



FRED LESLIE, COMEDIAN.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY A. BASSANO, LONDON.—[SEE PAGE 1215.]

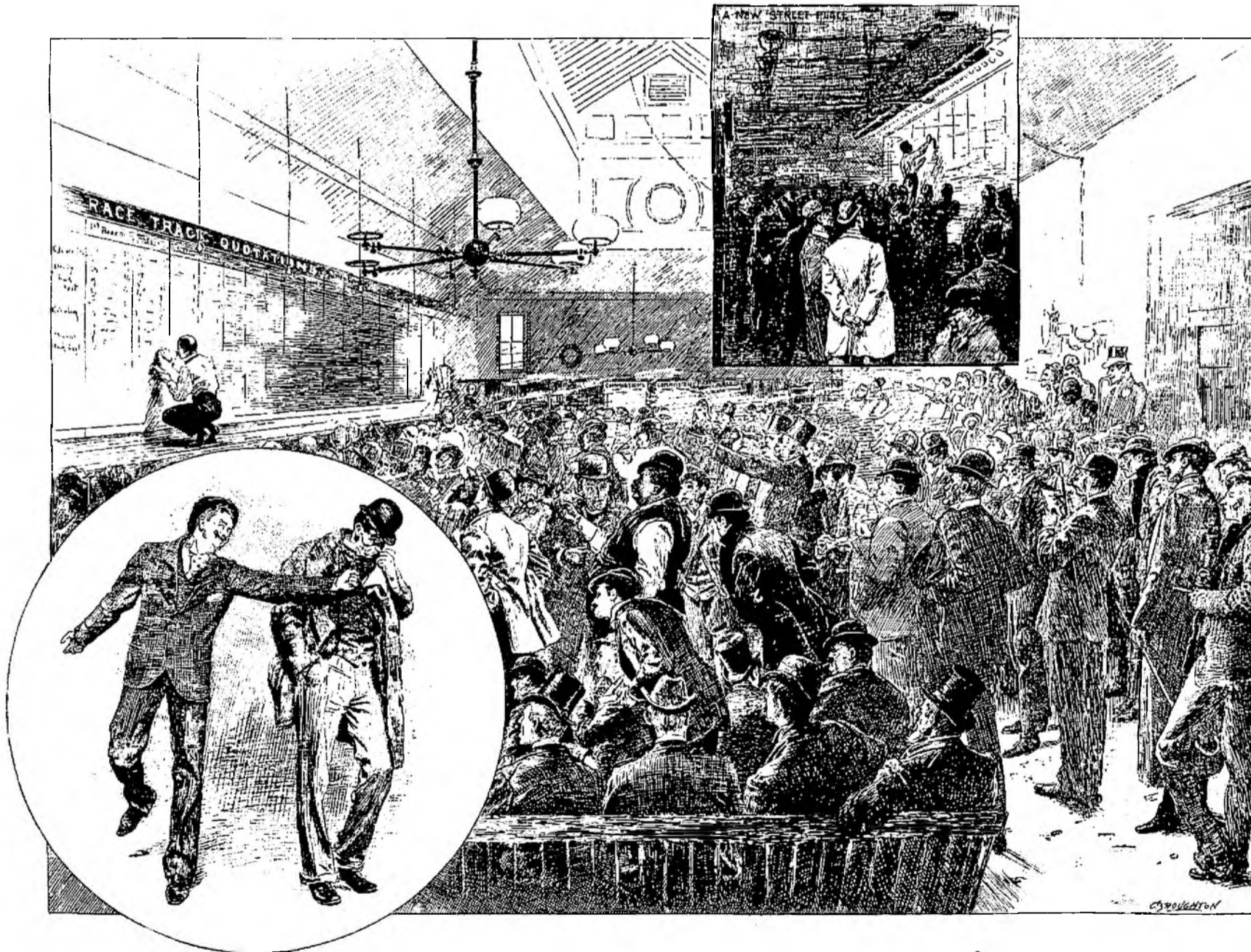


GEORGE W. CHILDS'S OFFICE IN THE "PUBLIC LEDGER" BUILDING, PHILADELPHIA, RECENTLY DESTROYED BY FIRE.

BURNING OF THE "PUBLIC LEDGER" BUILDING.

The *Public Ledger* Building at the corner of Sixth and Chestnut streets, Philadelphia, suffered from a severe fire on Tuesday, December 6th. There is general sympathy expressed for the owner of the paper, Mr. George W. Childs, who has endeared himself to all workers who have come in contact with him by his kindness and generosity, and won the esteem of the public at large by his many acts of munificence. It was nearly six o'clock in the afternoon when one of the women clerks noticed the smoke that entered the room. A fire had just been extinguished on the opposite corner, and upon being summoned by a clerk, firemen found a blaze in the cellar, where a lot of rubbish had been thrown. Before the firemen could do anything to check the fire the flames made their way to an air-

shaft in spreading a fire. The fifth floor, occupied by the compositors, was easily reached by the flames which sprang up through the well. The firemen appreciating the danger had meantime sent out two alarms, and a large force with steamers and other fire-machines were soon on hand. The city editor, who was just preparing for the work of the evening, was alarmed by the shouts below, and snatching up all his copy and assignment books, made a safe exit with his materials for Wednesday's paper. The many volunteers from other newspaper offices, together with the police and firemen, carried out what they could, and the valuable files of the paper and the curios and rich articles in the far-famed private office of Mr. Childs were all saved. Mr. Childs soon made his appearance on the scene, and standing in a doorway of the courthouse across the street, watched the progress of the fire, while L. Clarke Davis, the managing editor, gave directions for the issue of



NEW YORK POOL-ROOMS.—DRAWN BY CHARLES BROUGHTON.—[SEE PAGE 1210.]

Wednesday's *Ledger*. By 7.30 the fire was under control, but by that time the building was thoroughly saturated with water, and some of the floors completely burned out. The damage is estimated at \$150,000, which is said to be fully covered by insurance.

The *Ledger* had a job-printing office as an annex to the regular building on Sansom Street, which was uninjured. The office was complete, with the exception of the presses, and there the compositors went to work. The editorial staff occupied the Board of Trade room in the Drexel Building. The regard in which Mr. Childs is held by his fellow-citizens was forcibly illustrated while the fire was in progress. It is stated that the publishers of every weekly or daily newspaper in the city offered the use of their presses to Mr. Childs, it being impossible to work the *Ledger* presses that night, owing to the damage done by water. The presses of the *Record*, offered by Mr. William M. Singerly, were accepted by Mr. Childs to bring out the *Ledger* for Wednesday. Even in the midst of his own misfortune Mr. Childs showed his kindness of heart by providing the firemen with a supper at a restaurant near by, and the intelligence and bravery displayed by the firemen so delighted Mr. Childs and his good friend Mr. Anthony J. Drexel that a check for \$5000 was promised to the director of the Department of Public Safety, to be used as he deemed fit for the benefit of the firemen. The many evidences of kindness on all sides that Tuesday night proved the "City of Brotherly Love" to be worthy of its name.

THE STUDY OF A POOL-ROOM.

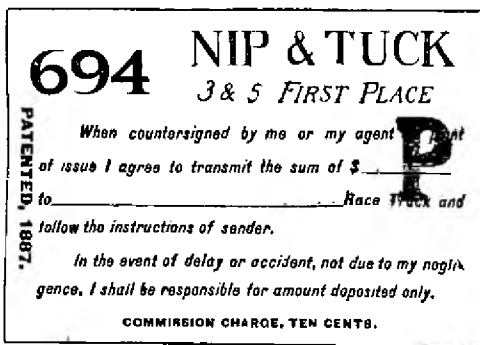
BY FLAVEL SCOTT MINES.

THAT well-worn remark about going to see *Hamlet*, with the melancholy Dane omitted from the cast, is always brought to mind when I think of a pool-room. There you bet on the horses without ever seeing the race or going to the race-track. There you wager your money, with the firm hope of winning, and the old excuse of the track that you merely bet a small sum for the sake of having an active interest in some one of the horses that you are watching is not available. It is gambling pure and simple, with no extenuating circumstances. You do not see the horses run; no act of your own, no skillful play, can change the result when the bet is once made. You merely wait until the race is run, maybe a hundred miles away, and then, if you are lucky enough to pick the winner, you cash your ticket. All you know about the race is what is told you by the man in charge, and how it was run you must gather from the meagre details that are given while the race is in progress. Not far from the down-town exchanges are three pool-rooms in a bunch, and there each day during the racing season gather a motley crowd. Gray-haired, respectable-looking old men, portly brokers, sleek business men, anxious young clerks, dirty, unshaven specimens of humanity—ragged, careless men—all jostle and crowd together during the hours of business. Caste is disregarded, social barriers are broken down, the man with two dollars and a heap of luck is as good as anybody else—better than anybody else, in fact, if he is the only lucky one. The room is comparatively still, save for the whirring fans overhead that drive forth the clouds of tobacco smoke that would otherwise shut out the view. Men converse in whispers, and seldom is a laugh heard. The idea of gain is predominant. The money-devil has fastened its clutch upon each one, and every man is for himself. If he wins, his neighbor must lose in order that he may be paid, the book-makers not being in the business for fun. Sometimes the voice of the man behind the grating is heard as he calls to his assistant to record the bet just made.

In entering a pool-room there is nothing to attract the eye. One end of the room is partitioned off like an office. There are four gratings, reading, "Commissions"; "Commissions, 1-2-3 Horses"; "Combinations"; "Cashier." To one side of the room runs a raised platform, and above it the wall is covered with black-boards, with the race-track, race, horses, etc., neatly printed thereon. The following diagram will give an idea of one section of the black-board, the horses, jockeys, etc., all being fictitious:

SARATOGA.				
3d RACE.		BLIND STAKES.		1 1/4 M.
5	2	3	5, 5, Bluff	Brown 110
6	2	1	5, 6, Giddy	Jackson 103
20	8	4	20, 20, Time	Robinson 112
1	2 1/2		3/4, 1, Last not Least	Pinkney 98
8	3	7/8	A. R. J. Smith	Pilson 110
5	2	1	S. S. Cicero	Fogg 105
5/8	2 1/2		Actual	Barlow 95

The top line gives the name of the race-track; the second line contains the number of the race, the stake for which it is run, and the distance—a mile and a quarter. Below are the horses in larger lettering, and the small names to the right are the jockeys, the numbers below being the weights at which they ride. To the left are the betting odds that the office gives, and the small figures above the horses' names represent the odds at the track at two stages of the betting. The odds given in the diagram are merely for the sake of illustration, the differences varying somewhat at the pool-rooms. The unit of the race-track is one dollar. In the column furthest to the left are the odds for first place. For example, the pool-room men bet \$5 to \$1 that Bluff will not win, 2 to 1 that he will be neither first nor second, and even money that he will not finish first, second, or third, the second column representing odds for second place, and the third column third place. If there are less than six horses, there is no 1-2-3 betting. Actual, being the "favorite" in the race, is not quoted for third, and in order to bet on him for second place, \$5 must be put up to win \$3; for first the odds are 8 to 5. After studying this board, the bettor goes to the window marked "Commissions." Not less than \$2 is accepted, and that amount is placed on Bluff for "place," plus ten cents commission in order to comply with the letter of the pool law. A ticket similar to the following is handed out, and the bet recorded:



This ticket is stamped with the agent's name, bearing the date of issue, and "Commissions Paid." The man who has made the bet then writes across the face of it the name of the horse and the odds wagered. If the suppositions man above referred to desires to wager another \$2 on Time for third place, he goes to the next window, and depositing his money, receives in exchange a ticket similar to the following:



He marks on the back of this ticket also the horse and odds, and then awaits developments. These tickets are elaborately engraved by the American Bank Note Company, and printed in colors in order to prevent forgery. Before long the betting at Saratoga stops as the horses go to the post, and the race is marked "closed" on the board; but bets can still be made until the horses are off. Behind the office partition is a telegraph instrument and attendant, the wire leading direct to the race-track. As soon as the horses are "off," an electric bell rings, the betting odds are rubbed out, the crowd shows signs of suppressed excitement, and the announcer prepares to give details of the race.

"All off together," comes the shout, followed by an intense silence, only broken by the ticking of the telegraph instrument.

"Giddy leads," says the telegraph agent. "Giddy leads," shouts the announcer, who has a voice made on purpose to be heard. "By a neck," comes from inside. "By a neck," is the fierce echo for the benefit of the crowd. "Time, second; Cicero, third, neck and neck with Actual," follows; and so it goes all through the race, the echo being heard by all. "Time leads at the quarter"—tick, tick, tick—"Giddy, second"—tick, tick. The man who may win \$6 on Time begins to get nervous. "Actual, third"—tick, tick—"Time at the half"—tick—"Giddy, second"—tick, tick—"Actual and Bluff close up"—tick, tick. The gentleman who was so delighted at hearing from Time now jumps as his second horse is mentioned. "Time and Bluff neck and neck at the three-quarters." The man with both tickets begins to grin. "Actual, second; Giddy, third"—tick, tick. "At the mile. Actual leads; Bluff, second; Giddy, third." The grin has disappeared from the man's face; he wonders where Time is. "In the stretch. Actual leads; Giddy, second; others close up"—tick, tick. The silence is penetrating now. The man who lost his grin a moment before begins now to scowl. "Actual wins," comes the cry, and the name of Actual is encircled with red chalk. "Giddy, second," marked on the board. "Cicero, third." There is a bustle in the crowd. Those holding winning tickets form a line against the wall, black with the thousands of dirty shoulders that have pressed against it, and wait for the race to be verified from the track and the cashier to open his window. Mr. Man, however, who bet on Time and Bluff, is disconsolate, the picture of utter woe. He tears up his tickets dejectedly, and walks slowly out—it was his last \$4.

So are the races run, and the same scenes often repeated a dozen times a day. Men, and sometimes mere boys, squander their last cent, and go forth miserable and unhappy. They may win for a time, but it is an old saying among horse-racing men that if an outsider sticks to it he is sure to lose all his money sooner or later. It is generally a matter of blind luck vs. science, and the book-makers prove that science is bound to come out ahead. They win \$100 from Peter to pay Paul \$5, and then take Paul's \$100 to pay Tom, Dick, or Harry \$10. That is the way it goes. The pool-rooms seem to be run on "the square," to be technical, and if a man picks out the winner, he gets his money, so far as my personal observation goes, but the odds are practically against him. The character of the pool-rooms is regulated by the neighborhood and the character of the *habitués*. The rough, ragged, and dirty element are to be found in all. The well-dressed man is to be found only in certain rooms, especially those near the exchanges. These pool-rooms are under the protection of the law, the book-makers being supposed to forward the money to the race-track, and place for their patron for ten cents commission. They collect the commission—obey the letter of the law—but it is ridiculous to suppose that the money is placed at the track. The men in the office are the only men you have dealings with, and the only men concerned in the transaction. Some outsiders tell stories of large winnings, but others, who are never heard of, lose their all, and families suffer because of the rooms. Some men have not the time or the money to go to the tracks, but the pool-room affords them ample opportunity to lose the little they possess.

Human nature is strongly portrayed in these places. Humor sometimes is found. Some horses are burdened with such strange inappropriate names that it is a wonder they are ever able to run a mile. Public, famous, and historic names are drawn upon to designate the horses. Pet names, Indian names, and unpronounceable combinations of letters are called into service. The English dictionary is used, and sometimes it seems as though the owners had searched the Sanskrit of the Mahābhārata to find some sort of appellation.

Some ordinary names are funny under certain conditions, as when the announcer calls out: "Headlight leads." "Indian rubber in the stretch." The latter is an old, old joke with horsemen, but it never fails to arouse a laugh when the horse really leads. A very funny incident happened during the present season. Two horses with similar names were in one race. Stonehell and Stonemason were the two, and on one (I forget which) were "long odds," while the other was a "short horse." Stonemason, for example, was 8 to 5, while Stonehell was 20 to 1 to win. A young man at the pool-rooms put up four dollars on Stonemason, having a faint, very faint, chance to win eighty dollars. The race was run, Stonemason in the lead all the time, Stonemason not heard from. At the finish, however, the man called out, "Stonemason wins." The young man with the ticket was simply enraptured. Without waiting for verification from the race-track, he invited a friend out to celebrate the luck. While the young man was absent word was received over the wire that the operator had made a mistake, and that Stonehell had won. The change was made on the board, and the returns having been made straight, the tickets were paid. At this juncture the happy youth returned and looked up at the board, and nearly collapsed.

"What's the matter?" asked his friend. "Matter!" he cried. "Don't you see? Stonemason wasn't in it. I didn't think he would win; but after the race was announced, with Stonemason winner, I spent every single cent I had in celebrating," and he went forth broken in heart and pocket.

That is the way that nearly everybody goes out of the pool-room if they tempt fortune long enough.

PERSONAL.

The first New York daily newspaper to issue a Sunday edition was the *Herald*, and, according to Mr. ROBERT BOKNER, the innovation was due to an accident. One Saturday the *Herald's* galleys, on which the set-up type is held in readiness for making up into pages, were filled with left-over matter which had been crowded out of the Saturday paper, and Mr. BENNETT said to his foreman, "Let's get up a Sunday issue. Use the old matter, and put in a few fresh things." This happened shortly before the outbreak of the war, and as the publication of a Sunday newspaper was at that time considered disreputable, the other dailies did not follow the *Herald's* example until the beginning of hostilities created an eager demand for news from the front.

—ADLAI E. STEVENSON was a member of that famous class, among the other members of which were Justice HARLAN, Senator BLACKBURN, Senator VEST, and Governors B. GRATZ BROWN and THOMAS I. COTTRENDEN, of Missouri, which was graduated in 1849 from the little school kept by B. B. SAYRE in Frankfort, Kentucky. From there they all went to Centre College, at Danville, Kentucky, to study law. Mr. STEVENSON is remembered by a schoolmate as a quiet and dignified boy who held aloof from his comrades, and seemed to prefer solitude to other companionship. The new Vice President-elect is said to have more cousins than any other man in public life. He is a descendant of a very old and very prolific family, and has relatives in nearly every State in the Union.

—During his four years' occupancy of the White House Mr. HARRISON received a salary of \$200,000, and it is computed that of that amount he spent only \$94,000 in living and general expenses, including the purchase of his Cape May cottage. If these figures, which are from a Republican source, are correct, the President will return to Indianapolis richer by \$106,000 than when he left that city for Washington.

—JOHN A. MORRIS, the Louisiana "lottery king," to whom New York is indebted for one of its finest race-tracks, has a country estate in Tangipahoa Parish, in Louisiana, which is described as literally a sportsman's paradise. It embraces six hundred acres of woodland, in which are preserved hundreds of deer and bears, and numberless coveys of game birds, while the four lakes on the place are black with mallard ducks. In the middle of the estate Mr. MORRIS has built a handsome hunter's home, which is filled at various times with house parties of intimate friends. As an indication of the wildness of the life there, it is related that the laborers employed on the place killed three thousand snakes and alligators last summer.

—HALL CAINE, the novelist, who writes so graphically of Manx peasants, lives almost as simple a life as that of the characters he portrays. At his picturesque home in the mountains, Mrs. CAINE does her own milking, churning, and cheese-making, and attends to the other duties of a country homestead, while the novelist himself affects the peasant's dress. He is a man of delicate physique, with a head and face that show a very striking resemblance to the portraits of SHAKESPEARE.

—In the last number of HARPER'S WEEKLY, in the article on the "New West Point," it was stated that J. D. HUNTER, JUN., had designed the Battle Monument of which MCKIM, MEAD, & WHITE are the architects. This is an error, the designer of the monument being STANFORD WHITE himself. Mr. WHITE'S Battle Monument is as fine and strikingly appropriate a piece of work as is his Memorial Arch and the Madison Square Garden in this city.

—When Miss ELEANOR CALHOUN sailed for England on the *City of Paris*, a few days ago, it was to join COQUELIN as the leading lady in the new plays that famous actor has added to his repertoire for this season. Miss CALHOUN has previously been a member of COQUELIN'S company, and is probably the only American actress who ever learned French well enough to be mistaken by an audience for a native French woman, as she was. She is a descendant of JOHN C. CALHOUN, and her finished style of acting has given her an enviable pre-eminence in her profession in England as well as on the Continent. Like SYBIL SANDERSON, the prima donna, she is one of the numerous California women who have left here in recent years to grow celebrated elsewhere.

—MR. WILLIAM POTTER, who succeeds ex-Governor ALBERT G. PORTER as minister to Italy, is a man of great prominence in business and society in Philadelphia. He is forty-two years old, wealthy, cultivated, and popular, and a graceful public speaker. He has had some previous experience with diplomacy, as President HARRISON two years ago appointed him a special commissioner to visit London, Paris, and Berlin, and negotiate a more convenient system of sea post-offices. In the following year he was sent as a delegate to the Fourth Congress of the Universal Postal Union, held in Vienna, and signed the new postal treaty arranged there. Mr. POTTER has been very active in Republican politics in Pennsylvania, and is one of the best known of the younger party leaders in that State.