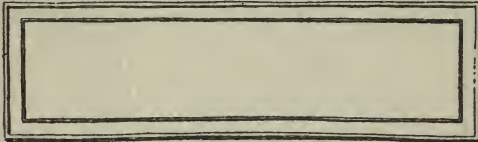


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AMATEUR CIRCUS LIFE



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THE CURTAIN RISES



THE CURTAIN RISES

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Amateur Circus Life

A new method of physical development for Boys and Girls

Based on The Ten Elements of Simple Tumbling and adapted from the practice of professional acrobats : : :

BY
ERNEST BALCH

New York
THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

1922

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The illustrations in this book are prepared from photographs of boy amateurs taught in classes by this method of physical training. My thanks are due to them, to the Cloyne House School, Newport, St. Thomas Chapel Gymnasium and the Madison Square Church House Gymnasium, New York City.

This book is written for the comfort and aid of boys and girls of twelve to sixteen and of their older friends who are interested in their development.

THE AUTHOR.

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CHAPTER I

TUMBLING

Tumbling is known to have great value for physical development. It is the best basis of all gymnastics. Occasionally it is taught to advanced amateurs—or attempts at teaching it are made. But it is never taught systematically, for no system has yet been devised to adapt tumbling practically for the use of amateurs.

The chief mistake consists in trying to teach to beginners one of the most dangerous of all tumbling tricks, the somersault in the air, or 'air-turn' as it is called. To learn this one must have an exceptional teacher, must have a muscular development quite uncommon among pupils of 12-16, and must practise unremittingly. Such conditions are very rare indeed.

The fine art of tumbling is generally at-

tempted in the wrong way and is hardly ever taught to the boys and girls of 12-16 who would most benefit by it.

What is needed is a system of simple tumbling which can be taught in classes by people who are not acrobats, which will delight the pupil, will be progressive in its various feats, and sufficiently difficult to remain interesting for two or three years. At the end of this period the pupil can go on to advanced tumbling, or better still, if there be opportunity, to fine competitive athletics.

Since Archange Tuccaro wrote, I find no one who has discussed the philosophy of this method of developing the body. Therefore this book is written. It proposes to employ the simpler movements of tumbling, systematise them, arrange them for classes, and so utilise the deep interest of boys and girls in the circus, the vaudeville stage—in a word, the acrobatic art—as an impelling force, that they will joyfully endure the tedious and prolonged practice which develops perfect bodies.

CHAPTER II

HEALTH, STRENGTH, GRACE

Every one desires to be well, strong, and graceful. Every one understands more or less clearly that one is more likely to reach the best in life if he or she is well, strong, and graceful. The point is to become so, not simply to talk about it.

People between twelve and sixteen years old as a rule have the time and opportunity to get strength, health, and grace; at least they have the time to do what this book will tell you to do. Some of them have the opportunity to play many games and get a little calisthenics or drill. But very few have the time to play enough games to obtain the best results. So this book is written to explain how the many, who lack time and games enough, may get the best of health, strength, and grace and meanwhile have the good time which helps to make

up for the tedious work, patience, and courage needed.

The delightful experience of taking part in a good successful show is worth a lot of practise, especially if one feels that strength and grace are coming steadily.

Health, generally speaking, is the result of the exercises one must practise in order to get strength and grace. Or as an instructor might put it, strength comes from the proper development of the muscles and grace from the efficient control of the muscles by the nerves and brain. It is not necessary between twelve and sixteen to bother much with the theory of all this, only to fix one's mind and will upon a steady daily practise of these ten elements about to be described. If in addition to this you get a little calisthenics or drill every day in school and a fair amount of games, in a year or two you will find that you have health, strength, and grace. With these precious possessions everything you wish to do in life will be just so much easier. Good dancing, star tennis, good work in school, fine quick work in an office, shop, or

factory; in short, efficiency—all the things which are so very desirable, will be so much the easier to attain.

It is a common idea that the best muscles are hard, bulky muscles. This is not true. For a boy or girl the most valuable kind of muscle is soft when flexed. What is needed is strong quickly responsive muscle, and this means soft muscles when flexed—hard when contracted. Heavy work produces slow hard muscles. Sandow acquired a very fine development starting with a not very wonderful body. He did it by light work. His muscles flexed were very soft. By endless practice and patience and much time spent he had acquired an unusual control of them. I was much impressed to see him call the name and bunch up a muscle of the back that most of us do not know by name and have no separate control of.

Also, a common difficulty with boys who stick too much to heavy work or calisthenics is that their muscles “go dead,” become stale. You see this also with professional acrobats who are ignorant and practise too much; or

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boxers who do not train intelligently. The boy or girl at fourteen should be full of life, quick in all movements. Instructors have to look out for this. I have always found it best to practise simple tumbling about an hour not more than six times a week, if possible not more than once a day, and to rest two full days before a show.

When you see the perfect grace of a good trapeze performer, remember that it results from instantaneous or, better said, perfect control of the muscles by the brain and nerves, and that such grace may be yours if you will pay the same price of steady, conscientious practise of the ten elements of simple tumbling.

Now there is no such thing as an impromptu on the stage or in the circus.

Amateurs who try to do something on the spur of the moment simply make fools of themselves and bore their audience. Either you know your act or you do not.

If you know it, you can do it at any time. To know your act means to know every little turn so that you can always do each movement

properly, smile at the right time, and make your points.

In the "Path to the Stars," for instance (see illustration 12), the Topmounter—that is, the boy at the top of the pyramid—must walk up erect with a gallant air.

If he goes up on his hands and feet he looks like a monkey and spoils the picture. When on the Understander's shoulders, he must be firmly held or he cannot do his work. All the staircase must stand solidly. So it is and must be with anything you wish to present before an audience. It is necessary to learn it properly and thoroughly.

Therefore the best way is to really master the ten elements at the beginning, although I will here make the exception that a good show can be given before any member of the class has learned the front and back handspring.

CHAPTER III

THE TEN ELEMENTS OF SIMPLE TUMBLING

We cannot in this world do anything much worth doing without some tedious study and work. Into this chapter I will put all the study and work that is required. Get it thoroughly and all the rest will be interesting and delightful. If you do not learn it thoroughly you will not succeed in what you wish to do. All of these directions are put in for a good reason and nothing is here written which it is unnecessary to learn. The best way to learn these elements is to master one or two at a time and get some one to tell you, if you are not fortunate enough to have an instructor, whether or not you do each thing properly.

The last—the handsprings—you will hardly learn without an instructor. Two working together can sufficiently help each other on the other nine elements. Remember that daily practise of simple tumbling for about an

hour, five and not more than six times a week, is what you need and the price you must pay supposing that you are enthusiastic and determined to achieve a splendidly developed body. As I have said, there is rarely time enough to do this by playing games. That becomes clear as one grows older. Apparatus work amounts to little before sixteen and calisthenics can be taken only in limited quantities. Once the boy or girl of 12-16 obtains a good development these things are all fine, but before the development comes they are not very practical. Simple tumbling you can begin at ten, and it will quickly bring the development you need for other things.

As far as I know, there is no good book on tumbling for boys. All that I have seen desire the learner to master back and front hand-springs, and, above all, the air-turns—back, front, full- and half-twisters. Very good if you are to be a professional and have the time to practise; but how many boys who work or go to school can give the necessary three hours a day and command the instruction of a good acrobat while practising? In no other way

can you learn these hard tricks. Also, on account of the danger, it is foolish to try air-turns unless, besides having the required time and supervision, you are old enough to be very careful. Nearly all the accidents among professionals, careful as they are, come from air-turns. A little slip or balk, and there is a broken leg or worse. So for boys who have little time to practise, it is better to cut out air-turns altogether. Leave air-turns alone until you get to college, and master these other tricks I am going to tell you about. For they are not risky and will enable you to give as pretty a show as you like.

The best way to practise a class is to form them in line according to size, the smallest first, and bring each on the mat in turn to try the trick. A class is best composed of two little boys for Topmounters, two big boys for Understanders and four medium sized for other parts, and the same is true for a class of girls.

If there are too many in the line, it takes too long a time to get around and each is standing still too long. Eight more or less green boys

is the right number—ten when they are well broken in—and when the class has been trained a while, you can work two classes side by side.

The first thing to do, as the class practises, is to settle upon the Topmounter. For pyramids and all double work, such as 2-High Falls, the Topmounters ought to be intelligent and brave, as light as possible, and also strong and obedient. Very important work is that of these Topmounters. If they do not know their parts, the Understanders cannot do theirs.

The ten elements of simple tumbling to be mastered are: The Salute. The Roll. The Headstand. Cart-wheels. Handstand. Hand-walking. Double Work. Handsprings. Pyramids. Diving.¹

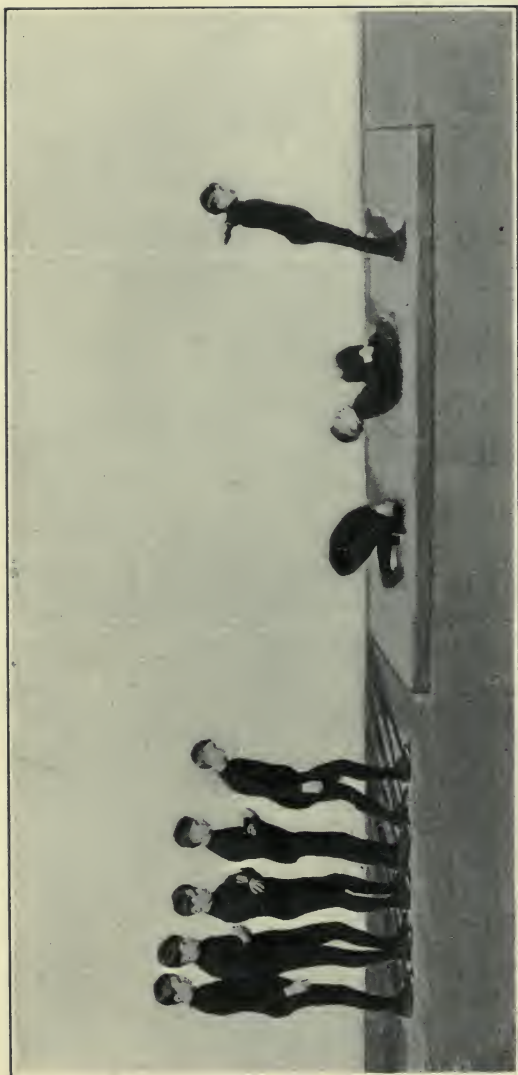
THE SALUTE. This is very important.

You will see all performers at a circus salute

¹ The order in which these are practised must vary according to the needs of the class and the judgment of the instructor. It is not well to work too long at any one. I begin always with the first three. Pyramids may come in at any time, the front handsprings after handstands and diving. Back handsprings I leave to the last. The roll is the most important. The shoulder-mount and the 2-High Fall are naturally used in "brother acts"; but if the instructor cares to do the work of Understander, these are very useful for all the class in teaching nerve and balance.

the audience with their hands before they begin, and they use the same method of expressing thanks for applause—if they get any. This courteous custom has come down for hundreds of years from the Roman and Greek shows. It is exceedingly difficult to teach boys. Girls learn it more easily. There are a number of styles, but two are sufficient for ordinary use. The first is shown in illustration 1. Feet opened out, heels together, body straight in balance, head up, smile, arms raised, and bent a little at the elbow, the edge of the hand toward the audience, hands slightly cupped, fingers and thumb close together. The whole position should be graceful and balanced. In the illustration the class is trying to do it, and there is something wrong with each one after three weeks' practise. Probably this class, an exceptionally clever lot, could not master this simple position without two months' steady effort.

The second style is well shown in illustration 2. The arms must be level with the shoulders, and exactly in line with them, neither forward nor back, head erect, smile,



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2. PRACTISING THE ROLL. SALUTE NO. 2

Practising Rolls. The most important work in beginning to tumble. One boy has the wrong position with the hands around the legs. The last boy is overbalanced forward and should throw his head back. The boy beginning has too much weight on his head.



I. SALUTE NO. I

There is not one perfectly done salute among these. Something just a little wrong about each.

heels together, fingers and thumb closed, hands flat, easy balance. It is especially useful at the end of the roll.

Now we begin to work on the mat; one fifteen feet long by three feet wide is the best, and two to three inches thick. (Only for style in show-time lay a red carpet over it, which must not be slippery.) Such a mat costs about fifteen dollars, and other accessories, such as hoops, et cetera, three or four dollars.

THE ROLL. (Illustration 2.) Place your hands on the mat, duck your head, roll on your rounded back over and up on your feet, drawing them in well. In doing this *you must not strike your head nor bump your back*. All your weight should be carried on the hands and back. *To duck your head and keep it from striking the mat is the most important part of the roll*. You hit the mat first with the shoulders. Gradually you will learn to carry nearly all your weight on the hands and roll smoothly and easily on your rounded back without bumping it, and evenly up on to your feet. When you are on your feet, stand up straight and make a salute with your hands.

If you overbalance forward or back, throw your head the opposite way and that will stop you. Do not try the roll without a mat until you have thoroughly mastered it. Do not go on to the dive until you have the roll completely and correctly. You need the roll to finish nearly all tricks, and it is best to learn it first.

A smooth, easy roll, made without striking the head or bumping the back and then coming to a standing position with a good balance, requires steady work. Do it slowly at first, until you get the right motion, then, after a lot of practise, faster and faster. The hands should never be placed on the legs, as in illustration 2.

THE HEADSTAND. Having made sure of the roll, the next thing is to learn to stand on your head.

Mark out on the mat a triangle measuring twelve to eighteen inches on each side. Place your head on one point and your hands on the other two. The instructor may take hold of your ankles and pull you up straight. Push on your hands and keep the weight on your



3. HEADSTANDS



4. BRIDGE AND HANDSTAND



5. Middle Position in
Cartwheels

hands and head. When the body is straight up over your head—the top of your head, not the forehead—put your legs up straight and point your toes. After enough practise you can do this alone. Get some one to tell you if head, neck, body, legs and toes are in one straight line (illustration 3). Until you are used to the upside-down position, it confuses you, and until the muscles become strong you cannot push up to, and hold, a correct position. The hands, of course, are to the front. At first, being upside-down, you will naturally put them at the back. Also, at first you will push too hard on the hands, perhaps, and go over. Then duck your head and roll over to your feet. Do not get discouraged if you cannot get this quickly. Two of the boys in the picture learned it in three weeks. When you have it, you can place your hands and head correctly on the mat, get your weight on the hands and head, draw the feet and knees close to the body, push all straight up over the head, shove the feet straight up in line, pointing the toes, and hold that position. Not for long, however, nor to do it longer than some other

boy. Nothing is more silly or useless than to try that.

CART-WHEELS. A cart-wheel is left or right, depending upon which hand touches the mat first. We begin with the left. Place the left hand on the mat; throw the right leg up in the air; jump with the left leg, throwing yourself so as to land on the right hand, both legs being up in the air; then turn and land first on the right leg and then on the left. The arms, as in the handsprings, must be stiff, and, at the finish of the turn, the right gives a shove which brings you up quicker to the standing position in which you began. The instructor, or any one else, will help you, standing at your back and holding you around the waist. As long as you keep the arms stiff, nothing can happen except to tumble backward on the floor. The true position is with the arms and legs as in illustration 5, like the spokes of a wheel, and, when you get an even motion, the arms and legs will be a little bent.

The right cart-wheel is the same, except that you begin with the right hand down and the back turned the other way.

The most effective trick in cart-wheels is to throw a string of rights and lefts alternately, but this—though well worth the effort—takes a great deal of practise, and does not look well unless done quickly and smoothly.

HANDSTAND. Place the hands on the mat about two feet apart; keep the arms stiff; curve the body and legs up in the air; curve the head up as far as you can; put the feet together and point the toes; do not bend the knees; bend the body at the waist as much as you can. After practise you will get a balance which you can hold. At first, in practising the handstand, you need some one to hold you in position. Then practise against the wall. Place your hands on the floor about eighteen inches from the wall, or whatever distance suits your height. Keep the arms stiff; throw one foot up against the wall and then the other. In coming down, put one foot down on the floor first then the other, and you will not bruise your knees. *Keep the arms stiff*, so as not to crumple up and bang your head on the floor. Curve the body as much as

you can and keep the head well up. (See handstand in illustrations 4 and 23.

After you get the balance against the wall, push away an inch or so with your heels and hold the balance. Do this two or three times night and morning, and in a few weeks you can do it on the mat without any one to help you. Then you can begin, little by little, to walk on your hands. Always come down from the handstand on the mat by ducking your head and doing a roll.

HANDWALKING. To practise this, use the trick called the "Wheelbarrow." (Illustration 6.) Let half the class stand on their hands, and the other half take the feet of the first half on their shoulders. The four doubles walk in file from the stage steps to the mat, and up and down the strong little handwalking double staircase of two treads on each side, each step being four inches high, eight wide, and sixteen long. After coming down the staircase, each pair do a roll, finishing with the second salute.

DOUBLE WORK. The first thing to teach in double work, is the shoulder-mount. Take



6. THE WHEELBARROW

At this point each pair do a roll, then wheelbarrow off the mat, form a line at side, advance to mat, roll across and salute.



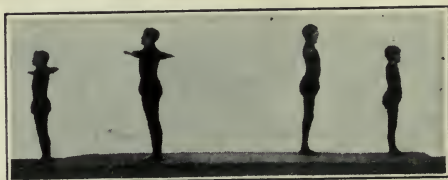
10. The method of teaching a bender used by Archange Tucaro.



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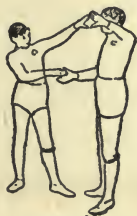
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THE 2-HIGH FALL

- 7. 1st Position
- 8. Falling.

- 9. No. 2 Salute

the Topmounter's hands as shown in illustration A. He places the right foot on your bent right leg as near the body as he can (illustration B). Pull him up, and he can place the



A



B



C



D

other foot up on your left shoulder (illustration C). He then draws up the right foot to your right shoulder, and stands erect, steadying himself by pressing his legs against the sides of your head. You, the Understander, then drop the Topmounter's hands and hold his legs tightly against your head, grasping

them just below the knees. Both stand straight as in illustration D. The Topmounter must hold his head up, fold his arms, and smile—always practise smiling. At first the Topmounter is wobbly and walks all over your neck—he is so scared. If the Top-
mounter loses his balance (there must always be some one placed behind to watch and catch him at first), the Understander should lean forward so he can jump to the mat. Be careful not to hold his legs and trip him. Before long, the Topmounter will learn to go up straight, keeping close to the Understander.

The Understander must not straighten up his right leg until the Topmounter has his left foot firmly planted on his shoulder and has begun to pull up to position. As soon as both are in good balance, try the fall. Both lean forward and fall, keeping in a straight line (illustrations 7, 8 and 9) until the Topmounter cannot stay any longer on the Understander's shoulders. He jumps to the mat, and both do a roll, coming to the salute as in the illustration. In this picture the less trained of the two Topmounters has crumpled

up, his Understander is trying to hold him, and the two are not in line nor in balance. He is also looking sideways and not straight ahead in the first position. After both Topmounters are in position and ready, the manager gives a signal for the fall. One pair is at each end at opposite sides of the mat, and, falling past each other, a pleasing effect is produced. If the rolls are smartly done, an audience will hardly notice a little defect in the fall, but the camera shows it clearly. The Understander must be careful not to hold the Topmounter's legs so as to trip him when he wishes to jump.

HANDSPRINGS. These are back and front according to the direction you go. The back handspring is generally called a back flip.

In learning handsprings use a "mechanic." This is a broad strong belt of canvas, soft enough not to cut, which buckles around the waist with two or three small straps. Fasten two small rings outside in the middle line of the belt and a little back of where the arms fall, and in them catch two snap-hooks, with swivel heads, fastened at the end of soft ropes

about three feet long. These ropes are strongly held by a person at each side, so that, when you throw back, you will not strike your head on the mat.

It is sometimes convenient to pass two long $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch ropes through one single and one double pulley (fastened high up about twelve feet apart) and attached to the belt ropes. Both come down on the same side of the mat and the instructor can hold both in one hand, leaving a hand free to help the pupil turn.

Now throw your hands over your head; curve your body back; keep your arms stiff; land on your hands on the mat; jump with your feet, and throw them over to the mat. At first you will not get over, and the instructor will help you with one hand. Be sure to keep the arms stiff so as not to knock the head, and presently you will begin to get over alone. After that, you do not need the mechanic, and the instructor can put one hand under your back and help a little until you can do this back flip alone. Always practise on a mat at first or you will bruise your hands and feet.

I have prepared a show without attempting

the back handspring, and gotten on very well; but, naturally, each additional element of the ten enables you to make more combinations and give a better show. The forward handspring is easier.

Walk to the mat, put your hands down as for a handstand, jump, and go over to your feet. Fix your mind on keeping your arms stiff. If you bend the arms you will not get over and will perhaps knock your head. The instructor will help by using the mechanic, which is better at first, or by putting his hand on the front of your shoulder and giving a push as you go over. Learn the handstand and practise handwalking a great deal first, as these two are most helpful in learning the handspring.

Professionals as a rule teach the bender before the back flip. Hold the pupil around the waist and let him bend over backwards, placing his hands on the mat as near his feet as possible. When he can do this without being held, he has only to learn to keep his arms stiff and the little jump needed for the flip is easy. Archange Tuccaro wrote his book on

tumbling three hundred years ago. He gives a funny little illustration of his method. In this the boy bends over the instructor's leg and the soft muscles of the thigh make an admirable cushion for his back. (Illustration 10.)

For a man or big boy, it is common for the instructor to take hold of one leg and the back or a belt and throw him, but this has always seemed to me the slowest method of teaching the back flip.

If a boy is stiff, cannot learn a bender, and does not weigh over 100 pounds, I put one arm around his waist, the other under his knees, and throw him over to his feet.

Before long he is used to turning in the air, which is about one half of what he has to learn.

Then as soon as he can be relied on to keep his arms stiff so that he will not knock his head, one hand under the back is enough as you help him over. Pretty soon he can get over alone and will shortly get the correct and easy motion of a back flip. After that he can learn to do spotters or a string of flips.

PYRAMIDS. There are many of these.



II. PYRAMID. ADORATION.

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12. PYRAMID. PATH TO THE STARS
Lighted balloon is balanced on Topmounter's right hand.

Two, "Adoration," and the "Path to the Stars," are useful.

ADORATION. (Illustration 11.) Three on their hands and knees, shoving close together, arms braced across. Two above them doing the same. The Topmounter goes up quickly from the back, salutes, jumps down, and does a roll. The two seconds dive down and roll. The three Understanders roll. All form at the end of the mat and salute; run back to the steps. This requires practise. If the Understanders and seconds are not steady, the Topmounter cannot go up and is invariably blamed by the rest. The Topmounter must not hesitate and must make a graceful salute, or the effect is bad. All must come smartly through the rolls to the final salute.

PATH TO THE STARS. This is a very pretty pyramid if well done. Form a solid and even staircase (as shown in illustration 12), ending in the strongest Understander. The Topmounter gracefully (more or less) walks up this and stands on the shoulders of the Understander, who must hold him firmly. The staircase behind braces the Understander. To

the Topmounter is handed a sort of paper balloon, sold in trick-shops, or a dazzler cut short, and a lighted taper. He balances the balloon on right hand, lights it, and throws down the taper (*cue for lights*). Instantly the lights in the hall are snapped off. The balloon burns down to the hand, watched by the Topmounter with an anxious smile. But just before the flame reaches it, the balloon sails up and drops a shower of silver stars (*cue for lights*). The lights are snapped on, the Topmounter and Understander do a 2-High Fall, all the rest roll, one after the other, coming up to the second salute, and run back to steps.

DIVING. I have left to the last the directions for diving, for the reason that, in this sort of a show, rolls and diving are the most important of all the tricks. **AFTER YOU HAVE MASTERED THE ROLL**, let the instructor hold a stick horizontally about a foot above the mat. Walk up to it slowly, fall over on your hands, duck your head, and roll. Be especially careful to keep all your weight on your hands and not to strike your head on the mat. Practise this until you can

run up to it and go over properly, banging neither your head nor your back. Each time roll up on your feet to saluting position. If your heels come over and strike the mat, draw them in. When you get this, the stick is raised a little and practise continues until the stick is about waist high.

On no account stop this practise until all the class can go over it easily on the run without balking or bumping. Much depends on this in future tricks, so do not go on until you have it. Now place a chair on the mat and stand on it. As well as you can, without bending the knees, drop to your hands on the mat, keep the weight on your hands, duck your head and roll. At first the instructor must hold you around the waist when you drop. Later you can do it alone, without upsetting the chair. Turn the chair around and do the same over the back, always being held by the instructor at first. Lay the chair on its side, and let the class do running dives over it. *When these things can be done perfectly, bumping neither the head nor the back, and not before, advance to show diving.*

THE HORSES. All form a line, the leader runs to the mat, rolls and places himself across, as in illustrations 13 and 14. The second boy dives over him and places himself beside number one. The third the same, and so on until you get up as high as your best diver can go without kicking the "horses." In this act you can star the best diver.

THE HOOPS. Get some medium-sized or large play-hoops. Begin with one. Let each dive through it until he does not balk or bump. Then to bother the divers a little, hang some coloured rags on it or use two hoops. Next, cover the hoops with strips of thin paper and dive through these, the arms held out stiffly, breaking the paper. After that cover the hoops with solid tissue paper. The diver will land on his hands on the mat, duck his head and roll as in illustration 15. Practise this steadily until no one balks or bumps, then the class is ready for

"**THE FIERY HOOP OF DEATH.**" Take a hoop and wind it with narrow pieces of cloth or cotton. An old sheet torn in strips lasts longest. Leave about a quarter of the rim



13. DIVING.
THE HORSES. SALUTE NO. 2



14. A STAR DIVER LANDING ON THE MAT JUST BEFORE HE
DUCKS HIS HEAD AND ROLLS

unwound to hold it by. Soak it in alcohol before the show, and dash on a little just before using. At Cloyne the class lined up, the hoop was lighted, the efficient stage-manager turned off the lights, and only the burning hoop lit the hall. Down charged the class, dived through it, rolled up to the feet, and ran back to the steps. After all were back in line, instantly the lights came on, and you should have heard the applause. It is better not to repeat this trick, even if applauded.

Before this the class dived through a plain hoop and eight paper-covered hoops, each of a different colour, with a gorgeous Thompson gold star in the centre to aim the hands at.

It is a good plan with hoops to wrap all the joints with bicycle tape rubbed over afterwards with talcum powder, as they are apt to break at the joints.

The best way with hoops is to buy the outside four of a "nest" of hoops. That gives two pairs which fit snugly together. Laying the inside one on the table, cover with tissue paper and fasten with the other, thus avoiding the work of pasting. For a class of eight, ten

pairs are ample, allowing one for each to break and two for double hoop diving.

When you desire to give a show, the best method is that of professional circus-directors and vaudeville stage-managers: to so build up your programme with such material as you have that the show begins well, ends well, and does not drag. By that I mean that the opening interests the audience, that they are not weary as it proceeds, and it finishes well.

One half of the success of a professional show is due to the style and finish. Everything goes smoothly and all the acts are planned to look well. This style and finish you may have if you rehearse enough, and, if the acts are pretty, the fact that the tricks are easier does not much matter.

You must remember that, when you give a show, you have to know exactly whatever you try to do. It is not like a classroom where there is time to think and where you may get through by excuses or good luck. If you undertake to do anything before an audience you *must* do it properly and at the exact moment appointed.



15. HOOPS, NO. 2 SALUTE
The Diver has just landed on his shoulders and hands.

In building up a programme, star each one of the company in something, every member getting a chance at the limelight. One boy will learn the cart-wheel first; make that his specialty and star him in it. Another the handspring, and so on. Begin with a slow act by the class, end with a quick one. Break the monotony of all-class acts by "brother acts" and specialties, as described in the following chapters.

TOPMOUNTERS AND UNDERSTANDERS. In all double work it is the Understander's duty to save his Topmounter from falls and bruises. That is what the Understander is there for, to take everything that comes. Otherwise the Topmounter will not have confidence and cannot do good work. Until two have worked together for a while they are not "in time," as professionals say. They cannot make the right moves at just the right moment, but it is fine to see partners working in a good "brother act," every move nicely timed and together. Naturally you choose the smallest boys for Topmounters on account of the weight, but there are other things to be con-

sidered. Does he look well when he smiles? Has he courage? Has he a swelled head? Will he be obedient? A sullen-faced boy produces a bad impression on top of a pyramid or in a brother act. People think he has been overtrained or the work hurts him or I know not what—especially nervous women, and as you are trying to make a pleasing impression on an audience you must consider all this.

It is not enough to do a difficult act properly. It must be done gracefully, with style, for if your audience is not pleased—you may as well stay at home.

In the old days there used to be a theatre on the Bowery which had an amateur night once a week. Any amateur could pay a dollar and go on and do his or her act. If the act was bad the audience would all yell—"rotten" or "get the hook," and if the performer declined to stop, the stage hands dragged him off. I have seen there, acts, given by boys, which had real merit; that is, they were difficult things to do, but they were so awkwardly done, without style or finish,



16. PLANCHE



17. Throw No. 1
First Position



18. Throw No. 1
Second Position



19. Throw No. 2
First Position



20. Throw No. 2
Second Position

Center Oval, 21, Double Walk

Both these practice throws are useful, especially in training Top-mounters. Learn them always on a soft mat. No. 1 is more easily learned than No. 2. At first in swinging up No. 1 let some one put a hand at his neck so that he will not fall back. Soon he will get the time and land on his feet. No. 2 has to push hard on the mat at the pull up of the legs. Do not let go of him the first few trys or he is sure to land on his nose. When he has the time, throw his feet over, he pushes his hands hard and comes to second position.

that no audience could accept them. Perhaps the boy would slouch on; he looked all hands and feet—his work was always too slow or too fast. He lacked training. Amateur boy boxers generally make the mistake of boxing too fast—they go at it as if each expected to knock out the other in the first half of the first round, bow, and go home. So to avoid all this—there must be ceaseless drill on the little points—the way one stands, holds his head and so on. In partner work, or “brother acts,” as in all show work, your difficulty is that you cannot see yourself working. Here the instructor or a sensible friend can help enormously. By steady criticism every day he will polish up your work until it becomes what all desire—a smooth, clever, beautiful act. Many an amateur act could be made a really good act if it were competently criticised and the performer did not have a swelled head and would listen.

Do not try advanced work until you have mastered the ten elements and the simple work described. The patience that wins in life is needed here. Those who exercise it will be

rewarded, for the boy or girl who masters the ten elements can easily learn to do well, pretty much anything.

Another caution to Topmounters: Do not practise with any one else but your partner. Stray people who see you at work like to try the throws and double work without learning the Understander's part. This results in bruises and spoils your form. After practising a while with a partner both learn the time; and this is important. You gain nothing by practise with an ignorant stranger.

When all have practised the fall and know the roll well, the double 2-High Fall can be much improved by using mats which cover a space about 18 feet long and 3 wide. Do the fall as before; after the salute all roll again quickly, get in position again, turn around, mount, and repeat the fall, roll, and salute. This takes each pair down the mats and back.

Second time change the salute to number 2. Another variety of the 2-High Fall, if there are four Topmounters and four Understanders, is to put two pairs at each end. The four

pairs cannot double down the mats and back unless wider mats are used.

These 2-High Falls are much appreciated by an audience and supposed to be very difficult. As a matter of fact the Topmounter stays on as long as he can and when he jumps is but a short distance from the mat. The roll, however, is done so quickly that an audience imagines that he lands on his hands.

The Topmounter cannot get bruised unless his Understander trips him or lets him fall backwards. If the Topmounter is damaged it is the fault of the Understander, a very good reason for never working with an Understander who has not learned his part. The instructor should see to this.

Now then we may assume that you have faithfully followed the directions in this chapter and have attained a real proficiency in these ten elements of simple tumbling.

It is fitting that you should enjoy the pleasure that one may find in "Amateur Circus Life" and the next chapters are devoted to telling you how best that may be done.

CHAPTER IV

PREPARATION FOR A SHOW

Suppose that a Y. M. C. A. or Boy Scouts' Patrol wish to give a show and have three months to get ready in.

The show can be given in a gym, a hall, in a tent or in the open. Wherever it is, arrange a ring with sawdust and a stage on one side. Lighting should be the best you can command. If you have electricity that is best. A ring can be very well lit with the old-fashioned flare lights, such as peanut vendors use, or larger. A stage, however, must have footlights and a curtain that works properly.

Plenty of circus people are making a living in Latin America with no better rig than this and canvas enough for a fence to enclose the audience and balk the deadheads, because they cannot afford to buy a tent and give good shows too. Of course if you have no

PREPARATION FOR A SHOW 37

tent a show is impossible in bad weather. Benches, planks, and borrowed chairs will do for the audience.

SIZE OF THE RING. Just here this letter from Barnum & Bailey is interesting.

BARNUM & BAILEY

Greatest Show on Earth

General Offices and Winterquarters,
Bridgeport, Conn.

March 21, 1916.

Ernest Balch,
107 East 30th Street,
New York City.

Dear Sir:

Answering your inquiry, a regulation circus ring is 42 feet in diameter. The height of the curb is optional as it is only to serve as a guide for the horse. However, they are usually about 12 inches high.

Very truly yours,

BARNUM & BAILEY.

Messrs. Barnum & Bailey explain that the size of a full ring is 42 feet. But this size is needed only when horses have to be ridden bareback. In a smaller ring the horse would be too cramped to get the right gait.

For amateur work it may be as small as 20 feet in diameter. This would give room

enough for a double 2-High Fall and pretty much any kind of work desired. The circular wall may be built of wood with a padded canvas top or turf covered with canvas or old carpet. If it can be managed, a very good effect is produced by covering the ring wall with pretty coloured bunting or similar stuff. If your ring is built on grass-covered ground, cut off the turf for the wall. Dig out the ground say two to three inches, smooth and remove all stones or stumps. Then cover with sifted sawdust or tan bark. This is as good for tumbling and acrobatic work as any mat.

If you give a really good show, you can sell tickets for it. People will always pay to be amused and the entrance money counts up rapidly. Many people are quite tired of the movies. Boys should plan a show at 10,-15, and 25 cents for the best seats. Ticket sellers and ushers are easy to get. The main thing is a well-drilled company giving an interesting performance. The advantage of the stage is that you can put on a fake animal act, or a boy or girl who can sing a solo or a chorus

or indeed anything that interests, barring long and stale recitations.

In the ring the only fake animal you can use is an elephant, shown by a clown, or perhaps a donkey.

You will make the most money by giving three performances.

First at night. The second day a *matinée*, and then an evening show with a little change of bill, say a pretty pantomime. There are a number of these; for instance, "Cinderella," part in the ring, part on the stage; "The Schoolmaster" in the ring, "The Hotel" in the ring, "Box & Cox" on the stage, a burlesque of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," etc.

HOW MUCH TIME SHOULD BE ALLOWED FOR PREPARATION? I would say three months, supposing that you wish to give a show and make money out of it, for the Red Cross or something.

If you sell tickets at 25 and 50 cents you must give a very good show and that means a long drill and some older head to manage things. A smaller enterprise takes less prepa-

ration. If you have boys or girls who have learned already to do something, so much time is saved. If there is a stage, a piano or violin act may be put in or a dance.

Small one-ring circuses can do this with benefit; the show goes better because there is change and variety. All sorts of people go to a show and there are varying tastes.

A programme has to be made interesting. It is not enough to provide a string of Class acts. That would be monotonous. The audience must be entertained by affairs which seem to it amusing and pretty. In a word, you must please your audience. It is like a good dinner, to the solid meat course, you add soup, salad and dessert. The tumbling work is the real solid meat of your banquet, but there must not be too much of it.

It is not my intention nor is there space to describe very many circus acts; but rather to pick out a few that may be learned by amateurs without too great sacrifice of time. Lack of time is the great obstacle. To practise an act two or five years before he is sure of it is not unusual for a professional, and this is

obviously impracticable for the readers of this book.

I exclude also acts which depend for the effect upon one difficult or dangerous feat, acts which require elaborate scenery and lights or expensive costumes.

All these things must be considered and furthermore we can do well without them for we do not have to pass the exacting and sometimes routine standards of agents and managers, and best of all we are free from the burden of the treadmill life of the professional.

If the amateur masters the ten elements of simple tumbling, to give two or three attractive shows a year is easy and this is about all he will wish to do.

To embark in the business is given to few, and is altogether another matter. Any boy who intends to do that will find that what he learns here is a help, but that he has to learn a whole lot more which only a master—an exacting master—can teach.

Professional acrobatic work is very serious business. The life is one of great self-denial.

A first-class acrobat does not drink, use tobacco, or gamble; he must have plenty of sleep and he cannot follow any other occupation.

He is always going somewhere and never getting anywhere. A week or less in one place and you are off for another, perhaps never to come back. Travelling all over the world and seeing nothing and knowing nothing about the best things in that world—behold the life of an acrobat.

BROTHER ACTS are so-called because it is circus custom to bill an act as performed by families or brothers. This is simply a convenient custom. The act is owned by some one and the name is a sort of trade-mark which is of value in treating with agents and managers. The "Brown Family" or "Brown Brothers" do a certain kind of act and acquire a reputation which is valuable. They are known in the business to be reliable and able to do what they contract to do. If one of the "family" drops out some one else is hired to fill the place.

It is convenient in amateur circus work to follow this custom.

Two or three practise together, learn an act, and choose a name. These brother acts may be easy or difficult according to the skill of the actors. In Chapter V a show is described which was rehearsed only three weeks. Two brother acts were built up out of easy tricks. As they were done nicely with style and finish, both improved the programme.

Once the ten elements of simple tumbling are mastered an endless list of combinations is possible. Each act should comprise three tricks, and a fourth, the best or showiest, should be kept for encores. A trick nearly always ends with a roll and salute. The following are two-brother acts for big boys and one for little boys and a "principal" brother act, The Sanreyes, given as illustrations of what may be done.

SIMPLE BROTHER ACT. No. 1. *The Kick.* Understander on his back on the mat. Topmounter sits on his feet. Understander kicks him up in the air. Topmounter shoots up,

dives, and rolls up to standing position. Understander back rolls to standing position. Both do No. 2 salute together.

2d Trick. Topmounter rolls, and Understander dives over him, while he is rolling in opposite direction. Both turn and go the opposite way, but second time Topmounter dives and Understander rolls. Both face and give No. 1 salute or salute back to back.

3d Trick. Shoulder mount 2-High Fall, No. 2. Salute.

ENCORE. *The Turn.* Double bridge, Topmounter on top. (Bridge shown by Understander in illustration 4.) They turn so Understander is on his hands and knees and Topmounter same on his back.

Understander gives one hand to Topmounter and brings one foot forward. Balancing on that he gives the other hand to Topmounter and begins to rise up on his feet. Topmounter is balanced well up near the shoulders. When Understander is well up on his feet and solid, Topmounter brings one foot up to place on his shoulder, then the other, balanced and supported by Under-

stander's hands. After this stand up straight, a 2-High Fall and No. 2 salute.

This turn requires much practise. Topmounter's feet must never touch the floor in making the turn, and both must learn the 2-High Fall before trying the turn.

This brother act follows the rule. Do three things: Begin with an easy trick, fill in with your second best, end with a showy one of merit, and have ready for an encore a harder and showy trick, in case you are applauded. It is also so composed as to include what the partners have learned to do, and to interest an audience, providing always the work can be done smoothly and quickly.

In brother acts it is desirable to combine tricks, if possible, that easily run into each other, as, for instance, the 2-High Fall does into the roll, and No. 2 salute. As in illustration 16 this planche follows well the shoulder mount. After an erect balance on the shoulders the Topmounter sits on the Understander's shoulders, plants his feet on the Understander's legs close to his waist, stands up and curves back, while Understander pulls

his head back and leans back to a balance. The combination, therefore, runs: shoulder mount, planche, double roll, No. 2. Salute.

SECOND BROTHER ACT. *Bridge Handstand Snap-up*. In the bridge and handstand (illustration 4), the Understander is invariably supposed by an audience to be doing all the work. As his feet and hands are spread a little and knees touching, he really does nothing, since it is easy to sustain the weight of the Topmounter in this position. This is properly a two-trick combination. Topmounter does a handstand and handsprings off. Understander does a snap up. Both salute. But if they are not far enough advanced to do all this, the Topmounter can come back to a standing position and Understander can back roll to his feet, both saluting, which makes a fair combination.

BROTHER ACT FOR LITTLE BOYS. Two simple and easy tricks for little boys are the double walk and the double roll. They do not look well for big boys and are too easy.

DOUBLE WALK. Face to face both take hold of each other's shoulders. No 2 jumps,



Russak

22. DOUBLE ROLL

Top boy dives between feet close in holding feet firmly. Bottom boy pushes up and does the same. Both should roll smoothly without bumping the head. This is brother work on a mat.



Russak

23. EASY PYRAMID

Topmounter goes up first. Front boy takes position second. Back boy last. Handstanders come down first, then Topmounter. All roll and salute.

throws his legs around No. 1's waist, and hooks his feet. No. 2 bends backward through No. 1's legs, puts his hands on No. 1's Achilles tendons, and raises his head and shoulders up. No. 1 bends over and puts his hands on the mat. They walk down the mat. Stop. No. 1 pulls No. 2 back to standing position. Both salute. (Illustration 21.)

DOUBLE ROLL. No. 1 lies on his back. No. 2 stands with a foot on each side of his head. No. 1 puts his feet up. Each takes hold of the other's ankles. No. 2 does a roll and No. 1 pushes and helps him over. No. 1 then does a roll helped over by No. 2. Three rolls down and two back. Salute. (Illustration 22.)

An improvement of this: The two march on the mat as in the Wheelbarrow (illustration 6). *Swiftly* the wheelbarrow ducks and rolls, taking hold of No. 2's ankles. Proceed in the double roll down and back.

THE SANREYES. PRINCIPAL ACT. We will suppose the two boys who wish to make the act have a trained dog.

The boys have learned to do the roll, the dive, the headstand, the shoulder-mount, and 2-High Fall, and one of them can do a handstand.

The dog has learned to sit up, to do one or two rolls in succession, to walk on his front or hind paws, and to jump on the back of one of the boys and then climb up onto his head assisted by the boy and sit there, then do a 2-High Fall.

All of these are easy and do not take much time. The dog is taught as described in Chapter IX.

We will name the act

THE SANREYES

(Properties required, a mat)

As explained such a name is a sort of trademark and has nothing to do with the real name of the performers. We will suppose the dog to be pretty good and above all reliable; that is, he will always do what he has learned when he gets his cue. If he runs around barking, balks or has to be coaxed he will spoil the act. The three Sanreyes are

therefore, George, Harry, and Billy, the dog. You would bill it so:

THE SANREYES

GEORGE

and

HARRY

BILLY

First George and Harry come out on the floor and salute, or if the act is put on the stage, the curtain rises and they are standing there saluting, but Billy remains out of sight. The mat is conveniently placed. Nothing else is needed for this act.

Billy does not appear until the second part or the third, if he is not very reliable or has learned only one trick.

No. 1. George and Harry. Shoulder mount. Balance. No. 2 Salute. Planche. Both roll. No. 2 Salute.

No. 2. George and Harry do a bridge and handstand (illustration 4). Shoulder-mount and 2-High Fall. They stand behind the mat with arms folded. Billy comes on and walks down the mat on two feet. Billy jumps on Harry's back, sits on his shoulders or head. 2-High Fall. Both roll.

No. 3. Harry shoulder-mount on George. Billy jumps up to Harry. Harry holds Billy on his shoulders and does a planche. When Harry and George are in balance, Harry brings Billy out to a planche in front of him. All roll. (Illustration 16.)

ENCORE. George on hands and knees. Harry same on his back. Billy jumps up on Harry. Harry steadies Billy with right hand. George and Harry come to standing position. Billy on Harry's shoulders. 3-High Fall. All roll. Bow. After the three Sanreyes have built up the act so far they will change and improve it as fast as they learn more difficult tricks. This is true of all brother acts.

TABLE AND CHAIR ACT FOR BIG BOY OR CLOWNS

1 table 22 inches by 22 inches by 32 inches high.

1 chair 16 inches by 16 inches by 18 inches high to seat.

1 chair 14 inches by 14 inches by 18 inches high to seat.



Russak

24. TABLE AND CHAIR ACT. FORWARD FALL



25. TABLE AND CHAIR ACT
Back Fall. "This is the life."

Russak

The top of table and seat of big chair are slightly notched to keep the legs from slipping.

Clown piles them up and sits on the top chair.

1st clown rocks back and forth with funny business.

No. 2 clown meanwhile pretends fear, etc.

If you wish to fall forward, just as the chairs and table go over throw your feet forward, your head back (illustration 24), land on your feet and do a quick roll to feet. This produces the effect of a fall. If you fall back spread your feet on each side of the chair and throw the head and shoulders forward (illustration 25). You will land on your feet and instantly do a back roll to feet again. Mats are arranged in front and back of the table.

At first practising a partner or instructor should hold table and chair until clown gets control of the balance, for table and chairs are liable to double up and the table and one chair should be practised first; then two chairs until the performer can keep all in line as he rocks back and forward.

This is properly a clown act, but may be put on the programme as an independent act for a big boy. The measurements must be changed to fit the table and chairs for a small boy. While No. 1 is piling up the chairs and climbing up to his place and while he is falling, both clowns can use effectively a lot of business which they can work out themselves. The table should be made with big, heavy legs. After the act is learned these can be shaved down at the bottom so that the table will tip more easily.

CONTORTION WORK. *Contortionists*—snake men—are popularly supposed to be double jointed—even that their bones are broken when children. This is untrue and absurd. Among boys there is sometimes one who has the peculiarity of very flexible joints. This may be seen by bending the fingers back to the wrist. If you can do this you can do ordinary contortion work, which mostly consists of bending back until the head goes between the feet or placing the feet behind the neck. Any one who can do so can make a contortion act with little work. I have seen a boy do a

fair amateur act after about two weeks' practise. The main difficulty in his case was to learn the order of the tricks and not repeat himself.

JUGGLING. It requires long practise to do work that depends on sleight of hand. There are good books to teach it, easily attained. Big stage mystery acts are easy but require expensive apparatus and lighting effects. However, I would recommend a boy to learn to juggle three objects, beginning with tennis balls, as this is an accomplishment useful in balance acts and other ways, and is very good training for the eye and nerves.

BOXING. As I have explained, the important thing to do is to diversify your programme. Boxing is a very good way to do this, but solely as an act to show off your smallest boys. If you can get a pair about ten years old who know a little about boxing and are not afraid to be punched a bit and can stand it without losing their tempers, that will make the act. Let one much larger pair begin, a middle pair follow; and then out jumps your smallest pair. You will be sure of applause.

Rounds should last about one minute. One round is enough for the first two pairs as they go on solely to introduce the little pair. Two rounds is enough for the smallest pair if they are evenly matched and really good. If they can box only a little or are unevenly matched, one round. It is hardly necessary to say that no boy should be allowed to box if he cannot control his temper and stand a little hammering.

PANTOMIMES possess a perennial fascination and are most useful for an amateur circus.

"Jack and the Beanstalk," "Cinderella," many of the famous old fairy tales can be turned into pantomimes with great success. "Robinson Crusoe" has been used again and again. The "Swiss Family Robinson" would make a good one. There are also afloat in the world little sketches of I know not what origin, such as the "Hotel," the "Schoolmaster," the "Railroad Conductor." But one should distinguish in making a choice. It is necessary to consider what each story requires in the way of scenery, costumes, and changes. "Mucha maquina" as the Spanish puts it,

would be an objection in many cases. The famous old tale of El Rey Dorado for which so many men have died, could be turned into a most effective pantomime but it would require very elaborate costumes and effects and many people. The culminating scene in that story represents a sacred mountain lake in which the Gilded King bathes, washing off the gold dust and jewels with which he is covered as an offering to the God below the waters. Difficult to reproduce, whereas the culminating scene in "Cinderella" is the trying on of a slipper in a kitchen. "Jack and the Beanstalk" would be easier to give than the "Gilded King" but more difficult than "Cinderella." In producing any of these little pantomimes or comedies a trained and *disciplined* tumbling class can do easily what other boys or girls would find very difficult. One could write another book explaining fully such matters.

Any bright person can make up one of these little comedies. They may be all in pantomime, or part pantomime, and part spoken lines. "Cinderella" begins on the stage.

Build a runway from the stage to the ring on which two side by side may easily walk. Two sets are required for the stage. One, the cottage kitchen of Cinderella. The other, the palace of the Prince.

PARTS

THE PRINCE

THE PRIME MINISTER

FAIRY GODMOTHER

PROUD SISTER NO. 1

PROUD SISTER NO. 2

HERALD

As many more people as desired. Courtiers, attendants, guards, etc.

ACT I. *Scene 1.* Cottage of Cinderella. All talk of the ball. Proud sisters rub it in. *Scene 2.* Proud sisters have gone to the ball. Fairy Godmother appears. Cinderella transformed comes down runway to coach in the ring. Goes to the ball.

ACT II. *Scene 1.* (On stage.) The ball. Clock strikes. Cinderella runs home, dropping slipper, from the stage down the runway and out the entrance. *Scene 2.* (On the stage.) Prince demands that Prime Minister finds the wearer of the slipper.

ACT III. (On Stage.) Kitchen scene. Trying on the slipper. Cinderella is discovered. Grand march down to ring and out to entrance. End with a grand wedding scene.

This "Cinderella" is a very convenient little comedy because you can use many or few people and make it simple or gorgeous according to the resources of the company. I saw it done once in Mexico by a circus company of sixty odd. An extremely pretty girl in a beautiful costume was the Prince and looked it. Another pretty girl took the Cinderella part. All the principals were good pantomimists. Nothing was spoken. A famous clown played the Prime Minister. Another good clown the Herald who bore the slipper on a cushion.

The Proud Sisters were magnificent and homely. There was a real coach with coachman and two footmen in cocked hats, wigs and liveries drawn by two little Shetland ponies. The transformation of the coach, ponies, and attendants was supposed to take place outside of the tent. When the Fairy Godmother summoned the coach, Cinderella

was already beautifully dressed and covered with a ragged old dress which she dropped while Godmother stood in front of her and waved her wand, the ponies and coach galloped in from outside, stopping in the ring and the footmen opened the door with a bang and low bows.

Cinderella drove off bowing and smiling to all of us in the audience.

The Second Act was on the stage, the real circus orchestra playing dance music for the crowded ball. There was a pause, a clock struck slowly and loudly the fateful twelve, poor little Cinderella, dismayed, gathered up her dress and fled down the runway through the ring and out of the tent, the slipper is discovered and down came the curtain.

ACT III. Curtain rose on first kitchen set. Proud Sisters are discussing the ball, Cinderella weeps in the corner. The Prime Minister, Herald, and guards solemnly march into the ring. This procession was very amusing. They mount up the runway to the kitchen on the stage. Each Proud Sister tries on the slipper. Nothing doing. Then Cinderella

is discovered. *Scene 2.* The Palace again. Prince and Cinderella centre of the stage. Fairy Godmother behind them, blesses them. The Coach drives into the ring. Orchestra plays wedding march. Prince and Cinderella descend to the coach, slowly drive away, as you may believe to the great applause of the real audience, so sweet and happy they looked. The curtain descended, the audience applauded, sighed a little and went home. In this rendering the transformation of Cinderella, the coach, the ponies and the attendants was dodged because they require so much setting and machinery. But the audience did not mind that and the other points were charming and well done. The fairy atmosphere was achieved. And a sweet, lovely old story it is, appealing as much to grown ups as to children, which will go well with a much simpler setting.

THE HOTEL requires no scenery at all, and but three clever actors.

Two cot beds are placed in the ring, one a broken tumble-down affair, the other a comfortable one. A desk and chair are placed in

front at a little distance, say twelve feet. These represent the office of the hotel. The beds represent the lodging. Enter an old woman who keeps the hotel. After some remarks from her, come in a lodger in a sort of ridiculous tramp costume. Dialogue. He receives the broken cot and gets into it. Funny business. Then enters the second lodger well dressed who is received with great politeness and shown to the nice cot. More funny business. This leads to a row between the lodgers, for the second goes out for a moment and No. 1 steals his bed. The row increases until the old lady chases them both out and, distracted, runs out herself. The ring attendants rush out the beds, chair, and desk. In this comedy the whole effect is produced by the dialogue and funny business. In clever hands it is very funny indeed. As a rule little comedies or pantomimes of this kind are used to end the show. At the end the orchestra plays the final good-night music. If a coach and ponies are not attainable for Cinderella, the arrangement must be changed somewhat and all take place on the stage.

A burlesque of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" is not difficult. Once we did it in French and English mixed and it was sufficiently ridiculous and amusing, under the name of "Le Cabine de Tio Tom." Soapboxes covered with cotton batting represented cakes of floating ice on the Ohio River over which little Eva was chased by a half dozen assorted dogs led by an Italian greyhound. Never shall I forget the magnificent Legree and his boots and the mongrel French pathos of Uncle Tom.

CHAPTER V

A SHOW AT A BOARDING SCHOOL

One day at the Cloyne School, Lewis said, "Won't you start a tumbling class?" Twice before I had conducted a tumbling class at Cloyne. In 1914, while building the winter camp, which is described in Chapter XII, we practised for four weeks. Lewis and three other boys, of this class described, were in it.

So we began to practise an hour every afternoon but Saturday, starting with eleven boys. Then the head of the school asked, "Can you not give a show Thanksgiving evening?"

Every one wanted to do this; but there were left only three weeks in which to get ready, and that is a very short time; moreover, eleven boys are too many for a class. But there we were with eleven, four of whom had had a little training, and just three weeks to Thanksgiving. I could not fairly ask a boy who worked well to drop out, but I have always

made the rule in a tumbling class that a boy must obey orders. Before long one of the class began to disobey and make disorder. Twice he was warned, but I suppose he thought he could pull through, and the third time I let him resign.

Another boy was to go home for Thanksgiving, and we needed one for stage manager, so now you see we were down to eight, just the right number, and a well-balanced lot they were except that the two Understanders should have been a trifle heavier. Fortunately, in this class there were two boys suitable for Topmounters, so I began to train both, then at any symptom of enlarged head the other could be used, and the class not be delayed; we were ready in time and both did good work at the show.

In practising cartwheels it happened that Tom caught the true motion in two weeks and was the only one who did. So we made this his act. The other boys did left cartwheels down the mat, two each, twice round while he stood in a majestic pose. Then the floor was cleared and Tom turned a string of beauties

all around the mat on the bare floor. Had we had a calcium light this would have been spotted on him while we wheeled around the mat, increasing the effect, which of course was due to the contrast between the not-well-done cartwheels on the mat and his easy motion. Great applause rewarded him.

As I have described, what is done in sight of an audience must be done properly. Excuses amount to nothing at all. Moreover, this class had not yet appeared before an audience and would naturally be nervous. I must say that the night of the show they were hardly at all nervous, which I attribute to their practise in public speaking and also to the capable work of stage manager Sam. None the less this same class would work a whole lot better at their next show, for it is surprising how much one learns by appearing before an audience.

One of the class tried a front handspring, but he did not get away with it simply from lack of confidence. With a week's more practise it would have gone all right. Not in the least his fault, for he was unwilling to try it, and I

insisted. It was hardly noticed and mattered little.

As we had but three weeks to practise in and four of the eight boys were quite green, we did not attempt the back flip. In the second week of practise it became time to settle the programme of this Thanksgiving show. One difficulty with amateur shows is that they do not work smoothly. There are always delays, the curtain does not go up at the right time, and all the rest of it. Here the stage manager knew his business and the company worked so smoothly that all went a little too fast. Afterwards it was agreed that the show might have had more acts and run a half hour longer without tiring the audience. Like all good stage managers Sam is gloomy and pessimistic.

"These kids can't do anything," said he.

"That's a fact, they cannot do much in three weeks, but they will stand for a lot of drill now that the class is down to eight, and what they do they will do with style and finish. Two-thirds of the audience will not know the difference between easy stuff and hard, and

the other third will make allowances for the short preparation. You run your end in good shape and the show will go well."

"Suppose Craik gets rattled?" (One of the Topmounters).

"Well, he won't; he is getting steadier every day."

"I think you ought to beat 'em up a little."

"Yes, that would probably hasten matters, but might not be understood."

"Lewis will never hold that handstand in Turner Brothers act."

"Yes, he will—he has not a lot of style but he is always reliable."

"What are they going to wear?"

"Tights, of course; we can get up a fine costume for little money."

The costume described in Chapter VI was purchased and the two Topmounters had crimson velvet trunks, and each performer wore a rosette of crimson ribbon placed on the chest, a little below the left shoulder, and a crimson ribbon tied around the left leg below the knee. This red relieved the effect of so

much blackness. Every one else was in evening dress, so the show achieved a certain style.

Now for the beginning, "The Grand Entrée." This opens the show and must be a little picture. It is very important to impress an audience well at the start. If you slouch in with an embarrassed air the effect is depressing. We began this way: the orchestra played an overture. A little introductory speech was made. Meanwhile the stage manager arranged the class in line, back of the curtain, with the two Topmounters in front and the Understanders at the ends. Behold a nervous moment behind the curtain while the speech was paralysing the audience in front. The stage manager held the situation by marching down the line and giving each boy a punch in the stomach, thus pleasantly attracting their attention. The talk ended, the speaker descended the steps to the floor, the orchestra began the incidental music; slowly the footlights went up in professional style, the curtain slowly rose, and the class stood there like a rock. (*Frontispiece.*)

At a signal, led by the Topmounters, they marched steadily down from the stage, two by two, formed a line, did a roll on the floor (illustrations 48, 49 and 50) and came to the salute. (Illustration 51.) This was an effective entrance and brought applause.

The Finish. We selected "The Cascade" to end the show. This is simple if you have learned to do the roll properly. All ran back to the cottage set on the stage. The curtain was dropped and the line formed behind it. The orchestra, which had stopped playing after the Horses, began a quick march. Up jumped the curtain, the class ran down the steps in single file, each one did two quick rolls and ran back to join the line again, until all had gone down the mat twice; then the line ran up the steps as quickly as possible, and down dropped the curtain. Simple but effective. It was encored and then had two curtain calls, the class saluting.

Now we have the beginning and the end, but the programme was monotonous. The two brother acts, Turner Brothers and Stires Brothers, helped; but something else was

needed, so we put in a boxing act. The two biggest boys first, then two medium-sized, after that the two smallest. Each pair boxed one minute. The two bigger pairs were simply to introduce the last and smallest as explained in Chapter IV. This amused the audience a lot and helped to improve the programme.

This is the programme as it was finally carried out, with two full-dress rehearsals to get the artists used to their tights and it will serve as a model for a forty-minute to one-hour entertainment, beginning with a slow, impressive *Grande Entrée*, ending with a quick class act and broken by two pyramids and two brother acts and the boxing.

TUMBLING CLASS
CLOYNE HOUSE SCHOOL

Newport, Rhode Island

Thanksgiving, 1915

<i>Stage Manager</i>	MR. KISSAM KERR
<i>Director of the Orchestra</i>	MR. J. L. CORYDON
<i>Decorations</i>	MR. MANUEL MAITZO
<i>Lights</i>	MR. WALTER HINDRY
<i>Costumes</i>	NEWPORT RUBBER CO.

THE COMPANY

MESSRS. LEWIS KERR, HERBERT TURNER, *Understanders*;
 ARTHUR STIRES, TOM CRAVEN, HARDEN CRAWFORD,
 DONALD CARPENTER,
 CEDRIC CARPENTER, CRAIK SPEED, *Topmounters*.

Mr. Reginald Roland kindly coached the boxing.

MUSIC

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Grand Entrée. | 8. Diving. <i>The Fiery</i> |
| 2. Roll and Salute.
(The Class.) | <i>Hoop of Death.</i>
(The Class.) |
| 3. Horses. | 9. Cart-wheels. |
| 4. Headstands (four). | 10. Double Roll. |
| 5. Double 2-High Fall. | 11. Brother Act. |
| 6. Handwalking Pairs.
The Wheelbarrow.
(The Class.) | 12. Boxing. |
| 7. Brother Act. | 13. Pyramids: <i>Adoration.</i>
<i>Path to the Stars.</i> |
| | 14. The Cascade.
(The Class.) |

When the show finally came off, ask the boys if they were thrilled. It all went so fast that the hour seemed only a few minutes. Did the audience enjoy the show? Immensely—the remembrance of old circus days, the graceful little acts, the finish—the Cascade twice repeated—they applauded a long time, those people who had seen everything.

CHAPTER VI

COSTUMES AND DISCIPLINE

A costume consists of tights and shirt with sleeves, both of heavy standard cotton and trunks of so-called velvet. For the feet use well-fitting black sneakers. It is important that the sneakers should be neither too small nor too loose. If black sneakers are not attainable paint black any old pair. Expensive acrobatic shoes do not help and are not appropriate except for advanced work. The black colour fits in with any coloured costume except white. White tights are difficult to keep clean and should never be indulged in except for very advanced work. The best colours are black, crimson or blue for tights and shirt. Pink, light blue, and yellow do not look well except in silk.

According to your taste use trunks of the same colour or not. Distinguish, however, the Topmounters as this looks well in pyra-

mids. It can be done by covering their trunks with gold or silver braid, or some such method. If a class performs and there are specialties it is a good plan for the specialties to change costume, in which case the programme must be arranged to give them time for the change.

For heavy Understander work, it is desirable to use a Morton supporter or other type as it helps to prevent strains to the abdomen.

Girls will know how to arrange an effective costume which should avoid anything to trip or entangle and the eternal sailor blouse which does not seem appropriate for the sawdust ring.

In measuring tights, give chest, waist, hip measures and inside seam of leg; this last is the most important measure. If too short the tights are uncomfortable, if too long they will always wrinkle at the knees.

The inside seam measure should be given one-half inch less than the exact measure. The size stocking used may be added. Shirt should be rather low in neck and with long sleeves. In putting on tights put them on gently and do not pull them out of shape.

When on, fasten drawstring, put on a light narrow belt or cord and roll the tights around this until they are smooth. Shirt goes inside tights or under the belt and the trunks cover all.

I have already spoken of the necessity for choosing a Stage Manager or Equestrian Director and of obeying his or her orders exactly. This is invariably done by professionals and is not from choice but from necessity; there is no other way to success. What the stage manager says "goes" emphatically. This is so important and hard to understand that it might be a good plan to print the rule at the head of each chapter of this book. One stage manager is better than another naturally, but any stage manager is better than none, just as any system of exercise is better than none.

This comes out clearly, when you arrive at the question of make-up and costume. Only a very experienced professional can judge of the effect before an audience of these. The reason is simple enough. What is becoming and appropriate in a room appears differ-

ently on the stage or in a ring on account of the difference in the effect of the lights and the position of the artist. There should never be less than two dress rehearsals before a show, and any order to change by the stage manager should be obeyed at once. Do not ask for reasons. If the stage manager does not think well of it that is enough. That is what the stage manager is for, the artist cannot see the effect as the stage manager does, and the manager is just as anxious for a good effect as the artist.

Costume and make up effects copied from the real stage may look well or may not. There is one general rule to be observed. Nothing in the least bit vulgar should be permitted in these,—costume, make-up, jokes, or pantomime.

Colours and styles must suit the artist on the stage and in the ring. Amateurs easily make mistakes on these two points which is not surprising for even professional stage managers who do not make mistakes are scarce.

For a minstrel show, boys' and girls' or grown people's evening clothes with burnt

cork on the face and black gloves on the hands may be used.

Black gloves are better because black corked hands get everything dirty, but the hands can be blacked if gloves are unattainable. If black cork is not used, some sort of costume or uniform or fancy dress appears well. A boy scout uniform, with an Interlocutor and four end men in fancy dress or burnt cork and evening clothes would be fine. The five in costume will show up the Scout clothes nicely. For acrobatic work in the ring nothing could be better than the costume shown in Chapter V. Of course, hair, hands and face should be nicely arranged. A dirty face or hands are apt to kill the effect.

Clown costume is easy. The illustrations show two styles:

A CLOWN COSTUME FOR \$.75.

Buy cheapest grade of cotton cloth twice the length from the neck of the clown to the ground. Double in the middle. Cut out hole for neck. Split up ends to form legs, sew up sides and insides of legs. Carry up split above knees far enough so you do not trip but not far

enough to catch. Split the back down far enough so as to enter and put one button at top. Cut holes for arms and sew on straight sleeves. Each sleeve and leg should end in an elastic. The extra length pulled out makes a ruff around bottom of each leg and one around each sleeve. Ruffs for the neck may be white, green or red.

Cut out little figures of animals or what you will of coloured muslin. Sew on the cotton cloth. Hat is ordinary coneshaped clown effect made of pasteboard and white muslin with coloured dots pasted or sewed on. They may be purchased in New York for five cents.

There are endless ways of varying this costume. Half black or colour, with black or coloured dots, is effective. The sleeves may be made fuller than in the illustration; and one leg may be shorter than the other. If a strong yoke is sewed in the neck and the back opening and legs are reinforced, the costume will stand harder work.

Clown caps, crepe paper, white with dots as in illustration No. 3411 and sparklers No. 20/5331, for the "Path to the Stars," at Shackman, 906 Broadway, New York. Costumes in illustrations, Newport Rubber Co., Newport, Rhode Island.



26. Way to Shape a Clown Costume
First cut and sewing.



27. Clown Ruffs. Pair of
Hoops.



28. Elephant Hook. Sample
Buttons for Eyes.

Russak

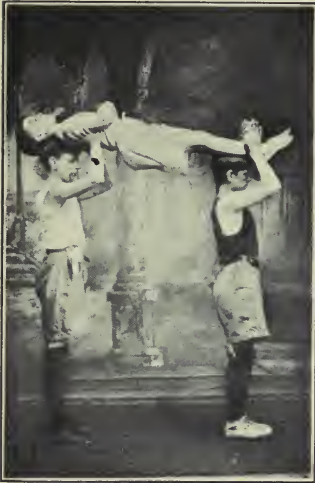


29.

EASY PYRAMIDS



30.



31. DEAD MAN



32. PRACTISING HAND-BALANCE ON A CHAIR

This has to be done without assistance and is advanced work.

CLOWN RUFF

Strip of crinoline or coarse mosquito netting seven to nine inches wide according to size of boy or girl. Fold it in accordion pleats one inch wide. First four one way, then four facing. Length of strip is 36 to 50 inches. Sew down the centre of outside face a tape. Length when pleated is length of boy's collar with tape over to tie. Colours: White, blue, green, or yellow. Pleated this way of stiff material, the ruff stands up as a Clown's ruff should. Other material may be used. Stiff mosquito netting is very good. Cost about 25 cents.

CHAPTER VII

CLOWN WORK

CLOWN MAKE-UP. Here we have to consider where the clown is to work. In the big three-ring circuses the old-fashioned talking clown is unknown for the simple reason that he cannot be heard. A talking clown can only work in a one-ring circus or on a stage. There is, however, little he can do on the stage and his true field is in the old style sawdust ring. His jokes, his acts, and his costumes are designed for that, and there appear best.

For over twenty years Ricardo Bell was not only the best clown, he was the best known and most popular man in all Mexico. His make-up never varied: hair built up to a peak in front, face covered with white, mouth outlined with red. The costume was the conventional Pierrot, sometimes with an old coat or a plug hat, with a large ruff around the neck. He

had a noble great voice. He worked always in Spanish, and the mother-in-law, the train, the photographer and all the other old jokes produced a singular effect when you heard them so told. After hearing the same jokes for eight or nine years—each season, I asked him once why he did not give us something new. He said because the people wanted the old stuff—especially the gallery—and were not content unless they got it. So every year at the same season when the show came to Yucatan, he used each of the forty odd little acts, with the same jokes—the same points made in the same way, to the entire satisfaction of everybody. A great man Bell,—the greatest in his line I have seen. When he opened his mouth there was intense silence in the audience—when he stopped came a roar like the waves of the sea, waves of happy laughter; and so for eight or ten weeks, working ten times each week, and generally going on twice at each performance. A man of talent, he understood that to get the effect sought a clown has to laboriously perfect every little detail of voice, word, gesture and costume. Poorly applied

make-up is worse than none for a clown. To apply the red lines properly requires plenty of study and is generally beyond the amateur. For a boy, I prefer the Pierrot costume—wide and baggy. The hair built up to a peak in front with pomatum, and an old cutaway coat. But look out that it is either too big or too little. A plug hat is useful, but it also requires much study. It must be “foolish—not too foolish but just foolish enough.” This saying applies to all clown costumes and make-up.

The make-up intended for a circus tent is a bit too coarse for a gym or hall. Putting dabs of red in many places on the face gives a poor effect. I have always found that the make-up of one heavy red spot about the size of a dollar is best unless the work is done behind strong footlights, in which case a little tint all over the cheeks looks well.

As it is difficult to decide all these points without experience a mature friend with an artistic eye is invaluable.

I have seen boys delightfully costumed and made up as clowns; but I have never seen it

done by the boys themselves. Often they appear simply silly—not clown-foolish.

A grown-up clown cannot appear charming and never tries to; but a boy or girl may use the advantage of youth to take the place of the experience of professionals. With this advantage, no elaborate make-up is necessary. A pretty girl of say sixteen makes a specially delightful clown. Grotesque feet and hands amount to little, and require great experience in their use. A simple funny make-up is all that is necessary; and the rest of the battle is drill, drill and more drill so that the jokes and points run smoothly.

It is best to bar the slap stick. I have seen four boy clowns working in a Y. M. C. A. show who simply could not leave the slapstick alone they thought it so funny. Result, a bored audience. But any one who undertakes to be a clown must prepare for endless tedious practise, and here again the mature friend with artistic eye is invaluable—one who will attend many rehearsals and say "That does not go well," "Too long," "Too short," "Too slow," "Too fast," "Speak louder," "More

action," "Too wooden," "Rotten." This is the sort of comment that results in a performance in which every point you make will be rewarded by a roar of laughter.

Talking clowns, as a rule, work in twos; or if there is only one the ring master has to learn the dialogue and help him.

A clown should know enough simple tumbling to do a roll, a dive, and a headstand. If he can walk on his hands so much the better. If he learns the roll and dive—funny falls are easy.

All circus and minstrel jokes are built the same way—a preliminary part to get the attention of the audience, and then the point. The principal clown delivers the point and must speak it clearly and not too fast so that it "gets over," as they say. If both clowns are of the same rank they take the point in turn.

If there is one clown and he has an assistant or "feeder" the clown takes all the points. The other work consists of little acts such as "The Hotel" described in Chapter IV. In Chapter X there are printed a string of old time jokes most of which will do in the ring.

Local jokes can be made up and tried out. If they do not succeed, cut them out at once.

If the clown can play a violin, cornet or banjo, or sing, it is an effective change to do a bit of music, especially for an encore.

As I have said, where the big 3-ring circuses exist talking clowns are no longer known; so the present generation of boys and girls, when they try clown work, are apt to do it in pantomime and for the most part fail. At the best they amuse only the children. In any ordinary Gym or one-ring tent a talking clown is better and easier to do.

The explanation of this is that untrained boys cannot imitate well crack professionals. For that, years of training are needed; but in talking clown work youth and inexperience help rather than hinder. In pantomime work they are no help at all.

THE READER

A table and chair beside it are placed on the mat or sawdust. On the table is a newspaper, three crackers and a small-boy's air gun.

First clown enters with a foolish grin and

funny business—not too much. Finally sits down on chair resting one arm on table, becoming absorbed in reading the paper. Second clown enters—funny business—a little—tiptoes up behind first clown and gently pulls out chair. First clown remains unmoved. Then No. 2 rubs his head and pulls away table. No 1 remains unmoved absorbed in paper, so disgusted No. 2 gives him a shove. Both do a back roll, paper and all. Business of grinning at each other.

CHAIR ACT. No. 2 puts the chair at edge of the mat. Bends forward and rolls over the floor. Without looking back he back rolls up on to the chair. He is so satisfied with this feat that he repeats it. While he is standing grinning with his back to the chair, No. 1 tiptoes up, moves the chair and sits down on it, No. 2 rolls back, sits down and of course has a funny fall. Each has played a trick on the other. Both have to know how to do the back and front roll and funny falls. The mat is used so the falls are on it.

TRICK RIFLE SHOT. No. 1 takes position with air gun and a small mirror. No. 2 holds



33. Fishface discovers Koko reading.



34. Fishface pulls the chair away to give him a fall.



35. Nothing happens so he pulls away the table.



36. But to make him fall at last he has to shove him over.



37. Fishface amuses himself rolling from the chair across the floor and back. The second time Koko pulls away the chair.



38. So Fishface gets a fall.



39. And Koko triumphs.

CLOWN ACT WITH CHAIR

a cracker in his fingers. Both do funny business. No. 1 aims, makes a noise, and No. 2 crushes cracker in his fingers. This trick would be better with dialogue; and as in all clown work, make the points clear and do not overdo it.

It is customary for two clowns working together to assume stage names. The two boys in the illustrations took the long used names of Koko and Fishface. The acts given in these photos with two spoken jokes run about eight minutes. One or two more jokes could be used and the encore will then bring it to ten or twelve minutes, which is long enough. Or, if desired, it can be split up into three short entries, an entry meaning an appearance before an audience. This is distinct clown work by itself either with or without dialogue. Clowns may also be used to advantage to help out an acrobatic act while the acrobats are resting in the familiar way of the bareback rider and the clown. The act in the illustrations may be given on a stage or in the ring; begins with "The Reader" (no dialogue) next the chair (with or without dialogue) then two

or three spoken jokes and last "Hypnotism" (with or without dialogue).

The Dialogue for "Hypnotism" runs much this way. Clowns generally prefer to make up their own dialogue.

KOKO.—Did you know that I am a hypnotist?

FISHFACE. I did not.

KOKO. (Illustration 40.) Come on and I'll show you.

[*Drags him forward.*]

Illus. 41. [*To the audience.*] See how he's going under the influence.

Illus. 42. KOKO. Now he is hypnotised. I can do anything I like with him. I'll stand him on his head.

Illus. 43. [*More business and talk.*]

Illus. 44. KOKO *puts* FISHFACE *back on his feet.* [*To the audience.*] Observe the perfect control.

[*Slaps his face.*]

KOKO. Perfect control. Yes, sir. Perfect control. [*Slaps FISHFACE again.*]

[*This is the point. The return slap of*



40



41



42



43

HYPNOTISM



47. Director E. C. Ostlin and a Tumbling Class in a New York City Gymnasium.

Koko by Fishface must be quick and make a great noise.]

FISHFACE. [*Loudly.*] (Illustration 45.)
You said it. [*Slaps Koko. Both do a backroll and grin.*]

If an encore is won, "The Serenade" is given, of one or two pretty sentimental songs.

Koko must have learned to do a backroll, the pantomime work and his side of the jokes. In the songs he sings a second part. Koko is the No. 1 clown, although in this act the work is quite evenly divided between No. 1 and No. 2 clown.

Fishface has to do a backroll and stand on his head; then do the pantomime work and dialogue and sing soprano in the two songs.

The jokes may be chosen from the list given in Chapter X.

Koko leads off with the "Boiled Egg" joke. The club is used as a guitar.

CHAPTER VIII

FAKE ELEPHANT. FAKE LION ACT. THRILLERS

A practical way of improving a programme is to use a fake elephant. With the aid of Baby Jumbo you can make a most attractive act for the clown. But the effect largely depends upon the way Jumbo is built. If the proportions are correct, that is if they are natural, the illusion will be impressive.

The design here given is for an elephant 6' 4" to 6' 6" high, depending on the height of the boys in the front and hind legs and is drawn from photographs and information, kindly given at the Museum of Natural History, New York. Taking leg boys about 5' 6" in height, then Jumbo will be a little over 6' 4" and the other proportions are correct.

ELEPHANT HOOK

The elephant is an animal possessing great strength. If he gets away from you he can

easily do much damage. Therefore you need for Baby Jumbo an elephant hook with which to control him. One may be made for twenty-five to fifty cents like this (illustration 28). Fix a place behind the ear for the clown to hook it in when leading him on.

Having a hook to control him we will proceed to build the elephant.

Head 21" x 14" extreme width, x 12"	
Backward slope from top of head to point where trunk begins to be attached	2"
Height over all	6' 4"
Length over all	6' 4"
Length on back from forehead	6'
Extreme thickness of elephant	23"
Length of trunk, about	5'
Length of ear	2'
Width of ear	1' 6"
Foreleg, floor to stomach	2'
Back leg, floor to stomach	2' 3"
Length of tail	3'
Backbone	4'
Forehead to end of backbone.....	2'
Length of stomach between legs.....	3'
Length of neck	1'
End of backbone down to tail slope	2"
Diameter of feet, about	12"

The following are the specifications from the drawings:

- Backbone. One piece wood..... 4' x 3" x 2" thick
 Neck and insertion in skull. One
 piece wood 2' x 2" x 1½"
 Face of skull. One piece wood.... 21" x 14" x 1"
 Two sidepieces of skull..... 12" x 1" x shaped
 Top of skull. One piece to size.
 Two iron frames to bolt to backbone, to rest on shoulders of leg-boys, padded at the shoulder ends and strapped around the chest.
 One spring 12" x 2½" wide x ⅛" thick, bored with four ¼" bolt holes.
 Ribs to suit.
 Two pairs of old rubber or leather boots, large size, to take boy's foot in sneaker.
 Two buttons for eyes.
 Cotton cloth, say 10 yards, single width, and cotton wool or excelsior for stuffing.
 5 ft. piece of old rubber hose.
 Dark grey drugget cloth for skin, say 10 yards, single width.
 Cost of elephant inside of \$15.

Assembling all the materials, bolt the iron frames to the backbone in the right position and secure all this on a couple of saw-horses while building. The head—Trim out the head on the sides between the cheekbones and the forehead. It is this hollowing of the outline of the face that largely gives the effect of age and pathos to an elephant's face. Shape the side pieces and nail to the face piece.

Nail on top of the head. Nail, or screw strongly into the head the neck piece, letting twelve inches project for the neck. Now tack on cotton cloth, stuffing it to give the rounded protuberances of the forehead and the beginning of the trunk. Build in the eyes with large appropriate buttons (artificial eyes cost too much) surrounded with a glistening white space made of white kid from an old glove. The shape of the eyes will be fixed when you put on the skin and eyelids of grey cloth. Only the upper eyelid moves as the lower eyelid of an elephant is immobile against the bone. Mould the trunk and carry down the cotton cloth so as to cover the rubber hose. Fasten in the hose so that the loose end shall be about one inch above the ground when the head is level; then stuff around to proper shape, and cover neatly with cotton cloth. With four bolts fasten the spring on top of the neck and backbone. Then you can unbolt the head from inside if you wish to crate the elephant. The spring is to give the characteristic up and down swing of the head when the front boy pushes it up and down with a stick.

If the spring is too flexible insert a pad of rubber between end of backbone and neckbone. This produces a more dignified motion. The rubber hose in the trunk should project into the neck about a foot, so that the front boy may blow through it and use it to move the trunk around. With swaying of the trunk and the up and down motion of the head, you can imitate the restless movement of an elephant chained in his stall. Also you can blow a piece of paper around the floor. Fasten a fine piece of gut to the end of the trunk and bring it up through the mouth. By pulling on this the elephant will appear to put his trunk in his mouth, especially if a wire hook be hidden in the end of the trunk, which will catch and carry up to the mouth some wisps of hay.

Bend and fasten to the backbone say nine ribs on a side, although he can get along with less, shaping them up conveniently.

Cover and stuff out neck, body and legs.

LEGS. Take two pairs of large old boots, stuff around and cover to elephant shape. In doing this, the boys who are to be front-legs

and back-legs must put on the shoulder supports and get into the boots.

Then measurements may be made and a frame arranged to hold up the supports when boys are not inside. Shape and stuff the tail. Make and stuff the ears, fastening so that they fall back flat against the head. Insert into each ear a stick projecting inside the head, so arranged that a string carried back to the hind-legs boy enables him to flap forward either or both ears. A similar stick in the tail enables him to swing that sideways.

Another pair of strings attached to the upper eyelid enables the hind-legs boy to wink the eyes. Front-legs boy manages head and trunk. Hind-legs ears, tail and eyelids. Baby Jumbo can dance, sit down (hind-legs sits down) walk, swing his head up and down, swing his trunk sideways and all around, blow a piece of paper on the floor, put hay in his mouth, wag his ears, and wink his eyes.

When all is fastened and properly stuffed, cover with this cheap blue grey drugget. In some places it may be tacked on, in others sewed and in others glued. Try to make join-

ings where wrinkles naturally should be and pinch the cloth up a bit or paint wrinkles over seams. Shape the eyelids properly, put small wires in the edges and fasten the upper eyelid with elastic, arranging the strings to wink them.

Fasten around the right foreleg an iron ring (polished by much use) to which Jumbo's chain is attached when he is in his stall.

Put on enough ribs and pad them so your elephant will not seem too starved and perhaps get the S. F. T. P. C. T. A. after you.

The cloth skin must be perfectly smooth over the head but naturally wrinkled in the proper places. A hole along the bottom of the belly admits the boys and can be buttoned up.

A tuft of coarse black hair at the end of the tail and little patches gummed on the cloth and a few eyelashes will improve baby Jumbo's looks.

A little grey and black paint about the head will also make baby Jumbo more beautiful. Do the best you can with the eyes, which are difficult. The ears are easy.

If you can get a naturalist to help you so

much the better. If not, get hold of a book about elephants, with pictures. The mouth need not open and can be shown with paint or cloth. It is surprising how natural Jumbo will seem when he makes his bow if your dimensions of the skeleton are correct. Two small holes in front and two aft enable the boys to see. As this elephant is designed to go through an ordinary door, he is a bit too thin. He can easily be made fatter by pushing out the ribs.

Jumbo should be exhibited by the clown—if there is one. If not by some one in evening dress. He can work on the stage or better in the ring. The first part of Jumbo's act should be as serious as if he were real, and the boys should try to make his movements perfectly natural.

Later on he can do foolish and impossible things. For example: first part. Seesaw on a plank, sit on a chair. Second, disobey the trainer. Walk twice over the trainer lying down; second time, sit on him, etc. Jumbo dances. Hind legs keep on when front are commanded to stop, etc.

The elephant will be more durable if covered with light canvas instead of cotton before the skin cover is stretched on, and instead of grey blue drugget, blue denim may be used to cover him, but the colour will not be so correct. The true colour of an elephant is a dirty blue grey. If denim is used, rub it all over with dirt and then brush it off. That will tone down the blueness.

FAKE LION ACT. This must be given on the stage. Build as natural and strong looking a cage as you can, not less than six feet high inside. The door must work well with a great clatter. Three or four small boys each in as good an imitation of a lion skin and head as possible. The trainer should appear in evening costume or a uniform. He carries a big whip. (See Hagenback and Bostock books on training wild animals, in any public library.) This should be a short quick act.

Before the curtain rises have all the company roar like lions behind the stage. The orchestra begins incidental music, the curtain rises, the trainer bows magnificently and enters the cage with many precautions and much



48. Floor Roll No. 1



49. Floor Roll No. 2



50. Floor Roll No. 3



51. Floor Roll No. 4

Russak

After learning to roll on the mat this is the way to roll on a hard floor without a mat. The arms protect the neck and back.

The
Innocent
Child
Act.
Class
dives
through
on to
mat.



53

Same but
more
difficult
as hoop
is higher.



ADVANCED WORK

Boys in class like to give fine names to tricks. This was named "The Innocent Child" as the small boy with the hoop might get a swift kick if the diver is careless or mischievous and he is therefore placed with his back to the diver so he will not flinch. As a matter of course only practised divers are allowed to try it.

The spectacle of the small boy on the mat holding the hoop always makes the class laugh, the opportunity is clear and tempting. The low position is much easier than the high.

evident fear while the lions jump around and charge the bars. Trainer puts them through an act, makes as much funny business as he can, and slips out taking more precautions.

Two or three attendants behind the cage with long bars assist, to protect the trainer. Trainer bows (to applause if all is well done). Do not encore this act. If it goes very well, for an encore line up the lions on the stage holding their heads in their paws and bowing their natural heads with pleased grins on their faces, the trainer posing with a proud air in the centre.

Run the curtain up and down quickly once or twice.

There are more fake animal acts practical but space fails to describe them.

FAKE THRILLERS are sensational acts, or rather imitations of sensational acts, for the very sufficient reason that amateurs are not permitted to take big risks and real thrillers invariably are risky—that is what gives the thrill.

Example: THE BOY SHOT OUT OF A CANNON. Prepare what looks like a cannon out

of painted canvas and a wooden frame, surround this with a low canvas screen. High up in the roof of the Gym or tent is a platform, screened by a curtain. With much ceremony and an elaborate speech the boy is put head first into the cannon, then business of pointing and levelling it goes on while the boy crawls out of the cannon and runs around outside, getting up behind the curtain on the little platform.

As soon as he is in position a light charge making much smoke and noise is fired off from the cannon and the boy instantly appears from behind the curtain or better between the two curtains. If all this is done smartly, the trick will not be at once discovered by many in the audience.

When I saw it done in Brooklyn, however, the details were not well managed. You could see the boy's feet while he was waiting for the cannon to go off, as the curtains were too short, so there was no illusion except for pretty small children.

CHAPTER IX

TRAINING ANIMALS

You are not likely to attempt to train wild animals. They are always dangerous and require too much time. The same is true of elephants, and seals are hard to get and harder to take care of. The amateur is reduced to horses, pigs, geese, cats, and dogs.

The horse is the most stupid of all domesticated animals, perhaps, and has an unreliable memory. I recall Roland the Great. This horse had been on the stage for six years. One day the owner of Roland, much excited, came to see me.

“What you t’ink,” he said; “that fool horse has forgotten his act, and we’re on the bill tomorrow night.” Which meant that Roland the Great had mixed up the signals.

It appeared that the Act had just arrived in Yucatan and had been at sea for six days dur-

ing which, naturally, there was no opportunity to rehearse.

“What will you do?”

“Do! I rehearse all day to-morrow and see if that fool horse can remember his act.” He went off gloomily, talking to himself, and it looked like a bad time for Roland.

Now the signals taught to an educated horse must be so slight as not to be seen by the audience.

I later learned that Roland had to remember only three signals, one to paw his feet, one to swing his head up and down, which meant “yes,” and the third to swing his head sideways; that meant “no.” The pawing of the foot was for counting. He was a beautiful white horse, too stupid to be afraid of an audience. The professor must have enlightened him, for the next night I saw him at the circus, and he made only two or three mistakes. Of course, he was immensely advertised as a wonderful “Educated Horse.”

Cats are difficult and unreliable. I am told there are only two good cat acts to-day in the United States.

The amateur will probably choose a dog. In arranging an act with a dog in it he is taught to do certain things, and the rest the trainer does. For instance, if there is dialogue introduced, you give him a signal, and he barks, and you talk so that his bark is an answer, so. "Do you want to dive for the ladies, Billy?" Signal. Billy barks. "Come on then." Holds a hoop out.

You fire a gun at him. He falls down and pretends to be dead, and so on.

THE RABBIT HUNT. Mr. Phil Daly, one of the Barnum and Bailey clowns, in 1915 had two dogs who did this. Each dog wore a rabbit head over his own, fastened around the neck, and with holes to see through. The clown was made up as a hunter. The two dogs trotted a little way behind him. When he turned and fired at the supposed rabbits both dogs lay down and played dead. As soon as he went on, they jumped up and followed him. The rabbit heads are made of cloth painted, and have large upstanding ears. The effect is very good, but depends upon the

dog dropping dead and getting up again at the right moment.

If you can train three or four dogs, it is easy to make an act for the stage. A fire company, etc.

Birds are all difficult for lack of intelligence, except the sulphur-crested cockatoo. They are difficult also on account of liability to illness. Pigs are hard to train because they are so obstinate. Geese have very little intelligence.

Monkeys also suffer much from illness and are very unsteady. To train an ape is an endless job, besides which they bite badly.

To teach a dog to play dead until he gets his signal is not so very difficult, if you are patient and practise steadily every day; or to teach him to sit up and beg, to stand on his head, to walk on his hind or front legs, to jump over something or through hoops, and do the high jump. Your dog must not be too old and must not be overfed. It is not necessary to whip him, unless he is sulky and will not obey. When he understands he will almost always try to do what you want him to do. But it is

necessary to reward him, with caresses and praises and a lump of sugar or something he likes. Regular everyday lessons are the thing, and the more he learns, the faster he will learn.

A dog is very useful in building up a clown act or a tumbling act, as explained in the act called "The Sanreyes."

I would suggest for amateur work the following training. Bring the dog to the practise place and teach him to sit at one side or on a chair until called out to work. This is for him the same as the discipline for boys and girls of which I have said so much. If he leaves his place without being called, scold him; but never hit him. When practise is over reward him. He should sit up all the time, and not lie down.

As soon as he understands and does this properly begin to teach him, trying only one thing at a time, and not attempting another until he has learned the first. First, the roll: teach this just as you would to a boy, explaining kindly, bending his head and front legs and rolling him over. Patiently giving lesson after lesson, some day he will get the idea

and do it himself. Form in his case is of no importance, so as soon as he gets a roll over at the signal, nothing more is required.

Then teach him to stand on his head and front legs; next, to walk on his hind or front legs. Here, you must hold him up all the time. Do not forget to praise him and reward him with sugar or something else the first few times he does well. Next, or before the last trick, teach him to sit balanced on your head, to jump on your back and walk up to your head. A more difficult thing is to teach him to do a back air turn. In this it is necessary to use a small mechanic fitted to him and strapped around the chest. Never let him get bumped. Tell him to jump; and when he jumps, throw him over, precisely as you would help a boy. All of these foregoing tricks are for a small dog about the size of a fox terrier.

A larger dog can learn to do the roll, hoop diving, and high jumping. In hoop diving it is unnecessary to teach him to do a roll after diving through the hoop. Give him one hoop, then two, and lastly three held a little apart. In the jumping, of course, he begins

on a low jump; then takes a higher and so on to his top point, landing always on a mat.

If the act with the dog follows on the programme after the class diving, the hoop diving by the dog will be better appreciated by an audience. If the dog is taught to go first through an empty hoop or two and then breaks a paper covered hoop he is sure of applause.

All of these acts described can be done by a fox terrier so that if there is any choice this is the best kind of dog to select. Even when the dog has learned only two tricks he can be used in a typical act like "The Sanreyes," provided he has learned his discipline and cues first. After he has learned to take his place and obey his cues the order of teaching the tricks and the tricks taught may be varied according to the need of the proposed act. It is the discipline of the dog that is essential. After that is obtained with patience any needed trick may be taught. The less punishment and scolding the better. A dog in good health is almost invariably willing to practise and learn and it should not be forgotten that before an audience, just as boys and girls, he

is apt to be excited. If several dogs are working together, again like boys and girls they become jealous and quarrelsome. It is uncertain whether they understand applause from an audience; but it is perfectly clear that a good performer knows his cues and is wildly anxious to do his trick well. The dog and the elephant, once they have learned an act, never forget it. Indeed it is difficult to get an elephant to change the order of tricks and cut one out. With this done, they are apt to refuse to go on, so that no one thinks of shortening or lengthening an elephant act unexpectedly. Both elephant and dog at times will practise their tricks alone.

But you can rely on Baby Jumbo described in Chapter VIII after he has been rehearsed two or three times; he will do his act correctly whenever desired.

CHAPTER X

THE OLD-FASHIONED MINSTREL SHOW

The old-fashioned negro minstrel show was a delightful entertainment. Have the moving pictures killed it or is it that the talented artists find better paid employment elsewhere? I wonder. Certainly the combination of lovely music and good old time-tested jokes made many people happy.

A minstrel show is impossible unless you have the voices. Songs poorly sung have no value. It also requires a lot of practise.

If the talent is available, a minstrel show may be used alone or as a short act on the stage or an afterpart. It is not suitable for the circus ring. This is a sample programme for a show about two hours long, but of course the songs must depend on what the company can sing.

ALL STAR MINSTRELS

FIRST PART

- OPENING CHORUS. "Swanee River." *Entire Company.*
 Jokes by end man.
- SONG. "Mary, you're a big girl now." *John Smith.*
 Jokes by end man.
- SONG. "Mandy, how do you do." *Harry Jones.*
 Conundrums by end man.
- SONG. "Garden of Roses." *Quartette.*
 Jokes by end man.
- SONG. "Put on your old grey bonnet." *Wm. Brown.*
 Jokes by end man.
- SONG. "Sometime, Somewhere." *John Smith.*
 Conundrums by end man.
- SONG. "Sugar Moon." *Harry Jones.*
 Jokes by end man.
- FINALE. *Entire Company.*
-

SECOND PART

- MONOLOGUE or STUMP speech. *John Smith.*
- SKETCH. "Black Magic." *Smith and Jones.*
- DANCING, BANJO or guitar specialty. *Harry Brown.*
- AFTER-PIECE. "Captain Swell."

The old-fashioned negro minstrel costume is rather elaborate. The quartette, or singers, should wear full evening dress suits with white waistcoats, black ties, and standing collars, white gloves, and boutonniere, and black dress wigs instead of the common wigs. The end

men should wear fancy coloured ties and costumes, comic wigs,—in fact anything to make them look eccentric—the more burlesque the better. For boys, all wigs may be omitted.

In the matter of making up the face, use only the best prepared burnt cork, which can be obtained from any dealer in theatrical face-preparations or can be made by burning and charring corks. Moisten the hands with water and take a small quantity of the cork, rubbing it in the palm of your hands until it becomes a thin paste, then apply to the skin; when it dries, brush the surface gently with some soft substance. Another and more economical way, if there are several to be made up, is to get a couple of small paint brushes and, after mixing your burnt cork in a dish with water until it is about as thick as cream, have two men paint the faces of the others, and in this way save a lot of time. Never mix the burnt cork with anything but water. If you wish to represent an old darkey, use white chalk or grease paint under the eyes and for the wrinkles, and iron grey hair for the eyebrows and beard. Be sure and have the

burnt cork even around the mouth and eyes. If you wish to have the lips a deeper red, or larger for the end men, use carmine grease paint. Running it down produces a surly expression.

For getting the cork off the face, I do not advise the use of grease or cold cream of any kind, as it washes off perfectly well with the aid of plenty of soap and water. Get a good lather and use a sponge.

In preparing a show for public entertainment there are several very important details to bear in mind. It is necessary to impress upon those who are to take part the absolute importance of being on time at the rehearsals, for the late ones cause uneasiness and impatience that greatly interferes with the show.

Select some member to act as stage-manager, with whom must rest all power behind the curtain. It should be his duty to regulate the hours of rehearsals, to arrange for the proper "settings" of the stage, to make up the order of the programme, to settle any little misunderstanding that may arise as he may best consider for the general interest of the per-

formance, and his orders should go in every detail of matters concerning the stage.

Two or three dress rehearsals are necessary to insure a perfect performance, when every one taking part should dress for each character they are to assume and make themselves up precisely as they intend to do at the regular performance so that any defects, if they exist, may be corrected. The entire programme ought to be given from the ringing up and the going down of the curtain with the same care in every detail as at the performance. After the rehearsal it is well to correct the faults immediately, while they are fresh in the minds of the actors.

Arrange your circle of chairs, placing the interlocutor in the middle. Have the second row of chairs on a staging high enough so that those sitting on them can rest their feet on the rounds of the chairs in the first row, and the third row in the same manner.

When it has been decided to have a minstrel show, if you do not have a professional coach get a good musician or piano player to pull your company together. Sing a few practise

songs so as to sort out the voices. Pick out the end men, and if you decide to have a quartette, or even a double quartette, have them practise their "turns" or songs together in addition to the regular rehearsals; they cannot do too much rehearsing, for the end men, especially, should work together like clock work. If you have six end men, four of them will no doubt be good singers; the others can get along all right by talking the songs, this often being found very effective. If you want to make a hit with an amateur show, make it short and run it like lightning.

Minstrel shows are one of the most popular forms of amusements and give a better chance for members of a club, lodge or college to present their talent before the public than anything else; and a great variety of settings can be used and made either simple or elaborate. For instance if you do not care for the circle, you can have the stage arranged as the deck of a boat or as a southern plantation, or as a "roof garden." If you have military or scout uniforms, a "camp scene" is very effective, also

a "banquet scene" with the company all sitting around the table.

The end men should be selected with the greatest care, as the success of the show depends largely on them. The jokes should be practised over and over again, every one getting thoroughly used to them and the manner of telling them, so that when you face the audience you will not lose your self-control. Always appear amused, and have a good time with the audience when telling the stories.

The interlocutor, or middle-man, is another most important part. He should be a boy or man with a dignified manner, taking plenty of time and working up the joke until it is ready for the point which the end man gives in his answer. He should have the entire programme and "cues" for the jokes and songs on his fan or paper, as the responsibility of the show is on his shoulders.

The following jokes were *printed* fifty years ago. For how many generations they have amused people—no man knows. They

survive in the circus ring, I suppose, because the humour is elemental. Good old enduring jokes, they will be found useful and in the ring or on the stage are serviceable where really finer, fresher wit would not do at all. They may be used for negro minstrel work or for clown work in the ring.

This one used before the rider jumps through the paper covered hoop may be changed, if a clown works with a tumbling class, to use with hoop diving.

NED.—What is he going to do with the balloon?

MASTER.—Jump through it.

NED.—What, horse and all?

MASTER.—No, you blockhead, the rider.

NED.—Without bursting the paper?

MASTER.—Certainly; he will have to burst the paper in order to jump through it.

NED.—I can jump through it without bursting the paper.

MASTER.—Impossible, sir.

NED.—I'll bet you five dollars.

MASTER.—Done, I will take the bet.

NED.—All right. Hold up the balloon.

(Master turns his back to the clown and holds up the balloon.) Are you all ready?

MASTER.—Yes, sir.

NED.—(Catches boy from among the audience, throws him through the balloon, then jumps through himself.) There, sir, I won the bet; I did not burst the paper. (Boy runs out of ring, very much frightened.)

THE MEN WE WANT

NED.—The horse has stopped. I suppose there is more work for me?

MASTER.—Yes, sir, see what the rider wants.

NED.—There are a great many things wanted nowadays. I saw, by this morning's papers, that Harry Gennett is wanted, not by the people to serve them in office, but by the sheriff, to serve the people in prison. What the people want is honest men in office to serve them.

God gives men! A time like this demands
 Strong minds, great hearts, true faith and
 steady hands;
 Men whom the lust of office does not kill,

Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy;
 Men who possess opinions and a will;
 Men who have honour; men who will not lie;
 Men who can stand against a demagogue
 And damn his treacherous flatteries without
 winking;

Tall men, sun-crowned, who live above the fog
 In public duty, and in private thinking;
 For while the rabble, with their thumb-worn
 creeds,

Their large professions and their little deeds,
 Mingle in selfish strife, lo! Freedom sleeps,
 Wrong rules the land, and waiting Justice
 weeps.

Why are young ladies like arrows?

Because they can't go off without a bow
 (beau), and are in a quiver till they get one.

Why is a pawnbroker like an inebriate?

Because he takes the pledge, but cannot al-
 ways keep it.

LOVE

NED.—Miraculous! wonderful! That lit-
 tle child is so handsome and talented that a
 person cannot help loving him.

MASTER—What is love?

NED.—Love is a small decoction of electric fluid, bound up in a woman's heart and dealt out in small quantities to suit purchasers. I take about a dime's worth twice a week. But of all the love affairs in the world, none can surpass the true love of a big boy for his mother. It is a love pure and honourable in the highest degree to both. I do not mean merely a dutiful affection—I mean a love that makes a boy gallant and courteous to his mother, saying to everybody, plainly, that he is fairly in love with her. Next to the love of her husband, nothing so crowns a woman's life with honour as this second love, this devotion of a son to her. I never yet knew a boy to turn out bad, who began by falling in love with his mother; but show me a son who does not love his mother and I will show you a boy that is fit for the gallows.

MASTER.—You seem to understand all about love.

NED.—I do, for I have been there.

MASTER.—And pray how did you feel?

NED.—I felt as though I was away up in the

clouds between two wheat cakes, and a lot of little angels were pouring molasses all over me.

MASTER.—Well, how do you feel when the young lady gives you the mitten?

NED.—Then you don't feel quite so good; you feel as though there was a lot of little devils up there licking the molasses all off again.

CONTENTMENT

MASTER.—Come, sir, stop that foolishness, and find contentment by assisting those gentlemen.

NED.—Find contentment? That is something that I have been hunting for for some time, and I found it at last. It's an imaginary place laid down on the map, but it has not been settled yet; and those reach it soonest who throw away their compass and go it blind.

When is a butterfly like a kiss?

When it alights on tulips.

What kind of money do ladies prefer?

Matri-money.

When should a tavern keeper visit an iron foundry?

When he wants a *bar made*.

Why is the letter U the gayest in the alphabet?

Because it is always in *fun*.

Why is Sunday the strongest?

Because all the others are *week-days*.

Yes, but it is often broken.

Why is a rich man like a dog's tail?

Because the rich man keeps a carriage and the dog's tail keeps a wagging (waggon).

How do you measure your lover's sincerity?

By his sighs.

What requires more philosophy than taking things as they come?

Parting with them as they go.

When was beef-steak the highest?

When the cow jumped over the moon.

Another one to be used with hoop diving is

WHOOPING COUGH.

NED.—Do you call this a hoop?

MASTER.—Yes, sir.

NED.—Did I have a thing like that in me when I had the whooping cough?

MASTER.—Nonsense, sir.

TWO NOAH JOKES

When was pork first introduced into the navy?

When Noah brought Ham into the ark.

What is the difference between Noah's Ark and Joan of Arc?

One was made of wood, the other was Maid of Orleans.

SPORTSMAN

NED.—You put me in mind of a nobby sportsman, with that whip in your hand.

MASTER.—How so?

NED.—Because when he goes a fishing he has a long pole with a string attached to it, and there is a fool at one end of it, and a worm at the other.

MASTER.—(Whips.) I am no fool, sir.

NED.—Then you must be the worm.

What is the difference between a hungry man and a glutton?

One longs to eat, and the other eats too long.

What plant is fatal to mice?

The *cat-nip*.

WANTED

A mile-post from the road to death.

A finger to fit the ring of a laugh.

A smile from the face of a clock.

A needle and thread to sew a patch on the pants of a tired dog.

A suit of clothes to fit a large body of water.

Some moss from the rock of a cradle.

A plank from the bridge of a man's nose.

Some yarn to knit a person's brow.

A nut from a thunderbolt.

A cure for a pane of glass.

A rafter from the roof of the mouth.

Some teeth from the jaws of death.

A crust from the roll of the ocean.

The chair in which the sun sets.

A fence made from the railing of a scolding wife.

An egg from the nest of thieves.

A horse to travel round the course of love.

A spark from the blazing eyes of a tigress.

A head to fit a wreath of smiles.

A wag from the tail of a dog.

A leg from a duck of a bonnet.

A pupil from the eye of a needle.

ANOTHER HOOP JOKE

SON OF A GUN

NED.—Master, do you know that I came very near being a soldier?

MASTER.—How so?

NED.—To-day a little boy called me a son of a gun, and the little fellow is right.

MASTER.—And why was he right?

NED.—Because I came in a direct line from a good old stock. Speaking of soldiering, are you a good shot?

MASTER.—I am.

NED.—Well, I will bet you five dollars that if I take this hoop and stand right here (standing on the bank of the ring), and you go over

to the opposite side of the ring, that you cannot walk up to me and put your finger into this hoop.

MASTER.—You will lose your money.

NED.—Will you bet?

MASTER.—Yes, sir, as I am certain to win. (Master takes his position, and walks toward Ned with his arm extended, pointing for the centre of the hoop.)

NED.—Hold up, you must close your eyes.

MASTER.—I did not make that bargain.

NED.—Well, I will give you a chance for your money. I will keep talking all the time, but you must keep your eyes closed.

MASTER.—All right. (Closes eyes and walks toward Ned.)

NED.—A little more to the right, now to the left, now you are all right; walk straight ahead. (Master walks up, puts his finger through the hoop into Ned's mouth. Ned bites his finger, makes hurried exit.)

FOOL

MASTER.—Come, get up on that pedestal, you fool.

NED.—How do you know that I am a fool?

MASTER.—I see it in your face.

NED.—Well, that's the first time that I knew that my face was a looking-glass.

When do ladies carry fire?

When they have taper fingers.

PET NAMES

NED.—Master, are you fond of pet names?

MASTER.—Yes, very.

NED.—I have utilised a few. Now, for instance, a printer's wife ought to be named Em; a sport's wife, Bet-ty; a lawyer's wife Sue; a teamster's wife, Carrie; a fisherman's wife, Net-ty; a shoemaker's wife, Peg-gy; a carpetman's wife, Mat-tie; an auctioneer's wife, Bid-dy; a chemist's wife, Ann Eliza; an engineer's wife, Bridg-it.

WANTED TO KNOW

If a man who turned a somersault (summer salt) was able to turn it fresh again?

If when a "man's brain is on fire," water can be used as an extinguisher?

If the individual who "murdered a tune" was ever brought to justice?

Whether there ever was an eclipse of the honeymoon?

YOUR CHOICE

NED.—If you had your choice, would you rather die, an Irishman or an American?

MASTER.—Being an American I would prefer dying an American.

NED.—There's where I differ with you. I would prefer to die a true son of the Emerald Isle.

MASTER.—Why so?

NED.—Because when an American dies he's buried and that's the last of him.

MASTER.—Very true.

NED.—But when an Irishman dies—

MASTER.—Well, sir, what then?

NED.—His friends always wake him.

BOILED EGG JOKE

NED.—Why, how do you do, Charley? Mr. Seamon is a smart young man—

MASTER.—Why do you call him a smart young man?

NED.—Because the other day he bought a lot of laying hens, and he thought he would try an experiment, so he gave them all boiling water.

MASTER.—What did he give them boiling water for?

NED.—To see if he could not make them lay boiled eggs.

“They will not recognise me in the other world,” said a Marshal of France on his deathbed, “it is so long a time since a Marshal of France has gone there with a head on his shoulders.” Marshal Saint-Geran, 1632.

That is a concise witty saying. Try to fit it for clown or minstrel use and it will be seen at once that it has not the right form and requires too much explanation. These old jokes, so banal to read, are given last because they have the right form and when the clown is working hard to get the whole audience laughing, produce the effect desired. It is not enough that part of an audience is

amused. When the curtain rings down you will be fortunate if you have earned such kindly words as these quaint old press notices written about the clown who used these jokes and on whom the curtain fell finally years ago.

“Mr. Ned Turner impersonated the part he had taken (jester to the ring) with a considerable degree of fidelity, avoiding a too common error among clowns—that of unnatural straining after effect—and acted upon the sensible presumption that the audience would be better pleased with a faithful representation of the character he had assumed, than with the self-conceived greatness and attractiveness of the actor. He was rewarded for his wit and sentiment with frequent outbursts of applause.—*Quincy, Ill., Evening Call.*

Mr. Ned Turner is a talented clown, and fully sustained the reputation that he has gained for himself throughout the West.—*Council Bluffs, Iowa, Nonpareil.*

Mr. Ned Turner is a gentleman who possesses sterling qualities, both as a man and a jester.—*Quincy, Ill., News.*

Among the special attractions, Mr. Ned

Turner, the jester, is still foremost. His ready and sharp wit, combined with the perfection of his art, have indeed stamped him as unapproachable.—*Charleston, S. C., Morning News.*

Ned Turner is the most gentlemanly jester in the equestrian profession. His jokes are gems of wit and wisdom, sense and nonsense.”
—*Chicago Journal.*

CHAPTER XI

COSTS AND CHARGES

A fifteen foot mat, or better two mats eight by three feet and about two inches thick, cost about fifteen dollars. A dozen hoops are needed, a table, two chairs, a small handwalking staircase, paper balloons, etc., say \$5 in all. A fake elephant will cost about \$15 to make. A clown's costume about 75 cents. Fifty cents' worth of make-up is enough for a show. Negro minstrel costumes can be calculated, according to one's plans. A good acrobatic costume for a class shown in the illustrations will cost a little less than \$3.50 apiece not counting the sneakers and it is foolish to buy expensive shoes and tights until one is really a good performer and knows how to take care of them. You can learn just as well in cheap things.

The mats generally will be indispensable; but for those who have a place to practise out

of doors, better than any mat is the following contrivance: Dig a shallow place two to three inches deep, twenty feet long and three feet wide. Fill this with sawdust or tan bark watered and pounded down—first sifting the bark or sawdust to remove from it bits of wood or stones.

Better still is a regular circus ring made in the same way with a parapet two feet high of sods, or built of boards covered with padded canvas. The diameter of the whole should be about 20 feet.

In calculating costs and charges for a show one must consider lights, decorations, costumes and make-up, rent, music, printing including advertising, tickets and programmes, license if one is needed, the expense of a good curtain for the stage and cost of chairs or benches. In a well managed show the business manager is chosen at the beginning outside of the company and has plenty to do to keep things straight and see that there is no loss. The cost of a curtain depends on the size, quality, etc. It must work easily without any noise either slowly or quickly accord-

ing to the need. The cost of tents can be learned from catalogues of tent makers who seem to be no longer in Persia but mostly in Kansas.

TO GIVE A SHOW WITHOUT ANY MONEY. Let us imagine a case in which an ambitious group of amateur artists has talent and no cash. This is apt to occur.

Perfect an organisation with a business manager and a Ring Manager who can get his orders obeyed. Then practise—practise, practise and practise some more. Work in a yard with a sawdust ring which you can make yourselves. Use anything for a costume. The indispensable articles are a good fitting pair of black sneakers for each artist. Sneakers can be purchased inside of a dollar apiece. Always buy black as they look well with any costume. There are plenty of ways, selling papers, blacking shoes, etc., to obtain these. If only four of the artists have time to earn money, that is enough. Before long there will be ten or twelve dollars in the treasury to get the sneakers and the ring can be built on holidays. All the materials for a good prac-

tical clown costume can be purchased as described for seventy-five cents. Once the company is so well drilled that everything goes nicely and a snappy little show can be given, it is possible to sell tickets, and money will roll in to buy handsome costumes, lights, mats and a tent. This plan involves more patience, brains and discipline. It will be harder to stick together but there will be lots more fun in it than if everything is made easy. Almost anywhere a group can obtain the use of a yard large enough, and a competent older person to advise and criticise. After that by continuing to earn money, and giving one or two five cent shows, they will be able to do the following:

1. Buy costumes for all the company.
2. Build a stage with a good curtain.
3. Build an elephant.
4. Train a dog.
5. Build a table and two chairs for a table and chair act. By the time this has been done, supposing that the Company has learned the ten elements of tumbling and one or two pantomimes or a minstrel part to end the show,

tickets may be sold at ten cents. Once the Treasury is in good shape, a tent and more ambitious decorations and lights are possible.

The main thing if you have no money and wish to have a circus of your own, is to get together a company who will work, save the money and stick together without fighting. Such a company can accomplish almost anything it sets out to do.

Moreover everybody likes to help those who help themselves.

It will surprise such a company of boys or girls how many people will help them once it is seen that they are really in earnest and working hard. Your elephant will cost one-half then, whereas my estimates are made from New York prices. For an instructor and critic the company must depend upon some good friend.

CHAPTER XII

SLEEPING OUT OF DOORS

Centuries ago it was found out that sleeping out of doors in summer is an excellent proceeding; it is now beginning to be understood that it is equally good for a growing boy to sleep out all the year. I subjoin an account, taken by permission, from *St. Nicholas*, of a Winter Camp at the Cloyne House School, Newport, Rhode Island, designed with the intention of making an attractive place for boys, and in accordance with a practical method for sleeping out all the winter.

I also quote a few interesting remarks by Prof. Leonard Hill, on the theory of ventilation, which best explains the undoubted benefits obtained in this Winter Camp.

This Winter Camp is now in use (1916) for the third year. The boys immensely prefer it to any dormitory, and it has been found that a boy who sleeps there never has a cold. As

what is commonly called a cold generally precedes illness and provides the conditions under which bacteria may flourish, it follows, and has been so found, that a boy or girl who never has a cold, is exempt from many forms of illness.

I suggested to Professor Hill that there is possibly an electrical effect on the sleepers in the winter camp, produced by the currents of moving air. He replied, "There is no need to evoke anything but rate of cooling and its stimulating effect produced by fresh moving air. Five-sixths of the metabolism of the human body, the food eaten and digested, frequency of circulation and digestion depend on the loss of body heat, that is, on the rate of cooling of the skin."

The two years' experience with this camp proves that its use, or the use of something like it, will largely head off epidemic diseases from boarding-school life. Before very long it will be understood that a headmaster, in whose school there are constantly cases of colds, grippe, catarrh, whooping cough, etc., what are thought to be the lighter ailments, is

exactly as incompetent as he would be considered to-day if smallpox, yellow fever, malarial fever are chronic in that school.

It so happened that, on account of the political troubles in Mexico, the Americans in Yucatan found it necessary in 1914 to leave that country and come north to the United States. Then I had an opportunity to visit the Cloyne School. A patrol of Boy Scouts, established in the school, had a tent on the grounds. They slept there, and many evenings we cooked over an open fire and told stories until time for lights out. The boys found it so much fun to "sleep out" that they asked me to design and build a winter camp for them.

We spent ten weeks planning and building the camp so that it would fit in with the routine of the school life. It had to be near the dormitory building that no time might be lost out of the few free moments between study hour and bedtime. Fortunately, we were able to take a place in the grounds among trees and only a hundred feet from the main building. It was decided to construct an old-



54. Slumgullion

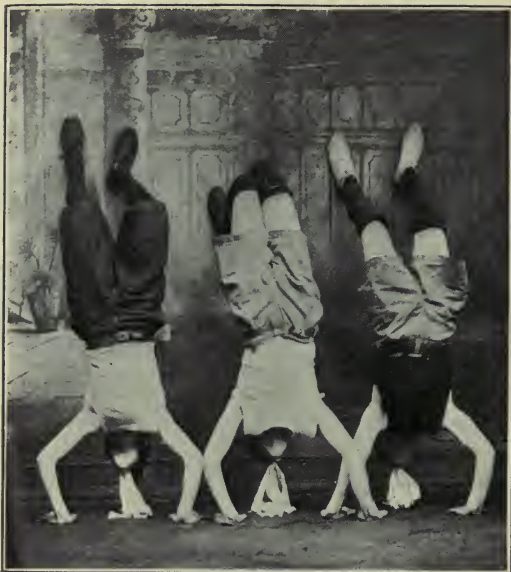


55. Time to Get Up.



56. THE WINTER CAMP
December, 1914

O. W. H.



57

Put a handkerchief on the floor in front of each. All together stand on their hands with feet against the

58

wall. Bending the arms each picks up handkerchief with his teeth, returns to standing position and salutes.



ADVANCED WORK
The Handkerchief Pick-Up

fashioned log fort of the days of the Indian Wars. As there was already a large play-hut with two fireplaces next to the site of the fort, by extending the stockade sufficiently a covered passageway would join the play-hut to the fort.

Around the camp we built a log stockade fifty feet long by thirty wide. This used up over two hundred logs ten or more feet long, the bark being left on the logs, pointed at the top and set two feet in the ground. The stockade was well braced on the inside and solidly fastened by logs spiked on lengthwise. Trees are scarce in Rhode Island—it is said they were nearly all cut off for firewood during the occupation by the French soldiers years ago—so it was not easy to get logs of good size, and the white birch that was used had to be brought from the North.

At the southwest corner a blockhouse was built on top of the stockade to hold the brass saluting cannon belonging to the Scouts,—Patrol Number 5, Newport, Rhode Island, is their official name. Just behind the blockhouse is planted the flagstaff. A large gate in

the centre of the south wall opens on the path to the door of the school. Between this gate and the platform of the tent is placed a "Chocorua stove" and a stone fireplace. The gate is secured at night by a heavy birch bar laid in wooden forks.

To build a platform for the tent, we dragged inside the stockade huge logs thirty feet in length. These were blocked up three feet above the ground and then a cave—with a very secret entrance—was dug underneath the logs. Across the logs was nailed a platform, 20 x 30 feet, and all around it on three sides wooden bunks were built. The bunks had a wide board at the back, so that the wind could not strike the sleeper, and little cross-boards to separate the bunks from each other. But first we built a trussed frame of birch poles to carry the tent. Two poles twenty-five feet long, of heavy $2\frac{1}{2}$ inch birch, were planted in the bottom of the cave. They came 17 feet above the floor, and were strongly braced to the logs and flooring. The ends of the ridge-pole were nailed on top of these, then the tent and fly were put in place. Both

tent and fly had half-inch iron rings worked into them opposite each end of the ridge-pole, and through these a six-inch iron bolt was driven down through each end of the ridge-pole into the posts. Each one of these bolts ended at the top in an iron ring.

From each iron ring, and outside of the fly, we carried two wire-rope guys to heavy logs on opposite sides of the stockade. Inside we lashed and spiked between them two birch cross-braces four feet apart and one diagonal brace from one upright pole to the other. The result of this plan was a strong flexible wooden truss to hold the heavy tent and fly, giving a little to the wind when it blew hard.

Instead of the usual long guy-ropes, which pull and tear a tent when wet, birch racks were planted on each side of the tent, two feet from it and strongly braced into the ground. The short, two-foot guy-ropes were lashed to the racks when wet, with the result that, when dry, they slacked off a little, but not enough to be troublesome.

A tent so mounted requires no adjustment. This one stood the heavy gales and snow all

winter. It will need no further attention, and will stand any blow until the canvas rots. The sides can be looped up, or buttoned down to spikes driven into the platform logs. There is a door at each end of the tent, and the windward one is buttoned while the other is left open.

Electric lights were put in the hut, the blockhouse, and the tent, so arranged that all could be put out by one switch, except that in the tent. At night the flag was hauled down and the gate barred; then, when all hands were in their bunks, the last man had to turn out the light and the stories began.

It was fine, snugly tucked into a sleeping-bag, to hear the rain drum on the tent-fly—the wind blowing in the trees. Surrounded and protected by the heavy stockade and gate one felt so safe while the “Adventure of the Red Inn” was unfolded, or the ghostly step in the story came slowly across the floor, one—two—three. And the scared ones could easily crawl down into their sleeping-bags and cover their heads.

As the stockade ran up high enough and was

strongly braced, even a full gale did not disturb the sleeping-tent or the canvas on the racks.

The length of this tent-fly was forty feet—ten feet longer than the tent itself. This extra length of the fly formed a comfortable shelter, as the fire was built just at the edge, and benches were placed on each side. There one could cook in rainy weather with no inconvenience.

If there were time he could broil a chicken, or bake potatoes, or make clam soup while the Scout Boys were in the evening study hour. As soon as that was over, they rushed to their alcoves and put on pajamas, boots, a bathrobe and cap. Then there would be a few minutes for "follow my leader," or supper, or a general scrimmage before "lights out" and stories. In the morning, if the master who was in charge at the time "had a heart," he would get up early and cook the stimulating "slumgullion."

It took only a couple of minutes to arrange a sleeping-bag and ten minutes was time enough in which to drink the hot slumgullion

prepared according to an ancient formula and with the skill which makes it so delicious. A blazing fire was fine in zero weather at half past six in the morning, and then came the wild rush to be in the dormitory at just seven o'clock; neither one minute before nor after.

The playhouse was found convenient on cold nights when it was too early to turn in, if there happened to be no study-hour, or when the school gave a dance. The stockade, tent, blockhouse, and hut made a charming effect illuminated by Japanese lanterns and the open fire.

Thus, while living a boarding-school life with all its necessary and tiresome details, there came some of the magic of camping out for the faithful four who had worked to build the camp. Gaul was none the less divided into three parts, X plus Y still exactly equalled just what it always did, but I think it was easier for the boys of the winter camp to learn these necessary facts because of their nightly contact with the great world of out of doors, their hours in the camp, and that fine sleep which you cannot get in a house. When the

thermometer is away down, when a gale is lashing the trees, and the air is full of flying snow, you are so very comfortable in a good sleeping-bag, and the voice of the story-teller fades away into the song of the gale, and sleep, and happy dreams.

CHAPTER XIII

FOR THE INSTRUCTOR

It appears best not to give too many exact or confining rules for this system of physical development. The importance of an intelligent instructor cannot be exaggerated and the printed word does not fully take the place. In capable hands this method of physical development will be found to remedy most of the defects of the methods now in use and capable hands should be left free.

If a boy or girl is clumsy, slouches along with the shoulders bent in, it is because the trunk muscles are not developed, or the nerves do not control them properly. Since the human body is more or less plastic all this may be corrected. A fakir by constantly holding an arm upright finally fixes it there permanently. In the shapable 12-16 period, by these easy graceful tumbling motions muscles may be developed and balance obtained with

a free upright carriage of the whole body.

Such a boy or girl becomes practically immune to the ordinary accidents of life. No trained tumbler ever breaks a leg by slipping on a side-walk or rolling in a coasting spill; for automatically the body takes care of itself in minor difficulties.

I repeat the words which begin Chapter II. Every one desires to be well, strong and graceful.

How much any one will sacrifice to obtain that desire is another matter. Very few can attain their wish fully without the assistance of a competent instructor. Granting that there is time and opportunity what shall the instructor do?

Treating boys and girls between the ages of 12 and 16 he finds by experience that calisthenics and drill do not go very far, and that time and opportunity are terribly lacking for the use of games—and by “opportunity” I mean to include the expensive plant necessary.

Games require space indoors and outdoors and much time to accomplish a satisfying all-round development. So the conscientious

teacher does the best he or she can and often wonders, I fancy, how much or how little is accomplished.

I think the plan advocated in this book will recommend itself to many because the plant required is a mat; or better two mats, eight feet by three, a little simple stuff, say in all \$20 worth, and any place at all to work in. The proper rig for a small boy practising football costs as much as that. Once broken in, two classes of eight each can be worked together for an hour a day, and that is enough five times a week to secure a very good all round development.

Best of all the stimulus is there, provided by the glamour of the circus and the stage. Given an occasional show—the pupil will practise steadily, without urging, under competent guidance. Can more be said for any game? It is rare indeed that so much can be said for the mechanical exercises. I have never seen it.

This method is not intended for professional acrobats nor for the glory of the same.

It is an attempt to build up a method simi-

lar to that which they use so successfully in dominating the human body. It permits a successful all round development between 12-16 prior to competitive athletics without the tedium of calisthenics and with a great economy of time spent. The instructor will find that he can accomplish more in an hour of this practise than he can in two hours of basket ball or other games.

As I have already explained, to use dangerous tricks for non-professional youths who cannot give a professional's time and patience to them, is absurd; and I eliminate absolutely all air-turns for boys and girls between 12 and 16. Consequently I think it is better if the instructor is unable to do air-turns.

There is no chance then of setting the student's ambition on something you do not want him to try. Moreover, a man cannot see his own form in tumbling. He does not really know how he appears. What is desired of an instructor is ability to hold the student when he first begins so that he will not be bruised, keep discipline so that he will not go on until he has mastered the first elements, and to

enforce constant drill and criticism of form until the class possesses that easy graceful motion which denotes perfect muscle control. He must understand the theory of this method so that he will aim for and obtain the desired exercise of the digestive tract, and, in a word, develop the class and not himself.

I have certainly never been able to qualify as an acrobat and I have planned this method in such a way that it can be taught by any intelligent man or woman of ordinary strength. Keeping always in mind the splendid boys and girls who have not access to elaborate equipments and specialist teachers in athletics, I would feel that it is no method at all if its perfect result cannot be obtained in any schoolroom where there is space for a fifteen-foot mat and a progressive teacher of ordinary good health.

When your boy or girl has learned these ten elements of simple tumbling and practises them steadily five times a week, one hour a day during term time, at sixteen that boy or girl will possess a well developed body, under almost perfect nerve control and a splen-

did digestion, given that he or she starts with a fair equipment. No more can be done by the best athletic instructor with the most expensive equipment.

By the discreet use of the glamour of the circus, tights, shows, etc., the pupil's interest may be maintained at white heat; and there is no need to be athlete or acrobat to do this.

Great private schools and academies have to invest many thousands of dollars to obtain a fine physical development. The reason—the main reason for doing so, for I leave out of consideration the desire to attract pupils by means of athletic success in extra-mural competition, is that the pupil's time is limited and his interest must be aroused. Every experienced teacher knows that you can go only a short distance with calisthenics, that it is vitally necessary to interest the pupil; and, using games to do so, it is necessary to take the games in their seasonal order. As the time is limited the whole number must be cared for in say three hours; therefore a large and expensive athletic plant is needed.

Hence for the vast majority of our boys and girls good football, ice-hockey, tennis, rowing, boxing, wrestling and basketball are impossible. What they get is too insufficient in quantity or quality to accomplish the best all-round development.

Such development can be obtained by the games if there is time and an expensive equipment, but the majority lack either one or the other.

This is the reason why the universal military systems do improve National physique. During army service, developing exercise, not the best kind but still developing, is possible for all the men but no Nation does this adequately for the 12-16 boy or girl. In a large number of the Public Schools calisthenics are pushed about as far as they can be, and excellent results are obtained. But contrast these with the achievement at say Groton, or any school which possesses an expensive plant, and it will be seen at once how inferior they are.

I submit then this plan to give the best development of all the body under the limita-

tions of time and equipment *accessible* to the vast majority of boys and girls, so that any one can take this book and proceed to instruct a class. I say any one, but I am not planning for acrobats or even very good athletes as teachers. They have their field now and a most valuable one it is. I do not wish to have a teacher who can do the difficult tricks and always risky (for a boy) air-turns for I wish the boy to regard these simple elements as sufficient, as indeed they are for him at his stage. In all practise I keep steadily in mind the even exercise of the whole body, the growth of nerve control and above all the exercise of the digestive tract. A quick roll ending in a No. 2 salute does this I think almost as effectually as a back flip. (Illustration 2.) Both are superior to any movement I know of in any game or any form of calisthenics. Slow rolls with a salute, quick rolls, the class chasing down the mat, in 2-High Falls, etc., there are innumerable ways of working in this motion. When back and front handsprings can be added, you attain constant and perfect exercise of the diges-

tive tract, and circulatory system while steadily developing muscular power and nerve control. The other combinations of elements give variety and the line method, placing the class in line and working in turn, prevents all chance of strain.

Every now and then some student brings out striking facts in regard to the effect of exercise on the organs during the growing period. Quite clear and interesting editorials are written by people who, knowing little about the matter but stirred by some sorrowful collapse in competitive athletics of a promising youth, lump it all together and charge it up to the Athletic Director.

What is the Director of Athletics to do? Here are some of the things he knows to be facts.

1. Desultory play has small effect on the physical development of boys, for a number of reasons of which I will cite one only. The many demands school life or a working life make on a boy leave him not over three hours a day and in that amount of time, left to himself, he accomplishes little.

2. You cannot employ mechanical exercises such as calisthenics or drill to produce the result you are after. They will help—that is all.

3. There is nothing left but competitive athletics at his disposal.

4. On the spiritual side of the boy, only by competitive athletics can he develop courage, loyalty and manliness, and combat weakening feminine influences.

I believe pretty much all men whose object is to attain the desirable results described by writers on the physical development of the boy would agree on these four points.

5. The danger of injury from competitive athletics is greatest between 12–16. Strains received then are the beginning of injuries to some organ which may or may not develop disastrously later on. This point is not yet generally recognised.

The Directors and the schools cannot help themselves—they have no other way, and it is clear the benefits of competitive athletics exceed the drawbacks and will be sought until a better way is found. Observe that in our

Government schools where mechanical exercises, drill, calisthenics can be pushed farther than anywhere else, competitive athletics are used because they give a result which cannot otherwise be obtained.

Now this is a singular thing. Men write at length about bees, minute points of law, the collection of half truths and misunderstandings called history, but of this acrobatic art, so difficult, since Tuccaro, I find only an incoherent foolish book by Hughes Le Roux and Garnier, and an excellent manual of feats by Professor Gwathmey. Yet its proficientes travel all over the world and what they do is interesting to millions.

Perhaps because they are absorbed in doing not talking about it and also perhaps because it is difficult to understand, and more difficult to give the patience and self-denial needed.

TUCCARO

Archange Tuccaro (Archangelo Tusquaro) was born about 1535 at Aquilai in Italy. He was therefore near 35 when he performed be-

fore the Court during the wedding festivities of Charles IX of France and a Princess of Austria, the high moment of Tuccaro's life. Charles highly approved and made him the King's Acrobat, taking him to Paris. This was a great and much appreciated honour. Whether the King did the right thing financially, history does not state; but we may infer this as Messire Archange appears to have gotten on very well through all the troublous times that followed, publishing his book of *Three Discourses* in 1599.

He also published a book of poems in 1602 and died not many years after, somewhere between 65 and 70 years old.

He proudly states that he was the King's instructor in the noble art of tumbling, but discreetly refrains from stating just what he did teach him. We may believe that it was not much, for all of Tuccaro's work is difficult and it is hardly credible that the King exercised the patience and self-denial needed for hard stunts.

Tuccaro takes high ground as to the nobility and value of his art. For four things are

needed by those who do difficult feats: courage, self-denial, patience, and complete control of this our earthly and heavy garment.

It is a singular popular delusion that acrobats die young on account of the physical demands upon them, overworked hearts, etc. Tuccaro is a case in point, exercising his skill up to sixty odd years. It is true that some die from accidents because of lack of care or more likely because of ambition, the desire to do something new. The perfect health of acrobats of itself would prove this popular conception untrue and the reason for the error is that audiences, not liking to see an elderly man or woman doing difficult acrobatic feats, seldom do see them. On the dramatic stage as time slides by, people take to older parts, but in acrobatic work there is no room for such. It is for those who have divine youth to do these impossible feats with a graceful smile. You do not wish to see Grandpa in a death-defying act; but his grandson full of the joy of life—that is another matter. Hence when make-up is no longer possible, there is nothing to do but retire and teach.

PRACTICAL POINTS

There are two imperative reasons why it is necessary to train a class to do interesting and "classy" acts, besides the need for an impelling force that will make them work.

First as in all education that there may arise always before the pupil feats a little harder to do—a little more difficult to learn.

Second, that older boys may respect what he does and not bring to bear the destructive force of a contemptuous public opinion to deter him from work.

In considering the use of the show as a stimulus for the pupil one finds that there are as many different kinds of shows as there are places in which to give them. In practise, the thing to do first is to get on paper what can be done, the number of acts, time each one requires, the people.

Next see if the place is suitable. If you have to work on a stage and the curtain arch is not very high you could not do the "Path to the Stars," for the reason that the stars from the balloon would not be seen by the audience and the point of the picture would be lost.

As we have seen the main object in giving a show is to assist in maintaining the interest of the class during the long practise which good physical development requires.

In competitive athletics the same end is reached by intra-mural and extra-mural games.

People who think that the disadvantages of games between schools outweigh the advantages, resort to elaborate systems of games between clubs formed in the school. Now I write from the standpoint of the man or woman who has to get the work done. They are confronted with a condition not a theory, so much work, so many hours of practise each term in order to bring about the desired physical development. Much is written about athletics by people who do not seem to know a great deal about them. Those who do the actual work are mostly silent. The teacher who has to produce a result knows that talk to students about improving the body, maintaining health, duty and obedience are useful influences, but since human nature is what it

is, not sufficient. Therefore the need for competitive games and the inadequacy of calisthenics. The difficulty of games is the small number who can get on to the teams. It is necessary to provide an enormous plant to adequately take care of 400 boys by games. To realise the benefit you are after each boy must actually play, it is not enough for him to sit on the sidelines and yell. Naturally the biggest or best boys of the group do the actual playing. Whereas in this tumbling plan you will find you can utilise all sizes, interest all sizes and drill steadily all sizes. There is not the necessity of sacrificing the practise of the smaller boys to the needs of the others, and lack of equipment is no difficulty at all. In one gym it is possible for five instructors to drill adequately 400 boys at simple tumbling in four hours' time and maintain the interest of 80 per cent. of them for all the time.

No game can do that in such a short time. Only however up to sixteen. I do not believe it is desirable to carry the boy or girl after that age on this plan. I think they are better

employed at competitive athletics especially if they have had two or three years of tumbling practise first.

As will have been seen, it is proposed to utilise the deep interest of boys and girls in AMATEUR CIRCUS LIFE for a driving force by which to obtain steady developing practise. I do not however burden this book with a greater mass of detail because practically all instructors have more or less knowledge of how to conduct amateur entertainments, and it is nearly always possible for a group of boys or girls to get such counsel. Once the ten elements of simple tumbling are mastered innumerable combinations are possible, so it is easy to devise class acts and brother acts such as those described in Chapters III, IV, V and VIII and other interesting little acts can be found according to the taste of the instructor and the latent talent in the group. While it is hoped that a group of boys and girls can by the aid of this book attain valuable physical training without help, it is needless to remark that in this or any system the directing energy and wise criti-

cism of an instructor are invaluable. I have found in conducting classes that the pupils invariably make helpful suggestions and clever plans which almost invariably require changes to make them fit in.

To the instructions given in Chapter III, I have to add but a word of caution. One constantly finds boys who are taught to do a roll by clasping hands around the lower legs when balled up as in illustration 2. This makes it easier to learn the roll but is a bad method. Such a boy is always liable when diving to become rattled and put his hands to his legs instead of in front of his head, thus diving squarely on to his head. If on the contrary he learns from the beginning to keep his hands in front he will before he dives much have learned automatically to take care of his head and neck by sustaining all the weight on his hands and arms.

CHAPTER XIV

FOR PARENTS

There are boys so well endowed by their parents that they flourish under any system; there are boys so damaged by inheritance, or the control of women, that no system can do much with them. There are teachers tied to systems, or whose faces are not turned to the dawn.

With none of these people have we anything to do. It is the progressive, intelligent teacher and the shapeable boy and girl of twelve–sixteen for whom better methods may be suggested than those in use to-day. And better methods are needed from the point of view of all involved; pupil, teacher, and parent.

Irrespective of all fine plans parents may make, as far as it concerns the twelve–sixteen ¹

¹ I should like to emphasise that the term twelve-sixteen is used for convenience. All people in touch with boys and girls observe that the period I write about begins and ends, at times, earlier or later.

boy or girl, physical education consists of what is actually done during the short time at the disposal of the athletic instructor. Remember that these boys and girls have to be taken in classes, that the greater part of their work must be made interesting to them. Remember, too, that the instructor himself is limited by conditions imposed upon him; for the profession of athletic instructor has so recently emerged into respectability that it hardly ranks yet with that of other educators. In a school of four hundred boys, splendidly equipped, out of a faculty of forty-five mainly given to the work of getting the boy into college, there is but one physical instructor helped by fourteen semi-voluntary assistants; this is an absurd condition, but one probably not changeable for years to come.

Watch the work with such boys in a good Y. M. C. A. gymnasium, a public school, or a boys' club gym, and note how much time is wasted, necessarily wasted, in unorganised play.

Those who wish to change our nation from its comfortable helplessness to a sensible

strength see the need of better and more universal physical training.

The worst gap—the weakest point in present methods, practically speaking, is between twelve and sixteen. This method proposes to fill that gap.

After the “tumult and shouting” dies away, and the need for preparation has been established in this country—what is to be done! It will be seen then that very little training for war is practical before sixteen. What is needed between twelve and sixteen is an all-around physical development, and that brings one face to face with present methods in schools and gymnasiums.

At Camp Chocorua, in the days when the summer camp was still considered an amusement enterprise and not an experiment in education, it was my privilege to think much about new ideas in education: How may the education of boys and girls be lifted up to better ways?

In the end, all discussions come back to what appears to be the truth. Only by laborious study of the child may new ways

be found. If you wish to progress you must understand body and soul. The wise Japanese know this. It is not possible to reach the best physical development unless the soul is enlisted. Wherefore, the method proposed in this book for the twelve–sixteen boy or girl.

The teachers of scholarship, the teachers of religion are apt to speak of the boy as if he were a being detached from his body.

They do not seem to realise that man begins as an animal, and passes through many changes before he reaches the developed reasoning, controlled, religious human. The boy lives always with his body, he cannot get rid of it; he is hampered, swayed, and at times governed by it. It seems clear that the first step in attempting to obtain a better type of boy ought to be to improve that body, and could you achieve fairly perfect bodies, half of the difficulties with the sex force, with their scholarship and their religion, would disappear.

In all work with boys it is to be remembered that the twelve- to sixteen-year boy is a curious, streaky compound of ignorance, knowledge,

courage, cowardice, sacrifice and selfishness, desire and indifference, conditioned first, last and always by the state of his body.

That mentally, morally and physically he is constantly changing, always in a state of unrest.

Failure to remember this brings defeat. Moreover, in groups of boys there are always those with whom you can accomplish next to nothing and those who possess a divine impulse which if I dared I would call a super digestion system.

No matter how stupid and ignorant the teaching, the latter will derive good from it or seem to.

In what I am about to say I set aside these two classes. We will treat of the boy who can be largely made or spoiled by good or bad methods.

The schools take each year a mass of more or less promising material and at the appointed time turn out a result they have a right to feel is creditable. May we not, however, analyse their work, searching for a better method on the physical side?

An iron age has come again. Whether Germany loses or wins, this soft, luxury-loving people of our republic need to gird on the sword and defend what we believe in. Is it not time to find better ways of preparing the body and soul of these future men and women than those to-day in use? A way that will reach its end without the waste of time and risk of strain of the present athletic competitive system. But I confine myself to the golden opportunity for work, the second period of life, between twelve and sixteen. You may at this period definitely prescribe methods of living which will bring youth to a better development of the three: body, mind and soul.

This, then, is the golden time in the development of man. Not too plastic, as in the previous period, he is still shapable. To this time, I believe, should be applied the clearest thinking, the most perfect skill; and at this time is determined the future physical efficiency and probably that of the mind and soul. Mistakes made then continue more or less through life. Fine work by teachers gives

larger results than before or after. Our future man or woman at that period reaches the domain of the athletic director, if fortunate, whose work is often of more real value than that of all the other pastors and masters together.

How great is the burden laid on this director! If the valiant young heart be overtaxed in a flat race, in jumping, or a boat, damage results that may be irreparable.

The director is always between the devil and the deep sea.

He has at his command to-day only the two systems: systematic, mechanical exercises, and the competitive method with its dangers.

A fine attempt has been made by the principal of a New York public school to introduce the competitive principle into systematic exercises but with only partial success.

Life and growth depend upon the stream of blood which passes from the heart to all parts of the body and returns. When that river ceases to flow we depart to another form of existence.

Likewise all growth of the boy or girl de-

pend upon this current of blood. Every particle of the future 150 pounds must be picked up at the factory where it is made and delivered to its destined place. If not there is no growth.

We know that the heart can do only part of this work. It must force outward the life-giving, the body-building, stream; but to insure the perfect delivery of each particle to just the right place and the return of the blood to the lungs for refreshment, the whole muscular system is employed. If that is unused the desired work is badly done, and according to the measure of its non-use largely follow the common defects in general health and growth.

When the best results are obtained there is for at least fifteen hours each day of the child's life a constant kneading by all his muscles. When you forbid the boy or girl to wriggle, or be restless, you are interfering with this process or some other. Man has been described as a system of tubes. The tubes are useless if the currents do not properly flow through them and the gallant heart cannot do the work alone.

The same process takes place with the food

eaten, which is shortly, or should be, made into a liquid to be propelled to the needed places.

During later periods of life this perfect circulation of the two streams, the blood and the food, is not of such pressing importance, as only the growth acquired has to be maintained. There is not the need of constant movement, of a ceaseless action of the muscles. The grown man may live very comfortably as an inert, pompous, slow-moving mass. He is not driven for exercise to wriggle or fidget.

It is, however, clear that in this second period of life, 12-16, we should think of all exercises with regard to their effect on the muscular action which aids these two moving streams.

So of the heart, we know it to be of supreme importance that before maturity it should never be overloaded, and the muscular system that aids the heart, the methods by which the two streams are assisted to do their work, we may know a lot about.

Muscular action is brought about by stimuli: physical, mental and moral. To save time I omit discussion of the nerves, glandular sys-

tem and metabolic processes, and roughly pass over development conditions to get to what I propose. The stimuli commonly used are: The physical need the boy or girl feels for motion, vanity, ambition, discipline, etc., effect of heat and cold on the skin, light and darkness on the eye, sound on the ear, etc.

Now to obtain the best success at 12-16 we must use all the stimuli possible.

If you simply beat a boy and thereby obtain muscular activity on his part you will not get the best result. The competitive system is better than the mechanical for it employs more stimuli. Of the two streams I have described, that of the blood is the more important. The digestive stream can be and is often supplied with good material from poor food poorly prepared and circulates fairly well. But if the blood is not distributed, if inert matter clogs the system, all fails, no good results are attained.

What we are trying to do, therefore, between twelve and sixteen is chiefly to aid or direct these processes. How ignorant a view it is to consider that the book knowledge then ac-

quired is the principal matter. There are long years ahead in which the boy or girl may learn at any time that X plus Y equals something or other, but very few in which the building work of his heart may be well done. All the factors of the body are tied together. If the teeth decay digestion is impaired, and impaired digestion accelerates the decay of the teeth. So there is infinite action and reaction.

Now, I submit, it is clear from the foregoing that while all exercise has an effect on the organs, any exercise which would extend and compress the arm and leg systems of muscle and at the same time strongly employ those of the trunk and abdominal cavity would best meet the conditions for circulation of the blood stream and the digestive.

Running has its chief effect from the waist down. Baseball, except for the pitcher and catcher, very little, except spiritually. Tennis is very good. Its drawback is, it pulls on one side and is not abdominal enough. Riding not enough from the arms. Boxing and wrestling very good, but the danger here is that competition may overstrain the immature

heart and neither can be taught in classes.

It has been my good fortune in Mexico during ten years to know and study intimately over twenty acrobats of 12-16. This is what I found. I saw people disregarding pretty much all the common ideas of physical training and indeed knowing almost nothing of them and yet obtaining a result with their children on the physical side vastly superior. I at once asked the question, how do they do it? These twenty-odd children were professional acrobats, some of them of the first class working in circuses. They lived in the roughest way. In a country where yellow fever was endemic they knew nothing of and never used mosquito nets. Ptomaine poisoning and typhoid fever had no terrors for them. Few of them, as I remember, had been vaccinated. Care of the teeth or eyes not thought of. *And they never had anything the matter with them.* Why? Only one reason can be given: the quality of the exercise, for no one asks from a boy or girl so much physically and morally as the professional acrobat. Their parents and masters are driven by necessity to develop

the muscular control, courage and constancy in these boys and girls of 12-16, so that they can do very difficult things. Topmounters must be boys or girls, or their weight would be too great. A 3-High mat act must end with a double air-turn down to the Understander, or some feat equally difficult, otherwise the act has no standing and cannot obtain regular, highly paid employment. In no one of our schools is there a boy 12-16 who could do that double down at all times and under all conditions and never miss landing squarely on the Understander's shoulders. Or if he does miss, go back and get it certainly the second try. Three tries are seldom permissible. A series of failures would ensure the discharge of the whole act. Furthermore, no system at present in use so prepares the schoolboy physically that he could safely be taught to do such a feat.

Rain or shine, under all conditions, the boy must be able to do his difficult work.

It is not that school boys lack the strength. They have not the developed valour and the nerve control of their muscles. Also the boy

acrobat must have a perfect digestive set. Otherwise he could not endure the poor food and unsanitary conditions of his life.

One of these boys, Kame Sugimoto, at twelve could and did always such feats. He was not naturally physically remarkable. I have seen boys in the schools with a far better inherited endowment. He did possess an extra high degree of courage.

I acquired the confidence of the parents or bosses and the path was easy to the liking of the boys and an intimate study of them and their ways. You may say, why do these acrobats not attain the desired end through rowing, tennis or riding a horse or bicycle? Of these, as to nerve control the nearest approach to the effect of acrobatic work is given by the bicycle. In rowing little balance is demanded. In tennis a little, but in bicycle work more.

An acrobat would smile if you proposed to give his boy the necessary circulation, digestive power and nerve control by means of these exercises.

He knows that none of them would prepare the boy so well as his own method. Whereas

the schools, for lack of a better method, have to use these games.

There is, moreover, in the schools a greater difficulty—the lack of time.

One effective hour a day, five or six days in the week, of acrobatic exercises will bring you to your object. With these other methods used at present three to four hours a day are needed for an equal result.

This is not practical in a school for lack of time and because it is most difficult to sustain the interest of the boy of 12–16 for so long a period.

To retain it for the time employed, at present the whole machinery of influence and example of the competitive system is required.

In the amateur acrobatic work I have described, when interest flags, a performance with such circus atmosphere as is within the compass of the school is sufficient. A simple feat described in circus language as the “fiery hoop of death” will stimulate the boy at once. Then it may be said, granting such benefit is possible, How can the work be done? A school of three hundred boys, giving perhaps

200 between 12 and 16, would necessarily be divided into twenty classes. Four hours only may be utilised as school life is at present arranged. That would require five competent teachers. My answer is that if the benefit is as great as I think it is, three times that number could in time be provided.

It is greatly to be desired that a better method be found than our present one and I hope I have shown that in this way may be obtained a far superior development and yet between 16 and 20 the best of the competitive system may be utilised.

The professional acrobat would smile again if you proposed to him to train his boys as boys are trained at any good school. He knows the school systems are incompetent; that a boy so trained could not earn his living as an acrobat and runs considerable risk of irreparable damage when he attempts to learn difficult feats. He also knows how to do for his boy what was done for him, and he proceeds to do it. In competitive athletics a start is made the wrong way. The soul is moved and then the body is trained to obtain

its object, whereas the body should be evenly developed before spiritual stimulus is applied. The boy is worked up to desire to win a flat race. He trains and forces his body to produce the necessary speed. Here we encounter the difficulty of strain. His body is very little developed and unevenly developed. It is easy to injure it at 12-16, demanding effort from one set of muscles and nerves out of proportion to the development of the others. As nearly all the training practical in his limited time is given to the legs, arms and lungs, there is peril of damage to other sets of muscles and nerves, say for instance in the digestive tract. I think this happens more often than is supposed. The injury when done is not easily located in a growing boy. Every one under such circumstances unconsciously conspires to conceal it or lay the blame elsewhere.

Hence in these two theories of athletic training which practically cover the field of school and college training we are up against great difficulties. On the whole the competitive is the better system because it trains also the soul and therein is much gain. But considered

from the point of a real, fine, even development of the growing man both are rather absurd. Drill calisthenics, systematic methods, all presently reach the point at which the growing man revolts. He detests the whole business and ceases to gain more than a very little benefit from them.

Just why this is so I suppose cannot yet be clearly explained. Most teachers sooner or later reach this conclusion. These exercises are successful with the majority only in so far as they can interest the soul. In military drill something may be done with the aid of uniforms, flags, guns, mass movements, the stimulation of the attractive side of war, but with the other forms very little is attained.

How does a contagious germ disease begin in the boy or girl?

Children are constantly exposed, as germs of disease are everywhere. As long as one is in perfect condition the chance for a lodgment of germs is much lessened. The student should be not only well, but happy, bursting with health and the joy of life. Moreover, a lowering of condition is apt to be marked by a

cold which prepares the ground for more trouble. But the boy acrobat by his training exercises is kept always in perfect condition in regard to the two streams and therefore never has a cold and never is in shape for germs to lodge and flourish. As I have said, he "never has anything the matter with him."

It would take an expert bacteriologist, two or three in fact, to keep one child from contact with germs, so the only practical method of fighting disease is to strengthen the defence of the body.

So here we are led right back to the value of the training I propose, as more easily maintaining perfect condition in the time we have than any other I know, for as you go through the list of sports you find that all we use have their defects. It is quite true that using all these the director could obtain an all round result and sometimes does, but in this he is generally barred by the limit of time.

The directors know how they are hampered in this respect.

Therefore it is desirable to seek some way that in a limited time will do thoroughly what

should be done. It is agreed, I presume, that it is our duty to try to develop devotion to the ideal, valour and constancy in defeat, therefore we are driven to the competitive system in the end, but I maintain that this may be put off until after sixteen. By that time the brave heart is better able to sustain its burdens and by this acrobatic system of training we will have constantly aided the heart and the entire body to attain a better development.

I found the popular ideas incorrect that acrobats are especially selected children, especially endowed or that they are acrobats by inheritance. Undoubtedly the very best, doing the most dangerous feats, are of the second or more generations, but any kind of an ordinary boy can reach a tolerable or good level if properly trained. I have observed that their courage, hardihood, circulation and digestion are all far superior to such qualities in boys not so trained in the schools. I came to these conclusions after some five or six years' study of boy acrobats and later knowledge has confirmed it. Necessarily I have to present these conclusions in the form of an opinion, but I

may add that I have studied boys of 12-16 during thirty years and in five countries.

Practically speaking the school puts the boy at a more or less dangerous feat with but little training. The acrobat trains him first and then sets him at dangerous work. Clearly the latter is the better plan.

I then reached this conclusion: The professional acrobat or trainer has a better system. He turns out a boy ready to learn difficult feats with a better digestion, circulation, muscle control and valour than the same boy can attain under the school system; while muscular strength is a little better developed.

A similar training to that by which he prepares a boy or girl may be substituted for what the 12-16 pupil does now in the schools. The student of 16 so trained will be more evenly developed and hence will do better work after 16 in competitive athletics. The effect on the pupil of improved digestion and circulation between 12-16 will be marked. Immunity from disease, more solid and hardy bodies may be expected, but whether or not better and quicker results in getting the boy into college

may be looked for I do not know. Theoretically the boy will do better mental work if he has a better digestion. Increased valour and endurance he will not obtain from such modified acrobatic training, since it is not proposed nor is it practical to attempt dangerous tricks or prepare to do so. Such qualities he must obtain as he does to-day from competitive athletics.

To illustrate the force of the charm this sort of acrobatic work has for the 12-16 period, I might explain that of the five classes I have trained at different times and places in none have I had the advantage of disciplinary authority. Attendance has been purely voluntary. Obedience could be enforced only by the threat of dropping the boy from the class.

To any one who knows the changeable nature of the 12-16 period this I think is a most convincing proof of the great value such fascination has in obtaining steady physical drill.

A child cannot be taught to walk or allowed to play without risk of injury. These risks are encountered because it is the wiser course

—abstention from them brings about greater harm.

The risk of injury in present systems of physical training is understood and is either minimised or accepted properly as a part of the price. In considering this element of risk in a new method the writer decided to apply two tests:

For the elementary system with which this book deals, as a standard of comparison, the risk of injury to an active boy of same age sliding down the banisters of a staircase. For more advanced work at 14 on, the risk in a canoe for a boy who has learned to swim or in a football game for a boy who has been well taught.

Everything here given is believed not to exceed these standards. Many agreeable and interesting tricks have been tried and rejected solely for that reason.

This system is recommended emphatically for 12-16 for another reason that it is nearly impossible to use it during 16-20 unless the subject has already been so taught during 12-16.

As shown, an imperative need of 12-16 is motion which need this plan thoroughly satisfies. Pupils practised five times a week for an hour will be found to be in a state of rest balance. Other activities will be used and enjoyed but there is not that feverish restlessness found in the under-exercised.

It is a combination of directed exercise with the spiritual interest that satisfies best and enables the body to grow along the lines of development most needed later. The muscles are developed which permit an erect carriage, expanded chest, deep breathing, the noble physical attitude toward life, fearless and unafraid because sufficient oxygen is absorbed to nourish the soul, if, indeed that is the explanation.

Such valuation of the noble physical attitude, the fearless upright pose is not as it might appear a sentimental or artistic conception. In practical work when attained it will constantly prove to be of genuine—sometimes of very great value, during the process of turning the 12 year old into a hardy, balanced, disease proof individual at 20, enduring and physically efficient.

There are many factors to be watched; one may not fix the attention alone on this but a balanced body possessing developed deep breathing is among the values of the first rank. The best in life is for the young in heart, the strong, the brave.

I do not assert that an erect carriage insures a courageous soul any more than a college course insures an education.

But it may powerfully contribute to it and in the business of education the wise lose no chances.

Let us take for instance a school-boy of twelve of what one may call average physical endowment.

His digestion is fair and goes on well if the conditions are observed of good well-cooked food eaten regularly, and a sufficient supply of sugar, warm clothing, baths, dry feet, plenty of sleep and good dental work plus a happy life.

Every now and then he has an attack of catarrh, occasionally a cold. At times he is obviously run down; the shadows in the face are darker; his nervous system shows instability.

Interested people think he has been working too much, that is studying, and lay it to the school. At other times he reacts and is very well and vigorous. Should any of the necessary favourable conditions fail, exercise be lacking, "there is no one to play with," "this place is dead," and so on, he probably acquires a pathogenic germ and has a serious illness from which he may or may not emerge or may recover with a permanent defect of some kind. Perhaps he swims poorly, is caught in an accident and needs for escape every grain of fight his soul and body should be capable of, but lacking one or two grains, possibly due to a backward gland, a tablet records that on a certain date "Richard, Beloved son of two ignorant people who did not give him the training he needed for such an emergency, passed to the heavenly mansions." But all this is not on the tablet.

If he scratches through such crises, in due time he reaches the 16-20 period into which it is not my purpose to follow him, with a foundation physically and morally for what takes place then, which at the best we can only de-

scribe as fair and attended by the assured conviction of his parents and masters that *they* have turned out a good job.

Let the same lad of twelve fall into the hands of a fine professional acrobatic trainer such as it has been my privilege to watch.

After that happens proper mental development for the boy is conspicuously lacking, sentimentalism and sentiment are absent. In an atmosphere of rigid exact performance of very difficult feats he shortly acquires a perfect digestion and circulation. Conditions as to food, clothing, regular sleep, are of little importance because he now has a body that masters conditions. Life is happy—fully of interest. Immune to disease germs he proceeds to that complete control of the muscles by the brain seen only in a perfect animal, to a hardy courage, and a patient endurance, and he enters upon the 16–20 period as a joyous prince into his rightful kingdom of which God made him heir, or could so enter if he had the mental training also, with which the acrobatic trainer does not concern himself.

And a touching figure Richard would make

at first, for this is a life of exacting specialism, grim and Spartan. Unless you can do what is required, you are of less than no account.

No home chorus supplies a rose-coloured atmosphere of excuses, praise, pride, interest in his least accomplishment. If he cannot do the thing, no one cares that "he tried so hard," "he is so disappointed," "he has been at this for so long." A more one-sided life than that which Richard leads in a gentle home, but with the tremendous advantage that the physical foundation which ought to be the first care at 12-16 is superbly attended to.

So my problem has been to prepare a system, as the outcome of the foregoing theory, which would do the work of calisthenics, put off competitive athletics until after sixteen, maintain the vivid interest of the pupil, shorten the time required for daily practise; do this without using expensive plant, simplify the work so that the instructor need not be either acrobat or athlete, and devise attractive work simulating that of professionals, but

eliminating the risk and the draw-backs of the professional life. This has been done, and I have had the opportunity to test this system five times with classes of six to ten for from six to twelve weeks for each class.

You parents who possess jewels of inestimable value upon whom to lavish your devotion, what then will you give to assure your beloved a more perfect physical equipment for the battle of life!

The price to be paid is an intelligent comprehension of the principles herein set forth, and a patient application of these training methods. For in the final summing up the matter lies in your hands.

THE END

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