

A CIRCUS BAND STORY

THERE IS MUCH CHARM TO THE ROVING LIFE.

Vance Colvig, Free-Footed Wanderer, Loves to Follow the Big Red Wagons of the Circus.

The circus has gone. It took with it its outstanding feature, the band, an organization of first-class musicians who take up the free-footed life of the "high top" armies for the pure love of travel, and for the little adventure they can get from the daily grind of two shows, parades and practice. It is a restless, discontented group of amiable young fellows who seem to have the instinct of hobnobism covered with the smooth veneer given by good family ties and education. A man must have some few of the finer sensibilities in his make-up to be a musician, and it is not so much to his discredit if he chooses the carefree, roving life of the modern troubador. The circus bandmen are mostly in their twenties, most of them are educated either in high school or college, and many can trace their family connections creditably. There are a number of college graduates in the organization and as naturally accustomed to a dress suit as they are to the green uniform of the band. The leader, E. A. Woekener, has collected and capably trained the band. He is careful in his selection of material, and when he finds a really good musician he can usually interest him in an Al. G. Barnes contract, no matter what his previous condition of servitude may have been nor what his vocation is.

One of these is "Pinto," known to his family and good friends as Vance DeBar Colvig, a roving youth of many talents, and known to thousands of people from end to end of the United States by his nickname, awarded in honor of his very freckled face. Studying himself the box-car idol, the break-beam tourist and the society tramp, he has followed circus band life for many years and has been taken to practically every city in the United States and Canada. Occasionally "Pinto" foregoes the charms of the wandering musician's life and says he will settle down. When he settles he employs his talents as a cartoonist to bring him a living, and they bring a good one. He is an artist compared to most cartoonists, and can almost command a position in that work. His own story of his last settlement is interesting. He was employed last year as cartoonist on the Carson City (Nev.) News, where his little horse, used as Reynolds uses his tiger, and called "Pinto's Nightmare," won him great popularity. Barnes circus was billed to show in Carson City in the early spring of this year. He sat at his easel, immune to the call of the big tents and the pleas of his former colleagues. Along came Mr. Woekener, who said: "Pinto, think of the life; think of the world you see." "Ah, Shueks," says Pinto, "give me a contract." That's the way it is with Pinto. His father is Judge Colvig, for eight years at Medford, and at present head of the tax and right-of-way department of the Southern Pacific, with offices in Portland. The judge is well-known in Dallas where his legal work has brought him many times. He cannot influence his son to calm himself, but thinks, as does the young fellow himself, that he will finally end his roaming by the time he is thirty years old. Pinto allows himself that much time, he is twenty-five now, to adjust himself to normal conditions of existence. Pinto tried for a number of years to get a college education. As soon as the circus started out each spring, however, he would forsake his studies and climb on the band wagon. Some of those who knew him in college asked him on Tuesday what he thought he would do when he was too old to play the E-flat clarinet, and too old to wield the pen and ink in his present masterful style. Colvig looked shocked at the question, and asked in retort: "What do you think they build poor houses for?" He attributes his loose-footedness to a peculiar disease, over which he has no power, and calls the malady the "niggers itch." Which it must be to make a talented youth, capable of earning better money at music or at art, forsake a good home, pleasant surroundings and a chance in the world, for the charm of the big white canvassed arena, and the joy of waking up, as Pinto puts it, "in a new town every morning, with hundreds of strange faces in a sea about the cars seeking curiosity as I seek the life I love."

CERTIFICATE OF EXEMPTION.

U. S. Grant Holds Document from Dallas Fire Department.

U. S. Grant is the first Dallas man who ever received an "exempt certificate" from the local fire department, although a considerable number have been issued since 1890, the date of the issuance of the document now highly prized by him. Mr. Grant, after having read in Tuesday's Observer an account of the Dallas fire department in an early day, brought the certificate in question to this office for inspection. It reads as follows:

"Exempt certificate, Dallas Fire Department; organized June 15, 1883: This is to certify that U. S. Grant has served seven years as an active member of the Dallas Fire Department, from June 16, 1883, and

is admitted and entitled to all honors, benefits and privileges of an exempt fireman. Witness our hands and the seal of the department, affixed at the town of Dallas, Oregon, this 7th day of October, 1890. J. W. Crider, president; I. N. Woods, secretary."

The possession of the above certificate has exempted Mr. Grant from jury duty through all the intervening years. Once when called upon for jury duty by a jurist long since departed, Mr. Grant declined to serve because of other matters occupying his time, but the good judge insisted, and it was only when the above certificate was produced that he was excused from service.

OTHERS' OPINIONS.

Oregonian: "The people of Polk county of course will conduct their affairs to suit themselves; but is it a matter of no moment to them that two score or more newspapers have more than a passing interest in them and are unanimous in the opinion that the thing which some people in that county desire to do ought not to be done?"

"It is the opinion of The Oregonian that no recall of a public officer, elected by the suffrage of the people, is justified, except for grave reasons of public policy. Undoubtedly, proven dishonesty warrants the recall; or notorious moral delinquencies; or demonstrated incompetency affecting vitally the public interests; or prejudicial favoritism for one or another interest. But it is foolish to recall, or attempt to recall, any public official over any question of mere administrative detail. That is what most attempted recalls are, except those other recalls which are inspired by motives of personal revenge or factional, sectional, or political resentment."

"Polk county ought not to be insensible to the fact that the people of Oregon as a rule rejoice greatly when a recall, anywhere within a city or county, fails."

Mr. Ellis Shows Old Letter.

I. M. Ellis brought into The Observer office this week an interesting letter that was exchanged between an uncle and father, Nathaniel Ellis, at Venus postoffice, Madison county, Illinois, more than sixty years ago. The letter is full of interest, and to add to that of the four pages of writing Mr. Ellis' uncle has drawn a diagram of a man named Nathaniel W. Evans who was shot and seriously wounded by Jesse Furman on December 12, 1849. Evans, so the letter says, was a store keeper, and Furman a worthless drunkard. Crops in Illinois were in "a sorry state" that season, and the winter and spring had been very wet. "Bacon is worth 8 to 10 cents, cheese the same, coffee 5 pounds for \$1.00, wheat \$1.00 a hundred, eggs 10 and 12 cents a dozen, and butter 15 to 20 cents a pound." The letter was written, as was that shown by Mr. Macomber a short time ago, before the day of the postage stamp and envelope. We are advised by the communication, which cost ten cents to transmit a distance of 100 miles, that Aunt Sally weighed more than 200 pounds at the time the letter was written.

First Hops of Season Picked.

Recording the first harvest of the season, J. R. Cooper started picking hops on his yard near Independence on Tuesday. The pickers on the Cooper place report a good crop and continue steadily at work. By next week picking will have commenced in most of the river yards. There are some lice and mold, necessitating the total abandonment of some yards. But these are few and the only great sorrow that has come to growers is through the low prices that prevail at present.

Sale Is Well Attended.

The public sale at the Arthur W. Fink farm in the Salt Creek neighborhood on Wednesday, conducted by M. F. White, was well attended considering the fact that the farmers are unusually busy these days. A large part of the personal property offered was disposed of. Mr. and Mrs. Fink, accompanied by Dr. Fink, will leave next week for Pasadena, California, where they will make their future home.

Getting in Shape Again.

After having suffered financial difficulties through alleged crooked work on the part of its attorney, Mr. Snelling of Willamina, the Bentley Telephone company is getting its affairs straightened out, and within the ensuing fortnight will be in position to liquidate its obligations. Mr. Boyer of Bear Camp, who was in Dallas on Wednesday, says his company has made arrangements to extend its line in order to make connections with the Siletz country.

Will Exhibit at State Fair.

Mr. Ralph Savery of the Salt Creek section, and a raiser of Clydesdale horses of the thoroughbred kind, will exhibit six horses at the state fair next month.

Teachers Attend Oakland Meet.

Polk county educators, who this week attended a meeting of the National Education association at Oakland, California, are: Ora and Nellie Collins of Dallas, M. G. Carter, E. S. Evenden, R. B. Parrott, Mabel G. West and Myra H. Butler of Month.

Progressivism Is Historical.

Qualifying his use of the word "progressive" in a talk before the

EVERY PATRIOT'S DUTY

NATIONAL GUARD A PREPARATORY SCHOOL FOR SOLDIERS.

Organization of Country's Young Men Provides a Way for Protection of Our Government.

The National Guard is a preparatory school for citizen soldiers, writes Col. James Jackson, U. S. A., retired, in the Spectator. The colonel's article will be read with more than ordinary interest in Polk county, where he is well known. He says the National Guard affords the opportunity for citizens to become proficient in the ways and means of national defense. The people of this nation, its citizens and voters, have decided that they do not want and will not maintain a standing army of sufficient numerical strength to repel a serious attack by any of the strong military powers of the world. Clearly then, since they will not do it, the duty devolves upon the citizenry of the country. To perform the duty intelligently and successfully, the citizen must have a military training, for raw soldiers would be as helpless as children when confronted with the modern, trained soldiers. A careful study of the history of the United States will prove this beyond a question. If it is desired to repeat the experiences of this country with green troops, as at the battles of New York, Guilford Court House, Eutaw Springs, Cowpens, Camden, and later at Buffalo, Niagara, Bladensburg and Washington, we can continue to depend upon raw levies with which to meet trained troops, and the day of our great humiliation as a nation is not far off. You cannot make an efficient soldier in a day, any more than you can make a doctor, a lawyer, or a mechanic in that time. War has become a business, and it requires thorough previous training to make an army proficient in that business. The people of this country have no right to expect that military greenhorns can protect their property, their territory, their wealth, their commercial interests, their homes and firesides should we become involved in a conflict with any of the predatory powers of the world, and such a conflict is more than likely to occur within the next few years.

It would seem to be the duty of every patriot, who cares for the welfare and perpetuity of his country, to gain a military training that he may be prepared to meet with effective action any emergency that may arise or any serious threat that may be made against the nation's life or interests. To make the nation safe, and immune from attack, every citizen "liable to military duty" should receive some military training; should, if possible, serve an enlistment in the national guard some time between the ages of 17 and 25 years. This would not interfere with his business, and the training he would receive would be of great benefit to the man personally and add much to the value of his citizenship. Where service in the national guard is not practicable, military training in the schools should be substituted. The point is, that it is the duty, a duty involved in the citizenship of every able-bodied man, to become a trained soldier; then and only then has he put on the full panoply of American citizenship ready to do his whole duty to his country in peace or war. A citizenry thus trained would be the greatest insurance for long continued peace that a nation could have.

The national guard was organized by officers of volunteers who had held high commands during the civil war, and who noted the utter helplessness of the national government at the commencement of this war. They thought to provide a way and an organization, through which the young men of the country could become trained soldiers, without taking them away from productive industries, and so give some stability to the government and the country in similar emergencies. It has not done as much for the nation as it was capable of, principally because the people, from presidents down, were obsessed with the idea that this nation did not need and never would need trained soldiers, notwithstanding the fact that no man can put his finger upon any battle in the history of this country won by raw levies against trained soldiers. Is it desirable to risk the life and perpetuity of this republic, its value to the world and to humanity, upon such untrained material, when we can just as well have the best soldiers in the world at comparatively little cost to this great and prosperous country? Undoubtedly the American people have banked largely on the security afforded by the nation's position on the globe, between great oceans, and concluded they could neglect the duty of preparing for defense without danger to the republic; but the time is past when this physical location can be considered proof against attack, and if this nation is to continue to live on through the ages both national and state governments should see to it that the citizenry be made efficient for defense. It is neither right nor just that a few patriotic citizens should bear all the burden; it should rest equally on all citizens and will have to in the future if the nation is to continue on in its present successful career.

Progressivism Is Historical.

Qualifying his use of the word "progressive" in a talk before the

joint meeting of the Oregon and Washington bar associations last week, former President W. H. Taft said: "Gentlemen, I employ that word not in its historical sense, but in its proper, normal garb." Thereby the former president greatly amused Judge H. H. Belt and Oscar Hayter, who attended the meeting. Judge Belt and Mr. Hayter returned from Portland on Tuesday.

Funeral of Frank Woods.

The funeral of the late Frank C. Woods was held from the Chapman chapel Wednesday forenoon at 10 o'clock, and was quite largely attended by old-time friends and acquaintances. The body was brought here from Portland, the home of the deceased. Interment was in Oddfellows' cemetery.

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