

and still are in vogue among trotting-horse trainers, there are a great many that no reason can be given for except that somebody else used it on a certain horse, and, therefore, it must be a good thing for any horse. It is now more than thirty years since Hiram Woodruff used a peculiar kind of check-rein on Kemble Jackson. He thought that particular horse went better with that special arrangement, and from that day to this about every brainless trainer in the whole country has looked upon the "Kemble Jackson Check," or some modification of it, as a necessity to the speed of every horse he has abused. This imitative faculty in trainers is fully equal to that in monkeys, and just about as reasonable, in many cases. They try everything that anybody else has tried, no difference how unphilosophical and absurd it may be. It may seem presumptuous to say so, but it is nevertheless true, that many of Hiram Woodruff's methods have done a world of harm among brainless imitators. His philosophy of training was wrong at the very core, for he assumed and treated the horse as a mere machine, instead of a sentient and reasonable creature. That the horse must have his head braced up to an unnatural and painful elevation, and then pull a ton weight with the bit, in order to go fast, was a piece of unpardonable stupidity. After working four years on Dexter, the best he ever had, with his check-rein-machine methods he got him to go in 2:21, while a little two-year-old filly, developed in a few weeks, with her head loose, did the same thing. The filly was no better bred than Dexter, indeed, not so well bred, but she was allowed to carry her head where nature prompted her to carry it, and thus she made her supreme effort without hindrance or restraint. Nature is a far better guide in this matter than fifty Hiram Woodruffs or fifty millions of his stupid imitators. All the phenomenal youngsters of the last two or three years have been developed in the same natural, free-headed way, and they stand as a perpetual protest against the cruelties of machine methods, all centering in the check-rein.

The constrained and unnatural position of the head not only prevents the animal from putting forth a supreme effort, but the torture sours his temper and he commences fighting the bit. He soon becomes willful and obdurate by his suffering, and the contest between the horse's mouth and the strength of his driver's arms commences. This soon becomes a habit, and when once confirmed the animal is of but little value for either the track or the road. Every pound he pulls checks his speed to a greater or less extent, and when he pulls very hard his speed is destroyed. There can be no reasonable doubt that if Dexter had been trained to go with a free head his record would have been

much lower. But, it will be answered, the check-rein and a strong pull are necessary to control the horse and to recover him from a break. No doubt this is true with horses that are trained and driven as machines, but the very point we want to reach is, to train and drive as though they were *not* machines. Horses so trained and so driven will obey the mere shifting of the bit far more readily and promptly than the severest wrench on a puller. To sum the whole matter up, when a humane and thoughtful man finds a check-rein in his stable let him throw it out, and send his blockhead of a trainer whirling after it. If a man is not able to develop the speed of a colt in a kindly and natural way, he certainly never can succeed by first trying to make a machine of him.

Something About the Tom Halls in Indiana.

IN the last number of the MONTHLY a call was made for some more definite and tangible information about the pacing tribe of Tom Halls that have abounded in Indiana for some years past. We are glad to receive the following from a new correspondent, and although it is not so definite and particular as we would like, he will please accept our thanks for it, as it may lead to further responses. He says:

"I notice your inquiry about the Tom Halls, and I will tell you what I know about them. In 1857 or 1858, Mr. John Shawhan, of Falmouth, Rush County, Ind., brought from Harrison County, Ky., a big sorrel stallion that was known as 'Sorrel Tom' or 'Shawhan's Tom Hal.' He was kept by Mr. Shawhan at Falmouth, Ind., two seasons, and left a multitude of good horses. He was a large, well-made horse, with good bone and fine style, and could pace as fast as the wind. He had four white stockings and a stripe in the face. He was sent back to Kentucky. He can be distinguished by his being a bad roarer. Among his colts was Hoosier Tom, which, in my judgment, was the greatest race-horse Indiana has ever produced. My memory is that they claimed this horse to be by Lail's Tom Hal, he by Bald Stockings, and he by Shropshire's Tom Hal; but I don't know anything about that. This horse left three entire sons. Two of them were owned by Shawhans—a gray and a bay horse. They practically killed the gray colt, running foxes with him, and then castrated him. The bay colt they sold, at three or four years old, to Wm. Gray, of Rush County. This colt is sometimes called Shawhan's Tom Hal and sometimes Gray's Tom Hal. He is the sire of Little Gipsey; hence she is sometimes said to be by Shawhan's Tom Hal. This horse is also the sire of Fanny Bixby and one or two others that could trot fast. Fanny could trot in 2:28, but I don't know of her having any record. Most of these colts went east, and I lost the run of them. The blood of the dam of Gray's Tom Hal is hopelessly unknown. This horse is said to be the sire of the pacer Bay Billy, and I think it is the case. The third son is known as Landers' Tom Hal, and is the sire of Lady