A VINDICATION OF THE RIGHTS OF BRUTES
By Thomas Taylor, the Platonist, as he himself informed me.

J. R.
A

VINDICATION

OF THE

RIGHTS OF BRUTES

(1792)

BY

Thomas Taylor

A FACSIMILE REPRODUCTION
WITH AN INTRODUCTION
BY

Louise Schutz Boas

GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA

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INTRODUCTION

I

A Vindication of the Rights of Brutes is one of the rarest items among the numerous works of Thomas Taylor the Platonist (1758-1835). A comparatively young man, he had already published a book on "a new method of reasoning in geometry, applied to the rectification of the circle," a paraphrase of Ocellus Lucanus on the nature of the universe, translations of the hymns of Orpheus including a dissertation on Orpheus, a paraphrase of Plotinus on "The Beautiful," the mathematical commentaries of Proclus on Euclid's Elements, and a dissertation on the Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries.

In spite of its background of classical reference, A Vindication of the Rights of Brutes is out of line with Taylor's other works, a diversion from his self-dedicated task of translating and elucidating the Greek philosophers. It takes note of a current controversy. It negates the usual picture of Taylor with his head in the clouds, living, in effect, in the ancient world, unaware of his times, a scholar without wit or a sense of humor.
A Vindication of the Rights of Brutes is an exercise in irony, a witty, merry book in which Taylor, using the weapon of laughter, professed agreement with the radical ideas recently published by two of his friends, Mary Wollstonecraft and Thomas Paine, and by carrying these to their logical extremes, reduced them to absurdity. That it was their ideas which eventually triumphed does not lessen the reader's enjoyment of his wit, or alter the usefulness of his parody of what he regarded as an oversimplification of the nature of man, an over-generalization of the worth of all men, and an egalitarianism he could not accept.

Indirectly Taylor's mock-serious defence of the rights of brutes stemmed from the publication in November 1790, little more than a year after the storming of the Bastille, of Edmund Burke's unsympathetic Reflections on the French Revolution. This book led to an immediate reply from Mary Wollstonecraft; two editions of her open letter to Burke, A Vindication of the Rights of Men, were published in November 1790, followed in 1792 by her more famous A Vindication of the Rights of Woman. Of the great spate of refutations of Burke's Reflections the most powerful, famous, and effective was Thomas Paine's Rights of Man, written in 1790, published in London in 1791, and swiftly banned; to own or to sell a copy was a criminal offence, but four months later Paine wrote to his friend George Washington that already eleven thousand of the sixteen thousand copies printed
had been sold. Paine, very helpful in the American Revolution, was now active in the French Revolution, with a seat at the Convention. He had left England for Paris before this first part of the *Rights of Man* was published; he returned, but in 1792 when the second part was published he fled to France to avoid the trial for seditious libel it provoked. The magic phrase, "the rights of man," used decorously in America, was in France highly inflammatory, as indeed it tends to be today when on all sides, in many parts of the modern world, there are repetitive cries of the right to strike, to vote, to assemble, to march, to demonstrate.

Mary Wollstonecraft as a guest in Taylor's home had called his study "the abode of peace." He was not in sympathy with her radical ideas or those of Paine; he was not an advocate of an egalitarian world, but if they insisted upon agitation for this, he could show them how much farther they must carry their theories. His *Vindication of the Rights of Brutes* (London, 1792; Boston, Massachusetts, 1795) endeavors to demonstrate that who has said A must say B; and that B leads on to an unforeseen Z.

A spirit somewhat similar to Taylor's motivated a discussion in the United Nations in May 1964 on the rights of the indigenous inhabitants of Mauritius and the Seychelles: it was pointed out that the first, dodos, were now extinct, and the second, giant tortoises, were uninterested in politics.
Thomas Taylor the Platonist was one of those men who become legends in their own day, about whom myths accrue; who, admired, decried, or mocked, are the subjects of numerous articles during their lives and long after; who appear as characters in contemporary novels [Taylor is the "modern Platonist" in Isaac D'Israeli's Vaurien published in 1797]; who give inspiration to famous men [Emerson was almost a disciple of Taylor]; and who provide textbooks for generations of schoolboys [some of Taylor's translations were still in use in 1945]. In 1848 Emerson, in conversation with the aging Wordsworth, declared it a flaw in the English character that Taylor was so little known, "whilst in every American library, his translations are found."

Thomas Taylor was born in London in 1758 at the time of Halley's comet, to "poor but worthy parents." At eight he was sent to a famous school, St. Paul's, founded in the early sixteenth century by John Colet for boys "who could already read and write and who were of good capacity" for "a sound Christian education and the knowledge of Greek and Latin." Three years later Taylor, nicknamed "philosopher," persuaded his father to permit him to continue his studies at home. From fifteen to eighteen he lived with an uncle at Sheerness, studying assiduously and developing an in-
terest in speculative philosophy. From eighteen to twenty he studied under a dissenting minister, because his father, interested in modern theology, wished him to become a clergyman and disapproved of his mathematical studies. He was now ready to enter the university at Aberdeen.

But at the age of twelve Taylor had fallen in love with Mary Morton and, remeeting her, had been spending his evenings courting her. A secret marriage to save her from the wealthy suitor favored by her father was soon discovered and the anger of both fathers made it necessary for Taylor to earn his living. The only post available was at a distant boarding school, from which he was rescued by a friend who secured for him a clerkship at a banking house. Poorly paid, he remained there for six years, fortunately provided by another friend with a suitable house at Walford. Comparatively secure, he pursued his studies at night, augmenting his income by published articles.

To improve his finances he turned to invention, experimenting with phosphorus which, immersed in a mixture of salt and oil boiled together, burned with great brilliance and threw a circle of light a yard wide. Having constructed his "perpetual lamp," he held an exhibition to which too large a group came; the room became overheated and the lamp exploded. Nevertheless, the lamp proved the foundation of a modest fortune for him through
the interest taken in it and the lecture he had given on light, by some of the spectators, wealthy and influential men. The retired merchant William Meredith and his architect brother George, who were interested in the Greek philosophers, found a market for Taylor's dissertations and his translations from the Greek. The popular sculptor Flaxman lent his home for a series of twelve lectures on Plato, with audiences of distinguished people many of whom became Taylor's friends.

In 1798 Taylor was appointed assistant secretary of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce in London. In recommending him Samuel Paterson, well-known bookseller, publisher, and bibliographer, librarian to the Marquis of Lansdowne, wrote: "I only regret that a man who has the learning and abilities sufficient to govern a City, or even a province, should have no higher prospect in view than the doubtful succession to a Deputyship of inconsiderable emolument." Taylor from 1798 to 1806 apparently found the post congenial and was an efficient and sedulous assistant to his superior executive, as existing letters prove.

In 1802 he visited Oxford, possibly with the thought of an appointment there, though he was self-taught and not a professional scholar, and his translations had not been favorably noticed by the Greek professor, Richard Porson. He was kindly received by the Dean of Christ Church who spoke
admiringly of his books and wished to subscribe to his translation of the complete works of Plato. Heads of other colleges and professors of history, and especially the professors at New College where he was staying, were cordial; he had free access to the Bodleian Library at all times, and found there the manuscripts he had been seeking. Oxford's Gothic Halls he found gloomy and melancholy and he returned to London gladly; no offer had been made.

Through the generosity of the president of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Charles Howard, the eleventh Duke of Norfolk, who was interested in Plato, and that of William Meredith, who was interested in Aristotle, Taylor was able to resign his post in 1806 and spend his remaining years, 1806-1835, in the work he loved, leaving behind him an astonishing number of translations, including the complete works of Plato and Aristotle, and a creditable number of original works, both prose and poetry. The Duke of Norfolk guaranteed the costs of his Plato, the first complete edition in English, so that by 1805 Taylor could include this in the list of his published translations printed at the back of his Miscellanies in Prose and Verse. Six volumes were listed there, but in the end when the final volume was finished there were five volumes, the first containing the translations of another self-dedicated Platonist, Floyer Sydenham who, finding no interested public and no patron,
had died of starvation. Taylor's beautifully printed volumes were not offered for sale; they were deposited in the Duke's library at Arundel Castle and not dispersed until 1848. Taylor may have retained some sets aside from presentation copies, for in 1818, three years after the death of the Duke, another advertisement appeared in the list on the back pages of Taylor's *Iamblichus' Life of Pythagoras*, priced at ten pounds and ten shillings the set.

The Duke's action in effectively suppressing the *Plato* was not an arbitrary decision. Plato was in disfavor as a pagan; Taylor was sometimes referred to as a pagan, as one who wished to overthrow the Christian religion and re-establish the Greek gods. He was reputed to have statues of pagan gods in his study, to pour libations to them, to have been expelled by his landlady for trying to sacrifice a bull in his room, to have sacrificed a goat in some public place, absurdities which may have some slight basis in boyish pranks but are, except perhaps an occasional libation, mere gossip. Taylor had no landlady—he owned his house and was happily married, having firm views on monogamy and domestic responsibility, at odds with the views of Mary Wollstonecraft. He had not yet published the anti-Christian arguments of the Emperor Julian or the translation of Celsus' irreverences, both of which were suppressed (copies are still available in a few libraries). He
was, however, known as an admirer of the ancient theology which he interpreted allegorically. That he and his unorthodox views were well known by 1797 is attested by D'Israeli's chapters in *Vaurien* where Vaurien goes to visit "the Platonist" and talks at length with him. D'Israeli shows familiarity with Taylor's publications, including the *Vindication of the Rights of Brutes*.

III

Mary Wollstonecraft's *Rights of Men* was not concerned wholly with political rights or the injustices suffered by the poor. She was angered by Burke's tendency to "vitiate reason" which she postulated as man's highest quality, leading him to virtue, and so distinguishing him from the animals, who have not the gift of reason. This is the sounding board for Taylor, who sets out to prove that animals have reason; he supports his thesis with multiple quotation from the Greek philosophers, thereby making his point without direct statement that men are not equally blessed with reason. He believed that "in every class of beings in the universe . . . there is a first, a middle, and a last, in order that the progression of things may form one unbroken chain, originating in deity, and terminating in matter . . . a golden chain of beings" formed by the first and smallest class, the multitude forming the lowest. He set out therefore
to show the impracticability of an egalitarian society.

Quite sincerely he accepted reason as higher in man than in the brute creation but went on, as today’s computer might do, to equate the whole brute with the whole man. Man’s strength is less than that of the lion, his eye inferior to that of the fly, he lacks the bird’s art of flying, and the fish’s knowledge of submarine navigation. The sum total of gifts plus reason of the brutes seems level with man’s reason minus these skills; the intrinsic worth of all created things is the same.

Taylor by manifold illustration showed that animals have long been known to have reason and to communicate with one another. If men diligently studied the language of little known peoples they would find them intelligible; similarly the languages of animals could be learned. It follows that man would change his attitude toward animals—and refrain from eating them. In our modern world we are told that men will before long be able to converse with dolphins whose brain is remarkably like the human brain. Taylor would have been interested, but his purpose here was mockery; he found in Plutarch and others a wealth of anecdote of loving and intelligent animals: oxen who could count to one hundred, the number of pails of water each carried daily to the King’s gardens; elephants who were clever and affectionate, especially to ladies; magpies who were natural mu-
sicians, and dogs who were natural actors. An orchestra of magpies and an acting company of dogs could provide much public entertainment, and their wages, because animals care nothing for money, could be used to reduce the national debt.

The worship of animals, and the statues of gods with animal heads or bodies Taylor offered as an indication of the high estimation in which men have held the brute creation whose rights he was now demanding. Lacking time to pursue the matter further, he left to others the task of vindicating the rights of rocks and stones and trees, and the very dust beneath men's feet. Then the truth of equality established, "government may be entirely subverted, subordinated, abolished; and all things everywhere, and in every respect, be common to all."

This triumphant conclusion was the final arrow in his quiver. In his future works he reiterated his firm belief that he "who has not even a knowledge of common things is a brute among men. He who has an accurate knowledge of human concerns alone, is a man among brutes. He who knows all that can be known by intellectual energy is a God among men."

Louise Schutz Boas

_Huntington Library_
_San Marino, California_
_January, 1965_
BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

The copy here reproduced, somewhat enlarged, of Thomas Taylor's *A Vindication of the Rights of Brutes*, is reprinted with the kind permission of the British Museum. It is the only known copy of the London edition of 1792; search has been made in many libraries in England and America. Two copies of the edition published in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1795 are recorded: one is in the Library of Congress, and one is in the American Antiquarian Society. These two copies have some slight variations in the preface and pagination. The American edition is octavo with fifty-eight pages as against the first edition's one hundred and three.

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VINDICATION

OF THE

RIGHTS OF BRUTES.

Quid rides?

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR EDWARD JEFFERY, PALL-MALL; AND SOLD BY MILLER, IN BOND-STREET; AND J. SEWELL, CORNHILL. 1792.
The particular design of the following sheets, is to evince by demonstrative arguments, the perfect equality of what is called the irrational species, to the human; but it has likewise a more general design; and this is no other, than to establish the equality of all things, as to their intrinsic dignity and worth. Indeed, after those wonderful productions of Mr. Paine and Mrs. Woolstoncraft, such a theory as the present, seems to be necessary, in order to give
give perfection to our researches into the rights of things; and in such an age of discovery and independence as the present, the author flatters himself, that his theory will be warmly patronized by all the lovers of novelty, and friends of opposition, who are happily, at this period, so numerous both in France and England, and who are likely to receive an unbounded increase.

The author indeed, is well aware, that even in these luminous days, there are still many who will be so far from admitting the equality of brutes to men, that they will not even allow the equality of mankind to each other. Perhaps too, they will en-
deavour
deavour to support their opinion from the authority of Aristotle in his politics, where he endeavours to prove, that some men are naturally born slaves, and others free; and that the slaveish part of mankind ought to be governed by the independent, in the same manner as the soul governs the body, that is, like a despot or a tyrant. "For (says he) those who are born with strong bodily and weak mental powers, are born to serve; and on the contrary, whenever the mind predominates over the body, it confers natural freedom on its possessor." But this is a conclusion which will surely be ridiculed by every genuine modern, as it wholly proceeds on a supposition, that mind and body
body are two distinct things, and that the former is more excellent than the latter; though almost every one is now convinced, that soul and body are only nominally distinguished from each other, and are essentially the same.

In short, such is the prevalence of truth, and such the futility of Aristotle, that his distinction between master and servant is continually losing ground; so that all subordination seems to be dying away, and an approximation to equality taking place among the different orders of mankind. The truth of this observation is particularly evident in female servants, whose independent spirit, which
which is mistaken by some for boldness and impudence, is become the subject of general surprize; and who so happily rival their mistresses in dress, that excepting a little awkwardness in their carriage, and roughness in their hands, occasioned by untwisting the wide-bespattering radii of the mop, and strenuously grasping the scrubbing-brush, there is no difference between my lady and her house-maid. We may therefore reasonably hope, that this amazing rage for liberty will continually increase; that mankind will shortly abolish all government as an intolerable yoke; and that they will as universally join in vindicating the rights of brutes, as in asserting the prerogatives of man.

A VIN-
the United States. In contrast to other nations, the United States is characterized by a more equalitarian social structure, a high level of individualism, and a strong emphasis on personal responsibility. These factors contribute to the creation of a unique political culture, one that is often described as liberal in nature. The American political system is based on the principles of democracy, individual freedom, and equality. The Constitution, adopted in 1787, serves as the foundation of the American political system and is the supreme law of the land. The United States has a federal system of government, with power divided between the national government and the states. The elected representatives of the American people are the President, who serves as the head of state, and the Congress, which consists of the Senate and the House of Representatives. The President and the Congress work together to make laws, but they also have distinct roles and responsibilities. The President is responsible for enforcing the laws, while the Congress has the power to make laws. The American political system is designed to ensure the protection of individual rights and the rule of law.
A

VINDICATION

OF THE

RIGHTS OF BRUTES.

CHAP. I.

That God has made all Things equal.

It appears at first sight somewhat singular, that a moral truth of the highest importance, and most illustrious evidence, should have been utterly unknown to the ancients, and not yet fully perceived, and universally acknowledged, even in such an enlightened age as the present.

B The
The truth I allude to is, the equality of all things, with respect to their intrinsic and real dignity and worth. But indeed, a little consideration will soon enable us to account for the ignorance of mankind in this interesting particular; and will teach us, that it solely arises from those baneful habits of perverse reasoning, which have from time to time immemorial taken root in the minds of men, and have at last sunk so deep, as to render their final and general extirpation, an immensely laborious, if not a ridiculous, attempt.

I perceive however, with no small delight, that this sublime doctrine is daily gaining ground amongst the thinking part of mankind. Mr. Payne has already convinced
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convinced thousands of the equality of men to each other; and Mrs. Woolstoncraft has indisputably proved, that women are in every respect naturally equal to men, not only in mental abilities, but likewise in bodily strength, boldness, and the like.

But all this, however, is only an approximation to the great truth, which this Essay is designed to promulgate and prove, that there is no such thing in the universe, as superiority of nature (the first cause being excepted); and that any thing, when minutely and accurately examined, however vile and contemptible it may falsely appear, will be found to be of inestimable value, and intrinsically equal
equal to a thing of the greatest magnitude and worth.

To be convinced of this, we need only consider, that the Deity, according to the common conceptions of all men, is a being of perfect equity and impartiality; that his goodness is immense, and that he is no less powerful than good. Now in consequence of this, all his productions must be equally good and excellent; since otherwise he would be partial and unjust. Should it be said, that according to this doctrine the vilest natures must be as similar to the Deity as the most excellent, I reply, that this is only begging the question; as we contend that the merit of all things, is in all things perfectly equal and the same. But
But this will appear more evident, from the following induction:—On comparing the nature of a lion with that of a man, we find that bodily strength is the apparent characteristic of the one, and reason of the other. I say apparent; for, as will shortly be proved, brutes possess reason in common with men, though not in quite so exquisite a degree; and hence, the deficiency of reason, combined with superiority of strength, renders the lion an animal equally excellent with man; in like manner, the swiftness of a hare united with hare-like reason, puts the hare upon an equality both with the lion and the man; the advantages of flying in a bird, united with the reason of a bird; the subtilty of spinning in a spider, with spider-like reason; and the microscopic eye of a fly,
fly, with the reason of a fly, will severally be found to be equal to each other, and of equal dignity with the reason and bodily advantages of man.

This theory will perhaps appear to many too abstracted and refined, and as having a tendency to destroy those distinctions of society, which seem to have been pointed out by nature herself, and to have commenced with the creation of the world. There appears indeed to be some weight in the first part of the objection, with respect to the abstractedness of this theory; for not long since Mr. Payne, who may be considered as the father of this system, was so lost in contemplation of its sublimity, that he suffered himself to be insulted in a company of two hundred persons,
sons, without attempting to revenge the affront (the whole two hundred likewise experiencing the same abstracted effects); Mrs. Woolstoncraft, who though a virgin, is the mother of this theory, often, as I am told, eats beef for mutton; and I myself am frequently so lost, as when reading the best productions of the moderns, to imagine they are nonsensical, when at the same time they are the progeny of the most consummate wisdom and wit. But consequences like these, which are in reality but trifling, ought not to be objected to a system, which is founded on truth, and intimately interwoven with the nature of things. And, as to its being urged, that such a system tends to destroy the necessary distinctions of society, I answer, that it must first be proved that
such distinctions are necessary and natural; for there is great reason to suspect, that they are, and always have been, nothing more than tyrannical invasions of certain wicked and designing men, who wished (and have unfortunately succeeded in their wish), to destroy that equality, which the Author of the universe has benevolently inserted in all things. These distinctions indeed are so far from being natural, that the very words by which they are expressed, are evidently corruptions of more common, and less arbitrary appellations. Thus, for instance, the Greek word for a king, βασιλεὺς, is doubtless a corruption of βασιλικὸς, a βασιλικός; and the English word nobility, is in like manner a corruption of the word mobility; just as praying, when it becomes social,
socal, is beyond all controversy a corruption of *braying*; as I doubt not will be readily acknowledged by the ingenious and learned Mr. Wakefield.

**CHAP.**
BUT as our more immediate business at present is with brutes, and their rights, in order to accomplish in a becoming manner this arduous investigation, I shall prove, in the first place, that they are rational beings, as well as men; and in the second place, I shall enumerate some out of the numberless advantages which would arise from endeavouring to understand the language of brutes, and restoring them to their natural equality with mankind. At the same time, I would wish the Reader to take notice, that whatever is here asserted
asserted of brutes, is no less applicable to vegetables, and even minerals themselves; for it is an ancient opinion, that all things are endued with sense; and this doctrine is very acutely defended by Campanella, in his Treatise De Sensu Rerum, et Magia, and is indeed the natural result of that most sublime and comprehensive theory, which is the basis of the present work. So that there is some reason to hope, that this Essay will soon be followed by treatises on the rights of vegetables and minerals, composed by persons of far greater abilities than I possess; that thus, the doctrine of perfect equality will become universal; dominion of every kind be exiled from the face of the earth; and that beautiful period be realized, which at
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present is believed to exist only in fable, when

"Man walk'd with beast joint tenant of the shade."

But in order to prove that brutes possess reason in common with men, I shall present the Reader with the substance of the Platonic philosopher Porphyry's arguments on this subject, which I have collected with great pains, from his Third Book, on Abstinence from Animal Food, as they appear to me to be admirably calculated for our present design; and are as follow:

It is a true and Pythagoric opinion, that every soul participating sense and memory is rational, and is endued with speech as well
well internal as external, by means of which, animals apparently irrational confer with each other. But that the words they employ for this purpose should not be distinguished by us, is not to be wondered at, if we consider, that the discourse of many Barbarians is unintelligible to us, and that they appear to make use of indistinct vociferation, rather than rational speech. Besides, if antiquity is to be believed, and the testimony of those who existed in our time, and that of our ancestors, there are some who have affirmed themselves capable of hearing and understanding the speech of animals, as among the ancients, Melampus and Tiresias, but among the moderns, Apollonius Tyaneus, who is reported to have told his friends who were present at the occasion, that
that one swallow informed other birds, that an ass had the misfortune to fall near the city, loaded with wheat, which was scattered on the ground, through the incursions of a porter; and one of our companions related to me, that he met with a boy, in capacity of a servant, who understood all the voices of birds, and affirmed, that they were diviners, and prognosticators of future events; but at length, through his mother, who was fearful left he should be sent as a present to the emperor, and on this account poured urine in his ear when asleep, he was deprived of this wonderful sagacity. But that brutes are endued with reason, may be argued from their signifying to each other their peculiar concerns; from their consulting for their own interest with
with diligent sagacity; from their providing for futurity; from their learning many things alternately of each other and of mankind, and from alternately instructing each other in things necessary to their existence. To all which we may add, that Plato, Aristotle, Empedocles, Democritus, and others, who have accurately investigated the truth concerning animals, have found them to partake of reason and discourse. But as Aristotle observes, there appears a diversity in the participation only, and not in the essence of reason; the difference consisting in more and less, which many think may be applied to the nature of gods and men, a diversity between these subsisting according to a perfect and imperfect habit of reason, and not according to a contrariety of essence.

So
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So one and the same reason is common to men and brutes, but is distinguished by degrees of intension and remission. Aristotle further observes, that those animals are most prudent, that is, are most crafty and subtle, which excel in acuteness of sensation; but the difference of the corporeal organization renders animals easily, or with difficulty, passive to external objects, and is the occasion of their possessing reason in greater or less energy and vigour; but this cannot cause an essential variation of soul, since it neither compels the senses nor the pallions to depart from their proper nature.

It must be granted therefore, that the difference of reason in these subsists according to more and less, nor must we deprive
deprive other animals of reason entirely, because we participate an higher degree of intellecction. As we do not deny that partridges can fly, because hawks soar with greater rapidity; for indeed it may be admitted, that the soul is subject to passion from its union with the body, and is affected according to the good or bad temperament of its constitution; but that the nature of the soul is changed in consequence of this passivity, must by no means be allowed: but if it is passive only from this union, and uses the body as an instrument, when this instrument is differently organized from ours, it performs many things which we are unable to effect; and indeed it is passive from the particular constitution of the body, but it does not on this account change its pecu-
liar nature. But those who affirm that brutes, in their rational operations, act from nature, do not sufficiently perceive that they are naturally endued with a rational power, nor that the reason we participate is the gift of nature, although its perfection depends on an increase beyond what we derived from nature. Nor is it an argument against the rationality of brutes, that their reason is not derived from discipline; since it is true in other animals as well as in men, that many things are taught them from nature, but that they acquire much information from after instruction. Again, some have endeavoured, and I think not absurdly, to shew, that many animals are more prudent than we are, from the places in which they reside; for as the inhabitants of
of æther are more rational than mankind, this is likewise true, say they, of the next to these, the inhabitants of air; afterwards the residents in water and in earth differ from each other in gradations of reason. For if we measure the dignity of divinities from the excellency of place, it is equally just to apply the same standard to every kind of animal nature. Again, Socrates, and before him Rhadamanthus, used to swear by animals; but the Egyptians believed that certain animals were gods; whether this was their real opinion, or whether they designedly gave the countenance of an ox and the face of birds to the forms of the gods, that they might induce men to abstain from animals, as much as from their own species; or whether this proceeded from some more secret cause
cause of which we are ignorant. Thus too the Greeks placed the horns of a ram on the statue of Jupiter; but the horns of a bull on that of Bacchus, and composed the statue of Pan from the junction of a goat and a man. To the Muses and Sirens, Love and Mercury, they gave wings; and they relate, that Jupiter assumed, at different times, the form of a bull, of an eagle, and of a swan. By all which the ancients testified the honours they bestowed on animals, and this in a still greater degree, when they affirm that a goat was the nurse of Jupiter.

But Fables indicate that brute animals accord with mankind in the nature of soul, when they affirm that through the indignation of the gods, human souls pass into
into the bodies of brutes; and that, when thus transmigrated, they excite the pity of the divinities; signifying by such narrations, that all animals are endued with reason, which, though imperfect in most of the brutal kind, is not entirely wanting in any.

Hence it is unjust to destroy animals, since they are not entirely alienated from our nature, but participate of reason in common with mankind, though in an inferior degree. But we, indulging in wantonness and cruelty, destroy many of them in theatrical sports, and in the barbarous exercise of the chase, by which means the brutal energies of our nature grow strong, and savage desires increase. On the contrary, the Pythagoreans exercised
cified gentleness and clemency towards brutes as a specimen of humanity and pity. Again, that brutes participate of reason may be argued as follows: Every thing which is perfectly inanimate, since it is destitute of reason and intellect, is opposed to that, which together with soul participates of reason and a certain intelligence. For every animated sensitive being possesses also a phantasy, as a kind of reason; and Nature, which forms every thing for the sake of some purpose, and with reference to some end, formed also an animal, sensitive; not that it might simply perceive and suffer, but that it might distinguish what is convenient to its nature from what is inconvenient, and pursue the one and avoid the other. Sense therefore procures to every
every animal the knowledge of what is noxious or beneficial; but that conduct, which is the result of sensation, I mean the prosecution of things useful, and the avoiding such as are destructive, can only be present with beings endued with a certain ratiocination, judgment and memory. Indeed Strato, the physiologist, justly observes, that sense cannot at all operate without intelligence, since we often run over writings with our eyes, and expose our ears to discourse, without any attendant consciousness, the soul being intent on some other concern; and afterwards consider and pursue the meaning they contain, by recollecting what was before unnoticed. From whence it is well said by the poet,

"'Tis mind alone that sees and hears,
"And all besides is deaf and blind."
For indeed, though our eyes and ears become passive to external objects, yet perception cannot take place unless intellect is present. On which account King Cleomenes, when a certain discourse was praised at a banquet at which he was present, being asked whether it did not appear to him excellent—that must be determined by you, says he, for my soul was at the time in Peloponesus. But although we should admit that sense does not require intellect in the prosecution of its energies, yet when it places a difference between two objects pursuing the one and avoiding the other, and sagaciously invents the middle term of pursuit and declination, we may justly attribute such inventions to the operations of reason,
reason, and conclude, that these powers are peculiar to a rational nature, and are present in different degrees to all animals possessing a progressive motion.
That in consequence of Brutes possessing Reason, we ought to abstain from Animal Food;—and that this was the Practice of the most ancient Greeks.

Thus far Porphyry, from whose perfectly convincing arguments it evidently follows, that it is equally as unjust and tyrannical to destroy and eat brutes, as they are erroneously called, as it would be to sacrifices our own species for the same impious and intemperate purposes; since in either case, we injure our kindred and allies. Besides, as he well observes in another place, he who loves all animals in general, will have no particular hatred for
for any individual; but by how much the more he cultivates justice, towards the whole animal kind, by so much the more will his equity be extended towards that part of the species, which is more nearly allied to his own. Hence he who uses all animals with kindness and familiarity, will not injure this or that in particular: but he who circumscribes justice, within the narrow limits of the human race, is ever ready, like one placed in a difficult situation, to relax the reins of injustice, and hasten into the dangerous paths of iniquity. On which account the banquet of Pythagoras, is much more pleasant and desirable, than that of Socrates: for the latter of these affirmed, that hunger was the sauce of food; but Pythagoras asserted, that to injure no one, and to act justly, was the sweetest of all banquets.
But that this abstinence from animal food, which is here so warmly recommended, was actually adopted by the most ancient nations, is evident in the first place from the conduct of the primitive Greeks, as related by Porphyry, in the Fourth Book of his above-mentioned Treatise, and which was as follows:

"Dicæarchus the Peripatetic (says he) in his History of the ancient Manner of Living among the Greeks, relates, that the ancients immediately originating from the gods, were endued with the most excellent natures, and led the most exalted lives; so that compared with us, who spring from an adulterated and base matter, they are denominated the golden age; and these men (says he) destroyed no animal
mal nature. But the truth of this is evinced by the poets, who call this first age of mankind golden, and relate that every good was present to the inhabitants of this happy period. For according to Hesiod:

"Then earth spontaneous on her bosom bore,
Of various herbs and fruits, a plenteous store;
In peaceful works, then men remote from strife,
And blest with virtuous friendship pass'd thro' life."

Which verses Dicæarchus explaining, affirms that a life of this kind was under the government of Saturn; since it is proper to believe that this period was in reality such, and was not alone celebrated in empty fables, but sublimed agreeable to the description of the poet, and ought therefore to be referred to some cause consonant to reason, and the nature of things. Every
Every thing was indeed spontaneously produced, for mankind as yet ignorant of agriculture, and of every other art, prepared none of the necessaries of life. This too was the reason why they enjoyed the greatest repose, and passed through life free from labour and care; and if we may acquiesce in the reasonings of the most knowing and most elegant of physicians, they were not infested with any disease. For they found that nothing was more conducive to the preservation of health, than restraining from a useless abundance of nutriment, from which they always preserved their bodies perfectly pure. Hence they did not make use of food exceeding the strength, but such as was easily subject to the dominion of their nature; and never assumed nutriment be-
beyond mediocrity through the abundance of provisions, but frequently less than what was sufficient through the scarcity of supply. They were perfect strangers to wars and seditions, since no reward worthy of contest was ever proposed to them, for the sake of which they wished to commit themselves to such great and dangerous dissections. So that repose and quiet from the molestations produced by the preparation of necessaries, together with health, peace, and friendship, were the principal results of such a life. But afterwards the offspring of this happy period, from indulging in the desire of abundance, and from extending their possessions, which produced a multiplicity of evils, rendered the former mode of existence truly desirable to succeeding generations.
rations. But the slender and spontaneous nutriment of this primitive age is sufficiently indicated by the adage which was afterwards in use, \( \alpha \lambda \iota \varepsilon \delta \gamma \iota \omicron \sigma, \) enough of the oak; a proverb most probably usurped by those who changed the former mode of subsistence. After this, a pastoral life succeeded, in which mankind extended their possessions, and subjected animals to their dominion. But perceiving that some of these were innoxious, and others malevolent and destructive, they tamed some, and contended with others. For war arose together with this altered institution of life, which we do not affirm upon our own authority, but from the testimony of those who have compiled a variety of authentic particulars from historical traditions.

And
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And now in this subordinate age, such things as were in any estimation became the riches of mankind, which some ambitiously endeavoured to seize, provoking one another for this purpose; while others endeavoured to defend them with equal zeal and opposition. So that by gradual advances, mankind always regarding what appeared useful, passed into the third kind of life, in which the business of agriculture became the principal object of general attention. And thus far Dicæarchus proceeds in relating the ancient manners of the Greeks, and the blessed life enjoyed by the most remote antiquity, to the possession of which abstinence from animals afforded no small contribution. Hence no wars nor tumults flourished at this time, because all injustice was exiled
exiled. But afterwards, together with the perpetration of injuries towards animals, war and fraudulent conduct mutually arose. So that the audacity of those men is wonderful, who are not ashamed to call abstinence from animals the mother of injustice, since it appears from the credit which is due to history and experience, that war, luxury and injustice, invaded the earth together with animal slaughter."

CHAP.
That this was likewise the Practice of the Egyptian Priests.

Porphyry then proceeds to shew from the writings of Chæremon the stoic, that abstinence from animal food, formed one part of that mode of living, which was adopted by the Egyptian priests; whose relation epitomized is as follows:

"These priests, who are considered as philosophers by the Egyptians, choose a place for their residence, which is best adapted to the study and exercise of sacred rites; so that a desire of contemplation is excited by only frequenting those recesses,
which are dedicated to their use. But they live entirely solitary, except at particular times when they mix with others, in certain public assemblies and feasts; but on all other occasions, they are scarcely to be approached. He adds, that these men, renouncing every other occupation, and all human affairs, give themselves entirely, through the whole of life, to the contemplation of divine concerns, and to enquiring into the divine will: by the latter of these employments, procuring to themselves honour, security, and the estimation of pity; and by contemplation tracing out the latent paths of wisdom and science. Indeed a solitary life rendered them perfectly venerable. For during that period, which they call the time of purification, they scarcely mixed with the
the associates of their own order; and even refrained from the sight of any one of them, but him whose presence was necessary, on account of certain menial employments which the exercise of purity required.

He adds, they are always seen employed, among the resemblances of the gods; either carrying their images, or preceding them in their accustomed processions, or disposing them with gravity of deportment, and in a graceful order. But their gravity was so extreme, that when they walked, their pace was perfectly equable, and their eyes so steady, that they frequently even refrained from winking; and their risibility extended no farther than to a smile. Their hands too...
were always contained within their garments; and as there were many orders of priests, each carried about him some remarkable symbol of that order which he was allotted in sacred concerns. Their sustenance was slender and simple; and with respect to wine, some of them entirely refrained from it; and others drank it very sparingly, because they affirmed that it hurt the nerves, was an impediment to the invention of things, and an incentive to venereal desires. They also abstained from bread in exercises of purity; and if they eat it at other times, it was first cut in pieces, and mingled with hyslop. For the most part too, they refrained from oil; and when they used it mixed with olives, it was only in small quantities; and just as much as was sufficient
sufficient to mitigate the taste of the herbs.

In the mean time, it was not lawful for any one to taste of the aliment, whether solid or fluid, which was brought to Egypt from foreign parts. They likewise abstained from the fish which Egypt produced, and from all quadrupeds having solid, or many fissured hoofs; from such as were without horns; and from all carnivorous birds; but many of them abstained entirely from animal food. At those times too, when they all rendered themselves pure, they did not even eat an egg. But when the period drew near, in which they were to celebrate some sacred rites, or festival, they employed many days in previous preparation; some of
them setting apart forty-two days, others a greater length of time than this, and others again a shorter, but never less than seven days; abstaining during this period from all animals, and from all leguminous and oily nutriment, but especially from venereal congress. They washed themselves thrice every day in cold water; viz. after rising from bed, before dinner, and when they betook themselves to rest; and if they happened to be polluted in their sleep, they immediately purified their bodies in a bath.

Their beds likewise were composed of the branches of a palm, which they called case, bai. A piece of wood of a semi-circular form, and well plained, served them for a pillow. But through the whole
whole of life, they were exercised in the endurance of hunger and thirst, and were accustomed to a paucity and simplicity of nutriment.

But as a testimony of their temperance, though they neither used the exercise of walking, or riding, yet they lived free from disease, and were moderately strong. For indeed they endured great labour in their sacred ceremonies, and performed many services, exceeding the common strength of men. They divided the night between observations of the celestial bodies, and offices of purity; but the day was destined to the cultivation of the divinities, whom they worshipped with hymns each day, three or four times; viz. in the morning and evening, when the sun
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is at his meridian, and when he is setting; the rest of their time they were occupied in arithmetical and geometrical speculations, always laborious and inventing, and continually employed in the investigation of things. In winter nights also they were diligent in the same employment, and were ever vigilant to literary studies, since they were not solicitous about external concerns, and were freed from the base dominion of intemperate desires. Their unwearied and assiduous labour therefore, argues their great patience; and their continence is sufficiently indicated by their privation of desire. Besides, it was esteemed very impious to fail from Egypt, as they were very careful in abstaining from the manners and luxuries of foreign nations; so that to leave
Egypt was alone lawful to those who were compelled to it by state necessities. But they discoursed much concerning a retention of their native manners; and if any priest was judged to have transgressed the laws in the least particulars, he was expelled the college. Besides, the true method of philosophizing was preserved in commentaries and diaries by the prophets, and ministers of sacred concerns; the remaining multitude of priests, paepophori, (or priests of Isis and Osiris) governors of temples, and servants of the gods, studied purity, but not so exactly, nor with such great continence, as those we have mentioned. And thus much is related of the Egyptians, by a man who is equally a lover of truth, and of accurate diligence, and who is deeply skilled in the stoic philosophy. But
But the Egyptian priests having proceeded thus far in the study of purity, and conciliating divinity to their nature, were of opinion, that not only men may become divine, and that soul is participated by man on this terrestrial globe, but that it passes at different periods into the bodies of all animals. Hence, in framing the resemblances of the gods, they made use of every animal form; and sometimes they united for this purpose the bodies of men and beasts, and again of men and birds. For it was customary with them to represent some particular god in a human form from the extremities to the neck, but with the face of a bird, or a lion, or of some other animal: and again they fashioned another divinity with a human head, having the other parts composed
posed from different animals; applying the superior parts of some animals, and the inferior parts of others in this conjunction. By all which they shewed, according to the sentiments of the divinities, that men and beasts possess something in common, and do not without the concurrence of the divine will, from a savage state become tame, and receive their education together with mankind. Hence a lion is venerated by them as a god; and a certain part of Egypt, called Nomos, is surnamed Leontopolis, or the city of Lion-worshippers; another part, Busiris, or Ox-worshippers: and again, another, Lycopolis, or Wolf-worshippers. For they venerated the divine power which is exalted above all things, under the similitude of that species of animals which
the province they inhabited produced: and on this account they dedicated particular animals to particular gods. Among the elements they paid a particular veneration to fire and water, as they are the principal causes of our preservation; and this they exhibited in their temples; and even at the present time, when the sanctuary of Serapis is opened, the rites are celebrated with fire and water. For the minister who sings the sacred hymns, both pours out water by drops, and exhibits fire when standing in the place appointed for such purposes, he invokes the divinity in the native language of the Egyptians. Since therefore they venerate these elements they particularly worship, whatever possessest most of these, as participating largely of holy natures. But after
after this they worshipped all animals; and in the village Anubis paid divine honours to man; for they sacrificed to him, in honour of his nature upon altars. And prepared for themselves (in a short time after the religious ceremonies) such food as was accommodated to his nature as man. From which conduct we conclude, that other animals are to be abstained from as well as mankind.—

Again, from their most excellent wisdom, and from their intimate acquaintance with divine concerns, they learned what animals are friendly to men and dear to the gods. Thus they affirm that a hawk is acceptable to the sun, because its nature is entirely composed from blood and spirit: besides, it feels compassion for man and bewails his death, lightly casting earth
earth upon his eyes, in which they believed the solar light resided.

They have likewise discovered that a hawk lives many years, and that when dead, it is endued with a divining power; and being freed from its corporeal bonds possesses great wisdom, and is very knowing in future events: that it also gives perfection to images and moves temples. The rude uninformed vulgar, ignorant of divine concerns, doubtless abhors the καυθαγος or beetle; but the Egyptians worship it as a living image of the sun. For every beetle is of the male kind, but drops its offspring in the mud, which it fashions into a spherical shape; and moves round it in a retrograde course, like the sun in the heavens. And in this manner it
it remains expecting the conclusion of twenty-eight days, that is, a lunar period. After the same manner, the ram, the crocodile, the vulture, the ibis, and universally all animals, were the subjects of their philosophical disquisitions. So that in consequence of their wisdom, and great knowledge of divine concerns, they at length came to animal worship. But the unlettered man is perfectly ignorant by what means they preserved themselves from being carried away by vulgar folly; how they deserted the paths of ignorance frequented by the multitude; and admitted as a part of their worship things of no general estimation.

But this consideration, no less than the preceding observations, strengthened their belief
belief in the propriety of animal worship: I mean their discovering, that the souls of all animals when freed from body are endued with reason; are præcient of future events; possess a prophetic power, and are capable of all the various operations of man, when divested of his corporeal bonds. Hence they justly reverenced all animals, and as much as possible abstained from using them in food. But as the Egyptians worshipping the gods through the medium of animals, requires much investigation, and far more than the limits of this work will admit, what has been already revealed concerning their mysteries must suffice our present design.”
CHAP. V.

The same Abstinence exemplified in the History of the Persians and Indians.

"AGAIN, says Porphyry, among the Persians, those who are wise in divine concerns and priests of divinity, are called Magi. For such is the signification of the word according to the Persian dialect. But so august and venerable is this class of men among the Persians, that Darius, the son of Hyestaspis, ordered this, among other things, to be inscribed on his tomb, that he was the master of magic. These Magi, according to Eubulus, who composed the History of Mithras, in many books, are divided into three kinds; the
first and most learned of which sects, neither eat nor destroy animals, but adhere to the ancient abstinence from animal food. But the Magi of the second order, destroy animals indeed, but not such as are tame. Nor do those of the third order equally feed on all kinds. The first and greatest dogma of all these tribes is, the doctrine of the metempsychosis of Mithras; insinuating the agreement of our nature with that of other animals, by calling themselves by their names. Thus they denominate the male Mystics, who participate of their orgies or sacred rites, lions, but the female lionesses, and the servants of the priests, ravens. And the same custom obtains in preserving the remembrance of their fathers, for they denominate these hawks and eagles, but he
he who is initiated in those rites, of which a lion is the symbol, is invested with all the various kinds of animal forms. This custom Pallas, in the books which he composed concerning Mithras, accounts for, by saying, that common people thought it respected the circle of the zodiac, but that the true and accurate opinion is, that they insinuated by this custom, the transmigration of human souls into all the different orders of bodies. He adds, the Romans call some men by the names of boars, goats, and black-birds, and denominate in a similar manner, the gods, the artificers of these. Thus they call Diana, lupa, or a she-wolf, but to the sun, they give the appellations of a bull, a lion, a dragon, and a hawk; and to Hecate, the names...
of a horse, a bull, a lioness and a dog. But the Greek name of Proserpine, Ἀρετῆ, according to many theologists, is derived from Ἀρετῆ θυσαις, or nourishing wood-pigeons. For this bird is sacred to Hecate. Hence a wood-pigeon is dedicated to the goddess Maia by her priests; and Maia is the same with Proserpine, because she is both a mother and a nurse. For the terrestrial goddess and Ceres are one and the same, to whom they consecrate a cock: and hence, those who are initiated in the mysteries of this goddess, abstain from domestic birds. For it is ordered in the Elusinian rites, that the initiated refrain from cooped-up birds, from fish, beans, and pomegranates; for they reckon it equally as defiling, to touch the trunk of this fruit-tree as a dead body.
body. But he who knows the nature of appearances, knows likewise, why it is requisite to abstain from all birds; especially for him who hastens to be freed from terrestrial concerns, and to dwell with the celestial gods. But improbity, as we have often observed, is powerful in defending itself, and especially when it addresses the ignorant. Hence it is, that they who keep the middle rank among the base part of mankind, esteem this exhortation from animal food, as vain and empty, and similar as it is said, to the trifling of an old woman's discourse; while others, who are something farther advanced in improbity, are not only prepared to rail bitterly at those who recommend and excite mankind to such an abstemious life, but also to calumniate such
a conduct, as imposture and arrogant presumption. However, men of this kind will suffer the just punishment of their crimes both from gods and men; and prior to this, will sufficiently punish themselves by such material affections.

But we shall now proceed to another instance of a foreign nation, highly celebrated, just and religious in divine concerns, which abstained from animal food: and this is the republic of the Indians.

This republic then, says Porphyry, is distributed into many parts; one of which comprehends that kind of theologists, denominated by the Greeks, gymnosophists. But of these there are two sects, one called Bramins, the other Samaneans.
The family of the Bramins succeed as regularly in the profession of this divine wisdom, as to the office of the priesthood. But the Samaneans are chosen for this institution; and their number supplied from among those who desire to apply themselves to theology. The institutes of these men are as follows, according to the writings of Bardepanes, the Babylonian, who lived in the times of our fathers, and in India became acquainted with the associates of Damadamis, who were sent to Cæsar. All the Bramins, says he, originate from the same stock, as they all descend from the same father and mother. But the Samaneans are not of the same kind, but as we have already observed, are collected from every tribe of Indians. A Bramin is
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is subject to no command, and is free from the exaction of tribute. But among these philosophers, some inhabit mountains, while others reside on the banks of the river Ganges: and they subsist on mountainous autumnal fruits, and on certain herbs, formed into a concretion with milk. Those who dwell near the Ganges, live on the fruits which are produced in great abundance about that river; but the earth bears almost continually recent fruit, and besides this, much rice, spontaneously produced, which they use when there is any deficiency of fruit; and they esteem it extremely impure and impious, to subsist on any other kind of nutriment, or even to touch animal food. This opinion subsists among those who worship divinity, and exercise piety. Hence
Hence they devote the day, and the greatest part of the night, to the sacred employment of singing hymns, and praying to the gods, each of them possessing a small cottage, as much as possible buried in the depths of solitude; for the Bramins cannot endure to dwell together, nor to speak much; but whenever this congress and discourse with each other happens, returning afterwards to their accustomed retirement, they entirely refrain for many days together from all discourse; they likewise often fast; but the Samaneans, as we have observed, are chosen from other tribes; and when any person desires to be enrolled in that order, he goes to the master of the city, and immediately abdicates the city or street in which he resided, and relinquishes whatever wealth and
and abundance he possesseth. In the next place, purifying his body from all defilements, and being invested with a robe, he departs to the Samaneans, never afterwards returning to his wife or children, (if he happens to be connected with either of these) nor concerning himself about them, nor considering them as any longer pertaining to him; but the King takes care of the children, and procures them necessary instruction; and the support of his wife devolves on her relations. Their manner of living too is as follows: they dwell without the city, exercising themselves throughout the day in discourses concerning the Deity; and they are furnished with groves and temples, raised by royal bounty, in which there are domestic stewards paid by the King, for the purpose
pose of supplying those with food who assemble in these places; but the apparatus of their nutriment consists of rice, bread, apples, and olives. When they enter into their houses, on the ringing of a small bell, those who are not of their feet depart, and the Samaneans begin to pray: afterwards, a signal being again given by the bell, they distribute to every one a dish or pan, (for two are not permitted to eat out of the same vessel) and feed them from rice. If any one desires variety of food, he has some pot-herbs added, or some autumnal fruits; but as soon as the wants of nature are supplied, they depart without delay to the same divine exercises. They all live without wives, and without possessing any external abundance; and other Indians regard this Feet,
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feet, and that of the Bramins, with such high veneration, that the King himself visits them, and begs that they will pray to and supplicate the gods, (when enemies assault the kingdom) or give him such counsel as the situation of his affairs requires.

These philosophers are so affected towards death, that they bear with reluctance the whole of the present life, as a certain necessary service of nature; and hasten with the greatest eagerness to a liberation of their souls from the bondage of body. Hence, when they perceive their corporeal part in a flourishing condition, and are free from the incursions of evil, they often spontaneously depart from the present life; and though they previously
previously declare their intention to others, yet no one prevents them in its execution; but the Gymnosophists pronounce all those who are dead happy, and deliver certain instructions to the familiars of the deceased. So that the vulgar as well as these philosophers, from their mode of education, are firmly persuaded that souls converse with each other after death. But the friends of the deceased, after the charge given by the Gymnosophists, commit the body to fire, that the soul may be separated with the greatest possible purity from its connection with the body, and conclude the service by singing a hymn. For indeed these men commit their dearest friends to the embraces of death with far greater cheerfulness, than others endure the departure of their fellow-citizens to
some distant country. At the same time they lament their own situation, as yet abiding in mortality; and proclaim the happiness of the deceased, who have now obtained an immortal condition of being."

Thus far the excellent Porphyry, from all which it evidently follows, that abstinence from animal nutriment, which is the natural consequence of our sublime theory, is by no means a novelty, but may be justified by the practice of the wisest and best of men, in the earliest periods of time. But it may perhaps be objected, that according to my system, vegetables likewise ought not to be destroyed, and eaten, on account of their perfect equality with the nature of brutes and
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and men. To this I answer, that the life of a plant is in itself so inconsiderable, (though this deficiency is amply recompensed by the beautiful organization of its corporeal frame) that it cannot be supposed to suffer any pain in its decepttion; and consequently is not in reality injured, by being made subservient to the nourishment of man and beast. Indeed it is much to be wished, that we could abstain from a vegetable aliment, without any inconvenience to our composition; and that, like Homer's deities, we were superior to the want of meat and drink, that we might become truly immortal: or that we could procure for our nature, what is celebrated in fables, a remedy against hunger and thirst; and that stopping the flowing condition of our body, which,
which, like an ever-running stream, is continually rolling into the dark sea of matter, as into the abys of non-entity, we could immediately be present with the best and most exalted natures, and rise to that condition of being, in which he, who is conjoined by an ineffable union with the deity, is himself a god. But this indeed, is one of Porphyry's extacies, who being a Platonist, was of course subject to uncommon flights.
C H A P. VI.

On the Importance of understanding the Language of Brutes, and restoring them to their natural equality with mankind.

But it is now time to consider the importance of learning the language of brutes; for it is already evident from Porphyry, that they have a language of their own, and that it may be understood by mankind. In order therefore to accomplish this design in the most perfect manner, I shall produce a variety of curious histories of brutal sagacity, from the writings of Plutarch; and shew how mankind may be benefitted by associating with brutes, as on a level with themselves. F 2 And
And that I may first of all please the ladies, I shall begin with the elephant, a beast by nature very amorous; and from his prodigious size, very well calculated to become the darling of our modern virgins, who having wisely laid aside the foolish veils of antiquity, and have assumed greater boldness, are seldom intimidated at any thing uncommonly large. Plutarch then, in that treatise of his, in which he contrasts the sagacity of land animals, with that of the aquatic species, observes, concerning the amours of brutes, that some are furious and mad; but that others observe a kind of human decency, united with a very courtly kind of conversation.

"Such
“Such (says he) was the amour of the elephant at Alexandria, that rivalsed Aristophanes the grammarian. For they were both in love with a virgin that sold garlands: nor was the elephant’s courtship less conspicuous than the grammarian’s. For as he passed through the fruit-market, he always bought her apples, and stayed with her for some time: and besides this, thrusting his proboscis within her waistcoat, as a substitute for a hand, took great delight in gently feeling her breasts.”

From this instance, it may be fairly concluded, that if elephants were to associate with ladies in common (each at the same time understanding the other’s language) great and unexampled gallantries would
would take place on each side, and a mixt kind of species would be produced, in which the enchanting elegance of woman would be united with the prodigious strength and terrific bulk of the elephant.

No less charming, likewise, would be the advantages arising from an association of the fair sex with dragons, as is evident from the History of the Dragon, who was in love with an Etolian woman. For he used (says Plutarch) to visit her in the night, and creeping under her garments to her very skin, embraced her naked body; and never, either voluntarily or involuntarily, injured her, but always departed very gallantly about break of day, but the relations of the woman
woman observing that this was the custom of the dragon, removed her to a considerable distance from this amorous spot. After this the dragon was not seen for the space of three or four days; being all this time, as it seemed, wandering in search of her. But at length having with great difficulty found out the place of her abode, he accosted her somewhat less gallant and gentle than before; and with the folds of his body, having first bound her hands and arms, he lashed the calves of her legs, with the end of his tail; expressing by this means a gentle and loving anger, which contained more of indulgent expostulation than punishment.

F 4 Plutarch
Plutarch adds, that he shall say nothing respecting a goose in Egypt in love with a boy; nor of the ram in love with Glaucé that played on the harp, because, (says he) the story is well known to everyone. Indeed the instances already adduced are sufficient to convince the sagacious reader, that prodigious benefits must arise from the mutual converse and copulation of species, which have hitherto been considered as unallied and inimical to each other.

And here I cannot refrain from mentioning a most singular advantage, which would arise from an association with dogs, when their language is perfectly understood by us; the advantage I allude to, respects a thing of no less importance than the
the instruction of youth in one of the most interesting particulars belonging to juvenile tuition. Every one knows how universally prevalent the practice of self-pollution is become amongst children; and how dreadful its consequences are in debilitating the constitution, and corrupting the morals of the unhappy youths who are the votaries of this detestable vice. Now that extraordinary genius, Mrs. Wollstonecraft, proposes the following remedy for this pernicious practice, in that great work of hers, called, Elements of Morality for Children*: "I am thoroughly persuaded (says she) that the most efficacious method to root out this dreadful evil, which poisons the source of human happiness, would be to speak to children

* Page 14 of the Introductory Address.
of the organs of generation as freely as we speak of the other parts of the body, and explain to them the noble use, which they were designed for, and how they may be injured." She adds, "I have conversed with the most sensible schoolmasters on this subject, and they have confirmed me in my opinion." This plan is beyond all doubt a most striking proof of her uncommon capacity, and the truth of her grand theory, the equality of the female nature with the male; for whoever considers this affair with the attention it deserves, must be convinced, that if children were but told how the genital parts may be injured, and how they are to be employed in a natural way, they would not have the least curiosity to make any experi-
experiments, which might tend to frustrate the benevolent intention of nature.

But however great and original this thought may be, yet it would certainly be very much improved, by committing the instruction of youth in this particular to dogs; for these sagacious animals, all of whom appear to be Cynic philosophers, would not only be very well calculated to explain the noble use for which the parts were designed, but would be very willing, at any time, and in any place, to give them specimens of the operation of the parts in the natural way. Not to mention, that they would likewise teach them how to get above those foolish habits, decency and shame, which false opinion first intro-
introduced, and ridiculous custom afterwards has so deeply confirmed.

But we must not yet dismiss the elephant; since it appears that these wonderful animals are no less calculated to act the part of surgeons, than to please the fair. "For being brought (says Plutarch) to persons that are wounded, they will extract the heads of spears and arrows from their bodies, with a very small degree of pain, and without dilacerating and mangling the flesh." Now the advantages which would result to apothecaries and physicians, from entering into partnership with these animals, are so important, that they will doubtless be greedily embraced by all the medical tribe.
tribe. For in the first place, with respect to apothecaries, it is well known, that they are obliged to act in the double capacity of physicians and surgeons, which causes their employment to be very laborious, especially to those of the lowest class, who belong to the order of the foot. For these gentlemen are divided into three tribes, the first and highest consisting of those who sublimely ride to their patients in chariots, without footmen; the second, of those who ride to the sick on horseback; and the third tribe, which is by far the most numerous, being composed of those who visit their patients on foot; and who in wet weather arm themselves with a great coat and umbrella; and in fine, with a fashionable cane. Now these gentlemen, by speaking to the elephant, and persuading
persuading these noble animals to become their partners, would derive the following amazing advantages from such an association; for they might ride on the backs of their elephants, and might commit the whole surgical department to the entire management of these bulky beasts: not to mention, that as the weight of one man must be very inconsiderable to an elephant, they might with ease carry all sorts of remedies upon the backs of their associates, and thus save a prodigious deal of time, trouble and expence, by administering medicines on the spot.

And in the second place, as to physicians, riding on the elephant would save them the expence of a carriage; and this beast being so remarkably strong, they might
might easily have a large chest fastened to his back, for the purpose of depositing their fees, which at present, in consequence of being secured in their waistcoat pockets, they find very troublesome, from their quantity and weight.

But the elephant is not the only beast with which the medical tribe might associate, to great advantage; for many other animals are as capable of forming great physicians, as elephants are of becoming incomparable surgeons. "For we may observe (says Plutarch) in other animals, a three-fold innate practice of medicine. Thus, for instance, tortoises make use of basil, and weasels eat rice, when they have devoured a serpent; and dogs purge themselves from abounding bile, with a particular
cular kind of grass; the dragon sharpens the dimness of his sight with fennel; and the bear, when she leaves her cave, after long emaciation, feeds upon the herb called wild dragons; because the acrimony of this herb opens and separates her intestines, when they are clung together. At other times, when satiated with food, she repairs to the emmet-hills, and thrusting out her tongue, all soft and undulous, through the sweet kind of slime with which it is enveloped, till it is crowded with emmets, she at length swallows them, and thus recovers her health: and it is reported, that the Egyptians observe and imitate the bird called Ibis, in purging and cleansing her bowels with the briny water of the sea. Hence the priests, when they purify themselves, make use of the
the water of which the Ibis has drank; for these birds will not drink the water, if it be medicinal, or otherwise infected. There are likewise some beasts that cure themselves by abstinence, as wolves and lions, who, when they are over-gorged with animal food, lie still, and digest their crudities by the warmth of one another’s bodies."

Now as there is no reason whatever to doubt the truth of these relations, such specimens of medical skill must convince the most incredulous, that when these animals are tamed through their association with mankind, we may expect to see physicians equal to the most illustrious among men, in the persons of bears, dragons and weasels; and till all distinctions
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tions among mankind are levelled, (an event which it is to be hoped will shortly happen) I do not see why an elephant may not become the king's principal surgeon, and a bear his physician in ordinary, as soon as the language of beasts is universally known, or at least understood, by the principal persons at court.

CHAP.
C H A P. VII.

That Magpies are naturally Musicians; Oxen Arithmeticians; and Dogs Actors.

But let us now see what advantages we might derive from an amicable association with other animals, such as magpies, oxen, and dogs. And to begin with the magpie, the following story, from the above-mentioned treatise of Plutarch, indubitably proves that this bird naturally possesses musical abilities in the most extraordinary degree.

"A certain barber in Rome, who had a shop directly opposite to the Temple, which
which is called the Greek's Market, bred in his house a miraculous kind of a magpie, who was perpetually chattering with the greatest variety imaginable; sometimes imitating human speech; sometimes talking in those wild notes peculiar to her nature; and sometimes humming the sounds of wind instruments. Nor was all this the result of any constraint, but the consequence of that extraordinary ambition, by which she accustomed herself to leave nothing unsaid, and nothing that her imitation should not master.

It happened that a certain person of the wealthier sort, and lately dead in the neighbourhood, was carried out to be buried, with a great number of trumpets before
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before him. Now because it was the custom of the bearers to rest themselves before the barber's shop; the trumpeters, who were excellent in their art, and were commanded so to do, stopped a long time at this place, playing on their instruments all the while.

But after that day, the magpie was entirely mute, not so much as uttering the usual notes, by which she called for what she wanted; so that passengers who before admired the loquacity of the bird, were now much more surprised at her sudden silence; and many suspected her to have been poisoned by persons affecting peculiar skill in teaching those kind of birds; but the greatest number were of opinion, that the noise of the trumpets had stupe

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fied
fied her hearing, and that in consequence of this she was likewise deprived of the use of her voice.

But indeed the cause of her unusual silence was not the result of either of these effects; but arose from her retiring to exercise by herself, the imitation of what she had heard, and to fit and prepare her voice, to express in the same manner as the instruments what she had learnt; for soon after she suddenly made her appearance, but had quitted all her former imitations, sounding nothing but the music of the trumpets, and observing all the changes and cadences of the harmony, with an inconceivable exactness of time.”

Now
Now from this curious history, it evidently follows, that magpies, when properly disciplined, (their language being perfectly known to us), might in time form a musical band equal to that at Vauxhall; and thus being employed instead of men, by the proprietors of that elegant place, might save them a prodigious expence; since it does not appear from any accounts, ancient or modern, that either birds or beasts are money-getting animals.

Besides, they would form admirable clerks for dissenting meeting-houses; for as the dissenters have a great objection to instrumental music in divine service, not because of the harmony, but because it is instrumental, the magpie by his imitative
art would present them with all the variety of instrumental melody, and yet it would be strictly vocal.

The loquacity indeed of these birds appears to be so admirable, that I see no reason why they might not become excellent methodist parsons; for they could doubtless as well imitate vehement declamation, and vociferate barbaric cant, as counterfeit the sound of the trumpet, and utter the apparently wild notes of nature.

And thus much for the magpie:—let us now proceed to the ox, who has been unjustly characterized with the epithet of dull; as the following history will abundantly evince.

"At
"At Susa (says Plutarch) there are oxen that water the King’s gardens with portable buckets, of which the number is fixed; for every ox carries a hundred buckets every day; and more than this, you cannot by any means force them to carry. For indeed, when constraint has been used for experiment’s sake, nothing could make them stir after they had carried their full number; such an accurate account do they take, and preserve in their memory, as Ctesias, the Gnidian, relates."

Now who can doubt after reading this, but that if the same pains were taken with oxen, as we take with our youth, they would become excellent arithmeticians; and by being taught to write with
with their hoofs (which is surely no more impracticable than for a man to write with his toes, and which we all know is possible) might form admirable bankers and merchants clerks, or indeed bankers and merchants themselves; and from their indifference to gold, in common with all animals but man, by depositing their gains in the Treasury, might help to pay off the national debt.

Nor are dogs less calculated by nature to become great actors, than oxen to form good arithmeticians, as the following story will, no doubt, fully convince the managers of both the theatres.

"There was a dog at Rome (says Plutarch) belonging to a certain mimic, who
who at that time had the management of a farce, consisting of a great variety of parts; in the performance of which he undertook to instruct the actors, by teaching them the several imitations proper for the transactions and passions represented in the farce. Among the rest there was one who was to drink a sleepy potion, and after he had drank it, was to fall into a deadly drowsiness, and counterfeit the actions of a dying person. The dog, who had studied several of the other gestures and postures, observing this with greater attention, took a piece of bread that was sopped in the potion, and in a short time after he had eat it, counterfeited a trembling, then a staggering, and afterwards a drowsiness, in his head. Then stretching himself out, he lay as if he
he had been dead; and seemed to offer himself to be dragged out of the place, and carried to burial, as the plot of the play required. But afterwards understanding the proper time, from what was said and acted; in the first place he began gently to stir, as if waking out of a profound sleep, and lifting up his head, gazed on all around him: and then to the amazement of the beholders, he rose up and went to the master to whom he belonged, with all the signs of joy and fawning kindness; so that all the spectators, and even Cæsar himself (for old Vespasian was present in Marcellus's Theatre) were highly pleased with the sight.”
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It appears to me, I confess from this relation that the dog must have acted in a manner equal to Garrick himself: and it is to be hoped, that the managers of our theatres, in consequence of paying proper attention to this wonderful story, will, in a short time, bring on the stage dogs and puppies, to act at least jointly with men, till the language of these animals is known in common; and when that much to be desired event shall take place, that they will suffer them to act by themselves, to the infinite delight of numberless spectators; for surely when puppies act, the theatres will be uncommonly full.

I might here enlarge greatly on the prodigious benefits which would arise to mankind
mankind from associating with fishes, through the means of a submarine navigation, which Bishop Wilkins has demonstrated to be practicable, in his ingenious treatise on *Mathematical Magic*; but this would too much exceed the limits of the present work. However, if the reader is desirous of obtaining perfect conviction in this particular, he need only consult the latter part of the so often mentioned curious treatise of Plutarch, and he will find that fishes are no less sagacious than land animals; and that of course the advantages arising from restoring them to their natural equality with mankind, are not less numerous and great, than those we have already taken notice of, in the terrestrial and aerial tribes.
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And thus much may suffice, for an historical proof, that brutes are equal to men. It only now remains (and this must be the province of some abler hand) to demonstrate the same great truth in a similar manner, of vegetables, minerals, and even the most apparently contemptible clod of earth; that thus this sublime theory being copiously and accurately discussed, and its truth established by an indisputable series of facts, government may be entirely subverted, subordination abolished, and all things everywhere, and in every respect, be common to all.

THE END.
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