

*"Publishing is the Soul of Justice."—HENTHAM.*

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CORRESPONDENCE  
WITH  
CHARLES DARWIN,  
LL.D., F.R.S.,  
ON  
EXPERIMENTING UPON  
LIVING ANIMALS.

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THE TIMES, APRIL 18TH, 1881.

## MR. DARWIN ON VIVISECTION.

The following letter has been addressed by Mr. Charles Darwin to Professor Holmgren, of Upsala, in answer to a request for an expression of his opinion on the question of the right to make experiments on living animals for scientific purposes—a question which is now being much discussed in Sweden:—

“Down, Beckenham, April 14, 1881.

“Dear Sir,—In answer to your courteous letter of April 7 I have no objection to express my opinion with respect to the right of experimenting on living animals. I use this latter expression as more correct and comprehensive than that of vivisection. You are at liberty to make any use of this letter which you may think fit, but if published I should wish the whole to appear. I have all my life been a strong advocate for humanity to animals, and have done what I could in my writings to enforce this duty. Several years ago, when the agitation against physiologists commenced in England, it was asserted that inhumanity was here practised, and unless suffering ceased to animals; and I was led to think that it might be advisable to have an Act of Parliament on the subject. I then took an active part in trying to get a Bill passed, such as would have removed all just cause of complaint, and at the same time have left physiologists free to pursue their researches—a Bill very different from the Act which has since been passed. It is right to add that the investigation of the matter by a Royal Commission proved that the accusations made against our English physiologists were false. From all that I have heard however, I fear that in some parts of Europe little regard is paid to the sufferings of animals, and if this be the case I should be glad to hear of legislation against inhumanity in any such country. On the other hand, I know that physiology cannot possibly progress except by means of experiments on living animals, and I feel the deepest conviction that he who retards the progress of physiology commits a crime against mankind. Any one who remembers, as I can, the state of this science half a century ago, must admit that it has made immense progress, and it is now progressing at an ever-increasing rate.

“What improvements in medical practice may be directly attributed to physiological research is a question which can be properly discussed only by those physiologists and medical practitioners who have studied the history of their subjects; but, as far as I can learn, the benefits are already great. However this may be, no one, unless he is grossly ignorant of what science has done for mankind, can entertain any doubt of the incalculable benefits which will hereafter be derived from physiology, not only by man, but by the lower animals. Look, for instance, at Pasteur's results of modifying the germs of the most malignant diseases, from which, as it so happens, animals will in the first place, receive more relief than man. Let it be remembered how many lives and what a fearful amount of suffering have been saved by the knowledge gained of parasitic worms through the experiments of Virchow and others on living animals. In the future everyone will be astonished at the ingratitude shown, at least in England, to these benefactors of mankind. As for myself, permit me to assure you, that I honour, and shall always honour, every one who advances the noble science of physiology.

“Dear sir, yours faithfully,

“To Professor Holmgren.”

“CHARLES DARWIN.”

HENBURY, MAGGLESFIELD,  
CHESHIRE.

19th April, 1881.

MY DEAR SIR,—

SINCE I had the pleasure of corresponding with you relative to some statements in your work on the "Variation of Animals and Plants under Domestication," I have given much of my time to the questions of the Moral Right and True Philosophy of subjecting live Animals to painful Experiments for Scientific Purposes,—and I was sorry to find we were at variance in our Evidence before the Royal Commission as to our views upon a subject of such importance. I see by "The Times" of yesterday, that you assert "the accusations (of inhumanity) made against English Physiologists were false." Surely you must have made that statement without having perused the admissions made by Physiologists themselves before the Royal Commission in 1875. Pray permit me to refer you to some of those admissions, and which are enclosed in this letter. And, kindly allow me to enquire of you,—why, if "the accusations of inhumanity were false,"—Her Majesty appointed a Royal Commission to enquire into the Practices of Physiologists?—why an Act of Parliament was passed (89 and 40 Vict., chap. 77) "to Amend the Law relating to Cruelty to Animals?"—and why Inspectors were appointed to watch the conduct of Licensed Physiologists and Report thereon?

Relative to your statement as to "improvements in Medical Practice, which may be directly attributed to Physiological Research," and "the benefits already great" derived therefrom, I shall be happy to discuss with you the discoveries credited to Vivisection before the Royal Commissioners, before whom, as you may perhaps be aware, I gave Evidence on several days.

As to Monsieur Pasteur,—surely we have plenty of Experimenters on Animals at home, without crossing the Channel to seek for them and their discoveries. Even as to Pasteur,—he has been loudly lauded lately as the discoverer,—not of a New Remedy,—but of "A New Disease"! At the Académie de Médecine, however, during a Meeting in Paris, in October, 1880, one of the Members, Monsieur Bouilland, said to Pasteur,—"You can see many interesting things through your Microscope, but that is no earthly use to us."

If you would like to peruse the Correspondence on this question I have had with Professor Owen, Mr. T. Spencer Walls, Dr. T. Lauder Brunton, Professor Ferrier, Dr. Grimshaw, Dr. McDonnell, and other men of eminence, I shall be happy to forward the letters to you.

Believe me, yours very sincerely,

GEORGE R. JESSE.

Charles Darwin, Esq.,  
Ac., Sc., Ac.,  
Down, Beckenham.

HENNING, MACCLESFIELD,  
CHESHIRE.

SOCIETY FOR THE TOTAL ABOLITION AND UTTER  
SUPPRESSION OF VIVISECTION.

18th April, 1881.

To the Editor of "The Times."

SIR,—

Mr. Charles Darwin, in his letter which appeared in your issue of yesterday, asserts that "the accusations made against our English Physiologists were false." Mr. Charles Darwin's statement is, I regret to say, inconsistent with the admissions made by Physiologists themselves before the Royal Commission on Vivisection in 1878. (See extracts from their Evidence now enclosed.)

If the "accusations of inhumanity were false,"—why was a Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the practices of Physiologists? Why was an Act of Parliament, 39 and 40 Victoria chap. 77, passed "To Amend the Law relating to Cruelty to Animals"?

As to "the improvements in Medical Practice," which Mr. Charles Darwin learns are "great," and due to painful experimentation on Living Animals, we shall be happy to discuss with him the discoveries credited to Vivisection before the Royal Commissioners. We believe that all or nearly all such "discoveries" are phantoms disappearing before the eye of the enquiring mind,—or, if so made, could have been arrived at by legitimate means. We beg leave to refer Mr. Darwin and the Public to our correspondence with Professor Richard Owen, Mr. T. Spencer Wells, Dr. T. Lander Brunton, and other Medical and Scientific Men of eminence. Also to our Evidence given on three days before the Royal Commission.

Mr. Darwin alludes to Monsieur Pasteur's doings. Surely he might have referred to some Physiologist in the British Isles! But, as to Monsieur Pasteur, he was recently credited with the discovery of,—not a Remedy,—but "a New Disease," and at a Meeting at the Académie de Médecine, in Paris, October, 1880, Monsieur Bouilland said to him—"you can see many interesting things through your microscope, but that is no earthly use to us."

I remain, sir,

Your obedient servant,

GEORGE R. JESSE,

Hon<sup>ble</sup> Sec<sup>y</sup> &c.

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NOTE.—The above reply to Mr. Darwin was refused insertion, on two occasions, by "The Times." In the first instance as a Letter, in the second as a paid-for Advertisement.—G.R.J.

The Times Office,  
(Advertising Department.)  
Printing House Square, Blackfriars, London, E.C.,  
April 22nd, 1881.

Sir,—

I beg to return the enclosed and inform you it is inadmissible as an advertisement.

Yours obediently,

J. KNOX,

Chief Clerk.

G. R. JONES, Esq.

:" *Report of the Royal Commission on the Practice of subjecting Live Animals to Experiments for Scientific Purposes, &c. Presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of Her Majesty.*" London: *Eyre & Spottiswoode.* 1876. Price 4/4.

#### EVIDENCE.

*Sir William Phips, Bart., F.R.S., Sergeant-Surgeon to H.M. the Queen.*

" ANSWER. The impression produced on my mind is that these experiments are done very frequently in a most reckless manner.

QUESTION. In a manner that, if it were known to the public at large, would call for interference on their part?

ANSWER. Yes; and would bring the reputation of certain scientific men far below what it should be."

*Dr. Samuel Klein, M.D., Assistant Professor of the Laboratory of the Brown Institution, &c., London.*

" QUESTION. Then for your own purpose you disregard entirely the question of the suffering of the Animal in performing a painful experiment?

ANSWER. I do."

*The Rev. Samuel Haughton, M.D., F.R.S., Medical Registrar of the School of Physic of Trinity College, Dublin.*

" ANSWER. . . . I would shrink with horror from accustoming large classes of young men to the sight of Animals under Vivisection. I believe that many of them would become cruel and hardened, and would go away and repeat these experiments recklessly, without foresight or forethought; science would gain nothing, and the world would have let loose upon it a set of young devils."

*Dr. Henry Westworth Acland, M.D., F.R.S., Regius Professor of Medicine in the University of Oxford, &c.*

" ANSWER. . . . There has come to be a pursuit of knowledge in this direction, just as you pursue knowledge of metals with the ordinary apparatus of a chemical laboratory.

So many persons have got to deal with these wonderful and beautiful organisms just as they deal with physical bodies that have no feeling and no consciousness."

*Dr. John Sinclair, M.D., said he had—*

" Performed Vivisection with and without anaesthetics; but more frequently with anaesthetics, as finding it more convenient."

*Dr. John Anthony, M.D., asserted that Physiologists—*

" Get the same sort of feeling as the woman is said to have who skins cats—and that in a very short time their sense of humanity becomes blinded."

*Dr. William Balfour, M.D., Professor of Physiology, &c., in Edinburgh University, proclaimed—*

" It is wonderful! what one may do to a sheep dog without the animal making any commotion."

*Sir George Burrows, Bart., M.D., President of the Royal College of Physicians, stated—*

" He thought there had been great abuse in the performance of operations and experiments on living animals."

*&c., &c., &c.*

HENRY, MIDDLEFIELD,  
CHESHIRE.

SOCIETY FOR THE ABOLITION OF VIVISECTION.

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22nd April, 1881.

MY DEAR SIR,—

For your prompt and friendly reply, received this morning, pray accept my best acknowledgments. As the question at issue is a Public one,—pregnant with important consequences to the human and other races, I hope you will allow me to publish it. The appearance in *The Times* of your Letter to Professor Huxington, necessitated an answer from us. We could not, with honour, do otherwise than promptly seize the glove which so renowned and so formidable an adversary cast into the Lists of Controversy. I consequently wrote immediately to the Editor,—but my answer was, as usual, “burked” by that Newspaper. Consistent in its policy towards us, it has never yet permitted a Letter in reply from the Original Society for the Abolition of Vivisection to meet the Public eye in its columns. *The Times*, on this question, prefers to publish abroad the Logic of the Ladies, and is too astute not to know full well how deeply a weak defence injures a cause.

Relative to what you say in your kind Letter to me as to my side “execrating Physiologists,” I have the pleasure to enclose *The Lancet* of the 26th ult. At page 525 is a Letter from our Society which will demonstrate to you that we are not the people you allude to.

In regard to the trapping of Animals, wild, or domestic, and wounding them in what is termed “sport,”—that is, inflicting pain and death for mere amusement, I thoroughly agree with your observations and those of several of our greatest writers.

Believe me, yours very sincerely,

GEORGE R. JESSE,

Charles Darwin, Esq.,  
Ac., Ac., Ac.

Hon<sup>d</sup>. Sec<sup>y</sup>.

THE LANCET, MARCH 19TH, 1881.

THE PLAIN TRUTH ABOUT VIVISECTION.

Their mode of carrying on the agitation has been, to say the least, unscrupulous and undignified.

The Bill before us writes its own Epitaph in the 7th clause:—"This Act shall not apply to invertebrate animals." The promoters of the measure do not dare to push their initial—and, we must be excused for saying, pretended—proposition to its obvious and logical consequences. The feeling of the invertebrate animals is not less acute in relation to their own organisms—looking to their colder blood and comparatively less sensitive nervous systems—than the feeling of the vertebrates. If no pain is to be inflicted in the interests of science we must desist from vivisection of every kind. It is a contemptible affectation of pharisaic humanity to take credit for protecting the dog while we allow the frog to be dismembered for our information and advantage.

THE LANCET, March 26th, 1881.

SOCIETY FOR THE ABOLITION OF VIVISECTION.

To the Editor of the Lancet.

Sir,—In reply to your leading article of the 19th instant, pray permit me to state publicly in your columns that the assertion therein made—viz. "their mode of carrying on the agitation has been, to say the least, unscrupulous and undignified," is without foundation in regard to the original Society for the Abolition of Vivisection.

In the *Morning Post* and *The Times*, of April and May, 1877, this Society disavowed any approval of the sensational and revolting illustrated placards which had been put up in the streets and public places of the Metropolis and inserted in a petty weekly newspaper (*the People News*), addressed to a certain class.

The Society, which gave the first great humane impulse to the public mind by its publications, the press, its numerous and costly advertisements and correspondence with eminent physiologists, and which obtained the appointment of a Royal Commission, and gave evidence on three days before it—has no connexion with persons who make a convenience of the cause, and seek notoriety or subsistence by a humane enterprise.

The Society had nothing to do with the "anti-vivisection meetings" got up in Peterborough and elsewhere, but regrets ignorant and incapable exhibitions as bringing discredit on the cause.

As to the Bill in Parliament, we repudiate it. Our opinion has always been that to introduce a Bill into Parliament before the country is educated is useless.

I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

March 22nd, 1881.

GEOFFREY R. JAMES, Hon. Sec., &c.



HENDURY, MACCLESFIELD,  
CHESHIRE.

SOCIETY FOR THE ABOLITION OF VIVISECTION.

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25th April, 1881.

MY DEAR SIR,—

I am much obliged by your kind reply of the 23rd instant received to-day. I can but express regret that you will not permit publication,—for, your Letter in *The Times* must, of course, seriously wound the Cause for which I and others have made no trifling sacrifices. The injury done to our Cause by that Letter is the greater as the person who has attempted to answer you in *The Times* was mentally unfit to argue the question. *The Times*, a partisan in this Controversy, is, cunningly, ready to give notoriety to a Woman as the professed exponent of the Anti-Vivisectionists on a great Ethical and Scientific Question; and doubtless anticipated the crushing rebuff you gave and which her statement laid her so palpably open to.

I can well believe what you tell me as to the Letters sent, by what the Bishop of Peterborough denominated his "hysterical correspondents." Their private "controversial amenities" however, do not damage the Physiologists,—but public exhibitions in the Press certainly help these Gentlemen and injure the cause of Animals.

Believe me,

Yours very sincerely,

GEORGE R. JESSE,

Hon<sup>ble</sup> Sec<sup>y</sup> &c.

Charles Darwin, Esq.,  
&c., &c., &c.

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NOTE.—The Society for The Abolition of Vivisection, as Mr. Darwin has declined to allow his Letters to be published, leaves men to draw their own conclusions as to the reasons which may render Mr. Darwin unwilling to appear before the Tribunal of Public Opinion.—G. R. J.

[From the *Athenaeum* of March 26, 1861.]

## THE ENDOWMENT OF RESEARCH.

THE ASTRONOMER ROYAL, in a letter of much import, addressed by him to Captain W. NOBLE on the 10th instant, wrote as follows:—

"The very utmost, in my opinion, to which the State should be expected to contribute is exhibited in the large Grants entrusted to the Royal Society. The world, I think, is not unanimous in believing that they have been useful."

The *Proceedings* and *The Philosophical Transactions* of the Royal Society contain many elaborate papers with details of painful Experiments upon Animals for Scientific Purposes. These practices extend over a long series of years down to the present generation. They are as much wanting in real Humanity and true Wisdom as, perhaps, they ever were. Which is asserting much, for two great Surgeons of distinguished ability and learning have said of the Royal Society:—"Their old and favourite experiment, so often repeated by Hooke, Croone, and others, before our Royal Society, viz., of blowing up the lungs of a dog, and then compressing them, is good for nothing."

To such practices, the language of the "Great Lord Chancellor of Learning as well as of Law" is most appropriate.

"Ejusmodi doctrinae bene abominavit Iohannes de Jure; qui cum Jure, prout sit, constituta animo ubi designaret, cum evadit ante rem habuit; et quae Constantia et Chinese propositi."—FRANCIS HOOKER DE TRANSLATIONE.

February, 1861.

[From the *Athenaeum* of April 9, 1861.]

## THE ENDOWMENT OF RESEARCH.

Letter from the Rev. THOMAS P. KIRKMAN, M.A., F.R.S., &amp;c.

"Croft, near Warrington, March 11, 1861.

"My dear Sir,—Many thanks for your Fifth Report. I have read it and the enclosed papers with great pleasure.

"I wish you could get some Medical Man to look through the various papers of the Vivisection, and bring out the evidence that abounds therein—that they have no clear questions proposed for solution. They are groping, not for answers to scientific questions, but for hints how to frame definite questions. What a horrible thing it is that after three thousand years of carving living men and animals (they Vivisected slaves innumerable as long as they dared), they have really nothing to show for a result, except that Dr. B. has always found it easy and glorious to prove that Dr. A. was a drowsing Murderer; while neither B. nor A. ever yet had a sensible question before him which he could show likely to be solved by Vivisection. The Public are, as their Fathers ever were, under the false impression that these gentlemen have Benevolent and Scientific Aims. I don't believe it for all their Latin and Greek compounds. They carve away in the vain hope that something new will turn up for them to shine about, while hitherto they have discovered nothing which they could not find or infer from anatomy and lawful study of health and disease. Any scientific thinker can satisfy himself of the truth of my remarks by a logical examination of their papers.

"Sincerely yours,

"THOS. P. KIRKMAN."

"P.S.—You have given a capital account of all your antagonists."

"G. R. JESSE, Esq., Hensbury, near Macclesfield."

SOCIETY FOR THE TOTAL ABOLITION AND UTTER  
SUPPRESSION OF VIVISECTION.

Honorary Secretary and Treasurer,

GEORGE R. JESSE, Esq.,  
Hensbury, near Macclesfield, Cheshire.

Bankers—Messrs. Herries, Parryhar, &amp; Co., 18, St. James's St., London, S.W.

## SOCIETY FOR THE ABOLITION OF VIVISECTION.

This Society (the first of its kind) was Established in February, 1875.

GEORGE E. JESSE, Esq., Hon. Secy., and Chairman of Committee.

## SOCIETY FOR THE TOTAL ABOLITION AND UTTER SUPPRESSION OF VIVISECTION.

This Society has the same Object and Supporters as the above. It has a Council and Legal Constitution; and was founded March, 1876, in consequence of an attempt made (but ultimately defeated,) to suppress the original Society by a Chancery suit.

This Society numbers amongst its supporters the following and many other persons of distinction:—

H.H. Prince Louis Lucien Bonaparte,  
 Prince Balthazar.  
 The Marquis Townshend.  
 The Earl of Charlemont.  
 The Countess of Charlemont.  
 The Countess of Albemarle.  
 The Lord Gessely.  
 The Lady Forrester.  
 The Lady William Godolphin Osborne.  
 The Lady Abinger.  
 The Lady Charlotte Mount.  
 The Lady H. J. Saint-Maur.  
 The Lady Harby.  
 The Hon. Mrs. Cooper-Temple.

The Hon. and Rev. L. W. Doxman.  
 The Hon. Mrs. Annesley Gore.  
 The Hon. Mrs. F. H. Boyle.  
 Sir William de Capell Brooke, Bart.  
 Sir Christopher E. Lighter, Bart.  
 Sir Walter R. Farguhar, Bart.  
 Sir Arthur Hallam Elton, Bart.  
 Sir Patrick Colquhoun, Q.C., LL.D.  
 General Jephson.  
 Miss de Winton.  
 Mrs. Oates.  
 Professor Francis W. Newman.  
 Professor T. W. Moffat, LL.D.  
 George W. Marshall, Esq., LL.D., F.R.S.

Hon. Secy. & Treasurer—**GEORGE E. JESSE**, Esq., Barbary, Macclesfield, Cheshire.  
 Bankers—Messrs. **HERRIES, FARQUHAR, & Co.**, 16, St. James's Street, London.

The object of the Society is a Law for the Total Suppression of Vivisection or putting animals to death by torture under any "Scientific" pretext whatever. To call on the Legislature for less would be to admit the principle (and thereby perpetuate the enormity) that man is justified in selfishly inflicting agony on the innocent.

Opponents of the Slave Trade agitated not for restriction but abolition. The wrong perpetrated by man on animals are even more dire than those inflicted by him on his own species. The Abolition of Slavery was an act of high Christian philanthropy. It is no less noble or less Christian to stop the sufferings of other helpless creatures of our God.

The hideous cruelty of dissecting living animals, or inflicting on them, though innocent and defenceless, multitudinous deaths of excruciating and protracted agony, has secretly grown up in this Nation—a Nation which for ages past has been nobly distinguished by the courageous and unshrinking character of its people.

This moral evil has spread widely, and (whether it be or not a dreadful form of insanity) becomes dangerous and demoralising to Society—a blot on Civilization—a stigma on Christianity. The public has little idea what the horrors of Vivisection are; its crimes is studied, ingenuously, refined, and appalling torture; its wantonness, senselessness, and wickedness cannot be surpassed in the annals of the World. It therefore calls for extirpation by the Legislature, cruelty being not only the worst of vices in itself, but the most retributive to mankind, more especially when perpetrated by the refined and educated.

THE NATION IS APPEALED TO FOR AID.

Subscriptions may be paid to Messrs. **HERRIES, FARQUHAR, & Co.**, 16, St. James's Street, London, S.W.; or to **GEORGE E. JESSE**, Esq., Honorary Secretary and Treasurer, Barbary, Macclesfield, Cheshire.