CHAPTER XIII.

KINDNESS TO ANIMALS.

He who feels contempt
For any living thing, hath faculties
Which he has never used.

WORDSWORTH.

The wanton troopers riding by,
Have shot my fawn, and it will dye.
Ungentle men! they cannot thrive,
Who killed thee. Thou ne'er didst alive
Them any harme: alas! nor could
Thy death yet do them any good.

MARVELL.

There is in every animal's eye a dim image and gleam of humanity, a flash of strange light through which their life looks out and up to our great mystery of command over them, and claiming the fellowship of the creature, if not of the soul.—RUSKIN.

WHAT an enormous amount of cruelty is perpetrated upon dumb animals—upon birds, upon beasts, upon horses, upon all that lives. The Roman gladiators have passed away, but the Spanish bull-fights remain. As the Roman ladies delighted to see the gladiators bleed and die in the public amphitheatre, so the Spanish ladies clap their hands in exultation at spectacles from which English warriors sicken and turn away. "It must be owned," said Caballero, "and we own it with sorrow, that in Spain there is very little compassion shown to animals among the men and women; and among the lower classes there is none at all."

But we are not clean-handed. Not long ago bull-baiting was one of our public sports; cock-fighting and badger-

drawing were common until our own time. The sports were patronized by rich and poor. In 1822 Richard Martin, of Galway, the friend of animals, succeeded in obtaining the enactment of a law which invested animals with rights under the social contract; yet two of the judges, in a case brought before them, declared that bulls were not entitled to the benefit of the Act.

In 1829 a bill to suppress bull-baiting was rejected by the House of Commons by a majority of 73 to 28. But public opinion grew, until bull-baiting became only a poor man's sport. It was not until 1835 that an Act was passed putting an end to bull-baiting. The Society for the Suppression of Cruelty to Animals was founded upon Martin's law. Animals were placed under legal protection, though some were unhappily excluded. There are yet many survivals of cruelty.

For instance, birds were excluded. One need only go to Hurlingham on a ladies' day to see the cruelty with which pigeons are treated. The poor things are let out of their trap and are shot down for a bet, dyeing the ladies' dresses with their blood. There is as much clapping of hands as at a Spanish bull-fight. The pricked bird, the bird with a broken leg, contrives to fly out of the field, and falls into some covert place, and there dies after a long agony. Is this the lesson of humanity that English women would teach to their sons and daughters?

The fashion for birds' wings in ladies' dresses has been a woeful time for birds. They have been shot down in all countries to supply "gentle woman's" passion for birds' wings. The *Spectator* mentions a marriage in which eleven bridesmaids wore dresses trimmed with swan's down and robins. What a slaughter of birds for that one wedding! The robins should have been draped in blood. But ladies will permit the slaughter rather than be out of fashion.

But bird-slaughter as a trade has now reached proportions which threaten the extinction of some of the most beautiful of God's creatures. Humming-birds, king-fishers, larks, nightingales, are all shot down. One London dealer in birds received a single consignment of 32,000 dead hum-

ming-birds, 80,000 aquatic birds, and 800,000 pairs of wings!

Some years ago an Act was passed by Parliament "for the protection of wild birds during the breeding season;" and an Act was afterward passed "for the preservation of wild-fowl." But these Acts have had little effect. The wild-fowl are still killed for the pleasure of women. One of the last things out is the every-day ladies' hat, "trimmed with glossy wild duck." If they cannot get their adornment at home, the corners of the earth are ransacked for them. India is a great field for kingfishers, whose wings are of the most beautiful color. They are shot down for the English market.*

Englishmen are exposing themselves to the contempt of the Norwegians for their wholesale slaughter of birds and game, carried on by the lower class of English tourists. The Christiana *Punch* says of our countrymen: "Long has the time gone by since England dared to take part in politics: since then she has faithfully slept. [Perhaps referring to Lord John Russell's policy with regard to Denmark.] The whole of God's summer every English lout comes hither to plague us, fishing, shooting, and destroying; thus, all our game will soon be annihilated."

In consequence of the swarms of English tourists, the Storthing has passed a law prohibiting any foreigner from

* A "Lover of Nature" writes to a Lahore paper from Khairpur: "A couple of evenings ago I was strolling along the banks of a large lake here when I came upon two men with peculiarly-shaped baskets. To my inquiries as to what they were and what they were doing, they replied that they were bird-catchers from Madras. What kind of birds? Kingfishers; and in their basket, they showed me 200 kingfishers' feathers, for which they said they would receive Rs 40 on their return to Madras. They said this was their yearly occupation, and all the year through there were bands of them spread throughout the country, and that the plumages were sent to England. As they were on their road South, I asked if they went to Guzerat. They said no, they were prevented from carrying on their occupation there. Good Guzeratis! I hope their example is followed in other parts of British India, or if it be not, that it soon will be. For it is plain that if this wanton destruction of the beautiful bird goes on for very long, we shall have cause to lament the total disappearance of one of the handsomest of the wild feathered tribe."

carrying a gun or fishing-rod without a license. It is quite enough to enjoy the splendid scenery of Norway without destroying its wild-fowl and game. The law will at all events put an end to the wholesale destruction.

The capture of larks in this country is enormous. At Lakenheath, in Suffolk, 2,000 dozen of larks were taken in three days, and sent to London to be made into lark pies—that delicacy of the gourmand. Indeed, lark pies have become very popular, and every means are taken to capture the birds in large quantities, both at home and abroad.

Let us tell how a good man undertook to save the larks and defeat the gourmands. It occurred in the neighborhood of Aberdeen only a few years ago. Toward the middle of March a heavy snow-storm set in. The country was white as far as the eye could reach. The inland birds were driven down by the stress of weather, by cold, and by hunger, to the sea-coast. They were seen fluttering about with that peculiar motion of the wings characteristic of the lark over the earth before lighting upon it. The fields by the seashore were almost black with larks.

A number of people went out to snare, and gin, and lime, and shoot them. The number caught was immense. The season being late, the birds had paired. They were all husbands and wives. Poor things! They were driven by hard times to seek their fortune or their fate together. The good man we speak of found a Rough offering a lark for sale, and at his feet he saw a whole cageful of birds. It was a perfect Black Hole of Calcutta. They were struggling and pushing each other in their frantic efforts to escape. The sight of this was too much for the good man's feelings. He bought the whole lot, and sent them to his warehouse for better accommodation. He then went to the Secretary for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals to see if nothing could be done to put a stop to the infamous traffic, but found to his sorrow that, while many of our favorite birds had been protected by the Wild Fowls Preservation Act of 1876, the lark had strangely been omitted.

He therefore took upon himself the preservation of the larks. He told the persons who were engaged in destroy-

ing them to bring them alive, and he would buy the birds at the same price which they were receiving from the game dealers in town. They agreed to his offer, for they knew that in the one case the birds would have been killed and eaten, whereas, in the other, they would be taken care of and set free. The number of larks brought to him was so great—over a thousand—that, besides the larks in cages in his warehouse, he obtained the use of a large room in the country for their accommodation. The noise of their singing in the morning became almost deafening, and crowds of birds gathered over the house to listen to the musical throng.

The great storm passed away. The snow disappeared, and the green grass and dark earth became visible once more. Then came the delivery of the captives. The windows of the room were thrown open, and out they streamed, chattering and singing, and winging their way in every direction. Then the cages of larks were brought from the warehouse to a sweet spot outside the city. The doors were opened, and the benefactor stood to one side to see the escape of his friends. It was curious to watch them. Some would dart out, soar aloft, and burst into song.

"Pouring their full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art".

Others would flutter on the surface of the ground and disappear in the adjoining woods. One may imagine, but can scarcely express, the joy felt by our northern friend in his little act of well-doing. The larks settled down and built their nests in the neighborhood. They reared their young there; and from that time the city has been surrounded by the music of the skylark.

"Higher still, and higher
From the earth thou springest,
Like a cloud of fire;
The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest."

The great Leonardo da Vinci—a man great in his kindness to birds and animals—great as an architect, a military engineer, a philosopher, and an artist—was accustomed to buy birds in cages for the purpose of restoring them to

liberty. A picture has been painted of this noble artist doing his deed of mercy, with the released birds fluttering round their deliverer, and the empty cages at his feet. The picture is to be seen at the gallery of the Louvre in Paris.

The old hermits had a great love for animals. They were their only companions. The birds used to flutter about them; and even the wild animals took shelter with them. They seemed to feel that no harm would be done to them. Even birds know and feel their danger when a man appears among them with a gun. Crows rise from picking up the grubs along the ploughman's furrow, and immediately disappear; though the crows by feeding themselves were furthering the next year's harvest.

St. Francis had a notion that all living things were his brothers and sisters, and he carried his idea beyond the confines of poetry into literal fact. He even preached to the birds. He used to speak to all created things as if they had intelligence; and he loved to recognize in their various properties some trace of the divine perfection. "If your heart be right," said another ancient sage, "then every creature is a mirror of life, and a book of holy doctrine."

A very different state of feelings prevails at the Bass Rock in the Firth of Forth. The solan goose has made it the favorite haunt of bird-killers. Yachts and steamers sail round the rock, and for hours keep up an incessant and deadly fusillade. The birds, young and old, fall in scores, and, whether wounded or dead, are left to their fate. The wounded, with broken legs or bleeding wings, toss about the restless ocean, mutilated waifs, and die in tortures impossible to describe. And yet inhuman beings call this "sport."

Birds are more human than some men. They help each other when in difficulty. When Edward of Banff shot a tern, he was amazed to see two of the unwounded terns take up their brother, bear him aloft on their wings, and take him out to sea. Edward might have shot down many of the terns, but "he willingly allowed them to perform an act of mercy, and to exhibit an instance of affection which man himself need not be ashamed to imitate."

The "battue" has for the most part been introduced into this country from Germany. Whole droves of partridges, pheasants, hares, and such like, are driven by keepers from miles about, and brought into some sheltered spot, where they are shot down in hundreds. This is also called "sport." "I venture to hope," said the Archbishop of York, "that the time is not far off when it will be a matter of curious history that English gentlemen once used to publish it abroad with satisfaction that they and their friends had in a couple of days killed 2000 head of game that had been driven together into a wood for certain death. Then again, the trapped bird, released without a chance, wounded again and again, and picked up fluttering and suffering, is made a pastime for strong men, and when women make a holiday over such a sport, it shows that they are without love or pity. It reflects a shadow, and becomes a painful study indeed."

Is this the Chivalry to which England has sunk? Is this craving for inhumanity and cruelty the highest idea of manhood? Sir Charlies Napier gave up sporting because he could not bear to hurt dumb creatures; and yet he won the battle of Meeanee. He was courageous, and yet he was not cruel. He could not bear the sport that feeds upon the sobs and dying shrieks of harmless creatures. When General Outram—the Bayard of India—was seeking health in Egypt with his wife, a friend of his, knowing that they had no meat for dinner, shot a bird. Outram, sportsman though he was, said sadly, "I have made a vow never to shoot a bird." He would not eat the bird when cooked; his friend gave it to an old peasant woman, and "we dined as we could."

Albertus of Siena is represented in old miniatures as caressing a hare, for he often preserved them when pursued by the hunters. He is represented moralizing over the spectacle, like melancholy Jacques weeping and commenting upon the sobbing deer. "One man," says St. Chrysostom, "keeps dogs to catch brute animals, himself sinking into brutality; another keeps oxen and asses to transport stores, but neglects men wasting with hunger; and spends

gold without limit to make men of marble, but neglects real men, who are becoming like stones through their evil state."

A French novelist somewhere says of the Englishman, "Let us go out and kill something!" This is his idea of the Englishman's practice. But he forgets his own countrymen. We have still kept our birds, though many have been destroyed by cold and hunger during these later winters; and many more by shooting and battues. Still our birds are the glory of the land—Gloria in excelsis! But in France the fields are mute. There is no music from the skies. The larks have been netted and eaten. The birds of gay plumage have been shot, and their wings put in ladies' bonnets. All over the country sparrows, finches, robins, and nightingales have disappeared. All are killed and eaten.*

But now comes the punishment. The trees are eaten bare; the vine is destroyed by phylloxeræ; the leaves of the shrubs are devoured by caterpillars. They are seen hanging in bunches from the trees. The birds have been killed that destroyed the grubs and the phylloxeræ. Hence destruction is spreading over France. The crops are eaten up at the roots, and the vine is in some districts entirely fruitless. Thus inhumanity, like curses, comes home to roost. Waterton has calculated that a single pair of sparrows destroy as many grubs in one day as would have eaten up half an acre of young corn in a week.

We are glad to see that some steps have been taken in France for the protection of birds and animals, under the

* For the matter of birds, France is a dark and silent land. The eye searches in vain, the ear listens in vain, for nature there sits lamenting her children that are not. Whatever may be said for Republican institutions and peasant proprietary, they can claim no partnership with Nature, who clings rather to her old friends, feudalism and aristocracy. If there were reported anywhere in France as great a number of birds of gay plumage and thrilling song as may be seen and heard almost anywhere a few miles from the metropolis, populations would turn out in fancy costumes, carrying guns and large bags, followed by nondescript dogs, and ready to watch whole days for the chance of a victim within easy range.—*The Times.*

fostering help of the Minister of Public Instruction. The boys—for it is always the young that imitate cruelty—are taught kindness and humanity to dumb animals, as well as to everything that is dependent upon human care. This is the new order of chivalry in France, and it will doubtless prove of great service. There are already five hundred juvenile societies for the care and Protection of animals. In America there has been a similar movement; and two thousand boys are already enrolled in the juvenile branch of the Society for the Protection of Animals at Philadelphia. Kindness to speechless animals is inculcated, and the two-fold duty of reverence and compassion is strongly enjoined.

How much time is spent in cramming children with useless knowledge, and how little is spent in teaching them useful humanity. They are taught literature from books, which does nothing to make them better or more humane. They are not taught gentleness, kindness, or urbanity. Their head is taught, but not their heart. But it might be difficult to find teachers who could evoke the better feelings of the inner nature. Physical force is at hand, and is more generally resorted to. It is a direct and palpable thing. It can be felt. Its immediate effects are sometimes apparent; but its ultimate effects are concealed in the heart. These are generally under-estimated, because obscure and remote.

When Euffordius of Cologne heard a great cry issuing from a school-house which he was passing, he opened the door, entered, and rushed up like a lion, raising his staff against the teacher and his assistant, and delivered the boy from their hands. "What are you doing, tyrant?" he said. "You are placed here to teach, not to kill scholars!"

The cruelty done to children by some parents, as well as by teachers, is indescribable. Children are held to be of the same mental nature, of the same temperament, of the same adaptability to learn, as their parents and teachers. Yet the boy who cannot learn his lesson as quickly as another is thrashed; or he is degraded in some way. Grown people forget the intense misery to which children are thus exposed. The child's horizon is so limited that he sees no remedy to his woes; and his sorrow absorbs his whole little being.

"Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, lest they be discouraged." If the life of a child be embittered, the result is shyness and secret aversion. Even a child feels itself wronged, and a sense of bitterness is implanted in its heart. We can never think without pity of the parent who lost a promising son by death, and was haunted through life by his parental severity. "My, boy," he said to a friend, "used to think me cruel, and he had too much reason to do so; but he did not know how I loved him at the bottom of my heart; and now it is *too late!*"

We often think, when we hear of parents beating their children, that they should rather be inflicting the punishment upon themselves. They have been the means of bringing into being the inheritors of their own moral nature. The child does not make his own temper; nor has any control, while a child, over its direction. If the parents have conferred an irritable temper on the child, it is a duty on their part to exercise self-control, forbearance, and patience, so that the influence of daily life may, in the course of time, correct and modify the defects of its birth.

But "the child's Will must be broken!" There is no greater fallacy than this. Will forms the foundation of character. Without strength of will there will be no strength of purpose. What is necessary is not to break the child's will, but to educate it in proper directions; and this is not to be done through the agency of force or fear. A thousand instances might be cited in proof of this statement.

When the parent or teacher relies chiefly upon pain for controlling the child's will, the child insensibly associates duty and obedience with fear and terror. And when you have thus associated command over the will of others with pain, you have done all that you could to lay the foundations of a bad character—a bad son, a bad husband, a bad father, a bad neighbor, and a bad citizen.* Parents may not think

* "Every first thing," says Richter, "continues forever with a child; the first color, the first music, the first flower, paint the foreground of his life. . . . The first inner or outer object of love, injustice, or such like, throws a shadow immeasurably far along his after-years."