an American named Charlie La Forest, who contested for superiority as principal riders previous to 1840. I do not know the exact year. La Forest was declared the best rider of the two. Levi North was the first to do a somersault on horseback (pad), alighting on his hands and knees. Tim Turner was the first to do the somersault (pad), alighting on his feet. These two did this in 1840. To Charles J. Rogers belongs the credit of doing the first forward somersault on a horse, alighting in "his fork," or astride of the pad. This was also in 1840 with Welsh and Bartlett's Circus, at that time located on the site of St. Nicholas Hotel. Rogers was also the first to do the "Indian" on a bareback horse. John Glenroy was the first to do a back somersault on a bareback horse.—Who are the celebrated bareback riders of the old world? George Hernandez is the only name that stands out prominently, although I believe there are others on the Continent whose names would

not be out of place under this heading, but unfortunately no one here seems to remember their names.—What lady rider does somersaults? At present I can recall to mind none doing them. Louisa Renz (pad), and Mollie Brown (bareback), have done them. I have heard of another in Europe, but the name escapes me.—What lady riders do clean "jumps up?"? Emma Bell, the Meers Sisters (Rose and Lillie), Rosita La Plata and several others in Europe.—What are the particular specialties of the different riders. I can name but one trick not done by more than one rider; that is a somersault alighting on one foot. This trick is done by me, and I was the first, and, as far as I know, the only one that ever did it.—What is the greatest number of somersaults done in string? No one has ever done any number of somersaults in a string, or "swing," as we term it. The only records I have ever heard of was thirty-six somersaults without pausing to rest by John O'Brien, now high school rider with Barnum & Bailey, and the same number by Wooda Cook during his act. I have on several occasions done 18 somersaults through balloons in three parts of the ring without stopping. I presume others have done as many or more. It is merely a matter of endurance, which to me seemed more a test of strength than skill.—Was a double somersault ever successfully accomplished by a rider? No.—What is the general style of riding in the Old World? Mostly pad riding, in which one man stands out alone, John F. Clark, a young Englishman, whose tricks are said to be wonderful. But as a rule the lady riders of Europe excel the men. In general style they differ but little, if any, from our American riders.—What are the names of the celebrated circuses of Europe? Heading the list stands the Circus Renz, Germany, then follows the Noveau Cirque, Paris; Salamonsky's, St. Petersburg, Russia; Cinniselli's Moscow, Russia; Cirque d'Hiver and Cirqu d'Ete (winter and summer circus; two buildings, one company), Paris; Circus Carre, Germany; Circo Parrish, Madrid, Spain; Circo Allegria, Barcelona, Spain; Circus Wolf, Germany; Hengler's Grand Cirque, with buildings in London, Hull, Liverpool, Glasgow and Dublin; Sanger's London, and John Henry Cook, Scotland and North of England. That I believe includes the leading circuses of Europe. I forgot to mention also the Cirque Fernando, Paris.—What is the style of the show given? The style is circus pure and simple, trick and high-school horses being a principal feature of all circuses. They are numerous and good. All acts and

APR 1931

artists are placed before the public as prominently as their talents demand, and are drawing-cards in consequence when of a high order of merit. Spectacular pantomimes, on a scale of grandeur undreamed of in our country, are produced. Cinderella, Seven Dwarfs, Montano, Africano, The Students, Carnival on the Ice, and The World Upside Down are the most elaborate and costly of production. Next to the opera, the circus takes second place. Czar Alexander of Russia, and King Victor Emanuel of Italy are especially fond of this class of entertainment. Galtano Cinniselli is honorary equerry to the King of Italy. The circus was under Government patronage in St. Petersburg, under Alexander II. A royal box is seen in all circuses in Europe, and is never occupied except by members of the royal family. In France this box is now called the state box. There is no rush in giving a circus performance as we give it here. Twelve or fourteen acts constitute a programme, including an intermission of ten minutes after the seventh act. This intermission gives an opportunity for friends to visit each other in the boxes, exchange bon-bons, order ices, or pay a visit to the stables and look at the stock. The stable is one of the principal features of the circus. They are kept exquisitely clean, well lighted, the horses heads turned outwards, the grooms in livery and polite. A bell announces the end of the ten minutes, the audience return to their seats and the performance is resumed. An excellent orchestra is also a feature, sweet sounds charm the ear and add materially to the attraction of the circuses in the Old World.

He Scares the Lions

By **HARVEY V. DEUELL**

(Liberty, July 23, 1927)

After forty-five years of wild animal training, Captain "Dutch" Ricardo has reached the following interesting conclusions:

The most vicious animal is the tiger.
The most dangerous is the bear.
The most treacherous is the leopard.

The smartest is the American mountain lion.

The dumbest is the hyena.

And the safest animal to train is the one that is popularly regarded as the most ferocious—namely, the King of Beasts.

In addition to these interesting conclusions, Captain Ricardo (who is known to his wife, his bankers, and a couple of his most intimate friends as Richard Warner) has discovered, he says, that a captive lion who has dined off a man will subsequently be very, very sick.

Like most other types of circus performers, wild-animal trainers are of two schools—the American and the European. The latter follow the precepts of the late Carl Hagenbeck, or refinements of the methods he worked out in the great Hagenbeck menagerie at Hamburg.

Captain Ricardo belongs to the American school, whose precise origin is in doubt, although the Captain attributes it to a Colonel Boone, a relative of the historic Daniel, who flourished as an animal tamer about three-score years ago.

The principal difference in the two schools, as they now exist, is in the means their pupils use to defend themselves against attack. The Europeans' weapon is a large wooden fork, which looks like a two-pronged pitchfork.

When the animal leaps, as he usually does at some time or other during the early stages of their acquaintance, the trainer meets the attack by catching the beasts neck between the prongs.

The Americans do their training with a chair. As the animal charges, it is the trainer's ambition to thrust one leg of the chair into its mouth, so that it will give the tissues of the roof a vigorous rake.

While the beast is tearing the chair to pieces the trainer escapes from the cage. But the next time the animal attempts to eat, he discovers that routing the intruder wasn't quite so satisfactory as it seemed.

His mouth is painful for two or three days, after which the trainer enters the cage with another chair, and the animal generally lets him alone.

Captain Ricardo began to train wild animals when he was fifteen years old. Colonel Boone gave him a chair and showed him how to do it. Since then the Captain has been "massack-creed" on three or four occasions, and has had "the clothes pulled off 'im" twelve or fifteen times.

To be "massack-creed" in the animal business is to ad-

APR 1931

vance to death's door and take a peek inside. It may also signify, in Captain Ricardo's picturesque vernacular, that the victim has gone over the threshold, although when he uses it to describe his personal misfortunes, it obviously does not.

To have "the clothes pulled off 'im" designates a less serious variety of injury. It may confine one to the hospital for anywhere from twenty-four hours to three months.

The Captain is now the head trainer for the largest circus on earth. In the summer he travels with the show and, after the close of the season, "breaks" animals in winter quarters.

Breaking does not mean that the animal's spirit is broken. Breaking means that he is taught, first, not to attempt to "massack-cree" every human being he can get at, and, later, the routine of an act, so that any trainer, provided he is reasonably competent, can perform with him in the steel arena.

It is a mistake to suppose that all trainers who appear in cages with wild beasts have themselves schooled the animals in their work.

Five lions, fit for performing, are worth about $10,000. Tigers, bears, and leopards, are valued approximately at as much. It is not at all unusual for a large circus to have from $150,000 to $200,000 invested in its animal acts. If these acts could not be shown without the trainers who had originally subdued the particular animals concerned, the trainers would have the circus managements by the throat.

"Performing" animals is not accounted especially difficult—though it calls for iron nerve, the willingness to suffer a great number and variety of incidental and inevitable injuries, and a degree of horse sense above the average.

But breaking animals is another story. Of those who would follow it as a profession it requires all the attributes that performing animals does, and something besides. The last requisite is probably the rarest—an instinctive comprehension of the workings of the animals' minds.

"When you start out to tame an animal," the Captain said, "the first thing you've got to do is to size him up—just as you size up a man you're going to do business with.

"A lot of people think wild animals get beat up. Well, they don't. In the first place, a lion or a tiger costs too much. In the second place, there's some animals you can beat up and there's other animals that'll take the clothes off you in a minute if you try it.

"You never ought to start beatin' a tiger around, because

he'll kill you the first chance he gets. A tiger's more noble than a lion. A tiger never bluffs. That's what makes him more dangerous.

"You can train a lion to be what's called an 'untamable.' You can get him so's he makes passes at you with his paws, snarls, roars, and all that. He'll understand it's part of the act.

"But you can't put that stuff on with a tiger. When a tiger makes a pass at you, you'd better figure that he means it, and not stand around there trying to make up your mind what you're going to do.

"Another thing: A tiger can lick a lion the best day a lion ever saw. I saw two of 'em go to it one afternoon in the old Hagenbeck-Wallace show. They never got a chance to finish it, because we separated them, not wishing to see four thousand dollars get all chewed up. But the tiger had all the best of the argument up to the point where it was stopped.

"You can tell it, too, by the way the lions and tigers act when they're in the same cage. A lion will always give the tiger the most room.

"While I think of it though, there's an animal—and he ain't either a lion or a tiger—who don't get proper credit for being mean. He's the bear. A lot of people think bears're easy to handle, because they're not a showy animal, like a lion or a tiger.

"Well, of course, there are bears—and bears. Some have good dispositions and others have not. But when a bear's mean he's a whole lot more dangerous than a cat, because he can kill you quicker and in more ways. And, believe me, a lot of them are willing to try.

"I've seen a bear take a pole away from a trainer and darn near beat him to death. If they get to you with a swipe of their paw, they'll either lay you wide open or crack your skull. And when they start after you in earnest it's almost impossible to stop 'em and still keep your clothes on. A bear bit my finger off one time—which is the only part of my person I ever lost.

"As I was saying, when you start out to train an animal, the first thing you've got to do is to size him up. Some animals are smarter than others. Take the American mountain lion. He's the smartest wild animal there is.

"I dope it out this way: A mountain lion is hunted all the time. He has to be smart to keep alive. It's the same

APR 193?

way with people: they're smart—when they have to be.

"The first and hardest thing in breaking an animal is to get him on a stool. The crowd in a circus tent never pays any attention to that stunt, but that's because they don't understand about training.

"You generally put two or three stools together, so he won't fall off and hurt himself, and then you keep forcing him toward them, tapping him with a buggy whip and talking to him.

"Lion talk is a kind of a purr, made 'way down in your throat. Tiger talk is a noise like 'Puss-ss-ss-sst,' which you make by blowing air through your lips while the air moves your lips up and down. All lions and tigers understand it. It means a kind word.

"What else you can teach an animal to do, and how fast you can train 'em, depends on a lot of things. You've got to size 'em up. The most serious massack-cree I ever got was because I didn't size up an animal right.

"I got a leopard one time from Cy De Vry, who used to run the Chicago Zoo. Cy gave me fair warning. "Be careful of that cat,' he says, ''cause he'll pull all the clothes off you if you let him.' Well, after I got him, I took him in the steel arena and worked him out. And he worked perfect—took a stool, did a couple of other stunts, showin' that he'd been worked before.

"We were going to play in South Chicago. So I put him in a wagon cage and took him in the parade. I was sittin' pretty in there with him, smoking a cigar and thinkin' that Cy didn't know what he was talking about, when all of a sudden that leopard had half the clothes off me.

"He grabbed me with his forepaws by the shoulders, and started to work on my legs with the claws of his hind feet, and all the time he was chewing on me.

"I socked him on the nose with the loaded end of a sawed-off buggy whip as well as I could, considerin' that he had both my arms pinned down, but I wasn't making much progress until he let up on me a little and I got one of my arms free. Then I jammed my hand in his mouth!

"I figured that hand wasn't going to be much good after that, but it was much better than letting him chew on me indefinitely.

"Well, just about that time a couple of animal men came along and began to work on that leopard with iron bars. And

after he'd got enough he let go and went back and sat up on his stool, just as though nothing had happened. I was in the hospital for quite a while, but it wasn't anything permanent.

"Although you hear a lot about animals chewing their trainers to pieces, not many actually get killed in the cages. Somebody always comes along in time to drag 'em out. In all the time I've been training wild animals I only knew of one man who was really torn up.

"He was a man who worked in the winter quarters of the old Boone show out on the coast. His job was cleaning up the cages and feeding the animals, and his name was Albert.

"One night he was alone in the menagerie—something that very seldom happened—and he went into one of the cages. The Colonel and all the rest of us had gone out to eat. When we got back you could tell that something had happened—the way the animals were acting.

"One of the boys went into the menagerie, and after a while he came running out and told us what it was. Well, that lion was sick for four days. I figured it out that it was something like a change in a person's diet. Anyway, that was certainly a sick lion.

"Whenever you start to do business with a wild animal, you want to bear in mind that if he begins to fight you it's usually because he's scared. That's why you want to go slow. Or he may have some other reason. You got to look out for that, too.

"I remember once I was trying to teach a lion to ride on the back of a horse. I could get him up on the horse's back all right, but he wouldn't stay there. I kept making him do it over and over, until finally the lion jumped down off his stool and, instead of leaping on the horse's back, grabbed him by the hind legs.

"I thought that horse was going to get massack-creed, but the lion didn't hurt him any. He just laid down with the horse's legs between his paws and wouldn't move.

"Well, after a while, I studied it out, and I made up my mind that the lion was tired. So I let him be until he got rested. Then he went and got up on his stool and we began all over again. If I hadn't let him rest he'd have massack-creed me, maybe.

"It's all bunk about a lion being driven mad by the sight and smell of blood. The lions eat horse meat. I've gone into

a cage all covered with blood, which I'd got on me while killing horses, and nothing happened.

"It's bunk, too, about never turning your back to an animal. But there's one thing that you never ought to do, and that's to frighten a wild animal badly, because he'll grab you —sure as shooting.

"A wild animal ain't brave. He's timid. But he ain't going to let you hurt him—if he can help it. Take a lion or a tiger that escapes. I've seen a good many in my time, but I never saw one of 'em that wasn't glad to get back in the cage. They were frightened darn near to death.

"One time, five or six years ago, when I was traveling with another show, a tiger got loose, jumped up in a tier of seats, and grabbed a little girl. It was lucky that a blacksmith, who was sittin' right alongside of her, happened to be packing a gun. He dragged it out of his pocket and shot the tiger dead before the tiger got a chance to do any damage.

"But the tiger wouldn't have made for that tier of seats if he'd been able to see any other place to run. And here's a case to prove it:

"It happened when I was with a different show. A tiger got loose and started to stroll around the tent. I lit out after him with a buggy whip. He was walking slow, so I had to walk slow. If I'd started to chase him he'd have got scared and massack-creed somebody.

"Well, the audience thought it was great stuff. They laughed fit to kill themselves. I guess they thought the tiger had his teeth filed, or something like that, and it was part of the act. Anyway, I wasn't laughing. I was scared he was going to pull the clothes off somebody any minute.

"After he'd walked around a while, he saw an opening between the seats. In there he goes. There's a flap in the side wall of the tent that's looped back at about the same place, and he goes through that, too. And I am walking right after him, talking tiger talk, and trying to figure out the best thing to do.

"When we got out on the lot, of course, everybody knew what was up and began to climb on the wagons. That tiger walked around for about half an hour, it seemed to me, though it probably wasn't more than three or four minutes, and then he went up to a wagon tongue, crawled on top of it, and laid down.

"I stood in front of him, talking to him, while some of

the other animal men got a transfer cage and wheeled it up close. And it certainly was funny to see that tiger get inside. When a wild animal escapes you can bet your life all he's looking for is a chance to hide out."

"Suppose," I suggested, "that a man and an escaped animal come face to face. What's the best thing to do?"

"Stand still," said the Captain positively. "The chances are ninety-nine to one that he'll run away. But, if he hesitates, charge at him and give him 'the look'!"

'MEMBER

When the clown used to shout "Houp-la!" when the lady bareback rider (not equestrienne) jumped through the paper balloon.

When the words "object holder" appeared in a circus artiste's contract.

Severance's Sirkussy Subjects

By G. A. SEVERANCE

ARE THERE NO MORE FREAKS?

(Harper's Weekly, March 1, 1902)

The plaint of the manager of a dime museum, that there are no more freaks—at least, of the kind that people will pay to see—must be taken, we apprehend, as only an indication of an improvement in taste on the part of the public, for it is not to be assumed that Nature, after making some things wrong at birth for, lo! these many years, has all at once begun to make everything right. There have been freaks ever since man began to notice what was about him. And modern "novelties" in freaks have seldom been new. A few years ago an armless wonder who did remarkable things with his toes was a shining stage attraction in New York. But in the sixteenth century Montaigne saw and wrote of one not less than equal to this latter-day exhibit. Says the essayist:

APR 1931

"It is not long since in mine owne house I saw a little man who at Nantes was born without armes, and hath so well fashioned his feet to those services his hands should have done him, that in truth they have almost forgotten their natural office. In all his discourses he nameth them his hands, he carveth any meat, he threds a needle, he seweth, he chargeth and shoots off a pistole, he writeth, puts off his cap, combeth his head, plaieth at cards and dice, shuffleth and handleth them with as great dexteritie as any other man that hath the perfect use of his hands."

And Montaigne writes again of another armless man who brandished a sword, threw a dagger, or snapped a whip by the motion of his head, holding the blade or whip in his mouth. Other like instances afford pretty conclusive evidence that there have been no new freaks for many years, and it may be, as the manager laments, that there are no more at all worth seeing. If so, overlooking the sympathy one naturally feels for a worthy man whose business has become unprofitable, we confess to unalloyed satisfaction.

THE AZTECS AT THE SOCIETY LIBRARY

(The International Magazine, New York, March 1, 1852)

For several weeks the attention of the curious has been more and more attracted to a remarkable ethnological exhibition at the Society Library. Two persons, scarcely larger than the fabled gentlemen of Lilliput, (though one is twelve or thirteen and the other eighteen years of age), of just and even elegant proportions, and physiognomies striking and peculiar, but not deficient in intellect or refinement, have been visited by throngs of idlers in quest of amusement, wonder-seekers, and the profoundest inquirers into human history.

The "Aztec Children" have the phrenological and general appearance of the ancient Mexican sculptures, and may well be regarded for their probable origin, their physical structure, or their mere appearance, as among the "most wonderful specimens of humanity." We assent to the following paragraph by Mr. Horace Greeley, whose testimony agrees with the common impressions they have produced:

"I hate monstrosities, however remarkable, and am rather repelled than attracted by the idea of their truthfulness. As-

suming that there is a propensity in human nature—an 'organ', as the phrenologists would phrase it—that finds gratification in the inspection and security of Joice Heths, Wooly Horses, and six legged Swine, I would rather have gratified by fabricated and factitious than by natural and veritable productions, and would rather not share in the process from which that gratification is extracted. There is a superabundance of ugliness and deformity which one is obliged to see, without running after and nosing it out. It was, therefore, with some reluctance that I obeyed a polite invitation to visit the Aztec children, and ratify or dispute the commendations hitherto bestowed on them, in these columns and elsewhere. I did not expect to find ogres nor anything hideous, but, among all similar exhibitions, remembering with pleasure only Tom Thumb, I could not hope to find gratification in the sight of two dwarf Indians. But I was disappointed. These children are simply abridgements or pocket editions of Humanity—bright eyed, delicate-featured, olive-complexioned little elves, with dark straight glossy hair, well-proportioned heads, and animated, pleasing countenances. Their ages are honestly given, and that the boy weighs just about as many pounds as he is years old (twenty), while the girl is about half his age and three pounds lighter, I see no reason at all for doubting. That they are human beings, though of a low grade morally and intellectually, as well as diminutive physically, there can be no doubt; and they are not freaks of Nature, but specimens of a dwindled, minnikin race, who almost realize in bodily form our ideas of the 'brownies,' 'bogies,' and other fanciful creations of a more superstitious age. Their heads, unlike those of dwarfs, are small and not ill-looking, but with low foreheads and a general conformation strongly confirmatory of certain fundamental assertions of Phrenology. Idiotic they are not; but their intellect and language are those of children of three or four years, to whom their gait also assimilates them; but they have none of childhood's reserve or shyness, are inquisitive and restless, and articulate with manifest efforts and difficulty. To children of three to six or eight years, their incessant pranks and gambols must be a source of intense and unfailing delight. The story that they were procured from an unknown, scarcely approachable Aboriginal City of Central America called Iximaya, situated high among the mountains and rarely visited by civilized man, may be true or false; but that they are natives of that part of the world, I cannot doubt. To the

APR 193

moralist, the student, the physiologist, they are subjects deserving of careful scrutiny and thoughtful observation; while to those whose highest motive is the gratification of curiosity, but especially to children, they must be objects of vivid interest."

JUMBO'S ARRIVAL

AN ELEPHANTINE WONDER

Special Telegram to The Inter Ocean, Chicago

New York, April 9, 1882.—Jumbo has arrived. He did not have an opportunity to jump overboard during the voyage, and he reached New York in safety today after a tempestuous passage of fourteen days. The Assyrian Monarch, the stanch steamer to which this distinguished cargo had been intrusted, anchored at quarantine shortly before midnight on Saturday, but it was not until 12:30 o'clock noon that the steamer was moored at her dock at Jersey City. A steam derrick was to have been in readiness to transfer the monster to a lighter. It was 5:35 o'clock when the order to "Hoist away" was given, and, with a clattering of chains, straining of ropes, and creaking of pulleys, and puffing of the engine, the box rose very slowly into the air. A slight rocking motion attended its upward movement, the cause of which was apparent. The box, studded with wooden beams, clasped about with many bands of iron, and dotted with bolts and rings, was closed on every side but one. The front was open, except for five heavy lateral bars of timber, and, as the cage rose about the combings of the hatch, a huge, dark, swaying mass was visible through the openings. It was the head and trunk of Jumbo, and a cheer burst from the fast-increasing crowd which lined the pier, clambered over adjacent vessels and blackened the roofs of sheds and warehouses. The great bulk rolled uneasy and restlessly from side to side in his narrow quarters, and pushed his trunk between the bars with quick and nervous motions, causing his cage to rock very perceptibly in spite of jury ropes and cables. Matthew Scott, who has been Jumbo's keeper since the elephant was imported from Africa seventeen years ago, stood on the ledge of the cage just outside the bars as it rose into the air. He talked to the animal as if it were human, quieting and soothing him. From that time either Scott or William Newman, the American keeper, who went to England to fetch the elephant to this country, had to remain in sight. If they showed any indication of

leaving he manifested his displeasure by bellowing. When the lighter reached the battery at 7 o'clock the whole of the First Ward seemed to have turned out to welcome Jumbo. Nearly two hours were spent in landing the cage and adjusting to it the low and broad-wheel truck, which was to be the means of conveying Jumbo through the streets to Madison Square Garden. A team of sixteen horses was in waiting, and these, after much delay, were finally harnessed to the cage, and it was started on its way to the garden, where it arrived without accident shortly after midnight.

Hagenbeck, Hamburg

(Clipping of 1889)

There are strange professions in this world, and but few could outrival that of the proprietor of the firm of Hagenbeck, Hamburg. They are most likely the foremost existing importers of animals, being in connection with all the leading museums, circuses, acquariums and zoological gardens of the continent, a large number of which depend entirely on Hagenbeck for their supply. The firm has its headquarters in St. Paul's, that ill-reputed suburb of the old hanse town, where sailors of all nations congregate. From outside the building looks like a plain storehouse, but in the 500-600 yards it occupies animals from all zones and countries are crowded together. The bold, soaring condor from the highest mountain peaks of the Andes is represented, as well as the strong, ferocious gorilla from the primeval woods in Africa.

Ordinarily, only purchasers, known or introduced to the firm, are allowed to visit the grounds, but a number of cards of admission are issued every month. On entering one passes the office room, where more than two dozen clerks are employed, of whom several are merely occupied in keeping account of the arrival and departure of animals, as these only stay there a few days before leaving for their final place of destination. Showing my card of admission I was introduced to one of the keepers, says a Hamburg correspondent of the Atlanta Constitution. They seem to be a set of energetic

APR 193

men, who, armed with bowie-knives and revolvers, are willing to dare any danger.

One of the Keepers.

My conductor was a little, muscular, clean-shaven man who had already spent ten years in the service of the firm, and was, therefore, acquainted with all the peculiarities of his profession.

"The majority of the keepers are excellent marksmen," he related, "and acquainted with an explorer's life, being sent out as assistants in the expeditions. My last trip was to South America. We had a great time with ostriches, which, like the natives, we chased on horseback, throwing the bola (a ball attached to a string) after them. But the heat was awful. I am sure the llanos are the hottest places on earth."

"How often do they send out an expedition?"

"Oh, about five or six every year. There are three at work at present, one is expected home in a few days and another going out in a month or so. A number of our best hunters are collecting several complete sets of fur-bearing animals in Canada. There is a great difference between simply shooting an animal and catching it alive, you know."

"Do the members of the expeditions consist of permanent employees of the firm?" I inquired.

"No; they generally send out a few of our experienced men, a few apprentices and volunteers, mostly amateur sportsmen, under the supervision of one of the office staff. On arriving at their destination they hire as many natives as are deemed necessary." My conductor gave me all this information with a good-humored grin.

"These expeditions must be an enormous expense," I remarked.

"Some of them cost up to 300,000 marks. They seldom go beyond that."

So we walked through the long rows of cages, which varied from tiny wooden ones, ranged one above the other, for birds and other small animals, to huge cages formed of one-inch-thick iron bars, most of them running on wheels. All bore little tablets with the name of the animal marked in Latin.

It was a strange sight to see all those wild animals, accustomed to unlimited freedom, confined in space in which

they could hardly turn around. Their long imprisonment seemed to have broken them of many of their savage habits.

"Do many accidents happen?" I asked the little man.

"No, not many. Nevertheless the majority of us could show the marks of their paws and teeth," and, rolling up his shirt-sleeve he displayed a deep scar on his arm.

"A Tasmanian wolf did that, and look, here a jaguar got a firm clutch on me."

The tamer animals were merely fenced in. We passed a group of Japanese chamois, which are very rare, Chilean alpacas, zebras, antelopes, etc.

Asiatic and African Elephants.

Then we came to the elephants and my guide remarked:

"We are out of Asiatic elephants at present, as they are difficult to get since the Government passed the bill for their protection. But here is a dozen of their African brothers with their schlapp ohren (long flabby ears)."

Near by were some crocodiles from the upper Nile and the Amazon. One of them was a giant fellow over thirty feet long.

"Do you secure all your animals by the special expeditions you mentioned?"

"By no means. Many things are simply ordered; for instance, we get most of our dromedaries from the Crimea, while a large number of other animals fall into our hands by chance. We buy everything in the line of rare and outlandish animals, and people who trade in or keep animals for pleasure are aware of it. Hamburg is an excellent place for good bargains, as nearly every vessel brings us something rare and unlooked for. Every sailor comes armed with some specimen from the tropics. Parrots we only sell wholesale," he added, as their chatting fell on our ears.

"Take care of the kangaroo," my companion warned. "That beast could kill you with a single stroke of his foot."

When we came to the seals my talkative guide related laughingly how once two ice bears broke loose and, finding their way to the seals, made short work of them.

"Which are the most difficult animals to procure?"

"Undoubtedly the gorilla and the condor, which hardly pay the trouble. We only catch them to boast that we have everything on hand. But the greatest bother we had was

APR 1931

with a whale, having to build a special tank for him. Fish, anyhow, are not my taste," he continued, making a sour face. "If I were the proprietor I would not bother with them," and, pointing to some glass tanks bound in iron, he exclaimed: "Look, several of them have to be filled with fresh sea water at regular intervals."

A graceful black swan was swimming solitarily in a small fenced-in tub, and a lyre bird near by was running against the wire railing. He is a native of the mountains of New South Wales.

"What is in those boxes?"

"Snakes," was the reply. "We can measure them by the yard. There are pythons, boa constrictors, adders; whatever you like. They are quite harmless creatures and quite easy to keep. They only require to be fed once in three months, and sleep away the rest of the time."

"You must need an enormous amount of meat to feed all these animals!"

"Well, yes; we have a special storehouse for that," and we entered an apartment where men were busy with all sorts of meats. It was a finely equipped slaughter-house. The largest portion of raw meat seemed to be furnished by horses killed by accident. In the adjoining room various kinds of food were heaped up in pyramids or stowed away in bags and boxes.

"Right around the corner are the kitchen, dining-room and bedrooms of the employees, but there is nothing particularly interesting about them."

Coming to a courtyard my guide pointed out a number of wagons that looked like huge furniture vans. "We use those to transport our goods from the vessels and railway stations. Sometimes we run special trains."

"What do you do with the animals that die?" I inquried.

"We sell their skins and also their skeletons, though their carcasses first go to the dissecting-rooms." Then tapping me on the shoulder he pointed towards two gentlemen, one of the present proprietors and the veterinarian, talking over a sick monkey.

It occurred to me what wide and valuable knowledge the veterinarian must have gathered while attending on all the cases of Hagenbeck. And, if I heard rightly, he is going to

publish his experiences in a book entitled "Diseases of Animals." Surely nobody else has a better right to do so than he.

The fierce-looking, middle-aged man, with a slight resemblance to Stanley, in conversation with the doctor, was a son of the original Hagenbeck, who began with a small traveling managerie, exhibiting at country fairs. It was one of the very best and met with great success. Then he settled down at Hamburg, buying and selling animals, and by thrift and clever management his business soon rose to its present importance.

"The circuses are good customers of ours," resumed my guide. "We have traded with Salomonsky, Rentz, Carre, the circus d' Hiver, Forepaugh, Barnum, etc. A tamer of wild animals is steadily engaged; he merely does the preparatory, but, it seems to me, the most dangerous work. I believe he is now at a lion, who, but a few weeks ago, haunted the oases of the desert Sahara."

I was introduced to the tamer, a Dutchman. He was neither robust nor well built, but his eyes revealed a strange hypnotizing power. Among other things, he remarked in his broken German:

"I was a school-teacher in my young days, but I assure you it is much easier to train animals than children. If an animal learns something it learns it for its whole life, while a child knows something to-day and has forgotten it by tomorrow." But it was time my interesting visit came to an end, and I handed my guide a fee, thanking him for his kindness. But he still continued to talk: "Would be glad to see you again here, though I expect to leave very soon with one of the expeditions. We have very much to do this winter. They are going to give an anthropological exhibition next summer in Paris, where the manner of living of all nationalities, Zulus as well as Chinese, is represented. And we have contracted to secure a large number of these colonies. You know we originally introduced the exhibition of foreign villages into Europe. We let a band of Hindoos, Japanese, Esquimaux and Patagonians travel all over Europe. Perhaps you have seen one of them."

I departed and it was a great relief to me to breathe again the cool air outside after a stay of two hours in that tepid atmosphere which, in spite of its excellent ventilation, could not lose the peculiar, disagreeable smell of a menagerie.

Side-Show Freaks and Barkers

By ED. P. WILEY, Circus Historian

There has always been considerable difference of opinion among circus folks as to who was the best talker, the old-timer or the present day circus orator. Having been in the circus business for a good many years and having been a circus talker during the early years of my circus life, it was my good fortune to become acquainted with nearly all of the old-school of side-show managers and talkers of any note, and I consider the old-timer far superior to the circus orator of today. There are many, perhaps, who will debate this point.

Among my many friends and acquaintances who are old-timers are Pete Staunton, Doc John E. Ogden, Bert J. Chipman, Lew Graham, Arthur Hoffman, Jimmy McNulty, Bobby Kane, Whitey Matthews, Frank (Skinny) Rosenthal, Doc Crosby, Al. Conlin, Doc Hickey, Al. Salvail, Tom Ambrose, Cal. Towers, Frank Blitz, Lew Aronson, Al. Mastiff, Bobby Fountaine, Doc Palmer, Ben Bowman, Hugh Harrison, Frank McCart, Ike Shipley, Lew Nickols, Doc Miller, Harley Halflin, Doc Foster, Phil Elsworth, Pop McFarland, Nosey Bell, Fred Griffin, Fred Coley, Bill Tumber, Joe McCullum, Chas. Philson, Doc Colby known as the crazy Doctor, and many others.

Most of the old-timers (and I use the words old-timers in a most respectful way) have either retired or passed to the Great Beyond. Still there are a few left in the business. Doc Ogden takes a turn at it now and then, Arthur Hoffman is still active, and good old Pete Staunton is in harness, and is one of the best all-around circus orators in the business. None of the younger set can compare with him. Pete has been assistant to Clyde Ingalls, manager of Ringling Brothers' circus annex, during the past season and made most of the openings.

All the men I have mentioned were not side-show managers. Many of them were just talkers, but any one of them was capable of jumping in on a moment's notice and making a first-class opening.

We all have our favorite talkers, and my pick would be

Lew Graham, Bert Chipman, Pete Staunton, Hugh Harrison, Doc Ogden, and Arthur Hoffman. My reason for naming these men is that they knew the English language and could use it properly as well as fluently. Their vocabulary was large and they never hesitated for an expressive word. Doc Crosby, Doc Hickey, and several others I might mention, may have been more flowery talkers, but they were not as convincing as the men I have mentioned.

Not one of these men that I have picked were of the stereotyped class of talkers, who had to learn their openings by heart before they could deliver them. Any one of them could step out in front of a line of banners and talk just as naturally and as intelligently about them the first time they ever laid eyes on them as they could had they been talking about them all season.

So it is my honest opinion that these men that I have picked were among the greatest in show business, and that they have no equals today, and their names will go down in any circus history.

Lew Graham was without a doubt the greatest announcer that ever stepped into a circus tent. He was in a class by himself. He is the only one I ever knew who could walk into that center ring of Ringling Brothers mammoth circus tent and make himself heard in every part of the enclosure. Since he has been forced to retire on account of ill-health, no one man has ever put it over as good as Lew was able to do it.

Some of the younger circus folks claim that it is harder today for the present-day side-show orator to convince the public of the merits of their exhibitions, owing to the fact that years ago circus day was almost a holiday. The circuses then gave the public a series of free exhibitions that held them on the lot a greater part of the day and consequently the side-show got a much longer grind than they do now. This is true, to a certain extent, but on the other hand we must not overlook the fac that the circus of the earlier day did not get the railroad service afforded the circus of today, and were very often so late getting into town that it was almost impossible to get the parade out on the streets before noon. Many times it had to be eliminated altogether. When this happened the side-show of the earlier day did not get as long a grind at the public as the side-show does now. I do not think that the folks in the larger cities came on the lot any earlier than they do now, and furthermore, the old-time side-show did not begin to have the "flash and pomp" of the side-

APR 1931

show of today.

I cannot remember any one of the old-time side-shows that had a line of gayly painted banners, two high ("double deckers" as they are called) that reached from the front of the lot to the Marquee of the Big Top. You were lucky if you had seven or eight banners in front of the show you were working. Nearly all of the circuses in those days had the "Lucky Boys" and the side show was used principally for them to work in. ("Lucky Boys" are usually pickpockets, Ed.)

When I first joined Lemen Brothers circus, Bert Chipman was manager of the side-show. I have known him to go along day after day and get from three to fifteen hundred dollars a day at ten cents admission. With nothing more in the Kid Show than a lot of old snakes, Joe Lucasie the Albino, Pigs Leslie, Paul Petrosky the Demon Child, (made of plaster paris) a Half Lady Illusion, and a colored band of about seven pieces. I would like to meet the side-show manager of today who could get that kind of money with that kind of frame up at ten cents admission. Talk about the side-show being dressed up,—Bert didn't even have a stage cover. If you gave the public that kind of a show nowadays you would be pinched for obtaining money under false pretenses.

No doubt some will disagree with me on my selection of talkers, but as I said before, we all have our favorites, and the right to our own opinion. I still claim the men I have mentioned were among the greatest talkers in the show business. Nearly every talker I knew was particularly strong on some particular line of talk.

"Whispering" Tom Ambrose who had the Cooch Show on the John Robinson 10 Big Shows a number of years ago, was a master at making cooch show openings. He had a line of cooch chatter all his own; he could take you back into ancient history, in the days of old King Herod, and tell you how Salome, the old King's beautiful step-daughter, caused poor old John, the Baptist, to lose his head, all on account of that naughty-naughty dance and how many European thrones had since fallen all on account of that very same terpsichorean manoeuvre. Tom was a wonderful talker along those lines. Later, he became an advertising man and had the advertising banners on the Yankee Robinson Shows for several seasons. He went from there to the Al. G. Barnes circus and was still in that position when he passed away.

Doc Ogden could turn more people on the "come out" of a circus with his Wild Man talk than any other talker I ever

knew. His Wild Man talk was about the classiest along that line. I am reasonably sure that any of the old-timers will agree with me on that.

I used to get an awful kick out of Skinny Rosenthal's Big Snake and Live Goat Ballyho. He would bring out the Big Snake (about as big around as your arm) and a full grown live goat.

He would tell his audience he was going to feed the goat to the snake at the next performance. He would use this ballyho so often that it would become a huge joke with the natives. Yet he never failed to turn a few of them, no matter how often he used it. Skinny was not the worst side-show manager in the business by any means.

I could go on down the line and tell you of many more talkers who were strong with some certain line of chatter, but I want to tell you something about the old-time freaks. I do not believe that the freaks of today are to be compared with the old-time freaks. Jonathan R. Bass, the Ossified Man, who actually turned to solid bone before he died. He was a puzzle to the medical profession. They were unable to diagnose his case correctly. Millie Christine was the first two headed lady ever placed on exhibition, and was for many years under the capable management of my old friend Frank Blitz. Chang, the Chinese Giant, was brought to this country by the P. T. Barnum show, and was one of the outstanding Giants of all time. Mr. and Mrs. Tom Thumb were the smallest couple ever placed on exhibition and were great entertainers. Ella Ewing was, without a doubt, the tallest woman that ever lived. George, the Turtle Boy, was one of the big money getters among the freaks. Lala Coolah was one of the strangest of all freaks. He actually had a separate body growing out of his chest. Chequeta, the Mexican Midget, was the smallest human being ever on exhibition. It was said that an ordinary finger ring would go around her wrist. The first time I ever saw her, her manager held her at arms' length on the palm of his hand during his entire lecture. Chas. Tripp, the Armless Wonder, was a wizard with his feet. He could do almost anything with them that an ordinary person could do with their hands. Joe Lucasie, of the Lucasie Family of Albinos, was an accomplished violinist and had studied under several of the big European masters. Joe was highly educated and a good entertainer. The Blue Man (Walters), who was with the Ringling Brothers' Circus for

so many years, and whose entire body was as blue as indigo, was another outstanding freak. He was a fine-looking fellow, except for his color. Jo-Jo, the Dog-Faced Boy, was another great freak with great drawing power. Then we had Zip, Barnum's what-is-it, Prince Mungo, the Zulu Prince (from down in Virginia) and his troupe of trained Alligators. South Sea Island Joe, Delno Fritz, the Sword Swallower, Del Fugo, the King of Fire Eaters, Alistair MacWilkie, the man with the twelve foot beard, and many other old-time freaks too numerous to mention. Those that I have mentioned were a few of the best ones. I am sure that if a side-show manager of today was lucky enough to have freaks like Bass, the Ossified man, Millie Christine, Lala Coolah, George, the Turtle Boy, Chequeta, and the Blue Man, he could get all of the money any one man needed.

I do not want to leave you with the impression that I think there are no good freaks in the business today, for there are any number of them. The Hilton Sisters, Siamese Twins, who since breaking into the business have repeatedly played all of the big vaudeville circuits throughout the U. S., Ko Ko, the Bird Girl, featured in the Annex of the Sells-Floto circus for the past two seasons, Doc Brewer's Pin Heads, who are the best ones I have ever seen, Bert Earls' Midgets, a fine collection of little people, are all high-class freaks. Still, none of them are quite so outstanding as some of the old-time freaks I have mentioned. In the earlier days not all of the freaks were with circuses. There were several circuits of Dime Museums that extended from coast to coast, that gave employment all year to high-class freaks. The Boston Dime Musee, Stone's, Huber's, and many others were in the East. Kohl & Middleton, Capt. White's London Dime Museum, Epstine's, and Frank Hall's Eden Musee were in Chicago. Sackett & Lawler were in Omaha, Lincoln, St. Joe, Denver and in several other cities in the Middle West. There was still another circuit on the Pacific Coast. The Big Freaks were featured in the billing matter of all of these houses just the same as the musical comedy or movie stars are today. However, all of the freaks I have mentioned were with the various circuses of yesterday, with the exception of Bass, the Ossified Man. He may have been with some circus at some time or other, but not to my knowledge. There are so many Fat People, Living Skeletons, Bearded Ladies, Pin Heads, Tattooed People, etc., that I did not attempt to name them. I think I have covered the field

fairly well, so I will say, as the old-time side-show manager would say, "I thank you very kindly for your valuable time and undivided attention."

Answers to Correspondence

Q. What is the longest Circus title used?

A. As far as we can learn it is the title used by the Sells Bros. during the season of 1887. The title was "SELLS BROTHERS' WORLD CONQUERING AND ALL OVER-SHADOWING 3-RING CIRCUS, REAL ROMAN HIPPODROME, GRAND FIREMEN'S TOURNAMENT, INDIAN VILLAGE AND MUSEUM, FIVE CONTINENT MENAGERIE, AND PAWNEE BILL'S FAMOUS ORIGINAL WILD WEST."

Iowa Inquirer. Who was James Bensley?

A. James Bensley was a well-known gymnast, who died on August 7, 1905, at Belleville, Canada. He was born in 1841 in the Province of Ontario, Canada, and began his career as a circus performer in 1865, he and his partner being known as the Bensley Brothers, trapeze and horizontal bar performers. They toured that year with L. B. Lent's Circus, after which Mr. Bensley played successfully with the following old and well-known circuses: Wheeler's; George F. Bailey; Washburn's; John H. Murray's; Boyd and Peters. In 1877 he introduced his son in a unique and novel act, which kept him a feature in vaudeville until he joined Adam Forepaugh's circus; then he performed successfully with Barnum and Bailey's; Roberts and Gardiner; Howe's London; Rogers and Gollmar Brothers, and Downie's. During his last years he played parks and leading vaudeville houses, until he was stricken with diabetes, which caused his death. A wife, a son, two brothers and a sister survive him. He was buried in a Canadian cemetery.

Inquisitor: Levi J. North, at Astley's, London, England, turned the first somersault ever accomplished while standing upon the back of a horse. He repeated the performance, for the first time in America, at the Bowery Theatre, New York, in 1849. The New York Clipper Almanac for 1874.

Equestrian: On August 24, 1868, George M. Kelley, at Corinth, Miss., vaulted over 17 horses. The best leaping on record.

APR 1937

Men-and-Animal Shows and How They are Moved About

By WILLIAM O. STODDARD

(St. Nicholas, 1882)

When a modern "circus-menagerie" is in motion, there is a good-sized town on wheels. When one is set up for exhibition, there is a strange and wonderful city on the ground that was so open and bare only the day before. It is a well-peopled city, even if you leave out of sight the crowds that come to it as paying visitors.

And the object of this article is to explain, very briefly, some of the ways and customs of this great, movable, wonderful city of tents and cages.

There probably was never a time when people were not fond of staring at "shows." Getting up shows to be stared at is, therefore, as old as almost anything else in history. The ancient Romans understood it perfectly, and sent all over the world for materials for new and startling sights in their amphitheaters, at Rome itself and in other cities. Their shows differed very much from ours. The great aim of their costliest exhibitions seems to have been to see, during the show, as many as possible of the performers killed, both men and wild beasts. Nowadays we are willing that all the performers should remain alive, and we are satisfied if it merely looks as if somebody were quite likely to be either killed or eaten.

In the Middle Ages, the greatest "shows" were given by warlike knights in armor, and vast crowds gathered to see them charge against one another on horseback, or hack at one another with swords and battle-axes. Some of them were really splendid performers, and they were very apt to be hurt badly, in spite of their armor and their skill.

As the world has grown more civilized, the character of its shows has changed, and now nearly all the excitement is among the people outside of the "ring." It is hard work and

regular business to the people on the sawdust and to all the other inhabitants of the tent-city.

There are great shows in some countries of Europe, but it is only within a few years that they have been transported long distances. They have settled in great central cities, like London or Paris. The national boundaries were too numerous for convenience, and the people of each country were too jealous of foreigners, or unable to understand the jokes of the clown in a different language. Even now, few European shows travel so far on land as ours do, or carry so much with them. One reason may be the small number of European boys and girls with enough pocket-money to buy tickets. America is the country for the show business.

Not a great many years ago, there were several different kinds of shows, but, as time went on, it was found profitable to gather all the varied attractions possible into one concern. And now, although there are many shows, there is a strong family resemblance among them, and the show-bills of one would answer for another, very nearly, if the names and dates were changed.

The "menagerie," in the last generation, often was called a "caravan," and, for a while, these collections held out stoutly for separate existence. Then the circuses began to have a few cages of beasts as a sort of "side show," and the days of the "caravans" were numbered, for their owners discovered that nothing that they could carry around would gather a paying crowd.

One secret of this was that the wildest beasts had ceased to be strangers in the eyes of American young people; as soon as the country became flooded with illustrated books, magazines, and papers, and boys and girls knew as much about giraffes and boa-constrictors as their grandparents had known about rabbits and rattlesnakes. So, after having seen them once, living serpents and antelopes ceased to be regarded as an attraction.

The menagerie managers learned a costly lesson, and the circus men learned another. The latter are still compelled to carry along a goodly number of rare beasts with their other attractions. No circus-menagerie would be called "great" without the cages, but these must now contain something which the books and papers have not told about beforehand. Most youngsters who pay their way into a tent know every animal at sight, and, as soon as they have nodded recognition

at him, are sure to ask: "What can he do?"

For this reason almost every dangerous creature in the best recent collections has been both wild and tame. The lions, the tigers, the panthers, are as large and terrible-looking as ever, and it would be just as dreadful a thing if they should get loose among the spectators. It is worthwhile, therefore, to see them all playfully submissive to a little man or woman with a mere whip in hand.

A direct consequence of all this is, that the more a wild beast can be taught, the more he is worth, but there is no telling how stupid some lions and other savages are. The very best of them, even after all kinds of good schooling, retain a lurking disposition to make a meal of their keeper, or of anybody else, if a good opportunity is given for it.

"Taming" is a process which has to be constantly renewed, for the tamest tiger is a tiger still, and there has been no change in his born conviction that all other living creatures are "game" for him. The best lion and tiger "kings" of today say that every time they enter a cage containing these fierce creatures they carry their lives in their hands.

"Gentle?" remarked one of these venturesome folk the other day. "Those tigers of mine? Why, do you see that whip? I know, as well as I know anything, that if I drop that whip when I am in that cage, they'll be on me. Their idea of obedience is connected with the whip, first; then with my voice; then with my face. Severity? Cruelty? No use at all. I never use cruelty in training them. Only patience. When I take on a new cage of beasts I work to get them used to me; feeding them; cleaning the cage; talking to them; all that sort of thing; before I go in among them. Then I do that. It's a ticklish piece of business, going in the first time; and I pick my chance for it when they're specially peaceable. I go right in, just as if it were a matter of course, but I keep my eyes about me. It is all humbug that a man's eye has any power over a wild beast. Your eyes are to watch their motions—that's all. They'll find out quickly enough if you are getting careless. They're sure enough to be watching you all the time. Are they intelligent? Well, there's as much **difference among** 'em as there is among men. I can train a real intelligent lion, right from the wild, in about four weeks, so that he will do all that the lion kings make them do. A lioness always takes a couple of weeks longer, and so does a leopard or a tiger. You can't get a hyena all in hand

inside of two months. They're the meanest of brutes. They never understand anything but a club. The easiest to train, because they know the most, are pumas. I can teach a puma all it needs to know, in four weeks. Affection? Teach those fellows to love you? That's all nonsense. They'll fawn and fawn on you, and you'll think you've done it, maybe. Then you go into the cage, if you want to, without a whip, or when they're in bad temper, and find out for yourself what they'll do. See that dent in the side of my head and those deep scars on my arm! There are more down here,"—patting his leg. "Got 'em from the best trained lioness you ever saw. It's awful, sometimes, to have one of those fellows kind o' smell of you and yawn and shut his jaws, say, close to one of your knees! See my wife, there? She's the 'Panther Queen,' just as I'm a 'Tiger King,' and that fellow yonder's a 'Lion King.' Her pets are playing with her now, but they've scratched her well, I tell you. There's great odds among them, though, and that young puma with her head up to be kissed is what you might call gentle. Only they're all treacherous. Every Lion King gets sick of it after a while. I could name more than a dozen of the best who have given it up right in the prime of life. Once they give it up, nothing'll tempt them inside a cage again. You see, every now and then, some other tamer gets badly clawed and bitten. They've all been clawed and bitten more or less themselves. The strain on a man's nerves is pretty sharp—sure death around him all the while. And the pay isn't anything like it was."

It may be true that the strictly predatory animals of the cat kind are never to be trusted, but the now three-years-old hippopotamus of the leading American "show" seems to have formed a genuine attachment to his keeper, a young Italian. He is savage enough to all other men, and when out of his den for his very limited exercise, it is fun for all but the person chased to see how clumsily, yet swiftly, he will make a sudden "charge" after a luckless bystander. After that, he will crustily and gruntily obey his keeper, and permit himself to be half enticed, half shouldered into his den again. There should be more room for brains and, consequently, for affection, in the splendid front of a lion, then between the sullen eyes of even a very youthful hippopotamus.

The "keeper" question is one of prime importance in collecting and managing wild animals. Trainers of the right kind are scarce, and although high pay can hardly be afforded,

it will not do to put rare and costly animals in the care of stupid or ignorant men. Such qualities as courage, patience, good temper, and natural aptitude for the occupation are also needful, and they are not always to be had for the asking. Unless the right men are secured, however, the failure of the menagerie is only a question of time. As for the "specimens" themselves, it is much easier to obtain them than it once was, owing to the better facilities for transporting them from the several "wild-beast countries." Catching them in their native wildernesses has been a regular trade for ages. There have been "wild-beast merchants," and their trade has been carried on as systematically as any other, since the earliest days of commerce. The headquarters of this trade have, for a long time, been at Hamburg, with branches, agents and correspondents wherever in the known world there are "show animals" to be captured. Some of the leading showmen, however, having capital as well as enterprise, send out hunters on their own account, or trusted agents, who travel in savage lands and purchase whatever the native hunters may bring them that will answer their purposes.

The market price of a menagerie animal of any kind varies from time to time, like that of other merchandise, according to the demand and supply. A writer stated recently that zebras are sold at a little over $2,000 a pair, gnus at about $800 a pair, wild rhinoceroses cost some $6,000 a pair and tigers about $1,500 each. A short time ago, however, and perhaps now, a very good "uneducated" tiger could be bought in London for from $500 to $800. The same beast, the moment he takes kindly to his keepers, double and trebles in value. There is no telling what he would be worth should he show further signs of intellect or good morals, but he is like a human being in this respect—the more he knows the more it will pay to give for him. The same rule applies to the entire list, from elephants to monkeys, so that no precise idea could be given of the probable cost of a menagerie.

Managers find that a moderate number of first-class animals, including as many well-trained notabilities as can be had, will "draw" better, and cost less for keeping and feeding, than a mere mob of all sorts, however crowded with "rare specimens."

It is, indeed, an easy matter to lose a menagerie, after all the toil and cost of getting it together. A lion or tiger

will eat fifty pounds of raw beef per day, if he can get it, but it must be specially prepared for him. All the bones must be taken out, lest he hurt his mouth upon them, for he will not grind when at them so patiently in his cage as in his forest lair.

All the fat must be cut away for him or any other great cat of the woods, or, as he has little exercise, a fatty deposit will form around his lungs and he will die. His den must be kept clean, and he himself must be vigorously encouraged in good personal habits, or various diseases will assail him, and he will die before his time.

Other animals, such as the hippopotamus, polar bear, and sea lion, accustomed in their wild state to abundant water, must have their bath liberally supplied, and frequently renewed. If, as is often the case, they exhibit, like some boys, a forward and unhealthy dislike for it, they must be shoved in, even at the risk of brief quarrels with their keepers.

All care of this sort, and much more, must be given to the most ferocious beasts, not only during the show season, but in winter retirement. They must also be carefully attended to while in the process of transportation from place to place, and there are difficulties enough on land, but it's at sea that the keeper and trainer meets his most trying obstacles, and the owner his heaviest losses.

Animals on board ship are very much like human beings, for while some of them get seasick in bad weather, others of the same kind will endure all the pitching and rolling of the vessel like "old salts." There is nothing quite so disconsolate as a bilious elephant in a gale of wind. There is so much of him to be sea-sick.

The worst of it is that the sickness clings to many of the poor beasts after they reach the shore, and not a few of them die on land in consequence of a rough voyage. On the other hand, large collections have been safely carried to distant countries, visiting even such far off places as Australia.

After his collection is made, the showman's cost and risk begin before the show is set in motion. Trained animals, as they are trained nowadays, stand for much more than their original cost. They represent time spent in preparation. That means weeks and often months of care and labor, when they are earning nothing, and eating well, and when their keepers were on full pay. Nor do "food and attendance" include all the large items of a quadruped savage's board bill. Every

APR 1931

menagerie, with enough of capital or success to keep it out of the sheriff's hands, must be provided with ample and permanent "winter quarters," or, in other words, space and buildings for its accommodation during that part of the year when no kind of show would tempt a crowd to spend its time under the cold shelter of a tent.

That, too, is the time of the year when an exposure of tropical beasts and birds to the changes of the weather, the dampness and cold, would simply entail upon the manager the additional expense of funerals for his costliest curiosities.

Nevertheless, vacation time is by no means idle time for the showman. Training involves hard and patient toil, and it receives a sort of compensation from the larger and more intelligent animals, in the dumb earnestness with which many of them will meet their human friends half-way, and strive to learn the lessons set them. The anecdotes of the sagacity of horses, for instance, are innumerable, but there are points at which the elephant may be said to have fairly beaten all animals below man. He is even able to offer a good example to some men, for it is found that the great unwieldy brute is himself desirous of obtaining a liberal education. In the earlier stages of his instruction, while he is studying, so to speak, the "primer" of any given "trick" or duty, he will frequently and loudly express his distress of mind, and the cause of this is found to be the slowness he feels in comprehending what is wanted of him. His will is good enough, and he spares no pains to excel, after he has once grasped the new idea.

During the winter of 1881, a number of elephants were in training at Bridgeport, Conn., for the summer campaign of Mr. P. T. Barnum. They submitted, from day to day, with vast grumbling and trumpeting, to have one leg or another tied up and to be driven around on what they had left. They lay down; got up; obeyed every order of the teacher as well as ever they could; carefully imitated one another; but no elephant in his right mind could naturally be expected to understand why any man in HIS right mind should wish any respectable and heavy quadruped to stand upon three or two legs, or upon his dignified head. Their great sagacity was shown after the animals were left a little to themselves. The keepers observed them on their exercise ground, with no human teacher near to offer a word of suggestion or explanation, and yet, singly or in pairs, the huge scholars gravely

repeated their lessons and did their "practicing" on their own account. This was the secret of the wonderful proficiency they afterward exhibited in the ring.

Up to this time, it seems, no such intelligent self-help can be looked for from any other wild animal. The monkey, indeed, will "practice" all sorts of things, with more or less understanding, but he is more than likely to select performances not on the program, and omit those he has been taught. In this, and other doings, the monkey is a queer caricature of humanity.

Special attention must be paid to the health of creatures that have cost so much, and the keeper is a kind of attending physician, with a sharp eye for all doubtful symptoms. Two of Mr. Barnum's wisest elephants, one day last winter, after careless exposure to wet and cold, were found shivering with a sudden chill. Nothing could be more dangerous to their valuable lives. Several gallons of the best whiskey were procured as soon as possible and the gigantic "shakers" were forced to take it. They were then put to bed in their shelter, warmly covered up, and anxiously watched. It was not long before the remedy had its effect, and the half-tipsy patients wanted to get up and stagger around and trumpet the fact that they felt better. The chill was broken, and for a while they felt very well indeed. Next morning, when their keeper approached them, they began, with one accord, to shake all over, as a strong intimation that they needed more of that medicine; but the doctor was too sharp for them, and roared at the nearest one: "No, sir. You cannot have a drop!" They understood, and the chill disappeared.

The animals themselves, their care and training, by no means supply all the winter-work of preparing a circus-menagerie for its summer tour. The tent-city must be complete in all its appliances before the day comes for its first transportation, no matter how short may be the distance. At the hour for moving, the manager must be sure that he is provided with every man, woman and child required for every service connected with his advertised performances, and that every one of these knows exactly what to do and when and where to do it. He also must know that he has supplied himself with every van, wagon, car, tent, rope, pole, tool, implement, of whatever kind, which any part of his huge establishment may need, and that all these are in place, ready for instant use when the order to start is actually given.

The circus part of the great show is not less interesting than its "better half," and it is in every way attended with great costs and difficulties. The circus has also its winter quarters, but they are not like those of the menagerie. No troupe of performers comprises just the same persons during two successive exhibition seasons. Its entire membership, excepting perhaps the managers and a few prime favorites, breaks up and scatters over the country at the close of a season's engagements. Each particular wonder or group of wonders takes care of itself as best it can during the idle months.

Each season, therefore, the attractions to be offered must be sought, corresponded for, gathered, organized anew. All engagements are made early enough in advance, but not in any case without careful inquiry and inspection by the manager as to the physical and moral condition of the person or persons he is bargaining with. The special abilities of all capable performers, such as riders, acrobats, giants, dwarfs, magicians, clowns, pantomimists, are well-known to the trade, and so are all their particular failings. No manager in his senses will engage a performer who has permitted himself or herself to get out of practice or to acquire such bad habits as will endanger the regularity and attractiveness of the season's "appearances."

The human members of the show are scattered, indeed, but they cannot be altogether idle, for they must be in perfect training when they come to be inspected by the keen eyes of the man who is to direct their movements, after deciding whether or not they will answer his purposes. He cannot afford to hire an intemperate man at any wages. The manager may be one man, or two or three men acting as one, but he is in anxious training all the while. Generally, he is at least part owner of the concern he is to manage, or is directly interested in its profits and losses, and has therefore a sharp and watchful eye upon every question, great or small, which the business under his care may present.

His first anxiety, as well as outlay, is in getting his show well together, and right along with the winning of that victory goes a trial which fully tests all his capacity for management and good generalship. All that huge aggregate of animals, tents, wagons, machinery, and appliances must be cut down to the smallest possible weight, the "fat man" and the giant excepted. Then everything, with or without life, must be packed into the smallest possible space for transportation.

There cannot be employed nor carried one needless man, or boy, or beast, nor can one that will be needed be safely left behind. All are picked and disciplined beforehand. All other requisite things must be provided, since it will not do, even in a great city, to trust to luck, nor to waste precious time in finding the right thing, whether it be a horseshoe nail or a breakfast.

Time was when small shows, and even some of pretty good size, could depend upon hotels for food, and upon railways and steamboats for transportation; but it will not do to run any such risks with the monster shows which are brought together nowadays. Hotels and steamers have no spare accommodations for the entertainment of a suddenly arriving "city." On the railways the case is similar, and the very sleeping-cars for the performers are the property of the managers, as also are the baggage-cars and platform cars for all the immense store of material. Of these cars, too, every article has its exact place and space, from which it comes, and into which it goes again according to an established rule, and the men in charge know, therefore, where it is when it is wanted. The first "packing" is done over and over with patient care, for instruction and drill, and each department or section is under a sort of foreman, that the eyes of the master may be multiplied. While a manager is wrestling with his packing problem, he is also dealing with another which is hardly less important. A valuable part of his varied learning is the knowledge he has of the country through which his show is to be carried and exhibited, and of the peculiar tastes and demands of its several local populations. If anybody supposes these requirements to be the same, or nearly so, North, South, East and West, he is very much mistaken.

The show which suits one set of people may fail to suit another. As soon as a manager has studied the field of his coming campaign, and decided upon the best tour for just such a show as the one he has prepared, his next business is to send ahead experienced and competent men to prepare the way.

Spaces in which to exhibit have to be contracted for in advance, and the most suitable sites soon become known to all the managers. A tent pitched in some spot difficult of access, or to which the people were unaccustomed, might fail to have any audience under it, no matter what else should be there.

APR 1931

A few energetic men, with due instruction, can attend to this branch of the business, but there are so many other duties to be performed before the arrival of the show, that a great circus has been known to have more than "seventy men sent on ahead," the manager knowing exactly what each man had gone for. For instance, there were supplies of lumber to be procured, and of such other materials as the setting up of the show called for. There is often a good deal of carpenter work required, in addition to all that is carried along or that can be done by the regular carpenters of the concern. There are fresh meat to be obtained for the wild animals, and grain and forage for the tame ones. All must be ready at the hour of arrival, and among the other necessaries the heavy "marketing" must be on hand for the uses of the circus cooks. Not one article can be waited for after the train with the show on board pulls up on the switch at its stopping-place. If there were lack of knowledge concerning stock on hand or deficiencies, or failure to send ahead and provide, the tent-city would soon fall to pieces.

One great trial is fairly past when the railway train with the show on board gets under way for the first time.

The railway train that carries a modern American show contains all sorts of cars and trucks, and is well laden. Indeed, it has so many cars that it is divided into several sections, each section equal to an ordinary train, and drawn by its own engine. These rains—including a dozen Pullman "sleepers" and the elephant cars, in each of which five of the huge beasts are stowed—bear along about 500 men and 300 horses, besides the other show animals and the miscellaneous freight.

The "trick-horses," of course, are few in number, and often they are the private property of the men and women who perform with them. All the "great artists" prefer to appear in the ring with the animals with which they have done their own training, if these are good ones. The horses, too, are artists in their way, and not a few of them have world-wide reputations of their own in the business, won under a long succession of famous riders. The actual work of a "trick-horse" is not very severe, but he requires to be kept up to his full training, in season and out of season. Upon the perfection of his performance may depend not only the applause of the spectators, but even the life of his rider.

Most of the other horses of the circus are mere draught

animals, but they need to be both good and good-looking. Any lack of horses, or any misbehavior on their part, might ruin the impression of the "grand procession" which regularly convinces the staring multitudes of the unusual size of each "mammoth show."

As for the men and women, only a few of these are actual performers in the "ring;" but if the rank and file of the circus army is deficient in the performance of its share of the work in hand, the prosperity of the tent-city will come to grief on its first morning out of winter quarters.

All things are generally so arranged and the movements so timed that circus travelling and transportation may be done by night, since any day wasted without giving an exhibition, would show a heavy loss in the manager's accounts. The wages of all the human beings employed, and the eating and drinking done by them and by the animals, wild and tame, with nearly all other current expenses, go right along whether or not the big tent is up and money is coming in for tickets.

The book-keeping, cash taking, and cash paying of such a business require as perfect training as most any other part of it. A separate van is arranged and fitted up as a business office, with safes and desks and clerks, and when the "cash is settled" at the close of each day's work, it is well-known in that van how much has been made or lost. The cashier's van is one of the first things to be pulled ashore, so to speak, on any arrival, for the paying out of money begins right away, rain or shine.

When the circus train has arrived in an exhibition town, and has arranged its odd-looking cars upon the side tracks, where they are to be unloaded, the very first duty to be attended to is the care of the horses, since all these must be fed and groomed before the grand procession can start.

Off rolls the first wagon, a large one, loaded with hay and straw. A team is hitched to it, and it is hurried away to the spot where the tents are to go up. Sometimes, indeed, the men who were "sent ahead" have already delivered sufficient forage upon the ground. Other wagons are rolled off, hitched up and driven away, for all their cargoes are ready-packed upon them. Groups of spare animals follow, and as many of these as can, begin work upon their breakfasts before the canvas stables are set up.

The exhibition ground is pretty sure to be an open space well situated for the purpose and often used for circuses, but

it rarely is in perfect condition or clear of rubbish.

Experienced men, with gangs of helpers, are instantly at work with tape-lines and pennoned marking-pins, laying off the exact places and dimensions of the areas to be occupied by the tents, and designating the spots where poles are to stand and stakes to be driven. Almost as fast as a spot is marked, a tent-stake is dropped beside it, for cargoes after cargoes of material, with men who know what to do with it all, are constantly arriving from the cars. They start and travel and come in regular order, and yet hardly anything reaches the grounds many minutes before it is wanted. Gangs of strong-armed fellows with sledge-hammers follow close behind the stake-droppers, and the stakes are driven in firmly, while other gangs clear loose rubbage from the surface. Every one minds his business earnestly, and it seems but a few moments before the long, low-crowned stable-tents are up, the bedding for the horses is pitched around in place, and the animals themselves are quietly feeding, with a look of quiet contentment, as if they were saying, "Here we are, gentlemen, all at home at last."

The next tent to these, in point of time, is the one under which such important people as elephants and camels are to take their morning hay; but the "traveling hotel" for the human beings is hardly less essential, and it is sure to be ready a very short time after the head-cook and his assistants have started their fires. The cooks are "experts," every one, and they will generally be prepared to offer their hungry fellow-travelers hot coffee and a capital breakfast in from twenty to thirty minutes after the unloading of their ingenious "portable range" upon the grounds.

The cooking-tents and the canvas dining-rooms are quite enough to put any old soldier in mind of his campaigns. But the rations furnished are of the best. All the work is done by exact rules, but it is not every man who has genius of the kind required to set up a hotel in half an hour and feed five hundred guests the first morning. They are apt to be a hungry set, indeed, and it may be noteworthy that P. T. Barnum's present head-cook is an ex-lion-king, and has passed much of his life in hourly peril of being eaten up.

Not all the motley inhabitants of the tent-city will take their meals in the same room nor at the same table. There is a strong caste feeling between the skilled performers of

different callings and varied fame, and the living curiosities have a pride all their own. For instance, it could not be expected that a lady weighing half a ton, more or less, should have a small opinion of herself, nor that a giant should fail to look down upon almost anybody else. There is no confusion in the management of the dining-room, but there is no long lingering at table, for all the guests have work before them, and as fast as one swarm flits away another settles in the places left empty.

With three hundred horses of all sorts to care for, there is constant need of the services of a blacksmith, and the smith, forge and all, must be promptly in working order. The smith, indeed, must be ready with his hammer and fire before he gets his breakfast, for there is much iron-work about the tools, wagons, tent gear, and housekeeping apparatus, as well as upon the feet of the horses.

Neither is it to be supposed that the people of the tent-city preserve the beauty of their linen without the aid of a laundry; and the tub, the wringer, and the clothes-line speedily offer ample evidence that the washerwoman is at work. Every day in the week is washing-day, and there is no time to spare, even then.

The minor tents go up rapidly, but the raising of the "exhibition tent" and its adjoining canvasses is no small affair. That is, there is nothing apparently difficult about it in the hands of the circus men, but twice their number of untrained workers, say two full companies of militia, would make many trials at it before succeeding. Every peg and stake is driven, and every rope is in its place; the center-poles grandly rise in the air; the side-poles or stretchers are lifted, one by one, and their stays are hauled upon till all are taut and firm, and then the great central canvas "skin" of the vast fabric is skillfully slipped on and stretched to unwrinkled smoothness. The whole operation is an example of the marvelous results to be obtained by discipline and concert of action; and it is performed every few days, often daily, throughout the exhibiting season.

If the entire circus-menagerie, when packed for transportation, should be compared to a chest of tools, the collection of implements appears, when unpacked for use, altogether too large to be again reduced to the space it occupied. Applied as are those tools, however, to one perpetually recurring

APR 1931

job, and all being numbered and fitted to their places in the box, or rather boxes, they come out and return again, time after time, without crowding. However, they do not all have to be brought into use upon every exhibition of the show, for no two days present precisely the same job to the workmen. *No two consecutive exhibition-grounds, in the first place,* present the same features of size, shape, surface, or character of soil, and all these points must be taken into consideration. Neither are any two towns or cities alike, nor are the expected audiences the same in size or tastes or character. The performances must be varied with some reference to all these things, and even in the neighborhood of large cities, it is sometimes impossible to obtain a large enough space for the full presentation of all the show's attractions. Here comes in a demand upon the manager for good judgment, promptly used. He must instantly decide what part of his programme he will cut out and what he must leave in, and he must succeed in performing this delicate duty so that all the crowds of persons who may be gathered shall leave the tents with a satisfied feeling that they have had the full worth of their money.

The most important business, after the tents are up, is the formation of the "ring" and the setting up of the gymnastic machinery for the performances of the acrobats.

The "ring" is generally a little more than forty feet in diameter, and it looks like a rude enough affair, but its preparation calls for both care and skill. The ground for it is leveled with nicety. The barrier, a circular mound of earth of about 125 feet inside circumference, is raised to a height of somewhat over twenty inches on its inner face. It must be thick, firm, and strong, to bear the hard blows of a horse's feet or the sudden leaning upon it of an elephant. It must, therefore, be banked, and pounded with sledge-hammers, until no strain to which it can be subjected can break it down, and it must retain no looseness or unevenness to trip a horse or endanger the life of a rider. It is the work of a few hours only, but there is a man busy upon almost every square yard of it while it is rising.

As to the machinery for the acrobats, simple as is the appearance of the uprights and cross-bars, they must be set up with especial care, so as to leave no possibility for breaking down. The performer using them must be able to trust his appliances absolutely, or he could never have the nerve and

confidence to delight the crowd at the risk of his neck. All his feats of skill and daring, moreover, have relation to the exact distances at which he has practiced them, and there must be no variation from those precise measurements in the daily adjustment of his machinery. He, or she, as the case may be, is sure enough to meet with what are called "accidents." When a "great show" recently came to the city of Brooklyn, a family group of three persons sat down together in the breakfast-tent. They were acrobats of unsurpassed agility and skill. A sad-faced woman, a young man of middle-size, a girl just entering her teens. There had been four of them prior to a recent performance, but the "star," an older girl, the most daring of them all, had "missed her motion" in a feat of uncommon peril, and had fallen upon the receiving net. "She was but slightly injured" all were told who cared or thought to ask, but the little group at the table knew that she was dying. They performed their parts that day as skillfully as ever, though with so much more weight than usual to carry, but when the evening exhibition was over there were, indeed, but three of them. The fourth had gone forever.

Such an "accident" may come to the best-trained and most experienced performer, and yet it is a mistake to suppose that acrobats are necessarily a short-lived race. The constant exercise, the enforced temperance, the out-of-door life amount, in fact, to a careful observance of well-known laws of health. If a professional athlete escapes the more serious disasters which are constantly possible to him, it is his own fault if he does not remain for many years a man of comfortable body.

His worst perils do not come to him in the "ring," but during the long months when he is necessarily unemployed, and when he has no immediate and pressing need for careful training. For, in this interval, he is in danger of relaxing his habits of careful living, and a very little over-indulgence will put out of order that wonderful machine—his body—on the perfect condition of which depends his power to do the feats required of him.

The actual term of service as a practical acrobat can not, indeed, be a long one. The public is capricious, and has a rooted prejudice against the appearance of elderly men and women in exhibitions of physical agility and strength. Even the star performers must sooner or later drift into other callings.

When, at the beginning of an exhibition season, after

passing the manager's inspection, an athlete of any kind gets into the ring, he represents a vast amount of hard and thoughtful labor and instruction. He has been in "winter quarters," of some kind, but he has also been at "school," and the younger he is, the more he has to endure from exacting and often severe teachers.

The larger shows and more enterprising showmen often set up "schools" of their own, connected, it may be, with the establishments wherein they keep and train their quadruped performers.

In every such school of the circus there is a good deal of machinery, as well as an experienced professor of the art of doing impossible things. There are kept on hand every kind of gymnastic apparatus for the department of activity and muscular strength. These latter vary, of course, with the nature of the lessons the pupil is learning, and at last he is confronted with the very things he is to employ in the presence of watching crowds.

By the pitiless severity meted out to all needless failures made in the presence of his exacting trainer, the "schoolmaster," he is made to understand at an early day that he must never make a failure in the presence of paying spectators.

The trainer represents the keen-eyed public, and also the demands of his employer, the manager, and he must give a good account of the time and money expended upon the school. If any boy should be seized with a "fever" to distinguish himself in the "ring," nothing would be so likely to cure him as a week or so under a careful and faithful teacher in a winter school for the circus. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, the scholar would forever afterward be contented to remain outside the rope circle.

The "grand procession" is a good advertisement, but it serves other practical purposes. It keeps the crowds away from the grounds until the preparations are completed, and besides it gives the animals their morning exercise, after their stiffening ride on the cars. When it returns, there is work for all hands. The grooms and riders are busy with the horses. The performers are in the "greenroom" tent, looking over their wardrobes, repairing damages, and generally getting all things in readiness for the opening. The elephants, returning from their long, hot, dusty promenade, expect some attention to their own toilet, and it is something of a task

to give one of the thick-skinned monsters a bath and a broom shampoo.

The setting up of the seats of the amphitheatre, all around the vast enclosure, employs a number of men for hours, and must be done with care. A disaster to any part of the crowd upon those seemingly fragile structures would be all but ruinous to the show. Hundreds of dollars are often spent in strengthening them before the weigh of the spectators and the fortunes of the manager can be trusted upon them.

When at last all things are finished, and the hour has arrived for the band to strike up, and the guests of the tent-city have gathered to witness the results of all this outlay and care and toil, there comes an hour of excitement and amusement,—to everybody who does not belong to the circus-menagerie. The show people are busy with the hard, anxious work of making fun for the visitors. Quick eyes among them are watching every rope and wire and stake. The exact condition of every horse and human being is known, and just what and how much each can be safely called upon to do at that day and hour. There must be no failure, no blunder, no accident, and if one of these by any means occur, it must be instantly covered, hidden and carried beyond the knowledge of the public. The perfect smoothness, promptness, clock-like regularity attained by practice and sharp discipline make an indispensable feature and attraction of the entire performance.

There is one other attraction, born of an evil taste in the popular mind, the secret of which is a sore temptation to all managers. There still lurks among us, in spite of all our civilization, a relic of the coarse and morbid appetite which made the heathenish, savage populace of Rome clamor for the bloody shows of the arena. We are still uncivilized enough, many of us, to be drawn to gaze upon a performance which seems to be full of danger. It is a disgraceful appetite, but every manager caters to it, more or less. The provision for it begins with the wild animals in their dens. Unfortunately, some people love to see a man or woman in among the ferocious brutes, and in constant deadly peril of strong teeth and rending claws. The fascination, to the crowd, of the snake-charmer's exhibition is the supposed danger she is in, with hideous pets twisted around her. The shuddering folk who stare at the dreadful folds of the boa-constructor, with the doomed pigeons perched upon them, do not know how safe the pigeons are, but they enjoy their shudder all the

APR 1931

same. The "big serpent" in captivity, whatever he may do in freedom, never eats oftener than once in two or three months. He is more likely to call for a meal at the end of six months or a year, and then to be satisfied with a few doves or chickens—permission being given him to swallow them alive, or he will not eat them at all. If an elephant has a reputation of being "dangerous" and has to be chained up, he will have knots of people staring at him who otherwise would pass him almost contemptuously. If a grizzly bear or a lion can be said to have eaten a keeper or two, and to have a tendency to burst his prison-bars and eat everybody, an important class of circus-ticket buyers will flock to shiver in the near presence of the monster. No manager leaves that class entirely out of his calculations.

The danger element of attraction by no means ceases at the door of the menagerie. The ring itself is full of it. The ordinary feats of bareback horsemanship answer well enough for the demands of many, and they are only not perilous because of the great skill of the horses and their riders. The spectators know very well that every now and then a "champion" or a "queen of the ring" meets with a terrible fall on one of those swift circlings and graceful leaps. They will respond with enthusiastic cheering at some specially sensational spring or plunge.

The perilous and the impossible are especially demanded of the acrobats, and the only limit set them may be said to be in the kindlier sensibilities of another large class of ticket-buyers who "will not go to look at such dreadful things." There is, therefore, a constant effort made to steer a middle course and satisfy all comers.

The public will endure a considerable degree of danger to the performers, but it is very sensitive on its own account, and it is rare indeed that it is called upon to face any genuine peril. Discomforts will sometime come, such as sudden rain-storms and cold winds, and the great tent is but an imperfect shelter after all, even though it requires a terrible gale to bring it down.

While one set of performers is in the ring, at work, the next is in the greenroom-tent getting ready, and that is a part of the "show" which is not shown, but is very interesting. The very horses wait and watch for the signal as anxiously as do their human associates, and the elephants seem to be eager for the duty before them. The last touches are given

to the performers' finery, the last instructions are received, the applause outside tells of a completed "act" of the performance, the band strikes up, the ring-master raises his hand, and the greenroom sends forth the next instalment of the show.

The telegraph, railway, printing-press, and even the "weather bureau" itself, are the regular and constant servants of the travelling show.

Such trades as are not actually represented on its weekly pay-roll are not there only because their work was done before it set out upon its travels, or can be better done elsewhere than under the tents.

As for the weather-bureau and its prophets, the farmer in wheat harvest is not more anxious concerning their accuracy than is the circus manager. There is no law, in spring, summer or autumn, which compels bad weather to come at night or on Sundays. A few days or a week of storms and rains will sometimes made a doleful hole in the calculations for an exhibition season, not only in mere prevention of specific performances, advertised beforehand, but in the consequent disarrangement of others set for days yet farther on. There must be postponements and omissions and disappointments, and a danger that the show will get a bad name for not being "on hand." If a hurricane or a broken bridge prevents the setting up of the tents in Bungtown on Wednesday, and the performance is therefore given at that place on Thursday, the expectant people of Scrabbleville can not be gratified on that same Thursday, nor can Catamount Centre be delighted on Friday. The weather, therefore, has much to do with the success of a great show, and any manager would be glad to have control of it, so far as his list of performances is concerned.

The experiences of any great show bring to it one more great trial, constantly recurring under all sorts of circumstances of locality, weather and weariness. There is one hour which, more than any other, tests to the uppermost the temper, skill, and discipline of the force under the command of the circus manager. It is the hour when the tents must be "struck," or taken down, and the vast establishment packed up for removal to its next stopping place.

Slowly the audience has leaked away through the narrow entrance, though some of its younger members linger until it is necessary to scare them out. The preparations for depar-

APR 193

ture began long ago. Every article of dress taken off was instantly packed for travel. Every animal has been fed and cared for. Every tool is in its place, for present use or for transportation, as the case may be. There are miles and hours of traveling to be done, and every minute is precious. The least confusion or mismanagement would surely bear bad fruit on the morrow.

The experts of all sorts—acrobats, animal trainers, keepers—are caring for their wardrobes, or themselves, or for the precious beasts in their charge. The horses in their canvas tents know that their time is up, and meet their grooms as if prepared to go. The cook and his assistants have fed their last "boarder," and already have packed their pots and crockery, and the fire is dead in the portable range. Every man who has not completed his task is working at it with all his might; but the center of interest is the great tent and its appliances. There is comparatively little shouting or orders, but scores of men are taking their positions by stakes and ropes, knowing exactly what to do and where and when to do it. There are, perhaps (to give the exact size of one big tent), 168,060 square yards of canvas to come down, with all that held it up. The huge, hollow interior is empty at last, with the exception of a few loiterers who hurry out in great alarm, as they hear a loud shot of "Let go!" from the manager. The shout was meant to scare them out, and not a man looses his hold upon a rope. It is a plan which always clears away the loiterers.

The immense space is clear, but vaguely shadowy and dim, for the lights are out and there is nothing there to "show."

Another order, another, another, follow in quick succession; ropes are hauled upon or let go; the canvas steadily pulls away, and the center-poles and stays, all the airy skeleton of the tent, stand as bare as when they were first lifted there. These, too, come down in regular order, rapidly, and without a sign of hesitation or confusion. Thus every peg and pole and board is removed from the tent-area to its proper place on its own wagon.

More than a quarter of a million square yards of "duck," and every flag, rope, pole, and penion are neatly folded and packed away in the wagons. And all this has been done in less than twenty minutes; Not a rope is mislaid, not a tool lost sight of, and the secret of it is that some one person has

APR 1931

been made personally responsible for each of all those numberless items of duty. Not too much has been laid upon any one, but mercilessly strict will be the inquiry concerning the least shortcoming.

The general crowd of spectators hurries home at once, all the sooner if the night is dark or rainy, or if it be the last performance and the tents are coming down. The latest to depart are invariably the boys, to whom the show presents a world of weird, strange fascination. It is almost hard upon them that their attachment is not reciprocated. Neither the manager nor his corps of trained workers has any use for boys. The former "does not want 'em around." He would not have them at any price, although hundreds are sure to offer, continually, with their heads full of dime novel ideas of circus life, its "adventures,' 'and its "glories." They know nothing at all of the hard work, the patient training beforehand, neither do they think of the experience and thorough knowledge of at least some one trade required by every member of the manager's army of helpers. Even the "bill-stickers" must know how to do their work, and work hard in doing it, but boys with the circus fever are after something which will enable them to wear tights and spangles. They seldom, if ever, think of the hard work, severe training, wearying repetitions, and terrible risks of injury and lifelong maiming that must be undergone before a manager will allow a performer to appear in public. For instance, in learning circus feats of but one kind—riding on bareback horses—severe falls are always likely to happen. To lessen the danger, however, almost every large circus school has a derrick with a long arm. Through a pulley in the end of this arm is passed a rope which is fastened to the learner's belt, the other end being held by a watchful attendant, who secures it whenever the rider loses his balance. A second man keeps the arm revolving just above the pupil as he rides around the ring, and the instructor leads the horse by a lariat. Thus three men are needed in teaching one to ride bareback, and each new lesson has to be repeated a great many times in the same wearisome round.

It is likely that most of the youngsters who so eagerly volunteer are in a kind of mental fog. They could hardly say, if they were asked, whether they prefer to be hired as owner, manager, clown, "king of the ring," or to train and handle the elephants.

APR 1931