



THE CARMEN OF NEW YORK.

IN discharging our serial task of laying before our readers the peculiar out-door features of New York city life, we in this number reach the carmen. We do not pretend to say that they date their order from Phaeton, who guided the chariot of the sun upon a most unfortunate expedition, or from Achilles, who attached the dead body of Hector to his car, and dragged it around the walls of Troy; but this we are well assured of, that they are a valuable body of men, exact to their duties, just in their demands, except, perhaps, on the 1st of May, and governed by the city ordinances, like the rest of New York humanity.

In the first place we introduce to our readers the earliest specimen of the carman. He lived in the olden day, when huge merchantships were not so common as they are now, and when the business had not risen to a profession.

Less than fifty years ago New York city did not extend, as a city, any further up than about Fourth street; and where Washington Parade Ground is, there was a burial ground, and beyond that the crops of wheat and corn were cultivated by a simple, industrious, and honest population. The now barren lots in which the workmen of the Central Park are employed in

acts of ornament, were in those days large, outlying estates. Murray Hill, pierced now by the Harlem Railroad tunnel, and boasting some of the finest sites for private residences, was covered with woods, and in a thousand places, where streets wander now, the tangled undergrowth and creeping briar held sway.

Among these wooded heights resounded the busy ax, and thence it was that the cartman, the original carman, transported to the city, the well-measured cord of fuel, and leisurely plodding round in the calmness of his immense importance, and the grandeur of the fact that without him, the Mayor, perhaps, would be without his dinner, and in the dignity of his Dutch nature and the Dutch phlegm of his horse, he allowed the wheels of time to roll as they pleased, while the wheels of his cart lolled through the mud of the as yet unpaved thoroughfares: In that time man took his time.

There is a freshness in the train of those recollections that carry us back to the mossy wood and the bosky dell, where the squirrel played his pipe, and the woodpecker beat his drum, to the old rocks, gray and glorious, peeping from the earth, crept over by vines, and garnished with flowers; and then the patient carmen, dressed in the picturesque cos-



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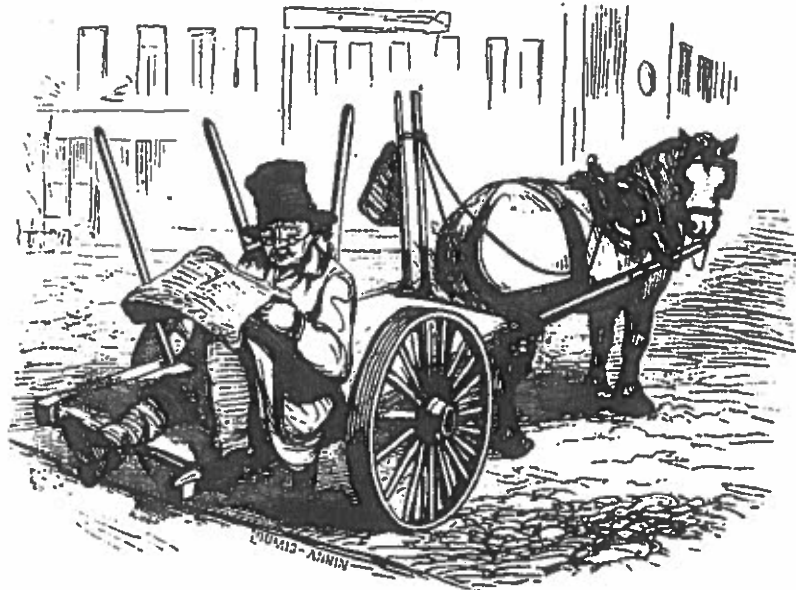
tune of demi-woodcraft and demi-city craft,
 emerging from the deep shadows or creeping
 into sunlight; his brown horse, contrasting
 with the gray boulder, and perhaps his rosy-
 cheeked children (berry hunters) with him,
 their merry voices cheering the old laborer,
 and cheering, too, the old horse, toiling amid
 the ruts. Happy days were those of moderate
 wants and moderate means.

Perhaps his ancestor, a carman himself, for
 carmen have ancestors as well as people who
 live in brown front houses, had been present
 in 1765, when the "stamps" were brought
 into the city of New York; had gone with the
 Sons of Liberty to Fort George, that stood in
 those days on the place where now stands a
 row of houses, south-east of the Bowling
 Green, to demand the delivery of the obnoxious
 stamps from Governor Colden; had joined
 in the shout that defied the refusal to the demand,
 and helped to hang the Lieutenant Governor
 in effigy, "in the fields," where stands
 old Tammany Hall to-day, and farther rollicking
 in his patriotic humor, and on this point more
 violent than ever, had helped to burn the
 splendid carriage of Colden the hanged effigy,
 thus finishing to his satisfaction the glories of
 the day; and here let us say that there were
 but three live coaches in existence in New
 York in those high times, one of which was
 owned by a Quaker, Robert Murray, and called
 by him, for modesty's sake, a leathern convenience.

Perhaps, too, his great and gallant ancestor

had carted wood for Governor Stuyvesant, when
 that worthy head of a worthy line of Dutch
 Kuickerhockers lived on the "Bowerie" estate,
 in a small yellow brick house that stood near
 the present St. Mark's Church, between the
 Second and Third avenues. Doubtless, too,
 he had more than once, when the master of
 the grounds had his stiff back turned from
 that direction, plucked a pear from that old
 tree which, now over two hundred years of
 age, flourished then in the Governor's garden,
 and even now bears blossoms and some fruit,
 on the corner of Thirteenth street and Third
 avenue. Daily as we pass the spot, and look
 on that relic of the past, inclosed in its iron
 railing, we almost fancy that we see the
 fierce but upright Governor, standing on his
 wooden leg, watching for the first blossom of
 his favorite tree, that he may bear it to his
 dainty wife, and say, "The pruning still holds
 good, old woman," and she for answer says,
 "Grafts from thy wooden leg bloom all around
 our old dwelling, Peter Stuyvesant!"

The olden day, of broad-tailed coats and
 broad shoe-buckles, and broad wheels has past,
 and the sun of universal commerce has
 dawned and meridianed upon this surface,
 "west side up, with care," of the globe. The
 city of New York, whose history is forever
 linked with the history of the nation, whose
 name is known where the name of the Duke
 who gave it his, is never heard, and never will
 be heard, and of whose past existence not one
 out of fifty thousand people of the present in-



WAITING FOR A JOB.

habitants of the globe ever dreamt, whose keels pierce with Kane's genius the frozen mart of silence and of death, dash through the unknown waters of sealed rivers, and lay their mighty lengths along the shores where traffic until now had been a mystery, and was almost looked upon as a false god, has become in wealth, in dignity and enterprise, one of the chief monarchies of civilization. She sends her fleets out as did Tyre and Carthage; and from every section of the discovered world she receives the tribute of their exchanges.

Look along our rivers, and see the wonders of the deep. From away up beyond the *Novelty Iron Works* down to the mouth of the East River, and on the other side, "where the Hudson pours its waters to the bay," the same distance up and down, and let the day be fine that you may enjoy the great treat more to your heart's content and your body's comfort, and tell us did you ever see a sight so full of industry, so busy, so interchanging, so eloquent of energy? London and Liverpool have their world-renowned docks, with drays like arks, and horses like elephants, but their movements are slow, and tempered with British dignity, while ours are those of men and animals who work as if they were of the bees that were to eat the honey. Pile after pile, box after box, bale after bale disappear, dragged off by the spirited steed that draws the sturdy car, and with such an ease, such a quiet don't-

care-a-straw-for-anythingness about the whole affair as to shed over the most toiling duty the pleasant color of a dramatic scene. See our modern carman, so easy in his boots, sitting on a box of silks from Lyons, just as composed as if he had floated on its upper lid from the foreign port of exportation, merely to see the world at his leisure, and take his comfort around among things generally. You have no idea how that man is trusted by those who know where to place trust, nor have you the slightest thought of the fund of intelligence there is in that nonchalant Hercules. He delivers his charge as a king would a battle, with dignity equal to the comparative emergency.

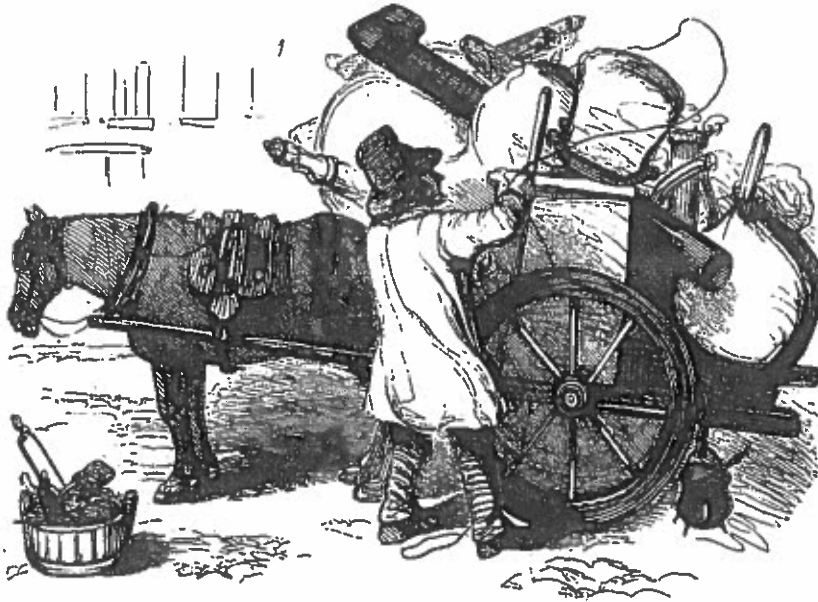
The day on which this number of our Magazine issues to the world is a day of days in New York. It is the moving day of the people, of the tenants of the landlords. Day after day, it is one that should be abolished in its horrid practice. By some singular whim every one rents his house from the 1st of May, and consequently the revolving year finds him afflicted with the chronic movement. Out he must go with his penates of frying pans and feather beds, to take possession of a house similarly vacated by its self-misery imposing occupant. Rain or shine, thunder or no thunder, mud or no mud, out they all turn, and every street looks like an arcade of Jew second-hand furniture shops. Then the carman is his glory. All other business is put aside, and to the field of the slain furniture they gather like powerful neutrals after the fight of weaker armies.

People living outside of New York should come on the 1st day of May and see the *inside* of New York turned outside. Imagine the scene. Hundreds of carts are loaded with hundreds and thousands of all sorts of affairs, from furniture the most sacred to articles the most profane. Whoever has a handle hangs conspicuously from every crook and crank upon the confused mountain side of a household arrangement. How the carmen manage to pile one thing on another, and the other thing upon that other thing without breaking the things, bobs, "puzzles the brain" and "gives us the heartache."

On the 1st of May all carmen are inspired profits, and a city follows them, worshiping and paying. Some poor devil with only a hair trunk and that too much for him to carry to where he has been turned to by the fate of circumstances, sits like *Marius* among the ruins of Carthage, and



MORICART'S CARMAN.



MAY DAY MOVING

r-anythingness about the whole of the most toiling day of a dramatic scene. See it, so easy in his boots, sitting from Lyons, just as compressed on its upper lid from the exportation, merely to see the leisure, and take his comings things generally. You have a man is trusted by those who place trust, nor have you the gift of the fund of intelligence that nonchalant Hercules. He goes as a king would a battle, with the comparative emergency, which this number of our kings the world is a day of days. It is the moving day of the tenants of the landlords; they of that should be abolished in its ice. By some singular, which his house from the 1st of May, until the revolving year finds in the chronic movement. Out of his penates of frying pans and, to take possession of a house, staid by its self-misery inspiring, rain or shine, thunder or no, and no mud, out they all fare, and looks like an arcade of Jew and other shops. Then the carmen in all other business is put aside, and no field of the plain furniture they like powerful neutrals when in the t of weaker armies.

People living outside of New York would come on the 1st day of May, see the inside of New York from outside. Imagine the scene. Hundreds of carts are loaded with beds and thousands of all sorts of articles, from furniture the most useful to the most profane. What a car has a handle hangs conspicuous in every crook and crack upon the refused mountain side of a household arrangement. How the carmen manage to pile one thing on another, and the other thing upon that, without breaking the things, puzzles the brain and gives the headache.

On the 1st of May, all carmen are inspired profits, and city laborers, worshipping and paying, fear or devil with only a hair-trunk, and at too much for him to carry there he has been turned to by the tie of circumstances, with the loss among the ruins of Charles's

ing in vain for a carman or a common or uncommon porter, to help him in his distress. He can get it done for ten dollars, not a cent under, and better for him to sell his trunk and his old clothes to Simon Israel, in Chatham street, and give sixpence to an omnibus driver for carrying him and the remainder of his pantaloon and legs, anywhere up town.

You may knock Christmas day out of the calendar, and Washington's birth-day, or even the Evacuation day of the British, but the carmen would not willingly submit to have the home-manufactured evacuation day ruled out of their rent roll.

Notwithstanding our great sympathy with the wants of the laboring classes, we would go hand and heart in any arrangement that would nullify this abominable habit of forcing everybody out of home on the first day of the sweetest month of all the "glad new year." As we expect no nomination for Congress, we are willing to risk this opinion, and earnestly call upon the tenants and landlords all over the island to come to a sensible reflection on this immense and positively ruinous system, ruinous both to health and purse, and rectify it for the years to come. When a thing is of no use, what's the use of it?

The carmen are under the city government, licensed, and responsible to the Mayor for their good conduct. Well are they protected by the statute made and provided for their conduct, and we will barely allude to a few statistics in their line.

They are commanded, by one of the provisions of the Carmen's Bill, to carry, if necessary, (to one horse) a weight of upward of two thousand pounds. He is not allowed to refuse a reasonable order at any time, but if not paid for his services, he is authorized to take the goods upon his dray or car to the Chief of Police, by whom he will be protected in his legitimate demand. He is not allowed to transport through the public streets any poles, plank, or timber exceeding thirty feet in length, and then the timber is to be so as not to interfere, to the right or left, with other conveyances, so they have to keep a pretty straight line, and "walk the planks" very precisely. Their rates vary according to the size and weight of their loads. Their legitimate fare for a load of furniture is thirty-eight cents; but they vary a little on the 1st of May, as you will find when you put them to the test. When off active duty they are obliged to stand at particular places throughout the city, where they await orders, and while so waiting they are not allowed to lounge upon front door steps; but as yet no law has been passed either to prevent them or the police from holding soothing converse with young area ladies from Ireland, or elsewhere, who may take it into their heads to think they are their cousins. But the carman is a graver human being than a policeman; in fact the best modern school of gallantry is to be found in the force. Look at that Colossus of Roads at Stewart's or the corner of Fulton and

Broadway. He is ever polite to old, in order to go it strong with the young ladies. The carman, however, is more of a man than a dandy; and daintily he holds his horse so that no speck of mud, if he can help it, shall assail the crinoline of the fair pedestrian. They work for ladies who keep house, and who especially are their patronesses. The carman of the dock is a different person from the carman of the upper portion of the city. One is wholesale, the other is retail. The carman of the docks affects seafaring people, and can talk "compass" and "lee shores," and utter profound thoughts on the fluctuations of trade; the other can relate anecdotes of trunks and small packages, of anxious people waiting at front doors for carpet-bags.

The dock carman thinks of the arrival of great merchantmen from over the seas; the carman of the streets thinks of perfumed boxes and tender maidens and matrons arriving from neighboring cities by the different trains. One is sedate and silent, the other chatty and vivacious, keeping a sharp look-out for jobs.

The carman's horse, his fellow worker, his "silent partner," is the carman's pride and the pride of his family; in fact he supplies in their affections the place of the Irishman's cow. They pet him in his stall, and on Sundays the children hang around him, or, when the spring



THE DOCK CARMAN.

is out with her garniture of beauty, the family harnesses him up to a wagon, and gives the young ones a quiet airing among the blossoms. He is never overworked, is always in good keep, and though crowds may bump by his nose on work days, he takes his exercise in solemn joy, while the master, from a small tin can, brought to him by his little girl, rejoices in a pork steak and other matters incident to his desires.



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