

THE VALUE OF TROTTERS.

The Fortunes Paid for Flyers by Men Who Appreciate the Thoroughbred.

A Sketch of the Growth of the Value of Fast Horses From the Beginning.

Robert Bonner Set the Pace and the Millionaires of the East and West Followed.

The remarkable records made by young trotters this season, together with the high prices some of them have brought, have set all interested in the breeding and performance of the useful class of harness horses from the sandy plains of San Diego, to the borders of Mexico, to the rocky fields of Maine, talking about the past history of the trotter and the possibilities of the future. And there is material enough for instructive and interesting horse talk to last through the coming winter and until the trotters enter on the campaign of 1890. Think of the late performances of the young stallions, Astell's 2:12 and Nelson's 2:14 1/2, the gelding Guy's 2:19 1/2, and Belle Hamlin's 2:13 1/2. Then consider the sale during the season of Acolyte for \$40,000, Stamboul for \$50,000, Bell Boy for \$51,000, and the three-year-old Astell for \$165,000, a grand total of \$246,000 for four sires whose quality in the stud has yet to be proved. The useful trotter at present outranks the fleet-footed thoroughbred in value for it is doubtful whether Hanover, Hindoo's greatest son, after he had won \$28,000 during his three-year-old career, could have been sold for one-third of the money which Astell brought. The \$70,000 paid for him, Dexter was then 2 years old, and had the best record, 2:17 1/2. He thought that when Dexter made his performance the limit had been reached. In 1870 Mr. Bonner bought Hambletonian's three-year-old son Startie, 2:26, paying \$20,000 for him. After the purchase Startie trotted a trial mile in 2:13. Nine years later Mr. Bonner purchased Marcus for \$20,000, the highest price ever paid for a gelding. This famous trotter then headed the list with a record of 2:13 1/2, trotting a trial mile after the purchase in 2:11 1/2. In 1884 Mr. W. H. Vanderbilt sold Maud S. to Mr. Bonner for \$40,000, record 2:09 1/2, which she has since reduced to 2:08 1/2. There was just four seconds difference in the respective records of Dexter, Marcus and Maud S. when Mr. Bonner became their owner. Now Mr. Bonner believes that the limit is not reached, and that his peerless mare can beat it a point. Mr. Vanderbilt bought Maud S. from Mr. George N. Stone of Cincinnati when the mare was four years old. Mr. Stone afterward offered Mr. Vanderbilt \$100,000 for Maud S. but her owner objected to having her go on the track. Mr. Bonner also paid \$30,000 for Edward Everett, son of Hambletonian. In the aggregate Mr. Bonner has expended more than \$500,000 for choice roadsters, but those mentioned above are all that cost \$20,000 or more each.

Another gentleman who figures in the rather limited list of men who have paid \$20,000 or more for a trotter is Mr. John H. Shmits, Brooklyn's millionaire baker, and owner of the great breeding farm with a private mile track alongside the Brooklyn boulevard. At the famous Ferran sale in Kentucky in 1886, when the highest average yet made on trotting stock was reached on the first day, forty-two averaging \$2,327 per head, Mr. Shmits paid the highest price at the sale, \$20,000, for the stallion Pancoat, by Woodford Mambrino, out of Hicoria. Pancoat's record was 2:21 1/2, made at Lexington in 1884. The horse was taken to Mr. Shmits' racing farm, where he was struck by lightning last spring, but is reported to have recovered his vigor. Messrs. H. L. and F. D. Stout, of Dubuque, paid \$22,000 on the same day at the sale for Nutwood, 2:18 1/2, by Belmont, out of Miss Russell, dam of Maud S.

The auction boom reached its highest mark last spring when the four-year-old stallion Bell Boy was sold in Kentucky for \$51,000 to Messrs. J. H. Clark, of Elmira, N. Y., and George W. Hopper, of Unionville, Ohio. This famous son of Electioneer and Beautiful Belle had made a record of 2:19 1/2 as a three-year-old on a track deep with mud, and he was famous throughout the land. On the same day Mr. L. J. Ross, of Los Angeles, sold his stallion Statist, record 2:14 1/2, to W. S. Hobart, of San Francisco, for \$30,000. About the same time Mr. Rose purchased his two-year-old colt Mascot, by Stamboul, out of Electioneer, for \$20,000. Peter C. Kellog & Co.'s auction sale in New York, at which the colt was purchased by Marcus Daly, of Montana, for \$25,000. The colt is turning out a clinker, as he has already trotted a quarter in 33 seconds.

In relation to auction prices of horses, Mr. Kellogg says that in 1878, when Charles Beckman paid \$10,750 for Kentucky, it was the highest genuine auction price for a horse in this country, though Sam Purdy had been struck down at \$20,000 at auction in California, but the sale, by special agreement, was payable in installments. The gelding Darby, 2:16 1/2, was put up by the Wallace estate in about 1880, and was struck down at \$17,000, but it turned out that he was bid in, and there was no evidence of a genuine bid near that mark. Years after the estate sold him for less than \$400.

Among the old-timers, Fearnought, foaled in 1852, after making his record of 2:23 1/2 at Buffalo in 1868, was sold to Mr. David Nevins, of Boston, for \$40,000. Fearnought used to trot with cotton stuffed in his ears and goggles over his eyes. He was a very nervous and high-strung horse. His owner relegated him to the stud. He was by Morrill, out of Jenny.

Jerome Eddy, the bay stallion by Louis Napoleon, out of Fanny Mapes, that made sensation in 1882 by trotting in 2:16 1/2, was bought by Messrs. Jewett & Co. of Buffalo for \$25,000.

Among notable sales of California trotters the disposal of the stallions Anteo and Antevolo, full brothers, both being by Electioneer, out of Columbine, attracted particular attention at the time. Anteo was foaled in 1879; his record is 2:16 1/2, and he was sold by Mr. J. Cairn Simpson to Brown & Co. of Kalamazoo for \$39,000. Antevolo was foaled in 1881. Mr. Simpson sold him to Mr. Robert Steele of Philadelphia for \$26,000. Mr. Steele also purchased the stallion Happy Medium, foaled in 1882, by Hambletonian out of Princess, paying \$22,500 for the horse. Happy Medium's record was 2:22 1/2. He died last year, leaving thirty-eight trotters and three pacers in the 2:30 list.

The stallion Weigwood, record 2:19, foaled in 1871, by Belmont, out of Woodbine, was sold by Mr. J. S. Clark of New Brunswick for \$25,000.

The phenomenon of Astell, whose recent sale for \$165,000 to a syndicate which is said to be composed of W. P. Ijams of Terre Haute, and A. E. Brush and F. T. Moran of Detroit, is the greatest instance of recent development of speed in the trotter.

He is by William L. out of L. G., and was bred by C. W. Williams of Independence, his owner. Astell trained up to the time of the sale. Axtell made a three-year-old record last year of 2:23, and by persistent trials this year kept on reducing his record until he placed the stallion record at 2:12 recently at Terre Haute.

Acolyte, the five-year-old stallion, one of the high-priced four mentioned above, selling for \$40,000, is by Onward, out of Lady Olive. He has a record of 2:30, and was bred by R. P. Pepper of Lexington, Ky.

Other trotters reported to have been sold for \$20,000 or upward are St. Julien, Mr. Hickok paying \$20,000 for a controlling interest in the great gelding during his successful trotting campaign, and afterward buying the horse outright on private terms. Buckwood, foaled in 1866, by Norman, dam by Mambrino Chief, bred by D. Swigger; sold for \$30,000 to H. Darke, of Ticonderoga.

Governor Sprague, record 2:20 1/2, at five years, foaled in 1871, by Rhode Island, out of Belle Brandon; sold in 1876 to J. I. Case for \$27,000.

Jay Gould record 2:30 1/2, foaled in 1864, by Hambletonian, out of Lady Sandford; sold for \$30,000. Owned at Fashion Stud Farm at Trenton, and taken to Kentucky in 1886.

Lady Thorn, record 2:18 1/2, foaled in 1856, by Mambrino Chief II, bred by Levi T. Rhodes, Providence; sold for \$30,000.

Lady Maud, record 2:18 1/2, foaled in 1867, by Gen. Knox, out of Fanny, bred by T. S. Lane, Augusta, Me.; sold for \$20,000.

Patron, record 2:14 1/2, foaled in 1882, by Pancoat, out of Beatrice, bred by J. C. McFerran & Son, Louisville; sold for \$27,000.

George M. Patchen, record 2:23 1/2, foaled in 1848, by Cassin, M. Clay, dam by Headem; sold for \$25,000.

Sam Purdy, record 2:20 1/2, foaled in 1866, by George M. Patchen, Jr., out of Whisky Jane; sold for \$22,000.

Socrates, record 2:23 1/2, foaled in 1866, by Hambletonian out of Lady Fallis; passed through several hands to H. M. Smith of Trenton, at \$20,000.

Roeland, record 2:21 1/2, foaled in 1865, by Abdallah out of Burch mare; sold for \$30,000.

No accurate record has been kept of the sale of several horses named in the \$20,000 list, and a few of the sales have been exaggerated, accounts merely stating that the horses were sold for such a price; but in the main the figures are correct, especially in the cases where the buyers were Mr. Bonner, Mr. Shmits, Mr. Steele and other well known lovers of trotters.

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