



The Horseman's Soliloquy

By ERNEST COLER

(With apologies to William Shakespeare)

To buy, or not to buy, that is the question;
 Whether 'tis nobler for a man to suffer
 The impositions of a balking horse,
 Or to take arms against a sea of troubles
 And with a Maxwell end them? To
 swear,—to cuss,—

No more, and with a car to say I end
 The meanness and the thousand fretful tricks
 That horses practice,—'tis a consummation
 Devoutly to be wish'd. To chug,—to fly;—
 To fly! Perchance to race! Aye, there's
 the rub;

For to acquire this state what fate may come
 Ere I can shuffle off my habits old
 Must give me pause; there's the respect
 That renders prejudice of so long life;
 For who would bear the ills and the delays,
 The barbarous fits, the haughty independence,
 The man-tormenting petulancies and

The want of power, possessed by horses,
 Together with the toil that patient friends
 Of such a transportation have,
 When he himself could his releasement make
 Owning a Maxwell? Who yet would use
 This four-legged relic of our bygone days,
 To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
 But that the dread of new-discovered means—
 (That frail and narrow fear from whose
 embrace

No bungling man can get)—puzzles the will
 And makes us rather bear those ills we have
 Than use inventions we know little of?
 Thus indolence does stultify us all,
 And thus the progress of tremendous strides
 Is sicklied over with procrastination.
 Yet enterprises of such pitch and moment
 May have their currents turned aside,
 But cannot be defeated.