

amity with the creatures who at present form their food. The carnivora do not obviously serve any good purpose in the world. They say a tiger is immensely fascinating just when he is about to eat you ; but that is a species of attraction which most men are pleased to have no experience of. Indeed, man-devouring animals seem to be neither useful nor ornamental. In any case, there is no reason to doubt but that they will continue in the future to go the way they are going at present—that is to say, the way of complete extermination. The prophet says “the lion shall eat straw like the ox” ; but apart from the fact that the lion shows no tendency in the direction of becoming a vegetarian, we should want to know what he was prepared to do for his straw. Man, originally omnivorous and cannibal, and still an eater of carrion—fish, flesh, and fowl—becomes more and more vegetarian and fruitarian in his diet, and while I am fond of beefsteak, I think it is perhaps not too much to expect that a time will come when men will turn with loathing from the idea of breeding and feeding an animal in order to kill and eat it. Use and necessity reconcile us to many things ; but I do not think I could be a butcher. I have a great deal of sympathy with the Lord High Executioner in “The Mikado” who “Couldn’t kill a bluebottle.” And I do not consider that I have any right to ask others to do what I should not like to do myself.

The millennial picture of Isaiah, the Kingdom of God spoken of by Jesus, and the more specific schemes of the latter-day Socialist are all varying forms of one aspiration and one vision—the vision of a reformed and happy and peaceful world. Nature will always doubtless remain “red in tooth and claw.” We can exterminate and are rapidly exterminating beasts and birds of prey. But the lightning will still deal death from the blue. The earthquake will swallow cities and devastate a countryside. The cruel sea will continue to engulf the trusting voyager in one hour, and the next will smile over the living and the dead in its depths. Floods and typhoons will not conceivably cease to remind man how puny and helpless he is against the mighty forces and elements of Nature.

But if Nature must always remain a capricious and often cruel step-mother, at least man in the mass need not continue to suffer inhumanity at the hands of a despicable few of his fellow-creatures. A hundred tenants need no longer give their substance to one landlord. A thousand workmen need no longer hand over any part of their gains to one capitalist. That the community as a whole should be deceived by professional mumbo-jumbos—priest, lawyer, official, medicine man, newspaper editor—is no necessary or unescapable law of the order of things. Not the education which produces sharps and sharks and intensifies the struggle for existence. Not the science which ministers to the wealthy and mocks the miserable with triumphs in which they do not share. Not the wealth which burdens and vulgarises Midas and enslaves the mass of the people in a still more helpless and hopeless slavery. Not the rude health and brute strength