

CLOWNING NOT WHAT IT WAS

THE MODERN CIRCUS TOO BIG TO TALK IN.

So There Must Be Action, Hard and Quick, if You Are Going to Make People Laugh—An Interview With a Whole Bunch of Circus Clowns of Duty.

Many of the costumes that the Barnum & Bailey clowns offer for the inspection of the people who come to see them are worthy of special mention. They are the very latest in things sartorial, and if Broadway does not copy them, well, it is a loss to the world of the Great White Way, that is all. Here's a chance to get away from the rule of the conventional.

One of these outfits has a waistcoat of large size. It is worn with a coat of elephant's tusk that has about forty tails wired to give the required nonchalant air. The trousers are modestly high and only exhibit four inches of snow white hose. A

long, tight wig lends distinction. The shoes are of the flapping kind. Color, bay. A frock coat of the vintage of 1812 is worn with a dark red sweater, champagne colored stockings and no shoes. A mule, heavily belted, should accompany wearer.

With a swallowtail cut to half the usual length at the back, a bright red necktie with flowing ends is very effective. This should enclose collar with six inch points, built so as to hold the head very erect. Large loose shoes that beat time with the walk and visible stockings are worn. This white blouse with many frills. Red belt drawn taut over expansive waist girth, black stockings, flap shoes, small linen cap set flirtatiously on the side of riotous yellow curls.

A policeman's coat is worn over tipped bustle and shoulder pads. It has three rows of buttons down the front, the middle row very small. A black flower on left breast gives a Paquinlike air. A clay pipe and whiskers are absolutely indispensable.

With the radiance of this accumulation of fashion and folly in the eyes, it is hard to realize that the rows of men who sit silently in the press room after the circus is over are the very ones who a few minutes before flaunted their magnificence before thousands of spectators. All this white zinc and grease paint has been washed off, and the prismatic attire replaced by the common, ordinary Madison Square Garden kind of business suit, a little the worse for wear in a few instances, showing the storm and stress of life on the road.

There is not the slightest attempt to get away from the current mode. Everything is rigidly conventional and correct. Each one of them has a clean shave, a shot shine and immaculate linen.

There are fat men and thin men, old men and young, those experienced in circus ways and those to whom it is still something to offer besides a weekly salary and a problematical engagement for next season. But the cheerful ease of the ring is replaced by what in circus talk is called sawdust fright.

It is caused by the unusual experience of being interviewed. All the merry quips and cracks with which people ordinarily associate the genus clown are gone. They sit on the extreme edge of their chairs and wait for each other to speak. When one ventures, after an apologetic cough, the rest admire and envy his eloquence and self-possession.

"If we'd only known about it two days ago, one of them confesses, 'we'd had a chance to think up something to say.' Lord, lady, we've got stories enough. Some of us have been more forty years in the clowning business. But you can't think of stories right off the bat, begging your pardon, this way."

Then they introduce themselves and each other.

"Lady, I'm the policeman, the jockey and the ballet girl."

"In the man with the long rope and the short dog, 'Me but I thought he'd bite my ankles to-day, exposed as they be.'"

"I'm the one whose feet flap the most."

"I'm Foolish Ford. In my contract it says that I can come and go as I like."

"I call myself the most absurd, ridiculous individual in the world, abounding in melody, mirth and madness. Then when people say 'I'm so bad I'm good' I don't have to make apologies. I just point to my explanation that's written in the posters."

"I'm the man that's got a sort of cousin on Park row who gets all his funny ideas from me."

The tall man who is looking for some pictures of himself in the press album continues the apologies for being so "revealed."

"We ought to have written the story ourselves," he adds, "and given it to you to fix up if you think it needed it. We're great on monologues. We could have done you some corkin' ones if we'd only known. Next year if we're with the show and you want us to—"

The rows nod approval.

"Is it to be a long story," another ventures, "or a short one?" They all lean forward for the reply.

"Oh, a long one with pictures. They are visibly more interested. One or two prod the others to speak. "Go long, Ford; you ought to have a heap of things to say."

"What's the matter with you, Arthur Borella? Tight as a wad."

Book a. Fredie Egner over there, dumb 'a a clam. He's got enough to gab

self, and when you've got everybody in your neighborhood interested in your stunt and you can only hold 'em there for a minute or two by the power of your marvellous personality, it's mighty hard work to have to eternally and forever trying to crawl out from under the weight of half a dozen animals of one kind and another.

"Lots of times I've taken my new costume, before anybody else had had a chance to see it, and walked up and down in front of the horses so that when I did appear they wouldn't be too surprised and mistake me for the sawdust in their admiration or fright, whichever it might happen to be."

The clowns are beginning to lose their fear. Another would be speaker can scarcely wait for his turn.

"You see, the old time clown, which we nearly all of us used to be, was a one ring clown. His stunt was to come out and talk with the ringmaster, and between them they managed to fire the changes on all the local gags and the jokes."

"He would interpolate a comic song now and then and answer back if any one asked him a question. It was hard work, but it didn't begin with the work of the clown today."

"Now it's action, something doin', and doin' quick and hard. You've got to get a laugh as soon as possible, and you've got to talk it over and come to some family decision. No, sir-ee."

"No our surest way is the makeup, for the modern circus has in his repertory. You wouldn't be heard. A clown has to get up his own rig, buy it or have it made; then it belongs to him, and the value of a clown is oftentimes measured by the number of funny costumes he has in his repertory."

"Here at the Garden I suppose every clown has four or five changes which he puts on in the course of one show, never appearing in the ring in the same gown. We don't spend much time browsing about libraries or Fifth avenue action rooms, but sometimes we do get an idea from a cartoon, and junk shops are our favorite hunting

ground. Anything funny that we see get and hang on to it."

"Many of the costumes are very expensive, \$35 or \$40 maybe, and as they don't last long the accumulation of this property represents quite an item of expenditure. We do economize sometimes by using one year's costumes for the next season's rainy day suits. That's our only way of getting anywhere near ahead of the game."

"And if you get a funny idea be sure that it will be copied right away. The day fees when they first came into the business made a great hit, but the season wasn't over before every clown in the country was flapping his feet, as if he'd invented 'em."

"The policeman breaks in. "I suppose I'm considered the funniest clown in the business. There is a little choking sound heard from the rows, but it does not break into articulate speech. "This makeup of mine is a direct inspiration."

"I was calling on a lady friend and telling her that I was looking for a long coat. She was a good sized woman, somewhere near 200 pounds, and she opened the door of the wardrobe and showed me her last year's garment hanging there. It was all right but the color, and she suggested that I have it dyed, which I did."

"Then I sewed three rows of buttons down the front, the smallest in the middle, and borrowed from another lady friend her bustle and shoulder pads—the first one didn't have 'em in stock for obvious reasons. You see what a success it is. The children simply love me."

"It's a queer thing about those kids. Just as soon as they get old enough to throw a stone they're on the lookout for a cop to throw it at, but let there be a policeman clown, they can't see him too often. They just go crazy over him."



THE DESIRE OF THE MOTH FOR THE STAR.

After its contents have been thoroughly digested by the assemblage there is a deep silence. Walsh looks quite fussed up about it and Egner crosses his legs and uncrosses them nervously.

Finally there is a chorus of protesting voices, but of course they've run away with the circus. Led to their ruin by the clown's talk. Whenever there's a circus in town and the boy's misadventure of course he must have joined. And why they always think they're going to be clowns? It requires some training to ride bareback or swing on the bars, but none, of course, to be a clown; oh, no, none at all. Think of it! As if we didn't have troubles enough without stealing children to train."

"Well, but," begins a mild voiced clown in the second row, "we couldn't get along without the kids. That's true enough. They come pleased in the beginning, and all you've got to do is to take a little notice of 'em, wave a day-day and they're with you from start to finish. No weary work trying to smooth out the glassy stars."

"I remember one orphan's day. Well, lady, I've been clowning now for some thirty odd years, and when I think of it I get a queer sort of feeling somewhere."

"It was a benefit performance and a whole founding establishment was there—courtesy of the management. How they did enjoy it! Didn't seem to have too much fun in their lives, and they laughed as if it had been bottled up for a long time. After the show was over the manager asked me as a great favor if I'd stand at the door and shake hands with the children as they went out. Would I? You bet I would!"

"I never enjoyed handshakes like those. One by one the kids sidled up, some scored as could be, some brazen; those were scored when they grew up. Some of the littlet ones hesitated, not through fear—oh, no, but they wanted to—what do you think? Sure, kiss me!"

"Did I let 'em? I lifted them one by one in my arms and they kissed me so hard that

there was a lapse for sixteen, and I could only touch the manager for about two bits a day."

"At the end of that time I went home in a box car and put my trunk in pawn before I started. Same with you fellows! Beginning's nearly always identical. Next

year I got \$35. Same with you fellows? Thought so."

The dark man who speaks next was with Walter Main's show in the beginning. "I was in the concert that took place after the show, and one day it occurred to me if I could draw \$12 a week for that, why couldn't I make \$35 being a clown? I put it up to the manager and he gave me a try. I

succeeded, and am now at the top of my profession."

"There is a decided movement of disapproval when he addresses to a friend in another quarter and dispatches the gawk with it, admonishing the greatest speed possible. So the poor gawk goes on from pillar to post and back again until some one takes pity on him."

"A word to the wise is sufficient, of course, and the recipient of this communication forthwith encloses the couplet in another envelope, which he addresses to a friend in another quarter and dispatches the gawk with it, admonishing the greatest speed possible. So the poor gawk goes on from pillar to post and back again until some one takes pity on him."

"I'm philosophic. After all's said and done the truest criticism I ever read said that a man didn't know what he was worth at all until after his funeral, and then he didn't care a darn."

"Some people think that the clowns live together, herded like freaks, and I met some one around asking for the 'clown' boarding house. The truth is that most of us have been born and brought up in the business. We married in it and our children are taught the circus stunts as soon as they begin to walk and talk, but we all of us like them to go into the legitimate and make a name for themselves, get away from their long footprints of the one night stands and the seasons on the road."

"A good many of us have homes about the country and wives waiting anxiously for the end of the show. My bill will be the tickledest fellow when I can make tracks for mine and the little sonny that don't know a trapeze from a rubber ball."

"We don't any of us retire rich. Barney Barnato, the South African millionaire, was the only one, and the disappointment of riches is the contrast between his life as he was and is made him commit suicide in midcareer. There's many of us who have left clowning for good. Richard Golden and Billy Clifford, for instance, but perhaps you'd better not mention their names and give 'em free advertising."

"The one real excitement of the clown's life begins when he starts in betting. Every Saturday night in Clowns' alley, as we call the clown's dressing room, we bet on the number of weeks and the town where the circus'll end. It's in the Clowns' alley that all special announcements are made and any one has the privilege of stepping on the table and making a little speech."

"The isolation that has been thrust upon us by herding us together in a dressing room where the proclivities for covering everything with white wooln' interfere with the rights of others has resulted in the making of many fine orators and monologists whose talents are unknown to the general public."

There are various feasts of fools which are guessed at as the forerunners of All Fools' Day, and some writers, hard put to it to find a theory, say it is simply a general reference to the character of April weather, which is so deceitful and changeable that it is always making fools of us, soaking us with rain when we go out in our fine feathers and shining ironically upon our raincoats and galoshes when we go in prudent fear of its showers."

The French do not call the cheated person an April fool but an April fish, or a mackerel; "an innocent and unsuspecting animal, easily taken." The phrase is probably a reference to the gullibility which takes the bait easily. It is a sure thing that the custom of April fooling was firmly fixed in France early in the seventeenth century."

At that time the King, Louis XIII, had as prisoners in the Chateau of Nancy, Prince of Lorraine and his wife. On the first of April the Prince, arrayed as a workman and carrying a hod on his shoulder, accompanied by his wife, dressed as a peasant woman carrying a basket, walked calmly out past the guards and through the city gates."

Some one recognized them and in great excitement announced to the guards that the Prince and Princess were giving them the slip. The guards were not to be fooled at least they thought they were not to be. So they laughed, "Ho-ho!" and wagged their heads and said, "Who's an April fish, eh?" and vowed they weren't, anyhow.

The more the discoverer of the fugitives called on the guard to get busy the louder laughed those wiseracs. Finally some one carried the joke to the commandant, who thought he'd rather be made a fool of once than another and sent therefore to overhurl the departing pair."

But it was too late. The Prince and his wife had made good their escape and the guards gaped like true April fish clean out of water."

In Scotland they call an April fool a gawk and have a cheerful little custom of giving him a so-called important letter to be delivered to some person at a good distance, if possible, and if not, to deliver it to a friend in another quarter and dispatches the gawk with it, admonishing the greatest speed possible. So the poor gawk goes on from pillar to post and back again until some one takes pity on him."

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less Women sees all in his power to save those on a downward path and to rescue those who have already parted with respectability.

Nobody seems to know when or why the first of April was set apart as the day of fool making. The custom got a good early start somewhere, for it has spread now to various corners of the earth.

Some say that it is a survival of the ancient New Year celebration. New Year's Day once came on March 25 and was observed with sundry high feasts lasting eight days and winding up with particular fits of hilarity on the day corresponding with the present first of April.

Others say that the origin must be earlier than that, for the custom has existed among the Hindus from time immemorial. With them it was a part of their feast of Huli, which occurred at the time of year now called the first of April. The pious devotion of the fun—as this feast of Huli consisted in sending one's victim on some utterly absurd errand—was called, among the English and Scotch call them, meaning probably a useless and ridiculous specimen of an errand.

Another theory is that the first April fool sent on the first of these useless errands was the dove which Noah sent out of the Ark to find what didn't exist just then, namely, dry land. This event occurred on the first day of the Hebrew month corresponding with April, and it is said that Noah made the dove about as tired as later victims of the day have declared themselves to be.

In all seriousness the custom is considered by many to be an odd keeping in memory of the mockery of Christ by the Jews when he was sent from Annas to Caiaphas, from Caiaphas to Pilate, from Pilate to Herod and from Herod back to Pilate. This is supposed to have taken place in April.

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With Subaqueous Variations Through the Tubes.

Subaqueous Journeys That Give a New View of New York—A Free Ride With Your Dinner if You're Bold Enough—How to Fill in Odd Hours by Tabled Travelling.

You go to Chicago or New Orleans or San Francisco and call it a pleasure trip. But it takes time to make the journey, and maybe you haven't got the time. It may be you have only a day or part of a day, and the impulse is to go on a journey. You may do so and have fun and not venture far beyond the city limits.

The ferriesboats which are on the move continually in the water hereabouts answer the call of pleasure as well as serve the usual purpose of helping the Staten Islander or Jerseyite or Long Islander home to bed and back again in the morning. The subaqueous subways now have a part in the city's pleasure making as well as in its business life. You may not like the trolley car when you've got to ride in it to get somewhere, but if you go trolleying for the fun of the thing it is worth while.

These intracity journeys give one an enlarged view of New York. The dweller in Manhattan knows little of Brooklyn or Staten Island or near Jersey, and yet the knowledge is well worth acquiring.

Of course in the summer time there are Coney Island and other places by the sea to which the people rush, but the points of these remarks is that all the year it is possible to take to the interest of life by use of the city's transit facilities.

When the city took over the ferry to Staten Island and put on big, comfortable, fast boats, New York woke up to the fact that there was a fine sea trip. Return tickets only a dime. But there are other trips for even less money, or maybe none at all, which are fully as interesting.

Take a concrete example: Suppose you have been to the matinee with the inevitable companion of the opposite sex and are in no hurry to go home. She wants to go and you want to dine somewhere new. You are both tired of the show places of Broadway, with their glare and high prices; the tables d'hoite on the side streets don't appeal, and you are weary of what is called Bohemia.

An inspiration! Why not dine in Hoboken? Sure! Why not? Doesn't a railroad land in Hoboken?

If you have mastered the current advertising you remember Phoebe Snow and the road of which she is the patron saint. But most of all you wish to try the new tubes. There might be a new sensation in passing under the Hudson.

The decision is made, and in a few minutes you are in the tube Hoboken bound. Somehow you can't get away from the idea that you are in a tube, for there is little space outside of the cars and you wonder what you'd do if anything happened. But nothing does happen, and before you realize it fully you have passed beneath the waters and are in a foreign land.

When you were a boy in an up-State village it was one of the daily excitements to go to the station and see the train come in and depart snoring up the valley. So here, after you have climbed up stone stairways and followed the cavernlike passages which echo to the hurrying feet, you may stand long or journey short and sort of half want to buy a ticket and go somewhere.

But you remember and she remembers that it's dinner time, and you seek out the restaurant and get a table from which you see the river and the gleaming boats go up and down. The ferriesboats in midstream look like floating palaces, and if your digestion is good even the shrill shrieking of the busy big seems to be harmonious.

It would be giving the railroad a free advertisement to record the impression made by the dinner. When it's time to go it occurs to you that here is a good chance to cheat the soulless corporation. Just a little cheat—merely the fare back to New York.

If you walk boldly out and onto the ferry boat which will land you nearest your destination, you will stop you; at least no one did. Maybe the ride is thrown in with the dinner.

Anyhow you are soon afloat and have the big boat privately to yourself. The Jersey boat has already gone to the theatre, and it is the hour of the evening when few trains arrive. There are secluded parts of the upper deck where you may smoke in peace despite the "no smoking" signs.

In mid-evening presents an interesting picture. That especially brilliant glow must be Longacre Square. There are huge electric signs before and behind you, making a splendid lighting. If you care for astronomy here are the stars above. You might be pardoned for breaking into verse. They are shining above and before and behind you. The stars in the heavens, the lights on the shore. The eyes of the world are turned to you. You are made by his God, the almighty evermore.

Your muse just gets fairly started when you are interrupted. Your companion has discovered a new star. It shines red in the lower heavens and you wonder at its appearance so long after sunset. And then you discover that it's merely a light on the top of the tower of the Singer Building. Near it the clock faces on the Tribune tower wink at you like a blue moon. The stars and the journey's done, unless you haven't tubed to Brooklyn yet and feel like trying that.

Another example. Suppose you live in Brooklyn. The subway is more than possible, but the figures of the last census show that if you are a New Yorker the chance of your living in Brooklyn is just about one in three. That's mathematics. Now suppose you are a New Yorker and live in three, there you are in Brooklyn.

Now for an evening's entertainment, you want to get out of Brooklyn. If you live in Brooklyn you understand, just to vary the routine of the Manhattan supper you go to Jersey City.

CATHOLIC CHARITIES HERE. Institutions Developed in the Diocese's Century of Existence. Not less remarkable than the growth of the Roman Catholic Church in this diocese, whose century is about to be celebrated, is the growth of its charities as regards both their extent and their variety.

gets a chance to reform without the stigma of having served in prison and at the same time he may continue working and helping to support his family.

There are 149 Roman Catholic free elementary schools and three free high schools, with about 100,000 pupils.

There are five homes for immigrants. The Jeanne d'Arc Home for French Immigrants is in charge of seven sisters of the Divine Providence and can care for fifty-six girls. The Leo House for German Immigrants is under the care of St. Raphael's Society and has accommodations for seventy-one. St. Raphael's Home for Italian Immigrants has room for thirty inmates.

St. Joseph's Home for Polish and Lithuanian immigrants, under the charge of five Polish sisters and eight lay assistants, cared for 16,000 immigrants last year. The Mission of Our Lady of the Rosary is for the protection of Irish immigrant girls.

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THE NEW TIE

ADVANCE STYLE IN ENGLISH CHINTZ SENT BY MAIL, POSTAGE PREPAID, ON RECEIPT OF 75c. CHINTZ BELTS \$1.00. EMILY LESTER MUNN 108 PLYMOUTH AV. ROCHESTER, N. Y.