

# BARNUM & BAILEY SHOW

Chicago, April 8.

The Barnum & Bailey Show opened the season for the first time in Chicago on April 1. It was a splendid and most propitious inauguration.

The Barnum & Bailey circus exhibited here about four years ago, closing the season in this city. The Ringling Brothers' Show made Chicago its starting point for a number of years, in fact, ever since these showmen invaded "Big" towns.

A fact worthy of mention is the successful opening, which far exceeded any similar event in recent years, in view of the elimination of the extensive advertising, which has characterized the circus ever since P. T. Barnum made the tent show an important factor in the amusement world. In former years every dead wall was plastered with picturesque paper and the daily papers carried columns of advertising. The visit of the Barnum & Bailey show evidently modified the system, for the Ringling Show last season was more conspicuous than the former is this year.

The Barnum show is in many instances differently envired as a "circus" from the Ringling Show, containing fewer regular vaudeville numbers and abundant equestrian display.

The "Grand Tournament," while richly dressed and superbly arrayed in picturesque garb, cannot be compared to the series of so-called "Preliminaries" which the Ringling Brothers introduced last season and seasons before. One of the greatest achievements in spectacular magnificence was the "Grand Entree" of the Ringling Show two years ago. Nothing similar has been shown since, and it is doubtful if the present liberal displays will be retained as part of the shows next year.

The costumes and trappings formed a gratifying kaleidoscopic effect, all the displays in the Barnum & Bailey prelude earning admiration for their dazzling color and sumptuousness.

The show did not run according to the program and a number of acts did not appear, probably on account of the length of the performance.

The principal "death defying" features are an automobile somersault, and a thrilling dive from the dome to the arena by an acrobat named "Desperado." The feat is a hazardous one. The leap is made from the top of the building to an incline platform about forty feet below, Desperado alighting on his chest and hands.

The "Autos That Pass in the Air" thriller is furnished by Sisters La Rague. The two young women are securely fastened in their respective cars. The first comes down an incline at great speed, strikes an obstruction and turns a forward somersault. The other car follows closely and while the first turns the somersault the second passes underneath and lands several yards away. It is an exciting arrangement and the spectators were held breathless.

There are several other features. The best is probably the Leamy Ladies, an aerial act of remarkable skill (New Acts). The Bokromas are another importation (New Acts). The Four Dekoes, Four Sisters Dieke, Five Koes, La Belle Victoria, Five Perez, Prince Youturkey are under New Acts.

Display No. 2 is given over to a novel

series of high school manouvers by expert riders, followed with a polo game on horse back by Count Teitze and several others. The three herds of elephants amused, particularly the tribe under the discipline of Harry J. Mooney. These elephants play real tunes on brass instruments and act as accompanists to five young women who extract music with horns. It is a very novel act, the best of its kind seen here. The other two herds go through various feats under the direction of J. L. Clark and J. J. Dooley, respectively.

Several other trapeze acts are D. Ladora, Cordona and Cortez, Senies La Nazier, Mae Florence and Dexter Martin, while Horace Webb brought merriment on a revolving ladder, and Fischer Brothers showed exploits on a double trapeze. Siegrist Sisters (one appearing) showed dexterity in aerial evolutions. Misses Olympia Konyot and Mae Davenport showed cleverness in a very attractive double equestrian act, making leaps with ease and grace.

In the north end of the building an agile display of bare back riding was shown by Julia Shipp and Victoria Davenport. They are charming and graceful. The "Soldier Horse," introduced by H. Lipot, occupied "Ring No. 1." The routine consists of military tactics and drilling, the feature being leaps over burning cannons.

Sixteen fine steeds are brought to view by H. Cruner. They are known as the Great Karoly Troupe of Hungarian Horses. Dummies representing soldiers act as their riders. Trained canines who divert themselves running after a foot ball are presented by C. Teitze, who is said to make his first appearance with the show. This is the only dog act in the entire performance. Johnnie Short amused the crowd with his dwarf horse, and Gus Kraft did likewise with a mule.

The Six Florences and the Dollar Troupe divided honors. The latter made an excellent showing in ground tumbling, while the other displayed much strength and muscular development.

Cliffe Berzac, who was in vaudeville, and Mme. Berzac, are given prominence, occupying undivided attention in the arena. The ponies are about the best trained, and the revolving on tables with great rapidity brought forth applause. It remained for the obstinate mules to bring laughter. The act was not draggy and was well received.

Chas. Siegrist, Orrin Davenport and Fred Derrick showed different styles of acrobatic horsemanship, their skill bordering on the remarkable. High wire acts were given by The Four Ekid Sisters, The Avallons, and the Nettie Carroll Troupe. The four Kirsten-Mariettas, in exhibitions of strength, accomplished difficult feats with their teeth.

Expert riding is also shown by Ella Bradna and Fred Derrick, in a daring demonstration on swiftly running horses. The Six Konyots are reckless riders and showed the limit of horsemanship.

The aerial department is most complete, including The La Troupe Lamar, Imperial Viennese Troupe and Six Neapolitans, the latter under New Acts. The feats of these high-air gymnasts is really astounding. Nothing like it has ever been beheld in any previous show.

The hippodrome races were curtailed, probably on account of the late hour.

The balloon horse "Jupiter" made his

ascent. The fireworks seemed to disturb him little, although at times the animal was uneasy, and Mrs. Ray Thompson, who mounted him, showed courage.

The performance ran with unusual smoothness. There was not one hitch. The corps of attendants seemed well rehearsed. The band, under the leadership of Frederick Alton Jewell, was a feature. It is an excellent concert organization.

Mr. Shipp, equestrian director, handled the performance with minute detail. The comedy was delightful and pleased. There are plenty of the usual slap-stick and grotesque antics. There are scores of clowns. Among them are Pierre Kerfysler, Franc Perez, H. C. Stantz, Wm. La Rue, Henry Sylow, Fred Egner, Horace Webb, D. W. Winslow, Gus Kraft, Zandon Konyot, Harry La Pearl, F. Valdo, Amil Bigourette, Thomas Gerome, Harry Burns, Four Comrades, Harry Clemmings, Frank Everett, Anton Pisch, George Baker, Eddie De Voe, Roy La Pearl, Kid Farmer, Three Olifans, Olschansky, Antonio Perezitti, Harry Gerome, Louis Moustier, Fritz Bigonet, Louis Peruchi, John La Badie, Chas. Azora, James Leoni, Anthony Hueter, Chas. Jennings, James Pleasants.

John and Otto Ringling were present at the opening. The public is interested in this year's circus and there is no reason why "The Greatest Show On Earth" should not do large business during its stay at the Coliseum, which terminates April 27. It is worth seeing more than once. It is impossible to properly review the entire performance on one visit.

## AMERICAN SHOW'S SOUTH AMERICAN TOUR?

Miller Bros.' "101 Ranch" show will exhibit in South America next season, if there is any truth in reports which are circulating in New York. These rumors have it that everything has been arranged to take the Wild West to Buenos Ayres, Chili, on a guarantee for three weeks. All transportation charges from America to the South American city have been provided for, and a stipulated sum is declared to have been guaranteed to the outfit during its stay in Chili.

The same report indicates that other dates have been arranged by which the Wild West exhibition will be able to work back north without taking chances, all the dates being on monetary guarantee.

## FARMERS HAVE THE MONEY.

"Young Johnny" Robinson was in New York last week for three days, receiving incoming acts from Europe. Mr. Robinson talked freely of the coming season's prospects.

"My own opinion," said he, "is that the circus which plays for the rural communities this season is going to be the winner. The manufacturing towns do not look very good to me. The laying off of a large percentage of employees in the steel industries and a general depression in the same line of properties lead me to believe that the factory towns are going to be a tough proposition. But the farmers have money—plenty of it, and then some. A route based on these calculations is quite likely to involve a large expenditure in the paper account, but in the long run I believe it will turn out to be the right circus 'dope' for 1909. Anyhow, I am working on that idea."

## NEW CIRCUS STARTING OUT.

St. Louis, April 8.

A new circus to be known as the Rice Brothers' Shows will be launched here by the Missouri Amusement Company, which has just been incorporated with a capital stock of \$50,000.

The incorporators are James Babcock, W. H. Pomeroy and Bernard Greensfelder. The show will begin its season in St. Louis April 17.

## VETERAN TRAINER DEAD.

Alasco C. White (better known to the circus profession as "Charley" White) died in New York late last week. Few trainers of wild animals have had the success of White. In his younger days he was one of the principal "breakers" for the Barnum-Bailey circus; also one of James A. Bailey's favorites. While he was connected with that organization, his wife, known to all circus performers as "Mother" White, was wardrobe mistress for the same show.

White began his career as an animal trainer in 1853. For many years he was accounted the best breaker and handler of wild animals in the circus business. Toward the latter end of his career he turned to the training of smaller animals and had turned out a large number of dog and pony turns. At his death he was 77 years old. It was "Charley" White who went to Europe at the instruction of James A. Bailey to bring back to the United States the famous "White" Elephant which was for several seasons one of the big attractions with the Barnum-Bailey Circus.

The widow was recently said to have lost most of her small competence in speculation, but reports this week indicate that she is fairly well provided for.

White was buried from the Stephen Merritt chapel in West 23d Street, New York. The deceased was a Civil War veteran and members of his G. A. R. Post attended the funeral services.



## "POP" SEMON'S GOLDEN WEDDING.

MR. and MRS. S. H. SEMON celebrated the golden anniversary of their wedding on Tuesday evening, April 6, at the residence of their niece, Mrs. S. P. Stiner, 415 Central Park West, New York. An informal reception was held by their children, grandchildren, relatives and friends.

"Pop" and his wife were married at 11 Prince St., New York, on April 6, 1859. He is now 74 years of age. Mrs. Semon is 67. Four of seven children, the fruit of the union, are living—Dr. Jos. Semon, of New Rochelle; Lawrence Semon, Philadelphia; Mrs. B. L. Richmond, and Mrs. E. G. Tuttle, of New York.

"Pop" Semon was contracting agent for 35 years for Adam Forepaugh, Barnum and Bailey and Buffalo Bill's Wild West. He retired at the expiration of last season.

Known all over America as "Pop," the veteran showman has a host of friends, and he is missed in the show world.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Semon are enjoying good health. "Pop" says he is laying out a line of paper and fixing up the "jump" to the diamond anniversary of his wedding that will give him a route to make the natives sit up nights waiting for it to arrive.