

A THEATRICAL BOARDING HOUSE PROVIDED FOR HORSES, OTHER ANIMALS INCLUDED

(New York Herald-Tribune)

Discreetly removed from the roaring Forties and the bibulous Fifties, where their human conferrers are wont to billet themselves, there are a group of Thespians forming an exclusive little coterie of their own on lower Seventh avenue in old Chelsea. At the Ben Hur Stables, under the eagle eye of Edward Fills, are domiciled nearly all the animals who from time to time make their bows behind the footlights on Broadway, as well as in the provinces.

The guests of the hostelry are mainly equine, but the register also includes cows, bulls, calves and burros (to wit, the late "Hot-Cha"); sheep and goats (discreetly separated); camels and even elephants, although Mr. Fills admits that the latter are a bit obstreperous to have about, so they are kept in the stables only when specifically needed. There are, of course, dogs and other species of quadruped that may be required. If they haven't got it they'll get it; so if you have written a play that simply has to have a reindeer or a giraffe in it, don't let that fact deter its production.

Home of Chariot Racers

Fills took over the business from "Doc" Potter, who established the stables some thirty-five years ago and supplied and trained the original "Ben Hur" horses, one of which, Brownie, aged thirty-four years, is still in the harness, having recently completed a successful season tour with Walter Hampden in "Cyano." In place of honor, on the office walls hangs a picture of Monk, famous leader of the twelve horses in the "Ben Hur" chariot race. Monk always worked nearest the audience, and was taken to England as an indispensable member of the cast.

Also in a prominent spot hangs a picture of Big Boy of Al Jolson fame, and one of Dan, who gathered laurels with Marilyn Miller in "Sunny." Dan was brought down for a little exercise while the writer was at the stables. His pulchritude has not diminished and he seems to be in the pink of condition, but Dan has not been working lately. His exercise consisted of being walked around in large circles in the center of stable, just as a goodly number of his brethren and his sisters of the species homo sapiens are walking around in large circles further up the avenue, also jobless.

"The business is not what it used to be," said Fills with a meditative shake of the head. "The time was when we had as many as 150 animals. Now we once keep about forty-five on hand. Such shows as Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm, 'Joseph and His Brethren,' 'The Garden of Allah'—those were the days. Camels and burros and horses, and plenty of them working all the time. But now its mostly a matter of sending them out to pageants, such as one just produced in Cleveland, where we had eight horses working on treadmills. And we've got some with the Fanchon and Marco units."

Learn Thier Cues Quickly

Fills says it is not hard to train animals for the average production. About five rehearsals and they know their cues well and can be counted upon to do their stuff without prompting. In one play there was a cue when a pack of dogs were supposed to howl off-stage. Old Bruno was the leader of the ululation, and despite the most intriguing distractions in the way of caresses or games perpetrated by experimental stage hands, never once was Bruno known to miss that cue.

There is the story of a lone mongrel dog in the company of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," which was expected to represent a pack of pursuing hounds. This modest order was filled by the mongrel dashing madly across the stage from left to right, around behind the back drop and across the stage from left to right again, repeatedly in such rapid succession as to not be devoid of the illusion intended—well, at least, not completely devoid. At any rate, the dog performed his task not only conscientiously but with the enthusiastic ardor of the true artist.

In the recent production of "Cyano" the two horses, Brownie and Duke, hitched to the stagecoach, would stand

quietly in the wings during the first part of the act, heads drooped, apparently oblivious to their surroundings. A few speeches before the cue for their entrance they would suddenly jerk erect, and when the line came, rush on the stage with gusto. But after several successful weeks on the road Duke developed a complex. He committed one of the unpardonable sins of the profession—that of anticipating his cue! One speech too early he would suddenly spurt forward, dragging Brownie with him, causing general consternation on the stage and the resourceful cutting of lines to meet the contingency.

Duke Gets His Notice

As the frenzied efforts of the groom driving the coach were incapable of restraining him, and as special rehearsals and all sorts of appeals to his horse-sense proved futile in straightening out this little matter for Duke, when the production reached home territory (Brooklyn and Newark) there was nothing to do but to give him his "notice." Of course, he took it rather hard, as any actor would—but not so hard as his partner Brownie. In subsequent performances Brownie, standing in the wings hitched to the successor, kept her head snootily turned in the opposite direction, consistently ignoring friendly bitings of the ear and other amicable overtures from the interloper.

Such was the sympathy between the original troupers that when in Los Angeles it was necessary for Brownie to have a little dental work done, Duke after agitatedly watching the operation, suddenly started biting the air, grinding his teeth and registering other distress signals. The veterinarian eventually broke down and looked into Duke's erstwhile healthy mouth. Sure enough! His gums were bleeding!

Country Home Near Nyack

After a season of work, when the tired nerves of the artists become frayed, what with the demands of their publics, the tedious road tours and this and that, they are sent up to the farm near Nyack which is maintained for general toning up purposes. Here in town they occupy the upper floors of the stables, which are strictly cloistered from the prying eyes of the public would-be spectators. If you want to see this particular brand of actor, either pony up from 50 cents to \$3 (plus tax) and view him over the footlights, or stand down on Seventh av. on the chance that a strolling player may wander by. Most of the exercising however, is done on the treadmills indoors, rather than by promenading the city pavements. Even the bulls work the treadmill, and despite the terrific din of the contrivance, after the stunt is once learned they all seem to enjoy it.

The care given to these animals is obviously meticulous. They are groomed and curried and protected in the last degree. On a recent road tour a terrific rain storm occurred immediately after a matinee. The actors of the company, peering out of rain-swept windows of taxis on the way to their hotels, observed a group of horses from their show. The animals were protected from the elements by elaborate rubber vestments covering head, body and even legs, but astride the back of the foremost sat the little groom in whose charge they were entrusted, and drenched almost beyond recognition in a scanty, clinging overcoat.

SNAKE NEARLY STRANGLING COW

Merrillan, Wis., July 30—A Jackson county farmer had one more cow today because of the quick action of his son. The lad noticed one of the cows on the ground, investigated and found a large pine snake around its neck, strangling her. He beat the snake off.

A Hiawatha, Kan., girl hung out a pair of ordinary hose and found them a little later with the fashionable mesh effect, due to grasshoppers.

THE STRAITS OF SINGAPORE PRESENTS MARITIME PICTURE QUITE BEYOND COMPARE

(New York Sun)

Like the drawing aside of a filmy curtain the mysterious shadows lift from the eastern horizon. A streak of crimson deepens rapidly, then changes to gold. A rose tint touches the fleecy monsoon clouds and the islands are bathed in a soft lavender hue. The gray of the sea yields to a deep purple and then to the turquoise blue of the tropical day. And suddenly, following swiftly its outriders of crimson and gold, the sun leaps above the horizon. It is morning in the Straits.

Singapore awakes to life if, indeed, it can truly be said ever to have been asleep. At any rate, the subdued noises of the night, seemingly softened by the dull murmur by the very weight of the thick equatorial darkness, swell into the tumult of the turbulent day in this strange place where twenty tongues clamor for expression. The legendary tranquility of the East is markedly absent. White and yellow, black and brown, Chinese and Malay and Indian and every racial blend that the migrations of men have developed mingle in a kaleidoscopic activity like to nothing else on earth when the day begins in Singapore.

As it is ashore, so is the commensurate degree it is in the Straits, that famous roadster where daily one may regard the maritime life of the world and the ages. If the picture ashore is unique, that afloat is the very essence of the exotic. The flags of every nation flutter in the morning breeze from the sternposts of the luxurious modern liner and of the goggle-eyed junks like those in which the mariners of Confucius's day braved the typhoons of the China Sea. None but a mariner of the East can by any possibility identify all the national emblems that add their rainbow colors to the rich-hued picture.

What then, is yonder five-stripe flag of red, white and blue which flies from the stern of the neat, white little passenger steamer? It is the new emblem of the Kingdom of Siam, only absolute monarchy in the world, and it has but recently replaced the famous insignia of the white elephant. But what in the name of all we thought we learned at school, is that curious many colored banner astern that dapper little vessel? Why, that is the flag of the Protectorate of Sarawak, land of the famous British Rajah, His Highness Charles Vyner Brooke, and the steamer is one of the Sarawak Steamship Company which will bear you away to little known ports of far-flung fancies where primitive people dwell beside unfamiliar seas.

Starting Place for Anywhere

If the wanderlust is like to grip you at little provocation be well advised and avoid Singapore, where there is more provocation than anywhere else on earth. For Singapore is the setting-forth point for such places as you never heard of and would not believe even existed unless you saw them. A day here and you will realize that the world still has its novelty and its romance, despite the penetration of modernity into additional places every year. Yonder, for example, are half a dozen white little steamships of the Straits Steamship Company. Any of them will take you to such remote, hidden, unheard of ports as no world cruise-de-luxe has ever made or ever will make. All about us, too, here in the roads, are the buff funnel ships of the Dutch K.P.M.—Konninklijke Paketvaart Maatschappij—aboard which you may search out such places as Amboina and Ternate in the "Spice Isles," Samarinda and Sandakan in Borneo, penetrate 200 miles up the Borneo, river, or find a life unaltered since the stone age on the little-known northeastern coast of New Guinea.

Here, close at hand lies one of the Siam Steam Navigation Company's passenger boats which touches at Singapore, founded by the Chinese pirates centuries ago, at Nakawn Sritamarat in Southern Siam, at the beautiful port of Hua-hin on the picturesque way to Bangkok, at Ream on the Cambodia Coast, and finally attains Bangkok itself, most picturesque city of the East. The Straits of Singapore! There in the junk anchorage, off the eastern end of the Bund with its hotels and clubs and luxurious tropical

villas, are hundreds of strange craft of a past age, more of them and in greater variety even than in Hongkong or Shanghai or Canton. Searchingly their protruding, singularly life-like eyes stare at you. For as the Chinese pertinently demands:

"No have eyes, how can see?"

No can see, how can savvy?"

No can savvy, how can do?"

And sure enough, the junks seem to pick their ways with adroitness almost uncanny through the roadstead by day, and to glide eerily by night in and out of the great harbor as confidently as some night bird winging its way above the forest.

Yet modernity has touched them, too, in the form of artificial power. As the story goes, a merchant of Singapore recently imported a cargo of outboard motors and it turned out to be an unsuccessful venture. They went at a tithe of their value to a canny Chinese, who disposed of them to his countrymen. And now half the harbor sampans of Singapore dash wondrously about the Straits while their owners rest at last from the sculling of centuries.

Port for Ships of All Nations

At the other end of the Roads behind the breakwater and around yonder point alongside the great piers lie the ships of today, the P. & O. liners the Messageries Maritimes, the North German Lloyd, the American Dollar boats, the Hamburg-American and the Chargeurs Reunis, the Danish East Asiatic Company, the Nippon Yusen Kaisha and the Royals Netherlands Lloyd, the Blue Funnel liners, familiar to every globe trotter, the British India, Ellermans & Bucknail, and a great variety of the coastwise carriers of the East plying to the numberless islands of the Dutch East Indies and along the China coast, to Australia and the south, with cargo ships of every size and type from all the ports of the seven seas.

It is a maritime picture beyond compare the Straits of Singapore, even as the blend of all the world and every age in the seething, steamy streets of the equatorial city is a picture of human activity unparalleled. Everything that is of the land is represented there in the streets and that name of singing euphony ever recalls it all to him who has seen it, ever fires the fancy of him who has not.

We—you and I and all of us—have thrilled to the very word ever since we saw it on the maps of our school days. With all sorts of flaming imagery have we invested this most picturesque port of all the seas. And those of us who have at length realized our dream of looking upon, of participating in, that stupendous spectacle called "The East" on its stage 5,000 miles square have found that even fancy's furthest flights have not led us astray as to the many-hued allure of Singapore and the Straits.

A QUEER TRADE

(Albany Knickerbocker Press)

Tucked away among the \$45,000,000 worth of exports from the United States to India is one item of \$750,000 which represents as queer a trade imaginable—second-hand clothing.

In every city in the United States second-hand clothing stores are to be found where one can buy or sell. But the channels of world trade are peculiar, and into them flows a certain percentage of the suits, dresses, stockings, shoes, etc., of which we dispose when no longer useful to us.

And a certain percentage, representing a cash value of \$750,000 finds its way across the vastnesses of the Pacific to fabled Hindustan. The old coat you've abandoned with regret, retired after years of honorable service, may eventually find a final resting place on the back of an Indian peasant.

Almost everything goes in this trade, it seems, but trousers.

India has no use for such effete western garments.

Why not a mental test of the experts who have decided that a startling percentage of modern young men don't know much about anything?

Red Rose Tea

The New **20¹/₂ lb.**
BROWN LABEL, 40¹/₂ lb.

"It is good tea or it would not be in a Red Rose package"

A woman who marries for money The young ladies attending the works more than eight hours a day. Teachers' Institute put the "Queen" One can be famously indignant in Queen street yesterday. without losing his temper. Why If a mob had any sense there would not be no mob.

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