

JOHNNY NOWHERE.

The sides of the old circus tent flapped lazily in the breeze. The inmates were up and stirring and the hum of voices was heard on the morning air. Through an opening in one side of the tent was thrust a bushy head, a pair of bright eyes peered in, then an urchin cautiously entered. The manager, hearing a slight noise, looked up and saw something that appeared to be a bundle of rags. But out from this bundle came a voice: "Say, mister, are you the boss?"

The manager curtly replied: "Yes, what do you want?"

"Want a job with your show," the boy answered.

The manager's eyes twinkled as the boy came nearer. "What's your name? Where do you live?"

"Johnny. Nowhere," sharply answered the boy. "I'm just a travelin'. Can I get a job?"

"Well, we are needing some help—a man, though," the manager hastened to say as the little face brightened up. Instantly a grimy little hand was placed in his and an eager voice replied: "I'm your man."

From that moment "Johnny Nowhere," as the men dubbed him, was an essential part of the circus and a source of amusement to most of its members.

His duties were many, but he never grumbled. Bright and early every morning his cheery whistle was heard above the other noises common to a circus tent.

One morning, however, no cheery whistle was heard; no Johnny appeared. The manager

went to the animal tent and found him lying on a bundle of straw.

His face was pale and drawn, and around his mouth were lines of suffering. Johnny tried to rise, but fell back with a moan of pain. The manager reached his hand toward him and asked: "Johnny, what's wrong?"

Stifling a moan, Johnny replied: "Nothing, only I rode Firefly yesterday in the circus ring and——"

"Well, go on," insisted the manager.

"And I missed her back when I jumped through the hoop, and," with a glimmer of a smile, "I think I broke a slat. It's nothing, though. I'll soon be all right."

Stooping, the manager lifted Johnny and tenderly carried him to another tent. While carefully removing the clothing from the wounded side he saw long marks as if a heavy whip had been used on the body. Looking down into the honest face, he asked: "Johnny, what else happened yesterday?"

But Johnny's lips were closed and his eyes were looking straight at the wall of the tent.

"You didn't get those marks when you fell from Firefly, did you?"

"No."

"Then where did you get them?"

"I don't want to tell," cried Johnny.

Being forced to tell, Johnny related how each day he had been compelled by the horse trainer to