

TRAPS FOR THE FARMER.

FAKIRS REPORT GOOD BUSINESS AT THE COUNTY FAIRS.

Farmers Have Plenty of Money, They Say, and Are Anxious to Part With It—Devices Old and New for Emptying Pocket-books—Women as Guiltless as the Men.

A number of swindlers are now closing their fall season at county agricultural fairs, and will soon return to their homes in New York and other cities, having done quite well in August and September and thus far in October. Said one of the leading operators:

'Working the jays this autumn has paid well. Everybody seemed to have money to burn at the agricultural fairs, and our business was dead easy. Those who operated games of chance cleared big money, in spite of the fact that heavy charges had to be paid for gambling privileges. But, where they could get in, \$5,000 was nothing to pay for a full gambling privilege for four or five days.

'It was nothing to see eighteen gambling tables running on a fair ground in the open air during September. What was the favorite game? I think jack-pot probably caught more people and made the most money. No, it wasn't poker, or anything like that. It was betting on a card with a doubling-up privilege for the banker, and many a dollar was lost by the countrymen who hadn't enough money to double-up, so they dropped all. I have been following the fairs for years at various games, but I never before saw as many rolls of money among the farmers as this season. And they played it, too.

'I think the easiest thing this year was the old tobacco box trick. A capper of mine had a neat silver box. He'd stand off a farmer and show him the trick, that is, show him how to open the box. Then I'd come along dressed like a farmer. I'd fall in with the pair. Capper would show me the box. I'd fail to open it. Then I'd offer to bet a ten dollar bill no one else could open it. The guy would jump at the chance flash his roll, and we'd put up ten each. I'd look at the box, give it a dead-lock turn, which the jay'd not see, and hand it back to him. Then he'd go to work. Of course, he couldn't open it under the new conditions and he'd lose. To take in ten jays a day wouldn't be much of a job for five hours. I recollect one jay I had my doubts about. He was dangerous looking. He had up his ten and I had covered it. It looked like his bottom stake. I imagined he had a gun, so I ventured another bet of ten against his pistol he couldn't open the box. We got away all right, but we might have fared badly had I not thought he might be armed.

'One of our party sold a lot of twenty-five-cent rings for a quarter and then gave 50 cents each for them to the farmers who bought. When he had a big crowd he sold a dozen cheap watch chains for a quarter each, and gave a half dollar each for them back to buyers. Then he offered fifty cheap watches, at a dollar apiece, saying there was no telling but what he'd give \$5 each for them again, as he was simply advertising a big New York jewelry house. Buyers were plenty, flush and anxious. Watches were handed out as fast as they could be wrapped in paper. A few of the first that were sold had works in them and would run in a fashion. All the others had no works but were only cheap imitation cases. All were well wrapped in paper. Buyers were told to keep up their arms, watches in hand, in plain view, so that no one could make any change or substitute. Before they knew of anything, four men who drove a fast horse, would leave the crowd and get away before they could touch him. In this branch, we'd take in country cappers and all and beat them with the rest. It was dead easy to get a half dozen jay cappers for the first two buys. Nine cases out of ten they'd not stop, but go ahead on the third buy. They, still, like the other farmers, have their alloy watches on hand unless they throw them away. A few dollars fixed any constable or special who might be in the way. It was dangerous, but it went.

'One clever new thing was this: For a half dollar enough drug could be bought to color a barrel of water. Our barkers sold the cure all medicine, crying out to every farmer to take a sample. The cappers accepted a small drink of it. Hundreds followed. Cappers then made a dime each. Farmers hedged saying they had accepted a sample. 'Nonsense,' cried the barkers. 'we said it was Dr. Sample's cure.' And in this way the agriculturists were compelled to give up a dime each, which they did

with a laugh and a swear at 'the damn swindle,' as they said.

'We had two boys in our party, kids they were, who flim flammed the hucksters with two and five dollar bills, and they did the trick so cleverly that I'm sure that they can live comfortably all winter in New York without much labor. That pair of kids will grow up and become expert ten-dollar bill workers in a year or two. They shoved many a bad five, asking for two two's and a one, for change, while the beer and oyster men were in full swing of business at the various eating stanos. We did some little green goods business, where we could manage a tent privilege in some side show, but there was not time or opportunity to fall in with a jay who had a big enough roll to equal a regular come-on. Green goods men have a hard row to hoe these days, where they're located.

'Too many people are on to 'em, yet they're doing fairly well. A bright young fellow was given away the other day by his pal in a neighboring jail. For a promise he squealed; wrote to his pal in New York to come on. Faithful lad that he was, he came on to help his friend and walked right into the hands of a chief of police. The judge gave him two and a half years in an east Pennsylvania jail, while the chief man got free. That's right, what I'm telling you.

'The twirling pointer that is loaded and never stops on the space were the ten dollar bill is, if the operator don't want it to, is not a new thing, but it is a winner. When the capper elbows his way in the crowd and the operator lets the pointer stop at the tenner, why, of course, the farmers try to win the next big money. I hired a good man—that is, I thought he was a good fellow—to help us out on a busy Thursday. Well, sir, that fellow, like all of us, had his price. He jumped the fair ground when he won his first ten-dollar bill. Maybe he's running yet, poor fellow. The ten was too big a temptation

and he got away with it. The whirling racehorse is a winner, as most of the farmers like to bet on a horse, even if it is a tin one in a race.

'We didn't have any thimble rigs, little jokers or sweat cloths this trip. People are too much on the alert for new plays. The shoe blacking peddler, who puts one, two and five dollar bills in the tin boxes in the presence of the jays, to boast sales, is not a success any more. Not enough in it for quick business. We had a wart remover fakir, who could cut out a wart with his specially sharpened thumb nail, about as slick as the best surgeon I ever saw. He sold as much of the wart remover compound as he could make out of cheap rosin soap. Of course, his thumb nail did the business in the presence of the crowd who thought it was the instantaneous wart remover compound. He could put some of the compound in his eye and it wouldn't hurt him. It was sold as a harm less preparation, you know.

'There is more business done with the women farmers than ever before. It is astonishing how they fill the little side tents of the fortune-teller women and the female palmists. But, after all, the biggest card to win is when you offer something for nothing. Anything with the word free to it, is a sure go. 'Free of charge' gets a big crowd quick for you, and then if you have a work to do for cold cash, do it quickly.

'As it was in Barnum's days, so it is now. People take the chances when it comes to a humbug or fraud or swindle. They have faith in their wisdom. Why distrust them? They'll be just as eager next fall to get something for nothing, or to buy a chain for a quarter if they can sell it back for a half. Of course, they'll take a dozen each.

'But don't you imagine that I'm here giving away the best we've got. There are some things which cannot be revealed. It would make our business too cheap.'

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FRANKLIN'S MONUMENT:

How the American is Remembered in the United States.

There are as many statues of Benjamin Franklin, probably, as of any other American, unless it be Washington; but the city of Philadelphia, which was Franklin's place of residence through the greater part of his life, possessed no really splendid memorial of the great man until recently. On June 14th a statue of Franklin, presented to the city by Mr. Strawbridge, the work of the sculptor, John J. Boyle, was unveiled in front of the post-office.

The statue is of bronze, and represents the philosopher and statesman seated, in an attitude of that thoughtful and courteous attention which it seems to us, must have been characteristic of him. It is in the costume of Franklin's own period. It represents, undoubtedly, the Franklin whom Philadelphia knew; for he was best known in the city of his residence, as the philosopher, the journalist, the author, the man of science, rather than as the statesman or man of affairs.

The deferential smile which the seated figure in the statue wears was certainly characteristic of Franklin. The gentleness of his ways always endeared him to his neighbors, although they found much to deprecate in his opinions and in his way of

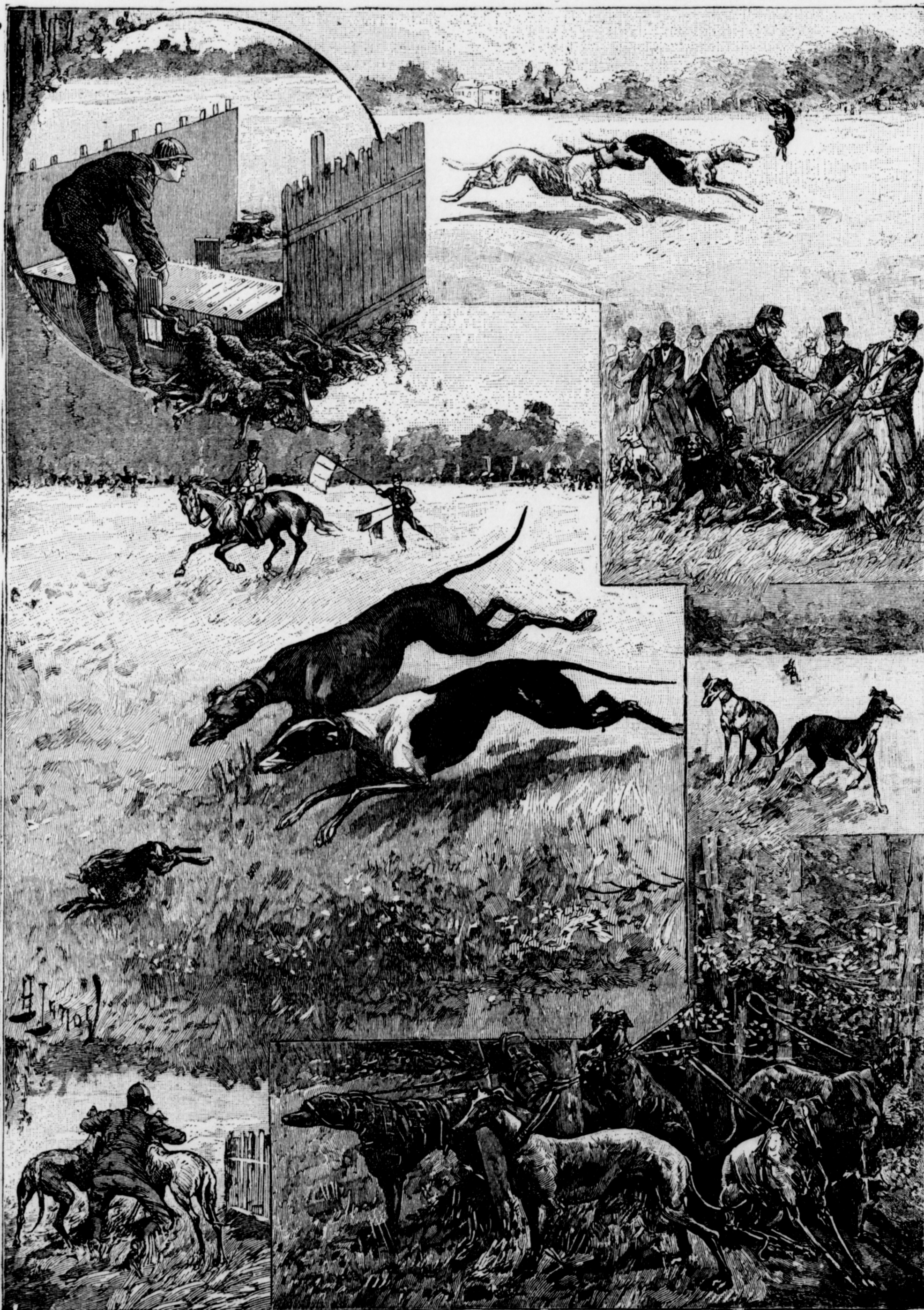
life. Even when on his arrival in Philadelphia, he was once seized for falling asleep in a religious meeting, account was quickly taken of the fact that he was young and greatly exhausted by travel.

Franklin has received one sort of monumental tribute to a degree second only to that of Washington. More towns and post offices have been named after him than any other man, even Washington himself, although the bestowal of the name Washington on the capital of the country transcends, of course, any of the similar honors accorded to Franklin.

Thirty-six places in the United States, in as many states and territories, bear the name of Franklin simply, and thirty-four others bear names into which the word enters in combination, such as Franklinton, Franklinville, Franklin Falls, and so on. As against this there are twenty-seven Jacksons in the country, thirty Washingtons, and twenty-five Jeffersons.

Thirty-one counties bear the name of Washington, twenty-four the name of Franklin, twenty-three the name of Jefferson, and twenty-two the name of Jackson.

The naming of the first town for Franklin was regarded by him as a great honor. This was in 1778, during the Revolutionary War. The town of Wrentham, Massachusetts, was divided, one part of it taking the name of the celebrated diplomat and philosopher. In recognition of the honor Franklin presented the new town with a bell for its church.



HUNTING RABBITS.