

## Part III

### 32 A Horse Fair

No doubt a horse fair is a very amusing place to those who have nothing to lose; at any rate, there is plenty to see.

Long strings of young horses out of the country, fresh from the marshes; and droves of shaggy little Welsh ponies, no higher than Merrylegs; and hundreds of cart horses of all sorts, some of them with their long tails braided up and tied with scarlet cord; and a good many like myself, handsome and high-bred, but fallen into the middle class, through some accident or blemish, unsoundness of wind, or some other complaint. There were some splendid animals quite in their prime, and fit for anything; they were throwing out their legs and showing off their paces in high style, as they were trotted out with a leading rein, the groom running by the side. But round in the background there were a number of poor things, sadly broken down with hard work, with their knees knuckling over and their hind legs swinging out at every step, and there were some very dejected-looking old horses, with the under lip hanging down and the ears lying back heavily, as if there were no more pleasure in life, and no more hope; there were some so thin you might see all their ribs, and some with old sores on their backs and hips. These were sad sights for a horse to look upon, who knows not but he may come to the same

state.

There was a great deal of bargaining, of running up and beating down; and if a horse may speak his mind so far as he understands, I should say there were more lies told and more trickery at that horse fair than a clever man could give an account of. I was put with two or three other strong, useful-looking horses, and a good many people came to look at us. The gentlemen always turned from me when they saw my broken knees; though the man who had me swore it was only a slip in the stall.

The first thing was to pull my mouth open, then to look at my eyes, then feel all the way down my legs, and give me a hard feel of the skin and flesh, and then try my paces. It was wonderful what a difference there was in the way these things were done. Some did it in a rough, offhand way, as if one was only a piece of wood; while others would take their hands gently over one's body, with a pat now and then, as much as to say, "By your leave." Of course I judged a good deal of the buyers by their manners to myself.

There was one man, I thought, if he would buy me, I should be happy. He was not a gentleman, nor yet one of the loud, flashy sort that call themselves so. He was rather a small man, but well made, and quick in all his motions. I knew in a moment by the way he handled me, that he was used to horses; he spoke gently, and his gray eye had a kindly, cheery look in it. It may seem strange to say--but it is true all the same--that the clean, fresh smell there was about him made me take to him; no smell of old beer and tobacco, which I hated, but a fresh smell

as if he had come out of a hayloft. He offered twenty-three pounds for me, but that was refused, and he walked away. I looked after him, but he was gone, and a very hard-looking, loud-voiced man came. I was dreadfully afraid he would have me; but he walked off. One or two more came who did not mean business. Then the hard-faced man came back again

and offered twenty-three pounds. A very close bargain was being driven, for my salesman began to think he should not get all he asked, and must come down; but just then the gray-eyed man came back again. I could not help reaching out my head toward him. He stroked my face kindly.

"Well, old chap," he said, "I think we should suit each other. I'll give twenty-four for him."

"Say twenty-five and you shall have him."

"Twenty-four ten," said my friend, in a very decided tone, "and not another sixpence--yes or no?"

"Done," said the salesman; "and you may depend upon it there's a monstrous deal of quality in that horse, and if you want him for cab work he's a bargain."

The money was paid on the spot, and my new master took my halter, and led me out of the fair to an inn, where he had a saddle and bridle ready. He gave me a good feed of oats and stood by while I ate it, talking to himself and talking to me. Half an hour after we were on our

way to London, through pleasant lanes and country roads, until we came into the great London thoroughfare, on which we traveled steadily, till in the twilight we reached the great city. The gas lamps were already lighted; there were streets to the right, and streets to the left, and streets crossing each other, for mile upon mile. I thought we should never come to the end of them. At last, in passing through one, we came to a long cab stand, when my rider called out in a cheery voice, "Good-night, governor!"

"Halloo!" cried a voice. "Have you got a good one?"

"I think so," replied my owner.

"I wish you luck with him."

"Thank you, governor," and he rode on. We soon turned up one of the side streets, and about halfway up that we turned into a very narrow street, with rather poor-looking houses on one side, and what seemed to be coach-houses and stables on the other.

My owner pulled up at one of the houses and whistled. The door flew open, and a young woman, followed by a little girl and boy, ran out. There was a very lively greeting as my rider dismounted.

"Now, then, Harry, my boy, open the gates, and mother will bring us the lantern."

The next minute they were all standing round me in a small stable-yard.

"Is he gentle, father?"

"Yes, Dolly, as gentle as your own kitten; come and pat him."

At once the little hand was patting about all over my shoulder without fear. How good it felt!

"Let me get him a bran mash while you rub him down," said the mother.

"Do, Polly, it's just what he wants; and I know you've got a beautiful mash ready for me."

"Sausage dumpling and apple turnover!" shouted the boy, which set them all laughing. I was led into a comfortable, clean-smelling stall, with plenty of dry straw, and after a capital supper I lay down, thinking I was going to be happy.

### 33 A London Cab Horse

Jeremiah Barker was my new master's name, but as every one called him Jerry, I shall do the same. Polly, his wife, was just as good a match as a man could have. She was a plump, trim, tidy little woman, with smooth, dark hair, dark eyes, and a merry little mouth. The boy was twelve years old, a tall, frank, good-tempered lad; and little Dorothy (Dolly they called her) was her mother over again, at eight years old. They were all wonderfully fond of each other; I never knew such a happy, merry family before or since. Jerry had a cab of his own, and two horses, which he drove and attended to himself. His other horse was a tall, white, rather large-boned animal called "Captain". He was old now, but when he was young he must have been splendid; he had still a proud way of holding his head and arching his neck; in fact, he was a high-bred, fine-mannered, noble old horse, every inch of him. He told me that in his early youth he went to the Crimean War; he belonged to an officer in the cavalry, and used to lead the regiment. I will tell more of that hereafter.

The next morning, when I was well-groomed, Polly and Dolly came into the yard to see me and make friends. Harry had been helping his father since the early morning, and had stated his opinion that I should turn out a "regular brick". Polly brought me a slice of apple, and Dolly a piece of bread, and made as much of me as if I had been the "Black Beauty" of olden time. It was a great treat to be petted again and talked to in a

gentle voice, and I let them see as well as I could that I wished to be friendly. Polly thought I was very handsome, and a great deal too good for a cab, if it was not for the broken knees.

"Of course there's no one to tell us whose fault that was," said Jerry, "and as long as I don't know I shall give him the benefit of the doubt; for a firmer, neater stepper I never rode. We'll call him 'Jack', after the old one--shall we, Polly?"

"Do," she said, "for I like to keep a good name going."

Captain went out in the cab all the morning. Harry came in after school to feed me and give me water. In the afternoon I was put into the cab. Jerry took as much pains to see if the collar and bridle fitted comfortably as if he had been John Manly over again. When the crupper was let out a hole or two it all fitted well. There was no check-rein, no curb, nothing but a plain ring snaffle. What a blessing that was!

After driving through the side street we came to the large cab stand where Jerry had said "Good-night". On one side of this wide street were high houses with wonderful shop fronts, and on the other was an old church and churchyard, surrounded by iron palisades. Alongside these iron rails a number of cabs were drawn up, waiting for passengers; bits of hay were lying about on the ground; some of the men were standing together talking; some were sitting on their boxes reading the newspaper; and one or two were feeding their horses with bits of hay, and giving them a drink of water. We pulled up in the rank at the back

of the last cab. Two or three men came round and began to look at me and pass their remarks.

"Very good for a funeral," said one.

"Too smart-looking," said another, shaking his head in a very wise way; "you'll find out something wrong one of these fine mornings, or my name isn't Jones."

"Well," said Jerry pleasantly, "I suppose I need not find it out till it finds me out, eh? And if so, I'll keep up my spirits a little longer."

Then there came up a broad-faced man, dressed in a great gray coat with great gray cape and great white buttons, a gray hat, and a blue comforter loosely tied round his neck; his hair was gray, too; but he was a jolly-looking fellow, and the other men made way for him. He looked me all over, as if he had been going to buy me; and then straightening himself up with a grunt, he said, "He's the right sort for you, Jerry; I don't care what you gave for him, he'll be worth it." Thus my character was established on the stand.

This man's name was Grant, but he was called "Gray Grant", or "Governor Grant". He had been the longest on that stand of any of the men, and he took it upon himself to settle matters and stop disputes. He was generally a good-humored, sensible man; but if his temper was a little out, as it was sometimes when he had drunk too much, nobody liked to come too near his fist, for he could deal a very heavy blow.



The first week of my life as a cab horse was very trying. I had never been used to London, and the noise, the hurry, the crowds of horses, carts, and carriages that I had to make my way through made me feel anxious and harassed; but I soon found that I could perfectly trust my driver, and then I made myself easy and got used to it.

Jerry was as good a driver as I had ever known, and what was better, he took as much thought for his horses as he did for himself. He soon found out that I was willing to work and do my best, and he never laid the whip on me unless it was gently drawing the end of it over my back when I was to go on; but generally I knew this quite well by the way in which he took up the reins, and I believe his whip was more frequently stuck up by his side than in his hand.

In a short time I and my master understood each other as well as horse and man can do. In the stable, too, he did all that he could for our comfort. The stalls were the old-fashioned style, too much on the slope; but he had two movable bars fixed across the back of our stalls, so that at night, and when we were resting, he just took off our halters and put up the bars, and thus we could turn about and stand whichever way we pleased, which is a great comfort.

Jerry kept us very clean, and gave us as much change of food as he could, and always plenty of it; and not only that, but he always gave us plenty of clean fresh water, which he allowed to stand by us both night and day, except of course when we came in warm. Some people say that a

horse ought not to drink all he likes; but I know if we are allowed to drink when we want it we drink only a little at a time, and it does us a great deal more good than swallowing down half a bucketful at a time, because we have been left without till we are thirsty and miserable. Some grooms will go home to their beer and leave us for hours with our dry hay and oats and nothing to moisten them; then of course we gulp down too much at once, which helps to spoil our breathing and sometimes chills our stomachs. But the best thing we had here was our Sundays for rest; we worked so hard in the week that I do not think we could have kept up to it but for that day; besides, we had then time to enjoy each other's company. It was on these days that I learned my companion's history.

### 34 An Old War Horse

Captain had been broken in and trained for an army horse; his first owner was an officer of cavalry going out to the Crimean war. He said he quite enjoyed the training with all the other horses, trotting together, turning together, to the right hand or the left, halting at the word of command, or dashing forward at full speed at the sound of the trumpet or signal of the officer. He was, when young, a dark, dappled iron-gray, and considered very handsome. His master, a young, high-spirited gentleman, was very fond of him, and treated him from the first with the greatest care and kindness. He told me he thought the life of an army horse was very pleasant; but when it came to being sent abroad over the sea in a great ship, he almost changed his mind.

"That part of it," said he, "was dreadful! Of course we could not walk off the land into the ship; so they were obliged to put strong straps under our bodies, and then we were lifted off our legs in spite of our struggles, and were swung through the air over the water, to the deck of the great vessel. There we were placed in small close stalls, and never for a long time saw the sky, or were able to stretch our legs. The ship sometimes rolled about in high winds, and we were knocked about, and felt bad enough.

"However, at last it came to an end, and we were hauled up, and swung over again to the land; we were very glad, and snorted and neighed for

joy, when we once more felt firm ground under our feet.

"We soon found that the country we had come to was very different from our own and that we had many hardships to endure besides the fighting; but many of the men were so fond of their horses that they did everything they could to make them comfortable in spite of snow, wet, and all things out of order."

"But what about the fighting?" said I, "was not that worse than anything else?"

"Well," said he, "I hardly know; we always liked to hear the trumpet sound, and to be called out, and were impatient to start off, though sometimes we had to stand for hours, waiting for the word of command; and when the word was given we used to spring forward as gayly and eagerly as if there were no cannon balls, bayonets, or bullets. I believe so long as we felt our rider firm in the saddle, and his hand steady on the bridle, not one of us gave way to fear, not even when the terrible bomb-shells whirled through the air and burst into a thousand pieces.

"I, with my noble master, went into many actions together without a wound; and though I saw horses shot down with bullets, pierced through with lances, and gashed with fearful saber-cuts; though we left them dead on the field, or dying in the agony of their wounds, I don't think I feared for myself. My master's cheery voice, as he encouraged his men, made me feel as if he and I could not be killed. I had such perfect

trust in him that while he was guiding me I was ready to charge up to the very cannon's mouth. I saw many brave men cut down, many fall mortally wounded from their saddles. I had heard the cries and groans of the dying, I had cantered over ground slippery with blood, and frequently had to turn aside to avoid trampling on wounded man or horse, but, until one dreadful day, I had never felt terror; that day I shall never forget."

Here old Captain paused for awhile and drew a long breath; I waited, and he went on.

"It was one autumn morning, and as usual, an hour before daybreak our cavalry had turned out, ready caparisoned for the day's work, whether it might be fighting or waiting. The men stood by their horses waiting, ready for orders. As the light increased there seemed to be some excitement among the officers; and before the day was well begun we heard the firing of the enemy's guns.

"Then one of the officers rode up and gave the word for the men to mount, and in a second every man was in his saddle, and every horse stood expecting the touch of the rein, or the pressure of his rider's heels, all animated, all eager; but still we had been trained so well that, except by the champing of our bits, and the restive tossing of our heads from time to time, it could not be said that we stirred.

"My dear master and I were at the head of the line, and as all sat motionless and watchful, he took a little stray lock of my mane which

had turned over on the wrong side, laid it over on the right, and smoothed it down with his hand; then patting my neck, he said, 'We shall have a day of it to-day, Bayard, my beauty; but we'll do our duty as we have done.' He stroked my neck that morning more, I think, than he had ever done before; quietly on and on, as if he were thinking of something else. I loved to feel his hand on my neck, and arched my crest proudly and happily; but I stood very still, for I knew all his moods, and when he liked me to be quiet, and when gay.

"I cannot tell all that happened on that day, but I will tell of the last charge that we made together; it was across a valley right in front of the enemy's cannon. By this time we were well used to the roar of heavy guns, the rattle of musket fire, and the flying of shot near us; but never had I been under such a fire as we rode through on that day. From the right, from the left, and from the front, shot and shell poured in upon us. Many a brave man went down, many a horse fell, flinging his rider to the earth; many a horse without a rider ran wildly out of the ranks; then terrified at being alone, with no hand to guide him, came pressing in among his old companions, to gallop with them to the charge.

"Fearful as it was, no one stopped, no one turned back. Every moment the ranks were thinned, but as our comrades fell, we closed in to keep them together; and instead of being shaken or staggered in our pace our gallop became faster and faster as we neared the cannon.

"My master, my dear master was cheering on his comrades with his right arm raised on high, when one of the balls whizzing close to my head

struck him. I felt him stagger with the shock, though he uttered no cry; I tried to check my speed, but the sword dropped from his right hand, the rein fell loose from the left, and sinking backward from the saddle he fell to the earth; the other riders swept past us, and by the force of their charge I was driven from the spot.

"I wanted to keep my place by his side and not leave him under that rush of horses' feet, but it was in vain; and now without a master or a friend I was alone on that great slaughter ground; then fear took hold on me, and I trembled as I had never trembled before; and I too, as I had seen other horses do, tried to join in the ranks and gallop with them; but I was beaten off by the swords of the soldiers. Just then a soldier whose horse had been killed under him caught at my bridle and mounted me, and with this new master I was again going forward; but our gallant company was cruelly overpowered, and those who remained alive after the fierce fight for the guns came galloping back over the same ground. Some of the horses had been so badly wounded that they could scarcely move from the loss of blood; other noble creatures were trying on three legs to drag themselves along, and others were struggling to rise on their fore feet, when their hind legs had been shattered by shot. After the battle the wounded men were brought in and the dead were buried."

"And what about the wounded horses?" I said; "were they left to die?"

"No, the army farriers went over the field with their pistols and shot all that were ruined; some that had only slight wounds were brought back

and attended to, but the greater part of the noble, willing creatures that went out that morning never came back! In our stables there was only about one in four that returned.

"I never saw my dear master again. I believe he fell dead from the saddle. I never loved any other master so well. I went into many other engagements, but was only once wounded, and then not seriously; and when the war was over I came back again to England, as sound and strong as when I went out."

I said, "I have heard people talk about war as if it was a very fine thing."

"Ah!" said he, "I should think they never saw it. No doubt it is very fine when there is no enemy, when it is just exercise and parade and sham fight. Yes, it is very fine then; but when thousands of good brave men and horses are killed or crippled for life, it has a very different look."

"Do you know what they fought about?" said I.

"No," he said, "that is more than a horse can understand, but the enemy must have been awfully wicked people, if it was right to go all that way over the sea on purpose to kill them."



35 Jerry Barker

I never knew a better man than my new master. He was kind and good, and as strong for the right as John Manly; and so good-tempered and merry that very few people could pick a quarrel with him. He was very fond of making little songs, and singing them to himself. One he was very fond of was this:

"Come, father and mother,  
And sister and brother,  
Come, all of you, turn to  
And help one another."

And so they did; Harry was as clever at stable-work as a much older boy, and always wanted to do what he could. Then Polly and Dolly used to come in the morning to help with the cab--to brush and beat the cushions, and rub the glass, while Jerry was giving us a cleaning in the yard, and Harry was rubbing the harness. There used to be a great deal of laughing and fun between them, and it put Captain and me in much better spirits than if we had heard scolding and hard words. They were always early in the morning, for Jerry would say:

"If you in the morning  
Throw minutes away,  
You can't pick them up

In the course of a day.  
You may hurry and scurry,  
And flurry and worry,  
You've lost them forever,  
Forever and aye."

He could not bear any careless loitering and waste of time; and nothing was so near making him angry as to find people, who were always late, wanting a cab horse to be driven hard, to make up for their idleness.

One day two wild-looking young men came out of a tavern close by the stand, and called Jerry.

"Here, cabby! look sharp, we are rather late; put on the steam, will you, and take us to the Victoria in time for the one o'clock train? You shall have a shilling extra."

"I will take you at the regular pace, gentlemen; shillings don't pay for putting on the steam like that."

Larry's cab was standing next to ours; he flung open the door, and said, "I'm your man, gentlemen! take my cab, my horse will get you there all right;" and as he shut them in, with a wink toward Jerry, said, "It's against his conscience to go beyond a jog-trot." Then slashing his jaded horse, he set off as hard as he could. Jerry patted me on the neck: "No, Jack, a shilling would not pay for that sort of thing, would it, old boy?"

Although Jerry was determinedly set against hard driving, to please careless people, he always went a good fair pace, and was not against putting on the steam, as he said, if only he knew why.

I well remember one morning, as we were on the stand waiting for a fare, that a young man, carrying a heavy portmanteau, trod on a piece of orange peel which lay on the pavement, and fell down with great force.

Jerry was the first to run and lift him up. He seemed much stunned, and as they led him into a shop he walked as if he were in great pain. Jerry of course came back to the stand, but in about ten minutes one of the shopmen called him, so we drew up to the pavement.

"Can you take me to the South-Eastern Railway?" said the young man; "this unlucky fall has made me late, I fear; but it is of great importance that I should not lose the twelve o'clock train. I should be most thankful if you could get me there in time, and will gladly pay you an extra fare."

"I'll do my very best," said Jerry heartily, "if you think you are well enough, sir," for he looked dreadfully white and ill.

"I must go," he said earnestly, "please to open the door, and let us lose no time."

The next minute Jerry was on the box; with a cheery chirrup to me, and a

twitch of the rein that I well understood.

"Now then, Jack, my boy," said he, "spin along, we'll show them how we can get over the ground, if we only know why."

It is always difficult to drive fast in the city in the middle of the day, when the streets are full of traffic, but we did what could be done; and when a good driver and a good horse, who understand each other, are of one mind, it is wonderful what they can do. I had a very good mouth--that is I could be guided by the slightest touch of the rein; and that is a great thing in London, among carriages, omnibuses, carts, vans, trucks, cabs, and great wagons creeping along at a walking pace; some going one way, some another, some going slowly, others wanting to pass them; omnibuses stopping short every few minutes to take up a passenger, obliging the horse that is coming behind to pull up too, or to pass, and get before them; perhaps you try to pass, but just then something else comes dashing in through the narrow opening, and you have to keep in behind the omnibus again; presently you think you see a chance, and manage to get to the front, going so near the wheels on each side that half an inch nearer and they would scrape. Well, you get along for a bit, but soon find yourself in a long train of carts and carriages all obliged to go at a walk; perhaps you come to a regular block-up, and have to stand still for minutes together, till something clears out into a side street, or the policeman interferes; you have to be ready for any chance--to dash forward if there be an opening, and be quick as a rat-dog to see if there be room and if there be time, lest you get your own wheels locked or smashed, or the shaft of some other vehicle run

into your chest or shoulder. All this is what you have to be ready for. If you want to get through London fast in the middle of the day it wants a deal of practice.

Jerry and I were used to it, and no one could beat us at getting through when we were set upon it. I was quick and bold and could always trust my driver; Jerry was quick and patient at the same time, and could trust his horse, which was a great thing too. He very seldom used the whip; I knew by his voice, and his click, click, when he wanted to get on fast, and by the rein where I was to go; so there was no need for whipping; but I must go back to my story.

The streets were very full that day, but we got on pretty well as far as the bottom of Cheapside, where there was a block for three or four minutes. The young man put his head out and said anxiously, "I think I had better get out and walk; I shall never get there if this goes on."

"I'll do all that can be done, sir," said Jerry; "I think we shall be in time. This block-up cannot last much longer, and your luggage is very heavy for you to carry, sir."

Just then the cart in front of us began to move on, and then we had a good turn. In and out, in and out we went, as fast as horseflesh could do it, and for a wonder had a good clear time on London Bridge, for there was a whole train of cabs and carriages all going our way at a quick trot, perhaps wanting to catch that very train. At any rate, we whirled into the station with many more, just as the great clock pointed

to eight minutes to twelve o'clock.

"Thank God! we are in time," said the young man, "and thank you, too, my friend, and your good horse. You have saved me more than money can ever pay for. Take this extra half-crown."

"No, sir, no, thank you all the same; so glad we hit the time, sir; but don't stay now, sir, the bell is ringing. Here, porter! take this gentleman's luggage--Dover line twelve o'clock train--that's it," and without waiting for another word Jerry wheeled me round to make room for other cabs that were dashing up at the last minute, and drew up on one side till the crush was past.

"So glad!" he said, 'so glad!' Poor young fellow! I wonder what it was that made him so anxious!"

Jerry often talked to himself quite loud enough for me to hear when we were not moving.

On Jerry's return to the rank there was a good deal of laughing and chaffing at him for driving hard to the train for an extra fare, as they said, all against his principles, and they wanted to know how much he had pocketed.

"A good deal more than I generally get," said he, nodding slyly; "what he gave me will keep me in little comforts for several days."

"Gammon!" said one.

"He's a humbug," said another; "preaching to us and then doing the same himself."

"Look here, mates," said Jerry; "the gentleman offered me half a crown extra, but I didn't take it; 'twas quite pay enough for me to see how glad he was to catch that train; and if Jack and I choose to have a quick run now and then to please ourselves, that's our business and not yours."

"Well," said Larry, "you'll never be a rich man."

"Most likely not," said Jerry; "but I don't know that I shall be the less happy for that. I have heard the commandments read a great many times and I never noticed that any of them said, 'Thou shalt be rich'; and there are a good many curious things said in the New Testament about rich men that I think would make me feel rather queer if I was one of them."

"If you ever do get rich," said Governor Gray, looking over his shoulder across the top of his cab, "you'll deserve it, Jerry, and you won't find a curse come with your wealth. As for you, Larry, you'll die poor; you spend too much in whipcord."

"Well," said Larry, "what is a fellow to do if his horse won't go without it?"

"You never take the trouble to see if he will go without it; your whip is always going as if you had the St. Vitus' dance in your arm, and if it does not wear you out it wears your horse out; you know you are always changing your horses; and why? Because you never give them any peace or encouragement."

"Well, I have not had good luck," said Larry, "that's where it is."

"And you never will," said the governor. "Good Luck is rather particular who she rides with, and mostly prefers those who have got common sense and a good heart; at least that is my experience."

Governor Gray turned round again to his newspaper, and the other men went to their cabs.



## 36 The Sunday Cab

One morning, as Jerry had just put me into the shafts and was fastening the traces, a gentleman walked into the yard. "Your servant, sir," said Jerry.

"Good-morning, Mr. Barker," said the gentleman. "I should be glad to make some arrangements with you for taking Mrs. Briggs regularly to church on Sunday mornings. We go to the New Church now, and that is rather further than she can walk."

"Thank you, sir," said Jerry, "but I have only taken out a six-days' license,\* and therefore I could not take a fare on a Sunday; it would not be legal."

\* A few years since the annual charge for a cab license was very much reduced, and the difference between the six and seven days' cabs was abolished.

"Oh!" said the other, "I did not know yours was a six-days' cab; but of course it would be very easy to alter your license. I would see that you did not lose by it; the fact is, Mrs. Briggs very much prefers you to drive her."

"I should be glad to oblige the lady, sir, but I had a seven-days' license once, and the work was too hard for me, and too hard for my horses. Year in and year out, not a day's rest, and never a Sunday with my wife and children; and never able to go to a place of worship, which I had always been used to do before I took to the driving box. So for the last five years I have only taken a six-days' license, and I find it better all the way round."

"Well, of course," replied Mr. Briggs, "it is very proper that every person should have rest, and be able to go to church on Sundays, but I should have thought you would not have minded such a short distance for the horse, and only once a day; you would have all the afternoon and evening for yourself, and we are very good customers, you know."

"Yes, sir, that is true, and I am grateful for all favors, I am sure; and anything that I could do to oblige you, or the lady, I should be proud and happy to do; but I can't give up my Sundays, sir, indeed I can't. I read that God made man, and he made horses and all the other beasts, and as soon as He had made them He made a day of rest, and bade that all should rest one day in seven; and I think, sir, He must have known what was good for them, and I am sure it is good for me; I am stronger and healthier altogether, now that I have a day of rest; the horses are fresh too, and do not wear up nearly so fast. The six-day drivers all tell me the same, and I have laid by more money in the savings bank than ever I did before; and as for the wife and children, sir, why, heart alive! they would not go back to the seven days for all

they could see."

"Oh, very well," said the gentleman. "Don't trouble yourself, Mr. Barker, any further. I will inquire somewhere else," and he walked away.

"Well," says Jerry to me, "we can't help it, Jack, old boy; we must have our Sundays."

"Polly!" he shouted, "Polly! come here."

She was there in a minute.

"What is it all about, Jerry?"

"Why, my dear, Mr. Briggs wants me to take Mrs. Briggs to church every Sunday morning. I say I have only a six-days' license. He says, 'Get a seven-days' license, and I'll make it worth your while;' and you know, Polly, they are very good customers to us. Mrs. Briggs often goes out shopping for hours, or making calls, and then she pays down fair and honorable like a lady; there's no beating down or making three hours into two hours and a half, as some folks do; and it is easy work for the horses; not like tearing along to catch trains for people that are always a quarter of an hour too late; and if I don't oblige her in this matter it is very likely we shall lose them altogether. What do you say, little woman?"

"I say, Jerry," says she, speaking very slowly, "I say, if Mrs. Briggs

would give you a sovereign every Sunday morning, I would not have you a seven-days' cabman again. We have known what it was to have no Sundays, and now we know what it is to call them our own. Thank God, you earn enough to keep us, though it is sometimes close work to pay for all the oats and hay, the license, and the rent besides; but Harry will soon be earning something, and I would rather struggle on harder than we do than go back to those horrid times when you hardly had a minute to look at your own children, and we never could go to a place of worship together, or have a happy, quiet day. God forbid that we should ever turn back to those times; that's what I say, Jerry."

"And that is just what I told Mr. Briggs, my dear," said Jerry, "and what I mean to stick to. So don't go and fret yourself, Polly" (for she had begun to cry); "I would not go back to the old times if I earned twice as much, so that is settled, little woman. Now, cheer up, and I'll be off to the stand."

Three weeks had passed away after this conversation, and no order had come from Mrs. Briggs; so there was nothing but taking jobs from the stand. Jerry took it to heart a good deal, for of course the work was harder for horse and man. But Polly would always cheer him up, and say, "Never mind, father, never, mind."

"Do your best,  
And leave the rest,  
'Twill all come right  
Some day or night."

It soon became known that Jerry had lost his best customer, and for what reason. Most of the men said he was a fool, but two or three took his part.

"If workingmen don't stick to their Sunday," said Truman, "they'll soon have none left; it is every man's right and every beast's right. By God's law we have a day of rest, and by the law of England we have a day of rest; and I say we ought to hold to the rights these laws give us and keep them for our children."

"All very well for you religious chaps to talk so," said Larry; "but I'll turn a shilling when I can. I don't believe in religion, for I don't see that your religious people are any better than the rest."

"If they are not better," put in Jerry, "it is because they are not religious. You might as well say that our country's laws are not good because some people break them. If a man gives way to his temper, and speaks evil of his neighbor, and does not pay his debts, he is not religious, I don't care how much he goes to church. If some men are shams and humbugs, that does not make religion untrue. Real religion is the best and truest thing in the world, and the only thing that can make a man really happy or make the world we live in any better."

"If religion was good for anything," said Jones, "it would prevent your religious people from making us work on Sundays, as you know many of them do, and that's why I say religion is nothing but a sham; why, if it

was not for the church and chapel-goers it would be hardly worth while our coming out on a Sunday. But they have their privileges, as they call them, and I go without. I shall expect them to answer for my soul, if I can't get a chance of saving it."

Several of the men applauded this, till Jerry said:

"That may sound well enough, but it won't do; every man must look after his own soul; you can't lay it down at another man's door like a foundling and expect him to take care of it; and don't you see, if you are always sitting on your box waiting for a fare, they will say, 'If we don't take him some one else will, and he does not look for any Sunday.' Of course, they don't go to the bottom of it, or they would see if they never came for a cab it would be no use your standing there; but people don't always like to go to the bottom of things; it may not be convenient to do it; but if you Sunday drivers would all strike for a day of rest the thing would be done."

"And what would all the good people do if they could not get to their favorite preachers?" said Larry.

"'Tis not for me to lay down plans for other people," said Jerry, "but if they can't walk so far they can go to what is nearer; and if it should rain they can put on their mackintoshes as they do on a week-day. If a thing is right it can be done, and if it is wrong it can be done without; and a good man will find a way. And that is as true for us cabmen as it is for the church-goers."

### 37 The Golden Rule

Two or three weeks after this, as we came into the yard rather late in the evening, Polly came running across the road with the lantern (she always brought it to him if it was not very wet).

"It has all come right, Jerry; Mrs. Briggs sent her servant this afternoon to ask you to take her out to-morrow at eleven o'clock. I said, 'Yes, I thought so, but we supposed she employed some one else now.'"

"'Well,' said he, 'the real fact is, master was put out because Mr. Barker refused to come on Sundays, and he has been trying other cabs, but there's something wrong with them all; some drive too fast, and some too slow, and the mistress says there is not one of them so nice and clean as yours, and nothing will suit her but Mr. Barker's cab again.'"

Polly was almost out of breath, and Jerry broke out into a merry laugh.

"'Twill all come right some day or night': you were right, my dear; you generally are. Run in and get the supper, and I'll have Jack's harness off and make him snug and happy in no time."

After this Mrs. Briggs wanted Jerry's cab quite as often as before, never, however, on a Sunday; but there came a day when we had Sunday

work, and this was how it happened. We had all come home on the Saturday night very tired, and very glad to think that the next day would be all rest, but so it was not to be.

On Sunday morning Jerry was cleaning me in the yard, when Polly stepped up to him, looking very full of something.

"What is it?" said Jerry.

"Well, my dear," she said, "poor Dinah Brown has just had a letter brought to say that her mother is dangerously ill, and that she must go directly if she wishes to see her alive. The place is more than ten miles away from here, out in the country, and she says if she takes the train she should still have four miles to walk; and so weak as she is, and the baby only four weeks old, of course that would be impossible; and she wants to know if you would take her in your cab, and she promises to pay you faithfully, as she can get the money."

"Tut, tut! we'll see about that. It was not the money I was thinking about, but of losing our Sunday; the horses are tired, and I am tired, too--that's where it pinches."

"It pinches all round, for that matter," said Polly, "for it's only half Sunday without you, but you know we should do to other people as we should like they should do to us; and I know very well what I should like if my mother was dying; and Jerry, dear, I am sure it won't break the Sabbath; for if pulling a poor beast or donkey out of a pit would



not spoil it, I am quite sure taking poor Dinah would not do it."

"Why, Polly, you are as good as the minister, and so, as I've had my Sunday-morning sermon early to-day, you may go and tell Dinah that I'll be ready for her as the clock strikes ten; but stop--just step round to butcher Braydon's with my compliments, and ask him if he would lend me his light trap; I know he never uses it on the Sunday, and it would make a wonderful difference to the horse."

Away she went, and soon returned, saying that he could have the trap and welcome.

"All right," said he; "now put me up a bit of bread and cheese, and I'll be back in the afternoon as soon as I can."

"And I'll have the meat pie ready for an early tea instead of for dinner," said Polly; and away she went, while he made his preparations to the tune of "Polly's the woman and no mistake", of which tune he was very fond.

I was selected for the journey, and at ten o'clock we started, in a light, high-wheeled gig, which ran so easily that after the four-wheeled cab it seemed like nothing.

It was a fine May day, and as soon as we were out of the town, the sweet air, the smell of the fresh grass, and the soft country roads were as pleasant as they used to be in the old times, and I soon began to feel

quite fresh.

Dinah's family lived in a small farmhouse, up a green lane, close by a meadow with some fine shady trees; there were two cows feeding in it. A young man asked Jerry to bring his trap into the meadow, and he would tie me up in the cowshed; he wished he had a better stable to offer.

"If your cows would not be offended," said Jerry, "there is nothing my horse would like so well as to have an hour or two in your beautiful meadow; he's quiet, and it would be a rare treat for him."

"Do, and welcome," said the young man; "the best we have is at your service for your kindness to my sister; we shall be having some dinner in an hour, and I hope you'll come in, though with mother so ill we are all out of sorts in the house."

Jerry thanked him kindly, but said as he had some dinner with him there was nothing he should like so well as walking about in the meadow.

When my harness was taken off I did not know what I should do first--whether to eat the grass, or roll over on my back, or lie down and rest, or have a gallop across the meadow out of sheer spirits at being free; and I did all by turns. Jerry seemed to be quite as happy as I was; he sat down by a bank under a shady tree, and listened to the birds, then he sang himself, and read out of the little brown book he is so fond of, then wandered round the meadow, and down by a little brook, where he picked the flowers and the hawthorn, and tied them up with

long sprays of ivy; then he gave me a good feed of the oats which he had brought with him; but the time seemed all too short--I had not been in a field since I left poor Ginger at Earlshall.

We came home gently, and Jerry's first words were, as we came into the yard, "Well, Polly, I have not lost my Sunday after all, for the birds were singing hymns in every bush, and I joined in the service; and as for Jack, he was like a young colt."

When he handed Dolly the flowers she jumped about for joy.

### 38 Dolly and a Real Gentleman

Winter came in early, with a great deal of cold and wet. There was snow, or sleet, or rain almost every day for weeks, changing only for keen driving winds or sharp frosts. The horses all felt it very much. When it is a dry cold a couple of good thick rugs will keep the warmth in us; but when it is soaking rain they soon get wet through and are no good. Some of the drivers had a waterproof cover to throw over, which was a fine thing; but some of the men were so poor that they could not protect either themselves or their horses, and many of them suffered very much that winter. When we horses had worked half the day we went to our dry stables, and could rest, while they had to sit on their boxes, sometimes staying out as late as one or two o'clock in the morning if they had a party to wait for.

When the streets were slippery with frost or snow that was the worst of all for us horses. One mile of such traveling, with a weight to draw and no firm footing, would take more out of us than four on a good road; every nerve and muscle of our bodies is on the strain to keep our balance; and, added to this, the fear of falling is more exhausting than anything else. If the roads are very bad indeed our shoes are roughed, but that makes us feel nervous at first.

When the weather was very bad many of the men would go and sit in the tavern close by, and get some one to watch for them; but they often

lost a fare in that way, and could not, as Jerry said, be there without spending money. He never went to the Rising Sun; there was a coffee-shop near, where he now and then went, or he bought of an old man, who came to our rank with tins of hot coffee and pies. It was his opinion that spirits and beer made a man colder afterward, and that dry clothes, good food, cheerfulness, and a comfortable wife at home, were the best things to keep a cabman warm. Polly always supplied him with something to eat when he could not get home, and sometimes he would see little Dolly peeping from the corner of the street, to make sure if "father" was on the stand. If she saw him she would run off at full speed and soon come back with something in a tin or basket, some hot soup or pudding Polly had ready. It was wonderful how such a little thing could get safely across the street, often thronged with horses and carriages; but she was a brave little maid, and felt it quite an honor to bring "father's first course", as he used to call it. She was a general favorite on the stand, and there was not a man who would not have seen her safely across the street, if Jerry had not been able to do it.

One cold windy day Dolly had brought Jerry a basin of something hot, and was standing by him while he ate it. He had scarcely begun when a gentleman, walking toward us very fast, held up his umbrella. Jerry touched his hat in return, gave the basin to Dolly, and was taking off my cloth, when the gentleman, hastening up, cried out, "No, no, finish your soup, my friend; I have not much time to spare, but I can wait till you have done, and set your little girl safe on the pavement." So saying, he seated himself in the cab. Jerry thanked him kindly, and came back to Dolly.

"There, Dolly, that's a gentleman; that's a real gentleman, Dolly; he has got time and thought for the comfort of a poor cabman and a little girl."

Jerry finished his soup, set the child across, and then took his orders to drive to Clapham Rise. Several times after that the same gentleman took our cab. I think he was very fond of dogs and horses, for whenever we took him to his own door two or three dogs would come bounding out to meet him. Sometimes he came round and patted me, saying in his quiet, pleasant way, "This horse has got a good master, and he deserves it." It was a very rare thing for any one to notice the horse that had been working for him. I have known ladies to do it now and then, and this gentleman, and one or two others have given me a pat and a kind word; but ninety-nine persons out of a hundred would as soon think of patting the steam engine that drew the train.

The gentleman was not young, and there was a forward stoop in his shoulders as if he was always going at something. His lips were thin and close shut, though they had a very pleasant smile; his eye was keen, and there was something in his jaw and the motion of his head that made one think he was very determined in anything he set about. His voice was pleasant and kind; any horse would trust that voice, though it was just as decided as everything else about him.

One day he and another gentleman took our cab; they stopped at a shop in R--- Street, and while his friend went in he stood at the door. A

little ahead of us on the other side of the street a cart with two very fine horses was standing before some wine vaults; the carter was not with them, and I cannot tell how long they had been standing, but they seemed to think they had waited long enough, and began to move off. Before they had gone many paces the carter came running out and caught them. He seemed furious at their having moved, and with whip and rein punished them brutally, even beating them about the head. Our gentleman saw it all, and stepping quickly across the street, said in a decided voice:

"If you don't stop that directly, I'll have you arrested for leaving your horses, and for brutal conduct."

The man, who had clearly been drinking, poured forth some abusive language, but he left off knocking the horses about, and taking the reins, got into his cart; meantime our friend had quietly taken a note-book from his pocket, and looking at the name and address painted on the cart, he wrote something down.

"What do you want with that?" growled the carter, as he cracked his whip and was moving on. A nod and a grim smile was the only answer he got.

On returning to the cab our friend was joined by his companion, who said laughingly, "I should have thought, Wright, you had enough business of your own to look after, without troubling yourself about other people's horses and servants."

Our friend stood still for a moment, and throwing his head a little back, "Do you know why this world is as bad as it is?"

"No," said the other.

"Then I'll tell you. It is because people think only about their own business, and won't trouble themselves to stand up for the oppressed, nor bring the wrongdoer to light. I never see a wicked thing like this without doing what I can, and many a master has thanked me for letting him know how his horses have been used."

"I wish there were more gentlemen like you, sir," said Jerry, "for they are wanted badly enough in this city."

After this we continued our journey, and as they got out of the cab our friend was saying, "My doctrine is this, that if we see cruelty or wrong that we have the power to stop, and do nothing, we make ourselves sharers in the guilt."



### 39 Seedy Sam

I should say that for a cab-horse I was very well off indeed; my driver was my owner, and it was his interest to treat me well and not overwork me, even had he not been so good a man as he was; but there were a great many horses which belonged to the large cab-owners, who let them out to their drivers for so much money a day. As the horses did not belong to these men the only thing they thought of was how to get their money out of them, first, to pay the master, and then to provide for their own living; and a dreadful time some of these horses had of it. Of course, I understood but little, but it was often talked over on the stand, and the governor, who was a kind-hearted man and fond of horses, would sometimes speak up if one came in very much jaded or ill-used.

One day a shabby, miserable-looking driver, who went by the name of "Seedy Sam", brought in his horse looking dreadfully beat, and the governor said:

"You and your horse look more fit for the police station than for this rank."

The man flung his tattered rug over the horse, turned full round upon the Governor and said in a voice that sounded almost desperate:

"If the police have any business with the matter it ought to be with the

masters who charge us so much, or with the fares that are fixed so low. If a man has to pay eighteen shillings a day for the use of a cab and two horses, as many of us have to do in the season, and must make that up before we earn a penny for ourselves I say 'tis more than hard work; nine shillings a day to get out of each horse before you begin to get your own living. You know that's true, and if the horses don't work we must starve, and I and my children have known what that is before now. I've six of 'em, and only one earns anything; I am on the stand fourteen or sixteen hours a day, and I haven't had a Sunday these ten or twelve weeks; you know Skinner never gives a day if he can help it, and if I don't work hard, tell me who does! I want a warm coat and a mackintosh, but with so many to feed how can a man get it? I had to pledge my clock a week ago to pay Skinner, and I shall never see it again."

Some of the other drivers stood round nodding their heads and saying he was right. The man went on:

"You that have your own horses and cabs, or drive for good masters, have a chance of getting on and a chance of doing right; I haven't. We can't charge more than sixpence a mile after the first, within the four-mile radius. This very morning I had to go a clear six miles and only took three shillings. I could not get a return fare, and had to come all the way back; there's twelve miles for the horse and three shillings for me. After that I had a three-mile fare, and there were bags and boxes enough to have brought in a good many twopences if they had been put outside; but you know how people do; all that could be piled up inside on the front seat were put in and three heavy boxes went on the top. That

was sixpence, and the fare one and sixpence; then I got a return for a shilling. Now that makes eighteen miles for the horse and six shillings for me; there's three shillings still for that horse to earn and nine shillings for the afternoon horse before I touch a penny. Of course, it is not always so bad as that, but you know it often is, and I say 'tis a mockery to tell a man that he must not overwork his horse, for when a beast is downright tired there's nothing but the whip that will keep his legs a-going; you can't help yourself--you must put your wife and children before the horse; the masters must look to that, we can't. I don't ill-use my horse for the sake of it; none of you can say I do. There's wrong lays somewhere--never a day's rest, never a quiet hour with the wife and children. I often feel like an old man, though I'm only forty-five. You know how quick some of the gentry are to suspect us of cheating and overcharging; why, they stand with their purses in their hands counting it over to a penny and looking at us as if we were pickpockets. I wish some of 'em had got to sit on my box sixteen hours a day and get a living out of it and eighteen shillings beside, and that in all weathers; they would not be so uncommon particular never to give us a sixpence over or to cram all the luggage inside. Of course, some of 'em tip us pretty handsome now and then, or else we could not live; but you can't depend upon that."

The men who stood round much approved this speech, and one of them said,

"It is desperate hard, and if a man sometimes does what is wrong it is no wonder, and if he gets a dram too much who's to blow him up?"

Jerry had taken no part in this conversation, but I never saw his face look so sad before. The governor had stood with both his hands in his pockets; now he took his handkerchief out of his hat and wiped his forehead.

"You've beaten me, Sam," he said, "for it's all true, and I won't cast it up to you any more about the police; it was the look in that horse's eye that came over me. It is hard lines for man and it is hard lines for beast, and who's to mend it I don't know: but anyway you might tell the poor beast that you were sorry to take it out of him in that way. Sometimes a kind word is all we can give 'em, poor brutes, and 'tis wonderful what they do understand."

A few mornings after this talk a new man came on the stand with Sam's cab.

"Halloo!" said one, "what's up with Seedy Sam?"

"He's ill in bed," said the man; "he was taken last night in the yard, and could scarcely crawl home. His wife sent a boy this morning to say his father was in a high fever and could not get out, so I'm here instead."

The next morning the same man came again.

"How is Sam?" inquired the governor.

"He's gone," said the man.

"What, gone? You don't mean to say he's dead?"

"Just snuffed out," said the other; "he died at four o'clock this morning; all yesterday he was raving--raving about Skinner, and having no Sundays. 'I never had a Sunday's rest,' these were his last words."

No one spoke for a while, and then the governor said, "I'll tell you what, mates, this is a warning for us."

## 40 Poor Ginger

One day, while our cab and many others were waiting outside one of the parks where music was playing, a shabby old cab drove up beside ours. The horse was an old worn-out chestnut, with an ill-kept coat, and bones that showed plainly through it, the knees knuckled over, and the fore-legs were very unsteady. I had been eating some hay, and the wind rolled a little lock of it that way, and the poor creature put out her long thin neck and picked it up, and then turned and looked about for more. There was a hopeless look in the dull eye that I could not help noticing, and then, as I was thinking where I had seen that horse before, she looked full at me and said, "Black Beauty, is that you?"

It was Ginger! but how changed! The beautifully arched and glossy neck was now straight, and lank, and fallen in; the clean straight legs and delicate fetlocks were swelled; the joints were grown out of shape with hard work; the face, that was once so full of spirit and life, was now full of suffering, and I could tell by the heaving of her sides, and her frequent cough, how bad her breath was.

Our drivers were standing together a little way off, so I sidled up to her a step or two, that we might have a little quiet talk. It was a sad tale that she had to tell.

After a twelvemonth's run off at Earlshall, she was considered to be fit

for work again, and was sold to a gentleman. For a little while she got on very well, but after a longer gallop than usual the old strain returned, and after being rested and doctored she was again sold. In this way she changed hands several times, but always getting lower down.

"And so at last," said she, "I was bought by a man who keeps a number of cabs and horses, and lets them out. You look well off, and I am glad of it, but I could not tell you what my life has been. When they found out my weakness they said I was not worth what they gave for me, and that I must go into one of the low cabs, and just be used up; that is what they are doing, whipping and working with never one thought of what I suffer--they paid for me, and must get it out of me, they say. The man who hires me now pays a deal of money to the owner every day, and so he has to get it out of me too; and so it's all the week round and round, with never a Sunday rest."

I said, "You used to stand up for yourself if you were ill-used."

"Ah!" she said, "I did once, but it's no use; men are strongest, and if they are cruel and have no feeling, there is nothing that we can do, but just bear it--bear it on and on to the end. I wish the end was come, I wish I was dead. I have seen dead horses, and I am sure they do not suffer pain; I wish I may drop down dead at my work, and not be sent off to the knackers."

I was very much troubled, and I put my nose up to hers, but I could say nothing to comfort her. I think she was pleased to see me, for she said,

"You are the only friend I ever had."

Just then her driver came up, and with a tug at her mouth backed her out of the line and drove off, leaving me very sad indeed.

A short time after this a cart with a dead horse in it passed our cab-stand. The head hung out of the cart-tail, the lifeless tongue was slowly dropping with blood; and the sunken eyes! but I can't speak of them, the sight was too dreadful. It was a chestnut horse with a long, thin neck. I saw a white streak down the forehead. I believe it was Ginger; I hoped it was, for then her troubles would be over. Oh! if men were more merciful they would shoot us before we came to such misery.



## 41 The Butcher

I saw a great deal of trouble among the horses in London, and much of it might have been prevented by a little common sense. We horses do not mind hard work if we are treated reasonably, and I am sure there are many driven by quite poor men who have a happier life than I had when I used to go in the Countess of W----'s carriage, with my silver-mounted harness and high feeding.

It often went to my heart to see how the little ponies were used, straining along with heavy loads or staggering under heavy blows from some low, cruel boy. Once I saw a little gray pony with a thick mane and a pretty head, and so much like Merrylegs that if I had not been in harness I should have neighed to him. He was doing his best to pull a heavy cart, while a strong rough boy was cutting him under the belly with his whip and chucking cruelly at his little mouth. Could it be Merrylegs? It was just like him; but then Mr. Blomefield was never to sell him, and I think he would not do it; but this might have been quite as good a little fellow, and had as happy a place when he was young.

I often noticed the great speed at which butchers' horses were made to go, though I did not know why it was so till one day when we had to wait some time in St. John's Wood. There was a butcher's shop next door, and as we were standing a butcher's cart came dashing up at a great pace. The horse was hot and much exhausted; he hung his head down, while his

heaving sides and trembling legs showed how hard he had been driven. The lad jumped out of the cart and was getting the basket when the master came out of the shop much displeased. After looking at the horse he turned angrily to the lad.

"How many times shall I tell you not to drive in this way? You ruined the last horse and broke his wind, and you are going to ruin this in the same way. If you were not my own son I would dismiss you on the spot; it is a disgrace to have a horse brought to the shop in a condition like that; you are liable to be taken up by the police for such driving, and if you are you need not look to me for bail, for I have spoken to you till I'm tired; you must look out for yourself."

During this speech the boy had stood by, sullen and dogged, but when his father ceased he broke out angrily. It wasn't his fault, and he wouldn't take the blame; he was only going by orders all the time.

"You always say, 'Now be quick; now look sharp!' and when I go to the houses one wants a leg of mutton for an early dinner and I must be back with it in a quarter of an hour; another cook has forgotten to order the beef; I must go and fetch it and be back in no time, or the mistress will scold; and the housekeeper says they have company coming unexpectedly and must have some chops sent up directly; and the lady at No. 4, in the Crescent, never orders her dinner till the meat comes in for lunch, and it's nothing but hurry, hurry, all the time. If the gentry would think of what they want, and order their meat the day before, there need not be this blow up!"

"I wish to goodness they would," said the butcher; "'twould save me a wonderful deal of harass, and I could suit my customers much better if I knew beforehand--But there! what's the use of talking--who ever thinks of a butcher's convenience or a butcher's horse! Now, then, take him in and look to him well; mind, he does not go out again to-day, and if anything else is wanted you must carry it yourself in the basket." With that he went in, and the horse was led away.

But all boys are not cruel. I have seen some as fond of their pony or donkey as if it had been a favorite dog, and the little creatures have worked away as cheerfully and willingly for their young drivers as I work for Jerry. It may be hard work sometimes, but a friend's hand and voice make it easy.

There was a young coster-boy who came up our street with greens and potatoes; he had an old pony, not very handsome, but the cheerfullest and pluckiest little thing I ever saw, and to see how fond those two were of each other was a treat. The pony followed his master like a dog, and when he got into his cart would trot off without a whip or a word, and rattle down the street as merrily as if he had come out of the queen's stables. Jerry liked the boy, and called him "Prince Charlie", for he said he would make a king of drivers some day.

There was an old man, too, who used to come up our street with a little coal cart; he wore a coal-heaver's hat, and looked rough and black. He and his old horse used to plod together along the street, like two good

partners who understood each other; the horse would stop of his own accord at the doors where they took coal of him; he used to keep one ear bent toward his master. The old man's cry could be heard up the street long before he came near. I never knew what he said, but the children called him "Old Ba-a-ar Hoo", for it sounded like that. Polly took her coal of him, and was very friendly, and Jerry said it was a comfort to think how happy an old horse might be in a poor place.

## 42 The Election

As we came into the yard one afternoon Polly came out. "Jerry! I've had Mr. B---- here asking about your vote, and he wants to hire your cab for the election; he will call for an answer."

"Well, Polly, you may say that my cab will be otherwise engaged. I should not like to have it pasted over with their great bills, and as to making Jack and Captain race about to the public-houses to bring up half-drunken voters, why, I think 'twould be an insult to the horses. No, I shan't do it."

"I suppose you'll vote for the gentleman? He said he was of your politics."

"So he is in some things, but I shall not vote for him, Polly; you know what his trade is?"

"Yes."

"Well, a man who gets rich by that trade may be all very well in some ways, but he is blind as to what workingmen want; I could not in my conscience send him up to make the laws. I dare say they'll be angry, but every man must do what he thinks to be the best for his country."

On the morning before the election, Jerry was putting me into the shafts, when Dolly came into the yard sobbing and crying, with her little blue frock and white pinafore spattered all over with mud.

"Why, Dolly, what is the matter?"

"Those naughty boys," she sobbed, "have thrown the dirt all over me, and called me a little raga--raga--"

"They called her a little 'blue' ragamuffin, father," said Harry, who ran in looking very angry; "but I have given it to them; they won't insult my sister again. I have given them a thrashing they will remember; a set of cowardly, rascally 'orange' blackguards."

Jerry kissed the child and said, "Run in to mother, my pet, and tell her I think you had better stay at home to-day and help her."

Then turning gravely to Harry:

"My boy, I hope you will always defend your sister, and give anybody who insults her a good thrashing--that is as it should be; but mind, I won't have any election blackguarding on my premises. There are as many 'blue' blackguards as there are 'orange', and as many white as there are purple, or any other color, and I won't have any of my family mixed up with it. Even women and children are ready to quarrel for the sake of a color, and not one in ten of them knows what it is about."

"Why, father, I thought blue was for Liberty."

"My boy, Liberty does not come from colors, they only show party, and all the liberty you can get out of them is, liberty to get drunk at other people's expense, liberty to ride to the poll in a dirty old cab, liberty to abuse any one that does not wear your color, and to shout yourself hoarse at what you only half-understand--that's your liberty!"

"Oh, father, you are laughing."

"No, Harry, I am serious, and I am ashamed to see how men go on who ought to know better. An election is a very serious thing; at least it ought to be, and every man ought to vote according to his conscience, and let his neighbor do the same."

## 43 A Friend in Need

The election day came at last; there was no lack of work for Jerry and me. First came a stout puffy gentleman with a carpet bag; he wanted to go to the Bishopsgate station; then we were called by a party who wished to be taken to the Regent's Park; and next we were wanted in a side street where a timid, anxious old lady was waiting to be taken to the bank; there we had to stop to take her back again, and just as we had set her down a red-faced gentleman, with a handful of papers, came running up out of breath, and before Jerry could get down he had opened the door, popped himself in, and called out, "Bow Street Police Station, quick!" so off we went with him, and when after another turn or two we came back, there was no other cab on the stand. Jerry put on my nose-bag, for as he said, "We must eat when we can on such days as these; so munch away, Jack, and make the best of your time, old boy."

I found I had a good feed of crushed oats wetted up with a little bran; this would be a treat any day, but very refreshing then. Jerry was so thoughtful and kind--what horse would not do his best for such a master? Then he took out one of Polly's meat pies, and standing near me, he began to eat it. The streets were very full, and the cabs, with the candidates' colors on them, were dashing about through the crowd as if life and limb were of no consequence; we saw two people knocked down that day, and one was a woman. The horses were having a bad time of it, poor things! but the voters inside thought nothing of that; many of them



were half-drunk, hurraing out of the cab windows if their own party came by. It was the first election I had seen, and I don't want to be in another, though I have heard things are better now.

Jerry and I had not eaten many mouthfuls before a poor young woman, carrying a heavy child, came along the street. She was looking this way and that way, and seemed quite bewildered. Presently she made her way up to Jerry and asked if he could tell her the way to St. Thomas' Hospital, and how far it was to get there. She had come from the country that morning, she said, in a market cart; she did not know about the election, and was quite a stranger in London. She had got an order for the hospital for her little boy. The child was crying with a feeble, pining cry.

"Poor little fellow!" she said, "he suffers a deal of pain; he is four years old and can't walk any more than a baby; but the doctor said if I could get him into the hospital he might get well; pray, sir, how far is it; and which way is it?"

"Why, missis," said Jerry, "you can't get there walking through crowds like this! why, it is three miles away, and that child is heavy."

"Yes, bless him, he is; but I am strong, thank God, and if I knew the way I think I should get on somehow; please tell me the way."

"You can't do it," said Jerry, "you might be knocked down and the child be run over. Now look here, just get into this cab, and I'll drive you

safe to the hospital. Don't you see the rain is coming on?"

"No, sir, no; I can't do that, thank you, I have only just money enough to get back with. Please tell me the way."

"Look you here, missis," said Jerry, "I've got a wife and dear children at home, and I know a father's feelings; now get you into that cab, and I'll take you there for nothing. I'd be ashamed of myself to let a woman and a sick child run a risk like that."

"Heaven bless you!" said the woman, and burst into tears.

"There, there, cheer up, my dear, I'll soon take you there; come, let me put you inside."

As Jerry went to open the door two men, with colors in their hats and buttonholes, ran up calling out, "Cab!"

"Engaged," cried Jerry; but one of the men, pushing past the woman, sprang into the cab, followed by the other. Jerry looked as stern as a policeman. "This cab is already engaged, gentlemen, by that lady."

"Lady!" said one of them; "oh! she can wait; our business is very important, besides we were in first, it is our right, and we shall stay in."

A droll smile came over Jerry's face as he shut the door upon them. "All

right, gentlemen, pray stay in as long as it suits you; I can wait while you rest yourselves." And turning his back upon them he walked up to the young woman, who was standing near me. "They'll soon be gone," he said, laughing; "don't trouble yourself, my dear."

And they soon were gone, for when they understood Jerry's dodge they got out, calling him all sorts of bad names and blustering about his number and getting a summons. After this little stoppage we were soon on our way to the hospital, going as much as possible through by-streets. Jerry rung the great bell and helped the young woman out.

"Thank you a thousand times," she said; "I could never have got here alone."

"You're kindly welcome, and I hope the dear child will soon be better."

He watched her go in at the door, and gently he said to himself, "Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of the least of these." Then he patted my neck, which was always his way when anything pleased him.

The rain was now coming down fast, and just as we were leaving the hospital the door opened again, and the porter called out, "Cab!" We stopped, and a lady came down the steps. Jerry seemed to know her at once; she put back her veil and said, "Barker! Jeremiah Barker, is it you? I am very glad to find you here; you are just the friend I want, for it is very difficult to get a cab in this part of London to-day."

"I shall be proud to serve you, ma'am; I am right glad I happened to be here. Where may I take you to, ma'am?"

"To the Paddington Station, and then if we are in good time, as I think we shall be, you shall tell me all about Mary and the children."

We got to the station in good time, and being under shelter the lady stood a good while talking to Jerry. I found she had been Polly's mistress, and after many inquiries about her she said:

"How do you find the cab work suit you in winter? I know Mary was rather anxious about you last year."

"Yes, ma'am, she was; I had a bad cough that followed me up quite into the warm weather, and when I am kept out late she does worry herself a good deal. You see, ma'am, it is all hours and all weathers, and that does try a man's constitution; but I am getting on pretty well, and I should feel quite lost if I had not horses to look after. I was brought up to it, and I am afraid I should not do so well at anything else."

"Well, Barker," she said, "it would be a great pity that you should seriously risk your health in this work, not only for your own but for Mary's and the children's sake; there are many places where good drivers or good grooms are wanted, and if ever you think you ought to give up this cab work let me know."

Then sending some kind messages to Mary she put something into his hand,

saying, "There is five shillings each for the two children; Mary will know how to spend it."

Jerry thanked her and seemed much pleased, and turning out of the station we at last reached home, and I, at least, was tired.

## 44 Old Captain and His Successor

Captain and I were great friends. He was a noble old fellow, and he was very good company. I never thought that he would have to leave his home and go down the hill; but his turn came, and this was how it happened. I was not there, but I heard all about it.

He and Jerry had taken a party to the great railway station over London Bridge, and were coming back, somewhere between the bridge and the monument, when Jerry saw a brewer's empty dray coming along, drawn by two powerful horses. The drayman was lashing his horses with his heavy whip; the dray was light, and they started off at a furious rate; the man had no control over them, and the street was full of traffic.

One young girl was knocked down and run over, and the next moment they dashed up against our cab; both the wheels were torn off and the cab was thrown over. Captain was dragged down, the shafts splintered, and one of them ran into his side. Jerry, too, was thrown, but was only bruised; nobody could tell how he escaped; he always said 'twas a miracle. When poor Captain was got up he was found to be very much cut and knocked about. Jerry led him home gently, and a sad sight it was to see the blood soaking into his white coat and dropping from his side and shoulder. The drayman was proved to be very drunk, and was fined, and the brewer had to pay damages to our master; but there was no one to pay damages to poor Captain.

The farrier and Jerry did the best they could to ease his pain and make him comfortable. The fly had to be mended, and for several days I did not go out, and Jerry earned nothing. The first time we went to the stand after the accident the governor came up to hear how Captain was.

"He'll never get over it," said Jerry, "at least not for my work, so the farrier said this morning. He says he may do for carting, and that sort of work. It has put me out very much. Carting, indeed! I've seen what horses come to at that work round London. I only wish all the drunkards could be put in a lunatic asylum instead of being allowed to run foul of sober people. If they would break their own bones, and smash their own carts, and lame their own horses, that would be their own affair, and we might let them alone, but it seems to me that the innocent always suffer; and then they talk about compensation! You can't make compensation; there's all the trouble, and vexation, and loss of time, besides losing a good horse that's like an old friend--it's nonsense talking of compensation! If there's one devil that I should like to see in the bottomless pit more than another, it's the drink devil."

"I say, Jerry," said the governor, "you are treading pretty hard on my toes, you know; I'm not so good as you are, more shame to me; I wish I was."

"Well," said Jerry, "why don't you cut with it, governor? You are too good a man to be the slave of such a thing."

"I'm a great fool, Jerry, but I tried once for two days, and I thought I should have died; how did you do?"

"I had hard work at it for several weeks; you see I never did get drunk, but I found that I was not my own master, and that when the craving came on it was hard work to say 'no'. I saw that one of us must knock under, the drink devil or Jerry Barker, and I said that it should not be Jerry Barker, God helping me; but it was a struggle, and I wanted all the help I could get, for till I tried to break the habit I did not know how strong it was; but then Polly took such pains that I should have good food, and when the craving came on I used to get a cup of coffee, or some peppermint, or read a bit in my book, and that was a help to me; sometimes I had to say over and over to myself, 'Give up the drink or lose your soul! Give up the drink or break Polly's heart!' But thanks be to God, and my dear wife, my chains were broken, and now for ten years I have not tasted a drop, and never wish for it."

"I've a great mind to try at it," said Grant, "for 'tis a poor thing not to be one's own master."

"Do, governor, do, you'll never repent it, and what a help it would be to some of the poor fellows in our rank if they saw you do without it. I know there's two or three would like to keep out of that tavern if they could."

At first Captain seemed to do well, but he was a very old horse, and it was only his wonderful constitution, and Jerry's care, that had kept



him up at the cab work so long; now he broke down very much. The farrier said he might mend up enough to sell for a few pounds, but Jerry said, no! a few pounds got by selling a good old servant into hard work and misery would canker all the rest of his money, and he thought the kindest thing he could do for the fine old fellow would be to put a sure bullet through his head, and then he would never suffer more; for he did not know where to find a kind master for the rest of his days.

The day after this was decided Harry took me to the forge for some new shoes; when I returned Captain was gone. I and the family all felt it very much.

Jerry had now to look out for another horse, and he soon heard of one through an acquaintance who was under-groom in a nobleman's stables. He was a valuable young horse, but he had run away, smashed into another carriage, flung his lordship out, and so cut and blemished himself that he was no longer fit for a gentleman's stables, and the coachman had orders to look round, and sell him as well as he could.

"I can do with high spirits," said Jerry, "if a horse is not vicious or hard-mouthed."

"There is not a bit of vice in him," said the man; "his mouth is very tender, and I think myself that was the cause of the accident; you see he had just been clipped, and the weather was bad, and he had not had exercise enough, and when he did go out he was as full of spring as a balloon. Our governor (the coachman, I mean) had him harnessed in as

tight and strong as he could, with the martingale, and the check-rein, a very sharp curb, and the reins put in at the bottom bar. It is my belief that it made the horse mad, being tender in the mouth and so full of spirit."

"Likely enough; I'll come and see him," said Jerry.

The next day Hotspur, that was his name, came home; he was a fine brown horse, without a white hair in him, as tall as Captain, with a very handsome head, and only five years old. I gave him a friendly greeting by way of good fellowship, but did not ask him any questions. The first night he was very restless. Instead of lying down, he kept jerking his halter rope up and down through the ring, and knocking the block about against the manger till I could not sleep. However, the next day, after five or six hours in the cab, he came in quiet and sensible. Jerry patted and talked to him a good deal, and very soon they understood each other, and Jerry said that with an easy bit and plenty of work he would be as gentle as a lamb; and that it was an ill wind that blew nobody good, for if his lordship had lost a hundred-guinea favorite, the cabman had gained a good horse with all his strength in him.

Hotspur thought it a great come-down to be a cab-horse, and was disgusted at standing in the rank, but he confessed to me at the end of the week that an easy mouth and a free head made up for a great deal, and after all, the work was not so degrading as having one's head and tail fastened to each other at the saddle. In fact, he settled in well, and Jerry liked him very much.

## 45 Jerry's New Year

For some people Christmas and the New Year are very merry times; but for cabmen and cabmen's horses it is no holiday, though it may be a harvest. There are so many parties, balls, and places of amusement open that the work is hard and often late. Sometimes driver and horse have to wait for hours in the rain or frost, shivering with the cold, while the merry people within are dancing away to the music. I wonder if the beautiful ladies ever think of the weary cabman waiting on his box, and his patient beast standing, till his legs get stiff with cold.

I had now most of the evening work, as I was well accustomed to standing, and Jerry was also more afraid of Hotspur taking cold. We had a great deal of late work in the Christmas week, and Jerry's cough was bad; but however late we were, Polly sat up for him, and came out with a lantern to meet him, looking anxious and troubled.

On the evening of the New Year we had to take two gentlemen to a house in one of the West End Squares. We set them down at nine o'clock, and were told to come again at eleven, "but," said one, "as it is a card party, you may have to wait a few minutes, but don't be late."

As the clock struck eleven we were at the door, for Jerry was always punctual. The clock chimed the quarters, one, two, three, and then

struck twelve, but the door did not open.

The wind had been very changeable, with squalls of rain during the day, but now it came on sharp, driving sleet, which seemed to come all the way round; it was very cold, and there was no shelter. Jerry got off his box and came and pulled one of my cloths a little more over my neck; then he took a turn or two up and down, stamping his feet; then he began to beat his arms, but that set him off coughing; so he opened the cab door and sat at the bottom with his feet on the pavement, and was a little sheltered. Still the clock chimed the quarters, and no one came. At half-past twelve he rang the bell and asked the servant if he would be wanted that night.

"Oh, yes, you'll be wanted safe enough," said the man; "you must not go, it will soon be over," and again Jerry sat down, but his voice was so hoarse I could hardly hear him.

At a quarter past one the door opened, and the two gentlemen came out; they got into the cab without a word, and told Jerry where to drive, that was nearly two miles. My legs were numb with cold, and I thought I should have stumbled. When the men got out they never said they were sorry to have kept us waiting so long, but were angry at the charge; however, as Jerry never charged more than was his due, so he never took less, and they had to pay for the two hours and a quarter waiting; but it was hard-earned money to Jerry.

At last we got home; he could hardly speak, and his cough was dreadful.

Polly asked no questions, but opened the door and held the lantern for him.

"Can't I do something?" she said.

"Yes; get Jack something warm, and then boil me some gruel."

This was said in a hoarse whisper; he could hardly get his breath, but he gave me a rub-down as usual, and even went up into the hayloft for an extra bundle of straw for my bed. Polly brought me a warm mash that made me comfortable, and then they locked the door.

It was late the next morning before any one came, and then it was only Harry. He cleaned us and fed us, and swept out the stalls, then he put the straw back again as if it was Sunday. He was very still, and neither whistled nor sang. At noon he came again and gave us our food and water; this time Dolly came with him; she was crying, and I could gather from what they said that Jerry was dangerously ill, and the doctor said it was a bad case. So two days passed, and there was great trouble indoors. We only saw Harry, and sometimes Dolly. I think she came for company, for Polly was always with Jerry, and he had to be kept very quiet.

On the third day, while Harry was in the stable, a tap came at the door, and Governor Grant came in.

"I wouldn't go to the house, my boy," he said, "but I want to know how your father is."

"He is very bad," said Harry, "he can't be much worse; they call it 'bronchitis'; the doctor thinks it will turn one way or another to-night."

"That's bad, very bad," said Grant, shaking his head; "I know two men who died of that last week; it takes 'em off in no time; but while there's life there's hope, so you must keep up your spirits."

"Yes," said Harry quickly, "and the doctor said that father had a better chance than most men, because he didn't drink. He said yesterday the fever was so high that if father had been a drinking man it would have burned him up like a piece of paper; but I believe he thinks he will get over it; don't you think he will, Mr. Grant?"

The governor looked puzzled.

"If there's any rule that good men should get over these things, I'm sure he will, my boy; he's the best man I know. I'll look in early to-morrow."

Early next morning he was there.

"Well?" said he.

"Father is better," said Harry. "Mother hopes he will get over it."

"Thank God!" said the governor, "and now you must keep him warm, and keep his mind easy, and that brings me to the horses; you see Jack will be all the better for the rest of a week or two in a warm stable, and you can easily take him a turn up and down the street to stretch his legs; but this young one, if he does not get work, he will soon be all up on end, as you may say, and will be rather too much for you; and when he does go out there'll be an accident."

"It is like that now," said Harry. "I have kept him short of corn, but he's so full of spirit I don't know what to do with him."

"Just so," said Grant. "Now look here, will you tell your mother that if she is agreeable I will come for him every day till something is arranged, and take him for a good spell of work, and whatever he earns, I'll bring your mother half of it, and that will help with the horses' feed. Your father is in a good club, I know, but that won't keep the horses, and they'll be eating their heads off all this time; I'll come at noon and hear what she says," and without waiting for Harry's thanks he was gone.

At noon I think he went and saw Polly, for he and Harry came to the stable together, harnessed Hotspur, and took him out.

For a week or more he came for Hotspur, and when Harry thanked him or said anything about his kindness, he laughed it off, saying it was all good luck for him, for his horses were wanting a little rest which they would not otherwise have had.

Jerry grew better steadily, but the doctor said that he must never go back to the cab work again if he wished to be an old man. The children had many consultations together about what father and mother would do, and how they could help to earn money.

One afternoon Hotspur was brought in very wet and dirty.

"The streets are nothing but slush," said the governor; "it will give you a good warming, my boy, to get him clean and dry."

"All right, governor," said Harry, "I shall not leave him till he is; you know I have been trained by my father."

"I wish all the boys had been trained like you," said the governor.

While Harry was sponging off the mud from Hotspur's body and legs Dolly came in, looking very full of something.

"Who lives at Fairstowe, Harry? Mother has got a letter from Fairstowe; she seemed so glad, and ran upstairs to father with it."

"Don't you know? Why, it is the name of Mrs. Fowler's place--mother's old mistress, you know--the lady that father met last summer, who sent you and me five shillings each."

"Oh! Mrs. Fowler. Of course, I know all about her. I wonder what she is



writing to mother about."

"Mother wrote to her last week," said Harry; "you know she told father if ever he gave up the cab work she would like to know. I wonder what she says; run in and see, Dolly."

Harry scrubbed away at Hotspur with a huish! huish! like any old hostler. In a few minutes Dolly came dancing into the stable.

"Oh! Harry, there never was anything so beautiful; Mrs. Fowler says we are all to go and live near her. There is a cottage now empty that will just suit us, with a garden and a henhouse, and apple-trees, and everything! and her coachman is going away in the spring, and then she will want father in his place; and there are good families round, where you can get a place in the garden or the stable, or as a page-boy; and there's a good school for me; and mother is laughing and crying by turns, and father does look so happy!"

"That's uncommon jolly," said Harry, "and just the right thing, I should say; it will suit father and mother both; but I don't intend to be a page-boy with tight clothes and rows of buttons. I'll be a groom or a gardener."

It was quickly settled that as soon as Jerry was well enough they should remove to the country, and that the cab and horses should be sold as soon as possible.

This was heavy news for me, for I was not young now, and could not look for any improvement in my condition. Since I left Birtwick I had never been so happy as with my dear master Jerry; but three years of cab work, even under the best conditions, will tell on one's strength, and I felt that I was not the horse that I had been.

Grant said at once that he would take Hotspur, and there were men on the stand who would have bought me; but Jerry said I should not go to cab work again with just anybody, and the governor promised to find a place for me where I should be comfortable.

The day came for going away. Jerry had not been allowed to go out yet, and I never saw him after that New Year's eve. Polly and the children came to bid me good-bye. "Poor old Jack! dear old Jack! I wish we could take you with us," she said, and then laying her hand on my mane she put her face close to my neck and kissed me. Dolly was crying and kissed me too. Harry stroked me a great deal, but said nothing, only he seemed very sad, and so I was led away to my new place.