

"OH, WHAT A CUNNING LITTLE BABY-ELEPHANT!"

MEN-AND-ANIMAL SHOWS, AND HOW THEY ARE MOVED ABOUT.

BY WILLIAM O. STODDARD.

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 amphitheatres, 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 attrac-

tions 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.

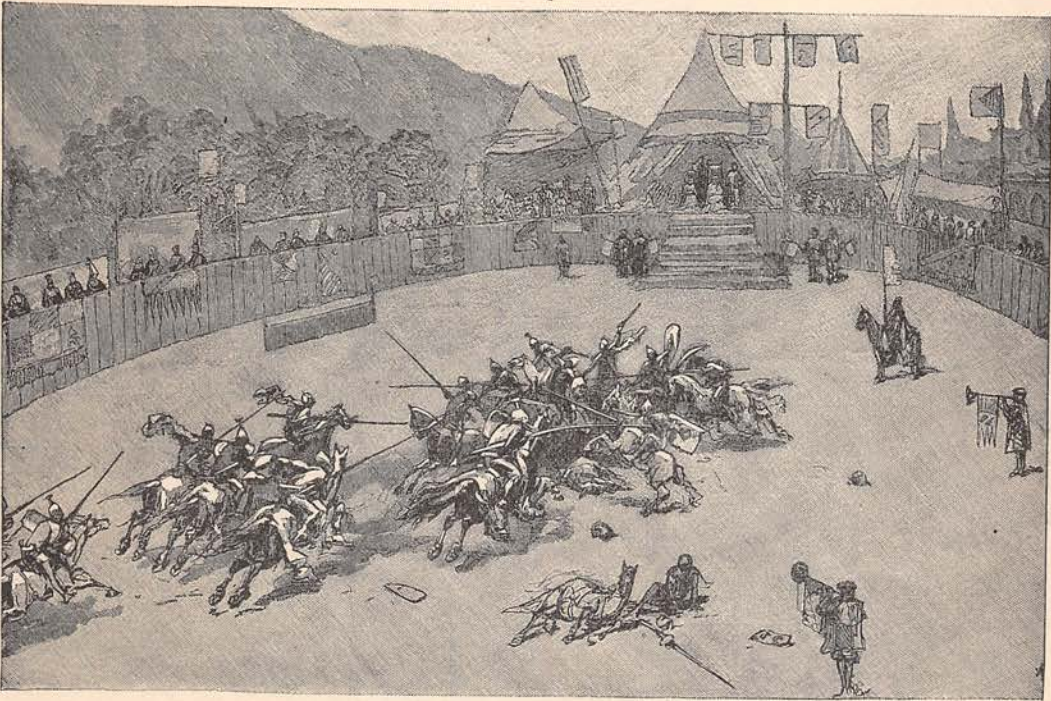
One secret of this was that the wildest beasts had ceased to be strangers in the eyes of American young people; as soon as the country became flooded with illustrated books, magazines, and papers, and boys and girls knew as much about giraffes and boa-constrictors as their grandparents had known

which the books and papers have not told all 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 worth while, 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



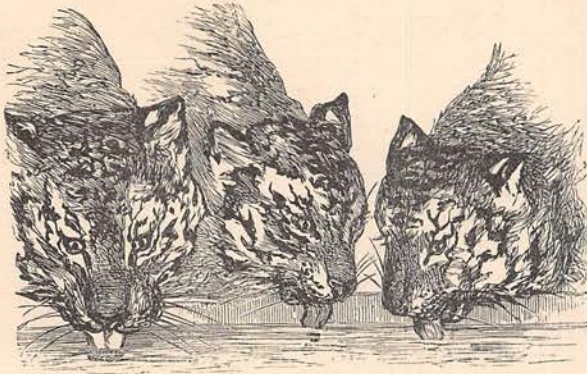
A TOURNAMENT IN THE MIDDLE AGES.

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

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 to-day 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



TIGERS DRINKING.

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's 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're 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 really intelligent lion, right from the wild, in about four weeks, so 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 well 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, may be. Then you go into the cage, if you want to, without your 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 lions 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 'em inside of 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 is n't anything like what 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 for 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 gruntingly 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, than 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 hardly can 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 head-quarters of this trade have for a long time been at Hamburg, with branches, agencies, 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 trusty 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, while rhinoceroses cost some \$6,000 per 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 learning and promises to be sparing of his keepers, doubles 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

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 away 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 froward and unhealthy dislike for it, they must be shoved



PERSUADING THE BABY HIPPOPOTAMUS TO GET INTO HIS WAGON.

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 can be given of the probable cost of a menagerie.

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



A CIRCUS-WAGON IN THE PROCESSION THROUGH THE STREETS, BEFORE THE SHOW.

the show season, but in the winter retirement. They must also be carefully attended to while in process of transportation from place to place, and there are difficulties enough on land, but it is 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 very much of him to be seasick.

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 were earning nothing, and eating well, and when their keepers were on full pay. Nor do mere "food and attendance" include all the large items of a quadruped savage's board bill. Every 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 the cold, would simply entail upon the manager the additional expense of funerals for his costliest curiosities.

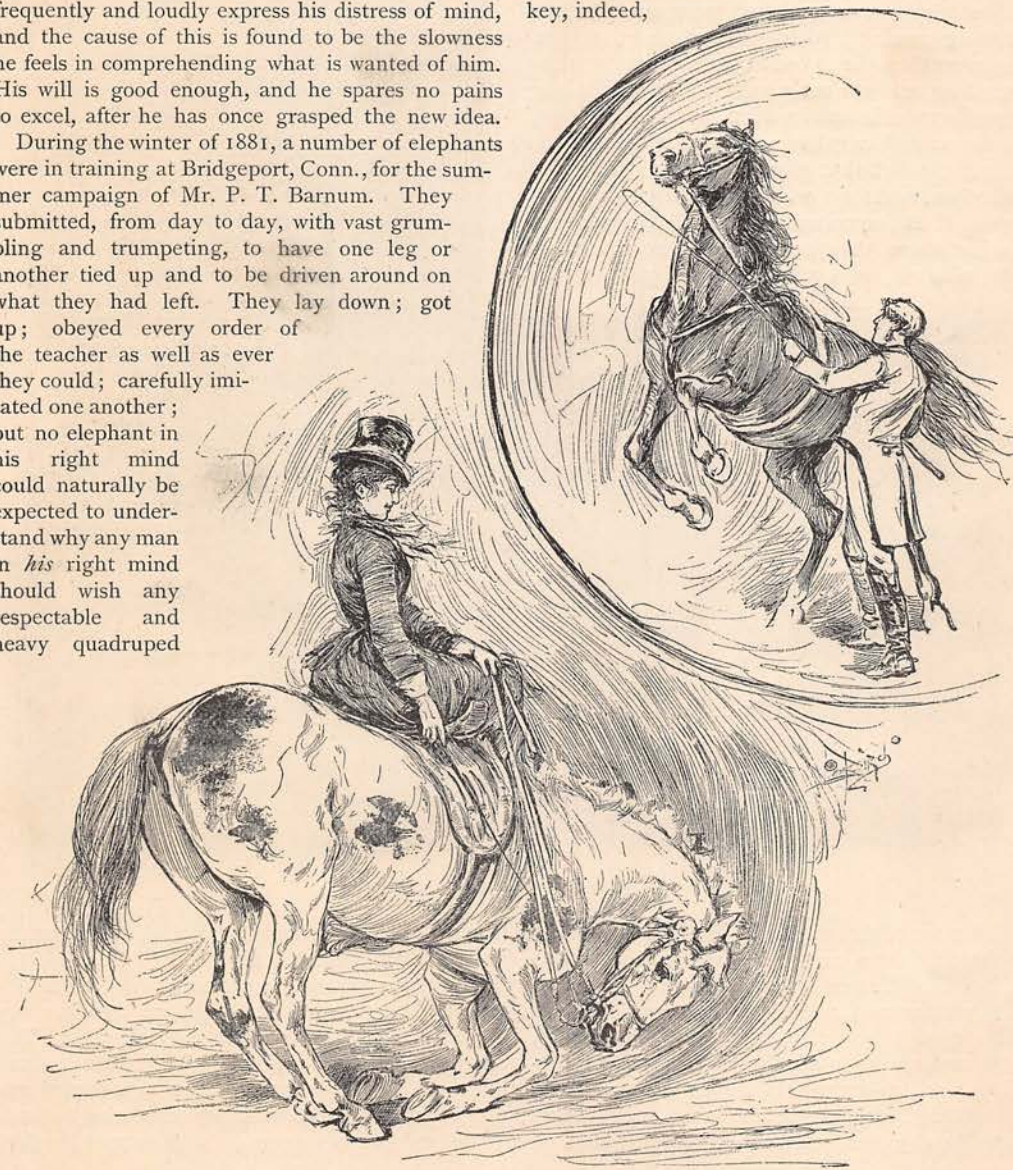
Nevertheless, vacation time is by no means idle time for the showman. Training involves hard and patient toil, and it receives a sort of compensation

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,

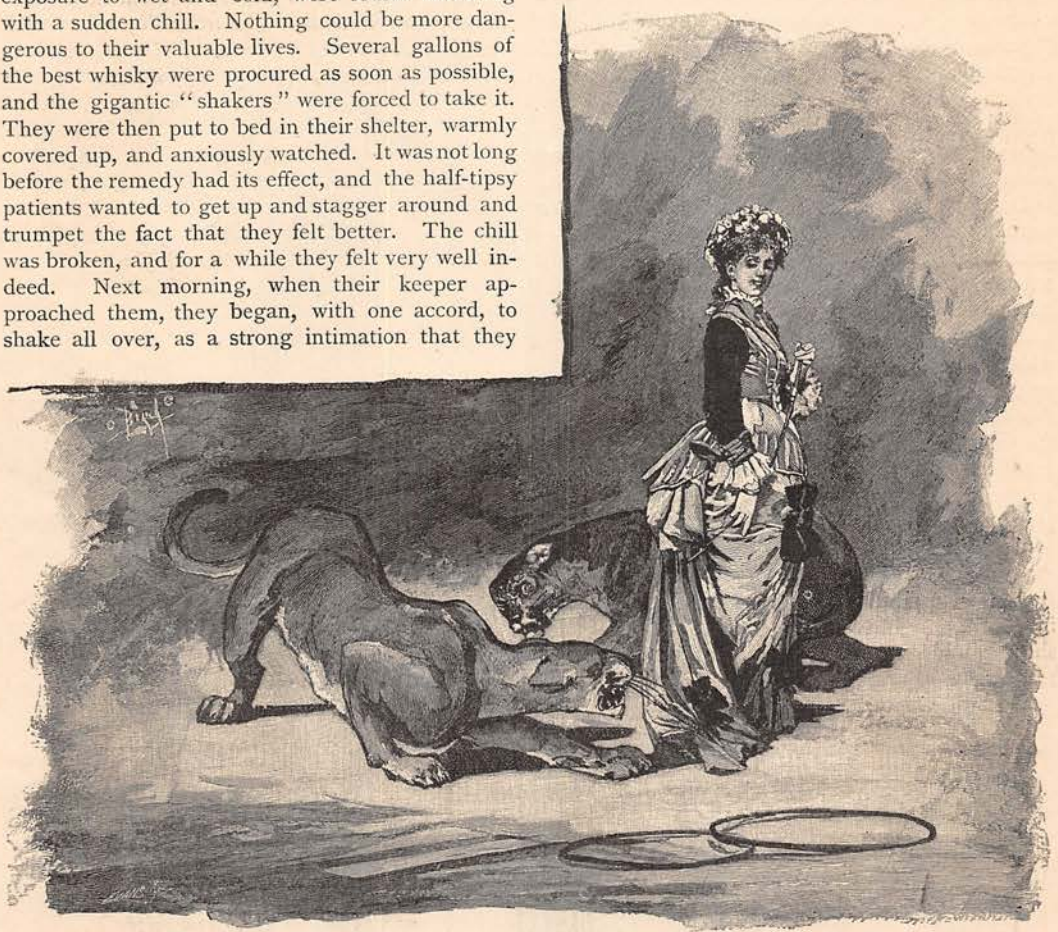


"TRAINED HORSES."

will "practice" all sorts of things, with more or less understanding, but he is more than likely to select performances not on the programme, 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 whisky 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

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, tool, implement, of whatever kind, which any part of his huge establishment may need, and that all



THE PANTHER QUEEN AND HER PETS.

needed more of that medicine; but the doctor was too sharp for them, and roared at the nearest one: "No, sir. You can't 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

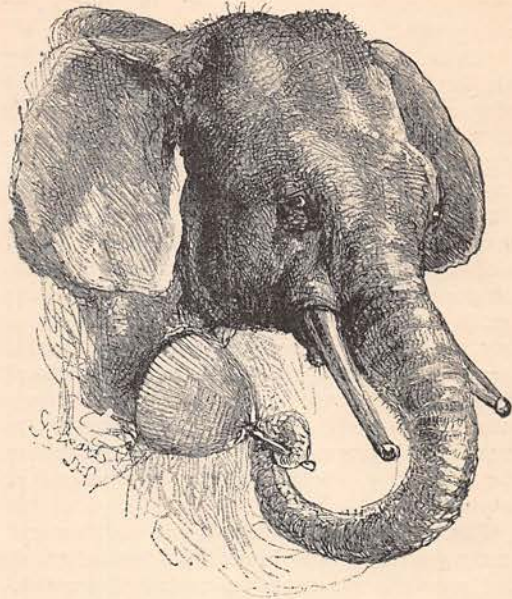
these are in place, ready for instant use when the order to start is actually given.

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.

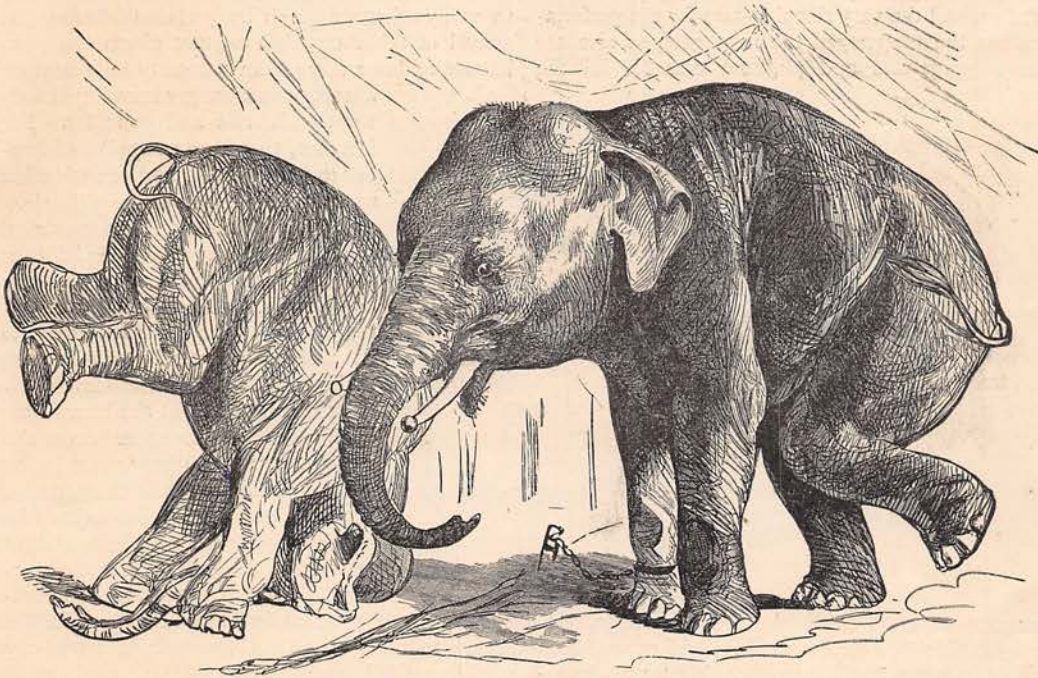
Each season, therefore, the attractions to be offered must be sought, corresponded for, gathered, organized anew. All engagements are made early enough in advance, but not in any case without careful inquiry and inspection by the manager as to the physical and moral condition of the person or persons 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 can not 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 can not afford to hire an intemperate man at any wages.



"PHEW! CIRCUS FEATS ARE WARM WORK!"

ing all the while. Generally, he is at least part owner of the concern he is to manage, or is directly



ELEPHANTS PRACTICING, DURING THE TEACHER'S ABSENCE.

The manager may be one man, or two or three men acting as one, but he is in anxious train- 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 comes 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 can not 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 steam-boats 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

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.

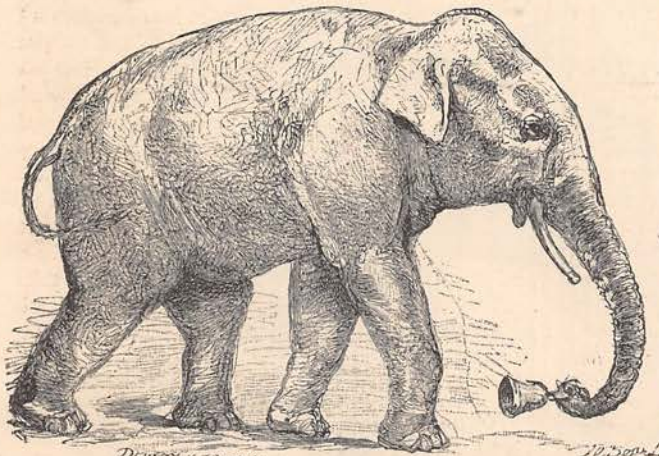
A few energetic men, with due instruction, can attend to this branch of the business, but there are so many other duties to be performed before the arrival of the show, that a great circus has been known to have more than "seventy men sent on

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 necessities 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 knowl-

edge 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 passed when the railway train with the show on board gets under way for the first time.

(To be concluded next month.)



RINGING THE BELL FOR DINNER.

immense store of material. On 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

OUT OF BOUNDS.

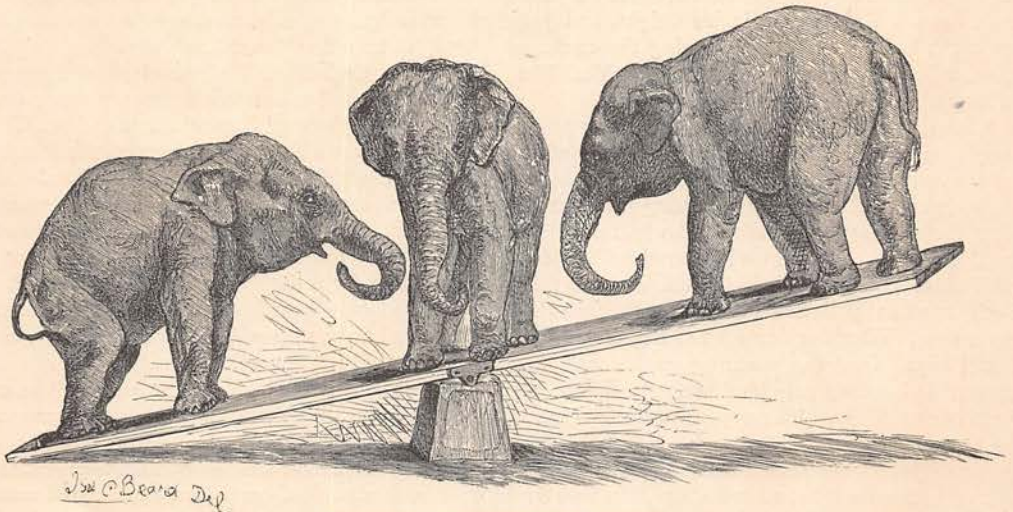
A FROG leaped his way up a tree.
 "I can sing," said he,—"listen to me;"
 So he uttered a shout,
 And an owl found him out,
 And no more a musician was he.

Said a tiger, "I'll walk through the clover,
 Yea, verily, yes, and moreover;"
 But the bees who were there
 Sadly ruffled his hair,
 When they battled this tropical rover.

A baboon once said, "I can swim;"
 So he dived from the end of a limb,
 And a crocodile there
 Quickly rose from its lair,
 And there was n't a surplus of him.

MEN-AND-ANIMAL SHOWS, AND HOW THEY
 ARE MOVED ABOUT.—CONCLUDED.

BY WILLIAM O. STODDARD.



PERFORMING ELEPHANTS PLAYING SEE-SAW.

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 trains—including a dozen Pullman "sleepers" and the elephant cars, in each of which five of the huge beasts are stowed—bear along about five hundred men and three hundred 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.

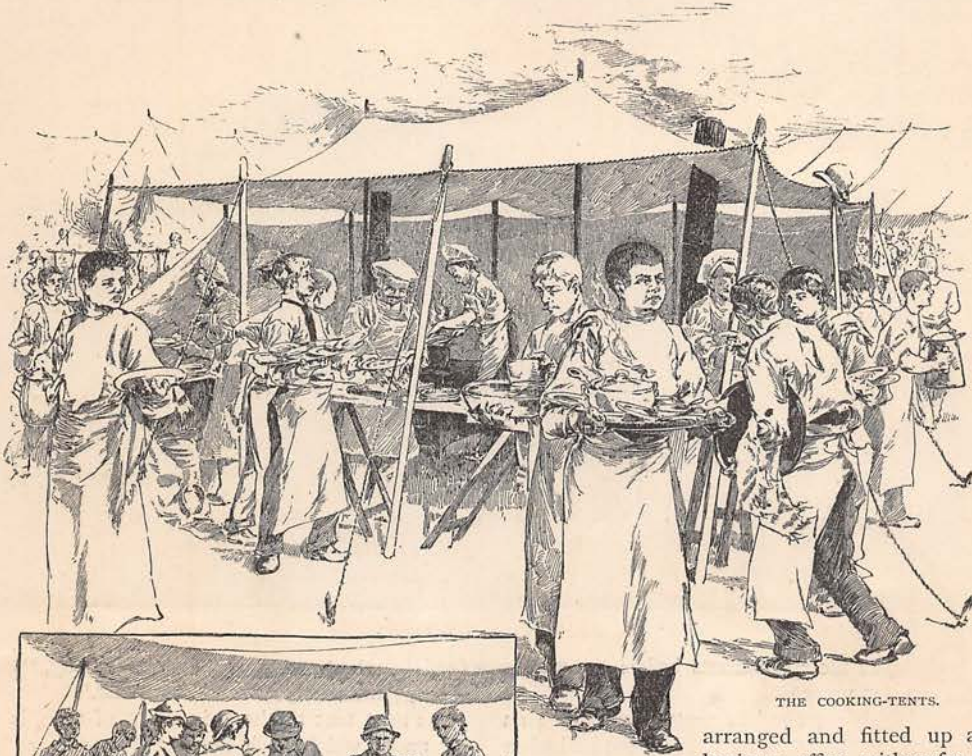
Most of the other horses of the circus are mere

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

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 almost any other part of it. A separate van is



THE COOKING-TENTS.



WASHING THE DISHES.

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 traveling and transportation may be done by night, since any day wasted without giving an exhibition would

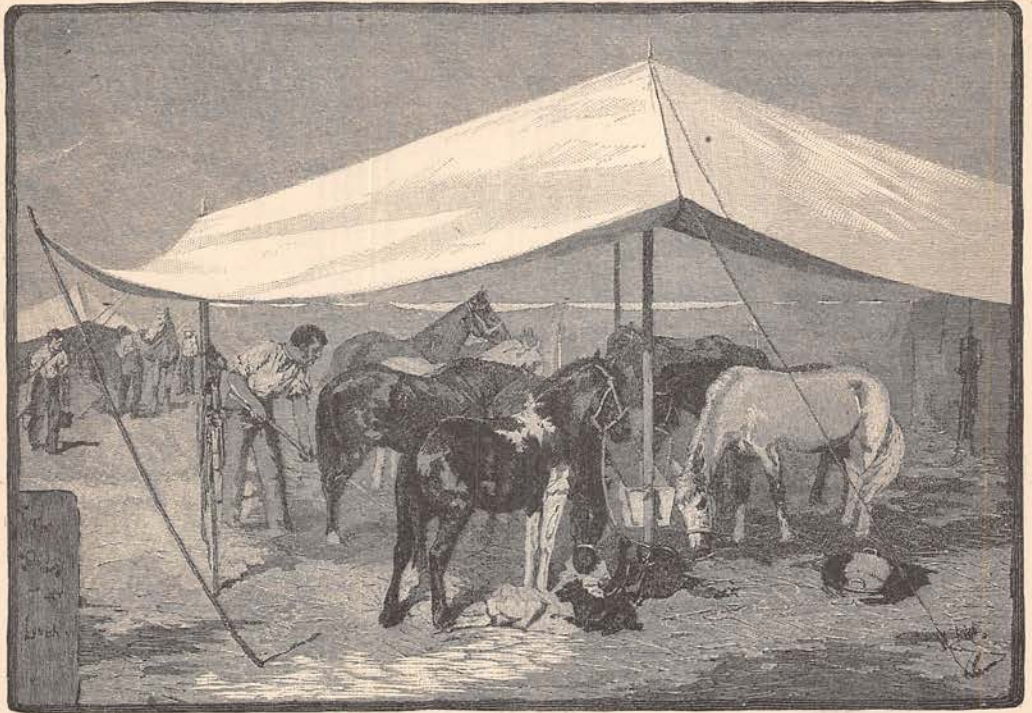
be arranged and fitted up as a business office, with safes and desks and clerks, and when the "cash is settled" at the close of each day's work, it is well known in that van how much has been made or lost. The cashier's van is one of the first things to be pulled ashore, so to speak, on any arrival,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

When a 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, be-

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



THE TENT FOR THE PONIES.

gin 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 rubbish from the surface. Every one minds his business earnestly,

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.

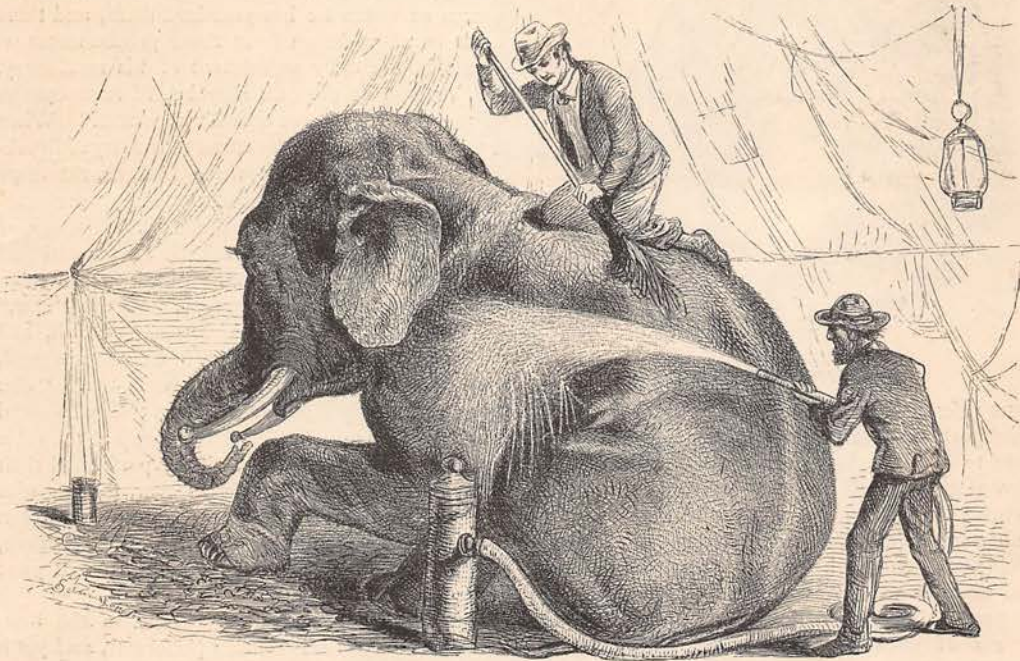
Not all the motley inhabitants of the tent-city will take their meals in the same room nor at the same table. There is a strong caste feeling between the skilled performers of different callings and varied fame, and the living curiosities have a pride all their own. For instance, it could not be expected 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 smithy, 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.

evidence that the washerman 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 canvases 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



THE ELEPHANT'S TOILET.

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

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 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



THE CLOWN "MAKING-UP."

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.

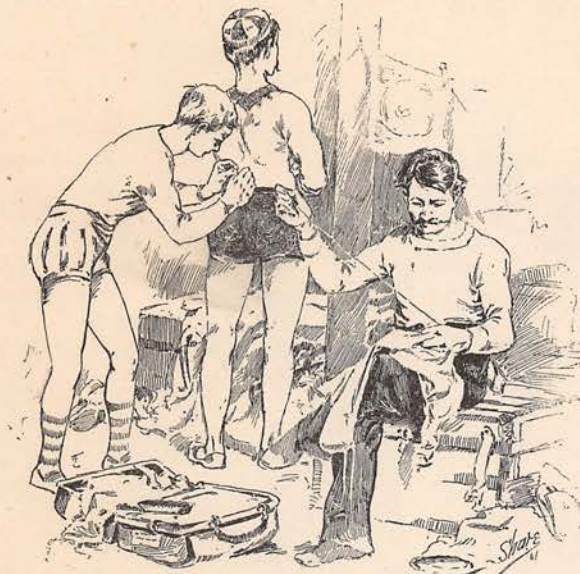
The most important business, after the tents are up, is the formation of the "ring" and the setting up of the gymnastic machinery for the performances of the acrobats.

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 one hundred and twenty-five 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 will break it down, and it must retain no looseness nor 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 of their 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-doors 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 continually

possible to him, it is his own fault if he does not remain for many years a man of comfortable body.



REPAIRING DAMAGES.

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 had 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 development 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 "school-master," 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



THE LAUNDRY.

preparations are completed, and besides it gives the animals their morning exercise, after their stiffen-

ing 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

comes an hour of excitement and amusement,—to everybody who does not belong to the circus-menagerie. The show people are busy with the



THE SNAKE-CHARMER TAKES THE BOA OUT OF ITS CAGE.

“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 amphitheater, all around the vast inclosure, 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 weight of the spectators and the fortunes of the manager can be trusted upon them.

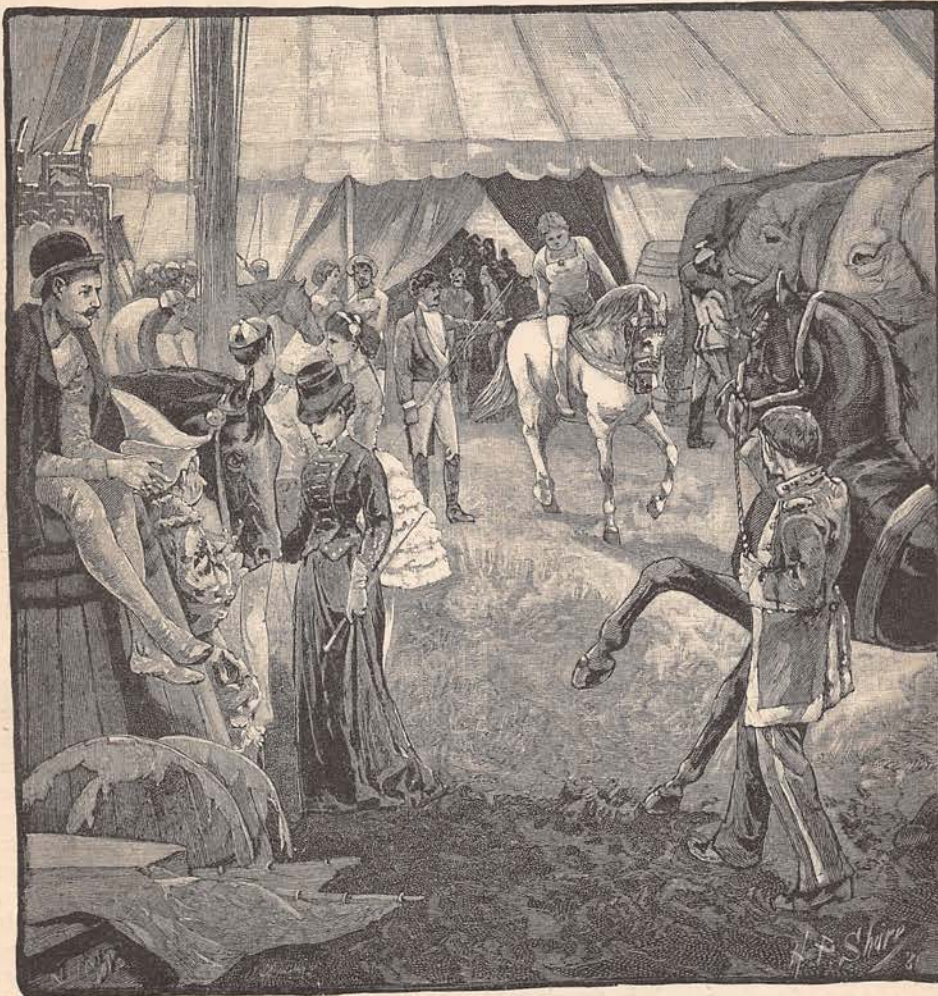
When at last all things are finished, and the hour has arrived for the band to strike up, and the guests of the tent-city have gathered to witness the results of all this outlay and care and toil, there

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 occurs, 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 un-

civilized 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 he is in, with his hideous pets twisted around him. The shuddering folk who stare at the dreadful folds of the boa constrictor, with the doomed pigeons perched upon them, do not know how safe the pigeons are,

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 the 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.



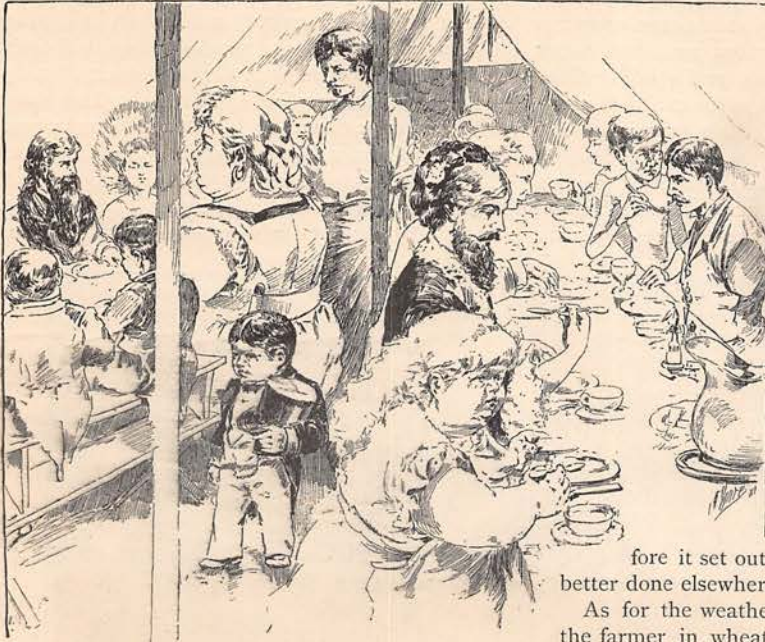
READY TO BE CALLED INTO THE RING.

but they enjoy their shudder all the same. The "big serpent" in captivity, whatever he may do in freedom, never eats oftener than once in two or

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 bare-

back horsemanship answer well enough for the demands of many, and they are only not perilous because of the great skill of the horses and

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



THE HUMAN CURIOSITIES AT DINNER.

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 in one of those swift circlings and graceful leaps. They will respond with enthusiastic cheering to 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 sometimes come, such as sudden rainstorms 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

instructions are received, the applause outside tells of a completed "act" of the performance, the band strikes up, the ring-manager raises his hand, and the greenroom sends forth the next installment of the show.

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

Such trades as are not actually represented on its weekly pay-roll are not there only because their work was done be-

fore 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 make a doleful hole in the calculations for an exhibition season, not only in the 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 Scabbleville 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 the 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 uttermost 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.

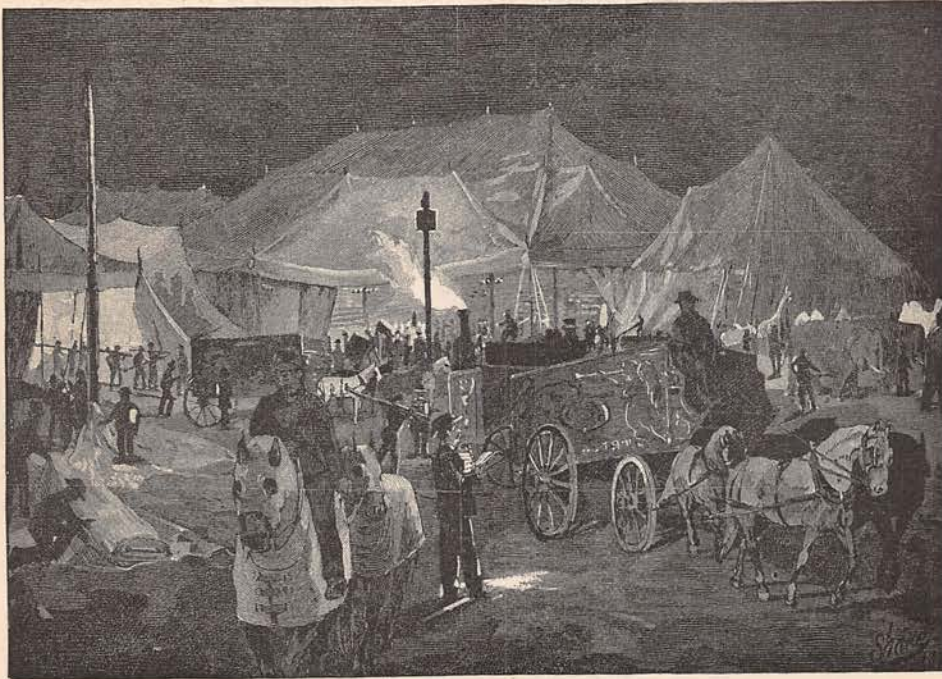
Slowly the audience has leaked away through the narrow entrance, though some of its younger members linger until it is necessary to scare them out. The preparations for departure began long ago. Every article of dress taken off was instantly packed for travel. Every animal has been fed and cared for. 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 stables 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 com-

of 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), one hundred and sixty-eight thousand 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 shout 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.



BREAKING UP AT NIGHT, AND STARTING AWAY.

pleted 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

More than a quarter of a million square yards of "duck," and every flag, rope, pole, and pennon, 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, nor a tool lost sight of, and the secret of it is that some one person has 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 short-coming.

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 life-long 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. A few days of practical experience might teach them wisdom, or it might, indeed, set them at a solemn consideration of the whole matter, in some such doleful attitude as this:

