

Shall we Vivisect?

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I am opposed to Vivisection because it is one of the forms of cruelty.

Nearly thirty years ago I gave up blood sports, although the fascination of shooting and fishing were strong upon me and the arguments of the sportsman were ready to my tongue.



I gave it up because of the cruelty which I found was inseparably attached to it, and which left

behind at eventide a taste of bitterness, however glorious the day itself had been.

Nearly thirty years ago I gave up flesh eating, although the love of the broth of dead things was strong upon me, and though the plausible plea that animals were "sent" for man's use had grown up with me from childhood.

I gave up flesh eating because I found that butchery could not be separated from cruelty, and that however much the well seasoned dish stimulated my palate, the after taste of a pathetic sadness spoiled the memory of it, and compelled me to become Fruitarian.

And so with Vivisection. It is inseparably connected with cruelty and with sufferings which need no exaggeration. They go home to the heart, and refuse to be quieted however much the head may be plied with argument or the intellect hardened by logic.

It is often replied that we who are opposed to cruelty are flying in the face of Providence.

"Is not Providence," they ask, "red in tooth and poisonous in fang? Do not the strong ever prey on the weak? Are not raven and cunning and cruelty and slaughter the very foundations on which Nature is built, from the lowest rung of life's ladder? Why, then, should man presume to set up an unnatural standard of Gentleness and Humaneness and Mercy towards the weak and suffering?"

The answer is a simple one, but like many another simple truth, it is often overlooked by those whose ears hear not and whose eyes do not see.

It is true that cruelty and rapine and desolation and devilry are carved deeply into the walls of the quarry from whence we were digged.

It is true that the pathway we have trodden is strewn with carcasses and blackened with deeds of shame and poisoned with a desolating curse, but this is *all behind us*, and only to those who, like Lot's wife, look back at the Sodom from which they have been delivered is there this picture of blood and destruction.

The pathway ahead is tinged with the halo of a golden sunshine and aureoled with the blessings of Peace.

From Enmity we have come, to Amity are our footsteps leading. From the law of "might is right" are we being slowly freed, and into the freedom of the comradeship of all sentient creation are we being ushered.

From the Egyptian land of Hate and Cruelty and idols and fleshpots has the human race begun its historic journey towards the Canaan land of Love and gentleness and a divine concept of fatherhood and a sustenance of manna and milk and honey and cornfields and vineyards and oliveyards.

If I read the book of Nature aright, I admit only too sorrowfully that the lower rungs of life's ladder are splashed with gore and gashed with the struggles of agony; but I see that it is *only* the lower rungs, and that higher up the call of evolution is ever towards the humane and the compassionate and the self-sacrificing.

The pathway of life is from Sadness towards Gladness, and blessed are they who take up their parable and their burden to help on the grand march of the Ages.

Vivisection, therefore, since it tends to perpetuate grievous pain, is *retrogressive*, and not progressive, and is on this ground to be condemned.

If, however, Vivisection humbly admits that it is a dreadful evil, and proclaims in all reverence that it is being done, like many other dreadful things, under necessity, as a temporary expedient, and that it will only too gladly welcome any method to render itself unnecessary, it is bound to show three things.

It is bound to show (1) that Vivisection produces important benefits to the human race; (2) that it does not pay too great a price for these benefits; and (3) that these benefits could not have been obtained by any other means.

I cannot attempt to analyse in any detail these immense and important questions; suffice it if I suggest a leading thought or two which will show why the most convinced apologist of Vivisection should pause before he condemns the Humanitarians as unscientific or faddist.

Has the human race gained beneficial knowledge by means of vivisection.

I am bound to confess that the claim may be advanced that it has, just in the same way that it may be claimed that the English race has become possessed of many lands by bloody wars and treacheries, and deeds of shame.

It is, however, very easy to make claims which cannot be substantiated, and when it is dogmatically stated that rabies has been exterminated, diphtheria rendered harmless, enteric fever deprived of its danger, the circulation of the blood discovered, and brain surgery made an exact craft by means of vivisection, I cannot help feeling that the arrogance of dogma which so often blinded the Roman Church to the importance of facts, is beginning to lay its blighting hand upon the high priests of physiological science.

Vivisection has been done in connection with all the discoveries in these realms of anatomy and medicine and surgery, and because of this it is arrogantly claimed that the discovery was due to the Vivisection.

This is not the normal way in which discoveries are actually made. They usually result from the acute grasp, in a highly sensitive mind, of the result of many observations made by patient and painstaking watchers, or of patent facts which are known to all, but which have hitherto never been sensitively and actually observed in the particular way in which the discoverer sensitively and actually observes them.

When anyone claims that such and such a discovery is due to Vivisection, in a high percentage of cases you may be assured that he is dogmatizing without knowledge, and that in a considerable percentage he is dogmatizing without facts—and such dogmas are closely akin to falsehoods.

But in the residue of cases where beneficial knowledge has been acquired as the result of Vivisection, we are bound to ask the second question.

"Have we paid too dearly for our bargain?"

It is not enough for a physiologist to come triumphantly into our midst and to proclaim, "Lo, these and these are the treasures I bring!" We are bound to reply, "Show to us the whole balance sheet." It is only cooking accounts to bring forward the *Credit* side of the ledger. Before we can judge rightly we must see the *Debit* side also.

We can imagine many an Esau coming forth with steaming pottage and crying aloud in his sensual joy, "Behold! behold! here is savoury meat which I have gotten. Food for the hungry. Strength for the failing. Comfort for the longing stomach. Have I not done well? Am not I a World's benefactor in that I am perpetuating a virile race?"

But behind all this profession of good things obtained, comes the ominous refrain, "But Esau, thou hast lost thy birthright and hast exchanged imperishable things of glory for the paltry luxury of a passing meal."

Is it not true, too, that the researches of vivisection are made by tampering with the most sacred of human birthrights—the right to be humane—I had almost said the right to become divine, in that Mercy and Self-sacrifice are the attributes of divinity!

Can we deliberately take a sentient animal and slowly bake it to death in order to discover some thermal scale of cell endurance, without destroying some of the angel within us?

Can we take that wonderful masterpiece of all ages, the picture of motherhood, and callously smudge out the most pathetic tints from it in order to draw black lines and interpolate gross cyphers, without blunting our best artistic sense?

And yet men have actually taken a mother dog and cut off her teats one by one and put the hungry pups to the groaning dam, and have sat by with pencil and paper to jot down facts about maternal secretions and inherited instincts!

Can anyone answer whether vivisection such as this drew the man nearer to the Devil or to God?

I could linger long upon this dread field, but I dare not. I can only recall with a haunting memory of horror how for one long week, when in my student days, I was doing physiology, I heard the recurrent, monotonous, reiterant cry of a cat in the adjacent room—a cry which went on the whole of the hour I was at work, and was going on just the same when I began my work again the next day, and again the next day, sadly weakening, but still the same sad, slowly-failing plaintive cry of pain and misery; and I thought of the long, long nights and the long, long days ere sister Death, the kindly one, came and laid the hand of peace upon this poor mortal.

It was *but* one, but it *was* one; and it came home to me and told me what printed words can never tell, of the misery which goes on in the dark places of scientific research.

And again I ask myself whether it is better to gain the

whole world of Knowledge and to lose the soul of the race which is struggling towards God. Is it not better for the human race, decimated by disease, to enter by the narrow gate which leads to the good things of glory, than to be freed from pain and to be cast headlong into the abyss of selfishness and into the chasm of callous disregard of all that is humane and sanctified by divine sentiment?

And if for a moment I might digress here, I would point out that those very diseases which men are torturing the animal world to try to cure, are largely produced by a previous torture of the animal world to produce an unnatural, unwholesome, blood-stained and pain-smirched food.

And thus the vicious circle goes round. We begin by inflicting pain and agony on animals in order to please our palate—the acme of selfish pleasure—Nature steps in and demands the penalty. The penalty of pain wantonly *inflicted* is pain to be *endured*, and so we get the dread form of painful Disease stalking through the land.

Instead of learning that the modern dead—like the 10,000 who died at Kibroth Hataavel—are killed because of their wanton disregard of the beautiful food that is given to them, and because of their demand for the flesh pots of Egypt and the quails of the desert, the seekers after Health go deeper into the morass of the incantations of pain.

"The animals are sent to be eaten" they cry, "and if their dead bodies bring disease, they are also sent for us to experiment upon in order that we may escape from this disease."

I have never yet met a humanitarian fruitarian who is a vivisector! And why? Because those who have grasped the true meaning of humaneness have also learned that advancing Nature teaches the secrets of Health as well as the gospel of Goodness.

It is not for nothing that the inspired writer of the Book of the Revelation foresaw that in the time to come the fruits of the twelve trees would be the food of the blessed, and the leaves thereof would be for the healing of the Nations, and that then there would be "no more pain."

There will be no slaughter-houses in Heaven, and because of this there will be no vivisection laboratories there. And because of all these things "there will be no more pain."

The pathway to Health does not lie through the charnel house, and the abattoir, and the vivisection trough, but in conscious obedience to the humanest and best within.

Fruits, not meat extracts; vital juices of plants, not broths of dead things; living grains, not decaying game, are the best sustenance for Man in health, the best remedies for Man in sickness, and the best preventives of disease.

The right adoption of a scientific Fruitarian dietary would at one stroke do away with the very need for the greater part of the vivisection which is asked for.

And lastly, and even still more urgently, are we bound to ask, "Is Vivisection the *only* way by which these discoveries could have been made?"

And again, I for one am bound to answer that in

my opinion a large proportion of vivisectional experiments are as needless as they are cruel, and that therefore until they are condemned, and until the physiologists separate themselves absolutely and entirely from any fellowship with such things, they have no claim to be heard even in defence of those experiments which are presumably necessary.

We have been regaled of late years with wonderful stories by the scientific experimenters of the effect of 'shock,' but to what end I cannot yet understand.

If we want to know the effect of shock upon the human body, why go and torture some poor innocent dog and watch him writhe in agony?

Are there not enough crushed hands and feet and arms and legs brought into every great Hospital in London every day of the week, which could be observed and tabulated, without adding to the wretched misery of the world by deliberately crushing dogs' paws in order to observe the effect on their heart.

It were better to go upon the battlefield, where men and horses are being shot by bullet, splintered by shell and crushed and wounded in a thousand ways, and to make successful observations there upon a grand scale, which would eliminate the errors of narrower observations, than to spend a quiet post prandial hour with a pipe while a dog or a cat is being crushed and his dying moments are comfortably watched and his agonized writhings are being pleasantly counted.

For those who wish to study the effects of shock on the human system there is no need to add to the sum total of animal misery by inflicting more miserable tortures—the world is only too full of accidents and crushings and bruising and woundings and falls and fractures and dislocations, and these can be studied first hand on men.

From this one illustration I would point out how unnecessary are many of the major vivisections so painfully carried out, so painstakingly reported and so widely approved.

Let those who will, carry on the parable and show how in other fields of research the arm-chair physiologist is studying his own comfort and ease when he says that his experiments are necessary.

It can be shown by patient research that the world is full of every sort of material for the observant mind to learn from, and that for those who will hold before themselves the diviner attitude of self-sacrifice there is no lack of opportunity or of cases, without manufacturing pain *ad hoc*.

May I, in conclusion, emphasize one great motto that should guide us in our researches for the welfare of suffering humanity, and in all our observations on pain and disease. It is this maxim:

"Learn while healing, but do not torture to learn."

Let the first aim be always and everywhere to heal disease, to cure the suffering, and to alleviate those in pain, and during our ministrations of healing we shall find infinite opportunities of observing causes and effects, and of discovering new methods of cure. And the science of medicine and her handmaids of chemistry, of bacteriology, of physiology and of anatomy shall ever bless, and, in blessing, shall also be blessed.

Josiah Oldfield.

This article will be published at once in booklet form, with an Appendix of Medical Opinions against the Practice of Vivisection. Price One Penny.

Glimpses of Truth.

All spiritual truth is waiting to become yours as fast as you will make room for it.

You cannot come into conscious communication with angelic beings until yourself are fitted to receive them.

The religion that has nothing to give, gives promissory notes, payable after death.

The world is dependent upon each one of us for some of its light.

If I allow anything and everything to control my being, I am then like a house given over to tramps.

Wisdom transforms the wrong with its superior harmony. Ignorance fights it and thereby increases it.

People who entertain their friends with fine dinners, etc., often give them invisible mental food that would be too corrupt for a buzzard to eat, if it were materialized.

True friendship is of the mind and heart, and does not consist of a mask of pretty make-believe externals.

You cannot cling to the soul-dwarfing habits of thought, feeling and action of the old life, and at the same time receive the health, happiness and prosperity of the New Life.

It is well to be an unconscious instrument for the transmission of the wisdom of the spirit spheres to Earth, but it is far better to be a conscious giver of the Wisdom earned by your own soul.

The harder the transgressor makes his own way, the more he blames others. He is on the road of reformation when he ceases to blame others, and realizes his own responsibility for his condition.

The man of to-day is like a child—he wants joy, peace, happiness, but clings with both hands to that which can only bring him discord, unrest and dissatisfaction.

A man becomes rich *materially*, by getting mankind to work for him. He earns *spiritual* wealth by working for humanity.

When an animal attacks a man he is called a "savage brute." When a man attacks an inoffensive animal he is called a "sportsman." But a "savage brute," called by any other name, is still a "savage brute."

Is it worth while—this falsifying and cheating and strife and discord for a few years (important years, too) of life in the flesh body, and living, eating, sleeping, acting and thinking like an animal? If Love is the "open sesame" to Heaven, is it not of the utmost urgency that we cultivate it and value it as the "pearl of great price"?

Lucy A. Malloy.