Confessions
Of A
Horse Dealer

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CONFESSIONS OF A HORSE DEALER

CHAPTER I


There are at least five hundred fools born every day and the longer I live, the more I feel convinced that this assertion is true.

But of another thing I feel equally certain, that in the population of the United Kingdom - indeed I may venture to say the whole human race - there are at least two rogues for one fool; and really, if were called upon to give an opinion, I should say that it is more agreeable to transact business with a rogue than a natural fool, providing (as a horse-coper would say) that a man has "cocum" enough to avoid being cheated himself. I once heard one of these arch rogues say, "I don't care what people call me, if they don't call me a fool"

A rogue will get money by hook or crook, and generally stick to it, and an honest man, after trying his best, may sometimes, with great difficulty, manage to scrape up a little surplus capital; but sooner or later, he is sure to have some business transactions with a rogue, and his spare cash is then either wheedled or bullied out of his hands by a thousand – and one little ways, so familiar to a thorough-bred rogue, who mostly contrives to steer clear from the lash of the law.

The fool has generally his money ready got for him, by some means or other, often in the form of an annuity, or -if in business-he is, perhaps, allowed to tread on honest people's means, until (by being a fool) he falls into the hands of the other gentry, who find him a ready market for their circulating medium, and when he cannot meet his payments, the honest creditor will begin to think he is dealing with a rogue, and treat him as such.

The fool's eyes are then opened, and he finds the man who has cheated him more respected than himself, because he has the means to command respect; for I regret to say, that now-a-days, if a man has money and can make a good appearance, very few people, will trouble themselves as to the manner In which he came by it; it is enough that he has it. That "honesty is the best policy," no one can deny; but roguery is the most fashionable, and those who really know the world and human nature, will admit that a genuine, Bank of England honest man should live in business and pay his way.
In exposing the numerous tricks of horse-copers, let not be understood that I am prejudiced against them more than other dishonest tradesmen; for in the course of my experience I have known many men, who, if cheated out of a few pounds in the purchase or exchange of a horse, would transport the horse-coper, if the case were strong enough, and they could catch him.

And yet the same individuals would blind the wives of their most respected friends, to the tune of a few pounds, any time she might patronize them for an article in their own business, when the dust they throw in her eyes may prevent her from ascertaining its fair value.

Nay, there are plenty of men who are continually crying down horse-copers as the most arrant scoundrels that ever disgraced the human race, who themselves, but for the law, would not scruple to rob their old parish church of its communion plate. It is an old adage, and a true one, that "there is cheatery in all trades" but while I admit that there is not the least, I am also certain there is not the most, in the horse trade.

And if there is any consolation for a cheat, the horse-coper may console himself with an idea that, while he has plundered his foolish victim of a few pounds, he has not only taught him a lesson, but also diminished the amount of the money which would, sooner or later, have fallen a prey to others, in some other way of business. Beware of cheating.

As a duty I owe to my readers, I shall expose the various systems and instances of horse coping, which are continually coming under my notice, and doubt not that, while some may take a salutary lesson from the instances of swindling the novice in horse buying, which I shall describe in the ensuing chapters, others will be interested, if not amused, at the ingenious manner which the various victims have been duped.

It is strange that in the face of repeated warnings from the press and other sources, that people who are conscious that they are totally ignorant of a horse's nature, infirmities, or faults, will rely solely on the representations of a class of men who are perfect strangers to them, and who have neither place of business, license to deal in horses, nor reference to give as to respectability.

I am in a position to relate an instance which has very recently occurred in London, whereby a gentleman residing in the suburbs has been cheated out of no less a sum than £157, by an organized gang of horse-chauntings.

This class are much more dangerous than the genuine coper, who sells a low priced hack at a country fair, for a sound horse, knowing him to be unsound, because they are much better educated, and consequently enabled to fly at higher game. The professional horse-chaunter is for the most part a broken-down gentleman, living in furnished lodgings, which, together with his name, he is constantly changing.
On a stranger's first introduction to him, he presents a neatly engraved address card, sometimes bearing a crest, the plate of which serves until it is policy to make a new move, when a fresh one is engraved, bearing another name, the wardrobe is also changed, and the cut of his jib so altered, by trimming his whiskers or shaving them clean every morning, that his victim—who is seldom gifted with a superfluity of natural intelligence—would have great difficulty in recognizing the accomplished chaunter in the crowded thoroughfares of London, where this peculiar business is chiefly carried on, for it is comparatively unknown in the provinces.

The horse chaunter rarely exposes himself to the amenities of the criminal law; and even if he did, his victim will generally prefer to let the matter drop, sooner than rake it up again in a police-court; for he will say to himself, "I shall be so ashamed to let so and so hear of it, and everyone of my friends will think I have been foolish, and after the exposure, I may not get my money back."

And so, for this reason, many horse chaunterers have, from time to time, escaped, and will again, for the very same reason, in spite of all that may be said by way of warning, because the stock of fools is kept up by constant reinforcements.

In the case above referred to, an advertisement appeared in a morning paper, written in a classical style, and purporting to emanate from a gentleman who was anxious to sell a pair of superb and high-stepping carriage horses.

A first-class carriage was hired to stand in the coach-house, contiguous to the stable, in which the pair of beauties stood, (the value of said carriage having been deposited with the coachmaker prior to its removal from his establishment), a quiet-looking coper groom was in constant attendance, and everything in apple-pie order, for the reception of the unsuspecting "flat," who is sure to put in an appearance to such a genuine-sounding advertisement in this instance the rendezvous was a quiet-looking stable, in a very respectable part of the west-end, the last place in the world where swindling was likely to be done.

"You have a pair of carriage horses here for sale, I understand?" said the victim on his arrival, trying to appear as horsey as possible, in the hope of getting them cheaper. "Yes sir," replied the coper groom. "Who do they belong to?" inquired the victim.

"I'll give you the guv'ner card, sir, for I think I have one somewhere," said he, fumbling in his pockets, although he knew exactly where to find it. "Oh, here it is at last," said he.

"What are you selling them for?" inquired the flat. "Well, I think the guv'ner wants £157."
"Yes, but are you parting with them for any fault."

"Oh, I thought you meant what price," said the acute but simple-pretending groom. "Well, no, they have no fault 'cept," he added, in an under tone, "I heard the coachman
say that the one there in the corner stall has a little harder mouth than the other; but please not to say as how I told you, sir."

"Oh no, here's a shilling for you; I don't care so much about that, if they are sound and quiet."

"Well," says the coper groom, I heard the coachman say that the guv'nner would give a warranty with them, and he would not do that unless they were sound, I think; but here comes the coachman."

"Morning, sir," said coper coachman, who has a beautiful Skye terrier under his arm. "Bill, Miss Harriet says your are to wash little Jessie very clean, and take her up to the house when she is thoroughly dry"; and without further noticing the flat, "Carriage and pair at three-it is now two."

The rugs were swept from the horses' withers to their buttocks, and coper groom bustles about like a besom in a fit; the "screws" are towelled from head to heel, and the harness is brought from the saddle-room; all this strengthens the opinion of the victim, that he is in for a cheap deal, and he asks coper coachman a few questions, but that worthy is sorry he cannot stay; being ordered at three, he must go and dress, but if the gentleman could come down again in the morning, he could see them go; but suddenly recollecting himself, he added, "Why not see them now, while they are in the carriage?"

The victim consents, and away coachee hies to prepare coper A1, and to don the hired livery (which forms a part of the working plant of a London chunter of the better class). This done, he is sharply back at the stable. The horses are put to the carnage.

"Better get upon the box with me," said coper coachee, touching the brim of his hat to the victim.

Glad of this favourable opportunity for a trial, he mounts the box, after walking round the horses, and looking in their mouths, as if he could tell the difference between a five-year old mouth, and one the age of a man.

Coper coachee can tell by his very appearance that he is a "muff" at the game of horse dealing; but it is the fashion of many gentlemen to profess a great deal more than they know about horses, and this only makes them better game; for many horse-copers, who know human nature well, will have the audacity to point out a spavin, or a curb, as a good point, under the term of "great strong hocks," and when the unmistakable sign of unsoundness (to a practiced eye) is explained away, the really good points will speak for themselves.

But this pair of horses are as clean on their legs as the day they were foaled, and their action and general appearance are all that can be desired.
They are now arrived at the door of a good-looking house, and the victim is introduced to coper AI, who is sorry to say he has scarcely a moment to spare, for he has just received a letter from the country to say that one of his "dear little boys" is very ill at school. But if it is about the horses the gentlemen desires an interview, it is sufficient for him to say they are both perfectly sound, and free from any description of vice; he is selling them owing to circumstances, which he has then no time to explain; they cost him nearly double the amount for which they are now offered; he trusts the gentleman is not a dealer, or buying them for a dealer, as he most decidedly objects to do business with dealers; not that he looks like one, but they sometimes send gentlemen who are good judges to buy horses for them, when they know the seller has an objection to let his horses fall into their hands.

The victim feels to be worth a pound more money; he is flattered to think there is nothing green-looking about him after all, and in the best of humours he accepts a seat beside coper AI to the railway, and he has then a further opportunity to see them "go."

"Great Western Railway" is the order to coper coachee, and they are off. Every now and then the head of the victim is popped from the window to see how they bend their knees. Coper coachee is aware of this, and has then well collected, and stepping like cats on a very hot plate.

"Splendid action, sir; indeed I know of no fault, except the near side one being a little hard in the mouth, and that is not worth mentioning—because it is easily remedied by buckling the reins on the lower bar—but I make it a principle when I do sell a horse, to call the attention of the buyer to every little fault, to prevent ulterior unpleasantness," says coper AI lolling back in his seat.

This corroborates the little secret which the flat learnt from the groom, and he is convinced now—even if he had any suspicion—as to the respectability of the whole concern; and now arrived at the station, the victim and coper A I adjourn to the refreshment room, and a check is given in exchange for a simple receipt without a warranty.

The coachee receives instructions to deliver them this evenings; but he knows better than to do so, until the cheque is cashed. The principals shake hands and part, the victim being set down anywhere in town, where coper coachee kindly offers to drive him, and thus he is bottled up in the carriage safe, while coper A I emerges from the station, jumps into a cab, and is set down in Lombard Street, where the check is cashed, and the business is safe.

This is called a deal on the bustle; a message is sent that all is square, and coper coachee, with coper groom, set off to deliver the horses, and receive more tip from the victim than the screws would fetch from a coper at a country fair.

The gang meet, the carriage is sent to the coachmaker's, and the deposit received back, less the few days hire. The wardrobe and lodgings are changed, and they are ready to come out in a new character.
The dupe calls in a friend or two to look at his bargain, and these declare them to be a beautiful pair of horses. They have a rackful of hay constantly y before them, and a bucket of water Is given to each just before they are harnessed to the new carriage on the following day—which Is the very thing to bring out their particular Infirmitis - and driven at a smart pace Into the park, leading from Hyde-park-corner, by the side of the Serpentine, to the Incline, leaving the magazine to the left.

"But, oh dear, what ever is that noise, Pa' said one of the little angels by his side, "whatever is the matter with the horses?"

Pa's head is hurriedly thrust through the open window; he hears the unwelcome music.

"Pull up, John," says he, in a tone of alarm, as a suspicion flashed through his disordered mind.

"Are they broken-winded, John?" says he, feebly. "Why, yes sir, it’s very like it."

"Drive home," Is the order, and home they are driven, whistling like jays, and labouring like blow-bellows in a fit.

The victim hires a cab, hoping to find the coper coachee and groom, and regrets he did not take the country address of coper A1, but the whole kit are non est. A day or two is allowed for him to cool, and a good-natured looking, farmer sort of Individual contrives to see the coachman.

He has been told they have two broken-wended carriage horses for sale, and he wants something at a little money to do slow work on his farm; both horses are sold to him for £ 12, less a luck shilling, and a few days after are again advertised as single brougham horses, but at different places, and shown by gang No.2 of the same fraternity, and In their turn are sure to find customers among a certain class of gentlemen who are on the look-out for a cheap horse, forgetting - If ever they knew - that sound horses are few and far between, and cannot now-a-days be bought for a trifle.

* * * * *

A favourite plan among copers to get rid of an unsound horse is to raffle him at some sporting public house where the landlord is a bit horsey, the coper agreeing to spend a handsome bonus, and stipulating that the winner shall do the same-and, by-and-bye, this latter sum often amounts to more than the value of the horse.

It is customary in some towns, on the evening the raffle takes place, for the subscribers to have a supper. The sort of people who generally subscribe to horse raffles are tradesmen who keep a horse themselves, and the list very often includes a veterinary surgeon, the brewer, the spirit merchant, the ginger-beer and soda-water maker, the cigar
dealer, or their representatives; then there is the horse-breaker, with his corduroy breeches and well-spurred boots, with a flash scarf round his neck, a shilling pin stuck in it, and a heavy riding whip in his hand, monopolizing all the conversation with that trotting butcher; their small, but loud talk is about rarey.

"He; oh yes," says the horse-breaker. "This is the boy to tame 'em," says he, as he drops the loaded handle of the whip on the table, and makes the glasses containing the aqua fortis and hot water fairly jingle again. "Thank goodness his day and doctrine are about over, and he will soon be (as the farm labourer said of the hunted fox) 'gone up th' sough, gentl'em."

The raffle is generally announced as follows: To be raffled for, at the _____ Inn, a splendid black gelding, rising six-years old, 15 hands 2 Inches high, and goes well in saddle or harness, by fifty members at one pound each, the winners to spend five pounds and the putter-up five pounds, to defray the expense of liquor and a supper, which will be on the table at eight o'clock."

Here follow the names. And I may say, in most places, the list is speedily filled, for horse raffles are more popular than raffles for watches, pictures, and the like. Horsey tradesmen are fond of horse raffles; they meet with horsey friends, and it is "hail, fellow, well met"; they chaff one another, get up trotting matches between their old stiff £7 galloways, stake a pound, sign articles, go home late, and often drunk, have high words with the wife, who rifles their pockets, and finds the agreement, "that Mr. Jonathan Muddlehead (her husband) agrees to bet Mr. Timothy Haddock £5 that his grey pony beats Mr. Haddock's brown mare," etc.; but this Is enough for Mrs. Muddlehead.

"Oh, a nice fellow, isn't he, to be squandering his money away among a lot of ragamuffins like Haddock, Thompson, and the rest of them, Trot! Ah! I'll give him trotting. More need play Mr. Jones, and not have him coming here every week for his account.

However, the next thing will be a writ, the bailiffs, and the workhouse. Such men as him only marry poor women to get them into trouble. Look at Mr. Simpkins he never goes to public houses; he pays his way, and keeps his wife and children respectable. (At this point she tears up the agreement.) There-that's what I'll do with that."

"Fetch me a bottle of soda-water," says Muddlehead, placing his hand on his fevered forehead.

"Will you promise me to keep away from that Red Lion Inn."

"Yes, yes; anything for a quiet life," says poor Muddlehead.

The soda-water is swallowed, and there is a temporary lull in the domestic storm.

* * * * *
I remember a lot of horses being cast from the 8th Hussars. They were sold by auction at a repository in the town where the regiment was then stationed. One of these had a rat-tail, a pair of capped hocks, and a brace of jack spavins, but his greatest curse was his rat-tail, and for this poor old Jocko was despised by every man in the regiment.

He also had the misfortune to be a black colour, and required a deal of extra grooming. Yet Jocko was nobody's horse In particular. He was groomed in turns, and ridden for punishment as a sort of pride-humbler for those who committed any petty faults, or who, for the time being, happened to be out of favour with the troop sergeant.

When the trumpet sounded "Stand to your horses," the smart lace-bedizened hussar whose misfortune It happened to be to ride old Jocko a day's march, would twirl the ends of his moustache, and rolling his eye fiercely at the bare stump sticking out of Jocko's croup, he would say, "Look at that beastly tail!"

The writer will confess that it has been his lot more than once to ride old Jocko on the line of March. Once In particular, he remembers, when changing quarters from Manchester to Hounslow, he incurred the displeasure of the troop sergeant, and for this he received a peremptory order to ride Jocko from Lichfield to Warwick.

He would much sooner have walked; but there was no alternative, and when the parade call was sounded, No.17, D troop, might have been seen looking very sulky, mounted on Jocko, who's tail cocked up like a miniature barber's pole.

The Lichfield girls were delighted with the gay-looking scarlet pelisse, slung carelessly over the rider's left shoulder, his smart brass mounted shako, and nodding horsehair plume, and his jingling sword with Its bright sabretach; but oh dear! oh dear!

"Look at his horse's tail!" they shouted as he trotted old Jocko up to the market place, and took his place In the ranks; but the girls and boys were soon behind him again, with their half screaming, ringing laughter. "Oh! Look at his tail, look at his tail," was the entire cry, until the officer in command gave the words "Walk! march!" when the band struck up "The girls we left behind us," and their screeching "Look at his tail,"; but the same cry awaited him at every hamlet and village, until the detachment marched into Warwick, where "Oh, la! Oh, la! Look at that horse's tail! Look at his tail! "Was the reiterated cry, until Jocko was fairly stabled in his comfortable billet at the George and Dragon?

Like the tails of most horses, when divested of hair, Jocko’s was about seven inches long, in shape like a carrot, but thicker at the end, with not a vestige of hair upon it: and Jocko being of a sluggish disposition, he frequently had to be touched with the spurs, when the stumpy apology for a tail would wriggle and twist like a new-caught sing, and this always increased the mirth of the gaping crowd, who invariably collected on the appearance of soldiers In a provincial town.
From Hounslow the regiment marched to York, and there old Jocko was cast with a jot more worn-out screws, to be sold by auction. In the usual manner, a gang of copers being the principal purchasers, the average price realized being about £6 each.

The copers fastened a wig (false tail) on old Jocko's stump, by means of spring wires, which not only gave him a more juvenile appearance, but disguised his plain quarters and capped hocks. The brand was filed out of his hoofs, and he was then put up to be raffled for fifty pounds, as the bona fide property of a gentleman having no further use for him.

He was won by a brewer, who said he would keep him for his own riding. Having a journey due the morning after the raffle, he mounted Jocko; but had not proceeded far before some boys told him that "his horse's tail had cumm'd off." "How rude those children are" said he, as he pushed Jocko into a trot, and left them far behind. His journey lay the way to the barracks, and old Jocko took his rider at a rasping gallop into the yard, when the regiment was parading, before marching off for field drill.

"HI, hi, where are you going there?" shouted the sentry at the front gate, as Jocko, with his unwilling rider, crashed past him. "HI, hi," shouted the corporal of the guard, but Jocko held on his way until he cannoned, against the quarters of two troopers in the rear rank, and, fairly dovetailing himself between them, stopped—as only troop horses stop—all of a sudden, and pitched his rider on to the croup of the horse in front, fortunately without serious injury.

Old Jocko could not be induced to leave the ranks without company, and the colonel kindly ordered him a mounted escort, to whom, on their way back to the brewer's stables, he related the particulars, as communicated by me to my readers.

After this, old Jocko again fell into the hand of the same gang of copers, and was frequently sold with a false tail, and rebought by their agents with a bare stump; and once he was sold to a gentleman, who rode him home from a fairy after dark, with his old stump decorated with long streamers of ribbon representing all the colours of the rainbow.

This was the ruse of some rival copers, who succeeded in prejudicing the purchaser against Jocko, and finally bought him for a mere trifle. And I know for a fact that Jocko was sold and rebought for more than two years; the coper's main points were to "wig" his stumpy tail, and sell him to some purchaser who wanted a horse to go steady in the harness.

If a trial was required, he was dosed with opium, and those who knew his "little peculiar ties" would drive him a few yards and then take him out, and give a warranty "that he was quiet in harness." And so he was; but it was the vehicle that bothered him most, and he seldom rested while that was within reach of his hind feet.

His false tail would generally be found on the road where the scene took place, or if stabled for the night, before being tried in harness, the "wig" would be found under his
hind feet in the stall next morning. Poor old Jocko, he was one of the few exceptions to the justly received opinion that a bad horse is rarely seen with a "rattail."

CHAPTER II.


"Take him back and return you the money, did you say?" said a well-known horse-coper In Lambeth the other day, to a gentleman who had given him £73 for a horse. "Yes, I'll take him back, and find you another one that will suit you; I'm sorry you should think he's touched In the winds, but I can assure you it is quite unknown tome.

Indeed, I feel certain that he was up to the warranty when I sold him to you; however, you shall have one about which there shall be no mistake this time. Here, Joe, bring out the Marquis. The animal I am going to show you, sir, Is one I bought at the sale of the late Marquis of Waterford, who always made it a rule to buy a good horse whenever or wherever he saw one, regardless of cost."

Crack goes the whip, and the horse (a great long-legged, flat-sided, straight-shouldered animal, with a head as big as a Scotch churn) is bounced on to the run with a hop, skip, and a jump, but on no account Is he allowed to trot slow and evenly, for that would be the surest way to expose his Infirmity, which is a spavin, i.e. an enlargement on the Inner side of the hock joint.

But this Instance the spavin was in its early stage, and the swelling scarcely perceptible; indeed, none but a practiced eye could discern the unnatural stiffness in the hocks, when the horse was in action; besides, the practiced coper continually directed the gentleman's attention to the horse's head.

"Lor!" said he, "how he carries his napper; look at his great strong shoulders and loins! Carry you with hounds, did you say?"

Although the gentleman asked this question, he never jumped a horse the height of a straw in his life.

"Why, he would carry a caste, and gallop for a man's life; I wish I had as many acres of good land as he carried the Marquis over stone walls and sod-banks."
"I hope his is not the same horse that fell with and killed the Marquis," said the gentleman.

"No fear of that, sir, I'll give you my word and honour," said the coper.

"I should like to see him jump," said the gentleman. "Jump! Oh, yes. Saddle him, Joe."

The coper fixed a pole across a portion of the yard about five or six feet high, then placed the wheelbarrow and rolled a water-cask under the bar, and bearing a little to the taking off side. The horse (who never rose at a jump since he was foaled) was led up to the gentleman.

"Now, sir," said the coper, "jump on his back, and he'll take you over this rasper cleverly; he is like a flea, sir, he can jump more'n his own height."

"I would rather see you or the lad take him over, as I am not very well to-day."

"Why, you see as how my lad has always been in a harness room till very recently, and I don't think he ever jumped a horse in his life, did you, Joe?" said the coper, addressing Joe. "Never," said that worthy, looking very sly.

"And for myself, I never jump horses now, for the last time I fell and broke two of my ribs-get on him yourself, sir; do you think I'd risk him at such a jump as this on hard ground, if I were not quite sure he could top it in style?"

"I'd rather not jump him to-day," said the customer. "Well, sire," said the coper, "you may take my word for it that he'll carry you next season with any hounds in the world, and be in at the death, too, if you buy him."

"Well, let me have him a few days on trial, and if he suits me, I'll take him in exchange for the one I returned," said the gentleman.

"I always make it a rule to keep my own horses in sight while being tried, for many reasons; for instance, sir, I don't know what sort of grooms you may have; they may spoil this horse, if! Don't bribe them, and that I never do, for I always buy such horses as will sell on their merits alone," said the coper, with an air of dignity.

"But you have £73 of my money, and you will be running no risk," said the dupe.

"Yes, but you don't suppose I can sell such a horse as this for £73; why he cost me £89 at the sale at Curraghmore."

"How much can you take for him, then?" said the gentleman.

"Not less than £ 105," said the coper.
"Well, but surely you may give me credit for the difference of £32, until I see whether the horse suits me." "indeed, I cannot, sir; the fact is, I have a nobleman in treaty for him, but, under the circumstances, as I have not another to suit you, you may have him in exchange for the one you brought back by paying me the difference," said the coper.

A cheque was given for the amount, £32, and the screw taken away. After being ridden a few days the new-sprung spavin began to develop itself (having been carefully nursed since it first appearance) he was taken to a veterinary surgeon, who told the dupe to get rid of him at any price; for, said he, "although blistering may do him a little good, nothing less than firing will render him serviceable, and the expense, with keep, &c, until he is fit for use, will amount to considerably more than his value."

The victim now began to see his folly, or, in vulgar parlance, to "smell a rat"; he directed his groom to lead the horse to the coper's stable, whither he accompanied him, and the following conversation ensued:

"Good morning, sir."

"Morning, sur."

"My veterinary surgeon says this horse is spavined." "Indeed! Who is your veterinary surgeon?"

"Mr. ---, in'----'street."

"Oh! I know that old scamp; he's a spite against me because I never tip him."

"What do you mean by tipping him?"

"Why, sir, If I had known where you Intended to have the horse examined, I mean to say that, by sending him a £5 note, this horse, which as he says has a spavin, would have had no spavin at all; that's what I mean to say; and you may tell your veterinary surgeon that I say so."

"Well, but you cannot deny that the horse is quite lame; what Is It If It's not a spavin?"

"Why, It's a spavin in the hock joint; you've been jumping him all day, or some of your servants."

"Indeed, I've not, and shall leave him, and expect you to refund my money."

"Shall you really? Well, that does seem strange; a pretty pitch horse-dealers would come to If they would allow swells to have their good sound horses, ride 'em and
drive 'em about, and then get a vet to say as how they're spavined, and expect all their money back.

But suppose I were to consent to take this here horse back, what would you think of allowing me?"

Why, I don't see how you can reasonably expect me to allow you anything, seeing that a respectable veterinary surgeon says that both the horses I had on trial are unsound."

"Veterinary surgeon indeed! What has he got tu du with my horses?"

"Well, I want no unpleasantness, I'll allow you £5."
"Will you Indeed, £5? Do you think as how I'm cranky?" this is said in a bullying tone.

"Well, how much do you require?"

"Why, £21, and then I'll take the horse back and return you the money."

"Very well, give me £84, and the matter is settled."

"I cannot give you the cash this week or next, but I'll give you my acceptance at a month's date."

"Your what?"

"My acceptance, which is as good as money; I should like to see the man who will say It Is not," looking very fierce.

Gent considers. Here is a fix! £105 in the hands of this bullying scoundrel, and nothing for it. What is he to do? The horse is not worth a row of pins, therefore it is useless to take him back, and the question is, that being compelled to wait for his money, would it not be advisable to allow the man £21, and take his bill for £84? Surely he will meet it when it becomes due.

"Well," said he, with a deep-drawn sigh, "I'll take your bill for the balance, allowing what you ask."

This was just the thing for Mr. Coper, as it reduced the transaction to a matter of debt, and also allowed him plenty of time to clear off—or, in coping slang, "to lamas." The document was signed and kept by the poor dupe until it became due, and, as a matter of course, dishonoured. Mr. Coper was sought, but, as usual, was non est, and so his victim had neither horse nor money, leaving a vacancy in his exchequer to the amount of one hundred and £5 sterling.

* * * * *
In horse coping slang, a glandered horse is designated a "snitch." The plugging process is performed by cramming his nostrils with tow, to prevent the exposure of the mucous discharge from the ulceration which exists to a fearful extent in his nostrils; but previous to this plugging, a quantity of snuff and pepper is applied to the nostrils, which, by reason of the horse's breathing through them alone, must be inhaled, and this causes him to sneeze out any matter which may be accumulated there. His nostrils are then carefully sponged, and the tow (through which he can breathe) is thrust up, and the plugging business is complete.

Glanders is a most malignant and highly contagious disease, so much so, that the law of our land justifies the destruction of a glandered horse wherever he may be found.

The disease is caused by a repetition of colds upon colds, and by confinement in close, badly-drained, and ill-ventilated stables. It discloses itself by a constant discharge of a greenish yellow colour, and of a sticky glutinous nature, from the left nostril, a swelling of the glands beneath the lower jaw, and unnatural redness and inflamed appearance inside the nostrils.

To the practiced eye, an uneasiness about the horse's head will be perceptible, and certain other symptoms, which—although difficult to describe—are, nevertheless, a never-failing evidence of the existence of this most dangerous disease, which, when arrived at the state as above described, admits of no cure.

The novice who may suspect, but still be uncertain as to the existence of this malady in a horse offered to him for sale, may set all doubts at rest, by placing in his left hand a quantity of sharp snuff or cayenne, and (if the coper stand by) under the pretext of examining the horse's mouth, as if to ascertain his age, by drawing the nether lip from the horse's incisors with his right hand, and the over-lip with his left, it is placed in such a position as to cover the nostrils, and the horse cannot help but inhale the irritant therein, which adheres to the tow, and still further irritates the already inflamed membrane of the upper air passages, and almost instantly causes the poor afflicted animal to sneeze out the plug; and the man, whoever he may be, will be neglecting an important duty if he does not immediately destroy the horse or place the matter in the hands of the police.

If the horse be in his own hands, and he be uncertain whether the suspicious looking discharge which, at times, will proceed from catarrh or cold—my be ganders, he should place a pail of cold water under the horse's nose and let the mucus drop in; if it sinks it is a cold, if it floats it is a suspicious discharge, and doubtless will, in the end, prove ganders; colds should never be neglected, or, in defiance of all treatment afterwards,

Inflammation of the respiratory passages may follow, and hence ganders. The coper who deals in glandered horses is a double-dyed scoundrel of the worst description. I know one who died a most horrible death, caused by the inoculation of his body, through a punctured wound, with the discharge from the deceased horse, conveyed.
through the medium of his pocket handkerchief, which he had used to wipe the horse's nostrils.

It is a criminal offence to sell a glandered horse in a fairy or market, and whenever the sale of one is effected, the gang vanish if by magic, and travel both far and fast along the most unfrequented roads, and, if possible avoiding the towns, villages, or toll-gates, by which they may be traced to their destination, wherever that may be; but it is very rare that this class of coper has any settled dwelling place, his own parish being generally too warm for his health.

In the year 1856 I was riding along a bye-lane in the vicinity of Warrington on a fairy day, when I overtook two of these snitch copers. I knew them to belong to this class, and I could tell by their anxious looks that a snitch had been sold. After chaffing with them a few minutes, a rattle of a vehicle was heard behind us, and approaching at a rapid rate.

"What's that coming?" said one.

"A phaeton with three gentlemen," was the answer. "Gentlemen Indeed! They're bobbies" (policemen), exclaimed the one who asked the question, as they both instantly topped the ridge.

The vehicle stopped, and two policemen alighted, and jumping the hedge, gave chase. The race was a very exciting one, but as they neared the banks of the Mersey, their determined pursuers gradually drew upon them, and they were finally captured and brought back and placed in the phaeton; but the affair was hushed up by their returning the money to the victim (who was in the phaeton), by some means, before they arrived at the police office.

And this is, in most instances, the case, the victims preferring their money back to the trouble and annoyance of a prosecution, and consequent exposure of their ignorance of horseflesh.

The common mode of offering glandered horses for sale is to show them when in harness, or riding them as hacks in the vicinity of the fair ground; for if offered in a fair, the regular dealer would instantly detect and destroy them.

But the snitch coper knows better than to run any such risk; his favourite ruse is to send one of the gang, as his "agent in advance," who contrives to worm himself into the company of a haggler or green-grocer, residing in the neighbourhood where the fair is held, and states that if he (the haggler) requires any carting performed, he will lend him a horse, having one coming to the fairy which he wants to show in harness to a customer.

This very often succeeds; If not, a cart is hired, the name board on which bears the address of some one who is in business at the place where the fairy is held; this is an admirable blind, as the flat never suspects the actors in this shameful affair to be copers.
The horse is left the night before a short distance from the town, with the confederate agent. The coper bustles about the fair looking out for a victim, and being a good judge in physiognomy, he soon selects one from those who are inspecting the string of horses which belong to that class which he has for sale (barring the glanders); he watches him from gang to gang, until certain that he is really a buyer. He then walks boldly up, and accosts him with—

"Are you searching for a useful harness horse?" "Yes, I am," says the victim. "Well, a friend of mine has one to sell," says coper. "Where is it?" enquires his victim. "At work, so-and-so, if you don't mind walking with me as far." .

This is just the thing required, for no man likes to buy a harness horse from a stranger unless he first sees it in harness. The whole affair looking so genuine and straightforward, a suspicion of foul play is never entertained. The victim is, introduced to the confederate, and the horse is sold, and so is the customer, who belongs to that grade of society who can ill afford to lose their money.

The glandered horse is rarely sold for more than £10; the general price being under £10. For as this malady seldom appears but as a winding up of many other minor afflictions, he is considered, exclusive of glanders, considerably below the mark for a gentleman, or even well-to-do tradesman.

I have, nevertheless, in the course of my experience seen many first-class horses afflicted with this disease; this has, in most cases, been contracted by contagion, but being in the hands of those who can afford to lose them, they are soon destroyed.

No man, having a shadow of a claim to respectability, will prolong the life of a horse after being thoroughly satisfied of his having contracted this fearful disease. For if a glandered horse is once introduced into a stable, almost every horse in that stable will, sooner or later, become infected and die.

CHAPTER III


It requires an experienced coper of the very first water to make up an aged horse to imitate a young one, to make a colt appear at the age of maturity, and thereby exchange their marketable value.
There are thousands who ride and drive horses, more or less, all their lives, who never can tell the age of a horse by examining his teeth; and many experienced men are at fault after the horse has attained the age of eight years, more especially if he has been cleverly "bishoped," and his form still retains the appearance of vigour, which is the case with many horses until a great age.

But this, of course, depends entirely upon the amount of labour and the treatment they may have undergone. Every horse-coper makes a point of purchasing a screw which is afflicted with some particular infirmity, in the disguising of which he most excels.

The clever "bishoping coper" is always on the lookout for what he calls a "Methuselah," and the grand finishing-stroke to his particular calling is to conceal the ravages of age. The horse is selected as fresh on the legs as possible - in fact, as young in his appearance as the best of old horses can be.

Most of my readers who may be interested in the perusal of these chapters, will probably have read the works of Youat and others on the horse, in the pages of which are described the progress of dentition, and appearance of the horse's teeth at various stages, from foal hood to maturity.

In my contributions, I always make it a rule to confine my observations within the pale of my own practical experience, or that of others, which I know has never been served up to the public in a readable form, I shall content myself by informing those who are inexperienced in horse-flesh, that at eight years old the black marks on the upper surface of the incisors (front teeth), which appear at an early age.

These disappear as time progresses, are obliterated, and it is for the imitation of these marks, so as to resemble their natural appearance at five years old (the age at which horses reach maturity), or some other age corresponding with the general appearance of the horse, that the skill of the "bishop" is practiced.

At eight years old, the canine teeth (tushes) are also considerably worn and blunt, and the whole teeth are of a dirty yellow colour. Very old horses may be distinguished by the great length of their Incisors, and the gushes being worn down very considerably.

Those animals which are of a dark colour, such as blacks, browns, dark bays, or chestnuts will have a mixture of grey hair on the face; along the neck, mane and withers, the dapple grey. Colours gradually give place to a permanent white, commencing at the head, and in course of time extending all over the body, the legs being last to change colour. In the aged horse may also be noticed a deep Indentation over each eye, which, in coping parlance, is called the "glims."

I shall now proceed to explain how all these marks of age are obliterated, and an appearance of youth given to the poor old horse, which is well calculated to deceive the unwary purchaser, especially when the horse is offered by a plausible oily-tongued coper in a fairy where this business is mostly transacted in a hurry, and where the novice has no
opportunity of obtaining the advice of an honest, experienced man, even if he suspected foul play.

The "bishop" and his confederates will lead the horse in to a building strewed with a deep bed of straw, and secure from observation; they will then hobble and cast the poor old creature on his back, securing him so firmly that he cannot struggle.

A thick wooden gag is then thrust between his molar teeth (grinders), leaving his Incisors open and in a convenient position for the operation, which is commenced by filing down the edges of the incisors to the required length, then the sides or surface are filed, to cleanse them of the dirty yellow colour, and the whole is rubbed smooth with sand-paper.

A sharp steel-pointed engraving tool (made for the purpose, and sold secretly by itinerants at fairs) is then applied to the edges or tables of the incisors, in which little holes, in a concave form, are made to imitate the natural marks which would exist at that particular age which the coper intends to, represent the horse.

A red-hot iron tool is then applied with great care and skill, by which a permanent black mark is indelibly stamped on the teeth. But if this is clumsily performed, unnatural stains will appear around the edges of the teeth, and an experienced man will have little difficulty in detecting the swindle.

The disguising of the deep holes above the eyes, which exist in all aged horses, is termed "puffing the gloms," and is performed by first perforating the skin several times with a pin, into the hollow space beneath, and applying the lips, blow them full of air; they then present the same appearance, to a common observer, as the corresponding parts in much younger horses.

This done, there now only remains the grey hairs to be disposed of, and the make-up of the Methuselah is complete, which are disguised by what is called "gypping." In black or brown horses, the horse is washed all over with warm soap and water, mixed with a little soda, to clean his coat from dirt and grease.

He is then thoroughly dried with straw wisps and coarse towels, and trotted briskly about to assist the drying; a solution of India Ink is now cleverly applied to the parts which are mixed with grey hairs; other colours are dyed with a preparation corresponding with the natural colour of the horse's coat; much importance is attached to the best secrets, in the preparing of colours and the manner of applying them, and some, of course, excel others at the business.

I have known Instances where men, who have owned the horse for years, after selling him at one fairy, have bought the same animal at another from these clever copers, and have never suspected the deception until they have arrived home, when their suspicions have only been awakened by the exhibition of some peculiar trick, and other
little et ceteras which they fancied could only belong to the old horse that they once owned; this may appear strange, but I pledge my reputation to the truth of the statement.

But although the appearance of the horse's coat and teeth is changed, the "make-up" does not exactly stop here, for yet another link has to be added to the chain of cruelty by which the poor old horse, after working the best of his days in the service of man, is held to bondage.

Before he is offered for sale, he is confined, as long as circumstances will permit, in a dark stable, the coper being particular to exclude every ray of light, and as the time approaches for his being shown in the fairy, the brutal fellow will belabour him with all his might when fastened up in the stall, with a heavy ashplant; and if by this, unsightly weal's are raised on the skin (which is mostly the case) these are erased by pricking them here and there with a pin and running the fingers along to press out the air, which leaves the surface level as before the cruelty is practiced.

The horse is then treated to the indispensable "fig." A man leads him out, being closely followed by the brute who has so recently and shamefully abused him with the Instrument of torture, which he still keeps within range of the horse's eye.

The confinement in the dark stable makes him step high when brought out into the dazzling light of open day, his ears move in rapid succession, alternately up and down, and his eyes flash wildly, as if in constant dread of a repetition of the dose of ashplant, as it is held in a threatening attitude by the same hands who administered it in the stable.

His poor old bewildered head is cruelly chucked up by the hand of the runner, on the severe curb bridle and his tail is curled upwards by the sharp pain proceeding from the dose of "fig" (ginger), which is snugly ensconced in the cavity beneath it. In fact, his whole appearance is so altered, that many a man, who may be several degrees higher than a greenhorn, will declare him to be a magnificent animal, full of fire and spirit.

* * * * *

"How much for the Bobby?" asked two impudent looking horse-copers to a gentleman who had been purchasing a very remarkable, good-looking nag horse, for which he had just paid £45, and whose groom was leading it away from Preston fairy, on the 6th January last. "Were you speaking to me?" said the gentleman. "Yes! Who and what are you that you should not be spoken to?"

"Go about your business, you low, ignorant fellow!" "It's our business to give you in charge of the police, if we did it properly."

"What for?"

"What for? Why, for offering a broken-backed horse for sale; we know you."
"I'm not offering any horse for sale; I have only just bought him."

"Come along, Sam, you're mistaken; he's a fool, not a rogue. Beg your pardon,’
sir; we took you for a coper, and It seems you are a flat. Good by! We wish you luck with
'Old Robert. ",

"Whatever can be the meaning of this?" said the gentleman to his groom.
"I really don't know, sir."

"Surely the horse is all right; but I have a warranty, and the gentleman from
whom I purchased him said that he was the Vicar of--. Then again--"

He was interrupted here by another of the same firm, who had contrived to meet
him at across road on the outskirts of the town. "£2 for the old Bobby," said this
Individual, holding out a halfpenny in his left hand, the right hand at arm's length, and
grasping a well-worn ash-plant.

"Now, my good man, I really don't know what your meaning is when you call this
horse an 'Old Bobby'."

"Don't know? Come now! I'll makeIt£2, and pay you the money now."
"I'm, still in the dark; besides, I have only just bought the Horse."

"Indeed. Who from?"

"A very respectable gentleman, the Vicar of--."  

"Oh, oh! Ha, ha! I know; he was a tall man, dressed in a regular swell suit o'black,
and a white choker, and two of his front teeth out."

"Well, that is a good description of the gentleman from whom I purchased him."

"Why, I thought everybody knew 'Long Jack,' or, as some people call him, the
'Darby Top. ",

"Indeed, I never had the honour of his acquaintance and
Think you must be mistaken."

"Did he give you any religious tracts?" "He did."

"Entitled 'Jerusalem Lamented?'"

"Yes, here they are," (producing tracts).
"Now, I'll convince you that he also sold you a 'chinked backed' horse, for which the money I offered you is a fairy price."

"You never offered me any money." "Yes I did £2 and a half-a-bull." "What do you mean?"

"I mean £2 and a half-a-crown."

"I gave £45 for him, and received a warranty with him." "Very likely; shouldn't wonder. But look here, sir, (with this the coper pinched the vertebrae of the horse's back with his finger and thumb just on the seat of Injury-on the arch of his loins-and the poor animal suddenly cringed until his belly nearly touched the ground), this is the place where his back is chinked. I have known this horse for four years, and he has been bought and sold at every fairy in the kingdom. Long Jack has made a little fortune by him, one way or other, although he seldom offers him for sale himself, except to a 'plumb butt fool"

"Then he's not the Vicar of--." "Vicar of blazes, more like!"

"I'll go back to the fairy, and give him in charge for swindling me."

"You need not trouble yourself. He is miles away before now; I saw him off myself."

"And what do you want with the horse; since you say he is of so little value?"

"I've been trying to get hold of him for the last six months, for a young veterinary surgeon, who wanted to slaughter him for examination."

"Are you a horse-dealer?"

"Well, I'll be candid with you, I'm, not what people generally call a horse-dealer; I'm a horse coper."

"What's a horse-coper?"

"One who gets money in any way he can, so that he keeps clear of the everlasting staircase."

"What's that?"

"The treadmill. We all deal in wids, roarers, pipers, bulls, knocks, millers, and Bobbies, such as you have here; but this particular Bobby I want for the purpose I told you, so I'll give you another half-bull, If you'll give me a bob out for luck."

"I'll not take any such money."
At this juncture another of the gang rides up in a contrary direction to where the fairy is held. "A useful-looking horse you have here, sir" says he, "Is he for sale?"

The gent, anxious for his opinion, replied, "Well, yes; I think I shall sell him." (Cope' I now stands aloof.) "How much?"

"Fifty two pounds."

"He's well worth half the money if he's sound."

"I have a warranty with him; for I've only just bought him in the fairy."

"Oh! I daresay; but I never care much for warranties; I prefer my own opinion to all the warranties that ever were written." And, dismounting, he proceeded to examine the horse.

First looking at his mouth and eyes, he then picked up his fore feet, and ran his hand down the horse's shanks, from the knee to the fetlock, to feel for splints; then the hocks are scanned over for curbs or sprains, and the whole matter is summed up by the crafty coper shaking his own head, as if to ascertain whether there was anything in it, and turning to the groom, said,

"Run him on a few yards, and turn him sharp round." The groom obeyed. "Oh, oh!

That's his game, is it?" said the coper, as, when the horse turned round suddenly, he threw up his head in the halter, and instantly dropped into a low, cringing walk, as if suffering the most excruciating agony in his hind quarters; his back was bent like a slack rope, and the back part of his hocks nearly touched the ground.

The groom tugged vigorously at the halter to drag him along.

"Come up, come up:" said he; but the poor creature seemed more like "coming down."

The coper now commenced to pinch his back-bone, running his finger and thumb, from the fall of the withers along the back. Inch by Inch. "I shall find it directly," said he. "Oh, here it is:" he exclaimed, as, when he came to the horse's loins, the horse fairly groaned with agony under the unfeeling coper's cruel pinch, on the exact joint of the vertebrae containing the seat of injury; and, turning to the unfortunate dupe, "Why, you cussed horse-copying thief," says he, as he mounted his pony, "did you think I was a flat, that you should attempt to swindle me out of £52 with a broken-backed screw of the very worst stamp?"

"No. no! I assure you," said the gentleman.
"Oh, you old fool! I'll send a policeman after you," said he. As he cantered off.

"Better take my money. Sir, and cut it, or you'll be in a scrape,' said the first caper. "Well take him, and give me the money."

Coper I count out £2 and five shillings from an old greasy purse. "Give me a coin back for luck," says he, as he hands it over. A shilling is returned; the coper spits upon it, and slips it into his pocket, and the Bobby is once more in the hands of the same party who brought him to the fairy, and they have cleared about £42 10s by the transaction.

The gang, five in number, meet to divide the spoil at a place previously assigned, Long Jack receiving the lion’s share. The horse was taken to the railway station, and sent in a box to Manchester, then the head quarters of this particular gang. From thence he was travelled to various places. I saw him at Cardiff fairy In May of the same year, in the hands of the same party, who, I have no doubt, had sold and besought him many times since Preston fair.

* * * * *

"There's equality and fashion, not to be equalled under the sun, and if they would pass a veterinary surgeon's examination, would fetch at least £525," said a plausible man, of respectable exterior, the agent and accomplice of a gang of copers in the West End of London, to a young gentleman who had plenty of money, but no common sense, and who applied to the coper as the person having two pair of fashionable, high stepping carriage-horses for sale, as described In an advertisement, "In consequence of the decline of the London season."

The pair in question were dark bays, stood nearly seventeen hands high, fine steppers, and In blooming condition. They had been matched and trained by the coper and his confederates to work well together, but had never been driven as "a pair" in a gentleman's carriage.

One was a confirmed "rarer," and the other a rank "piper." They had been selected and purchased solely for coping purposes, and belonged to that class termed by copers "flatcatchers," and their value was not more than £20.

"Why won't they pass a veterinary surgeon's examination?" Inquired the gentleman.

"They appear to be the least in the world touched in their wind, sir, but with a groom who understands the treatment of this little Infirmitiy in horses, it would never be the least perceived, and, in the course of six months, I have no doubt that any veterinary surgeon would pass them perfectly sound.

The groom who has had them In charge has been giving them mouldy hay and musty oats, feeding them with large quantities of this provender a very short time before
they were ordered out, and thus distended their stomachs with undigested food, as to make it appear as if they were affected in their wind, to serve his own purposes.

"Indeed! What purposes could he have to serve by so wantonly depreciating his master's property?"

"Why, sir, it is customary, when a gentleman purchases a pair of carriage horses from a dealer, to make the groom and coachman a present. This pair of horses were bought from a dealer who had made a stand against this custom, and the result is the slow, but sure revenge, which the groom practices, and by this means he succeeded in prejudicing his master in favour of the dealer from whom he purchased another pair; and so the unprincipled servants got their fee.

One of them got drunk, and told all this to one of my stable-men, in confidence, and I bought them from the dealer to whom they were sold, as being unsound; but my belief is that, with good treatment, they will be as sound as a bell of brass in a very short time."

"But where can I get a groom who will be honest to me, and who would properly understand the treatment of these horses if I were to buy them?"

"If you do buy them, sir, they will do you good, and (for my own sake) I will guarantee to recommend you a groom who shall be all you require, for I happen to know one who perfectly understands his business, and it is lucky, I expect him here any minute."

"Well, on those conditions, I will take the horses, provided we can agree as to price. Let me see, I think you said £ 157 for the pair in your advertisement; I suppose you mean £ 147?" this was said good-humouredly.

"Why, yes, I'll accept that amount--of course, you take them, like a man takes his wife, for better or worse."

"I understand you; but I suppose you will exchange them if they do not suit?"

Enter Tommy (the man whom the coper recommends as a clever groom). Tommy is a downy-looking, lop-eared individual. He stands at a respectful distance in the yard, playing with a goat.

He was dressed in very tight pantaloons, strapped down to a pair of--what appeared to be-gentlemen's cast off boots, until the pantaloons fairly grinned again, a very long waistcoat, and an upper garment, known as a "puzzle devil," or a kind of cross between a coat and a jacket; this attire had evidently been made to the fancy of some ex-flunkey, from whom it had been borrowed for the occasion.
Tommy's closely-cropped head was surmounted by a flat-brimmed hat, and round his neck he wore a light-collared scarf, in which was prominently displayed a Birmingham pin with a horseshoe head.

"Here, Tommy," said the coper. Tommy obeyed with alacrity, and saluted them both with his fore finger raised to the brim of his hat. "This gentleman wants to speak to you," said coper.

Gentleman to Tommy (alias Coper 2)-"I understand that you have had some experienced in the care of valuable horses."

"Yes sir, I ought to, for I was brought up in a racing stable."

"Indeed, why did you leave it?" "Why, sir cus I was too heavy."

This and a few more questions were answered to the gentleman’s satisfaction, and Tommy was engaged to go a month on trial, and at once installed into office by leading to the victim’s residence the pair of screws, for which notes and gold amounting to £147 were paid.

Tommy, the groom, was one of the gang who did not mind passing a week or two in service as his part in the play; he fed the horses on damped hay and mashes for about ten days, when it suited his purpose to have some words with his master.

This arose through not obeying orders to drive faster; and these orders were so repeatedly disregarded, that his master gave him a severe lecture, when Tommy packed up his traps and left him, as he said for a better situation. Another groom was engaged, who, of course, commenced to feed them on hard dry corn and hay, giving them an unlimited supply of water, and when they were driven out at a spanking pace a few days after, they piped and roared like the band of a Highland regiment.

While standing a moment at the door of the gentleman's mansion, a passer-by remarked to the coachman that his horses were very accomplished, as they understood both "music and drawing."

"Beg yer pardon, sur, but I think It would be better to sell these here horses, for they are sure to git wusser and wusser," said the new coachman; but the gentleman Is unwilling to do so, for as he justly remarks, he had never heard them make that horrid noise before; It must be that the groom does not understand their treatment (his man servant Is for the present both groom and coachman).

"The dealer was right after all," said he. He goes to him again and asks his advice.

"I'm afraid the horses are Injured," said he to the coper. "I'll go and look at them," said the coper.
They were put in the carriage, and the coper drove them himself at a rapid rate, and when the (to him) well-known music was at its height he ramped them into the yard.

"These horses are ruined, sir, from some cause or other, and recently too, for I met your late coachman yesterday, and he told me they were all right." said the coper.

"Could the man be Induced to come back, think you?" "We'll try to persuade him to do so."

A week or two passed over without coming to any amicable arrangement with Tommy, during which the victim became heartily sick of his musical horses. The coper called upon him to say that Tommy had entered upon another situation, and enquired how the horses were getting on. "Very bad, indeed," said the gentleman. "Better exchange them for the other pair," said the coper.

This advice was taken, and the horses exchanged places. £ 1 00 more are also transferred from the victim’s account to the exchequer of the coper, as the difference in price, with the understanding that if that pair did not suit, he was to have his money back, less £10 for the use of both pairs. This made a total of £257 paid to the coper, for which the victim had a pair of horses considerably worse than the first pair; for their Infirmity was visible, whereas in the others it was invisible, and of course, better for coping purposes.

One of the new pair had a "bone spavin," and the other was "lame In the shoulder," but having had good rest, and having been carefully exercised for some time, the lameness Is not perceptible except to a man of experience; but, when they were put into heavy work, their respective infirmities soon began to exhibit themselves.

They were sent back, and the gentleman waited upon the coper for his £247, according to agreement; but it was not convenient, just then, to pay him in cash, so he proposed his acceptance at two months' date.

"But I want the cash to buy another pair of horses,' said the victim.

"Oh! I'll get a friend of mine to discount the bill, and, as it is for my convenience, I will pay the discount," said coper Gent. (Who, I forgot to say, was only just of age).- "That will do, so long as I get the cash."

The bill was drawn, and the coper pushed It towards the victim (who was as Ignorant about bills as of horse flesh), and handing him the pen, said, "Just write your name across here."

The greenhorn endorsed the bill, and shortly after was introduced to another of the gang, at his lodgings in a fashion-able street. After the Introduction the coper produced the bill.
"Can you discount me this little bill?" said he. "Certainly," said the friend.

The money is produced and the victim receives the £241 10s. In full, the trifling discount being paid out of the copper’s own pocket. So far he is impressed with a capital opinion of Mr. Coper, never thinking he is liable on the bill.

"I am extremely sorry we have not been able to suit you with a pair of horses to your mind," said the coper; "those two pair of horse’s will lose me a deal of money. The last pair you tried I bought from Lord--; they were sound when I had them, and I cannot account for their lameness.

The other pair I told you all about. You must mind, sir, and keep out of the hands of horse copers; there are so many in London. If you will wait until the day after to morrow, I shall have a pair to sell on commission, for a gentleman who is off to the continent, and they must be sold cheap, for he cannot wait."

The gentleman consented to wait, and was once more in the meshes of this Wiley coper, who sold him another pair of screws, worse than either of the other pairs, for which he received £178. This, with the bill of exchange amounted to £425 sterling. The coper disappeared, the horses were destroyed, and when the bill became due it was dishonoured. A sharp letter was written to the victim, who finally had to pay the money.

CHAPTER IV


I was lately amused by a coping Incident, which a farmer related to me. He said,

"I had made up mind to sell 'Old Boxer,' a brown horse with two white heels; I bought him at four years old, and had worked him on my farm for eleven years, and although fifteen years old, he was sound; my sole reason for parting with him was, that he could not masticate his food properly (owing to the Irregularities of his teeth).

So as to be kept in proper working condition, our furrier rasped and filed his teeth, from time to time, but all to no purpose, and at last he advised me to sell him. I took him to Chesterfield fairy, and sold him to some horse-coping chaps for £6."
I interrupted him here.

"May I ask you whether you told them that the horse could not masticate his food?" said I.

"Not very likely," said he. "Well, they were very anxious to swap with me for another, asking £15 to boot; but I had heard so much about their swapping dodges, that I determined to sell first, and buy after; that is, provided I saw a horse that would suit me; many were offered, but I saw nothing I liked so well as old Boxer, and I half-regretted selling him - indeed I went so far as to offer £7 for him back again, but he was sold, they told me.

I went home without one, and afterwards visited many fairs, but saw nothing in make and shape like poor old Boxer, until Nottingham Goose Fairy; there I casually met with one of the men to whom I had sold hyoid favourite, and asked him where he thought he was now?"

"Oh! said he, my hearty, you drew me a tooth with that deal; why the old brute could not chew butter; we sold him to work in a coal-pit in Staffordshire, and he soon after died. We have one here to-day, as much like him in figure as one pea is like another; I said, when we bought him, that he was the very model of your old horse. He is five years old, and perfectly sound, and ready for immediate work."

"Where is he?" said I.

"Come along, I'll show him to you," said he. It was a little before the horse fair began, and I was taken to the stables, which were full of all sorts of horses and copers. "Bring out that black horse we bought at Shrewsbury, Tom," said the dealer or rather coper.

"All right, sir," said a dashing looking fellow, in a waistcoat with sleeves, and red neckerchief, and disappeared into the stable, wither I attempted to follow him; but seeing that I should have to pass many horses, whose looks and signs made it probable that I should be kicked to a jelly, I retreated, and patiently waited until the horse was brought out. I had not long to wait, before his appearance was heralded by, "Care, care; look out there! Look out, Cranky! Do you want to be run over?" and out he bounced.

"Crack" went a whip behind him; the man at his head trots him to the extremity of the street, and back again, finally fixing him with his feet on rising ground, against a white-washed building; and I must confess, that I never saw a better made cart-horse in my life; he was a jet black, with no white upon him, about sixteen hands high, and according to my judgement, a perfect model of a farmer's horse for general purposes.

His mane and tail were neatly plaited with straw, which, with the white leather halter and rosette of red ribbon, contrasted nicely with his glossy coat and superb
condition. I examined his mouth, which Indicated five years; his feet and legs appeared sound, and I made up my mind to purchase him, if the price was not too high. At this moment a bustling man came up, and addressing me,

"This here hoss yours, sir?" said he.

"No, he belongs to that gentleman," said I (pointing to the owner).

"Oh, thank you," said he, "I want a few useful horses for Chaplin, Horne, and Co. How much are you asking for the black?" said he to the owner, who replied,

"I am trying to sell him to this gentleman (jerking his thumb over his shoulder to me), but If we don't agree, I'll sell him to you at a fairy price,"

"Very well, very well," said the man, and disappeared. "Now then, sir," said the owner,

"Did you ever see a horse you liked better in your life, or so well?"

"Well," said I, "when my old Boxer was the same age, he was quite as good, If not better, although he might not be quite so big a horse. How much shall you ask me?"

"Five and thirty pounds," said the owner.

"I think thirty a fairy price," said I, "and will pay you for him with that sum, if you choose."

"No, I'll not take farthing less," said he.

"However, I finally bought him at £33, and was very proud of my bargain, and many a one asked me If I would sell him again; but no, I was quite satisfied with my purchase, and I at once mounted him, and started on my way home, near Ashbourn.

The farther I rode him, the better I liked him, for he seemed as satisfied with me as I did with him. It was near upon thirty miles to my farm from Nottingham. I had baited him twice on the road; but although he ate the bruised oats and bran, he refused his hay; at length we arrived at a roadside Inn, where I generally stayed for a glass on my way from Darby market.

It was about eight o'clock, and as I neared the house, I could with the greatest difficulty hold my horse with the halter. He increased his pace to a brisk trot, stopping, however, under the oil lamp over the front door.

"Hi, hallo, threepence worth of gin," said I, and after exchanging compliments with the landlord (who came out and admired my horse very much), we were off again; but whatever had come to the horse? I could not hold him at a less pace than a brisk trot;
and when we turned from the main road down the lane leading to my farm, he still further increased his pace, and having no saddle, I rolled off his back into the muddy lane, where he left me, and clattered into the yard at a regular gallop, stopping at the stable-door, and neighing as if the devil was in him.

"My wife came out with a lantern, and seeing a horse halted without a rider, she became alarmed. Her fears, however, not of long duration, for I walked into the yard unhurt, although covered with mud; the horse was admired, bedded down, fed, and left for the night, but I could not rest for thinking about the horse being so impatient as we drew near the farm;

It appeared so very strange to me, morning came, and at five o'clock I went into the stable, and found the horse all right, and his manger quite clean; he drank a bucket of water, and ate his feed of split beans and bruised oats, then commenced to eat his hay; he did his work steady and well, and for nearly a week I was perfectly satisfied, when my son said his heels were turning grey.

"I laughed at the idea, but on examination, I found that such was the case, and on closer examination, I found that the black colour of his coat was gradually giving place to brown, and finally his two heels assumed their natural appearance, 'pure white,' and there could be no mistake. 'Old Boxer' once more stood before me, in his natural tiger.

"What could I do? Be angry! No, for I was moved almost to tears, and really pleased to see my favourite again. My neighbours chaffed me; but after all, the old horse was worth every shilling I had given for him.

He ate his corn, kept his condition, and did his work superior to too many younger horses of theirs, which had cost them more money. The copers had so skilfully bishop him and filed his teeth, that they had managed what my furrier had entirely failed to do—viz., to cure him of quitting his food—I.e., partially chewing, and leaving most of it in the manger.

"I kept the horse five years after this, and though for the last twelve months, he partially returned to his old infirmity of quitting his food, I never regretted selling him for £6, and buying him again in a new coat for thirty-three," concluded the farmer, in high glee.

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There are in the United Kingdom several gangs of scoundrels frequenting country fairs, whose calling is far more dangerous and disgraceful than that of the regular "horse coper"; these are "smashers," or makers of counterfeit Bank of England notes; for such characters as these, horses, and in many instances, cattle and sheep, are only a vehicle or a cover to shield them from suspicion as to the true nature of their calling.
The flash term for these notes, as used by them, is “soften”; and many counterfeit notes are passed in the following manner:

There are stationed in the vicinity of the fairy the dealers in these notes, who sell them at about five percent, on their value, if they were good; the smashers seldom buy more than one or two at once, which they mix up among a lot of genuine notes; then, suppose, for instance, they buy a horse whose true value is £30, by paying two genuine notes and one counterfeit, they get a £30 horse for £20; the horse is passed, by a sham sale, to a confederate for £35, who generally holds a receipt embodied in a warranty for that amount, and thus proof being apparently shown that the horse has been honestly bought, no suspicion attaches to the confederate, who is allowed to hold possession of the horse In peace, while the actual smasher makes good his escape; and, supposing the farmer detects the counterfeit - a thing of rare occurrence, after very often rolling it up and depositing it among others, taken from some one else, perhaps the cheese buyer, or butcher-how is he to bring the charge home to the smasher?

He may be arrested and searched; nothing, however, is found upon him but genuine money. He states that if the farmer really can prove that he paid him the note, he will give him a genuine one in its place, but he is always very particular; he buys and sells largely, it is true, and might have taken it in the ordinary course of business. It is dangerous to detain him in custody.

He gives his name and address, which, by-the-bye, are often genuine; and sometimes he really is, in the eyes of the world, a very respectable man, for this is the very thing that blinds the suspicion, if any exists as to this point of his calling, with his own neighbours; but this dark portion of his business is never practised about his home, but, in most instances, some hundreds of miles away; he is, however, careful not to pass more than one flash note in a place.

Some of the more daring will contrive to pass a £50 counterfeit, when a favourable opportunity offers; such, for instance, as the “touts” having found a person with more money, or rather more cattle, sheep, or horses, than brains.

The gang put all their genuine capital into the hands of one—for there is honour among thieves—who may be in a position to buy the whole drove of cattle or sheep. The party selected for this bold stroke is the least suspicious looking man of the lot, and the best judge; for notwithstanding the profit they get by paying a portion in counterfeit money, it is policy on their part to buy the animals as cheap as possible;

Indeed, they frequently leave a flock of sheep, a drove of cattle, or a string of horses, for a very trifling difference of price; more especially, if, after a little conversation, they ascertain that the seller is a shrewd, wide-awake sort of man; for the smasher, as well as the horse-coper, is generally a capital judge of human nature, and, in their own words, can “reckon a man up” very quick.
Most of these flash notes are so little different in their appearance to the genuine ones, that in fairs or markets, where business is transacted in a hurry, they are scarcely looked at, but rolled up among country notes and Bank of England’s, thrust into a greasy canvas bag, and paid away, time after time, without ever being suspected as counterfeit money, until they are laid on the counter of some bank, when it is often a very difficult matter to ascertain from whom they were received.

I once was sitting in the bar parlour of a country Inn. There was a special train from Birmingham that day to the locality, in Derbyshire, and the Inn being near the railway station, was crowded.

The landlord being short of waiters, every person wanted to be served at once; but when the bustle had somewhat abated, a gentlemanly-looking man entered; he wore spectacles, had grey hair, and umbrella, and three neatly-clad females with him, one old enough to be his wife, and two apparently in their teens, who possibly might have been his daughters; he ordered tea for the lot, and tendered a £10 Bank of England note; the landlord not having sufficient change in the house, got it from a draper’s shop in the neighbourhood.

In the course of the same day, another of the special trainers got change at the same inn for a £10 note; but this time the landlord managed to scrape up sufficient, without troubling his neighbours.

He laid the note by, and paid it to his spirit merchant, in the usual way of business. In the course of a month after this, the spirit merchant’s wife called upon the same draper to make a purchase of some morning, and paid for it with a £10 note, which the draper put by in his cash-box.

Some time after this, the draper counted up his money, preparatory to a purchasing tour in the manufacturing districts, but never took the number of his notes; he, however, made a purchase in Manchester, and the cashier took them for him, or rather, for himself; when, lo!

He found two notes of a number, both counterfeits, and evidently from the same plate; the notes were morally, but not legally traced as having come from the innkeeper, because neither the draper nor spirit merchant had taken the numbers and entered them in a book, with the date, and from whom received.

It created a great sensation in the place at the time, and among the ill-natured portion of the neighbours, the winks and nods were sufficient evidence that, if they were a jury, he would have little chance left but to pay the money.

I have seen a great deal of the world and its ways since then, and have no doubt that the old gentleman with the females, spectacles, and umbrellas, and, may-be, a wig of grey hair, was a smashed of the first water, and the other special trainer was a confederate sent by him, after finding out the easy gullibility of the inn-keeper; for if amen will be so
foolish as to take notes from strangers, and mix them with others, taken with a similar want of caution, how can he ever expect to trace them to the party from whom he received them. This reprehensible practice is a direct encouragement to dealers in counterfeit notes and "smasher."

• • • •

What shall I say for this chestnut gelding? he is five years old, goes in harness, is as handsome as a peacock, and will carry a gentleman or lady, without tripping, shying, or broken paces.

And, as far as my judgement serves me, appears perfectly sound," said the auctioneer at a coping repository in the provinces to an assemblage gathered round his rostrum, composed of a few gentlemen who are on the look-out for a cheap horse, and some tradesmen who are obliged to keep a horse and trap for the delivery of those commodities to their customers in which they may deal.

But who are constantly buying, selling, or swapping their pony away and losing the money which they should have paid the traveller from the house which sent them that circular, the purport of which was to say that their Mr. So-and-So would have the pleasure of waiting upon them on such a day, when, &c., &c.

One really would think a nudge like this would be sufficient to cool the horse fever, which seems to rage in their very souls, more especially with those who (by chance) have purchased at this repository, or elsewhere, a horse or pony out of which they have cleared a pound or two. I'll lay my life to a bad potato that such a man, will never give up dabbling in horse-flesh (instead of minding his own business) until he loses the price of a useful horse-aye, and cart, too; but he'll never tell any of his neighbours how much he loses; it is only the amount of his gains which reaches their ears. But by far the greater part of this assemblage is made up of horse-copers and their confederates, who soon find out which are buyers and which mere gazers.

"Now, gentlemen, favour me with an offer forth is fashionable and most useful chestnut gelding," said the auctioneer, looking anxiously round the motley crowd; but no answer is made at present.

The poor brute of a horse stands quivering every cubic inch of his body in front of the rostrum, and the auctioneer being the most prominent object within range of his eyes, which are so expressive of anxiety from fear of the whip in the hands of that lop-eared specimen of human kind, in tight gaiters and capacious inexpressibles, standing behind him, that, like a half throttled cat, they appear ready to start out of their sockets, or burst. "Run him on a few yards, Joe," said the auctioneer.
The bullet-head of Joe (covered with a skull cap) is nodded, and Lop-ears flourishes his cat-gut flag, dropping the cord with a sharp cut on the point of the shoulder. "Hooroo! hooroo! Care! care!" Bullet-head, the runner, chucks up the horse's head with the deep-levered curb bridle, raising, at the same time, his left hand before the horse's eyes to check his pace, and thereby make him bend his knees and exhibit a false display of action.

Lop-ears, keeps the hind-quarters in constant play; and on rounding the turn, out go the horse's heel, as if he fully intended to plant them neatly on the ribs of that man with the green spectacles, who could not get the focus in time to get out of the way.

The crowd closes up round the horse, and an individual the model of a horse-dealing man of substance—walks steadily up to the horse's head, places his whip or ash-plant under his left arm, and examines the horse's mouth, looks (for the corroborating proofs) at the "glims," runs his hand down the inside of the fore-legs, picks up his feet and examines them, apparently with great care, passing the left hand along the near side, until it grasps the tail.

"Wo, boy," said he, as he glanced his own practised eye back to the horse's, to ascertain whether he might take a liberty, "all right."

The eye only indicates anxiety, not roguery (the man knows full well the difference), and the hands (which have been used for this purpose thousands of times) are passed gently over the inside of the hock joints, to feel for spavins, which, although invisible to the eye, may be springing, but nothing objectionable appears to be there, and the seat of curbs (back part, below the hocks) is examined with due care; the man steps backward a yard or two, and casts his eye over the general contour of the horse; he then slowly retires into the crowd (all of whom have been watching his movements), and in the course of a few seconds:

"Gentlemen, make me an offer for the chestnut gelding," is repeated by the auctioneer, and a voice responds:

"Twenty pounds."

That part of the crowd who have been favourably impressed by the animal's appearance, and who themselves would have made an offer, but for their want of confidence in their own judgement, turn sharply round to the place from whence the sound proceeds, and find out that the dealing looking man has evidently made up his mind to buy the horse at his value; therefore, they imagine that there can be no harm in following up his bid.

And, after all, the horse cannot be more than a pound too dear, for the man who examined him appears perfectly satisfied with his quality and his merits, and so the bidding goes on briskly, until reaches an amount likely to be the utmost limits to which it
is probable the genuine bidder will go. The hammer falls to his last bid, the clerk requires instant payment, and the dealing man is non est.

In this instance, which came under my notice, when the horse was examined he was found to be a thorough screw, being broken-winded, and not worth more than £4, although it had been run up to £29 by the owner and his confederates, who, although they went through the mockery of an examination, never coughed the horse, lest the short dry sound (peculiar to the broken-winded horse) which would be thereby produced, might be heard by some practised ear in the crowd, in which case it would be buzzed about, and prevent the sale of the horse.

Many of my readers who are inexperienced in horse-flesh, may not know how a horse is made to cough, or if they have seen dealers or others practise this part of an examination, and hear the cough, they may not be able to tell whether the horse be sound in his wind or not, by the sound produced.

First, then, I shall say to my readers, when you are suspicious about a horse's wind, place your left hand gently on the ridge of the horse's neck, so as not to alarm him, and with the finger and thumb of your right hand pinch his windpipe firmly, about five or six inches from his jaw; hold on firmly, and he will cough in the course of a few seconds.

Now mark the sound of the cough; if it be a long whistling kind of sound the horse's wind is right, but if it be a short, dry sound, something similar to the cough of a human being in a consumption, the horse's wind is affected. If a broken-winded horse be suffering from a cold, he will be all but continually Coughing; and a practised ear can always tell when he hears the hard, dry-laboured hackle of one that is broken-winded, or, in horse-dealing phraseology, a "wid."

* * * * *

To return to my coping repository-I remember an instance of "done brown," which occurred at one of these places in the north of England; and, although very discreditable to the proprietors, was brought about by the victim himself; he was a gentleman of independent means, but of very drunken habits, and resided in the immediate vicinity of the repository it was his regular practice to get drunk every day.

He very frequently staggered into the sale-yard while the auctions were going on, and foolishly offered a price for every horse run up to the rostrum. I will, however, do the auctioneer the justice to say that he frequently cautioned him, but all to no purpose; for as sure another sale day came, so sure it brought "Old Roby" staggering into the yard and elbowing his way up to the front of the rostrum, he bid indiscriminately for every horse run up.

The auctioneer lost his temper, and determined to put a "stopper" on at once, and forever. He knew that Old Roby was good for any reasonable amount, therefore the trap was laid and the victim was caught.
On the following sale day a handsome bay gelding with a flowing mane and tail, and a coat on his back as sleek as a mole, was run up to the rostrum.

"£20," said Old Roby.

"Well done, Roby!" said a coper.

"Five-and-twenty," bid a gentlemanly-looking individual, planted for the purpose.

"Thirty," said Mr. Roby; and "Well done, Roby!" was repeated from another quarter.

"Forty," said the plant.

"Now, Roby," came from a voice in the crowd, and Roby quickly answered: "Fifty."

"Well done, Roby!" said the same voice.

"Any advance upon fifty pounds for the magnificent bay gelding?" enquired the auctioneer, looking at the gentlemanly-looking man, who had retired into the crowd.

Mr. Roby had a peculiar habit of shaking his head; the motion may be described as a sudden, nervous kind of twitching—the same as one would imagine might be produced in any other man, if suddenly stung in the ear with a wasp; but the sting of ten wasps in Roby's ear could not have produced a corresponding movement in his head, when the clerk called upon him to pay fifty pounds..

"Fifty d--less as like!" Said he.

"Well, you've bought the horse, and must pay for him; and it is fortunate that I know you," said the auctioneer.

The reputed owner now came up, and turning to Mr. Roby, said, in a tone of displeasure,

"Why don't you pay for this horse, like a gentleman? You've bought him fairly; and if you don't pay me to-day, you shall be served with a writ tomorrow."
The wasps were in Roby's ear again, and he began to look more serious. Another of the coping gang tapped him on the shoulder, and said.

"May I have a word with you, sir?"
"Certainly," said Roby, and the two walked away. "Now," said the coper, "I understand you have bought a bay horse at this sale to-day?"

"Yes," said Roby, "they say I have." "Will you sell him again?"

"I will," said Roby.

"How much must I give you for buying him?" "Five pounds," said Roby.

"I'll have him," said the coper, "if you will bring him over to Warrington the day after to-morrow, for I have been looking after such a horse for the last month; I want to match another to run in a nobleman's carriage.

I am sorry that I left my check book at home, but you can send the horse up, and come yourself to my residence (anyone will tell you where I live), and have a bit of dinner with me. I have very little money with me to-day, but here is half-a-pound to bind the bargain. You must give me an acknowledgement in writing that you have sold me the horse, and received half-a-pound on account."

"Oh yes," said Roby, and received the half-pound.

This took place in the bar-parlour of an inn, near the gates of the repository, and when the bargain was fastened, another coper appeared on the scene.

"A glass of ale, miss," said this worthy to the waitress, "and look handy—I'm in a hurry. Have you seen—? "Oh," said he, affecting to see Mr. Roby for the first time, and not recognizing the confederate, "you're the very gentleman I am looking for. I'll give you a pound for buying that crazy horse," holding a pound towards Mr. Roby with his finger and thumb.

"Well, said he, turning to his confederate, "how much will you sell him for?" "Money would not buy him!" replied the other.

"Oh, you're a fool," said he, as he turned on his heel, and left the place. The reputed owner now entered.

"Oh, you here, Mr. Roby? come, settle with me for this bay horse; I want to be off."

"Oh, yes! I'll pay you for him; It was all my nonsense, or I should have paid you in the yard; however, I'll fetch you a cheque," and away he reeled for the £52 10s, cheque, which the landlord (who I may say was also a confederate) changed, or pretended to do so, it being then past banking hours.

The horse was a 'chinked" (nearly broken) backed one, not worth more than his hide and shoes, for any kind of work. He was taken to Warrington on the day appointed,
but instead of Mr. Roby meeting with the man who had bought him for a match-horse, and receiving his £5 profit, he was met by another gang of copers (connected with the first lot); they pinched the vertebra of the poor horse's back till his hocks touched the ground.

Poor Old Roby was hocused and bullied, and they finally bought the horse for £3 10s., and made him stand dinners and lots of brandy for seven or eight of the most notorious copers that Infest the fairs, market, and repositories In the north of England.

It is needless to say that Mr. Roby never entered the yard of another "horse repository" again; but I heard many persons say that every time he passed the gate of the one in question (which he had to do on his way from the Inn, where to took his drops, to his residence) he always quickened his pacer and twitched his head, as if suddenly stung in the ear by a wasp.

CHAPTER V


"Good morning, sir," said a middle-aged unsophisticated looking Individual to me one morning, In Kensington Gardens, "you're Ballycastle, I presume."

"Ballycastle, at your service, sir," I replied, with my best Derbyshire bow.

"Well," said he, "I can furnish you with materials for another chapter on a similar subject as detailed in the first, for I have recently been swindled by what I have reason to suppose Is the same party."

"Much obliged to you, sir, but time presses, therefore let me have it without further ceremony."

"Very well," said he, "but I want a little of your advice.

What can I do with them? Oh, the audacity, the villainy!" and here he stopped, fairly choked with rage.

"My dear sir," said I, "I am quite prepared to hear any amount of audacity and villainy; but, for your own sake, don't work yourself Into such a towering passion, or you may make your wife a widow, or your children fatherless, by breaking a blood-vessel. They have not quite ruined you, have they?"
"Oh no, but they have swindled me clearly out of £60," said he, as soon as he could speak.

"How's that?" I enquired.

"Oh, the rascality, the wickedness!"

"Good morning, I really cannot stay to hear any further preface," said I, for I really was in a hurry.

"Stay, stay," said he, pressing my arm, "you really must expose this audacious swindle, or neither you nor I shall be doing our duty to society."

"Proceed, then, if you please, sir," said I, laughing, for I could not help it.

"Well then," he began his narrative. "I must tell you that by the most persevering industry and self-denial I have amassed as much money in business as to feel justified in purchasing a villa, about eight miles from town, and for years I have thought how pleasant it would be to keep a horse and brougham, so that my wife and children could take an airing when they felt inclined; and in time I thought we might be able to retire from business, and keep a pair of horses the same as the aristocracy. I have read most of the books published about the formation of the best horses' teeth, age, &, and fancied I should have no difficulty in selecting one to suit me.

"I had been on the look-out for some time, when an advertisement of a brougham horse, in a morning paper, took my attention as being the very animal I required. I went at once, to the address, and found a very pretty-looking bay horse, which the owner, a bustling, jolly sort of looking man, at once harnessed to a brougham and drove me back to the warehouse.

My cashier, who is the son of a farmer, always said he was a good judge of horses, and pronounced this one to be perfect. The owner said he had another gentleman coming to look at the horse, and I, to secure him, at once gave him a cheque for £60, the price asked, and made sure in my own mind that I had done well, as the man showed me an envelope, bearing a country post-mark, containing a receipt for £54, and a letter purporting to come from a clergyman, who had sold the horse, giving him the best of characters.

And stating that he only sold him because his physician had recommended him to take horse exercise; the concluding part of the epistle thanking the man for the capital riding horse, which had arrived safe by rail, in lieu of his old favourite, which he hoped would fall into good hands, for he was a good creature.

Altogether the whole affair looked so genuine, and the man himself so very plausible in his manner, that I never for a moment suspected being in bad hands.
"I sent the horse to a livery stable, and a messenger to the villa for my man servant, who came by rail, and at once took my new purchase to a saddler, and had him fitted with a set of harness; he then fetched the new brougham which I had recently purchased from the coach maker's and we started for my villa, where I thought I would surprise my family with the long-talked-of and much-desired horse and brougham.

Our way lay through Hammersmith; I sat on the box with the driver; the horse seemed to go very steady, but when we came to Turnham Green, Tom called my attention to what he described as the horse being a 'leetle groggy.'

"What do you mean, Tom?" said I. "You have not been giving him beer to drink before we started, have you?"

"Oh, dear no," said Tom. "I mean that he appears to go a leetle tender before, though his legs appear straight and fresh enough for anything; I think it must be in his feet."

"What's in his feet?" said I.

"Why, the cause of his going so near the ground, and so crappelly."

"What do you mean by crappelly? speak out, man, if you think anything is the matter with the horse," said I.

"Well, then," said Tom, "I believe he is a regular screw." "Not he, it is his way of going."

"I know that," said Tom, with an ominous shake of the head, "but we shall soon see, sire."

"I was very uneasy, for the horse evidently got worse as we neared home, and when we arrived his feet were carefully examined, but we could see nothing to account for his excessive care in placing them on the ground, and Tom said his legs were free from blemishes and natural heat in every joint, so that he finally gave an opinion that the horse was shod too tight.

After grooming and feeding, he was taken to the shoeing forge, where I accompanied him; his shoes were taken off in my presence, and would you believe it, sir, there was actually a pebble about the size of a pea inserted between one of his shoes and the sole of his foot.

"I thought when he came into the forge that he was beaned, sir," said the farrier to me.

"What do you mean by being beaned?" I enquired, thinking the pebble had got there in travelling.
"Why," said the farrier, "you have bought the horse from a coper; he is lame on the other feet, and this pebble was placed under the shoe of the sound foot to make him give way and go equal, and so disguise the lameness, which you will soon perceive exists on the other foot, when I have nailed the shoe on this again; but still he will not appear so lame now as after the effect of the pressure on the pebble is worn off."

"After the shoe was replaced, the horse was trotted slowly over the stones, and sure enough the surmises of the farrier were too correct, for he was dead lame, and a veterinary surgeon pronounced him to be suffering from 'acute founder.' I sought, but never found the rascal from whom I bought him, and after keeping the horse for some time, I sold him for £3.

"And now, sire," said this victim of horse-coping to me, "what steps would you advise me to take in order to obtain a horse to suit me?"

"Well," said I, "you must go to a respectable licensed horse dealer, confess your ignorance, and trust to his honour to select you a sound horse suitable for your purpose, at a reasonable price, or buy a ginger-bread one, and then, if you don't like him, you can eat him."

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"I'll trot you for a 'fiver,' sir," said a dapper-looking country coper who was riding a very good sort of saddle cob, to a fresh-complexioned, elderly gentleman, well known to this coper's confederates as being very fond of fast trotting horses, but who knew the pace of this cob to be much more than an equal match for the best of the gentleman's stud, which was an aged chestnut with a docked tail of the old Bank of England stamp of other days, and upon which he was now mounted.

These two individuals appeared to have met on the road casually. The coper being overtaken by the gentleman riding up at a slinging trot, and then taking his pace, they walked their horses side by side together. But in reality the meeting was planned by the gang for a purpose which will be seen in the sequel.

The elderly gentleman is as rich as a nabob, but, nevertheless, he thinks more of £5 won by trotting, that he does fifty made by another means; and, moreover, on this particular morning he was inclined for a bit of a spin, for there was a fine bracing air, and his old favourite "Blazeway" had just carried him about a mile from his princely mansion on his way to his model farm (which he visited every morning), at a rate that (like all other men afflicted with the trotting fever) Mr. S-thought nothing could surpass, excepting, perhaps, Flora Temple, the American mare (of whom he had read), or a telegraphic message.
Most men, who happen to own a horse of twelve or thirteen miles an hour pace, think while riding or driving them, that "there is nothing in this country can lick 'em."
"Why, they have trotted their animal from this place to that, with two in a gig, in an hour and three minutes, and they would like to know how far that is short of seventeen miles."

Don't believe 'em my friends, sixteen and seventeen miles an hour wants covering. it may not be too fast for Americans, for they are fast people, but our steady English sober sides will say it is too fast for them; they say, "'s pose the' orse was to cum down, or the wheel cum off oh smither 'em, they had rather go at the much safer pace of eight or ten miles an hour; it suits their book much better; it is not only less dangerous to themselves, but their horses' legs and carriage wheels wear so much longer.

When one of these owners of only middling trotters (chiefly fast tradesmen, young in business, who have not been bankrupt or insolvent yet) is bragging about his tear-away horse in some bar parlour, when more than half-full of Jersey brandy, and a two penny cigar between his teeth, you need not contradict him point blank-even when you know he is "throwing the hatchet," but you must just edge in sideways the remark, "Many a one would think that was an exaggeration; "never mind his being vexed, he will cool down again when you tell him that you believe every word he has spoken, but at the same moment mind you point the fore finger of your right hand over your left shoulder, and cheat the devil of the lie. But dear me, here I am, a mile from the crafty coper and his prey.

"Yes, a 'tenner' if you like," said the coper.

"Are you in earnest?" said the same old gentleman, at the same moment tickling old Blazeaway with the spurs, who responded by shaking the two extremities of his body as much as to say, "Be quiet, will you? Let me alone."

"Yes, I am in earnest," said the coper.

"Very well," said Mr. S--, "I'll have you a spin for £10, if you will trot this morning from here (the gates of Trafford park, on the Manchester and Al trincham road) to the' Pelican' at Sale Moor--about two miles."

"Yes," said the coper, "I am ready now," and away they went without further ceremony. Mr. S--"fired up" old Blazeaway with the persuaders, and sticking out his elbows at right angles, shook the reins and encouraged the game old animal with his voice. "Now, old boy, go along," said he; the old favourite shook his head and dropped his ears alternately, poked out his nose, and expanded his capacious nostrils, as he took the lead and kept it for more than a mile.

Mr. S--was in high glee as he kept looking over his right shoulder, and winking his eyes (he has a habit of continually winking his eyes when excited), but his opponent was close in his wake and laughing now, for the steel is evidently out of old Blazeaway, his first effort is fast exhausting the resources of his wind-a little touched to start with-
besides, he is too fat. Still the coper is courteous to his elderly opponents, and allows
them the lead through Stretford village (the source of black pudding and pork), where Mr.
S--is well known.

"Hurrah! hurrah! for Mr. S--." Shouted the children and their progenitors, as the
clatter of the horses' feet is heard, and their riders were seen through a cloud of dust.
"Aye' forward, ga' forward, little un, eawt the dust, thou'll be smothered, mon," they said;
the coper began to find this out too, and his cob and Blazeaway changed places opposite
the Cook inn on the outskirts of the village.

"Double the wager, sir," said the coper as he drew alongside Mr. S--; but the old
gentleman only shook his head; and with a "good morning, sir, I'll order your order at the
Pelican," he pulled his hat firmly down in front, and eased his hands; the merry little cob
answered like a cricket ball to the master hand of Caffyn, our glorious batsman, and left
poor old Blazeaway reduced to dying embers.

The coper was leading his cob gently about, although, he had never twisted a hair,
when Mr. S.--jogged in with poor old Blazeaway like a half-drowned rat.

"How much do you want for that cob?" said he to the coper. "£ 1 05, he's the best
goer in England, sir. Your horse is an out-and-out goer, but you see this is a better." said
the coper.

"Yes, he is, I must admit, and here are the £10 you have honestly won; and now if
you will ask me a fair reasonable price for your cob I will buy him from you," said Mr. S-

"Well, the lowest I can take is £ 1 00; he is an American bred horse, by Royal
Morgan, out of the celebrated Sweeney mare, and I'm satisfied that nothing in England
can leave him behind, either in or out of harness; he's as fast and as game a horse as ever
stood on iron," said the coper.

"Did Barnum bring him over?" enquired Mr. S.-laughing;.

"Upon my honour, sir, I have told you the truth, and I can refer you to the
gentleman who bought him in New York; he sold to settle a dispute, and the gentleman
bought him on speculation, and me and my brothers bought him the day after he landed,
from the same gentleman, who is over on a visit to Liverpool," said the coper.

The cob was really a good and sound animal, and an extraordinary trotter, and,
independent of his trotting qualities, was worth £40 or £50 for a gentleman's riding hack.
Mr. S--is by no means a bad judge of horses and he knew, after a careful examination,
that he should not be wide of the mark to give a hundred for him, more especially as he
could bring him out on the sly, and astonish some of his trotting friends in Manchester.

For money is not so much an object with the merchants there, when they wish to
gratify any particular hobby. I know a timber merchant in Manchester, who (five years
ago) gave £315 for a trotting horse, a chestnut, and yet this gentleman (Mr. Kearsley) never would match him for a shilling, he kept him solely as a hobby.

An ex-mayor gave £120 for a bay horse, bought at Rotherham fair by a Derbyshire dealer in 1853 for £18; the horse was then six years old, but it never was known up to this period that he was more than an average goer. I rode him myself the first time, when he covered a mile in three minutes and a hah!

The second time he was ridden by a friend of mine, and he covered the same ground in three minutes and ten seconds. I rode him again the following day, over the same ground, four times with intervals of rest between, and he improved his pace every time, until the last time he covered the mile in two minutes and fifty seconds; he was trained, and afterwards trotted a mile in two minutes and forty seconds--when he was sold to his present owner; who has regularly ridden him as a hack to and from business.

It was about this time that the Incident occurred which forms the subject of this chapter. Mr. S--had been beaten with these new-catched trotting horses, and he fondly hoped that, by purchasing the cob, he should turn the laugh against them, therefore he finally bought him for £100, and told the coper to bring him to his residence in the afternoon, gave him a crown to fasten the deal, and told him to keep the matter secret.

"For then I shall be able to take the nonsense out of a few of my friends," said he. The coper, true to his time, appeared with the cob, and received his money.

"I want no warranty," said Mr. S--, "It is only bad judges and old women who require warranties with horses. Now what ground do you think this cob can really cover in an hour?" said he to the coper.

"Well, sir," replied he, "I really don't know, for we never timed him; but he can go a burster, sir."

"How far do you call a 'burster?'" said Mr. S--. "Why, an extraordinary pace," said this Wiley coper. "Do you think he's as fast as 'Sir William?' "Who's Sir William?" said the coper.

"Why, the old American horse that trotted eighteen miles within the hour, on Knutsford race course; you must have heard of him" said Mr. S--.

"Oh! yes; you mean Roger Bowring’s horse of Pendleton; why, a great deal depends how he is ridden. Now, the cob won't go near so fast with you for the first week or two, as he went with me to-day, you see; for one thing, you are a heavier man, and you will not have the knack of keeping him together until he gets accustomed to your hands, therefore I should advise you to keep him hid a week or two, until you are sure that you are able to get his fastest pace out of him. So I wish you good day, sire, for I'm off to Ireland tonight. I will call upon you when I come back, and see how you like him," said the coper, as to took his departure.
Mr. S--rode his new purchase to the farm on the following day, but his trotting fever considerably abated, when, after sending him along at the top of his speed, all that he could squeeze out of him, amidst whipping, spurring, fretting, and breaking, was a mile

In six minutes. "He's not accustomed to my hands yet," said he to himself. Morning after morning the cob was tried, but a mile in five minutes was all that could be got out of him, after a month's riding, timing, and nursing.

Old Blazeaway was a well-known fifteen mile an hour horse, and In the two-mile match Mr. S.--reasonably thought that, al though not in trotting trim, he would at least go in the match at Stretford twelve miles an hour, or at the rate of a mile in five minutes, and he was completely bewildered, as may be imagined; for, in the two mile stretch at Stretford, he went by old Blazeaway like a rifle ball, but now the old horse could beat his opponent a mile In five.

My readers will also wonder how this could be, and It Is time to inform them that the cob delivered to Mr. S--was not the same coper trotted against old Blazeaway for £10 and sold to his victim. The gang had two of these cobs, as near alike as possible, and none but parties who knew them well could tell one from the other when seen separate.

The one delivered to Mr. S--had cost £24 at Stockport fairy, rather more than his value, because he was a match for the "Trotting Doctor," the name given to the real Simon Pure, because of the number of patients he had cured of the "trotting fever," and, In this case, his professional attendance upon Mr. S---cost that gentleman £86. But although his charges were high, his patients had the advantage of being permanently cured of that Infectious malady, the "trotting fever."

A few years ago, an Irish horse-coper brought a string of the best-looking screws across the Channel that I ever saw together. They were all well made, well bred, and in superb condition, and for two or three weeks previous to their arrival in England they were advertised in the Liverpool and Manchester papers as the property of an Irish nobleman, to be sold by auction without reserve, at a livery yard, situated among the densely-packed ware-houses in Manchester.

Great preparations were made by the proprietor of the yard, the stable was white-washed, and the boxes bedded down knee-deep in clean straw, the front of the yard was plastered over with large bills, and neatly-arranged catalogues were freely circulated, and many sent by post, to the most horsey merchants in Manchester and adjacent districts.

An auctioneer was engaged, who, although a man well up in the ways of the world, and of strict integrity, knew as much about a horse as a fish knows about its grandmother; but his respectability and standing in society made a capital passport for the copers to the pocket of his victims. The livery-stable keeper knew as much, and no more, than the auctioneer about horses, and when questioned about the owner, he winked and shook his head.
"The fact is," said he, "the man has done the pace too fast, and is obliged to pull up; but the horses must be sold-there will be no reserve."

The day before the sale took place, this herd of cripples, numbering twenty-eight, were landed from one of the Dublin steamers at Liverpool. They were all clothed in complete suits of one pattern, marked with the initials "L. K." The clothing had been bought for the purpose and soiled to make it appear as if it had been more or less in wear, thus, with the knee-caps and bandages, the screws were packed as carefully as Egyptian mummies.

Railway boxes were engaged at Lime Street, and it was arranged to send them by a train which arrived at Victoria Station, Manchester, about twelve o'clock, the time when the merchants would be in and about the Exchange (where the horses must pass on their way to the mart).

The screws were everyone led separately (by men engaged for the purpose) in Indian file, about a couple of yards from head to tail, and, as may be supposed they created no small sensation among the country manufacturers and merchants.

Manchester men are fond of "bargains," and those who are in the staple trade there have generally money in their pockets, or they know where to get it at very short notice; and, although I know some sporting writers of the present day who sneer at the idea of the Manchester school, as they term it, knowing anything about a horse, yet I can assure them that there are many Manchester men who ride as good horses, and are quite as much at home in the pigskin, as the best of London gentlemen; and let those who cherish a contrary opinion gird up their loins, and take a turn with the "Cheshire," among the bulfinches or the rasping stone walls, to be met with at every hundred yards in the countries hunted by the Oldham, Disley, or High Peak Harriers, and I am sure they will come away convinced that "Manchester men" are indeed, "men" in every sense of the word, and not to be sneezed at, just because they make their money out of cotton and calico.

However, many of these Manchester men, in common with four London and eleven Liverpool gentleman, were "jockied" to an unheard-of extent in the great "horse auction swindle" at Manchester, even a dealer from the West-end of London came down and bought two of these cripples, for which he gave £ 110, one of which was lame in the shoulder, and the other subject to staggers, and died in the stall soon after he arrived in London.

A cold, damp November fog ushered in the day of sale.

The auctioneer mounted his rostrum at eleven o'clock, and made a sort of speech to the numerous and respectable assemblage. I could not hear all he said, but he tried to look as pompous as possible, and commenced with something about being commissioned by the agent of an Irish peer, well-know on the turf, whose racing-stud had recently been
sold at Tattersall's, and who was now reluctantly compelled, by misfortune and a chain of adverse circumstances, which he could not explain, to offer his stable of splendid hunters and hacks for sale.

He was instructed by the agent to say that the horses were all sound, with the exception of a bay mare, which had caught a little "sea-cough" in transita cross the Channel; in fact, the unsound and "amiss" horses had been sold or turned out in Ireland, the expense being too great to bring them over at the risk of not being able to sell them.

To these preliminary remarks the auctioneer added that the horses would be sold to the highest bidder, who must pay for them at the fall of the hammer, as the agent had to be in Ireland on the following day, the cash being urgently required, the lots would be sold without the "least reserve."

A staff of "touters" were posted here and there in the crowd, to bid and run up the prices. The sale commenced in earnest. The horses were shown in a narrow carriage-way, forming the entrance from a busy thoroughfare to the yard. This was prepared for the crippled feet of the screws with a deep bed of litter from the dung-heap, and over that again plenty of clean straw, to hide side bones and sand cracks, by burying the feet in the straw.

A smart, active looking roan, clipped, and in good condition, was led from his box on to the litter, to the end of which he was led by the groom at a quiet walk, who then trotted him back, and placed him in front of the rostrum. Twenty pounds, five-and-twenty, thirty, and thirty-five were the offers, until they reached sixty-five for the roan gelding and his clothing (the clothing of every horse was sold with them), and in less than two hours every horse, including the one with a "sea cough," was sold.

The victims were pleased with the new style of showing the horses; there was none of that whipping, shouting, and scrambling out of the way of their heels, so common at some repositories, where the horse is seldom permitted to show a distinct pace of walk, trot, or canter; and here I shall observe that, notwithstanding few, even of the most finished connoisseurs in horse-flesh, will close a bargain for a saddle-horse until they have seen him "walk,.."

I do not know one single horse-bazaar in the kingdom (and I have seen business done at many) where the proprietors check their "whoppers-up" in the foolish practice of punishing and frightening the horse about to be offered the moment he emerges from the stable, to the danger and disgust of many gentleman who would otherwise be purchasers; for when so alarmed and punished, it is not in the nature of a high-couraged horse to make the most of himself (as some erroneously suppose), because he cannot settle down to his paces, and perform them with anything like confidence, while a fellow

Is torturing him from behind with a long whip, and another is continually checking up his head with a deep-levered, jaw breaking, curb bridle. For the horse is then much in the same position as a man would be were he in a narrow lane, with a high wall
on each side, the sea before him, and the devil behind him. In fact, all that the bystanders can see of a horse at some repositories is a series of hops, skips, and jumps.

In making these remarks, I do not wish in any way to insinuate that no good or cheap horses can be bought at horse bazaars; on the contrary, I know that many first-class horses change hands at these places.

But in these cases the purchasers generally know more of the horses they buy than it is possible for them to ascertain while they are writhing and contorting their forms in fear and agony under the loud cracking and deep cutting whip, in the hands of the man employed for the purpose.

Gentlemen, and all good judges of horses, like to see them in their natural state, and free from excitement caused by artificial means. In fact, they wish to see them as they are likely to appear at their own stables, after purchase.

But even at the establishments of many most respectable dealers it is common practice, when showing a horse to a customer, to cut him with a whip, or rattle a hat behind him, when he is in the midst of a nice steady trot, and this instantly causes a high couraged horse, when fresh in condition, to break his pace, and jump with his hind toes close up to his fore feet; thus the natural steady business like action is suddenly transformed into a succession of antics similar to the irregular gambols of a young bear.

The indiscriminate use of ginger is also to be strongly condemned. Indeed, there is no real use in its application at all; it only tends to mislead the customer by producing a false appearance.

For the effect is transient, and does more harm than good, by creating dissatisfaction and unpleasantness between dealer and purchaser, when the horse is seen in its true colours at the stable of his new master, who always did and always will prefer natural to artificial courage and false appearances.

Indeed, men of common sense need not be told that the more natural courage a horse has in him, the less need has he for the application of the means above described to produce artificial appearances.

All this was well known to the experienced Irish coper, who acted as the assumed agent of an Irish peer.

He had studied human nature as well as horse nature. The whole transaction was divest of anything like professional horse-dealing; and many of his victims thought they were making a good thing out of him, because he did not know how to make the most of his master's horses, or was not sufficiently Interested to do so.
The result was that the horses found customers as fast as they were brought out of their boxes. And the agent appearing so very green completely allayed suspicion, if any ever existed, as to the sale being a *bona fide* affair.

The sale realized upwards of £1000 (the average value of the screws was about £10 each, and, after paying the auctioneer and livery-stable keeper, the agent shook hands with them both, and said he was off to Liverpool to catch a Dublin steamer that evening, but he got into a Stockport omnibus and rode to Stockport, and from thence proceeded to London, where he arrived the same evening.

He had only one confederate; the "touters" were only engaged for the day. The confederate went to Dublin, where he telegraphed, in the name of the agent, to the auctioneer, to be kind enough to go to the Inn where he had slept in Manchester, and fetch a rug (which had been purposely left there), and make it up in a parcel, and direct it to an address in Limerick.

This dodge sent several victims to Ireland after the agent; for, as may be imagined, there was a regular "hubbub" raised among some the dupes in the course of a few days after the sale. Others, wiser, kept their folly to themselves. Most of these screws were more or less unsound in their wind, some quite broken-winded, some roarers, others were lame in the shoulder, or had acicular disease; many were as old as "men," but none were spavined, and none had either curbs or splints.

There were no visible Infirmities worth naming among the whole lot, and the ruse of selling them at a place where there was no room to run them on the stones was only discovered when too late.

All the badly broken-winded horses were so skilfully "set" that they would have baffled the judgment of a practiced hand, if he had pinched the windpipe and thus caused the horses to cough, to enable him to ascertain, by the peculiar sound, whether the wind was right or not.

CHAPTER VI

Patrick Dunlevy, the assumed agent of an Irish peer, cleared upwards of £600 by his horse auction at Manchester, exclusive of expenses; and suspecting that he would, in all probability, be wanted, and sought for at the various fairs for some time to come, he thought it best to avoid such places.

He also considered it prudent to change his mode of getting money, style of dress, cut of whiskers, &c. And the badly fitting suit of grey frieze, and broad-brimmed hat that enveloped the body of the agent at Manchester was given away to one of his poor countrymen in London, and R. Patrick Dunlevy was now attired in tight fitting Bedford-cord trousers, a New market coat, with a long-cut buttoned-up-throat waistcoat, of some kind of thunder-and-lightning pattern; the suit being surmounted by a low-crowned hat, very much turned up at the sides.

Mr. Dunlevy had made up his mind to buy a few second-class race horses, and travel with them to the minor race meetings when the flat race season commenced; and in the meantime he would lay by—for it was only Christmas, and he had more sense than to risk his money in steeple-chases. For, said he, so many of 'em tumble and never get up again.

During this interval he was joined in his lodgings in Camden Town by his Irish confederate, Denny O'Byrne, who was better up in racing matters than him, and the brace managed to pick up half-a-dozen "leather flappers," of more than average merit for second-rate horses.

The best of them, the "Queen of Hearts," cleared the cost of the whole, the second time she ran—all the others being squared, and their owners making more than the value of the stakes by the betting alone, and Dunlevy was, on the whole (with Denny's assistance), very fortunate.

They bought a better class of horses, and entered them at better meetings, for much higher stakes.

Nearly two years had now elapsed since the "Horse auction swindle," and Mr. Dunlevy, thinking that all had blown over, made up his mind to enter two of his horses to run at the Manchester September Meeting. Denny O'Byrne was sent on, in charge of the horses, the day before the races were commenced. They were stabled at the Griffin Inn, near the race-course.

There is a nice bowling green at the Griffin, frequented by the most respectable class of gentleman who reside in the Bulgaria of Manchester, Higher and Lower Broughton.

These gentlemen, however, on this particular evening were more interested in watching the arrival of race-horses, and discussing their merits, than in their customary pastime on the bowling-green. Amongst this party was one of the "agent's" many victims, who had given £58 for a "roarer" at the sale, when his eyes rested upon the visage of
Denny, they flashed with excitement, wonder, and surprise. Denny noticed this, but still did not recognize the gentleman as one of the purchasers at the sale. He, however, thought there was danger in the wind, and became alarmed.

"Whose horses are these, my man?" said the victim.

_Denney._"Mr. Dunlevy's, sur."

_Victim._"Was Mr. Dunlevy ever in Manchester before?" Denny._"The truth is he was, sur."

_Victim._"Were you with him when he sold a lot of horses by auction in Manchester?"

_Denney._--"Yes, sur, but I had nothing to do with that business."

_Victim._--"I didn't say you had; they belonged to an Irish nobleman, I think, if I remember right."

_Denney._--"Yes, sur."

_Victim._--"Well, I bought a horse at that sale, which turned out very well, and I want another to carry me with hounds this season; I am very partial to Irish horses, and perhaps your master would not object to assist me in the purchase of one, if I paid him well for his trouble. When will he be here?"

_Denney._--"To-morrow morning, sur, about eleven."

And the victim walked triumphantly away. Denny locked up his horses, and walked up to the Commercial Inn to Dunlevy, who had arrived in Manchester, and determined to risk the chances of detection. Denny related the particulars of his interview with the "swell," as he called the victim.

"And now, Dunlevy, my boy, off with you from this, for sure there's danger in staying."

"Well, but what's to be done?" said Dunlevy; "the horses must be run."

"True and they must, and one of them must win too, me boy. Will you leave it all to me?" said Denny.

"Not at all, Denny; I'll tell you what we'll do. You know Mick, don't you?" said Dunlevy.

"Does a duck swim?" said Denny.
(Michael Dunlevy was a dealer in smuggled, or rather, illicitly distilled whiskey, and Ireland was too warm for his health. His trade was carried on through the medium of Irish reapers in harvest time, which carried it from place to place, and sold it to the farmers and second-rate public-houses, as being smuggled by them from Ireland.

The ground covered by his travellers was part of Lancashire, Cheshire, and Staffordshire. He lived at a small village near Macclesfield; but at the time of the "horse auction," he was in Knutsford Gaol, having been convicted of illicit distillation; but his brother Patrick had generously paid the penalty, £25, after his luck at Manchester, and set him free.)

"Well now, Mick must stand in my shoes to-morrow, for you know we were twins," said Dunlevy.

The business was discussed and settled. Dunlevy went to his twin brother, and sent him well-togged as a turfman to the Manchester races (only a distance often miles from where he resided). The victim and a lawyer were waiting for his arrival, and at half-past eleven Mickey arrived at the Griffin, and played his part as owner of the race-horse.

The victim pointed him out to the lawyer.

"That's him," said he, "I could swear to him among a thousand men."

The lawyer approached Micky, and offered him a piece of paper, which he took. "Your name is Dunlevy, I presume?" said the lawyer.

"That's my name," said Micky. "Patrick Dunlevy, I suppose?"

Mick."Divil a Pat - my name Is Michael Dunlevy."

Lawyer."You know this gentleman," (pointing to the victim.) "Mr. Dunlevy, surely you remember selling a lot of unsound horses by auction, In Manchester, last November but one. That is a writ for £55. The horse was a 'roarer,'-which you knew very well. He was sold by public auction for £11 10s, and wth expenses, our claim is £55; and if you don't know us--We'll soon make you know us," said the lawyer, as he walked away wth the victim.

"Sure, and I never sold a gentleman a horse in Manchester in my life, and to blazes wid you 'an your paper an' all! "said Mick, as he tore up the writ, and tossed it in the air, like a swarm of butterflies.

Patrick Dunlevy attended the race meetings as usual, but was never seen conversing wth Mick and Denny. Mick was followed from place to place by the lawyer, who in due course served the declaration, and when the term of grace expired, the Queen of Hearts and the Maid of Killen, the only two horses wth them then, were seized In execution, and sold for little more than paid the expenses of the sale, and finally Mickey,
who purposely kept in the way, was arrested and taken to Lancaster Castle, but he paid
the debt and was liberated.

His turn now came, and he sued the victim for the illegal sale of the two racers,
and for false imprisonment. The case was tried at Liverpool; Mickey proved that he was
in Knutsford Gaol at the time the sale took place, and therefore could not, at that time and
place, have represented the agent of an Irish peer, in Manchester. The jury awarded
damages, £1 00 each for the two horses, and £100 for the false imprisonment, with costs.

"We'll make you know us," said Mickey to the lawyer, as he jostled against him
on leaving the court.

This I trust may be a lesson to those who are cheated by horse copers with no
fixed residence, to sit down quietly with the first loss, for it is most assuredly the least.

* * * * *

I remember a kind of horse-coping, half-betting, regular "fly-fellow," taking up
his abode in a populous town where I then resided; no one knew from whence he came,
and he took very good care not to tell anyone.

The nature of my business frequently led me to a respectable Inn, kept by a well-
known dealer in first-class horses, which was also patronized by this worthy; many
readers of sporting papers would know the man I am describing, were I to write one of
his names, for he had many, but none, perhaps, was more appropriate than the one given
him one night at the Inn, after a clever dodge at cards, and that was Double-shuffle; he
was a man of considerable astuteness, and well he might be; his forte, like that of many
others, being to get money by any means, provided he could steer clear of the criminal
law.

Double-shuffle to those who knew no better-passed as a gentlemanly sort of man,
with a very good address; he lived in respectable furnished lodgings, had a wife, or
mistress, who dressed rather extravagantly; she was at least fifteen stone weight; and her
figure belonging to the style known in the country as "dumpy."

Double-shuffle always had a few horses, or rather screws, standing for sale at a
livery stable, and was always on the look out for a flat. In one instance the flat came from
York, where he was formerly well-known as a "Dealer in Horses." but not being very
well up in his business, he entered into another; still, however, he continued to deal, or
rather dabble, a little in horses.

He came over to M--, and Double-shuffle came across him at the Inn before
referred to. In course of conversation, our coping hero asked him to come up and look at
his stud, amongst which was a very handsome bay horse, once the property of the Earl of
Wilton. This horse was sound, but no farrier could shoe him without first casting and
hobbling him; few men could mount him in saddle, and fewer still could ride him. If ever
they succeeded in mounting him; In short, the horse, although full of fashion, breeding, and quality, was valueless; but Double-shuffle had obtained him, for the express purpose of teaching some one a lesson on how to buy horses.

Mr. H--, of York, thought he would be just the thing to carry a young gent, whose inclination led him towards a pack of harriers, kept in the neighbourhood, and who employed Mr.--to buy him a suitable horse for his first essay in the hunting field. Double-shuffle said he had bought the horse at a bargain, and would sell him again as such. £84 was boldly asked, and the horse finally sold for £73.

A warranty of soundness and perfect freedom from vice was given, and the horse was shortly on his way to York, whither Mr. H--accompanied him. A day or two elapsed, and I was taking a glass of pale ale at the bar of the Inn aforesaid, when the landlord entered. "Good morning," said he; "I have just received a letter from that gentleman who bought the horse from Double-shuffle; here It is," handing me the following letter:

Yorkshire,

"My dear Sir,-The horse I bought from 0 the scoundrel whom I met with at your house is a perfect devil. I sent him to be shod this morning, but the lad who mounted him, by a leg up on the blanket, for the purpose of riding him to the forge, was immediately thrown over the brute's head, and his skull fractured.

I afterwards directed a man to lead him there, which he managed to do, but not without a deal of trouble; but when the farrier approached wIth his box of tools, within range of his heels, he sent them out and broke three of the poor fellow's ribs.

I have therefore concluded to send him back by the 3 o'clock train to-morrow; and if you will send a trusty man to the station for him, and keep him at your stables until you get me the money back, I will pay you all charges and expenses, and you will render me a service.

"I am, my dear sir, yours faithfully, "G--H--,"

"Well, what do you think of that business?" said the Innkeeper to me. "I have sent for Double-shuffle, and I expect him here presently, and he shall see the letter."

"I should do nothing of the kind," said I, "for the language Is too strong. You will have to go quietly and warily to work on him to get the money back."

"Oh! But I'll show him the letter, and see what he says; there can be no harm In that," said my friend. "As you please," said I. "Here he is, by Jove." "Morning, gentleman," said Double-shuffle.

"Good morning," said the Innkeeper; "read this letter." Double-shuffle reads. "Oh! Scoundrel, he calls me, does"
He? I'll teach him better than to call a respectable man a 'scoundrel,' Give me a nip of whisky, cold. 'See his Yorkshire eyes! I'll be even with him, for I'll bring an action for defamation; I'll make him prove his words, that I will."

"Well, if you do that you will be a scoundrel," said I. "Oh, you be bowed! mind your own affairs; I know what I'm about. Scoundrel-ah! well, that's good. Good morning, gentlemen," said Double, as he shuffled out of the bar.

"What do you think of the £73, and the horse's box to and from York, now?" said I to my friend.

"I wish poor H--had it," said he.

The time arrived to send the man to the station for the horse, but when he arrived there he found Double-shuffle and his man waiting for the train. In obedience to Instructions, Double's man walked up to the other and asked him to an Inn, near the station gates; he was waiting for a horse coming by the same train, but it would not arrive while they were away; and if it did, the horses would stand in the boxes until they were ready to lead them home.

The ruse took; and when the train arrived, in the men's absence Mr. Double led the horse to his own stable and locked him up.

"It's no use being called a scoundrel for nothing," he said to himself.

The man went home and told his master the truth. Double had signed the book at the station and taken charge of the horse for my friend, to whom it was directed by a card attached to the body-roller, as also entered in his name in the way-bill.

"What's to be done now? I'll send for the police and have him arrested for obtaining the horse under false pretences," said the Innkeeper to me.

"Yes! that would be as clever as showing him the letter," said I, "for if he had never seen the letter the horse would have been in your stable instead of his; not that it matters much where he is, for he's not worth a week's keep."

"What would you do, if you were me?" said my friend. "It must be a case of diamond cut diamond," said I. "Will you leave it to me, and I'll try to get the horse back or another better?"

"Agreed," said my friend.

It wanted about five days to Doncaster Races, and I knew Double-shuffle would go there. His confidential servant, Jack, was always left in charge of the screws, with power to sell, while he was away at the various race meetings. Jack, although a clever
fellow was very fond of drink; but nothing delighted him better than to catch a flat, and have a "deal" while his master was away.

The day after Double went away I sent a confidential friend (not resident in the town) to Double's stables, with proper instructions.

"You have some horses here for sale I understand," said he to Jack, who hitched up his breeches, and touched his cap with his forefinger.

"Yes sir," said Jack.

"Where's your master?" said the gentleman. "Donkisser," said Jack; "but I can show them and sell them too."

There were four of these beautiful screws, all in separate boxes; the bay horse, the subject of the dispute, stood in the corner box. A rakish looking brown blood mare stood next to him; she had navicular disease in her cobbly-looking, contracted feet.

An ewe-necked, snig-bellied looking thing, with four white legs and a bald face, which Jack said was by Harkaway, and another miserable looking brute, whose sire might have been Accident, and dam Misfortune, with splints on both fore-shanks overlapping the knee-joints, and the scars of both old and recent marks of speedy-cut inside the shanks, as well as brushing on the fetlock joints, both before and behind, completed the stable of Double-shuffle.

"I want something to carry me quietly in saddle; and if you will pick me out one that is likely to suit me, if I buy it and like it, I will make you a present. I live at S--, my name is R--; your master, I think, would know me. What is this brown mare?" said he.

"A very good mare, sir--a very good mare--and perfectly quieting saddle. Will you get on her back a few yards, sir?"

"Thank you; I cannot ride to-day, for I have sprained my knee-joint." This is just the thing for Jack; he is glad the gentleman is not able to ride to-day.

"What is this horse in the comer?" said he.

"That horse, sir, is one the master bought from the Earl of Walton, who is reducing his stable; we call him Walton. He is a splendid saddle horse--so quiet, yet so showy, and such a beautiful mouth. I rode him from Heaton-park in a saddle that did not fit him--he is so high in his withers--and the saddletree has slightly galled him; so master said he would keep him until he got all right again, which he will be in a day or two, as the skin is not broke--you see, sir, only slightly bruised. Master ordered me not to put a saddle on him, or I should have liked to have shown him to you mounted. He is a
splendid animal; but I think master has a customer for him, when he is ready to ride and show."

"How much do you want for him If! Take him as he is, w/th all his faults?" "£84, sir, is his price; and if he was In London, one hundred and fifty would be asked. I have lived In London, and have seen many worse horses sold for that sum.

"Come, now, suppose I give you a pound or two for yourself, what is the lowest your master will be content w/th?"

"Well, sir," said Jack, "If you will stand a "fever," you shall have him for £73."

"Very well, I'll have him; bring him down to the -Hotel, in an hour from now, and I'll pay you for him. My man will meet you there, and take charge of him."

The hour passed, and Jack led the identical bay horse into the hotel yard. I was watching all that was passing through the lathes of a Venetian blind. A man in livery met Jack, and "kicked" him for something for himself.

"Wait till I get the rhino," said Jack, in great glee.

My friend, the Innkeeper, had provided me w/th a blank cheque, which I gave to our confederate, who had it ready filled up for £7810s., when Jack was ushered into his presence, in a private room at the hotel.

"Well, you have brought the horse, I suppose." "Yes sir," said Jack.

"Well, here is a cheque for £78 10s, which includes the £5 I promised you. Now you are sure this horse Is perfectly sound, and quiet to ride?"

"Oh, yes sir! as nice an animal as ever was shod, I assure you."

"Well, we shall see," said my friend, as Jack retired from the room, and scampered off to the bank w/th the cheque.

It was, however, a considerable distance, and there was ample time for the "man In livery" to lead the horse to the stables, where he ought to have been the day he came by rail from York, before Jack laid his cheque on the bank -counter to be told there was "no effects."

"No effects!! I don't want 'effects:' I want £78 10s." "Oh, that be bad! How! What! How the duce is that? and then the truth suddenly flashed across his mind, he had been sold himself, and given the horse away.

He strongly suspected where the horse was, but could obtain no clue, as the dealing Innkeeper and myself only laughed at him. Double-shuffle returned home after
the races, made a great bounce and bother; but the horse was sold by public auction, and scarcely realized the expenses. Mr. H--, of York, reduced the debt to £50, to bring it within the jurisdiction of the county com1. The judge ordered it to be paid by twelve monthly Instalments, but Mr. Double shuffled out of the country before the first Instalments, became due; and so Mr. H--was shuffled and copered out of £73, which one would think (from the difficulty in getting hold of them by these means in York) ought at least to be worth seven hundred in any other.

* * * * *

I knew a brewer's traveller, who resided in one of the most populous towns of the midland counties. He was a thorough go-ahead sort of fellow, who could get orders in his particular line where some milk-and-water sort of travellers would have starved. He from a remarkably fast-trotting bay mare, in brown harness, attached to a neat light -built gig.

His attire was decidedly of the horsey character. it consisted of Bedford cord trousers made very tight, cut-away coat, &c.,&c., which savoured more of the country horse-dealer than of his own business, and nothing pleased him better than a spin on the road in' a trotting match for a few pounds, or a transaction in horse flesh with some fast tradesman or' horse dealer, and, though not much of a judge, he was generally lucky in the purchase and sale of horses.

Besides his business as a traveller on salary and commission for an extensive brewery firm, he was the proprietor of a livery stable, and let hacks for hire under saddle and in harness.

This department of his business was managed by a man from whom he had bought the business and lease of premises, and who had saved so much by being a master as enabled him to commence business as a servant. This man had a superabundance of low cunning, but no common sense.

With it (as is the case but too commonly with many others of the same sort) all were fish that came to his net; and this had been his ruin, for no one who did business with him once would do so a second time.

For instance, he would receive a horse to livery at an agreed sum of one pound a-week, but when the bill was rendered there would be an extra charge of five shillings a week for grooming, and a shilling now and then for an alternative or a cordial medication, when the horse had never had them.

Sometimes gentlemen would send horses to livery with a view to sell them, and advertising them in the papers to be seen at his stables in this case he would (when a customer applied to see the horse) shake his head significantly, and "crab", that is, say that it was unsound, or had some fault; and this he did for the mere purpose of keeping the horse at livery to his own advantage and profit.
This is a prevalent practice everywhere, especially in London. Many other disreputable things, similar to these, sent him to the insolvent Court, where (having sold his business, and pocketed the money) he was required to give it up to the assignees for the benefit of his creditors, and received his discharge.

Being turned upon the streets almost in a destitute condition, the brewer's traveller, out of pity, appointed him as a manager in his old quarters, but required him to lay aside every low, quirking trick, and manage the concern in a fair, business-like manner.

A short time in this capacity, however, sufficed to finish his career, for he was detected as being privy to a systematic robbery (practised, more or less, in many places) in the sale and purchase of hay, which, for the information of horsekeepers, I shall describe. In this instance the manager always bought his hay from one hay-dealer, or salesman (not a farmer), and having twenty horses at work, he was a good customer; the hay was of good quality, bought at a market price, and weighed at the town's weighing machine.

The proprietor never suspected anything wrong until a singular circumstance revealed and exposed the whole plot. It was in the winter of 1853-54, when the price of good old hay rose from £4 to £10 a ton, in consequence of the vast quantities being bought by the Government and shipped to the Crimea, that the swindle was extensively carried on. In the centre of the load of hay was left a hole sufficiently large to hold the body of an extra-sized man, who ensconced himself therein until the hay was sold and weighed; the trusses being so arranged that the man could breathe freely, and yet no person could, by the appearance of the load, ever suspect that a man was concealed among the trusses.

In this instance, the man weighed upwards of eighteen stone, being 2 1/4 cwt., which, at £10 a per ton, made the swindle amount to 22s. 6d. per load, as the consumption was two loads, of about a ton, each week.

The hay being always bought by the single load, so as to give them the opportunity of weighing the same man In each, the proprietor, by these means alone, was swindled out of £2 5s a week.

The man weighed with the hay used to get down from the load between the weighing machine and the stable, at a signal from the driver, when the course was clear; and so this little game was carried on for a long time, until one day the man never answered to the signal, and it being known that he was in liquor—in fact, drunk—when he went on duty, it was feared that he had fallen asleep, and might be suffocated among the hay.

The driver mounted the load and cleared away the trusses, when the man was discovered black in the face, and all but dead; he was sent to the hospital, and fearing death, confessed all, and implicated many others beside the manager of the livery-stable.
keeper-In fact, there were but few gentlemen in the neighbourhood who had not-through their grooms-bought and paid for this man by weight many times over.

The result of this business was the forfeiture of a sum of money by the hay salesman to the proprietor, which was preferred as more profitable than a prosecution, and the dismissal of the manager, who now was turned completely adrift, shunned and despised by everybody who knew him.

He had, however, as I have said before, a superabundance now cunning, and very soon after the occurrence of the above events, he left the town and allied himself to a gang of trotting copers, by whose assistance he concocted another scheme to swindle his late generous and forgiving master, the brewer's traveller.

The scoundrel knew, to the second, in what time the bay mare, before alluded to, could trot a mile at her most clipping pace, which is, three and a-half minutes; but the trotting copers possessed a horse they called Dusty Bob, that could trot a mile in considerably less than three minutes, and getting the necessary information from their new man as to the whereabouts of the traveller on a certain day, two of them started with Dusty Bob harnessed to a gig, to the rendezvous, and awaited his coming; and in due time up he dashed with the bay mare at a spanking pace, and pulled up opposite the bar-parlour window of the Inn, where the two copers sat, one of whom had alighted from the gig a few hundred yards from the Inn, and walked into the house as if he were a perfect stranger to the other. This one accosted the traveller with-

"A nice mare you are driving, sir; she looks like trotting," said he.

"Yes, she's a fairy gore, sir—a very fairy gore," said the traveller.

There were several more people in the parlour at the time, one being the butcher, who lived hard by, and who knew the traveller well from the fact of his always treating when he called at that house, and also from a little similarity in their tastes, especially in trotting matters.

At this juncture the landlord entered, and after shaking hands with the traveller, they retired; the footsteps of the landlord were immediately heard on the stairs, and in another minute or two he descended, a brief interval elapsed, when the pen and Inkstand were fetched from a shelf in the bar, then a rattling of gold and silver was heard in the distance, and all was over but a low murmuring, which sounded very like kilderkins, barrels, ale, porter, empty casks, &c., &c.

But while all this was going on in the little snuggery, the conversation between the butcher and coper had commenced; mildly enough at first, it is true, but it had now waxed very warm about the respective merits of the bay mare. The coper thought his old "bag of bones" in the stable could trot faster.
The butcher strongly advocated the traveller's opinion, with the addition of sundry thumps of his mutton fist on the table, that there was "nothing in this country" could lick the mare; "Midland Pride," he called her.

The traveller now entered. This was the last calling place; he had been lucky that day both in money and orders, and a common observer, who knew the man, could see it in his beaming countenance.

"Now, Sam, what's this entire row about, my boy?" said he to the butcher; and, turning to the landlord, "Bring a bottle of sherry," he added.

Sam (with a sly wink).-"Why, this gentleman thinks he has a horse in the stable that can lick your mare at a trot."

Traveller (with a wink at Sam).-"Oh, what's the use of talking about that nonsense? You know very well my mare can not trot fast, Sam."

Sam-"Well, no; but still I don't like to sit here and hear people bounce about their fast-trotting horses."

Coper (with well-assumed warmth).-"Who is bouncing"

Sam. - "Why you, and If you think anything about your Grand trotter, back him for a 'fever' against the mare; that's what I say."

Coper.-"Indeed, I have no 'fever' to bet about trotting- Horses."

Sam-"Well, then, shut up." Coper.-"When I please."

Traveller.-"Drop It, Sam-drop It. Come, sir, have a glass of sherry with me," said he to the coper, in a conciliatory tone.

Healths were pledged, and there was a temporary lull in the somewhat angry controversy; but another bottle being subscribed for by the company, and glass after glass finding its way to the eight two penny worths of villainous whiskey on the butcher's stomach, it soon became a case of wrangling drunk a character which none can act so well as the half-butcher, half-horse-dealing, trotting genus homo, so often to be met with in our horse-proud country.

The coper bided his time; he knew very well the butcher would again bring up the trotting controversy; he had also noticed the traveller's wink, and knowing his weakness, he was tolerably sure of a match. He walked out of the bar, ostensibly for the purpose of ordering his horse.

"I don't know," said Sam, "he is all bounce, and holds no sugar."
"What do you mean by sugar?" said the confederate.

"Tin, rhino, money, to be sure," said Sam.

"Oh, there you are mistaken, for I noticed, when he paid for his brandy, that he had a bag of coins," said the confederate.

"Had he?" said Sam, brightening up, and turning to the traveller, "let's try him whether he will back his 'bag of bones,' as he calls him, against the mare," said he.

Traveller."Very well."

(Enter Coper.) "Well, will you have a spin for a 'fiver?" said Sam.

Coper.-"Didn't I tell you before that I had no 'fiver'? to spare?"

Sam."Ah, I knew you were all bounce. Your horse can't trot at all; Indeed, you were never able to buy a trotting horse."

Coper."You are very insulting, and to prove to you that you are mistaken, I will match my horse for a 'fiver,' as you call It, against this gentleman's mare-a mile In harness."

Sam."Agreed, here's my money; cover It, and you're on."

The coper pulled out lots of money from which he counted £5, and staked the whole In the hands of the landlord.

The nags were harnessed, a crowd of people collected, and the match came off, the owners driving from one mile post to another, as agreed, outside the village; the coper kept Dusy Bob well in hand and he lost the race, but not before he had ascertained that he could have gone by the mare at any time. The party adjourned to the Inn; and, as may be imagined, was in high glee. The drinking and bragging were kept up till a late hour.

The coper feigned drunk. The traveller was really drunk; so was the butcher. They wrangled and chaffed the coper in turns; until finally they agreed to trot the mare against his horse for a £ 100 a side.

The traveller posted the money on the table and the coper covered it, and a sporting miller, resident in the village, who dropped in casually, was deputed to hold the stakes. It was agreed that the race should come off over the same ground on the following day.

The traveller and butcher were in high glee; indeed, the latter booked the race as his own, and particularly requested the Insertion of a proviso in the agreement, "that
either party failing to be at the post at twelve o'clock the day following, should forfeit the money down."

This was signed by both parties, and shortly after the company broke up, the coper staying at the Inn all night, and the confederate, who had well played his part of "keeping the game alive.", slept at another Inn.

Long before twelve o'clock the day following, might be seen all the horse talent in the neighbourhood assemble at the place of meeting for the great trot. The butcher was most anxious to drive the mare; but the owner preferred the honour of driving her himself. Company, without breaking.

The coper knew this very well. He also knew by the nervous, anxious twitching of the traveller’s face, that the night’s drinking had done Its work; and that, although he had assumed drunkenness himself, he went to bed perfectly sober.

The sporting miller acted as judge, and the parties started their respective nags (harnessed to gigs) at the tap of a drum, and away they went—the mare breaking directly after the start; but catching her stride again, she led at a switching pace. The butcher shouted, and tossed his hat.

"Let her go," said he, as he galloped along in the rear, on a spavined hack, continuously fiddling wIth his persuader on the poor brute's side.

The traveller did let her go, but still he could not shake off the coper; he gave her the whip, and she broke badly; and now the coper passed her. But the fine handling of the traveller again brought her down to business, and again she had her nose In front; the half-mile was now covered.

"Let her go, let her go!" again shouted the butcher; but the coper thought It was now time to let Dusty Bobby go, and away he went, winning by more than 200 yards; and waiting for the traveller coming up, he accosted him quietly wIth-

"I think your mare does not go quite so fast today as she did yesterday, or old horse has wonderfully Improved. What do you think?"

Traveller.-"Oh, you be hanged!"

Butcher.-"Yes, you be hanged, you swindling thief!" Coper (to sporting miller).- "Give me the stakes."

The stakes were handed up, for they had been fairly won, and there could be no protest.
"There," said the coper (returning £5 to the miller), "give the butcher a bucket of gruel and a bran mash, for which you can payout of this, and keep the rest for yourself. And now I'm off. Good by," said he, as he eased his hands, and Dusty Bob dashed away.

"A clean sell that, by jingo," said the brewer's traveller.

CHAPTER VII


A Captain B--, of Brighton, called at the establishment of a respectable horse-dealer In the west end of London, and, after inspecting several horses In his stud, selected one as being the most likely to suit him, but left the completion of the purchase until the following day, when, he said, he would come to London, and call again, or write to the dealer.

On his way to the railway station, he called at a hotel, and read in a morning paper an advertisement of a brougham horse to be sold, described as the property of a medical gentleman, who could be referred to, and, the address being In the same direction he was going, after leaving the hotel, he took the opportunity of dropping In to see It, thinking It was just possible to pick up a bargain.

"You have a brougham horse here for sale?" said he to the groom (who was a well-known horse-coper in the garb of a groom).

"Yes sir," said Jimmey, the groom. Captain B.--"Let me see him out." Jimmey .-

"Certainly, sir."

The horse was brought out, and Jimmey expatiated on his merits. The Captain was no judge, and although many of the horse's infirmities were hidden by his condition, yet any person who possessed the slightest particle of knowledge about horses might have seen that he was a thorough screw.

"Who does he belong to?" Inquired the Captain. "Doctor L--, of St. John's Wood."

Just at this moment, another character appeared on the scene; he was a respectable-looking, aged person, wearing a black, clerical-cut coat, a broad-brimmed hat, a respirator covering his mouth, and a gold-headed cane in his hand. He walked slowly
up the yard, stopping now and then to cough. And entered the stable, without the least noticing the Captain. He inquired of the groom, in a low, husky voice, and feigning Illness, whether his daughter had been there."

"Oh dear, yes sir, she has-and she is in a pretty way about you, sir, being out in these cold, easterly winds. She left word that she was going to Swan and Edgar's, In Regent Circus. To make some purchases, and that if you called here, she desired me to say you were to go up there immediately."

"Yes, yes, I'll go," said he, as he hobbled off, being seized with another fit of coughing in the middle of the yard.

"Is that the gentleman who owns the horse?" said the Captain to Jimmey.

"Yes," said Jimmey; "that is Dr.--."

The Captain waited until the coughing scene was finished, and then, walking up to him, said-

"Pardon me, sire, but you are Dr.--, of --Road, St John's Wood."

"Yes, I am, sir," said the Doctor, with an effort.

"You have a horse here for sale; what do you want for him?" said the Captain.

"My dear sir," began the Doctor, "I'm sorry that I am not able to talk to you as I could wish; for, as you see, I am very poorly (gasp for breath and lays his hand on his side.). I am going to Germany to recruit my health, and have left the sale of him all to my groom, who is an old and trustworthy servant.

He has been with me eighteen years, and he will tell you all about the horse; but I may say, that I bought him from the breeder, he is six years old, and, for anything I know to the contrary, is perfectly sound. I instructed James to sell him for £8; he cost me £136. But I am anxious to sell him for I am going away in a few days. Excuse me staying longer with you. Good morning, sir!"

"Good morning." said the Captain, with a very low bow. The upshot of this scene was the purchase of the horse from Jimmey, and, returning to the hotel, he wrote a letter to the dealer, of which the following is a correct copy from the original, which is now before me:-

Webb's Hotel, March 17, 1859.

"Sir-I much regret that I shall not be able to take your horse, having, after I left you, met with a medical friend, from whom I purchased one which, I think, will be more suitable for my purpose.
"I am, &c., "J--B--."

Jimmey received the cheque for £84. Which he got cashed, and, in accordance with the Captain’s Instructions, led the horse to the railway station, and sent him in a box to Brighton. When the horse was put into his new master's brougham, he commenced to kick, and soon proved himself a coach maker’s friend, by caving in the front part of the vehicle with his hind feet, and cut his own hocks very badly in the bargain. The veterinary surgeon was sent for to dress the wounds, in doing which he discovered a "bog spavin."

This led to further examination, when it was found that the horse was suffering from chronic lameness in both fore feet, besides other Infirmities too numerous to mention: suffice it to say, that his value was not more than £5 or £6.

The Captain immediately went to London, leaving Instructions for the groom to bring the horse by rail. He took a cab to the Doctor’s stables, but nothing was known of any Doctor, and Jimmey, the groom, only had a screw standing there at livery a few days, and he had never been seen since the horse went away; that was all they knew about the man.

Here was a predicament for the Captain to be in, and the horse on his way to the town! What was to be done with him when he arrived; for it was evident that he had been done very brown? At last he determined to take the horse to the very dealer to whom he at first applied for a horse.

He would confess everything, and ask his advice, and, if possible, get him to take the screw as part payment for the horse he at first selected, or some other, if that was sold. He accordingly met his groom and gave the necessary Instructions, and followed himself, but when he arrived found the principal away at Lincoln Fairy; so he left the horse at livery, telling the foreman he would come again on a certain day. When the dealer arrived home with his horses, he found the Captain’s screw very comfortably quartered in one of his best boxes.

"Halloo, halloo, Jerry!" said he. "What on earth have you got here?"

"It's a horse that Captain B--, of Brighton, left here, sir.

He's been cheated by a gang of copers, and wants your advice," said Jerry.

"Indeed," said the dealer, "Captain B-- ought to have taken my advice at first, and bought the horse I offered him: "He said he would do so now, if you would take the screw off his hands." said Jerry.

"Oh, oh! me take the screw off his hands! I'll not have such a heap of Infirmity on my premises," said the dealer, and immediately wrote the following note to Captain B--:
Sir,-I am surprised that you should attempt to disgrace my establishment, wth leaving such a wretch of a horse at livery there during my absence. I desire that you immediately send for him, or I must send him to you, by rail or road, charging you wth the expenses, as I wish you to understand that mine is not a knocker’s yard at present. "Yours, &c., &c."

Immediately on receipt of this letter, the Captain came to London, and apologized in the most handsome manner to the dealer, which, of course, he accepted, but refused to treat for the screw.

However, the Captain bought a sound horse; and then came the question, what was to be done wth the other poor brute? The native Intelligence of the dealer had been quickened by the deal, and he offered to take him off the Captain’s hands, at knocker’s price, to save him the trouble of sending him there.

These terms the Captain accepted, and, as far as he was concerned, there was an end of the transaction.

The dealer knew the whereabouts of the coping gang who had swindled the Captain particularly the one who figured as the "Doctor,"-and he determined to punish him in his own way, and make a profit by him at the same time.

Those of my readers who are London horse-dealers will know whom I allude to as the Doctor, and they will be pleased to know that, In this Instance, he was pretty well dosed wth his own physic. The dealer suggested to the Captain that he would sit down and write a letter to his dictation, and post it to him (the dealer) from Brighton. The following is a copy:

--Terrace, Brighton, May 2, 1859.

"Dear Sir-I bought a horse from a man who represented himself to be a physician, at St. John's Wood, and find that I have been grossly swindled, as no such person is known in that locality. The horse is unsound and worthless. I have sent him for your Inspection, and if you will take this matter up for me, find out the scoundrels and give them in charge of the police, I will come to London and prosecute them to the utmost rigor of the law.

For any trouble or expense you may incur I will simply repay you, as I am determined to make an example of them. I send you a description of the scoundrel who calls himself a doctor in a separate form-via, a handbill, a thousand of which are printed and ready for distribution; but I await your advice, please write me by return.
"I am sir, yours faithfully J--B--."

This letter was posted at Brighton, and received by the dealer, and he wrote to the Doctor (alias Coper) the following:
Sir—If you value your liberty, meet me at the --Hotel. Don’t come near my establishment, or you may meet the enraged Captain, to whom you sold a screw for £84 last week, who may give you into custody before you have a chance to settle it.

"Yours, &c.,"

The dealer sent the horse first, and then followed himself to the meeting place, and in a short time was confronted with the Doctor, who now appeared to be quite recovered from his Illness, and attired like a person in the middle walk of life. He was attended by two cut-throat-Looking fellows, who were evidently employed for a rescue, or any other purpose, as occasion required.

But when the Doctor saw there was no immediate danger, he made a signal, and they withdrew. The dealer knew by this that he had him in his power, for he was frightened.

"Read this letter, " said he, handing it to the coper. Doctor reads, and folds it up again. "This must be settled," said he.

Dealer.—"I should think you must settle it; and immediately."

Coper.—"Will you stand my friend?" Dealer.—"On certain conditions." Coper.—"What are they?"

Dealer.—"That you take the horse back and return every shilling of the money, pay £ 1 0 for expenses, and £50 to compensate me for the trouble I have taken to suppress the circulation of the handbills, and thereby saving you from jail, where you have been so often; for If you go again you are certain to be transported."

Doctor.—"I agree to the conditions, and will pay you the money and take the horse back."

The money (£144) was paid to the dealer then and there.

He subsequently paid the Captain his money back and expenses (although not bound to do so), and kept the remainder for himself, so that, In this Instance at least, one of the most clever horse-copers In London was out-copered.

* * * *

My chapters on horse swindling are now drawing to a close, and I flatter myself that I say that the principal object which I had in view has been attained, which Is, that of drawing a line between the honourable licensed dealer In horses and the low swindling coper, w/th which London and the country abound.

There is at all times a sufficient number of useful horses to be found in the boxes of respectable dealers, so that there is no reason that gentleman should incur the risk of being cheated in the purchase of them. But the desire to buy cheap horses is so
predominant, that the regular licensed dealer is deserted for the horse co per, which is the cause of our continually hearing of gentleman being swindled. Purchasers seem to forget

(If they ever knew) that really good horses, free from defects, well formed, perfect in their paces, and free from vice, can scarcely be too dear at any price.

I notice many horses in London that for fashion, breeding, and quality, cannot be surpassed in any part of the world. I also notice, even in the equipages of noblemen and gentlemen of well-known wealth, many miserable weeds that would not fetch £20 each in a fair.

I cannot compliment their owners for their taste; and were I a wealthy man, I would ride and drive the best horses that the country could produce; they cost no more in keeping than bad horses; besides, a really good horse is as good as ready money in the bank-he can either be sold or kept; but there is always a difficulty in finding a customer for a bad horse, and it is seldom that the seller hears the last of him, even after he has delivered him, and received the paltry price from the purchaser.

Nothing bespeaks the true-bred English gentleman so plainly as the quality of his horses; such a man invariably patronizes the respectable dealer. The penny-wise and pound-foolish gentleman will patronize the chanting coper, and always pay as much in the long run for unsound horses as he would have done for honest animals at the establishments of respectable men.

I know a gentleman who, in July last, came to London for the purpose of buying a pair of carriage-horses; he applied to a dealer of high standing in the West End, who recommended a pair of young, fresh, and exceedingly handsome horses, for which he asked the sum of £168.

The gentleman brought a dozen friends and a veterinary surgeon, to aid his judgment, and the horses were all but purchased, when one morning he picked up the Times and read the following advertisement:-

"To be sold, in consequence of demise, a pair of carriage horses. They are six years old each, and perfectly sound; recently cost £21 0; but, to effect a speedy sale, the sum of £126 will be taken, and a warranty of soundness and freedom from vise will be given. - Apply to Mrs. Hard acre, Hall, Cumberland, or the business can be transacted through her coachman, who will be in London on the 12th (this was the 11 the), and the horses can be seen on that day, at--Mews,-Square."

"The very thing for me; how fortunate I did not buy the pair for which I am in treaty, for, most likely, these are quite as good, if not better," said the gentleman to himself, as he entered the address in his pocket-book, sallied out of the Queen's Hotel, in Cork Street, and hailed a cab.
Twenty minutes brought him to the door of the stable where the flat catching beauties stood waiting his or some other victim's coming. A stable boy was In charge, who at once volunteered to run for the coachman, who speedily came. He was attired in a spanking new suit of mourning livery.

"You are Mrs. Hardacre's coachman, I presume," said the gentleman to the coper In livery.

Coper (pulling off his hat and smoothing his hair over his forehead wIth the left hand).- "Yes, sir."

Gent.-"These are the pair of horses she advertised for Sale, I suppose."

Coper.-"Yes, sir."

Gent.-"I suppose you have been driving them." Coper.--"Yes, sir; I have driven them for my poor master for the last two years; but Missus is only going to keep a pony and phaeton In future, and so she has the carriage horses for sale."

Gent.-"Are they quiet and sound?"

Coper.-"Oh dear, yes; my poor master was an excellent judge of horses; he bought them at four years old from the breeder. I trained them myself, and they have never been in any other hands but ours."

Gent.-"Do you think £ 126 would be the lowest?" Coper.-"Yes, sir; I'm sure It would, In fact, I expect a gentleman here every minute. I think he's a horse-dealer; he saw the horses yesterday at the railway station, and promised to call here this morning and look at them again."

Gent.-(considers).-"Well, I'll take them at the price, If you will allow me a week's trial."

Coper.-"If you will wait until the other gentleman has called, and If he does not buy them, I shall have no objection to let you have them a few days, If you will deposit the price of them; for you see, sir, I'm a stranger In London, and I want to be on the safe side."

Gent.-"Well, I'll take your word, and pay you for them, if you will give me a warranty."

Coper.-"I have the warranty ready written. My Missus got her lawyer to draw it up. Here It Is, sir. It only wants filling up wIth your name, sir."
The gentleman took the warranty and the coper to his hotel, and paid him £126 for a pair of the most miserable screws that ever were collared. One had a pair of bog spavins, and was a wheezier; the other was a curb-hocked roarer of at least seventeen summers.

This was, of course, soon discovered by the gentleman's groom. He wrote to Mrs. Hardacre, the widow lady, but his letter came back, marked "returned paid letter." The horses were sold for £27, and are now in the hands of a notorious gang of chanting copers in the west end of London, and are constantly being sold to gentlemen who are on the look-out for cheap horses, and rebought by the agents of these copers. But, again, let me remind horse-buyers that if they want fashion, substance, and quality combined, they must be prepared to pay the breeder a fairy price for the judgment and risk always consequent upon raising the best kind of horse stock, and which always find a ready market with the London dealers of position.

* * * * *

The true horse coper will seldom stoop to any other species of roguery but that of cheating the inexperienced horse buyer; but there is a class of men who regularly frequent fairs and the vicinity of horse repositories, who dress and ape the horsey style of gait so peculiar to the coper; these are neither more nor less than thieves in disguise.

They would as soon knock a man down on the highway and rob him of his money as they would drug his liquor in a low public house, and then pick his pocket, or induces him to make a bet upon some paltry matter get him to stake his money, and then run off with it, or pretend to wrap it up for him, and substitute forged notes and base coins in place of his good ones; in short, their chief vocation is to get money in any way or shape whatever, with a recklessness and barefaced effrontery that would astonish the regular sneaking town thief.

One of their favourite dodges is to sell a drove of cattle or sheep, and draw the money for them during a temporary absence of the owner, and decamp.

I remember a case of this description occurring at Shrewsbury fair, where a grazer left a boy in charge of thirteen cows, while he went to dine; the lad was treated to a show by one of the gang, while the whole drove of cattle were examined by a customer, which they had casually picked up, and sold to him as a bargain, being, as they said, the last of a large number.

When the owner returned from dinner he found the boy absent, and the dupe marking the cattle with his own private mark in a busy bustling style, that told too plainly he had paid for them.

"What on earth are you doing with those cows?" said the owner.
Dupe.-"Why, you see what I'm doing marking 'me to be sure."

Owner.-You'd better let 'me alone, I think or I'll mark you."

Dupe.-"Well, that's good, however; can't a man do what he likes wIth his own?"

Owner.-"His own,' did you say? Why, you crazy fool, these cows are mine."

Dupe-"Your's uh! where's your keeper, cranky? You must have escaped from some mad-house. Why I've just bought the cows, and paid £207 for 'em."

Owner.-"You lie, the cattle are mine, and I have not sold 'em."

The dupe and his herdsmen attempted to drive the cows away by force. A crowd collected, the police came, and finally the cattle were impounded, until the true ownership was ascertained, and the poor dupe made fully aware of the great mistake he had made. The delinquents got clear away wIth the £207, and the dupe employed detectives, and wasted a deal more good money, in the hope of bringing them to justice, but without success.

This class of thieves Includes thimble-riggers, card-sharpers, conjurors, &c.; but they never meddle wIth horses; the cast of their countenances is eternally stamped with the prison die. And they cannot stand the keen searching glance of men whose avocation is among horses.

For of all men, I believe thoroughbred English horsemen, be they dealers, breeders, or hunting gentlemen.

Are good judges of human character, and a rogue cannot stare them in the face without feeling uncomfortable. There is a bold and searching expression in the eye of a good horseman. And an easy confidence in his gait, that seems to tell you that he fears no man, and can face most women.

Look at our genuine hunting men; they are Nature's gentlemen; by which I mean those who can and do ride up to hounds, distinct from the made-up specimens of sportsmen occasionally visible at the cover side, but who are never to be seen elsewhere, and who dare not compete In a tidal of pluck and skill wIth the real hunting man across country; the wealth of a Nabob would not tempt them.

If all those young gentlemen who have the means, would breathe more country air, and Indulge more frequently In field sports, Instead of wasting their valuable health In the enervating dissipation of a London life, they would secure to themselves a much larger amount of enjoyment than that which they now partake of, and of a rational and satisfactory description; and their pallid countenances and languid looks would give place to the ruddy glow of health, accompanied by the bright eye, the smart elastic step, the happy beaming countenance, and manly resolution of England's most noble children -
viz., her hunting, shooting, fishing, coursing, rowing, cricketing, rifle volunteering representatives. But I am unconsciously wandering from my subject, the exposition of the practices of that class of the community who live upon the credulity and Industry of others.

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Another trick, becoming very much in vogue with these characters, is called the "salt trick." The modus operandi is as follows:- Two confederates appear as strangers to each other, and enter some business doing public house, where the company are of a class that is likely to tolerate a betting transaction; one professes to be suffering most acutely from tooth ache, and commences to rub his jaw with something screwed up in a bit of paper; the confederate asks him what the paper contains, and he tells him "salt."

"Why," says the confederate, "whoever told you that salt would do you good?"

"Why, a dentist to be sure," says the other.

"And does it really do you good?" asks the confederate. "Certainly, or do you think I should be such a fool as to use it?" replies the other.

At this moment the one with the toothache places the screwed paper containing the salt on the table, and retires. The confederate immediately suggests that it would be a good lark to change the contents of the paper and substitute ashes or sawdust.

Some of the companies invariably enter into the lark, by changing the contents of the paper, and replacing it exactly where the supposed dupe left it, which, on entering, immediately commences using it again.

The confederate recommences chaffing him about his old-womanish method of curing the toothache, until the other tells him to mind his own business, and not to annoy him. "For," says he, "what have you to do with it?"

But the chaffing is kept up until the man with the toothache offers to bet a certain amount of money the contents of the paper are salt, and nothing else. The confederate, however, contrives to shuffle this part of the business on to the shoulders of some one else.

There is, however, generally one or more in a bar parlour company who are always ready to bet a few Pounds about anything, especially when they think they see so clear a chance of winning, as in this case the money is staked, and the paper is opened, when 10, the contents are really salt, and nothing else—the man having watched his opportunity, and changed the screwed-up paper left on the table, and prepared by the confederates, for another exactly of the same size, containing salt, previously prepared, and safely deposited in his pocket.
This is a case of "diamond cut diamond," and the company invariably turns the laugh against the man who has lost his money.

This class of rogues Is too often confounded wIth horse copers, which Is a mistake, for although the horse coper will invariably cheat a man In the purchase or sale of horses, and have recourse to the most unworthy means to attain his end, he has too much spirit and too much pride, however misplaced it may be, to descend to these very mean and paltry practices of extracting money from the pockets of the unsuspecting.

He is an unmitigated rogue, but in his own way; he flies at high game, and goes in for large amounts, and scorns to descend to the petty devices of the salt trick.

* * * * *

"Good morning, sir," said a well-made up horse-coper to a Welsh farmer, who was on his way wIth a drove of sheep to Chester fairy last spring. The coper was in a gig, and Invited the farmer to get in and ride, leaving the sheep In care of a lad and a dog. He accepted the coper's offer, and rode wIth him to Chester, a distance of about five miles.

They were very chatty together, and In course of conversation the coper told the farmer that his business at the fairy was to buy two or three horses for his master, a nobleman, for whom he was farm bailiff.

"But," say he," I am not over-fond of my job, for I have not been much accustomed to the purchasing of horses at fairs, there are so many of these rascally copers who frequent fairs, and I am afraid of being cheated. Do you know anything about horse-dealing?" said he to the farmer.

"Nothing at all; I never deal in anything but sheep, and It Is seldom that I attend fairs," said the Welshman.

They reach Chester, and drive into the yard of an Inn, when the horse is stabled. They then adjourn to the bar parlour, and the Welshman pays for glasses, and soon after they separate about their respective business. The Welshman strolls about the fairy until the lad arrived wIth the sheep.

The coper keeps his eyes upon all his movements, and In the meantime weaves his net, wIth which he intends to catch his unsuspecting victim. He first transfers the horse and gig which he drove to the fairy, to a confederate. The gang then consults, and the least suspicious looking man in the lot is told to assist Coper No.1 in the Intended swindle.
The best trotting horse in the lot of screws which form their joint stock, is saddled
and bridled, and stationed at a certain rendezvous, for it is more than probable he will be
required.

A very good-looking horse is then turned over to Coper No.2. This horse, in
addition to being a roarer, has been "nerved" (a term used among horse copers for the
operation called "neurotonomy"), that is, if a horse is lame in his feet (navicular disease is
the most common malady to which the operation of neurotonomy is applied), he is
relieved by a separation of the nerve which supplies the foot with feeling; the horse will
then go sound; but this is an operation which requires a great amount of skill, and is but
rarely practiced by veterinary surgeons upon gentlemen's horses; for although the horse
may be relieved of the agony proceeding from acicular or any other disease of the feet by
this operation, he is never considered safe to ride or drive afterwards.

Copers, however, often have recourse to this operation; and, as practice makes
perfect, they think no more of nerving a horse than they do of "setting him" for broken
wind, or dosing a kicker with opium.

The horse is cast on his side, and secured with hobbles, an incision is made in the
skin of the shank, just above the fetlock, and laid back. The nerve and sinews are all
exposed.

The nerve is then divided, when the horse is turned over, and the like operation
performed on the other side. The skin is sewn together, and the horse ceases henceforth to
suffer the pain in his feet, and in a short time the incision is healed; but a mark is left,
frequently disclosing itself by a line of white hairs; these are dyed to the corresponding
colour of the surrounding parts, and the inexperienced eye cannot detect any mark of
lameness, for the horse is to all appearance sound.

The horse selected for the purpose of swindling the Welsh farmer, as I have
already told my readers, was a roarer, and had undergone the operation of neurotonomy.
He had been long bought from a gentleman, whose veterinary surgeon had returned him
as incurable of the acicular disease, and in place of shooting him or nerving him, and
turning him out as a pensioner, he was sold for a mere trifle to a gang of copers, who now
kept him for no other purpose than that of swindling the inexperienced.

This horse was about sixteen years old, but his mouth had been so skilfully
"bishop," and the indentations over his eyes so well puffed up, that the unsuspecting
observer would suppose him to be only six years old; he was a rich brown colour, about
sixteen hands high, in fine condition, and very handsome.

Coper No.2 was dressed like well-to-do farmer, and took charge of this screw,
whose value was certainly not more than £10. The lynx-eyed Coper No.1 watched the
Welshman sell his sheep, and marked him down at the Inn where he went with the
purchaser to receive his money.
He then had a second consultation with his confederates, the result of which was, that one should accompany him to the Inn, where he knew the Welshman to be; they entered the room where the Intended victim sat, saw him roll up his honest-got notes, and deposit them in an inside pocket of his waistcoat.

"Well, sir, how are you by this time?" said the Coper, addressing the Welshman.

"Oh, all right," he replied. "Sold the sheep?"

"Yes."

"Well, I have done my business too, and when I have paid this gentleman for two horses, I am ready for home; perhaps you will ride back with me as far as I go?"

"Thank you I will," said the Welshman.

The copers sit down, and Coper No.1 takes out his pocketbook and pays his confederate £110, all in forged notes, the other throws a genuine pound on the table for luck.

"There," said Coper 1, exhibiting two genuine £5 notes, "these and this pound are all the money I have left; I am afraid his lordship will grumble at me, for he said I had quite sufficient money to buy a carriage horse as well as two cart horses."

"Oh, he will never grumble at the price you have given me for the cart horses; they are well worth more money; but do you really want a carriage horse?" said the confederate.

"Yes, we do."

"What colour? Is your governor particular?" Inquired the coper.

"Well, yes, he would prefer a brown gelding, about sixteen hands high, as he wants to match another." said Coper No.1.

"How fortunate; why, a friend of mine has the very horse for you, one he has bred himself, and has been working him easily on the farm since a four-year old; he is in the fairy with him, and he was unsold an hour ago, for there are no London dealers here today, and nobody else will buy such a horse; but let us go and see him if he is not sold. Have a walk, sir," said Coper No.1 to the Welshman, "and then we shall lose no time, for I want to be off."

"Yes, I'll go with you," he replied; and the three go in search of the friend and his horse.

"Oh, here he is; I see he is about selling him to that dealer, I'll warrant."
"No, he isn't a dealer. Why, It's the Mayor of Chester." "By Jove, he's a nice horse," says Coper No.1, "and just the very animal for his lordship."

"He is a nice horse," says the Welshman.

"Now, your worship," says the apparent owner and breeder, "It Is not like buying a horse from a stranger; you can take the horse and work him a month, and I'll give you a warranty, and If he does not suit you can send him back and have your money returned. " At this moment a man, dressed In livery, hurriedly approached "The Mayor," respectfully touched his hat, and said."Please, sir, you are wanted Immediately, Sir Watkins Williams Wynn has arrived."

"I'll see you again," said "The Mayor", as he hurried off the stage wIth the flunkey.

(There is always a flunkey in a well-organized gang of first-class copers.)

"How much do you ask for that horse, Mr. Owen?" said the man who had acted his part as receiver for the cart horses.

"£73," said Coper No.2, "and he Is richly worth one hundred; but as you know I require the money, and there are no buyers of this class of horses here to-day, or I should have sold him for that sum, I have no doubt, I'll take that sum."

The horse has now to play his part, and well he performs It; the lad who holds him is Instructed to "Run him on a bit," and away he goes In grand style exhibiting his really grand action In a graceful trot; but the lad knows better than to trot him back, and he walks him proudly up and fixes his forehand on rising ground-If he had been trotted briskly back, the roaring would have been detected.

"But there he is," said the assumed breeder, "as sound in wind and limb as any horse in the world; I'll give a warranty wIth him, and sell him for £73."

Coper No.1 now taps the Welshman on the shoulder. "A word wIth you," said he, as they retired a few paces. "Now," said he, "this is just the very horse for his lordship, but £11 is all the money I have left, and if I do not buy him it is probable The Mayor will. You and I are going the same way, and if you will lend me £62.

To make up the £73, I will give you a pound; of course you can keep the horse until I get you the money from his lordship, "said the coper. "Or if you like it better, I will give you this £ 11, and you can buy the horse and pay me £ 1 0 back when his lordship pays you; and when I explain the matter to him, I have not the least doubt that he will give you a £5 note for the loan of your money."

Very well, I'll buy the horse for you, I have quite plenty to pay for him without your£11;perhaps we may get him for £70, and then we can divide the shillings between
us, his lordship will never dream of anything," said the Welshman, who was not a bit more honest than he should be.

"Agreed," said the assumed bailiff, and the Welshman forthwith buys the screw for £73; he sends his lad to lead the horse the same way he had travelled with the sheep that morning, the assumed breeder wishes him good-bye and great luck with the horse. The bailiff says he will go and order the gig; they will overtake the lad, who can ride with them, and the horse will run behind.

And he is off; but not for the gig, for in less than five minutes he is on the back of the trotter before alluded to, and dressed in a smock-frock and wide-awake hat, he is rapidly covering the ground in a contrary direction, and the same night at ten o'clock he meets his confederates (who have travelled in the gig) not a hundred miles from Chapel Street, Sanford.

One of the gang, however (who has never been seen by the Welshman), is left behind to play his part. This fellow sends a lad to the Inn where the Welshman is waiting for the bailiff.

"Is there a gentleman here waiting for Lord A--'s steward?" says he.

"Yes," says the Welshman.

"Please, sir, he told me to tell you to walk after him; he is waiting for you at the toll-gate."

Away goes the Welshman; but the bailiff is not at the tollgate.

"Have you seen a gentleman go through here with a low crowned hat, and wearing a green coat with metal buttons?"

"No," said the toll-collector.

"Well, he'll be up directly; will you tell him that the sheep dealer has walked forward?"

"Yes," said the man. The poor victim walked on, and kept turning his head at every rattle of wheels, but the bailiff came not. He overtook the lad leading the miserable screw.

"It is strange," said he, "what the gentleman can be doing." They walked on a little way further, and then stood still to wait for the bailiff. The victim eyed the horse from head to heel, but, like the Irishman once said, the more he saw him the worse he liked him.
While he was looking at him, the coper who had been left behind came walking up, in a contrary direction (having, by a cross cut, come into the main road some distance ahead of the Welshman).

"Is that horse for sale?" said he. The Welshman, whose heart was fast failing him, thought there would be no harm in selling him, especially if he could make a profit.

"Yes," said he.

"How much?" said the coper.

"A hundred pounds," said the Welshman.

"Of what?" enquired the coper. "I suppose you mean soap, at 6d. per lb., for that would be £2 10s., and more than he's worth."

Welshman.-"More than he's worth! What do you mean?

Why, I have given more than £70 for him."

Coper.-"Then you've been jockied. Why, the horse is a roarer, I am sure. I can tell by the unnatural width of his nose; look how wide the air passages are from his nostrils upwards; and, well I declare, I'll bet any amount of money that he's been nerved, too, for 'vickeler disease."

Welshman.-"What do you mean by being nerved for 'vickeler disease."

Coper.-"Why, you take him back to Chester and show him to a veterinary surgeon, and then he'll tell you all about it; however, I'll convince you that he is a roarer."

The coper here jumped on to the horse's back (where he had often been before) and trotted him smartly out for two or three hundred yards, and galloped him back a confirmed rarer—there could be no mistake, he roared like a mad bull.

"Oh, dear, oh dear," said the Welshman, "whatever must I do with him?"

Coper.-"Well, brings him to a veterinary surgeon, and let him examine whether he has not been nerved, and then I will buy him of you."

The screw is brought back to a veterinary surgeon at Chester, and examined by him, and the tale of his infirmities being confirmed, he is finally repurchased by the coper for £6, and is thus once more reinstated in the hands of the Philistines to be again be used as an instrument for making victims.