

in the progress of the game, to which the tables have been brought. In speaking of the table, of course, all its appliances are considered. For a time the game had to contend against the prejudices of the people, but it gradually, and on its own merits, became recognized as the most popular indoor amusement of the age, and, breaking down the barriers of fanatical opposition, worked its way into the homes of our best citizens, the public salons, the recreation rooms of leading educational institutions, and the gymnasia of the Y. M. C. A., and the Mechanics' Institutes. Now and then, even at this late day, in some localities where the benign influence of the civilization of the nineteenth century does not appear to have penetrated, we hear of opposition being offered to the introduction of the game of billiards; but as travel is becoming more general, and advanced ideas of liberality are taking possession of the public mind, it must necessarily be only a short time before the game will be as welcome in these localities as it is now objected to.

The game is of great antiquity, but the tables and accompaniments of even a few years ago compare very unfavorably with the manufacture of to-day. The invention of or the discovery of the use of the billiard tip caused a complete revolution in the game. The discovery is, by some, imputed to a French player named Mingot, about the commencement of the present century. It is said that the late Wm. Lake was the first man to put a leather tip on a cue in America. With the introduction of the tip came the draw shot, which was considered a marvelous movement of the balls, indeed much more so than the *masse* (which is a higher development of the "draw") is looked upon now. Previous to this improvement on the cue, the strokes were all plain caroms and follow shots, so the tip may also be considered the parent of the side or "English" stroke. The early tables were gigantic affairs in size, and even now the English use a much larger standard than the French or the Americans. The cushions were the next great improvement in the construction of the table. It will be quite within the memory of some of our Canadian players when many of the cushions were made simply of pieces of cloth nailed or tacked together, and then cut out into proper shape. The first advance in this direction was the use of tubular rubber, which was considered to be the extreme of improvement in this direction. However, American ingenuity was at work, and almost simultaneously there appeared two new cushions as candidates for public favor. One, the invention of a western gentleman, was composed of glue and molasses, similar in composition to the material of which printer's rollers are made. The other was the solid rubber cushion invented by the late Michael Phelan, who may be considered the father of the game on this continent. In a very short time the "composition" cushion went out of use, the change of temperature rendering it very uncertain in its operation. The Phelan rubber cushion, however, stood the test, and with the improvements of shape, etc., suggested by experience, to-day is the standard of excellence in all places where the game is played. The tables, too, underwent a change, and from the field of green cloth twelve feet by six, with its six pockets, has been curtailed in its dimensions to moderate proportions; and the pockets, being consistent with the American idea of the game, were reduced in number to four, and finally abolished altogether. No less improvement was made in the shape and finish of the table; the big square box form was transferred to the elegant bevelled shape, and the adornments introduced made the table desirable and beautiful articles of furniture. The substitution of marble and slate for wood in the beds, also increased its durability and excellence, and now we know of no nicer article in the way of amusement

slate beds with improved cushions are another speciality. They are vastly superior to the old style, while the cost is about the same. In cues, an immense number in all stages of finish are shown the visitor. Thousands are to be seen suspended by their ends undergoing a proper seasoning. In the matter of balls, cloths, and the other accessories which go to make up a billiard table, the number is surprising. In cloths alone a large amount is invested, Simon's being the most used. Balls are seen in all the stages of manufacture, and they are carefully seasoned before being sent out. To give a passing description of all that may be seen in this model establishment would require quite a book. In addition to his billiard business, Mr. May does a large trade in ten pin balls and pins, bowling-green balls, Indian clubs, India rubber exercising bands, horizontal bars, and gymnastic fittings. In all these departments the same care in selection and manufacture that is exercised in the billiard section is observable. From the large stock Mr. May carries, orders can be filled on receipt, and vexatious and annoying delays are avoided. On the score of economy alone, Canadians should support such an establishment, while it should be a national pride that we have such an industry in our midst. Not the least attraction about the factory is the courtesy with which the visitor is received in all the departments, and the care shown in exhibiting the resources and working of the establishment. It is a pleasure to draw attention to such a complete and model place, and gentlemen desiring any of the classes of goods which are here produced can do no better than give Mr. May a call, and we feel satisfied they will be suited in quality, material and price.

To Correspondents.

We would particularly request our correspondents and advertisers to send their favors as early in the week as possible—so that they will reach us by Wednesday morning. We are unable to use many items sent us in consequence of not receiving them in time for the issue intended.

(No notice taken of anonymous communications or queries. No answer by mail or telegraph.)

W., Prescott.—Molly Morris, 2:22.

TOE WEIGHT, Ingersoll.—You had better address the owner of the horse for the information you desire.

C., Guelph.—There does not appear to be any possibility of getting a reply to your enquiry from the source you suggested, so we return the original query.

HARRY, Chatham.—Mr. Sam. May can furnish you with ivory balls of the size you want.

A FEW REMINISCENCES OF FLORA TEMPLE.

Mr. James D. McMann, who had Flora Temple in his possession seven years, a few days ago gave us some facts about the grand old mare. Her height was but 14.1, still she could pull weight. Mr. McMann always declined to trot her to a 250 pound waggon, fearing that the strain might prove too great for her. Hiram Woodruff, however, watched her in this way. She trotted about one hundred races during the time McMann had control of her. In 1858 she appeared in twenty-five races, and he drove her in twenty-one of them. In 1859 he drove her twenty-three races. She was ten years old when she came into his hands. She was a rank puller, being of a high-strung, impetuous nature. Previous to this time she had been driven by Woodruff, Wheelan, Tallman and others. McMann broke her of pulling by being patient and kind to her. When we went on the track with her and found that she was nervous and excited he immediately drove to the road and there jog-

the case the latter was not suited, on the ground that no negligence on the part of the owner of the team had been proven. It has generally been supposed that the owner of a team was always responsible for accidents occurring through a runaway, but the verdict in this case, will no doubt remove the illusion. The other tried was that of Worthington vs. Hill, in which it was shown that Dr. Worthington wished to purchase a horse, and informed Mr. Weir, a machine agent, to obtain one for him, suitable for farm work, etc. Weir learned that Hill had a mare for sale, and in the course of business asked about it. Hill offered to sell the animal, and represented that it was in good working order, serviceable, etc., but did not warrant it to that effect. On the strength of the representations Weir took the mare at \$80, and turned it over to Worthington, who on attempting to use it, found it to be worth little or nothing, and accordingly brought suit against Hill to recover damages. The case was tried by jury, they giving a verdict of \$40 in Worthington's favor, the ground on which this was done being that the horse was sold under misrepresentations.

TIME AS A TEST OF MERIT.

The following communication to the Spirit of the Times from the pen of an able, most astute, and experienced turfman upon the question mooted by us, that time as a test of merit should be abolished upon all American running courses. Our intercourse with turfmen for twenty years past has convinced us that the general verdict is, that time is not now, and—from the very nature of things, some of which are pointed out tersely by our correspondent—never can be a reliable test of merit. It would long since have been abolished had a move to this end been made. Such a move will not want for seconders and supporters from every section of the country. It is a more appendage to the American turf, entirely ornamental. It is impossible to point out a single practical benefit that it contributes to it, but it overflows with untold evils, and misleads the uninformed. It is true that it does not unfrequently add to the reputation of an inferior colt, and induces a sale of him at a price far beyond his value. It rarely leads the judgment aright, but almost invariably amiss as to the character of performance, but we invite the attention of the reader to the suggestions of our correspondent:

NEW YORK, Jan. 1, 1878.

DEAR SPIRIT: In your article in last issue, entitled 'The Three-year-olds of 1877,' you say that you 'do not regard time as a true test of merit; also, that you 'do not hesitate to say that it should be abolished.'

"As one interested, I wish to thank you for those words. If you can bring about the abolition of 'official' time at our running meetings, you will confer a great benefit to the racing interest generally. To show that time is no true test of the merits of a horse, you have the fact that no two tracks in the country are alike, nor is any track the same on two consecutive days. The timers often disagree, and split the difference to satisfy the 'official' time-board. At times the horses are sent off from almost under the string, and others from fifty to sixty yards back of it, making the difference between a standing and a running start. The time is taken from the leading horse, as his nose passes under the string; the best horse, perhaps one of the hindmost in the field of a dozen, is thirty yards behind, having an extra distance yet to cover in picking his way through, or going quite around his horses, is landed the winner—up goes the 'official' time one or two seconds less than he was entitled to. The fact that second and third-rate horses have, in several cases, obtained the fastest record, makes the record worthless. Associations very properly do not offer prizes for time races; it is not racing to start a horse against a clock, and we may hope to see all such spectacles left to the hippodrome.

"In abolishing the time-board, the great benefit to owners will be found in having safe courses instead of fast ones. Now, all associations are trying to see how fast they can make their track—then their effort will be to see how safe they can make them. The faster the track the more dangerous, and owners already have sufficient risks without that greatest of all dangers to horses, a fast track. Give us a safe course, good management, and let the best horse win. At the end of his racing career he may enter the stud on his real merits as a winner—as the best horse, and not as the lucky horse that has ob-

FLORA TEMPLE'S DEATH.

She was beyond all question the best trotter of her day, and nothing could surpass the determined spirit with which she vanquished all her opponents. Flora was a very bloodlike and beautiful little mare. When we first saw her, many years ago, she was very elegant as well as powerful and strong. The great thoroughbred ponies of the running turf in England and America, such as Rowton, Underhand, Trifle, Maggie B. B., &c., showed no higher characteristics of blood than Flora Temple. Her head and eyes were especially fine and expressive. Her neck and throat were exactly like those of the famous English race-horse Cromorne, and like that son of Parmesan and Rigolbochie, Flora was powerful in the back with fine shoulders well laid, and she stood over a vast amount of ground. In fact she was a brilliant instance of a long, low, bloodlike mare, with immense power in the quarters and stiles. Her legs were like hammered steel and whale-bone. Her action was very square and rapid when she was going fast, but in slow jogging she hitched a little. She was a very game mare, and when she got off, as of course she sometimes did, she recuperated and regained condition with amazing rapidity. Flora's idiosyncrasies were very marked. She hated strangers of the male sex, and would not let them come near her in her box, but with ladies she was singularly gentle and familiar. Another of her curious characteristics was that she would not consort with the trotting mares at Mr. Welch's and to keep her quiet and content they had to let her mingle with the thoroughbred mares. After her last foal was weaned she had a great fancy for taking charge of young thoroughbreds, and whenever she was seen in the field she always had a couple with her. She was obliged to content herself with one at night, as the boxes were not large enough for three. About two years ago she began to loose flesh, and all they could do was insufficient to keep her from wasting. Her appetite was good to the day before she died, but she had been very nervous for some time and could not get up without help. On the day of her death she was up and trotting up, even with assistance, and her appetite failed. The last thing she ate was an apple given her by John McClosky shortly before she died. Mr. Welch and John watched her all that day, and the former says she looked at them calmly with her great brown eyes and knew them almost to the last gasp. We learn from John McClosky that Mr. Welch was much affected by her death. Poor, glorious old Flora! They made a stout coffin for her and buried her under the magnolia trees upon the lawn, the fitting resting place for her, as was that at Knowlsey Hall for the famed Sir Peter Teazle.—*New York Sportsman.*

NEW YEAR'S DAY REGATTA AT PORT HOPE.

One of the best and most exciting regattas ever witnessed at Port Hope took place on Jan. 1, the participants being the sailors and captains of the different schooners in the harbor. Ten four-oared ships' boats started at three o'clock. Capt. Nixon's boat took the lead and held it till the end, closely followed by Capt. Colwell, and, third, by Capt. Henning, the others doing very well. The excitement as they neared the winning flag was intense, it being nip and tuck between Capt. Nixon and Capt. Colwell's boats.

DEATH OF PATRICK FLAVIN.

A well known character of New York, Patrick Flavin, popularly called Paddy the Painter, died in Bellevue Hospital in that city, on Dec. 23, aged 41 years. In 1857 he was appointed a member of the Metropolitan Police, and two years later was made a detective. Assigned to Wall street, he succeeded in making many important arrests, and in 1863 became a private detective, being employed by numerous important banking-houses. He took part in the search for young Ketchum, and assisted in the capture of Jenkins, who embezzled \$300,000. Becoming inflated with the possession of money

was on two courses. Sam. Morris, who had him the position of detective, at the Metropolitan Hotel. But his habits were too expensive for the proprietors of that house to retain him. Since then he was supported by contributions from his former employers. He died in a pauper's bed in Bellevue Hospital.

AMERICAN HORSES IN ENGLAND.—American horses may be seen now in London in front of English drags and carriages. It will not be many years before the American trotter will rule the roost at the principal trotting meetings.

Amusement.

Mr. George Rignold commenced his second week at Mrs. Morrison's Grand Opera House on Monday evening last. He presented Henry V. for the last time. On Tuesday and Wednesday the bill was Amos Clarke, in which the star appeared in the *Prologue*. Thursday evening a complimentary benefit to Mrs. Morrison, under the patronage of the Lieut. Governor. The programme consisted of Married Life, The Maid with the Milking Pail, a scene from Henry V., and a musical selection in which several volunteers appeared. Friday and Saturday, Abou and Black Eyed Susan. Next week the Bob Butler Pantomime Troupe will commence their second engagement. Business has been very good.

The attraction at the Royal Opera House has been the sensational drama of Jack Harkaway, in the former part of the week. On Thursday, Friday and Saturday, *Le Comte de Monte-Cristo* held the boards. Both plays were produced under the direct superintendence of Mr. Harnandez. On Monday, *Mlle Zola*, the Queen of the Theatre, was engaged for one week, during which time she will present *Mazepa*, *French Spy*, &c. During the week her husband has been good.

The Queen offered a number of new features this week.

GENERAL.

MONTREAL.—The regular season at the Academy of Music commenced on Monday under Mr. Wm. Van der Stuyvenberg. The company is composed of Misses May Howard, Amy Stewart, Mary Maddern, Emma Hendricks, Jennie Morton, Nellie Bingham, Florence Wood, Susie Morrison. Messrs. Walter Trevaillio, J. P. Rutledge, J. W. Hague, Harry Hottel, W. R. Sutherland, Walter Edmunds, Robert Darton, R. C. Gardiner, A. H. Forrest, L. W. Stevenson, Wm. Wethersby. Mr. Dampier was the initial star in *Battling for the Right*.

OTTAWA.—Miss Kate Fisher opened at the Grand Opera House on Monday for one week thence to Montreal.

HAMILTON.—Mechanics' Hall—Butler Party Jan. 5; Oliver Donat Byron, 7 and 8; Not Guilty, by 13th Batt., amateurs, 21 and 22. Sophie Milos, in Guy Mannering, 25.

COBURN.—Bob Butler and party, Jan. then to Belleville.

BUFFALO.—Den Thompson as Joshua Whitcomb, Academy of Music, Jan. 7, for one week.

TO LEASE.
WOODBINE
DRIVING PARK
TORONTO
Will be leased for a term of years reasonably.
Woodbine is the finest and best track in Canada. Full mile. For particulars address
JOSEPH DEGGAN,
Norway, P. O. Ont.
333-nt