



COMPASSIONATE FRIEND

JOURNAL OF BEAUTY WITHOUT CRUELTY INDIA



Beauty Without Cruelty

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EDITORIAL

When it comes to justify our destructive actions against the poor, defenceless animals, we find an alibi in trotting out our concern for the well being of mankind. It gives rise to the dictum that no matter what means are employed to benefit the humans, necessarily they (means) have a glow of sanctity. Following this trend of thought, are the scientific experiments and research carried out on animals, regardless of the indescribable torture involved. Those who are impervious to the sensitivity of the animals think that the animal lovers magnify the ill treatment out of all proportion and some of these cynics wonder what the fuss is all about. This disorderly state of mind proceeds from the non-recognition of the sense of values and refinement. A belief is rampant among some that man as a superior living creature has a right to frown upon and trample non-human objects, be it for fun, fancy or frenzy.

Scandals about atrocities on weak animals are being splashed across the pages of animal welfare magazines. The subject of killing and torturing small animals for clinical purposes has opened the Pandora's box of controversies. There are those who do not mind the sacrifice of animals for providing medical cure to the super creatures that the humans are believed to be and there are others who dispute this barbaric claim on the ground that animals have a right to live as much as humans.

One of the creatures which is exploited by the bogus healers is the lizard. Gullible and unwary people suffering from aches and pains are swindled with the offer of potions said to cure all bodily ills. The pedlars on the streets in big cities ply a regular trade in lizard oil, which is considered excellent for massaging limbs of men. It is a gruesome sight to see self-styled 'hakims' lighting a stove on public streets and setting about boiling alive lizards in an edible oil. Unsubstantiated claims are made by the masquerading 'hakims' not only to cure rheumatic pains but even to wipe out impotency with massage of lizard oil. According to a renowned naturalist, there is absolutely no scientific basis for such a claim. Unfortunately some of our people are prone to gulp whatever the fraudulent hakims and sham soothsayers spew out.

The naturalists also aver that the annihilation of lizards may cause natural calamity like locust invasion. According to them, if the lizard population is maintained, we may not need chemical agents like the D.D.T. to keep away the menace of locusts. It is worth noting that the nature's balance will be seriously disturbed by the mindless massacre of lizards.

S. M. Masani

(This issue has been kindly sponsored by Bank of India)

FROM MY DESK . . .

BEAUTY WITHOUT CRUELTY (India Branch) is producing a 35 mm coloured film depicting cruelties inflicted on animals - all for the sake of the luxury trades. Humane alternative products of non-animal origin will be also shown in the film thereby giving the viewer the choice of either supporting or not supporting cruelty. We are most grateful to the group of enthusiastic film makers who are doing this documentary at cost. No animal is being specially subjected to torture or killing for shooting this film. We plan to get the film released via the Films Division (Government of India) in all the cinema houses and mobile units. It is our hope that this will not only result in excellent publicity for our cause, but will also act as an eye-opener to those who unknowingly have been buying 'cruelty-products'.

April 24th has been declared as World Day for Laboratory Animals. Unfortunately 70% of the laboratory animal tests carried out annually on an approximate 225 million animals the world over are unnecessary and for non-medical research. Thus the World Day serves as a reminder to us all of the price being paid for our comfort; also for the anti-vivisectionists to express their concern for the miserable plight of animals in experimental laboratories across the globe.

B.W.C. (India Branch) has been working to ensure that the export ban on monkeys is not lifted. We are therefore very pleased to hear from the International Primate Protection League that our Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi has written disapproving the cruel experimentation on monkeys in U.S.A. She has also stated that there are no current plans to renew export of monkeys from India.

The latest issue of our 'List of Honour' (March 1980) containing the names of those cosmetics and toilet preparations free of animal substances, is ready for circulation. We request those interested to write us for a free copy. B.W.C. would like to see more and more people referring to this informative cosmetic booklet before making their purchases.

Recently BEAUTY WITHOUT CRUELTY (India Branch) has discovered a very cruel activity. In North India, pigs are held down and their hair brutally pulled out from the roots while the animal struggles and screams in acute agony. This hog hair is used in the making of paint brushes, wall brushes, and even hair brushes and shaving brushes. B.W.C. is approaching manufacturers to utilise instead synthetic non-animal hair.

Diana Ratnagar
Chairperson

SPARROWS AROUND THE HOUSE

By P. Govindsinh

Sparrows are one of a few species of birds which fearlessly fly into houses and even occupy them overnight, oblivious of the movement of human dwellers. However, when it comes to nest-building, they often select any old place and when they do, it is agonizing to see their efforts wasted hour after hour with twig after twig falling to the ground and the birds instinctively carrying on regardless of the failures. Although their activity can be annoying, it is often possible to induce them to build in a less troublesome area by providing a suitable footing.

I had some experience of their perseverance over a year ago when they tried in vain to construct a nest in a living room on the electrical wiring running on a wall. When their repeated attempts failed, I decided to provide a more practical location. Luckily for the sparrows and me, very closely-spaced rafters ran under the ceiling and all I had to do was to improvise a bottom made of a piece of thick cardboard abutting the wall. The rafters, the wall and the cardboard bottom formed a housing closed on four sides with the open end facing a window. The birds soon packed it two-thirds of the way to the top and thereafter I could observe their progress at close range until the young flew away. Incidentally, when I brought it down later, I noticed that it was kept scrupulously clean. So there is no cause to worry about hygienic standards.

Little did I expect yet another pair to choose a difficult spot the next breeding season, but outside the house. This time it was a gap between ventilator louvres and a piece of wirenetting fitted over the frame to keep out rodents. Since slipping past the netting and stacking hay underneath was difficult and especially because the edges of glass louvres tend to be razor-sharp, I decided to shift the site of their activity as early as possible. The nest as it stood was in the open, so for the present project it seemed logical to provide a covered shelter with a dim interior, protected from wind and rain and with a durable entrance with the feel of tree branches. Not finding a wooden crate small enough for the purpose and since any delay would have upset their time-schedule, I bought a medium-sized edible oil can, cut out its top, cleaned it with detergent to remove odours and with a few additions converted it to what surely would appear as an apartment to its feathered occupants, should they decide to make it their home. I added a perch at the top for alighting, and nailed down the can to the wooden frame of the louvres.

In order not to take chances, I kept the open end of the can facing towards the old site rather than away from the louvres although such a placement would have given more freedom for taking off and alighting. Immediately after installation and while the sparrows were away, I removed the material collected under the wirenetting and transferred it as a starter to the new nest after discarding a few brittle grass roots which were difficult to manage and compacted the pliable material like stems with miniature leaves, lengths of twine and grass. I wondered if they would ignore the box as just another fixture and return to their exact original spot. For a while they were confused but after fumbling for a few minutes they discovered the readymade nook, explored its interior and within less than an hour started depositing new nest-building material as if the place were all too familiar and there was no interruption. The pair soon took a liking to the perch, as expected, and kept hopping on to it to sing merrily whenever they were not working on the nest.

About forty days after they had started, they slowed down the pace of nest-building and stealing a close look revealed that they had made the inside quite cozy with a tunnel-like passage leading to the rear. I eagerly awaited the hatching of the eggs and chirps of the new-born that would follow. The squeaks, when they came, were very faint and audible only in the quiet of the morning, being lost otherwise in the din created by the activities of other birds in the area. Gradually they grew louder, often drowning out each other and were loudest at mealtime. When the chicks were on their own, they flew down clumsily with the parents to search for food, appearing lethargic in the beginning, but quickly imitating the adults in later sessions.

At the nest, hectic activity that had started some nine weeks earlier was no more evident and though quite a few dangling straws that were so laboriously brought in were blown away by the wind, to those who knew, the nest stood as a reminder of a job well done by a pair of sparrows, who had staked their claim on this particular spot in the territory in which they happened to be.

Editorial Note :

It is disconcerting that while some heartless people throw away functioning nests with incubating eggs under the pretext of a clean-up, others, more considerate, drive a feeling of satisfaction, witnessing birds construct and succeed in their instinctive parental care and protection.

BEANFEAST CURE FOR THE BALDIES

By Jill Evans

Farm hands now ride shotgun to protect their precious crop ... the jojoba bean. Yet for centuries the plant has grown wild in the desert - overlooked and unwanted by all except the Red Indians who squeezed the oil from the nuts and used it to soothe burns and make their hair shine. Then suddenly scientists discovered the magic of the shrub's oil which acts as everything from hair restorer to motor oil. And the great liquid gold rush had begun.

"It's amazing" said Ransey Harris, who heads the Jojoba International Company in California, the largest producers of the oil, "I can see the day when jojoba will be the answer to the world's oil shortage." He added: "It isn't a fuel but a high quality lubricant which is what 30 per cent of black oil is used for."

Jojoba mania has meant that land where it grows has increased in value by 600 per cent in the last three years. And farmers have swung back to the ways of the Old West by taking up shotguns to discourage jojoba bandits. "Jojoba takes three to four years to mature", said Roger Nelson, who farms a jojoba plantation, "So those of us, the pioneers who planted three years ago are just about ready to reap our first harvest". Farm hands patrol the Nelson plantations daily with shotguns to see that the bankable beans go from the fields to paying customers only.

In the cosmetics industry, the hottest use of jojoba so far is in shampoos and scalp treatments. Research by the U.S. Department of Agriculture has shown that it is effective in fighting thinning hair. Millard Tipp a Hollywood cosmetologist, swears that his bald patch has filled in through regular treatment with jojoba oil. This he said, was after he had tried expensive cell therapy in Mexico and at a clinic in Switzerland to no avail. "I've been using the oil for six months and my bald spot is definitely filling in" he said.

Other uses for the oil include making penicilin, detergents, cosmetics, gear lubricants, plastics, polishing waxes, cooking and salad oils - and it can even work for jet engine lubricants and chewing gum. As the great bean rush gains momentum, the land where it grows - mostly former wasteland - is reaching a premium in price.

Courtesy : Sunday People

BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

By Pilu Dady

Take a loveable Rabbit. Imprison its head in a hutch and keep its eyes open by the use of metal clips or strips of adhesive tape. Drip concentrated fluid such as shampoos into its eyes over a period of several days. Then, measure the damage according to the area injured.

Take an innocent Guinea-pig. Immobilise it with restraint devices. Remove the fur or hair by pressing adhesive tape firmly on the animal's body, then stripping it off. Repeat this procedure till several layers of skin are removed. Apply irritants, such as After Shave Lotion, to the sensitive tissue. After a period of one or two days inspect the skin for chemical burns.

Take a cute white Mouse. Clamp it down on its back with its hind legs raised, the feet enveloped in tight shoe-like tubes made of rubber to prevent any sweat secretions from evaporating. Apply an Anti-perspirant to one foot, then compare with the untreated foot.

Take any animal - Rabbit, Guinea-pig, Hamster, White Rat, Mouse, Dog or Squirrel-monkey. By means of a tube force-feed it with chemicals of lipsticks, hair dyes, face powders or any other make-up preparation. These experiments are to determine at what dosage level 50% of the animals die.

The above experiments are few of the shocking facts about cosmetic tests carried out in Laboratories of the world. Moreover, those animals who have not already succumbed to the torture are put to sleep once their usefulness is over.

It is a known fact that humans and laboratory animals react differently with respect to the same products. For instance, eye irritancy tests on laboratory animals have failed to indicate the likelihood of their adverse effects on man. Yet these unnecessary experiments continue year - in, year - out - behind closed doors... Yes, always behind closed doors.

So what does one do - stop using cosmetics? - NO! The answer surely lies in discriminating against those products which have brought suffering to the innocent. All that is required is that one pause for a second ... think ... then select.

There is an innate desire in each woman to look beautiful. BEAUTY WITHOUT CRUELTY understands this desire just as it appreciates and respects the desire of every living creature to live its life in its own natural, normal way. In accord with its principles, BEAUTY WITHOUT CRUELTY (India Branch) have brought out an All-India 'List of Honour' of all those cosmetics and toilet preparations which have not been tested on animals and which moreover do not contain any animal ingredient. This 'List of Honour' can be obtained free of charge from us.

U.S. AIR FORCE PSYCHOLOGIST EXPOSES CRUELTY TO RHESUS MONKEYS IN RADIATION AND GAS WARFARE EXPERIMENTS

SUMMARY

Dr. Donald Barnes, a research psychologist, left his position at the school of Aerospace Medicine, Brooks Air Force Base, Texas, USA, in January 1980. After performing experiments on rhesus monkeys for 15 years, Dr. Barnes decided that he could no longer tolerate the senseless cruelty of the experiments and the waste of monkey life. The experiments conducted at the school of Aerospace medicine involved exposure of monkeys to nuclear radiation, burning their eyes, and, in conjunction with the Aberdeen Proving Grounds, studying the effects of chemical-biological warfare agents such as nerve gases.

DETAILS

Dr. Barnes began his statement by commenting : "I can no longer perform experiments with animals doomed, by virtue of their participation in such experiments, to very early death," as well as to "pain and suffering during the final weeks and months of their existence."

He stated that, in each experiment, a group of monkeys would be trained to perform a complex task designed by psychologists, which was abnormal for monkeys to perform. Because the behaviour was not natural to the monkeys, they were trained by electric shock. Dr. Barnes claimed that, "Although the papers written to report such experiments claim that very low-level shock is utilised, such statements are simply untrue. He stated that the shock generators were capable of delivering at least 10 times the degree of shock described in the articles, and that, "I couldn't even guess the number of times I've seen these units used at full power to punish a slow learner, well into the thousands." He stated that shocking was not the only problem faced by the monkeys; the frustrated animals became crazy and began to act in self-destructive ways such as "biting hunks of meat from an arm or hand, pulling out hair till the monkey is bald in all spots he can reach."

For training sessions, the monkeys would be placed in "primate chairs or couches." According to Dr. Barnes, "the restraint devices are barbaric, e.g. metal couches with metal neck, belly, and ankle restraints - as the animal tries to free itself, it often loses its teeth to the neck-bar, gains severe abrasions on the abdomen (often wearing through the abdominal wall, or so severely chafes its ankles that they become infected). "Then, the helpless monkey is shocked and

shocked again, sometimes hundreds and hundreds of times per day, until it either does the experimenter's bidding or is transferred to another program."

After the monkeys were trained, those that survived (many did not) were exposed to radiation to see how it affected their ability to perform the task. Various types of radiation were used, such as neutron, gamma, or flash X-ray. Dr. Barnes stated that "In years past, I was ordered to keep a death watch on these irradiated monkeys, which meant, simply, to see what happened till they died of radiation injury," He asked, "Do you have any idea how miserable it is to die from radiation injury? I do, I've seen so many monkeys go through it."

Dr. Barnes commented that he became more and more disgusted by the experiments over the years: "I discovered that this data was not used to help Man struggle against his environment. The data was and is used to generate more worthless experiments, thereby killing and crippling more animals. I began to feel more strongly that I didn't have the right to kill these innocent creatures."

Dr. Barnes stated that experiments into the effects of nerve gasses and other chemical-biological warfare agents were performed at both the school of Aerospace Medicine and the Aberdeen Proving Grounds in Maryland, USA. The effects of the agents and various possible antidotes are evaluated on monkeys. These experiments were also extremely cruel.

According to Dr. Barnes, many monkeys are held at the school awaiting experiments. Because he had left in disgust, he felt that "I can no longer assure their relative comfort" because "neither of the two program directors has the slightest notion about the degree of suffering experienced daily by these monkeys, although they are both aware of all the conditions described and ultimately responsible for them." A new 3-year project was in the planning stage, according to Dr. Barnes, which would cause pain and suffering to large numbers of monkeys, but which "will not add one iota of data useful to peaceful co-existence of humans (let alone all creatures) on this planet."

Commenting on Dr. Barnes' revelations, Dr. Shirley McGreal, Co-Chairwoman of the International Primate Protection League, commented, "All these experiments conducted on Rhesus monkeys from India violated the U.S.-India Agreement of 1955 which permitted export of monkeys on condition they be treated humanely and not used in military experimentation. This agreement was violated from Day 1 with Brooks Air Force Base actually placing monkeys at atomic bomb sites in the late 1950s. Now the U.S. wants to get India to export monkeys again and makes all kinds of promises about how well they will be treated. At the same time, these revolting experiments are going on, in spite of protests by American animal-lovers and humane societies. I hope therefore that India will retain its export ban on its monkeys."

DOMINION OVER THE ANIMALS

By Hilda G. Farrant and her daughter The Rt. Hon. Muriel, Lady Dowding

Many years ago I had a little house by the sea on the south coast. It was countrified, and in my garden there was a frame in which I grew vegetables during the winter. One day a family of rats came to live in it. As I kept chickens this worried me. When an old friend, Miss Geraldine Owen, who was well known for her "new thought" ideas, came to see me I told her about the rats.

She said at once, "My dear, you can get rid of them if you want to. Just sit quietly for a few minutes each day and send out your love to them. Even if you don't feel it, say, 'I love you. I love you. I love you.'"

I'm afraid I did not believe that this would have much effect, but I tried it – and found that watching the rats was quite interesting. I was particularly amused by the neat way they stored their food.

Not long afterwards – perhaps a fortnight or so – a neighbour came to me in some excitement, "I've just seen such a lot of rats climbing over Miss Pratt's fence into her garden," she said. The neighbour knew nothing about my daily "talk" with the rats, or that I had asked them to leave my garden, and I was so astonished it was some time before I began to feel rather guilty, and realised that I should not have sent the rats to someone else! After all, we are to some extent responsible for all the animals and birds and plants in our homes and gardens, and if we are going to ask inmates like a large family of rats to go somewhere else it is more considerate to suggest where they might go and live happily without disturbing the neighbours!

This is written by my mother, who at the time was eighty-seven years old.

In 1962 a debate took place in the House of Lords on Cruel Poisons. My husband, Lord Dowding, spoke and somewhat startled the House by saying that his mother-in-law and wife merely asked animals to go – and they went: if this method of getting rid of "pests" was practised there would be no need for cruel poisons. For at least three weeks after this our home was visited by newspaper men, and there were some very famous cartoons by famous cartoonists. Thus, my husband's simple statement circled the world and letters began to arrive tied up in large bundles – some from far away countries. We discovered that a surprising number of people, like us, hated to kill and wanted to know how to get rid of unwanted rats and mice by "talking to them". Among these letters are the following two which throw a little further light on the subject.

My Lord,

I enclose herewith a paper cutting from one of our papers, viz. Ceylon Daily News, 1st February, 1962, about you.

If this paper account of you be correct, you have been practising what we Buddhists call "MAITRI". It is a Pali word meaning loving kindness.

You will be interested to know, my Lord, that Buddhist priests living in hermitages in thick jungles get on with all the wild beasts and serpents of a tropical jungle by the practice of Maitri or loving kindness. This is why we never get any harm to these hermit priests from such animals or serpents.

Sd./- Dr. E. R. Abeyesundere, F.R.C.S.E."

To The Editor

The Times

London

Sir,

I would like to mention, if I may, a first-hand experience I had several years ago, when I was in Ceylon, about talking to animals and insects, and one that was raised by Lord Dowding in a recent debate in the House of Lords.

A party of us were returning from a hunt, and in the gathering darkness in dense jungle, we suddenly came across a wooden hut dimly lit by an oil lamp, and seeing that the door was open we stopped for a while to talk to the occupant. On entering and after a few words were spoken we were rather surprised to discover that the occupant was a European, and to learn that he was a German who had become a Buddhist monk and had lived in this very hut for a number of years - living a life of service, meditation and study. Our attendants told us that he was well known and much beloved by the jungle inhabitants who came to him for help and guidance. We also learned later on from other sources that he had given up a very lucrative profession as a surgeon in Berlin. What impressed me most when talking to him was his great learning, his serenity, and his lovable nature.

Quite naturally, in the circumstances, we asked him whether he was ever afraid, and of living alone in a place that was infested with ferocious animals, poisonous snakes and insects.

He smiled in a benign way and said in an unconcerned manner that he had nothing to fear since the "ferocious animals, poisonous snakes and insects" didn't fear him and that, daily, he talked to them, as friends, adding that he owed this to the teaching of Gautama the Buddha, whose main emphasis was on the kinship of all life and which he was able to prove not as an abstraction, but as a fact, and above all as a way of life.

On leaving this great soul on our way back to "civilisation" we all admitted how small we felt after such an experience and all our erstwhile bounce and swagger looked silly and childish.

Sd./- Samuel Dennis'

My husband gave considerable thought to this matter and came to the conclusion that there does seem evidence in various religions and philosophies of a different, parallel line of evolution - the Angelic or Vedic which cares for the welfare general and individual of the animal and lower Kingdoms of Nature, and when the human desires not to harm their charges they respond to the human request.

Many in this day and age think that Dominion over the Animals means the right to torture and destroy them; it may well transpire that true Dominion over the Animals is obtained by loving and caring for them - never by destruction. Maybe the time will come when, as a Sage of long ago has prophesied, "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my HOLY Mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the Waters cover the Sea." Isaiah II.

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THOUGHTLESS INTERFERENCE

By Suneel Dabholkar

In India, today, due to our inexcusable lethargy, greed and lack of interest, rats have become a terrible menace as they not only ravage the fields, but also pillage grain from households and destroy clothes and other articles.

The country's rat population is now estimated at 600 crores - ten times the human population and the problem is becoming worse as rats have an alarmingly high reproduction rate (a pair can multiply into an unbelievable 888 rats in just one year !).

Rats, which are mainly categorised into field rats, domestic rats and wild rats, destroy an estimated 25 million tonnes of grain every year. The price - Rs. 2,000 crores. Moreover, they render a large amount of food grain unfit for human consumption by infecting it with urine and pellets. This infected grain occasionally totals ten times the amount of grain the rats themselves eat. Can a poor country like India afford this ?

This situation has unnecessarily cropped up because snakes have been indiscriminately slaughtered for their valuable skins. These skins go to make handbags, wallets, belts, shoes and the like which are promptly swallowed by the fashion-conscious markets of the West. The majority of the snakes feed on rats and mice, thus keeping down their number and indirectly saving our crops.

Unfortunately, the lucrative snakeskin trade has upset the ecological balance and, in the bargain, aided the rats to consume 25 per cent of the foodgrains India produces per year. So the only beneficiary of the snakeskin trade are the dealers. And does India's snakeskin trade, by any chance, fetch us Rs. 2,000 crores in foreign exchange ?

Rat skin is now being used to make watch-straps, gloves, shoes, handbags and other fashionable articles in an indirect effort to bring down their population. So apart from the snakes, now its the turn for the rats to die too. Very soon there will not be any rats and the population of some other creature will increase like nobody's business, affecting another natural balance in turn.

Some thing must be done to stop this wanton killing so that the animals will keep up the balance of nature in their own way without causing undue harm and damage to others ... before the snake and the rat are added to the list of those soon to be extinct. Man in his arrogance appears to think that he can escape joining the list !

NEWS PICKS

The Times Of India, 24th March, 1980

Racket in killing leopards busted

A well-organised racket in the killing of wildlife and selling their skins in the foreign markets at high prices has come to light with the arrest of three persons in a village near Udaipur recently on the charge of killing a leopard.

According to a report reaching Jaipur, two leopards were found killed by people, suspected to be members of the well-organised gang, in the past one-month. Both the leopards were males. The skin of one of them was seized by the wildlife staff of Udaipur and three persons were arrested. No arrest has yet been made in the other case. The arrests and the recovery of the skins of the two leopards have further deepened the mystery about the disappearance of a female leopard from the Udaipur zoo some time ago.

Hindustan Times, 28th December 1979

Snakes Skinned Alive

By N. D. Batra

The villagers of a comparatively little-known place, Kranthi in Thanjavur District of Tamil Nadu are not only making shoes but also purses, watch-straps, hand-bags and other fashion articles out of snake skin.

For most of the year they make out a living by cultivating their small holdings, but during November and December the snake-skin industry takes over. At times 40 to 50 good varieties of snake, including the cobra are caught every day in this snake infested area. This gives them an additional income of Rs. 20 to Rs. 25 per day. Of these, however, the cobra skin, locally known as 'saral' is the most sought after as the price is three times that of ordinary reptile skin.

The skin is obtained in one piece by nailing the head to a tree, slitting the body from end to end with a knife and then tearing the skin off. Quite often the victim remains alive for two or three days after the skin-operation.

The area is famous for its cobras and other deadly snakes. In a way these reptiles destroy rodents like the bandicoots which destroy the paddy fields and also are instrumental in keeping the ecological balance on an even keel. Meanwhile

no costly disinfectants are used by the poor villagers. At the most the snake skins are preserved in salt pots for days before being sold off to wholesalers. The price invariably varies with the width and the length of the skin. Those with six inches width command the highest price – ranging between Rs. 80 to Rs. 100 per piece.

To buy snake skin scores of city merchants descend upon the village. A lot of haggling takes place before a price is fixed. The merchants in turn sell these skins to Madras for export to foreign countries where they are converted into fashion articles. Skins apart, oil has also been extracted from snake liver which is used for medicinal and polishing purposes. But it has not proved to be as lucrative as the fantastic prices fetched for skins.

Poona Herald, 2nd. March, 1980

Animals, birds being wantonly killed

A fox, a hare and two porcupines were found shot dead near Paud Phata alongside the N.D.A. Road over the past few days.

Earlier, on February 10th also, three porcupines were found similarly killed in the same area. In December last many ducks and birds had been killed with 12-bore gun shots.

According to the Forest Department, no one is licensed to hunt or kill any animal or bird in the forest area bordering on Poona.

Foxes and hare are being killed for their furry tails. The fox found killed on Thursday last had been shot dead with a 12-bore gun. The empty cartridge was seen lying within ten metres of the carcass. Its tail had been cut off and its eyes taken out.

A week ago, a peacock had been killed in the Parvati Pachgaon area, with its feathers plucked.

The Friends of Animals Society have placed much of the blame for this callous and thoughtless killing of animals and birds due to laxity on the part of the Forest Department personnel. On Friday, the Society managed to get eight persons arrested for making four sloth bears engage in dance performance in public; the four bears have been seized. Training a sloth bear to stand on its hind legs is said to involve a very painful and torturous technique, which causes a permanent injury to the nose of the bear.

TO A DOG

By Crystal Rogers

Eyes - tortured, terrified, with body rigid,
Waiting the blow he knows is bound to fall.
Crouching and cowering, all his body trembling,
His back against the unrelenting wall.

Eyes - tightly shut, too frightened to stay open,
No longer able to endure the sight
Of stick or stone, or heavy maiming object -
The brutal hand upraised about to smite.

Eyes - slightly opening, then the yelp, half strangled,
To feel the sudden touch of a strange hand,
Knowing that there is no one near to save him,
For he has not a friend in all the land.

Eyes - open now, and wide with stark amazement,
Unable to believe the sight they see !
A friendly face, and soft, caressing fingers -
"Can it be true this Human cares for me?"

Eyes - bright with joy, ecstatic tongue, tail wagging -
Love bursting from a small and faithful heart !
"I'll serve you always - I shall never leave you !
I'm yours for ever - we shall never part !"

Eyes - wistful, pleading - begging for forgiveness,
Apologising for some paltry ill;
Begging our pardon humbly, badly needing
The re-assurance that we love him still.

Eyes - still so faithful and adoring,
But dimmed by age, unable now to see -
"Beloved Human, do not be unhappy.
I'll wait for you wherever I may be !"

Eyes - which in dreams I still see brightly shining,
Waiting for me upon that distant shore.
I'll keep my faith until this life resigning,
We meet at Last where partings are no more.