

Animal Abuse referring to the Novel *Black Beauty* by Anna Sewell

Author: Dr. Amira M. Wasfy
Canadian International College (CIC)

Abstract - The English novel *Black Beauty* (1877) written by Anna Sewell is an autobiography of a horse "Black Beauty" tackling the problem of animal abuse during the Victorian age. Since Anna Sewell's *Black Beauty* (1877) appeared, horse stories were favored by children as they were part of their culture. The story shows how Anna Sewell was not only concerned with animal abuse, but she was also concerned, whether directly or indirectly, with many of the social issues of her time, such as poverty, unemployment, drinking, etc. She says, in her introduction, that her purpose in writing, is 'to induce kindness, sympathy, and an understanding treatment of horses.' Through such kindness and understanding, children can easily make a leap from horse-human relationships to human-human relationships, and begin to understand how their own consideration of others, whether animals or human beings may be of benefit to all. Anna Sewell believes that cruelty towards animals was a societal problem that could often be caused, whether intentionally or unintentionally, by ignorance and love for fashion. She tries to make readers aware of the need to legislate laws to protect animals from harsh and abusive treatment. Animal abuse is one of the cruelest acts seen among people through ages, However, nowadays it is still seen clearly in many countries especially the under developed countries. The story of *Black Beauty* (1877), written by Anna Sewell, is considered one of the most famous novels during the Victorian age which tackles this problem clearly. This novel is still most famous up to our present day. It is one of the best-loved and famous animal's realistic stories that became popular among people as well as with children. Besides, it started a trend in the popularity of autobiographical stories about animals.

INTRODUCTION:

Anna Sewell (1829 – 1878) is a famous and popular British writer who has only written *Black Beauty*. She was one of two children born on 1820 in Yarmouth, England, to Quaker parents of moderate beliefs and practices. She lived in London until 1822, and then moved with her family to Dalson. Since her early life, Sewell displayed sensitivity towards the treatment of animals, and that was clearly seen at her age of nine, when she refused to allow a man to redeem a blackbird he had shot in her yard and scolded him for his cruelty (Starrett 208). She even spoke out against the abuse of horses at that age as she saw that men used to drive them as if they are machines that do not need rest or kind treatment. Her love for horses increased when she fell in the rain at the

age of 14 injuring both ankles, causing her to be invalid. As she could not use her feet, she began to rely heavily on horses to pull her around in a cart. She spent many hours driving her father to and from his shuttle to work. Soon Anna grew to love horses and to resent the careless and cruel treatment they often receive from humans.

Animal abuse is one of the cruelest acts seen among people through ages, However, nowadays it is still seen clearly in many countries especially the under developed countries. The story of *Black Beauty* (1877), written by Anna Sewell, is considered one of the most famous novels during the Victorian age which tackles this problem clearly. This novel is still most famous up to our present day. It is one of the best-loved and famous animal's realistic stories that became popular among people as well as with children.

Besides, it started a trend in the popularity of autobiographical stories about animals.

Anna Sewell (1829 – 1878) is a famous and popular British writer who has only written *Black Beauty*. She was one of two children born on 1820 in Yarmouth, England, to Quaker parents of moderate beliefs and practices. She lived in London until 1822, and then moved with her family to Dalson. Since her early life, Sewell displayed sensitivity towards the treatment of animals, and that was clearly seen at her age of nine, when she refused to allow a man to redeem a blackbird he had shot in her yard and scolded him for his cruelty (Starrett 208). She even spoke out against the abuse of horses at that age as she saw that men used to drive them as if they are machines that do not need rest or kind treatment. Her love for horses increased when she fell in the rain at the age of 14 injuring both ankles, causing her to be invalid. As she could not use her feet, she began to rely heavily on horses to pull her around in a cart. She spent many hours driving her father to and from his shuttle to work. Soon Anna grew to love horses and to resent the careless and cruel treatment they often receive from humans.

Sewell was never married, nor had any children; she spent her time with her mother Mary Wright Sewell teaching in a Sunday school, as her mother was a deeply religious and popular author of evangelical children's books. She wrote several popular books which Anna used to help her edit. In fact, Anna was fascinated with writing and she started to write in 1871 her only story *Black Beauty*.

She spent six years to complete her novel *Black Beauty* which was published in 1877 a few months before her death on April 25, 1878. At her funeral, her mother insisted that the uncomfortable reins should be removed from all the horses in the funeral procession for that was one of the issues tackled in her daughter's novel.

The novel is not only based on Sewell's own experience of dealing with horses, but it is also based on real horses: one owned by her brother, named Bessie, and the other pony Merrylegs is based upon a favorite gray pony of Sewell's.

The book received great success on its publication. Such success was due to its main purpose as of an equine care manual, rather than that of an entertaining story.

Edwin Jaheil in his article "*Black Beauty*" observed that Sewell's novel remained in print since its initial publication and is considered one of the best-selling novels in her time, as its original publishers printed one fifty editions before copyright ran out. Furthermore, it was adopted by several societies which protested against cruelty to animals. Professor Waller Hastings, summarizing Sewell's life in his article "Anna Sewell (1820 – 1878)," affirms that her book gained sympathy from animal anticruelty groups, and "was widely used as propaganda by groups seeking more humane treatment of horses." In addition, Skyline Farm's "Anna Sewell's *Black Beauty* – Teacher Resource Guide" states,

The book was eventually adopted by both the British and American Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to

Animals, and thousands of copies were distributed for educational purposes. As a result, in the United States, a million copies were sold between 1890 and 1892, and *Black Beauty* continued to sell at the rate of a quarter million copies each year for another twenty years.

Claudia Johnson and Vernon Elso in their book *The Social Impact of the Novel: a reference guide* marked that the book's publication was sponsored by the Massachusetts ASPCA (American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) and was introduced by George Thorndike Angell, (an American lawyer, philanthropist, and advocate for the humane treatment of animals). Its phenomenal success was credited by boosting the activity and interest in anticruelty societies and anticruelty legislation across the nation (254).

It is very obvious from the above quotations that the book is very influential, effective and popular among people and that it has widely spread in different countries and become one of the best-selling novels read by generations of children as well as adults. In the article "You and Your Dumb Friends," Paul Collins stated that the novel was condensed and simplified, but one could not get the right feeling from that condensation or simplification. It was also made and remade many times over the silent and sound movies, as well as a TV series, and today, it is taught in language schools in Egypt and other countries.

The book was also distributed by animals' rights' campaigners as well as through bookshops, and over the years, the novel did much for the understanding and better treatment of horses in England and elsewhere. Consequently, this group of animals' rights' campaigners today also bans the use of animals in product testing and in scientific experiments. They changed the public sense of fashion by decrying the wearing of fur coats. They also advocated the spaying and neutering of family pets to prevent unwanted offspring and stray animals that the people used to kill.

Black Beauty is a realistic animal story that focuses on the animal itself and its suffering, not on a child's interaction with an animal in an animal tale. Although it was not originally intended for children, yet it has become a children's classic, a novel for the education of generations of school children up to the present day; it is an autobiography of a horse named Black Beauty.

In such autobiographical genre, the first person narrator is an animal that narrates his own life and experience from his own point of view, and that requires the reader to accept the fact that a horse is the first person narrator. *Black Beauty* is so convincing and believable because Anna Sewell so effectively entered the mind of a horse that everything in the text was so skillfully written from the perceptive of an animal. This proves to be more convincing to the reader as the animal speaks for himself/herself. Successfully, Sewell gets the reader to feel that he is actually getting the story 'straight from the horse's mouth,' to help the reader

imagine what it is like to be a horse. As Paul Collins said:

Anna Sewell undertook one of the most radical alterations of narrative in all of 19th century literature – making a horse talk, and making him talk as a horse. *Black Beauty* is not a fable: he does not flatter us with a cute simulation of humanity. He is neither human nor possesses any desire to be. *Black Beauty* does not have adventures or romances; nor does he try talking to humans. What he does is worrying about his reins being too tight, whether his food is fresh, and how his hoof is. (16)

Having a story written from the point of view of an animal has its advantages. As Catherine Holms, in her article "Critical Essay on *Black Beauty*: in Novels of Students," says that that genre is more convincing "... because the reader assumes that a horse is naturally more innocent, and less judgmental and cynical than a human, the same event through the eyes of a horse is more effective."

In the novel, horses speak only to one another, yet they are speechless auditors to humans, but this does not mean that they have no feelings or do not understand. Anna Sewell here highlights the fact that many people wrongly believe that animals neither feel nor understand, nor do they love, hate, or suffer. This genre invites the human reader to 'change situations' with the animal protagonist, and imagine its feelings in a realistic way. *Black Beauty* makes a perfect choice for

horse lovers and those interested in the rights of animals.

The protagonist here experiences various types of jobs, as the writer could not realistically place him in all situations. Thus, to show her in storytelling skill, Sewell encounters the situations with different horses throughout the book, for each has a unique story to tell, explores the theme of cruelty to animals and exposes the widespread mistreatment of horses by the people. Accordingly, Sewell is able to present to the reader these types of mistreatment in the city as well as the country; horses that are used for sport, for individual riding, for pulling carts, cabs, and carriages, and for combat. There are abuses that occur to them in each of these situations, and Sewell's pointed descriptions bring them to the reader's attention as had never been done earlier to the Victorian age in literature.

During that age, horses were over-worked, forced to work under horrible conditions, beaten and improperly groomed and harnessed. Since the novel is written from *Black Beauty*'s point of view, so the role of *Black Beauty* here is clear: it is an attempt to highlight the mistreatment of animals in general and horses in particular during that time and also to induce the reader to sympathize with the suffering and pain of horses and other animals.

Tess Cosslett in her book *The 19th Century Talking Animals in British Children's Fiction, 1786 - 1914* says that this genre of animal autobiography had been seen in a limited fashion before, but during the 19th century, that genre became popular, starting from Dorothy Kilner's *Life and*

Perambulation of a Mouse (1783) to S. Louise Patterson's *Pussy Meow: the Autobiography of a Cat* (1901) (80).

Anna Sewell was not only concerned with animal abuse, but she was also concerned, whether directly or indirectly, with many of the social issues of her time. During that age, the later Victorian period (1870 – 1901), England was a society of great poverty existing alongside with an enormously wealthy aristocracy and a growing middle class, as the middle class people were enjoying a great power. Economy was strengthened and consequently industry and commerce flourished. Nevertheless, the poor and working class were expected to make an attempt to better themselves through education and personal development, thus they were struggling hard to earn their living. However, the age was characterized by unemployment, desperate poverty, and rioting among the classes that did not benefit from the prosperity enjoyed by the upper and only few of the middle class. Those horrible conditions had greatly affected many novelists like Charles Dickens and Thackeray who tend to write mainly for that middle and working classes satirizing the social conditions during that time. As in Dickens's *Oliver Twist* where the writer examines the lives of people in the middle and poor classes showing the maltreatment exercised on the poor and even the children in that era.

This middle class consisted of people whose improved economic status allowed them to afford their own horses, but an improved lifestyle did not necessarily mean that they learned how to take care of their horses. Consequently, the abuse

of horses is the serious problem addressed in *Black Beauty*. In that sense, *Black Beauty* can be considered a symbolic novel in which abuse of the poor is represented by the abuse of horses, and that was shown when the horse's owner, a poor man, dies as a result of bad health conditions. The poor and some of the lower middle class members suffered greatly from the maltreatment of the upper and the governing class. When Anna Sewell wrote *Black Beauty*, she reflected the social conditions which controlled that time.

Anna Sewell says, in her introduction, that her purpose in writing, is 'to induce kindness, sympathy, and an understanding treatment of horses.' Through such kindness and understanding, children can easily make a leap from horse-human relationships to human-human relationships, and begin to understand how their own consideration of others, whether animals or human beings maybe a benefit to all. Anna Sewell believes that cruelty towards animals was a societal problem that could often be caused, whether intentionally or unintentionally, by ignorance and love for fashion. She intends to make readers aware of the need to legislate laws to protect animals from the harsh and abusive treatment.

Black Beauty is divided into four parts: each part is a new stage in Black Beauty's life from his early life on Farmer Grey's farm, where he is trained to be a riding and carriage horse, to his life with rich arrogant, ignorant and careless people who caused his suffering unintentionally. Part three depicts poor life as a London cab horse, though he was lucky to work for a kind, religious family. However, in

part four, he was mistreated by cruel, merciless and ignorant cab drivers, but the episode terminated with a happy retirement in the country. Despite the happy ending for the protagonist, Lucy Grealy, in her article "Afterward" admits that it is "also a deeply sad novel, a tragic account of human failure."

Each short chapter tells a story of an event that contains a lesson about how to treat horses. For example, one of the stories occurs when a powerful man, driving a light pony chaise, twisted the pony's head round and began to whip it fiercely. The pony tried to resist, but he could not; however, Squire Gordon mercifully warned him and finally said: "Remember, we shall all have to be judged according to our works, whether they be toward man or toward beast" (61:part1). Thus, these lessons can be applied on treating humans as well. Through her stories, Anna Sewall also illustrates what living in England was like during that period, showing the lifestyles of both the wealthy and the poor, and the consequent life of their horses. The novel is also full of exciting scenes, for example, the racing for the doctor, being saved from a stable in flames or a broken bridge, becoming lame from the loss of a horseshoe.

The novel opens with the most idyllic setting imaginable, a beautiful field with a shining pond, 'a pond of clear water,' surrounded by shady trees, rushes, and water lilies. The reader is also helped to envision a ploughed field, a plantation of fir trees, and 'a running brook overhung by a steep bank' and the most stunning horse lying by a gnarled oak tree. That was the first place Black Beauty used to live in, the entrancing picture of the

'pleasant meadow' at Farmer Grey's that captures the reading audience. Black Beauty describes nature in full details, as if it is a black and white portrait; but he does not maintain any color in the description.

The first place that I can well remember was a large pleasant meadow, with a pond of clear water in it. Some shady trees leaned over it, and rushes and water lilies grew at the deep end. Over the hedge on one side, we looked over a gate at our master's house, which stood by the roadside. At the top of the meadow was a grove of fir trees and at the bottom a running brook overhung by a steep bank. (1: part 1)

This is an auspicious beginning as; any imaginative reader would never feel while reading it, that he sees that pleasant meadow through a horse's eyes, and he also could never imagine the suffering and pain the protagonist and the other animals later confronted.

J. Lukens Rebecca points out in her book *A Critical Handbook of Children's Literature* that: "The novel is written chronologically, for order is easier for the child to follow if it is within his or her experience; chronological order is therefore more frequent in children's stories, while flashback is used more rarely" (77). Animals and in particular horses are the central characters that are given the main role in the novel; whereas, humans are only given marginalized roles. The novel shows how people and animals are interconnected, through

various owners who ask different tasks from Black Beauty. Black Beauty grows and has numerous adventures; in his life, he goes through many changes; his name, home, and treatment change each time he is sold.

All through the novel, Black Beauty narrates the story of his life from being a riding and carriage horse, to being a mistreated town cab horse and eventually to a humane treatment in a secure home. Notably, the animal keeps strength, patience, and good temper throughout his suffering. As animals play a significant role in the novel, the novel became extremely influential as pro-animal propaganda by groups seeking benevolent treatment to horses. The novel deals with three main issues: animal abuse, moral and religious lessons and discrimination. Besides that, it deals with the role of women in society during that time.

Animal abuse is the main theme in *Black Beauty*, as Anna Sewell believes cruelty against animals was a societal problem that should never be ignored or despised. Accordingly, she highlights that abuse in the novel, but at the same time she shows the positive results of kind treatment to animals. Mistreatment of animals was a heated public controversy at that time, for many people do not believe that 'animals do feel pain.' Sewell believes that those people who often abuse animals do that for no reason but fashion, carelessness, ignorance and duty.

The application of checkreins is one of the problems, which torture horses. Sewell's detailed narration helps the reader to imagine how it is painful for horses to hold their heads up continuously, simply

because the horse looks good with its head forced upright. In Anna Sewell's opinion, to shorten the checkreins and make them tight, for fashionable reasons, is a cruel act and one way of mistreating animals. She gives an example of the Lady of Lord W – the Baron at Earlshall Park who is a very arrogant woman. She is a merciless, proud-looking woman who does not seem pleased about anything. Although she knew that Black Beauty and Ginger have not been reined for three years, and that the Lord of Earlshall said it would be safer to bring them to this by degrees, yet she still insisted to shorten the rein to put their heads higher. She asked York to hold the horses' heads up again while driving, compelling the animal into a painful posture for the purpose of appearance alone. "Are you never going to get those horses' heads up, York? Raise them at once, and let us have no more of this humoring and nonsense" (120:part2). The horses here are forced to suffer just to support the mistress's upper class lifestyle and entertainment.

That is the beginning of Black Beauty's misery. He got so angry and sore in his legs, but he was not used to kick. Nevertheless, Ginger, another mare in the novel, has a different character and a different reaction as she went kicking in a nervous manner. Horses here wondered whether their masters knew how they suffered from those tight reins. They wondered whether they knew that the constrained position of their heads and throats causes foam at the mouth. Besides, the pressure on their windpipes makes their breathing uncomfortable.

Anna Sewell, at this point, is trying to tell the Victorians how animals and in

particular horses suffer and live a miserable life for no reason but to show off, by raising their heads up. Those people have no mercy and do not even think that those horses feel, suffer, and are hurt. Sewell here is highlighting the theme of people's cruelty to animals, to let the reader sympathize with them, and consequently, treat them kindly. She demonstrates that cruel humans can be males or females pointing out that women who mistreat horses like Lady of Lord W- in the novel do so only for the sake of fashion and appearance neglecting the horse's feelings and sufferings.

Another stupid fashion, which irritates and annoys Black Beauty and the other horses, is the use of blinkers. Black Beauty and the other horses were complaining about that fashion; Black Beauty wonders about the use of them, "Can anyone tell me the use of blinkers?" Here, Sewell's text provides different answers. Sir Oliver finds them to be of no use; whereas, Justice finds that they "prevent horses from shying and starting, and getting so frightened as to cause accidents" (54:part1). The answer is that people only do them for fashion; for there is no other reason for doing that except fashion. Although horses are used to these blinkers, yet they still would never want them. To walk in roads in the streets without having the ability to see around oneself is very irritating and frightening as horses should see and know what is there. They are more frightened when they see bits of things that they do not understand. People believe that horses would be more frightened to see the wheels of their own cart or carriage coming behind them, although actually without blinkers, streets would be very

clear to them even when they are crowded. As for Sir Oliver, he finds that blinkers are very dangerous at night, because horses see much better in the dark than men; consequently, many accidents would have never happened if horses had had the full use of their eyes.

Black Beauty narrates an accident caused by using blinkers some years past. One dark night, a hearse with two horses was returning by Farmer Sparrow's house; the pond was too close to the road. Suddenly, the wheels went too near the edge, and the hearse was overturned into the water; unfortunately, both horses were drowned and the driver hardly escaped. After that accident, they started putting a stout white rail to make the horses see easily, but if those horses had not been partly blind, no accident would have ever happened. Ginger was sarcastic about that accident that she commented: "...these men who are so wise, had better give orders that in future all foals should be born with their eyes set just in the middle of their foreheads, instead of on the side. They always think they can improve upon nature and mend what God has made" (56:part1).

Apart from Ginger's obvious sarcasm, the above quotation also reveals the writer's religious attitude and her appeal to faith, as all religions urge people to treat animals kindly and mercifully. Merrylegs, moreover, believes that John does not approve of the blinkers for he heard him talking with his master about it one day; however, the master objects for he sees that if horses had been used to them, it might be dangerous in some cases to leave them off. John comments that it would be a good thing if all colts were broken in

without blinkers, as was the case in some foreign countries.

The three horses, Ginger, Sir Oliver and Justice's explained opinions are not the only ones, as fashion also shows up in many variations in *Black Beauty*. Some horses are mistreated by having their tails painfully docked and that was done 'for fashion.' Sir Oliver, the horse, was also mistreated; he has a very short tail, only six or seven inches long, with a hassle of hair hanging from it. He says that when he was young, he was taken to a place where these cruel things were done. He was tied up, so that he could not move, and then they came and cut off his long, beautiful tail, through the flesh and through the bone, and took it away. That was a dreadful act, not just because of the pain that was terrible and lasted for a long time, but also because of his dignity of having his best ornament taken from him. Besides, that caused his inability to brush the flies off his sides and his hind legs when they sting him. What is really sorrowful is that all these sufferings are just for fashion. He complains,

Dreadful-ah! It was dreadful; but it was not only pain, though that was terrible and lasted a long time; it was not only the indignity of having my best ornament taken from me, though that was bad; but it was this: how could I ever brush the flies off my sides and my hind legs any more? You who have tails just whisk the flies off without thinking about it, and you can't tell what a torment it is to have them settle upon you and sting and sting, and have

nothing in the world to lash them off with. I tell you it is a lifelong wrong and a lifelong loss; but, thank Heaven, they don't do it now. (51:part1)

Anna Sewell is not attacking the abuse of horses only, but she is also attacking the abuse of animals in general. Sir Oliver notes that this horrible act is also done on dogs' ears and tails, causing the animal great pain as what is done with his dear dog friend, the brown terrier Skye. Sir Oliver says that his friend had five little pretty puppies that were of valuable kind and he was very fond of them. One day, a man came and took them from the stable, and in the evening, poor Skye searched for them and brought them back, one by one, her mouth bleeding and crying pitifully. They were all having their tails cut off, and the soft flap of their little ears was cut quite off. Their mother licked them and she was very troubled. The nice short lap that God has created to protect their delicate part of their ears from dust and injury was gone forever. Sir Oliver protested, "To my mind, fashion is one of the wickedest things in the world. Now look, for instance at the way they serve dogs, cutting off their tails to make them look plucky, and shearing up their pretty little ears to the point to make them look sharp, forsooth, said Sir Oliver" (52:part1).

Sewell wants to show how wicked some people are, to the extent that they torture those animals by cutting parts of their organs without caring about the pain they suffer. Oliver, here, is surprised because those horses that are valuable and fashionable are kept by people but are subjected to cruel acts that cause them

pain like docking their tails and ears; whereas, those animals that are of no value and are not fashionable are left. He also wonders: "Why don't they cut their own children's ears into points to make them look sharp? Why don't they cut the ends of their noses to make them look plucky? One would be just as sensible as the other would. What right has they to disfigure God's creatures?" (53:part1) and of course Oliver here represents Sewell's point of view. Sewell's use of the animal/child analogy makes humans sympathize and stand in for the animal as they do with humans. She draws her reader's attention to the fact that animals do not have less feelings than humans. Tess Cosslett in her book *The Nineteenth Century Talking Animals in British Children's Fiction, 1786 - 1914* mentions that Anna Kingsford, a prominent anti-vivisection campaigner deploys a similar analogy, "She reports a dream in which a tortured rabbit becomes a child: 'Your victim is of your own kind, a child that is human.' This comparison is obviously addressed to adults, as an attempt to extend their sympathy for animals" (73). During that time, there was a conflict concerning animal protection through the issue of anti-vivisection which became an element in the feminist movement especially in Britain and France.

Anna Sewell also connects animal abuse to a general moral deficiency which is torturing insects. In chapter thirteen, the schoolmaster, punishes a boy for torturing flies. The teacher comments, "...the devil was a murderer from the beginning and a tormentor to the end. God's mark, for God is love. ...there is no religion without love ... but if it does not teach them to be good and kind to men

and beasts it is all a shame" (71&72:part1). The concept of punishing a schoolboy for torturing flies is equal to hurting the weak and helpless people; besides, teaching children to have mercy on all God's creatures whether they are stronger or weaker than they are. A lady tells a carter, who has just tried to make a horse pull a too heavy load uphill, "We have no right to distress any of God's creatures without a very good reason" (x:int.). The message of the story is clear: have mercy on all God's creatures, whether they are weak or strong.

All through the novel, Sewell wants to stress the fact that animals do feel and do get tired, and they should not be overworked, or abused. However, she depicts animal abuse at its peak when Black Beauty went to work for Jakes, a large cab owner. Living with that cab owner was the worst period for Black Beauty, as he has to take a very heavy train and a party of four to the railway. As the load was too heavy to carry with no food or rest, Black Beauty fell heavily to the ground on his side and lost conscience. However, that cruel act did not stop after this accident; Black Beauty was always full loaded when he was working with Jakes. The later always believes that, "...it was no use going twice when once would do" (153:part2). As a result, Black Beauty's strength was deteriorating.

Animal abuse is not only committed by elders, but it is also committed by young boys. Cruel boys were shown in the streets of London abusing little ponies by letting them carry heavy loads. Black Beauty, as the mouth piece of Sewell, comments that they, horses, do not mind hard work if

they are treated well. When the butcher went out of his shop blaming his son for misusing his horses, the boy complained that his father always gave orders to be accomplished in no time as the customers are always in a hurry. However, the son sees that solving this problem is very simple, it is just that the customers ask the butcher their orders beforehand.

Other stories are narrated all through the novel by Anna Sewell to show how some boys are cruel and aggressive and how they are treated and deterred for their cruel acts. When Bill was trying to make a pony leap over the gate and the latter could not, the boy whipped, thrashed, and knocked the pony over the head. The pony then threw up the boy, and the boy was stuck among the thorns; he asked for help, but John refused to help him and told him: "I think you are quite in the right place and maybe a little scratching will teach you not to leap a pony over the gate that is too high for him" (69:part1).

Another theme tackled in *Black Beauty* is the problem of poverty during the Victorian age. Here the writer relates humans to animals, as the working class was suffering from poverty; they were cruelly treated and as a result, they became cruel with humans as well as with animals. Nicholas Skinner, a large cab owner is 'hard on the men' who are in turn 'hard on the horses.' The suffering of poor people, consequently, causes the suffering of their horses. Cab drivers in general used to live a harsh life, overworked and very low pay. *Black Beauty* comments, "Horses are worked to the bone, sometimes I was so fevered and worn that I could hardly touch my food and cabmen suffer from overwork because of low fares

and the high rental charge of the cab owner" (260:part4).

In addition, the working class used to work seven days per week without any rest, although at that time keeping the Sabbath – that is not to work on Sundays – was something that many people considered important. However, people used to hire cabs to go to church without caring or even thinking that those cab drivers themselves were breaking their own Sabbath. Anna Sewell portrayed the problem of hypocrisy in Sabbath keeping. There is an analogy between the suffering of animals and the suffering of the poor working class, as they both suffer from cruelty.

Another example, drawn by Sewell, to show how that working class suffers, by being over-worked, is the miserable looking driver Sam Speedy. The governor accused him, of mistreating his horse, as he looked dreadfully beaten. The man exploded and complained about the costs of living. As being the only breadwinner of the family, he had to work day and night only to be able to feed his family, with six children. Sometimes he had to pledge his clock to pay to Skinner, because if he did not work so hard, he would starve. Sam Speedy was not the only one, but many other drivers were also living the same miserable conditions. Sewell wants to show us here that one of the major reasons of mistreating horses is poverty, as it makes men work day and night, never have a day rest or a quiet hour for their wives and children. They do not ill-use their horses just for nothing, but for the sake of working harder and earning their living.

Anna Sewell discusses several other social problems prevalent during her age. One of the most serious problems that continue to confront the society is: that of the ignorance of some people of how to deal with animals. In the novel, *Black Beauty* was not only driven by bad tempered people, but he was also driven by ignorant ones. The first sort was the tight-rein drivers who seemed to think that all depended on holding the reins as hard as they could, and never relaxing the pull on the horse's mouth, or giving him the least liberty of movement. The second sort was the loose-rein drivers, who let the rein lie easily on the horses' backs and their hands rest lazily on their knees, and of course they would not have any control over the horse. *Black Beauty* was comparing those ignorant people with Squire Gordon who always kept them to their best paces and their best manners. Squire Gordon believed that "spoiling a horse and letting him get into bad habits was just as cruel as spoiling a child and both had to suffer for it afterwards" (150:part2).

Reuben Smith is another example of ignorance. When a nail in one of *Black Beauty's* shoes had started to be loose, he did not notice it except later for he was ignorant and drunk. When a hostler told him that he should have the shoe looked to, he replied: "No, that will be right till we get home" (136:part2). As a result, the shoe became looser and it came off. *Black Beauty* was hurt, and the driver was dead. Smith has harmed and ruined *Black Beauty* because of his ignorance and drinking.

Carelessness is once again referred to by another ignorant driver. This driver did

not recognize that *Black Beauty* had a stone caught in one of his forefeet, the most dangerous kind that a horse can pick up. When the driver was told by a farmer passing by that there was something wrong with his horse, his ignorance was obvious in his response when he replied, "that is a queer thing! I never knew that horses picked up stones before" (153:part2). *Black Beauty* also confronted ignorance when Filcher fallaciously fed him and when Mr. Barry did not realize that the horse's health was getting worse. Anna Sewell above gives several examples of people who harmed the horse as a result of the combination of their ignorance and their carelessness. As carelessness is also one of the social evils tackled by Sewell, the new groom Alfred Smirk was also a perfect example. Though he was a good-looking fellow, taking much care of his appearance, civilized and never ill-used *Black Beauty*, yet he was very lazy. Moreover, he was not keen on the stable's cleanliness, as he often left the straw moist and the stable smelling bad. Eventually, *Black Beauty's* feet became so unhealthy to the extent that he became very fumble-footed and sometimes he became restless and feverish. He was taken to the furrier who said that the horse was not in good health and that it was absolutely necessary that he stay in a clean stable.

Evil experience never ends; *Black Beauty* has suffered from, the corn dealer and baker, Jakes, as his stable was badly lit and there was only one small window at the end. The consequence was that the stalls have almost weakened his sight to the extent that he was afraid to become purblind.

Sewell also shows that carelessness is not only the result of ignorance, laziness and drinking, but it exceeds that. Jeffers's portrayal of the barn fire is an example, which is quite frightening. A young man was as careless as he did not lay down his pipe and this caused fire all over the place, that Black Beauty, Ginger and all the other horses woke up suffocated with smoke. Fire engines came to extinguish the fire, but unfortunately, two horses could not get out of the stable and were dead and buried under the burned rafters and tiles. On the whole, Anna Sewell attracts our attention to the fact that sometimes animals are abused, tortured and harmed unintentionally, through the ignorance and carelessness of the men who are in contact with them.

As a religious Quaker woman, Anna Sewell believes that if you see cruelty you have to try to stop it, and the proper way to behave towards others whether they are humans or animals is to be kind, patient, and understanding. "A bad-tempered man will never make a good-tempered horse," (36:part1) says an old horse trainer to his bullying son who has just tried to break a horse with violence and abuse.

In the second half of the 19th century, almost a decade before the spread of commercial product of automobiles in the developed countries, horses played a vital role, as they were the sole means of transportation and locomotion (Jaheil 1). However, they were also the labor force for a variety of jobs, as they used to pull carts, cabs, wagons, and barges on the roads and on city streets, work as pit ponies in the coal mines, and help plough rural fields. Margaret Bennett in her article "Who was Black Beauty?" reports

that "During the 1890s, there were over 11,000 hansom cabs alone on the streets of London, needing twice that number of horses to operate." Despite their importance, horses were treated miserably and forced to carry very heavy weight that may cause their collapse. Bennett adds that they "often died in harness due to overwork and lack of care." That equation of beasts with machines or animals with steam engine, during the Victorian age, was criticized several times especially in the novel. Many people, during that time, were so ignorant in their thinking that a horse was something like a steam engine, but only smaller. They also think that if only they pay for it, a horse can go as far and carry as much heavy load as they like. They consider horses as steam engines and not as creatures that feel, get tired, and suffer. Black Beauty comments that, "...ninety-nine out of hundred would as soon think of patting the steam engine that drew the train" (215:part3).

Anna Sewell, through Black Beauty, attempts to make the animals in her story appear more human. She wanted the reader to look at animals as creatures that have thoughts and feelings and not as machines that do the work that humans are incapable of doing. She also attacked the hunting sport as it hurt both animals and men who are fond of that sport.

'I never yet could make out why men are so fond of this sport; they often hurt themselves, often spoil good horses, and tear up the fields, and all for a hare, or a fox, or a stag, that they could get more easily some other way; but we

are only horses, and don't know,' said Black Beauty (7&8:part1).

As a Quaker, Anna Sewell, furthermore, tackles the problem of violence and war. The antiwar sentiments expressed by another horse 'Captain' echo the philosophy of nonviolence, particularly as defined by Quakerism. Captain admits that he cannot understand the logic that leads humans to engage in warfare, just as Black Beauty's mother who claimed that people hunt for reasons beyond a horse's understanding. Captain used to serve in the cavalry as an army horse in the Crimean War. His first owner was an officer there; first, the horse thought that the life of an army horse was very pleasant, but then, he changed his mind as it was not fun – but war. Some horses were shot dead or pierced with lances, and were left either dead or in the agony of their wounds. Captain, the horse, was not afraid because his master's cheery voice, as he encouraged his men, made him feel as if they could not be killed.

I saw many brave men cut down, many fall mortally wounded from their saddles. I have heard the cries and groans of the dying, I have cantered over ground slippery with blood, and frequently had to turn aside to avoid trampling on a wounded man or horse, but, until one dreadful day, I had never felt terror; that day I shall never forget, said Captain. (186:part3)

The above quotation shows how the horse's master died. Captain felt lonely

when his master died: "...and now, without a master or a friend, I was alone on that great slaughter ground" (198:part2). That quotation shows how horses feel when their masters die, as many animals do feel depressed when their masters die, to the extent that some of them quit food. The horse here expresses how he loves and misses his master, "I never saw my dear master again. I believed he fell dead for the saddle. I never loved any other master so well" (190:part3). Captain describes the horrors of war, how horses had been so badly wounded that they could scarcely move, how other noble creatures were trying on three legs to drag themselves along and how after the battle, wounded horses were shot, but those who had slight wounds were brought back. This shows how Anna Sewell has made the horse, Captain, feel and think just like a human being, who have sympathy and love for others whether humans or horses.

The role of animals here is not just to show the cruelty, carelessness, ignorance and all the evil abuses of animals, but also to guide people morally and socially to a better life, as will be shown in the following pages.

Black Beauty has been considered as a work of humane literature, a moral tale, and an animal autobiography, which were all popular genres in the late nineteenth century. As Anna Sewell was born into a Quaker home that follows their religious rituals and beliefs, she incorporated many moral lessons in her novel. The role of the animal here is to reveal these moral lessons and religious beliefs that some people are bestowed with and

demonstrate how those people treat animals with affection and respect.

Sewell, moreover, introduces other good people into the book to deliver lessons to children. When Jerry Barker's customer stops a drunken driver from whipping his horses brutally, he tells Jerry:

It is because people think only about their own business, and won't trouble themselves to stand up for the oppressed nor bring the wrong-doer to light. I never see a wicked thing like this without doing what I can... My doctrine is this, that if we see cruelty or wrong that we have the power to stop, and do nothing, we make ourselves sharers in the guilt. (217:part3)

Jerry Barker believes that one should not accept wrong deeds without stopping it or complaining about it. This belief is also practiced in the religion of Islam, as said in one of Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) sayings that, if you see cruelty or wrong, you should try to stop it by hand, if you could not, by advice, but if you could not by heart (silent complain) and this is the weakest faith. Anna Sewell here creates the character of Jerry Barker to supply most of her lessons on honesty and integrity, as he is an example of a cab driver who was very religious. In all his scenes, Jerry makes decisions based on his strong moral convictions, "Every man must look after his soul; you can't lay it at another man's door like a foundling, and expect him to take care of it... if a thing is right, it can be done, and if it is wrong, it can be done without, and a good man will find a way" (204-5:part3). As a strong

believer, Jerry refuses to take extra fare for extra effort because he finds sufficient reward in a job well done. He refuses to work on Sunday, so when he was offered to take Mrs. Briggs regularly to church on Sundays morning, he apologized for the license he had was only six days per week. The gentleman suggested that he would change the license because Mrs. Briggs preferred him, but he apologized by saying that he used to have a seven days license before, but it was a hell of a work for him and for his horse, and he believes that he and his horses should have a day of rest. Jerry and his family were religious; they wanted Sundays off to go to church and spend their time together.

Nevertheless, as most people care more about materialism than spiritualism, Jerry was criticized by his fellows for that concept and for refusing a good job only because it was on Sunday. Although he has lost his best customer, yet he believes that by God's law they have a day of rest, and by the law of England, they have a day of rest. He sees that those who do not believe that Sundays should be off like Larry do not believe in religion. Jerry believes that, if all people unite to take their rights, they will take them. He is a very merciful and religious man who cares about his horse in particular and animals in general.

Sewell uses Jerry to voice her beliefs saying, "Real religion is the best and truest thing in the world; the only thing that can make a man really happy, or make the world better" (204:part3). When Jerry broke his Sunday rule – Sabbath, it was only to drive a friend to her dying mother. Sewell makes it certain that this good deed is rewarded by his spending together

with Black Beauty, a refreshing day in the country. Another good deed also depicted in the novel is when he drove a mother with her sick child to the hospital refusing to take any fees. This is also rewarded by the meeting Mrs. Fowler, his wife's former employer, which results by reinforcing their relationship, and later, by being rescued, when he got too ill, to continue his work as a cab driver and his life with his family at her farm.

Moral lessons are given not only by man, but also by animals. Black Beauty's mother has played an important role in the novel, as she gives her son some pieces of advice about how to behave as a well bred horse and she warns him that horses' life is often difficult and that helped him a lot all through his lifetime that no matter what circumstances he faces, nothing breaks his spirit. She says:

I wish you would pay attention to what I am going to say to you. The colts have not learned manners. You have been well bred and well born; your father had a great name in these parts, and your grandfather won the cup two years at the new market races. Your grandmother had the sweetest temper of any horse I ever knew, and I think you have never seen me kick or bite. I hope you will grow up gentle and good, and never learn bad ways. Do your works with a good will, lift your feet up well when you trot, and never bite, or kick even in play. (2:part1)

Beauty's mother also told him that as there are good men, there are also mean, foolish, ignorant, and careless men, who never trouble themselves to think. "... but a horse never knows who may buy him or who may drive him" (15:part1). She advised him to do his best wherever he is, and keep up his good name.

The role of Black Beauty's mother is very important in the novel, as she gives her son instructions, and advice that children will never forget. As Laura Carter in her article "Novels for Students," points out that most children who read this story will reflect on similar advice from their mothers. Just as we hear children speaking to their dolls, repeating their parents' advice, they also remember Black Beauty who must always be good no matter what circumstances he finds himself in. Accordingly, young readers are reacting to the story on two levels: First, the need of Black Beauty to find love, friendship, and a safe home; second, his mother's advice that guide him to the right direction.

Black Beauty is also affected by his mother's advice when he was faced by wearing things that do not seem natural to him such as saddle, checkrein, blinkers etc. He reacts in good manners and is tamed. According to Laura Carter, in her article "Novels for Students," this is considered a very good lesson for children to learn when they face the problem of wearing things that do not seem natural or comfortable to them, like wearing their raincoats, boots and mittens. Besides that, Black Beauty has to learn to go just the way adults want him to go. That also teaches children to take into consideration their parents' demands even if they

contradict with theirs, most important is to turn to know how difficult it is when they do not obey elders, as well as to learn the rules of their society.

Another important issue for both children and animals is the fear of leaving home. For children, going to a babysitter or going to nursery school is a trip also to the unknown. Similarly, when Black Beauty moves away from his mother and is taken to Birtwick Park to his new owners it is a trip to the unknown, thus children sympathize with him. They understand his feelings, as he has to leave his mother, his friends, and the people that he has known during his early life.

One of the effective themes in *Black Beauty* is that of temperance. A major turning point in the story occurs when Beauty's knees are ruined in an accident as a result of a drunken groom. To build up the tragedy of the accident, as Lois Kerschen in his article "Critical Essay on *Black Beauty*, in *Novels for Students*" comments, "Sewell describes the groom Reuben Smith in glowing terms concerning his abilities and personality but notes that he had one great fault, and that was the love of drink." The consequences was that, the drunken groom, Reuben, is dead and Black Beauty's knees are ruined, and the earl decided that Beauty should be sold for he says "I could not have knees like these in my stable" (146:part2).

As a Quaker, Anna Sewell makes a stance against drunkenness, and this is commented on by Gloria Stevens in her book *Anna Sewell: Black Beauty as*, "If there's one devil that I should like to see in the bottomless pit more than another,

it's the drink devil" (39). Stevens then compares between the two coachmen, Reuben Smith and Jerry Barker. She describes Reuben Smith as a faithful and valuable man who was "gentle and very clever in his management of horses and could doctor them almost as well as a farrier ..." (134:part2). Nevertheless, she notes, "he had one great fault, and that was the love of drink" (134:part2). Smith could be very fine for a week, but once he is drunk, he destroys everything "... be a disgrace to himself, a terror to his wife, and a nuisance to all that had to do with him" (135:part2). He had been dismissed from many jobs; however, York had hired him out of pity when he promised never to drink.

On the other hand, Anna Sewell shows us Jerry Barker who never drinks because he is religious. When he fell ill, the doctor said, "...he had a better chance than most men, because he didn't drink. He said yesterday the fever was so high that if father had been a drinking man it would have burned him up like a piece of paper; but he thinks he will get over it," said Harry (249:part3).

Anna Sewell above depicts the accident of Smith to show how alcoholism causes people to break their promises and lose their lives. She gives an indirect advice to people during the Victorian age, which is the devastating result of drinking alcohol. It is very dangerous to their health, their attitude and behavior.

During the Victorian period, drinking was a hazardous problem for the working class. Barrows and Room in their book *Drinking: Behavior and Belief in Modern History* says that a major social reform

effort was achieved by the 'Temperance Movement.' That movement was a moralistic movement, during the Victorian period, that sought to reform society through abstinence of alcohol consumption. It was led by the middle-class but aimed at the working class. The movement's target was the working-class men, because those men, unlike women usually drink in public. Besides that, the 'Feminist Movement' dealt with those men who used to practice drinking at home because that caused domestic violence, as drunkenness causes one to lose control because the consumption of alcohol is destructive. In addition, spending money on liquor was a wasteful form of entertainment, so the 'Temperance Movement' called for saving one's money and avoiding useless times spent in self-indulgent leisure.

Black Beauty has, moreover, played a great role by helping others. He did a very good job by galloping as fast as he could eight miles to the town to stop at Dr. White's door, for Mrs. Gordon was so ill and her husband, Squire Gordon, thought she would die if he could not get there at once. Unfortunately, the doctor's horse had been out all day and was quite done up and his son had taken the other. The doctor was obliged to take Black Beauty although he had galloped nearly all the way. The way back was very tiring for Black Beauty; besides, the doctor was a heavier man than John and not so good a rider. However, Black Beauty did a good job by being soon in the park, but he got very tired and ill. When his master went to see him, he appreciated what he did, "My poor Beauty, my good horse, you saved your mistress's life, Beauty; yes, you saved her life" (99:part1). Black

Beauty was glad to hear that, for the doctor told them that if it had not been for Black Beauty, he would have not been able to save the mistress. Black Beauty stayed ill for a while; but fortunately, after a few days he recovered. Sewell wants to show here that animals are very helpful, faithful and friendly, so they deserve good treatment.

Even though humans in *Black Beauty* consider themselves superior to dumb animals, yet Anna Sewell gives the reader an example where animals understand by instinct more than humans do. Black Beauty refuses to cross the bridge because he knows by instinct that there is something wrong. He refuses although they insist, but he is proved to be right. He attempts to explain his state of mind to the reader, emphasizing that he cannot tell his master and John. He says: "I felt sure there was something wrong. I dare not go forward, and I made a dead stop . . . I could not understand much of what they said, but I found they thought, if I had gone on as the master wanted me, most likely the bridge would have given way under us" (66:part1). Black Beauty's master discovers that the bridge is broken by flood and if Black Beauty had crossed it, they would have died. He then said, "God had given men reason, by which they could find out things for themselves, but He had given animals knowledge, which did not depend on reason, and which was much more prompt and perfect in its way, and by which they often saved the lives of men" (66:part1).

In the above paragraph, Sewell wants to reveal the fact that animals have a strong sense of feeling. She highlights the truth that humans lack the ability to sense and

understand situations while animals can, for Allah bestows the latter with a better power, which is their instinct. Black Beauty did not save Mr. and Mrs. Gordon's life only, but he also saved Lady Ann's life. When the horse Lizzie galloped with other horses taking Lady Ann with her, Black Beauty noticed that, and he neighed for Blantyre to come and save her. These are some examples given by Sewell to emphasize the role of animals in man's life.

Moral lessons tackled in the novel are not only portrayed through giving advice and teaching discipline, ethics and religion, but they are also revealed by showing how to deal with animals. Sewell gives example of good people who treat animals in a humane manner. One of these characters is the mistress of Squire Gordon; she is very kind and merciful to animals. If she meets any horse with his head strained up, as said before, she stops the carriage and reasons with the driver with a sweet but serious voice trying to show him how foolish and cruel such act is.

Anna Sewell comments on human's abuse – poor people's abuse – who were stressed physically as well as emotionally. She sympathizes with them through her characters Jerry Barker, Speedy Sam and the others. She wonders, how could a mistreated, overworked and humiliated human being treat animals kindly, as most people probably if they are abused by their superiors, they abuse their inferiors. Sewell gives examples of people who are forced to treat animals badly and let their horse's work day and night using the whip in order to make money to satisfy their needs. Seedy Sam felt that he was old

although he was only forty-five, as he complained about the expenses that after a long tiring journey, he only earned three shillings. Of course, it is not always as bad as that, but sometimes when the horse is tired, there is nothing to do but to whip him/her for going. "You can't help yourself – You must put your wife and children before the horse" (220:part3). He does not ill-use the horse for the sake of it, but for earning his living for himself and for his big family.

Jerry sympathized with that man, Seedy Sam, and so did the governor. Black Beauty also sympathized with him, and with his horse and comments: "Sometimes a kind word is all we can give'em, poor brutes and 'tis wonderful what they do understand" (222:part3). By showing the suffering of the poor people and of animals, the writer aims at teaching children how to be kind and merciful.

Another important issue tackled by Anna Sewell in her novel is social differences, whether it is among animals or humans. Anna Sewell has depicted different scenes to show this discrimination. In the setting of the story, the reader is made aware of the importance of classes even among horses. Black Beauty is told by the mother not to mix with 'rough' colt in the meadow: "... they are cart-horse colts, and of course, they have not learned manners. You have been well bred and well born" (2:part1). Here, Black Beauty's mother describes carthorse colts as ill-mannered and she does not want her wellborn son to mix with them. This could also be a lesson for the children as not to mix with naughty children who are not well brought up.

In addition, Anna Sewell compares the luxurious life of the rich like Squire Gordon and his wife, and the Lord and Lady W- with the anguished, dim life of the poor like Sam Speedy and others. She portrays the careless, inhumane and selfish treatment that some rich people treat the poor. When Jerry Barker was obliged to wait for two gentlemen all night on the New Year, he got seriously ill that 'he could not be much worse.' He had bronchitis as the doctor thought. During that time, many rich people used to treat the poor carelessly. The two gentlemen above left Jerry for two hours and a half late at night, in the cold, raining weather. They never bothered to think of how that poor man would have born that weather.

Some critics, such as Paul Collins, believe that *Black Beauty* is more of a political work than many other children's books. The emphasis of Beauty's darkness is a debatable issue. Some believe that it cannot be coincidental. The color black in *Black Beauty* was not chosen haphazardly, but it plays an important role in the novel. Black Beauty himself is also called 'Darkie,' 'Blackie' or 'Black Auster' by his masters. As Paul Collin in his article "You and Your Dump Friends" believes, Anna Sewell has taken the idea of the American slave in *Uncle's Tom Cabin*, written by the American author Harriet Beecher Stowe and replaced the slaves with horses (185). She has used the emotive power of anti-slavery and she applied it to animals. She reverses the metaphor, to show us that animals are treated like slaves. The primal scene of enslavement comes early after Black Beauty witnessed a hunt in a field nearby. That hunt ends with a rabbit nearly torn to bits and with the falling down of the horse breaking his leg and

killing his rider. After leaving the horse a long time groaning, the horse was shot. That horse was Rob Roy, Black Beauty's brother whom he never knew as his mother has not mentioned that he has a brother. Black Beauty says that his mother was so troubled because she has known this horse for years, but it seems that horses have no relations; at least they never know each other after they are sold.

In both stories, the plot and the main character were almost exactly identical. In *Uncle's Tom Cabin*, when Uncle Tom was still too young and naïve, he was put to work; then, once his body became valuable enough, there comes the breakup of his family as he is sold to a new owner; a kindhearted one, then a series of owners who abuse him in different ways, steal his food and put him in a miserable house. He makes friendship with others, but that does not stay long as some of them die and others are sold.

Eventually, both stories end up on downward track, as stated by Jennifer Mason in her book *Civilized Creatures: Urban Animals, Sentimental Culture, and American Literature*, in which they are sold in public auctions, separated from their families, and finally purchased by taskmasters who intend to work them to death. Along the way, Uncle Tom encounters several characters analogous to Black Beauty; Topsy was, like Ginger, separated from her mother before her memory (208).

These analogies between animals and slaves have been extensively investigated in some critical reviews about *Black Beauty* and was advertised in America as "the Uncle Tom's Cabin of the Horse." Robert

Dingley has argued in the article "*Black Beauty-Talking Animals in British Children's Fiction*" that, "*Black Beauty* is compared badly with anti-slavery literature. While a book like *Uncle Tom's Cabin* can have liberty as its project, *Black Beauty* depends on an acceptance that it is right for horses to be the slaves of man" (qtd. in Cosslett 79).

Many people, during that time and still in some countries, believe that animals are born to be subjected and they have no rights or liberty, just like the slaves. Anna Sewell tackles this problem all through the novel, as most of the horses in the novel are just complaining of being abused, but they do this in a passive way, and a good example for this is *Black Beauty*. He complains about checkreins, straps, blinkers, unhealthy stables etc., but as mentioned before, in a passive way, and fortunately, at the end of the novel, he is offered liberty through a good master and later by the three young ladies.

The novel's cast of male characters, from stable boys to groomsmen to proprietors openly speaks for animal's rights; for example, Squire Gordon goes out of his way to warn a neighbor who was abusing a pony by needless whips, kicks, and knocks. Furthermore, Joe blames a carter for beating a team of horses because they fail to pull a load of bricks that was too heavy for them. When the carter told him to mind his own business, he told his master and testified in front of the judge about the carter's mistreatment of horses.

Though Sewell uses male's voices to call for treating animals mercifully and not oppressively, yet she believes that this

should not only be restricted to men, but everyone whether male or female has to interfere when he sees any animal abused. As a female writer, Anna Sewell demonstrates how some of her female characters take active actions in equine matters when any abuse of an animal is involved. For example, the daughter of one of the passengers, when she sees that a big load is put on *Black Beauty*, tells her father that she is confident that "this poor horse cannot take us and our luggage so far, he is very weak and worn out" (261). She begs her father to take a second cab to accommodate their luggage, but her pleas are dismissed. Her father, tells her not to make so much a 'fuss' and insists that the driver knows his business.

Sewell's words here put into context the true nature of women's role in the 19th century England, for the daughter is openly criticized for questioning and is immediately rejected. However, she also shows us that the girl's expectations comes true as *Black Beauty* tragically collapses under the extreme weight of the overloaded carriage hired by her father.

Another important female animals in the novel is the character of Ginger who plays a significant role in the novel. Although all the animals in the novel are silenced and cannot speak up to defend themselves, nor can they fight back when they are abused by handlers, yet Ginger, as mentioned earlier, used to kick and bite and as a result, she is more abused.

What more could I want? Why, Liberty! . . . I must stand up in a stable night and day except when I am wanted, and then I must be just as steady and quiet

as any old horse who has worked twenty years. Straps here and straps there, a bit in my mouth, and blinkers over my eyes. Now, I am not complaining for I know it must be so. (28:part1)

Ginger has been oppressed all her life except when she was with Squire Gordon. She uncompromisingly expresses rebellion and actively complains against slavery all the time. In Part Two, the chapter entitled 'A Strike for Liberty', Ginger rebels against the bearing-rein: "...plunging, rearing and kicking in a most desperate manner" (121:part2). However, by the end of the story when she met Black Beauty in the city, she admits to him that she has ceased defending herself for she has been ill used. Ginger tells him, "I did once, but it's no use; men are strongest, and if they are cruel and have no feeling, there is nothing that we can do, but just bear it on and on to the end" (225:part3). Ginger above pays for that rebellion by being grounded and defeated, and, at the end, miserably meets her death.

All through the story, Ginger presents human cruelty and savage treatment towards animals, and this is considered the most striking part in the novel. That brutal act impresses children so much and makes them cry. Children or anyone who reads this novel will sympathize with Ginger and will exasperate on anyone who causes this mare to suffer. He/she will never try to be cruel with any animal, but on the contrary, will be very kind to all animals. On the other hand, the character of Ginger for children is considered to be their destructive emotions, and no matter

how some of them are loved or trained, no child is good all the time. Children consider her as a 'naughty' horse, as she is not raised well, and neither humans nor animals could trust her.

Accordingly, through Ginger's character, females prove to have strong personalities; they fight for their rights whether they are defeated or not. It seems that Anna Sewell, as a female writer, wants to attract our attention to the status and role of women during that age, as women were struggling to obtain their rights.

Anna Sewell portrays a stereotype of Victorian women who could be seen but not heard, and if they try to prove themselves, they are ignored. As Laura Carter in her article "Novels for Students" comments that Anna Sewell tries to highlight the fact that women's voices were ignored during the Victorian society, but both men and women have authority over animals, but the authority and wisdom of the mistress may have been recommended by female writers. *Black Beauty* ends up with being purchased by female owners, but both men and women speak up for a better treatment of animals.

The tragic ending of Ginger, as Tess Cosslett in his book *The Nineteenth Century Talking Animals in British Children's Fiction, 1786 – 1914*, means that the novel endorses Black Beauty's acceptance of being so passive. Ginger's role here, as a defeated rebellious horse, proves the impossibility of 'liberty.' Although all those animals express a reluctant acceptance, yet nothing is changed, they had to accept their place and destiny without asking for a better

change. However, Cosslett believes that it is not just animals that are denied 'liberty' and forced to know their places, but it is also human beings (80). Anna Sewell introduces readers to a world through the eyes of a horse. It is from this perspective that she makes a case for the animal, speaking for a horse that cannot speak for himself. However, animals in this novel have proved their importance in the life of people, whether men, women or children. Moreover, the reader's sympathy for them due to their suffering because of mistreatment is made analogous to his/her sympathy for the suffering of the poor weak human beings.

Gary F. Taylor briefly ends in his article "A Memorable Children's Novel with Important Values" saying,

The novel is an extremely exciting, moving and loving children's story; it is a children's classic and that is clear in its sympathetic portrayal of Beauty and his fellow horses. The humanization of the beast made such novel successful and made it a catalyst for change in people's attitude toward animals. Not only is the book suspenseful, touching and occasionally sad, but it is also not in the least sentimental. It has drama, humor, and tragedy.

CONCLUSION:

Black Beauty is one of the most loved animal stories and most successful in the

history of children's literature, as animals play a significant and crucial role in the story. It is the first full-length animal autobiography narrated in the first person from Black Beauty's own perspective. The novel was firstly thought to be written by a veterinarian, coachman, or groom because it is so accurate in its details. Through reading, the reader experiences every joyful and every sorrowful moment in Black Beauty's life, living in the same situation as Black Beauty, for his experience and emotions are presented in a way so persuasive and intelligible to human readers. Joyce Hart in his article "Critical Essay on Black Beauty, in Novels for Students" comments that though the horse is never made into a cartoon character which talks, he still speaks his mind in the story, and shares the conversation with other animals, as Sewell successfully makes the protagonist appear human in his reactions and emotions. He is not a talking-horse, but he reveals his thoughts to humans through gestures like nudging with his nose, a neigh, a tossing of his head. In other words, Anna Sewell does not remove Black Beauty from his 'horsiness,' yet she arouses empathy for him.

Thus, it is clear that animals play a significant role in the novel as it reveals the problem of cruelty to animals, and rectify people to change their behavior towards animals. It deals with the widespread problem of mistreatment of horses during the Victorian age, when they were over-worked, and forced to work under horrible conditions, beaten and improperly groomed and harnessed. Black Beauty passes through many hardships all through the novel, but he was always devoted to his masters. At the

hands of various owners – some gentle, some thoughtless, some brutal – he comes to learn a painful lesson: that a horse's life can be filled with injustice. Thus, the novel left a tremendous impact on people that many changed their attitudes to horses and other domestic animals, and it left a memorable impression on many children, as it opened their eyes to the abuse and cruelty that those creatures suffer at the hands of their human counterparts.

What Anna Sewell calls for in this novel is that people should have empathic feeling with the horse and ask themselves the following questions that the novel raises. How would they like the checkreins and blinkers? How would they like being overloaded and whipped? How would they like living in a stall too narrow to turn around in? How would they like the rein being too tight that they could not breathe and bleed and have foam at their mouths? How would they like their children's ears to be cut into points to make them look sharp? How would they like to cut parts of their noses as they did with Sir Oliver and the puppies when they docked their tails? One should like for others what he likes for himself. What right do they have to torment animals? What right do they have to disfigure God's creatures? The horses in Sewell's novel were sarcastic as they were trying to let humans put themselves in their shoes, and see whether they will act the same or not.

Animal abuse is not tackled by all owners, as Sewell, on the other hand, reveals scenes of mercy towards animals. In her introduction of *Black Beauty*, Anita Nelson clarifies that the lesson of the book is

simple and straightforward: "Be kind to everyone, human and animal alike, and look out for those who are at a disadvantage" (x: int.). Anna Sewell's faith as a Quaker, plus her physical inability lead her to have enormous compassion for horses, as well as all living creatures, whether animals or humans. She urges people to have mercy on animals and treat them kindly. As Waller Hastings, in his article "Anna Sewell (1820 – 1878)," rightly believes, "*Black Beauty* has a 'missionary aim' to induce kindness, sympathy, and an understanding treatment of horses," and she wraps this up by assuring that animals will serve humans well if they are treated with kindness.

Anna Sewell leaps from animals to humans to give an 'allegorical lesson' in the novel, and that is treating the poor with kindness, tenderness, and respect. Here, she highlights the problem of mistreating 'humans' in general, as she figures it out that overworked animals results from overworked people. The impoverished working class here offers a subtle but well-rounded perspective of the social conditions in England during the late 19th century. Working class people were used to work all day without even having a 'Sabbath' as Anna mentioned. Of course, later, that problem no longer existed for the laborers' law in England stated that children under fifteen years old should not work and it limited the working hours to eight hours, five days per week. The novel, hence, has made a great impact on the Victorian society; regarding the problems of mistreating both animals and humans. Associations for 'animal rights' were established to defend animals from any mistreatment,

and so did associations for 'human rights,' and laws were legislated for human rights, and that shows that the novel had its impact not only on horsemen and children but on the whole society.

Black Beauty is "a picture of an orderly world, and good that has power over evil" (Kornbluth 2), and that what makes the novel timeless, and educational. Animal-loving children have been devoted to *Black Beauty* since its publication in 1877 until the present time. Although it gives a clear picture of the 19th century London, yet its message is universal and timeless: animals will serve humans well if they are treated with consideration and kindness. Besides, it presents self-improvement and social justice. Accordingly, the role of the animals in the novel is lucid, to teach children and every reader values such as kindness, friendship, love and common sense.

Bibliography:

Sewell, Anna. *Black Beauty: An Autobiography of a Horse*. Chicago, Illinois: J. G. Ferguson Publishing Company, 1992.

Angell, George T. "Introduction to Black Beauty: His Grooms and Companions." A. Sewell, American Humane Education Society, 1890, pp 5 – 7. Reprinted in *Children's Literature Review*, Vol.17.

Backes, Laura. "Straight Talk about Talking Animals." *Children's Book Insider*, the Newsletter for Children's Writers.

Barrows, Susanna and Robin Room. *Drinking: Behavior and Belief in Modern History*. Oxford:

University of California Press, Ltd, 1991.

Carter, Laura. *Critical Essay on "Black Beauty, in Novels for Students"*. Vol. 22. USA: Thomson Gale, 2006.

Collins, Paul. "You and Your Dumb Friends." 2003 – 2006. The Believer & its contributors. 2003 – 2006. 1 May 2006. File:\\H:\\The Believer - You Dumb Friends.htm

Cosselett, Tess. *The Nineteenth Century Talking Animals in British Children's Fiction, 1786 – 1914*. UK: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2006.

Farm, Skyline. "Anna Sewell's Black Beauty-Teacher Resource Guide." June 24, 2010. www.facebook.com/note.php?note_id=138262049522641

Grealy, Lucy. "Afterward" in *Black Beauty, Signet Classics*. (2002): 217-23.

<<http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0451528654/102-7644643-2753722?v=glance&n=28315>>

Hart, Joyce. "Critical Essay on Black Beauty, in Novels for Students". Vol. 22. USA: Thomson Gale, 2006.

Hastings, Waller. "Anna Sewell (1820 – 1878)" Northern State University online. 12 Apr. 2005. 15 Mar.2005. <http://www.northern.edu/hastings/sewell.htm>

Holm, Catherine Dybiec. "Critical Essay on Black Beauty: in Novels of Students". Vol.22. Thomson Gale, 2006.

Jahiel, Edwin. "Black Beauty" ed. Claire Simpson. www.edwinjahiel.com/blackbea.htm

Johnson, Claudia Dust and Vernon

Johnson. *The Social Impact of the Novel: A Reference Guide*. USA: Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc., 2002.

Kerschen, Lois. "Critical Essay on Black Beauty, in Novels for Students."

Vol 22. Thomson Gale, 2006. 17

Apr. 2008.

<http://Ogalenet.galegroup.com.lib.aucegypt.edu/servlet/LitRC?BE=AD>&locl>

Kornbluth, Jesse. "Black Beauty: Anna Sewell." Head Bulter, Inc., 2009.

www.headbutler.com/books/black_beauty.asp.

Lukens, Rebecca J. *A Critical Handbook of Children's Literature*. USA: Scott, Foresman & Company, 1989.

Mason, Jennifer. *Civilized Creatures: Urban Animals, Sentimental Culture and American Literature*. USA: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005.

Sewell, Anna. *The New Encyclopedia Britannica*. Vol. 10. Founded 1768. 15th ed. Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc, 1998.

<http://www.eb.com>

Starrett, Vincent. *Buries Caesars: Essays in Literary Appreciation*. "Black Beauty and Its Author." Washington: Covici McGee Co., 1968. 205-223.

Stevens, Gloria. *Anna Sewell: Black Beauty*. New York: Longmans, 1957.

Stoney, Peter. "Sentimental Emasculation: Uncle Tom's Cabin and Black Beauty". 19th Literature, 54.1. University of California Press, (1999): 53-72.

Sutherland, Zena and May Hill Arthuthnot. *Children and Books*. 7th ed. USA: Scott, Foresman Company & Leo & Diana Dillon, 1986.

Taylor, Gary F. "A Memorable Children's Novel with Important Values." 29 Jan. 2004. Amazon.com Inc.

www.amazon.com/Black-Beauty-Anna-Sewell/.../0439228905

IJSER