

THE
ATLANTIC MONTHLY.

*A Magazine of Literature, Science, Art,
and Politics.*

VOL. XXI. — MAY, 1868. — NO. CXXVII.

THE TURF AND THE TROTTING HORSE IN AMERICA.

NEARLY all the great trotting horses of America have come of one blood,—that of Messenger, an English horse, imported into New York in 1788.

The lineage of this horse can be traced directly back to the Darley Arabian, who was the sire of Flying Childers; and to the Cade mare, who was a granddaughter of the Godolphin Arabian. He was, therefore, of the best English thorough-bred racing stock.

All accounts concur in representing Messenger as a horse of superb form and extraordinary power and spirit. A groom who saw him taken off the ship which brought him to this country was accustomed to relate that, "the three other horses that accompanied him on a long voyage had become so reduced and weak that they had to be helped and supported down the gang-plank; but when it came Messenger's turn to land, he, with a loud neigh, charged down, with a negro on each side holding him back, and dashed off up the street on a stiff trot, carrying the negroes along, in spite of all their efforts to bring him to a stand-still."

He was a handsome gray, fifteen and three quarter hands high,* with "a large bony head, rather short, straight neck, with windpipe and nostrils nearly twice as large as ordinary; low withers, shoulders somewhat upright, but deep and strong; powerful loin and quarters; hocks and knees unusually large, and below them limbs of medium size, but flat and clean, and, whether at rest or in motion, always in a perfect position.

These records indicate that he had more of the form of the trotter than the thorough-bred horse in general. This form, along with the extraordinary vitality and endurance of his race, he gave to his progeny; which being persistently used and trained to trot became still more marked in these characteristic particulars. The first generation of his descendants were fine road horses, many of them fast, and all endowed with extraordinary courage and endurance. The second and third generations possessed in still greater perfection the form and action of the trotting horse, of which the fourth gen-

* A hand is four inches.

eration has furnished the most perfect specimens.

Messenger lived to be twenty-eight years old. For fifteen years he was owned in the neighborhood of New York, and was held in such estimation that he probably left a more numerous family than any horse that has ever lived. So great has been the impress of his wonderful stamina and splendid form upon the horses of America, that those best acquainted with the subject do not hesitate to estimate his value to the country at one hundred millions of dollars.

Of the other horses that have founded lines of trotters, Justin Morgan deserves to be mentioned first. He was foaled in 1793 at Springfield, Massachusetts, and when two years old was taken to Vermont. His sire was True Briton, a fine horse ridden by General Delancey in the Revolutionary War.

Justin Morgan is described as a "low, compact, powerful horse, with a proud step, and good lively action." These qualities he communicated to his descendants, who are smooth, easy travellers, and possessed of indomitable perseverance. Fox, one of his colts, was driven one hundred and seventy-five miles on the road within twenty-four hours. The excellence of the stock of New England is due to this horse and to Hambletonian, a son of Messenger.

The Bashaws are descended from two imported Arabian horses. The first, known as Bashaw, was bred by the Emperor of Morocco, by whom he was presented to the Dey of Algiers, and finally, through the Swedish Consul, found his way to this country about the year 1768.

Grand Bashaw was imported from Tripoli in 1820. Andrew Jackson, Kemble Jackson, Long Island Black Hawk, Henry Clay, Lantern, and George M. Patchen are of his descendants, although all of them are more or less derived from Messenger. The Bashaws are characterized by fine size, handsome head and neck, full mane and

tail, and a certain pride and magnificence of style.

The trotting horse Bellfounder was imported from England in 1823. He was a horse of great substance, of remarkable spirit, and his career in England was marked by splendid achievements. At three years old he trotted two miles in six minutes; and when four years old, ten miles in thirty minutes. Afterwards he trotted over the Norfolk Course, seventeen and one half miles, within an hour, winning a purse of five hundred guineas. He gave muscle and sinew to his progeny, and a Bellfounder cross appears in the pedigrees of many fine trotting horses.

There remain to be mentioned imported Trustee, and Sir Henry; Duroc, by thorough-bred Diomed; Glencoe, by Sultan; and the French horses Pilot and Royal George. These last horses were only in part of the original Norman stock; but they had enough of the blood to show it in their form, in the toughness of their constitution, and in their bold trotting action.

From the horses that have been here enumerated all the trotting horses and most of the road horses in the United States have come. In the case of many trotting horses a pedigree cannot be made out; but whenever one is fully ascertained, it invariably establishes a connection with one or the other of them. An excellent authority claims that no great trotter has been produced whose pedigree, when traced for four generations, does not show a connection with imported Messenger.

This record proves the immense influence of a few good horses upon the stock of a nation, and attests also the superior qualities of the English racer. All the horses here mentioned are of the Arabian and English thorough-bred stock, except the French horses, and even they are known to have had a strong infusion of the blood. From the vast hordes of wild horses which roamed over the plains of Texas, Mexico, and South America, not a single animal equal in size, speed, and enduring power to these English horses

and their direct descendants has ever been bred.

The first public trotting race in America, of which there is any record, took place in the year 1818. There had been for many years previous a growing taste for driving the trotting horse, and racing, or running, had been popular from the first settlement of the country; but it was not until that comparatively recent date that the interest in trotting culminated in a public exhibition of it.

The love of the horse is a part of the birthright of Americans, as the offspring of a people who for centuries have been devoted to the sports of the turf, and whose patriotism and pride have co-operated with their love of pleasure in the cultivation and improvement of a national stock. As early as the twelfth century a regular race-course was established in London; this being none other than Smithfield. Fitzstephen, who lived at that period, gives the following quaint account of the contests between the palfreys of the day: "When a race is to be run by horses which in their kind are strong and fleet, a shout is raised, and common horses are ordered to withdraw from without the way. Two jockeys, then, or sometimes three, as the match may be made, prepare themselves for the contest, — such as are used to ride, and know how to manage their horses with judgment; the grand point being to prevent a competitor from getting before them. The horses on their part are not without emulation. They tremble, and are impatient, and continually in motion. At last, the signal once given, they hurry along with unremitting velocity; the jockeys, inspired with the thoughts of applause and the hopes of victory, clapping spurs to their willing steeds, brandishing their whips, and cheering them with their cries." Youatt adds, that this description, with the exception of the cries, might form part of the record of a modern race at Epsom, in the columns of a morning paper, — so national is the English sport of horse-racing, and so unchanged are

its characteristics. The history of the English horse and turf is full of interest. Such was the importance that Edward III. attached to good stock, that he gave a thousand marks for fifty Spanish horses, negotiating at the same time with the kings of France and Spain for their safe passage by land. The Stuarts imported many fine horses from the East, and laid the basis of the modern thorough-bred stock. Since their time it has been considered obligatory upon royalty to encourage breeding and racing, and even Parliament adjourns in honor of the Derby. As a recent writer in an English magazine says: "It is an undoubted necessity that Englishmen should have a national pastime, capable of affording amusement to all classes, enacted in the open air, devoid of all taint of cruelty, and conducted, as far as possible, with the rules of fair play. That want racing supplies; and when the national amusements of other times and peoples are reviewed, it will be found a difficult task to dispute, successfully, the claim, that the English turf is the noblest pastime in which any nation, ancient or modern, has ever indulged."

The love of the national sport was strongly implanted in the breasts of those Englishmen who settled Virginia and other southern and southwestern portions of the United States. They imported the best English horses, and the time early came when every planter kept his stud. As the country was sparsely settled, and wagon-roads uncut, the horse and saddle furnished the principal means of communication with neighbors and towns, and to be well mounted became one of the distinguishing marks of social position. The stage-coach came afterward, and the railroad; and travelling on horseback gradually ceased, but not until the taste for using the horse under the saddle had become thoroughly established, and yearly meetings for racing in the English style had become popular.

Passing over Colonial times, and the period immediately following the Revo-

lution, we come upon the period when racing reached the highest point of popularity. For a period of over twenty-five years every city and considerable town, from New York to Florida, from Cairo to Balize, and all through the valley of the Mississippi, had biennial meetings, in which the most distinguished men of the time took part. The leading politicians of the South were foremost in patronizing the turf. The efforts of General Jackson to improve the stock of Kentucky, and his fondness for racing, are fully set forth in his biography by Mr. Parton. The names of Sir Henry, American Eclipse, Ariel, Black Maria, Gray Eagle, Boston, and Fashion will render this period in American turf-annals forever illustrious.

But racing had its origin in the Southern States. Virginia and Kentucky were the great nurseries of the running horse. The principal race-courses were near Southern capitals; and although, in the great race on Union Course, Long Island, in 1823, between Sir Henry and American Eclipse, the North was successful, in the main the greatest success in breeding running horses, as well as the greatest popularity of the sport, was at the South.

If the English love of the horse was shared by the Puritan settlers of New England at all, it did not show itself in patronage of the turf. On the contrary, they regarded racing and all its accompaniments with peculiar aversion. Their creed and lives, indeed their very expatriation formed a protest against the habits and principles of those of their countrymen at home with whom the maintenance of the turf was the first object of life. Nor was the exhilarating ride in the saddle in harmony with the Puritan temper. It was tainted with incitements whose direct tendency was the race-course. Their settlements covered a narrower field, and consequently there was not the same demand for the horse for use in travelling as at the South. It was as an assistant in the labors of agriculture that they found him principally serviceable. His de-

corous use before the rude vehicles which carried their families to meeting was the nearest approach which they made to modern pleasure-driving. Harnessed before their "one-horse shays," a horse possessing the speed of Flora Temple or Dexter would be brought down to an orthodox amble. Thus it came that driving the horse before vehicles of varying degrees of clumsiness generally prevailed in New England; whence it has gradually spread over the country, displacing the use of the horse under the saddle, and furnishing another evidence of the complete predominance of Puritan influence in the country. The habit of driving led naturally to the cultivation of trotting; that gait being the easiest for the horse in harness, and the most unobtrusive and agreeable to the driver.

There exists but a scanty record of the early trotting horses and their achievements. The first sporting-paper published in America, "The Turf Register," was first issued September 1, 1829. This monthly journal was almost entirely devoted to the thoroughbred running horse and racing; and, during the first two or three years of its existence, trotting was barely mentioned in its pages. As has been stated, the first public trotting race took place in 1818. In that year the horse Boston Blue trotted at Boston, in a match against time, a mile within three minutes (the exact time is unknown), which was reckoned a very great performance. In 1824, Albany Pony trotted a mile on the Jamaica turnpike in 2 m. 40 s., which shows a considerable advance in speed in the six years which had intervened.

The performances of Top Gallant were so extraordinary, and he was in every respect such a superior horse, that a more complete record of him has been handed down than of any of the old-time trotters. He was foaled in 1808, but trotted his principal races after he was twenty years old. Hiram Woodruff, who rode him at his exercise, thus describes him: "Top Gallant was a dark bay, fifteen hands,

three inches high; plain, and raw-boned; but with rather a fine head and neck, and an eye expressive of much courage. His spirit was very high, and his bottom was of the finest and toughest quality." In 1828, in a four-mile race against Whalebone over the Hunting Park Course, Philadelphia, he trotted four heats * of four miles each, in 11 m. 16 s., 11 m. 6 s., 11 m. 17 s., 12 m. 15 s., the whole sixteen miles in 45 m. 44 s. In 1830, when twenty-two years old, he trotted twelve miles over the same course in 38 minutes; and in 1831, on the same ground, two miles in 5 m. 19 s.

A correspondent of the "English Sporting Magazine," writing of the trotting horses at the Hunting Park Course in 1829, mentions Top Gallant first, as follows:

"Top Gallant, by Hambletonian, he by Messenger, trotted twelve miles in harness in 38 minutes; and three miles, under saddle, in 8 m. 31 s. He is now nineteen years old, and can trot a mile with one hundred and fifty pounds in 2 m. 45 s.

"Betsey Baker, by Mambrino, he by Messenger, beat Top Gallant three miles, under saddle, carrying one hundred and fifty pounds, in 8 m. 16 s. This mare, when sound, could trot twenty miles within the hour.

"Trouble, by Hambletonian, a horse of good bottom, trotted two miles in 5 m. 25 s.

"Sir Peter, by Hambletonian, trotted three miles in harness in 8 m. 16 s.

"Whalebone, by Hambletonian, trotted three miles in 8 m. 18 s. These two, Sir Peter and Whalebone, can be matched either against Rattler or Tom Thumb, now in England, for any amount."

(Tom Thumb trotted, in England, 16.5 miles, in harness, in 56 m. 45 s., and 100 miles in 9 h. 30 m.)

"Screwdriver, by Mount Holly, he by Messenger, in a race with Betsey Baker, trotted two three-mile heats in 8 m. 2 s., and 8 m. 10 s."

* A heat is one continuous effort, either in running or trotting.

This record of performances would be creditable to the trotting horse in any year of his history. It illustrates the general character of all the trotting races of the early time. They were as much a test of endurance as of speed, and were seldom of less than two, and frequently of three and four miles. Races were trotted in which the endurance of horses was taxed to the uttermost, and the tasks most commonly imposed would render completely worthless one half of the trotting horses of the present day. Speed has been cultivated to the neglect of bottom, and what has been gained in swiftness has been lost in staying power.

In this respect, the course of trotting in America is analogous to that of racing in England. The English racers of half a century ago partook of the characteristic excellence of the Oriental horses, from whom they were derived,—which was that, in addition to their speed, they possessed extraordinary powers of endurance. Such horses as Bay Middleton, Glencoe, Mameluke, The Baron, Pyrrhus the First, Blair Athol, Wild Dayrell, Lanercost, and Harkaway, and the mares Catherina, Beeswing, and Alice Hawthorn, are not now found upon the English turf, and it is doubtful if ever they will be found there again. An English writer on the present condition of the turf says: "There is not a six-year-old now in training in England to whom any of these four (Lanercost, Harkaway, Beeswing, and Alice Hawthorn) could not at the same age have given a stone and a beating over the Beacon Course."

The "Turf Register" of March, 1834, copies from a Philadelphia paper the following comments on a race which took place at Trenton, N. J., in which the horse Edwin Forrest trotted a mile in 2 m. 36 s., and Columbus, in 2 m. 37 s.: "The improvement of the trotting horse is engaging the attention of some of the best sporting characters in the country. We believe our State boasts of the best trotters in the Union. New York is nearly as good as our own. It

is, in our opinion, a sport which should be encouraged."

The horses Edwin Forrest and Columbus were the best trotting horses of their time. The first trotted on Long Island, in 1834, a mile in 2 m. 31½ s., which was then the best time ever made. He was afterward beaten by Daniel D. Tompkins, a New England horse, in a great race for ten thousand dollars. Columbus was the first horse to trot three miles in less than eight minutes.

The celebrated horse Dutchman made his appearance on the turf in 1833. His pedigree was never ascertained. In his work on the trotting horse, Hiram Woodruff says of him: "For the combined excellences of speed, bottom, and constitutional vigor, equal to the carrying on of a long campaign and improving on it, Dutchman has had few, if any, equals, and certainly no superior." In 1836 he was entered in sweepstakes with Fanny Pullen and Confidence. Fanny Pullen was the dam of Trustee, the first horse to trot twenty miles within an hour. Confidence was a handsome bay horse, afterwards purchased for the well-known English horseman, Mr. Osbaldestone, and taken out of the country. Dutchman won the race in 5 m. 17½ s. and 5 m. 18½ s. He afterwards beat Lady Suffolk in two straight two-mile heats in 5 m. 11 s. and 5 m. 13 s. His race with Rattler, a horse that Hiram Woodruff declared to be the best trotter ever taken to England, was one of the most closely contested and best three-mile races ever trotted. For eleven miles the horses were never clear of each other; and when Dutchman left Rattler in the twelfth, it was by inches only. In 1839, on the Beacon Course, New Jersey, Dutchman made his great and imperishable record of three miles in 7 m. 32½ s. He trotted one mile of this race in 2 m. 28 s., which was the best one-mile time that had then been made, as the three-mile time is the best made up to the present writing.

Long Island, the scene of so many

of the triumphs of the trotting horse, is equally distinguished as the birth-place of some of the most celebrated. Messenger was kept at its western extremity, and his blood was disseminated over the whole island. From one of his descendants, Engineer, came Lady Suffolk, for many years the unquestioned mistress of the trotting-turf. She was bred in Suffolk County, whence her name, and when three years old was purchased by David Bryant, from the farmer who raised her, for ninety dollars. She was a gray, raw-boned, slab-sided, homely animal; but deep in the chest and muscular in the arms and quarters, which enabled her to keep up a wonderfully long and clearing stride. Her first appearance on the turf was in 1838, when she was five years old. From that time she was kept steadily at work for sixteen years, trotting one hundred and sixty-one races, of which she won eighty-eight. Her owner, though devotedly attached to her, did not use the discretion in her management which is necessary to secure success, even with the most reliable animals; so, despite her extraordinary speed and bottom, the list of her defeats is nearly as long as that of her victories. She was beaten by Dutchman, Repton, Lady Victory, Lafayette, Independence, Aaron Burr, and by Americus in a great five-mile race which came off on the Centreville Course in the fall of 1841. That same year she beat Dutchman on the Hunting Park Course, Philadelphia, trotting three miles in 7 m. 40½ s. The year before, the same horse had beaten her easily in 7 m. 51 s. She had steadily improved from the time of her first appearance, although she had been driven in races of two and three miles every season, until it was a cause of surprise that her legs were strong enough to bear her up at all. Anything of less steel-like fibre would have given way, and the trotting-turf been deprived of one of its greatest ornaments.

In 1842 she beat Ripton in a two-mile race, in harness, in 5 m. 10 s. and

5 m. 15 s. This was on the 7th of May. On the 1st of August, Ripton turned the tables by beating her in 5 m. 6 s. and 5 m. 22 s. This Ripton was a handsome bay, small, but a trotter of peculiar smoothness and beauty. He had many contests with Lady Suffolk, and the record shows that he beat her oftener than he was beaten. Even as late as this year, 1842, most of the races were of two and three miles, and in all such races it is important to husband the power of the horse as much as possible; consequently the full speed is very seldom called out, but a gait is aimed at which can be maintained to the end of a long race. For this reason, horses of moderate speed and great endurance may beat, in such races, far faster trotters. Although Lady Suffolk had the hardest bottom and highest courage, she was a long strider, and calculated to put forth all her strength in a great effort, rather than expend it gradually in a moderate effort long continued. In spite of this, such was her enduring power, that, in 1837, she distanced the pacer James K. Polk, the first heat of a two-mile race in 5 m. 3 s. But her greatest performance was in the season of 1849. Hiram Woodruff says: "This arduous season began at the Union Course on the 21st of May. Lady Suffolk and Lady Moscow trotted mile heats, Moscow winning in four heats. Lady Suffolk then went Down East, and trotted three races at Providence, Rhode Island. From there she went to Boston, and on the 14th of June she trotted on the Cambridge Course with Mac, on which occasion she made the fastest heat she ever trotted. The first heat was won by Mac in 2 m. 31 s. The Lady won the second in 2 m. 26 s." This was her greatest performance. It raised her to the highest place among trotting horses, and gave her a world-wide fame, which has endured to the present day. She afterwards trotted with Jack Rossiter, Lady Sutton, Trustee, Long Island Black Hawk, Gray Trouble, and Gray Eagle, — all horses of the very first class, — and

remained on the turf until 1853, doing an immense amount of work every season, maintaining her great reputation both for speed and endurance until she passed into honorable retirement.

Long Island Black Hawk was one of the greatest stock-horses ever bred upon the island which furnished the first half of his name, and one of the best representatives of the Bashaw family. He was fifteen and a half hands in height, finely moulded, a great weight-puller, and a good traveller. He was hardly a match for Lady Suffolk, who drew three hundred and fifty pounds, and beat him in 2 m. 40 s.

Kemble Jackson, another son of Andrew Jackson, was equally distinguished. As a trotter, he surpassed Long Island Black Hawk. He commenced his career on the Centreville Course in December, 1850. The next year he beat the Nelson Colt in a three-mile race, giving a strong proof of his great qualities. On the 1st of June, 1853, in a similar race with O'Blenis, Boston Girl, Pet, Iola, and Honest John, he achieved a national reputation. This race attracted almost as much attention as the great race between Sir Henry and American Eclipse, in which the honor of two sections of the country, the North and the South, was considered at stake. The contest was mainly between the popular favorites Kemble Jackson and O'Blenis. The latter was by Abdallah, from whom he inherited all the fine characteristics of the Messenger stock. Kemble Jackson was driven by Hiram Woodruff, whose skill and judgment in driving were signally displayed in the management of his horse on this occasion. All the horses came on the ground in good condition, and were well started for the first trial. The popular judgment was immediately confirmed by Kemble Jackson and O'Blenis drawing ahead of the others, — Kemble Jackson on the lead, which he maintained for three miles, winning the first heat in 8 m. 8 s. In the second heat, Iola and Pet got off with the lead, but on the second quarter Kemble Jackson headed them, and O'Blenis

coming up, a duel between them was maintained until the end of the second mile; Kemble Jackson, leading easily in the third mile, won the heat and the race in 8 m. 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ s. All the horses did well, but Kemble Jackson surpassed all expectation; and though the time has been frequently beaten, this is generally considered one of the best three-mile races ever witnessed on Long Island.

Lady Suffolk's day was hardly over before a successor appeared who was more than her equal, whose career on the turf was nearly as long, and marked by achievements exciting equal admiration, and gaining her even greater celebrity. The new light was Flora Temple. She was foaled in 1845, near Utica, New York, and was by One-eyed Hunter, a son of Kentucky Hunter. She was a little bay mare, fourteen and a half hands high, of thorough-bred, muscular form, and peculiarly quick and nervous gait. When four years old she was sold for thirteen dollars, and again for sixty-eight dollars, and ultimately found her way to New York, where she soon became known on the suburban roads as a trotter of unusual promise. In the summer of 1850 she trotted her first race, a half-mile, on the old Red House track. In the fall of the same year she trotted with Delaware Maid, Whitehall, Napoleon, and Hiram, winning in 2 m. 55 s., 2 m. 52 s., and 2 m. 49 s.

In 1852 she beat the horse Centreville in 2 m. 42 s., and this year she was sold again; the price paid was four thousand dollars. In 1853 she beat Black Douglas, who had previously beaten her on the Hunting Park Course, Philadelphia. In this race she trotted a mile in 2 m. 31 $\frac{1}{4}$ s. Her races with Highland Maid took place the same season. This mare was bred in Orange County, New York, and was of the purest Messenger blood. She was very powerful, and a great strider, and was then, like Flora Temple, in the first flush of what promised to be a brilliant career. Their first race was in harness, and came off

on the Centreville, Long Island, Course, on the 15th of June, 1853. Highland Maid won the first heat in 2 m. 29 s., and the second in 2 m. 27 s., which last was the best time that had then been made in harness. Flora Temple had pushed her antagonist to the top of her speed, and the great strain had told upon her. In the third heat she gave out, and was distanced in 2 m. 32 $\frac{1}{2}$ s. The next race between them was to wagons, and took place on the 28th of the same month. In the first heat Flora Temple got the lead, and maintained it, winning in 2 m. 28 s. The next heat was won by Highland Maid in 2 m. 32 s. The third heat was severely contested, and was declared a dead heat. The fourth was won by Highland Maid in 2 m. 33 s. But in the fifth and sixth Flora Temple showed her superior power to repeat by beating her rival in 2 m. 31 $\frac{1}{2}$ s. and 2 m. 35 s. This was a very severe race, and Highland Maid, not being thoroughly matured and seasoned, did not recover from it for a long time. It raised Flora Temple to the rank of the first trotting horses of the country.

The next month she trotted with Tacony. This horse was bred in Canada, and had trotted under the saddle in 2 m. 25 $\frac{1}{2}$ s. The race was in harness, and was won by Tacony in three desperately contested heats, the time being 2 m. 28 s., 2 m. 27 s., 2 m. 29 s. The horses were immediately matched to trot again two-mile heats in harness, the race to come off in five days. Flora Temple won easily in 4 m. 59 s. and 5 m. 1 s. On the 26th of July she beat Tacony again at Saratoga; and afterwards, in 1856, distanced him in 2 m. 24 $\frac{1}{2}$ s., effectually establishing her superiority.

In 1854 Flora Temple beat Lady Brooks in four heats, and Kemble Jackson in five heats, to wagons. The victory over this veteran was only won after a terrific struggle. It seemed hard for the victor over so many courses to lay all his laurels at the feet of a youthful rival. In November she beat Green Mountain Maid and Rhode Island at Rochester. After her return to New

York she trotted with Mac, an old antagonist of Lady Suffolk. She beat him easily in 2 m. 31 $\frac{3}{4}$ s., 2 m. 32 s., and 2 m. 33 s.

Not long after this race, Flora Temple became the property of James McMann, who henceforth drove her in her principal races, and with whom she is chiefly associated. Her first appearance after this change of ownership was in a race with Sontag. This mare was by Vermont Hambletonian, a grandson of Messenger, and a sire of many famous trotting horses. In this race Flora Temple was driven by Warren Peabody (Hiram Woodruff had driven her in most of her previous races), and was beaten by Sontag in 2 m. 31 s., 2 m. 33 s., and 2 m. 35 s. The loss of this race would seem to be owing to the change of drivers, as the best time made had been repeatedly beaten by Flora Temple on previous occasions. She was now matched to trot twenty miles within an hour, but was withdrawn after trotting twelve miles. Like Lady Suffolk, she does not appear to have been constituted for the dragging effort which is required for success in such races.

It was in October of the year 1856 that Flora Temple and the great Morgan horse, Ethan Allen, trotted their first race. Ethan Allen may well be the pride of New England, for a finer built and more beautiful trotter was never harnessed. He had just beaten Rose of Washington and Hiram Drew; and this, with his easy and perfect trotting gait, made many regard him as fully a match for the pet of Long Island. The race came off on the 5th of November, and was won by Flora in two heats in 2 m. 32 $\frac{1}{2}$ s. and 2 m. 36 $\frac{1}{2}$ s. It proved that Ethan Allen had hardly arrived at the period of development, or become sufficiently seasoned upon the turf, to compete with its mature and experienced mistress.

Her first match in 1857 was with Rose of Washington. This Messenger mare was bred by that veteran horseman, Smith Burr of Comac, Long Island, and was a full sister of Lady Woodruff. Although she had been beaten by Ethan

Allen when four years old, she was now fully matured and in prime condition for the race. Flora, on the contrary, had only shortly returned from her winter quarters, and had not had the work necessary to put her in condition to trot with a rival who had beaten Tacony in 2 m. 30 s. and 2 m. 31 s. that same season. In addition, it was stipulated that Flora should draw a wagon, Rose of Washington going in harness.* The result was that Flora was beaten in three straight heats. Another race between these two mares took place two weeks afterwards, with a different result. Flora, in the mean time, had trotted with the Belle of Portland, and had been worked into trotting condition, and in this race distanced Rose of Washington in the first heat. The time, however, was not so good by one quarter of a second as the time made in the previous race; and had it not been for the early death of Rose of Washington she might have eclipsed her victorious rival.

After these races, Flora travelled about the country, trotting for purses at various places, with Miller's Damsel, Redbird, Lancet, and Brown Dick. In 1858 she was sold to Mr. William McDonald of Baltimore for eight thousand dollars. The change of ownership made no difference in her trotting appointments, all of which continued to be made by James McMann. She trotted with Lancet at Philadelphia on the 8th of June, and at Baltimore on the 8th of July. In October she went West, and trotted at Detroit, Chicago, St. Louis, and other places. Among her antagonists in these races were Hero the pacer, Prince, and Reindeer.

But it was not until 1859 that Flora Temple made the time which raised her to the high position which she holds among later trotting horses. She began the season that year by beating Ethan Allen in 2 m. 25 s. Her races with Princess followed. Princess was a very beautiful trotter. She was bred in New

* A horse is held by the best judges to be able to trot under the saddle three seconds faster than in harness, — that is, harnessed to a sulky, — and six seconds faster than when harnessed to a wagon.

Hampshire; but had been in California, where she had trotted ten miles to wagon in 29 m. 10½ s. The first race between Flora and Princess was of three miles, and was won by the former, after a hard pull, in 7 m. 54 s. and 7 m. 59½ s. The second race of two miles was won by Princess in 5 m. 2 s. and 5 m. 5 s. The third race of one mile was won by Flora in 2 m. 23½ s., 2 m. 22 s., and 2 m. 23½ s. Although this most extraordinary race was won by Flora, Princess had trotted so well that it was still thought by some that she was the better horse. In August a fourth race of two miles took place between them, which was won by Flora in the unprecedented time of 4 m. 50½ s. The time of the second heat was 5 m. 5 s. The two mares then made a trip together, trotting at Saratoga, Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Chicago, and, on the 15th of October, at Kalamazoo, Mich. In the third heat of the race at this place, with Princess and Honest Anse, Flora trotted a mile in 2 m. 19¾ s. The news of this great performance was received by telegraph in the principal cities of the Union, and created a general excitement. It was the culmination of a long and brilliant career. Flora Temple became thenceforth an object of public interest, and wherever she went was regarded with the greatest curiosity and favor. Before she returned to New York, she visited Cleveland, and St. Catharine's, Canada, winning races at both places.

Flora was now fifteen years old. She had been on the turf for ten years, during which time she had trotted over fifty successful races, and won thousands of dollars. It would seem that she had fairly earned a release. But such was not the fate in store for her. Another great horse had made his appearance, with whom she was destined to fight her old battles over again. This was George M. Patchen. He was bred in New Jersey, and was of Bashaw, Messenger, and Trustee lineage. He had been beaten once by Ethan Allen, but had beaten Brown Dick and Lancet, and trotted under the saddle in 2 m. 25¼ s. He was a large, powerful

horse, and every way worthy of his reputation as a trotter. His first race with Flora took place on the 21st of November, 1859. Flora won the first heat in 2 m. 23 s., the second in 2 m. 24 s., and the third in 2 m. 24 s.; but this heat, because of some irregularity, was given to Patchen by the judges. The race was then postponed, on account of darkness, until the following day, but was never finished.

The second race between them took place on the 6th of June, 1860, and was won by Flora in 2 m. 21 s., 2 m. 24 s., and 2 m. 21½ s. Hiram Woodruff pronounces this the best of Flora's races, and the horse that pushed her in it could not be other than very nearly as good as herself. They afterwards trotted a number of races at different places, in which Flora maintained her place at the head of the trotting horses of the country.

In 1861 a new rival came from the West, to put the undecayed powers of this wonderful mare to one more trial. This horse had been known as Medoc, but was now called John Morgan. He was by Pilot, Jr., deriving Messenger blood from his dam. He was a very strong horse, and of great courage and endurance as well as speed. He was matched to trot three races with Flora; the first of one mile, the second of two miles, and the third of three miles. In all he was beaten; but in the second race he proved himself worthy to rank with the very best horses that had ever been pitted against Flora. In this race he pushed her at every step, and the two heats were the best ever trotted in one race; the time being 4 m. 55 s. and 4 m. 52½ s.

Flora's races with Ethan Allen and running mate remain to be mentioned. In these she was beaten, but they are not to be considered in any fair estimate of the powers of the two horses. A horse trotting with a running mate is not only relieved of the whole weight of wagon and driver, but is absolutely helped along. In these races Flora showed undiminished speed and endurance, and in the last heat of the last

race was only beaten by the team by a length, in her own best time, 2 m. 19 $\frac{3}{4}$ s. She was now withdrawn from the turf, and has never since made her appearance in a public race.

In this sketch of the career of Flora Temple, in which the interesting "Reminiscences of the Trotting Horse, by Hiram Woodruff," published in the "Spirit of the Times," have been consulted, most of the first trotting horses of the country, of the twelve years of her life on the turf, have been noticed. During the period of her ascendancy there was a great development of the taste for trotting, and the number of trotting horses had constantly increased. During the past five years that taste has become still more marked, and diffused over the whole country. The number of trotting-courses has multiplied, until nearly every town of three thousand inhabitants is supplied with one. The attention of farmers is largely given to breeding trotters; and the amount of money, care, and intelligence bestowed upon that one branch of rural economy is almost incredible. In one county in the State of New York — Orange County, on the Hudson — there are millions of dollars invested in trotting stock farms. At the Stony Ford establishment alone there are one hundred and twenty-five horses of the Messenger blood. So many fast trotters have consequently been produced since 1861, that it is possible, within the limits of this article, to mention only the most celebrated.

The first noticeable race of the year 1862 was that of Lady Emma and Jilt, on Long Island. Lady Emma was a granddaughter of Abdallah, and every way worthy of her descent from that patriarch of trotters. In the race with Jilt she made the following surpassing record, — 2 m. 28 $\frac{1}{2}$ s., 2 m. 29 $\frac{1}{4}$ s., 2 m. 30 s., 2 m. 31 s. This was followed by the race between two great horses, Ethan Allen and Robert Fillingham, or George Wilkes, as he is now called. The latter is by the celebrated Messenger horse Hambletonian of Chester, — with one exception the only son of Abdallah liv-

ing, and the sire of more great trotting horses than any horse that has ever lived in America. George Wilkes has all the characteristics of the Hambletonian stock, — fine size, great muscular development, smooth long stride, and superior endurance. He beat Ethan Allen in three straight heats, in 2 m. 24 $\frac{3}{4}$ s., 2 m. 25 $\frac{3}{4}$ s., and 2 m. 31 s.

In October of the same year the first race between the horses General Butler and Rockingham was trotted, to wagons, on the Fashion Course, Long Island. General Butler is a very remarkable horse. He developed slowly, and came to his great speed only after long and careful training. He has shown lasting powers equal to those of old Top Gallant. Rockingham was bred in Massachusetts, where he was known as the Granger colt. He was a large, flea-bitten gray horse, of very stylish appearance, and a great trotter. In this race five heats were trotted, — Rockingham winning the first two, in 2 m. 30 $\frac{1}{4}$ s. and 2 m. 29 $\frac{1}{4}$ s.; and General Butler the last three, in 2 m. 28 s., 2 m. 27 s., and 2 m. 30 s. The second and third of their races were both won by Rockingham, in the third of which he trotted a mile under the saddle in 2 m. 22 $\frac{1}{4}$ s.

The famous feat of the "Ledger team," Lady Palmer and Flatbush Maid, also took place in the season of this year, 1862, on the Fashion Course, Long Island, on the day of the race between the black mare Sunnyside and Gray Eddy. As Sunnyside was a new-comer of great pretension, a large concourse of people had assembled to witness her first performance. After the race was over, it was whispered that Mr. Bonner would give his mares a trial of one mile; and his appearance on the course in his road wagon, driving the well-known beauties, detained the whole assembled multitude. The reason of this public exhibition of the speed of a pair of horses kept strictly for private amusement by a gentleman strongly opposed to betting, and all the demoralizing accessories of the turf, was known to many upon the grounds, and tended to increase their interest. A few years

before, Mr. Bonner had taken up driving for his health. On the roads about the city, among others he met Commodore Vanderbilt, the great steamship owner, who has for many years been known as an indefatigable *roadite* and horseman. They were accustomed to meet at what is known as the Club House on Harlem Lane, where easy and pleasant social intercourse, enlivened by an occasional brush between some of the first-class horses that were daily assembled there, made such meetings exceedingly agreeable. On one of these occasions some *badinage* took place between Commodore Vanderbilt and Mr. Bonner as to the speed of their respective teams, that resulted in a lasting rivalry. Mr. George Wilkes, writing of this rivalry, says: "It was a fair contest. Commodore Vanderbilt was worth eight or nine millions of dollars, and Mr. Bonner had an income of considerably more than one hundred thousand a year. Every one, therefore, looked on with pleasure at this rivalry, and the efforts each gentleman made to secure pre-eminence made the contest conspicuous to all lookers-on." The efforts here referred to were efforts to obtain the fastest horses in the market. As Mr. Bonner would not accept a bet of ten thousand dollars, he offered the Commodore the alternative of competing in a friendly way, should he see fit, with the time that he should make with his horses in a public trial. On the day in question the Commodore was on the course, and, by request, held a watch upon the horses, and took note of the time made.

When Mr. Bonner brought out his team there was a murmur of admiration. The horses were well matched, of the finest mould, full of life and elastic vigor, and moved together as if they obeyed a single impulse. Lady Palmer is a dark chestnut Glencoe mare, of fine thorough-bred appearance, but has bone and muscle in abundance, where bone and muscle are needed in trotting. Flatbush Maid is of the same height, but of heavier build. She has the compact and solid form and vigor-

ous action which indicate ability to carry weight and trot a long race. In the preliminary skirmishes, previous to starting, it became apparent that both were in the best condition for the trial. Mr. Bonner now gave them a turn around the course, gradually increasing the rate of speed, and passed over the score for the trial at a flying gait. The quarter pole was passed in $38\frac{1}{2}$ seconds, and, urged on to their utmost endeavor, the team increased the pace, and crossed the score in 2 m. $32\frac{1}{2}$ s. But Mr. Bonner did not stop them at the end of the first mile. He pushed straight forward for the second mile, rightly estimating that in the first half of the first mile they had not been quite up to the mark. But they were now fully down to the work. They moved with the steadiness of a locomotive, and as they came upon the home-stretch, they appeared to put forth all their strength. The eyes of thousands were upon them as they came flying on; and as they passed over the score, they were greeted with a general exclamation of delight and a universal clapping of hands. The time had not been announced, but all were satisfied that it was a great improvement upon the previous record, though few were prepared to hear 2 m. $28\frac{3}{4}$ s. announced from the judges' stand. This made the time of the two miles 5 m. $1\frac{1}{4}$ s. It was entirely unprecedented; the best time on record being that of Lady Suffolk and Rifle, of two miles in 5 m. 19 s., made May 31, 1842, and of one mile in 2 m. 42 s., by Lantern and Whalebone in 1856. After learning the time in which his horses had trotted, Mr. Bonner publicly declared that, while it was a rule with him never to make a bet, he would present ten thousand dollars *as a gift* to any gentleman who owned a team, if he would drive them in the time just made by Lady Palmer and Flatbush Maid; and this, although the time was not so good by nearly three seconds as that of a private trial, namely, 2 m. 26 s., made a few days previous.

This great feat, and the circumstances out of which it arose, had more influence

in drawing public attention to driving the trotting horse than any other single occurrence in his whole history. Mr. Bonner's refusal to bet somewhat dispelled the fancy that it was impossible to own a fast horse without using him for gambling purposes; which fancy had arisen from the fact that running horses in America are of no use except upon the turf. Taken with the established popularity of driving, and the increased facilities for it provided in trotting-parks and improved roads, that refusal assisted in making the use of the fast trotting horse general, and in freeing a perfectly innocent and healthful amusement from a disreputable odor which had for many years attached to it.

During the year 1863 the war caused a great diversion of public attention; nevertheless, the records of the turf exhibit a goodly amount of excellent work. It was marked by the splendid trotting of the horses General Butler, George Wilkes, George M. Patchen, Silas Rich, California Damsel, and by the first appearance of a number of the horses that have since become famous. In May, the Hambletonian, Shark, made his mark in a three-mile race with Frank Temple; placing himself in the list with Screwdriver, Dutchman, Lady Suffolk, and all the famous old three-milers of the first generations. He won the race with Frank Temple in two heats; trotting the first in 7 m. 47 $\frac{1}{4}$ s., and the second in 7 m. 52 $\frac{1}{2}$ s.

The great two-mile race, on the Fashion Course, Long Island, between General Butler and George M. Patchen, in which General Butler made the best two-mile time to wagon on record, took place on the 18th of June. General Butler won the first heat in 4 m. 56 $\frac{1}{4}$ s. In the second heat, owing to some unfair advantage taken by the driver of General Butler, the judges declared him distanced. Two days after, the same horses met again, when General Butler came off victorious; winning three mile-heats in 2 m. 27 $\frac{1}{2}$ s., 2 m. 30 s., and 2 m. 32 s. In the early part of this month — June — George Wilkes, in harness, beat Rockingham, under the sad-

dle, in three straight mile-heats, the best of which was trotted in 2 m. 24 $\frac{1}{2}$ s.

In September, George Wilkes and General Butler were pitted against each other again, in a race on the Fashion Course. The year before, George Wilkes had beaten Ethan Allen, and he came to the encounter with the green laurels of his victory over Rockingham. It was stipulated that he should go in harness, but this was to him no drawback, while General Butler was privileged to go under the saddle, the style most favorable to an exhibition of all his powers. The day was fine, and the track in excellent condition. General Butler appeared in trim to surpass all his previous performances, and perhaps outstrip all his predecessors. George Wilkes did not appear so well, and in the race broke frequently, but pushed General Butler out in the last heat in 2 m. 23 $\frac{1}{2}$ s. The preceding two heats were won by General Butler, in 2 m. 29 $\frac{1}{2}$ s. and 2 m. 28 $\frac{1}{2}$ s. General Butler may therefore be fairly regarded as the first horse upon the trotting turf in 1863; and his great endurance and speed entitle him to be mentioned among the very first of American trotting horses, living or dead.

The great performance of the gray mare Peerless also took place on Long Island in the summer of this year. She was then, as now, the property of Mr. Robert Bonner, and the performance referred to was a trial of one mile to wagon. Hiram Woodruff drove her in 2 m. 23 $\frac{1}{4}$ s., which is the best time to wagon upon record. This mare was bred in Orange County, New York, and is directly derived through her sire, American Star, from Sir Henry. She is therefore the best living representative of that excellent and popular strain of trotting blood, and is held by many of its admirers to be able to draw a wagon faster than any other horse living.

It will perhaps be noticed that the principal races mentioned have been upon Long Island. This is owing to the fact of its being the seat of the great metropolitan race-courses to which every first-class horse sooner or later is

brought. New York City is, in truth, the sporting emporium of the Union. The great facilities for driving in its suburbs, and the large number of its wealthy men interested in fast horses, make it the best market for them in America. The record of trotting on Long Island is, consequently, a record of its progress in the whole country.

The year 1864 was one of the most brilliant in trotting-turf annals. A fitting record of its great races would fill a volume. They represent the best horses of 1862 and 1863,—General Butler, George Wilkes, Lady Emma, and Stonewall Jackson; and such additions as Dexter, Shark, Nutwood, Brunette, Prince, May Queen, Lady Thorn, and Commodore Vanderbilt. Some of the latter had been on the turf for a short time previous; but it was in 1864 that they flowered into a fulness of speed which gained them a national reputation. Dexter, however, the greatest of all, and the horse that at present represents the highest development of speed in trotting, made his first appearance on the 4th of May of this year.

Dexter was bred in Orange County, New York, of the blood of Messenger and Sir Henry. That of the former he derived from his sire, Hambletonian; and the latter from his grandsire, American Star. He was foaled in 1857, and was therefore seven years old when he made his appearance on the turf. He is of a rich brown color, fifteen hands one and one half inches high, and has all the characteristics which distinguish the trotter, as the following minute analysis of his prominent features exhibits: "His head, though somewhat large, is clean and bony; lower jaw well open at the base, leaving ample room for the wind-pipe; ears tapering and lively; eyes bright and prominent; head well set on to a rather light neck, which is well fitted to fine sloping shoulders; withers high, with great depth of brisket, and a good barrel; back slightly arched, with broad loin and hips, and a drooping rump; uncommonly long from the point of the hip to the hock; short cannon-bone.

Though wide across the hip, he is more so measured across the stifles, where his power is most apparent; fine arm and thigh; his limbs are clean and sinewy, and without blemish, with long pasterns fitting into well-shaped hoofs; mane and tail sufficiently full, and the latter denoting his Hambletonian origin."* In the seven years which preceded his first appearance, his frame had become firmly knit, and his muscles developed and hardened, so that, when placed in the skilful hands of Hiram Woodruff, he had the strength to undergo a thorough training, and to maintain and repeat every improvement in speed.

The first race on the Fashion Course in 1864 was that in which Stonewall Jackson, of Hartford, Connecticut, beat Frank Cosette and General Grant in 2 m. 30 s. This was on the 10th of April; and the race of Stonewall Jackson, Lady Collins, and Dexter followed on the 4th of May. Although Dexter was a green horse, the fact of his being pitted against such a champion as Stonewall Jackson, under the management of Hiram Woodruff, was sufficient to excite considerable expectation as well as curiosity, and there was in consequence a good attendance at the race. In the first heat the horses got off well, Dexter leading, and giving a taste of his quality by trotting the first quarter in 37 seconds. Stonewall Jackson then drew up, but did not succeed in disposing Dexter of the lead which he maintained to the end of the heat; time, 2 m. 33 s. In the next heat Stonewall Jackson led nearly half-way round the course, when he was overhauled and passed by Dexter, who kept the lead, winning the heat in 2 m. 36 s. In the third heat Dexter opened a wide gap between himself and his two competitors, which was never closed. He won this heat in 2 m. 34½ s., and with it the highest opinion of all who had been witnesses of the race. Not only his style of trotting, but his apparent vigor and courage, impressed every one with the idea of a great horse, and caused

* From "Turf, Field, and Farm."

much speculation as to his future. Looking back now, there appears to have been a chance for speculation of a more easily computable value, as Dexter could probably have been bought at that time for five thousand dollars. Two days afterwards Dexter beat Lady Collins on the Union Course. In the interval between the last heats Commodore Vanderbilt drove his famous team, Ploughboy and Postboy, around the course several times in fine style, but made no attempt to compete with the time placed upon record by Mr. Bonner with Lady Palmer and Flatbush Maid. On the 3d of June Dexter started in a race with two other Hambletonians, Shark and Hambletonian Second, but struck his leg in the first heat, and was withdrawn. He did not appear on the turf again during 1864.

In the early part of this season there was a great revival of trotting in all parts of the country. In the West as well as in the East there was an unusual activity upon the turf. At Cincinnati, Quaker Boy trotted in 2 m. 30½ s.; at Chicago, Black Diamond beat General Grant and Boston; at Woodlawn, Kentucky, Rolla Gold dust distanced Jerry Morgan in 2 m. 29½ s.; at Hartford, Connecticut, John Morgan beat Prince, trotting five heats, — the fifth in 2 m. 28¾ s.; at Springfield, Massachusetts, Dan Mace beat General Butler, trotting under the saddle, one heat, in 2 m. 31 s.; and later in the season, at Boston, Belle of Hartford and mate trotted in double harness in 2 m. 33¾ s.

The principal races of the year, however, came off on Long Island. On the 1st of June, Lady Emma, May Queen, and Dan Mace met in a race on Union Course, which was won by Lady Emma in three successive heats, — two of which were trotted in 2 m. 27¼ s. On the 15th of June General Butler beat George Wilkes and John Morgan in a great race on the Fashion Course. George Wilkes won the first two heats; but through the disgraceful conduct of his driver, in driving foul, he was distanced by the judges in the third, although he won the heat

in 2 m. 24 s. The fourth and fifth were won by General Butler in 2 m. 33½ s. and 2 m. 31½ s., who came out of the contest apparently as fresh and vigorous as when he went into it. On the 16th, Toronto Chief, the famous son of Royal George, beat Shark, on the Union Course, in 2 m. 25¾ s.; and July 8th, Shark was also beaten by Goshen Maid in 2 m. 31¾ s.

On the 21st of September a great race between the champions General Butler, Lady Emma, Prince, and John Morgan took place on the Fashion Course. It was won by Prince, of Hartford, who trotted the three last of five heats in 2 m. 28½ s., 2 m. 30¼ s., and 2 m. 30¼ s., beating at the same time both Lady Emma and General Butler, — a distinction never enjoyed by any other horse.

October 8 there was another meeting of the same horses. George Wilkes was entered also; and, if he had trotted, it would have included nearly all the great rivals on the turf. As it was, the celebrity of the horses engaged in it, and the fact of their having trotted together a few weeks before, excited very great interest in the race. Their previous trial had been in harness; this was to wagons. Lady Emma was the favorite, and she came on the ground in the finest condition; Prince had the prestige of success; while General Butler and John Morgan were well sustained by their friends, upon the strength of their many victories. The race was worthy the reputation of the horses engaged, and fully met public expectations. It was indeed one of the best that was ever trotted. Lady Emma increased her great reputation by winning every heat. Her time was 2 m. 27¼ s., 2 m. 26¼ s., and 2 m. 26¾ s. Flora Temple, in her best race to wagons, trotted three heats in 2 m. 25 s., 2 m. 27½ s., and 2 m. 27½ s., which cannot be regarded as very much better than the time of Lady Emma in this race.

On the 12th of October Stonewall Jackson trotted a three-mile race with Shark, in which he made the best three-mile time on record, excepting that of

Dutchman. He trotted two heats; the second in exactly the same time as the first, — 7 m. 39 s. Shark showed himself a worthy antagonist, and his splendid trotting made the race very interesting. October 17 the horse Commodore Vanderbilt beat Toronto Chief in 2 m. 33 $\frac{1}{4}$ s., and established his reputation as a first-class trotter, — a reputation which he fully sustained the following year. On the 21st of October Lady Thorne, the famous daughter of Mambrino Chief, the great Messenger horse of the West, trotted at Philadelphia with Shark in one of her earliest races, in 2 m. 32 $\frac{1}{2}$ s. In this race she gave a good earnest of her future greatness.

The trotting season of 1865 opened about the 1st of June, and was marked by fine races in all parts of the country. In many of these the horses that have been previously mentioned were pitted against Dexter, who made the year memorable in trotting records by his surpassing performances. On the 2d of June he beat General Butler; trotting three heats in 2 m. 26 $\frac{3}{4}$ s., 2 m. 26 $\frac{1}{4}$ s., 2 m. 24 $\frac{1}{2}$ s. This showed a marked improvement in his trotting capacity, his best time in 1864 being 2 m. 30 s. On the 12th he was beaten by Lady Thorne, who trotted a mile in this race in 2 m. 24 s. On the 26th he beat Stonewall Jackson in a three-mile race, but without making a remarkable record. A race with General Butler followed September 7th, and one with the same horse and George Wilkes, September 21st. George Wilkes had been previously beaten on the 20th of June by Lady Emma, — a mare in praise of whose beauty, speed, endurance, and reliability it is impossible to say enough. The race of September 21st was won by Dexter, whose claim to the title "King of the Turf" was now pretty clearly established. It received, however, an indorsement on the 10th of October, which rendered it indisputable. On that day he trotted his great race against time, on the Fashion Course. In the presence of all the leading horsemen of the country, who had assembled to see Flora Temple

forever dispossessed of her place at the head of the trotting horses of America, Dexter trotted one mile under the saddle in 2 m. 18 $\frac{1}{2}$ s. Subsequent to this great feat he made his appearance on the turf only twice in this year, — each time in a race with the indefatigable bay veteran, General Butler. In the last race Dexter trotted two miles in 4 m. 56 $\frac{1}{4}$ s.

In the latter part of this season there remains to be mentioned the race in which General Butler beat George Wilkes and Lady Emma, adding another to his long list of splendid victories; and two races in which George Wilkes beat Commodore Vanderbilt.

November 16, 1865, the gentlemen of New York interested in horses had the high honor of entertaining General Grant at their pleasant rendezvous, Dubois's Club House, on Harlem Lane. The Club House is an open cottage building, situated near the road, with a one-half mile course immediately in the rear. Through the agency of Mr. George Wilkes, — during General Grant's visit to the city, — the owners of most of the fine horses were informed of the General's desire to see their horses, and, upon solicitation, he appointed a day to meet them at Dubois's Club House. On the day appointed there was such a gathering of trotting horses and horsemen as was never equalled. Flora Temple, still living, was there to claim admiration for the splendid performances of other days; Dexter, in the height of fame; The Auburn Horse, of whose great speed every one present had caught glimpses; Lady Emma, Lantern, Peerless, George Wilkes, General Butler, Toronto Chief, Commodore Vanderbilt, Brunette, Ella Sherwood, Lady Clifden, and many others. The General, who is a great lover of the horse, was highly gratified; and his discriminating remarks indicated his ability to review an army of horses quite as well as an army of men.

This review showed the strength and richness of the trotting turf in material for various and brilliant displays

of speed, and in the seasons of 1866 and 1867 these succeeded each other so rapidly as to lose something of their former novelty. The season of 1866 opened early. The reappearance of Dexter on the 15th of June was preceded by several fine races. In one of these, which took place on the 15th of May, on the Fashion Course, Rosamond, a dark chestnut mare by Old Columbus, and Mambrino Pilot, in whom the strains of Messenger and Pilot are united, took part. Mambrino Pilot, although untrained, won one heat in 2 m. 34 $\frac{3}{4}$ s. The other three heats were won by Rosamond, who trotted the first in 2 m. 30 $\frac{1}{4}$ s. On the 30th of May, Shark, a really first-class horse, but almost uniformly unsuccessful, beat Lady Emma in 2 m. 28 $\frac{1}{2}$ s., 2 m. 30 s., and 2 m. 36 s.; Lady Emma winning two of the five heats in 2 m. 28 $\frac{3}{4}$ s. and 2 m. 26 $\frac{1}{4}$ s.

The antagonist of Dexter, on the 15th of June, was George M. Patchen, Jr., a son of George M. Patchen, — a horse sixteen and one half hands high and of proportionate size, but compactly built, and possessing rare ability as a trotter. He had beaten Commodore Vanderbilt on the 1st of the month, and high hopes were entertained of his power to dispute the supremacy of the "King of the Turf"; but Dexter beat him easily in three successive heats. After beating General Butler and Commodore Vanderbilt once more, Dexter made a tour of the country, trotting at Philadelphia, Syracuse, Avon Park, Buffalo, Cleveland, Hamtrank Course, Chicago, Milwaukee, Adrian, Kalamazoo, Pittsburg, Baltimore, and Washington. He was everywhere successful. At Buffalo he beat Rolla Golddust; at Pittsburg, the Magoozler pacer and George M. Patchen, Jr.; and, at Washington, Silas Rich.

October 25, 1866, there was a race on the Union Course, Long Island, between the celebrated mares Lady Thorne and Lady Emma. Judged by the record, there was hardly a choice between them, — if anything, the balance was in favor of Lady Emma; both

represented the best blood and the form of the trotter in the highest perfection. The race between them was one which any amateur in horses desirous of seeing a race between equals would have suggested, and the result proved the wisdom and beauty of such races. The first and second heats were won by Lady Thorne; the third and fourth by Lady Emma; and so closely had each heat been contested that the betting in the last heat was even. When this was trotted, so near were they together at the score that it was generally considered a dead heat; but the judges decided Lady Thorne the winner by a head.

The purchase of the beautiful trotting mare Young Pocahontas by Mr. Bonner, for a very large sum, was among the interesting turf items of the year. This mare is a daughter of Ethan Allen and the pacer Pocahontas. She inherited the wonderful symmetry and perfect trotting gait of her sire, and the power and endurance of her dam. The great pacing match, in which Pocahontas distanced Hero, in 2 m. 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ s. is in the memory of all veterans of the turf. Young Pocahontas was owned for a time in Boston, but caught the attention of Mr. Bonner, who obtained the refusal of her. Nevertheless, she was sold to other parties in New York, from whom Mr. Bonner obtained her by paying over twenty-five thousand dollars.

The trotting season of 1867 is still fresh in the minds of all readers of newspapers. It will be long remembered for its extraordinary number of races and trotting horses, and for the great performances of Dexter, and his retirement from the turf. In the first part of the season he was taken to his early home, and gave an exhibition of his speed at Middletown, beating Lady Abdallah. He returned to distance Lady Thorne in 2 m. 22 s. on the 28th of May. The next day a race took place on the Fashion Course between Ethan Allen and Brown George, both with running mates, in which Ethan Allen astonished the trotting world by making a

heat in 2 m. 19 s. He was forthwith matched to go with a running mate against Dexter. Although a running mate was known to be of very great assistance, yet Ethan Allen, thus assisted, was not generally considered by any means the equal of Dexter. His best performance made in this way was nearly a second slower than Dexter's 2 m. 18½ s., and the latter's power of endurance was acknowledged by all to be superior. The race excited the greatest interest. It took place on the Fashion Course, on the 21st of June, in the presence of many thousands of people. There was the largest amount of speculation, and conning over of the records of the turf, in order to arrive at a more correct approximation of the result; but this was all to no purpose, as the result was entirely unprecedented. Ethan Allen and mate won in three terrific trials, in 2 m. 15 s., 2 m. 16 s., 2 m. 19 s. Dexter's time was 2 m. 17 s., 2 m. 18 s., 2 m. 21 s. Although beaten, Dexter surpassed himself and all his predecessors on the trotting turf. The advantage of a running mate, great as it was known to be, was not until now fully appreciated. Ethan Allen's best time, single, does not approach the time made in this race by Dexter. Notwithstanding this, the sterling qualities of this grand old horse must not be overlooked or depreciated. As the antagonist of Flora Temple and George M. Patchen, as well as of Dexter, he is entitled to rank among the first trotting horses of his time.

Dexter after trotting two two-mile races with Lady Thorne on the Fashion Course, in the first of which he made his best two-mile time, 4 m. 51 s., started on another tour through the country, trotting for purses at the principal cities.

July 4, at Middletown, New Jersey, he encountered Ethan Allen and running mate a second time, and with the same result; the team winning in three successive heats. July 10, he beat Lady Thorne at Trenton, N. J.

It was now established that there

was no horse in the country capable of competing with Dexter on equal terms; and his next three races were with Brown George, assisted by a running mate. But the latter thus assisted was not equal to the New England champion; and Dexter beat him in three successive races, winning each race in three successive heats. The time made by Dexter in the last race, which took place at Boston on the 30th of July, shows the terrible demand upon him in these uneven contests. It was 2 m. 21¾ s., 2 m. 19 s., 2 m. 21¼ s.

On the 14th of August he trotted at Buffalo in a race against the time he had just previously made at Boston, 2 m. 19 s. He was allowed three trials, in the second of which he trotted a mile in 2 m. 17¼ s. This was in harness, and was altogether unexpected and unprecedented. After this race it was announced that he had been sold to Mr. Robert Bonner; and that, so soon as his engagements at Chicago were fulfilled, he would pass into that gentleman's hands, and be added to the unequalled collection of famous horses in his private stable.

The withdrawal of this great horse from the turf was universally regarded with regret; as thousands were thereby deprived of an opportunity of seeing him, and witnessing an exhibition of his wonderful powers. This general feeling of regret shows the strength of the interest in the trotting horse throughout the country, as it exists entirely free from the passion for betting, for no one would bet against Dexter. His superiority had made the purses raised from the admission fees to the various race-courses where he trotted the principal source of his profit to his owners. The price paid for him was also an evidence of the high value placed upon the trotting horse for pleasure-driving, and induces the hope, that in the popularity of this pastime the horse and the turf may be relieved of the odium which immoral practices have brought upon both.

During the summer the great fairs held in the interior had attracted most

of the best horses and professional horsemen, and the stables and race-courses of Long Island were deserted; but by the end of September most of them had returned to their old quarters, and were in the best condition for the severe work of the fall season.

On the 30th of September a race took place between Lady Thorne, Lucy, and a new horse, Mountain Boy, bred in Orange County, New York, of the Hambletonian stock, and owned by Commodore Vanderbilt. He had recently risen into high favor, and from certain private trials it was assumed that he was more than a match for Lady Thorne. This assumption, however, proved incorrect, as Lady Thorne won the race in three successive heats, making a record which has been surpassed but a few times in the whole history of trotting.

The second race between Lady Thorne and Mountain Boy came off on the 7th of October, and was won by the latter; but the best time made was slower by one and one half seconds than the time made by Lady Thorne in the previous race. Mountain Boy has since trotted a mile in harness in a public trial, in 2 m. 21½ s.; but it is still doubtful whether he can draw a wagon, and beat Lady Thorne.

Some letters written by Mr. Bonner and Commodore Vanderbilt have appeared in the newspapers within a few months, in one of which the latter denies a knowledge of the existence of any rivalry between Mr. Bonner and himself, while indorsing a challenge addressed to Mr. Bonner by his trainer, to trot Dexter against Mountain Boy. This denial, after what has transpired in years past, is inexplicable, and is even inconsistent with

the matter of the letter containing it. As Mr. Bonner never uses his horses in public races, he took no other notice of the challenge than to call Commodore Vanderbilt's attention, in a note, to Dexter's performances, indicating, at the same time, that when Mountain Boy should equal or surpass them he would willingly acknowledge it. Until then, these pretensions of superiority to Dexter, which have been set up for Mountain Boy, must be regarded as altogether premature and unwarranted.

The races of General Butler, George Wilkes, May Queen, George M. Patchen, Jr., Daisy Burns, Mountain Maid, Ben Franklin, and Empress, which took place in various parts of the country this year, were in the best style of these fine horses.

On the 10th of October a race took place on the Fashion Course, which is noticeable for the great interest with which it was regarded by breeders. It was projected a year before it took place, and was between colts three years of age, and all by Hambletonian. There had been sixteen entries of promising colts scattered all over the country, but on the day of the race only six appeared on the ground. The winner was a full brother of Brunette and Bruno, one of the most promising young horses in the country.

This concludes a survey of trotting in America from its rise to the present time. It will be seen that it is at present stronger in popularity, and in the number and quality of its horses, than ever before in its history. The progress in speed has been gradual, and can be better appreciated by a slight tabular statement of the best performances, commencing with the first public trotting race:—

ONE MILE.

				m.	s.
1818.	Boston Blue,	Boston,	harness,	3	0
1824.	Albany Pony,	Long Island,	saddle,	2	40
1834.	Edwin Forrest,	" "	"	2	31½
1839.	Dutchman,	Beacon Course,	"	2	28
1847.	Highland Maid,	Long Island,	harness,	2	27
1849.	Lady Suffolk,	Cambridge,	saddle,	2	26
1858.	Ethan Allen,	Long Island,	wagon,	2	28

1859.	Flora Temple,	Kalamazoo,	harness,	m. s.
1859.	Flora Temple,	Long Island,	wagon,	2 19 $\frac{3}{4}$
1863.	Peerless,	" "	"	2 23 $\frac{1}{4}$
1865.	Dexter,	" "	saddle,	2 18 $\frac{1}{8}$
1866.	Dexter,	Buffalo,	"	2 18
1867.	Dexter,	Long Island,	harness,	2 17 $\frac{1}{4}$

TWO MILES.

1831.	Top Gallant,	Philadelphia,	saddle,	5 19 $\frac{3}{4}$
1847.	Lady Suffolk,	Long Island,	"	5 3
1852.	Tacony,	" "	"	5 2
1858.	Lady Franklin,	" "	wagon,	5 11
1859.	Flora Temple,	" "	harness,	4 50 $\frac{1}{2}$
1865.	Dexter,	" "	wagon,	4 56 $\frac{1}{4}$
1867.	Dexter,	" "	harness,	4 51

THREE MILES.

1827.	Screwdriver,	Philadelphia,	saddle,	8 2
1839.	Dutchman,	Beacon Course,	"	7 32 $\frac{1}{2}$
1839.	Dutchman,	" "	harness,	7 41
1841.	Lady Suffolk,	Philadelphia,	saddle,	7 40 $\frac{1}{4}$
1853.	Pet,	Long Island,	wagon,	8 1
1864.	Stonewall Jackson,	" "	harness,	7 39

ONE MILE BY TEAMS.

1856.	Lantern and Whalebone, both trotting,	2 42
1861.	Ethan Allen and running mate,	2 19 $\frac{3}{4}$
1867.	Bruno and Brunette, both trotting,	2 25 $\frac{1}{4}$
1867.	Ethan Allen and running mate,	2 15

TWO MILES BY TEAMS.

1842.	Lady Suffolk and Rifle,	5 19
1862.	Lady Palmer and Flatbush Maid, both trotting,	5 1 $\frac{1}{4}$

Trotting horses have increased in value even more rapidly than in numbers or speed. Since 1830 that increase has been about one hundred per cent every ten years. The amount paid by Mr. McDonald, of Baltimore, for Flora Temple in 1858, \$8,000, represents the value of the best trotting horse bred in the country up to that date. In 1862, Mr. Sprague of Rhode Island paid \$11,000 for California Damsel. Mr. Bonner paid \$13,500 for The Auburn Horse in 1864; \$25,000 for Young Pocahontas in 1866; and \$33,000 for Dexter in 1867. The great stock horse of Orange County, Hambletonian, was valued in 1866 at \$100,000. It is now no unusual thing for fast trotting horses, and fine stock horses of the best trotting blood, to sell

for amounts varying from ten to twenty thousand dollars.

The events which have transpired in the country during the past six years, affecting all values, have had an effect in bringing about the change in the value of horses; but a great deal must also be credited to the legitimate rise caused by increased demand. The increase in the demand becomes apparent when the source from which it now chiefly emanates is considered. The highest prices paid for trotting horses are paid by those who have no intention of placing them upon the turf. They are bought for pleasure-driving. The taste for this pastime has already deprived the turf of its greatest ornaments, and it absorbs nearly all the promising young trotting horses as

soon as they make their appearance. The market thus created by a taste which makes nearly every man a driver and every road a course is infinitely more extensive than that which existed when the only field for the display and enjoyment of speed was the regularly appointed race-courses. The race-course in America is, in fact, gradually becoming merely an exercising ground for developing and training horses previous to their passage into the hands of gentlemen who keep them solely for their own amusement.

In proportion as the cultivation of the trotting horse has been encouraged by the demand for him for driving, the practice of using him on the turf for the purpose of gaming has declined. Gaming is not a practice in harmony with the calculating and careful acquisitive character of the American people. Their native prudence and foresight incline them to shun any mode of investment in which the chances of loss and gain are so nearly equal.

The turf and its gaming accompaniment have been only the nurses of trotting. They have furnished a field where those interested in the horse could gratify their taste, and see the results of their labor and expenditure in breeding and training. But the growth of a more general appreciation of trotting has widened and enlarged the arena for the display of it, and the turf has assumed a secondary place. The decay of betting, its leading feature, is the best evidence of the fact. During the past year a large majority of the races throughout the country were for purses offered by associations formed for the improvement of stock; and in all the exhibitions the excitement and pleasure were principally derived from a

genuine interest in the performances of favorite animals.

In conclusion, the peculiar adaptation of driving, as a pastime, to the character and needs of a large portion of the people, affords an assurance of its enduring popularity. The undivided pursuit of wealth has made native-born Americans in the highest degree active, intense, and calculating. The fierce competition resulting from the predominance of the commercial spirit makes the largest demand upon their intellectual and vital energies. The life of the American, especially in towns, is one of unrelenting endeavor; and an adequate means of relief and recreation is one of the chief requirements of the time. Driving furnishes the means. The act of driving is an easy and pleasant diversion. It gratifies a natural inclination to control, and affords moderate exercise. The docility, spirit, and power of the horse engages the sympathies; while the trials or brushes on the road, to which emulation on the part of owners of fast horses gives rise, add zest and piquancy.

The change from the town to the open country is gradual. There is a preparation for the effect of the landscape. The influence of nature in restoring mental equilibrium, and counteracting the effect of perplexing and absorbing employment, cannot be overestimated. It furnishes the great corrective of American life, and the eagerness with which it is sought is evidenced in the national art. A fine nervous temperament makes the majority of the population peculiarly open to this influence; and, whether acknowledged or not, the facilities which driving affords for enjoying it constitutes one of the strongest claims of this pastime to popular favor.

Copyright of Atlantic Magazine Archive is the property of Atlantic Monthly Group LLC and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.