

## ROAD-COACHING UP TO DATE.



ARRIVAL AT MANTES.

The pictures with this article illustrate the trip from Paris to Trouville, described on page 83. EDITOR.

**T**WENTY-FIVE years ago the youth of America took no interest whatever in athletics. Our national game of base-ball was hardly known. What changes have been wrought in one short quarter of a century in the taste for athletic sports may be seen by glancing at the numerous colleges throughout the country, where the maxim of "Mens sana in corpore sano" has a practical influence it never had before.

Some eighteen years ago road-coaching was introduced into America by Colonel Delancey Kane, Colonel Jay, and others, and considerable interest in it has been kept up ever since, though confined to a small set; but the general public at that time was not prepared to second their efforts with much enthusiasm, looking upon it rather as a pose than as a manly sport requiring all the nerve, energy, and powers of organization that can be developed by an athletic pastime.

This period has happily passed. The pub-

lic to-day take such a lively interest in all matters appertaining to road-coaching that a few notes which I have been able to gather from the best authorities on the subject may not be unwelcome at the present time. For convenience I shall divide the subject into the following heads: The Road; The Horses; The Pace; The Coach; The Horse-keepers; The Stables; The Driving; A Practical Illustration: The Record Trip from Paris to Trouville.

### THE ROAD.

MACADAM roads made with volcanic rock carry a coach better than roads macadamized with sedimentary rock. This sedimentary rock disintegrates and becomes "woolly" in wet weather, whereas granite sheds the water much better. On roads that have high crowns and are narrow, such as can be found between Cookfield and Friar's Oak in England, it is extremely difficult to make good time with a heavily laden coach, because when you pull out to pass a

vehicle your coach no longer runs on a level, and the wheels which are below the crown bind and drag heavily. The best road is made of granite macadam, slightly undulating, and with medium crown. Over such a road horses can go at a great pace without fatigue. Such a piece of road exists between Reigate and Crawley, and that distance has been accomplished daily for six months with the same horses, going at the rate of a mile in three minutes (distance nine miles and one half), as was done by Mr. W. G. Tiffany in 1873, when he "horsed" and owned the Brighton coach. Slightly undulating ground is the easiest for horses, as it calls for different muscular action in turn as they go up and down hill. Any one can prove this by merely running over the above kind of ground, when he will find that in going down hill he will rest his lungs from the

## THE HORSES.

LET us now consider the class of horses most suitable for road work. It will be noticed that in most coaches running out of London, where the pace is necessarily slow, owing to the crowded traffic and the desire to sell the horses to an advantage at the end of the season, a coarse-bred, short-necked class of horse has gradually crept in from the omnibus to the coach. To each portion of the road the horses should be adapted. If the ground require it may be well enough to use a coarse horse that can exert his utmost strength for a considerable time, providing the pace is slow; but it must be borne in mind that coarse horses ought never to be galloped. No greater mistake can be made than that of outpacing your stock. If a horse is worked within his pace he will



Mr. Tallor (gathering the reins).  
Mr. Tiffany (at the pole-chains).

Mr. Higgins. Mr. Bennett.

A QUICK CHANGE AT LA RIVIÈRE THIBOUVILLE.

strain put upon them by rising ground, and will alternately rest different sets of muscles and regain his breath.

Hence it is a great mistake to endeavor to run teams up a long hill, especially if any of them are "a bit gone in the wind." Sandy roads, even if they are not hilly, are most distressing to horses, as they have no spring. The more spring there is the better it enables the horses to keep the vehicle moving; whereas, when the road is deep, it is a dead pull and very disheartening.

last for years; if outpaced he will go to pieces in a few weeks.

If it is considered desirable to have a galloping stage to your coach, remember to have small horses, or at least horses with a great deal of blood. They alone can stand the excitement and the wear and tear of a fast pace. On the whole, the most desirable class of horse is a well-bred, well-proportioned animal of medium size that can trot eleven miles an hour without distressing himself. In a general way, with regard to "horsing" a coach, it must be re-

membered that it is most desirable to buy all your horses of a certain type, whatever that may be. In this way you can transfer a horse from one team to another; whereas, if you have a nondescript lot, of all sorts and qualities, they become very difficult to handle. A man should never allow himself to buy a horse because it pleases his fancy as an individual, but should try to maintain as near as possible the same stamp of animal throughout.

In the old days the road was divided up into certain stages, and men were said to "horse" portions of the ground. The guard carried a "time bill," in order that the pace might be so regulated that if time were lost in one portion of the journey he could prevent the coachman from taking it out of the horses on the next. At the present day, however, the horses are generally run in common over the whole of the road; hence the disappearance of the "time bills."

The roads out of London to-day are traveled very slowly for reasons mentioned above; but for a gentleman's coach to be smart, a credit to himself, and a pleasure to the passengers, the pace should not be less than ten miles an hour, including changes.

The objective point of the road should be a place of beauty and interest, with a good cuisine, and the road leading to it pretty and smooth, as nothing is more disagreeable than to be shaken up over a long stretch of cobblestones. To do ten miles an hour, play should be made over every bit of road that is advantageous. The coach should be taken as rapidly as possible over all falls of ground, in order that the horses should have more time to contend with rising ground, and should be allowed to run down hill at the accelerated speed it would naturally acquire. The horses, thereby, are not fatigued by hauling at their pole-chains. The coach, in fact, should be allowed to take itself down hill, and the horses should be kept out of its way. Especially is this the case with cripples, or horses with bad legs that must have their heads and be kept on their feet by the whip, because the position of the ground bends their hocks and puts them "in their bridles" even with a loose rein. By this I mean that the horse is "gathered," or in other words has his hocks bent and his neck arched. Up hill, on the contrary, the team cannot be held too tightly, and a judicious use of the whip, carefully distributed, must keep them "in their bridles" the whole way up at a moderate and even pace.

#### THE COACH.

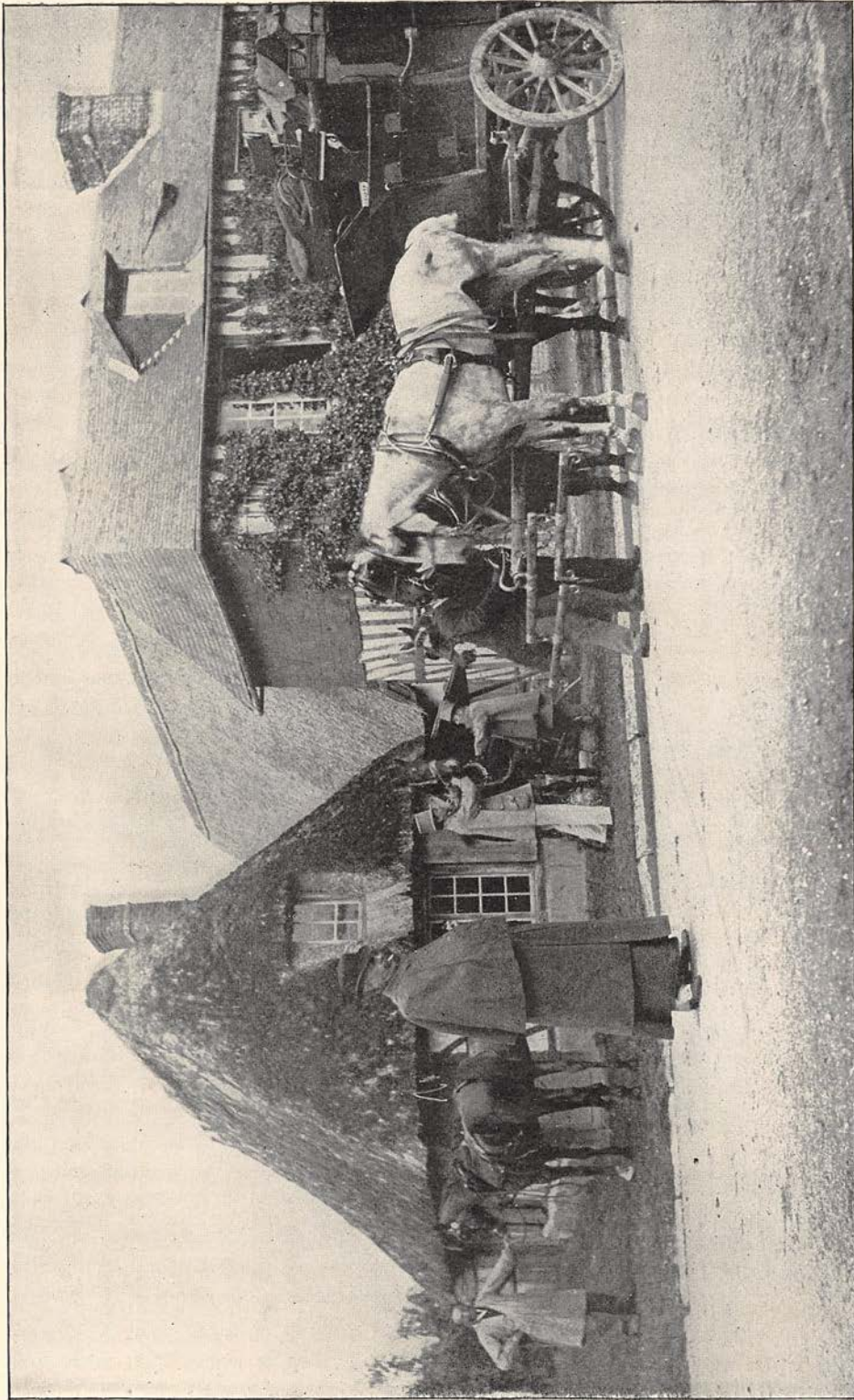
In the old days it was an important matter to consider the number of passengers that rode outside, as there was imposed by the Government a duty of fourpence halfpenny per mile

for each person when nine or more were carried outside, while the duty was only threepence when there were seven or less. In both cases the number of inside passengers was limited to six. Coaches carried as many as sixteen outside, but only on short journeys. An example of the old London coach carrying sixteen on the outside can be seen at the present day running from Ballater to Balmoral, and very curious vehicles they are. I have counted twenty-five on one of them, but the pace never averages more than seven miles an hour. The true type of the modern coach can be seen on the roads out of Paris and London at the present day. These carry eight passengers on the body, three with the guard, and one on the box-seat beside the coachman. They are beautifully constructed, and cannot be surpassed for traveling up to ten miles an hour, including changes; beyond that pace, however, a special vehicle, such as the old mail, is required.

Now that road-coaching is on the increase in America, it is to be hoped that a judicious and limited use of the horn may prevail. Continual horn-blowing has become not only a nuisance to passengers, but an impertinence to the public at large. The latter certainly have as much right to enjoy the road, if only with a donkey, as the noisy swell with his four horses and brass.

#### HORSE-KEEPERS AND STABLING.

HORSE-KEEPERS are a subject of great trouble at the present day. It is difficult to find men at reasonable wages who at the same time thoroughly understand four-horse work. In this respect old coachmen had a great advantage over those of modern times. The present horse-keepers are, as a rule, difficult to manage, to say nothing of their conceit, incapacity, and love of strong liquor. It requires a thoroughly competent man to go over the road and keep these persons in order. This head servant does not by any means get the praise to which he is entitled. He should be provided with a buggy; an extra horse should be kept at every stage, so that he can start any time, day or night, pick up his changes on the road, and see what the horse-keepers are about. Moreover, he must be thoroughly familiar with the business of managing coach-horses. It is admitted that some of the best stud-grooms, accustomed to hunters and ordinary carriage-horses, have signally failed to accomplish this work. Not only is the feeding an art in itself, but the stabling is also peculiar. The coach-horse must have more air and less clothing than any other horse that works, and nothing is more pernicious to a highly excited coach-horse than to turn him into a warm stable when he comes off the road.



Useless French hostler.

Mr. Bennett  
(timing the change).

Mr. Tailor and guard  
(harnessing the fresh team).

Mr. Tiffany  
(at the pole-chains).

### CHANGING HORSES AT LIEUREY.

The hours of feeding have necessarily to differ at each stage, owing to the various times at which the horses commence their work, and great care has to be exercised, especially in warm, wet weather, to preserve their condition and keep them free from sore shoulders and galls.

Each horse should be numbered and be known only by that number, a board being kept at the door of each stable giving detailed instructions to the horse-keepers. This precaution will save the annoyance of oft-repeated and time-losing mistakes.

#### THE DRIVING.

In regard to driving the road, it may be said in general that no hard and fast rules can be laid down. Much latitude should be allowed to the individual, and his performance should be judged of as a whole rather than by the crotchets of theorists. Some say that the reins should be buckled, others that the ends should hang loose; some that the coachman should throw the reins and whip down, others that he should bring them down with him from the box. These and other minor details form food for many petty discussions, but are really not worth the acrimony they have aroused. I would suggest that town teams should have cruppers, a smart set of harness with bearing-reins, and moderately tight pole-chains to facilitate the steering of the coach, and that the team should be driven at a moderate pace with horses well collected; whereas with the country teams more of a coaching style should be adopted, the cruppers, ornaments, and bearing-reins being dispensed with.

#### A PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATION.—THE RECORD TRIP FROM PARIS TO TROUVILLE.

FROM 1800 to 1840 there were several classes of mails running from the General Post Office in London at St. Martin's le Grand. The main lines ran north, south, east, and west, each coach carrying three passengers on the outside, and going at the rate of  $11\frac{1}{2}$  miles an hour. Subsidiary mails made the necessary connections in the country, running at about 9 miles an hour, and carried six or eight passengers on top. It is only with the former class that we have to deal at present. We take for our type the Devonport Quicksilver Mail, which was considered the fastest out of London and was timed at 12 miles an hour, including changes. In the older days horses were not always of the best description, and the few coachmen that are left from those times, such as Charley Ward, lay great stress on this fact. Modern coachmen have but little knowledge of these difficulties,

because they generally have well-broken horses accustomed to their work, and good horse-keepers.

In a trip from Paris to Trouville in July, 1892, an attempt was made to repeat as closely as possible the conditions of the old mails as well as to keep their time. The distance was 140 miles, portions of the road being level and very good, the remainder extremely hilly. On the day we drove, part of it was "woolly" from rain, owing to the fact that this, like most French roads, was macadamized with sedimentary rock. The official time-table was as follows:

JULY 12, 1892.

#### DOWN.

	Arrival.	Departure.
Paris "Herald" Office.....	6	A. M.
St. Germain.....	7.08	7.12
Vaux.....	7.55	7.58
Mantes.....	8.57	9
Bonnières.....	9.39	9.45
Pacy-sur-Eure.....	10.30	10.33
Evreux.....	11.29	11.33
La Commanderie.....	12.28	P. M. 12.31½ P. M.
La Rivière Thibouville.....	1.24	1.26
Le Marche Neuf.....	2.06	2.12
Lieurey.....	2.50	2.56
Bonneville.....	3.40	3.46
Pont l'Evêque.....	4.18½	4.21
Trouville Town.....	4.40	....
Hotel Bellevue.....	4.50	....
140 miles in 10 hours 50 minutes.		

The passengers were Eugene Higgins, W. G. Tiffany (the noted whip), James Gordon Bennett, of the New York "Herald," and the writer. Inside the mail were Mr. Hiekel, an amateur photographer, to whom we are indebted for the accompanying illustrations; Mr. Luque, of the "Figaro Illustré"; the builder of the mail, Mr. Guiet, and the sporting editor of the Paris "Herald." Mr. Higgins drove during the first half of the journey, the writer the second. Morris Howlett acted as guard, and, in spite of his youth, was most efficient.

There were thirteen changes; of these, three had not been in four-horse harness before, and the wheelers were very rein-shy. The horse-keepers were so inefficient that we had to harness many of our teams ourselves. Thus the conditions claimed by the old coachmen were fulfilled, and the difficulties of driving under these circumstances were very great. In the first place, some of the teams had never been driven fast, as they were horses hired separately from different dealers, accustomed to be driven about Paris to vehicles, single or in pairs, at the rate of 6 to 7 miles an hour. To get them up to a pace of 14 miles an hour, and to keep them there for a distance of 10



"ALL ABOARD!"—AT THE FOLVILLE CROSS-ROADS, NEAR BONNEVILLE.

miles, rendered them very excited and difficult to drive. If a great deal of care had not been used at the first part of each stage, they would have become entirely incapacitated owing to this sudden over-exertion. It requires much judgment to enable untrained horses to accomplish the distance at this high rate of speed, without either running away or falling down. A team outpaced at the start would have been absolutely useless before half 10 miles had been accomplished. When we started with a team we drove slowly, say 7 miles an hour, feeling the temper and quality of our horses. Then when we came to a fall of ground we would urge them until all but one were galloping, thus getting the pace of the best trotter in the team as a guide, and his fastest trot would be the pace for the rest of that stage. We had engaged cockhorses for the hills, but found that the time lost in putting them to and taking them off was not counterbalanced by their assistance.

It was a mistake, we found, to have too many relays on the road, for the time lost while changing is not made up on short stages. This was also the experience of Mr. James Gordon Bennett when he put his coach on the road from Pau to Biarritz.

In a drive like this, the use of the whip is of the greatest importance. People driving

their own teams in the park, even for years, do not get the training a day like this offers. For example, through the ignorance of the horse-keepers the horses intended as wheelers, coarse and sluggish, were once put as leaders, whereas free little horses, which would have made capital leaders, were put at wheel, necessitating a vigorous use of the whip on these misplaced leaders over every yard of the ground, while the wheelers had to be held. In another case the wheelers were very reinshy, and continually pulled away from the pole. This could be controlled only by a judicious and energetic use of the whip, directed mainly to the off-side ear of the off horse, and vice versa. If we had not been able to administer this correction this stage would never have been accomplished at all. In this sort of work time will not permit of any change of biting and coupling. The coachman must keep his horses for that stage just as they are, whether he likes it or not; for it must be remembered that time wasted in changing of bit and coupling cannot be gathered up again, but is lost forever.

As an illustration of the importance of what has been previously stated in regard to the feeding of coach-horses, it may be mentioned that one of the leaders, which was apparently a perfectly sound horse, was unable to continue

after three miles, and we were consequently forced to leave him on the road, although the next day he was perfectly well, and accomplished his journey in comfort. We learned afterward that this horse had been fed too late, and it was impossible for him to work at a high rate of speed on a full stomach.

As in the case of a judicious jockey who finds, when his horse bolts with him at the post, that the best thing to do is to outpace him at once and thus get hold of his head, so when we found ourselves with four big Percherons, heavy in the neck, and so lightly bitted that the strongest man in the world could not have stopped them suddenly, we whipped them into a run, thus outpacing them, so that after a few miles they came back to our hand and were under complete control.

In spite of the speed made during this journey, various horse-dealers in Paris certified through the press that every horse used on the

In Selby's famous drive to Brighton and back, the changes were made on an average within one minute, and as he changed fourteen times we deduct 14 from 7 hours and 55 minutes, leaving 7 hours 41 minutes for the accomplishment of the 104 miles.

We changed twelve times, for which 48 minutes must be deducted. Ten hours 50 minutes, less 48 minutes, equals 10 hours and 2 minutes for 140 miles, which gives for Selby 1 mile in  $4\frac{3}{10}$  of a minute; Higgins and Tailer 1 mile in  $4\frac{3}{10}$  of a minute, or an average of  $\frac{1}{10}$  of a minute per mile in our favor, in spite of all the advantages in horses and road that Selby had over us.

This, certainly the most "sporting" departure in the coaching line of modern times, was conceived and carried out by the latest member of the New York Coaching Club, Mr. Eugene Higgins. He followed the advice of Colonel Jay, the president since its foundation,



ARRIVAL, ONE HOUR AND TEN MINUTES AHEAD OF TIME, AT THE HOTEL BELLEVUE, TROUVILLE.

trip was returned to them in an entirely satisfactory condition.

This distance of 140 miles in 10 hours and 50 minutes gives an average of a mile in  $4\frac{3}{10}$  minutes, being a little over 12 miles an hour, including changes; and these changes in many cases, for reasons explained above, were unnecessarily long.

and came abroad to study coaching. Colonel Jay's influence for good in these matters has made itself felt all over America, and many a young whip has to thank him for finding himself on the road to success. When Mr. Higgins found that, from the dusty archives of the British Post Office, a genuine old mail-coach had been reconstructed, he conceived the idea

of placing this bric-à-brac of a bygone day in the *entourage* of its time, and straightway sought out a road which excellently represented the one run from London to Devonport by the old Quicksilver Royal Mail; moreover, he collected fifty odd horses, which were queer and strange like those of old, and in the spirit of a true artist sought to make the equipment conform to the epoch represented. In the old time the mails were constructed by the British Government with the same thoroughness that they give to their ironclads to-day. The very best engineers were consulted, and their specifications were handed to the constructors, who were obliged to conform to them accurately. Of this fact we have been able to assure ourselves by the courtesy of Mr. R. C. Tombs, Controller of the London Post Office, who kindly gave us access to the original documents at present in St. Martin's le Grand.

Unfortunately the modern coach-builder works by rule of thumb, and, because he has

been accustomed to put a certain camber to his axle and a certain dish to his wheel, he goes on so doing without any idea of the problem which these two points involve. This was solved years ago by the mathematicians employed by Parliament to make reports on this subject. We attempted to discover upon what principle these modern coach-builders were working, and upon investigation found that not one of them knew the law on the subject. So American coach-builders were insisting on a dish and camber that rested on a law of England totally unknown there, and which had never been in operation in America, where, unfortunately, the law regulating the crown to be given to roads has not yet been determined upon.

Hence the strange anomaly, that an old English idea, after having been offered in vain to English and American coach-builders, was finally taken up by the enterprise of a Frenchman well known in America, Mr. Guiet.

*T. Suffern Tailor.*



## THE ANSWER.

A ROSE in tatters on the garden path  
 Called out to God, and murmured 'gainst his wrath,  
 Because a sudden wind in twilight's hush  
 Had snapped her stem alone of all the bush.  
 And God, who hears both sun-dried dust and sun,  
 Made answer softly to that luckless one:  
 "Sister, in that thou sayest I did not well,  
 What voices heard'st thou when thy petals fell?"  
 And the Rose answered: "In my evil hour  
 A voice cried: 'Father, wherefore falls the flower?  
 For lo, the very gossamers are still!'  
 And a voice answered: 'Son, by Allah's will.'"

Then softly as the rain-mist on the sward  
 Came to the Rose the answer of the Lord:  
 "Sister, before I smote the dark in twain,  
 Or yet the stars saw one another plain,  
 Time, tide, and space I bound unto the task  
 That thou shouldst fall, and such an one should ask."

Whereat the withered flower, all content,  
 Died as they die whose days are innocent;  
 While he who questioned why the flower fell  
 Caught hold of God, and saved his soul from hell.

*Rudyard Kipling.*