

A TROTTER'S TRAINER'S EXPERIENCE  
WITH TOE-WEIGHTS.

CHATHAM, Ont., March 5, 1877.

DEAR SPIRIT Although my name does not appear on your subscription list, I have been a regular reader of The Spirit for a number of years, and highly appreciate its great value to horsemen and the world in general.

Since reading "North Branch's" very interesting and instructive article on toe-weights, gait and bits, in your issue of Feb. 17, I have concluded to give you my views on the same subjects.

In the first place, I would say that my conclusions are based on an experience of eighteen years spent in the training and driving of trotters.

Several years ago I came to the conclusion that much of the success of the trotting horse trainer and driver depended on the proper shoeing of his horses, and I at once went to work and acquired a practical knowledge of horse-shoeing. This knowledge has very much assisted me in experiments with all kinds of shoes and weights that have been used to assist the trotter and enable him to develop his speed.

When I have derived new ideas from others or conceived them myself, concerning shoes or weights, I have been enabled to thoroughly test them by being able to make what I might want for my experiments.

It is not necessary for me here to introduce evidence to prove that weights, properly applied to the feet of the trotting horse, assist him in keeping his gait square and level, and enable him to speed faster than he could without them. All horsemen whose opinions I have ever been able to consult concede that they do; but while all horsemen admit that weight is necessary to assist many horses in speeding fast, there is a difference of opinion among horsemen with regard to the proper manner of applying the weight to the feet.

There are a few, and one or two of them among the most noted horsemen of the day, who claim that the only proper way to apply weights is to put it into the web of the horse's shoes and nail it on to the ground surface or inferior part of the horse's feet. While the great majority of trainers believe that a better result may be obtained by applying the weight on the wall of the foot, at the toe, in the shape of toe-weights, or by applying it on the sides of the feet, in the form of side weights.

My experience has taught me to coincide with the toe and side weight parties. Before toe and side weights were invented I used many different kinds of shoes, varying in weight from four pounds up to four pounds. And while I found that heavy shoes assisted me in getting some horses to go more square and speed faster than they could with light shoes, I also learned that heavy shoes were more injurious to the horse's feet than light ones. To secure a pound and a half to two pound shoe to the horse's foot requires much larger nails than to secure a twelve to sixteen ounce shoe. Large nails are more likely to split the shell or wall of the foot than small nails; consequently, they are more injurious than small nails.

A pound and a half to two pound shoe cannot be formed to fit an ordinary-sized foot without making the web of the shoe either so broad that it would be but a clumsy and slippery affair for the horse to travel on, or so thick that it would soon destroy the normal state of the foot by undue pressure on the quarters and bars. I have seen a number of horses that produced quarter cracks by wearing heavy shoes, thick at the heels.

Thick-heeled shoes raise the frog so high that it does not perform its natural functions in supporting the weight of the horse; consequently, there is undue pressure thrown on the quarters, and frequently quarter crack is one of the results.

I once saw at Pittsburgh, Pa., a pacer that naturally had strong, sound feet. She could pace in 2:30, and, to cause her to change her gait and trot, her trainer had put on her front feet two and a half pound shoes. It soon had the desired effect, and in ten days from the time the heavy shoes were applied, she could trot in 2:40, but in the meantime she had caused a quarter crack to appear in both her front feet, being the result of the injury produced to her feet by the use of the heavy shoes. I could name many similar cases that have fallen under my observation.

After using shoes of different weights, I have come to the conclusion that one weighing from twelve to eighteen ounces is as heavy as can be applied to an ordinary-sized foot without producing injury to the foot, or by causing the horse to cut or bruise himself in one of the many places which he is always liable to when not properly shod. I shall not now further attempt to prove that heavy shoes are injurious to the horse's feet, and, sooner or later, will destroy their normal condition.

Neither is it necessary for me to enumerate the many trotters that have been made what they are by the use of toe and side weights to prove that toe and side weights are superior to

self. When after having acquired the art of balancing and walking, he may trot level without the aid of toe or side weights, and only require shoes of sufficient weight to protect his feet from injury.

I will now give my experience with toe-weights, as I have used them on pacers to convert them into trotters. I have converted a number of pacers into trotters. I have used heavy shoes and all the various kinds of cross strap rigs used for that purpose. I have found that toe-weights have assisted me more than all other contrivances that I ever saw, polo and sail tracks thrown in.

I could enumerate a number of pacers that I converted into trotters; but will only mention one. He is a horse that has been before the public, and earned a reputation for himself; most horsemen are acquainted with him. I refer to Mazo-Manie.

During the year 1872 Mr. Francis Ardary, of Pittsburgh, Pa., started a stock farm forty miles out of that city, on the line of the Pennsylvania Railroad, and employed me to take charge of it and train and drive his horses.

During the summer of 1872 Mr. James Hair, of Pittsburgh, brought the horse now called Mazo-Manie to that city, and sold him to Mr. F. Ardary. Mr. Hair stated then that he had not the horse near Columbus, O.; that he had never had any training, but had been used on a farm during the spring and part of the summer of 1872 at ploughing and cultivating corn.

Mr. Ardary, after purchasing him, used him some five or six weeks for a road horse, occasionally driving him to Friendship Park, where he had him hitched to a sulky and speeded by a professional driver. He soon showed considerable speed at a pacing gait. At the end of this time Mr. Ardary concluded to send him to his stock farm, where I took him in charge some time during the month of September, 1872. Mr. Ardary desired me to develop his pacing gait, so I at once set about it. I soon found that he was a very speedy pacer, for in a few days after he came into my hands he could turn a new half-mile track in 1:07 and 1:08. But when he had gone a half-mile he would go all to pieces, and want to stop. He did not appear tired, but indicated that he thought that he had gone far enough.

Learning that he had never been speeded but half a mile at a time before coming into my hands (owing to his condition), I was satisfied that was the cause of his trick of stopping.

To be concluded next week.

## IMPORTANT TO STALLION OWNERS.

The Kentucky Court of Appeals has just rendered a decision of vast importance to stallion owners and breeders, in the case of Dr. S. Price, Lexington, Ky., vs. Col. R. P. Pepper, of Frankfort, on an appeal from the Franklin Circuit Court. Col. R. P. Pepper bred three mares to Dr. S. Price's stallion Sentinel, one of which failed to prove in foal, and Sentinel died at the close of the season, and suit was brought for the recovery of the season money. The printed terms on which the horse stood were as follows:—"Sentinel will make the coming season at Ash Grove Stud Farm, at \$75 for the season, with the privilege of breeding back next season should the mare not prove with foal." The terms bound the breeder to the payment of the money at the close of the season, which was not done, and the Franklin Circuit Court decided that as the mare was not in foal, and the horse having died, so that the privilege of breeding back could not be obtained, Dr. S. Price should not recover the price (\$75), of the season. The Court of Appeals reversed the decision of the Franklin Circuit Court on the following grounds:

"It is true the appellant gave the appellees the privilege of breeding back next season should the mare not prove with foal," but he did not agree that he was not to be paid till the mare proved in foal.

"Suppose appellees had complied with their contract and paid appellant \$75 for the season of the Almont mare to Sentinel at the time they took her home at the close of the season and afterwards Sentinel had died, could the appellees have recovered the season price of the Almont mare back? Or suppose, after the payment of the season price for the Almont mare, she had proved not to be in foal, but died before another season, could appellees have recovered the money back? We think not. The agreement to permit customers to breed back till their mares were in foal of course only meant that they could do so if the horse and mare lived to another season, nor did he make the amount due him for the price of his horse depend upon whether his horse did or live.

"We are of opinion that Sentinel's terms, as indicated in appellant's printed card, did

## A BLAST AT SHORT HORNS.

At the New York Mills sale in September, 1873, twelve cows of the Duchess family sold for \$238,660, and one bull of the same blood brought \$12,000. At least, two animals were knocked down by the auctioneer at bids which amounted to \$250,000. The 8th Duchess of Geneva, bid in by the agent of Mr. Davis, of England, for \$40,000 was retained in this country for the reason that said agent, as he claimed, got mixed in his hasty reduction of dollars to pounds, and carried the competition further than his orders warranted. Mr. L. G. Morris took the cow off his hands at \$80,000, and in doing so incurred a gr at loss, since the animal died before a year had rolled around. She was seven years old at the time of sale. Quite a number of the twelve Duchesses so much in demand in September, 1873, are now numbered among the dead. The purchasers of them have not realized as extensively as they expected. Only a few weeks ago we chronicled the death of the 10th Duchess of Geneva, calved in 1867, and for which Lord Bective paid \$85,000. The 4th Duchess of Onoda calved in 1872, was purchased at Mr. Campbell's sale by Messrs. Mead and Bedford, of Paris, Ky., for \$25,000. The heifer was bred and she produced a bull calf and then turned her toes to the sky. As she was so young, her sudden departure from this world was quite unexpected. Mr. Megibben purchased from Mr. Bedford that gentleman's half interest in the calf for \$9,000, and thus became its sole owner. It is alleged that Mr. Bedford insured the breeding quality of the bull. Upon examination, the calf was found to possess but one seed, and upon trial it was proved impotent. Thereupon Mr. Megibben brought suit against Mr. Bedford for damages. The case was tried before Judge Buckner last week, holding court in the county of Bourbon. Eminent counsel was heard on both sides, and excitement ran high. The jury failed to agree, and the end is not yet. The only point which we care to emphasize is the impotency of the bull. The Duchess family is too much inclined to do much toward perpetuating its line. The most conspicuous members of the family have shown in the last four years an alarming lack of vigour and constitution. The 16th Duchess of Airdrie died in giving birth to the 22nd Duchess of Airdrie, about which so much has been said. The 11th Duchess of Airdrie died Feb. 28, 1873, at the age of five, one year after giving birth to the 16th Duchess of Airdrie. What but lack of constitution, produced by incestuous breeding, could have caused this early decay. Truly we have seen the folly of paying extravagant prices for animals too closely inbred.—Turf, Field and Farm.

## A HEN LIE

It is charming sometimes to witness the ingenuity of man when he departs from his usual habit of mendacity into the broader realms of unconscionable romance. 'Twas a brother-in-law of a "well-known gentleman" in New Haven who concocted the following: "I dropped a cartridge, one of the small kind, Smith & Wesson make, in the yard of my residence, a while ago. One of my boys picked it up among other edible articles, appearing nowise inconvenienced by its size, weight, or composition. I have always noted that that hen, a Shanghai of the ostrich breed, had a remarkable fondness for bits of metal. Two days elapsed after the occurrence before developments ensued. The hen having a disagreement with the local rooster, turned and ran. Probably the rapid motion engendered a fatal movement, bringing one of the bits of metal in that hen's gizzard against the fulminate end of the shell with force enough to cause an explosion. The hen scattered, while the amazed rooster, brought to a stand-still by such unexpected denouement, sadly shook his crest and moralized on the impropriety of leaving such playthings scattered about." Good day! Gentleman from New Haven, your story is undoubtedly true.

## ASTONISHING VITALITY OF A DOG.

About six weeks ago a gentleman who prided himself on having one of the best rabbit dogs in the city went rabbit hunting north of the city. The dog soon struck the trail of

## DRESS PARADE DOGS.

It does not follow that a dog which looks well on dress parade will act well in the field. It is desirable, however, to combine good looks with good nose and a disposition which will yield to the trainer's art. There are a great many dogs of fine pedigree in the country which, for practical purposes, are not worth the powder and shot necessary to kill them. We recall the experience of one gentleman, which points a moral, if it does not adorn a tale. Three years ago he had shipped to his shooting box in the Northwest a red and white setter pup, a perfect beauty in form, boasting of a pedigree which comprised some of the most desirable strains in the world. The pup was reared with the greatest care, and he had the benefit of the best of training. But, in a country full of game, he learned nothing. The poorest cur in the land could not have behaved worse in the field. He always overran his birds, and put them to flight before the hunter got near him, and as for obeying the word of command, why, you might just as well have shouted at a post. He was untractable, and had no nose. He was an excellent bench show dog. His looks and his breeding would have recommended him to any one who pretends to be a judge of canine points. In November last the red and white setter was doomed. He exhausted the patience of his owner and was ordered to be shot. Two years ago the same gentleman carried to the Northwest with him a brace of Gordons. They were the produce of a famous kennel, and their ancestry was praised as being without a flaw. Their sire as well as their dam had won prizes in bench shows. The dogs were in bred, but that was pronounced the proper thing, they were all the better for it. In the field these Gordons gave rise to the keenest disappointment. They lacked nose and had no constitution. Miles Johnson tried his hand on them, and found he could do nothing with them. At the end of six weeks they were condemned as worthless. Last Fall the gentleman in question made his third experiment. He expressed to his shooting box a brace of lemon and white setters. They were of famous stock, and as handsome in appearance as a dream. Well do we remember the parlor parade at his house on Fifth avenue, before the trainer took charge of them. They were in splendid feather, and their rich coats had been washed, combed and brushed until they looked like satin. A dainty blue ribbon heightened the tone of each silver collar, and cologne water had been sprinkled in the hair. The ladies went into raptures over them, and old sportsmen swore that their equal had never been seen. When tried in the field, these handsome, well-bred dogs acted so badly as to cover their owner with mortification. They were indifferent hunters, and so timid that you could never depend upon them. Drive ten miles out upon the prairie, and then release them from the wagon and motion them forward, and seven times out of eight they would strike a bee-line for home. One of the best trainers in the country tried to break them of their shyness, but he did not succeed. The dogs are now held on probation. They will be given another trial the approaching Summer and Autumn. It would gratify us to be assured that the experience of this gentleman is exceptional. But we doubt it, for the reason that we could name a good many who have sought diligently and found not who have purchased fashionable strains only to meet with the bitterest disappointment. The moral to be drawn is, when you have a good working dog, do not trade him off for an untried one, who has good pedigree and good looks to recommend. Those who breed for the market will have to put their dogs to more thorough tests. Mere bench show winners will not answer. Merit will have to be established by practical work, by trials in the field.—Turf, Field and Farm.

## HORSES OF CENTRAL ASIA.

The horses which are native to the Kirghiz Steppes are the hardiest breed in the world. They are small in size, with thick, shaggy coats like a Newfoundland dog's. They have a jogging gait ordinarily, and their gallop is not very swift; but their powers of endurance are marvellous. They are never housed in winter, sovereigns as they are in Central Asia, nor are they blanket-d during the coldest days or nights. Their thick coats of hair is their only protection against the rigors of wind, snow and piercing cold, even when the mercury drops to 40 degrees below zero. Nor is there any provision made for their sustenance during the months when the ground is covered with snow. They are turned loose on the Steppes when the day's toil is over and left to suit for themselves, which they do by kicking away the snow and feeding on the withered grass and herbs. A great many die of starvation during the winter months; occasionally when the winter is

## MILLIONAIRES' PALACES.

For nearly two years past the summit of California street has been the scene of building operations on a gigantic scale. The crown of this hill is the site selected by the railroad magnates for their residences. Mr. D. Colton was the first to build, erecting his house on the northwest corner of California and Taylor streets several years ago. Leland Stanford the President, and Mark Hopkins, the Treasurer of the Central Pacific Railroad Company, purchased conjointly the block surrounded by California, Powell, Pine, and Mason streets, which they began to improve over two years ago. Although Mr. Stanford's residence, at the southwest corner of California and Powell streets, has been intended for some time, it is only very recently that it was completed. Mark Hopkins' house, at the southwest corner of California and Mason streets, is well under way, the roofing being nearly finished. The third, Charles Crocker, at the northwest corner of California and Taylor streets, is almost ready for occupancy. These three buildings are the largest and most costly in the city. Hitherto no reliable estimate of the cost of the ever been made public, but various estimates from \$500,000 to \$1,000,000 have been made. Stanford's residence has, however, cost about \$2,000,000. The total outlay on the residence of Charles Crocker will amount to about \$2,300,000. Mark Hopkins' residence, which is the most elaborate in design, will have cost when finished nearly \$3,000,000. Over \$7,000,000 is thus represented in these three residences. The external appearance of these dwellings gives the spectator but a indifferent idea of the costliness and magnificence of the interior. No expense has been spared anywhere. The bath rooms in the Crocker residence, for instance, have cost \$4,000 each, and there are about half a dozen of them in the building. Even the three-runged step-ladder in Mr. Stanford's library cost over \$150. In all the interior woodwork the most valuable timber, specially imported from South America, has been employed. This has been handsomely carved, and highly polished. All of the finished woodwork (even to the window sashes and frames), in each of the three houses has been made at the railroad workshops at Oakland Point. A large quantity of furniture for the Stanford and Crocker residences has been made at the same establishments. Massive pieces of furniture for the Crocker residence are being manufactured at the railroad workshops. The elaborately carved trunk-work of the handsome conservatory recently built on the Pine-street side of the Stanford mansion was also made at the railroad shops at a cost, in round figures, of \$30,000. The appointments of the various rooms in each of these mansions have been prepared with the same disregard of cost. The architects represent that no estimate was made of the cost of either building when the plans were submitted. The plans were simply accepted and all the details faithfully followed, the best and most expensive material being employed in their execution. San Francisco Bulletin.

THE EFFECT OF BREEDING ON  
MAKES.

We have often been asked what we thought of breeding a filly which has to be trained after raising a colt or two? The instances we have known have proven that it was detrimental to speed. Princess, Lady Palmer and Lucy had each one foal before they were trained, and Flora Bell two, and a number of Bell's Lids in London is the following, from one of the correspondents of that paper. His article is in relation to the breeding of hunters: "It does not bear a three-year-old filly at all to breed from her. She has a foal at four, and the Autumn of that year she is broken. Some have even bred advantageously from two-year-old fillies, but it is a light animal to have a foal, and that it does not hurt her constitution in the slightest degree is proved by the number of mares that have done so and still in the same steep chase with her. I have seen Theobald, by The Emperor, who was then five, and I remember seeing an old mare called R. gate beat a good field in one of the best contested chases I ever saw, and she had been out of training after running up to four years old; then she had five or six more, and