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AN ADVANCED STANDARD.

The past 10 years has wrought a great change in public sentiment in regard to the standard. This was foreseen 10 years ago, and predicted by a few, but at that time nearly all trotting-horse breeders in New England and nearly every writer on horse matters in the East were in favor of the standard. Many New England breeders sold good mares at low prices because they were not standard bred, and paid much more money for those of far less merit because they were bred in such lines that mated with a standard-bred stallion their produce could be registered as standard.

John H. Wallace raised the cry, "Breed only standard-bred animals." Nearly every newspaper in New England except the American Cultivator, the parent of the AMERICAN HORSE BREEDER, reiterated the cry, and the majority of horse breeders appeared to be impressed with the idea that unless they bred stock of that kind there would be no demand for it, but that if their stock was only standard bred it would command fabulous prices.

When they had got fairly settled in the business, and had begun to breed stock eligible to standard registry, those in charge of the American Trotting Register changed the rules, so that many of these small breeders were compelled to sell their mares and buy anew, in order to be in the fashion. A few years later still another change was made in the rules. These changes required additional standard crosses on the dam's side, in order to make the produce eligible to standard registry. The weak points in the old rules first adopted were entirely overlooked or disregarded in the amended rules. The bicycle sulky finally came along, which enabled most horses to trot from two to five seconds faster than they could hitched to the sulkies in use when the rules were first established on a 2.30 basis, but no attention was paid to that. The amended rules up to the present only require of trotters a 2.30 record.

Then several changes in the standard rules have cost New England breeders of horse stock hundreds of thousands of dollars in hard cash. What have they to show for it today? Are the average of the horses that have been bred and raised in New England for the past ten years worth more for actual use than the average of those bred and raised 20 or 30 years ago? Ask any of the old dealers or old-time horsemen and see what they will say. It is true that some of the trotters and pacers are much faster now than the best of them were then, but we are referring to the average marketable horse stock of New England, and we have been assured by dealers who have bought horses in the country, for city markets, for upwards of 30 years, that the average of the horse stock to be found on New England farms today is vastly inferior to that of 25 and 30 years ago.

This is due largely to the fact that their great anxiety to breed animals eligible to standard registry caused breeders to overlook many of the qualities which those who use horses for the road demand, viz., size, style, soundness, good conformation, pleasant dispositions, etc. It appears that about all the average of Eastern breeders have to show for their vast expenditure of money in trying to breed stock eligible to standard registry is an inferior class of undersized, misshapen and in many cases unsound animals for which there is no demand at any price.

The rules originally adopted to govern standard rank were so weak in some points as to break in time of their own weight. Still as a guide for breeding [illegible]reme and uniform trotting speed they [illegible] far superior to either set of the amende[illegible]. This can be easily demonstrated b[illegible]ying them to the most successful st[illegible] and brood mares and the fastest tr[illegible] have ever been produced. Ver[illegible]tres and dams of these would [illegible] breeding according to th[illegible] Neither Electioneer, N[illegible] Onward, Alcantara [illegible] best son, Altamont [illegible] Jr. (2.26), Mamb[illegible] best son of Man[illegible] standard by bree[illegible] amended rules, w[illegible] tion of Elyria, w[illegible] of rules first adopted [illegible]

One of the weak[illegible]pots in the standard rules is that which permits a stallion without merit to get standard-bred animals, and perpetuate standard rank through his offspring for all time, simply because some full brother or half brother or sister had taken a tin cup record of 2.30. Too large a proportion of the animals registered as standard in the American Trotting Register are of this class. The produce of the inferior and worthless animals that are standard bred are eligible to registry as standard under the present rules.

We have always contended that when a set of standard rules is once established, they should never be changed. A new standard can be established without injury to any class of breeders, and possibly be of great benefit to some, but it should have a new name, and the weak points of the other standards when discovered should be cut out. The present standard of the American Trotting Register Association is as dead as the proverbial door nail, and will always remain so. On account of the large proportion of dead wood or worthless material with which it must always be encumbered, it will prove a laughing stock to practical breeders. It is useless, except to serve as an index to a practical or progressive standard.

We believe that the time has come to establish a standard that shall prove of benefit to all practical breeders, especially to those who are about entering upon the breeding of trotting stock. We believe in basing this trotting standard upon a race record of 2.25. A few rules only are necessary, and records of 2.30 made prior to the year of the advent of the bike sulky might be considered equivalent to a record of 2.25, but records against time should, under no condition, make an animal or his progeny eligible to standard registry. This would keep out an immense amount of dead wood. The produce of no stallion should be eligible to standard registry, unless that stallion, or at least one of his get, had taken a trotting race record of 2.25. This clause would keep out another vast amount of worthless material.

Have the rules such as to admit the produce of a stallion that has trotted to a record of 2.25 in a race, or is the sire of a trotter with a race record of 2.25, when that produce is out of a mare whose sire has a trotting race record of 2.25, or has sired a trotter with a race record of 2.25. This rule would admit to standard registry such animals as Electioneer, Nutwood, Wedgewood, Red Wilkes, Alcantara, Maud S, Sunol, etc., and would not disqualify the stock of such breeders as are inclined to favor a pretty close thoroughbred cross.

The writer has studied the subject carefully for years, and is convinced that an advanced standard, based upon a few simple rules, and so constructed as to require an animal to demonstrate by actual performance in a race that he possesses merit before admitting his produce to standard rank, will have a tendency to improve the trotting stock of the country, or, at least, to produce a class of horses that will perpetuate a high rate of trotting speed with greater uniformity than can be expected of the present standard-bred stock of the country.

Experience is a good teacher. A valuable lesson may be learned from a careful study of the breeding of the most successful trotting sires and of the most famous producing dams that have yet come to light. This has evidently been lost sight of by the framers of the amended rules of the American Trotting Register Association.

Breed in producing lines is a short, simple rule, and a safe one to follow. Abdallah left a number of sons, but only one of them, Rysdyk's Hambletonian, ever became famous as a producer of uniform trotting speed. Great as was Rysdyk's Hambletonian, at least two-thirds of all his entire sons failed to get even a single 2.30 performer. The same is true of quite a large proportion of the most successful of trotting sires. Men who breed to these failures will be disappointed. A set of standard rules like those suggested above will naturally have a tendency to cause breeders to confine themselves to producing lines.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

Mr. C. W. Marks appreciates a good joke, even if it is at his own expense. He tells this one: "One day, during the Grand Circuit meeting at Readville, last year, a seedy-[illegible] swipe, who had been imbibing [illegible], came up to me and said: '[illegible]rks, lend me (hic) a dollar? I've [illegible]ght (hic) tip and can win a (hic) [illegible]ner for it.'

"I am an easy mark, so I pulled out a dollar and handed it to him and he started away, but turning about, he came back and addressed me thus:

"'Mr. Marks, you are a (hic) good feller, but you (hic) would never have heard of (hic) it if it hadn't been for *Joe Patchen*, would yer?'"

Such is fame.

Mr. Marks was in Boston last week, and from what he had to say about *Joe Patchen* it is evident that all the talk about who will drive the great horse this season has been mere guesswork. He says he has engaged no one as yet, nor has he any particular driver in view. As a matter of fact, beyond the free for all pace at the Dubuque, Ia., meeting, which is to come off the last week in August, and in which *Joe Patchen* is entered, he has made no engagements for the horse.

Mr. Marks suggests, and the suggestion is a good one, that it would be an excellent idea for some associations to hang up purses for *Patchen*, *Star Pointer*, *Gentry* and *Frank Agan* to compete for. He is aware, of course, that Mr. Murphy has said that *Star Pointer* would be reserved for exhibitions this season, but perhaps he might be induced to enter his horse in a few races, such as suggested. *Patchen* is at present at the Peoria, Ill., track in charge of Peter V. Johnson, who brought out the old-time pacer *Johnston* (2.06¼), and he is in fine fettle.

It is passing strange that men will be so short sighted as to stand in their own light. Anything that tends to elevate the sport of harness racing can have but one result—increased prosperity to track managers, owners, trainers and their dependents. If a manager can offer sufficient inducements to attract a crowd of 10,000 people to his track, he can afford to hang up much larger purses than he is able to do if he can only secure the attendance of 1000. That is reasonable, is it not?

In order to attract a big crowd and induce ladies and gentlemen to attend harness meetings, it is necessary to offer them clean and wholesome entertainment. Attention must be paid to details, and things that are offensive to good taste should not be for a moment tolerated on a track. One of the most important details is the matter of dress of drivers and their attendants.

To the credit of drivers let it be said that most of them appreciate importance of neat and tasty dress. Most of them, we say, for there are still a few exceptions. It was only recently that the writer attended a meeting where a driver who had neither ignorance nor inability of means to excuse him appeared on the track to drive for a race garbed in a pair of dirty jumpers and a red sweater, with a superannuated vest over it, and he was the laughing stock of the crowd. The worst feature of it was that he not only made himself ridiculous and offensive by his slovenly dress, but he lowered the whole tone of the sport.

The dress of drivers and attendants is a very important matter. Managers of running meetings long ago recognized this, and they don't tolerate anything slovenly about the conduct of their meetings. They do things neatly and tastily, and brilliant colors of jockeys and stable boys is not the least attractive feature of running meetings.

A Frenchman from Cork with a Yankee twang sends us the following notes about the horses around Wayback:

Bill Sykes' spiked-tailed nag is a-comin' fast. He has been a full mile in 4.20, last quarter in a minit flat. Bill is a-bankin' on sure coin, fur he kalkerlates that he'll bag most er them punkin show purses this fall.

Thimblerigger is a smooth article. Ef he don't scoop the tin this year I'll miss my guess. He's slicker than one er them three-card monte fellers, and oilier than a lightnin'-rod agent. He stepped a quarter t'other mornin' in a shade better than 39¾ seconds, and I'll be durned ef he turned a hair after doin' it.

Here's one for "Trotwood." Zeph Jones has got a freak. It's a brindle heifer that was born a-pacin' and she can step to beat the band, and she ain't got a drop er Hal blood in her veins, nuther. Zeph's turned his farm over to his brother-in-law, Zeke Tider, an' is puttin' in his time eddercatin' the heifer. She goes without hopples.

Tinker's Dam, by Gee Whizz, is hot stuff, an' that ain't no bluff. He reeled off a mile t'other day in the vercinity of four minutes an' a quarter, an' he could have beat it by a few points ef he'd er wanted tew.

Rubber Neck, that's in Hank Stone's stable, is an elastic cuss. He's a little slow a-gittin' orf, but he's good on the stretch.

Mike Donovan is all-fired blue these days. He swapped hosses a little while ago with his naybur, Dan Sheedy, "without lookin'," as the boys swap jackknives. Mike's hoss had a spavin, a ringbone an' the heaves, but the one he gut had two spavins, one on 'em a bog, two ringbones an' is broken winded an' blinder than a bat. Mike's addin' to his misery by borrowin' trouble. He's afraid his new hoss 'll throw out a curb.

The flashiest thing seen on the streets of this up-to-date burg these days is the high stepper Lightnin', by Electricity. LEE.

The meeting at Denver, Col., which opened on the 11th inst. was a success from a racing standpoint, for although some of the fields were small, the time in several of the events was very fast for so early in the season. *Carbonate* made *Anaconda* step three heats in 2.09¾, 2.09¼, 2.10¾ on the opening day. Respond, by Campbell's Electioneer (2.17¾) won the first heat of the trotting race in 2.21¾, but Electric Light, by Acolite, gathered in the next three in 2.21½, 2.21¾, 2.21½. On June 13, the second day of the meeting, *Shekam*, by Durfee, won the 2.30 pace in straight heats; time, 2.21½, 2.20¼, 2.22. Second money went to *Florence B.*, by Kankakee, third to *Blast*, by Onward, and fourth to *Fanny V.*, by Kankakee. The two-year-old trot, same day and track, went to Annine, by Superior, which won first and third heats in 2.48½, 2.45. Jack Dean, by Jefferson, took the second heat in 2.52.

The three-minute pace on the 15th inst. was won in straight heats by Miss Peterson, by Great Tom, time, 2.17¼, 2.18¼, 2.17½. The 2.14 trot, same day and track, proved a seven-heat event, and was finally won by Hazel Kinney, a daughter of McKinney (2.11¼) by Alcyone. Dione, by Eros, won the first heat in 2.17, but was drawn after the second heat. Stambulette, by Stamboul (2.07½), took second and third heats in 2.15¼, 2.14½. The fourth heat went to Dr. Leek, by *Sidney*, time, 2.18½, after which Hazel Kinney went to the front three times in 2.17¾, 2.18¼, 2.17½. This gave her first money, and still leaves her eligible to the 2.18 class. Her record is 2.17¼, made last season.

Split-heat races were the order of the day at Denver on the 16th inst. In the 2.12 pace, *Roberts*, by Arragon, won the first two heats in 2.09½, 2.10¼. Then *Raymond M.*, by Thorndike, got two heats in 2.09¼, 2.14½. *Lena N.*, by Sidney (2.19¼), then captured first money by taking the next three heats in 2.14½, 2.18, 2.19. The 2.45 trot, same day and track, resulted in some fast records, for so slow a class John Nolan, by Prodigal got the first two heats in 2.14¼, 2.14. G. W. McKinney was second in each heat, and captured the next three in 2.14½, 2.19¾, 2.18. The winner is by the California stallion McKinney (2.11¼), the son of Alcyone, which some of the California breeders refused to take at $1500 a few years since because he had curby hocks.

On the 17th inst., *Athol Wilkes*, by Shadeland Onward, started out like a winner in the 2.19 pace, but after capturing two heats in 2.14, 2.12½, he took a back seat, and Klatawah, by Steinway, landed first money by winning third, fourth and fifth heats in 2.15½, 2.14, 2.14½. The 2.20 trot, same day and track, was won by Electric Light, son of Alcolyte, which took first, fourth and fifth heats in 2.18½, 2.17¼, 2.18. Lady Bomont, by Bomont, won second and third heats in 2.17¼, 2.20½.

First money in the 2.25 pace on the 18th inst. was captured in short order by *Miss*