

THESIS

ORIGINS OF THE ANIMAL HUSBANDRY ETHIC

Submitted by

Jo Ann Hedleston

Philosophy Department

In partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the Degree of Master of Arts

Colorado State University

Fort Collins, Colorado

Summer 1998

HV  
4757  
.H44  
1998

COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

June 30, 1998

WE HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER OUR  
SUPERVISION BY JO ANN HEDLESTON ENTITLED ORIGINS OF THE  
ANIMAL HUSBANDRY ETHIC BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING IN PART  
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS.

Committee on Graduate Work

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Adviser

[REDACTED]

Department Head

COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

**ABSTRACT OF THESIS**  
**ORIGINS OF THE ANIMAL HUSBANDRY ETHIC**

This thesis gives a historical account of the ethical idea of kindness to animals that is part of the animal husbandry ethic as found in British and American culture. It deals in particular with the philosophy of Thomas Jefferson as the “author”, along with Adam Smith, of the American agrarian dream, with special emphasis on the influence of the Christian utilitarian ethic of Francis Hutcheson, a leader of the Scottish Enlightenment in mid-eighteenth century, whose idea of the moral sense influenced both of these men.

The modern idea of kindness to animals, or refraining from cruelty to animals, as part of good husbandry, comes from the social humanitarian movement in Britain during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The idea is transformed

from the ethic which states that we ought not be cruel to animals because it might in turn lead to cruel treatment of humans into a new ethic which claims we ought to be kind to animals because they are sensitive creatures with a value of their own beyond that of human use.

That transformation of the ethic occurs in part as a result of the rise of natural science which gives us a new conception of the anatomical similarities of animals to humans. The discussion about what animals are is highlighted by Descartes' theory of the beast machine in Europe in general and I look at the controversy in detail in England and France especially as the organized church struggles to integrate the new empirical science and the old religion of Christianity.

I make the claim that the humanitarian movement which produced the movement for reform in Britain was fueled by the ethical idea of the moral sense which first came to the public's attention through the popular writings of the Earl of Shaftesbury. These ethical ideas of the moral sense were refined and made palatable to ordinary Christians by the work of Francis Hutcheson and other natural theologians of the eighteenth century and written about extensively in the latter part of that century and the early part of the nineteenth in Britain.

I survey some relatively unknown (in current scholarship) propagandistic literature of the animal welfare movement in Britain in order to support the claim that it was through a revival of Old Testament texts regarding the kind treatment of animals that the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and others were able to bring about legislative change in England regarding the treatment of domestic animals in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

I also survey some current theological writings on the subject of Christian duty to animals in order to compare the basic ethical assumptions of both centuries' interpretations of the Biblical texts, and suggest that modern problems in animal welfare might still be addressed by these same Biblically based ethical formulas, enlightened by scientific knowledge about animals.

Jo Ann Hedleston  
Philosophy Department  
Colorado State University  
Fort Collins, CO 80523  
Summer, 1998

This work is dedicated to two of my grandfathers:

Rev. W.D. Hedleston, pastor and professor of  
philosophy, University of Mississippi

and his son

W.D. Hedleston Jr., engineer and farmer

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	
Defining the Ethic of Animal Husbandry . . . . .	1
Boundaries of the Historical Definition . . . . .	5
Part I	
Midgley's and Webster's Accounts of Our Human History in Community with Animals . . . . .	8
Thomas Jefferson and the Enlightenment Ideals that Founded a New Agrarian Economy . . . . .	11
Part II	
The Search for the Modern Ethic Regarding Animals in Europe . . . . .	27
Men and Animals in the Literature of the Middle Ages . . . . .	28
Experimental Science and Animal Soul . . . . .	31
Cartesianism and Empiricism in France . . . . .	32
The Question of Animal Soul in France . . . . .	34
Cartesianism and Empiricism in England . . . . .	41
Empirical Science, the Enlightenment and Religion	49
Natural Theology and the English Moralists, The Idea of a Benevolent Moral Sense . . . . .	54
The Earl of Shaftesbury . . . . .	55
Francis Hutcheson's Communitarian Ethics Applied to Animals . . . . .	57
David Hume and Adam Smith . . . . .	64

The English Clergy and the Movement Against Animal Cruelty . . . . .	.66
Reverend Granger . . . . .	.66
Humphrey Primatt . . . . .	.66
The Latitudinarians . . . . .	.67
De Levie's Thesis . . . . .	.69
Jeremy Bentham . . . . .	.71
Paley's Natural Theology . . . . .	.73
Paley's Influence on the Writers of Propaganda . . . .	.76
A Short Summation . . . . .	.80
Part III	
The Nineteenth Century Literature of Agriculture and Animal Welfare . . . . .	.81
William H. Drummond, An Essay from a Prominent Minister . . . . .	.82
William Youatt, Advice on Theology from a Veterinarian . . . . .	.88
Mrs. Charles Bray on What the Children Ought to Learn . . . . .	.106
A Short Summation . . . . .	.109
Part IV	
Modern Theology's View of the Origins of the Ethic in the Old and New Testaments . . . . .	.111
The Story of Creation Revisited . . . . .	.111
Linzey and the Theocentric Model . . . . .	.117
Dominion and Covenant as Redefined by the Christ of the New Testament . . . . .	.119
Process Theology: Relational Panentheism or God's Immanence in Nature as Divine Empathy . . . . .	.121
A Short Summary . . . . .	.123
Part V	
An Afterward and Suggestions for Further Study . . . . .	.125



# *Origins of the Animal Husbandry Ethic*

## **Introduction: Defining the Ethic of Husbandry**

The dictionary definitions of husbandry are as follows.

1. the cultivation and production of edible crops or of animals for food; agriculture; farming 2. the science of raising crops or food animals 3. careful or thrifty management; frugality, thrift or conservation. 4. the management of domestic affairs, or of resources generally.<sup>1</sup>

1. the care of a household 2. the control and judicious use of resources: conservation 3. the cultivation or production of plants and animals: agriculture 4. the scientific control and management of a branch of farming and especially of domestic animals (ME *housebondrie*)<sup>2</sup>

The verb, to husband, is defined as:

1. a: to manage prudently and economically b: to use sparingly: conserve<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Jess Stein, ed., The Random House Dictionary of the English Language (New York: Random House, 1967), p. 694.

<sup>2</sup> Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield, Massachusetts: G&C Merriam Company, 1979), p. 554.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

## 2

The definition of husband as a noun comes from the Middle English *husbanda*, meaning “the master of a house” or its “frugal manager” or “steward”, and the husbandman is defined as, “a specialist in a branch of farm husbandry” or “farmer”<sup>4</sup>.

Taking care of domesticated animals in a practical sense has traditionally involved looking out for their welfare, a word that in old Middle English is *welfaren* or “the state of doing well in respect to good fortune, happiness, well-being, or prosperity”<sup>5</sup>. The notion of promoting the animal’s welfare and prosperity comes out of the methodology of prudent management of the animal resource which is the property which belongs to the farmers’s household, and the idea of prudent management has a decidedly utilitarian foundation. The animal’s health and welfare insures the best possible consequence for the prosperity of the farmers household.

Within our Western tradition the farmer’s responsibility for his or her animal property is defined by the husbandry ethic. This ethic has been the guiding normative principle of western agriculture over the last few centuries and perhaps longer, and in general it is reflected in the definitions previously mentioned. My focus here is on the relationship of the husbandman to what I will call the non-human animal, sometimes non-human for short. As the story of the relationship unfolds I will also use the terms: beast, brute and creature as they seem appropriate in the literature under consideration. I will also be using traditional male terms like mankind, men or Englishmen because this is the language of the literature under consideration (from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and some time previous to that). I will be trying to identify, on an intuitive level, with that era when almost all of the scholars were male, so

---

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

I will be assuming the identity of the time period as much as possible.

The ethic governing the modern relationship between human and domesticated non-human animal is relatively simple. It is something “every farm-boy or girl knows”, according to Bernard Rollin (public lecture, 1989). Simply stated it is this: that if you take care of the animals in your household in a judicious manner, then they, in turn, will “take care” of you, in the sense of providing the goods and services required of them and for which purpose you are presumably raising and caring for them in the first place.

What this caring consists of is, on the one hand, a very scientific and practical matter involving the utilitarian aspect of the ethic, and, on the other hand, a more specifically moral issue having to do with the valuing of the non-human animal in a more intrinsic sense. Both aspects of the ethic would seem to serve a utilitarian purpose to some extent since the non-human animal is truly an economic product for the farmer, and the happiness of the animal “cashes” out in that product, but there seems to be a particular quality of treatment or care about the second aspect that goes beyond the economic benefit and “productness” of the animal and treats that creature as something more than a means to a human end. This second kind of value is linked with a sort of empathetic relationship between the husband man or farmer and the particular non-human animal.

Even fifty years ago, at least in the United States, farmers and animals in a family farm setting had the kind of face to face and one on one relationship that constitutes our romantic picture of farm life. In today’s agri-businesses this personal side of the animal’s care has been lost, but for centuries our Western culture’s husbandry ethic was something that we consider a national treasure.

The milk cow had a name, Bessie. The farmer's wife knew the personalities of the hens in the chicken yard. The farmer's children kept pets who often escaped slaughter simply because of their honored status in the farmer's household. The family farm will perhaps never again be a viable economic pursuit, but there is a sense in which modern American consumers to some extent still believe in this second aspect of the ethic and most certainly base their moral justification for the use of animal products on this romantic myth.

This is clearly the area of the ethic that needs clarification, for even among current activists in the animal welfare movements there is confusion and often simple ignorance regarding the origins of this widely popular ethic and, given the current practices in agribusiness, there seems to be a need for the rearticulation of the ethic itself. It is possible that this not strictly utilitarian part of the ethic no longer has any relevance at all for the modern farmer. In fact, it is possible that the farmer no longer exists at all; although it is hard to imagine a businessman in a suit, rather than the farmer in overalls, hosing down the floor of the chicken shed. But it is also likely that the public, which supports these agri-businesses, would be sorely distressed were they to come face to face with this reality about the products they consume. There is already some evidence of this distress among the more educated and enlightened American consumers, and it could very well be that this distress will ultimately cash out in terms of better quality lives for domestic animals, indeed in some cases it already has. It seems important, therefore, to try to articulate this ancient ethic because it has played so prominent a part in the history of economic prosperity and because it is a part of the story of our modern Western culture.

Further, this seems to be a worthy intellectual project simply because the means of production in agriculture have shifted so radically in our recent history

as to have had devastating results on the lives of these individual non-humans that, as I will demonstrate here, we once considered to be integral parts of our families and communities in the context of this normative ethic.

### ***Boundaries of the Historical Definition***

In our American culture the ethic, as we have known it since the early twentieth century, seems to come primarily from two sources, the philosophical principles of our founding fathers, Thomas Jefferson in particular, and the literature to which they were heirs on the European continent, mostly from the British Isles. The modern articulation of the ethic starts with these sources in the eighteenth century and continues into the next century mostly in the literature of the people of Great Britain who have been the undisputed leaders in the awareness of animal welfare issues in the modern world.

In the nineteenth century the promotion of the ideals of kindness towards animals is promoted on several fronts, mostly under the direction of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in Great Britain. The original part of this essay will deal with representative selections from the different genres of this nineteenth century propaganda which I discovered in the course of my research. This instructive literature represents the response to a popular mood of the times, loosely based on public reaction to the cruel practices of the scientific community, but also characteristic of the distinctly British moral sense which culminates in the moral sensibilities of the Victorian era, especially as this moral sense relates to religious values.

Many of these writings are relatively obscure and unknown in academic circles. I think it is crucial to the future of animal welfare that ethical

philosophers become well acquainted with those origins as they try to address the current problems in agribusiness where the quality of animal lives is concerned. Finding the source of the valuing of nonhuman animal lives that has guided farmers historically can give an important context to the next steps that we as a culture, encompassing the art of agriculture, take towards improvement and change in the lives of our domesticated animals, because it can possibly point the way toward a new valuing of animal lives by humans in the late twentieth century.

I will claim that the central theme of the ethic in England is drawn from theological sources and will, therefore, also be concerned with modern theology's interpretation of the biblical texts that receive so much emphasis in these nineteenth century texts. This will be in direct response to problems in the ethical arena in which we find ourselves today, that of giant agricultural businesses and modern methods of animal husbandry.

The first part of this work will deal with the long history of the Western attitude towards domestic animals up through the period of the early to mid-nineteenth century. It is by sorting through these literary sources of the gradual articulation of an ethic of man's relationship with animals that we can hopefully synthesize the vast amount of information that is out there into a coherent explanation for the normative code which comes to be called the husbandry ethic in Western society. The task is complex because it is about human history, specifically the history of an idea, and it may be that for all the effort expended I will have missed the mark. But the mark is not a simple and well defined bull's eye in this case, perhaps in any case in which the history of an idea becomes a cultural norm; and it may be that simply achieving a clearer picture of the field surrounding the target will accomplish the result that is sought. I will be

constructing this intellectual history from my bias which is rooted in my identity as an American middle-aged woman of Scot/English descent who was raised a Presbyterian in the deep south and is now an active and pledging member of the local Unitarian Universalist congregation. I am also a lifelong animal lover whose first association with domestic farm animals came from my experiences on my paternal grandfather's small farm in northern Mississippi in the 1950's. I will start in America from the time of the American revolution with a Unitarian hero, Thomas Jefferson, and sort through the European, mostly British, influences on those settlers in the new world. But before that I would like to look briefly at a sort of anthropological social history as related by Mary Midgely and John Webster.

## Part I

### ***Midgley's and Webster's Accounts of Our Human History in Community with Animals***

If a set of biblical principles for the treatment of non-human animals does indeed serve to promote good husbandry in our tradition, as I will try to show in this paper, so has the simple and practical relation of humans to non-humans, according to Mary Midgley in her 1983 work, *Animals and Why They Matter*.<sup>6</sup> She approaches the ethical relationship of man and animal from a biosocial perspective which sees humans as members of nested communities where our ethical duties vary in relationship to the roles we play in our various communities.

The central community is usually the immediate family of which we are a part, of course, and we find that we have obligations within that nest which do not apply elsewhere. For example, we owe our own children both affection and physical comforts which we do not owe to our neighbor's children. We owe our close neighbors something we do not owe to others in our community who do not share close proximity with us.

For Midgley these social-moral relationships are often subtle and complex and extend to non-human members of the community as well. Pets, for

---

<sup>6</sup> Mary Midgley, *Animals and Why They Matter*, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1983)



example, are surrogate family members who merit treatment not owed to less intimately related animals, because of a narrative history that these particular individual animals share with our human family. Midgley believes that domesticated animals, in general, belong to what she calls a mixed community of human and animal, and that the welfare ethic of such a community enjoins us to care humanely for domestic species.

Midgely points out that all human communities have included animals. Dogs are among the closest of our species associations, but in addition to dogs a huge variety of other creatures have all undergone the process of domestication in order to be used by humans for draught and riding, meat, milk, wool, hides, feathers, eggs, aids to hunting, and as vermin catchers. Midgley argues that if humans had treated animals as things, in the sharp Kantian sense of a split between persons and things, domestication would probably never have taken place in human history. Animals became tame as a direct result of the bonds they formed with individual humans as they came to understand the social signals of that species. Animals were able to eventually understand those signals, not only because the beings that tamed them were social beings, but because the animals themselves were also social beings.

She asserts that all animals which have been domesticated successfully are originally social by nature, and tend to transfer a sort of trust and docility to humans in a domestic state which they would normally (in the wild) have developed toward their parents, and later in adult life to the leaders of their pack or herd. She points out that there are still various intelligent species who are pretty much untamable, simply because they do not have the innate ability to respond to social signals in their own species, wild cats being one example. This sounds completely reasonable from a common sense standpoint for

anyone who has experienced living with both a dog and a cat. By nature, cats seem never to become as sociable or docile as dogs no matter how much time we lavish on them.

In some regard this underlying notion of sympathetic understanding in the treatment of domestic animals, who share a common social nature with us, has been a part of the husbanding tradition over the many centuries of animal domestication, in most cases because the relation between man and animal has always had this personal social quality to it. Animals have lived in our communities with us, and shared our circle of social concern, because we needed them as much as they came to need us, given the process and effects of domestication. The moral to this tale is that we would never have been able to exploit them for our needs in the first place had we not related to them in this social arrangement.

In his *Animal Welfare, A Cool Eye Towards Eden*,<sup>7</sup> John Webster points out that in early civilizations humans got to know individual animals like dogs or cattle and gradually developed favorite species because of their lasting value to the human community in terms of utility, companionship or both. The welfare of these individual animals eventually had an effect on the quality of human lives. Even in these primitive societies animal welfare could not be seen as an absolute value, but was always weighed in a cost/benefit analysis. It is a fact of human life that we seem to care for animals in direct proportion to their actual value to us, and that value is assessed both in production or wealth, as well as in the quality of our lives, which are indeed made richer by this mixed community in which we have lived.

So the notion of husbandry is tied to this social relationship of human to

---

<sup>7</sup> John Webster, *Animal Welfare, A Cool Eye Towards Eden*, (London: Blackwell Science Ltd., 1994)

animal, but the relationship is always one of economy as well as social contract. The unspoken social contract has evolved over centuries, to care humanely for domesticated animals is part of our contract with them, tied to the narrative history of our relationship with them. And the history of each animal species defines the relationship we have developed with them. In this country our shared histories with animals starts with the early colonists from England who participated in the building of a new agrarian economy.

### **Thomas Jefferson and the Enlightenment Ideals that Founded a New Agrarian Economy**

Many of our modern ideals of agriculture come directly out of the vision of the founders of the new world. America has been perceived by most of the rest of the world as a sort of agrarian paradise for centuries since the revolution, and for some time preceding that momentous political event. I believe that Thomas Jefferson saw himself as a model of the good American citizen of his new country and through the *Declaration of Independence* and his *Writings* expressed a vision of agrarian morality that continues to influence our Western culture even now. The ideals expressed by Jefferson in both his exemplary life and his writing can be seen to have a strong connection with the principles of the Enlightenment in general, but more especially with the ethics associated with Francis Hutcheson and those influenced by him, notably Adam Smith and David Hume. These three represent a smaller segment of the European Enlightenment known as the Scottish Enlightenment. Jefferson came to know these thinkers very early in his life through his primary teacher at the College of William and Mary, a Dr. William Small. Small had just recently arrived in America from Scotland in 1760 when the seventeen year old Jefferson came to

America from Scotland in 1760 when the seventeen year old Jefferson came to the big city of Williamsburg to attend college from his country home in Virginia.

Small was fairly gushing with the spirit of scientific enquiry which had reached a peak in his native Scotland, where the five universities had outdistanced Oxford in the study of science, philosophy and law by the mid-eighteenth century. In ethics the undisputed intellectual leader of the moral sense philosophy espoused by the Scottish Enlightenment was Frances Hutcheson. By the time of the American revolution, in fact, Hutcheson's, *System of Moral Philosophy*, was one of the principal textbooks in all of America's colleges.<sup>8</sup>

Historian Garry Wills, in his *Inventing America, Jefferson's Declaration of Independence*, supports the view that it was Hutcheson, much more than John Locke, who influenced the young Jefferson philosophically, and that we would have had physical evidence of this in his extensive journals had it not been for a devastating fire at Jefferson's Shadwell home in 1770. The fire destroyed the plantation and virtually all of his personal writing that had been composed up to the age of twenty-seven. According to Wills, the lost writings, as well as the collection of books that perished, would have shown that the moral idealism of the Declaration of Independence can be interpreted almost entirely by Hutcheson's ethics of an inherent moral sense in human beings, which is echoed in both Adam Smith and Hume as well.

Hutcheson's moral sense ethics was "in the air" in the same way that Locke's political ideals were at that particular time in European intellectual history. This moral sense philosophy was decidedly communitarian, and if we read the *Declaration* with Hutcheson's philosophy in mind, it gives a whole different

---

<sup>8</sup> Gary Wills, *Inventing America, Jefferson's Declaration of Independence*, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc. 1978), p. 294.

twist to the American dream in general; one that is certainly less individualistic in the old and accepted Lockian sense that has formerly held sway in academic interpretations of Jefferson's philosophy. Hutcheson believed that humans were by nature benevolent and social creatures, and that benevolence was an organizing principle of the science of society in the same way the principle of gravity was of the physical world. Humans were created to live in communities and constituted morally to desire the happiness of their fellow creatures in the community, a very Aristotelian and therefore Enlightenment value.

Later on we will be examining the centuries long evolution of the idea of animal nature as it unfolds in British philosophy in particular, and it will be evident how important the articulation of man's relationship to animal becomes in the context of this particularly British, and even more specifically Scottish, moral idea of man's inherent moral sense. It is already evident how Midgely's idea of the mixed community could be given ethical underpinnings using the moral sense principle.

In a letter to John Adams from 1787 Jefferson says,

I believe.....that it is instinct, and innate, that the moral sense is as much a part of our constitution as that of feeling, seeing, or hearing; as a wise creator must have seen to be necessary in an animal destined to live in society: that every human mind feels pleasure in doing good to another.....The essence of virtue is in doing good to others.<sup>9</sup>

This is essentially Hutcheson, as well as Hume and Smith, as will be shown later on, a deliberate refusal of the Hobbsian egoism that opposed this view as well as a markedly different interpretation of man from that of the Puritan Christians.

Jefferson is also a typical Enlightenment Deist in his reflection of the reverent attitude toward creation as found in the Old Testament, which will later

---

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, p. 204.

be shown to heavily influence the formation of the animal husbandry ethic as well. As far as Jefferson's theology is concerned, he had a strong attachment to the moral teachings of Jesus the man, but believed that St. Paul, along with other early Christian writers, had badly bungled his teachings by their later interpretations. He skillfully managed to side step the charge of atheism, however, and cling to, and ultimately become famous for, his central Enlightenment values as expressed in the *Declaration*, despite his more liberal interpretation of the Bible, an interpretation that will later be seen to be an innovation of Hutcheson as well.

Jefferson contributed a great deal toward making the United States a thriving agricultural economy, both as a model husbandman and as a statesman whose words articulated a new moral and political way of life. He was a third generation gentleman farmer whose love of the cultivation of his land was well known. According to Barbara McEwan's, *Thomas Jefferson: Farmer*, he saw himself as a farmer much more than as a statesman most of the time. He perceived his social standing, which enabled him to become successful as a politician, to be based primarily on his reputation as a, more or less, successful grower of tobacco crops.... "farming melted into his philosophical and political convictions so that understanding Jefferson the leader begins with understanding Jefferson the planter."<sup>10</sup> He believed that,

Those who labor in the earth are the chosen people of God, if ever He had a chosen people, whose breasts He has made His peculiar deposit for substantial and genuine virtue. It is the focus in which He keeps alive that sacred fire, which otherwise might escape from the face of the earth. Corruption of morals in the mass of cultivators is a phenomenon of which no age nor nation has furnished an example. It is the mark set on those, who, not looking up to heaven, but only to their own soil and industry, as does the husbandman, for their subsistence, depend for it on casualties and caprice of customers. Dependence begets

<sup>10</sup> Barbara McEwan, *Thomas Jefferson: Farmer* (Jefferson, North Carolina, and London:McFarland & Company, Inc., 1991), p. vii.

subservience and venality, suffocates the germ of virtue, and prepares fit tools for the designs of ambition.<sup>11</sup>

Jefferson further expanded on this belief about the inherent goodness of the husbandman (which was, in fact, just the example of benevolence he believed could be found in all men) in a 1785 letter in which he calls cultivators of the earth the “most valuable citizens”. His vision of what this new country could become was based on a conviction of moral integrity inspired by Enlightenment ideals of a natural moral sense which could be seen in the lives of America’s early agriculturalists building a way of life on a new frontier. Those who were connected to their land by this kind of bond were privy to a special kind of true goodness and virtue simply by the living of their occupation. Hutcheson often mentioned the idea that the earth belonged to the living, a point that Wills emphasizes in his discussion of Jefferson’s choice of “the pursuit of happiness” over the Lockian emphasis on “property” when naming the inalienable natural rights of man in the *Declaration*. (This idea argued against what Hutcheson saw as the unfair laws concerning the inheritance of property in his day. Labor should cash out in happiness, not so much property.) He believed in a regenerative sustainable agriculture which had its roots in the lives of these good citizen farmers pursuing happiness, both their own and that of the whole community on the new continent.

Jefferson’s attitude about farmer citizens and their role in building a strong economy is reflected in the philosophy of Adam Smith who had an enormous influence on the Jeffersonian philosophy, and who was himself influenced by Hutcheson. Smith’s economic commonwealth consists of a multitude of

---

<sup>11</sup> Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, (1781; reprint, New York: Harper & Row, 1964), p. 157.

persons who are seeking their own interests, and in doing so, are also unwittingly furthering the public good.

“The natural effort of every individual to better his own condition, when suffered to exert itself with freedom and security, is so powerful a principle, that it is alone, and without any assistance, not only capable of carrying on the society to wealth and prosperity, but of surmounting a hundred impertinent obstructions with which the folly of human laws too often encumbers its operations.”<sup>12</sup>

Smith also believes in the idea of sympathy, modeled on Hutcheson's benevolence, as the fundamental fact of moral consciousness (more details to follow in the section on the history of the ethic in England), and the guidance of “the invisible hand” of God, the ultimate benevolent spirit, that directs the fate of mankind. In addition he feels that the interests of the whole society are much better served by the landowners and the working class, whose interests are in closer agreement with the interests of society than those of merchants and master manufacturers. This idea is clearly reflected in Jefferson's words above regarding the husbandman's virtue, which is based on his “own soil and industry” and therefore escapes the “subservience and venality” which he sees as the product of dependence.

Animals naturally played a large part in this thriving economy of the New World, and Jefferson led the way in the innovative importing and breeding of pigs, cattle and especially sheep to his Virginia plantations. The hogs and cattle were an especially important part of the innovative science of tobacco farming. Because tobacco tended to deplete the soil, the new technique for restoring the soil was to let the exhausted tract lie fallow for a few years while hogs and cattle foraged there, feeding on weeds and brush and helping to restore the land's fertility. Jefferson shared his newfound breeds of all these

---

<sup>12</sup> W.R. Sorley, *A History of English Philosophy*, (New York and London: G.P. Putnam's Sons, The Knickerbocker Press, 1921), p. 188.



animals, and techniques for raising them, with anyone who would listen. His sheep were a constant concern for him and he admonished his overseers on the plantation to tend to them “as if they were children”. Mules gained acceptance as work animals during the era of the Revolutionary War, and Jefferson was first inspired to use them at Monticello and Poplar Forest by President Washington, who imported breeding mares in 1785.

Horses too were a particular concern of the gentry in Jefferson’s time, since the work of these decidedly gentleman farmers was mostly done in a supervisory way from horseback. It is interesting to note that many draft breeds were small and light of body, in part due to genetic factors, but also because of poor care. This was never the case with riding horses. Since they were the only practical method of getting around as well as a sort of manly status symbol, they were treated extremely well; and Jefferson himself was a typical gentry man as regards his love of fine horses and his delight in riding them. He lived on his horse “from breakfast till dark” when keeping track of plantation activities. He also kept chickens, ducks, Guinea fowl, geese and turkeys and encouraged his youngest daughter, Maria, to keep her own flock of chickens.

Jefferson was an innovator in all branches of agriculture in his day, because he saw the success of the American farmer as the key to the economic success of the republic itself. He saw that as farmers became tied to the supplying of food and other commodities for growing urban populations, they also became obligated to produce better quality fruits, vegetables and meat products. Breeding better animals was simply part of the new economy.<sup>13</sup> And, in the true spirit of Adam Smith, free-market exchange enhanced value. The animal part of this agrarian vision was simply another part of the farm as community.

---

<sup>13</sup> McEwan, pp. 128-129.

Benevolence extended to the fellow creatures in one's farm community meant top dollar for a better product, and the betterment of the whole community too.

Later in life Jefferson established a sort of cooperative farm organization called the Albemarle Agricultural Society after his home county in Virginia. The Society was an important part of his vision to link agriculturalists in the sharing of information, and his recommendations for the group actually anticipated what agriculturalists ended up applying themselves to as a community in the 1800's. His last major project was the establishment of the University of Virginia; it was the realization of his dream of a state supported school with a liberal bent. The Albemarle Society, along with other counties' societies, became instrumental in the hiring of the first professor of agriculture in 1822 as well as the establishment of an experimental model, small farm which would serve to teach students and visitors alike about the best methods of farming and the plants and animals available to accomplish those goals. These innovations actually took until 1869, long after Jefferson's death in 1826, to become more fully realized; and much later on the state's efforts turned to the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University instead of the University of Virginia for efforts in the agricultural field. But Jefferson's last great act of statesmanship was the promotion of agricultural education in his home state.

Jefferson was a man of action who actually could have never written a single word, with the possible exception of the *Declaration*, and still have been counted among America's greatest statesmen and policy makers. His actions as a gentleman farmer and statesman spoke volumes to early American farmers who settled the new continent. His long life (1743-1826) is a monument to public service and benevolence which spans an extremely fertile intellectual period in the history of Europe.

In order to fully appreciate the utilitarian consequences of his acts for American culture and agriculture we have needed to examine his guiding philosophical principles, especially his moral philosophy. For it is very likely that a man of his stature in early agricultural circles in this new country does offer insight into the formation of the husbandry ethic in American culture. In addition to Wills' fine work other Jefferson scholars also point to his love of the Greek virtues, if not of all the Greeks themselves. He disliked Plato, but identified strongly with Socrates.

According to M. L. Burstein in his recent work, *Understanding Thomas Jefferson*, Jefferson's philosophy included, among other elements, utilitarianism, Epicureanism, civic humanism and opposition to a kind of possessive individualism. Burstein's work confirms again that Jefferson, with Aristotle and Hutcheson, believed that *Homo sapiens* have an innate moral sense born out of the our desire for the company of other human beings.

Because nature has implanted in our breasts a love of others, a sense of duty to them, a moral instinct, in short, which prompts us irresistibly to feel and succor their distresses....The Creator would indeed have been a bungling artist, had he intended man for a social animal, without planting in him social dispositions.<sup>14</sup>

This idea of a benevolent moral sense will later be shown to have its roots in writings of numerous British moralists of the seventeenth and eighteenth century besides Hutcheson, the Earl of Shaftesbury among them, who influenced Jefferson. But in short, for Jefferson, via Hutcheson, the idea of virtue is tied closely to this innate moral sense, and virtue itself has a classical Enlightenment definition.

There are two ideas at work in this virtue ethic . First, that man is a social animal, and this is an intrinsic value that is part of human nature. And second,

---

<sup>14</sup> Thomas Jefferson, *Writings* , ed. M.D. Peterson ( New York: Viking, Library of America, 1984), p. 1335ff., at pp. 1336-1338.

that virtue can be molded by social coercion, or habitual type training in the Aristotelian sense, and is therefore a relative value. (Hutcheson adds that all virtue actually flows from an *agape* type love of others, which is benevolence.) According to Burstein, Jefferson's thesis is that this innate moral sense can be reduced to a replacement set,  $V$ , of ethical values.

Man, a social animal, is sensitized to social interaction. A society draws vector  $v^*$  from  $V$ , relative to its circumstances. The replacement set  $V$  is intrinsic to *Homo sapiens*; the drawing  $v^*$ , selected from  $V$ , may be determined quite deliberately.<sup>15</sup>

To illustrate this, in the same section of his Writings mentioned previously, Jefferson states that nature has constituted man to utility, which he calls the standard of virtue. And though men living in different countries, circumstances and under different habits of culture may have different utilities, they, nevertheless, all seemingly possess this moral instinct. This instinct has to do with the love of others and a kind of duty toward promoting happiness in them in addition to a constitution directed at something like a utilitarian happiness principle on a personal level. It is interesting to note that Jefferson, again as influenced by Hutcheson, did not think morality had anything to do with duties or contracts with the self, as did Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau among others. Morality and the moral sense was directed to others in relation, it was not possible to have relations or contracts with ourselves; self-interest could never be the basis of morality.

The idea of the two kinds of virtue, one a part of human nature, the other a learned socialization, relates as mentioned previously to the philosophical influence on Jefferson's life and work of Adam Smith. Smith in turn relies heavily on Hutcheson and Hume's idea, which states that reason alone,

---

<sup>15</sup> M.L. Burstein, *Understanding Thomas Jefferson, Studies in Economics, Law and Philosophy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), p. 211.

contrary to Kant, cannot reveal to us what is right and wrong. According to Hume, from Hutcheson, it is this instinct of sympathy or benevolence which is the most important element in humans for the formation of our moral and political beliefs. We are all endowed, in a limited way, with this sympathy or benevolence, and we strengthen it by our actions in the world. The goodness of these actions actually depends on the habitual practice of generosity or benevolence, in the Aristotelian sense, which produces these beneficent results or consequences, our happiness. Behaving well by cultivating the habit of performing generous actions, proves that we have this natural benevolence, while references to duty and motivation, a la Kant, suggested for Hume that we must force ourselves to perform acts of generosity by a rational act of will. This forcing of the moral act would somehow diminish us, according to Hume, because it would suggest that we are deficient in natural benevolence. The moral sense is certainly submitted to some measure of reason as we sort out the means to our benevolent ends, but the moral act is not itself an act of reason. Hutcheson also felt that moral principles and devotion to duty in general are less likely to make us morally happy people than this benevolent spirit which we naturally possess.

Virtue then is a property of action for Hume, and Jefferson as well, and moral acts are valued for their consequences, the happiness produced. For example, Hume also distinguishes between benevolence, which he calls a natural virtue, and justice, which represents an artificial virtue, in much the same way as Jefferson's set,  $V$ , relates to the subset  $v^*$ . One kind of virtue we possess as part of our human nature, the other kind gets developed as we learn to live in human community. For Hutcheson justice or rights simply reduce to benevolence, like all the other virtues (more in later section).

The connection with good husbandry of animals seems obvious. The idea of benevolence and virtue translates into good principles of care for domestic animals. As will be shown in more detail later in the section on Hutcheson, we naturally have benevolent feelings towards these fellow creatures in our community, and through the practice of benevolent care of these creatures we can become habituated to the virtuous practice of good husbanding, or in an Aristotelian sense actually become good or excellent husbandmen. Furthermore, as will be shown in Hutcheson's moral scheme, we do this naturally and joyfully, not so much as a drudgery of duty.

Burstein points out that Jefferson does consider himself an Epicurean in some sense, though in his day this is dangerously close to Hobbes for a proponent of the moral sense. Happiness counts, but is defined or cashed out, again, by the classical values of beauty, truth, justice etc., and tends to be less selfish as a result. The key words for Jefferson are a communitarian utility and happiness. Because he sees man's highest good as bound up with this social nature he does not hold with an ethic (like Kant's and Locke's) of individualism, but tends rather toward the classical interpretation of the good, or where human good is concerned, *arete* (like Aristotle). Later on this paper will trace the origins of the idea that this goodness ought also to be extended to nonhumans, but for now we will just assume that Jefferson, having read both Shaftesbury and Hutcheson extensively, is aware of the implications of this doctrine for animals.

Within Jefferson's "Syllabus of the Doctrines of Epicurus", found in his *Writings* of 1819, Burstein discovers another key element in the philosophy, which is also tied to Jefferson's economic theorist mentor, Adam Smith. This is the theme of Stoicism.

## 23

Happiness is the aim of life.  
Virtue the foundation of happiness  
Utility the test of virtue  
Pleasure active and in-do-lent  
In-do-lence is the absence of pain, the true felicity  
Active, consists in agreeable motion; it is not happiness,  
but the means to produce it  
The Summum Bonum is not to be pained in body, nor  
troubled in mind  
.....To procure tranquility of mind, we must avoid desire  
and fear, the two principal diseases of the mind  
Man is a free agent  
Virtue consists in 1. Prudence 2. Temperance  
3. Fortitude 4. Justice  
To which are opposed 1. Folly 2. Desire 3. Fear  
4. Deceit. (p. 1433)

The Epicurean pleasure is to be found preeminently in the serenity of the soul for Jefferson, "To procure tranquility of mind". It is this feature of the philosophy that tends toward a Stoical notion, an acceptance of the ordering principle or harmony of nature and the idea of keeping our wills in conformity with that harmony. Although we will later discover some anti-Stoical elements in writings of the English Anglican clergy of Jefferson's time, he appears to be a thorough going theist in his Stoicism; the harmony of nature defines the principle of deity.

This is a theme we will later find to be associated directly with the popular writing of William Paley and other English moralists who set the stage for the full blown anti-cruelty movement among animal welfare advocates of the early nineteenth century. There is also this sort of laid back quality of Stoicism which is essentially the belief that our destiny is what is supposed to happen, and by nature nothing bad can happen in the world. We can control our human reaction or the response of our will in a way that will harmonize with the inevitability of what happens to us. In this way we can assure happiness in our lives. Later on this study will show how the intellectual movement of natural theology, expressed in the writing of Paley, contains this very quality which

ultimately contributes to the modern conception of man's relationship to other species, even though the moral text for the multitudes will turn out to be the Old Testament, not Greek philosophy.

(Also, Stoicism is distinguished by its roots in its Greek founding fathers like Zeno and Epictetus, who are both transplanted world citizens and not only, like Socrates, citizens of Athens. Since many of the important figures of Stoicism came from the Mediterranean basin, from cultures that Plato and Aristotle would have considered barbarian, their doctrines have a universal quality that reached beyond the narrow concerns of Athens or of any other city or nation. In an ethical sense being world citizens requires us to respect the natural order of things in the world as we find them, and not try to bend them to our particular ideologies. The quality of universality is also seen in the way that Stoicism appealed to all social classes. Among its leaders are both Epictetus, a freed slave, and Marcus Aurelius, a Roman Emperor. Crossing the boundaries of those kinds of class distinctions as well as cultural distinctions in both Greek and eighteenth century societies might be seen as similar to asking people to cross species boundaries in the application of an ethic which promotes benevolence.)

In later discussions of Old and New Testament theology we also discover an important link to the Stoics. For the Stoic, this harmony in nature, or the idea of the divine, is immanent in the world, a part of the creation; and the more personal or human-like the idea of God, the more theological is the theism. Another version of theism is a kind of pantheism, called panentheism, in which God is actually identified with the world. This version will be found to be the primary interpretation surrounding the valuing of the natural world and animals, which are a part of it, in twentieth century process theology, which could turn out



to be the new, biblically based, moral interpretation of the relation of human and non-human for modern Christians.

Also, the philosophy of Adam Smith, whose economic and social theories embodied many of Jefferson's guiding Enlightenment principles for the New World, proscribed an ethic which reflected this Stoic world citizen model. In their introduction to *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, (1976/82) Raphael and Macfie claim that Stoic philosophy is the primary influence in Smith's ethical thought, and later admit that his ethical doctrine is actually a combination of Stoicism and Christian virtues of the sort associated with Hutcheson, in which all virtue resolves into benevolence, or a version of Christian love. Furthermore, Wills contends that Adam Smith's economic theory was first communitarian and later conscripted to individualist uses by nineteenth century liberalism. Smith is part of that moral sense movement of the Scottish Enlightenment, those thinkers, "who stood at a conscious and deliberate distance from Locke's political principles".<sup>16</sup>

I believe that Jefferson's American dream is a large part of the rich heritage of the animal husbandry ethic because he discovers so much of value in the ideology of the European Enlightenment, especially the Scottish representatives, and translates that value into the dream of an agrarian paradise in America. It is this combination of harmony with nature, in the case of the Greeks, or divine providence, in the case of the Judeo-Christian tradition's model of God's love and care for the creation, along with this idea of the virtue of a benevolent moral sense and communitarian utility that I believe gets at the heart of the husbandry ethic. And Jefferson's inspiration from the great economist, Adam Smith, as influenced by Hume, Hutcheson and the

---

<sup>16</sup> Wills, p. 239.

Greek tradition, turns out to be the vehicle of faith for the American dream as it is embodied in the life and work of one of America's greatest leaders.

## Part II

### ***The Search for the Modern Ethic Regarding Animals in Europe***

Origins of the husbandry ethic in modern Western culture/agriculture must come primarily from the social histories of European peoples in the last 250 years, or after the end of that pivotal period called the Enlightenment, because it is only in Western intellectual history this recent that we find the recognition of non-humans as deserving of moral concern. Much needs to be said regarding the adjustments of human cultures to the new truths of science that emerged during that period and gradually came to be regarded as foundational in the lives of human beings, in much the same way as religion had been in the centuries of human history that preceded the Enlightenment. This new “religion” of empiricism, sometimes scorned but often embraced by the church during this crucial time period in modern Euro-American history, eventually brought new insights and progress to the relationship between humans and non-humans as it did to so many other arenas of human life.

Dix Harwood supports the claim that what we know as the modern ethic of kindness to animals has really only been a moral consideration fairly recently in human history. His PhD. thesis from 1929 at Columbia University is titled *Love*

*for Animals and How it Developed in Great Britain*, and is considered an important account of the elements of that culture's considerable contributions to the issue of animal welfare as seen in the various literature, mostly from the period between the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth centuries. Writing in the late 1920's he claims that even if there were no laws against cruelty to animals, that ordinary people would now (his time) rebel against most any conspicuous mistreatment of a beast as quickly as they would at the sight of that sort of mistreatment of a child. This now fairly commonplace ethical norm was, however, certainly not present in most of human history before this modern era. He demonstrates convincingly how we can find the elements of the modern ethic that arose on the European continent and in Britain as far by as the Middle Ages by searching through the literature of that period. Some of the literature he surveys is philosophy, some not.

### ***Men and Animals in the Literature of the Middle Ages***

Harwood finds that two elements emerge as we look this far back into human history, one of anthropomorphism and the other of anthropocentrism. The first of these elements is the idea that primitive people often felt a kinship with certain animals (as suggested by Midgely as well), and thought of their pets and domestic animals in terms of their own desires and emotions. Harwood claims that this is an eternal characteristic of the human race, "to read mountain, tree, or horse in terms of human experience"<sup>17</sup>, and that we often meet it when we attempt to study man's relationship with animals.

A primary literary source of this characteristic is to be found in the historical accounts from between the tenth and the eighteenth centuries of beast trials,

<sup>17</sup> Dix Harwood, *Love for Animals and How It Developed in Great Britain*, (New York: Columbia University, 1928), p. 2.

where pigs and dogs, for example, are actually held accountable for acts of destruction as though they were rational creatures and therefore responsible for their actions. The Middle Ages also produced bestiary tales, moralized fables about actual or mythical animals. He also describes the medieval teller of tales as giving many human characteristics to animals besides rationality. Animals also display gratitude, loyalty and friendship, all of which Harwood notes are traits "we still believe they feel". Still another rich source of the anthropomorphic idea is to be found in the many stories of the saints' relationships with animals. These tales combine elements of wonder in the form of romance and bestiary with the tendency to humanize animals that are found in the beast trial accounts. Harwood also finds in these tales of the saints what he calls "an unmistakable affection for animals and a joy in domesticating them."<sup>18</sup> Anecdotes by the thousands are found in the literature ranging from Chaucer to the well known tales of St. Francis of Assisi. Harwood claims that all these anthropomorphic tales of the period contained a certain amount of truth for the ordinary folk, but that it was always mixed generously with medieval wonder and supernaturalism.

These anthropomorphic legends were endorsed by the common folk, both urban and rural, and the lower clergy, but certainly not by the established church. (There is an important element of Scholastic orthodoxy present in the beast trials, however, that of the demon spirit inhabiting a body for evil purposes.) The church was primarily characterized by the other element in Middle Ages history, that of anthropocentrism. Even in the case of the tales of the saints these anthropomorphic elements were considered very unofficial and more often repugnant, if not directly opposed to, the church's teachings. Trials

---

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, p. 11.

of beasts were seen as heretical and saint stories as quaint instances of piety, but never official dogma.

As far as the established church was concerned St. Thomas Aquinas states the official theological position once and for all in the *Summa Theologica* and that was to remain essentially unchanged at least for Catholics. The Biblical account gives Adam authority to name the animals as well as to feed on every living thing. The official theological account of dominion makes every part of creation that is not made in the image of God (as is man) only necessary for its preservation to the degree that it, meaning plants and animals, serves man. Officially the only reason given in the scarce accounts of prohibition against cruelty to animals in the Holy Scripture is to turn man's mind away from the possibility of practicing cruelties toward other men or to prevent the temporal loss of their possible benefits to man. For example, the account of the injunction against "muzzling the ox" who treads the grain in Deuteronomy is reinterpreted by Paul in *The First Letter to the Corinthians*. So that the New Testament now makes it clear that this is done only for the benefit of the plowman in the form of the harvest; certainly God's concern is not for the sake of the oxen, according to Paul. "Kindness to animals is entirely supererogatory."<sup>19</sup> This is clearly the message of the gospel concerning animal welfare as far as the Catholic church is concerned and, in fact, is still the official position.

One of Harwood's sources, Edward Westermarck, makes the claim that no creed in Christendom teaches kindness to animals as dogma and pointed out that Pius IX as late as the nineteenth century actually refused permission for a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to be established in Rome because he considered it a theological error to suppose that man had any duty to animals at all. Harwood notes that despite this official dogma there are as many Catholic

---

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, p. 13.

humanitarian writers of commentary as there are Protestants and that many from both groups advocate the practice of duty to animals anyway.

St. Thomas represents the mind of a great ecclesiastical organization while the legends of saints and super beasts represent the “hearts of men” according to Harwood. It seems important to notice that this ancient dispute between the folk state of mind of ordinary believers and official theological dogma is still going on in a sense, and is often reflected in the common sense notions of the unofficial writings of those individual Catholic and Protestant humanitarians.

Because it has been sent underground by the churches' opposition, historically this folk point of view becomes fainter and fainter through a 500 year period of human history, according to Harwood, until the resemblance between man and beast is very consciously rediscovered in the eighteenth century.

### **Experimental Science and Animal Soul**

The rise of the natural sciences in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries mark a turn away from the supernatural beliefs of the middle ages and a turn toward a less man centered world, which ultimately becomes the decisive factor in the development of a new view of animal life. Forward movement toward a new exploration of the natural world is fueled by the skepticism of Descartes in the age of Descartes which follows his death in 1660.

Philosophers, who were in that day and age also natural scientists, wanted to see with their own eyes the workings of nature as opposed to accepting the supernatural explanations of the past. Descartes' hypothesis of the beast machine, the radical pronouncement that animals were without souls and actually no more than machine-like bodies, seemed to give open

encouragement to the study of anatomy in general and specifically the practice of dissection and vivisection using animal subjects. The discovery of the microscope revealed new worlds of animal life for scientists in the hundreds of laboratories that began to spring up all over Europe, and the sophisticated intellectuals of that day reveled in the new found entertainment provided by experimental science.

Descartes's hypothesis turns out to be a psychophysical paradox that is basically indefensible, but not before it has essentially worked an intellectual revolution in Europe. Descartes comes to his conclusion about the dual nature of reality by metaphysically locating the soul of man in the brain and making it wholly separate and distinct from the flesh. This soul is not only the pilot for the corporeal engine, but it is also the means by which humans are apprised of their sensory feelings and appetites. The soul enables us as humans to know our bodies, and without it we would be incapable of receiving sensory impressions at all according to Descartes. The flesh, however, is able to act automatically, without the influence of a cognitive soul. And this is how he explains the behavior of animals. They are simply all flesh and therefore automatons, fleshly machines.

### **Cartesianism and Empiricism in France**

In her much discussed and celebrated 1968 work, *From Beast-Machine to Man-Machine*, Leonora Cohen Rosenfield documents the complicated unfolding of the intellectual and scientific fruit of the Cartesian hypothesis in France during the period following Descartes' death. The main issue in France seems to have been a discussion centering on animal soul and its place in the hierarchy of created being, but Rosenfield remarks that the period she is



investigating and the questions it poses simply reflect an ages old fascination with the riddle of animal behavior. "Gazing into the eyes of a cherished pet, animal lovers forever wonder wherein his soul differs from theirs."<sup>20</sup>

Theologians have pondered the mysteries of faith regarding the place of animals in God's creation and scientists have experimented and hypothesized in an attempt to discover and explain the similarities and differences between animals and humans.

The dialogue reached a fever pitch in the period of time between the age of Descartes, beginning in mid-seventeenth century, to the time of the publication in 1748 of La Mettrie's, *L'Homme-Machine*, the basic hypothesis of which was that man too possessed a mechanical nature along with animals and all the rest of nature. He transforms the Cartesian dualism into a mechanistic and materialistic Monism, the most feared and hated notion that Christian tradition can conceive. It is this intellectual struggle as it is played out in France that Rosenfield attempts to document and which yields one part of the story of the impact of modern science on the belief systems of ordinary people that eventually produces the modern injunction against cruelty toward animals.

The French story of this intellectual struggle between science and religion is more similar to the stories of other countries on the continent, and so will be taken to represent that struggle in terms of Europe in general. The British story has a decidedly different twist and outcome, and will accordingly be best related separately, especially as it relates to the topic at hand, the history of the husbandry ethic.

---

<sup>20</sup> Leonora Cohen Rosenfield, *From Beast-Machine to Man-Machine*, (New York: Octagon Books, Inc., 1968), p. xx.

***The Question of Animal Soul  
and Cartesianism in France***

Two main trends of thought opposed Descartes' hypothesis of the beast machine in the seventeenth century in France, according to Rosenfield. One represented the older theological traditions and spoke more often in terms of souls and the other set out on a new course to discover animal nature using empiricism and the methods of natural science. When the smoke had cleared the cause of animals had advanced considerably though not by the same path that the social revolution had taken in England.

Early on in the debate in France the neo-Scholastics were defending an essentially Aristotelian concept of animal soul against the new philosophy of the Cartesians which emerged in the 1670's and gained prominence enough by 1684 that this "new" philosophy of automatism in animals had stirred great controversy in both scholarly circles and in public lecture forums. In the 1690's the vogue for animal mechanism spread even further and the fight against what was perceived as this dangerous doctrine was mainly carried out by a Jesuit order called the Peripatetics. This religious sect, who were members of the Society of Jesus, were defending a system which had deteriorated in both its neo-Aristotelian and neo-Platonic versions into an extremely non-scientific view of nature. These theologians were categorically opposed to animal automatism because it seemed to suggest a mechanization of nature that they found anti-religious in theory, at least where the Aristotelian notions of animal soul that were so much a part of the Scholastic tradition were concerned.

It turned out later on that Cartesianism had many allies in the established church as Christians struggled to retain the unique spiritual qualities of human soul and found Descartes' exclusion of animals from that category of souls who will go to heaven very gratifying for their cause. The problem of animal nature

as exemplified in the discussion of animal automatism is actually just the top of a wave of the debate over Cartesian metaphysics that occupied intellectuals for a half century in France. In this primarily Catholic environment the discussion was quite naturally around the issue of whether or not animals have souls, and if they did whether those souls were immortal, but theologically and philosophically the discussion was a much broader one involving the question the nature of extended substance and of metaphysical dualism in general.

Theologically as the church in France drifted away from the Scholastic Aristotelian conception of nature toward the beginning of the eighteenth Century and lined up with the more then current views of science in general, it found the Empiricists like Locke and La Chambre to be more in line with and better allies of the old scholastic distinctions. Cartesianism and the idea of animal automatism stood against a variety of views on the animal soul that were current in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. All of these ideas about animal soul ultimately came from Aristotle, and whereas Cartesians viewed the world in a dualistic sort of black and white scheme where human and animal nature was concerned, all the anti-Cartesians were much more interested in the more Aristotelian notion of a sort of shades of gray palette, which oddly enough they later found reflected more in the empiricist view of animals.

Rosenfield notes that the struggle in France was this three-cornered fight between the Cartesians, the traditionalists or neo-Scholastics and empiricists in the century which follows the age of Descartes. At first it was the neo-Scholastics and the Cartesians who waged the battle, with the empiricists sort of growling threateningly in the corner, but later, by the turn of the century, the empiricists were much stronger and, in fact, leading the attack on both of the

older systems. Most eighteenth century philosophers railed against Scholasticism and Cartesianism alike, Cartesianism for being too metaphysical, detrimental to true progress in the current age, which by definition was scientific in nature.

Where theology was concerned, the tides shifted rather quickly as well. In 1663 Descartes' writings were listed as dangerous and declared unteachable in the University of Paris by 1671; but by 1755 he was being eulogized as the refuter of Aristotle who made possible the new Christianity. The new philosophy of Cartesianism had become the old philosophy in a perfectly completed cycle. This circular progression occurred because the Cartesians were advancing the cause of rationalistic science in their effort to reduce nature to a measurable plenum governed by mechanical laws which operate alike in both animate and inanimate nature. This was an intellectual revolt against the non-scientific view of nature represented by both the neo-Platonists (of whom there were actually very few in France) and the neo-Aristotelians. Immanent thinkers both in and outside of the established church were attracted to the rationalistic science in the Cartesian system as well as the "neatness with which it shelved discussion about the place of animal soul in the hereafter and safeguarded belief in the spirituality of human soul."<sup>21</sup>

The Peripatetics as the staunchest defenders of the old Aristotelian faith had insisted on a purposive or teleologic story of nature which seemed hopelessly non-scientific, and in this age of natural science, hopelessly out of date. This schools' defense of the animal soul argued that if beasts had sensory organs, something that natural science was beginning to confirm, then God had intended them to perceive in the fullest sense of that word, simply because God creates nothing in vain. As actual experimentation revealed these similarities

---

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, p. 181-182.

between human and animal physiology these church fathers found it entirely satisfactory to apply their Providentialism to biology. This is how the empiricists came to be allies of these defenders of animal soul. The teleologic interpretation of nature is revitalized by the new experimental science and the resulting change in religion is a reflection of the new Enlightenment religion of Deism, later on called natural theology. (This issue receives a fuller discussion in the section on English reactions to Cartesianism.)

The Peripatetic thesis is actually a medieval concept which posits a substance that is intermediate between matter and spirit and which makes animals capable of sensation, but not reflection. What the empiricists, especially Locke, were saying at the time was that animals were capable of becoming sensitive through their animal bodies. Animals, according to Locke, could be seen as possessing perception as well as memory. They were capable of simple or particular ideas, but not of the reflection required for more general or universal ideas. This language being used by the empiricist was right in line with the old Scholastic distinction between particular and universal ideas and directly opposed as well to the notion of mechanical nature inherent in the theory of animal automatism.

The important turn from the view of science as being based on a rational metaphysics to that of the experimental model of Francis Bacon came about as a result of an appeal to the word 'experience' even more than any actual experimentation taking place in France at the time, according to Rosenfield. Among the Cartesians there had been a disdain, in good Platonic fashion, of the evidence of the senses while the empiricists were insisting that animal must feel and think, since our own senses were leading us by experience to that conclusion. For the empiricists any *a priori* theory was simply not as reliable

as 'experience'. But Rosenfield notes that what the empiricists mean by 'experience' was not so much any actual experimentation as it was an attitude of turning toward and relying on common sense instead of the rabid rationalism of the Cartesians. (It is interesting to note here that Cartesian automatism never did gain converts to its hypothesis among the common people, nor in the salons of the elite either. The French people remained loyal to their own natural love of pets throughout the controversy.)

John Locke became a principal player in the shift of ideas in the transitional time between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in France that was marked by the growth of empiricism. His attitude toward Descartes' theory is clearly stated in a letter of 1704 in which he states that the Cartesians .. "against all evidence of sense and reason, decree brutes to be machines, only because their hypothesis requires it."<sup>22</sup> Due to his extensive experience in the field of experimental medicine he was convinced otherwise. To most animals Locke attributed five senses: seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and feeling, and he urged his fellow men to be kind and sympathetic toward all feeling creatures, mostly on the old ethical grounds that cruelty to animals might lead to cruelty toward one's fellow-man.

Locke's popularity was due in part to his French translator and publisher Coste, who was more interested in the glorification of animal intelligence than Locke himself. Locke's ideas on the subjects of animal nature from the *Essay* are published in a 1774 edition along with editorial comments by Coste which go much further than Locke toward attributing intelligence to animals. Pierre Bayle, a celebrated French journalist of Protestant background, was a freethinker who documented the history of the animal intelligence/soul

---

<sup>22</sup> Dagobert De Levie, *The Modern Idea of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and Its Reflection in English Poetry*, (New York: S.F. Vanni, 1947), p. 35.

controversy and helped to popularize some of the key figures in the debate, Locke included. Locke's ideas were also promoted on the continent by two French thinkers who were general precursors of empiricism there, Gassendi, a priest, who saw the difference in animal and human intelligence as simply one of degree, and Cureau de La Chambre, a doctor who was both a Peripatetic and a Gassendist, who actually added the adjective 'rational' to his discussion of the mental processes of animals. The whole discussion of animal soul in France was taken to a new and different level with the rise in popularity of the empiricist principles.

The turn toward real scientific enquiry, or at least the idea of it, and away from metaphysics leads to an interest in animal psychology and physiology as well as a general interest in physiologic psychology. This new scientific view of animal nature serves to confirm a common sense notion of animal mind that has fueled the animal soul discussion from before the time of Descartes. The notion of vitalism versus mechanism as an explanation of animal lives and nature in general also has a quasi-religious element which links up with the everyday lives of people as they relate to the animals in their lives. The idea of animal soul seems to be very much a part of the husbandry definition as well, the idea that animals have something like species specific personalities, their own kind of intelligence in an Aristotelian sense. The view that animals have something like a sensitive soul had definitely triumphed in non-technical French circles in the century following the Age of Descartes.

Voltaire (1694-1778) is one of the great popularizers of this notion in France. He uplifts the empiricism of Locke and offers what amounts to skeptical common sense opinions on animal intelligence. He makes fun of both the Peripatetic and Cartesian notions of animal soul and animal machine. He thinks in a

strictly empirical way that the faculties of perception and of thought reside in the material or physical organs of living beings. Spiritual soul is unique to human beings for Voltaire, also a popular nugget of religious common sense, and the other sort of soul is common to both man and beast. Against Descartes he believes that the principle essence of this soul is not thought but rather an organization of the body, a very Lockian idea. What we call intelligence is simply a matter of degree of organization, greater in men, lesser in beasts. This looks a great deal like the idea of a great chain of being in the manner of Leibniz, Locke and La Chambre. He also can be counted as a Deist, the new religion of the Enlightenment which stands firmly on the teleological view of nature. Voltaire was also one of the first to introduce the occasional humanitarian slogan into the debate when he argued against the evils of vivisection and of slaughtering animals for food. What is important to this discussion, however, is the fact that he was a writer of great popular and sentimental appeal in his day, much like Shaftesbury was in England, as will be discussed further on. What he was saying, in a very humorous and touching way, was believable to the common man.

The popular idea that animals are not insensible automata was part of the general humanitarian demands of the eighteenth century and the Age of Enlightenment which pressed the cause for the rights of the oppressed. Along with then contemporary notions of universal human rights, as expressed by Locke and others, beliefs like this one helped promote the beginnings of a practical movement for prevention of cruelty to animals and resulted in the *Loi Grammont* of 1850, a bill which effectively curbed the mistreatment of domestic animals. This bill of rights for beasts ultimately grew out of the controversy over animal soul fueled by the Cartesian hypothesis. The idea of mechanism



served to galvanize the mainstream opinion of ordinary people who essentially never stopped believing, at least intuitively, or in their hearts, that animals were part of the same network of biological kinship as humans.

Rosenfield sees the historical role of empiricists in the 1700's as essentially the same as Cartesians in the 1600's. Both causes were fueled by the forces of the Enlightenment ideals which moved away from traditionalism and toward a modern faith in human progress. The definition of animals rendered by empirical science served to further the cause of animal welfare in the 1800's and beyond.

### ***Cartesianism and Empiricism in England***

Harwood claims that English philosophers did not take the unmodified theory of mechanism as seriously as other Europeans on the whole. The reason may have been that , "England was the paradise of empiricism from Bacon to Hobbes and from Locke to Bentham",<sup>23</sup> and the publication of the *Discourse* added encouragement to that tendency. Nevertheless, philosophically everyone was lining up in the two different camps, Cartesian or anti-Cartesian, just as they had in France. The academics at Oxford came out solidly against Descartes, partly because they confused the materialism of Hobbes with this doctrine of skepticism and mechanism, and therefore condemned both as atheistic. The Platonists at Cambridge, on the other hand, mostly loved the theory because it put limits on the material world and raised the soul to a level far above earthly matter. But in general the Cartesian hypothesis had more impact in the experimental sciences and less in the philosophical arena in England. The method of skepticism and the desire to see and reason for oneself fell right in line with the British tendency toward empiricism and the

---

<sup>23</sup> Harwood, p.90.

vogue all over the continent for experimentation. In addition Descartes himself had, of course, advocated for experimentation in the *Discourse*.

Harwood gives an account of several of the strictly philosophical/ theological reactions to Descartes' theory that represent the non-experimental scientific side. The group of Cambridge Platonists can be characterized in part by Henry More, a brilliant intellectual light in the late seventeenth century. As a Platonic idealist More agrees with and welcomes much of the Cartesian system for many of the same reasons that the French neo-Scholastics of the church found it appealing, but he cannot accept the idea that extension is the sole attribute of matter and the resulting conclusion that animals are nothing more than automata. Nothing in nature can be seen as purely mechanical for More, the idealist, because for him the universe is pervaded with spirit.

The coolly logical procedure in the *Discourse* that leads to the conclusion that all of creation except man are mere stones is positively horrifying to this mild university don. In true English fashion (more on this later) he is frankly dismayed by the fate of animals, converted by ingenious logic into mere machines. He thinks Descartes is gravely mistaken mainly on very sympathetic grounds. Harwood notes that More is so carried away that he does not even attempt to use logic in his argument against the notion of automatism in animals. To More, Descartes' fear of animals being endowed with thought, lest they be thought to have immortal souls, and his insistence on referring to them as machines, has resulted in robbing animals of their lives. More then has to be counted as one of the Platonists who supported Descartes' metaphysical theory, but utterly rejected the hypothesis of animal automatism.<sup>24</sup>

Another of the natural philosophers of the mid to late seventeenth century, Ralph Cudworth, was regarded as the leading member of the Cambridge

---

<sup>24</sup> Harwood, pp. 91-92.

school, was a thorough-going mechanist who was interested, like More, in establishing the spiritual nature of reality. Cudworth flounders on his own logic in the defense of Descartes' theory, because he simply believes, with More, that there is much more to animals than the Cartesian account. A beast has a sensitive body, and even if it lacks an intellect; animals are "something else" besides matter, though he hesitates to call that something else spirit in the same sense as man's immortal soul is spirit. He feels that God could have granted souls to animals, but simply did not. Automatism as such did not matter so much to Cudworth as did the possible, dangerous, next logical step of seeing men as automata also. His pious mind was simply troubled by the appalling consequences of his logic, as was true of the French admirers of Descartes as well. Cudworth sought just to leave "this matter of animals" in the hands of God who after all does everything for the best anyway.<sup>25</sup>

John Norris of Oxford was a follower of the French neo-Scholastic, Father Malebranch, who, like More and Cudworth, finds a way to skirt the disturbing logical conclusions that follow from Descartes' theory by advocating that the mechanical world is at some basic level spiritual; and that we simply cannot penetrate the mind of God on the matter of animal intelligence/soul. He wonders if perhaps animals are both material and thinking, but then again that seems ridiculous since it would mean that pure matter is rational. If we do indeed grant feeling to a bird, an oyster or a louse we seem to have to grant them immortality as well, and he is especially troubled (again a uniquely English trait) by the notion that in slaughtering any one of these creatures we might be annihilating the body housing an immortal soul. Besides, he reasons, how could a loving deity permit these inoffensive creatures to suffer so? It is just easier to imagine that God must have made the whole world a huge automaton,

---

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, p. 93.

animals included. He too concludes by trusting God's understanding on the matter of animals, although he is truly alarmed at the monster his mind has brought forth and almost inclined to disclaim it therefore. He remarks on the practice of cruelty toward animals, that we had all best refrain from practicing it on the bodies of these creatures which the Lord of creation has subjected to our power, just in case our reason should happen to deceive us. This almost visceral revulsion at cruelty to beasts seems to be uniquely a British trait, or perhaps it is simply that they are the only Europeans who felt strongly enough about the matter to mention it outright.

In the field of experimental science we discover the same sort of reluctance on the part of Englishmen to accept Descartes mechanism in animals *in toto*. In 1620 Englishman, Francis Bacon, published his *Novum Organum* emphasizing the importance of the empiric scientific method and thereby neatly severing himself from Aristotelianism and scholasticism. Perhaps as a result of Bacon's work, no other European country took to the actual practice of the natural sciences as early and as vigorously, it seems, as did England, though later on they fell behind other nations, especially France, in the practice of experimental medicine. (French notes that this happened in the mid-eighteenth century and early nineteenth as a direct result of their unwillingness to use the practice of vivisection in their scientific experiments to the extent that it was being used in France and Germany.) Calling themselves the "invisible college" some key philosopher/scientists like Wilkins, Boyle and Wallis founded a little society to foster the natural sciences; and in 1660, after the Restoration, and with the encouragement of King Charles II, formally established the Royal Society for the Improving of Natural Knowledge. Their experimental interests lay mainly in the field of biology and its subordinate study of zoology, and members of the

Society met regularly to read scientific papers and share in all sorts of experiments with one another. Anatomy became a popular branch of study for this group and quite naturally dissection and later vivisection were an integral part of those experiments.

The study of anatomy led these men to some interesting conclusions. Harwood states that out of the honest doubt in the age of Descartes “arose deism, empiricism, a scorn of innate ideas, and the dawning suspicion that men were not the centers of the universe.”<sup>26</sup> The Cartesian hypothesis of the beast machine was responsible in part for an unprecedented amount of animal experimentation all over Europe as labs and dissecting theaters sprang up by the hundreds. Harwood claims that much cruelty to animals occurred in these laboratories because the “praiseworthy desire to know” had somehow “degenerated into morbidity and fiendish cruelty,”<sup>27</sup> partly as a result of the belief that animals were like machines and truly had no feelings through organs of sense, much less souls. But the actual study of animal and human anatomy led to quite a different conclusion, that animals were in anatomical fact very much like humans.

One of these experimenters, Dr. Thomas Willis (1621-1675), was in the strict sense of the word a true scientist, lacking in the great metaphysical learning of More and the other academics. He had made his reputation as a professor of natural philosophy at Oxford and later came to London where he established a fashionable medical research practice. He was responsible for giving the most complete account to date of the nervous system, among other important medical advances, and was a famous clinician as well. His extensive experimentation on animal bodies led him to the observation of the close parallel between men

---

<sup>26</sup> Ibid, p. 77.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, p. 99.

and beasts. Especially after his study of the nerves, he was far from admitting anything like the complete divorce of mind and body described in Descartes' writings.

Willis preferred to describe man as a two-souled animal, possessing a reasoning or cogitative soul that was separate from the body, and a fleshly soul that was coextensive with it. This second soul is part of the flesh and dies with a man's body. This scheme then allows for the beast to possess a soul as well, one that is both vital and sensitive. From his laboratory experiments Willis simply could not conclude otherwise. Animal and human anatomy were simply too similar to deny. Though Willis actually borrows Cartesian language for his theory, in which Descartes speaks of animal spirits and vital fires in the heart, Willis, the scientist, actually uses his knowledge of anatomy to support the concepts. He is at once fascinated and impressed by the Cartesian analogy of the watch and its ingenious maker, but also highly skeptical as a result of his growing knowledge of comparative anatomy and the conviction that animals are sensitive. Willis represents this experimental side of the "English philosophers who did not accept the unmodified mechanistic theory as an article of faith",<sup>28</sup> but did take what they required from Descartes' writings and apply it to their own theories.

Harwood feels that the most significant effect of the Cartesian theory of animal automatism may have simply been the willingness to use the knife. He proceeds to relate the resulting growing trend all over Europe toward dissection and vivisection as entertainment. (He admits, however, that the fashion for these activities began in "a praiseworthy desire to know" which had been made respectable over preceding centuries.) In modern times Vesalius, in the sixteenth century, makes dissection respectable, and by the seventeenth

---

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, p. 97.

century it is actually considered obligatory to adequate scientific knowledge. William Harvey uses many experiments in vivisection to establish the inductive evidence for his thesis of the circulation of the blood published in 1628.

There was then a general awakening of human curiosity in experimental science which gradually led to a disappearance of prejudice against both dissection and vivisection. The Royal Society itself represented the phenomenon quite well in that the weekly meeting of the “invisible college” described by Robert Boyle was centered on discussions of physical and biological matters, and that anything having to do with theology or politics was strictly off limits at least in the beginning. It should be noted that there were actually many non-scientists, including great lords, preachers and poets, involved in the Society, but the point is that many scientific developments, along with the popularity of Descartes’ theory, made this sort of experimentation entirely acceptable, if not much admired, in the seventeenth century.

In addition to these surgeons and scientists the general public seemed to develop what Harwood calls a passion for seeing animals ripped open and for watching the still quivering viscera. Decades earlier he claims that dissections were looked on as racy exhibitions by the upper classes in Germany, and that people actually paid admission fees like a theater production. In France, as well, dissecting theaters became the mode for upper class ladies, and art work of the period reflected this trend too, especially in Dutch paintings like Rembrandt’s famous *Anatomy*.

The gentlemen of the Royal Society, including Hooke and Boyle, took great pains to include instructions for the repetition of their often public experiments on live animals, so that others could, and often did, repeat them. Robert

Boyle's air pump experiment in which he introduced various live animals into an airless chamber, using a vacuum pump to extract the air, in order to observe the effect on them of being deprived of air, was endlessly repeated by amateur savants with access to a pump, including King Charles II. Robert Hooke likewise conducted a famous experiment designed to study respiration in which he cut open a living dog and used a bellows to inflate his lungs after cutting the dog's windpipe and removing ribs, diaphragm and pericardium and later part of the lung itself. Sir Kenelm Digby (1603-1665) was representative of the courtly amateur British gentleman of the seventeenth century who performed his own experiments and then proceeded to write his own interpretation of the Cartesian theory of automatism based on the results. Meanwhile in France the intellectually well respected Port Royalists, great enthusiasts for Descartes' theory, declared that there was certainly no harm in this sort of praiseworthy curiosity since the cries of a dying animal were no more than the "creak of the spit" anyway.

(In an article called "Humanitarian Attitudes in the Early Animal Experiments of the Royal Society" from the *Annals of Science*, Vol. 24, No. 3, 1968, Wallace Shugg actually claims that a close examination of the writings of Boyle and his colleagues in the Royal Society reveal no grounds for the claim that these scientists themselves were "fiendishly and morbidly cruel". Boyle and Hooke especially seemed moved by the animals' suffering and loath to inflict more pain where it was not absolutely necessary.)

In his *Antivivisection and Medical Science in Victorian Society*, Richard D. French notes that "William Harvey's brilliant demonstration of the circulation of the blood by means of vivisection stimulated a spate of animal experiment."<sup>29</sup>

---

<sup>29</sup> Richard D. French, *Antivivisection and Medical Science in Victorian Society*, (Princeton and London: Princeton University Press, 1975), pp. 15-16.



But by the eighteenth century these experiments, in England at least, were starting to produce disapproving comments in literary circles. The reaction against those whose hands were continually wet with gore and blood, even in the cause of scientific progress, was part of the most significant social phenomenon of the eighteenth century, the Enlightenment.

So Britain can be seen as more experimentally progressive as well as more philosophically sensitive in terms of animals in this same time period of the march of scientific progress than their counterparts on the continent .

### **Empirical Science, the Enlightenment and Religion in England**

The Age of Enlightenment stretches from around 1650, the date of Descartes' death, through about 1776, the date of David Hume's death, and is considered by historians to be the highest point of intensity, self-confidence and vitality in the cultural life of Europe and America. It was a period of unprecedented optimism and progress in human culture, fed in large part by the progress of science. Newton's *Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy*, published in 1687, was a centerpiece of a new way of knowing the world. It offered for the first time an integrated theory explaining how the world worked by using mathematical physics alone, eventually banishing the dark religious mystery of the universe represented by the middle-ages, along with its scholastic philosophy, religious dogmatism and absolute political systems. Newton's theory of gravity was a triumph of both reason and empirical principles, a law of nature that applied to all the physical world , yielding a picture of a mechanical universe, a world machine.

Descartes' theory had offered only a sort of lip service to empirical science, while relying on deductive logic and self-evident rational principles to establish

the truth of mathematical physics. The new man of science, as represented by Newton, began an empirical search for more laws of nature governing both the physical and human spheres, and soon an equally new model of philosophy was born in England. If there were harmonious orderly laws of nature governing the physical world being discovered by empirical science, then man, as part of nature, must also be governed by natural laws. John Locke, the acknowledged father of British empiricism began to write about what he called the laws of human nature in the late seventeenth century and these pronouncements quickly became the Enlightenment slogans for the extraordinary social movements that occurred on the European continent as well as in the new world.

Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, published in 1689, seems to echo and define the spirit of the age. Locke argued that all human beings were rational, equal, and possessed the natural rights of life, liberty and property with accompanying obligatory duties to not infringe on the rights of others. For the majority of historians his words justified the English revolution of 1688 which ended the absolutism of the British monarchy, the French revolution of 1789 and the American revolution of 1776. Jefferson essentially wrote those words into the language of the Declaration of Independence for the new United States of America. (Although I have made the claim earlier, using Wills analysis of Jefferson, that Hutcheson is a more primary philosophical influence in the *Declaration* than Locke.)

If Locke's political philosophy seemed to echo the reasoning part of the new scientific viewpoint, his empiricist epistemological principles emphasized the importance of sense data and experience in formulating natural laws. Locke's empiricism is a deliberate defiant rejection of the kind of philosophic rationalism

exhibited in Descartes' metaphysical scheme. Locke sees Newton's science as a construction based on reason using basic laws of mass, energy and motion to deduce this explanatory theory of the physical universe, but primarily it begins for Locke and the other British empiricists with observation of the data or facts of sensory experience aided by new scientific instruments. Locke was a physician who worked at Oxford as a researcher in chemistry and medicine alongside some of the most brilliant scientific minds of his time, including Boyle and Hooke. He worked closely with Dr. Thomas Sydenham, one of the pioneers in the treatment of infectious diseases. From these men he learned the value of sustained and patient observation as well as the discipline, humility and diligence required to grasp the secrets of nature using experimental science.<sup>30</sup> This empirical side of science is anti-Cartesian precisely because it turns away from building a great metaphysical scheme based only on reason. What we can know about the world comes to us through sensory experience and any philosophical or theological system which still relies entirely on rational principles denies this new truth of science and is bound for obsolescence.

In terms of theology, Locke, like all good Christian Englishmen of his time, still wants to include God in his world view, and his empirical successor, Bishop Berkeley, is even more determined in that regard. Locke and Berkeley both, in fact, sometimes feel compelled to betray their own empiricist principles, the mind as "blank slate", the principle of Ockham's razor, the denial of innate ideas and the view that all knowledge derives from sense data, in their attempt to accommodate theology. They hang on for dear life to the metaphysical principles of self, God and substance (only Locke in the case of substance) and ultimately betray their own empiricist programs, at least in a strict philosophical

---

<sup>30</sup> John Dunn, J.O. Urmson, and A.J. Ayer, *The British Empiricists*, (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1992) pp. 11-16.

sense. But, but contrast, the third British empiricist, David Hume, proves to be such a radical enforcer of the empiricist program in philosophy that he leaves the mainstream of Christian popular thought far behind him. Although Hume will be referred to later in regard to his extremely timely and important new twist on moral theory which follows Hutcheson.

In the mainstream of English culture, religion simply had to adjust to the Newtonian mechanical world and the ideals of the Enlightenment in order to survive. It is at this point that mainstream religion finds a safe harbor for the belief in God in an old idea called the argument from design. This rational teleological proof for the existence of God, the idea of which originates with Aristotle, was used in the fourth century by Saint Augustine and in the thirteenth by Saint Thomas, and is based on the wonderful order, harmony and beauty that is found throughout nature. According to the new form of this argument, order, of the kind documented by Newton's mechanical laws of nature, cannot come into being simply by chance. The sort of perfection now being revealed by natural physical science could only come about through the intelligent plan of a designer and that designer is, of course, God.

This argument from design became the most widely accepted proof of God's existence in the Age of Enlightenment, mainly because it fit so neatly with the truths of the new science. The argument provided a bridge over the teeming waters of natural science to religious meaning in the world. Never before in the history of the Western world had humans had so clear a picture of the magnificent orderliness of the physical universe as evidenced by the Newtonian world machine and revealed in the rapid progress of scientific discovery and new technological inventions. The new discovery of the vast order, regularity and harmony of the natural world also included the sense that all of creation

was benevolent towards mankind who was, it seemed most certainly, the primary beneficiary of this scientific progress.

The argument from design was at the heart of the new version of Christian doctrine called Deism. Deism represented the Enlightenment response in theological terms to the demand for rationalism and the belief in this new scientific reality. It was the concept of God made consistent with reason and science. Deism refers loosely to that group of religious thinkers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in France and England who attempted to establish a harmony between reason and revelation. They were often considered extreme in their assaults upon traditional supernaturalism and dogma, mainly because they declared revelation to be superfluous to religious truth and reason to be the touchstone of that spiritual validity. Ethics and religion were seen as natural phenomena and the traditional God became an expression of this wondrous whole which was nature.

John Locke's *Reasonableness of Christianity*, appeared in 1695 and marked out the ground of the controversy for a long time. Typically, in terms of the movement's ideology, he passes quickly over the miracles and prophecy of the scriptures and tries instead to discover the content of faith. The theological controversy centered on what on rational grounds ought to be believed, not on whether reason ought to be trusted in religious questioning.<sup>31</sup> (In France this popular trend toward Deism is exhibited in the writings of Voltaire who is much influenced by the English thinkers of his day (1694-1778).) In general this Enlightenment religion fell under a wider religious umbrella called natural theology whose fundamental premise was the ability of man to construct a theory of God and of the world out of the framework of his own reason and a sort

---

<sup>31</sup> W.R. Sorley, *A History of English Philosophy*, (New York and London: G.P. Putnam's Sons, The Knickerbocker Press, 1921) p. 143.

of reasonable probability of science, as opposed to “revealed theology”, which sees God and divine purpose as not open to unaided human understanding. The older revealed theology had claimed that this sort of knowing about the world was by definition supernatural, and, therefore, ultimately mysterious and resistant to man’s understanding. Religion enlightened by science and human progress was starting to dispel the mystery.

### **Natural Theology and the English Moralists, The Idea of a Benevolent Moral Sense in Humans**

Richard French claims, “Where science emerges as a widespread social pursuit, the historian frequently finds that it acquires some sort of justificatory rationale, some linkage to the societal context”.<sup>32</sup> According to French, British science found its rationale in the religious enterprise of natural theology which reached its peak of social significance in the early years of the nineteenth century. What French refers to as empirical natural theology originated with Aquinas, with its lineage dating back at least to Plato, and flowers in the modern era with the growth of seventeenth century natural science. Empirical natural theology is defined by French as “the systematic treatment of what human reason may learn of God and His attributes from the study of the universe, man and nature.”<sup>33</sup>

By the period of the early nineteenth century in England, natural theology was seeking to prove the existence and perfection of the Deity through the study of the evidence of purpose and design in the physical world and also by the use of inductive inference, empiricism and reason. For natural theology the pursuit of science and its accomplishments actually constituted an act of piety.

Reason and empirical discovery were simply another avenue for finding

---

<sup>32</sup> French, p.352.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid

knowledge of God besides the sacred texts. Revelation was not left out entirely, however. French says, "the investigation of physical phenomena in the context of natural theology confirms, supplements, and interprets the image of God, which He has chosen to open to man through the special revelation of the Bible."<sup>34</sup> This religiously sanctioned scientific investigation will lead philosophically to the common acceptance of a new concept of animals through the moral sense theory of Hutcheson as inspired by Shaftesbury.

### The Earl of Shaftesbury

In the early years of the eighteenth century one book appears which, according to Harwood, becomes one of the most influential contributions to the main stream of English benevolent thought of the time. The author is the third Earl of Shaftesbury, whose grandfather, the first earl, was a patron of Locke and who was himself educated under Locke's supervision. His influential work entitled, *Characteristicks of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*, is published first in 1711. By 1790 it has gone into eleven English editions and is translated into French and German, having been much admired in those countries as well. It is clearly a popular and widely read version of a new kind of ethical theory.

Shaftesbury's orientation is Deist and like almost all philosophers of his time he starts with God. His God is decidedly interested in far more than the affairs of men; his is a God of well-wishing to every living thing, whose creation is the best of all possible worlds. Harwood claims that the idea is generally Leibnitzian, God as the ruling mind of the universe, a world where, "whatever is, is right," in the words of Pope, from his then popular, *Essay on Man*. The Earl's writing style is non-technical and polished to the degree of being artificial, but it

---

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, p. 352.

is perfectly pleasing to the contemporary tastes of his day. He in company with many others of his day was an enemy of the selfish theory of conduct closely connected with Thomas Hobbes. (Politically Hobbes' theory is also associated with Locke's self-interested rights of the individual.) Shaftesbury places man in a social context and his theory is communitarian, not about self-interest, except as it effects the whole community of beings. This is another example of a new Enlightenment ideal, mankind seen as part of a community, that is really an old Greek ideal revisited.

According to Shaftesbury, man is by nature full of natural affections that are directed to the good of the species to which he belongs, but also to whole company of other beings in the world. Man also naturally possesses a universal sensitiveness to suffering wherever he finds it. By virtue of these natural affections we as human beings rejoice when others, human or non-human, rejoice, and grieve over the troubles of others as well. Harwood states that for the first time, with the publication of the *Characteristicks*, philosophy begins to resent cruelty to animals, not simply because it is unedifying or might cause us to be cruel in turn to members of our own species, but because it is cruelty. This fellow feeling or sympathy that is natural in men binds us all in a world where "man is a partner, not a king".<sup>35</sup>

Shaftesbury is writing against a sort of pessimistic view of man's place in the world expressed by Bernard Mandeville, and echoing Hobbes, who objects to a too facile optimism regarding human nature common among Deists. (Mandeville is the author of the popular, *Fable of the Bees*, which many people found very disturbing in its negative view of man's role in the world.) But he is also writing against the revealed religionists of his day, for he is the staunchest

---

<sup>35</sup> Harwood, p. 130.



foe of the anthropocentric interpretation of the Biblical story which they represent.

It is singularly important to note that Shaftesbury is considered the foe of Christian (revealed) dogma, but at the same time represents one of the most sincere teachers of the ideals of brotherly love and universal benevolence in history. It is also interesting to note that though he is counted among the Deists, and is certainly considered dangerously unorthodox by even the liberal leaning church scholars, he still remains a loyal churchman throughout his life. Harwood notes that he seems to be at least as effective in the teaching of these ideals as any Christian sect had ever been. Many Christians probably related to his writings in spite of the orthodox opinion of his philosophy simply because he was such an enormously popular and widely read author. His influence on public opinion in his day can hardly be overstated; the common man, mostly Christian, was hungry for the kind of optimism about human life that he was selling.

### **Francis Hutcheson's Christian Communitarian Ethics Applied to Animals**

The doctrine of the moral sense which Shaftesbury introduced on a popular level gets much more systematic treatment at the hands of Francis Hutcheson, professor of moral philosophy at the University of Glasgow from around the 1730's to mid-century. In his *An Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* (1725), he introduces the work by saying that he is explaining and defending the principles of Lord Shaftesbury. In this *Inquiry* as well as in, *An Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections, with Illustrations on the Moral Sense* (1726), and the posthumously published, *System of Moral Philosophy* (1755), Hutcheson puts a more psychological

interpretation on the idea of moral sensibility and gives more systematic form to the ideas of Shaftesbury. Even more importantly he democratizes and Christianizes the theory of moral sense made popular by Shaftesbury and thereby makes it more acceptable to the common man. (Berkeley found Shaftesbury's ideas to be anti-religious and godless.) He was also on the cutting edge of theological controversies which defined the Scottish Enlightenment and eventually created a more receptive and enlightened attitude among many clergy and academics both there and throughout Britain.

Hutcheson was concerned with combating the prevailing narrow theological spirit of his Presbyterian community in Scotland and Ireland, the pessimistic, sour, morality of Puritanism which viewed man as flawed and self-interested. According to Thomas Mautner, in his 1993 work, *Francis Hutcheson on Human Nature*, which is an interpretation of two lesser known primary texts, Hutcheson was seeking a middle ground between traditional Puritanism and the egoistic theories, like those of Hobbes, which represented materialism, Epicurean type hedonism, and atheism.

As it turns out, Hutcheson's writings, at least on a popular literary level, have a substantially negative effect on the principle of selfishness found in both traditional Christian moralists and in Hobbes' principles, both of which represent a very pessimistic view of man's natural moral tendencies. In contrast, the moral sense theory is optimistic where man is concerned and places humans teleologically in a natural state of benevolence that is sanctioned by God, not in a state of egoistic self-interest. The general public loved Shaftesbury, and later Hutcheson, precisely because of this optimism. The pessimism of the traditional theologians, which took the form of man's sinful state after "the fall", defined "the good" as something remote, rare and ultimately

supernatural, whereas this new philosophy of the moral sense gave mankind an integrity and hope with the self-esteem building notion that they were somehow naturally good and well meaning creatures after all.

Hutcheson tried hard to base his moral sense on Lockian empiricism, the inner sense, but as he continued to develop the concept over the years of his writing it became decidedly more of a universalistic hedonism, based entirely on a capacity for feeling which he calls moral perception, then becomes a functioning "faculty" (in the last work, *A Short History....*, it is actually called conscience) which was more like Aristotelian virtue in an attempt to avoid an isolated subjectivism.

Mautner sees Shaftesbury and Hutcheson as leading the way back to the moral theories of the ancients, whose teachings had been banished in the age of empiricism for fear of the scourge of the empiricist doctrine, innate ideas. Shaftesbury had pointed in that direction and Hutcheson followed through to find a middle course between both the theological and secular theories of self-interest which emphasized a morality of divinely ordained or rationally determined rights and duties. Hutcheson's main sources for these Greek ideas are Cicero and the Stoic moralists, and later Marcus Aurelius, of whom he had recently done a translation.

The new, but old, theory was about virtue, and Hutcheson defined virtue as benevolence. All actions and states of character for Hutcheson are virtuous to the extent that they naturally appear to the moral sense to be benevolent. And all benevolence or virtue flows from an *agape* type of love of others, a sort of goodwill or well wishing for the happiness of others. All virtues can be seen as versions of benevolence. Even justice reduces to benevolence for Hutcheson; it is extensive benevolence in a calm, stable and universal good will to all.

Furthermore this benevolence is ordained by God and manifest in nature, which according to Hutcheson's biographer (1900), W.R. Scott, conveys to man the idea of the social constitution of the universe. All moral acts are a sign of the benevolent character and God is the Supreme Benevolent Cause in a teleologically ordained world. We recognize moral truth, the benevolence principle, just as we do beauty, the aesthetic truth in the world, by a natural internal sense that we all possess.

The author of Nature has much better furnish'd us for a virtuous Conduct, than our Moralists seem to imagine, by almost as quick and powerful Instructions, as we have for the Preservation of our Bodys. He has given us strong Affections to be the Springs of each virtuous Action; and made Virtue a lovely Form, that we might easily distinguish it from its Contrary, and be made happy by the Pursuit of it.<sup>36</sup>

Hutcheson sees the individual person's life as a microcosm through which this moral sense or faculty puts us in touch with the truth of "the whole" or macrocosm of ethical ends which is the purposeful, benevolent and socially constituted universe. This macrocosm shows us the necessity of social affections for the good of the whole and what he calls the naturalness of "kind affections and purposes". Philosophy's object is to make men happy by leading them to "that course in life which is most according to the intention of Nature."<sup>37</sup> The "*vox naturae*" is the "*vox Dei*" for Hutcheson, who borrowed some of this teleological part from Joseph Butler, a bishop of great theological reputation at the time. This whole yields a universal good of benevolence to all the other parts of the system. The "chief good" of benevolence has an Aristotelian quality of pursuing arete or human excellence which is a disposition of calm benevolence that renders goodness of character while it allows us to perform

<sup>36</sup> Hutcheson, Francis, *An Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue, in Two Treatises. I Concerning Beauty, Order, Harmony, Design, II Concerning Moral Good and Evil*, (London, 1728, Fourth Edition, Corrected) p. xiv.

<sup>37</sup> Scott, W.R., *Francis Hutcheson*, (Cambridge:At the University Press, 1900), p. 248

our human functions well. But it is also a Stoic dictum expressing a “love and reverence” of the Deity, as well as world citizenship. Ethically it renders that benevolence which is individual into what is universal, God or Nature. Moral value is cosmological value.

Before all of this system building, which Scott says comes only toward the end of his writing, benevolence for Hutcheson was an inborn psychological trait, and moral and aesthetic judgments were connected to the human tendency toward general happiness which he saw as the standard of goodness or virtue. In this respect Hutcheson is a forerunner of the utilitarians, in fact, he was the first to use the phrase, “the greatest happiness for the greatest numbers”, later made famous by Bentham. Sorley also notes that he anticipated Bentham as well in an attempt to formulate a calculus of pleasures and pains.<sup>38</sup>

In this extensive investigation of these moralists, I have come to believe that Hutcheson’s writings and teachings are pivotal in the attempt to discover the origins of the husbandry ethic as it relates to animals, because he was one of the first legitimate philosophers in a growing crowd of eighteenth century moralists in Britain to undertake an explanation of the legitimate rights of animals, and because he gives his moral sense a theological basis, or motive force, which makes it palatable for ordinary Christians people. His language and inspirational teaching was later to become an addition to the groundswell of sympathetic moral feeling toward animals as is expressed in the nineteenth century writing of Youatt, Drummond and Bray which will follow. Scott says that Hutcheson left behind a collection of writings that were very likely to be convincing to the “plain man” even though his system building would be seen as inconsistent to the metaphysician. The following passage comes from his widely used classic textbook for university students.

---

<sup>38</sup> Sorley, pp. 158-159.

But men must soon discern, as they increase in numbers, that their lives must be exceedingly toilsome and uneasy unless they are assisted by the beasts of the gentler kinds and easily tameable, whose services men need most, cannot be preserved without the provident care of men ;

...Reason will suggest that these animals, slaughtered speedily for food, perish with less pain, than they must feel in what is called their natural death; and were they excluded from human protection they must generally perish earlier and in a worse manner by hunger.....There's nothing therefor of injustice or cruelty, nay 'tis rather prudence and mercy, that men should take to their own use in a gentler way, those animals which otherways would often fall a more miserable prey to ....wolves....dogs....vultures.

..And yet all useless cruelty toward the brute animals is highly blameable<sup>39</sup>

He also used terms like those of Rousseau's social contract, actually seven years prior to Rousseau, to interpret the Old Testament covenant idea where animals were concerned, "that right of mankind to take the most copious use of inferior creatures..."<sup>40</sup> According to Hutcheson, the society of the Israelites was viewed as a theocracy, and they covenanted with their God, Jehovah, to uphold their side of the contract with God in exchange for the benefits he offered to them.

Hutcheson tried to work out a relation of man and beast on a theological compactual basis that was very close to the ideas that were destined to electrify Europe in the work of Rousseau's, *The Social Contract*, of 1762. In his last published work of 1755, *System of Moral Philosophy*, Hutcheson first asked what legitimate moral rights animals might have in a world where man has gained the upper hand. He saw the relationship between the two species as an alliance in which both parties received better protection against certain evils in the natural world than they would have been able to do singly. The alliance (see Midgely for the historical details) naturally introduces the question of

<sup>39</sup> Hutcheson, Francis, *A Short Introduction to Moral Philosophy*, (1747), (Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung Hildesheim, Facsimile Edition by Bernhard Fabian, 1969), pp.148 -149.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, p. 149.

moral rights between the parties on whose relationship the contract is built. And rights here are concerned with benevolence, rather than self-interested ownership, since justice reduced to that calm, stable good will to all throughout Hutcheson's scheme.

Hutcheson acknowledged that man, being the more powerful of the two parties in the alliance, has a certain moral right to happiness that takes precedence over all others. The brute has no right that trumps man's when it comes to support, but, as in the Old Testament contract of God with man, the contract between man and beast offers very definite benefits to beasts.

Harwood's account of the theory states,

Beasts are given protection against violent death from a host of enemies that might lie in wait if the world society were outside man's control: and if no stables were built to house them and no food saved through the lean months by the master's foresight, they would certainly be far worse off than by this sacrifice of their by no means enviable freedom in a state of ungoverned nature.<sup>41</sup>

For Hutcheson man also has a right to slaughter these animals because reason tells us that is surely why we bother to care for them, the utilitarian side of the ethic's justification. But killing them is so opposite to man's natural instinct of compassion that we actually need the command of divine revelation to grant us that right. The notion, expressed here by Hutcheson, that there might be any question of our right to slaughter beasts, is a thoroughly English eighteenth century nagging humanitarian doubt. He reasons animals into subjection, but needs revelation to actually give us the right to kill and eat them. Revelation shores up his conscience in the end, as it surely does for the majority of ordinary church-going Englishmen as well. Like Shaftesbury, Hutcheson thinks that our natural compassion towards animals and the loathing

---

<sup>41</sup> Harwood, p. 163.

we feel at the sight of their suffering is precisely the divine part of the contract that benefits brutes. God has gifted animals with man's God given natural tendency toward benevolence. When we cause them pain and distress unnecessarily in the cashing out of our "human interests" ( a phrase to which he gave much priority) we are acting in both an inhuman and an immoral manner; we are breaking the contract.

Hutcheson also feels that it is a breach of the contract to interfere with the natural enjoyments of beasts. In general it would simply be wrong to assume that animals have no right to make demands on their more superior masters. In fact, he draws out an effective analogy of beasts to human babies. Neither of them have what we would call a sense of right and wrong, but we are still bound to respect their rights to pursue their own kind of happiness, just as we would the similar rights of any adult human. Harwood notes that the term "rights" becomes part of ordinary speech after the doctrines of Rousseau gained currency and in conjunction with the writing of the Declaration of Independence as well. The language of rights comes into popular usage at close to the same time as Shaftesburian terms like "moral sense" and "natural affections" begin to be identified with the age.

### **David Hume and Adam Smith**

Other English philosophers in the direct line of descent from Shaftesbury's ideas of the moral sense and the moving power of sympathy are, of course, David Hume and Adam Smith, who are also considered part of the Scottish Enlightenment. These two are, of course, not just any "other philosophers", but as Sorley refers to them ( actually in the words of J.H. Burton, chronicler of Hume), "there was no third person writing the English language during the



same period, who has had so much influence upon the opinions of mankind as either of these two men.”<sup>42</sup>

Hume whose name is also closely associated with the idea of the moral sense discusses animal sympathy in his *Treatise of Human Nature*, and though his ideas are not identical with Shaftesbury and Hutcheson, certainly not concerning the religious aspect, he does speak of a “strong feeling of acquaintanceship and a love of kind” in animals that enables them to have a sense of and sympathy with “each other’s pain and pleasure”<sup>43</sup>, just like that which he says humans have for the happiness of others of their kind. We all desire the happiness of others and the sentiment of morality is described as a feeling for their happiness. Sorley notes that this emphasis on the quality of pleasure or happiness gives Hume a place in the utilitarian succession as well.

Adam Smith, who was actually a student of Hutcheson for a while, and greatly indebted to him for his own theory of value and ideas concerning the division of labor, says in his, *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, “sympathy is the fundamental fact of moral consciousness”. For Smith it seems impossible to conceive of any sensitive being, human or otherwise, whose happiness we should not want to promote. We naturally want to promote the happiness of those nearest to us in kind, but proportionally we also desire the happiness of all species.<sup>44</sup> The fact that Thomas Jefferson is so influenced by all three of these Scottish writers in particular does, in fact, give support to the positioning of the ethic towards animals over on the new American continent.

---

<sup>42</sup> Sorley, p. 163.

<sup>43</sup> Harwood, p.133-134.

<sup>44</sup> Harwood, pp. 133-134.

### **The English Clergy and the Movement Against Animal Cruelty**

I will now give evidence for an important claim in the formation of this work, that some of these more liberal Protestant ministers were actually on the cutting edge of the social movement that would extend the trend of humanitarianism to the rights of animals. I will show how these clergy interpreted the theological message against cruelty towards animals for the average British churchman.

#### **The Reverend James Granger**

By 1772, Harwood claims that the moral question of the rights of beasts in an anthropocentric world moves into the English pulpit, a position of great power in English society for the molding of public opinion. The language of sermons by divines like the Reverend James Granger seems to be taken less from rights language and more directly from a Shaftesburian/Hutchesonian idea of moral sense, according to Harwood. Although Granger still believes animals to have been created for the benefit of the human race, and agrees with Hutcheson that humans have a right to destroy animal lives to benefit their own, he draws on the Old Testament text from Proverbs xii, 10, "A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast", and bases his sermon, therefore, on God's teaching regarding man's rights where beasts are concerned. Man has no right, he insists, to inflict unnecessary pain on God's creatures who are our brothers and sisters in God's kingdom and to whom we are bound by both ties of sympathy and resemblance. Again, Christian benevolence extends to all God's creatures

#### **The Reverend Humphrey Primatt**

After the American war is underway and the popular theory of the rights of man are well publicized by the Declaration, all of Europe is ringing with the

political doctrine and its liberal language of rights. Thomas Paine and Benjamin Franklin are much admired as heroes all over Europe, and it seems natural that the rights language might be applied to beasts as well. The Reverend Humphrey Primatt is the prime churchman who applies the language in his *Dissertation on the Duty of Mercy and Sin of Cruelty to Brute Animals* in 1776, the very year of the American revolution. He speaks of the “reasonable and equitable claims of beasts” and because the humanitarian climate is right (in part because of the popular secular writing of Shaftesbury) he is immediately understood by his contemporaries. He denies that this is a world made for man’s enjoyment alone and like those moral sense philosophers and ministers who proceeded him sees the resemblance of beasts to humans in their passion, sense and appetites. Theologically Primatt sees man’s authority or dominion over the earth not as a natural right, but rather a gift from God, who has also given us immortality and reason. Beasts who enjoy neither of these gifts of man do have a right to happiness that is at least as inalienable as that of man, and we have absolutely no authority to put these beast to torture. Indeed, since they cannot enjoy the afterlife as we can, we probably owe it to them to make their time in this life more pleasant. Primatt applies the theory of the social compact between God, man and our fellow creatures to everything that breathes and also speaks with passion of the rights of black men held in slavery.

### **The Latitudinarians**

In order to add more evidence of Christian support for the movement in Britain toward reform in the treatment of animals we will look backwards for a bit now in history. In a 1934 article called, “Suggestions Toward a Genealogy of

the 'Man of Feeling', R. S. Crane makes the claim that from the period of the Restoration well into the eighteenth century a group of Anglican divines from the Latitudinarian tradition were responsible for a movement toward universal benevolence and good nature and away from the darker aspects of the Puritan creed, which had put more importance on faith and the theological dogma regarding man's sinful nature. These English clergymen were regularly dispensing from their pulpits, before Shaftesbury or Hutcheson, an ethical and psychological propaganda of Christian humanitarianism in the period from about 1660 to about 1725. Samuel Clarke's words from a sermon in 1705 on *The Great Duty of Universal Love* is typical of the sermons, delivered in hundreds of pulpits in London and the provinces, of those who had inherited the benevolistic spirit of these Latitudinarians.

The true End and Design of Religion, is manifestly this; to make Men wiser and better; to improve, exalt and perfect their Nature; to teach them to obey, and love, and imitate God; to cause them to extend their Love and Goodness and Charity to all their Fellow-Creatures, each in their several Stations, and according to the measure of their several Abilities; in like manner as the universal Goodness of God, extends it self over all his Works through the whole Creation....<sup>45</sup>

These clergy were making a decisive move against what they considered to be a more Stoic interpretation of the theological message, especially of the New Testament. This interpretation made exaggerated assumptions about happiness as true knowledge or faith without reference to the believer's involvement in the world, or what is more commonly called good works. The Puritan/Stoic idea upheld rationality and distrusted the passions, while these clergymen sought to uplift the idea of man's natural emotions being the inspiration for good works. The image of the tenderhearted Christian whose

<sup>45</sup> R.S. Crane, "Suggestions Toward a Genealogy of the 'Man of Feeling'," *A Journal of English Literary History*, Vol 1 (December 1934): 212.

emotional response to suffering moved him to these good works was a peculiarly unique character trait of the eighteenth century. Clarke wants to claim that this sort of “sentimentalism”, the description of the “man of feeling” was originally distinctively Christian in its background and expression.

These divines pictured the heart of man as naturally good, as over and against the idea of original sin, and this optimistic appraisal of human nature was a manifestation of the revolt against Puritanism that actually mirrored the secular revolt against the Hobbsian view of man as selfish as previously discussed in more detail. Crane notes that later on in the early nineteenth century many of the clergy, like Isaac Barrow, were preaching more obviously and directly as anti-Hobbesists, but whether against Puritanism or against Hobbes the message was essentially the same. Man was a naturally good and feeling creature whose sympathetic feelings could be enhanced by the Christian message. Men were to imitate God’s caring for his creatures by acting out a tenderhearted caring of their own for their fellow creatures.

### **De Levie’s Thesis: The Calvinist Clergy, the Old Testament and the Free Churches**

In his 1947 PhD. thesis titled *The Modern Idea of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and Its Reflection in English Poetry*,<sup>46</sup> Dagobert De Levie sees another reason for the ready reception in England of the humane attitude toward animals that centers on the church. After the Reformation the medieval dogma of the church was replaced by the absolute authority of the Bible, and the scriptures became the only theological orientation in Protestant countries. Of the two distinct branches of Protestantism that were the heritage of the Reformation,

---

<sup>46</sup> Dagobert De Levie, *The Modern Idea of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and Its Reflection in English Poetry*, (New York: S.F. Vanni, 1947)

Lutheranism put the New Testament in the foreground while Calvinism emphasized the Old Testament.

English church life was more closely associated with Calvinism than Lutheranism and this was especially true of the Free Churches, non-Anglican, which as a rule recruited more of their members from the socially lower classes. This group of parishioners could read and understand the Old Testament without any special study, according to De Levie, and, in fact, often read the Bible aloud as a regular family activity. Among many of these faithful, but more often in the parson's own home, the reading of the Bible was an integral part of the day's work. The day's work would naturally include the care of the household's domestic animals, and among the pentateuchal precepts to be found in the Old Testament was, of course, the prohibition against cruelty to animals. It was natural that the rising injunction against cruelty to animals came from the example set by the clergy to these parishioners.

The most responsible office in ecclesiastical life was filled by the clergyman, who on so many occasions, and particularly in stirring times, was in closest touch with his parishioners. No matter whether he were an academician or not, whether he were an Anglican or a dissenter, unquestionably he contributed greatly to molding the English national character. The English theologians spread the humane ethics of the Bible, and prepared the English for the ideals of humanity. In consequence of the clergy's initiative there came into being the famous humanitarian movements and organizations which spread from England, one of which was the movement for the prevention of cruelty to animals. The idea of compassion as in the Old Testament came here into practice.<sup>47</sup>

This is precisely the point made by the later literature which I will cover from the nineteenth century. The national character is oriented to Christianity with an emphasis on the Old Testament and it is this element that primarily effects the formation of the ethic where animals are concerned.

---

<sup>47</sup>Ibid, p. 50.

De Levie also makes a case for what he calls the minority church clergy's role in the movement in England for the prevention of cruelty to animals, especially as it relates finally to the formation of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in 1824. By the 1700's almost all English people were part of the Anglican State Church, and only a twentieth of the population did not belong to the State Church and was affiliated with the Free Churches. These churches had developed their own minority morals, partly as a result of having been persecuted themselves by the English government, according to De Levie, and became the primary spokesmen for criticism of government affairs in general and more specifically for the rights of other minorities. He notes that the denominational identities of the four pioneers of the English anti-cruelty movement were actually Roman Catholic, Irish Protestant and Jewish, with only one belonging to the State Church.

So far we seem to have established this much. The findings of empirical science have so effected man's moral conception of animals, by establishing the similarities of men with animals in a physical sense, that, mainly through the Enlightenment ideals of the moral sense as a legitimate theologically based morality as described by Hutcheson and others, the message of kindness to animals is being presented by some of the British clergy as standard Biblical morality at the end of the eighteenth century.

### **Jeremy Bentham's Utilitarian Doctrine and Animals**

Not long after Primatt and some of the other divines had preached their gospel of kindness to animals from the theological point of view, one of England's most famous writers, Jeremy Bentham, began to publish his own more rational justification for the rights of beasts. Bentham's 1789, *Principles of*

*Moral Legislation*, actually makes its appearance due to the urging of some of Bentham's friends who were uncomfortable with William Paley's writings anticipating Bentham's ideas. (Sorley reports that the book had actually been written and printed some nine years earlier, but that Bentham was always careless about the actual publication of his writings.) Bentham's utilitarian doctrine, often called philosophical radicalism, became a school of thought and practice and an effective political force in England for constitutional reform. The movement was led by Bentham's associate, James Mill, the politician and father of John Stuart Mill. Bentham's doctrine was clearly rational in a practical sense and decidedly non-theological, but his position on the rights of animals was essentially identical to the Christian position. Bentham's arguments simply lacked the biblical texts that had been so numerous in the urgings of humanitarians and divines toward increased humanity in the treatment of animals.

For Bentham, "the question is not, Can they reason? nor, Can they talk? but, Can they suffer?"<sup>48</sup> He placed the discussion on purely rational grounds based on the same scientific evidence used by the Christian philosophers, but harking back to the early Deists, with their emphasis on reason, instead. He noted that once the human race treated black slaves as they now treat animals, and that there would come a day when man would realize that tyranny over animals was just as unjust and unreasonable in a utilitarian sense as was the tyranny over black human beings. Of course, the rest of the world had not caught up with England on these moral fronts at that point in time, but in British publications of the turn of the century Harwood notes that these arguments grew "increasingly platitudinous" after Bentham.

---

<sup>48</sup> Harwood, p. 168.



**Paley's Natural Theology,  
Theism Meets Utilitarianism**

We will now look at the influence on the spread of the doctrine of kindness to animals by William Paley, whose teleological theory brings biology, theology and humanitarian values together in a sort of theological utilitarianism. Paley's writing was very influential in the period of the early nineteenth century especially as an academic textbook of the day and proves to play a major part in shaping the theological message of the three writers whose work will be explored in the next portion of this thesis.

Although variations on the natural theology theme had been present in the literature of scientists, poets and divines since the seventeenth century clearly the definitive statement came with William Paley's, 1802, enormously popular work, whose lengthy title said it all: *Natural Theology, or the Evidences of the Existence and Attributes of the Deity Collected from the Appearances of Nature*. The book starts with his famous analogy of the watch and watchmaker to nature or natural objects and God. It goes on at length to describe the intricate structure and function of various living organisms and the appropriate inferences about the attributes of the creator, all with enthusiastic fervor for the wonders of nature. His delight in his subject is infectious; it is the classic statement for the sweet reasonableness of a divine purpose at work in nature.

Paley sees the most important attribute of the Deity as being his beneficence and goodness and sees man's role as one of upholding and supporting that goodness and harmony found in nature wherever possible. The joys and pleasures of the creation require that each organism should share a just portion of happiness and Paley sees man's duty, as nature's highest achievement, to help minimize pain and suffering in the world.

The common course of things is in favor of happiness.....God intends our happiness, not our misery....No anatomist ever discovered a system of organization calculated to produce pain and disease.....

At this moment, in every given moment of time, how many myraids of animals are eating their food, gratifying their appetities, ruminating in their holes, accomplishing their wishes, pursuing their pleasures, taking their pastimes!<sup>49</sup>

In his 1921, *A History of English Philosophy*, W.R. Sorley calls Paley's world view a theological utilitarianism whose ideas were not so much original as simply accurate reflections of the views of his time, including those of Locke, Shaftesbury and Bentham. "Probably no English writer has ever excelled Paley in the power of marshaling arguments or in clearness of reasoning".<sup>50</sup> In fact it is because of his impressive thinking and writing skills that he earned a long life as the author of academic textbooks in his time, which, of course helped to give his ideas even more popular appeal.

One of his opinions in response to his fellow philosopher, John Locke, bears repeating here as it relates to this popularization of the theological message under discussion. Locke's writings, in particular, Sorley notes, were followed by a "whole literature of attack and defense" because, "Locke had the gift of making philosophy speak the language of ordinary life."<sup>51</sup> In Paley's case the response to Locke takes the form of an answer to what Sorley refers to as "the problem which faced all followers of Locke-- the consistency of an analysis of action in terms of personal pleasure and pain with a theory of morality in which benevolence is supreme."<sup>52</sup> It was consistently one of Hutcheson's problems as well, which he too solved by reference to a larger teleological interpretation.

<sup>49</sup> William Paley, D.D., *Natural Theology or Evidences of the Existence of the Attributes of the Deity*, (London: S. Hamilton, 12th edition), p. 460-468.

<sup>50</sup> W.R. Sorley, *A History of English Philosophy*, (New York and London: G.P. Putnam's Sons, The Knickerbocker Press), p.196.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid, p. 124.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid, p. 193.

And, as it turns out, Paley, the great borrower of ideas, is actually using the material of another of the respondents to Locke's theory, Abraham Tucker, a psychologist of the day who happened to be interested in physiological doctrines of the nature of mind, but also showed an enormous talent for the sort of introspective analysis practiced by many English writers, according to Sorley.

The Lockian problem is that if man's own individual happiness is always his motive then he can only seek the general, or public/social, happiness when his action also serves his own happiness. All common sense morality almost seems to vanish when reduced in this way to the utilitarian calculation of selfish interests or hedonism. The conjunction of selfish interests and the good of society happen only because of the rewards and punishments that are dealt to a person by the lawgiver, according to Locke. Locke distinguishes three sorts of law, and Paley follows him closely in that. One is the law of honor, which according to Paley, is a personal matter and has little regard for the general happiness. The second is the law of the land, which is also inadequate as regards the general happiness, because it omits so many duties and is so often found to be difficult, if not impossible, to define. The third kind of law is the law of the Scripture, or that of God, which is alone, and most obviously sufficient, Paley claims. Thus his famous definition taken from his *Moral Philosophy*, that "Virtue is the doing good to mankind, in obedience to the will of God, and for the sake of everlasting happiness."<sup>63</sup> This conclusion leads to the full argument of his later works which of course include the whole natural world as the just recipient of this "doing good" by humankind. This is very similar to Hutcheson's solution which is a sort of universalistic Christian hedonism.

There was a series of lengthy responses and elaborations on the Paley theme which came out in the 1830's called the Bridgewater Treatises. These

---

<sup>63</sup> Ibid, p. 197.

arguments concerning natural theology and its justification became what French calls, “part of the intellectual heritage of successive generations of the literate classes.”<sup>54</sup> These later writings further popularized the argument from design and the belief in the action of divine providence in natural phenomena.

Paley’s theodicy or Theism is based on the principle of human freedom and responsibility as outlined in the Genesis story of the Fall, and that doctrine requires the kind of active and intervening God described in his theory. In what turns out to be a very unscientific interpretation, especially after the story of evolution serves to shore up the basic assumptions of scientific naturalism, Paley sees evil in the world as instrumentally retributive for man’s sinfulness, a not uncommon view at the time. French points out that this anti-scientific bias is actually one of the active forces in the anti-vivisection movement, and is tied to the influence of Evangelicals within the movement, a sect which never embraced natural theology, but relied instead on justification by faith and more literal interpretations of the Bible.

### **Paley’s Influence on the Writers of Propaganda for the Anti-Cruelty Movement in England**

Although Paley is not specifically writing about animal husbandry it is clear that he sees man’s duty to animals as promotion of their happiness as it is to all God’s creation. Paley’s writings prove to have a widespread influence on writers like Youatt, Drummond and Mrs. Bray who represent the mid-nineteenth century propaganda of animal welfare being encouraged in England by the Royal Society during that time. They all mention him by name and Drummond quotes him.

---

<sup>54</sup> Ibid, p. 353.

The appeal to the common sense morality of the ordinary Englishman that is found in this literature was based on the biblical teachings which were part of the lower classes' normative ethic. Paley, as well as many others mentioned previously, offered a perfect motivation for those in more educated circles to justify the reintroduction of these biblical teachings to the more uneducated masses in behalf of their animal welfare cause. The justification for man's use of animals came from the Genesis story in which Noah is given authority over all the beasts, and the normative ethic for the treatment of animals could be shown to be found in the Bible too. If what was perceived as the new normative ethic regarding animals could be shown to be simply the old morality of the Bible revisited, it would surely be accepted more readily than Bentham's ideas, for example, by the public at large, who were after all the Bible oriented working class. Sometimes the Bible was, in fact, the only book in the home.

De Levie, Harwood and M. Dorothy George in her 1926, *London Life in the XVIIIth Century*, all document a tremendous amount of suffering and cruelty involving both humans and animals, that reached a peak in the mid-eighteenth century. The influence of poverty and the use of cruelty towards animals (and humans) as cheap entertainment was a function of the life of the working class poor, especially in the urban areas during this period. Craftsmen and women worked twelve hours a day, six days a week, in sweat shop conditions and on their days off were fond of spending time at public hangings, pressings to death or throwing refuse at and teasing those in the pillory. Public floggings and burning at the stake, of women especially, were also being carried out during this time, and when there were no people being cruelly tortured one could always go to the race track or catch a bull, bear or dog-baiting. De Levie quotes

John Dennis', *The Age of Pope* , "Men who could thus torture a human being were not likely to abstain from cruelty to the lower animals."<sup>56</sup>

Another popular entertainment was attaching fireworks to the animal and watching them literally die of fright. George notes that people were often given a holiday in London on the occasion of a public hanging, and everyone would get falling down drunk and turn out to mock the accused on his or her long public journey to the gallows. William Hogarth's illustrations of the spiritual and moral corruption of his time pictured these cruel excesses and brought many humanitarian reformers to a new realization where animals were concerned with his famous, "The Four Stages of Cruelty", which depicted the persecution of animals by the lower classes. At least in London these kinds of activities were going on daily in the public streets and would have been hard to ignore. Many humanitarian movements in the eighteenth century sought to improve conditions for these working people and the anti-cruelty movement regarding animals became just one among these.

Reformers saw that these were the people that a movement against cruelty to animals needed to target, because these were the people who had to deal with domestic animals on a daily basis. An educated English gentleman might own and ride his horse, but it was usually his groom who tended to the animals' needs. A landed gentry man like Jefferson might own and use the pigs he sought to breed or purchase, but it was the farm hand who dealt directly with the animal. Leaders of the anti-cruelty movement saw the practical importance of "selling" these ideas to those who actually dealt cruelty or kindness to animals on a regular basis. The Bible was the central text of normative ethics for this lower class of animal tenders, so the theological justification of the God given "rights" of those animals needed to be emphasized from pulpits and, for those

---

<sup>56</sup> De Levie, p. 14.

who were literate, in the form of educational literature. On purely pragmatic grounds the animal welfare messages of the nineteenth century needed to be clearly understood and grounded in the biblical message, and natural theology provided that justification.

In a little volume called, *Animals and Cruelty and Law*, Noel Sweeney claims that the cruelty documented by George continued into the nineteenth century, "England in the nineteenth century was a place where cruelty *per se* was the norm and cruelty to animals second nature."<sup>56</sup> After the Ill-Treatment of Cattle Act, popularly called "Martin's Act" in 1822 proved very hard to enforce, mainly because it was framed in such a way as to give rights to the owner of the animal, not the animal, that act was amended, then repealed, finally resulting in the Protection of Animals Act in 1911. It could be argued that this 1911 Act was promoted in part by the sort of literature (Drummond, Youatt and Bray) that served as propaganda for the movement. In this new act "Offences of cruelty" were committed by those who would:

- (i) beat, kick, ill-treat, over-ride, over-drive, over-load, torture, infuriate or terrify any animal.
  - (ii) cause or procure or, being the owner, permit any animal to be so used
  - (iii) by wantonly or unreasonably doing or omitting to do any act, or causing or procuring the commission or omission of any act cause any unnecessary suffering to any animal
  - (iv) being the owner, permit any unnecessary suffering to be so caused to any animal
- is guilty of an offence of cruelty [Section 1]<sup>57</sup>

The notion of "unnecessary suffering" was, of course subject to the magistrate's interpretation, echoing the Lockian idea that the law of the land was not always reliable as a motive force for moral behavior, and once again giving support to the "law of God" as perhaps having much more moral force where ordinary

<sup>56</sup> Noel Sweeney, forward by Peter Singer, *Animals and Cruelty and Law*, (Great Britain:WBC Ltd, Bristol and Maesteg, 1990), p. 8.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid, p. 9.

Christian individuals were concerned. Support for the new law could be seen as support for God's law and could be expected to be enforceable, at least in part, because of the moral force of that Biblical message which was being disseminated from pulpits and pamphlets in mid-nineteenth century.

### **A Short Summation**

The evident cruelty of scientific experimentation in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries had caused a reaction among the English people and their popular writers that was to provide the impetus for a social movement unique in the world. The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals was formed in 1824 specifically to enforce the 1822 Act and it was the first animal welfare society in the world. The scientific discovery of the similarities between animal and human bodies that were revealed in the course of the study of anatomy during the early years in modern medical research eventually led to an almost opposite view of that of Descartes' beast-machine.

The forces of modern empiricism and Protestant religion then joined together and found a satisfactory synthesis in the doctrine of natural theology. This peculiarly English moral sense emerged as this humanitarian style religion which quite naturally embraced the cause of animal welfare and finally promoted that humanitarian ideal as Biblically inspired. We will now look at representative samplings of this nineteenth century literature aimed at persuading the ordinary citizen in Britain and beyond that duty to animals was indeed a Christian virtue.



### Part III

#### ***The Literature of Agriculture and Animal Welfare in the Nineteenth Century***

The doctrine of natural theology as found in Paley now becomes the vehicle for the general teaching of the new ethic about animals, and the literature of the nineteenth century expresses the ethic using a Christian utilitarian approach. In my search for the husbandry ethic as it played out in the literature of the nineteenth century, I found some extremely varied sources from both British and American books and journals, but the general themes of all the writings were surprisingly similar in their messages. The following surveys cover books published in Britain from mid-nineteenth century that appear to be quite typical of the various genres they represent.

Drummond's entirely theological work represents a sort of nineteenth century version of a self-help book, something a person who was trying to become a more moral and happy person might look to for practical suggestions from a learned minister on a particular subject, in this case, a Christian's duty where animals were concerned. Youatt represents a more practical guide to animal

care, but at the same time, his is a theological treatise as well, containing detailed study of various passages from the Bible and aimed at the lay churchman and farmer. Mrs. Bray's book is obviously for the instruction of young children and intended to be used in the classroom as a teacher's aid. What all these genres of literature have in common is a propagandistic bent. They are all aimed at persuading the average Christian person that animals ought to be treated with kindness, and that it is our Christian duty to do so. All seem aimed at providing theological justification for the idea of valuing and caring for our fellow creatures in language that ordinary Christians could understand.

**William H. Drummond,  
An Essay from a Prominent Minister**

William H. Drummond, D.D. M.R.I.A., who also proclaims in his title page that he is an honorary member of the Belfast Natural History Society, is the author of *The Rights of Animals, and Man's obligation to Treat Them with Humanity*. In this short work, published in 1838, even his table of contents is instructive of his concerns. (see Table I, p.149 of this text) The title of Chapter III, for example, poses the question, "Does Christianity inculcate the duty of humanity to Animals?", and answers resoundingly that indeed "humanity to animals is a duty accordant with its whole spirit".<sup>58</sup>

His first theological point in support of this claim is that, "Christianity is throughout a religion of mercy--of mercy not limited to any tribe or nation, not to the sphere of rationality itself, but extending to the extreme limit of life and

---

<sup>58</sup> William H. Drummond, The Rights of Animals, and Man's Obligation to Treat Them with Humanity (London: John Mardon, Dublin: Hodges and Smith, 1838), p. 15.

sense.”<sup>59</sup> And from the New Testament’s account of the words of Jesus he reminds us.

He who said, ‘Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy,’ and ‘Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father in heaven is merciful,’ could never have meant that the animal creation should be excluded from the sweet influences of that virtue.<sup>60</sup>

So in one stroke he sets aside the traditional Augustinian hierarchy often endorsed by the church and proceeds to give an account of the Biblical origins of mercy. In support of this alternate interpretation he immediately begins a review of the moral law where the treatment of animals is concerned as he sees it revealed in both the Jewish tradition and the teachings of Jesus.

He starts by recounting the positive parts of the Jewish tradition in spite of some obvious prejudicial remarks (see\*) with which he apparently feels his reading audience of Christians will no doubt agree. Throughout the text he admonishes us to notice that Jesus, who is the product of the Jewish law and has come to fulfill the prophesy by confirming the moral law and “arming it with new authority from heaven”<sup>61</sup> would certainly have criticized this tradition had it not already fulfilled the spirit of the law which dictates this form of mercy.

According to Drummond nothing could have been more abhorrent to Christ’s nature or made him more indignant than cruelty to animals. But apparently the Jewish tradition contained nothing that he might have criticized on that score.

“The Jews, though chargeable with many offenses and transgressions of the divine law, remembered the declaration of their wise king, that ‘a righteous man is merciful to his beast.’ They might be justly reprehended, many of them at least, with avarice, selfishness, bigotry, and hypocrisy;” and these vices the Great Teacher did not spare; but they could not be taxed with cruelty to the animal tribes. They had no gladiatorial sports, nor *Ludi Circenses*, and were altogether ignorant of those refined amusements which are fostered by some of the enlightened and

---

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

Christianized nations of Europe, at such an expense of life and suffering. They kept cattle for such uses as Providence designed, and let the working classes of them rest on the seventh day, according to the commandment. They did not tax the horses beyond their strength and fleetness by running them against time. They had no bull-baiting, nor cock fighting, not bear-garden, nor worrying of dogs and cats, nor any of those spectacles which afford so much delight to our sons of 'fancy'. Neither had they schools for vivisection, nor were they skilled in those culinary arts which are taught by gluttony and cruelty to gratify the taste of the gourmand and epicure. Had such practices been tolerated by the Jewish law or followed by the people, we may be well assured they would not have escaped the special condemnation of the great benevolent Reformer, as the whole spirit of his religion condemns them now.

And continuing in his praise of the Jewish tradition, as regards the question of humane slaughter, either for the use of animals as food or for religious practice, he speaks eloquently.

But did not the Jews slaughter numerous animals for the altar? Unquestionably. Their religion demanded the sacrifice of both birds and beasts. But even in these as much lenity was manifested as is compatible with the act of depriving animals of life. They did not fatten their birds by arts which nature detests, nor bleed their calves to whiten their flesh, in the modes practised by our accomplished butchers, nor madden their beeves by baiting them with bulldogs. By such acts they would have thought, and justly thought, their offerings profaned, desecrated, and turned to an abomination in the eyes of the God of mercy. They brought their victims in prime condition from the stall, or the fold, or the dove-cote, and by a single stroke or section (*una sectione*, Buxt.) dis severed the cords of life without subjecting them to any previous injury. They had officers properly trained up to the performance of this necessary duty, who, with instruments keenly edged and properly adjusted as to form and size, executed their task speedily and effectually. This we learn from Buxtorf, Maimonides, and other writers on Jewish antiquities. (and here he includes a footnote: "Since it is necessary," says Maimonides in his *Mere Nerochim*, "that animals should be killed for the sake of good food and nourishment, the law enjoined that kind of death that was easiest, and forbade them to be tortured by a cruel and lingering mode of slaughtering."<sup>62</sup>

His references to the blood sports enjoyed by other great European civilizations as well as the horse racing, bull-baiting, and cock fighting of his

---

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., pp. 15-17.

contemporaries, the “Fancy”, are meant to point out the humane and merciful aspect of Jewish customs by biting comparison with these so called modern times. His examples seem to unfavorably compare the debasements of modern life’s relationship of man to animal with the actual sacred connection that was part of the everyday life and ritual of these Biblical people.

Following this long passage on Jewish tradition and Christ’s apparent approval of these practices, he makes another point regarding the duty of Christians in modern times. Since Christians are obligated to follow the example of Christ, because that is what he and his apostles enjoin us to do, then all we must do to ensure that Christians behave rightly in this regard is to show that Christ himself is distinguished for these virtues of humanity and compassion. For Christ is “the great model to which they should assiduously labor to conform”.<sup>83</sup>

He goes on to say, “Our Lord’s compassion was no doubt chiefly exercised on the human race; but it is no more than just to conclude that it flowed thence to the animal creation.” And here he makes a point that is crucial to the understanding of the New Testament message, “for had it not, that virtue would in him have been incomplete.”<sup>84</sup> This mimics the previously mentioned Biblical theme found in the emerging husbandry ethic of the previous century that all of God’s creation deserves the respect that God has given it by the very act of creation. And further that Jesus comes to earth in order to model the caring of God for creation.

In chapter VI he continues this theme as he gives us the biblical justification for the use of animals by man, and titles this section, “Man’s Right to the Use of Animals Limited”. According to Drummond “all charters and privileges have

---

<sup>83</sup> Ibid. p. 17.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

their limits", and although men have rights to the services and use of animals there is no "just law, human or divine" which permits man to inflict on them unavoidable pain or "destruction among them without imperative necessity".<sup>65</sup>

He quotes from the apocryphal book of Wisdom,

God ordained man through his wisdom, that he should have dominion over the creatures which he hath made, and order the world according to equity and righteousness, and execute judgment with an upright heart. (ix.2,3)

Thou layest all things that are, and abhorrest nothing which thou hast made; for never wouldest thou have made any thing if thou hadst hated it; and how could any thing have endured, if it had not been thy will? or been preserved, if not called by thee? But thou sparest all; for they are thine, O Lord, thou lover of souls. (xi.24.26)<sup>66</sup>

The Lord is the "lover of souls", both human and animal, whose charter invests man with the "privilege to reign" and not with "authority to tyrannize" according to Drummond. From Genesis he reminds us that God's bounty in creation was meant for animals too, "To every beast of the earth, to every fowl of the air, and to everything that creepeth on the the earth wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat" (i. 28,30.) The wants of what he calls "the animal tribes" were provided for at creation, and so we in turn should govern them "with righteousness and mercy". And we ought also to know that the "beneficent Parent of all" intended that we who are "constituted as the lords of the lower creation" ought always to use those powers given us with "discretion and lenity". And finally, as regards man's duty in relation to the charter,

But though amply empowered to conquer, to subdue, and to tame, he has no privilege from heaven to go forth, like a demon of destruction, wantonly and unsparingly to slaughter and destroy. The indulgence to use is not to be misinterpreted into a liberty to abuse the gifts of Providence. We may pluck the fruit, but not hew down the tree.<sup>67</sup>

---

<sup>65</sup> Ibid. p. 46.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid. p.47.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

Animals too have a charter of rights from God. All “beasts, birds, fishes, insects, as well as men, were formed to taste the pleasures of existence” and were given “innumerable sources of enjoyment, passions, appetites, affections, feelings, solitary or social, conjugal, parental, and to some extent intellectual and moral”. All of these powers in animals have their “proper objects of gratification”, and man cannot, “urged by no necessity, but for his sport or gust” destroy their happiness and in so doing “frustrate the will, and counteract the benevolent designs of the Deity”.<sup>68</sup>

He makes a reference to Paley, the eminent philosopher/theologian of his day, whose explication of natural theology had proved so popular in England, and who “when speaking of the human frame, observed that there is a marked design in every part for some beneficent end”. Drummond remarks that we can extend this description to all the universe, as Paley actually did, where we can obviously see that all things cooperate for the general welfare and happiness of all creation and animated beings. We can conclude that God was “clearly intending the good of his creatures” and for us to act otherwise would be “to act in opposition to the will of Heaven”.<sup>69</sup>

God gives us dominion but, “By what limits, it may be asked, is man’s right to the use of animals bounded?” Drummond clearly asserts that, “We must be guided here by reason, by conscience, and a sense of duty to God”, and that each of these principles will extend or contract the limits of our rights by their strengths and weaknesses. We must determine what “our real uses and necessities require” and not be guided by “the gratification of any cruel or luxurious propensity”. We should “never kill for the mere sake of killing, nor for sport, nor pastime, nor for gluttonous appetite, nor epicurean taste, nor from

---

<sup>68</sup> Ibid. p.48.

<sup>69</sup> p. 49.

antipathy, nor idle curiosity". Likewise we should not "tax the working animals beyond their strength, nor bring into contact those that are naturally hostile to each other", this last in reference to the cock-fighting and bull-baiting of his day.<sup>70</sup>

***William Youatt, Advice on Theology from a Veterinarian***

Moving on to a similar but more technical work, another London publication seems to have been written almost simultaneously with Drummond's by William Youatt, a veterinary surgeon, whose book, *The Obligation and Extent of Humanity to Brutes, Principally Considered with Reference to the Domesticated Animals*, came out in 1839. Of all those works researched in this paper this one seems to contain the most profound statements of the husbandry ethic.

Youatt starts this fairly practical guide for the care and treatment of various species of animals with an extensive introduction to his essay centering on the philosophy and theology of the moral relationship of men and animals.

He begins with a sort of social hedonism theory, typical of the English writers previously surveyed, stating in his first line, "Man was made for society". His claim is that it is in man's nature as a human to enjoy the happiness of others and to have a strong sympathy for the "weal and woe of those around him". This is the source for him of the words, "humane" and "humanity". By definition, as men, we are opposed to cruelty, and we view those whose habit it is to inflict pain and suffering on others as being "devoid of one of the most important and elevated characteristics of our nature". We love our neighbors as ourselves not only as the great law of Christianity, but also as the great law of nature, according to Youatt, sounding like a natural theology advocate right in line with Paley and the other humanitarian Christians. And this law "may be legitimately

---

<sup>70</sup> p. 51-52.



traced to that sympathy with the pleasures and pains of others which is implanted in every breast".<sup>71</sup> This language certainly has the ring of Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, Hume and Smith.

This sentiment seems to him to be expressed by every ethical writer of his day, each of whom admits this human trait on the basis of both reason and the scriptures. But how many of these writers, he asks, extend this humanity toward "the innocent and serviceable creatures--brutes as they are termed--that minister to our wants" ? Apparently he is not aware of Drummond's work in progress, but he is doubtless aware of the writings of other members of the, then named, Society for the Suppression of Cruelty; so his question is somewhat rhetorical. In any case, he takes pains to point out that, "the claims of the lower animals to humane treatment, or at least to exemption from abuse, are as good as any that man can urge upon man."<sup>72</sup>

He goes on to say that as recently as the beginning of the nineteenth century, it was the "avowed opinion of some of the British legislators" that men had the right to wantonly torture their own animals, and that any attempt to prevent this practice was considered an "interference with the rights and liberties of man!" Furthermore, that during that period any advocate of the claims of brutes would be considered either "a fool or a madman".<sup>73</sup>

But now, close to mid-century, according to Youatt, a new day has dawned, and he quotes from the opening address made at the annual meeting of the Society for the Suppression of Cruelty in May of 1837, by its president: "The lukewarm indifference of some, and the brutal scorn displayed by others, are gone", the president states, "and he who professes to honor his Maker no

<sup>71</sup> William Youatt, The Obligation and Extent of Humanity to Brutes, Principally considered with Reference to the Domesticated Animals (London: Longman, Orme, Brown, Green, and Longman, 1839) ,p. 1.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, p. 2.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid, p. 2.

longer dares openly to sanction cruelty to the brute creation. Even those who have not improved with the improving spirit of the day", the orator reports, "have changed their tone, and veil their heartlessness", resigning themselves to the social fact that it is no longer acceptable to defend cruelty toward animals with the liberty or debasement of "the manly spirit of the British nation". It is no longer a partisan issue in the government either, "but a new and generous principle of civilization and of humanity-- to be attained and diffused".<sup>74</sup>

This then is, as Youatt sees it, the general social attitude of his day, and it is in this receptive climate of opinion that he expects to find an attentive ear for his own statement of the principles of the obligations of man to the brute creation. It is his plan to state these principles more plainly and systematically, so that they may be "brought home to the business and bosoms of men moving in the various ranks of society, and in different ways connected with the enjoyment or the suffering of the inferior animals." He wants to accomplish this without an appeal to the passions, but by sober reflection on the consistent practice of the spirit of humanity that is "harmonious with the spirit and doctrines of Christianity, and the duty of man as a rational and accountable creature".<sup>75</sup>

By simply stating what he has seen and heard in his veterinary practice he hopes to win the reader over to the belief that this humane spirit is a worthy guide for dealing with animals. But first he finds it necessary to give an account of this humane spirit's origin which bears out the biblical message, because his bottom line, just like Drummond's, the text of whose sermon he refers to in his first chapter, will be about the implications of what it means to be a Christian.

In this first chapter, titled, "The Obligation of Humanity to Animals, as Founded in the Scriptures", he starts by quoting the long passages from Genesis I and 9

---

<sup>74</sup> Ibid, p. 3.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid, p. 4.

describing first, creation, and later, the delegation of power over the animals from God to man following the flood.

In this chapter he takes a long look at the issue of man's power over the brute creation. He notes that from the scripture we have most definitely been given authority by God over this other part of creation, but he is concerned with the theological extent of that authority. He asks how we can know the extent of this delegated authority, and answers that we need to examine the nature and intention of what he calls, this gift, by looking at our knowledge of the character of the donor. The giver of the gift of supremacy and authority, for Youatt, is he who delegated this power over beasts; is also he who gave these creatures life; and is he who binds himself to them by the same kind of tie as a human parent has to his child. He notes, "...the kindest feelings of earthly parents must be exceeded by his in proportion to the degree in which he is more perfect than they. A good father lives for his family." Anyone who would consider inflicting unnecessary pain on one of these creatures simply has never given a thought to "the interest which that all-wise Being must feel in the welfare of his offspring ...and the indignation with which he must behold every instance of wanton cruelty".<sup>76</sup> God's parental concern for all his creation is the model for the obligation and extent of this authority, in other words, for good husbandry.

Like Drummond, Youatt also mentions a kind of "boundless diffusion of life", a happiness in all of creation, and here he also quotes the famous and popular Dr. Paley. "It is a happy world after all," according to Paley, in his *Natural Theology*, and this happy world is fairly teeming with a natural urge toward the goodness of life itself. The Being who is responsible for this urge to live must, therefore, surely have the mandate to protect and promote that force built into any delegation of power over it. This Being could not possibly wish us, "To

---

<sup>76</sup> Ibid, p. 6.

interfere as much as man's puny malignity will permit with this boundless display and triumph of benevolence". In fact, according to Youatt, God most certainly intended that we should pursue our own happiness "without serious interference with the comforts of the inferior animals....and, at the same time, to increase the enjoyments of the lower beings". And, in fact, as regards the last part of this prescription for this humane relationship, "under the superintendence of an intelligent humane owner, there is not a domesticated animal that is not far happier than he would have been in his native forests wild." (This sounds much like Hutcheson's interpretation.) Furthermore, Youatt feels that the practice of keeping domestic animals can actually provide us with a sort of "school in which some of our best virtues might be exercised and nurtured."<sup>77</sup>

Youatt then proceeds a step farther as regards this delegation of authority from God to man. God never stops caring for his creatures. His watchful eye is on these creatures all the time, as seen in Psalms: 50.10, "Every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills". There is a sense in which all these creatures are in reality the property of God, and therefore, the one on whom they depend for support. These biblical descriptions must necessarily give us the most exalted ideas of, "the superintending care of our common Father ..... Let the cruel man read this description of divine benevolence, and lay it to his heart."<sup>78</sup> We cannot possibly read of God's divine care for these creatures and then follow that reading with wanton cruelty towards these creatures, even if we claim in an earthly sense to "own" them.

Youatt's final reference to the biblical source comes from the story of Noah and the great flood. This story's most enduring message is that of the covenant

---

<sup>77</sup> Ibid, p.8.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid, p. 9.

or promise that God makes to Noah as he emerges from the ark with his whole “family”, which includes all the pairs of animals he has taken on the boat with him, by God’s instruction. Noah and his human family have just built an altar and offered a burnt sacrifice to God in gratitude for his mercy in sparing them from the devastating flood. From Genesis :

And God spake unto Noah and to his sons with him saying, I accept your tribute of thanksgiving; and behold I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you, and with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the field with you. This is the covenant which I make between me and you, and every living creature. (Genesis, ix, 9, 10, 12)

This covenant is the final biblical proof that even though man has been singled out to receive the highest gift of creation in the form of this authority over it, he nevertheless is, in one sense, merely a part of the larger family of creation. God is bestowing his blessing on this larger family. “The universal Sovereign, the universal Parent, is bestowing his blessing on his innumerable family. All are his offspring, all share his blessing.”<sup>79</sup>

How could these holy bonds be annulled? When did that happen, asks Youatt? When did man commit this unnatural breach of relationship; when did he break this covenant? We were, at the time of this covenant, all bound together, “if not by an equal blessing, yet by the blessing of the same Creator”, and anyone who abuses this relationship that has been bestowed by our common benefactor could simply not “have soberly and seriously read these first chapters of their Bible”.<sup>80</sup> He seems to be calling the ordinary Christian to task for not knowing his Bible, or worse, for ignoring the message to be found there.

---

<sup>79</sup> Ibid, p. 12.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid, p. 13.

As he proceeds in his review of the Old Testament, Youatt remarks next on the singularly important, where this subject matter is concerned, laws of Moses, and the emphasis to be found in these laws upon the promotion of the smooth mutual relationship between man and the lower animals. Next to the pure promotion of the worship of Jehovah in Old Testament writings, “there was not a point so uniformly and systematically pursued as the the promotion of humanity towards the inferior creatures”. This seems to me to be a very strong claim, and makes one wonder if he really had the knowledge of the whole of the Old Testament that would back that statement up. He speaks of the affectionate spirit of these early books of the bible toward the dumb members of the great family of God which “gives so remarkable a prominence to subjects connected to their welfare.”<sup>81</sup> He seems to be deliberately highlighting these texts to suit his needs, but then again he speaks like a preacher, not an animal doctor, and that is how preachers are supposed to speak in his day.

The Jews were historically an exclusive nation with an extraordinary interest in maintaining their separateness from other peoples by their customs and their prejudices, partly for the assurance of the continuing purity of the race from which the Messiah was destined to come. One of the special marks of this separateness, in addition to their national faith and attachment to their country and to each other, was the expression, to an unusual degree, of this “spirit of kindness and humanity towards the lower animals”.<sup>82</sup> The author then proceeds to quote specific instances of these laws, and in each case he goes into great detail in the exegesis of the text’s meaning, in a normative sense, for the ordinary Jewish citizen’s rules for everyday living.

---

<sup>81</sup> Ibid, p. 13.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

He starts with the passage in Deuteronomy regarding the keeping of the Sabbath and the admonition to let one's animals, as well as people, rest for the day. This is important because it would have helped promote the virtue of compassion for other creatures less fortunate than themselves, including slaves. But he goes on to reinforce the moral lesson with the reinterpretations of the law from New Testament passages in Mark, Matthew, and Luke which admonish the husbandman to break the law against working on the Sabbath, for himself, if it should conflict with the ongoing welfare of the animal. The animal still needs to be watered, pulled out of a pit when he falls in, and generally made comfortable in a normal fashion, because it is still in the spirit of the law of faith and the character of the festival of the Sabbath to do good and be merciful.

He also makes reference to the law in the fourteenth chapter of Deuteronomy against cooking a kid in his mother's milk, and also the prohibition against killing both the cow or ewe and their offspring on the same day. The lessons are a sort of natural moral intuition about the revolting nature of both of these practices, as well as the implication that this sort of insensitivity tends to deprave and harden the heart of the human caretaker. Both of these practices do not exactly give true pain to the animal, but an appearance of cruelty that the Jewish culture did not, could not, tolerate given the benevolent spirit of the law.

In the twenty-second chapter of the same book, as well as a passage from the twenty-third chapter of Exodus, the faithful Jew was also charged with the collection and protection of stray animals which belonged to someone else, even if they belonged to an enemy. In fact, an animal in distress required immediate help no matter who the owner might be, for refusing assistance to an enemy's animal would simply be a case of disgraceful and entirely misplaced

revenge. In this regard Youatt quotes the Jewish historian, Josephus, who speaks of the fundamental laws of the Mosaic code:

It is not lawful to pass by any beast that is in distress, when it is fallen down under its burden, but to endeavor to preserve it, as having a sympathy with it in its pain." (Josephus vol. i, b. 4, c. 8.)

He uses the example, also from Deuteronomy, of the admonition toward not molesting the bird who is sitting on her nest in the process of collecting her eggs, and explains that the object of this particular law is "to prevent any unnecessary cruelty from mingling with the proceeding".<sup>83</sup> The practice of collecting both the eggs and young ones of quails and plovers was quite common among these Israelites in both their desert dwelling and the mountain country of Judea. To take these fruits of the labor of the mother bird was to cause her pain enough without also depriving her of her life and liberty. He refers to Dr. Primatt's reference to this particular passage as a prime example of the duty of mercy toward brute animals. It is Primatt's opinion that no other Biblical passage displays the goodness and condescension of the Creator in the law of Moses so well as this one of the bird on her nest, because it seems on the surface to be so trifling an issue, yet represents so vividly the spirit of the law regarding sympathetic care for brutes.

Before leaving the subject he makes a contemporary reference to the cruel habit of school boys in his day of bird-nesting, a game in which the boys are in competition to gather as many eggs as possible and then make sport of wastefully smashing them all when the competition is over. He principally blames the parents of these youth for not inculcating the duty of kindness nor the insight into the bird's common sympathetic feelings with those of human parents toward her eggs and offspring. Having felt a parent's affection themselves, human parents ought to instill in their offspring that same respect

---

<sup>83</sup> Ibid, pp. 16-17.



for the feelings of fellow creatures who are themselves parents, and ought not encourage such a thoughtless game.

Youatt also refers to the injunction in the same book of the Bible against ploughing one's fields with two different species of animals yoked together; the ox and the ass are the examples mentioned in Deuteronomy. There is, he claims, nothing more dreadful than trying to exact from a slow and weaker animal the same amount of work as one would from a stouter and more speedy one. And here he appeals to the horsemen of his day who know only too well how many good horses are ruined every year by this inequality in yoking practices. He also points out that in Biblical times the combination of ox and ass could be interpreted as the combining of a ruminant with a non-ruminating animal as well, so that one animal was feasting during his work while the other fasted, and that too constituted a kind of abuse of the animals.

Youatt also refers to the law of Deuteronomy against muzzling the ox that is treading out the corn. This also represents the benign character of the Jewish religion by noting their strong sensitivity to the animal who is forced to labor hour after hour over the tempting corn without occasionally being able to gratify his longing for the food which is constantly before him. The inclusion of this sort of concern in the laws is meant to remind the people of God's interest in "the comfort and enjoyment of the lowest classes of his family."<sup>84</sup>

He makes two further points in this section, the first, from Isaiah, is to Jehovah's care of the tribes of Israel being analogous to the care of a shepherd for his sheep. He refers to the kindly habit of the shepherd who gathers lambs in his arms and leads gently those of his flock who are with young. He then jumps ahead to the famous injunction from "our Savior" in the New Testament book of John, chapter ten, in which Jesus refers to himself as the good

---

<sup>84</sup> Ibid, p. 19.

shepherd who is willing to lay down his life on behalf of the sheep. He also mentions Christ's reference at another time in Matthew, Chapter 23, to God's care as being like that of the mother hen who gathers the young chicks under her wings for protection.

And lastly, Youatt refers to the distinction drawn by Solomon in Proverbs: 12.10, of the difference between a good and a wicked man. "A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast" whereas a wicked one is cruel in all his "feelings and acts". This old proverb is certainly as true in the nineteenth century as it was in Biblical times. One of the most distinguishing traits of the good man, or a person of good character, is still the kind usage of dumb animals, and, by contrast, that of the wicked man is cruelty and hardheartedness toward the brutes.

As he brings this first chapter to a close he discusses the message of the New Testament in regard to the subject at hand and essentially echoes what Drummond has said in his book of the previous year, although we cannot gather from Youatt's writing that he has any knowledge of that work. Although there seems to be no express command that enforces the duty of humanity to the creatures who are inferior to us found in that part of the bible, there is the injunction from the Savior to regard the Divine Being as a parent, our father. We are taught by Jesus to address him this way as well and to observe well the providential care that this Father God provides to all of the creation that are indebted to him. In the New Testament Jesus teaches us to be merciful as this Father is merciful, and that this universal law of benevolence is the true essence of Christianity.

Furthermore, says Youatt, we find the Savior frequently alluding to the humanity towards the inferior creatures as it is practiced by the Jews as a

standard for his own conduct as well as an illustration of God's mercy to all his imperfect offspring. The most famous example being that is, of course, of the shepherd who leaves the other ninety-nine sheep in his flock to go in search of the one lost sheep and rejoices on finding it again. The example of the good shepherd is the paradigm example of good husbandry expressed in the Jewish culture and the Mosaic law and taken on by the Jesus of Christianity as an integral part of his persona as God's messenger and model of mercy. There can be no doubt for either Youatt or Drummond that humanity to animals is most assuredly a Christian virtue.

In his next short chapter Youatt turns to the justification of the use of animals by man which comes most explicitly to the fore in the story of Noah. Noah is given the right to destroy the inferior animals as food; but as part of the covenant between God and the extended family of creation, he is also given a restriction on the animal slaughter that then becomes part of the sacred laws of Judaism. That restriction is the one previously written about so eloquently by Drummond as he recounted the strict Jewish code in regard to slaughter. It refers to the injunction in the law against consuming the animal before all the blood had been drained from the body. If all the blood was drained then you could always be sure that the animal was truly dead and suffering no longer. The interpretations of reasons for this law, which are both founded on humanity, relate to the the practice of barbarous tribes during Biblical times of using the blood to summon dead spirits and also the practice of cutting away and eating parts of the animal while it was still alive. The law was specific as to the extent of this delegated power of man to use the inferior creatures as food. There was to be no thoughtless wasting of life and never any unnecessary pain connected with the proceedings of the slaughter of these animals.<sup>85</sup>

---

<sup>85</sup> Ibid, p. 27.

In this same chapter Youatt proceeds next with a practical account of the issue of mortality for animals which is rooted in a Biblical interpretation. Our benevolent Creator, he says, wants to promote the greatest sum of happiness for all his family; and more happiness, in a utilitarian sense, is promoted for these inferior creatures by their passing through the different stages of their existence with as much efficiency as possible. Prolonging their lives certainly does not add to that sum of their happiness in most cases.

Each animal, human or non-human, has a specific period or duration of life allowed to him by the creator, and at the end of this period his lot is usually either to die of disease or of pure old age and the infirmities that go with that condition. For humans these two alternatives are bearable only because we can rely on the kindness and care of relatives and friends in our time of need, and also because we possess the intellectual and spiritual capacity to prepare ourselves for our final ends. But for the inferior animal either of these two natural ends are a curse, pure and simple, full of famine and wretchedness.

For these creatures there is another mode of departing this world, that of a sudden and violent death. In wild nature we see one class of animals preying on another, and they are all seemingly aware of the dangers with which they are faced on a daily basis. But, according to Youatt, they do not seem to be bothered unnecessarily by this fact of their lives. They do not suffer anxiety or dread where death is concerned; they live lives of happiness for the most part, even while using a variety of methods of avoiding danger according to their species' inclinations. They live and reproduce happily until their fate overtakes them. And what is true of those animals in the wild, he says, is likewise true of those we husband in a domestic situation. At this point he presents a bit of his

own poetry which is liberally inserted throughout the text, sure to touch the heart of a sentimental Briton from the country.

The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed today,  
 Had he thy reason, would he skip and  
 play?  
 Pleas'd to the last, he crops the flow'ry  
 food,  
 And licks the hand just rais'd to shed his  
 blood,  
 Oh, blindness to the future, kindly given,  
 That each might fill the circle marked by  
 Heaven.<sup>86</sup>

We do not need to consider the moral issue of using animals, even in the taking of their lives, any further than this. Because of the order of creation from the hand of God, we have the right to tax the strength of these lower creatures to provide ourselves with what we need to live, food, clothing and shelter. But we need to remember that we are always governed in the management of these animals lives by the reason which God gave us as the superior creatures in his world. We get to make the decisions about the ways we handle these creatures that are inferior to us, but we should also be aware that God is watching us on behalf of these creatures' rights. At some point we will be held accountable for their happiness or their lack of happiness through cruel treatment. In the sacred volumes we only find precepts on behalf of humanity, and we cannot find anywhere a reference to these creatures as mere machines to be used as fancy dictates. The laws of both nature and religion give us license to use them only, not to abuse them.

These ideas represent the new ethical stance in Youatt's day toward animals in England and beyond which is solidly grounded in the Biblical message. There is no code of law, human or divine, which can justify the brutal treatment of these our dumb slaves, the animals. The rights of property can no longer

---

<sup>86</sup> Ibid, p. 29.

stand against the justice, in the form of benevolent care, which rational men now acknowledge as belonging to animals as well. A new round of legislation now grants these domestic animals "sufficient nourishment, and merciful treatment, and a death as little painful as circumstances will permit."<sup>87</sup>

He quotes from Lord Chief Justice Hales of his own day and a speech of Lord Erskine from thirty years prior, both elegant statements of this new *jus animalium*. Both of these rather lengthy opinions refer to our present knowledge of the similar needs and feelings of man and animal as well as the Biblical injunctions toward humane treatment and the delegated trust which God's law demands of us in our dominion over them.

Youatt's final point in regard to humane treatment in our use of animals is the practical one which along with the Biblical component has historically been part of the husbandry ethic as well. If we suppose for a moment that there is no injunction against cruelty and that our powers over these inferior creatures are really absolute and without moral consequence, if we address the subject on the grounds of pure self-interest; what kind of treatment can we discover that produces the highest advantage for us in the use of these quadruped slaves?

The answer is and always has been, in the history of animal agriculture, that humanity and self-interest always go hand-in-hand.

---that the advantage which we derive from our slaves will be commensurate with the care which we take to put them in a condition of labor; to maintain them in that condition; to give them the desire willingly to exert themselves for us; to tax them not beyond their natural powers; to restrain our own occasional ill-temper, and to discourage all acts of cruelty in others.<sup>88</sup>

In fact, it can be argued that these advantages of a system of well-regulated humanity extend to the interests of the entire society, and therefore that the

---

<sup>87</sup> Ibid, p. 31.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid, p. 32.

laws of society ought to uphold these principles, because cruelty to these animals can be interpreted as injury to both the individual and the community (this sounds very much like the communitarian ethic again). This is not to even mention what he calls the greater mischief of the influence of bad example, or the old ethic's idea that allowing cruelty to animals promotes cruel treatment of humans as well. "The rights and comforts of the brute might be perfectly comprehended in the rights and welfare of society", he states, and promises in later chapters to follow this out by reviewing "with loathing" the acts of cruelty that are committed on the different domesticated animals.<sup>89</sup>

Youatt's next chapter deals with "The Usefulness and Good Qualities of the Inferior Animals" and he offers many anecdotal stories in support of the qualities of our different domestic animals including: attention, memory, association of ideas, imagination, which resembles human reasoning. The last part of this chapter is taken up with this final quality of imagination which he argues through example is so complex as to be a far more significant a part of animal mentality than the simple explanation of instinct. He argues for the perfect nicheness of the qualities of the various animals so that it becomes an accounting of the wonders of creation with a very sentimental bias towards Newfoundland dogs.

As an example of the practical aspects of Youatt's book I will review the section on sheep. It is interesting to see that he gives great emphasis in the treatment of these animals to the character of the shepherd, an emphasis that is an echo from the Biblical injunctions he has already paid such great attention to in the earlier sections. He states, "The kindness and humanity of the farmer and

---

<sup>89</sup> Ibid, p. 33.

of the shepherd have more scope for exertion in the management of sheep than occurs with regard to any of the other stock.”<sup>90</sup>

He touches first on the example of the misuse of the sheep-dog by what he calls youthful and often ill-tempered shepherds. The dog is judiciously used in the herding of the animals in very open fields, but these young boys will often use the dog for punishing a sheep who has committed some fault in their eyes. Often on a whim they will order the dog to pursue the particular animal until it is frightened and exhausted and the rest of the flock are standing trembling and crowded together in fear, dreading the same fate. They will refuse to give the signal for the dog to withdraw and often laugh at what Youatt calls the cowardly victory over this defenseless creature. The sheep is “dogged” into obedience out of cruel spite.

He makes reference to current volumes of Lord Napier’s, *Practical Store Farming* and Hogg’s, *Shepherd’s Calendar*, both of which document a praiseworthy solution to the problem of flocks of sheep along with their shepherds being completely obliterated by snowstorms in the remote sections of the Ettrick forest in the north of England. “Some kind hearts and enlightened minds” seriously pondered the problem and came up with the solution of erecting “stells” or crude covered buildings in the most exposed and remote of these pasturages which could be supplied with hay in the winter and offer shelter and food to both sheep and shepherd in the event of these sudden and severe storms. The humanity of this foresight was very well rewarded according to these reports in the reduction of the average losses and the overall health of the flock both in winter and summer.

---

<sup>90</sup> Ibid, p. 162.



It is Youatt's professional opinion that the exercise of kind treatment during the period of lambing can greatly benefit both the farmer and his sheep. The field in which the lambing takes place is often a sad and confusing sight which can "try the honesty and humanity of any shepherd", says Youatt. Too many of these shepherds simply "fail in the care and tenderness at that time required."<sup>91</sup> He then proceeds to give some specific instructions for the remedying of this situation.

The lambing field should be sheltered with a retreat for the weak or cold ewes. The lambs who are rejected or refuse to nurse right away should be supplied with warm milk by the lamber or in some more severe cases be brought up by hand. In this way many more lambs can be saved during this critical time. Often this kind of careful attention can only be accomplished if the farmer himself steps in to supervise the lambing.

Youatt also notes that there is often great cruelty involved in the shearing of sheep as well. Most of this cruelty is the result of great haste in getting the sheep to market that can often involve rough handling and unnecessary brutality. The sheep quite naturally suffers a lot of fear in this operation without the added violence of this haste. In addition the animals are often left exposed to wind and cold in their sheared condition on the way to market just for the added profit to be gotten from their wool. These farmers are simply very wrong, in both a practical and a moral sense, in this calculation of profit, he claims, because the sheep more often than not arrive at market in a weak and sickly condition as a result of this cruel practice.

There is also much unnecessary brutality involved as the animals are driven to the slaughter-house as well. The drovers often turn quite cruel in the use of sticks, goads and the dogs in their haste to get the sheep to enter the building.

---

<sup>91</sup> Ibid, p. 162-163.

Sheep quite naturally resist because they are unfamiliar with the building or simply “seem to have a kind of presentiment of the nature of the place”, he says. All this beating and brutality could be easily avoided, he claims, by using the natural inclination of the sheep to follow where one animal leads the way. The butcher is often in possession of a tame sheep which he can lead out to stand with the flock and on whose order will come when called by the butcher back into the building, followed by the whole flock.<sup>92</sup>

Youatt also has a suggestion for the consumer in the selection of animals he finds in the butcher shop from one of the legislators, a humane gentleman farmer, one Sir Chetwynd. Sir George Chetwynd suggests that the public should simply refrain from purchasing those sheep who appear to be marked and bruised when they are shopping for meat. This would appear to be a simple solution to these handling practices at the slaughter. If enough people would demand unbruised carcasses at the store, the sheep farmers would have to pay more attention to this lapse in their animal’s treatment and demand better.

***Mrs. Charles Bray, on What the Children Ought to Learn***

One of the genres that appeared frequently as I looked under the headings of agriculture and animal welfare in the nineteenth century and even earlier was that of children’s literature. The role of this kind of writing seemed to be primarily that of inculcating the values of kindness toward animals in the very young as part of their school educational experience. One of the works that seems typical of the writing of this period is by a Mrs. Charles Bray whose preface to *Our Duty to Animals* written sometime between 1800 and 1899 (the exact date of publication is a mystery), explains that the work has been

---

<sup>92</sup> Ibid, p. 164.

prepared specifically to carry out one of the objects of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. That object is that of systematically inculcating the duty of humanity to animals in the school “children whose home-influence is the least likely to counteract that tendency to cruelty which arises from ignorance and thoughtlessness.” The book includes what she calls “simple lessons” that are intended to give instruction on the nature of “our most familiar animals, and of our consequent duties toward them, as shall make a lasting impression”. She intends for the teacher to use these chapters along with his or her good example of “kindly consideration for every living thing”, which according to the author will “do much to implant the principles of humanity and justice in the young minds”.<sup>93</sup>

Bray’s work is full of charming animal engravings and includes chapters on the ox, cattle, sheep, pigs, rabbits and several varieties of poultry. In the first chapter, Lesson I, she discusses “What We Owe to Animals” expressing the notion that because animals do so much for us in the way of adding “ease and comfort and enjoyment to our lives” that we ought in turn “to do all that we can to makes their lives easy and comfortable and happy.”<sup>94</sup>

Lesson II gives the child a nineteenth century justification for meat eating that is very much tied to the helplessness of animals in the face of disease and old age. She suggests that if animals were not brought to a more timely death by human beings that the “sick, dying and the dead” among them would “soon cover the surface of the earth”. In fact she says this would be the result if no animals ever fed upon other animals in nature. Despite this somewhat silly vision of rotting carcasses littering the earth, she seems to be aiming at an important point for young impressionable minds of her day in this section. That

<sup>93</sup> Mrs. Charles Bray, Our Duty to Animals, (London: S.W. Partridge & Co., 1800-1899) p. Intro.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

point is that just because we are following what appears to be the “law of nature” by consuming other animals does not mean we have a right to inflict unnecessary suffering on these creatures. That it is, rather, our duty as humans, given the animal’s complete inability to understand sickness and suffering, to shorten miserable lives in as painless a manner as we can.<sup>95</sup>

In a later chapter on the ox she gives biblical references from Genesis for the relationship from earliest times of men and cattle and points out the many good animal products English people get from this useful beast, including “our roast beef and the suet that helps to make the plum pudding, the milk that feeds our children, the stout boots and shoes that protect our feet from the hard or wet ground”. She includes a short history of the domestication of the beast which is intended to reflect its nature carried over from the time of wild cattle herds, and remarks on the worship of this valuable creature in the “old dark days of ignorance”, when its form was “held sacred as a symbol or sign of God’s blessing to mankind.” She claims that the spectacle of solemn priests of olden days leading a garlanded ox to his sudden and painless death is much less brutal than the common scene “such as are often seen in our streets,” of a crowd of men and boys “driving a poor ox to the slaughter with blows and shouts and stones and sticks, without a thought of mercy and kindness to the harmless animal going to his death that we may live on his flesh” . In the question and answer section at the end of this chapter she asks, “How ought we to show our value for them (oxen)?” and gives the correct answer as, “By treating them with kindness.”<sup>96</sup>

In her chapter on sheep Bray invokes the words of the Bible in her question and answer section when she asks, “Why do we believe that shepherds of old

---

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., pp. 5-9.

were kind to their sheep?”, and answers that even the word shepherd is used in ancient books of the Bible “to signify a Protector, good and merciful”.<sup>97</sup>

In his article, “Animals in the Agrarian Ideal” by Paul B. Thompson (Journal of Agriculture and Environmental Ethics, Vol VI, Supplement 1, 1993) I found reference to an ideal reflected in Bray’s book. It is the same agrarian ideal expressed by Jefferson and Emerson as well as other American intellectuals of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries according to Thompson. This ideal stresses the formation of moral virtue, personal character and responsible citizenship as direct results of the activity of farming, in part because of the relationship of man and animal that is portrayed in the ideal. In contrast with a strictly utilitarian ideal, where efficiency criteria are more important in justifying production practices, the agrarian ideal stipulates a role relationship between humans and animals. It presupposes a strong moral commitment to the human use of animals. And it is this sort of ideal that children’s literature aimed at giving urban children; a picture of farm animals’ lives portrays the agrarian ideal, not just the utilitarian agriculture point of view. (Of course real utilitarian theory of the sort espoused by Bentham would calculate the animals happiness as well as the farmer’s profit.) This is decidedly a modern interpretation, but the agrarian ideal comes straight out of the nineteenth century and is the same sort of moral literature for children that we have today.

### **A Short Summary**

I believe that all this literature speaks for itself quite well. It carries the message of kindness to animals to ordinary readers and it does it using the Bible’s message of benevolent care, especially from the point of view of the old

---

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., p. 20.

**Jewish tradition. It constitutes a good husbandry ethic for Judeo/Christian societies.**

## ***Part IV***

### ***Modern Theology' s View of Origins in the Old and New Testaments***

A final step in determining the essence of the animal husbandry ethic would seem to be taking a look at modern theology's interpretation of the biblical texts in the light of the contemporary religious community's growing concern for a relevant environmental ethic where animals are concerned. More and more families are coming back into church communities at the end of this century. If modern Christians choose to take the message seriously they could certainly effect significant changes in the practices which now govern the care and production of domestic animals especially in the role of ethical consumers of meat and other animal products.

It is also instructive to notice how many similarities of theme can be found in this contemporary twentieth century theology and the message of the nineteenth century literature we have examined. In my afterward I will restate what I see to be the dominate themes of both, but for now I would like to address a concern I have regarding precisely this discovery about how identical the Biblical messages really are for Christians in the modern era and the early part of the nineteenth century.

Linzey and MacDaniel both advocate vegetarianism for the modern Christian ethic regarding animals. They do this because, as in so many other areas of modern life, technology has far outstripped our ability to adjust to it on a human level. It would seem that we have mechanized farming in the raising of animals simply because we have the technology to do it, without considering the ethical consequences. We have only considered the utility part. Modern factory farming has become industry and has virtually replaced animal husbandry as we knew it even as recently as forty years ago. Linzey and MacDaniel's solution has been abolitionist. We ought to just do away with domestic animals, as though there had never been anything good at all about this working relationship of human and non-human. They are essentially ignoring the old model that worked.

What we have found in the nineteenth century texts is a perfectly reasonable ethic regarding animal welfare in the relationship of man and animal. What we have found is a theologically based husbandry ethic. If that ethic was a good one then, how can Linzey and others fail to see that it is still a good one. Besides, if God had intended vegetarianism as our Christian duty would the Bible have been so concerned with the welfare of domestic animals?

Some theologians do argue that killing animals amounts to breaking the covenant, but there is not nearly as much evidence for that interpretation as we find for the kind treatment of animals who are a part of our human community. Indeed the Old Testament texts about humane slaughter seem to speak directly to that issue.

It seems much more reasonable to assume that our Christian duty in regard to animals might be to try to reform the methods of agribusiness so that moral consideration is given to these animals, rather than trying to convince Christians



to all become vegetarian or to denounce animals products altogether. Again from the standpoint of theological argument we might ask why the creator made the flesh of animals so palatable, the cow's milk and the chicken's eggs so tasty if we were not supposed to enjoy them. We might also ask why there are so many Biblical references to the kind treatment of animals in general if we were not intended by the creator to have dealings with them at all. We might try to find a solution to this ethical problem that does not necessitate such a radical paradigm shift for consumers.

Christians who consume animal products probably do so under the illusion of the old ethic. They have convinced themselves, to sooth their moral sensibilities, that these animals are leading relatively happy lives up until the moment of their humane deaths. Would it be more reasonable to expect that they might be willing to pay a bit more for cruelty-free meat and other animal products than that they become vegetarians?

The ethic we will see Hume, Linzey and McDaniel articulate does not necessarily imply this switch to vegetarianism, but because factory farming in the technological age has done away with husbandry except as a utilitarian goal they have assumed there is no other choice and presumably found the theology to back it up. I believe they have missed the message of the Old Testament by persuing such an abolitionist stance.

### **The Story of Creation Revisited**

The basic meta-ethical principle of the husbandry ethic seems to come largely from the biblical myth of creation as it is found in Genesis and later refined in the New Testament. According to C.W. Hume<sup>98</sup>, the Bible exhibits a

---

<sup>98</sup> C.W. Hume, *The Status of Animals in the Christian Religion*, (Great Britain: Garden City Press Ltd., 1957).

humane tradition that sees men and animals as part of a symbiotic community governed by what he calls the concept of neighborliness towards animals.

Hume thinks that the Bible, in general, “exhibits a notable unity in its attitude towards animals” and that “the devout and intelligent practice of Biblical religion created a state of mind out of which the modern movement for the legal prohibition of cruelty to animals grew up”.<sup>99</sup> (It seems clear to me now that this is far too simple an analysis.) He is critical, however, of what he terms sentimentality as opposed to this theologically based concept of neighborliness, because he sees sentimentality as being fostered by both the extremes of callousness and of overboard emotionalism. (Perhaps he would also object to the idea of the moral sense in Shaftesbury and Hutcheson’s writings.)

Hume also thinks that the theologian’s fairly typical disregard of animals in the past leads to more than just condoning the treatment of animals as things. It also tends to give rise to what he calls an unrealistic attitude toward God’s work in creation, and therefore obscures the Christian’s role in the modern world.

The Biblical theme is variously interpreted, first as an Old Testament message which comes from the Jewish tradition and represents a nature-centered pastoral life, and later as the New Testament teachings which seek to reinterpret Yahweh’s covenant with man through the persona of Jesus.

According to John Passmore in *Man’s Responsibility for Nature*,<sup>100</sup> in the Old Testament message there is already a conflict to be found between this nostalgic pastoral image of humans living and being in relationship to nature, and the notion of a new, more production oriented, man-centered agriculture. The latter seems to support the most familiar and damning, at least where environmentalists are concerned, message from the book of Genesis, that of the

---

<sup>99</sup> Ibid, p. 3.

<sup>100</sup> John Passmore, *Man’s Responsibility for Nature*, (New York: Scribner, 1974).

dominion of man over all of nature. However, Passmore points out that the Old Testament writers never set up the sort of unbridgeable gap between man and his fellow non-human creatures in the way that Christian theology seems to do. The Old Testament message first and most importantly takes nature to have been created for the glory of God and not solely for the benefit of man. By contrast, Passmore sees the model of man's dominion over nature as assuming a singular man-centered arrogance in the Christian interpretation, that is regarded by some as absent from the Old Testament account altogether.

Maimonides, who is considered the greatest Jewish orthodox philosopher, at first took the view, in his early writings in the twelfth century, that dominion over nature was what God had intended man's role to be. But in his later writings he rejects this dominion model as being essentially non-Jewish. He writes that Genesis makes it very clear that the natural world was good even before man was created, and that we would be mistaken to believe, "that all beings exist for the sake of the existence of man. On the contrary, all the other beings, too, have been intended for their own sakes and not for the sake of something else."<sup>101</sup> God's creation, the entire natural world of which humans and non-humans are a part, exists in this interpretation for the glory of God, not man.

Within this Jewish pastoral tradition one of the most familiar animals in the Bible's social and historical settings is the sheep. Hume notes that one concordance lists 140 references to sheep in the Bible. It could be claimed that it is man's relationship to this particular domestic animal which provides us with the most exactly proscribed normative formula for the husbandry ethic to be

<sup>101</sup> Moses Maimonides: The Guide for the Perplexed (I: 72), quoted in Norman Lamm: Faith and Doubt, p. 95.

found in the Old and New Testaments. This topic would, in fact, be a good area for further study.

What we see in the Jewish tradition of nomadic herding societies is the carrying out of the dominion contract, or covenant, that God makes with man. The shepherd's job is to care for the sheep for their own good as well as for the good of his master. Again, the appropriate Biblical passage is the old one from Proverbs: 12:10, "A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast." In Psalms: 23.4, we find the classic Old Testament description of the Biblical example of good shepherding in the words of the psalmist, "thy rod and thy staff they comfort me". The shepherd is expected to care deeply for the welfare of the animals in his charge, not simply as a means to an end, for the food and clothing that they can provide, but clearly as a end in themselves and as part of the glorification of God.

The message of the Jewish tradition mirrors the Socratic notion of good shepherding found in the Republic, when Socrates compares the good ruler's devotion to the interests of his subjects to that of the shepherd's devotion toward his sheep. For Plato the shepherd's art consists in looking after the interests of his sheep, not as a matter of profiting by them, but purely as a way of promoting their welfare, considering whatever is good for them as the only criterion for good care.

This sort of caring, whether Biblical or Socratic, is a strong representation of the husbanding idea from the last century, which in the Old Testament case comes directly out of the central foundational principle of God's glory, as it is found in all creatures. This sort of 'God-centeredness', much like Hutcheson's macrocosm idea, requires humans to value what God values, simply because he values it. Humans are not the center of value, God is, and it is his model of

covenant and care for man from which man should in turn take his cues in regard to caring for non-human animals.

### ***Linzey and the Theocentric Model***

This theocentric model is best described by Andrew Linzey in his *Animal Theology* in which he looks first at the doctrine of Saint Thomas Aquinas, which he says has dominated Western religious tradition since the thirteenth century. According to Linzey, Aquinas' theological interpretation of man's right to dominate animals comes less from Biblical sources than from the Greeks. He sees Aquinas as having adopted two axioms from Aristotle. The first of these is the now familiar argument that humans alone have a rational capacity, and the second, that animals have only one purpose, and that is to serve man. Linzey sees the elevation of these Greek ideas in Aquinas' writings as being central to this revered church father's thesis, while the biblical texts are simply used as over-writing to justify what ultimately is not justifiable as the theological message. Linzey writes,

“ Unluckily for Aquinas one would have to look very hard nowadays to find one Old Testament scholar who thought ‘dominion’ simply meant despotism; if anything at all, the concept underlines human responsibility for God's creation.”<sup>102</sup>

Influenced by Aristotelian philosophy, Hebrew monarchy or God centered reverence, gets turned into a hierarchy that the scriptures never intended. Linzey sees this great Christian scholar as having ignored both the humanitarian tradition of the Old Testament, as well as the the sacrificing example of Christ. So Linzey simply echoes these nineteenth century writers we have been examining.

---

<sup>102</sup> Andrew Linzey, *Animal Theology*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995), p. 18.

The humane tradition, or the theocentric orientation, was given new life in the work of the obscure eighteenth century priest, Humphrey Primatt, whose only work, *Dissertation on the Duty of Mercy and the Sin of Cruelty to Brute Animals*, appeared in 1776, and whose work we have already examined earlier. According to Linzey, Primatt directly confronts the important elements in the scholastic tradition of which Thomism is a part, actually agreeing with much of it. For example, he agrees with Aquinas' interpretation of creation as a natural order with man's mental perfection, especially displayed in his close relationship to God, at the top in the natural theology model. But for Primatt, each of the other creatures also exhibits a value of its own kind in the total design of creation's goodness. Every creature is as it ought to be, and whatever it ought to be is good and perfect according to a divine plan. What Aquinas might see as imperfection, a mental capacity below that of man, is not a demerit in the creature, but exactly what the creator intended, according to this theological interpretation, which would actually be closer to Aristotle's notion of the animal soul and the notions of fitness and function.

Primatt also disagrees with the tradition in his insistence that animals feel pain, that suffering pain is suffering evil, whether in man or beast; and furthermore, that the malicious infliction of pain simply to exhibit power is both cruel and unjust. To honor God's creation then, is to include animals in the wider circle of sympathy and justice.

Later on in the New Testament, it is through the example of Jesus, as yet another sign of God's great creative generosity, that we are shown the moral imperative for dealing with our fellow creatures. Living mercifully is a matter of revelation, because God shows us how we ought to care for creation in the person of Christ.

For Primatt any sort of cruelty is actually a form of atheism. In fact, the very usefulness of animals is seen as a sign of God's generosity, which ought to inspire a corresponding generosity in human relationships with animals. And here again, it is God's glory, not man's needs, which form the basis of the purposiveness of animals in creation. Linzey feels that it is this theological interpretation, and not that of Aquinas, that lives on in the modern Christian model of man's relationship to his fellow non-human creatures.

***Dominion and Covenant as Redefined by  
the Christ of the New Testament***

In Linzey's *Christianity and the Rights of Animals* he tackles what has come to be, for the Christian environmentalist, the troublesome concept of dominion. If God gives man power over non-humans, as seen in Genesis in the unfolding of the creation story, how is today's Christian to interpret this instruction from the creator to exercise control, power or dominion? How, in other words, do we play God by caring for non-humans, using the covenant model of God's care for us? We must as Christians, according to Linzey, always look to the example of Jesus, the central figure of the New Testament whose teachings seek to reinterpret the law and covenant of the Old Testament.

What we find in Jesus, "the good shepherd", is a being who always expresses his power over others, both human and non-human, as a kind of powerlessness. His lordship is a kind of service, expressed with humility, condescension and sacrificial love, notes Linzey. It is the model of stewardship which delineates our dominion in the New Testament, a model of genuine and prudent care.

Linzey also notes that the special covenant relationship between man and God, which is the model of that between man and animal, is exhibited in the

first place by the creation of these two forms of life on the same day in the creation myth, and reinstated in the biblical account after the flood. In Genesis 9: 9-10, God speaks to Noah, "I establish my covenant with you , and with your seed after you; and with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you." This too has an marked similarity to Youatt's interpretation, but I am almost certain that Linzey is not familiar with that material. Perhaps the message is so little changed by the 150 years of theology since that there could be little argument here anyway.

Man does not get to have a free hand to do whatever he likes with creation, but rather, "made in the image of God man has a duty to reflect, if not actualize, the divine love for all creatures."<sup>103</sup> The dominion part has been overplayed while the covenant part, especially as Jesus reinterprets it, has been underplayed for practicing Christians, according to Linzey. God is the supreme being who in the person of Jesus is humbled for the sake of humankind. God comes down to earth in human form in order to offer this paradigm of generosity in Christ.

Linzey elaborates on this interpretation with a reference to the writings of Karl Barth who says that if we take this paradigm of generosity to heart we are able to perceive the moral meaning in our own relationship of dominion over non-human creation. Furthermore, Christ's example is not an appeal to equality, but the far higher moral ground of sacrificing for the less powerful, the vulnerable and the powerless. Just as God's absolute power over us compels him to treat us with moral generosity in the form of Christ, so we in turn have a moral obligation to treat those less powerful than us, that is non-humans, with the same spirit of moral generosity.

---

<sup>103</sup> Andrew Linzey and Tom Regan (eds), Love the Animals. Meditations and Prayers. (New York: Crossroads, 1989), Introduction p.xvii.



***Process Theology: Relational Panentheism or  
God's Immanence in Nature as Divine Empathy***

In his *Of God and Pelicans*, Jay B. McDaniel draws on process theology in an attempt to put the problem of animal suffering, even in the world of wild nature, into a Christian perspective. He cites Holmes Rolston's example of the second pelican chick, whose role in life is to be a back-up for its nest mate and who is destined to lead a life of abuse and suffering ending in almost certain death. This kind of suffering on the part of an individual animal presents a serious theological problem, that of the incompatibility of God's omnibenevolence and the seemingly cruel and obvious suffering of this pawn in the evolutionary plan (Before and after natural theology's influence in the previous centuries many theologians of the revelation variety saw death and suffering in nature as a punishment for man's sin.) McDaniel uses this example along with that of a Nazi concentration camp victim's agonizing death to dramatize his point about God's presence in the lives of suffering creatures.

God is present in nature, according to process theology, in a relational panentheistic way. God is in all of nature, but nature is also "other than" God, and therefore able to receive a sort of divine empathy from God in its suffering. God is to nature much like a mind is to a body. God is able to experience his creatures as subjects with whom he identifies. What happens in and to the lives of creatures also happens in and to God, in much the same way as what happens in and to our bodies happens to us. The suffering of God's creatures, either human or non-human, becomes God's suffering, and that suffering of God is defined as perfect empathy. He feels the feelings of his worldly subjects as they feel them or from their point of view. God is able to overlap and "coindwell" in the creatures' perspective as a function of his immanence in the world. God is there in the suffering pelican chick as well as on the gallows at Auschwitz.

God is immanent in creatures both as an agent and as a patient in the language of morality. As agent he beckons them toward life and wholeness, and as a patient he is active as in the spirit of the Jewish tradition of *Shekinah*, or the indwelling presence of God in the world that does not forsake the suffering world, but suffers along with it. In this tradition God is divine empathy that contains a lamentation and yearning for things to be different. God's empathy also contains an evaluative element then, a wish for the best interest of the creature to be realized, a kind of caring which encompasses this knowing empathetic relationship.

McDaniel claims that Linzey's "theos-rights" are about God's given spiritual capacities as they are exhibited in his creation and then realized in his covenant relationship with those creatures, and not about the capacities of the creatures themselves as defenders of their own status. McDaniel points out that this is where Linzey disagrees with his co-author, Tom Regan, who sees the fact of simply being the "subject of a life" as sufficient reason for having moral status. Regan's moral reasoning is certainly very different from the eighteenth century notion of More's spirit pervading the entire universe or Hutcheson's macrocosm of nature, but is perhaps very close indeed to this Panentheism. There is more than one way to skin (how about "groom") a cat.

Process theology does seem to side more with Regan's assessment. For even if there is not a God, McDaniel asserts, individual living beings deserve our respect. It is God's role to beckon us toward a respect for and care of animals that mirrors God's care for us. God is like a cosmic parent in this interpretation whose love for the child is unlimited, but who must allow the child to have a goodness or value that is independent of its creator. In process theology God facilitates the creation out of a primordial chaos, and those

sentient beings that emerge have a value that is independent of God. This is quite a bit more complicated than any nineteenth century theology, but the practical result for believers might actually end up being the same.

In a final theological point McDaniel notes that after creating animals on the fifth day God does not assign them their goodness, but simply sees that they are, in fact, good. God invites humans to share in this wisdom with him, to see or recognize this intrinsic value that he sees.

### **A Short Summary**

It is interesting to see these two theological time periods compared. It is also interesting to notice the three different interpretations of contemporary Christian writers. It is very likely that modern Christians are reading this material, especially Linzey and McDaniel. It is very scholarly and fascinating reading for the lay theologian.

It is also reasonable to suppose that practicing Christians would consider it their spiritual duty to purchase cruelty free meat products if they take the Biblical message seriously, as mentioned. As a matter of fact this assumption that we make about the role of the husbandry ethic in Western agrarian culture, that animals are being well cared for until their humane deaths, motivates us to purchase animal products and feel good about it. For these reasons it has seemed worthwhile to look seriously at modern theologians like Linzey and McDaniel whose reinterpretation of the covenant, first set out in Genesis and retold through the example of Jesus in the New Testament, now stands to mold the church's teaching on animal welfare issues. We as Americans are part of a healthy and prosperous economic system. We can afford to be ethical. The feeling I get from my college freshman students at the community college, who

are not necessarily all that affluent, is that they want to do the right thing where animals are concerned. They really do care what kind of lives these non-humans lead. I also sense that they have a set of moral values collectively that are not necessarily religious in nature, but that are definitely rooted in the Biblical ethic of American society and totally accepting of the Christian utilitarian principles that define the animal husbandry ethic.

## Part V

### **An Afterward and Suggestions for Further Study**

When I first began this thesis it was directed at filling in a gap, as pointed out by Dr. Rollin, in existing academic research and writing about the subject of animal welfare. That gap was to be found from the first half of the nineteenth century to mid-century, a period which seemed on the surface to have produced relatively little on the subject compared to the preceding century. I did find fewer texts after the turn of the century, but that seemed to mainly be the result of all the philosophical work that had already been done in the previous century for the cause of both human and animal welfare. What was left to be done, apparently, was the dissemination of the idea of kindness to animals.

I had long nurtured a fascination for the underlying message regarding the kind treatment of animals in the husbandry ethic, which had such an emotive force for me when I first heard Dr. Rollin state it in a public lecture several years ago. I cannot imagine anyone not being impressed by the simple elegance of the utilitarian formula: If we treat animals well, they will in turn treat us well (provide for our human needs for clothing, food and all kinds of physical work that we could not accomplish without their aid). But as a lifelong animal lover I

also felt intuitively that there was much more to it than this practical formula would indicate. I wanted to find out more about that other part, the emotional connection between humans and animals, that made the simple formula so compelling for me. It was this personal curiosity that led me to the topic of this thesis, *Origins of the Animal Husbandry Ethic*.

When I began to search for that “missing literature” from the nineteenth century I found that it all bore a remarkable similarity; it seemed to be almost entirely Biblically inspired and exegetical of certain common theological texts, especially from the Old Testament. Youatt, Drummond and Bray represented what I could identify as three more or less distinct genres of propagandistic literature from the period before Darwin’s writings took the world of science and religion by storm, and essentially shifted the whole paradigm again. Youatt and Drummond both publish within a year of one another, 1838 and 1839, respectively, and Bray is randomly chosen from a host of similar books whose publication ranges over a fifty year period in early to mid-century. I sort of naively began to read and study that literature at its face value while comparing it to modern theological interpretations like Linzey and McDaniel. What I found was an interesting similarity of themes:

- 1) The Old Testament story of God’s creation and covenant with man in regard to animals, as related both in the Garden of Eden contract and the later contract between God and Noah and his family.
- 2) The idea of benevolence or mercy as a Christian virtue whose origin is the Old Testament and whose reinterpretation is from the New Testament, along with the associated idea of our human duty to animals. This duty was often interpreted as the care of a parent for a child, and meant to mirror the analogy of God’s care for humans, in fact, all his creatures.

3) Some common Biblical texts mentioned by authors of both centuries in support of an ethic of kind treatment of animals. The most commonly mentioned being the words of Solomon from the book of Proverbs, “A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast”, which I have used in at least four places in the text of this thesis.

Again, it was with a trusting naivety that I received this information and it is with much more sophistication that I now see the “larger picture” which produced these nineteenth century texts, and which picture I now see as the larger historical context for their place in the smaller context of the popular literature of the period. My first reaction was that the Biblical message for modern Christians and Jews regarding the treatment of animals really had not changed all that much over a century and a half. And yet I knew that the problem of kindness to animals, indeed to the non-human environment in general, had a problematic theological interpretative dilemma that extended into the twentieth century, regarding the concept of dominion as found in the Genesis story.

We humans of the Judeo-Christian tradition have been anthropocentrically using our world and the creatures in it for our whole species’ history, as Linzey has documented so well and related in Part IV of this thesis. (see page 117 for Aquinas’ hierarchy of beings) We had been selectively choosing the message of “man’s dominion” over nature in general and animals in particular and essentially ignoring the texts that dealt with the other side of this issue, the humanitarian message of the Old Testament and the reiteration of that message by Jesus in the New Testament. The history of this selective theology is well documented in the section on contemporary theology.

This bothered me, on a personal level, precisely because of my own upbringing in a Christian culture and community. It bothered me in the same way that the race question did in the 1960's, because it suggested to me that Christians and Jews who ignored the Biblical texts regarding animals were being just as hypocritical as I found my fellow Christian Southerners to be in the 1960's, when I was an idealistic teenager growing up in Alabama and Mississippi. (People were fond of using selected Biblical texts to justify the separation of the races back then too.)

The nineteenth century texts that I had found were devout messages of faith regarding the Biblical teachings about the valuing of animals that echoed the philosophy of natural theologians from the previous century. They were the pamphlets of the movement meant to sway Christian people to a new ethic, by reminding them of an old, if buried, belief. If people believed the theology, all of it, not just selected passages, then it ought to have made a difference in their lives. Obviously there were those who felt it did not, but part of that may have simply been that people were completely unaware that these theological texts existed. These writers, like Drummond, Youatt and Bray could have been responsible for changing all that. Maybe this devout message from over a century ago had made a difference for all I knew. Texts like those had seemingly been at least partly responsible for producing legislation against animal cruelty at the end of the eighteenth century, most definitively in England. This sounds like a whole other thesis topic to me, the effectiveness of the nineteenth century texts. What I chose to do was simply to document the change in social attitude that preceded the publication of these texts, and then compare the actual theology used to the interpretations of the new theologians in our contemporary social setting, because the issue of animal welfare for



Christians and others in our Judeo-Christian community has gotten much more complicated given today's agricultural methods.

What we do to domestic animals today certainly bears little resemblance to either our actual care of animals or the message of that ethic from so long ago. I was curious to know how people came to believe it then. How did it become so effective then? By what evolution of societal norms did people come to believe it was right or moral to care well, in both a feeling and a practical way, for animals?

Indeed, the very presence of this literature led me to wonder about the source in Britain of this outpouring of propaganda based on the teachings of the Bible in the nineteenth century, and in turn about the motivation behind the movement in Britain against cruelty to animals. I thought that if I could discover the motivation for the idea of kindness to animals in that century I might be able to better explain the use of theology to justify that idea, the selective highlighting of certain texts in order to promote a social or political cause.

But I was searching as well for an explanation for that other part of the ethic, the feeling part. Because that feeling part certainly seemed to be what those nineteenth century Bible centered texts were about, and very likely it was this feeling part, at least for the Englishman/woman, that had actually brought forth the legislative and societal changes for animal welfare reform in Britain and beyond. Actually feeling may be what all religious meaning is about, but that is probably another thesis too.

Spinoza had called sympathy for animals a "womanish pity" according to Midgley, and it was curious all along for me to consider how unique the Englishman has appeared to be in this regard. They really do not seem, as a people (culture), now or then, to be afraid of a stigma of this kind regarding their

manhood. They always knew how to be manly and feeling too, without apologizing. I also felt that tracing the evolution of “the feeling part” might possibly shed some light now on how we might morally recover and reclaim those feelings for our modern ethical dilemma where domestic animals are concerned, but here too, I realized, is a whole other thesis.

I have already mentioned that most contemporary Christian theologians feel that the technology of modern agriculture has simply made the ethic irrelevant and that we “Christians” ought to all now become vegetarian. One of the main reason I had been interested in this ethical problem in the first place was that I felt that this sort of abolition was far to radical. It involved a very unlikely paradigm shift, at least where Americans were concerned. I could not accept that our over use of factory farming ought to now dictate a whole different direction in terms of our diets and our moral values. It would seem far saner to use the old ethic to reform the existing agricultural systems, and abide by that ethic as both producers and consumers, than to try retraining the whole human race to give up using meat products. The nineteenth century writers had articulated a perfectly good ethic, so why not continue to use it?

In pursuit of the motivational forces driving those nineteenth century writers, my next area of research began in the period of the Enlightenment in Europe in general, and in Britain in particular, which later led historically to the experience of early Americans as found in the life and Enlightenment philosophy of Thomas Jefferson. I picked Jefferson because he represented a connection to the Enlightenment that was part of my own personal identity as an American, and I felt that his point of view would give me a historical context for the husbandry ethic that I could understand better, since it was my context. Jefferson is born in the American frontier environment but nourished by a

Anglo/European culture across the ocean. (I will add here that I also choose to ignore the currently controversial part of Jefferson's politics, especially in regard to his attitude toward Negro slaves and Native Americans, in part because I could see that one of his major influences had been Francis Hutcheson, whose views on these matters were extremely politically and morally correct.)

This part about "my context" adds a decidedly feminist perspective to my search, my epistemological approach, toward the animal husbandry ethic. Finding the "truths" in this history requires a construction which I actually want and intend to reflect my emotional attachment to the subject matter. If I can conduct at least a part of this search from my own perspective or context then I am going to be more open to my actual intuitive connections. In some respects, I want to be subjective, because from this feminist perspective my female constructive knowing is about my own personal responses. Indeed it may often be about my emotions about this material.... for instance, my sentimental feelings about rural life, including my associations with farm animals, as I experienced these things as a child. And certainly it is about my identity as an American, as I also intuitively feel that Americans have contributed more to the ethic relative to the uniqueness of the American agrarian dream which was a model for a free market agricultural economy.

In order to understand the Enlightenment I undertook a much too extensive examination of the history of the scientific revolution, starting with the French and Rosenfield texts. What I finally gained from my long detour through the reactions on both sides of the English channel to Descartes' theory of the beast machine had to do with the convoluted intertwining of science and religion that marked the boundaries of the Enlightenment for philosopher/scientists in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. I found the give and take

between empirical science and organized religion to be fascinating and much more philosophical than I had previously imagined the science and religion debate to be. The old religion of Scholasticism was essentially transformed by empiricism, because the new hard facts about the mechanistic universe, including the new view of non-human animals revealed by empirical science, shook that institution, the church, to its foundation. During and after the Age of Descartes natural science had turned in such a different direction from religion and anything supernatural that religion simply had to change in order to survive in this new world paradigm.

But there is also a hidden value in going back this far. No matter what the metaphysical difficulties of Descartes' theory were, he was asking questions that simply had to be asked. If he had not asked, then the issue would have been a sub-text for any ethical discussion that followed. His whole engagement of the question of the nature of animals in the Age of Descartes, was just the backdrop for the scarier questions about man's nature, the most threatening part of which was a question of the immortal soul and the traditional religious doctrine which hung in the balance. But in terms of man's relationship to non-human animals Descartes' contention that animals were merely machines was also a question that had to be asked, or an issue that had to be raised, in order for the modern husbandry ethic to emerge as it did. (It has certainly always been lurking in my own mental backwaters since my early years of association with animals.)

I believe that Descartes was raising the moral question that was or would have been lurking in the back of human minds anyway. Should we give animals any moral consideration at all? Are they even worthy of occupying that moral space? Is absolute dismissal of this kind even possible? As an argument

it always fails, because we can find categories of humans who lack rationality, and cannot dismiss whole categories of other sentient beings on the basis of rationality if we cannot also dismiss humans in similar categories. So my detour through the period of the Age of Descartes was instructive regarding that important and necessary question, in ethical language it had to do with a foundational sort of concept. The question is, "what sort of creature deserves our moral concern?", and the equally important scientific question is, "what sort of creature is an animal, especially as compared with a human?"

What I learned from the study of the effect of Locke and Bacon's empirical science on man's definition of animals and this scientific revolution's impact on ethical philosophy was this. The study of anatomy that was the result of the rise of empirical science gave the common man a new definition of animals, as sensitive beings with a remarkable physical resemblance to humans, which in turn came to profoundly effect the relationship of humans to animals from then on. (The relationship was destined to change significantly again with the publication of Darwin's theory, but my study stops just short of this momentous event in the 1860's.)

What I see as the old ethic regarding animals, that we should refrain from cruelty to animals simply because it could lead to cruel treatment of humans, changed to a new ethic, the basis of which was the idea that animals have a value in themselves, certainly related to human use, but not justified by that criteria alone anymore. The new value of animals was discovered by empirical science, but needed to be, and I will contend, could only be, promoted by a Christian utilitarian ethic. Jeremy Bentham may have made the definitive statement regarding the new scientific picture of them (and this historical priority of ideas is certainly still a point of controversy in intellectual history), but it was

ministers of a new kind of enlightened and liberalized Protestantism, many inspired by the like of Francis Hutcheson, who persuasively argued for the acceptance of this new ethic by using the Bible's message to ordinary believers.

The new ethic of valuing animals was part of a larger shift in ethics in general toward a new definition of humans as well. The idea of being human took on a whole new optimistic definition which also claimed to be rooted in empirical science. Humans could be seen as naturally good and benevolent creatures with a built in moral sense, harking back to the human virtues of the Greeks, an Enlightenment ideal, and opposing the pessimistic view of Thomas Hobbes' egoism, materialism and the old Puritan ethic based on man's sinful nature.

In that day and age religion was synonymous with the realm of the ethical, and furthermore, the realm of ethical theory was not separate from the realm of psychological or spiritual motivation as it is now. Hume and Hutcheson are actually two of the first ethical philosophers in history, according to some, to try and separate these two last mentioned realms. Hume ended up effectively trying to do just that; he was striving for a science of morals and did not worry much whether that "science " ended up making people feel good or be good. But Hutcheson followed a very different course than what turned out to be Hume's more limited conception of the new kind of modern moral inquiry.

Hutcheson assumed that moral philosophy ought to have an improving effect on people, and that assumption was generally shared by people in his time period, most of whom were professed Christians. Especially in the moral area of achieving a sort of personal well-being, people in his day and age, and well into the nineteenth century, were looking for self-improvement. They were fond of reading books on religion as it related to morality. I make the case for Drummond's book especially being of precisely this sort of genre. Mautner,

who was responsible for bringing some of Hutcheson's more unknown writings back into print recently, states that in the same way that self-help books are best-sellers in our time, those books on religion and morality were popular reading in that time period. This was mainly because people really expected that moral philosophy ought to both help people to be better as well as to feel better. Hutcheson was just what the "doctor" seemed to be "ordering" at that point in time.

I was drawn then to the themes of natural theology and the idea of a benevolent moral sense as found in the Scottish Enlightenment writings of Francis Hutcheson, because the evidence seemed to point in this direction as the path that religion was taking towards the new ethic regarding both humans and non-humans. Animals had been discovered to be sensitive beings, just like humans. Hutcheson believed that no code of ethics was worth its salt unless it served to make you a better and happier person, and further that the entirety of the realm of creation ( including animals ) was made better by the virtuous activity of individuals in the world.

Hutcheson wanted to touch the hearts as well as the minds of his followers by raising their enthusiasm for virtue, and his biographer, W.R. Scott, confirms that it was the force of his personality that made his teaching and writing so appealing and effective in this regard. He wanted to encourage a certain outlook toward life that he found in the best ancient writers. He wanted to extend his ideas of man's natural moral sense of virtue to his students at the university, so that those ideas would have a chance to take root as part of the culture of every educated man.

Hutcheson was selling a program of optimism and enthusiasm in the face of the pessimistic view of reality found in both Hobbes' egoism and the old

revealed Puritan religion's idea of man as degraded and sinful. The predominant influence of Calvinist theology was dour and morose to the hilt. Hutcheson thought, with others, that it made people ill tempered and gloomy, which was far from being conducive to a happy or contented life. He truly believed that the right kind of moral philosophy could overcome that sort of depressed mental condition that the contemporary revealed religion offered them. People could be persuaded instead to glory in their God given human capacities for moral sensitivity, toward each other and the other sensitive members of their community, the domestic animals. Furthermore, they could actually experience joy in their lives while being moral.

Hutcheson had found a way to revitalize and reform his traditional Presbyterian theology by going back to the ideas of the ancients for his full blown theory of the moral sense. He had found many kindred spirits among the Enlightenment Deists, but he was, in fact, a Christian minister and university teacher who was one of the company of natural theologians. He took intuitionism from Cicero (well known already among scholars of his day), a kind of Stoic world citizenship from Marcus Aurelius (whom he translated), Shaftesbury's more contemporary notion of a community of sensitive beings and refined and promoted these ideas using Biblical texts, making the whole package attractive to the ordinary Christian. He democratized the new ethic. He was truly the definitive Enlightenment philosopher in his ability to draw all of these diverse elements together into a moral philosophy whose time had definitely come. His idea of the moral sense evolves over the span of his career of teaching and writing to finally become less strictly empirical, in the Lockian sense, and more of a natural theology, so that he is sometimes metaphysically



inconsistent, but is still, and more importantly, producing a message of moral enthusiasm that his contemporary Christians found compelling.

People of his day were afraid of the implications of scientific materialism and selfish egoism, as well as the old dour Puritan morality. And here it was, the answer to all these “evils”, a “balm in Gilead” for the spirit of the age. It was an easy package to sell because Hutcheson was such a skillful artist of the language with such an optimistic message of enlightenment buoyed by Christian faith.

The other part that impressed me most about Hutcheson was that everyone, even Hume, thought he was a “really nice guy”. He seemed to practice in his own life the goodwill and benevolence that he recommended to others; I have already mentioned his political correctness regarding slavery. He is described as warm, dynamic and highly esteemed by a wide circle of professional associates, students and friends. It is highly likely that his family liked him as well. That is why, at least in part, he had such an enormous influence, for example, on his student, Adam Smith. And this leads me to my next point, that this Christian utilitarian ethic of Hutcheson’s was a perfect fit for the American agrarian dream.

Hutcheson’s biographer, Scott tells us that Adam Smith learned directly of natural liberty, optimism and naturalism in Hutcheson’s classroom at the University of Glasgow, that the older man’s general philosophical position is actually presupposed by Smith’s economics as found in the *Wealth of Nations*. He traces the actual ‘blackboard’ notes of Hutcheson’s lectures as presented in the final published work, called in Latin, *The Compend of Morals* and in English, *A Short History of Philosophy*, published in 1747, directly to Smith’s

economic theory, the same ideas that guided the birth and growth of the American colonies, through the philosophy of Jefferson and others.

I find this amazing confirmation that Hutcheson was doing exactly what I have previously described as his moral mission. He was extending his ideas of man's natural moral sense of virtue, in this case his ideas regarding the natural division of labor and wealth, supply and demand and the idea of man's labor as value, to his student, Adam Smith, so that those ideas could take root as part of the culture of educated men. He also presumably influenced Jefferson's teacher, William Small, though perhaps not personally, (since Small did not come to America till well after Hutcheson's death) and in turn Jefferson himself, who was undoubtedly one of the most effective influences on early American culture/agriculture.

I believe that all of the ideas of the husbandry ethic, in one form or another, can be shown to be a part of Jefferson's thought or activity, many through his association with Hutcheson's philosophy. This is why I have chosen and placed Jefferson in the beginning of this thesis as I have, because he is the hook on which I hang all these "hats" (in my contextual closet) that I claim are the various parts of the essence of the animal husbandry ethic.

The ethic of the moral sense, modeled as it was on the Enlightenment virtues of the Greeks and the belief that humans were basically good, and naturally had what Hutcheson called "kind affections and purposes", was the underlying theme of Smith's economic theory and Jefferson's dream of a republic built on that theory. The good farmer was the heart of that dream and the embodiment of the Hutchesonian ideal. This well meaning and hard working person of "kind affections and purposes" based his life on a Christian utilitarian ethic, which I have hopefully shown to be an integral part of the theological themes of the

eighteen and nineteenth centuries in Britain. These are basically the three themes that were mentioned early on in this section as also being present as well in the contemporary theological literature of Linzey, McDaniel and others :

1) The Christian/Old Testament story of God's creation and covenant with man in regard to animals, as related both in the Garden of Eden contract and the later contract between God and Noah and his family. This includes the reinterpretation of the covenant by Jesus, which for Linzey incorporates the perception of Christ as the definition of the gentle shepherd who expresses his power over the animals as service to them.

2) The idea of benevolence or mercy as a Christian virtue whose origin is the Old Testament and whose reinterpretation is from the New Testament, along with the associated idea of our human duty to animals which was often interpreted as the care of a parent for a child, with God's care for humans as the model.

3) The common Biblical texts mentioned by authors of both centuries in support of an ethic of kind treatment of animals, with special emphasis on the text from Proverbs, "A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast." I feel that it is this statement which might embody the simplest reason that the ordinary Christian might have paid attention to these nineteenth century writings. We all presumably want to be good people, "righteous", and therefore, right people. The Enlightenment and the liberalization of theology had mentally prepared the ordinary run of the mill citizen, at least in Britain, for the idea of hoping and striving to be a person of good moral character in an Aristotelian sense, and Christians, most especially, were prepared to study their Bibles and learn what it was that a good Christian ought morally to be and do in the world.

Philosophically the heart of the “feeling part” of the ethic is probably the idea of the moral sense, but “feeling” in this ethic is religious in nature, and that religious part, in this British context, is the humanitarian message of the Bible. We can become persons of good character as religious believers. Both the Protestant liberal reform, of which Hutcheson was a part, as well as the prior teachings of the Latitudinarian sect, give us a picture of the Christian version of the ideal of benevolent care of animals as part of the community of sensitive beings (the Old Testament covenant). In addition natural science contributed the truth of who animals really were and therefore showed us the way that human caring could actually contribute to their flourishing in a practical sense, partly because we now knew what good flourishing meant for the various species (And now we know even more). But the motivation for caring came from the ideal of virtuous Christian people who were characterized by this natural moral faculty and guided by the moral principles of the scriptures.

As previously mentioned, this natural moral sense or faculty in humans mirrored the love of a caring God for his creatures which was like the care of a parent for a child. Ethical caring, as is true in parenting, was not a sacrifice, as in the old morality, but a joyful work prompted by our own benevolent natures and connected to a whole benevolent creation. In fact, in the nineteenth century literature Youatt calls benevolence “the essence of Christianity”. The British movement to prohibit cruelty towards animals was part of a larger humanitarian movement against cruel practices in the work place especially where women and children were concerned. All of these humanitarian movements were fueled largely by the messages of sermons, and the kinds texts on religious morality like those I have surveyed (Youatt, Drummond and Bray).

Religion had co-opted the utilitarian message into a natural theology fed by the new discoveries of biological science and rediscovered in the old writings of the Christian Bible. The three themes mentioned formed the heart of these texts, which were both ancient and contemporary to the age, and therefore the essence of the modern husbandry ethic.

Since the movement for animal welfare reform created substantive legislative reform in the area of the treatment of domestic animals the ethic redefined what was legally right and wrong in the treatment of these animals. It may be assumed that those texts or similar texts played a role in that reform, because of the evidence for the evolution of the social and philosophical ideology fueling the movement that we find in the literature of the preceding centuries. The broad support of this legislation proved that the message of the new ethic concerning animals had truly become a part of the culture of educated people, and the popularity and profusion of these theologically based texts proved that the common man had also adopted these ideals. Clergymen in England had helped to form this part of the English national character which was oriented to sensitive and humanitarian Christian teaching in regard to non-human animals, and which led the way for similar reforms elsewhere.

[It will be noted that De Levie makes essentially the same claim as I do regarding the role of the clergy in the movement against cruelty to animals in Britain (see page 70 of this text), but he proves in his writing that he is fairly ignorant of the philosophical forces at work, and therefore fails to adequately support his claim. Also, I might add that I did not read his thesis until fairly late into this research and was thrilled to notice that he had said essentially the same thing that I had regarding the role of the clergy, but chagrined to learn that his philosophical background was shabby. His thesis after all is in the field

of literature, not philosophy. In fact, he himself makes a disclaimer in his introduction regarding Harwood's work, which he had not seen, being isolated in Germany while he was writing. ]

## Table I

## CONTENTS.

Chapter	Page
I. Introduction .....	1
II. The Obligation of Man towards the Inferior and Dependent Creatures.....	3
III. Does Christianity inculcate the Duty of Humanity to Animals?.....	15
IV. Man's Right to the Flesh of Animals .....	27
V. Man's Right to Hunting and Fishing .....	35
VI. Man's Right to the Use of Animals limited.....	46
VII. On the Use of Animals in the Designs of Providence .	65
VIII. The Benefits derived from Animals, their Docility, Obedience, and Affection for Man, an Argument for treating them with Humanity .....	82
IX. Causes of Cruelty to Animals. ....	94
SECTION. 1. Gambling and the Love of Gain.....	96
2. Brutal Passions, and the Love of Sport. ..	104
3. Luxury and Gluttony .....	114
4. Ignorance and False Pretences.....	122
5. Antipathies .....	137
6. Love of Science perverted—Vivisection ..	145
7. ————— Natural History	169
X. Humanity to Animals considered as a subject of Education .....	180
XI. Shall Animals, exist hereafter? .....	197
XII. Cruelty admits of no Defence .....	206