

*Letter to the editor of the Morning Chronicle**

JEREMY BENTHAM

" March 4th, 1825.

Sir, —I never have seen, nor ever can see, any objection to the putting of dogs and other inferior animals to pain, in the way of medical experiment, when that experiment has a determinate object, beneficial to mankind, accompanied with a fair prospect of the accomplishment of it. But I have a decided and insuperable objection to the putting of them to pain without any such view. To my apprehension, every act by which, without prospect of preponderant good, pain is knowingly and willingly produced in any being whatsoever, is an act of cruelty: and, like other bad habits, the more the correspondent habit is indulged in, the stronger it grows, and the more frequently productive of bad fruits. I am unable to comprehend how it should be, —that to him, to whom it is a matter of amusement to see a dog or a horse suffer, it should not be a matter of like amusement to see a man suffer; and seeing, as I do, how much more morality, as well as intelligence, an adult quadruped of those and many other species has in him, than any biped has for months after he has been brought into existence: nor does it appear to me, how it should be, that a person to whom the production of pain, either in the one or the other instance, is a source of amusement, would scruple to give himself that amusement when he could do so under an assurance of impunity.

" To one who is in this way of thinking, you will judge, Sir, whether it be possible to believe that the desire and endeavour to lessen the sum of pain on the part of the species inferior to man, and subject to his dominion, can afford any tolerably grounded presumption of an indifference to human suffering, in the instance of any part of the human species. Judge then, Sir, again, of the surprise and affliction with which, being, as I am, one of the sincerest admirers and most zealous friends of the *Morning Chronicle*, I have for such a length of time been beholding the endeavours so repeatedly and zealously employed in it, to oppose and frustrate, if it be possible, the exertions making in Parliament to repress antisocial propensities, by imposing restraints on the wanton and useless manifestation of them.

" Of these ungracious endeavours, the morality and the logic seem to me pretty equally in unison. Thus persevering in the exertions which the Parliamentary men in question have been, *ergo*, they are insincere. In sympathy towards the animals inferior to man, *thus* they have been abundant, *ergo*, in sympathy, good will, and good deeds, as towards men, they are deficient. With concern I say it, the exertions made in the *Morning Chronicle* to encourage and promote barbarity, have equalled, at least, in ardour and perseveringness, those made in Parliament for the repression of it. By nothing but by fallacies could an argument such as this have been supported. Accordingly, what a tissue of them is that which I have been witnessing. Such a tissue of fallacies, all of them so trite and so transparent; fallacies forming so marked a contrast with the close and genuine reasoning which I have been accustomed to witness with admiration and delight. All this, too, from so powerful and successful a champion of the cause of the people, with the laurels won by the discomfiture of the would-be conqueror of Naboth's vineyard still fresh upon his head. Were it not for that inconsistency which ever has been, and for a long time will continue to be, so unhappily abundant even in the best specimens of the human species, —that such opposite exhibitions should have been made in so short a time, by the same individual, would have been altogether inconceivable.

" In the ardent wish to see a stop put to a warfare, in my own view of it, so much more dangerous to the reputation of the *Morning Chronicle*, than to that of the public men whom it has taken for its objects, —I remain, Sir, your sincere and sorrowing friend,

* In JOHN BOWRING (ed.), *The Collected Works of Jeremy Bentham*, Edinburgh, 1842, X, pp. 549-55.

" J. B. "