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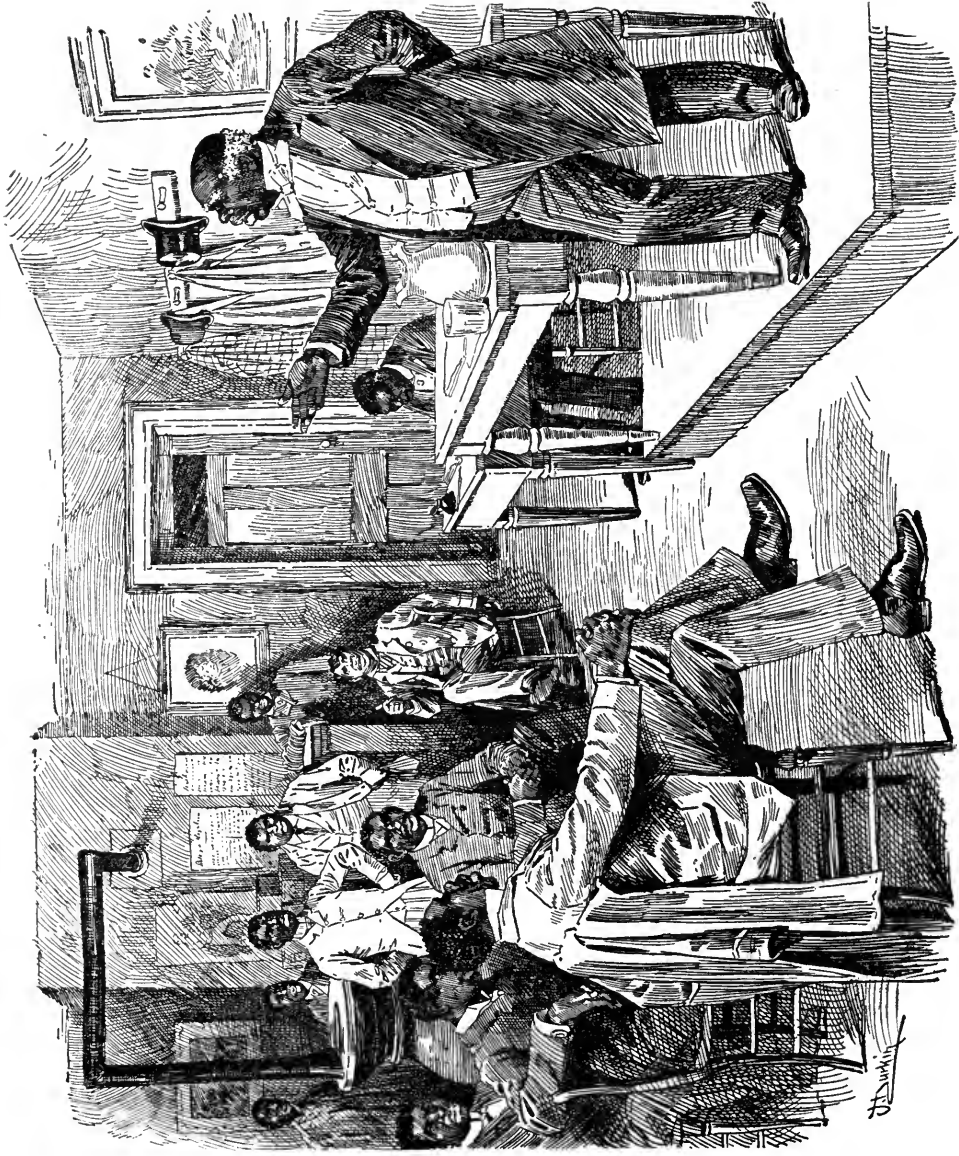
of

"Young Anne" Littleton





THE THOMPSON STREET LECTURES.



“THE LECTURER FIXED A COLD AND FISHY EYE UPON MR. WILLIAMS.”

H. M. W.

# LECTURES

BEFORE

## THE THOMPSON STREET POKER CLUB.



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## THE THOMPSON STREET POKER CLUB LECTURES.

NO. I.

THE REV. MR. THANKFUL SMITH DELIVERS A LECTURE ON "THE BANKER."



THE first lecture of the scientific series announced to be given this winter under the auspices of the Thompson Street Poker Club, was delivered at the club's rooms last Saturday evening by the chairman, Rev. Mr. Thankful Smith, who announced as his subject "De Bankah."

There were present Messrs. Cyanide Whiffles, Gus Johnson, and Tooter Williams, Professor Brick, and Elder Jubilee Anderson; and besides these regular members, five highly esteemed citizens of Hoboken, whom Mr. Williams, at the low rate of fifty cents apiece, had consented to steer against the lecture and the subsequent game.

The minutes of the last meeting were read by the secretary and approved.

The resolution introduced by Professor Brick, that members who may hereafter offer to blow in opulent relatives at the regular

game shall deposit twenty-five dollars with the treasurer, to partially cover losses, and partially as a guarantee of good faith, was carried after strong opposition by Mr. Tooter Williams, who voted in the negative.

The resolution introduced by Mr. Williams, to the effect that the dealer should save the valuable time now lost in cutting the cards, by cutting the pack himself, was lost ; Mr. Williams alone voting in the affirmative.

The Rev. Mr. Thankful Smith then resigned the chair to Elder Jubilee Anderson and spoke as follows :

DE BANKAH.

“ Gen'l'men membahs 'n' guesses ob de Thomps'n Street Pokah Club : Endurin' a speeunce of mo'n thutty yars' razzle wif de noble game, playin' 'em high 'n' skinnin' 'em close, penny anta 'n' quartah limmick, er go as yo' dern please 'n' sock her for all she's wuff—endurin' dis long speeunce, hit am been my sufferin' priv'lidge ter be mos'ly bankah, 'n' dey hain't no coon what kin say he didn't git squar' cash for de beans er de chips jess aftah de lass roun' ob jackers.”

“ Dasso,” asseverated Elder Jubilee Anderson, with fervor, forgetting that he was acting chairman. He then remembered, and with a rap of the gavel called himself to order.

“ De man wot banks on Wall Street,” continued the reverend gentleman, “ hez got a soff layout, bud de man wot banks in Thomps'n Street hez gotter keep hiz eye skint. De bankah in pokah hain't got no perkintage—de perkintage am all agin' him.”

“ *How yo' figger dat ?* ” inquired Mr. Tooter Williams, with some asperity—how yo' figger dat—dat's what I wanter know ? ”

“How I figger dat, Tooter?” said the reverend gentleman, sweetly. “Tree yars ago dar wuz a game yar 'n' I was bankin'. De janiter hed garnisheed de chips. Yo' went out 'n' buyed beans—doan' yo membah dat?”

“No zah,” exclaimed Mr. Williams, with warmth; “doan' membah no sitch thing.”

“Yo' buyed de beans, Tooter, 'n' I counted out tree hunded 'n' thutty-fo' 'n' sold em, 'n' yo' bought two dollahs wuff, fohty beans, 'n' played fo' hours, 'n' lost all de time, 'n' den cashed in six dollahs wuff 'n' jumped de game, 'n' den in de wind-up aftah de lass jacker I hed mo'n eight hunded beans howlin' fer cash, 'n' aftah all my big streak o' luck I fatched up twonny-two dollahs in de hole.”

“'N' what yo' call dat?” inquired Mr. Williams, in a voice inclining to war.

“Dat, Toot,” replied the lecturer, calmly, “dat am de perkin-tage agin de bankah what makes hisse'f 'sponsible agin de man wot's got a numbrellah case full ob beans a dribblin' from he sleeve. I'se got a fam'ly, 'n' I kaint feed 'em on beans wot



cost twonny-two dollahs de haff pint. Does yo' see de pint, Toot?"

Mr. Williams sniffed contemptuously, but did not vouchsafe a reply.

"Some bankahs gin out fresh chips fer de chips wot draps on de flo'," continued the lecturer. "Dat's perlite, but hit doan' pay. Cy Whiffles drappèd fo' blues 'n' two yallers one night, 'n' I guv him fo' blues 'n' two yallers ter save him de trouble er browsin' down to pick 'em up, 'n' dat perliteness coss me jess s'teen dollahs."

"Didn'—didn' yo find dem chips on de kyarpit aftah de game?" queried Mr. Whiffles, who was blushing at the personal turn the lecture had taken.

"Nary a blue 'n' nary a yaller, Cy," said the lecturer, sadly but firmly. "Bud I foun' s'teen dollah's wuff er speeunce. Yo' drapped nine blues 'n' six yallers at de next game, didn' yo'?"

"Yezzah," faltered Mr. Whiffles.

"'N' yo' didn' git no fresh ones from de bank?"

"Nozah."

The reverend gentleman here slowly closed one eye, and regarded Mr. Whiffles' blushes for several moments, and then resumed:

"Wen I'm bankah, I hain't no Jay Gool, nor I hain't no Vanderbilk, nor I hain't no Kemmikle Bank, 'n' wen a player says, 'Gimmy nudder stake,' er 'pass ovah ten mo' blues,' er 'pud me down fer twonny mor',' er 'I'll owe yer fohty fer two minutes,' I jest gaze him squar' in de eye, 'n' my deafness troubles me powerful. I kin be de deafess man dis side er Kallymezoo wen any man wants ter borry. De Wall Street bankah makes he money lendin', but de same rule's got lame tryin' de dodge in Thomps'n street pokah."



“Am de bankah 'sponsible fer all de chips?” queried Mr. Gus Johnson, who was not animated by any particular desire for information on this point, but wished to show that he took an interest in the lecture.

“De bankah am,” retorted the Reverend Mr. Smith.

“An' who am 'sponsible fer de bankah?” interrupted Mr. Tooter Williams, who then laughed immoderately at his own joke.

The lecturer fixed a cold and fishy eye upon Mr. Williams.

“Dat's de darkness mistry in nater, Toot,” said he, impressively; “'n' de lass time yo' banked, five coons went inter mo'nin', 'n' dey've been in mo'nin' ever sence, tryin' ter find out who was 'sponsible for yo' bankin'.”

“Dat's a lie!” shouted Mr. Williams, aggressively.

“Wen a man banks,” continued the reverend gentleman, “'n' de players blow in good chicken-feed agin chips, 'n' den de bankah starts in 'n' whoops her up, 'n' hist's de limmick, 'n' straggles 'n' plays kilters, 'n' fires in all de chips 'n' all de money in jackers, 'n' den says, 'Jess leave me out one hand w'ile I goes down fer sassengers fer de gang,' 'n' den fergits ter come back, 'n' is next heerd from sashayin' aroun' in Newark er Weehawken—dat bankah's got ter be chained up befo' I parse aroun' de aces wif him agin.”

Mr. Williams subsided.

“De bess bankah am de bank. Git a cigyah box, chuck in de wads, kyount out de chips, 'n' keep de box up on de top shelf, where no nigger wif a long reach kin fool wif it. Let de bankah buy his chips, 'n' no borryin'. Splits only kyount half in de cash up.”

“Splits?” queried Professor Brick.

“Yezzah, splits. One night Gus Johnsing dar hed a razzar 'n'

a ball er bluin', 'n' we was playin' wif papah chips, 'n' he split 'em 'n' blued de raw side, 'n' he'd er cashed in mo'n fohty dollahs ef I hadn' drapped. Dat so, Johnsing?"

"Yezzah," said Mr. Johnson, gloomily.

"I drapped, didn' I?"

"Yezzah."

"Let de bank keep hisself," said the reverend gentleman in



conclusion. "See dat yo' money is in, 'n' yo' naybers' money — specially yo' naybers'. Let no man cash in twell de wind-up."

"Why's dat?" inquired Mr. Williams, rising.

"Didn' yo' cash in thutty-fo' dollahs dat night wen yo' said yo' doctah said yo' had small-pox 'n' kuddent stay up later'n 1.0'clock?"

"Yezzah," said Mr. Williams. "'N' I was troubled in m' stummick."

"Yo'd been mo' troubled in yo' stummick ef I kud ha' seen yu' later. Twonny-eight dollahs ob dem chips come from de pondbroakah's aroun' de cornder."

Mr. Williams sat down.

"I'se been thutty-fo' yars bankin'," said the Reverend Mr. Smith, "'n' I'se jess got my eye teeth cut so's I know bettah. I'se quit

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bankin'. I'se smoked in a powder house 'n' I'se druv a dynamike kyart wif skittish mules in Pennsylvany, but bankin' at pokah is triflin' wif Providince. De next lesson'l be on 'De Bline, Straggle, 'n' Limmick', by Perfesser Brick, 'n' suckahs from Hoboken'll be admitted free on payment of half a dollah."

The club then went into executive session.

## THE THOMPSON STREET POKER CLUB LECTURES.

NO. II.

PROF. BRICK DISSERTATES ON "DE BLINE, STRAGGLE, 'N' LIMMICK."



THE second lecture of the scientific series was delivered last Saturday evening by Professor Brick at the rooms of the Thompson Street Poker Club, the Rev. Mr. Thankful Smith in the chair. Present were Mr. Tooter Williams, Elder Jubilee Anderson, Mr. Cyanide Whiffles, and Mr. Gus Johnson. Seven gentlemen from Weehawken were admitted by courtesy, upon payment of fifty cents each. The club was called to order at 8:15 p. m.

The reading of the minutes of the last meeting was dispensed with upon motion of Mr. Whiffles, as the secretary had forgotten to take any notes.

The report of the House Committee, to the effect that the Janitor had declined to fill the lamps until the last kerosene bill had been paid, was read and approved.

The name of Judge Montgomery Zerubabel Wax, of Jersey City, proposed for membership by Mr. Tooter Williams, was

referred back by the Governing Committee, with a request that the following points be considered : first, that the nomination had not been seconded, as required by Paragraph V., Article 21, Section XVI., of the Constitution ; and second, that the Committee had ascertained that Judge Wax was not a judge of anything but Jersey whisky, and had had but little recent opportunity to judge that, as he had just been released from a two years' engagement at Sing Sing, whither he had been sent for borrowing a stove said to have been the property of an entire stranger. Under these circumstances the Governing Committee have been placed in doubt.

Mr. Williams rose to a question of privilege. He moved that his friend be unanimously elected by a suspension of the rules. As to that stove incident, he was certain that either a habeas corpus or an alibi could be proven. The motion was lost, Mr. Williams alone voting in the affirmative. He then begged to be allowed to withdraw the judge's name, and by unanimous consent the application was granted.



Professor Brick then advanced to the rostrum, and announcing his subject, spoke as follows :

“ De study ob de Bline am psyhylogumcholly nex’ ter de study ob de Straggle, ’n’ bofe am proximus ter de study ob de Limmick.

“ De Bline am chips called de Ante, ’n’ am shoved up befo’ de kyards an parsed round, ’n’ befo’ de bline man sees he’s got tree jacks, fo’ fo’s, er a bobtail. Some mokes kinder fergit ter put up de bline till aftah dey has a squint at de skin, ’n’ den ef dey has trees dey shoves up haf de limmick, ’n’ on two par shoves up quartah de limmick, ’n’ on one par a fo’th de limmick, ’n’ on a nace high don’t shove up no bline ceptin’ dey kin borry chips handy. I don’t name no names, but I see Gus Johnsing squirmin’ oneasy in he cha’r.”

All eyes were turned upon Mr. Johnson, who colored violently, but pretended to be absorbed in reflection.

“ Some niggahs b’leeve in whoopin’ up de bline continuous, ’n’ rises hit, bad luck er good luck,” continued the professor.

“ Now whad’s de good in dat? Sposen de reg’lar bline am a quartah, ’n’ yo’ hasn’t hed nuffin’ ’ceptin’ bobtails ’n’ kilters fer two hours. Will a dollah bline work a mirrykle ’n’ brung yo’ fo’ naces? Am a two dollah bline gwine ter coax t’ree jacks ’n’ a par outen de pack?”

“ Dat’s what I b’leeve,” interrupted Mr. Tooter Williams; “ fo’ce de luck, ’n’ fo’ce her hard.”

“ Fo’ce nuffin!” retorted the lecturer, with some warmth. “ Yo’ fo’ced de luck at de las’ meetin’, yo’ did—yas yo’ did!—’n’ yo’ went bline a dollah, ’n’ straggled two dollahs, ’n’ ef I hedn’t got yo’ overcoat outen soak ’n’ loan yo’ t’ree dollahs, yo’d have et yo’

Crissmuss tukky in de po' house. Doan' talk ter me about fo'cin!"

Mr. Williams muttered something relevant to seeing the lecturer outside, and then folded his arms defiantly and glowered upon him.

"De bes' way," continued the professor, calmly, "am ter make de bline humble 'n' keep her down-sperrited."

"'N' 'den sposen yo' gits in a pat strake," suggested Mr. Whiffles.

"Rise her," said the professor. "Aftah de suckahs hez come in on de meek and lowly bline, give her a jintle histe, boost her up, kinder stimmylate her wif a dollah. Den de niggah wif a kipple o' squeens, he comb 'em over 'n' sorts 'em out 'n' says kinder soffly ter hisse'f, 'Well, I'se stuck fer a quartah, 'n' I mout ketch another squeen, 'n' I kain't drap now, befo' de draw,' 'n' he comes in fer a dollah. Den de coon wif de bobtail flisk, he sends a dollah ter help de quartah *he's* blew in, 'n' de moke wif two par *he* goes a dollah, 'n' dar yo' is.

"'N' sposen," inquired Mr. Whiffles, "sposen de flisk 'n' de two par fill?"

"W'y den," asseverated the professor, "de moke wif de flisk'll bet de limmick, er play coony 'n' bet a chip, 'n' de full niggah'll draw he breff hard 'n' rise a dollah, 'n' yo'll know de red flag's out, 'n' git onto de side track."

"Jesso!" murmured Elder Jubilee Anderson, who had recently been there.

"Keep de bline down ter po' house figgers, 'n' den all de fools kin cum in, 'n' ef yo' doan' find nuffin' in yo' own han', wizzle yo' pet hymn 'n' dror fo' kyards 'n' hit hain't cos' much, but ef yo' find t'ree kinks er a flisk, yo' kin rise her de limmick."

“How much did yo’ win at pokah las’ yeah?” sarcastically inquired Mr. Williams, rising.

“Not kyountin’ t’ree hund’ed ’n’ s’teen dollahs wuff er yo’ papah, wot I tuk at pah,” rejoined the professor, “I’se ’bout thutty-six dollahs out. W’en yo’ gits crazy ’n’ fergits yo’self ’n’ pays up, I’ll be mo’n two hund’ed in. I’ll jes’ call it thutty-six out, Tooter.”

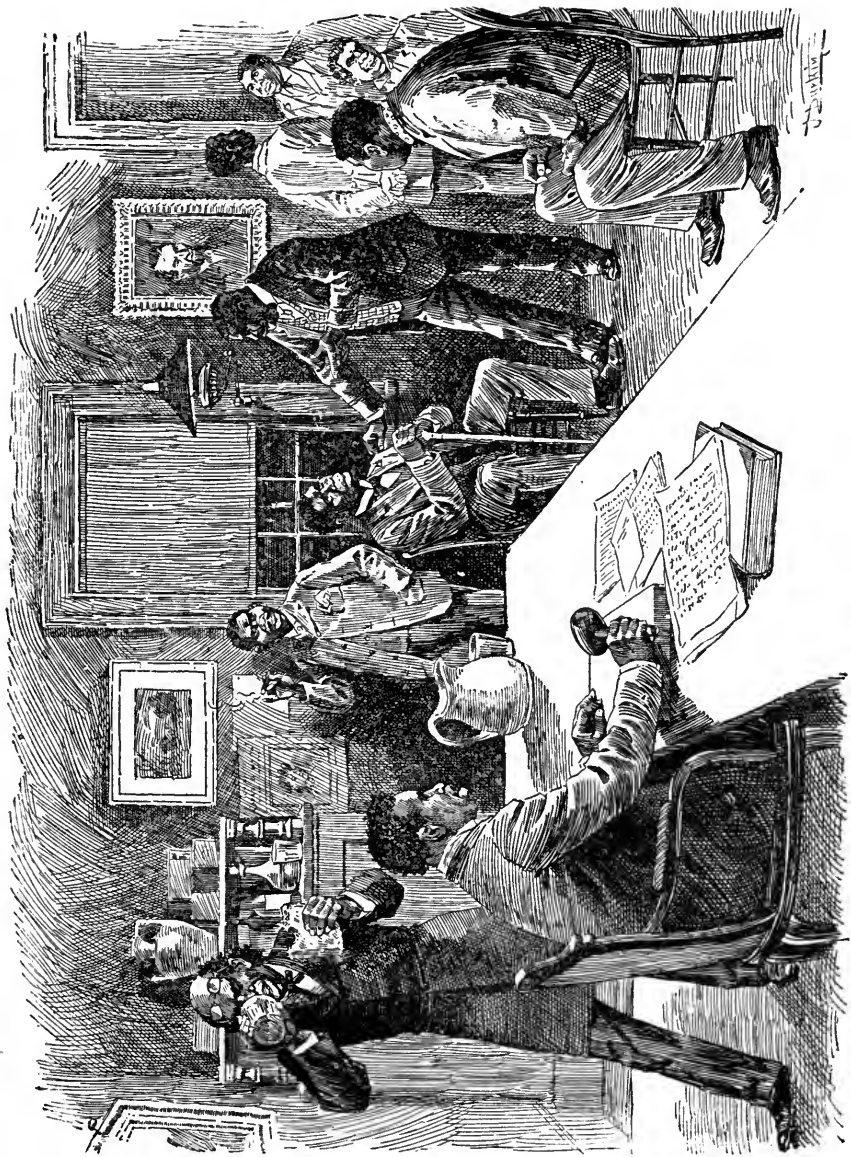
Mr. Williams sat down.

“De straggle am on’y good w’en yo’ wanter crowd de mo’ners ’n’ hog de aige. Doan’ straggle ’ceptin’ yo’ am de pet chile o’ calamity ’n’ feels yo’ power a comin’. De straggle doan’ give no aige aftah de dror. W’en yo’ makes up yo’ mine ter straggle, make up yo’ mine ter histe her de limmick aftah de dror, take two kyards, lock fierce ’n’ bet de limmick. I never straggle ’ceptin’ I’se fairly bilious wif luck, ’n’ de mo’ners am skittish. De man wot straggles w’en he luck am weak ’n’ the back is a man wot’ll be fust ter borry chips ’n’ las’ ter pay ’em. Doan’ straggle, niggahs.”

At this juncture the lecturer paused, waved his hand to the audience as a signal that they might converse for a few moments, and discuss the weighty matters he had laid before them, and proceeded to refresh himself with a glass of milk which he had previously placed upon the rostrum, and with a triangle of pie which he extracted from his coat-tail pocket. Then he continued as follows:

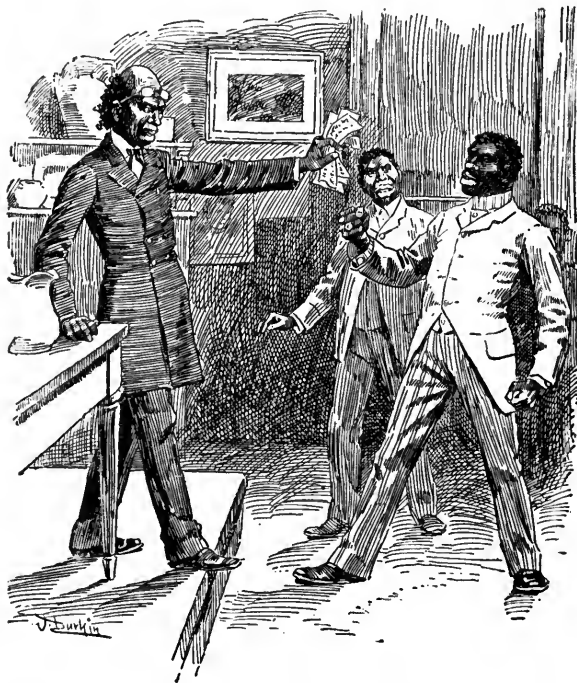
“De mattah ob de limmick am mo’ seeryus. De limmick shud be ten times de ante at de leastes’, ’n’ bettah twonny times de ante. Quartah ante ’n’ half dollah limmick am good chucky-lucky, but po’ pokah. Ten cent ante ’n’ two dollah limmick ’ll give a niggah all de chance ter lose he wants. Ten cent ante ’n’ five dollah limmick’s de game I hopes ter play aftah Gabril toots he ho’n, ’n’ we’ll





THE PROFESSOR THEN REFRESHED HIMSELF WITH A GLASS OF MILK AND A TRIANGLE OF PIE.

all be Vanderbilks. W'en de limmick 'n' de ante am fixed, doan let no niggah rise her. W'en some mokes git t'ree dollahs ter de bad, dey wants ter rise de limmick, 'n' den hard feelin's 'n' bad papah begin ter git in cirkylashin. Dat's all I'se got ter say."



"Befo' dis lectur closes," observed Mr. Williams, rising with hauteur and holding his left hand in such a manner that his amethyst ring showed to best advantage, "I wanter know did de perfesser mean ter spress any doubts ob my honah in de remarks 'bout de trifin' bits o' paper I hez out. Dat's whad I wanter know."

"I didn' say nuffin' 'bout yo' honah, Toot," explained the professor, sweetly. "I said dat I had t'ree hund'ed 'n' s'teen dollahs wuff er yo' I O U's, 'n' I'se held 'em fer fo'teen monts, 'n' yo' seem willin' I shud hole 'em fer fo'teen mo'. Ef yo' honah's sensitive, Toot, I'll sell de hull lot ter yo' fer t'ree dollahs."

"I—I gess—ef yo' means ter doubt my honah—" began Mr. Williams hotly.

"Am dat t'ree dollah offer a go?" queried the professor.

“I doan ’low no coon ter doubt my honah,” said Mr. Williams, glaring upon the assemblage.

“I’ll sell ’em fer two dollahs,” said the professor.

“De honah ob a gen’leman—”

“Gimme a dollah, ’n’ de hull batch am yo’n,” said the professor.

“I’ll fight ter de las’ gasp fer my honah,” said Mr. Williams.

“Haff a dollah,” said the professor, holding up the notes in question.

“Ef—ef yo’ didn’ mean nuffin’ agin my honah,” said Mr. Williams, “yo’ pollygy am ’cepted.”

Here the gavel fell; the chairman announced that the next lecture would be by Elder Jubilee Anderson, on “Mirrikles in de Dror,” and the club adjourned to put the professor’s theory into practice.

## THE THOMPSON STREET POKER CLUB LECTURES.

NO. III.

ELDER JUBILEE ANDERSON LECTURES ON "DE MIRRYKLES OB DE DROR."



THE third lecture of the scientific series at the Thompson Street Poker Club was delivered by Elder Jubilee Anderson last Saturday evening. There were present Professor Brick, Messrs. Tooter Williams, Gus Johnson, and Cyanide Whiffles, and the Rev. Mr. Thankful Smith, who occupied the chair. There were also present four invited guests, who had paid fifty cents apiece, and became thereby eligible to receive the club's hospitality.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and approved. Mr. Tooter Williams, of Special Committee, reported that in accordance with instructions he had consulted a legal adviser, who informed him that by only one process of law could the club recover its chips from the janitor, who held them in garnishee for nine dollars' rent.

Professor Brick rose to a question of privilege :

"Ken de hon'ble gen'leman tole de club what prossis ob law dat am?"

“Cer’nly,” replied Mr. Williams, affably. “Pay de bill.”  
Prof. Brick sat down.

Mr. Cyanide Whiffles arose with some excitement. Had Mr. Williams any objections to naming the eminent legal adviser whom he had consulted?

Mr. Williams, proudly, had none. He had not gone to cheap and worthless sources of information. He had consulted no less an authority upon jurisprudence than the gentleman who regulates the domestic economy of Mr. Delancey Nicoll’s house. Was Mr. Whiffles satisfied?

Mr. Whiffles was.

Mr. Gus Johnson moved that the club allow the chips to remain in garnishee until the nine dollars was paid, and the motion was unanimously carried.

There being no further business before the Club, Elder Jubilee Anderson advanced to the rostrum and spoke as follows:



“ DE MIRRYKLES OB DE DROR.

“ When de profit Mosis he done grew weary chasin’ de pillows ob smoke in de desert ob Sary Hary, ’n’ he ’n’ King Faro—”

Mr. Willams rose to a question of privilege. Was this a poker lecture or a Salvation Army address? He did not think the invited guests had paid their half-dollars to get their salvations repaired, but rather to—

“ Ordah!” The gavel fell, and Mr. Williams sat down. “ De honnerble gen’leman’ll kernfine hese’f ter pokah ’n’ not blow in gospil.” Thus the chair.

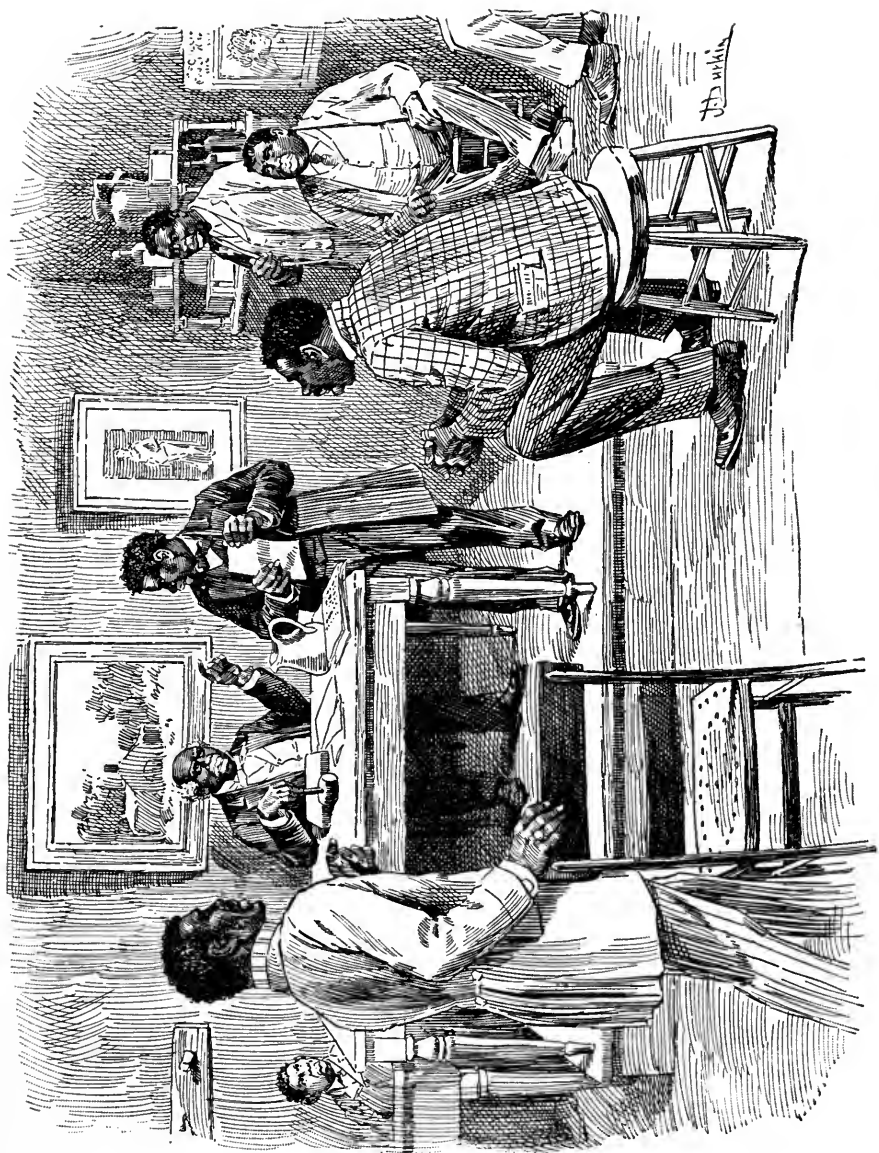
The Elder, thus admonished, folded the first nine pages of his address, inserted them in his left coat-tail pocket, and somewhat nervously resumed.

“ Dey is no mo’ mirrykles in dese yar sinful days, ’ceptin’ de mirrykles in pokah.”

“ Jesso,” echoed Professor Brick.

“ I was playin’ ten dollah froze-out wif Mistah Willyums las’ Choosday,” continued the lecturer, “ ’n’ I had fo’ eight speckers in de deal, ’n’ Toot he didn’ have nuffin’, ’n’ I drored one kyard, ’n’ Tooter he drored fo’ kyards, ’n’ he lay down a juce on de table, jes’ so, ’n’ he says, says he, ‘ I kin jess dror like a chimly wif juices,’ ’n’ I cotch a juce in de dror, ’n’ Toot, he comb over he fo’ kyards ’n’ bet a quartah, ’n’ I rise him a dollah, ’n’ he rised me back a quartah, ’n’ I rise him five dollahs, ’n’ he skin he han’ agin ’n’ rise a quartah mo,’ ’n’ I shoves up my las’ chip, ’n’ he calls, ’n’ den I shows up de fo’ eight speckers ’n’ de juce, ’n’ Toot he skun out fo’ squeens.”

A murmur of wonder ran through the room. Then the Rev. Mr. Thankful Smith reflectively inquired :



“ELDAH JUB’LEE’LL QUIT DIS YAR LECTEK. HE DOAN’ UNDERSTAN’ HE SUBJEK.”

“Who doled de han’?”

“I ’bjeck !” excitedly exclaimed Mr. Williams.

“Toot,” sweetly remarked the chairman, “dat info’mation am nessary ter know de size ob de mirrykle. *Who* doled de kyards?”

“Mistah Willyums,” said the lecturer.

“No mirrykle,” said the chairman.

“Whuffer yo’ say dat?” hotly demanded Mr. Williams. “Kint a gen’leman win squar’ on he own deal?”

“Yezzah,” replied the Rev. Thankful Smith, courteously. “A gen’leman kin win on he deal, ’n’ he kin lose on he deal, bud when de only mirrykles ob de dror happens w’en he’s fingered de pack, ’n’ w’en all de mirrykles am glued ter his side ob de table fer keeps, Prov’dence am gittin’ too lop-sided—dat’s all.”

Mr. Williams breathed heavily for several minutes, but made no reply.

“Mirrykles,” continued the lecturer, “am mo’ apt ter happen w’en de las’ roun’ ob jackers is parsin’. W’en I’se opened a jacker wif two par, naces up, ’n’ one coon he draps in ’n’ drors fo’ kyards, ’n’ anothah moke he say he’ll fo’ce he luck ’n’ dror five kyards, ’n’ de othah mahog’ny gen’leman say he doan’ speck nuffin’ but jes’ fer fun he’ll make her lively ’n’ dror two kyards, ’n’ de cullerd suckah nex’ ter me he say he doan’ keer fer he chips, ’n’ puts up ’n’ wants t’ree kyards—den I feels dat sorter shiver in de toes wat means dat dar’s gwine ter be fo’ er five mirrykles out, ’n’ I lies low.”

“K’rect !” remarked Professor Brick, approvingly, and Mr. Gus Johnson applauded.

“Whad I wanter know,” respectfully inquired Mr. Cyanide Whiffles, “am whedder mirrykles am apt ter happen mo’n once in a game?”



“Dat am de onsartineest thing whad kin be speeunced,” replied the lecturer. “De mirrykle—”

“De mirrykle,” interrupted the Chair, acting under Rule 19, Article XXXI. of the By-laws, “de mirrykle am de leastes’ apt ter happen w’en I’m in de game, ’n’ got my boodle in de pot, ’n’ de othah coons knows how sry I kin be in a mix-up wif a razzar. Bud ef Bre’r Tooter ’n’ Bre’r Cyanide is pokin’ wif t’ree Weehawkin barbabs on two-dollah limmick, a j’ar crap ob mirrykles might be ’spected jes’ ez long ez de barbabs kud ’strain hard feelin’s ’n’ pud up de cash.”

“Didjer meanter say”—began Mr. Williams, in a voice of war.

“I meant ter say, Toot,” sweetly rejoined the Chairman, “dat dey is mo’ moanin’ in barbabs suckles in Weehawken since yo’ ’n’ Cy Whiffles got ter drappin’ over Sunday fer a fren’ly game, dan sence Black Friday struck dis town, ’n’ mo’ talk ’bout mirrykles dan dey was befo’ de Flood.”

“Ef Cy an’ me doan’ play squar’, I’ll—”

“’Strain yosef, Toot,” gently said the Chairman. “Jess so long ez yo’ mirryles is wukked in Weehawken, an’ ef de barbabs kin



stan' it, / kin. Bud w'en mo'n one mirrykle draps inter a game whar I'se keepin' my own feelin's on tap, dar's gwine ter be a namberlance call in five minits. Once in fo'teen monts a man kin dror fo' squeeens ter a juce in a jacker on he deal, 'n' I won't say nuffin', but dat fernomynon hed bettah be as seldom ez a six-tailed comick in de sky. Dat's all. *Eldah Jub'lee'll quit dis yar lecturer.* He doan' understan' he subjek. Dey ain't no mirrykles in pokah, 'ceptin' w'en a man doan' keep he eye skint. Dat's all. At de nex' meetin', Brer Johnson'll lecturer on Bobtail Strakes 'n' Flisks, wif some remarks on Holdin' up Siders."

The Club then went into executive session.

## THE THOMPSON STREET POKER CLUB LECTURES.

NO. IV.

MR. GUS JOHNSON LECTURES ON BOB-TAILED STRAIGHTS, FLUSHES, AND SIDERS.



MR. GUS JOHNSON'S début as a lecturer drew nine eminent citizens of Hoboken to the meeting of the Thompson Street Poker Club last Saturday evening. Seven paid the full admission fee, under the privilege accorded invited guests by Section 41, Article XXVI. of the By-Laws; one was admitted on payment of twenty-seven cents, as he only had thirty about his clothes, and needed three with which to get back to Hoboken; and one, who had formerly been Mr. Johnson's silent partner in an extensive kalsomining contract, was admitted on that gentleman's note of hand, payable in thirty days and indorsed by Elder Jubilee Anderson.

There were also present Professor Brick, Messrs. Cyanide Whiffles and Tooter Williams the Elder, and the Rev. Mr. Thankful Smith, who, as usual, occupied the chair.

The reading of the minutes of the last meeting was dispensed with upon motion of the secretary, who had inadvertently left them home in his other pants.

Notice was given by Professor Brick that at the next meeting he proposed to introduce an amendment to the constitution providing for the payment of I O U's. He thought that if the treasurer assumed charge of these tokens, and prosecuted their signers with due diligence, both the financial condition and happiness of many members would be materially advanced.

Mr. Tooter Williams rose to a question of privilege. Did the honorable gentleman intend to be personal in this proposition?

The Professor denied any special reference to any member present.

"Den whuffer yo' gaze me straight in de yi fer?" belligerently inquired Mr. Williams. "Yas yo' did! gaze me straight in de yi, yo' did, 'n' whuffer yo' do dat?"

"Gotter gaze at somebody, hezn't I?" queried the professor, evasively.

"'N' spozen I *hez* got papah out?" pursued Mr. Williams, indignantly appealing to the company at large. "Sposen de Kemmikle Bank got papah out? Did jer spose me er Astah er Vanderbilk or Jay Gool's gotter kerry wads all de time, 'n'—"

"Ordah!" ruled the Chair.

"Kint I spoke for my credick!" yelled Mr. Williams.

"Too big a contrack for dis evenin', Toot," suavely remarked the Chairman. "S'mother evenin'. De Chair rules dat Mistah Willums am outen ordah, 'n' de Perfesser'll wifdraw he motion. De trasherer says he aint no clarin' house, 'n' ef he hed ter live on de perkintage on draffs c'lected from Tooter, he'd run hese'f bar'-

foot in twenty-fo' hours, 'n' be de champeen livin' skellington in de kentry in lessen fo' weeks."

Mr. Williams glowered upon the Professor, and murmured something relevant to seeing him later, and both sat down.

Mr. Gus Johnson then mounted the platform, and announcing as his subject, "Bobtail Strakes, Flisks 'n' Siders," spoke as follows:

"De niggah dat'll wade in agin' one man, w'en all he's got's a strake busted wide open in de miggle, am a niggah dat's boun ter froff at de mouff, 'n' go up ter spen' he las' days at de 'Sylum in a strake-jacket befo' punkin seasin."

"Dasso!" murmured Elder Jubilee Anderson, with fervor.

"De coon dat allers draws ter miggle strakes in a jacker," pursued the lecturer, "am got his troo ticket fer de po'house, 'n' de moke what gits glistenin' in de yi w'en he combs fo' clubs outen he han', 'n' pays tree dollahs fer a chance ter fish fer de odder club, wif only two playin' agin him, aint never gwine ter die from gittin tired cuttin' coupons w'en he gits ter be Cy Fiel's age."



MR. GUS JOHNSON.

“Haint dar no 'ceptions ter dat rule?” sarcastically inquired Mr. Williams. “Dat's whad *I* wanter know.”

“De 'ception in yo' case,” rejoined Mr. Johnson, with a dignity which befitted his position, “am w'en yo' am dealin'.”

“Whad yo' mean by dat insulk?” hotly demanded Mr. Williams.

“Dat's no insulk,” replied Mr. Johnson. “Dat's complimentin' yo' skyence. Las' game we played, me 'n' Cy Whiffles kyounted, 'n' yo' drored ter thutty-tree strakes 'n' flisks, 'n' fulled twenny-fo', 'n' twenny-one whad yo' fulled wuz on yo' own deal.”

“Deed, dat's a fack!” corroborated Mr. Whiffles.

Mr. Williams sat down.

“De perkintage in bobtails am eleben 'n' tree-fo'ths ter one agin fullin' a strake in de miggie, 'n' seben ter one agin fullin' a double ender strake, 'n' five 'n' haff ter one agin fullin' a flisk, 'n' in a tree-handed game dat's wuss perkintage dan in chucky-lucky.”

“Didn' I full dat strake agin yo', playin' freeze out, Crissmas?” inquired Mr. Cyanide Whiffles, respectfully.

“Yass yo' did, 'n' wen yo' did, didn' I full dat two par squeens up, 'n' wipe yo' up wif de flo?” rejoined the lecturer.

“Yezzah,” gloomily responded Mr. Whiffles.

“Didn' yo' go home wifout yo' ovahcote?” continued Mr. Johnson.

“Deed I did. Got dat coff yit what I kotched,” assented Mr. Whiffles, still more gloomily, resuming his seat with the air of a man who was convinced he had made a mistake.

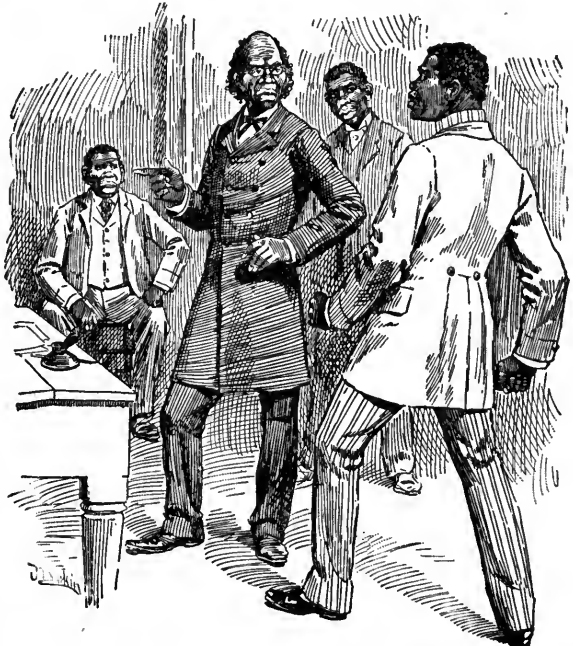
“De fac' am plain ez a freckled merlatter,” continued the lecturer, “dat strakes 'n' flisks am mo' onreliable den a mewl in fly-time. I kyounted once, jes' fer fun, 'n' I foun' dat I spent s'teen

dollahs 'n' a half drorin' ter strakes befo' I done got holt er my luck, 'n' wen I kotched her, 'n' bet one chip ez a coaxer, Toot Willyums he sez, sezee, 'Gus,' sezee, 'yo's got too much glimmer in yo' yi, 'n' I'll jes'—jes' call dat chip,' sezee" (Laughter, in which Mr. Williams heartily joined), "'n' I on'y wonned sixty-fo' cents."

"Dasso. Saw dat my-se'f," asseverated Professor Brick.

"De morrul is," said the lecturer, "wen yo's fa'rly wallerin' in luck, 'n' t'rees 'n' two-par 'n' patseys is a comin' reg'lar 'n' yo' hez a stacker blues higher'n Trinicky chu'ch, den yo' kin whoop up de game on bobtails 'n' miggle strakes; bud when de luck's limp'in' erlong, carryin' one foot free, 'n' yo's bin sittin' wif de mo'ners fer fo' hours, dribblin' out yo' substance, 'n' hain't got mor'n one blue

'n' t'ree reds 'n' nine whites lef', 'n' yo' Waterberry's bruk, an' all de odder niggahs is jumpin' onto yo' wif bofe feet, wy den I 'vise yo' ter leave strakes 'n' flisks, 'n' kinder loaf 'n' took her easy, 'n' milk yo' pile caffle, 'n' go slow until t'ree kinks er a patsey slides in. Fo'cin' de luck on strakes 'n' flisks am buckin' agin a buckick shop—yo' kin lose, bud yo' kain't win."



"DEN WUFFER YO' GAZE ME STRAIGHT DE YI?"

“Jesso! Hallylujy! dat’s de troof!” excitedly exclaimed the Elder, who forgot himself in his enthusiasm, and was called to order.

“De man whad plays miggles strakes ’ll play siders. Sposen a niggah’s got a pa’r o’ juices ’n’ a nace befo’ de dror. He sez ter hese’f, sezee, ‘I’ll jes’ hole up dis yar nace ez a sider, ’n’ ef I kotch a nace, I’ll lam beeswax outen de odder mokes,’ sezee. Dat’s triflin’ wid Prov’dence.”

“Ain’t bullicks up good?” queried Mr. Williams.

“Not w’en yo’s in de game, Toot,” was the soft reply. “W’en yo’s in, fo’cin’ yo’ luck, de on’y sider I’ll hole up am t’ree bullicks ’n a par. Didn’t I cotch bullicks up in dat las’ jacker de odder night, ’n’ didn’ yo’ rise me so’s I’d hafter walk home wifout my close ef I’d called yo’?”

“Yas,” chuckled Mr. Williams, “’n’ whad jer ’spose I made dat bluff on?”

“Fo’ jacks?” said Mr. Johnson.

“Fo’ gran’moddors!” retorted Mr. Williams, with scorn. “I done skun yo’ outen dat pot on a Nirish full.”

“’N’ whad’s a Nirish full?” asked Mr. Johnson.

“T’ree hearts ’n’ a pair o’ clubs,” said Mr. Williams, with a hoarse laugh.

Mr. Johnson swooned.

The chair then announced that the next lecture would be delivered by Mr. Cyanide Whiffles, on “De Kitty ’n’ Jackers,” and the Club adjourned.



## THE THOMPSON STREET POKER CLUB LECTURES.

NO. V.

MR. CYANIDE WHIFFLES LECTURES ON "DE KITTY 'N' JACKERS."



R. CYANIDE WHIFFLES was disappointed at the meagre attendance of invited guests at the Thompson Street Poker Club last Saturday evening, on the occasion of his lecture. The regular members showed up, however, in force, there being present Messrs. Tooter Williams and Gus Johnson, Elder Jubilee Anderson, Prof. Brick, and the Reverend Mr. Thankful Smith, who, as usual, occupied the chair. The club was called to order at 8 o'clock sharp.

A recess of one-half hour was then taken, but no applicants for admission appeared. Mr. Tooter Williams volunteered to go outside as a committee of one, to bark, and try to induce some citizens with a thirst for science to come and drink at the pure rills within, but at 8:45 he returned without success, and the meeting was re-called to order.

Elder Jubilee Anderson arose to a question of privilege. The absence of guests might be looked upon with indifference by cer-

tain members whom he would not name, but the absence of their half-dollars from the club treasury would be missed at the end of the evening if the janitor should drop in with that long-suffering kerosene bill. He did not wish to make any unpleasant remarks, but the five guests who remained to play after the last meeting had gone home without either ulsters or money, and probably had either to swim to Hoboken or work their passage, and he feared this fact had somewhat dampened the enthusiasm on the other side of the North River. He therefore desired to know what the club was going to do with guests at the next meeting?

“Skun ’em!” exclaimed Mr. Williams.

“Ordah!” commanded the chair.

“Show me a Hoboken niggah, ’n’ I’ll show you my meat!” continued Mr. Williams.

“Ordah!”

“I’ll skun anny Noo Jarsey moke outen he salvation, if it’s de las’ ack er my dissypatid c’reer!”

“Tooter Williams am fined a quartah!” said the chair.

“I’m gwinter ’spress my feelin’s in dis club ef it costs a DOLLAR!” yelled Mr. Williams, flinging a bill of that denomination on the desk. “Yar I comes wif a wad, ’n’ bruk a nengagement wif my bes’ lady ter rip de hide offen some suckah coon from Hoboken, ’n’ dar hain’t no suckah come. I’s raw, I is, ’n’ bilious, ’n’ ef it cos’ me de las’ dollah I got, I say it free.”

“Hez—hez yo’ got yo’ dollah’s wuff now?” calmly inquired the chairman, folding the bill lengthwise and putting it behind his ear. “Kase ef yo’ feels colicky nuff to spress ten dollah’s wuff er feelin’s, I’ll give yo’ two minnits mo’.”

Mr. Williams’s only reply was to fling himself haughtily into

his seat, and favor Professor Brick with a prolonged and belligerent stare, without any cause which that gentleman could ascertain.

This breezy interlude having thus come to an affable close, Mr.

Cyanide Whiffles ascended the dais, and after an elaborate bow to the chair, announced his subject as "De Kitty 'n' Jackers," and spoke as follows:

"De kitty am a leak in de bar'l ob profits at pokah, whad oughter to be stopped by ack of kungresh. In de good ole days befo' de wah, de kitty useter be on'y a small slice outen de bigges' jacker, whad didn' kyount no-how, bud now de kitty-keepah rakes in a wite chip outen a one-par pot, 'n' a red chip outen t'rees, 'n' a blue chip outen de jacker, 'n' w'en dey's a big razzle 'n' de coons is climbin' one ovah de udder, he steals a blue chip on each rise—"



MR. CYANIDE WHIFFLES.

"Da's de Lan's troof!" exclaimed Professor Brick.

"'N' bimeby whad's de resulk?" inquired the lecturer.

“W’y, de resulk am dat de kitty gits all de boodle, ’n’ de play-ahs gits bruk.”

“Doan’ de kitty pay fer de sassengers ’n’ cigyahs ’n’ beer?” queried Mr. Williams.

“Yezzah,” responded the lecturer, “’n’ each moke eats sassengers wen he doan’ want ’em, ’n’ smokes mo’ ciggahs dan would kill a mewl, ’n’ drinks mo’ beer dan would pizen a Milwaukee hog, sozeter git he share. Ef pokah am on’y ter skin de membahs, ter set up a free lunch costin’ mo’n two dollahs a head, I’ll go ter Delmunniky’s ’n’ feed cheapah.”

“Wudjer bollish de kitty?” inquired the chairman, under the right given him by Article LXI. of the Constitution.

“Nozah,” said the lecturer. “Bud I’d put de kitty-keepah undah bons not ter blow her inter he own stack wen de membahs ain’t watchin’.”

“Whad yo’ mean by dat?” queried Mr. Williams, in a voice of war.

“I doan’ mean nuffin’ pussonal, Toot” said Mr. Whiffles. “Bud I membah dat de las’ time yo’ kep’ de kitty, ’n’ we played twell sun-up, ’n’ all de membahs got lef’ ’ceptin’ yo’, ’n’ yo’ raked outen all de pots, ’n’ tuk two blues outen each jacker, de kitty was on’y fo’ blues, six reds, ’n’ t’ree wites at de en’ ob de game, ’n’ de beer bill ’n’ sassengers was on’y two dollahs—dat’s what I mean.”

“’N’ didjer s’pose I swinnle de kitty?” pursued Mr. Williams, still unmollified.

“Nozah. I on’y s’posed dat de kitty got ter meanderin’ car’less like, ’n’ crope inter yo’ pile.”

“Dat’s a lie!” yelled Mr. Williams, who felt that his honor was at stake.



"I'LL PAY A FINE OB FIVE DOLLAHS TER LICK CY WHIFFLES DIS MINNIT!"

"Ordah!" cried the chair.

"I'll pay a fine ob five dollahs ter lick Cy Whiffles dis minnit," exclaimed Mr. Williams, capering with anger and flourishing his wad.

"Make her ten 'n' I'll s'pend de rules," said the chair.

"*Come outside 'n' I'll make it cheapah'n dat,*" remarked Mr. Whiffles, preparing to take off his coat.

"I—I done leff my rizzer home," said Mr. Williams.

"I'll loan yo' one," said Mr. Whiffles.

Mr. Williams sat down, and order was restored.

"Dar's a limmick on de game," said the lecturer, "'n' dar should be a limmick on de kitty. Two sassengers 'n' fo' bottles er beer, 'n' fo' cigyahs cos' haff er dollah, 'n' six haffs is t'ree dollahs, 'n' dat's enuff fer dis club, 'n' at de nex' meetin' I'll pud in a mendmink ter de rules, puttin' dat limmick on de pussy."

"Hooray!" exclaimed Professor Brick, who was promptly fined ten cents for undue enthusiasm.

"Now ez ter jackers," pursued the lecturer, "I'se on'y dis ter say. De game whad hez jackers ebery fo' minnits, am a game whad gits a good man to go wrong. Dar's no mo' skyence in a jacker dan in climbin' a greezed pole, bud it's de easies' way ter slide ter de po' house. In de good ole days befo' de wah, dey warn't no jackers, 'n' pokah wuz pokah, 'n' not chucky-lucky. Now, w'enever a coon gits t'ree dollahs out, he sez, sezee, 'Les' have a roun' er jackers', sezee, 'n' den, er cose, some odder make gits low-speritted, 'n' *he* sez, sezee, 'Les' jacker one roun' mo', sezee, 'n' den dey's all jackers 'n' no skyence. Las' time I played, I wuz fohty-t'ree dollahs ter de good aftah nine hours' hard wuk, 'n' de Per-fesser he call fer one roun' er jackers, 'n' Gus Johns'n he call fer

a roun', 'n' Tooter, he arst fer jes' one mo', 'n' den Elder Jubbly *he* howls fer one, 'n' in twonny-eight minnits I done los' all my chips 'n' blowed in s'teen dollahs mo'."

"Den yo' wuddent have no jackers?" queried Professor Brick.

"Nozzah, not reg'lar," returned the lecturer. "Make her de rule ter have de jacker come on'y wen all de coons draps 'n' parses, 'n' t'ree jackers at de las' ob de game, 'n' I's wif de mo'ners at de funeril; but dis yar game, whad's one fo'th pokah 'n' t'ree-fo'ths jackers, wud skun Gabril hese'f outen he ho'n. Yo' heah my bazoo."

The chairman then announced that at the next lecture Mr. Tooter Williams would give expert views on "De Deal," and the club went into executive session.

## THE THOMPSON STREET POKER CLUB LECTURES.

NO. VI.

MR. TOOTER WILLIAMS LECTURES ON "DE DEAL."



HE sixth lecture of the scientific series was given at the rooms of the Thompson Street Poker Club last Saturday evening. The Rev. Mr. Thankful Smith occupied the chair. There were present Messrs. Tooter Williams, Cyanide Whiffles, and Gus Johnson, Professor Brick, Elder Jubilee Anderson, and a select party of gentlemen from Weehawken.

Elder Jubilee Anderson, of special committee, submitted his report. At the last meeting it had been decided to give a dinner on Inauguration Day, free for club members and two dollars apiece for invited guests, and he had been appointed to select a caterer. He had the honor to report that, while no doubt Delmonico's was fairly capable enough in its way, and although he



had heard most favorably of the Brunswick from Mr. William McGlory, who gave a large supper there about four years ago, there were reasons why the Club should not dine at either of those popular resorts. After a long and careful search, he had found a gentleman in Weehawken who was able and willing to provide the club with a dinner.

“C. O. D.?” inquired Professor Brick, thoughtfully.

“Y—yezzar,” admitted the Elder, with regret. “‘Cordin’ ter de constitution I done my bes’ ter git credick ‘n’ give de club’s note fer de paymink in thutty days, but de gemman he say he kuddent do ‘zackly dat, but ef de club wanted ter pay cawsh down ‘n’ den wait thutty days fer de dinnah, he’d fix it dat way so’s ter ‘blige de club, an’—”

“De club’s note am skured by de club’s honah,” said Mr. Williams, haughtily.

“Yezzah,” returned the Elder. “I ‘splained dat, but de mo’ I talked ‘bout de club’s honah, de furder we seemed ter git from de dinnah, ‘n’—”

“Am de gen’leman outside?” asked the Rev. Mr. Thankful Smith.

“Yezzah. Dat’s him dancin’ on de landin’ ter keep warm.”

“Sho’m in,” said the Rev. Mr. Smith.

The Elder opened the door, and a half-frozen gentleman from Weehawken Heights sidled in and humbly took up a position near the stove. A deep silence fell. The Rev. Mr. Thankful Smith regarded the stranger with great benevolence for several minutes, and then said :

“Yo’ name am Beesly?”

“Yas, boss—Beesly.”

“Beesly,” continued the reverend chairman, “doan’ yo’ run a chop house?”

“Yas, boss.”

“Kin yo’ git yo’ chops on credick, Beesly?”

“No, boss.”

“Does yo’ know any membah ob dis yar club, Beesly?”

Mr. Beesly took a careful survey of the room, and then jerked his head in the direction of Mr. Tooter Williams and Mr. Cyanide Whiffles, both of whom colored, but essayed to look unconcerned.

“Yo’ knows Bre’r Willyums ’n’ Bre’r Whiffles, Beesly?” queried the chairman.

“Yas, boss, ’deed I does—gottum on de slake,” said Mr. Beesly, sadly, but firmly.

“I wanter ’splain dat me ’n’ Cy—” began Mr. Williams, rising.

“Yo’ is outen ordah, Toot,” ruled the chair.

Mr. Williams sat down and twiddled his thumbs in a manner calculated to express defiance of both Mr. Beesly and public opinion.

“Fer how much am Bre’r Willyums ’n’ Bre’r Whiffles hung up, Beesly?” queried the chair.

Mr. Beesly extracted from his ulster a large package, which, being unwrapped, proved to contain a slate.

“Mistah Willyums t’ree dollahs ’n’ twonny cents, ’n’ Mistah W’iffles two dollahs ’n’ a quartah,” he announced.

“Didn’ I tole yer to sen’ dat bill ter my office?” haughtily demanded Mr. Williams.

“Ordah!” ruled the chair. “Beesly,” he continued, “I see dat yo’ hez hed too much speeunce to catah fer dis club. De kum-

mittee 'll browse round in some naberhood whar Bre'r Willyums's lunch route hezn't spiled de credick. Dat's all, Beesly."

"Kint I stay 'n' c'lect my money?" asked Mr. Beesly, who had just emerged from his chill, and was prepared to spend the evening.

"Not dis evenin', Beesly. Bud yo' kin darnce outside 'n' keep yo' eye skint until de show's ovah," ruled the chair. "Good evenin', Beesly."

Mr. Beesly meekly departed. Both Mr. Williams and Mr. Whiffles drew a long breath of relief, and then whispered together and laughed immoderately. The gavel then fell, and Mr. Williams mounted the rostrum with a jaunty air, blew a kiss to the secretary, winked at the chairman, smiled at Mr. Whiffles, and, announcing his subject as "De Deal," spoke as follows :



“De hones’ dealah am allers caffle ter dole de kyards slow, ’n’ let all de mo’ners see dat de deal am squar’—”

“’Scuse me, Mistah Willyums,” interrupted Elder Jubilee Anderson, rising, “bud de slower yo’ deals, de offener de naces ’n’ kinks seemter wandah into yo’ han’—how yo’ ’splain dat?”

“Am de dealah ’sponsible ef de luck driffs he way?” queried the lecturer, with some warmth. “Some mokes seemster tink dat de dealah oughter on’y git juices ’n’ kitters, ’n’ dole all de fulls ’n’ flisks ter de—”

At this juncture the door slowly swung open a few inches, and Mr. Beesly’s head cautiously appeared. His eyes sought out Mr. Williams, then rested upon Mr. Whiffles, and then his head mournfully withdrew and the door closed again. This had the effect of punctuating Mr. Williams’s discourse with a long and somewhat painful pause not demanded by the rules of oratory. Mr. Whiffles, although not hitherto known to be a spirit medium, went into an abysmal trance.

“De dealah,” continued Mr. Williams, endeavoring to appear at his ease—“de dealah kint swinnle’ ceptin’ when he’s got a confederick, ’n’ de confederick walks in wif a tray full ob—”

“How am de confederick to get a tray full when he’s outen de room?” queried Professor Brick, with the air of one who has propounded a staggerer.

“De confederick walks in wif a tray full ob drinks,” scornfully continued Mr. Williams, “’n’ slaps her down on de table jes’ aftah de pack hez been cut, ’n’ den de dealah rings in the cole deck ’n’ pertends ter git mad, ’n’ de confederick takes a kick ’n’ gits out, ’n’—”

Here the door slowly opened and a chill, accompanied by the

sad countenance of Mr. Beesly, again made its appearance ; the rueful eyes sought Mr. Williams and Mr. Whiffles, and then the vision slowly vanished. Again a long pause, and a deepening of Mr. Whiffles's trance. Mr. Williams coughed, looked over his notes, cleared his throat, gazed at the ceiling, leaned on the table, and did his utmost to appear at ease. Then he said :

“ I—I jes'—jes' found out dat—I—”

“ Mistah Willyums,” said the Rev. Thankful Smith, who, by virtue of Article XXIV. of the Constitution, had a right to ask questions of the lecturer, “ kin yo' 'splain ter de comp'ny what am a Hoboken 'shake-down' ?”

“ Cer'nly,” returned Mr. Williams, affably, glad of the interruption. “ Dey plays de game usual wif six coons in Hoboken, 'n' w'en all de coons comes in on de jacker, 'n' dey all wants kyards on de dror, 'n' dey ain't kyards enuff ter go roun', one coon he calls out, 'Shake down!' 'n' all de mokes shakes out de kyards whad dey's got up dey sleeve, 'n' de dealah shuffles 'em up 'n' goes on wif de deal, 'n'—”

Here, again, the door slowly opened. Mr. Beesly's head did not appear, but a tremulous, sad voice murmured, sepulchrally :

“ Kin I spoke wif Mistah W'iffles jes'—jes' a minnit befo' I froze ter deff ?”

A gruesome silence fell. Mr. Whiffles arose, still in his trance, slowly moved toward the door, and vanished. For a few minutes there was no sound, and then the corridor without echoed to the strains of activity, a cyclone and an earthquake appeared to roll together down the stairs, and all was still. Mr. Williams listened a moment, then continued his lecture.

“ De las’ time we had a ‘shake-down’ in Hoboken,” he said, “ de late Mistah Whiffles wuz dealin’, ’n’ I was jes—”

Again the door slowly opened, and thus the voice :

“ Kin I spoke wif Mistah Willyums a minnit ? ”

The silence became so deep that Professor Brick, listening intently, could hear his hair growing. All eyes centred on Mr. Williams.

Again the voice :

“ I wanter spoke wif Mistah Willyums.”

Mr. Williams’s hand went towards his hip-pocket.

“ Yo’ hed bettah see de gen’leman a minnit, Toot,” sweetly suggested the chair.

“ Am *yo’* razzer honed ? ” inquired Elder Jubilee Anderson, with a slight rising emphasis which implied that the other party had probably honed his.

“ Woodlawn or Calv’ry, Toot ? ” darkly inquired Mr. Gus Johnson.

Mr. Williams threw back his head with a haughty air.

For a third time the voice :

“ Am Mistah Willyums a-comin’ ? ”

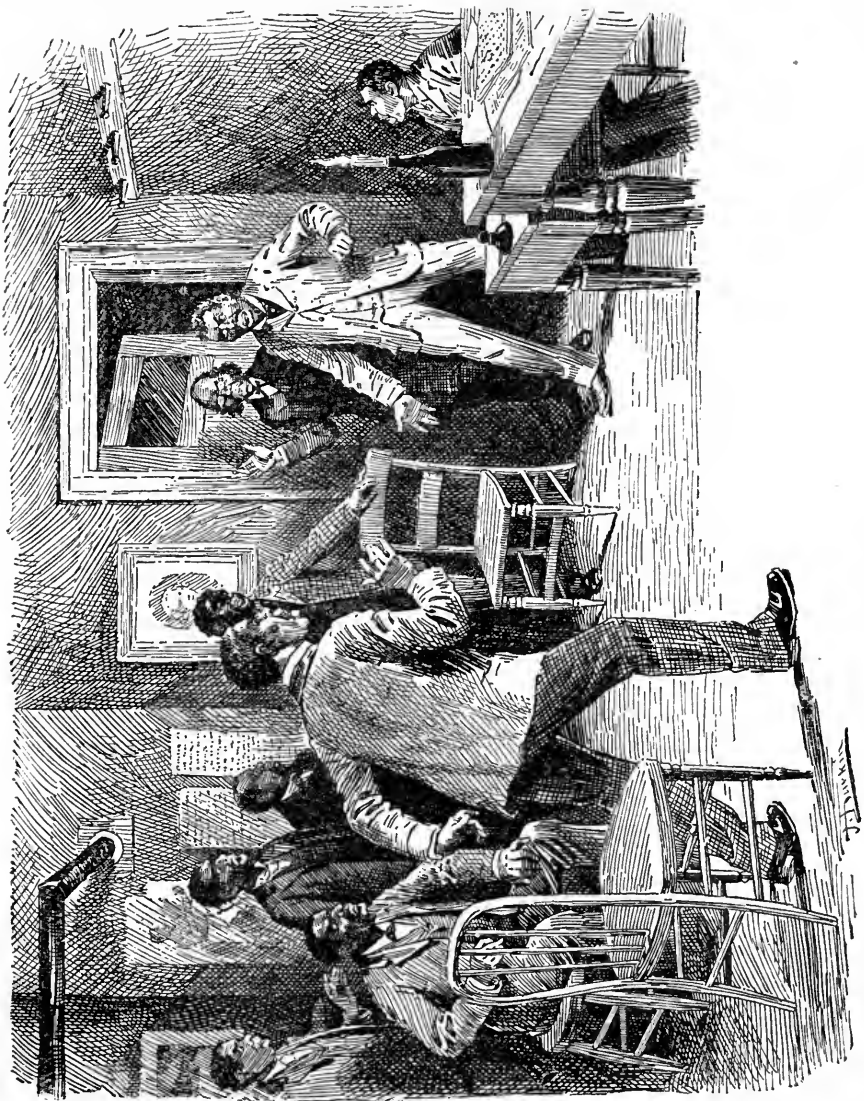
Mr. Williams moved toward the door.

“ Niggahs,” he said, “ I’m a-goin’.”

So saying, he vanished.

Again a grisly silence reigned. Professor Brick tiptoed softly to the door, locked it, and applied his ear to the panel, by which process, according to well-known laws of acoustics, he could accurately appraise the value of any sounds occurring without.

The silence continued. Five, eight, ten minutes passed. The professor opened the door. A keen blast entered, but nothing visible.



“ De Perfesser 'n' Gus Johns'n am app'inted a kummittee ter wisit 'n' report on de remains,” ordered the chair.

Mr. Johnson and the Professor departed. Three minutes later they reappeared. The Professor was speechless ; Mr. Johnson was hysterical.

“ Bofe dead ?” queried the chair.

“ My new ulcer 'n' my skyarf 'n' dicer !” gasped Mr. Johnson.

“ My sealskin ovahcote 'n' a dozen cigyahs 'n' a hat,” hoarsely whispered the Professor.

“ Dey ain't—ain't no murdah ?” exclaimed the Rev. Mr. Thankful Smith, upon whom a light was beginning to break.

“ No, but dey will be ef I evah kotches Toot Willyums,” exclaimed the Professor, capering with woe.

“ De hull lay-out in de dressin'-room's gone,” asseverated Mr. Johnson.

There was a wild rush of guests and members to verify this dire news. It was true. The dressing-room—a new convenience opened by Mr. Williams especially for this lecture—was bare of hats, coats, canes, and mufflers. The club gloomily reassembled. Controlling himself by a strong effort, the Rev. Mr. Thankful Smith rapped for order and then said, impressively :

“ Niggahs, dat Beesly eppysode was a fake, 'n' Bre'r Williams 'n' Bre'r Whiffles am sot up in secon' han' clothin' fer de wintah. Doan' spoke nuffin'. Dey ain't no use spressin' our feelin's. Bre'r Willyums promised us a s'prise ternight, 'n' we's got it, 'n' got it large. Doan' spoke nuffin', coons. Jes' pile in de coal in de stove 'n' set aroun' 'n' wizzle, 'n' I'll borry de jannyter's ovahcote 'n' hat 'n' git out de perlice 'n' de milishy 'n' wake up de kentry wif a howl fer justice. Doan' spoke nuffin', niggahs.”



“Kint we git no dammidges?” queried Mr. Johnson, who with great forethought had ensconced himself behind the stove and was prepared for a siege.

The Reverend Mr. Thankful Smith slowly turned. There was a cold, calm glitter in the spectacles through which he gazed. Then he spoke slowly and with majesty :

“Dere hez been a panel game wukked on dis club ternight, 'n' de dammidges all belongs to Bre'r Whiffles 'n' Bre'r Will-yums. Jes' wait, niggahs. Wait till yo' see 'em. Dey'll git de dammidges.”

So saying, he disappeared.

The club is still in session, with no chance of adjournment until the weather moderates.



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