

The writer once dwelt in a remote antipodal colony, the inhabitants whereof lived by stealing each other's sheep. A mineral discovery (I may not be more precise) made these people wealthy on a sudden, and for a long time the amusement most fashionable with the first families of the lucky colony was amateur sheep-stealing.

*Homo lupus homini* is perhaps a truer saying in these days than it was in the barbarous hunting ages of the past. Those that are engaged in the all but universal game of beggar-my-neighbor seem to find as much excitement in it as the minority devoted to sport find in the chase and destruction of their game. The charge of cruelty has been urged and re-urged against those who hunt, or shoot, or fish for their pleasure. It has never been fairly met; for the simple reason, I think, that it is true. To hunt a hare, or a fox, or a stag, to its death, with a pack of hounds, means a more or less prolonged agony for the hunted animal. For every bird killed clean with shot, at least five are wounded and suffer with varying intensity for a longer or a shorter time. Nor can the gentle fisherman, who impales worms and flies, frogs and small fishes, alive and palpitating, upon a barbed hook, truthfully say that his sport is the occasion of no cruelty.

I have hunted and shot and fished ever since I was old enough to sit a horse, to handle a gun or to lift a gasping roach out of the water, and I shall fish and shoot and hunt as long as my strength and energy shall endure. But I hate lies and sophisms and mean subterfuges, and I admit that my amusements cause suffering—sometimes very great suffering—to the animals I pursue. I admit it all frankly, and I am as well aware as another that two wrongs do not make a right. Therefore, I will not plead that this world is so constituted that cruelty—I mean the infliction of pain for anyone's pleasure or profit—is inseparable from every calling—even from that of the philanthropist. I will not argue that tears are as sad as blood, nor that the hunger of the unemployed workman is just as real a cause of suffering as are the sores of the neglected leper, who must be succored to the detriment of the wage fund. Neither will I attempt to defend sport on the ground that it favors the development of the qualities called manly, that were but a poor shift in these days of anile shrillness. In good truth I am not going to defend sport at all. I am a sportsman myself because I am something of a savage. If any brother sportsman can give a better reason for the faith that is in him, let him speak out.

MIALREA.

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