OLD HICKORY AS A HORSEMAN

His Exploits on the Turf in the Early Days of the Century.

THOUSANDS STAKED ON FAST HORSES

Track Racing in America Largely Due to Jackson's Enthusiasm—Plunger in the Betting Ring—Fighting for Fair Races.

One chapter in General Jackson's history will always be read with interest by all those who, like the Sage of the Hermitage, have a consuming passion for race horses. This chapter has been written by some of Jackson's biographers, but by none with such vivid distinctness and fascinating detail as characterize the personal reminiscences of Judge Joseph C. Guild. Judge Guild was a contemporary of General Jackson, and regarded the old hero as "the most almighty man that ever trod the earth." About twenty years ago he published a book under the caption of "Old Times in Tennessee," the major portion of which, however, is but Guild's personal recollections of General Jackson. The chapter about race horses is the most interesting in the book, and from it is gathered the material for a letter in the Chicago Tribune, which may afford some pleasure and, perhaps, amusement to the lovers of the royal thoroughbred.

General Jackson may be considered the first patron of the turf in Tennessee, and he stood at the head of it for twenty years. Racing, as a fixed institution in that state, was first inaugurated at Gallatin, in Sumner county, in the fall of 1804, and General Jackson was the most conspicuous feature of the great occasion. It was one of the events in the history of the state, and little else had been talked of for months previous. Vast crowds of men, women and children from adjacent counties were present; and while there were seen none of the modern adjuncts deemed indispensable to make racing interesting, yet the sport was as exciting as any that ever occurred on a race course—so exciting, in fact, that a venerable preacher, who said he was hunting a cow near the track, mounted the fence, waved his hat, and exultingly yelled, as Polly Medley, the winner, came flying home: "She leaves a blue streak behind her; praise God!" for which excess of feeling he was suspended from his parochial duties.

General Jackson had entered his favorite filly, Indian Queen, and backed her heavily, as was his custom when he had any faith in a horse; but Polly Medley was the winner from start to finish. This mare was a wonderful racer in her day and was the property of Dr. R. D. Barry of Gallatin, who was a co-partner with Jackson in promoting this sport.

At the same track, the year following, General Jackson again entered Indian Queen with what appeared every chance of success, but he was beaten worse than before and lost a great deal of money. Before the year was out he had bought his famous horse, Truxton, to which he became so much devoted, and also the fleet Greyhound, and then swore "by the Eternal" he would never afterward doff his colors to anybody. Accordingly, in the fall of that year, on his own track, known as Clover Bottom, he beat a famous horse belonging to the great sportsman, Joseph Erwin.

MONKEY SIMON, THE PRINCE JOCKEY.

In 1818 the first jockey club was established at Nashville by the most distinguished men in Tennessee, among them being General Jackson, Colonel Ward, General Carroll, James Jackson, Dr. Sappington, Dr. Shelby, Dr. McNairy, Dr. Butler, Major Williams, Governor Cannon, Colonel Elliott, and other citizens of like repute. In that connection it is pertinent to refer to one of the most celebrated characters of these times, who was better known, if not more admired, by the racing fraternity in Tennessee that General Jackson himself. His name was Monkey Simon, a negro jockey, and if tradition be true he was the greatest rider of race horses who ever lived. Garrison, McLaughlin, Barnes, Overton, Murphy—none of the famous pilots of the turf nowadays would have been "in it" with that strange and grotesque genius of the primitive race course in Tennessee. His sobriquet of Monkey Simon conveys a forcible idea of his appearance. Judge Guild thus describes him: "He was a native African, and was brought, with his parents, when quite young, to South Carolina, before the slave trade was interdicted. In height he was four feet six inches and weighed 100 pounds. He was a hunchback, with very short body and singularly long arms and legs. His color and hair were African, but his features were not. He had a long head and face, a high, delicate nose, a narrow but prominent forehead, and a mouth indicative of both humor and firmness. It was rumored Simon was a prince in his native country."

Of all his wonderful exploits on the turf, none gave Monkey Simon so much renown as his masterly riding of Hanie's Maria. It is a well authenticated fact that when in the eve of General Jackson's life he was asked by an old friend if he had ever undertaken anything earnestly that he did not accomplish, he replied: "Nothing I remember except Hanie's Maria. I could not beat her." She was a chestnut mare, brought to Sumner county in 1809 by Mr. Goodman and sold to James Hanie for $100, who named her Maria. In 1811, when she was 3 years old, Hanie had her trained by Berry Williams, a noted horseman of that day, and entered her in the Nashville races of that year, where she simply had everything her own way. For the two seasons following she ran away from every horse entered against her, which waked up General Jackson to a lively resolve that she must be beaten. Acting on that impulse he canvassed the whole country and gave his friends carte blanche to buy for him the fastest horse in the world, which led to the purchase of Pacolet from William R. Johnson of Virginia at a fabulous price. He thereupon started out to dethrone the reigning queen of the turf, and it is probable that throughout his entire life he never had his heart so earnestly set on the accomplishment of any purpose.

There had never been a horse race in this country up to that date on which half so much money was wagered. But the peerless Maria was not destined to have any dust thrown in her eyes that day. With Monkey Simon on her back she took the lead from the start and won in a canter. And to intensify General Jackson's chagrin, only a little later, at his own Clover Bottom track, Maria, with Monkey Simon in the saddle, took all the purses that were hung up. General Jackson was simply amazed at her achievements, and for the first and only time in his life he threw up the sponge and offered to bet $50,000 that Maria could beat any horse, mare or gelding in the world.

CARRIED FROM THE FIELD.

Maria was once matched against Yellow Jacket, a celebrated racer from Kentucky, and in connection with that race an amusing incident is related about General Jackson. It was a dash of two miles over the Nashville course for $1,000 a side. The owner of the mare gave orders to Monkey Simons to let Yellow Jacket take the lead and pull the mare, his object being to get bets, for he knew Maria would come down the home stretch like a whirlwind and make up for losses by a terrific burst of speed at the finish. The order was strictly carried out. General Jackson was thus led to believe that Maria would not win, and offered to bet $10,000 on Yellow Jacket then and there. Let Judge Guild narrate what followed: "General Coffee, who was a giant, standing 6 feet 8 inches, stepped up and tried to dissuade General Jackson from betting, but not succeeding, he stepped behind Jackson, lifted him on his shoulders and forcibly carried him out of the crowd. Jackson could do nothing but kick and fight the air, for Coffee held him as tight as though he were in a vise until the race was over. Monkey Simon, as he swung up into the last quarter, applied the whip and won the race easily. This was fortunate for General Coffee, for had Yellow Jacket won General Jackson would certainly have held Coffee personally responsible for the manner in which he prevented his betting."

JACKSON'S WASHINGTON STABLES.

The love of fast horses was no less than a passion with General Jackson. Even while he was president and absorbed with the ponderous affairs of state, he kept a stable of racers in Washington. He owned some of the finest thoroughbreds in the world, among which were Truxton, Greyhound, Doublehead, Opossum Billy, Indiana Queen, Lady Nashville and Bolivia. The celebrity of these and many others that he owned spread throughout the country and many were the challenges he received to match his swift coursers against the flyers from other states. And it was the proudest boast of his life that he was never beaten in a race by any horse brought from beyond the borders of Tennessee.

He would back his favorite like a lord. If he won he fairly bubbled over with exultation, not for the sake of the money involved, but from pure love of the sport. But if he lost it was not safe to take any liberties with him. Nobody but Monkey Simon ever dared to do that. When Hanie's Maria beat Pacolet the general was in a particularly bad humor, and Monkey Simons, meeting him in a large crowd, said: "General, you were always ugly, but now you're a show. I could make a fortune by showing you as you now look if I had you in a cage where you couldn't hurt people who came to look at you."

On another occasion, just before the horses started in an important race, General Jackson threateningly approached Simon and said: "Now, you little black devil, when my horse comes up and is about to pass you don't dare spit your tobacco juice in his eyes and those of his rider, as you sometimes do," to which the imperturbable Simon replied: "Well, general, I have done a good deal of work agin your horses, but no one of the d—n dromedaries was ever near enough me in a race to catch my spit." Had any one else in the world rave that little black freak of nature shown such audacious effrontery to the old hero, "by the eternal," there would have been an earthquake.

Judge Guild says General Jackson always declared the race between Truxton and Greyhound was not only the greatest test of speed and endurance he ever saw, but the sublimest spectacle in any line ever witnessed on earth. Besides the main bet of $5,000, Jackson won over $1,500 in wearing apparel, and after betting all his money and the horse he rode to the race, he staked fifteen of the finest horses on the ground belonging to other persons, several of them having side saddles on their backs.

BLUFFS TWENTY THOUSAND PEOPLE.

In all his connections with horse racing, General Jackson acted strictly "on the square." Incapable of fraud himself, he would not tolerate it in others. Judge Guild tells a story forcibly illustrating his character as a sportsman: "The occasion was this: Greyhound, a Kentucky horse, which General Jackson afterward bought, had beaten Doublehead, a Tennessee horse, and they were subsequently matched for $5,000 a side, to be run on the Clover Bottom course. There must have been 20,000 people present on that day. I never witnessed such fierce betting between the states, for state pride ran high. Money, horses and negroes were put up. The time had now arrived for the horses to appear on the track. I heard some loud talking, and looking down the track I saw General Jackson riding slowly on a gray horse, with long pistols held in each hand. I think they were as long as my arm and had a mouth that a ground squirrel could enter. As he approached the judges' stand he was swearing and gesticulating furiously. He said he had irrefragible proof that this was to be a 'jockey race'; that Greyhound was seen in a wheat field the night before, which disqualified him for the race, and that his rider was to receive $500 to 'throw it off,' and, 'by the eternal,' he would shoot the first man who brought his horse on the track; that the people's money should not be stolen from them in this manner.

"He talked incessantly, while the spittal rolled from his mouth and the fire from his eyes. I have seen bears and wolves put at bay, but he was certainly the most ferocious looking animal I ever saw. His appearance and manner struck terror to the hearts of 20,000 people. If they felt as I did every one expected to be killed. Finally he said: 'Now gentlemen, go calmly and in order and each man take his own property.' Each man got his property, and thus the fraudulent race was broken up by the exhibition of the most extraordinary courage. He did that day what it would have required 2,000 armed men to have effected."

A volume could be filled with just such thrilling incidents in the history of the early turf in Tennessee, in most of which Old Hickory was the central figure.

BATTLEFIELD BUTTONS.

An Exhibition of Souvenirs at the Chickamauga Reunion.

In one of the meetings on the battlefield of Chickamauga last September General Gordon, the senator, and also commander-in-chief of the confederate veterans, made the following statement:

"I have in my possession a button taken from the coat of the gallant union general, W. H. Lytle, who commanded a brigade in General Sheridan's division and was killed near this spot. It was given me by a confederate soldier who helped to carry the body of General Lytle to the union lines after the battle, thirty-two years ago. I shall be glad to give the precious souvenir to a soldier of General Lytle's regiment or brigade or one of his relatives."

Among those who heard General Gordon's statement, relates the Chicago Times-Herald, was Major Henry C. Rogers of Milwaukee, who served in Lytle's brigade and was wounded four times in the Chickamauga battle, not far from where his brigade commander fell. An hour after General Gordon had spoken Major Rogers crowded through the throng that was gathered about the southern general and introduced himself.

"I heard what you said about the button from General Lytle's coat. I was in his brigade and it would please me greatly to have the little souvenir. We all thought a good deal of him," said Rogers.

"Well, now, my Yankee comrade, you are half an hour too late. A nephew of General Lytle's presented himself and asked for the button and I gave it to him. Haven't you a souvenir of the great battle."

"Yes, general, four of them; three on the arms and this," holding up a hand with two fingers gone.

"Oh, they don't count. I have seven such souvenirs."

Then the two gray-haired American soldiers shook hands like brothers and parted.

SHOE HEELS OF WOOD.

Compressed Pulp is Now Used Extensively in the Shoemaking Trade.

One of the latest features of wood pulp industry is the manufacture, in Haverhill, Mass., of shoe heels from that material, white pine and other kinds being used for that purpose. In carrying out this art the plan, as described, consists in reducing the wood in the usual way in digesters, after which the pulp is put into a tank and mixed with the substances necessary for imparting to heel stock the necessary requirements, such as alcohol, litharge, tar, degras and fish glue, a thorough mixture of these with pulp being followed by soaking the same day or two, so that the fiber may be penetrated, when another application of materials occurs. The object at this stage is to harden the pulp somewhat, so that it can be rolled into thick sheets and handled, shellac and borax accomplishing this, the pulp thus having the consistency of cement. At this point slackened lime is put in, and, as this hardens when dry, the pulp must be rolled into sheets, it being just thick enough, and there being specially arranged rollers and adjustments at the bottom of the tank for effecting this. A series of pressures through press rollers reduces the sheet to the right thickness, and the sheet is next placed quickly upon the bed of a cutter; the wheels are now started and in a moment the platen falls, forcing a hundred or more cutters upon the sheet, shaping out a heel each.

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PRACTICAL AID FOR CUBA

Supplying the Revolutionists with Men and Munition of War.

HOW THE WORK IS CARRIED ON

A Few Quiet, Resourceful Men Render Effective Service—Story of One of the Cuban Expeditions.

While a thousand Cubans in Key West are listening to fiery speeches and shouting for Cuban freedom, says a writer in the New York Independent, two or three quiet men have their heads together in a locked room in New York City laying plans. The Key West enthusiasm finds its way into the newspapers, but it is the work of the two or three silent men in New York that tells.

One of the trio in the New York room may be called Gonzalez, because he is not a person, but a type. Gonzalez has made his mark in former Cuban insurrections, and of his loyalty to the cause and his personal bravery there is no question; he has been waiting, and now he is ready. Perhaps he has been waiting for men, but more likely he has been waiting for money, for money is not as plenty in the Cuban treasury as some people imagine, and what there is is gathered largely in New York. The Key West Cubans make it a rule to spend on Tuesday what they earned on Monday.

Gonzalez has a large acquaintance among the Cubans in New York; and if he is not a general already, the president of the Cuban republic (who is also in New York) makes him one. For a month or more he has been sounding his countrymen, and he knows that Carlos and Miguel and Don Antonio and twenty more are ready to follow him to the field as soon as he gives them the signal; but he cannot give the signal until the money is supplied for fitting out another expedition, for it is not the wealthy Cubans who go into the field and fight.

Now, however, the money is ready, and the trio in the New York room determine upon the arms to be bought. They cannot hope to send anything larger than rifles and revolvers; and the question of arms is the important one. To take twenty men to Cuba is a perfectly simple matter; they can go openly in any of the steamers, with no more of a passport than a line from a notary public, certifying that "John Smith, personally known to me, is a citizen of the United States of America, and a resident of New York City;" but to take them as an armed body is a very different matter, and without arms they would be worse than useless.

The first apparent result of the consultation in New York is the sending an order (with a check) to one of the manufacturers, for fifty rifles and fifty revolvers, to be shipped to Juan Alamo or some other trusty Cuban in Key West. The secret service people in New York know within twelve hours that these rifles have been bought and shipped, and the authorities in Key West know precisely when they arrive and who receives them. But Key West is an American city, and Juan Alamo can buy as many rifles as he can pay for.

The arms provided for, a whisper spreads among the Cubans that General Gonzalez is about to start for the front with volunteers. There are no meetings, no parades; but the Florida through train next day has among its passengers five or six Cubans, who are possibly going down to work in the Key West cigar factories. On the following day there are five or six more, all bound for Key West. Every day there are a few, and each detachment makes a short stop in Tampa to add to its numbers from the 5,000 Cubans who live there.

When the Tampa steamer lands at Key West a thousand Cubans are waiting on the wharf to see who comes. The hardest work of the Key West police is opening a narrow lane through the eager watchers to let the passengers land. On the steamer are fifty Cubans, perhaps a hundred, for there is a constant Cuban tide flowing between Tampa and Key West. The five or six who belong to the expedition are in no way distinguishable from the others. They go ashore, and are instantly swallowed up in the crowd of dusky Cubans, and quartered in their little houses. There are two steamers a week; and in a few days General Gonzalez has his men under his eye in Key West; not twenty now, but forty, with the recruits picked up in Tampa and on the island. He might have more, but he could not handle them to advantage. The Cubans who did the shouting in Key West know nothing about the presence of these men. They think they recognize a distinguished patriot landing from the steamer and cheer him, and he proves to be a real cigarmaker looking for work; for so many of the Key West factories are closed now that the men have to look for work, instead of the bosses looking for men.

The island of Key West is thirty or forty miles south of the mainland, and about ninety miles from Havana. For a hundred miles to the east and north, making almost a semicircle about the end of the peninsula, stretch the beautiful tropical islands called the Florida Keys—scores of them, mostly covered with a thick growth of small trees. Some of these keys are inhabited by a few Bahamians, and some are not inhabited at all. Between the keys and the mainland is Florida bay, a smooth, shallow bit of warm water, full of smaller islands; and five or six miles outside the keys is the outer barrier of half-hidden rocks called the Florida Reefs. The American government is represented by the collector of the port and the revenue cutter, McLane, and sometimes also by the revenue cutters, Morrill, Winona and Forward, not one of which is light enough of draught to run through the shallow passages between and behind the keys. All the government officers concerned do their work honestly, and will prevent Gonzalez from escaping if they can, but they have eyes only in front, and while they are looking ahead he may slip out behind.

Cudjoe Key, twenty miles from Key West, is a beautiful spot, well wooded, with plump birds singing in its trees and swarms of fish in its waters. If three or four Cuban gentlemen choose to go out there from Key West fishing and hunting, carrying their guns and rods, who is to say them nay? Possibly they may set out at night without advertising the start, and a few extra rifles may find their way into the boat for ballast. They take the inside passage, and the revenue cutter could not follow them if she could find them. At the same time a trading schooner is setting out for Biscayne bay and the intermediate islands, and among her passengers are three or four Cubans who have as good a right to visit Saddle Bunch Keys, or Ramrod Key, or Indian Key, or Upper or Lower Matacumbe, as a New Yorker has to visit Hoboken, for these are all American islands. Various little boats carry various little parties to various adjacent islands, and the revenue cutter makes her daily trip up and down the coast, and sees nothing but the beautiful green water and some rocky islands; for the Gonzalez men are very unobtrusive in their ways and do not thrust themselves forward.

Meanwhile two or three small boats are making frequent trips among the islands, heading generally toward Cudjoe Key. The hunting and fishing there are so good that the Gonzalez men are seized with a common desire to enjoy them; and, although they may have gone from Key West to Matacumbe, or Largo, or any other key in the group, it happens that within a few days they all meet on Cudjoe Key; and much surprised they must be at the coincidence. Cudjoe is named here only for an example; they may meet on Long Pine Key, or Indian Key, or wherever Gonzalez has arranged for.

This is one more step toward Cuba. Instead of his men being under cover and scattered in Key West, Gonzalez now has them in a mass on Cudjoe Key, all armed and equipped. They set to work and built such slight shelters as are needed in that climate; and the boatman who has been engaged to bring them provisions from Key West hardly makes a secret of his work. This quiet life may last for a week or for a month; but the end of it comes when one dark night a light-draught schooner runs in as close to the key as the water will allow, and shows a light that Gonzalez and his men understand. There is no accident about her coming; it was all arranged for in the quiet room in New York. Instantly the camp is broken up, and all the available boats begin to carry men out to the schooner. There is no moon and the wind is just right, for the schooner's captain has waited for that. In an hour the schooner is under way for Cuba, with all her lights out, and by daylight Gonzalez and his men are in the mountains of Cuba. The distance across is a little less than 100 miles. A few days later some Havana merchant cables his correspondent in New York that "Prices are ruling firm," or any other prearranged words, and the Cubans here know that their friends have landed safely.

The revenue cutter is hardly taken into consideration in this matter. She has to watch the coast and the 500 islands between Dry Tortugas and Biscayne bay, a distance of 200 miles. Her position is much like that of a single policeman sent to guard Third avenue from Cooper union to Harlem bridge and prevent people from crossing. The whole navy could scarcely keep an unlighted schooner from slipping through on a dark night.

The landing in Cuba is equally simple. From Sagua la Grande eastward for 300 miles there is scarcely a settlement worth naming. That long stretch of desolate coast could not be effectively guarded by all the ships in Spain. Back of that coast, to the eastward, is not the great fertile country we think of when Cuba is named, but barren, hilly waste; mountains that dip into the clouds, and that have never been explored; miles and miles without road or field or habitation or sign of man.

This is in almost every particular a history of the expedition that Roloff took successfully to Cuba last summer. Roloff made his rendezvous on Long Pine Key instead of Cudjoe Key. It is a history of a dozen other expeditions that have landed safely in Cuba, and doubtless a dozen more will follow in their footsteps.

BREEDING BUFFALOES.

Some of the Hybrids Produced Are Fine Animals.

A famous Montana character is Charlie Allard of Ravalli. Mr. Allard is famous mainly because he is one of the owners of the largest herd of buffalo in the country, and no man living has given to these now rare animals more patient study and attention than he.

"The coldest storms of winter do not trouble them," he said to a representative of the Anaconda Standard, "for their thick, shaggy coats are wind-proof. During the heavy snows and blizzards they climb the hills, and, turning their breasts to the wind, defy the storm. They feed where the snow is thinnest. Cattle are driven before a storm and will often go with a wind sixty or one hundred miles from the accustomed range, unless they reach a sheltered spot. Horses turn their backs to a storm, but the buffalo faces it every time. They seem to keep in about the same condition of flesh the year around, and are as good eating in the spring as they are in the fall, and a buffalo steak is as fine a morsel as ever a man made a meal of. About two years ago I purchased the Jones herd of buffalo, which was at Omaha. There were thirty-one of them in the herd, and we paid (for I have a partner now) $18,000 for the lot. Marchiel Pablo, a well known cattleman, has joined me in the business, and for the past year has had entire charge of them, so that I do not know just exactly how many we have—about 140, I should judge now, and by the next fall there will be fully 200 of them.

"We have experimented in crossing buffalo with all breeds of cattle, and the results are most satisfactory. The Polled Angus stock when crossed with the buffalo produces a magnificent animal. The fur is finer and closer than that of the buffalo, and the meat is sweet and wholesome. We are procuring as many of these animals as possible, but will not put any on the market for several years yet. We are not selling any buffalo either, for the reason that we need them all at present. We receive letters every day from museums, parks and shows wanting them in all quantities, and, though we might dispose of one or two singly, we have no pairs to sell.

"A good buffalo hide is worth $100 now in the market, and heads bring from $200 to $500 when mounted, and the value of these is steadily increasing, so that buffalo breeding is as good an investment as real estate. Our herd is the only one I know about of any size. There is a small one in the Texas Panhandle, and these, with the few that roam in the National park, are the sole remnants of the thousands which roamed the prairies but a few years ago."

ARNOLD'S COUNTRY PLACE.

Where the Traitor Once Entertained Ham and Eggs Are Now Sold.

If you wander far enough through the broad drives and cross the ample fields of Fairmount park, Philadelphia, you will presently encounter a commodious stone building, surmounting a wooded knoll, set down between two subsidiary ones of the same material, into and out of which a small crowd of people, mainly women and children, are constantly passing, says the New York Press. It is now known vaguely and generally as the "Dairy" and is a pleasant enough little place to stop for ice cream, tea and other light refreshments, pleasantly dispensed by a neat maiden, in the employ of the lessees of the house. But probably not one in 1,000 of the persons who so indulge themselves is aware of the fact that this quiet little refectory, with its trim gravel walk in front and its grassy banks in the rear, sloping gently down to the Schuylkill, was once the country seat of Benedict Arnold.

It was conveyed to him in 1776 by John McPherson, a Philadelphia merchant, for £16,240, subject to a mortgage of £1,760 and a lease to Don Juan Mirailles, the Spanish minister. In this sumptuous mansion, with its high ceilings, decorated walls, massive mantelpieces and deeply carved oaken doors and windows, Arnold lived and entertained and plotted for more than three years. The north room on the first floor, where the visitor now sips his tea and leisurely munches his sweet cakes, was probably, from its appearance, the morning room of Arnold and the gay party he constantly gathered about him. In the fine wide hall, where the guests were wont to be received with stately courtesy, is now a row of small tables on one side and a confectionery counter on the other. The portion in front, to which queued gallants and powdered dames, were wont to retreat in the cool of the evening, is now covered with small signs, calling attention to the ham sandwiches, ham and eggs and other delicacies that may be procured by the hungry.

When Arnold was attainted with treason in 1870 this property was confiscated by the government and was subsequently owned, among others, by Hon. Edward Shippen, chief justice of Pennsylvania; General Jonathan Williams and Baron von Steuben, inspector general of the army under General Washington. It was acquired by the city of Philadelphia in 1868.

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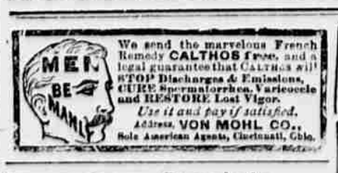

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