

THE LAST OF THE RINGLINGS

Interesting Facts About Circuses
Past and Present

(Toronto Mail and Empire.)

Some of our good newspaper friends on the other side of the line resented a recent remark in the Mail and Empire to the effect that being next door to the United States had all the advantages and disadvantages of living next door to a circus. To prove that we think the advantages far outweigh the disadvantages let us direct our minds to circuses this morning, speaking from the text supplied by the death of Alfred T. Ringling. He was not old in years, but was a veteran in achievement, for undoubtedly he and his brothers were the greatest circus men of the present generation. There were seven of them who engaged in the circus business. They bought up and absorbed Barnum's and Forepaugh's, and today it is probable that the circus that is left to the only surviving brothers, John and Charles, deserves more than any competing organization all the superlatives that Barnum invented forty years ago to apprise the public of the merits of his attractions. The Ringlings' success in the circus business was probably unequalled, and can anyone point to such another great business that was built up by seven brothers? We believe that if the seven Ringlings had chosen to exhibit themselves they would have drawn larger crowds than any of the competing attractions.

Barnum, the Showman.

Barnum, of course, will be remembered as the greatest showman in history, and as the author of some epigrams, the choicest of which "There's a sucker born every minute" was not his at all but the contribution to literature of a man known as "Hungry Joe." But Barnum was not originally a circus man. He was a speculator, and before he became a showman had quite a record of ups and downs in other businesses. He went into the show business but because it promised to make him a fortune, and the promise was well fulfilled. The Ringlings went into the circus business because they were circus men. Each of the seven had had circus experience in various departments before they joined forces in an organization. It is said that they were circus men from their youth up, and that their first performance given to other boys demanded only pins as admission. It is on record that they began by trading a skiff, of which they had tired, for a pony, and it was this pony and the kindergarten tricks they taught him comprised their first capital. Soon they had improved enough to ask for coppers instead of pins, and from that day, as the saying goes, they never looked back.

The Country Circus.
There are circuses today, scores of them, traveling over the United States and Canada which are never heard of in the large cities. They work through the country and the small towns making profits for their owners and affording a living for an army of clowns and other performers who lack that shade of "class" that would entitle them to engagements at the great hippodromes, as it often happens, young men who one day appear "before all the crowned heads of Europe," although a night's small tent would accommodate all those crowned heads nowadays. The Ringlings had one of these country circuses long before they were heard of in the great cities. In the '80's they had what is called a wagon show, and as it happened there was then a war raging among the great circuses the Ringlings profited by their tremendous advertising campaigns and steadily prospered. The time came when they were able to leave the middle west where they had grown and thrived and invade the east where the "big money" is supposed to be and by that time they were quite capable of meeting the giants of the industry on equal terms.

A Team in the Family.

Indeed, they had no small advantage. In the first place there were seven of them, and every one was an experienced circus man, beside being shrewd, enterprising and energetic. What other circus proprietors had to employ other men to do for them, as one newspaper biographer remarks, the Ringlings were able to do for themselves. Each one had a department in which he was quite as expert as was the highest paid employee of any rival concern. They worked together in perfect harmony, and probably there was less grafting and waste in the Ringling enterprises than in any other great circus of their time. In the days when the competition was keenest they made money, but it is not so sure that all their competitors did. So it came about in the course of years as almost inevitable that one circus should absorb the others, and those who had watched the progress of the Ringlings were never in doubt which would be the eventual absorber and which the absorbed. Thus it is that the names of Barnum and Forepaugh-Sells, the latter again a combination of two important enterprises, survive only in smaller type upon the billboards while that of the Ringlings overshadows them.

Great Talents Required.

Few people pause to think of the tremendous amount of business ability that is required to make a circus a success. For organization skill probably it can teach a lesson to even the railroads or the hotels, perhaps the most highly organized of businesses. Bad weather can almost ruin a circus. The performers, like other public stars, are a rather high strung lot, and great tact is necessary in dealing with them. A few accidents may mar a season's work. The adver-

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the hands of geniuses. For a long time circus owners were obliged to share some of the odium that attached to the disreputable or criminal element that followed them for the sake of the crowds. Of late they have had to pay tremendous license fees. But it speaks well for the quality of the intelligence and character that the business has attracted that so many have prospered, and that year after year the circus is "put over" and makes the most universal appeal of any form of entertainment that has yet been devised. To have won supremacy in this exacting business is sufficient epitaph for any man.

ENGLISH IN CHILEAN SCHOOLS.
New Educational Plans Put That Language First.

In a recent lecture before the students of Columbia University, the distinguished Chilean professor, Enrique Molina, said part of the business must be in

look up the charge often made about the Germanophilia of Chileans by stating that aside from the army, where Chile follows the example of many countries in adopting the German method, there was no evidence of such German influence in our educational system. It is true that we had some German professors of indisputable merit, as in the case of the naturalist, Prof. Philipp Dr. Lenz, the linguist and others, but apart from this purely scientific influence, even the popularity of the German language has not increased among Chilean students. For instance, some of the courses in our medical school are taught in French by Chilean and Italian professors. Our engineering school has Belgian professors, and in our high schools the French language is compulsory, while only 15 per cent of the students take up German as the second foreign language, and all the rest prefer the English.

A movement is now in progress to give to the English language the first place in our studies, as is already established in our commercial schools and the naval schools. In a recent convention of the high school teachers, Dr. Galvez led a movement with the purpose of obtaining uniformity in the national plans for the teaching of foreign languages. There is in existence a division in zones by which English has been declared compulsory in the northern provinces of Chile, French in the central part, German being limited to the three provinces in the south.

According to the new plan English should be the compulsory language for the entire school system of the country. The resolution, passed as far back as 1912 in the Teachers' Congress, was as follows: "The National Teaching Congress declares that the English, French and German languages are indispensable to our complete culture in the order given, for the teaching in high schools." One of the principal reasons for the adoption of the new system is the purpose of making more practical the work of the schools, and as the congress ex-

pressly declared, to put ourselves on a level with the general movement toward Pan-Americanism.

LABOR AND TIME CLOCKS.
Now that so many industries are cutting down on the working hours it has become necessary to make every minute count. Hundreds of factories which used to work nine and ten hours are now operating only 7½ hours and eight hours, with, in many cases, greatly increased wages. Under the old hours employees "punched" the time clock at the entrance, after which they proceeded to the various departments. This meant a delay of anywhere from two to fifteen minutes, or a loss of that much time to the employer. Since these shorter hours have come into effect time clocks have been placed in the various departments. In this way the hands are obliged to be close to their work when they register. The same thing applies to the time saved when the employees are leaving the building. One of the largest

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