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SUPPRESSING TIME.

The best friends of the trotting horse interest in Canada have long deplored the habit that has long prevailed in this country of suppressing or misrepresenting the time made by contesting horses. Again and again the unfairness and dishonesty of such practices have been pointed out with little or no effect, but as the question is now likely to take a more practical turn it is not too much to hope that our horse owners, trotting associations, and judges will be brought to take a more rational view of it. Unfortunately, however, the men who are likely to be most severely injured by this distinctively Canadian vice of time suppression

and misrepresentation are the men who for the most part have all along been strenuously opposed to it. We refer to gentlemen who have considerable sums invested in farms, stables, and stock intended mainly for the production of trotters. The men who are most anxious to have time suppressed are men who as a rule have not much money and still less character to lose. They are men who expect to make a living solely out of the bad side of the trotting turf. They have no breeding farms or families of trotters for which they desire to build up a reputation, they do not care what a trotter is like so long as he can win money for them. With them even such horses as they have are not "horses" as they would be to the true horseman, but mere "gamblers' tools," by which they expect to make money by hook or by crook, no matter how, so long as they make it.

The *modus operandi* of these gentry is comparatively simple. They hunt around for an old trotter "past his record," or perhaps expelled by the National Association. They rechristen him, alter his appearance as much as possible, and then enter him in a green race at an out-of-the-way ice meeting. The old pelter is thus started on a new career, making new records for himself on both turf and ice, and beating good youngsters that are entered and trotted in good faith. But the owners of these old ringers are not satisfied to take even the records they get in this way, but adopt every means possible to induce the judges to hang out the time so that they can stay in the '50, '45, or '40 class, as the case may be. The manner in which they influence even well-disposed men in the judges' stand is decidedly ingenious. If the heats happen to be broken ones the ringer stays back as long as it is safe for him to do so. Then some one of his own party goes to the stand and complains that he is not being driven to win. His owner is called up and questioned, and in reply darkly hints that his horse might do something to "upset the calculations of the gamblers" if it were not that he was afraid of a record. The judges hold a consultation. They see as they suppose an opportunity to accomplish a great good through the agency of what appears at the time a small wrong. They em-

brace the opportunity. The owner of the ringer makes a very neat little sum by giving his confederates the "double cross," the owner of some young horse entered, trotted, and backed in perfectly good faith gets second money, which does not represent ten per cent. of the sum with which he has backed his horse, while the horse himself gets an extremely warm record and the reputation of being a quitter because the time of the last three heats have been misrepresented in the interests of a horse that in reality had not had a right to trot in that class for half a dozen years preceding. And this is not the end of it. The horse that was trotted in good faith and lost is still in the same class with the horse that beat him, and wherever his owner can start him the ringer is likely to turn up and practise the same game on him again. What wonder is it that gentlemen who breed and trot their horses honestly should be disinclined to try their fortunes on the Canadian trotting turf?

Hitherto, however, all these appeals to owners, judges, and trotting associations have been practically useless, and we shall now endeavor to show another and a comparatively new phase of this evil.

Canadian trotters have always been highly prized in the American market, being especially commended for their sound legs and feet, and peculiarly robust, hardy constitutions. Their legs, feet, and constitutions are just as good as they ever were, but buyers are now beginning to be very wary about paying high prices for them, for the reason that there may be some well-nigh ruinous stain on their characters incident to the Canadian vice of time suppression. Here is a case in point, contained in a paragraph coming from a New York contemporary:—

"The claims against Alderman Hughes' fast trotter Fides, for moneys won on National Association tracks since he trotted in an alleged 'no-time' race at St. Catharines, Ont., in 1881, including a fine of \$100, aggregate \$3,420. The case is a particularly hard one, as his present owner bought Fides with a legitimate record of 2.32½, and in his hands he has been trotted to win every time he has been started. The point raised against Fides has availed to prevent him from trotting at any meetings this year since Hartford, and has already been quite a pecuniary damage to the