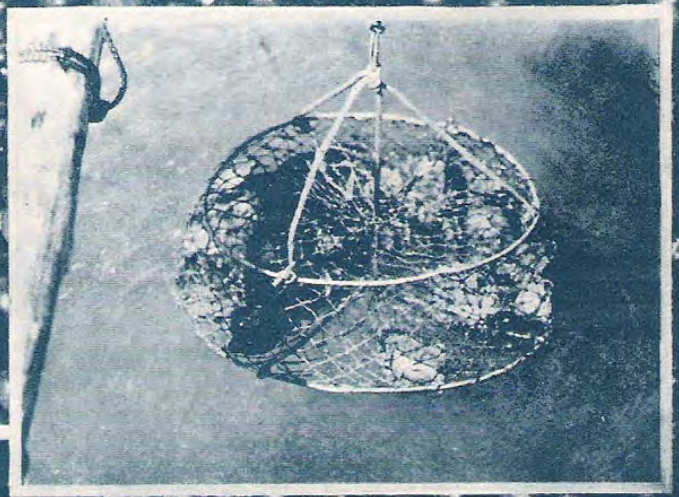


COMPASSIONATE FRIEND

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Beauty Without Cruelty

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EDITORIAL

There is something known as sanctity of life, universal life, human as well as animal. This sanctity is wrecked, when superstitious beliefs lead to the abominable practice of sacrificing animals and birds, and that too, in the name of the religion. One would expect a groundswell of resentment against the gory cruelties inflicted on thousands of animals and birds day by day. But nothing happens in a society where the value system has taken a back seat, where the thoughtfulness for others is a pitiable cry for the moon. The facets of provisions of legal enactments against untold savagery, in so far as they remain ineffective, reflect showmanship only. And in the midst of this sauntering distraction, man tries frantically to snatch glimpses of mental peace, oblivious of the fact that peace comes through extending love to all creatures. To fulfil his great mission of peace, Francis, the Saint said : "Make me, O Lord, an instrument of peace. Bless me that where there is cruelty, I may sow compassion ; where there is hatred, I may sow love ; where there is sorrow, I may sow joy." For enjoying entire satisfaction of a purposeful life, our love has to extend to all - man, bird, animal, tree, star, moon, sun - the whole universe.

Since ages past, mankind with hallowed sentiments have valued the concept of self-sacrifice. The ignorant and the unenlightened often fall a prey to the oracular dictums of obscurantist "sadhus" and "fakirs" or self-styled saints and "babas", who mislead their credulous followers with the hopes that sacrifice of animals and birds during the celebration of certain religious festivals would bring them good fortune and God's blessings. With this fatuous advice, one fails to understand the yardstick to measure God's blessings. Almost all who gloat over the sacrifice of animals and birds to propitiate the deities or goddesses, expect a bonanza of all the earthly things to be soon within their reach. The author of the "Gulistan" says : "A 'fakir' is one who possesses no earthly thing and who does not beseech God to endow earthly things on others".

Instead of upholding the sanctity of temples, they are soiled and desecrated with flesh and blood of slaughtered animals on the threshold of the temples during the Goddess festivals. This happens mostly in the villages, where the custom of animal sacrifices is uninhibited. An example of this crude practice, out of innumerable instances, can be cited. A young goat is fastened to a long wooden pole and the pilgrims bang coconuts on the hanging goat, who struggles with frantic cries to be freed and soon thereafter dies due to most merciless bludgeoning. Such sacrifices of goats, sheep and bullocks as offerings to appease the deities are galore on the very floors of temples.

As against the macabre indulgence in cruelties on the helpless creatures, how relieving are the words of St. Francis of Assisi ! He says ; "How happy would I feel, if men do one thing - throw their wheat and their grain along the roads, so that our sisters, the larks and other birds, may have plenty to eat ! "

S. M. Masani

(This issue has been kindly sponsored by M/s. BOMBAY FOODS PVT. LTD.)

FROM MY DESK . . .

GOOD NEWS TO SHARE! Our BEAUTY WITHOUT CRUELTY (India Branch) Rennet Project has turned out 100% successful. B. W. C. has supplied sample microbial (non-animal) rennet as a replacement for calf rennet to the Aarey Dairy through whose kind co-operation experimental trials in cheese making were undertaken. The sample cheese given to Hotels, Restaurants and Airlines was greatly appreciated as it compares very well with animal rennet cheese. The Aarey Dairy has agreed to switch over to the use of this non-animal rennet and their vegetarian cheese will be in the market by the end of 1980. On the basis of the excellent results obtained we are now approaching other cheese manufacturers in India to use non-animal rennet. Very few people seem to be aware that the death of one innocent calf is involved for the making of approximately 30 kgs, of cheese.

Since there has been a welcome increase in membership we are printing 1,500 copies of the current issue of "Compassionate Friend". With this number we go into our fourth year of publication. We do hope subscribers find our magazine interesting. We are always happy to receive suggestions and contributions by way of articles, poems, etc; also sponsorships (Rs. 1,000/- per issue) and advertisements which will help towards the cost of paper and printing which has gone up so drastically.

We are pleased to inform our numerous Donors who have given so generously towards our cause that BEAUTY WITHOUT CRUELTY (India Branch) has received an exemption certificate under Section 80-G of the Income Tax Act.

At the last annual meeting of the International Whaling Commission, July 1979, it was decided to declare the Indian Ocean (with the lower boundry set at 55° south) a Sanctuary. This has resulted in a reduction in the number of whales to be killed. But unfortunately this will allow Japan to continue killing Minke whales close to the Antarctic. In 1979 Japan has again pledged to stop all imports from non-I. W. C. sources; they had not implemented their earlier pledge. We hope all I. W. C. member countries will not purchase illegally obtained whale products. We can now look forward to the report to be submitted at the next annual I.W.C. meeting on implementing a world-wide ban on commercial whaling. BEAUTY WITHOUT CRUELTY therefore continues its efforts in introducing the Jojoba seed oil as a replacement for Sperm oil.

It is sad to hear from The International Primate Protection League that U.S.A. is putting pressure on Nepal to export monkeys. (India, Bangla Desh and Thailand have already banned the export of monkeys.) If Nepal exports, many monkeys from India will probably be smuggled across the border into Nepal.

Diana Ratnagar
Chairperson

ANIMAL'S PRAYER

By Pratima Sinha

"Forgive those who trespass against us,
But lead them into no more temptation
Thereby, deliver us from Evil, Amen."

Wordsworth said, "Nature is our greatest Teacher" - this included the forests, plants and animal life on Earth. But, instead we took it upon ourselves to tame this untameable creature, to make it listen to us and carry out our orders and be subjected to our whims and fancies. Having exploited the inanimate side of Nature, we marched on a warpath on those whose voice is not audible to us or whose tongue is not followed by us - the so-called God's Supreme Beings !

Cruelty has become a part of our lives - from time immemorial carriages have carried people, driven forward relentlessly under the cruel whip of the driver. "Westerns" show how horses are subjected to terribly cruel treatments by the use of the harsh bits - the way the poor creatures throw their heads up in protest show it clearly. Dogs and elephants too, Man's closest friends were not spared. Well, atleast the dog is not so much of commercial value - it must be its luck. Ivory became the "in-thing" and poaching in Africa (where the mighty Tuskers are found) began at an alarming rate. Poisoned berries, slow moving poisoned arrows drove elephants to a frenzy ; gigantic pits were created for elephants to fall into - whatever for ? For ivory of course - to carve gorgeous show pieces like ivory boats and even ceremonially bedecked elephants - What a farce !

Snake skin wallets for him and crocodile-leather handbags for her, to complete the picture-indeed ! Look behind the finished products and the scene will make you feel squeamish - alive snakes being pinned to the trees and entirely stripped off their skins. The snakes are not killed for the simple reason that that would only diminish the total length of the skin. Crocodile-leather is extracted in almost the same manner to give her the chic look.

That's not the end. Furs are another epic which require elaboration ; minks, ermines, seal fur, foxes, cheetah are either caught in gin traps or bred on fur farms to pamper some blood thirsty beauty's desires. Leave the furs on their rightful owners' backs and anyway, what use is it stripping them naked, leaving them writhing in agony, when there are fake furs which are as good. Perhaps haute couterie have some other reasons - hope one day they'll have to answer the animals ; best of luck, baddies !

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'Compassionate Friend' from Beauty Without Cruelty, Printed in India - January 1980

AN HONOUR BESTOWED

An event of great significance was the presentation of the International League for Animal Right's 'Order of Nature' to Anahareo, widow of Grey Owl, to mark World Animal Rights' Day. A special medal, inscribed with Grey Owl's own words - "Kindness is the hallmark of civilisation" - was presented to Anahareo.

The special citation dated 14th October, 1979 reads as follows : "This medallion, identifying the wearer as an Officer in the Order of Nature, is awarded to Anahareo, in recognition of her unswerving devotion to the protection of animals and the conservation of Nature.

When animals suffered, she grieved for them. Eventually she realised that for better or worse, she must take the step of refusing to trap another animal.

She could not foresee how this decision would affect her future with her husband, Grey Owl. They depended on trapping for their livelihood. But the sight of a trapped animal, its cries of anguish and the knowledge of its prolonged suffering proved to be more than she could bear.

In renouncing trapping for all time, she had unwittingly set the stage for a new and important chapter, not only in their own lives, but in the history of nature conservation in Canada and abroad.

Grey Owl followed Anahareo's example. He ceased to trap and took up the pen. By making skilfull use of his superb gifts of writing and oratory, he went on to become one of the greatest conservationists - perhaps the greatest - this country has ever known. His "Tales of an Empty Cabin", "Men of the Last Frontier", "Pilgrims of the Wild" and "The Adventures of Sajo", became standard reading in Canadian schools. His lecture tours and broadcasts, in Britain and America, were of breathtaking impact and culminated in a Command Performance before the entire Royal Family, including the present Queen.

Yet Grey Owl remained true to his principles, being unaffected by fame and fortune. His mission was to protect countryside and animals from human depredation and to defend the dignity of the Indians.

In all of this, it was Anahareo who pointed the way. Her courage and singleness of purpose gave to her husband the inspiration and moral support that he needed. The fruits of his genius are the result of the seeds that she planted.

For her sensitivity to the suffering of helpless creatures and for her vision of a better world, Anahareo is hereby admitted to membership in the Order of Nature. She is eminently qualified to be so honoured and to stand with the only other person to have received the award, the late Dr. Albert Schweitzer of Lambarene, Africa."

THE GENTLE TOUCH ...

By Kamala Ramchandani

It was a tiny, infinitesimal dot of life that moved across the paper, as I took up a pen to write, and I lifted my hand to brush it away and then paused. Was it really in my way? Was it so unimportant that I should brush it away with an unthinking gesture?

Why do I so thoughtlessly pluck a leaf off tree as I pass, crushing it to bits between my fingers, in a pre-occupation with what I consider to be something more important? Why do I mindlessly pluck a flower and drag its petals from its heart, one by one, idly tearing it to pieces?

Why do I hit at the bark of a tree with a wayside stone just as a passing fancy's game, and not see that I have chipped away a little bit of it? What moves me to catch a dancing butterfly and cruelly pull at its wings as it frantically tries to escape, so that it flies away raggedly, leaving a little bit of its stardust on my uncaring fingers?

So uncaring have we become that we kick at a tiny puppy that really isn't in our way, just to give vent to our frustrations, perhaps. Why, we'd even snatch the sunlit white clouds from the skies as they drift majestically by, and shred them to pieces if we could, on a whim, and rip a hole in the heaven's blue if we could reach that high, to satisfy our curiosity, so insensitive do we appear to become at times.

Every single presence in my world is a bit of sunlight, a part of a whole, here for me to see and be, if I would but **let**, and **learn** to see and be, if I would allow myself to cultivate my sensitivity and enjoy it, instead of hiding it behind a veneer of uncaring, lest I get hurt. Instead, I hurt my helpless other. But every bit of life in my world is a part of an infinite whole, and I a part of that, and unless I live it with a gentle touch, I am decreeing my own self-destruction.

My identification with and as all life has to include even the smallest aspect of it, even that which I give not a thought to as **being** life.

And then, I will not needlessly, heedlessly walk on by, when I see a dog lying in pain, helpless a parrot enclosed in a cage, trapped a skeleton of a horse wearily dragging a carriage overfilled with people, being whipped for its pains. I will not pass on by when I see a tiny sparrow, tied to a stone so it can fly just a few feet into the air, reaching for its freedom only to be dragged back to earth, condemned to a cruel death by an uncaring hand, for a moment's cruel pleasure I will not pass on by when I see a gentle kitten frightened, bewil-

dered, dodging between the metal monsters we have created for our own convenience, called cars, forgetting that we, in our self-indulgence, care not whom else we condemn to a fate worse than death.

We care not for the fate of the 'guinea pigs', tortured that we may enjoy the pleasures of an urbane world Need we 'rip their petals from their hearts', and shred their dignity to pieces, to satisfy our own desires and fancies? To experiment, to explore? In the 'interests of Science' for the 'sake of mankind'? Imagining ourselves to be civilized, we explain away our inhumanity towards our gentle, 'four-footed' companions and friends on their life's journey. Why do we betray their faith and trust? Why do we sacrifice **this** precious 'commodity' at the altar of a 'greater cause' - the comfort of mankind? Can we not be more compassionate? Can we not spare a bit of sunlight for our gentler animal friends, instead of casting them into shadows?

I can live my world as a wave of 'destruction' or a wave of 'construction', cruelly or kindly, but either way, no matter what I do, tree shall grow new leaves in time of green, and plant shall blossom forth and further flower, and earth-womb shall birth more tiny puppies and **bless** them, and sky more cotton-clouds, and idea-chrysalis more gentle butterflies with gossamer wings And verily, the blue of heaven shall stretch to infinity, always

But I, I will go on missing life's quiet beauty, its sunlit touch, the message of life and love, if I continue in this uncaring way, and then wonder why I feel so cold and alone.....

And as I looked up, I found the tiny bit of life had moved away and I took up my pen with a deeper awareness of the meaning of things. It was just a tiny dot of life an infinitesimal thing that moved across the page of my awareness and made me pause and think. Was it, then, so unimportant?

Continued From Page No. 4

As far as sports are concerned, wanton killing began in India during the British Raj, who looked upon tiger-shooting as a "royal pass-time". Indeed they destroyed wildlife and the tiger population of India to such an extent, that the Project Tiger had to be started. Shooting at random was done heartlessly with the use of Dum-Dum bullets which explode within the body after entering it, thus tearing up the insides. Hunting for pleasure and "sport" to enhance one's social status is absolutely meaningless; we are a progressive race, not a progressively destructive race, eventually bringing about our own downfall, for according to Jean-Yves Domalain in "L'Adieu aux Betes" : "Shooting will be a noble sport the day that rabbits carry guns."

A PEARL : THE DEATH OF AN OYSTER

By Suneel Dabholkar

"Pearls! Oh, how beautiful!" exclaim ill-informed women who love decorating their necks with strings of these lustrous gems, little realising the amount of pain and suffering an oyster undergoes to make just one pearl.

Actually, the formation of pearls in an oyster is quite accidental. In fact, there is only a one in a million chance of finding a natural pearl. If any living or inert material gets arrested within the tissues of an oyster, it gets embedded and begins to act as a nucleus around which the nacre or the pearly layer gets deposited. Gradually, it grows larger and larger, and finally becomes a pearl. This real pearl is grown by the oyster to protect itself from the foreign material which finds its way into the oyster's shell.

As natural pearls are not found in abundance, man has devised a way to produce them. The obtaining of cultured pearls is a long and difficult process and one which is very agonising for the oyster. Oysters are first anaesthised in a menthol-sea water solution. When the two valves of the oyster begin to gape, it is fixed on a special stand and the opening of the valves is regulated with a pair of tongs. An incision is then made at the base of the foot and a small piece of mantle or graft tissue, which is obtained from another oyster, is introduced into the incision. This is immediately followed by the insertion of the nucleus into the cut. After the nucleus is implanted, the surgical instruments are withdrawn, and a week later the oyster is returned to the pearl oyster farm, where the oyster secretes nacre around the nucleus. Oysters have been known to die during the operation.

It takes one season to obtain small pearls, but for larger good pearls it takes 3 to 7 years.

The shells are opened skillfully by a specially designed knife. While removing the pearl from an oyster, its tissues are usually damaged and thrown away, and thus the oyster's life comes to a sad end. But this does not affect the people in the pearl industry much because the oyster has done its job and is not of use any more to them.

Of the entire lot of pearls obtained, only 40% are marketable, and only 5% are perfectly spherical pearls which fetch a good price.

Another shocking fact is that many oysters die even before the pearl is ready because more often than not fouling and boring organisms enter the oyster's shell and attack it. If this is not prevented the oyster succumbs to the injury inflicted by these organisms.

Thus, an oyster is liable to die at any moment - while being incised, or falling a prey to fouling and boring organisms while secreting the nacre. If it does survive these two, it has a 10% chance of getting through unscathed during the pearl removal. Even when natural oysters are found, their shells have to be opened to find out if there are pearls inside. And once the shells are opened the oysters die.

Is it humane and logical to continue with pearl culture? It doesn't seem so as it involves considerable suffering to the oyster. Moreover, when the pearl is removed, the oyster dies.

To this problem there could be a solution as synthetic pearls can quite easily pass off as natural pearls. There could be another solution as scientists are now exploring the possibilities of culturing the mantle tissue of the pearl oyster which produces the pearly layer. They now predict that the day is not far when cultured pearls can be obtained through tissue culture in test tubes. This method seems to be humane and will prove to be a more logical alternative. Any way, let's cross our fingers and hope for the best.

Cover page photographs on background of cultured pearls
Illustration by Rita Braganza

Top : A basket of oysters returned to the sea after the insertion of the nucleus for the secretion of nacre.

Centre : Oysters awaiting opening of their shells for removal of the cultured pearls.

Bottom : Removing the cultured pearl which results in the oyster's death.

PONDER AWHILE

Look at all creatures with the eyes of friendship.

- *The Yajur Veda*

Ahinsa (No killing) is the highest religion.

- *Lord Mahavir*

If a man aspires towards a righteous life, his first act of abstinence is from injury to animals.

- *Tolstoy*

If the human race would but listen to the voice of reason, it would recognise that there is no need to torture animals.

- *Cecero*

Religion is in compassion and not in killing.

- *The Holy Koran*

Vivisection is the blackest of all the black crimes that man is at present committing against God and His fair creation.

- *Mahatma Gandhi*

Where meat consumption is high, the mortality rate for heart diseases is high.

- *Dr. Christian Barnard*

We, who are deaf to suffering creatures' cries,
Remember, their sound goes to heaven.
Perchance, a day may come, when we shall crave,
For mercy to be given.

- *Lord Tennyson*

Animals are like human beings created by Almighty God.

- *St. Francis of Assisi*

Compiled by : Balabhai Vadilal Kapadia

SAVE OUR CORAL REEFS

By Satish Bhaskar

Coral reefs owe their existence to colonies of millions of tiny carnivorous animals called coral polyps, which are very similar to sea anemones in external appearance. Coral polyps, have soft, saclike bodies, with one end closed and the other opening at a mouth surrounded by tentacles bearing stinging cells.

The term coral is generally applied to any polyps which produce a skeleton of some sort - a hard, stony skeleton, a horny one, or just a mosaic of particles buried inside the body.

Coral is beautiful. The hard skeletons of the reef building coral polyps, composed of calcium carbonate, occur in a variety of intricate shapes. The minutely tentacled soft parts of the colonial animals may display any colour in the spectrum. Luminescent bacteria live symbiotically with the coral polyps.

Only two localities off the Indian mainland - one in the Gulf of Mannar and Palk Bay, the other in the Gulf of Kutch - support coral and its associated marine life in abundance. Both these areas are small and fragile, yet their coral is being harvested for commercial purposes.

Coral reefs, whether dead or actively growing, offer a home to a multitude of marine animals. These include fish, molluscs, echinoderms, crabs, sponges, sea snakes, marine worms and algae. Offshore coral reefs, such as those off the string of islands in the Gulf of Mannar, absorb and lessen the destructive power of storm waves.

With the legions of scuba and skin divers in countries abroad increasing phenomenally, it is merely a matter of time before we can expect an "invasion" of Indian waters provided, of course, our coral gardens still exist then.

Once killed off or mined from an area, coral may take decades to recover, if recover it does. The slow growth rate of a coral reef (1 to 2.5 cms. a year) makes it possible for a crowbar wielding coral miner to destroy the work of centuries in a few hours. By mining coral at the present rate, whether live or dead, we have too much to lose and too little to gain.

NEWSPICKS

New York Times, 15th October, 1979

Snake Steak and Gossip Lead to Aide's Dismissal

By Philip Shabecoff

On September 11, C. Kenneth Dodd Jr., a 29-year-old herpetologist with the Interior Department's Endangered Species office, sent a letter on department stationery to Dominique D'Ermo, proprietor of Dominique's Restaurant, a downtown eating place popular with Government officials, journalists, business people and others who work in the area. Dominique's frequently advertises daily specials, including rattlesnake.

Mr. Dodd's letter cited evidence that the species of Pennsylvania timber rattlesnake being sauteed in red wine at the restaurant "is rapidly approaching extinction," and "respectfully" requested that it be removed from the menu.

Mr. D'Ermo wrote back shortly thereafter saying that the offending dish would be removed from the menu immediately.

But the poison had been planted. A widely followed gossip column in "The Washington Star" got wind of the exchange of correspondence and published a pithy synopsis. Among those who read the item was Secretary Andrus.

Mr. Andrus goes often to Dominique's and is friendly with the proprietor, according to Mr. D'Ermo, who said that the Interior Secretary preferred fresh fish to fresh rattlesnake.

Mr. Andrus was reportedly angered by his subordinate's action. He wrote to Mr. D'Ermo saying that the Pennsylvania rattlesnake was not listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act and asking that the restaurateur "accept my apologies for any inconvenience Mr. Dodd's letter may have caused". However, some of Mr. Dodd's defenders pointed out that Pennsylvania state law prohibits the commercial use of reptiles, including the timber rattlesnake.

Then, on Wednesday, Mr. Dodd received a four-page letter from Lynn G. Greenwalt, director of the Interior Department's Fish & Wildlife Service, saying that the department intended to remove him from his position in 30 days.

Mr. Dodd, who has the right to appeal against his dismissal, could not be reached today. However, several environmentalists expressed outrage over what they said was Mr. Andrus' action in having Mr. Dodd dismissed.

Lewis Regenstein, Executive Vice President of the Fund for Animals said "The message that employees in the endangered species office have been sent is that if you really do your job and protect endangered species but happen to step on the wrong toes, you are in serious trouble."

The Times of India, 2nd November, 1979

Poaching Poses Menace to Jumbo's Survival

Poaching of elephants for ivory has become such a serious problem in Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu that it is feared the species may vanish from the southern forests.

A recent high-level meeting of Kerala and Tamil Nadu forest officials, which considered the problem, recommended that the ivory handicraft industry should be taken over by the government.

Another proposal under consideration is the cancellation of gun licences given to Ryots in the forest belts to protect their crops from the menace of wild animals, mainly elephants.

In Kerala and Karnataka, existing law provides for the payment of full compensation for crop damaged by elephants. In the event of a human casualty, a compensation of Rs. 2,000/- is paid to the next of kin.

A scheme to reward those who pass on information to the government about elephant-poaching is also being thought of, according to informed sources.

The Asian Elephant Group of the I. U. C. N. which met a few weeks ago at Bangalore to study the survival prospects of elephants, discussed the issue of elephant-poaching for ivory in the southern states.

The group, the sources said, favoured the production of synthetic ivory as a substitute for genuine ivory, to stop the massacre of elephants.

The ruling price of ivory is Rs. 1,000/- a kilo. A large male elephant has tusks weighing over 60 kg. Ivory goods have a large market in American and West European countries.

According to a recent census, Kerala has 3,555 elephants, Tamil Nadu 2,994 and Karnataka 1,977.