

usually from defect in training. The perfect horse is trained to pull just sufficient to steady himself in harness. How Hiram Woodruff drove, he tells in his "Trotting-Horse of America." No one, during his life, or since his death, was better authority in such matters. Hence, we cannot do better than to give it to our readers in his exact words.

In order that a fast horse should be under circumstances to do his best, he should be as much at his ease in his harness and general rig as possible. If he is not, he is placed at almost as much disadvantage as if sore or stiff, or suffering from some bodily ailment. You may see horses brought out of the stable to trot with a very tight check to keep their heads up, and a tight martingale to keep them down. Such a horse is in irons; and when to this is added a dead drag at the reins, and no movement of the bit from end to end, I cannot see how he could do his best. People talk about a steady, bracing pull; but, in my opinion, that is not the right way to drive a trotter. There is a great difference between letting go of your horse's head, and keeping up one dull, deadening pull all the time. The race-horse riders practice what is called a bracing pull; and, a great many times, I have seen their horses tire under it without ever running their best. The steady pull checked them. The pull should be sufficient to feel the mouth, and give some support and assistance, so as to give the horse confidence to get up his stride. More than that is mischievous. To keep the mouth alive, the bit must be shifted a little occasionally. A mere half-turn of the waist, or less than half a turn, by which the thumb is elevated and the little finger lowered, is sufficient to shift the bit, keep the mouth sensitive, and rouse the horse.

The reins are to be held steadily with both hands while this play with the wrist is made; and it is, of course, only done with one wrist at a time. The hands should be well down; and the driver ought not to sit all of a heap, with his head forward. Neither should he lean back, with his bodily weight on the reins, which, in that case, are made a sort of stay for him. He should be upright; and what pulling he must do should be done by the muscular force of the arms. The head and the arms are what a good driver uses; but some hold their arms straight out, and pull by means of putting the dead weight of their bodies on the reins. If, instead of lying back, and putting their bodily weight on the reins, with which latter they take a turn round their hands, drivers would depend upon their muscular strength, they could let up on the pull, graduate it, and so ease the horse from time to time instantaneously. The driver who depends upon the arms has command of the horse: he who substitutes bodily weight with the reins strapped round his hands, has not half command of the horse, or of himself either; and, if the horse is a puller, he will soon take command of the driver. The reason of it is, that there