

THE CREED OF KINSHIP

BY

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"SEVENTY YEARS AMONG SAVAGES"
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PREFACE

Humanitarian books usually advocate no more than one or two of the various causes that are classed as humane, such as pacifism, or socialism, or some assertion of the rights of animals ; but this understanding, as I hold it to be, is an alliance of them all, my contention being that the single impulse by which they are inspired is the sense of Kinship, and that they will not be finally successful except in conjunction. The Creed of Kinship, I maintain, is itself a religion, and of all religions the greatest.

That was the idea which underlay the work of the Humanitarian League, which for nearly thirty years drew attention to certain barbarities in our national life, and at one time—until the war came—seemed likely to meet with some small measure of recognition. In this book I am endeavouring to state anew the principles of the League ; and that they are not of the sort which wins popularity I do not need to be told. I am well aware that not years, but ages, will be required to gain any serious consideration for the Faith of which I speak ; yet, with

limitless time before the world, I do not regard such work as being wasted.

It does not come within my scope to pay tribute, however deserved, to the many thinkers who have lent their aid to the humanitarian cause, but in the concluding chapter an instance is given, in the person of the poet Shelley, of how the conscience and intelligence of a future age may be partly anticipated in an earlier one. In his conception of two contending Powers, one barbarous, one humane, we seem to have the only clue to a rational interpretation of the universe.

A critic might wonder, perhaps, whether in giving so much counsel to my fellow-workers I am exceeding the bounds of what is needed—whether, in fact, the situation demands so much discussion. I think it does, and for reasons which I will state as briefly as possible. For here is the gist of the whole matter. That there must at present, and possibly for a long time to come, be separate humanitarian societies, each with a programme of its own and working on independent lines, is, of course, not denied; yet while we recognise this, as far as any actual work is concerned, it is none the less advisable, in thought, to take a longer and more distant view, and to attempt to foresee what kindred reforms will eventually have to come about, though they cannot be at present demanded.

To me it seems that in our movement such a point has now been reached, where it is of vital importance to try to understand the subject as a whole; and that is the explanation I would offer to a reader who might have preferred me to advocate pacifism alone, or socialism, or vegetarianism, or some other change, intellectual or ethical, rather than the several cognate reforms which in this book are discussed as comprising the creed of a humanitarian.

For these reasons I felt flattered by the remark of a hostile journalist that I was "a compendium of the cranks," by which he apparently meant that I advocated not this or that humane reform, but all of them. That is just what I desire to do. For what I anticipate is a fusion, a compendium, of certain great causes; and I am less concerned about the irreclaimable folk who feel no interest at all in these matters, but just cling to the old watchwords, than about those part-humanitarians who see a portion of the problem—socialism, perhaps, or some question of the welfare of animals—yet do not grasp its meaning or significance as a whole. It would be amusing, were it not rather sad, to note how afraid the reformers sometimes are of each other, socialists of zoophilists, zoophilists of socialists, or pacifists of both. Thus the creed which is to come includes a number of beliefs that are

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at present held separately, if at all ; whereas my argument is that it is only when they are held as one that they can be understood—that it is saner to be compendious than incoherent. The real “crank” is not the man who studies these matters collectedly, but the man who, except here and there, practically refuses to study them at all.

It may be well here to sum up, in the fewest possible words, the conclusions reached in this book :

- (1) That our present so called “Civilisation” is only a “manner of speaking,” and is in fact quite a rude state as compared with what may already be foreseen.
- (2) That the basis of any real morality must be the sense of Kinship between all living beings.
- (3) That there can be no abiding national welfare until the extremes of Wealth and Poverty are abolished.
- (4) That Warfare will not be discontinued until we have ceased to honour soldiering as heroic.
- (5) That the Rights of Animals have henceforth to be considered ; and that such practices as cruel sports, vivisection, and flesh eating are not compatible with civilised life.
- (6) That Free Thought is essential to progress, and that the religion of the future will be a belief in a Creed of Kinship, a charter of human and sub-human relationships.

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THE CREED OF KINSHIP

CHAPTER I

KINSHIP A REALITY

“Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain!”
(From *Hamlet*, II, ii.)

From the quotation which is prefixed to this chapter the reader will note, at the outset, that the word in which the great master of invective sums up the tale of human depravity is “kindless”—not to be found perhaps in dictionaries, but unmistakable in meaning. The kindless man is he who is unnaturally lacking in the sense of affinity, who has no belief in what I would call the Creed of Kinship, which, as I have said in the Preface, I regard as of all creeds the greatest, and eventually destined to prevail. To believe that in a far age men will be pacifists, socialists, rationalists, and in all ways humanitarian, seems much saner than to imagine them intelligently changed in one or two directions, but still the same old unthinking individuals in the rest.

That there subsists a real physical kinship

between mankind and the other races is now an established fact, and the problems that remain to be determined are of an ethical and social nature. "Man," as Mr. E. P. Evans has said in his *Evolutional Ethics*, is "as truly a part and product of Nature as any other animal, and the attempt to set him up as an isolated point outside of it is philosophically false and morally pernicious." The same moral was enforced in a letter addressed by Mr. Thomas Hardy to the Humanitarian League in 1910. "Few people," he wrote, "seem to perceive fully as yet that the most far-reaching consequence of the establishment of the common origin of all species is ethical. . . . While man was deemed to be a creation apart from all other creations, a secondary or tertiary morality was considered good enough to practise towards the 'inferior' races; but no person who reasons nowadays can escape the trying conclusion that this is not maintainable."

That the conclusion is a trying one, under present conditions, no thinker will deny; but it is one that has to be faced, and it is especially incumbent on humanitarians to face it. Perhaps, with complete candour, and a willingness to open the mind to all future possibilities, the difficulty may appear less insurmountable as we proceed.

That is the reason, and it is an imperative

one, why, in this attempt to show what I think will be the belief of a future age, a considerable number of themes have been included, it being my conviction that deliverance (the old word once more!) will at last be found, not by adopting one or another of the various remedies proposed by reformers, but by an amalgamation of those that are of the same class and the most essential. This is a thought that has seldom found expression in our literature; so here, at the start, to do justice to a predecessor, I will quote words used by Mr. J. C. Kenworthy in 1896:

"By humanitarians, socialists, vegetarians, anti-vivisectionists, teetotalers, land-reformers, and all such seekers after human welfare, this must be borne in mind—that each of their particular efforts is but a detail of the whole work of social regeneration, and that we cannot rightly understand and direct our own little piece of effort, unless we know it, and pursue it, as part of the whole." *

That is profoundly true. For example, are not the frequent questions of a just social system, and of humanity to animals, in principle closely allied? If anyone believes, as I do, that a kindly consideration for the rights of all our fellow-beings, human or sub-human, is the basis of any religion, any morality, worthy of

* In *The New Charter. A Discussion of the Rights of Men and the Rights of Animals.* George Bell & Sons Ltd.

the name, how can he consistently confine his interest to socialism alone, or to zoophilist doctrines? Where would be the sense of making protest against the ill-usage of the lower races, if the inhumanity with which some humans are treated were overlooked. And, conversely, are not the victims of hunting-field and slaughter-house as grievously exploited as any human workers? There is, of course, a worse and a better in these doings, but there is no ultimate difference in kind. In all cases the aggressor takes advantage of some neighbours' weakness. Whether he cheats them, or eats them, is but a detail.

It seems, then, that the various movements demanding the discontinuance of savage practices such as those I have mentioned, and many others, are all prompted by one and the same spirit, and that men's action, if their minds were carefully balanced, would be on a wider and more uniform scale. It was with that conviction that the Humanitarian League was founded in 1891. "Its promoters," as I have elsewhere written, "saw clearly that barbarous practices can be philosophically condemned on no other ground than that of the broad democratic sentiment of universal sympathy. . . . The emancipation of men from cruelty and injustice will bring with it, in due course, the emancipation of animals also.

'The two reforms are inseparably connected and neither can be fully realised alone."

Remark is often made on the excessive number of humane causes that appeal for assistance, each working busily on its own lines. This, as I have said, at present is inevitable; for reformers, of whatever school, are naturally inclined to advocate a single plea, because several, be the logic of the situation what it may, are less likely to win support. It is felt, truly enough, that everything cannot be done at once, and a society, if it is to see "results," must work on partial lines; it has been pointed out, for instance, that to expect all rationalists to avow themselves also pacifists would lead to endless discussion. Yet one wonders whether, apart from active propaganda, the members of the various schools of reform do not lose something in the long run by lack of a more concentrated purpose—of what may be called, if not a creed, an understanding.

On one point, at least, I am under no sort of hallucination, the certainty that the changes to which I look forward can only be realised after many years have passed. Even in political affairs, the extreme slowness with which reforms are accomplished is a matter of common remark: what, then, is to be expected in these far more vital matters of character and conduct? We are living in an age which still permits great

wealth and abject poverty to exist side by side ; we still hang and flog ; we still wage wars, and honour in every way the trade of soldiering ; we still ill-treat, hunt, cage, eat, and even vivisect, sentient beings closely akin to ourselves ; and we still maintain a religion which does not attempt to teach us how savage these practices are. In spite of scientific discoveries and our boast of high "civilisation," many of our doings deserve rather to be classed with the primeval—the prehistoric.

Yet there is comfort in the thought that the Future is before us, and that if a hundred years effect but little change, a thousand may effect more, and ten thousand more still ; there is, in fact, no limit to the time in which humane influences may be brought to bear on this brutal and barbarous mankind. Some learned man has been expressing his belief that the age of the earth is "not more than eighty-nine million years." Well, if there is no more than that behind us, and only the same amount to come, it leaves room for improvement ; and that is why I think the folk who smile so knowingly at the mention of a possible release from the savageries I have named are not quite so clever as they deem themselves, and that the "crankiness" of which they talk may prove in the long run to have been less on the humanitarian side than their own.

CHAPTER II

BETWEEN MAN AND MAN

"I don't care how the poor live ; my only regret is that they live at all." (GEORGE MOORE.)

As far as physical injuries and sufferings are concerned, the close kinship existing between man and man is now largely recognised. One of the best of O. Henry's stories is that entitled "Makes the Whole World Kin," in which he very brilliantly shows how rheumatism can be a kindly link between even the burglar and the householder, and there is seriousness, as well as humour, in the proposition. In dealing with actual personal maladies, whatever their cause, whether they result from disease, or from accident, or have been purposely inflicted in warfare, the assertion might be made with some approach to truth that the claims of kinship have been established.

But unfortunately there are other pains, other wrongs, less visible to the eye, but equally harmful in themselves, which need for their removal a much fuller understanding of what is ultimately implied in brotherhood, and it is of

these that I have to speak. I refer to the ills caused by that *social* injustice under which one man, one class, is permitted to grow rich, to find ease and enjoyment, through the labour, and therefore at the expense and suffering of others. It is here that the creed of kinship has yet to make itself felt.

I do not in the least mean to suggest that there will ever be a pretence of an affection which in the nature of things could not subsist between folk who dwell apart; for that would be merely mawkish, and all sentimentality has here to be set aside. What is meant is that in a happier age than any the world has yet seen it will be possible, and indeed necessary, that each individual, while not less conscious than now of the claims of relationship or of neighbourhood, shall also be moved by a wider regard for the well-being of others—of those who are at present looked upon as “outsiders”—and by a determination that they shall not be sacrificed to any interests, or supposed interests, of his own.

Are they now sacrificed, it may be asked—and this brings us to the social question—when huge sums are annually spent on hospitals, and refuges, and generally for the relief of those who have fallen in life’s struggle? They are; for no amount of charities can ever make up for the absence of just conditions, and just conditions cannot be said to exist in an age when one

class is able to exploit another, and in lands where the richer persons live by the labour of the poorer. How else *do* they live? It is plain that they live somehow, and that it is not on bank-notes or coinage. Admirable as it is, for example, that hospitals should be provided by the benevolence of the well-to-do, and great as is the immediate boon thus bestowed, it is plain, if the facts are faced, that so-called “charities” are ultimately paid for by the very class on whom they are bestowed!

When Mr. George Moore, for instance, in his *Confessions*, represented his “blithe modern pagan” as using the words that I have prefixed to this chapter (amazing indeed!), and as then giving the beggar a shilling, he surely overlooked the fact that it is on the poor, and the work of the poor, that the blithe modern pagan himself lives—what else can he live on?—and that without their aid he would fare very ill indeed.

A real sense of kinship would prompt all kindly persons not merely to mitigate the consequences of unjust social conditions, at whatever cost to themselves (and the cost would be heavy), but to confront and remove the cause. “Pauper,” as Richard Jefferies insisted, is an “inexpressibly wicked word.” It is not the well-to-do man who is the real sustainer of nations.

There is much talk nowadays about what are

called "the Charities." Without the least wish to undervalue the great charitable work that is done in this country, thanks to the generosity and unselfishness of individuals, the fact remains that it is a recognition of the Decencies, even more than of the Charities, that is needed for the welfare of the nation. For excellent as it is to provide homes, and hospitals, and remedies of every sort, physical or spiritual, for the overworked, such alleviations are but tampering with the trouble while people *are* overworked—that is to say, so long as the burden of work is borne mainly by one class and evaded by another.

Of late years there has been much controversy concerning what is named "the dole," sometimes "the demoralising dole," as it is called by those who (themselves comfortably off) object to the granting of allowances; and it could be wished that in such discussions folk who believe in the kinship of mankind would draw more attention than they have hitherto done to the important, and indeed essential fact that doles are not only of the one sort that we are accustomed to hear so much of, but that all persons living on unearned incomes are themselves in receipt of what is actually a dole, by whatever specious name it may be called.

There can be nothing meaner than the talk about the demoralising effect of the dole, that is,

of the allowance made to poor men who are out of work, when those who complain are often themselves well-to-do folk who have never been *in* work, but are living on the labour of others under the pleasant garb of "private means." As Henry Thoreau, that uncompromising individualist, wrote many years ago: "What an army of non-producers society produces! Many think themselves well employed as charitable dispensers of wealth which somebody else earned; and those who produce nothing, being of the most luxurious habits, are precisely those who want the most, and complain loudest when they do not get what they want." Such persons are as certainly "on the dole" as any working man ever was; yet it is largely from their class that the outcry proceeds. The situation, if it were frankly faced, would be seen to have its humorous, as well as its tragic side. If economy is to be enforced, let it be remembered that there is a Rich Man's Dole as well as a poor man's, and that it is much less excusable.

As has been pointed out by Mr. Bernard Shaw, "to live on what is called an independent income, without working, is to live the life of a thief" *; and indeed, when one thinks of it,

* *The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Socialism and Capitalism*, p. 457. See Mr. Punch's cartoon of 1843, reprinted by the *New Leader*, of July 30th, 1926, "with apologies to his respectable descendant."

even work done under such conditions is rather a method of appeasing one's own self-respect than of making any return to the party whose pocket has suffered ! It is *they* who in either case are the losers.

The Christian churches now seem to regard it as their mission to preach a passive content and acquiescence ; but it has not always been so, for as Lecky pointed out in his *History of European Morals* (ii, 86) some of the early Fathers " proclaimed charity to be a matter not of mercy, but of justice, maintaining that all property is based on usurpation, that the earth by right is common to all men, and that no man can claim a superabundant supply of its goods, except as an administrator for others." This, it may be said, is " Communism " ; but unless we are to be frightened by a word, it is the very practical question that a future generation will have to solve ; and if a real sense of kinship is ever developed between man and fellow-man it is difficult to see what conclusion can be arrived at except that of those early and genuinely religious Fathers.

Truth, indeed, may yet be found in the words of an old writer : *

" There is something in human nature, resulting from our very make and constitution, which renders us obnoxious to the pains of others, causes us to sympathise with them, and

* Wollaston, in his *Religion of Nature*, 1759.

almost comprehends us in their case. It is grievous to see or hear (and almost to hear of) any man, or even any animal whatever, in torture."

Note the contrast between that early pronouncement and the encyclicals of the Pope, in which all forms of socialism are denounced, and the inviolable right of private property maintained.* To appeal to the rich and the poor alike, to accept their relative stations in life, has a specious sound to those by whom the central fact is ignored, but can deceive no one who has realised that it is the toiler, the producer of the wealth, who " keeps " the moneyed man, not the moneyed man who " keeps " the toiler, and that the folk who do not themselves work, but are said to " give work " to others, and who take credit for doing so (there is a humorous side even to so grim a subject as this !), are actually supported by the workers—are themselves dependent on charity. As in Edwin Markham's fine poem, *The Sower* :

" He is the stone rejected, yet the stone
Whereon is built metropolis and throne,
Out of his toil come all their pompous shows,
Their purple luxury and plush repose ;
The grime of this bruised hand keeps tender white
The hands that never labour, day nor night.
His feet that know only the field's rough floors
Send lordly steps down echoing corridors,"

* May 18th, 1932

And as an instrument for calculating a man's merits and deserts, it is difficult to imagine anything less trustworthy than "money"; piled up, and passed on, as it often is, from parent to child, from generation to generation—how *can* it be justly "inherited." The newspapers lately reported a case where an Englishman was recognised as the sole heir to a vast estate in a foreign country, the property of a relative who had died many years before, and pointed out how the fortunate gentleman had thus at last come into "his own." His own! One would have thought it was somebody else's. In view of such doings, how absurd is the objection often raised against socialistic ideas, that if they prevailed, mankind would suffer from a loss of individuality!

But let everyone speak for himself. I cannot honestly pretend that I ever tried hard to obtain work; and such work as I did obtain, at a public school, was so highly paid as to make an early retirement possible, a great deal more possible than, say, in the case of a manual or genuine worker. I have thus been in receipt of the dole, the pleasant form of dole, for full half a century; and if by living very simply, and doing for myself some of the work that is usually done by servants, I have somewhat lessened the amount of the dole, the fact is not materially altered thereby.

A word must here be said on one very common misunderstanding. It is evident that a faith based on kinship must largely breed compassion; but it should not be forgotten, as it often is, that the sense of kinship means much more than compassion. It is not only what is called "altruism" that makes us shrink from wronging a fellow-being, whether human or sub-human; there is a higher egoism which does the same. We avoid a selfish act because, when once it is clearly apprehended, it becomes intolerable *to ourselves*.

There is no worse misapprehension of the humanitarian faith than the notion that it is mere "sentiment,"* due wholly to a self-sacrificing regard for others, whereas in fact it is equally to satisfy his own needs, his own instincts, that a humane man revolts from savage practices. Humaneness is not a dead external precept, but a living impulse from within; not self-sacrifice, but self-fulfilment.

I would like to close this chapter with an expression of deep gratitude to the great public benefactors to whom we all owe so much; by whom I do not mean the rich persons who, having inherited or accumulated wealth, occasionally bequeath large sums for charitable purposes—to endow a hospital perhaps, or some other needed institution. The philanthropists

* See Chapter XIV.

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I have in mind are not those well-to-do ones, kind and generous as they personally are (for, as I have said, they do but give from what they have been given), but the millions of poor unknown workers, whose labour, unrecognised and unrewarded, has kept so many of us others living in comfort and ease, while *their* life has been one of anxiety and toil. It is to them, I think, the thanks of the community are due, and to them, when the facts are rightly apprehended, our thanks will be given.

CHAPTER III

SEX QUESTIONS

*"The battle of the sexes
Alone their spirit vexes."*

(JOHN BARLAS.)

That the difficulties of the so-called "sex problem" arise largely from unequal economic conditions has long been a commonplace; and it is hardly necessary to point out that the introduction of a system under which *all* women, and not only, as now, those possessed of an income, would have the same economic independence as men, must greatly affect an important branch (though it is only one branch) of what we call Morals. For if a competence were assured to women, and they were under no compulsion, as many now are, to sell themselves in the marriage-market or in another market which is considered to be worse, the situation would at least be cleared, and the questions that would be left over, though doubtless numerous and difficult enough, would be of temperament only, a matter for the individual, not for the State.

There might still remain, in the words of a socialist poet, "the battle of the sexes"; but the "class-war" would no longer claim its casualties. Prostitution would not be, as now, an inseparable part of our social system.

But there is a further consideration, which, though fully as important as the economic one, is usually, like other humanitarian principles, left out of sight: viz., that the new spirit of comradeship, attendant on Socialism, would of itself effect a mighty change in all the matters that relate to sex. "Injure no one, but as far as possible give help to all," is the general rule laid down by Schopenhauer in his essay on *The Basis of Morality*; and he incidentally points to the fact that the difficulties of the sex question would in large measure be solved if this rule were acted on. In so far as Socialism is a humanitarian creed—and it can hardly, without stultifying itself, be otherwise—it will surely tend towards the establishment of happier conditions between the sexes, not by economic changes only, but by the growth of a kindlier and more natural spirit.

The problem, in so far as it is now a vexed one, would thus gradually disappear; for the mere forms and externals of the sex-relationship would be of less importance, if "to do injury to no one" were the principle that men and women had at heart.

This, of course, does not in the least imply what is sometimes absurdly, or perhaps malevolently, charged against Socialism, a state of licence and general loosening of morals, but on the contrary a welcome release from the present unwholesome medley of pious pretences and actual depravity, as exemplified in the morbid and widespread interest with which the doings of the Divorce Court are watched, a symptom even more disgusting, to a thoughtful mind, than the unpleasant stories that are related in those courts. How artificial is the system of so-called morals resulting from this hypocrisy may be judged from cases that occasionally come to light. I have heard of one where a married woman, having decided (whether justifiably or not it is unnecessary to inquire) to leave her husband and form another alliance, was so afraid of shocking the feelings of her relatives by this step that she agreed to an ingenious plan by which she was assumed and certified to have died; and her disappearance being thus respectably accounted for, she preferred that her parents should pass the rest of their lives under this painful delusion than that they should know the truth. If this sort of morality should decay under Socialism, need the heavens fall?

The "sex problem," as we know it, has indeed become little less than a plague, both in

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actual life and in that unreal but still more insalubrious shadow-land which we call "fiction," where "best seller" is too often synonymous with "worst smeller." The continuous output of trashy novels, harping with wearisome insistence on a single theme, makes one turn with relief to an old book like Godwin's *Caleb Williams*, in which there is hardly a mention of sex. And when it is said, with perfect truth, that Scott's heroes and heroines make love in a very stiff and straight-laced fashion, according to the simple code of morals which was accepted by writers a century ago, is not that at any rate better, and less sentimental, than the vapid, heartless stuff—most immoral when it affects to be inculcating a moral—that is everywhere rampant to-day, alike in novels, in cinemas, and on the stage?

CHAPTER IV

HOW CRIME WILL CEASE

"*Tout Comprendre c'est tout Pardonner.*" (MADAME DE STAËL.)

There are a number of serious problems which, though not emerging directly from the controversies between the advocates of public ownership and of "private enterprise," are certain to be materially affected by the adoption or rejection of socialist principles, and therefore have a claim to be considered in any discussion of the wider bearings of Socialism. Among the most important of these is the question of Crime and Punishment, which has an obvious connection with the present system of property holding.

"The fruitful source of crime," wrote Godwin, "consists in this circumstance, one man's possessing in abundance that of which another man is destitute"; to which he added that "the proper method of curing this inequality is by reason, and not by violence." Making full allowance for the strength of other forms of crime—especially those of passion,

which are certain to persist for a long time under any sort of government—the general truth of Godwin's statement has been confirmed rather than shaken, by the experience of the past century ; we have to consider, too, whether crime is not likely to be fostered, to some extent, by the very sanction given in our society to what are known as "business" methods. If it is thought permissible, for example, to sell a thing at a higher price than it is really worth, to take advantage of the ignorance or necessity of our fellow-citizens in order to drive a hard bargain, or to underpay those who work for us, it is hardly surprising that, for men of a still weaker moral fibre, the temptation to overstep such artificial boundaries between honesty and dishonesty is too strong. They become "criminals," and measures have accordingly to be taken for their suppression. Crime and Punishment are such essential features of a capitalist society that a vast and complicated fabric of Law has been built up to deal with them.

There are three theories as to the best method of dealing with crime—first, the old retributive idea, which vindicates the majesty of the law by the punishment of the culprit ; secondly, the utilitarian idea of the protection of society without any further desire for vengeance ; and thirdly, the more modern

principle, now held by most prison reformers, of the reclamation of the offender. In addition to these three established theories, partly conflicting and partly interwoven, we begin to see the development of a newer and still more advanced doctrine, which recognises that the criminal is himself a product and reflection of social conditions. Society grows its criminals first, and punishes them afterwards ; it is society itself that is, at root, to blame. The sum of the whole matter is that, if we wish to get rid of our criminals, we must cease to manufacture them ; and this cannot be done without a complete reform of the present social system.

So far from being merely a "sentimental" notion (as it is often represented) this is the considered opinion of some of the greatest modern criminologists. Thus, while we find it stated in Dr. W. D. Morrison's book on *Juvenile Offenders*, that "it is to ameliorative methods we must look for the best results in dealing with juvenile delinquency," he makes this further and still more noteworthy assertion :

"Ameliorative methods of dealing with the individual offender will accomplish much, but it must be borne in mind that these efforts do not touch the general conditions out of which juvenile crime arises. It is in these wretched and degenerate conditions of existence that juvenile delinquency has its origin, and it will always continue to flourish till these conditions are ameliorated."

Equally emphatic is the testimony of Dr. James Devon, as given in his most suggestive work on *The Criminal and the Community*. Sweeping aside the pseudo-scientific theory which sets down all crime to heredity, he holds that "our social inequalities are the cause of much serious crime," and points out the futility of the common cry for retribution. Much expert authority might be quoted to the same effect.

For a good many years past the Home Office authorities have, very wisely, been humanising the prison system by the introduction of rational methods in the place of the old stupid brutality of solitary confinement; and it is nowadays not uncommon to hear a complaint expressed that "prisons are being made too comfortable." But what inference would be drawn therefrom as to the comforts of life *outside*? Strange that we never hear from these stern penologists the converse proposition, that the homes of the workers are not comfortable enough!

Socialism, if it comes to power, will take care that the cottager is at least as well housed as the criminal. I think we may further assume that it will not tolerate the continuance of those two entirely barbarous forms of punishment—hanging and flogging—which, to the disgrace of a nation that imagines itself to be civilised,

have survived into the twentieth century. No doubt the war against Germany, and the brainlessness it engendered, had the effect of considerably delaying the growth of a saner feeling in these matters; but even so, it is difficult to believe that such revolting relics of savagery as the gallows and the lash can much longer affront the common humanity, and indeed decency, of a people which professes to have abolished torture.

If there be any life that a man has a *prima facie* right to take, it is his own. That suicide, or attempted suicide, should be a criminal offence, while the death-penalty is a cherished legal institution, is one of those glaring absurdities that amuse and disgust at the same time. Indeed, it must be said that the gallows are not merely a belated form of punishment but a present and actual disgrace to all concerned in their use; for, as was well said by Ingersoll, "a punishment that degrades the punished will degrade also the man who inflicts it, and the government that procures the infliction."

Moreover, capital punishment is a hindrance to the calm administration of justice; inasmuch as the horror which the thought of the penalty breeds in the mind makes it more difficult to decide a plain question of innocence or guilt. A jury's obvious business is to give a verdict on a matter of fact, and they ought not to have in

thought any matter that lies beyond ; yet how can they avoid having such thoughts when those of their number who object to capital punishment may be relieved of their duties before the consultations begin ?

It is often, and quite wrongly, assumed that opponents of capital and corporal punishments are moved wholly by pity for the culprit ; but I would point out that the feeling uppermost in the mind of those who would put an end to hanging is the sheer repugnance that such penalties arouse. I was told by a former chief of police in a great city that he used to remark privately to the judges that if it were their function, as it was his, to be a personal witness of executions, they would not so readily pass the sentences. I think the feeling on such occasions is less one of pity than of disgust ; and in like manner, when various other rough deeds are arraigned, the supposed "sentimentalists" are often taking the more practical view.*

Flogging, like hanging, is a degradation to all concerned ; and no graver mistake can be made by so-called "lovers of animals" than asking for recourse to the lash in cases of cruelty—that is, of appealing to one barbarism as a means of repressing another. This was done, for instance, in Mr. John Swain's un-

* John Ellis, our "public hangman," committed suicide, owing to the effect upon his nerves of what he had witnessed. See the *Morning Post*, September 21st, 1932.

pleasantly named book, *Brutes and Beasts* (1933). It has to be remembered that the floggings ordered by magistrates, and inflicted by jailers, are a much severer punishment than the mild correction to which boys are liable at public schools ; yet I have heard from the headmaster of a great public school that when the birch was in use, he had noticed how the upper boy, who was officially in attendance, would turn away from the sight. In brief, it is a beastly spectacle. Yet it is for a much nastier and more savage punishment than this that not a few "zoophilists"—kindly but foolish folk who have brooded over one, and only one branch of a very large subject—are not ashamed to clamour.

To return to the question of crime. Without desiring to claim for Socialism more than justly belongs to it, and admitting that the evils above mentioned have been unsparingly denounced by other than social reformers, I think it is unlikely that crimes against property will ever be greatly reduced, or the treatment of criminals ever fully humanised, until the present form of society has given way to a more equitable one. So, too, with regard to betting, gambling, and other practices, which, if not themselves criminal, are closely associated with crime : it seems impossible that they should be got rid of, except in a State which is itself free

from the extremes of poverty and of riches, and where life is no longer so sordid, or so selfish, as to drive people to these debasements.

The fact is, "stealing" cannot in justice be limited to the narrow conventional sense in which it is at present used. If to steal is to take what is rightfully the property of another, there is many a rich man whose possessions are fully secured by law, who is as much a thief as a Dartmoor convict. Nay more, there may be such a thing as an unintentional and unpremeditated stealing; indeed the whole system of modern society, with its "profits" and "interests," and similar genteel phrases, is nothing else than a gigantic conspiracy, by which non-workers steal the produce of the labouring classes. That individuals cannot remedy this systematic wrong does not in the least disprove the existence of the evil; at any rate they ought to have the grace to acknowledge the source from which their comforts are derived, and to join in the attempt to bring about as speedy a reform as possible. Unfortunately this is a course to which the well-to-do classes seem specially disinclined. They insist that they are the rightful possessors of wealth which comes in to them without any labour on their part, and attempt to raise the cry of "Stop thief" against those who venture even to investigate the origin of their wealth.

Our capitalists persist to the bitter end in the fatuous assertion that to live idly on the labour of others is not the same thing as to steal.

It can hardly be doubted, I think, that if the natural kinship of man with man be ever recognised on earth, the state established in that distant, extremely distant age will be one of Communism. Why, again, need we be afraid of the word? The present bad relations between those who call themselves communists and the other citizens have no bearing whatever upon the question. "Commune" is a beautiful word in itself, implying sympathetic union among friends; and the local misuse of it is due to its having been involved, as we know, in political and territorial contentions. Communism, actually and honestly practised, would put an end to crime; and a country which becomes free from crime is likely to find itself communistic.

I began this chapter by quoting Godwin's remark about the origin of crime. Let me conclude it with the words of a very different thinker, Henry Thoreau, concerning his life at Walden: "I am convinced that if all men were to live as simply as I then did, thieving and robbery would be unknown. These take place only in communities where some have got more than is sufficient, and others have not enough."*

* *Walden*, Chapter VIII., "The Village."

CHAPTER V

BETWEEN NATION AND NATION

*"Si vis pacem para bellum.
Leave such lies to those who tell 'em.
Wiser maxims now replace 'em.
Ni vis bellum para pacem."*

The saving sense of Kinship is necessarily a power of much later growth between separate nations, even if they be neighbouring nations, than between countrymen of the same race. Barriers of distance, and differences of speech, always delay, and frequently prevent, a mutual understanding ; and the tradition handed down from generation to generation has more often been one of mere enmity than of friendship. Such are the discouraging facts which, in spite of conferences and "conversations," have to-day to be acknowledged.

Nevertheless here, too, the feeling of friendship, even of brotherhood, exists, and if not forever checked and countered by its exact opposite (the fighting spirit which breeds quarrels between races), is capable of making

the world a civilised and habitable place, instead of the hell of rival camps that we see it to-day. Let us consider.

Turning straight to such international matters as would be affected by a belief in Kinship, we find the first and most obvious in the crime of War, a madness which is at last beginning to be recognised as suicidal to both parties engaged. Of war's horrors it is less necessary here to speak : it is the glaring misconceptions connected with it that demand attention.

Si vis pacem para bellum ("if you wish for peace, prepare for war"), is a fallacy which, far from being dead, as was fondly supposed a few years ago, is still very much and very mischievously alive. Under such a truce, open hostilities may doubtless be staved off for a time by a show of warlike preparations, but for a time only ; for as soon as the opposing nation is also well equipped it will be ready to take the field, and much more likely to do so than if there had been no rival preparation. The mere postponement or avoidance of warfare is not peace ; and the avoidance of hostilities is ultimately endangered, not secured, by international armaments. For, in the long run, opportunity begets action ; and whether you put a whip into a coachman's hand, a poker into a lunatic's, or a rifle into a soldier's, the weapon will

eventually be used. There is no sillier saying in the world than *Si vis pacem*.

In view of the appalling miseries which war inflicts on mankind, one can only smile at the plea that it inspires, among those who wage it, a spirit of comradeship and patriotic unselfishness in "the Cause." Let the claim be fully granted; but at what cost is this attained? Love of comrades, based on hatred of enemies; fellowship, rooted in animosity—is this sort of moral stimulant likely to be of much service to mankind? It may be allowed that, owing to the diversity of human character, it is possible that some individuals may be sobered and strengthened even by the fearful ordeal of war; but the majority are made more callous, more restless, and less able to settle down to a rational and peaceful life.

I have heard it amiably remarked that "there are worse things than fighting." Perhaps so; but it is conveniently forgotten that the things that are worse, or are assumed to be worse, than fighting, usually follow in war's train. We have war, *plus* the things that are worse, not instead of the things that are worse. Rape, robbery, violence in its many forms—when do these things most flourish? To state the question fairly is to see the fallacy exposed. For war, as John Bright described it, is "the combination and concentration of all the

atrocities, crimes, and sufferings, of which human nature on this globe is capable."

And all the time there is seldom any real hostility between the actual combatants; it is not so much the men who have to fight as the fools by whom they are forced to fight, that hate each other. The enmity between races is usually worked up. One of the few healthy and cheering incidents in the great European struggle was the manner (hardly to be mentioned) in which the English and German soldiers fraternised during an armistice, as if it were a football match, not a battle, and of course such a rational symptom was suppressed. Contrariwise, it was a glaring instance of war's wrongs that socialists should have been compelled to fight against socialists, though in truth far more closely akin to one another than are the workers and the idlers of the same race.

Another fact which ought to be more clearly recognised is that there is a close connection between wars and *other* inhumanities, the ill-usage, for instance, of animals, especially of horses—a point which the pacifists themselves do not urge as they ought. Peace cannot be secured by itself: its attainment will depend on kinship in all departments of life; on the way in which men regard and treat their fellow-beings generally. Animals suffer greatly in war, and as a consequence of it; and just as the

waging of wars has a serious bearing on the treatment of animals, so, it may be asserted, the treatment of animals is not without its effect on the conduct of wars, a civilising or a barbarising effect, as may be.

Blood-sports and battles are certainly kindred pastimes with a good deal in common, and the temper which makes war still possible is kept alive and fostered, among other practices, by that of doing to death thousands of helpless animals for purposes of mere recreation. Peace-advocates who declaim against the horrors of war, without taking note of the kindred horrors of "sport," have not looked very deeply into the subject of their propaganda ; and the same is true of those lovers of animals who are shocked at the idea of chasing a fox, but accept the flimsiest sophism as an excuse for warfare. Blood-sport is in truth a form of war, and war is a form of blood-sport.*

Perhaps the worst and most shocking fact of all, in regard to international disagreements, is the readiness of the Press of one country to foster jealousy and animosity against another, as in the reckless abuse of Russia by certain journalists of this country, writing in papers which are the mouthpieces of the wealthy classes, and consequently view the communist

* The *Morning Post* of November 13th, 1933, actually had a picture of fox-hunters reverentially observing the Silence for the Dead.

experiment with apprehension. Then, as regards our "possessions," as we absurdly call them, it is full time for the nonsensical talk about "empire" to be given up ; for in the present age it is not possible for one nation permanently to occupy the country of another. Surely our colonies—America beyond question—have taught us that lesson ; and now Ireland and India follow on like lines, and doubtless with the same result. As in Francis Adams's verses, *To England* :

"Look westward ! Ireland's vengeful eyes are cast
On freedom won.
Look eastward ! India stirs from sleep at last.
You are undone ! " *

Against these terrible facts what can avail an idle talk about "patriotism," when a genuine patriotism is something quite different from the selfish and silly affectation with which dullards confound it ? Again, why, it must be asked, are those who fall in war "heroes" more than those who die when doing their duty in any other field or occupation ? Without the least ingratitude or disrespect to the memory of dead soldiers, the nonsense, sheer nonsense, that is talked about soldiering must in honesty be pointed out. Look at the following instance.

* I believe there is nothing that so causes the dominant races to be detested, as their bad *manners*, as the insolence of Englishmen in calling Indians "niggers."

Speaking on Armistice Sunday, 1932, Sir Ian Hamilton said : "Wicked and cruel as war may be, it does at least possess one merit—it draws folk together, so that the whole of the people of each of the contending countries feel that they belong to one family."* But where is the merit of drawing people together, unless the purpose is good ? It is an additional *evil*, not merit, of war, that it creates a feeling of hatred between the nations that disagree. How people act and behave, when a war makes them "feel that they belong to one family," was very clearly shown in the course of the Great War, when there was an agitation in London in favour of the internment of all aliens "of enemy blood." The words used by certain speakers were of a nature which one would be almost ashamed to reprint ; yet the audience in Trafalgar Square repeated after one of them a solemn oath to bring force to bear on the authorities "to turn out the accursed, insidious, and dangerous enemy alien."† That is the way in which the people of one country are "drawn together" by war. The foolish sentiment that has been cultivated all down the centuries by poets and painters is used, in the long run, by the militant spirit for a cruel and vindictive purpose of its own.

* *The Morning Post*, November 7th, 1932.
† *The Daily Mail*, July, 1918.

A full sense of kinship is probably at present more a matter of rationality than of nationality, of good sense than of "patriotism." Ages have yet to pass before, in any nation, the quarrelsome fool is eliminated. But, meantime, something can be done to make progress, and it is of interest to recall a suggestion of a high and truly heroic nature made, some years before the war, by the correspondent of a London newspaper.* It was that Germany should restore to France the provinces that had been taken from her. "What a thrill throughout the world," he wrote, "what an imperishable place in history for the German Emperor, were the centenary of Waterloo to be commemorated by the generous, the magnificent release of Alsace Lorraine !"

That was most true ; but Germany is not the only nation that has failed to make a gesture of that kind. There are other "empires" that have been no less oddly built up. We had better look "nearer home."

* Mr. J. F. Macdonald, Paris correspondent of the *Daily News*.

WHEN WARS WILL CEASE

CHAPTER VI

WHEN WARS WILL CEASE

"Let the poet cease to celebrate men's achievements in battle, and wars will cease." (JOAQUIN MILLER.)

But when will wars cease? And why, the reader may ask, if so many good reasons can be alleged against warfare, do wars still persist? I should say that they persist because, immediately, and in the first place, the militarists like them to do so, and ultimately, because sentimentalists prate about them as if they were beautiful and heroic.

In saying that the military folk have a real relish for wars, I do not of course mean that, if they had their way, the country would never be free from quarrel, or that when there is a choice between war and peace they do not prefer the peace—if it is to be had on the terms they approve. I mean that, whatever they may say in any given case, they admire warfare, and believe it to be helpful to the nation's health and hardihood, and at times actually necessary. In other words, the practice of fighting is cherished and maintained by a very powerful

section of the community, a class which has reason to regard its own reputation, its own interests, as closely concerned therein.

This being so, it is not surprising that such institutions as the Armistice Day service at the Cenotaph, the various absurd parades and inspections, meetings of "Old Contemptibles," and the like, are so religiously maintained. They serve a very definite purpose, and fully justify the remarks made by a socialist Member of Parliament on a recent occasion.*

"I am thankful this mockery is over for another year. This service would have been abandoned before but for the gentlemen at the War Office, who realise that their jobs are safe while the crowd at the Cenotaph are hypnotised by the white-robed clergymen."

To such a pitch has this glorification of warfare been carried that in some quarters there is an insolent attempt to represent the policy of a simple pacifist body, such as the "No More War" Movement, as "bordering on sedition." Is it surprising, in these circumstances, that wars do not cease?

The influence of some powerful newspapers, where questions of militarism are concerned, is wholly bad; others, without openly advocating or eulogising war, indirectly promote it by the prominence they give in their columns to

* Dr. Alfred Salter, as reported, November 14th, 1932.

military subjects, as, for instance, by inviting letters which tell anecdotes of the battlefield, and what is more seductive than any other form of invitation, by offering to pay for them.

Of the same nature is the assurance, frequently given, that the British Navy is one of the chief factors that make for the peace of the world ; in which confused statement an armed neutrality between powerful nations is called "peace," as if it were actually that friendly state to which pacifists aspire ! This was seen, for instance, in a "message" sent on Trafalgar Day, 1932, by the president of the Navy League, to the effect that "Nelson, who disliked war as much as any pacifist of the present time, had no doubts that the Empire, as he knew it, rested, under Providence, wholly upon the national strength at sea." There followed a warning against negligence "lest the spirit of patriotism and self-sacrifice, which our greatest sea-officer bequeathed to us, be undermined by uninformed clamour."

Note the mention of Nelson's dislike of war ; the pious allusion to "under Providence" ; and the hint at a contrast between the "patriotism" of naval officers and the "uninformed clamour" of certain other persons ! It would be comical, if such terrible consequences were not involved. How is a courageous deed performed in "the trenches"

more worthy of honour than if it is done elsewhere ?

It is by such indirect advocacy, by the eulogies that are never lacking for military services of any kind, that wars are maintained. It has been pointed out by Joaquin Miller that it is the supposed men of peace who are themselves responsible for the wars they deprecate, the devastation they deplore. Without any sort of ingratitude to those who have fought, and perhaps fallen, for their country, and without any lack of respect for their memory, it is full time that men should make up their minds whether it is war or peace that they desire : it is useless to expend honeyed words on peace, while all the time they are sowing the seeds of war.

Miller was quite right. It is the "men of peace" who exalt the thing they deplore. The poets in all ages have been great sinners in this respect, and not least, be it noted, those whose song is of a mild and effeminate nature, like Tennyson's. The conclusion of his poem *Maud*, in its adoption of the wicked and crazy Crimean war as bringing an end to the personal sorrows of his hero, is truly amazing :

" Yet it lightened my despair,
When I thought that a war would arise in defence of the
right."

Yet one finds the truth apprehended, here

and there, in old writers like Sir Walter Scott, as when he makes one of his characters say (in *Woodstock*) : " An excellent man, and the best of Christians, till there is a clashing of swords, and then he starts up the complete martialist, as deaf to every pacific reasoning as if he were a game-cock."

Religion, when fighting was in prospect, has never been able to resist the strenuous weight of savagery, but in every land has shaped and adapted itself to the force of national prejudice, and has quite shamelessly blessed the banners of its countrymen under the plea of patriotism. This was seen in many cases in the South African war, when there was a frenzy of soldier-worship, and a bishop assured his flock that the clergy ought to consider what priests a nation should have, which was showing so splendid a character. The same sort of nonsense was often talked during the long European struggle ; indeed, among the various religious sects the Friends alone have consistently reprobated this alliance of cross with sword.

The sum of the whole matter, frankly stated, is this—that a war which is indirectly but deliberately cultivated will come. It is useless to talk of peace, and to pray for it as we do, so long as all the sentiment that men can muster is expended on war, or on ceremonies relating to war—burials in the Abbey, sermons about

patriotism, and love of king and country, royal inspection of Guards of Honour, and the like. All such fooleries can be stopped, and must be stopped, if we are serious in desiring peace ; for wars will never end as long as we picture them as heroic.

A recent correspondence in a daily paper has shown that while there were some combatants in the Great War who intensely hated it, there were others to whom it was little worse than a pastime. In the words of one, " Tunneller " : " The consensus of opinion was that they never hated the war ; and that though there were often unpleasantly sticky times, for the most part life in the war had been fairly enjoyable, and had great advantages over the type of existence many have had to endure in these weak piping times of peace." *

Surely, then, of all blessings which mankind has power to achieve, Peace is the most ill-used —praised in the abstract by sermonisers and romanticists, but maligned and deprecated when a choice has to be made between arbitration and war. Even its advocates too often plead its cause in a humble and apologetic tone, instead of insisting, as they ought, that it is war, not peace, that should be the subject of reprobation, ridicule, and disdain.†

* *Morning Post*, October 26th, 1932.

† As in that excellent book, *Captain Jinks, Hero*, by Ernest Crosby.

"But," it is said, "*this* war is justifiable." In every nation the naïve conviction prevails that though war in the abstract is to be deprecated, and though certain previous wars may possibly have lacked sufficient excuse, the particular conflict in which they are engaged is righteous, inevitable, one of pure defence—in their own words, "forced on us." Every people says and believes this faithfully, pathetically; yet even if we admit its truth in any rare instance, a modern war is none the less an offence against humanity. In bygone times when life was more savage, and international relations far less complex, war was perhaps not so criminal as it is now; for it was then possible for two or more countries to quarrel and "fight it out," like schoolboys, without inflicting any widespread or lasting injury. But now, so vast is the calamity of a war that to the world at large it hardly matters who, in childish phrase, "began it." It takes more than one to make a quarrel, and the two or more are jointly responsible for the results of their quarrel; a responsibility which becomes the heavier as the opportunities for arbitration increase.

And even if there still were cases in which a particular war was a necessity, that sheer necessity would be its one and only justification. All the other excuses, palliatives, and decorative embellishments of war in general are nonsense

and nothing else. Take, for example, the not uncommon belief that war is a great natural "upheaval," with something mysterious in its origin, and beyond human control. There is nothing in the least mysterious or cataclysmic in the outbreak of modern wars. Antipathies and rivalries of nations there are, as of individuals, and if these are fostered and encouraged (as they certainly are) they will eventually burst into flame; but it is equally true that if they were wisely disconcerted they would at length subside. We do not excuse an individual who pleads his jealousy or thirst for revenge as a reason for violence, though personal passion is just as much an "upheaval" as national hatred. Where a feud is nursed, a war will follow; but the feud does not justify the war.

Then there is that widespread idea, common among so-called religious persons (though it might well be called blasphemous), that wars are "sent" to rouse mankind from a selfish torpor. The effect of a war is precisely the opposite of this; for fighting concentrates men's thoughts on the attainment of a particular end, with complete disregard for those moralities which in peace cannot, at the worst, be denied some measure of consideration. What must be the result, when, in a considerable area of the world, many of the moral restrictions which have gradually been imposed on the primitive

instincts of the race are suddenly withdrawn, and hosts of men are forced to take a deep draught of aboriginal savagery? It is not too much to say that if wars are "sent," it must be a very malignant power that sends them.

Wars will cease only when two conditions have been fulfilled—the first, that men shall have a genuine desire for peace; the second, that their feelings shall have been humanised in regard not to fighting only, but to the other conditions of life.

CHAPTER VII

TWO SIMILAR PASTIMES

*"And we shall share, my Christian boy,
The foeman's blood, the avenger's joy."*

(THOMAS CAMPBELL.)

Before going further, I would like to speak again of a subject which forms a curious link between the case of human and that of non-human sufferers—the strange similarity, in certain cases, of Sport and War.

There were not a few instances, in the course of the struggle in South Africa, of the war being openly and avowedly referred to as a form of "sport." Everyone remembers the letter a newspaper published during the early months of the war, in which an English officer spoke of the "excellent pig-sticking" obtained by a British squadron in its pursuit of the flying Boers. "All men who are patriots and sportsmen," said a well-known M.P. on another occasion, "must feel that there is about war something of a magnificent game." These indiscreet utterances naturally raised a protest; but it must be admitted that they only expressed what is very generally felt among a

large section of nominally civilised people. There is not a doubt that numbers of Englishmen have gone to wars as to a sport *in excelsis*, a kind of glorified rabbit-shoot or battue—though probably many of them have modified that opinion in the light of subsequent experience, for we heard less talk of that sort in the war with Germany.

Blood-sports and war are certainly pastimes with a good deal in common. They both date from a prehistoric period when man

“Butted his rough brother-brute
For lust or lusty blood or provender,”

and both, having been prolonged into an age which ought to have left them far behind with other antiquated barbarisms, are now defended by the same moral and economic fallacies, as being, in the first place, part of the great “struggle for existence,” “survival of the fittest,” and so forth, and secondly, as “good for trade.” Good for trade they both are, in the sense that they help the few to snatch a temporary profit at the expense of the many; and as for the survival of the fittest, if you are determined to wrest that theory from its true meaning, it may be made to cover both war and sport at a stretch. “To-day,” as Mr. Robert Buchanan said, “under the fostering wing of Imperialism, brute force is developing more and

more into a political science. There is no excess of rapacity, no extreme of selfishness, no indifference to the rights of the weak and helpless, which Christian materialism is not ready to justify. The Englishman, both as soldier and colonist, is a typical sportsman; he seizes his prey wherever he finds it, with the hunter’s privilege. He is lost in amazement when men speak of the rights of inferior races, just as the sportsman at home is lost in amazement when we talk of the rights of the lower orders. Here, as yonder, he is kindly, blatant, good-humoured, aggressive, selfish, and fundamentally *savage*.”

Such sport is frequently justified by its apologists as being a “training” for war. But here it must be asked what kind of sport and what kind of training are referred to in such statements. The sports of which we are now speaking in connection with warfare are those which are more correctly described as “blood-sports,” to distinguish them from the humane sports of the gymnasium and playing-field. Training, again, is either physical or mental. Now as far as physical training is concerned, it is evident that blood-sports are no better preparation for war than football and other athletics; but if it is mental and moral training that our “patriots” have in mind, then we must allow—in fairness to our adversaries and to ourselves—that blood-sports are the best of

all schools for that other form of bloodshed which is euphemistically known as war.

It all depends on what is the object to be attained. If we wish as a nation to lord it over our human fellow-beings without regard to considerations of justice and humaneness, it must be a most appropriate training to practise and perfect ourselves in a similar treatment of the non-human races. In that sense we grant the "patriot-sportsman" his claim. As a school for callousness there is nothing superior to blood-sports, and the killing of defenceless animals is the best education for the looting of houses and the burning of non-combatants' farms. But conversely, if it is our desire that the people to which we belong should be a just, humane, and generous people, as jealous of the rights of others as of its own, and dreading no loss of prestige so much as a wrong done to a less powerful community—if we wish our country to be a peaceful, sympathetic, and considerate member of the family of nations—then assuredly it is not wise to encourage our youths in the practice of what we call blood-sports. To break up hares, to worry tame stags, to mow down driven pheasants in the battue, to shoot pigeons from traps, to dig foxes out of their holes, and to course bagged rabbits in enclosures where they have no chance of escape—such sports as these cannot possibly have conducted

to generosity of character, or to that much-misunderstood quality which is called manliness.

For we may take it for granted that, in the long run, as we treat our fellow beings "the animals," so shall we treat our fellow-men. In spite of all the barriers and divisions that prejudice and superstition have so industriously heaped up between the human and the non-human, the fact remains that the lower animals hold their lives by the same tenure as men do, and that there is no essential difference between the killing of one race and of the other. "The hare in its extremity," says Thoreau, "cries like a child. I warn you, mothers, that my sympathies do not always make the usual philanthropic distinctions." No; and our European soldiery does not always make the usual philanthropic distinctions. The tiger that lurks in all of us will not easily be tamed, so long as the deliberate murder of harmless creatures for "sport" is a recognised amusement in every civilised country. Once open your eyes to the kinship that links all sentient life, and you will see very clearly the relation that subsists between the sportsman and the soldier.

We recall an incident related some years ago at a humanitarian meeting where the craze for "big game" shooting was being discussed. Everyone knows how the possessors of such

"trophies" as the heads and horns of "big game" love to decorate their houses with these treasured mementoes of the chase. It had been the fortune—good or bad—of the narrator of the story to visit a house which was not only beautified in this way, but also contained a *human* head that had been sent home by a member of a certain African expedition and "preserved" by the skill of the taxidermist. When the owner of the head—the *second* owner—invited the humanitarian visitor to see the trophy, it was with some trepidation that he acquiesced. But when, after passing up a staircase between walls literally plastered with portions of the carcases of elephant, rhinoceros, antelope, etc., he came to a landing where, under a glass case, stood the head of a pleasant-looking young negro, he felt no special repugnance at the sight. It was simply a part—and, as it seemed, not a specially dreadful or loathsome part—of the surrounding dead-house; and he understood how mankind itself is nothing more or less than "big game" to our soldier-sportsmen, when they find themselves in some conveniently remote region where the restrictions of morality are unknown. The absolute difference between human and non-human is a fiction which will not bear the test either of fearless thought in the study or of rough experience in the wilds.

To conclude, then: the temper which makes war still possible in the twentieth century is that which is kept alive and fostered in so-called times of peace by the practice, among other practices (for we do not, of course, assert that sport is the *only* accessory to war), of doing to death thousands upon thousands of helpless animals for purposes of mere recreation. Peace advocates who declaim against the infamies of war, without taking note of the kindred infamies of sport, have, to say the least of it, not looked very deeply into the subject of their propaganda; and precisely the same holds good of those "lovers of animals" who are horrified at the idea of running a fox to death, but are ready to accept the flimsiest of flimsy sophisms as an excuse for going to war. Sport is, in truth, a form of war, and war is a form of sport; and those who have defended such institutions as the Eton Beagles, on the ground that the schoolboys who indulge in them were thereby trained to be the future stalwarts of Imperialism, are fully justified in their contention—provided only that they look the facts of war and Imperialism in the face. The Etonians who, in the eighteenth century, used to beat rams to death with clubs, and who now break up hares as a half-holiday pastime, have always furnished a large contingent of officers to the British army. Need we wonder that

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wars flourish without regard to justice or morality, and that an English officer could describe as "excellent pig-sticking" the slaughter of Dutchmen—the race nearest to our own in ties of language and blood?

CHAPTER VIII

BETWEEN HUMAN AND SUB-HUMAN

"Be kind to animals. You are one yourself." (*School of Arts Magazine*, Massachusetts.)

I have so far mainly spoken of the acknowledgment of Kinship as the one valid bond in human society, but it is not human society alone that is here concerned; for the non-humans, whom we indifferently class together as "the animals" (as if we were not animals ourselves!) have also to be considered. I wish to speak less of the actual wrongs that we inflict on them than of the injustice of what Schopenhauer called "the assumption, despite all evidence to the contrary, of a radical difference between man and beast."* When once it is realised that the more highly organised animals are closely related to ourselves, it will become impossible to ill-use them as is now done; but their treatment is not likely to improve while the great mass of people think

* In *The Basis of Morality*, translated by Arthur Brodrick Bullock, 1903.

and speak about them in a manner that is almost nonsensical. We are, in fact,

"A little more than kin, and less than kind."

To whom, then, are the people generally to look for right guidance in this matter? Not always, I fear, to those known as "scientists," for there are occasions when sheer nonsense about animals is talked in scientific circles. At a meeting of the British Association (September 2nd, 1932) a member gravely argued that non-humans are nothing more than machines. We have been warned not to let our hearts run away with us, but to give our heads also an opportunity; as if humanitarian hopes were not held by persons whose heads are quite as sound as that of any scientist living, and a good deal sounder than that of the one to whom I have just referred. It is, in fact, only the awe felt by the public for anything supposed to be "scientific" that permits such silly stuff to be talked and printed.

But here I must admit that nonsense is not talked on one side only. There are "friends of animals" who injure their own cause by use of an overstrained and exaggerated tone, and by such mistaken appeals to compassion, as in the common but foolish expression "dumb animals," which attributes a defect, an imperfection, where in truth there is none, and just

at a time when it is of importance to show that the gulf dividing human from non-human is one of mankind's imagination.

The kinship of human and sub-human, and the obligations which that fact lays upon mankind, are indeed a subject on which the great authorities speak plainly enough. Let two or three of them here be quoted.

"The theory of animal automatism," said G. J. Romanes (in his *Animal Intelligence*), "can never be accepted by commonsense."

"At one time," according to Lecky,* "the benevolent affections embrace merely the family: soon the circle expanding includes first a class, then a nation, then a coalition of nations, then all humanity; and finally its influence is felt in the dealings of man with the animal world."

"Why," asks Bentham (in his Introduction to *Principles of Morals and Legislation*), "should the law refuse its protection to any sensitive being? The time will come when humanity will extend its mantle over everything which breathes."

At present, in what we are pleased to regard as our civilisation, the moral aspects of the question are mainly overlooked. As Mr. Howard Moore wrote: "It is scarcely possible to commit crimes upon any beings in this

* *History of European Morals*.

world except men. There *are* no beings in the universe, according to human beings, except themselves. All others are commodities.”* That does not hold true of certain domestic animals; but it really is so of many of them, and of the rest, the wild and unowned, it is hardly an exaggeration. Consider some of the practices of which they are the victims.

The most obvious barbarity is that of “sport,” or rather it should be said, of “blood-sport.” Hunting and shooting are patronised to-day by many educated and well-to-do persons, who might be expected to know better; and the Church, instead of making some protest, is unwilling or afraid to say a word. Indeed, there was an occasion † when at the little old church of Moor Monkton, in Yorkshire, an Archbishop actually dedicated a stained window, “a very stained window,” as someone aptly remarked, to the memory of an old blood-sporting parson who had been killed when hunting. We advise anyone who would care to know what truly amazing excuses the apologists of a cruel practice are capable of uttering to look up that address.

I am not, of course, accusing sportsmen, or anyone else, of being personally or purposely cruel. One of the chief difficulties in bringing

* In *The Whole World Kin.*

† November 16th, 1914.

home responsibility in these matters is that things are so mixed up—that a man called to account for some very gross and barbarous practice may truly plead that it is “no worse” than something else. The trade in live caged birds, for instance, was described, and doubtless quite truly, as “one of the worst forms of habitual cruelty allowed in our country,” * yet the men who actually trapped and sold these poor captives may in other respects have been good fellows enough, supporting an aged parent, perhaps, or fulfilling some domestic duty! The public who buy are just as much to blame as the snarers who sell; and it is only when such questions are considered impartially (which they rarely are) that a way is seen to solve them.

So, in dealing with wrongs inflicted on our sub-human fellow-beings, we come back again and again to this same point, that it is a mistake to lay excessive stress, as so many of our friends do, on one particular subject, as transcending the rest in importance, and as demanding earlier attention. They are, in fact, so interwoven as to be in the end inseparable, and needing attention equally and together.

We are accustomed in this country to pride ourselves on having prohibited certain savage

* In an address given before the Cumberland Federation of Women’s Institutes by Lord Howard of Penrith.

pastimes which are still permitted elsewhere ; but it is to be feared that the advance in culture is only skin-deep. There was lately published a book on the art of bull-fighting, which frankly treated that pastime as a science worthy of respect, and drew the admiration of critics as containing an element of "mysticism." I like better the story, lately told me by a friend, of an old waterman, who years ago, when in the service of a titled lady, had attended a bull-fight in Spain. The duchess turned sick, and had to leave : "but I," said the old fellow, "was going to wait till I saw a man killed, and I did." Was not that more honest, and in the long run more humane, than the quibbles that are so frequent ?

I dislike Zoological Gardens ; for popular though these places have now become, and great as are the improvements adopted in the best of them, they probably do much to delay a right understanding of sub-humans, and in the minds not of children only, but also of grown-up persons, who in the scarcity (it must be admitted) of sensible forms of amusement, are glad to see inferior or unworthy sights. We must hope for better things hereafter. Two or three generations ago, pauper-lunatics used to be caged where passers-by—nurses perhaps with children in their charge—could see them as they passed, and the spectacle was sometimes

enjoyed.* We marvel now at such a story ; and it may be that a future generation will equally wonder that the sight of caged animals could attract us. There is the further fact that the modern "Zoo," whatever improvements have been wrought in it, has been built up with cruelties, not only in the manner in which many of the inmates have been captured, but in the feeding of snakes on live animals, practices which were only abandoned with reluctance and under protest from outside.

Again, respect for maternity is a maxim which, in everything that pertains to the human, is very properly inculcated, as an essential part alike of manners and of morals. What becomes of this chivalrous feeling in man's attitude to the extra-human races ? Maternity does not seem to be greatly revered in the hunting of gravid hinds and hares ; in the butchery of "big game" without regard to their cubs ; in the treatment of mother-bird, shot on her nest by some prowling game-keeper, or robbed of her eggs for some foolish collector's whim ; or in numerous other misdeeds that might be cited.

In the use of language, too, there is much that is amiss where the non-humans are con-

* I remember hearing from my mother that such was the case at Shrewsbury. The nurse would say, "Where shall we go to-day, children ?" and the cry would be, "Oh, to see the madmen, please !"

cerned. Words and names are not without their effect upon conduct ; and to apply to intelligent beings such terms as "brute," "beast," "live-stock," "dumb," etc., or the neuter pronouns "it," and "which," as if they had no sex, is a practical incitement to ill-usage, and certainly a proof of misunderstanding. For example, the *Morning Post* (September 26th, 1933) thus described a case of cruelty to a cow. He, the culprit, "struck the cow with a milking-stool. It fell to the ground and died." It ! One's thoughts turn to the milking-stool, but the allusion was to the cow !

By all, then, who accept the creed of Kinship, it will be held that while it may often be necessary to kill, it is never necessary to torture. To that extent the duty of mankind towards the lower animals is clear ; and seeing how great has been the power of human inventiveness in the past we can hardly doubt that the difficulties which at present stand in the path of humane reform will in the future prove less insoluble than they are represented. Of one thing we may feel certain—that it would be a great joy to Man himself, if he could see "the animals" (of whom he is one) living around him in peace, instead of fleeing in every direction when they meet the presence that they have now such reason to dread.

I quote, in conclusion, from a letter which I received from Mr. M. K. Gandhi in 1932 :

"One rarely finds people outside India recognising non-human beings as fellow-beings. Millennium will have come when mankind generally recognises and acts up to this grand truth."

CHAPTER IX

SACERDOTALIST AND SCIENTIST

"Strange bedfellows"

It is of very special interest to note that when some justification is needed for a cruel act, it is oftenest sought in the denial of "personality" to the intended victim, usually, of course, an animal; for which reason, as I have said, the recognition of the rights of animals will ultimately rest on our abandonment of the belief that they are not "persons" but "things." Witness what was said by a prelate of high position, in a lecture before the medical school of Guy's Hospital,* where he was bold enough to suggest that the law should permit the vivisection not of animals only, but, under certain conditions, of criminals.

"It was the violation," he said, "of personality that finally prohibited the vivisection of men. Might they argue boldly that since rights attached to persons, and since animals were *not* persons, animals could have no rights?"

With the speaker's further contention that

* In June, 1933.

where criminals have forfeited their human rights they might justly be utilised by the scientists, we are not here concerned, except to observe that it throws light on the amount of humaneness that may be possessed by a leader in the Christian church; but he was at least logical in his estimate of the importance of personality.

This dallying of sacerdotalist with scientist is by no means new. Over thirty years ago, for example, a justification of vivisection was put forward by Monsignor John S. Vaughan, an old-world Catholic, on the ground that "beasts exist for the use and benefit of man"; and there are undoubtedly many persons living in this twentieth century who still hold the belief that animals were created for man's pleasure. That ancient superstition is probably the most popular weapon in the vivisector's armoury. But here we come to what, if it were possible to jest on so terrible a subject, would be the humour of the situation—that the evolutionist and man of science is *not* able to take refuge in that old pretence that man is the centre of the universe, for if there is one thing above others that Darwin's teaching has disproved, it is this anthropocentric assumption. The animals, according to the scientific view, were *not* designed merely for man's benefit, nor is there any impassable gulf between human and non-

human ; on the contrary, man was evolved from among the animals, and is, if the truth be told, an animal himself. This is the creed, beyond denial or evasion, of the Darwinian scientists, whose torture of their rudimentary brethren the sacerdotalist is so eager to condone. Monsignor Vaughan was defending vivisection by an assumption which the vivisectors themselves must hold to be unscientific and obsolete. Such is the strangeness of the situation !

But vivisection has got to be defended somehow, on moral, as well as medical, grounds ; and to do Monsignor Vaughan justice the ground he alleged is the only one that can afford, or could once have afforded, any semblance of logical foothold. "Beasts exist for the use and benefit of man." In that unquestioned belief lay the justification—the comparative justification—of the horrible tortures inflicted on animals in the medicinal and magical quackery of the Middle Ages, when, as has been pointed out, "the nastier the medicament the more was expected of it." Animals were regarded alike by the religion, and the science, and the common usage of the times, as mere *things*, providentially designed to be the instruments of man's welfare, at the cost of whatever suffering to themselves. What, therefore, if they were carved, and tortured, and vivisected to provide mankind

with the filthy nostrums prescribed as the remedies for disease ? An anthropocentric philosophy could explain and justify it all. And so it might do at the present time, but for the fact that the anthropocentric philosophy—as a philosophy—has itself ceased to exist !

Indeed, the point of complaint against the scientists is precisely this—that the practice of vivisection, though perhaps logically justifiable on the absurd old belief that animals have no *raison d'être* except to minister to man's convenience, is wholly unjustifiable in the light of evolutionary science, which has demonstrated beyond question the kinship of all sentient life. That the scientist, in order to rake together a moral defence for his doings, should condescend to take shelter even under the mediæval reasoning of the sacerdotalist, is a proof that his position is hopelessly inconsistent and unsound ; for having got rid of the old anthropocentric fallacy in the realm of science, he actually avails himself of the same fallacy in the realm of ethics. This, of course, is less surprising, when we remember that one and the same person may be, and often is, as reactionary in one field of thought as progressive in another, and that the modern man of science may be, in morals, a mediævalist.

My sole reason for discussion is to insure that the humanitarian view of the question be

rightly placed before the public, and this can best be done by stating it clearly in contradistinction to the anthropocentric dogma. I do not admit the assumption that "beasts exist for the use and benefit of man." I view the matter in a wholly different aspect. We find ourselves born into an age which has been evolved in a gradual progress from savagery to something better, with old-world wrongs around us, the worst of which are being slowly redeemed, century after century, by a growing spirit of brotherhood. I have never pretended that these wrongs, woven as they are into the fabric of society, can be immediately and simultaneously righted, nor do I admit, in the case of the lower animals any more than in the case of men, that the necessity of inflicting *some* pain confers the right to inflict *any* pain. I insist on the undeniable tendency from barbarism to humaneness, which has already at many points bridged the gulf between man and man, and will in time bridge the gulf between man and his lower fellow-creatures. Science has exploded the idea that there is any difference in kind, and not in degree only, between the human and the non-human animal; and sympathy, guided by reason, is making it more and more impossible that we should for ever treat as mere automata fellow-beings to whom we are in fact very closely akin.

CHAPTER X

MAN'S MISTAKE

*"Oh, yes! You love them well, I know!
But whisper me, when most?
In fields at summer-time? Not so.
At supper-time—in roast."*

Where, then, I would ask, has been man's mistake, his cardinal mistake, in dealing with the sub-human tribes? It is evident that certain practices have got to cease before there can be any real truce and understanding between mankind and "the beasts," but is there any usage in particular to which we can point as a cause of disunion? I think there is; and though I am aware that it is dangerous to specify in such matters, I am going, in this case, to make the venture.

Among the justifications offered for the alleged cruelties of sport and science, and indeed of any ill-treatment of animals, there is one which occurs so frequently as to be almost a matter of course; and it is this—that as we may kill for food, it cannot be wrong to do the same, with certain safeguards, for the purposes

in question. Now, no one ever alleges the right to hunt, or to vivisect, in vindication of flesh-eating ; but flesh-eating is constantly cited as justifying the other practices ; which surely shows that it stands in a quite peculiar and unique position in affecting mankind's relations with the non-humans. It is, so to speak, the pivot on which the question turns. Butchery for food may not be, certainly is not, so callous as blood-sports, or so cruel as vivisection, but it underlies them both. Note the following argument from *Chambers' Encyclopædia* (1884) in a defence of scientific experiments :

"It is universally admitted that man may destroy animals for his food and to furnish him with many of the necessities and luxuries of life. . . . If, then, man can legitimately put animals to a painful death, in order to supply himself with food and luxuries, why may he not also legitimately put them to pain, and even to death, for the far higher object of relieving the sufferings of humanity ?"

So, too, when blood-sports are called in question. In the debate on "Pigeon Shooting" (1884), Lord Fortescue said : "If they were called upon to put an end to pigeon shooting they might next be called upon to put an end to the slaughter of live-stock." And in fairness both to vivisectionist and to blood-sportsman it must be said that the habit which underlies the many and various forms of ill-

treatment of animals—the fundamental negation of their rights—is flesh-eating, with its attendant business of butchery. The cattle-ship and the cattle-market are but a continuation of the slave-trade with the addition of a spice of cannibalism. The economic exploitation of our fellow-men is hateful enough ; but the dietetic exploitation of our fellow-animals is likely, as time goes on, to be regarded in much the same light. It is an undeniable relic of a savage past, condemned by every consideration of humaneness, æstheticism, and economy.

It is no part of my purpose here to state, still less to argue, the vegetarian contention ; what I wish to show is that a humane diet-system is indispensable if there are ever to be amicable relations between human and sub-human. The subject of cannibalism has been mentioned, and it is a subject by no means irrelevant or out of date when the assertion is so commonly made that mankind cannot, or at any rate *will* not, abandon its present tastes and habits. This is what the "*British Medical Journal*" has said :

"Man is undoubtedly, in his anatomy, most nearly allied to the higher apes, and these animals though they show obvious tendencies to be omnivorous, are yet, in the main, eaters of nuts and fruits. But man is not a higher ape, and in the process of development to his present high status he has become omnivorous. It is true that he can obtain from vegetables the nutriment necessary for his maintenance in health, but he has learnt that he can obtain what he wants at

less cost of energy from a mixed diet, and he is not likely to unlearn this lesson." *

But the scientific gentleman who wrote thus confidently must surely have overlooked the story of cannibalism ! For mankind, or a portion of it, in attaining to what the "*British Medical Journal*" regards as its "high status," became omnivorous to the extent of eating *human flesh*; and if that practice can be unlearnt, as is generally believed possible, it is difficult to see why, with the ages before us, so unpleasant a habit as the eating of dead pigs (for example) should be everlasting. Nor can cannibalism be ignored as merely a horror which does not enter into the study of dietetics. "Prejudice is strange," wrote Professor W. M. Flinders Petrie in a remarkably outspoken article on the subject, and on the horror which so-called civilised people feel for that form of diet.

"A large part of mankind," he said, "are cannibals, and still more, perhaps all, have been so, including our own forefathers, for Jerome describes the Atticotti, a British tribe, as preferring human flesh to that of cattle. . . . Does the utilitarian object [to cannibalism] ? Yet one main purpose of the custom is utility; in its best and innocent forms, it certainly gives the greatest happiness to the greatest number."†

Why, then, do "civilised" races prohibit

* June 4th, 1898.

† *The Contemporary Review*, June, 1897.

cannibalism? Obviously for *moral* reasons; and when a critic asks "how or where does the moral phase of food-taking enter into the science of dietetics?" he may be referred to the following passage in the article on Cannibalism in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*:

"Man being by nature carnivorous as well as frugivorous, and human flesh not being unfit for human food, the question arises why mankind generally have not only avoided it, but have looked with horror on exceptional individuals and races addicted to cannibalism. It is evident on consideration that both emotional and religious motives must have contributed to bring about this prevailing state of mind."

That is true; and to me it seems equally evident that similar feelings will eventually bring about a state of mind which does not tolerate any form of flesh-eating. Even Scott has it, in *Redgauntlet*; "I do not believe either pigs or poultry would admit that the chief end of their being was to be killed and eaten."

For these reasons, and for others with which I will not burden the reader, I will hold that the butchering of his fellow-animals has been a mistake, and a very serious one, on the part of man; certainly, his relations with the sub-humans are ruined by a practice which lends a ready excuse and support to various other barbarities. And while I am fully aware of the enormous stability of these old habits, and of the fact that not only years but centuries,

perhaps ages, will be required for them to pass, I firmly believe that in the fulness of time they *will* pass, and that Thoreau's faith (I quote again from that wonderful book, his *Walden*) will be eventually verified: "Whatever my own practice may be I have no doubt that it is a part of the destiny of the human race, in its gradual improvement, to leave off eating animals, as surely as the savage tribes have left off eating each other when they came in contact with the more civilised."

CHAPTER XI

THE SANCTITY OF LIFE

"*Cannibals? Who is not a cannibal?*" (HERMAN MELVILLE.)

It is rather surprising to learn, and on good authority, that the discoveries made by the great botanist, Sir J. C. Bose, showing that plants in their due degree have a heart, are capable of an undreamt-of sensitivity, and can give vocal, though to us inaudible, expression to their "feelings"—that these discoveries are producing doubt and hesitation in some vegetarian quarters, and even causing the question to be asked whether they do not upset the foundation on which the akreophagist creed is based. If we cannot escape the necessity of killing plants, plants thus highly organised, why, it is asked, should we restrict ourselves to a vegetable diet—why not kill and eat animals also?

It seems to me that a little consideration will show this solicitude, if it really is felt, to be entirely needless, and to be due, in fact, to a complete misunderstanding of the relation in

which vegetarians stand toward the whole problem of diet.

First, it is worth observing that there is nothing new in the idea that plants are thus endowed with hearts and feelings ; the novelty lies in the scientific confirmation of what has hitherto been only a surmise of poets and sages. These are the words of the Earth in Shelley's great poem, *Prometheus Unbound* :

"I am the Earth,
Thy Mother ; she within whose stony veins,
To the last fibre of the loftiest tree,
Whose thin leaves trembled in the frozen air,
Joy ran, as blood within a living frame."

And what the poet instinctively divined, the sage has dimly apprehended ; as when Edward Carpenter wrote that the cabbage "may inaudibly scream" when pulled from the ground. The notion, indeed, has been not infrequently used by opponents of diet-reform in the hope of thereby making vegetarianism appear ridiculous. Over a quarter-century ago I had to devote a page or two of my *Logic of Vegetarianism* to the *Science Jottings* of Dr. Andrew Wilson, wherein he argued that as the tissues of plants contain living protoplasm, the consistent vegetarian "must no longer kill a cabbage," since he holds "that you have no right to kill any living thing for food."

Now if vegetarians were really thus aiming

at perfection, and if they believed it to be an immediate possibility to "take no life" whatsoever, even the lowliest forms, as in the tissues of plants, then certainly they would have cause to be disturbed by Sir J. C. Bose's discoveries ; but when did vegetarianism ever involve the holding of such a creed ? The aim of a vegetarian has always been, not some distant and at present unattainable ideal, but the actual avoidance of the very gross cruelties associated with the orthodox diet. To be "consistent" does not mean that we must attain to perfection ; it means that we must do all we can. In diet, as in other matters, the question of *degree* is all-important ; it is not the absolutely best—the ideal, perhaps, of a far future—that is demanded of us, but loyalty to the humane ethic which is possible here and now.

It is, in fact, a theme for humorous rather than serious treatment, and the most fitting answer to those who put forward the "spare-the-cabbage" argument is to ask them what is their moral objection to cannibalism ? If the question of greater or lesser sensibility is to be disregarded, the Man may as justly be cooked and eaten as the Ox. If the fact that plants have *some* sensation, justifies the killing of animals who have much more, kreophagy in its turn might excuse cannibalism,

Obviously a recognition of degrees in morals is essential to any right conclusions. There is for us, at present, no possibility of avoiding, in some form or other, the taking of life ; it is the avoidance of taking life *unnecessarily* that is our aim ; and not of any and all life, but of the higher, the more sensitive, and the more developed. The grosser sorts of barbarism must be the first to be removed.

The sum of the whole matter is expressed in a letter of Sir J. C. Bose himself, from which I am permitted to quote. It is a reply to a correspondent who had questioned him about our use of plants for human food. "The cause of humanitarianism," he wrote, "can only be advanced by change of spirit, and not by making fun of people who feel compassion for the suffering of animals, greatly accentuated by terror when they are being done to death. Obviously, plants do not suffer from this terror, their nervous structure, where present, being far more rudimentary." No statement could be more authoritative or more conclusive.

But the fact of our present imperfection does not at all preclude us from looking forward to the future, and to the possibilities of still further humanising the diet of mankind. It is likely, even certain, that a fruit-diet will come more and more into favour ; and who can doubt that invention will be busy in foods as in other

things ? I have quoted from Shelley's prophetic poem. Is it not worthy of remark that the singer who, above all others, felt that not men and animals only, but plants and even rocks and stones have vitality, was the one who proclaimed in no uncertain tone the horror and cruelty of flesh-eating ?

CHAPTER XII

OUR RELATIONS WITH ANIMALS

"Do you think I should shoot you, if I wanted to study you?" (THOREAU.)

A great deal has been spoken and written on this subject; but where the wild animals are concerned it has been mostly about their world-wide massacre for purposes of commerce or sport. It has been said that in all the dealings of mankind with the non-humans, domesticated or wild, the expectation of Food plays a considerable part, and it may be so; but in this chapter I wish to draw attention to the much more remarkable part that is played by the Affections.

It is needless to dwell at any length on the wonderful instances of friendship that are recorded between men and domestic animals; yet I have again and again been surprised by facts that have come quite casually to my knowledge. Think, for example, of a man who, poor himself, preferred that the pony whom he could no longer afford to keep should be shot, rather than sold for ten pounds into strange

OUR RELATIONS WITH ANIMALS

hands. I have known, too, a case where a horse who drew a fruiterer's cart was so attached to his mistress that when she was laid up, after an accident, a daily meeting between them had to be arranged. These are but two cases out of the hundreds that might be adduced, where the Affections leave no doubt of their reality and keenness. The stories of dogs and cats are innumerable. There is a clergyman, a friend of mine, who invites his parishioners to bring their animal friends with them to church. Why not?

There was published as far back as 1886 a very interesting book on *Domesticated Animals in their Relation to Man*, by Mr. Nathaniel Shaler, of Harvard University, who took the view that mankind's association with the higher forms has been of much importance to what we call our civilisation; the strength and swiftness of the horse, the fidelity of the dog, the sagacity of the elephant, and the various qualities of other kinds, having been gradually enlisted in our service. Sympathy, according to Mr. Shaler's opinion, has been a powerful influence in this process, and is destined to be still more so. That is most true, and I venture to look still further ahead, and to suggest that what we need in the future is not to go on "domesticating" animals on the same lines, the old form of domestication being now of less

value, but to face the more interesting problem of the reconciliation of man with nature—how to establish friendly relations with the wild tribes. That this will become possible, if there is ever a real desire for it, I do not doubt. There is already evidence in plenty, for those who care to know; it must suffice here to quote the authority of Thoreau.

It was his opinion that there may be a civilisation going on among animals as well as men. The Walden foxes seemed to him to be "rudimentary, burrowing men, still standing on their defence, awaiting their transformation." The horse was "a human being in a humble state of existence"; and he was pathetically affected by the human behaviour of the oxen when loosed from the yoke at nightfall; even the wild moose in the Maine forests were to him "Moose-men, clad in a sort of Vermont grey or home-spun." He remarks how "man conceitedly names the intelligence and industry of animals '*instinct*,' and overlooks their wisdom and fitness of behaviour."

Perhaps the most charming feature of Thoreau's character was the influence which he wielded over the wild inhabitants of the forest. "His intimacy with animals," says Emerson, "suggested what Thomas Fuller records of Butler, the apologist, that 'either he had told the bees things or the bees had told him.'

Snakes coiled round his leg, the fishes swam into his hand, and he took them out of the water; he pulled the woodchuck out of its hole by the tail, and took the foxes under his protection from the hunters." This power was perhaps owing in part to his habit of silent watchfulness, which enabled him "to sit immovable, a part of the rock he rested on, until the bird, the reptile, the fish, which had retired from him, should come back and resume its habits"; but we cannot doubt that it was mainly due to his humane sympathy, the sense of love and brotherhood which, as in the case of St. Francis, lent so rare a charm to his relations with the non-human races. We read that when a sparrow alighted on his shoulder, he regarded it as "a greater honour than any epaulet he could have worn."

Speaking of man's lack of knowledge of the inner life of the non-humans, Thoreau remarked that a great book, and an intensely interesting one, is waiting to be written by some genius of the future. When such a book is published, which can hardly be until the general feeling of mankind is quickened and humanised, it is to Thoreau that the world's thanks will be largely due, as the pioneer who braved the ridicule of critics and scientists in his advocacy of the true method of nature-study and the understanding of animals.

—wrong because issuing from, and tending to perpetuate the spirit of selfishness and exclusiveness."

This is itself a religion, and one which the established forms do not supply. The faith of which I write will, in my belief, be a faith not of mysteries but of verities; indeed the attempts to see everywhere the working of a divine power seem to me to do little good, while indirectly they are a hindrance to the advance of thought, by fostering a belief that, with religion inviting us, humanitarian teaching is unneeded. Why trouble, we think, concerning the welfare of mere prisoners, or animals, when matters of much higher moment are calling? The result is inevitable.

I have stated in this book my conviction that the various schools of humane thinkers, religionist or rationalist as may be, will have to find a common ground of belief before any final success can be attained. But it is evident that this is a matter for a distant age, and that at present, and for many years to come, in such protests as are made against any surviving forms of barbarity, humanitarians must dwell as little as possible on the points wherein they differ among themselves. There must be at least what might be called a truce, upon matters of religious opinion, between reformers who cling to the old faiths and those who have a newer creed of their own.

CHAPTER XIII

A FREE RELIGION

"With disbelief belief increased." (RICHARD JEFFERIES.)

I have said throughout that freedom of thought is not only not opposed to the creed of kinship, but is essential to it. It is significant that the word humanitarian has two chief meanings in the dictionary—the one a lover of humaneness, the other a disbeliever in the supernatural.

It is my hope that what may be called a free or rational religion, founded on kinship, and expressing itself in unselfish deeds, will eventually take the place of the many superstitious beliefs that have in the past been regarded as religions, and in many cases continue to be so honoured. From the Rev. Francis Wood's book on *Suffering and Wrong*, I would quote this excellent remark about a new religion :

"We need," he says, "a religion which shall declare men brothers not merely in a religious sense, but by reason of their essential and universal nature and needs . . . , which shall declare our present divisions and distinctions of rich and poor, master and servant, employer and employee, to be all wrong

As one who has long worked for the cause of the lower animals, I have felt anxious that the zoophilist movement should be consolidated, not divided ; and therefore, in such books as my *Animals' Rights* and *The Logic of Vegetarianism*, I have always refrained from criticism of the orthodox creeds, feeling that persons of all persuasions should on ethical subjects be able to work in unison.

It is the habit of religionists and of scientists alike, when referring to morality, to speak of it as something apart, something which will have to be brought into harmony and conjunction with science or religion. "One of the greatest tasks before the human race," according to General Smuts, "will be to link up science with ethical values, and thus remove the grave dangers threatening our future." That is most true ; but might not the case be still more strongly stated ? For how can any conduct which is *not* ethically just be either religious or scientific ; and how can a science or a religion be worthy of the name, unless it assumes the fulfilment of all ethical duties ?

The same holds true of Rationalism itself : it is void and without value unless it carries with it that sense of kinship and brotherhood which the world so grievously lacks to-day. Full freedom of thought is essential for humane progress, because otherwise the old supersti-

tions stand in the way ; but it is not of itself all that is needed, and as long as cruelty and injustice are rampant it is small consolation to be told that our religious beliefs *may* be made rational. They *must* give practical proof of their rationality. Yet to-day one may receive lists of "libertarian" publications, in which not one word is said on the subject of humanness.

As far as religion is concerned—and my contention is that the future faith will be a religion—the central fact is summed up in one of Mahatma Gandhi's sayings : "True religion is identical with morality." What the churches have believed in the past, or what the scientists may discover in the future, is of infinitely less moment than what the human heart shall ultimately approve as beautiful and gracious. A creed so simple may at present appear but slight and negligible, in comparison with the complicated doctrines which theology has piled up : in reality, as the one sure and abiding hope for mankind, it will include and outlast them all.

The superman is doubtless coming in the fulness of time ; and his advent will best be forwarded by the patient and gradual process of fostering love and comradeship in place of hatred and self-seeking—a much larger love, and a much wider comradeship, than that of

which either the religionists or the rationalists have talked.

And here I feel impelled to quote that wonderful poem of Leigh Hunt's to which he gave the title of *Abou Ben Adhem*. I do not doubt that he was thinking of Shelley when he wrote it ; but it may be widely applied.

" Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase !)
 Awoke one night from a deep dream of
 peace,
 And saw, within the moonlight in his
 room,
 Making it rich and like a lily in bloom,
 An angel writing in a book of gold :—
 Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem
 bold,
 And to the presence in the room he said,
 ' What writest thou ? ' The vision raised its
 head,
 And with a look made of all sweet accord,
 Answer'd, ' The names of those who love the
 Lord,'
 ' And is mine one ? ' said Abou. ' Nay, not
 so,'
 Replied the angel. Abou spoke more
 low,
 But cheerly still, and said, ' I pray thee
 then,
 Write me as one that loves his fellow-men.'

The Angel wrote, and vanish'd. The next
 night

It came again with a great awakening light,
 And show'd the names whom love of God
 had bless'd,
 And lo ! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest."

The lines are almost beautiful enough to
 have been written by Shelley himself.

THE SENTIMENTALISTS

CHAPTER XIV

THE SENTIMENTALISTS

*"No sickly sentiment for us :
What nature bids is best."
It was the Cannibal who thus
The Flesh-eater addressed.*

Sentiment is a word much bandied about by the opponents of all humane measures ; and they mean, even when they do not say so, the false sentiment, or mawkishness, for no one would be so foolish as to deny the beauty of tender feeling, however devoid of it he may be himself. What is charged against humanitarians is that they are "sentimental," whether they are raising a voice against a threat of war, resource to the gallows or the lash, or some ill-usage of animals. The cry is always the same, "sentimentalist !" What is the amount of truth in it ?

In a world where there is so much suffering, so much wrong, it would certainly be strange if there were no exaggeration, no excessive feeling, on the part of those who make protest ; and that sentimentalism is unknown in humani-

tarian quarters will not of course be here asserted. During my thirty years' association with the Humanitarian League as its honorary secretary, when I saw and talked with many visitors at its office, I noted not a few cases of such emotion among kind-hearted people, and did my best to restrain it. Let that be admitted. But I can assert with confidence that the sentimentality of the "sane" folk, the stout and sturdy fellows, who affect to laugh at the reformers, is much greater than that which they attribute to others. It is they themselves who, quite unaware of it, are the over-wrought, the morbid, the emotional.

Peace is often represented as a period of softness, of "sentimentality," in contrast with the heroic sternness of war. According to this notion, it is a time of slumber, of dreaming, of do-nothing, enervating to the virility of mankind—perhaps even sapping our morals—whereas war wakes and rouses us to the great realities of life. Were it not that, as Mr. Howard Moore pointed out in his book on *Savage Survivals*, the war-instinct "lies pretty close to the surface in the natures of even the highest people," no reasoning person could thus describe pacifism as sentimental ; for there is more sentimentalism of the most feverish kind in a single year of war than in a century of peace. Grant to the full the personal courage

and hardihood of the combatants, it remains true that a nation engaged in war is in an intensely emotional state of mind, often verging on the hysterical ; and it is no exaggeration to say that peace, compared with war, is a time of cold, calm, logical deliberateness and self-possession. The fallacy which depicts peace as "sickly" is not only untrue, it is the exact opposite of the truth. It is war that is sickly ; it is peace that is sane.*

What, for instance, are we to think of the military experts who were so affected by an exhibition of "silent artillery" discovered by two Italian engineers, that in their enthusiasm they were moved even to embrace the inventors? Think of the ridicule and contempt that would be poured on humanitarians who should greet in this manner the discovery of any real benefit for mankind ! Yet we are expected to read without surprise, as an incident in itself likely and natural, of this idiotic reception accorded to a cruel and diabolic contrivance.

Take, too, from the same patriotic journal,† the account of how General Seely, at a dinner of the Authors' Club, spoke of a boy under his command in the Great War, who was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross. "General Seely, who was in command of the

* See Chapters V. and VI.

† *Morning Post*, August 13th and November 15th, 1932.

Canadians in this battle, told the story in a choking voice, and when he finished he almost collapsed in his chair." The true pathos of the tragedy would seem to be that a young boy should be concerned at all in the horrors of a battlefield ; but what would be thought of a pacifist who should tell *his* view of such an occurrence in a choking voice and almost collapsing in his chair ? It is not difficult to imagine what would be said of him in imperialistic circles !

Then certain forms of brutal punishment, most of all flogging, excite violent emotions in those who uphold them ; indeed there are persons who, in discussing the question of the Lash, are hardly self-possessed. Mark what was said by Mr. J. F. P. Rawlinson, when a Bill to extend the punishment of flogging was before the House of Commons :

" We know the extraordinary hysterical emotion which this Bill has aroused. We get letters from all sorts of people, chiefly women, 'flog them, crucify them,' and anything else you like. It is a cry we have had all down the ages.' (November 1st, 1912.)

There is in truth a mental disease known as "flagellomania," "a special disorder of the imagination," as Mr. Bernard Shaw has called it, akin perhaps to the malady of those mediaeval fanatics, the Flagellants ; but the subject is so unpleasant that it is commonly avoided. Yet,

in face of these facts, the opponents of this filthy punishment have been charged—even from the Bench *—with “sentimentality”!

I may be pardoned if at this point I quote some remarks made by a writer in the *Lancet*,† in a review of a book of my own :

“In this connexion it has also to be borne in mind that judicial whipping, whatever be its value as a corrective of criminal tendencies, may in many cases have permanent psychic effects of a peculiarly undesirable kind, especially when the punishment is inflicted on boys about the age of puberty. This is an aspect of the question about which advocates of corporal punishment generally know very little, and they may therefore profit by perusing the sensible remarks which Mr. H. S. Salt devotes to the point in his recently published essay on ‘The Flogging Craze.’”

It seems, as I have said, to be usually forgotten that the feeling uppermost in the minds of humane persons is not mere pity for the offender but disgust that such penalties should still be in use. Once, when I was a Master at Eton, a lady who called to arrange about placing a new boy in my House expressed a wish that I should lose no opportunity of having him

* As by Mr. Justice A. T. Lawrence, in 1908. In passing a sentence of the lash at Exeter, in October, 1934, Mr. Justice Humphreys made remarks about “people who call themselves humanitarians” which showed that he was entirely ignorant of the grounds on which flogging is condemned. It seems strange that high judicial authorities, to whom such great powers are entrusted, should not consider it a part of their duties to make themselves acquainted with the facts.

† December 9th, 1916.

flogged, and on my telling her that I could do nothing of the kind, took him elsewhere.

What says Hamlet ? :

“Use every man after his desert, and who shall ’scape whipping ? Use them after your own honour and dignity : the less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty.”

Hanging seems to excite fewer of these morbid emotions than flogging does, but it cannot be said to be wholly free from them. What are we to think of the Judge’s “assuming of the black cap” before passing the death sentence ? Is it not a piece of sensationalism that might well disappear from a scene that is already too painful ? And those who ask questions on the subject, receive idiotic replies from officials, such as : “It is the function of the Judge.” Of that there is no doubt : the question is whether such functions had not better be discontinued.

But it is when we come to the treatment of the lower animals that we find sentimentalism most rampant ; and among the worst offenders are the hunters and anglers themselves, with their silly talk of their “runs” and their “bags.” A frequent theme with the fisherman when he writes his reminiscences is the weight of his captures. Their weight ! It is nothing less than childish ; yet if I were to advise him to leave those fish in their rivers, he would tell me not to be sentimental.

Much foolish as well as kindly feeling is expended on domestic animals, and not usually by those who love them best. An important truth is illustrated in one of the amusing stories told of Father Stanton, the anecdote of the lady whose cat had died. "Is it not wonderful," she said, "to think that my little Tibby will meet me in the hereafter?" "Yes, my dear," was the reply, "but remember that the goose you had for lunch yesterday will also have something to say to you." The diet question, so commonly, and so conveniently, forgotten, is often a sharp test between the true sentiment and the false.

Of the nonsense printed in poems and anecdotes about shepherds "tending their flocks," the rising song of larks, and so on, there is no end; and the folk who are most addicted to it would seldom abstain from leg of mutton or lark-pie.

Humanitarians, as I have said, must take their due share of the blame for all such inanities, but it is not they, in nine cases out of ten, who are the worst offenders. It is from the "patriots," the advocates of hanging and flogging, the blood-sportsmen, the flesh-eaters, that we get the most flagrant display of sentimentalism.

SENSIBILITY

*"Sound sense—deny them not a share,
For that were incivility.
They've tons of sense, but this I swear,
No scrap of Sensibility."*

It is curious how certain English words, which spring from the same root, or are obviously related, so expand themselves as to acquire meanings that are not merely different, but actually opposed. In the foregoing chapter I have spoken of the "Sentimentalities," that is, of those excesses of feeling, which, whether shown by persons opposed to humane progress or by those in favour of it, must on rational grounds be deprecated. I have now to speak of the present lack, or insufficiency, of peculiar qualities which from their name might be supposed, in careless minds to be allied to the Sentimental, but in truth are sharply antagonistic to it.

There is no necessity for me to use many words, or to have recourse to bookish speech, in making plain what I mean by "sensibility."

Go out into the street, and walk a few hundred yards ; and the chances are ten to one that the first lot of persons you encounter, whoever and whatever they be, men or women, old or young, will not deviate a couple of inches from their course in order to allow you to pass them with comfortable space ; they will walk straight towards you, and you will have to turn aside, possibly into the gutter, though, where you meet a company of two or three, an easy passage would be secured by one merely dropping behind the other. I have noticed it repeatedly, and wondered. It is not that they have forgotten a grace that was taught them in childhood, for children are the most mannerless of all. They are doubtless good people enough in most respects ; but of *you*, as of anyone who is not a member of their own little party, they are merely not cognisant at all. They are unaware of *you*. They have no sensibility.

Why, then, do I trouble about them, you will perhaps ask. What do they matter ? Only for this reason : that however carefully the foundations of a future society may be laid, on the lines that I have indicated, no really adequate result will ever be obtained until this missing or very rare quality is developed and acquired by mankind.

Sensibility is the being *aware* of other persons. In its cruder and earlier forms it

may be only physical, as when proximity is felt and apprehended, even when not made plain through the ordinary channels ; but I believe it is going to play a much greater part in the progress that we foresee than is usually expected of it. That is the case even now ; and eventually it is likely to lead to actions and sacrifices and renunciations that are not at present dreamed of. When we begin to understand how much we owe to the work of others in the past—often men quite unknown to us personally, and living in distant lands—it does not seem to me to demand any excessive hopefulness to think it probable that an increasing number of us will grow out of the wretched isolation in which we now pursue what we regard as our interests, and will see a wider horizon.

For example : what really sensitive person would not feel uncomfortable at the thought, which many thousands of us ought to have, that his own comforts in life were provided by workers who lacked all such comforts themselves ? The present social system, as between man and man, would be impossible if there were real sensibility. It is only because, ethically regarded, we have hides of walruses that we can go on as we do.

So, likewise, between nation and nation ; the very thought of the savagery which poets

celebrate as "war" would be an absurdity to a refined race. We should see, in what we call an "Empire," lands stolen, yes actually stolen, from less powerful races in the past, and held for purposes of revenue and profit, and a convenient dumping-ground for our idlers and younger sons, as sportsmen, judges, and rulers in various forms, at the expense of the territories annexed. It is always the subjugated who pay!

Of the animals one is almost afraid to speak, so great is the wakening that has to come. It is only because Man is himself in such a savage state that he can treat his non-human kinsmen as he does, hunting and eating them as if they were mere commodities created for his pleasure, and I think the worst part of the whole business is that he is himself so unaware of the situation. If he ever develops a finer sense, as I believe he will do, given a sufficiency of centuries, he will long have left behind him the memory of hunting a fox, or of roasting an ox,* and of a number of other beastly practices the story of which even now causes a few of us to shudder.

* This very day (August 21st, 1934) the newspapers contain a report of an Ox roasted in public at a holiday centre, and to show how humour is as lacking in these savages as sensibility—for the sake of a hospital!

CHAPTER XVI

CIVILISATION : A PHRASE

*"A strange lot this, to be dropped down in a world of barbarians—
Men who see clearly enough the barbarity of all ages except
their own." (ERNEST CROSBY.)*

It is generally assumed that we are living in a very late age, and in a state of advanced civilisation. For instance, the British Broadcasting Corporation has organised talks on "Science and Civilisation," as if the two were almost necessarily contemporaneous; and our civilisation, or what goes under the name, has even been regarded by a certain school of thought as excessive, as when Edward Carpenter gave to a book of his the title, not wholly humorous, of *Civilisation, its Cause and Cure*.

Quite recently there appeared in the Press a report that four young men had become so "tired of the cares of civilisation" that they were leaving England for a while to go shark-hunting in the Caribbean Sea; and it must be agreed that in such a recreation as the butchery and dismemberment of sharks the cares of

civilisation are not likely to be very burdensome.

But the question still presents itself—*are we living in a very late and civilised age?* The answer must, of course, depend on certain definitions, certain comparisons. The world, as scientists tell us, has already lasted for many ages ; and if we choose to describe the present age as among the later and civilised ones, and to define civilisation as the mere living in houses and cities rather than in the wilds, we are quite free to do so. It is a manner of speaking. We are informed, for instance, in a popular Encyclopædia, that civilisation is “a general term to designate the condition of the more advanced nations, as contrasted with those that are looked upon as barbarians or savages” ; and that is a definition which is likely to give full satisfaction—to the more advanced nations.

But, to thinkers who look further ahead, and who include ethics in their survey, a doubt must present itself, whether the term “civilisation” is not too flattering to be applied to the present gross conditions under which men live, and whether ages have not still to pass before a real civilisation can be attained. If we are told by the scientists that this earth has existed for vast periods, do they not also tell us that it may continue for as many more ? And is it not

reasonable to suppose that there may yet be future changes as remarkable as the past ones, and that to later generations *our* ethics may appear quite as barbarous as those of our ancestors do to us ?

This, to me, seems the more rational view, and it certainly is the more encouraging one ; for if present conditions—those we have seen and shuddered at—were inseparable from civilisation, we might well incline to despair ; but if we are found to be living (as I think) in a still primitive period of savagery and barbarism, hope in the far future need not wholly be abandoned.

It looks, indeed, as if the ingenuity of mechanical invention were at present somewhat outstripping man’s ethical and intellectual wisdom. To race at frantic speed by road or air, or to hear words uttered in remote parts of the world, are powers of themselves of small value to humankind. One need not doubt that a time will come when the motor car and the aeroplane will prove a real blessing ; as yet, their chief result seems to be that they enable vast numbers of idle persons to disport themselves dangerously ; and even the telephone, as now used, often reminds one of Thoreau’s remark on the invention of the telegraph, that probably the first news to come across would be that some princess had the whooping-cough.

The worth of words is not enhanced by their having been transmitted from afar.

There are so many forms of "Discovery," so many lines along which "progress" must be made, if the world is ever to be the happier and wiser for them; and when we read the daily tale of collisions on the high-roads, or how yet another aeronaut is planning to fly to the Cape in shorter time than his predecessors, it is difficult not to fear that precious labour is being wasted. Is this "civilisation"? We hear of a search by scientists for the remains of "primitive man." A few more centuries, and antiquarians may be quarrying in wonder for us!

Can an age which tolerates wars be held to be other than barbarous? And with a civilisation yet to come, may we not confidently trust that war will then be ruled impossible? Nor wars only; for equally intolerable would be the unjust social conditions which permit one class to exploit and dominate another, and the morality which connives at the cruel ill-usage of the non-human tribes. Blood sports and vivisection are practices utterly incompatible with a civilised age; nor, when the subject is fully considered, is flesh-eating any less so, for it is in fact a form of cannibalism—nothing else. As Herman Melville wrote long ago in his *Moby Dick*:

"Go to the meat market of a Saturday night, and see the crowds of live bipeds staring up at the long rows of dead quadrupeds. Does not that sight take a tooth out of the cannibal's jaw? Cannibals? Who is not a cannibal? I tell you it will be more tolerable for the Fejee that salted down a lean missionary in his cellar against a coming famine—it will be more tolerable for that provident Fejee, I say, in the day of judgment, than for thee, civilised and enlightened gourmand, who nailest geese to the ground and feastest on their bloated livers in thy *pâté de foie gras*."

Can that land be deemed a civilised one, in which thousands of persons will watch the roasting of an ox, in the main street of a town, and compete for "the first slice"? Of course not; and indeed Christmas itself, a festival supposed to be sacred, is yearly disgraced by scenes that savour rather of savagery and heathenism.

For all which reasons I cannot but smile at the idea of those four young men—themselves strapping young barbarians no doubt—who were tired of the cares of civilisation some centuries, at the least, before such cares could truly have been known. The problem that seems rather to present itself is whether they, and their like, will ever tire of the amusements of barbarism, and not of shark-hunting only, but of the numberless kindred practices on which so many respectable persons spend their energies and their time. I must not venture to hope that a single generation, still less a

single lifetime, will suffice to make any visible diminution in a number of our doings which cannot be classed as civilised ; but I do console myself in the belief that in a long succession of ages there will be a change for the better, and that eventually something resembling a civilisation will arrive. At any rate there is comfort in the thought that *this*, our present condition, is very far from being a civilised one.

It was truth that Ernest Crosby spoke when he wrote the words that are prefixed to this chapter, and added :

"And who, strangest of all, are absolutely ignorant of the fact that future generations will consider them just as barbarous as their predecessors.

It is a curious destiny indeed to be planted in the midst of such a people."

Curious, beyond doubt. Yet it is in the midst of such a people, reader, that you and I are now planted.

We arrive, then, at exactly the same conclusion as that of Howard Moore in his *The Whole World Kin*, that, since Darwin established the unity of life, the attitude of a civilised people must be that of "universal gentleness and humanity."

Another word that is much in vogue, and received with superstitious respect, is "scientific" ; there is hardly any abuse that cannot be covered by it. Name a man

"scientist," and he is credited with every distinction, even if, as sometimes is the case, he is both stupid and cruel. What could be more foolish than a remark made in a presidential address at one of the British Association's sections (1934), that in five hundred years' time all study of the Classics will probably have ceased, but Science will never decline from its high position ? Yet this nonsense was quite solemnly reported in the newspapers. Homer, Virgil, and Lucretius, it seems, are to disappear in order to make room for the professors !

Perhaps the word "gentleman" is as instructive as any to those who ponder certain odd features of our "civilisation." In itself it is so entirely beautiful ; but to us, nowadays, it means in many cases an idler who lives on the labour of others—one who dresses, and hunts, and shoots—and with it I would link another term, "gentry," which has been greatly debased in modern life. There used to be a story at Eton, of how, when the bell rang in one of the big houses for the evening devotions which all the inmates had to attend, a servant was heard exclaiming with a weary sigh, "Oh, why do Gentry have Prayers ?" The assumed connection between gentility and piety is worth noting !

For "pious," like "gentle," is in itself a

very beautiful word, and in its old classical sense, which meant a fulfilment of all natural duties to one's kith and kin, one's fellow-beings here on earth, as different as possible from what it has been transformed into by our gospellers. A man who, in these days, spoke of deriving pleasure from the thought of his own piety would necessarily be deemed a dissembler : yet in the mouth of the Latin poet, Catullus, such a claim sounds quite natural and unaffected : it is a joy to him to remember how, in his past life, he has been " pious." * In like manner, according to Leigh Hunt, the leading feature of Shelley's character was a natural piety : " he was pious towards nature, towards his friends, towards the whole human race, towards the meanest insect of the forest." Contrast *that* sort of piety with what our civilisation presents to us !

It may be asked, perhaps, whether any importance attaches to mere names. Yes ; names are most important : and one which inspires a sense of self-content, as " civilisation " does—a wrongful assurance that we have escaped from the rudeness and barbarity of previous generations—is a very serious obstacle to progress. The belief that we are now a civilised race is used to great purpose by

* *Si qua recordanti benefacta priora voluptas
Est homini, cum se cogitat esse pium.*

the supporters of the various savage practices to which I have alluded, and will continue to be so used until reformers themselves express their feelings in clearer terms. For that reason I have given this chapter the title it bears, " Civilisation : a Phrase," because it seems to me that " phrase " is exactly the right word. Not fraud, but phrase. To talk of our life as " civilised " may perhaps be allowable when we are directly contrasting it with the manners and morals of prehistoric man ; but it really is not so if a humane and decent mode of living comes within the range of our thought.

It is of a poet I prefer to speak, because I regard poetry as the highest expression of feeling, and it seems simpler and more effective to take one writer than several as an example of how the thought of a later age may be largely anticipated in our own. I have chosen Shelley, because to me he has been pre-eminently a guide and companion, whose life and character have meant more than those of any other mortal of whom I have read.

One unmistakable tribute to Shelley's wisdom I find in the fact that his writings have incurred the wrath of so many bigots, and prigs, and opponents, in some form or other, of the humane faith which he championed. His position in the very front rank of English poets has long been assured; yet such is the hatred aroused by the greatness of his example that the Vatican organ, the *Osservatore Romano*, actually felt impelled in recent years to protest against the continued interest in him. "Poetry would have lost little," it thought, "and we should have been spared much scandal, if such a man had never been born." *

It was Shelley, our chief lyrical singer, writer of poetry unmatched by any but that of one or two other supreme artists, who beyond comparison was the poet-pioneer of our humanitarian creed. There are poets who are justly

* September, 1931.

CHAPTER XVII

ONE WHO UNDERSTOOD

"Summer was dead and Autumn was expiring,
And infant Winter laughed upon the land
All cloudlessly and cold, when I, desiring
More in this world than any understand." . . .

(SHELLEY.)

It is my belief that the philosophers and poets who have made Kinship their theme are far more worthy of our gratitude than any of the religionists or scientists to whom such respect is shown; for it is mainly by them that the Understanding of which I have spoken has been brought, however partially, to our knowledge. (To Schopenhauer, for instance, the thanks of all humane persons are due.) It is, of course, impossible for a mortal to outstrip his own age, and fully to anticipate the temper and conditions of a future time; but as there are sometimes prophets of a coming era, so are there pioneers, and it has occurred to me that the meaning I wish to convey would be best illustrated by a personal example of one who himself held and practised this creed of kinship of which I speak.

praised for their melody, mere melody perhaps like that of Swinburne, others for the message that they bring us, as in the verses of Browning, but the number of those who earn the double praise, who convey a great truth in a great song, is small indeed, and it is among those few that Shelley stands.

Nor is it of poets only that I speak ; for who else, among our poetical thinkers, understood, as he did, the great truth ? Richard Jefferies, for instance, in *The Story of my Heart*, wrote many beautiful things ; but looking back now to this book, published in the 'eighties, one must feel that it shows only a partial apprehension of the essential facts. Shelley saw them much clearer.

And for religious feeling ! Remarking that the greatest lack of it is to be seen not among freethinkers but the professedly devout, Leigh Hunt thus wrote of Shelley : " He assented warmly to an opinion which I expressed in the cathedral at Pisa, while the organ was playing, that a truly divine religion might yet be established if charity were made the principle of it." In like manner Trelawny said of him : " There was the very best of men, and he was treated as the very worst."

Shelley's belief in two conflicting Powers, the good and the evil, is deserving of much more attention than it has received. It is in his *Prometheus Unbound* that we find the

prophet as well as the singer ; for Prometheus stands as the champion of suffering Humanity, whose liberation is the theme of the poem. Witness the concluding stanza, in which the religion of a future age is surely and beautifully set forth :

" To suffer woes which Hope thinks infinite ;
To forgive wrongs darker than death or night ;
To defy Power, which seems omnipotent ;
To love and bear ; to hope, till Hope creates
From its own wreck the thing it contemplates ;
Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent—
This, like thy glory, Titan, is to be
Good, great, and joyous, beautiful and free ;
This is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and Victory."

It will be noted that the " victory " which is the final word of Shelley's great poem, is a peaceful and bloodless one ; there is indeed no truth on which he more frequently and strongly insists than the wickedness of vengeance. " I have avoided," he says, in preface to *Laon and Cythna*, " all flattery to those violent and malignant passions which are ever on the watch to mingle with and to alloy the most beneficial innovations." The stanzas in his *Masque of Anarchy*, in which he develops his doctrine of non-resistance, are well known, and curiously anticipate certain features in the teaching of Tolstoy.

It would have been difficult on social

questions to anticipate later judgment more clearly than Shelley did. "I put the thing," he said, "in its simplest and most intelligible shape. The labourer, he that tills the ground and manufactures cloth, is the man who has to provide, out of what he would bring home to his wife and children, for the luxuries and comforts of the wealthy." That is the central fact, the fact on which a nation's ethics should be based, and for that very reason it is evaded with all the skill and pertinacity that Riches can command.

Of war he wrote that it is "a kind of superstition ; the parade of arms and badges corrupts the imagination of men. . . . War, waged from whatever motive, extinguishes the sentiment of reason and justice in the mind." Contrast those wise words, taken from his *Philosophical View of Reform*, with the shocking nonsense that has been written by later poets such as Tennyson ; the continuous glorifying of the soldier, in books by historians, and in pictures by artists, who thus, without any ill-intention, but with entire lack of wisdom, create a widespread belief that there is something especially splendid in war.

I would say a few words, before concluding, on Shelley's attitude towards the lower animals —a very important part of any estimate of humanitarian sympathies. There is nothing in

him more delightful than the utter absence of the "superior person" (would that the same could be said of many of his critics !), both as regards his human and non-human fellow-beings. Whenever he speaks of animals, it is with an instinctive, childlike, and perfectly natural sense of kinship and brotherhood. Thus in *Alastor*, in the invocation of Nature, we find him saying :

" If no bright bird, insect, or gentle beast
I consciously have injured, but still loved
And cherished these my kindred."

My kindred ! Perhaps no feature of his philosophy has been more often ridiculed than his vegetarianism ; yet here, too, he gave proof not only of personal humaneness but of practical foresight, for food-reform is now widely recognised as a necessary part of any well-considered scheme for humanising our relation toward the animals, and everyone who deals with the question of animals' rights is compelled to take some note of it. Alone among the poets of his generation, he was unwilling to sentimentalise about the beauty of kindness to animals, and at the same time "to slay the lamb that looks him in the face," or, what is no less immoral, to devolve that unpleasant process on another person.

It would be impossible to sum up more

THE CREED OF KINSHIP

gloriously, in a single line, the essence of piety, of human goodness, than in Shelley's words :

"To live as if to love and live were one."

And it was because he himself came so near to doing so that we feel the perfect appropriateness of the inscription, "cor cordium," heart of hearts, that was placed on his tombstone. Only when there are everywhere hearts like Shelley's will this world become a happy place to live in ; and more centuries, it is to be feared, will have to go by before mankind can hope to attain to *that*. But as his own Prometheus says of the ages yet to come :

"Perchance no thought can count them, yet they pass."

THE END

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