

REDRAWN BY D. B. KEELER.

"JACKSON CLEARING HIS KITCHEN."

EARLY POLITICAL CARICATURE IN AMERICA.

POLITICAL caricature in the United States virtually dates from the first administration of Andrew Jackson. There had been occasional efforts to use caricature as a political weapon previous to that time, but they were too crude in execution, too spasmodic in appearance, and too indefinite in purpose to be taken into consideration in tracing the beginnings of our modern school. The advent in national politics of so robust a personality as General Jackson seems not unnaturally to have stimulated a resort to pictorial means for both assailing and defending him. He had entered the presidency as the savior of his country, a military hero of indomitable valor. His fight against the United States Bank, his vociferous and unceremonious methods of conducting controversies with political opponents, the subservient conduct of his famous "kitchen cabinet," and its dissolution when Van Buren withdrew from it, had combined during his first term to enhance greatly his attractiveness as a popular idol. He appeared before the people as their only champion against the oppressive designs of a huge money monopoly in which the whole world was joined. He was the "People's Friend" in all crises; the giant who, sin-

gle-handed, was fighting their battles against enemies from all quarters. Every conspicuous act of his public life was performed amid uproar and turmoil. Even when his "kitchen cabinet" was dissolved, there was so much dramatic disturbance that one of the political caricatures of the time pictures him, armed with a churn-dasher, clearing the kitchen of all opponents as with the very besom of destruction.

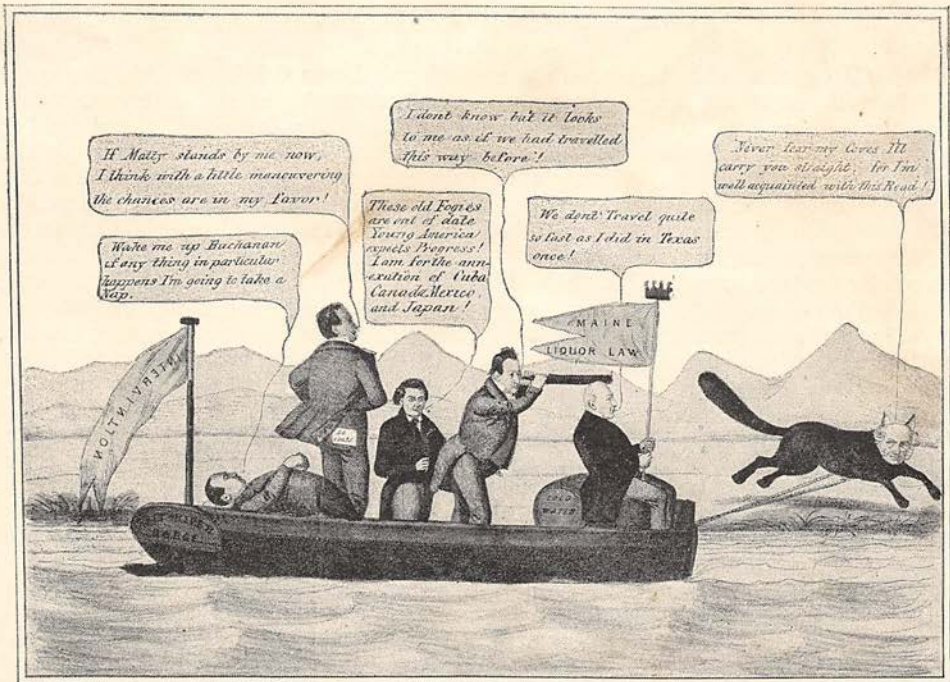
Few of the earlier caricatures are to be found now. They were issued at frequent intervals, mainly in New York city, in lithograph sheets to be nailed upon walls or passed from hand to hand. They were crude in drawing, and sometimes coarse to the point of indecency. They bore evidence that their designers had gone abroad for inspiration, taking their ideas mainly from English caricaturists. In fact our modern school of caricature dates from almost the same time as that of England, and both followed closely after that of Italy, France, and Germany. In all these countries the first political caricatures were lithograph sheets, passed about from hand to hand; usually issued by the artists themselves at first, and subsequently by some publishing house. The founder of the modern school in England was James Gillray,



"A BOSTON NOTION FOR THE WORLD'S FAIR.—A NEW CRADLE OF LIBERTY."

who was born in 1757, a few years before the death of Hogarth. His earlier work, which was mainly social, partook largely of the character-

istics of the caricaturists who had preceded him. It was generally coarse, and it nearly always made its effect by use of exaggeration. In his



LOCO FOCO CANDIDATES TRAVELLING. ON THE CANAL SYSTEM.

later years, however, between 1803 and 1811, he turned his attention to political caricature, beginning with Napoleon as a subject, and adopted methods from which the modern school has been developed. It would be more accurate to say that Gillray pointed the way to the founding of the modern school of political caricature, rather than that he was its founder. He never separated himself entirely from the tradition, as old almost as the art of drawing, that coarseness and exaggeration were the essential elements of humor as exhibited in caricature.

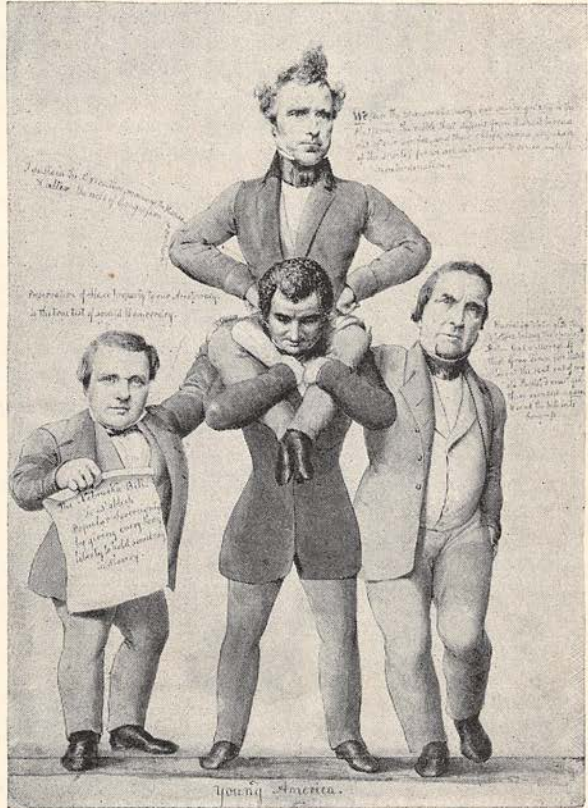
The first English artist to make that separation completely was John Doyle, father of Richard Doyle. He began to publish political caricatures in 1830, under the signature of "H. B.," and was the first caricaturist to preserve faithfully in all cases the likenesses of his subjects, and to give to them their individual attitudes and tricks of manner. He was the real founder of the "Punch" cartoon as it has been developed by Richard Doyle, John Leech, and John Tenniel. He preferred to draw single figures, though he sometimes produced groups with several figures, calling his productions "Political Sketches." It is a curious and interesting fact that the United States supplied the inspiration for one of his most successful pictures, and incidentally, perhaps, helped to lay the foundation for the double-page group-cartoon with which we are so familiar to-day. In 1836, Thomas D. Rice, the father of negro minstrelsy in America, went to London to introduce his invention. His "Jim Crow" song proved a great popular hit, and all London went to hear it and then went about singing it.

Doyle, with the quick eye which is the *sine qua non* of the true political caricaturist, drew and issued a large cartoon in which all the leading politicians of the day who had been changing their party affiliations or modifying their views were represented as assembled at a ball, and as being led forward one by one by Rice to be taught to "turn about and wheel about and jump Jim Crow."

The establishment of "Punch" in 1841 put an end to the lithograph sheet caricatures in England. The famous "Punch" cartoonists, Richard Doyle, John Leech, and John Tenniel, followed John Doyle's departure in preserving likenesses, but the double-page cartoon with many figures has been the exception with them rather than the rule. The typical "Punch" car-

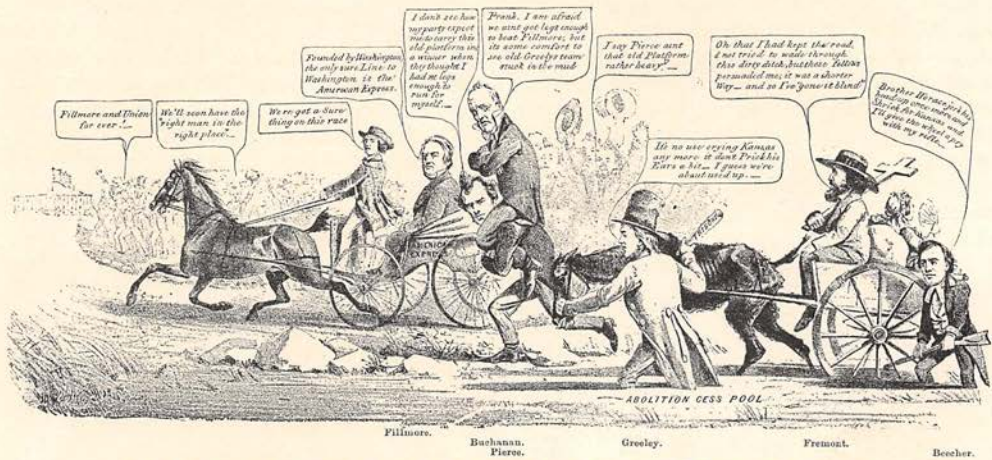
toon is about half the size of a central "Puck" or "Judge" cartoon, and is confined to a few figures, frequently to one. While there has been a steady advance in artistic merit since 1841, there has been little change in the general style of political caricature in "Punch."

In the United States the many-figured group-cartoon appears to have been a steady favorite since Jackson's time. Its immediate inspirers were undoubtedly Gillray and John Doyle,



"YOUNG AMERICA."

more especially the latter, whose sketches had been filling the shop-windows of London for two years when similar productions began to appear on this side of the water. Doyle had followed Gillray at a considerable distance, however; for he was a far inferior artist in every way, having slight perception of humor and being hard and inflexible in his methods. What Doyle did was to take Gillray's occasional act of giving a correct likeness, and make it his own permanent practice. His sketches are valuable to-day chiefly for this quality, all his drawings of leading men of the period being veritable portraits of real historical value, some of them the best in existence. Our early American political caricaturists followed Doyle's example as faithfully as their



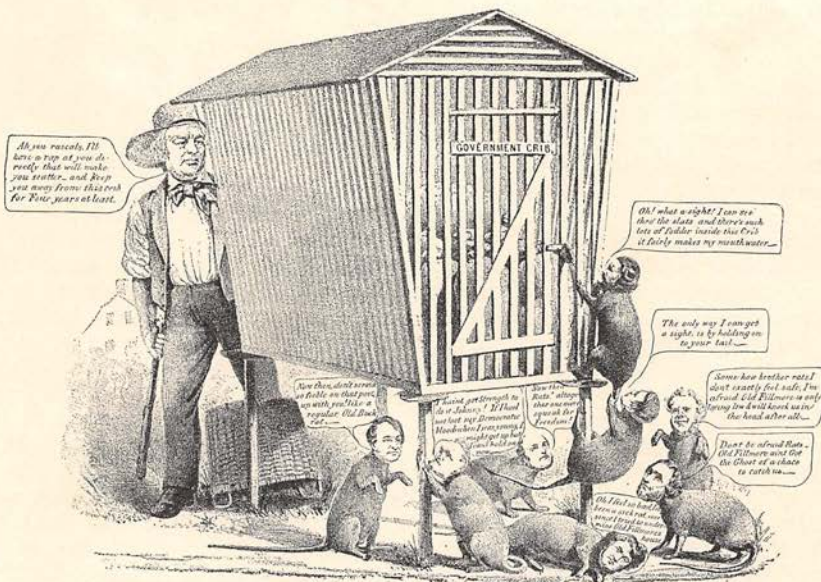
THE GREAT PRESIDENTIAL SWEEPSTAKES OF 1856.

Free for all ages, 'go as they please'

powers as draftsmen would permit. That they did not succeed very well in the beginning was not strange. Drawing was scarcely taught at all in this country at the time, and the only persons who were skilled in it had drifted here from abroad, and had little knowledge of our politics and public men. It was only in very rare instances, therefore, that a lithograph caricature of an earlier date than 1840 can be found which is even tolerable, either in conception or execution. There was a slight improvement after that period, and by 1850 a sufficient advance had been made to justify the assertion that the foundation of a school of American political caricature had been laid. In 1848 Messrs. Currier

and Ives began, in Nassau street, New York city, the publication of campaign caricatures in lithograph sheets similar to those which had been issued in London and other foreign cities. This was the year of the Taylor-Cass-Van Buren campaign which resulted in Taylor's election. Few of the caricatures of that year are obtainable now, or of those issued by the same firm in the following campaign of 1852. A complete set had been preserved by the publishers, but was stolen during a fire a few years ago.

I am indebted to Mr. James M. Ives, the surviving member of the firm, for much interesting information about the entire series of early caricatures, and for several of the earlier



FANCIED SECURITY, OR THE RATS ON A BENDER.

sketches, including the original drawing of the Jackson kitchen-clearing picture printed at the head of this article. There was a contemporary caricature, now unobtainable, called "Rats Leaving a Falling House," which represented Jackson seated in a kitchen smoking, while five rats, bearing the heads of the members of his cabinet, were scurrying to get out by doors, windows, and other openings. Jackson had planted his foot on the tail of the one which bore Martin Van Buren's head, and was holding him fast. This caricature, as well as its

always his garb in the earlier American caricatures. The World's Fair referred to was that held in New York in 1844. Clay is also the author of the single representative we have of the triangular contest of 1848, when Taylor, Cass, and Van Buren were the presidential candidates. Marcy, the author of the phrase "To the victors belong the spoils," appears in this with a patch on his trousers marked "50 cents," which was an invariable feature of any caricature of him. It was based on a report that he had, while Governor of New York, included in a bill



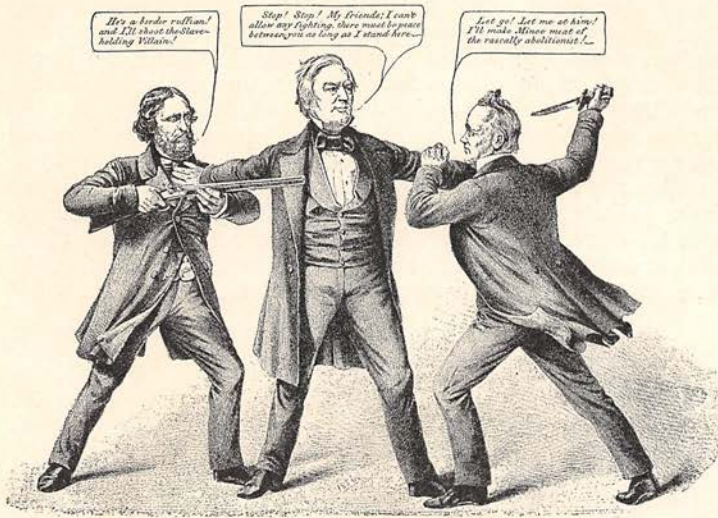
THE "MUSTANG" TEAM

companion, "Jackson Clearing his Kitchen," is believed to have been the work of an English artist named E. W. Clay. Both were published in 1831, soon after the dissolution of the "kitchen cabinet." The faces in the kitchen-clearing scene are all portraits: Van Buren, Nicholas Biddle, President of the United States Bank, and Calhoun stand nearest to Jackson; prostrate on the floor is Dixon H. Lewis, whose portly figure was a conspicuous feature of the Washington life of the time; and fleeing from the room with outstretched arms is Francis P. Blair, editor of the Jacksonian organ the "Globe."

An interesting caricature of a decade or so later is that called "A Boston Notion for the World's Fair." This was drawn by Clay, and was aimed at the Abolition movement, which was steadily making headway in Boston under the leadership of Garrison. Uncle Sam appears in this dressed in the style of Franklin, as was

against the State, for traveling expenses, a charge "to patching trousers—50 cents," his reason being that as he had torn the trousers while on business for the State, it was the State's duty to repair the damage. Van Buren is represented as towing the boat "up Salt River" because he was the candidate of a faction which had bolted from the nomination of Cass, and was thus making the latter's election impossible. Marcy appears in the caricature of the Pierce campaign of 1852, on page 221, with his hand covering the patch, he having obviously become weary of allusions to it by this time. In this picture Pierce, of whom a striking likeness is presented, is borne upon the shoulders of William R. King, who was the candidate for vice-president, while Stephen A. Douglas assists Marcy in supporting him.

In their original form, the cartoons here given were about the size of the ordinary



THE RIGHT MAN FOR THE RIGHT PLACE.

double-page cartoon in "Puck." With the exception of the two earliest, all of them were published by Currier and Ives. In all of them the faces are carefully drawn portraits, and the figures are presented in natural attitudes. The general style of the pictures is similar to that of the earlier political-caricature period in European countries. The figures are presented almost invariably without background, and each of them is represented as giving utterance to some sentiment which is inclosed in a loop over his head. This use of the loop had been abandoned in nearly or quite all European countries some time before its appearance here. It is to be found in some but not in all of the Gillray caricatures, in some of Doyle's, and very rarely in the earlier numbers of "Punch." The

large collection of them, I did not find one whose meaning was not made obvious by the title beneath it. Take the five relating to the campaign of 1856, for example, and see how plainly their meaning appears at a glance. In "The Great Presidential Sweepstakes" Fillmore is starting well in the lead, because, as the candidate of the American party, he had been the first nominee in the field. Next to him comes Buchanan, borne on the shoulders of Franklin Pierce, whose successor in the presidency he was to be; and bringing up the rear is a cart with Fremont in the driver's seat, Jessie Benton Fremont stowed snugly in behind, Mr. Beecher lifting at the wheel, and Horace Greeley coaxing the sorry-looking horse to pull his burden through the "Abolition cesspool" in which

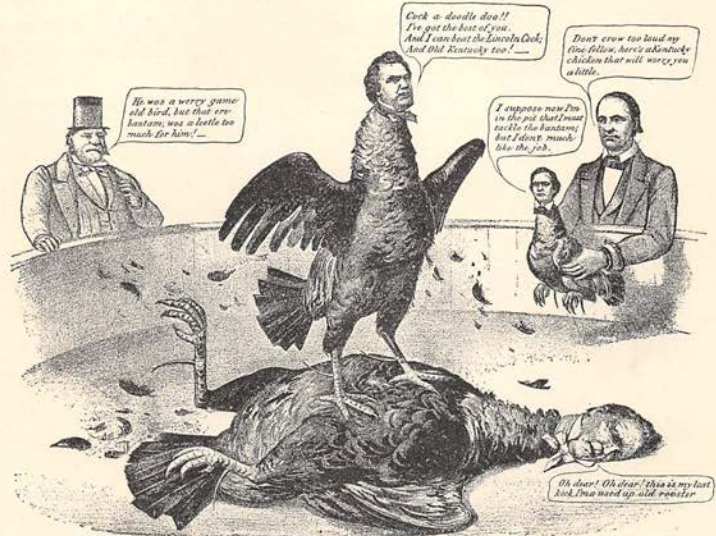
European artists abandoned the practice when they began to draw and compose their caricatures so well that they told their own story, with the aid of a title or a few words of dialogue beneath them. The early American caricaturists used the loop as generously as possible, as the specimens of their work given herewith testify. Their publishers found that the public demanded this, and that a picture without the loops would not sell. Yet the pictures told their story perfectly without these aids. In looking over



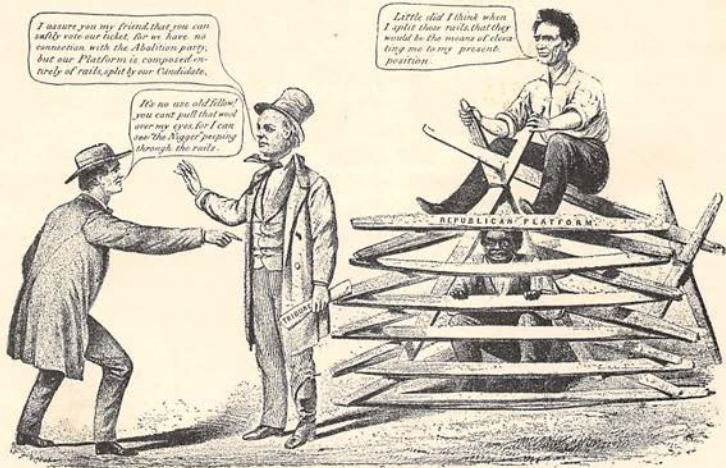
THE DEMOCRATIC PLATFORM.

the whole party is wallowing. "The Mustang Team" tells its story with equal directness. Here we have the three editors, Greeley, Bennett, and Raymond, astride Fremont's sorry nag, while another of the chief editors of the day, General James Watson Webb, is catching on behind. This is the forerunner of the oft-repeated cartoon of the present day, in which the editors of our great journals are frequently made to figure in even less favorable attitudes. The Fremont cart has the same look as in the first picture, with the addition of a bag for the "Bleeding Kansas Fund." It is noticeable that the face of Uncle Sam, who figures as toll-gatherer in this picture and who has changed his costume since the cartoon of 1843, is drawn without the chin-beard which he wears habitually in modern cartoons. In all the pictures of this period he is clean-shaven.

No word is necessary in explanation of the picture in which Farmer Fillmore is about to scatter the rats who are swarming about the "public crib" in the hope of getting possession of its contents. As a prophecy the picture was as bad a failure as its companion,— which represents Fillmore as standing between Fremont and Buchanan keeping them from each other's throats, and as destined presumably to triumph over them at the polls,—for Buchanan was subsequently victorious. The early appearance of the "public crib" as a synonym for the spoils of office is a point of some interest. It was evidently familiar at the time this picture was drawn, and may date back to Jackson's time, possibly far beyond that, coming to us from English usage. "The Democratic Platform" (page 224) gives us a full-length figure of Uncle Sam, without the beard, but with a costume



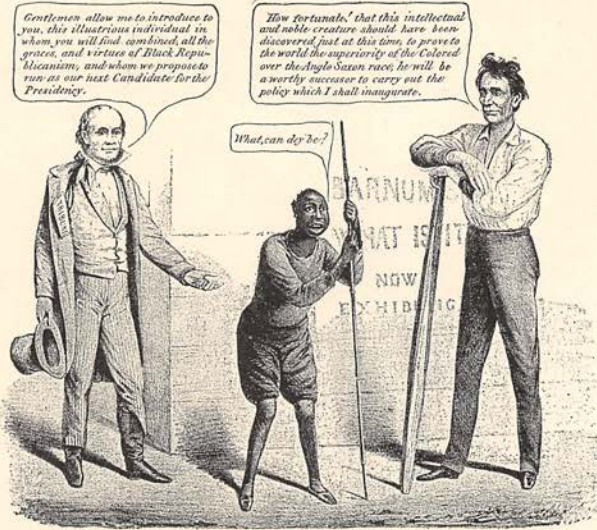
THE GREAT MATCH AT BALTIMORE, BETWEEN THE ILLINOIS BANTAM AND THE OLD COCK OF THE WHITE HOUSE.



"THE NIGGER" IN THE WOODPILE.

similar to that which is still assigned to him. The three supporters of the platform are Benton, Pierce, and John Van Buren. The latter was known as "Prince John," while his father, the ex-President, was known as the "Old Fox." In the caricature Prince John is talking to his father, who is presented as a fox peering from a hole. This picture, which has obvious points of strength, was a very successful one, and had a large sale.

The seven caricatures relating to the great campaign of 1860 were the most successful of the kind ever issued in this country. Probably the first of the series was that which represents Douglas as the victorious cock in the pit, crow-



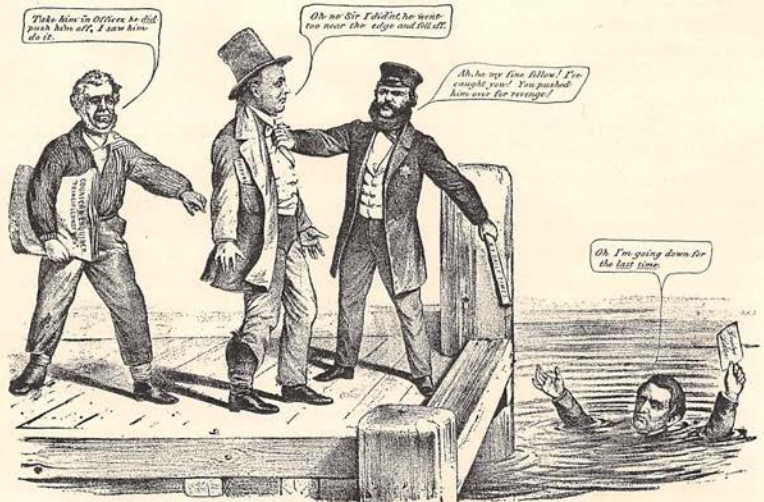
**AN HEIR TO THE THRONE,
OR THE NEXT REPUBLICAN CANDIDATE.**

ing upon the prostrate form of Buchanan after the Baltimore convention, for Douglas was the first of the four presidential candidates who took the field that year. This is one of the best-drawn and most vigorous pictures in the collection, and compares favorably with the caricatures of the present day. The two pictures in which Lincoln is the chief figure, "The Nigger in the Woodpile" and "An Heir to the Throne," came out soon after his nomination, and the likeness of him which is presented in both of them seems to be based on the photograph which was taken in Chicago in 1857. It is a powerful face, full of the same sad and noble dignity which became more deeply marked upon it in later years,—the face indeed, even then, of the "kindly-earnest, brave, foreseeing man" of Lowell's immortal ode.

The caricaturists of the period were quick to seize upon whatever happened to be uppermost in the public mind at the moment, with which to add point to their pictures. Thus Barnum's famous "What is it?" was used to make a point against the Abolition issue in Lincoln's election. The two companion pic-

tures of this 1860 collection, "The Impending Crisis" and "The Irrepressible Conflict," had a very large sale, exceeding 50,000 copies each. They represent the failure of Seward to obtain the Republican nomination, and in both Horace Greeley is pictured as the chief agent of the disaster. In one instance Mr. Greeley is depicted as having pushed Mr. Seward off a wharf, and as having been caught in the act by Henry J. Raymond, while General Webb gives evidence as an eye-witness. In the other, Mr. Greeley is throwing Mr. Seward overboard from a boat which Lincoln is steering, and which is very heavily loaded with the leaders of the Republican party. Mr. Seward's famous phrase, which gives the picture its title, was uttered in October, 1858, and had passed almost imme-

diately into the political vocabulary of the people. One of the most peculiar of the caricatures of this 1860 campaign is that called "Progressive Democracy." The manner in which the heads of the Democratic candidates are placed upon the bodies of the mules in this picture is the same as that employed in all the earlier caricatures before the year 1800, and but rarely after that time. Early in the nineteenth century the caricaturists began to form the human features from the face of the animal, rather than to hang the human head in front of the animal's ears as is done in this picture. The prominent position occupied by the Tam-



"THE IMPENDING CRISIS" OR CAUGHT IN THE ACT.



PROGRESSIVE DEMOCRACY - PROSPECT OF A SMASH UP.

of which are to be had now. They did not differ materially from the earlier ones, showing very little progress in either design or drawing.

The death-knell of the lithograph sheet caricature was sounded when the illustrated newspapers began to publish political caricatures. They did not do this till the close of the war, though Thomas Nast made his first appearance in "Harper's Weekly" while the war was in progress. His pictures during the war were serious in purpose, and cannot be classed as caricatures. He began his career as a political caricaturist when Andrew Johnson started to "swing round the circle," but his fame rests on achievements of a later period. His series of about fifty cartoons upon the Tammany Ring, during and following the exposures of 1871, constitute a distinct epoch in American political caricature. He was unlike any caricaturist who had preceded him, and his successors

have not followed his methods. He gave to the satiric art of caricature a power that it had never before known in this country, and seldom in any country. It is impossible to look at this work of his, in the light of what had preceded it and of what has come after it, and not say that Nast stands by himself, the creator of a school which not only began but ended with him. He had drawn political caricatures before he had Tweed and his allies for subjects, and he drew other political caricatures after his destructive, deadly work with them was finished, but his fame will rest on his work of that period. While he had no successor in artistic methods, the success of caricature in the pages of an illustrated newspaper was so clearly demonstrated by him, that he pointed the way to the establishing of the weekly journals devoted to that purpose which have since sprung up, and which have so completely occupied the field

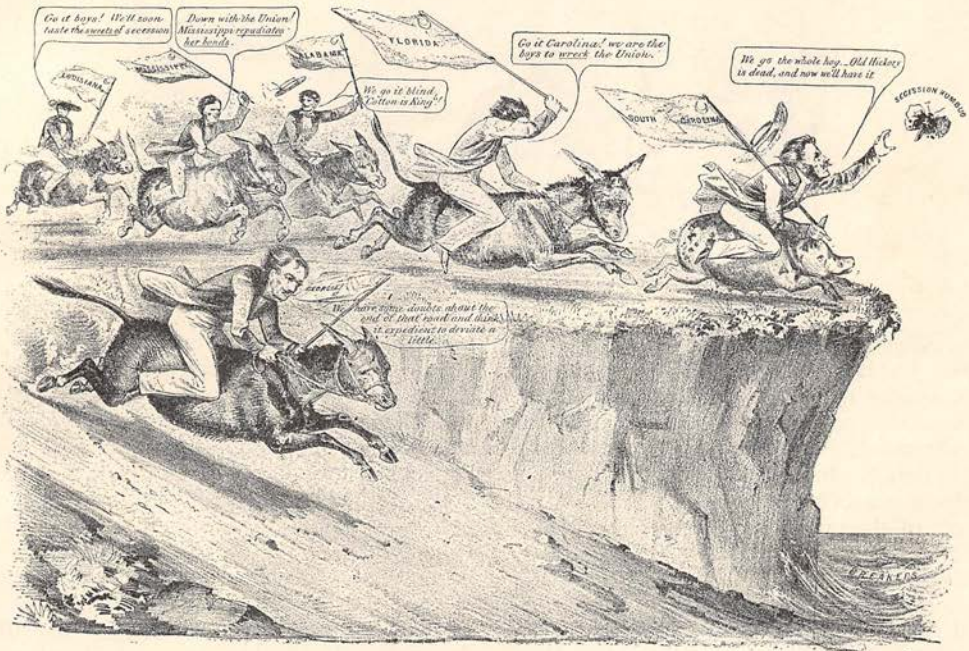


LETTING THE CAT OUT OF THE BAG!!

that "Harper's Weekly" and other similar competitors have practically withdrawn from it.

The founder and chief developer of contemporary political caricature in America, as we behold it in the many-colored cartoons of "Puck" and "Judge," was a young artist and actor from Vienna, named Joseph Keppler, who reached St. Louis in 1868 in search of his fortune. He had studied drawing under the best teachers in Vienna's Academy of Fine Arts, but a strong

for a time, and also reappeared upon the local stage as an actor. In September, 1876, the first number of "Puck" of the present day was issued in German, and in March, 1877, the first number in English made its appearance. The "Puck" of those early days was a very different thing from what it is now. Its cartoons were drawn on wood, and were in white and black. The drawing was strong, but the composition of the pictures was almost as crude as that of



THE "SECESSION MOVEMENT".

inclination for acting had taken him upon the stage. During the first year or two after his arrival in America he went about the country as a member of a traveling theatrical troupe, appearing in the theaters of many cities, including those of St. Louis, New Orleans, and New York. His hand turned naturally to caricature, and after vain attempts to sell some of his drawings to daily newspapers in St. Louis, he started in that city in 1869 an illustrated lithographic weekly, in German, with the title "Die Vehme." The subject of his first caricature was Carl Schurz, at that time a conspicuous figure in St. Louis. The paper had a short life, and was succeeded in 1870 by a new venture called "Puck." Two volumes of this were issued, that of the first year being in German alone, and that of the second in both German and English. The enterprise was doing fairly well, when Keppler was compelled to abandon it. He went to New York city in 1873, where he did some work for a weekly illustrated paper

the old lithograph sheets. Keppler at first followed the French and Italian schools of caricature, exaggerating the size of the heads and the length of the legs. He very soon abandoned this, however, and began to feel his way toward the gradual unfolding of what under his guidance has become a distinctly American school of caricature. In 1878 he began to draw on stone, and in order to brighten the effect of his pictures he commenced to tint them slightly with a single color. In 1879 two colors or tints were used, and from that time on the growth has been steady and rapid until the bright and multicolored cartoon of the present day has been reached.

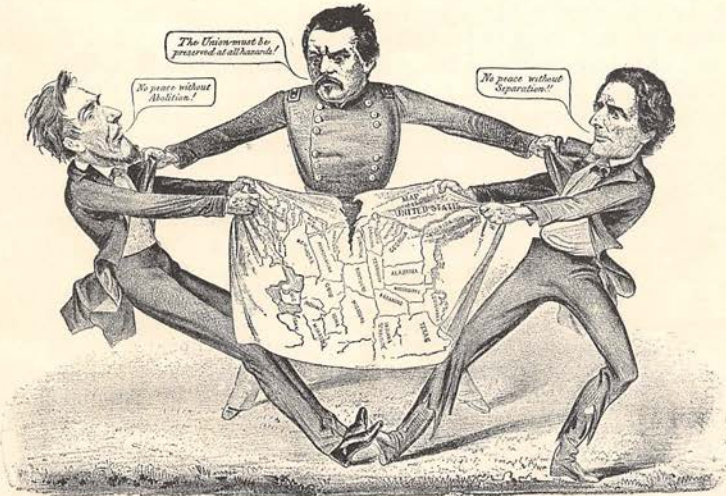
No one can look at the lithograph sheet caricatures of 1856 and 1860 and not be struck with the strong general resemblance which they bear to the cartoons of to-day. There is the same use of many figures in both, and the same mingling of editors, politicians, and other prominent personages in groups and situations illustrating



RUNNING THE "MACHINE":

and ridiculing the political developments of the day. Instead of using the overhead loops to explain the meaning of the picture, however, our contemporary artists build up elaborate backgrounds and surround the central figures with details which, if the cartoon be a success, help to tell its story at a glance. The artistic merit of the modern cartoon is, of course, far in advance of its predecessors. The style is very different from that of the "Punch" cartoon, which has been developed from the same original source as the American. Both trace their pedigree straight back to Gillray and Doyle, but the development has been in different di-

rections. The "Punch" cartoon of to-day is confined in almost all instances to a few figures, and, except in the great advance made in artistic merit, does not differ in general style from the "Punch" cartoon of fifty years ago. The American cartoon, on the contrary, is a modern creation. It has taken the old group idea of Gillray and Doyle, has made it gorgeous with colors, has built it up and fortified it with backgrounds, and has imparted to the figures and faces of its personages a freedom of humor and a terrible vigor of satire which are peculiarly American. The author and gradual unfold-er of this cartoon is Keppler, who has the honor



THE TRUE ISSUE OR THATS WHATS THE MATTER.



WHY DON'T YOU TAKE IT?

not only of founding a school of American caricature, but of establishing successful comic journalism in America. He has had able disciples and coadjutors in Gillam, Taylor, Opper, Dalrymple, and others, and an invaluable associate and helper on the literary side in H. C. Bunner; but he was the pioneer, and it is to the constantly growing power of his strong, sure hand that the cartoon of to-day, and the success of

the comic journalism which embodies and surrounds it, owe their existence. It is an interesting fact that among the many imitators of "Puck" which have appeared in various places during the past few years, one is established in Berlin. It is modeled closely after the original, is named "Lustige Blaetter," and, after an existence of three years, is now regarded as an established success.

Joseph B. Bishop.



THE ATLANTIC STEAMSHIP.

I SAW thee stride upon the tossing sea
 What time the pinions of all sail-borne craft
 Were buffeted by mocking gales that laughed
 And beat them down into the spumy lee;
 But onward thou didst urge, erect and free,
 In the gale's teeth; and streaming far abaft,
 A league-long, darkling banner thou didst waft,
 Signal of elemental victory.

A demiurgic triumph thou dost gain;
 An equal god within thy breast is pent
 To him who moves upon the whitening main;
 Thou thronest with great Neptune, and art bent
 To quell the empire of the stormy rain,
 And work old ocean's utter vanquishment!

Titus Munson Coan.