[*Written for the Christmas Number.*]

A MAIDEN RACE.

TO dispute the fact that ladies often take as deep an interest in trotting horses as the men themselves would be a thankless task in Kentucky, and, indeed, not only in that favored State, but in many others. In this State, however, this passion for horses among the fair sex is more general than elsewhere, and the stranger is some times struck dumb with amazement at the knowledge of pedigrees and records, races and race-horses displayed upon occasion by the daughters of "Old Kaintuck."

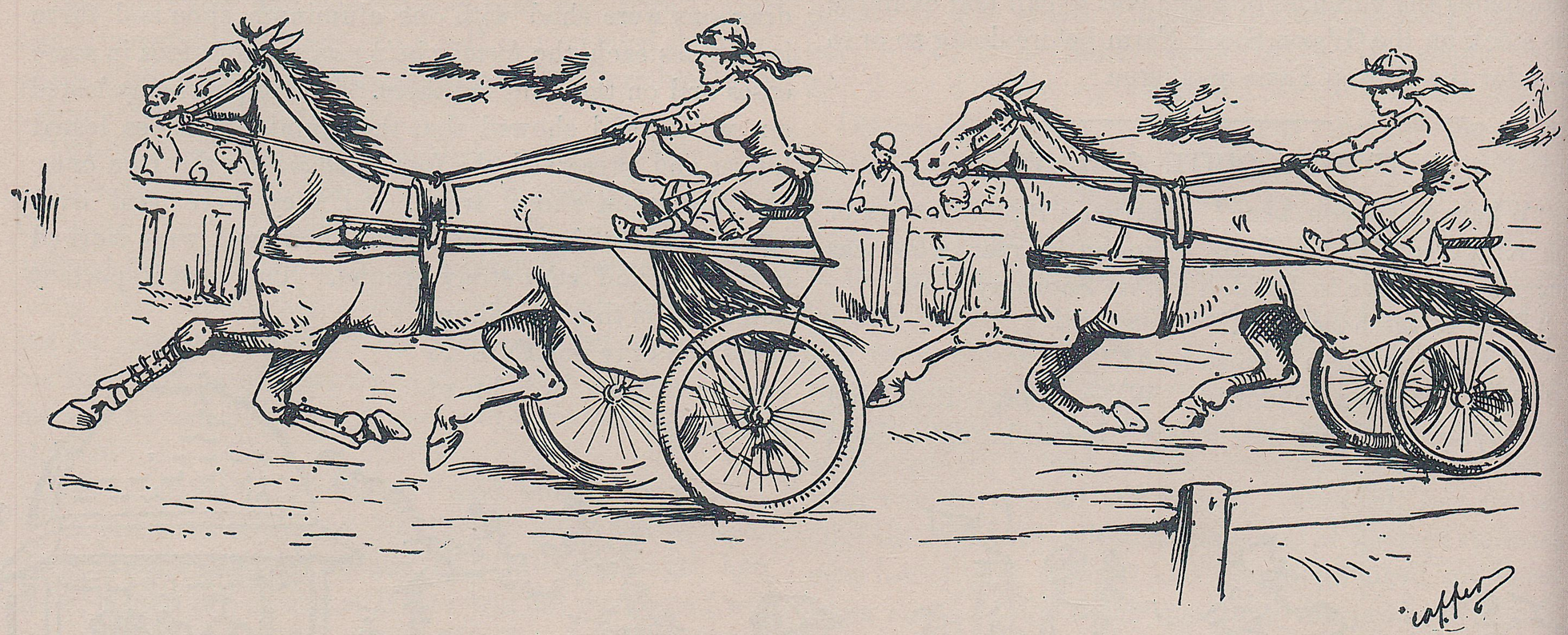
It is of two Michigan young ladies, however, that the following story is told. Both lived in the country, on their fathers' stock farms. Miss Ethel D—— was, like the rest of us, a great admirer of Nancy Hanks, and, in fact, of all Happy Medium stock, and swears by it, figuratively speaking. Her friend, Miss Sadie L——, favors Electioneer and Red Wilkes blood lines more strongly. The former young lady owns a fine Happy Medium filly, presented to her by her father on her eighteenth birthday, whilst the latter is the happy possessor of a colt by Red Wilkes. Both are three-year-olds.

The filly showed great speed as a two-year-old, and now was unquestionably fast. The Wilkes colt was also a speedy fellow, and considerable rivalry existed between the friends over their horses.

Finally, a race was arranged between the two, and each was to drive her own animal. Now, it is possible that many will consider it unbecoming in our young ladies to enter the arena as drivers of the trotter, and doubtless very rightly so. But in this case, no such question arose, as spectators were to be rigidly excluded, and the race was to take place over the private half-mile training track on one of the farms.

Sulkies were to be used, and two brand new pneumatic-tired Toomies, which had just been purchased, were pressed into service. It is doubtless somewhat puzzling to the mind of the innocent male reader, how a lady can sit a modern sulky with any degree of safety or comfort. He probably imagines that skirts and similar articles of feminine apparel would be found somewhat inconvenient and embarrassing to the animal as well as to the fair driver. This difficulty was, however, successfully bridged over, but I am not at liberty to explain how. Suffice it to say, that a suggestion made by a convenient brother was finally adopted, and the whole trouble removed.

The day of the race arrived, and great was the excitement on the rival farms. The stable boys were gambling heavily on the event, and the backers of the Wilkes colt forced the betting to a standstill by sheer weight of money. They were too much for the other side, who had recently gone broke on a sure thing at Independence, that didn't come off. Fifteen dollars and forty-two cents was the sum total that they could scrape together, and this enormous pile was placed advantageously.



At three o'clock the race was to be called, and before that hour all those who were permitted to witness the event were at the track. Nobody but the families of the respective drivers were there, with the exception of a cousin from Ann Arbor and the writer. On that day ten dollars would not have purchased a ticket of admission to the track. Kodaks were strictly prohibited, or I should be able to present some somewhat striking pictures of the race.

Timekeepers were appointed, and the bell sounded for the first heat. The race was to be two in three. The Red Wilkes colt drew the pole, and after scoring twice, they were sent off well together. As far as speed was concerned, it was the general opinion that the colt could beat the filly, but, on the other hand, Miss Ethel was a