



SUPPLEMENT
TO
UPS AND DOWNS
APRIL 1st, 1901

The City Hack

NOTE.—If “the labourer is worthy of his hire,” surely the beast of burden has his rights also; yet the commercialism of the age—the consideration only for profit and loss—is responsible for many heartless cruelties inflicted upon the horse. In health, he is often overworked; in sickness, he is frequently neglected. Hay, with an occasional measure of oats, is his daily fare; the hot, dusty streets by day, and the foul, uncomfortable stable by night, would be his invariable surroundings, were these not changed for the worse by the rigour of a Canadian Winter. Green pastures and luscious grass are not for him; he is a city hack. His fate—to work for frugal fare and then die—was fore-ordained by man, his master; his birth, even, ensued as the result of mercenary motives, and when, by reason of old age or ill-treatment, he is unfit for further service, the knacker is summoned and he forfeits his right to exist until death occurs from natural causes. When we reflect upon the matter from the standpoint of the horse, we must confess that man is sometimes ungrateful, unjust and cruel to one of his most useful and faithful servants.

Full of “points,” but not of breeding,
Angular from stunted feeding,
And an animated skeleton, yclept—ye gods!—a horse;
Spavined, hide-bound, broken-winded
(Has the by-law been rescinded?)
Yet he pulled up from the depot all the scenery for a farce!

Oh! the wistful look of anguish
Of the beast, that dared not languish,
Though the load was far too heavy for a dray-horse in his prime;
Though hard usage and short rations
Had divorced humane relations
’Twixt the driver and a willing hack, played out before his time.

Little wonder that he halted,
That he trembled and—defaulted;
Little wonder that he winced beneath the lash against his hide.
Little wonder that he staggered
When, to prove he was no laggard,
He exerted all his energy and—tumbled down and died!

WILLIAM T. JAMES.