The horse and his ways : stories of man and his best friend

THE

HORSE AND HIS WAYS.

STORIES OF

MAN AND HIS BEST FRIEND.

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THE COURAGE OF THE HORSE.

COURAGE and unshrinking firmness have ever been attributes of the horse. The magnificent description given in the Book of Job must be familiar to every one:—

"Hast thou given the horse strength? hast thou clothed his neck with thunder? canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper?—the glory of his strength is terrible. He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength; he goeth on to meet the armed men. He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted; neither turneth he back from the sword; the quiver rattleth against him—the glittering spear and the shield. He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage: neither believeth he that it is the sound of the trumpet. He saith among the trumpets, Ha! ha! and he smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting."

It is asserted that horses with a broad after-head, and the ears far asunder, are naturally bolder than those whose head is narrow above the forelock. This assertion is in all probability correct, for there is no reason why cerebral development should not influence the character of a horse as well as that of a man; but much, of course, depends upon judicious training. Some horses, says an intelligent writer on the subject, habituated to war, will drop their head, pick at grass in the midst of fire, smoke, and the roar of cannon; others never entirely cast off their natural timidity. We have witnessed them groaning, he continues, or endeavouring to lie down when they found escape impossible, at the fearful sound of shot, shrapnell-shell and rockets; and it was painful to witness their look of terror in battle, and to hear their groans upon being wounded. Yet many of the terrified animals, when let loose at a charge, dash forward in a kind of desperation that makes it difficult to hold them in hand; and we recollect, at a charge in 1794 —when the light dragoon horse was heavier than at present, and the French were wretchedly mounted—a party of British bursting through a hostile squadron as they would have passed through a fence of rushes.

The horse, though naturally afraid of the lion, tiger, and other feline animals, has often sufficient confidence in a firm rider and his own courage to overcome this timidity, and to join in the attack. This was conspicuously evinced in the case of an Arab horse which once belonged to Sir Robert Gillespie. This distinguished officer being present on the race-course of Calcutta during one of the great Hindoo festivals, when many thousands are assembled to witness all kinds of shows, was suddenly alarmed by the shrieks and commotion of the crowd. On being informed that a tiger had escaped from his keepers he immediately called for his horse, and grasping a boar-spear from one of the bystanders, rode to attack this formidable enemy. The tiger, probably, was amazed at finding himself in the midst of such a number of shrieking beings flying from him in all directions; but the moment he perceived Sir Robert, he crouched in the attitude of preparing to spring at him, and at that instant the gallant soldier passed his horse in a leap over the tiger's back, and struck the spear through his spine.

Here, instead of swerving, the noble animal went right over his formidable enemy with a firmness that enabled the rider to use his lance with precision. This steed was a small gray, and was afterwards sent to England as a present to the Prince Regent.

As may readily be supposed, the intrepidity of the horse is often of signal service in the cause of humanity, commanding at once our esteem and admiration. The following instance is worthy of record:—

"I should have found it difficult to give credit to the following incident," related a gentleman who was told by those who witnessed it, "had it not happened the evening before my arrival, and if, besides the public notoriety of the fact, I had not been an eye-witness of those vehement emotions of sympathy, blended with admiration, which it had justly excited in the mind of every individual at the Cape of Good Hope. A violent gale of wind setting in from north-north-west, a vessel in the road dragged her anchors, was forced on the rocks, and bulged, and while a greater part of the crew fell an immediate sacrifice to the waves, the remainder were seen from the shore struggling for their lives, by clinging to the different pieces of the wreck. The sea ran dreadfully high, and broke over the sailors with such amazing fury that no boat whatever could venture off to their assistance. Meanwhile a planter, considerably advanced in life, had come from his farm to be a spectator of the wreck. His heart was melted at the sight of the unhappy seamen, and knowing the bold and enterprising spirit of his horse, and his particular excellence as a swimmer, he instantly determined to make a desperate effort for their deliverance. He alighted, and blew a little brandy into his horse's nostrils, when again seating himself in the saddle he instantly pushed into the midst of the breakers. At first both disappeared; but it was not long before they floated on the surface, and swam up to the wreck, when taking with him two men, each of whom held by one of his boots, he brought them safe to shore. This perilous expedition he repeated no seldomer than seven times, and saved fourteen lives; but on his return the eighth time, his horse being much fatigued, and meeting a most formidable wave, he lost his balance and was overwhelmed in a moment. The horse swam safely to land; but his gallant rider, alas! was no more."

When General Sir Robert Gillespie fell at the storming of Kalunga, his favourite black charger, bred at the Cape of Good Hope, and carried by him to India, was, at the sale of his effects, competed for by several of the officers of his division, and finally knocked down to the privates of the 8th dragoons, who contributed their prize-money, to the amount of £500 sterling, to retain this commemoration of their late commander. Thus the charger was always led at the head of the regiment on a march, and at the station of Cawnpore was usually indulged with taking his ancient place at the colour-stand, where the salute of passing squadrons was given at drill and on reviews. When the regiment was ordered home, the funds of the privates running low, he was bought for the same sum by a gentleman, who provided funds and a paddock for him where he might end his days in comfort. But when the corps had marched, and the sound of the trumpet had departed, he refused to eat; and on the first opportunity, being led out to exercise, he broke from his groom, and galloping to his ancient station on the parade, after neighing aloud, dropped down and died.

During the Peninsular War the trumpeter of a French cavalry corps had a fine charger assigned to him, of which he became passionately fond, and which by gentleness of disposition and uniform docility equally evinced its affection. The sound of the trumpeter's voice, the sight of his uniform, or the twang of his trumpet, was sufficient to throw this animal into a state of excitement; and he appeared to be pleased and happy only when under the saddle of his rider. Indeed he was unruly and useless to everybody else; for once on being removed to another part of the forces, and consigned to a young officer, he resolutely refused to perform his evolutions, and bolted to the trumpeter's station, and there took his stand, jostling alongside his former master. This animal, on being restored to the trumpeter, carried him, during several of the Peninsular campaigns, through many difficulties and hair-breadth escapes. At last the corps to which he belonged was worsted, and in the confusion of retreat the trumpeter was mortally wounded. Dropping from his horse, his body was found many days after the engagement stretched on the sward, with the faithful charger standing beside it. During the long interval it seems that he had never quitted the trumpeter's side, but had stood sentinel over his body, scaring away the birds of prey, and remaining totally heedless of his own privations. When found, he was in a sadly reduced condition, partly through loss of blood from wounds, but chiefly from want of food, of which in the excess of his grief he could not be prevailed on to partake.

During that destructive war which for a space of thirty years desolated Germany, and which was terminated by the peace of Westphalia, the carriers who conducted the inland traffic of the country used to unite themselves in large companies in order that they might travel with greater security, and for their mutual defence against the marauding parties which infested every part of the empire.

One of these carriers happened to possess a horse of an extremely vicious disposition. It was greatly addicted to biting and kicking, from which not even its master was always secure, and which often embroiled him with his fellow-travellers. One evening while they were pursuing their journey the party was attacked in a ravine by a band of hungry wolves, and after a long contest, finding they should not be able to get quit of them without allowing them some prey, it was agreed that they should pay the owner of the vicious horse the price of the animal and make a sacrifice to the wolves. The bargain was soon concluded, and on the horse being turned loose the wolves immediately attacked him. He, however, defended himself courageously with his teeth and heels, retreating at the same time into the interior of the forest, while the carriers availed themselves of the opportunity to hasten to a place of security, not a little rejoiced at having got rid of troublesome companions so much to their advantage.

As they were sitting at supper in the inn where they usually slept for the night a knocking was heard at the house door, and on its being opened a horse pushed his head in. The girl, frightened, shrieked out, and called to the carriers, who, coming to her assistance, were no less surprised than rejoiced to see the heroic conqueror of the wolves, though much wounded, still faithful to his master; and, on account of his meritorious conduct upon this occasion, they agreed to forgive him his former misdemeanours and retain him in their company.

THE FRIENDSHIPS OF HORSES.

THE friendships of horses are sometimes as incongruous as are the friendships of man. Animals of entirely different species occasionally associate with and love each other; and the very opposition of character now and then constitutes the bond of friendship. Duncannon, a famous horse, formed an intense friendship with a sheep. He would lift it into the manger to share his fodder, and would suffer no one to offer it the slightest molestation. Chillaby, the mad Arabian, whom only one groom dared to approach, had also his peculiar attachment for a lamb; and the little protégé used to employ itself during many an hour in pawing away the flies from his nobler friend. The Darley Arabian imbibed a friendship for a cat, which sat upon his back, or nestled as closely to him as she could; and when he died she pined away and died also.

A farmer's boy had fed and taken great care of a colt. He was working one day in the field, when he was furiously pursued by a vicious bull. The boy ran to a ditch, and got into it just as the bull was close upon him. The furious beast endeavoured to gore him, and would probably have succeeded had not the colt come to his assistance. This little animal attacked the bull, screaming with rage as he did so, when some labourers who were working near the place, hearing the strange outcry, ran to see what was the matter, and extricated the boy from danger.

A gentleman of Bristol had a greyhound,

which slept in the stable along with a very fine hunter of about five years of age. These animals became mutually attached, and regarded each other with the most tender affection. The greyhound always lay under the manger beside the horse, which was so fond of him that he became unhappy and restless when the dog was out of his sight. It was a common practice with the gentleman to whom they belonged to call at the stable for the greyhound to accompany him in his walk. On such occasions the horse would look over his shoulder at the dog with much anxiety, and neigh in a manner which plainly said:

"Let me also accompany you."

When the dog returned to the stable, he was always welcomed by a loud neigh. He ran up to the horse and licked his nose; in return the horse would scratch the dog's back with his teeth. One day when the groom was out with the horse and greyhound for exercise, a large dog attacked the latter and quickly bore him to the ground; on which the horse threw back his ears, and, in spite of all the efforts of the groom, rushed at the strange dog that was struggling with the greyhound, seized him by the back with his teeth which speedily made him quit his hold, and shook him till a large piece of skin gave way. The offender no sooner got on his feet than he judged it prudent to beat a precipitate retreat from so formidable an opponent.

A gentleman in Buckinghamshire had once in his possession a three-year-old colt, a dog, and three sheep, which were his constant attendants in all his walks. When the parlour window, which looked into the field, happened to l e open, the colt had often been known to leap through it, go up and caress his master, and then leap back to his pasture. We have ourselves, says Chambers, often witnessed similar signs of affection on the part of an old Shetland pony, which would place its fore-foot in the hand of its young master like a dog, thrust its head under his arm to be caressed, and join with him and a little terrier dog in all their noisy rompings on the lawn. The same animal daily bore its master to school, and though its heels and teeth were always ready for every aggressive urchin, yet so attached was it to this boy that it would wait hours for him in his sports by the way, and even walk alone from the stable to the school-house, which was fully half-a-mile distant, and wait saddled and bridled for the afternoon's dismissal. Indeed, the young scapegrace did not deserve one-tenth of this attention, for we have often seen old "Donald" toiling homeward with its young master at a gallop, to make up for time lost at play, and enable him to be at home when dinner was on the table.

A blacksmith in one of the remote parishes of Scotland, on one occasion, purchased a lamb of the black-faced breed from a shepherd who was passing through his village with a large flock. The lamb was so extremely wild that it was with great difficulty it could be separated from its fleecy companions. The smith put it into his field, in company with a cow and a little white Galloway pony. It soon began to exhibit indications of fondness for the latter, which, not insensible to such tender approaches, showed by its conduct that the attachment was reciprocal. They soon became inseparable companions; whether the pony was engaged in the labours of the field, or in bearing his master to church or market, the lamb invariably accompanied him. Such a spectacle soon excited a great deal of attention; and when likely to be too closely beset, the lamb would take refuge between the legs of the pony, and gaze about it with a look of conscious security. At night it regularly repaired to the stable, and reposed under the manger at the head of its friend. When the two animals were separated, which only happened when effected by force, the lamb would raise the most plaintive bleatings, to which the pony responded with a sympathizing neigh.

On one occasion they both strayed into an adjoining field, in which there was a flock of sheep; the lamb joined them, at a short distance from the pony, but as soon as their owner removed him, it quickly followed without casting even a look behind it. Another instance of a similar character happened when the pony was driven through a flock of sheep, accompanied, as usual, by his friend, which followed, without showing the least inclination to remain with its natural companions.

"Even great disparity of mind," says White, in his *Natural History of Selborne*, "does not always prevent social advances and mutual fellowship; for a very intelligent and observant person has assured me, that in the former part of his life, keeping but one horse, he happened also once on a time to have but one solitary hen. These two incongruous animals spent much of their time together in a lonely orchard, where they saw no creature but each other. By degrees an apparent regard began to take place between these two sequestered individuals. The fowl would approach the quadruped with notes of complacency, rubbing herself quietly against his legs, while the horse would look down with satisfaction, and move with the greatest caution and circumspection, lest he should trample on his diminutive companion. Thus, by mutual good offices, each seemed to console the vacant hours of the other; so that Milton, when he puts the following sentiment in the mouth of Adam, seems somewhat mistaken:

> 'Much less can bird with beast, or fish with fowl
> So well converse, nor with the ox the ape.'"

The last instance of a peculiar friendship on the part of a horse which we shall refer to at present is so extraordinary, that, were it not well authenticated, it might be looked upon with suspicion. Dr. Smith, of the Queen's County Militia, Ireland, had a beautiful hackney, which, though extremely spirited, was at the same time wonderfully docile. He had also a fine Newfoundland dog named Cæsar. These animals were mutually attached, and seemed perfectly acquainted with each other's actions. The dog was always kept in the stable at night, and generally lay beside the horse. When Dr. Smith practised in Dublin, he visited his patients on horseback, and had no other servant to take care of the horse, while in their houses, but Cæsar, to whom he gave the reins in his mouth. The horse stood very quietly, even in that crowded city, beside his canine friend. When it happened that the doctor had a patient not far distant from the place where he paid his last visit, he did not think it worth his while to remount, but called to his horse and Cæsar. They both instantly obeyed, and remained quietly opposite the door where he entered until he came out again. The horse seemed to be as implicitly obedient to his friend Cæsar as he could possibly be to his groom.

The doctor would go to the stable, accompanied by his dog, put the bridle upon his horse, and giving the reins to Cæsar, bid him take the horse to the water. They both understood what was to be done, when off trotted Cæsar, followed by the horse, which frisked, capered, and played with the dog all the way to the rivulet, about three hundred yards distant from the stable. They invariably went straight to the stream, and after the horse had quenched his thirst, both returned in the same playful manner as they had gone out.

The doctor frequently desired Cæsar to make the horse leap over this stream, which might be about five or six feet broad. The dog, by a kind of bark, and leaping up towards the horse's head, intimated to him what he wanted, which was quickly understood; and he cantered off, preceded by Cæsar, and took the leap in a neat and regular style. The dog was then desired to bring him back again, and it was speedily done in the same manner. On one occasion Cæsar lost hold of the reins, and as soon as the horse cleared the leap he immediately trotted up to his canine guide, who took hold of the bridle and led him back through the water quietly.

THE DOCILITY OF THE HORSE.

THE horse is distinguished by the remarkable extent to which the docility that is in his common character has been sometimes cultivated. The labour and ingenuity expended by public performers and trainers to teach the animal feats of agility and imitation have been abundantly rewarded, and the intelligent actions of highly trained steeds, performed in accordance to the wishes of their master, frequently afford pleasure and instruction. Furnished with acute senses, an excellent memory, high intelligence, and gentle disposition, he soon learns to know and to obey his master's will, and to perform certain actions with astonishing accuracy and precision. The range of his performances, however, is limited by his physical conformation.

He has not a hand to grasp, a proboscis to lift the minutest object, nor the advantages of a light and agile frame; if he had, the monkey, the dog, and the elephant would in this respect be all far behind him. The following anecdotes will afford ample illustration of this.

One of the earliest equine actors in this country was Banks's celebrated horse "Morocco," alluded to by Shakspere in *Love's Labour Lost*, and by other writers of that time. It is stated of this animal that he would restore a glove to its owner after his master had whispered the man's name in his ear, and that he would tell the number of pence in any silver coin. He danced likewise to the sound of a pipe, and told money with his feet. Sir Walter Raleigh quaintly remarks, "that had Banks lived in older times, he would have shamed all the enchanters in the world; for whosoever was most famous among them could never master nor instruct any beast as he did his horse."

A French writer makes mention of several surprising feats performed by a small horse at the fair of St. Germains in 1732. Among others which he accomplished with astonishing precision, he could specify, by striking his foot so many times on the ground, the number of marks upon a card which any person present had drawn out of a pack. He could also tell the hour and minute to which the hands of a watch pointed in a similar manner. His master collected a number of coins from different persons in the company, mixed them together, and threw them to the horse in a handkerchief. The animal took it in his mouth, and delivered to each person his own piece of money. What is still more wonderful, considering his size, weight, and peculiarity of construction, the horse had been known to pass along the tight-rope.

Mr. Astley, the son of the famous proprietor of "Astley's Amphitheatre," at Westminster Bridge, had once in his possession a remarkably fine Barbary horse, forty-three years of age, which was presented to him by the Duke of Leeds. This celebrated animal for a number of years officiated in the character of a waiter in the course of the performances at the Amphitheatre, and at various other theatres in the United Kingdom. At the request of his master, he would ungirth his own saddle, wash his feet in a pail of water, and would also bring into the riding-school a tea-table and its appendages, which feat was usually followed up by fetching a chair, or stool, or whatever might be wanted. His achievements were generally wound up by his taking a kettle of boiling water from a blazing fire, to the wonder and admiration of the spectators.

An author, who wrote about the cleverness of horses when properly trained, stated that he had seen one that danced to music, and which, at the command of his master, affected to be lame, feigned death, lay motionless, with his limbs extended, and allowed himself to be dragged about till some words were pronounced, when he instantly sprang to his feet. Feats of this kind are now common enough in the circus and hippodrome.

The horse referred to above was the property of the famous equestrian Ducrow; and a writer in a popular journal thus described the performance of the animal and its master:—"The horse," he said "was a beautiful piebald, perfect almost in mould, and adorned about the neck with little bells. At first it playfully and trickishly avoids its master when he affects an anxiety to catch it; but when the muleteer averts his head and assumes the appearance of sullenness, the animal at once stops and comes up close to his side, as if very penitent for its untimely sportiveness. Its master is pacified, and after caressing it a little he touches the animal's fore-legs. It stretches them out, and, in doing so, necessarily causes the hind-legs to project also. We now see the purpose of these movements. The muleteer wishes a seat, and an excellent one he finds upon the horse's protruded hind-legs. A variety of instances of docility similar to this are exhibited by the horse in succession, but its leaping feats appear to us to be the most wonderful of all. Poles are brought into the ring, and the horse clears six of these, one after the other, with a distance of not more than four feet between them. After it has done this, it goes up limping to its master, as if to say, 'See, I can do no more to-night.' The muleteer lifts the lame foot, and seems to search for the cause of the halt, but in vain. Still, however, the horse goes on limping. The muleteer then looks in his face, and shakes his head, as if he would say, 'Ah! you are shamming, you rogue, are you not?' And a sham it proves to be; for, at a touch of the whip, the creature bounds off like a fawn, sound both in wind and limb."

Mr. C. W. Montague, an equestrian manager of great experience and intelligence, narrates the following incidents in *Chambers's Journal*:—

I was once driving to Long Milford in

Suffolk at a spot where there was a bridge leading over a river. As we approached the bridge the horse pulled up and would not move on again without whipping. For some time I was at a loss how to account for this freak; but it afterwards occurred to me that the last time I had crossed that bridge and with the same horse, I had pulled up at the very spot to speak to a man I had met.

Unless there is a reason to the contrary, we always prefer occupying the same field each time we visit a town. Sometimes it happens that the stud-groom, who is generally with the first wagon, forgets which field it is. But by giving the horse his head and leaving him to himself, he will most certainly pull up at the right gate. The groom never finds him to be wrong, and drives straight in.

Once when in Southampton I had to pass up the High Street daily, and had a different horse almost every day. Whichever horse

I rode he would slacken speed at the Star Hotel and want to turn into the yard. Upon mentioning this to the stud-groom, he explained that *five years* previously, when the circus was in Southampton, the stud had been stabled at the Star, and the horses had not forgotten the place again.

I have my opinion, writes Mr. Montague, founded upon close and varied observation, that horses can and do convey to each other very exact intelligence by the various sounds they produce, from the proud, sonorous neighings of a full-spirited horse, down to the whinings and snortings and other little sounds with which all keepers of horses are familiar. Once, in a long stable containing twenty stalls in a row, a horse at the one end was dying. Near the other end was a horse of a timid disposition, which showed marked signs of dread and extreme nervousness, as though conscious of what was going on; trembling from head to foot, and streaming with perspiration. I feel convinced that intelligence of what was passing had reached this horse, and that being of a nervous temperament, the poor animal had been troubled to the painful extent we had witnessed.

Another example of a different kind. It often happened that I was away from the company for weeks and months at a stretch; and on some of these occasions I had to return along the road by which the circus was coming, thus meeting the vans one after the other all down the line. When yet there was some distance between myself and the nearest van, my horse would scent, or see the head van-horse and salute him with a loud neigh. This would be at once answered by the van-horse which seemed to pass the signal to the rear down the line, where it was taken up from horse to horse to the very end, perhaps three-quarters of a mile away. Then as I rapidly drove up and met the vans, each horse would turn towards mine as he passed, greeting him with a friendly and joyous neigh; apparently holding a short conversation in passing, as though welcoming each other after a separation. For it must be noted that it was *only after long absence* that such demonstrations took place.

A horse in the cavalry depôt at Woolwich had proved so unmanageable to the "rough-riders," that at length no one amongst them dared even to mount him. His method of throwing or dismounting his rider consisted in lying down and rolling over him, or else crushing his leg against some wall, post, or paling. All means to break him of these dangerous tricks proving unavailing, the animal was one day brought before the commanding officer, with the character of being "incurably vicious," and with a recommendation on that account, that he should be "cast" or sold out of the service. The colonel of the regiment hearing of this, and knowing the horse to be thoroughbred, and one of the best actioned and cleverest horses in the regiment, besought the commanding officer to permit him to be transferred into the riding troop.

This was consented to, and the transfer was no sooner accomplished than the colonel determined to pursue a system of management directly opposite to that which had been already attempted. He had him led daily into the riding-school—suffered no whip ever to be showed to him while there, but patted him and tried to make him execute this and the other manœuvre; and as often as he proved obedient rewarded him with a handful of corn or beans or a piece of bread, with which bribes his pockets were invariably well supplied. In this manner, and in no great space of time, was the rebel not only subdued and tamed, but rendered so perfectly docile and quiet that a little child could ride him. At length he was also taught to kneel down when his rider mounted, and to perform various evolutions, dances, and tricks which no other horse in the regiment could be brought to do. In fine, so great a favourite did he become, that the name of "The Darling" was bestowed upon him by his master, and by that appellation he soon became known to all the regiment.

SAGACITY OF THE HORSE.

THE horse is inferior to none of the brute creation in sagacity and general intelligence. In a state of nature, he is cautious and watchful, and all his movements and actions seem to be the result of reason, aided by a power of communicating their ideas to each other far superior to that of most other animals. The neighings by which they communicate terror, alarm, recognition, &c., the various movements of the body, the pawing of the ground, the motions of the ears, and the expressions of countenance, seem to be fully understood by each other. If these points are well developed in their natural state, it must be admitted that they are strengthened and intensified in a domesticated one; and in the following anecdotes we have attempted to illustrate a few of the more important directions in which this sagacity is exhibited.

There is an interesting fact related of the hero of Poland, indicative of his customary practice of almsgiving. Wishing to convey a present to a clerical friend he gave the commission to a young man named Jelmer, desiring him to take the horse he usually rode. On his return the messenger informed Kosciusko that he would never again ride his horse, unless he gave him his purse at the same time; and on the latter inquiring what he meant, he replied:

"As soon as a poor man on the road takes off his hat and asks for charity, the horse immediately stands still, and will not stir until something is bestowed upon the petitioner; and as I had no money upon me, I had to feign giving in order to satisfy the horse and induce him to proceed."

A gentleman was one dark night riding home through a wood, and had the misfortune to strike his head against the branch of a tree, and fell from his horse stunned by the blow. The horse immediately returned to the house which they had left, about a mile distant. He found the door closed and the family gone to bed. He pawed at the door till one of them, hearing the noise, rose and opened it, and to his surprise saw the horse of his friend. No sooner was the door opened than the horse turned round, and the man suspecting there was something wrong, followed the animal, which led him directly to the spot where his master lay on the ground in a fit.

A carter in Fifeshire had an old horse which one day displayed a remarkable sagacity. The carter having a large family, this animal had got particularly intimate with the children, and would on no account move when they were playing among his feet, as if it feared to do them an injury. On this occasion, when dragging a loaded cart through a narrow lane near the village, a young child happened to be playing in the road, and would inevitably have been crushed by the wheels had it not been for the sagacity of the animal. He carefully took it by the clothes with his teeth, carried it for a few yards, and then placed it on a bank by the wayside, moving slowly all the while, and looking back, as if to satisfy himself that the wheels of the cart had cleared it. This animal was one of the most intelligent of his kind, and performed his duties with a steadiness and precision that were perfectly surprising.

In 1828 a gentleman in Montgomeryshire had a favourite pony, mare, and colt, that grazed in a field adjoining the Severn. One day the pony made her appearance in front of the house, and, by clattering with her feet and other noises, attracted attention. Observing this a person went out, and she immediately galloped off. The owner, hearing this, desired that she should be followed; and all the gates from the house to the field were found to have been forced open. On reaching the field, the pony was found looking into the water over the spot where the colt was lying drowned.

A captain of the 14th Dragoons had a powerful charger which he had purchased at a very low price, on account of an impetuous viciousness, which had caused the death of one groom and nearly that of another. The captain was a kind of centaur rider, not to be thrown by the most violent efforts, and of a temper for gentleness that would effect a cure, if vice were curable. After some very dangerous combats with his horse the animal was subdued, and became so attached that his master could walk anywhere with him following like a dog, and even ladies could mount him with perfect safety. His master rode him during several campaigns in Spain; and on one occasion, when in action horse and rider came headlong to the ground, the animal making an effort to spring up placed his forefoot on the captain's breast, but immediately withdrawing it, rose without hurting him, or moving till he was remounted.

A blind coach-horse ran one of the stages on the great north road for several years, and so perfectly was he acquainted with all the halting-places, stables, and other matters, that he was never found to commit a blunder. In his duties he was no doubt greatly aided by hearing and smell. He could never be driven past his own stable; and at the sound of the coming coach, he would turn out of his own accord into the stable-yard. What was very remarkable, so accurate was his knowledge of time that though half a dozen coaches halted at the same inn, yet he was never known to stir till the sound of the "Ten o'clock" was heard in the distance.

A supervisor of excise at Beauly in Inverness-shire was one evening returning home from a survey of Fort Augustus, and to save a distance of some sixteen miles he took the hill road from Drumnadrochit to Beauly. The road was completely blocked up with, and indiscernible amidst the waste of snow, so that the officer soon lost all idea of his route. In this dilemma he thought it best to trust to his horse, and loosening the reins, allowed him to choose his own course. The animal made way, though slowly and cautiously, till coming to a ravine near Glencouvent, when both horse and rider suddenly disappeared in a snow-wreath several fathoms deep. The officer on recovering found himself nearly three yards from the dangerous spot, with his faithful horse standing over him and licking the snow from his face. He was of opinion that the bridle had been attached to his person. So completely, however, had he lost all sense of consciousness, that beyond the bare fact as stated he had no knowledge of the means by which he had made so striking and providential an escape.

There was an old horse, well known in the pretty village of Rainford, and even for many miles round, by the name of "Old Tommy." This horse was famed not merely for his great age, and long and valuable services, but more especially for the tractableness of his disposition. His sagacity was particularly shown on one occasion when he lost one of his shoes in the pasture. Being aware of his loss, and knowing, from long experience, the comfort of good shoes, he lost no time, on the opening of the gate, in repairing to his old friend the blacksmith, who soon discovered and supplied his want. He then made the best of his way home, and prepared for the service of the day.

Occasionally there is so much sagacity and affection combined with the intrepidity of the horse, that his conduct would do credit even to the bravest human nature. He has been known to swim to the assistance of a drowning creature, and this without any other impulse than that of his own generous feelings. A little girl, the daughter of a gentleman in Warwickshire, playing on the banks of a canal which runs through his grounds, had the misfortune to fall in, and would in all probability have been drowned, had not a small pony, which had been long kept in the family, plunged into the water and brought the child safely ashore without the slightest injury.

In the electorate of Hanover there is a small island named Krontsand, which is surrounded by two branches of the Elbe. As it affords valuable pasture there is generally a number of horses and cattle grazing upon it. It is, however, liable to be overflowed at the time of spring-tide, when the wind blows in a direction opposite to the current, and thus causes an accumulation of water which cannot escape so quickly as when unopposed.

One day the water rose so rapidly that the horses, which were grazing in the plain with their young foals, suddenly found themselves standing in the midst of deep water, upon which they set up a loud neighing, and collected themselves together on the highest part of the island. In this assembly they seemed to determine on the following prudent measure, as the only means of saving their young foals, who were now standing in the water as high as the belly, and in the execution of which some old mares also took a principal part, who cannot be supposed to have been influenced by any maternal solicitude for the safety of their offspring. Every two horses took a young foal between them, and pressing their sides together, kept it wedged in, and lifted up, quite above the surface of the water.

All the horned cattle which were on the

island had already set themselves afloat, and were swimming in regular columns towards their home. But these noble steeds, with undaunted perseverance remained immovable under their cherished burdens for the space of six hours, till, the tide ebbing, the water subsided, and the foals were at length placed out of danger.

The inhabitants who had rowed to the place in boats, saw with delight this singular manœuvre, whereby their valuable foals were preserved from a destruction otherwise inevitable, and every one who heard of the circumstance was pleased and astonished at the sagacity of the horses.

A baronet, one of whose hunters had never tired in the longest chase, once encouraged the cruel thought of attempting completely to fatigue him. After a long run, therefore, he dined and again mounting, rode furiously among the hills. When brought to the stable, his strength appeared exhausted, and he was scarcely able to walk. The groom, possessed of more feeling than his brutal master, could not refrain from tears at the sight of so noble an animal thus sunk down. The baronet some time after entered the stable, when the horse made a furious spring upon him, and, had not the groom interfered, would soon have put it out of the power of his master of ever again misusing his animals.

A person near Boston, in America, was in the habit, whenever he wished to catch his horse in the field, of taking a quantity of corn in a measure by way of bait. On calling to him, the horse would come up and eat the corn, while the bridle was put over his head. But the owner having deceived the animal several times, by calling him when he had no corn in the measure, the horse at length began to suspect the design; and coming up one day as usual, on being called, looked into the measure, and seeing it empty, turned round, raised his hind-legs, and killed his master on the spot.

A horse belonging to a person in Glasgow had been several times ill, and as often cured by a farrier who lived at a short distance from his master's residence. He had not, however, been troubled with a recurrence of his disease for a considerable time, till one morning when he happened to be employed at some distance from the farrier's place of business. Arranged in a row with other horses engaged in the same work, while the carters were absent he left the cart, and, unattended, went direct to the farrier's door.

As no one appeared with the horse, the farrier immediately surmised that he had been seized with his old complaint. He was soon convinced of this by the animal lying down, and showing, by every means in his power of which he was capable, that he was in distress. The farrier quickly administered the usual dose, and sent him home to his master, who had by that time sent persons in all directions in search of him.

POWER OF MEMORY IN THE HORSE.

HORSES have powerful memories. In the darkest nights they will find their way home, although their rider or driver may be totally at a loss which way to go, if they have been only once over the road. They will recognize their masters, or those who have been their friends or foes, after a lapse of years; and those that have been in the army, although degraded to perform menial work, will not hesitate, when they hear the sound of the trumpet, or catch a sight of a brilliantly clothed regiment, to rush forward into the ranks, remembering not only their old uniform, but their own places in the troop, and the order of the various manœuvres.

The following anecdotes are illustrative of this remarkable faculty as developed in the horse.

A farmer one day passing along a street in Bristol recognized a cart-horse bestrode by a countryman as one which he himself had lost some nine months before. He at once seized the horse by the bridle, and told the rider that the horse had been stolen from him.

"That is my horse," said he, "and if I do not prove it in two minutes, I will quit my claim."

He then caused the countryman to dismount, liberated the horse frcm restraint, allowed him to go at large, and declared his proof to be, that the horse would be found at his stables, which were at some distance—a fact that was proved in a few minutes by the two claimants and several bystanders repairing to the stables, where they found the horse duly installed in a vacant compartment of the stable, and apparently quite at his ease.

Many remarkable instances of minute recollection have occurred in horses which have been accustomed to the army. It is told that in one of their insurrections in the early part of the present century, the Tyrolese captured fifteen horses belonging to the Bavarian troops sent against them, and mounted them with fifteen of their own men, in order to go out to a fresh encounter with the same troops. But no sooner did these horses hear the well-known sound of their own trumpet, and recognize the uniform of their own squadron, than they dashed forward at full speed; and, notwithstanding all the efforts of their riders, bore them into the ranks, and delivered them up prisoners to the Bavarians.

Towards the close of last century, about the time when volunteers were first embodied in the different towns, an extensive line of turnpike road was in progress of construction in a part of the north. The clerk to the trustees upon this line used to send one of his assistants to ride along occasionally, to see that the contractors, who were at work in a great many places, were doing their work properly. The assistant, on these journeys, rode a horse which had for a long time carried a field-officer, and though aged, still possessed a great deal of spirit. One day as he was passing near a town of considerable size which lay on the line of road, the volunteers were at drill on the common; and the instant that "Solus," as the horse was called, heard the sound of the drum, he leaped the fence, and was speedily at that post in front of the volunteers which would have been occupied by the commanding officer of a regiment on parade or at drill;

nor could the rider by any means get him off the ground until the volunteers retired to the town. As long as they kept the field, the horse took the proper place of a commanding officer in all their manœuvres, and he marched at the head of the corps into the town, prancing in military style as cleverly as his stiffened legs would allow him, to the great amusement of the volunteers, and to the no small annoyance of the clerk, who did not feel very highly honoured by "Solus" making a colonel of him against his will.

The following instance of retentiveness of memory is related by an officer who served in India:—

"I was the happy owner of a gray pony when stationed at Ferozepore. In the month of November I left that station, accompanied by my gallant gray, and was absent in

Afghanistan for about fourteen months. On my return I galloped into the station by the road in which I knew my bungalow was situated, and looked about trying to recognize the place; but owing to additions to the house, and alterations in the gardens and neighbouring houses and grounds, I failed in my efforts. But not so my pony, who, whilst I was staring about at the many new houses which had been built, and at the increase of the place in one year, very nearly threw me by turning sharply into the accustomed gateway which stood invitingly open."

A gentleman rode a young horse, which he had bred, thirty miles from home, and to a part of the country where he had never been before. The road was a cross one, and extremely difficult to find; however, by dint of perseverance and inquiry he at length reached his destination. Two years afterwards he had occasion to go the same way, and was benighted four or five miles from the end of his journey. The night was so dark that he could scarcely see his horse's head. He had a dreary moor and common to pass, and had lost all traces of the proper direction he had to take. The rain began to fall heavily. He now contemplated the dangerous position in which he was placed.

"Here I am," said he to himself, "far from any house, and in the midst of a dreary waste, where I know not which way to direct the course of my steed. I have heard much of the memory of the horse, and in that now is my only hope."

He threw the reins on the horse's neck, and encouraging him to proceed, found himself safe at the gate of his friend's house in less than an hour. It must be remarked, that the animal could not possibly have been that road but on the occasion two years before, as no person ever rode him but his master.