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MY STAR.

Behind blue hills the golden sun slides down,
Awearied with fierce driving of his car ;
Then swift the sea lifts up an ebon bar,
And where was golden light now blackly frown
The darkening clouds, and shadow all the town.
Behold ! a rift in the veil afar—
A sweet white hand points upward to a star,
That soon cloud-wreaths again in darkness drown.
Dark-shrouded I from golden gleams of light,
By mists of care that from the earth arise,
When thou, dear one, like angel in the night,
Didst look upon me with thy star-pure eyes ;
The darkness yet shall shroud my path awhile,
Light fills my heart, remembering thy smile.

KENNETH MCKEN.

WHY WE FIGHT.

II

As we look carefully around us in the world, we are certain to be struck by the curious fact, that there is undoubtedly a peculiar form of pleasure experienced by human beings, at least, in the infliction of pain. The boy gives evidence of it in his nature, by the persistency with which he persecutes and even tortures the various domestic animals which come in his way ; or when he grins with suppressed merriment when one of his comrades receives a caning from the schoolmaster. Man gives evidence of it when he pushes his way into the yelling crowd, to witness a dog-fight on the street, or when he eagerly stakes his money on the champions of the prize-ring. His very games, though perhaps somewhat brutal, have in them the element of the struggle—strength contending with strength for the mastery. The continental boar-hunting and bull-fighting is born of the desire to experience this peculiar form of pleasure without restraint. The North American Indian, upon whose nature the humanizing effects of civilization or the restraints imposed by constituted authority have never acted, shows clearly his keen delight in inflicting pain. One of his greatest pleasures consists in eagerly watching the ghastly effects of slow and agonizing torture of the most ingenious kind, having for its object the infliction of the maximum amount of pain, for the longest possible time. The extent of this savage pleasure is only measured by the physical endurance of the pinioned victim. The fierce Indian wars of extermination, like that waged by the Iroquois against the Hurons, so often said to be the result of ancestral feuds, were nothing less than tribal gratifications of this extraordinary desire to destroy and inflict pain. We reach the acme of this unbridled and bestial passion when we contemplate such combats as that of the Secutor and the Retiarius on the blood-stained arena of the Coliseum.

This love of violence and combat which we find "bred in the bone" of all nations both civilized and barbaric, in all stages of the world's history, may largely account for tacit agreement among modern nations to invoke no arbiter but the sword to settle all differences, and may in part account for the

readiness in which men can be found, against sober judgment, to enter the lists, or eagerly to rush into the fray without consideration, without investigation, without aught but preparation. To fully solve the problem we must venture to follow the development of mankind backward beyond the limits of historic times, and seek for the cause among still more subtle influences.

In the long course of the ages, the rapid multiplication of species in the animal kingdom brought with it its inevitable concomitants—the extension of range, or the increased area inhabited, and the competition among individuals of the same or different species, to maintain life. Natural selection was rooting out the weaker individuals, and rendering competition more keen among the strangers. There was slowly, little by little, but nevertheless, surely developed from downright necessity, traits which have left an abiding impress on all the varied ramifications of animal life. As the severity of the contest increased, the individual pressed upon on all sides by other species, and pressed upon sorely by his own fellows in the struggle to survive must needs live by a strenuous and life-long exertion. He must obtain food at all hazards. If individuals of a neighboring species form his prey, he must sharpen his faculties, in order that he may overcome them. He must be fleet, more cunning, more on the alert, more persevering, more audacious, in a word, stronger than they are, or he will not survive. In their turn his prey will have to struggle against him, and will, like him, have to grow more fleet, more wary, more astute, match him in all his now rapidly developing powers, or perish. Again, as the prey is more difficult to catch, the competition amongst the catchers themselves increases more than a hundred-fold, and in time of death a battle for possession follows the struggle for capture. But simply to live is not all, and even if life is ensured by a desperate and ever-continued strife, it is not all. The individual must leave behind him something of his wonderfully formed individuality, and bequeath to succeeding generations the highly developed faculties which have enabled him to live his life. But even to propagate his own species is a difficult task. Sexual selection once more forces him, to engage in a struggle with individuals of his own species and sex for the possession of his mate. He fights to live, and fights to fulfil the end of living.

To live is a pleasure, and to gain food for the satisfying of famished nature, or to give sustenance to his offspring, is certainly a pleasure—no matter of how low an order we may conceive it to be—and it is not at all surprising that the habitual gaining of this kind of pleasure by the inflicting of pain, and the sight of suffering so caused, may, in the lapse of time, have come to be more or less confused with the pleasure, and at length insensibly regarded as in part its cause. The pleasure not being distinguished from its concomitant, suffering, the two which at first were only incidentally connected, come to have in the mind a definite relation one to the other. As the sight of the victim dying in agony and blood was to the victor an earnest of subsequent enjoyment, the pleasure became inseparably connected with the necessary infliction of pain. By a process known as the "Lapsing of Intelligence," an action at first rational, becomes, through constant repetition, at last instinctive and involuntary. So the constant sight of suffering preparatory to the experiencing of a species of pleasure could not fail to produce in the animal the desire to destroy and inflict pain, not always necessary. We have examples of this today of animals which kill others, not for food or for any purpose that we can see, and which appear perfectly satisfied with