

MINSTREL, CLOWN, ACTOR.

THE LATE BEN MAGINLEY'S PROFESSIONAL VICISSITUDES.

The death of Ben Maginley was a shock to the professional circles in which it was yesterday discussed. He had made his plans for next season, and was to head an "Uncle Tom's Cabin" company of novel scope. His professional life had been unusually varied. He was on the dramatic boards and in the circus ring by frequent turns, was a member of Fair and Thompson's minstrels in 1861, and early in 1869 was among the specialty artists with whom it was attempted to set up a London Alhambra in Tammany Hall, this city. In 1874 he had a circus and menagerie of his own. Often he was clown, but in 1869 he became ringmaster for the circus of George F. Bailey, whose senior partners were Avery Smith and John J. Nathans *sub rosa*. In 1877 he alternated as Bunbury in "Rosedale" in support of Lester Wallack at the Grand Opera House, and as clown and equestrian director of Barnum's Show. It was in his boyhood, in the Summer of 1853, as second low comedian of "Napoleon" Foster's Theatre, Cleveland, Ohio, that he first donned the theatric cap and bells away from home. In 1856 he was one of the founders of the National Dramatic Association, a body of such professionals as Frank Lawler and Mrs. Coleman Pope, who were too far in advance of the combination system of to-day. He was at the People's Theatre, Cincinnati, in 1856-78, back in Cleveland in 1859-60, and from 1861 to 1863 was stage manager in Milwaukee and Memphis. Early in 1864 he married Mary, daughter of Barney Carroll, circus rider and trainer. As Mlle. Marie at first, and afterward as Marie Ellse, she had been a popular equestrienne for 13 years. The wedding was a sensation in circus circles, it being regarded as a runaway match, although the bride was in her twentieth year. The union was comparatively short, Mrs. Maginley dying in the village of West Chester in the Autumn of 1874. In 1872 her husband was the original Grand Hereditary Muddle in "Leo and Lotus," at Niblo's Garden, and after he finally quit circusing he was comedian at Stephen Fiske's Fifth-Avenue Theatre, going thence in 1878 to Abbey's Park in Shannon's "Champagne and Oysters," to the Lyceum in 1879 as Touchstone, on the road in 1879-80 as the Judge in "The Danites," and participating in 1880-81 in the experiments of Marion D'Avoy. His later career and his risks in management are familiar enough to playgoers. His first venture in dramatic management was when he and Gus Fenno undertook to make the old Washington (D. C.) Theatre pay during the year in which Lincoln was assassinated.