



DRIVERS I HAVE KNOWN.

BY MONTAGUE C. FURTADO.

Illustrated by FRANK FELLER.



HERE may or may not be any foundation in fact for the old adage which teaches us that a man can be known by the manner of his driving. It is none the less patent to every man, woman and child who has eyes to use, and uses them, that every type of driver has certain well-defined and separate traits by which he may be readily distinguished from his cousins of a cognate type. So easy is it, by the aid of these differentiating characteristics, to recognise a member of one driving fraternity even among those of another closely allied to it, that Bill the costermonger would feel that he was failing in the due performance of the educational obligations of a parent if he did not stop, in the course of vociferously declaring that the potatoes on his stall were to be given away at the rate of five pounds for twopence, to chide his "little nipper" in the vernacular if he found him so lacking in general intelligence as to mistake a bus-driver for a cabby.

If only actuated by delicate feeling and

common politeness we must not be oblivious of these distinctions, for drivers, like all other frail mortals, have their own ideas of caste and class prejudice. Of course no man outside of Colney Hatch would mentally connect a wedding-driver with a quill-driver. But it would be quite as idiotic and a trifle less prudent for one who had not "pugilist" stamped all over his face and fists to speak, within earshot of a hansom cabby, of him and of the driver of a donkey-cart in the same breath. We should remember which of the two sits the higher in the world.

It is even open to doubt whether the driver of her Majesty's carriage would not consider it *infra dig.* if it were hinted that he had anything in common with the driver of a char-à-banc. For of course the Queen's driver is the prince of all the professional drivers of quadrupeds. Most of us have seen him; we have watched him as he sat in pomp behind his stately eight; we have looked into his round, good-natured face as he peered from beneath his embroidered hat; we have been dazzled by his glittering

gold, and have felt how drivers of a lesser degree must recognise in him the personification of the acme of comfort and the quintessence of luxury.

Perchance his appearance may have conjured up contrasts in our minds. There may have come chilly visions of the sleigh-driver as we find him in parts of Russia. Perhaps it was his hairless face that gave our thoughts a diametrically opposite impulse towards the driver of the hunting-sleigh, long-bearded with a view to warmth, standing with his short-handled, long-thonged whip behind his trio of sinewy horses—one

Yet there are few of us who have not found it in our hearts to envy this light-hearted gentleman as in his noisy course he leaves behind him each successive milestone, recalling to our minds the merry days of the old stage-coach, and the masked rascal with a short argument packed away in his pistol. How he upsets the little village! How the yelping curs scatter to the roadsides to avoid the clattering hoofs of the panting four as their driver urges them past the old women, fresh from the wash-tub with rolled-up sleeves, who have appeared like magic at the cottage doors, and out of range of the eyes



THE QUEEN'S CARRIAGE.

saddled in case of need—cheered on his way by the merry concert of the sleigh-bells and the dogs, half dreaming perhaps of his old Cossack days as, wrapped in his capacious coat with its fur collars and cuffs, he drives homeward over the snow at sunset.

Probably—for so strong are the prejudices which different customs and modes of life induce—our hardy, iron-nerved, sleigh-driver would regard with ill-concealed disdain the sprightly gentleman, with the blandest of smiles on his face and the brightest of flowers in his coat, who drives his four-in-hand, inclining his ear to catch the joyous chatter of the lady by his side.

of the butcher, whose head has so speedily issued between the leg of mutton and the sirloin of beef which alone adorn the apology for a shop and serve to indicate the nature of his business! But this is a luxurious driver; he smokes his cigar on such an elevated rung of the driving ladder that the smoke from the clay of the donkey-driver near the bottom does not seem to offend him.

We all know the donkey-driver. He is as well-acknowledged an institution at the seaside as the nigger-minstrel himself. When we watch him, as with stick and badge he trots across the sands behind his stubborn



THE RUSSIAN SLEIGH-DRIVER.

FRANK FLETCHER

beasts, we know the donkeys lead him, he doesn't drive the donkeys, they are far too philosophical to be discomfited by his never-ceasing shouts, which only serve to render clamorous the little terriers which the lady visitors have brought with them from town. But the awkward donkey-driver knows his business for all that; experience has taught him that if it is useless to seek to master his donkeys it is peculiarly advantageous to parade his deep attachment to them. How well he knows that a caressing stroke and a kindly pat will steal away the heart of the little blue-eyed girl who so readily finds the way to open the purse of her fond mamma!

over grandfather's old overcoat, which has passed that minor stage of threadbareness which would have qualified it for being cut up for the little brother's jackets, father's old silk hat, which has gone to church so regularly for years, the battered birdcage which was wont to contain the poor little canary that died last summer, and all the old boots and shoes which, if not now disposed of, the thoughtful maiden dreads may be hurled after her on that eventful day.

We know the procedure of the shoddy old bargain-driver, how, sack over shoulder, he slides his broken, greasy hat to the back of his still more greasy head and jerks out



THE DONKEY-DRIVER.

Ah, artful donkey-driver! have you not something in common with another driver whose power is not wielded among quadrupeds but bipeds? There must be some relationship between yourself and the cunning bargain-driver, of unquestionable nationality, who is so pleased to inform his clients that he pays the best price for everything of every kind which has ceased to be of use to them. What a kind-hearted creature he is! How good of him to wait upon the young woman, of circumstances not too flourishing, who is about to assume the bonds of matrimony and is using every means in her power to supplement the wherewithal to purchase her trousseau! He has come to drive a bargain

his "*Grosser gericht Gott!* vat for ein lot! Vat is de lowest you vill take? Vat! Five sheelings? *Ach! Mein himmel!* I would lose money vere I to take it for noting! *Grädige frau!* zay—zixpence!" "Well, take them off and yourself as well and let me clean up the mud you've brought in," testily replies the damsel, thinking, mournfully no doubt, that the insignificant augmentation of her stock of wealth scarcely repays her trouble in collecting the rubbish.

Soon she is to meet a driver of a very different type, one beaming with smiles, dazzling in his large bright buttons, radiant in his white gloves and whiter bouquet as he drives to the church on the wedding day.

Note the air of satisfaction with which he flicks his whip, bedecked with the little piece of white ribbon, as he thinks of the tips



THE BARGAIN-DRIVER.

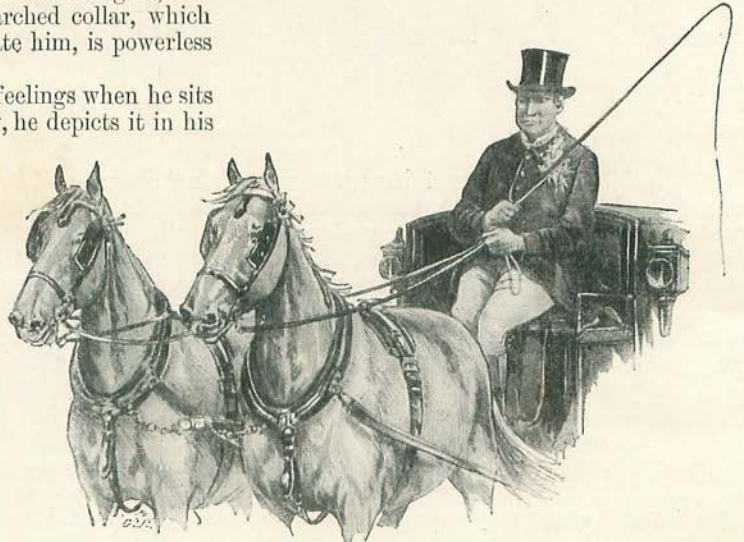
which he knows will soon be his! How his rosy nose glows rosier as his merry eye rests on the old stains on his coat, pleasant reminders of overflowing cups on bygone wedding days and happy auguries of more to-day! He looks the picture of that joy which happy expectation alone can give, and which even his stiffly-starched collar, which is trying hard to decapitate him, is powerless to abate.

No man can mask his feelings when he sits behind a horse; if happy, he depicts it in his face, if wretched, he exposes his feelings in his every look and gesture. Of all forlorn objects none is more pitiable and at the same time more terrible than the poor demented jehu who finds himself behind a runaway steed. His hat leaves his head quick as thought, his hair stands on end as if striving to follow his hat, his eyes roll in terrified frenzy, his nostrils breathe angry

emotion, his mouth foams with impotent rage, he is jolted now here, now there, he clenches his teeth, tugs at the reins, bellows at the horse, who, raising his tail in defiance, holds on his awful career, cannoning every conveyance, horrifying all nimble pedestrians, breaking the limbs of the unwary, never stopping until he meets some obstacle too massive to overcome, when the terrible crash leaves driver and horse one bleeding, insensible mass.

This is the type of driver who keeps not only the surgeon busy but also the third-rate solicitor who, with visions of possible six-and-eightpences, hovers near the hospital door inspiring the bandaged victims on their exit with thoughts of recoverable damages. This mad driver is, in all conscience, sufficiently objectionable, but even he will find a soft corner in our hearts when compared with

that inhuman driver of human beings, the slave-driver. Our dread of the one is mingled with sympathy, but the mere thought of the other conjures up anger in the soul and loathing in the heart of every being who has one jot of claim to generous feeling

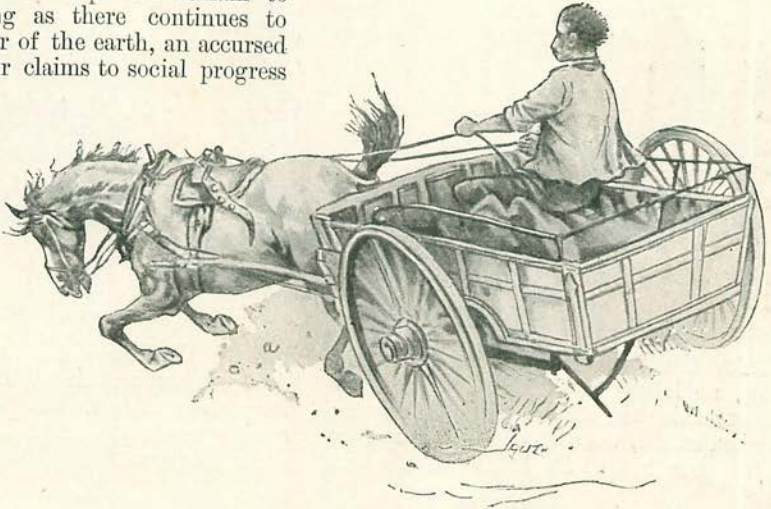


OFF TO THE WEDDING.

or to human pity. Mrs. Beecher Stowe has branded our minds with his hateful image as she found him in the Southern States, and his heavy boots and large felt hat, his cunning eye, his lowering brow, his cruel visage, his sinewy arm, his massive fist and his brutal cow-hide whip will remain to haunt us so long as there continues to exist, in any corner of the earth, an accursed slavery to flout our claims to social progress and to blot our vaunted civilisation.

An interesting example of the tender feeling lurking in a mother's heart, whether it beat beneath a white skin or a red, is presented by the Indian baby-driver. The rude but ingenious device by which the slumbering infant is swiftly but gently conveyed along the roughest roads is indicative of the careful thought of a race now fast disappearing, and is worthy of brief description. Two long poles are attached in

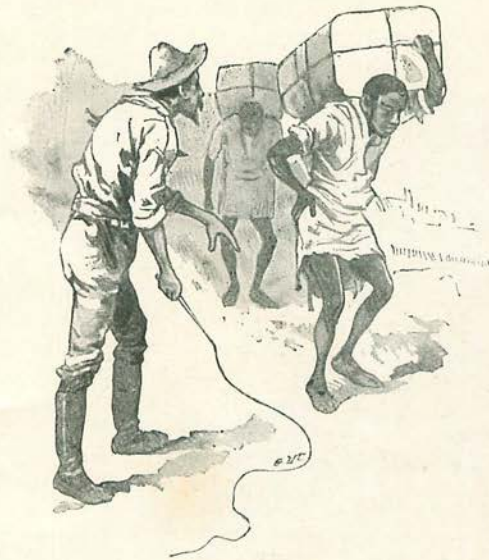
blankets and carefully secured, lies ensconced in a basket strapped between the middles of the poles, which, flexible by virtue of their



A RECKLESS DRIVER.

length, afford a springy carriage to the little cradle and break the jolting occasioned by the unevenness of the road, whilst the squaw, with her blanket closely drawn round her, sits astride the pony, her dangling feet encased in her fantastically embroidered shoes and her dishevelled blue-black hair wildly floating in the breeze as she drives over hill and through dale, casting ever and anon a careful glance over her shoulder to see that the little passenger is safe. The pony seems to catch the solicitude of the mother for it never falters and never stumbles even on the roughest road.

This ready understanding between the driver and the beast always takes a more accentuated form when nourished by a mutual forbearance and aided by the closer communion resulting from remoteness from a busy world. In solitude our horse or dog becomes our reasoning friend. The old horse who for years has journeyed past the same milestones on the country high-road, hearing nothing but the buzz of the bees, the song of the birds, the rumbling of the wagon-wheels and the sound of the voice of the rustic driver, feels, dumb brute though he is, a bond of affection between himself and his master, who, now sitting in the wagon behind him, now, for companionship, strolling at his head, has been so long



A NIGGER-DRIVER.

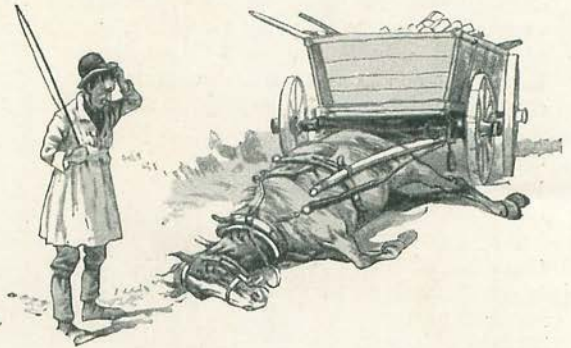
the manner of shafts to the pony on which the mother rides, the free ends trailing on the ground behind. The baby, wrapped in

his sole companion. The two perhaps are tottering down the hill of life together; they know each other, they feel for each other, they love each other. No attention is too

milestone, beneath the weight of a more than usually heavy load, the tears which fill the unfortunate driver's eyes are not from grief for the inconvenience of the moment,



THE INDIAN BABY-DRIVER.



THE LAST MILESTONE.

good for the horse which the driver can bestow, no labour is deemed too great by the horse which the driver wishes performed; and when at last, worn out by labour and by age, the poor brute falls lifeless at the last

but for the loss of his dumb associate, his dear companion, his faithful friend—a loss he'll ne'er forget till he too leaves the country roads to seek a land where drivers drive no more.

