

## *Carnivorous Callousness\**

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With respect to animal diet, let it be considered, that taking away the lives of animals, in order to convert them into food, does great violence to the principles of benevolence and compassion. This appears from the frequent hard-heartedness and cruelty found amongst those persons, whose occupations engage them in destroying animal life, as well as from the uneasiness which others feel in beholding the butchery of animals. It is most evident, in respect of the larger animals, and those with whom mankind have a familiar intercourse, such as oxen, sheep, domestic fowls, etc., so as to distinguish, love, and compassionate individuals. These creatures resemble us greatly in the make of the body in general, and in that of the particular organs of circulation, respiration, digestion, etc., also in the formation of their intellects, memories, and passions, and in the signs of distress, fear, pain, and death. They often likewise win our affections by the marks of peculiar sagacity, by their instincts, helplessness, innocence, nascent benevolence, etc. And if there be any glimmering of hope of an hereafter for them, if they should prove to be our brethren and sisters in this higher sense, in immortality as well as mortality, in the permanent principle of our minds, as well as the frail dust of our bodies, if they should be partakers of the same redemption as well as of our fall, and be members of the same mystical body, this would have a particular tendency to increase our tenderness for them. At the same time the present circumstances of things seem to require, that no very great alteration should be made in this matter: we ourselves are under the same law of death, and of becoming food to our fellow animals; and philosophy has of late discovered such numberless orders of small animals in parts of diet formerly esteemed to be void of life, and such an extension of life into the vegetable kingdom, that we seem under the perpetual necessity, either of destroying the lives of some of the creatures, or of perishing ourselves, and suffering many others to perish. This therefore seems to be no more than an argument to stop us in our career, to make us sparing and tender in this article, and put us upon consulting experience more faithfully and impartially, in order to determine what is most suitable to the purposes of life and health, our compassion being made by the foregoing considerations, in some measure, a balance to our impetuous bodily appetites. At least, abstinence from flesh meats seems left to each person's choice, and not necessary, unless in peculiar circumstances.

The doctrine of the scriptures on this head appears very agreeable to these dictates of sympathy. For Noah, and we in him, received a permission from God to eat flesh; and that this was no more than a permission, may be concluded from its not being given to Adam, from the shortening of human life after the flood, from the strict command concerning blood, from the Israelites being restrained from animal food for forty years during their purification and institution in religion in the wilderness, from the distinction of animals into clean and unclean, from the burning of part in sacrifice, and sometimes the whole, from the practice of many Jews and Christians particularly eminent for piety, etc. All these may be considered as hints and admonitions to us, as checks and restraints upon unbridled carnal appetites and lusts: at the same time that our Saviour's partaking in meats with all kinds of men, and many express instances and testimonies both in the Old and New Testament, as particularly the command to eat the paschal lamb, and other sacrifices, remove all scruple from those persons who eat with moderation, and in conformity to the rules of piety, benevolence, and the moral sense.

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\* Excerpted from *Observations on Man, His Frame, His Duty, and His Expectations*, vol. 2, London: Richard Cruttwell, 1810, pp. 230-232.