

English nightly dies a hundred deaths under his tender mercies."¹⁰³

The following June Rice's Circus was in Detroit, presenting a ropewalking elephant, a tame **rhinoceros**, a dancing camel, mules that played "low comedy," and the trained horse *Excelsior*.¹⁰⁴

In the fall of 1860 Dan Rice's Great Show exhibited in the Academy of Music, New Orleans, featuring a young man by the name of Omar Kingsley (1840-79),¹⁰⁵ who impersonated a female equestrienne and was known to the world as Ella Zoyara.

THE MABIE BROTHERS

Edmund Foster Mabie (1810-67) and his brother Jeremiah (1812-67) were typical of the substantial citizens who founded the American circus. They grew up on a farm near Patterson, Putnam County, New York. Observing the success attained in the circus business by the Howes brothers, Nathan (1796-1878) and Seth (1815-1901), who resided in the neighboring town of Brewster, the Mabies enlisted the aid of Seth as a partner and manager and organized the Howes & Mabie New York Circus in 1840.¹⁰⁶

After touring in the East for several years, the Howes & Mabie show ventured into the Midwest. In June of 1843 they were in Detroit, but failed to make a good impression on the editor of the *Daily Advertiser* (June 15, 1843). After the show had departed, the editor assured the editor of the *Jackson Gazette* that "the Circus of Howes and Mabie which is now perambulating through this State is a regular humbug

During 1879 and 1880 Cooper & Bailey conducted the combined shows under the title of Howes' Great London Circus, Sanger's Royal British Menagerie, and Cooper & Bailey's International Allied Shows. The adjective "great" was justifiably used and the show was a worthy competitor of any of the shows of the period. An indication of its size is found in the following list of menagerie animals carried in 1879: ten elephants, ten camels, a hippopotamus, a rhinoceros, seven tigers, four lions, six panthers, two cheetahs, one black bear, four zebras, four leopards, thirteen reptiles, fourteen hyenas, two wolves and cubs, two polar bears, one gnu, two baboons, eighty monkeys, one emu, one ostrich, two cages of birds, and two hundred small animals.

In that year the Cooper & Bailey show featured an electric light plant consisting of a direct-current generator driven by a thirty-horsepower steam engine and boiler, the whole being mounted on a wagon, and the current being supplied to a number of Brush open carbon-arc lamps which were said to be "the equal of 35,000 gas jets." This use of electric lights by a circus must have been limited and unsatisfactory, for many years elapsed before the electric illumination of circus tents by portable generating plants became practicable. Credit must be given, however, to Cooper & Bailey for their enterprise in exhibiting a great curiosity within two years after Charles F. Brush invented the open carbon-arc lamp. W. W. Cole shares this honor, his circus exhibiting a similar plant during that season.

Cooper & Bailey having become serious competitors of the Barnum show, a merger was arranged prior to



Photo by H. A. Howell

Elephant, "John," Spotting Den Containing Indian Rhinoceros, "Bill," Early 1920's.
John Patterson was then menagerie superintendent for the Ringling-Barnum & Bailey Circus