

ADDRESS OF THE COMMITTEE

APPOINTED BY THE

PENNSYLVANIA SOCIETY,

FOR THE

PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS.

HELD MAY 6, 1867.

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PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS.

*Address of the Committee appointed at a Meeting of Citizens,
held May 6, 1867, on the subject of "Prevention of Cruelty
to Animals."*

THE Committee, to whom has been assigned the preparation of an Address to be submitted to the members of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, deem it unnecessary to record their sense of the obligations imposed on man for the control and protection of those creatures, over all of whom it is declared in Holy Writ God has given him dominion and power. At the same time the Committee are not insensible of the many difficulties they will have to encounter in presenting to the Society such an Address as will satisfy the emergency, and shield themselves from criticism, and the inevitable sarcasm of a large number of their fellow-citizens. But the Committee feel the importance of the subject, and, in the performance of their duty, hope to be sustained by all good men, who love mercy, deal justly, and live in peace with their fellow-men.

It will be admitted that much cruelty exists, thoughtlessly, it may be, among a large class of our citizens, which, from early youth, has been so familiarized by constant practice, that the most revolting scenes of inhumanity are daily presented in our streets, and at our very doors, without provoking our censure, or even exciting our special wonder; and this too, in a city of brotherly love, where the benefits of education, and the benign influence of Christianity are as widely disseminated as in any other

city of its population in the world; to this class of people the Committee would earnestly present a few painful truths, well known to us all, and which every principle of justice, humanity and religion, cry aloud for redress and reform.

If there be any one principle more universally established in the minds of men than another, it is the conviction that habitual cruelty to animals predisposes us to acts of cruelty towards our own species; and if there were no other incentive to induce us to cultivate a feeling of kindness and benevolence to all the inferior creatures around us, this fact alone ought to be a sufficient reason why we should abstain from every species of cruelty, and resist, by every means in our power, a vice so insidious and brutal. The man who cultivates a humanity for animals, cannot, in the nature of things, practice inhumanity towards those whom God has made his equals; and as his religion teaches him to do good even to those who despitefully use and persecute him, so, upon the same divine principle, we should not only do good to inferior animals, but study to promote and enlarge the capacities which the Creator has given to the most insignificant of his creatures, for their enjoyment and happiness. We mean operative humanity, which shows itself in acts of kindness, and which exerts itself not only in rescuing animals from suffering and pain, but labors to improve their best estate, and to make them more happy and contented; humanity like this cannot fail to improve the heart and make us more humane towards mankind.

When, in the creation of the world, God gave to man dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, He did not divest man of responsibility in the treatment and usage of those He put under him; on the contrary, He made him the guardian of His sacred trust, and will

hold him accountable for their ill-usage and abuse. This is plain, from the fact that all animals are endued with certain instincts of pleasure and pain. And there is abundant provision made, in every sphere of animal life, for the gratification of their several senses; and if God has given to animals such faculties, it is clear that He wills their enjoyment and happiness; and all acts on the part of man to carry out this intention, must be agreeable to Him, and in accordance with His divine purpose and will. That this argument is correct, the Committee have many proofs in Holy Scripture, which will appear as we progress in a further examination of the subject.

Let us now turn our attention to some of the more glaring cruelties that are daily practised, to a greater or less degree, in all our large cities, and not unfrequently in the rural districts of our Christian land. We would not advise any sensitive or humane person to trust himself within the bloody walls of one of the slaughter-houses in this city, and witness the constant and agonizing groans, and dying struggles of hundreds of poor animals collected there for the supply of our daily wants in the article of food. The slaughter of these animals is necessary for our subsistence, but it should be tempered with mercy and with as little suffering as possible. The butcher who would crowd large numbers of animals together in small pens, and subject them to the fearful sight of beholding others of their kind slaughtered before their eyes, and often stained with their blood, and permit his inhuman and cruel boys in unbridled rage and impatience to maltreat with sticks and clubs unoffending animals about to be slaughtered, is unworthy of the title of a man, and should be classed among the meanest of the brute creation. The Committee would remind such persons, that God in His tender mercy, has sent forth his edict against such cruelty, for He says, in Exodus xxiii. 19 v.: "Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's

milk," and again in Leviticus xxii. 26, 27, 28 v. : The Lord spake unto Moses, saying: "When a bullock, or a sheep, or a goat is brought forth, then it shall be seven days under the dam, and from the eighth day and thenceforth, it shall be accepted for an offering made by fire unto the Lord, and whether it be cow or ewe, ye shall not kill it and her young both in one day." Could any command be more emphatic in showing God's respect for the feelings of animals than both these texts? How would we feel, and what anguish would be occasioned, if by any process of law or wickedness of man, parents and children, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, were brought forth to die in the presence of each other, with their agonizing cries ringing in their ears, and their hearts swelling within them as they cast their eyes upon the suffering objects of their love and affection. And so God feels for these poor animals, and forbids their sacrifice in the presence of each other. The Committee, in turning away from the slaughter-house with all its heart-rending scenes of cruelty and blood, would direct the attention of the society to the treatment and ill-usage of that noble animal—the horse. How often do we witness acts of cruelty practised upon him by brutal and drunken drivers, that shock the sensibilities and excite the warmest sympathies of our nature. There is scarcely a day in our walks through the busy and crowded streets of our city, that this fact is not brought home to our senses, and if there be any one who doubts this assertion, the Committee would invite him to a walk of a few hours in Broad, Market, and Willow Streets, where an opportunity would be afforded him of forming his own opinion. Of all the domestic animals that God has put under our care, the horse is undoubtedly the most valuable and useful. Willing, patient, and enduring, he draws his burthen from day to day, often disproportionate to his physical ability, yet faithful and uncomplaining he labors on even

unto death. And what reward hath he meeted out to him for all the labor that he doeth under the sun? In many cases, a ruffian's whip unmercifully laid on without provocation, scanty and unwholesome food, and a bare handfull of straw for a bed to rest his weary limbs. And this is not all of man's ingratitude to this noblest of animals; he is permitted to suffer all day without water, to chafe and gall himself with gear and harness unfitted to his make, and shamefully driven with a lacerated body to work again; when each succeeding day drags off the scabs of his festering sores and eats deeper into his flesh, "Oh, shame, where is thy blush!" Presidents and Directors of Rail Roads, Transportation Companies, and other corporations, where the services of the horse and mule are brought into requisition, and who receive the profits of their labor, God will hold responsible as well as private individuals, for every act of cruelty their agents or servants may commit; and if they would escape His vengeance, they must apply the necessary remedy and rid our streets of all future occurrences of this disgusting and painful evil. To the rich and to the poor, to the young and to the old, who have the care and ownership of any of God's creatures, the Committee respectfully address these words of Holy Writ: "A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast, but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel": Prov. : xii., 10 v. Study then to emulate each other in acts of mercy and kindness to these dumb creatures, and know that God so regardeth the comfort and happiness of all his creatures, that He has said: "Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest, that thine ox and thine ass may rest, and the son of thy handmaid and the stranger may be refreshed." Exo. : xxiii. 12 v. Again, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn," Deut. : xxv. 4 v. We find in these commands ample evidence of the Almighty's care for animals, and while He

has invested us with sovereign power over them, it is clear that He never intended to leave them unnoticed to the tyranny and abuse of the thoughtless and unfeeling.

The Committee would call attention to another subject, which in their judgment demands consideration and reform. The poor dog that has no protection under our laws unless muzzled with iron during our summer months, is an object of commiseration and pity. In the hottest days of summer he wanders about our streets dejected and careworn, from the heavy and irritating muzzle that the law compels his reluctant owner to buckle about his head, his tongue parched and dry, and his panting frame speaking as plainly as suffering nature can well speak: "We are thirsty and can get no water;" soon a white froth, a necessary consequence of the absence of this essential of life, accumulates around his mouth, the boys seize the opportunity for a little sport, and cry out "Mad Dog;" the crowd join in the general alarm, and the poor animal is pursued with sticks and stones, and chased for miles through our streets, until at last some bold cavalier steps out of his domicile with rifle or pistol in hand, and sends a ball through his heart. What a commentary upon human benevolence and mercy does this sad picture present, and how doubly painful to every feeling heart, when we reflect, that the dog is man's most constant and untiring friend. Endowed by the Creator with instincts and feelings almost human, he endears himself by his many acts of devotion to his master: becomes his companion in his daily walks, and guards and protects him while he sleeps at night. The Committee would respectfully and earnestly recommend to the city authorities, some modification in the laws respecting the treatment of this injured and persecuted animal. Froth about the mouth is no evidence of a rabid condition, and it is a well-known fact, that dogs often in hot weather go mad for the want of water, and when so affected, skulk away

in some dark corner instead of running about the streets attacking and biting every thing that chance has thrown in their way. Provide at the corners of our streets or elsewhere, troughs of fresh water, where these poor creatures can quench their thirst and refresh their heated bodies, and the use of the muzzle will be no longer needed, and instances of Hydrophobia rarely if ever known among us.

The Committee might advert to many equally glaring instances of cruelty that come under our daily notice, but for the fear of extending their Address beyond the limits of an ordinary publication. Our market houses, and other places of living traffic, are full of instances of barbarism and cruelty, and deserve the censure and rebuke of every humane and good citizen. Let us all then unite in suppressing the pain and suffering we see around us. Let us call upon the teachers of schools, and request them to educate the rising generation upon principles of mercy and justice; to teach the thoughtless boy or girl that the "poor beetle that we tread upon, in corporeal suffering, feels a pang as great as when a giant dies." Let us appeal to our civil authorities and judiciary to assist the Society in punishing speedily, and without delay, all acts of cruelty that come within their jurisdiction. Let us petition the legislature to suppress, and, if necessary, to pass additional laws for the prevention of that beastly and revolting habit of cock-fighting, dog-baiting, and similar acts of cruelty; and to make it felony for any man to engage in that other more brutal and inhuman sport (if we may use the expression) of pugilistic contests, where men after God's own image are arrayed against each other in cold blood, and use the physical powers which the Creator has given them for higher and nobler purposes, to maim and cripple each other. Let us recommend to the Society to appoint agents or supervisors, whose office it shall be to inspect and inquire into the

modes of transportation of animals by public conveyance or otherwise, and the provision made for their shelter, food and drink. Let us also recommend the appointment of agents or supervisors, to inspect or to inquire into the modes adopted for the shelter, food and drink of animals at all seasons of the year, and the sanitary condition of the places where such animals are kept, when the public interest shall justify such inspection and inquiry. And lastly, let us circulate, by the press, all knowledge or information within our reach in regard to the harness, gearing, and vehicles, rendered necessary for the purposes of pleasure, agriculture, or commerce generally, and such as shall promote, not only the comfort but the efficiency of all animals thus employed.

With these remarks the Committee leave the subject in the hands of the Society, trusting in the mercy of an all-wise and beneficent Providence to aid their efforts in building up upon the eternal principles of justice and right, a feeling of benevolence and kindness among all our citizens towards every species of God's creation.

SAMUEL V. MERRICK, *Chairman.*

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