

*Western religion alone is
to blame for the wanton
cruelty to animals.*



The blame for this universal suffering falls entirely upon our western religion and early education. Alone, the western religion stands in its isolation, as a monument of the most gigantic human selfishness ever evolved by human brain, without one word in favour of, or for the protection of the poor animal.

Abstract and train of thoughts

Is it possible for me, who loves animals, to learn how to get more power than I have to help them in their sufferings?

Why do the noblest animals suffer so much at the hands of men? I need not enlarge or try to explain this question. Cities are torture places for the animals who can be turned to any account for use or amusement by man! And these are always the most noble. 3

Why should a harmless creature be burnt alive, or vivisected?

Suffering is the cause of knowledge, so that the incarnating entity gains experience, although the organism is tortured to death. 5

In China frogs are under the protection of law.

We award the palm of superiority to the Chinese over the English legal documents, for the mellifluous, kindly, and fatherly appeal of the philobatrachian Chinese is far superior to dry, commaless, and incomprehensible legal twaddle of the British lawyer. 6

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Is it possible for me, who loves animals, to learn how to get more power than I have to help them in their sufferings?

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Genuine unselfish LOVE combined with WILL, is a “power” in itself. They who love animals ought to show that affection in a more efficient way than by covering their pets with ribbons and sending them to howl and scratch at the prize exhibitions.

Why do the noblest animals suffer so much at the hands of men? I need not enlarge or try to explain this question. Cities are torture places for the animals who can be turned to any account for use or amusement by man! And these are always the most noble.

In the *Sutras*, or the Aphorisms of the *Karma-pa*, a sect which is an offshoot of the great Gelukpa (yellow caps) sect in Tibet, and whose name bespeaks its tenets — “the believers in the efficacy of Karma,” (action, or good works) — an Upāsaka inquires of his Master, why the fate of the poor animals had so changed of late? Never was an animal killed or treated unkindly in the vicinity of Buddhist or other temples in China, in days of old, while now, they are slaughtered and freely sold at the markets of various cities, etc. The answer is suggestive:

Lay not nature under the accusation of this unparalleled injustice. Do not seek in vain for Karmic effects to explain the cruelty, for the *Tenbrel Chugnyi* (causal connection, *Nidāna*) shall teach thee none. It is the unwelcome advent of the Peling (Christian foreigner), whose three fierce gods refused to provide for the protection of the weak and *little ones* (animals), that is answerable for the ceaseless and heart-rending sufferings of our dumb companions.

The answer to the above query is here in a nutshell. It may be useful, if once more disagreeable, to some religionists to be told that the blame for this universal suffering falls entirely upon our Western religion and early education. Every philosophical Eastern system, every religion and sect in antiquity — the Brāhmanical, Egyptian, Chinese and finally, the purest as the noblest of all the existing systems of ethics, Buddhism — inculcates kindness and protection to every living creature, from animal and bird down to the creeping thing and even the reptile. Alone, our Western religion stands in its isolation, as a monument of the most gigantic *human* selfishness ever evolved by human brain, without one word in favour of, or for the protection of the poor animal. Quite the reverse. For theology, underlining a sentence in the Jehovistic chapter of “Creation,” interprets it as a proof that animals, as all the rest, were created for man! *Ergo* — sport has become one of the *noblest* amusements of the upper ten.¹ Hence — poor innocent birds wounded, tortured and killed every autumn by the million, all over the Christian countries, for man’s recreation. Hence also, un-

¹ [Or “Upper ten thousand,” a phrase coined in 1852 by American poet Nathaniel Parker Willis to describe the upper circles of New York, and hence of other major cities. In 1875, both Adam Bissett Thom and Kelly's Directory published books entitled *The Upper Ten Thousand*, which listed members of the aristocracy, the gentry, officers in the British Army and Navy, members of Parliament, Colonial administrators, and members of the Church of England. The usage of this term was a response to the broadening of the British ruling class which had been caused by the Industrial Revolution. — *Wikipedia*.]

kindness, often cold-blooded cruelty,¹ during the youth of horse and bullock, brutal indifference to its fate when age has rendered it unfit for work, and ingratitude after years of hard labour for, and in the service of man. In whatever country the European steps in, there begins the slaughter of the animals and their useless decimation.

“Has the prisoner ever killed *for his pleasure* animals?” inquired a Buddhist Judge at a border town in China, *infected* with pious European Churchmen and missionaries, of a man accused of having murdered his sister. And having been answered in the affirmative, as the prisoner had been a servant in the employ of a Russian colonel, “a mighty hunter before the Lord,” the Judge had no need of any other evidence and the murderer was found “guilty” — justly, as his subsequent confession proved.

Is Christianity or even the Christian layman to be blamed for it? Neither. It is the pernicious system of theology, long centuries of theocracy, and the ferocious, ever-increasing selfishness in the Western civilized countries. What *can* we do?



Why should a harmless creature be burnt alive, or vivisected?

First published in *Lucifer*, Vol. VI (34), June 1890, p. 336. Republished in *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (CRUELTY TO ANIMALS) XII pp. 238-39.

[Letter to *Lucifer* from an Enquirer]

Can any explanation be given, compatible with justice, as to why animals should suffer such terrible agonies as in a recent fire in the South of England, which destroyed some stables with sixteen horses? Such incidents are not uncommon. These poor creatures have none of the consolation arising from the powerful instinct possessing almost all human beings, with regard to the temporary nature of, and also the *surviving* torture and destruction, and therefore suffer the more acutely, their consciousness being centred in the present moment. I have read allusions to this subject, but in no case has any clear and intelligible explanation been given, compatible with that justice which is the corner-stone of Theosophy. Transmigration is rejected, and even if it were true, it would not furnish a valid reason why creatures deprived of higher principles should thus suffer, since responsibility ceases with such a severance. And on the other hand, if we once admit the possibility of useless or *undeserved* suffering, we open the door to what would undermine the philosophic views of Karma so gladly accepted by thinking persons who have been saddened by realizing the varied vicissitudes of life, and the tragic fate of countless human beings, year after year. *Why should a harmless creature be burnt alive, or vivisected?* Whatever light, in the plainest language, can be thrown on the mystery of pain in the animal world, would be thankfully accepted by many, as well as by

ENQUIRER

¹ [“As has been observed by psycho-analysts, persons who are always preaching vehemently against cruelty to animals, etc., are all the time tilling their minds with images of the cruel deeds they are preaching against, and are “tasting” them too.” From “Insights to emotion in Art,” in the same series. — ED. PHIL.]

Suffering is the cause of knowledge, so that the incarnating entity gains experience, although the organism is tortured to death.

Animals do not suffer so keenly as human beings, and do not remember suffering, unless reminded by the sight of the instruments of their pain, as for instance when a thrashed dog sees a whip. Animals again are almost immediately reincarnated in higher animal organisms. *Suffering* moreover, *is the cause of knowledge*, so that the incarnating entity gains experience, although the organism is tortured to death. Again physical suffering is on the lowest and most Māyāvic plane, so that the animals although often suffering tortures physically, are free from the deeper miseries, with which sometimes man, even supposing him in perfect health and in the midst of luxury, is crucified unceasingly. Indeed, when reflecting on such problems and on the awful horrors of vivisection, we may sometimes be inclined to feel more sorrow for the vivisector than for his pain-racked victim, for the awful pangs of remorse that sooner or later will seize on the former, will outweigh a thousand times the comparatively momentary pain of the poor dumb sufferers. — [EDS.] H.P. Blavatsky



In China frogs are under the protection of law.

We award the palm of superiority to the Chinese over the English legal documents, for the mellifluous, kindly, and fatherly appeal of the philobatrachian Chinese is far superior to dry, commaless, and incomprehensible legal twaddle of the British lawyer.

First published in *Lucifer*, Vol. IX (50), October 1891, p. 124. Republished in *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (FROGS AND CHINAMEN) XIII pp. 220-22.

Open your ears, ye kind, praiseworthy Societies for the protection of animal life and welfare; you shall not be put to the blush by the “heathen Chinese.” And you, ye reckless and improvident gardeners and nurserymen, by remaining blind to the yeoman services rendered you by the insectivorous toads and frogs, and allowing your sons and heirs to institute periodically crusades against these interesting batrachians, you show yourselves far below your Brethren, the Celestials, on both the intellectual and moral planes — not to mention the art of scientific gardening. In China where the usefulness of frogs in the fields and in gardens, both floral and vegetable, is a thing recognized ages ago, these interesting amphibians are under the protection of law. To remind the population of this fact, governmental orders are occasionally issued and distributed, in which the destruction of frogs is threatened with heavy penalty. Finding in the *Garden Messenger* one of such *Ukases*,¹ [arbitrary edicts] we reproduce it. The prose poetry of the redaction of this official document — fathered upon Ning-Po Governor of some unpronounceable province, is very remarkable. In this again we are compelled to award the palm of superiority to the Chinese, over the English legal documents. Not for one moment would we think of comparing the dry, commaless, and incomprehensible legal twaddle of the British or any other European lawyer to the mellifluous and [221] fatherly expostulation of the philobatrachian Ning-Po. Here it is:

Our fields and gardens are inhabited by frogs. Though but diminutive creatures, they are, nevertheless, not unlike human beings in their external form, and even in the moral nature. Thus, they preserve during the course of their life, a strong attachment to the land of their birth, while during the weariness of the dark nights, they gratify your hearing with their melodious vocalizations. Moreover, they preserve your future crops, by devouring grasshoppers, and are, thereby, entitled to your gratitude. Wherefore, then, should you emerge on dark nights from your abodes with lanterns and murderous weapons, in order to catch these useful and innocent beings? Most undeniably, when boiled with rice and spices, they offer a delicate dish. But why flay them previously alive? This is cruel and sinful. Henceforth this custom is forbidden by the law, and it becomes illegal from this date, to either sell or buy frogs, under the threat of severe penalty.

How beneficent it might be for the animal kind, were the Western vivisectioners, the children of our heartless modern civilization, to be sent from time to time to the Chinese province under the sway of the benevolent and poetic Governor Ning-Po! Should not Europe and America — England especially — extend their protecting hand to an-

¹ [Edicts of the Russian Tsar]

nex this Eden of the frogs; to make it triply Edenic through the additional blessing of Christian civilization, with its — vivisection, lynching, rum, and fraternal feeling for “inferior” races?

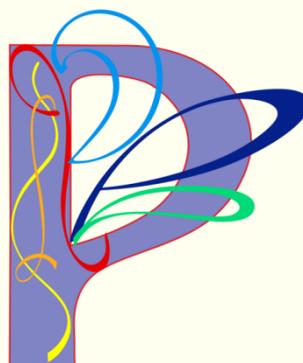


Editorial Notes by Boris de Zirkoff.¹

At this point, in Vol. IX of *Lucifer*, October 1891, pp. 95-99, the Editors published an essay from the pen of H.P. Blavatsky entitled “The Eighth Wonder.”² From her own words at the very outset of the article, it is obvious that she wrote it while in Paris. For this reason, it has been shifted chronologically to *Collected Writings*, Vol. XI, July 1889, the approximate time of H.P. Blavatsky’s stay in France.

At this point, the Editors of *Lucifer*³ published an essay from the pen of H.P. Blavatsky entitled “Chinese Spirits.”⁴ She mentions this essay in her article on “Theories about Reincarnation and Spirits,”⁵ published in November 1886. It will be found under that date in Vol. VII of the present Series, [222] as it appears to have been written at the time. It was intended for *The Secret Doctrine* but was not incorporated into it, neither in the First Draft, nor in the final work.

In the May 1892 issue of Vol. X of *Lucifer*, the Editors published an essay from the pen of H.P. Blavatsky entitled “The Kabbalah and the Kabbalists at the Close of the Nineteenth Century.”⁶ It is most likely that this essay was written much earlier. While it may not be possible to ascertain its correct date, except for the fact that material quoted therein places it after 1885, its similarity to other material on the same subject suggests that it was written around 1886–87. It will be found therefore in Volume VII of the present Series.



¹ Compiler of *H.P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*.

² [Consult “Unpopular Philosopher on the Eighth Wonder,” in our Blavatsky Speaks Series. — ED. PHIL.]

³ Vol. IX, November 1891, pp. 182-87

⁴ [Consult “Blavatsky on Chinese Spirits,” in our Constitution of Man Series. — ED. PHIL.]

⁵ [Consult “Speculations about reincarnation and materialized spirits,” in our Constitution of Man Series. — ED. PHIL.]

⁶ [Consult “Occultism and Kabbalah are only masks to hide the sacred truth from the profane,” in our Black versus White Magic Series. — ED. PHIL.]

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- CAN EATING ANIMAL FLESH EVER BE ETHICAL?
- PLUTARCH ON WHETHER WATER OR LAND ANIMALS ARE THE MOST CRAFTY
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- WHY DO ANIMALS SUFFER?

— *in our Down to Earth Series.*

- BLAVATSKY ON ANIMAL SOULS

— *in our Blavatsky Speaks Earth Series.*

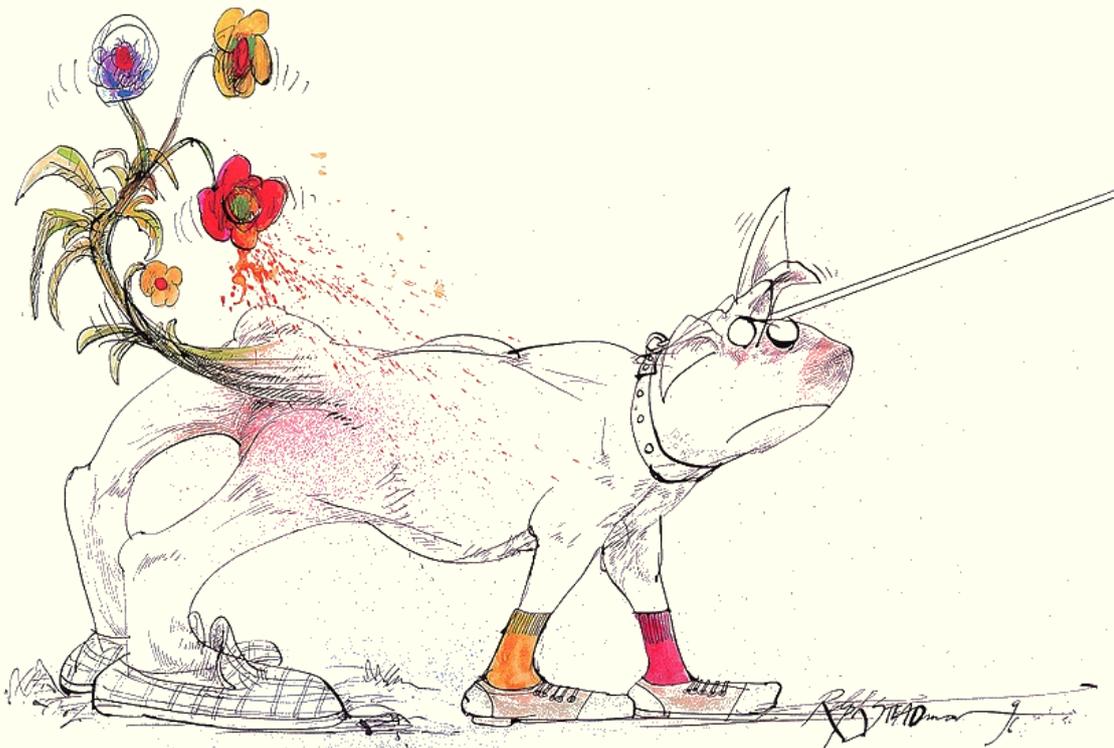


Illustration by Steadman Ralph