

For shame! Can men who boast a polishâ€™™d mind, Â 25
And feelings too, these savage pastimes court?
In such inhuman acts a pleasure find,
And call the cruel desolationâ€™”sport?

Thousands that graze the fields must daily bleed,
Necessity compelsâ€™”for man they die Â 30
But no excuse necessity can plead,
To kill those harmless tenants of the sky.

By heaven privilegâ€™™d they build the nest,
They take the common bounty nature yields,
No property with vicious force molest, Â 40
Â 35
But pick the refuse of the open fields.

Then why, if God this privilege has given,
Should we pervert great natureâ€™™s bounteous plan?
For happiness is sure the end of heaven,
As well to bird and insect as to
man. Â 40

Like us they move within their narrow sphere,
Each various passion of the mind confess;
And joy and sorrow, love and hope and fear,
Alternate pain them, and alternate bless.

Yes! they can pine in griefâ€™”with rapture glow Â 45
Their little hearts, to every feeling true:
Like us conceive affection, and the blow
That kills the offspring, wounds the mother too.

Then bid your breasts for nobler pastimes burn!
Let not such cruelty your actions
stain! Â 50
Humanity should teach mankind to spurn
The pleasures purchasâ€™™d by anotherâ€™™s pain.

Â NOTES:

Â Author Â Â Â â€™œPOSTHUMUSâ€™• appears at the conclusion of the poem followed by â€™œCanterbury.â€™•
â€™œPOSTHUMUSâ€™• is most likely the authorâ€™™s pseudonym, while â€™œCanterburyâ€™• is most likely where
the author had lived.

Â 1Â Â *raise the strain* Here the phrase means something like â€™œwrite this poem.â€™• Possibly also an allusion
to the hymn â€™œCome, Ye Faithful, Raise the Strainâ€™• by St. John Damascus.

Â 17 *hie* â€œTo cause to hasten; to hasten, urge on, bring quicklyâ€•(OED).

Â 19 *rout* â€œOf a person: to cry out; to roar, bellow, to shoutâ€•(OED).

22 *covey* â€œA brood or hatch of partridges; a family of partridges keeping together during the first seasonâ€• (OED).

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