CHAPTER V

"THE HUMANE SOCIETY TO CROWN THE WHOLE": GEORGE ANGELL AND THE PROMOTION OF KINDNESS TO ANIMALS

Humane reform in New England took shape under the guidance of George Thorndike Angell (1823-1909), a self-made man who retired from the law at forty-five to campaign not only against cruelty to animals but also against food adulteration and other public health dangers. To the assertive campaigning approach of Henry Bergh, and the institution-building focus of Caroline Earle White, Angell brought the third component of American animal protection—the broad-based public education initiative. In the 1870s, Angell put his approach to the test in what became a national campaign to raise awareness of the suffering of animals in transportation and slaughter. Over time, he narrowed his focus to the humane instruction of youth, and pioneered in the production of materials geared toward that goal. Angell's unrelenting emphasis on education as a means of promoting kindness-to-animals helped to push this approach to the forefront of humane work during the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

"there is much wrong in the treatment of animals"


Appropriating the hyperbole that would characterize Angell’s own rhetoric in years to come, the piece asserted that, in his hands, humane work was “a triumph of social science, destined not only to save our dumb animals from abuse, but to strike at the foundations of society.” Such labors promised, moreover, “the solution of the labor question, the abolition of war and the brotherhood of man.” It was a sweeping, utopian, and quixotic vision, one that reflected both Angell’s optimism and his faith in the essential goodness of humankind.

Angell’s mother was a schoolteacher, and his father a Baptist minister who died when George was four. Born in Southbridge, Massachusetts, Angell survived a precarious childhood in which he was placed with relatives. After graduating from Dartmouth in 1846, he taught in Boston public schools. In 1851, Angell was admitted to the bar, and became a junior partner of Massachusetts abolitionist Samuel Sewall. While not personally involved in the abolitionist cause, Angell knew many of its principals, including William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, and Charles Sumner.

By his own account, Angell had been fond of animals since childhood and had often intervened to protect them from cruelty. On August 22, 1864, he executed a will expressing his view that "there is much wrong in the treatment of domestic animals." Angell directed his trustees to employ his estate for production and circulation, in common schools and Sunday schools, of literature that “will tend most to impress upon

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the minds of youth their duty toward those domestic animals which God may make dependent upon them."  

Less than four years later, Angell decided to organize a society to protect animals, after reading accounts of a horse race, against time, in which the contestant horse, "Empress," was driven to death. Angell's announcement seeking support appeared in the Boston Daily Advertiser on February 25, 1868. He did not have to wait very long, for on that day he received a visitor, Emily Appleton, who had already taken steps toward the organization of a society. She had met Henry Bergh months earlier and had been corresponding with him. By October 1867, Appleton had collected close to ninety names of interested parties, and submitted paperwork for an act of incorporation with the Committee on Agriculture of the state legislature. With her consent, Angell redrafted the papers of incorporation, which the legislature quickly approved, and, on March 31, 1868, the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (MSPCA) conducted its first official day of business. The acquaintances of Emily Appleton and her husband William, a prominent publisher, became the first donors, and for years the Appleton home was an important venue for Angell's interactions with prominent New Englanders.

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Angell proved himself an exceptional promoter, and before long the MSPCA was thriving. The organization conducted an annual fair, and sponsored contests for the best essays on methods to prevent cruelty. Angell and his supporters also initiated competitions to encourage inventions designed to eliminate or relieve the suffering of animals. Angell did his best to gain access to the nation’s pulpits and other speaking platforms, and, here, too, he enjoyed considerable success. He wrote to prominent citizens throughout the country soliciting endorsements; Harriet Beecher Stowe was one of the first to respond.

Angell’s unique early accomplishment was the movement’s first steady publication, Our Dumb Animals, which he edited with help from Abraham Firth and Frank Fay. In June 1868, Angell produced the first issue, printing 200,000 copies. Through a political contact, he secured the help of the Boston police force for door-to-door delivery, a method of distribution that lasted for some years. Before long, supporters in other parts of the country were ordering copies to circulate. Each month’s issue included a compendium of recent news on animal protection, narratives of animal fidelity, heroism, and sagacity, recommendations for basic animal care, and accounts of humane inventions. Angell once told William O. Stillman of the American Humane Association (AHA) that he sent the magazine to every doctor, lawyer, and clergyman in Massachusetts, because they were most “apt to be consulted when people make a will.”

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5 “Fair Held at Horticultural Hall, Boston, by the Ladies, for the Benefit of the SPCA,” Frank Leslie’s, 30 December 1871, 251; and Angell, Autobiographical Sketches, 18.

Its children's department was an important feature of *Our Dumb Animals*, offering a steady fare of selections on kindness to animals. As a former schoolteacher, Angell took a special interest in humane education, and it quickly became the hallmark of the MSPCA's campaigns. From its inception, the organization offered prizes for compositions on the treatment of animals. In the early years, Angell frequently lamented the paucity of humane literature for children. In 1873, he expressed his delight at the publication of Julia Eastman's *Striking for the Right*, a progenitor of *Black Beauty*. Eastman drew upon real incidents from the MSPCA's case files. In her narrative, children in a Massachusetts town form a kindness club under the guidance of a teacher who supports their desire to take active steps to halt cruelty. Their efforts prompt numerous changes in the way the townspeople treat animals. Showing them the way, their young teacher contradicts the town pastor in regard to the rights of animals, challenges the cruelty of teamsters, and criticizes methods used to transport cattle. One boy's cruelty has bitter consequences, but even his story ends in redemption. Eastman's book sounded many of the themes that Angell liked to emphasize, and the appearance of *Striking for the Right* put him on the lookout for similar publications.7

In 1871, Angell abandoned his already neglected law practice in order to campaign full-time for animals. His approach greatly differed from that of Bergh; none of the rich apocryphal lore that surrounds the New York crusader attends his Massachusetts counterpart. Angell did not share Bergh's nativism or his commitment to

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prosecution. Instead, he preferred to promote public education as a means to encourage humane conduct. At a meeting of the American Social Science Association in 1874, Angell expressed his conviction that “it is quite as possible to develop the heart as the intellect.” When this is “required and done,” he continued, “we shall not only have higher protection for dumb creatures . . . but also human life better developed and better worth living.”

The Identification and Relief of Animal Suffering

Like his colleagues elsewhere, Angell first concerned himself with the common cruelties of the urban environment. The MSPCA’s earliest priority was the problem of overburdened horses. In a letter to the Massachusetts Ploughman, Angell protested the driving to death and starvation of animals. He also deplored the traffic in worn out horses and the frequent abandonment of injured or superannuated animals. Angell’s missive underscored the limitations of the 1834 Massachusetts statute and the need for new legislation to broaden the legal definition of cruelty. “There is a law against cruelly beating and torturing, but there is no law in our statute book against overdriving, overloading, overworking, starving, or abandoning to starve, and hitherto there has seldom been found anybody to enforce what little law there is,” Angell wrote. Thus, “beating horses with irons, with billets of wood, loading them far beyond their capacity to

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draw, overdriving them, overworking them, denying them proper food, drink and shelter, have been things, more or less of which have been occurring in our streets every day.\(^9\)

The first man arrested by the MSPCA in 1868 brought in experts to swear that the horse involved could bear the load, and the judge dismissed the charges. In a letter to the Boston Transcript, Angell offered a critical analysis, entitled “What is Overloading a Horse, and How Proved?” In it, he argued that “what one horse can do one day has no force in showing what another ought to do on another day,” and that the best judge of whether a horse was overloaded was the horse. Addressing the court’s reluctance to give credence to the testimony of some bystanders, Angell suggested an empirical approach. “So when the horse, ordinarily kind and willing to pull, comes with a heavy load to a rise of land and, after one or two efforts, stops and says, as plainly as words can speak it, ‘I am overloaded, I am working too hard, I feel that the task put upon me is too heavy,’ that is evidence,” Angell wrote. “No magistrate or juror would have any difficulty in deciding in his own mind whether a case to which his attention might be attracted in our public streets was or was not a case of cruelty.”\(^10\)

One editorialist for Our Dumb Animals believed the MSPCA might secure more convictions if it did not have so much trouble convincing witnesses to testify. “In a majority of cases reported at our office the first request is, ‘do not mention me in

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connection with the matter, as the party is a neighbor of mine, and I don't wish to testify against him,”” the writer noted. “The whole burden of unearthing suitable evidence to warrant a prosecution is thus thrown on our agent, who finds it exceedingly difficult, and he is sometimes obliged to abandon a good case in consequence.” Angell and his collaborators found it particularly hard to persuade women to testify, and made a point to praise those who had shown the courage to appear in court or to intervene against street-side cruelties.11

Early in its history, the MSPCA directorate considered mounting a test case against one of the Boston street railway companies. However, the directors hesitated, wishing to avoid the precedent of a failure, “a result pretty sure to follow, because of the difficulty of obtaining sufficient evidence,” Frank Fay, the MSPCA Secretary, later noted. “The society would have to prove that the horse car and load weighed over 12,000 pounds, which would require a freight of over fifty passengers, and if that was done,” Fay observed, “the hostlers, driver and conductor would testify that the horses did their usual work next day, and were neither disabled nor apparently weakened.”12

At first, Angell believed that in Boston, as distinct from New York, the problem was tied less to corporate avarice than to passengers’ tendency to “pile in” without regard for the horses’ welfare. To some extent, as a writer in Our Dumb Animals suggested in 1876, “the remedy is with the people.” Early on, however, Angell concluded that the transportation companies were disingenuous in their claims to enforce a limit on

11 “To the Ladies,” and “A True Woman,” ODA 1 (Jan. 1869), 58; “Unwilling Witnesses,” ODA 3 (Oct. 1870), 36; and “A Boston Woman,” ODA 21 (June 1888), 9.

passenger load, and in February 1872 the MSPCA sponsored a petition to the state legislature for a law to restrict the number of people on each car. An ex-director of the Metropolitan Horse Railroad offered compelling testimony, highlighting “that diabolical outrage, the use of over twenty-five hundred horses in the city of Boston on horse railways, night and day, rain or shine, year in and year out, by which they suffer all the tortures of a lingering death on an endless treadmill.” This was the first in a series of unsuccessful attempts.13

In November 1872, in the midst of the era’s greatest epizootic, a controversy about overworked horses led to an acrimonious exchange in the Boston press, as the MSPCA stood firm in its threat to make arrests if any sick horses were found in use. In the aftermath of the scourge, Our Dumb Animals published with enthusiasm accounts of advances in the development of a “steam street car” that would one day replace horses on street railroads. The MSPCA also took credit for many improvements the companies did institute as a result of pressure. The horses received much better care; “tow-horses” were stationed along steeper grades; superintendents forbade whipping and abuse of animals; and company stables observed higher standards for ventilation and cleanliness. Operators did not work animals who were lame or galled, and they did not use inferior stock.14


On the other hand, Bostonians, like Philadelphians, insisted on having the cars stop at their doors, necessitating frequent stops and starts that were punishing to the horses who drew them. The MSPCA could persuade neither the companies nor the riding public to end this practice. The Board of Railroad Commissioners also dismissed suggestions that the Boston companies emulate those of Paris, which sold only as many tickets as there were places available, as an "expedient that could not be thought of" in Massachusetts. There were many occasions, such as in inclement weather or after a theater performance, when crowding of cars seemed either justifiable or difficult to prevent.\(^\text{15}\)

Like the companies in New York and Philadelphia, Boston streetcar interests fought off all initiatives to regulate the number of passengers admitted onto the cars, and to prohibit the use of salt on their tracks. Ten years after the first attempt to limit occupancy, the MSPCA believed that the companies were carrying two to three times as many passengers in the same cars. Angell made one last attempt to lobby for restrictions in 1881, by which time he had become thoroughly cynical about the political influence of the street railways.\(^\text{16}\)

The means of putting worn out, sick, and injured animals to death on the street was an important priority. For years, the MSPCA lacked any authority to kill an animal without the consent of the owner, although such permission could usually be obtained

\(^{15}\) "Stop Horse-Cars at Street Corners Only," \textit{ODA} 9 (Feb. 1877), 68; and "Overcrowded Horse-Cars," \textit{ODA} 19 (Sept. 1886), 29.

\(^{16}\) "Number of Passengers to a Horse in Street Cars," \textit{ODA} 14 (Oct. 1881), 37; "Report of the Massachusetts Board of Railroad Commissioners," \textit{ODA} 14 (Apr. 1882), 84; "Horse-Railroads," \textit{ODA} 15 (Mar. 1883), 177; and "Overcrowded Horse-Cars," \textit{ODA} 19 (Sept. 1886), 29.
when it became clear that the use of a disabled, diseased, or fatally wounded animal could be prosecuted. On the streets, its agents used chloroform and specially designed hammers for curbside euthanasia. There were, one MSPCA editorialist underscored, worse things than death. “As our primary object is to save animals from suffering,” he wrote, “we feel that when we secure the comparatively painless death of an animal which is worn out and past service, if suffering from disabilities or with wounds or incurable illness, we are doing a merciful act.” Furthermore, the writer noted, “While some contend that animals are entitled to live until they die a ‘natural death,’ we feel that we are showing kindness to them by relieving them from the possibility of suffering.”

In 1872, Angell recruited Harvard zoologist D. D. Slade to prepare a pamphlet, probably the first of its kind anywhere, on how to provide a merciful death to suffering creatures. The instructions specified where the blow should be struck, or the bullet aimed, in the case of the horse. It recommended a bullet through the brain in the case of the dog, and advised the use of cyanide of potassium for the merciful killing of cats. Later in the century, the American Humane Education Society (AHES) editions of Anna Sewell’s Black Beauty (sponsored by the MSPCA) included this same information in an appendix.

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17 “Killing Horses by Agents,” ODA 7 (Aug. 1874), 20; and “Glanders and Farcy,” ODA 9 (Mar. 1877), 77.

18 “Killing Horses,” ODA 4 (Feb. 1872), 172; and “Killing Disabled Animals,” ODA 5 (July 1872), 220.

One issue Angell avoided was the gathering up of stray dogs. He believed that Boston had very few loose-running dogs in comparison with other communities, and reminded correspondents that the MSPCA had no authority to remove licensed dogs from the street, even if they were running loose. He consistently maintained that rabies was a rare condition and that much of the fear it occasioned was unfounded. Angell did think that humane muzzles were a useful precaution in times of high anxiety over hydrophobia.  

Perhaps more than any other figure in American animal protection, Angell conceived of humane work as akin to the other great reforms of the era. In a letter to Harvard University President Charles Eliot, politely if equivocally acknowledged, Angell proposed a series of lectures by such reformers as Clara Barton (the Red Cross), Mary Livermore (woman’s suffrage), Frances Willard (temperance), and himself. He regularly presented information on other reforms in the pages of Our Dumb Animals.

Like his counterparts in New York and Philadelphia, Angell sought to promote and defend the interests of animals in a broad range of contexts. From an early stage, however, he decided to focus special attention on two areas of concern. One, humane education, would occupy most of his energies after 1880. During the 1870s, however, Angell devoted his time and effort to campaigns against the mistreatment of animals used

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20 “Mad Dogs,” ODA 3 (Aug. 1870), 20; “Hydrophobia,” ODA 7 (July 1874), 12; “Killing Stray Dogs,” ODA 9 (July 1876), 11; “‘Mad Dog’ Panics,” ODA 9 (Sept. 1876), 29; and “Spitz Dogs and Hydrophobia,” ODA 9 (Mar. 1877), 76.

for food. It was an issue that held special urgency in that decade, and one that Angell helped to bring to a national audience.

**Cruelty, Consumption, and Consequences**

Most humane advocates in the mid- and late nineteenth century worked to soften the cruelties endured by animals being transported to slaughter. Angell was an especially active propagandist, and did more than any of his colleagues to place the issue onto the national agenda, where in 1873 it became the subject of the landmark Twenty-Eight Hour Law. In Boston as in other cities, the husbandry, transportation, and slaughter of animals for meat and other products constituted a realm in which environmental threats, animal welfare, and public health concerns all converged. This gave the humane societies a chance to assert themselves in municipal life. Between 1856 and 1859, Massachusetts passed a pure milk law, appointed milk inspectors, and banned the feeding of cows with the refuse of distilleries, so that swill milk never became an important focus for the MSPCA. The production of meat was a different story, though, and the need for reform was great. In 1870, Dr. George Derby, first secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Health, noted that slaughtering methods in the city had not changed in fifty years. In the earliest edition of *Our Dumb Animals*, Angell included quotes from the proprietor of one local abattoir on cruelty in slaughterhouses. He also lobbied Derby and other members of the Board of Health for replacement of antiquated slaughterhouses by a modern central
facility. He even purchased shares of the abattoir's stock, in order to have a shareholder's voice in its management.22

Ultimately, the health hazards constituted by an unregulated and decentralized slaughtering industry proved to be a more trafficable issue than the cruelties of slaughter or transportation. Since the mid-1860s, the environmental nuisances of the Brighton slaughtering district had stirred concern. The Massachusetts Board of Health tried to encourage changes in the operation and disposal methods of the slaughterhouses, but butchers resisted and little progress occurred. At first, even appeals to the legislature were thwarted.23

Events took a dramatic turn in mid-April 1871, when a slaughterhouse worker at Brighton died after wiping himself off with a towel he had used to wash the sides of a dead ox. The coroner ruled that George Temple's death resulted from blood poisoning after the towel inflamed a sore on his cheek. When it was revealed that his employer had already sent half the animal's meat to market, a panic ensued. Four days later, a joint special committee of aldermen and common council members convened to investigate the sale of unwholesome meats.24

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23 Rosenkrantz, _Public Health_, 65.

Angell capitalized on these events with a special insert in Our Dumb Animals. Summarizing the Board of Health’s report, Angell concluded “that our Eastern markets . . . are largely supplied with the meats of diseased animals, and to some extent with the meats of animals that have died of disease; second, that the eating of these meats produces disease in those who eat them; and third, that it is impossible to detect these meats after they have been dressed.”25 Among other points, Angell expressed admiration for the attendance of rabbinical authorities at the slaughterhouse to observe the slaughter and dressing of animals, with the aim of excluding unhealthy products from the Jewish community.26

In 1872, Angell issued the first of many editions of Cattle Transportation, an attempt to demonstrate that the public health problems at Brighton and other slaughtering districts were tied to the awful treatment of animals in transit. The MSPCA president assumed that public appraisal of the issue would turn on “sanitary considerations,” and the essay accordingly emphasized this aspect of the problem, “to secure the interest of persons who are not moved to consider the matter on the side of humanity alone.”27


27 George T. Angell, Cattle Transportation (Boston: MSPCA, 1874); idem, Autobiographical Sketches, 40; and Frank B. Fay, “Secretary’s Report: Stock Transportation,” ODA, 6 (May 1874), 107. At least six editions of Cattle Transportation had appeared by the end of 1875.
The humane movement’s campaign to highlight the ordeal of animals in transportation and slaughter emerged in the context of widely shared apprehensions, for it was not only animal protectionists who made the connection between cruelty and adulterated food products. Louis Agassiz, in an 1866 letter to Henry Bergh, alluded to “the dangers arising from the ill treatment of beef cattle before slaughtering them.” Other scientists agreed that the cruelties of confinement and transportation over long distances routinely brought the flesh of sick and fevered animals to the markets and dinner tables of the eastern metropolitan areas.²⁸

Other observers besides Angell saw the Brighton beef scandal as the direct result of mistreatment that resulted in the corruption of animals’ flesh. “Lusty and strong the oxen and heifers leave their far-off pastures, but a week’s experience on a cattle-train is too much for their constitutions,” one New York Times writer commented. “Crowded and crammed together in reeking cages, they are transported thousands of miles without sleep or rest, and often without food or drink. Some are crushed to death, some die of hunger and exhaustion, and some breathe just long enough after their arrival to be knocked on the head by the ruthless butcher.”²⁹


The conviction that cruelty corrupted the flesh of animals killed for food had a long history. Several early English advocates of humaneness, including Soame Jenyns, had advanced it, as had General de Grammont, the champion of animal protection in France. In the United States, this view had broad currency for a decade or two before the start of organized humane work. In 1853, for instance, a New York grand jury recommended the investigation of butchers who kept cattle from five to seven days without water. Horace Greeley’s *New York Tribune* lamented that “the flesh of beeves is often diseased by this system of starvation before butchering, that a congestive fever is engendered, and that the practice is not only cruel to the poor brutes, but worse than cruel to those who make use of the flesh of animals thus treated, for human food.” References to the deleterious nature of meat from badly treated or malnourished animals commonly appeared in discussions of food adulteration in the years before and after the Civil War, and the argument received considerable support outside the movement. Once they launched their work, Angell, Bergh, and other humane colleagues frequently cited the causal relationship between cruelty and corrupted meat as part of their case for improving the treatment of animals in transit. Indeed, the notion that “cruelty to animals avenge...
itself upon the consumer” was a central theme of Angell’s 1874 lecture at the annual meeting of the American Social Science Association.\(^{32}\)

In 1872, the onetime abolitionist Loring Moody, who had previously worked for the MSPCA, formed the Mission for Animals, specifically to address the public health dimension of cattle transportation. The organization’s literature subordinated moral arguments to those of health and economy. Its officers included Angell, Bergh, Samuel Sewall, the Reverend James Freeman Clarke, and Chicagoan Edwin Lee Brown, who in 1877 would play a key role in forming the American Humane Association (AHA). During its brief existence, the Mission was an early advocate of a national system of livestock inspection.\(^{33}\)

Moody's organization failed to raise enough money to survive, however, and it was Angell who pushed the issue onto the national agenda, establishing himself as one of the nation’s first pure food advocates. In addition to his campaigns against food adulteration, Angell crusaded against the introduction of poisonous substances into cookware, wallpaper, and other commonly used industrial products. His influence on


\(^{33}\) “Transportation of Cattle,” Phila. Record, 24 July 1873, PSPCA-PA, SBK 1866-1877; Mission for Animals, Secretary’s Report (Boston: Cochrane and Sampson, 1873); and Mission for Animals, Secretary’s Report (Boston: Cochrane and Sampson, 1874).
these issues was appreciable, and would soon draw the interest of an American president, Rutherford B. Hayes, to the question of cattle transportation.34

Humane advocates in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia also spoke out against the consumption of calves taken prematurely from their mothers. The product of this violation of the maternal bond—"bob" veal—was both a barbarity and a health risk. In New York, the sanitary code called for the punishment of those who sold meat from calves, pigs, and sheep less than four, five, and eight weeks old, respectively. One New York butcher agreed, writing that "much of the flesh called veal, sold about our cities, really is not fit for human food, in consequence either of its tender age, starvation, bleeding, and the inhuman manner of conveying these (and some other) animals through our streets to their destination, or all combined."35

Angell was one of the first animal protectionists to appeal directly to consumers to spur change. Throughout the 1870s, he regularly called attention to the cruelty of bleeding calves in order to whiten the meat, asking fellow citizens to remember that "when they refuse to buy it there will be nobody found to bleed the calves." Our Dumb Animals republished excerpts from the works of British veterinarian William Youatt, who had been so influential in helping to overcome the same practice in England, and from butchers who deplored bleeding but emphasized that the refined tastes of the consumer lay behind the cruelty. In "A Word to Housekeepers," one MSPCA

correspondent encouraged women to exercise their civilizing influence in the marketplace by rejecting the meat made white "by a practice as cruel as it is unwholesome," and by insisting upon "red veal," derived from older calves who had not been bled.\textsuperscript{36}

In addition, Angell and other humanitarians asked consumers to be more conscious of cruelty to poultry. They strongly condemned epicurean cruelties like paté de foie gras--produced, as J. V. Smith noted, "by nailing the poor animals to the floor in a very hot room. Unable to take exercise, and confined in a sweltering air, the poor creatures fall sick, their livers enlarge to a monstrous size." Humane concern extended to the more common mistreatment of poultry on the way to and from market. The prevailing method of carrying them upside down by the legs led to great suffering as the blood rushed to their heads.\textsuperscript{37}

Angell and his colleagues cautioned consumers about other animal products, such as milk and eggs, too. They even extended the claim to include the mistreatment of fish. "Every fish ought to be taken out of the water as soon as caught, and immediately killed by a blow with a little club, on the back of the head," Angell wrote, "both because it is


merciful to the fish, and merciful to those that eat the fish.” Sam Lawson, in Harriet Beecher Stowe’s Oldtown Folks, made a similar point.\(^{38}\)

Reformers like Angell also invoked cruelty’s corrupting impact on meat as part of their argument that animals ought not be slaughtered in each other’s presence. “[The] animal to be slaughtered should be conducted to the spot selected, quietly, without the use of goad or club, and everything calculated to alarm should be removed. All slaughtering premises should be kept clean from blood, and no carcasses be allowed to hang in view,” D. D. Slade advised. “No animal should be permitted to witness the death of another. Trifling as these measures may be to the professional butcher, they are of vast importance, not only in view of avoiding cruelty, but as affecting the wholesomeness of meat; there being no question as to the effects of torture, cruelty, and fear upon the secretions, and if upon the secretions, necessarily upon the flesh.” The MSPCA kept Slade’s essay in circulation for many years as humane advocates continued to cite the “culinary costs” of cruelly produced meats.\(^{39}\)

In 1870, Angell’s intense focus on the unwholesome products of animal suffering took him to Chicago, where he helped to launch a humane society that made stockyard

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\(^{38}\) “Kill Your Fish,” ODA 7 (Apr. 1875), 88; Angell, Protection of Animals, 10-11; and “Mr. Bergh and the Fish Market,” ODA 18 (Nov. 1885), 254. Henry Bergh had agitated on the question since the turtle case in June 1866. See Henry Bergh, An Address Delivered in the Great Hall of the Putnam County Agricultural Society on the 19th of September 1867 (New York: Lange, Billman, and Lange, 1868), 5. In Oldtown Folks, Sam Lawson insisted on killing the fish his youthful companions had caught by breaking their necks as he removed them from the hook. The flouncing and floundering of the fish distressed him, and he told the boys, “Fish hes their rights as well as any on us.” See Harriet Beecher Stowe, Oldtown Folks (1869; New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1987) ed. Dorothy Berkson, 31. An outdoorsman who shared Angell’s concern discussed this and other cruelties in an 1880 illustrated article for Harper’s Weekly; see Gaston Fay, “Cruelties to Fish and Fowl,” Harper’s Weekly, 13 Nov. 1880, 731-32.

\(^{39}\) D. D. Slade, quoted in Angell, The Protection of Animals, 7.
and transportation cruelties its central focus. During the period 1871-1873, the MSPCA president helped to marshal support for federal legislation directed toward the prevention of inhumanities in handling and transit. In 1877, he was a central figure in the mobilization of concerned humane advocates who gathered to form the AHA, a national organization that would address the issue. More importantly, throughout the decade, Angell waged an unremitting public awareness campaign that helped to keep the matter on the national agenda.\(^{40}\)

**Educating the Heart**

George Angell’s enthusiasm for humane education helped to make it one of the most important elements of animal protection work in the Gilded Age and Progressive era. While others before him had extolled the value of the kindness-to-animals didactic, Angell applied his entrepreneurial talent to promoting the teaching of kindness on the broadest conceivable scale. The MSPCA directed tens of thousands of dollars toward the production and distribution of humane education literature, making it the most important source of such materials in the nation.

Humane education provided a means of spreading the word that could easily be adapted by other advocates, especially women, in whatever region or situation they might have to operate. It did not require substantial funds, and anyone able and willing to work with children in the schools or elsewhere could participate. Angell provided both the

\(^{40}\) The next chapter discusses the national campaign to address animal suffering in transportation.
inspiration and the resources for such work, which contributed to the coalescence of a national animal protection movement.

In the early years of anti-cruelty work, humane education referred broadly to the instruction of both adults and children in the virtues of kindness. Many of the societies focused on teaching custodians and handlers of animals about the advantages of improved treatment and care. They appealed to the practicality and common sense of those who worked with animals, and found that fundamental ignorance about animals' needs and characteristics was the cause of much avoidable neglect and abuse.41

Before long, however, animal protectionists began to recognize and to trumpet the advantages of early instruction in kindliness as a means of reducing adult crimes and prosecutions. Accordingly, they shifted their emphasis to the education of children as a longterm response to the spread of cruelty. Angell stood at the forefront of this approach.

Enthusiasm for humane education of children predated the anti-cruelty societies, coinciding with the emergence of the common school movement. The massive influx of immigrants in the 1830s and 1840s led some educators to envision the school as a central instrument of assimilation, guiding immigrant children away from the "backward" cultures of their parents. Horace Mann (1796-1859), universal schooling's best known proponent, based his educational philosophy on unlimited faith in the perfectibility of human beings and their institutions. His conviction that the public school could be the answer to all of the Republic's problems had its roots in the deepest of American

41 An exemplary publication incorporating these premises is Hannah W. Richardson, A Plea for the Dumb Creation (Phila.: PSPCA, 1869).
traditions, including Jeffersonian republicanism, Christian moralism, and Emersonian idealism. As Mann conceived the common school, it would be a guarantor of social order that reduced the destructive potential of class, political, or sectarian difference. This was not an unproblematic or unchallenged view, of course, and popular education was a subject of intense debate.\textsuperscript{42}

By 1860, Mann’s ideals had reached fruition, with public schools operating in a majority of the states. Although there were significant variations in their philosophies, all supporters of the common schools hoped to improve children’s character by inculcating morality and citizenship, and to facilitate social mobility by promoting talent and hard effort. Through education, they would push all citizens toward what one reformer called the “civilized life” of order, self-discipline, civic loyalty, and respect for private property.

Between 1860 and 1920, the common school movement, expanding its reach to include kindergarten, elementary, and secondary levels, became the dominant tradition in American education. During the same period, compulsory attendance requirements—rare before the Civil War—became universal, with Mississippi the one exception.\textsuperscript{43}

\textsuperscript{42} H. Warren Button and Eugene F. Provenzo, Jr., History of Education and Culture in America (Englewood: Prentice-Hall, 1983), 94-98; and Lawrence Cremin, The Transformation of the School: Progressivism in American Education, 1876-1957 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), 8-9. Michael Katz has argued that public schools for at least the past 125 years have been designed to reinforce the dominant social and industrial values of American culture. Nineteenth century workingman’s parties, who saw education as a means to economic and social equality in an era when industrialization threatened traditional occupations and opportunities for lower middle and working class groups, pushed for reforms that would modify the established order. See The Irony of Early School Reform: Educational Innovation in Mid-Nineteenth Century Massachusetts (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968); and Class, Bureaucracy, and Schools: The Illusion of Educational Change in America (New York: Praeger, 1971).

A supporter of many antebellum social reforms, Mann recognized the value of early humane instruction. "The good man grows in virtue, and the bad man grows in sin," Mann wrote. "From the youthful benevolence that rejoices to see an animal happy, one grows up into a world-wide benefactor, into the healer of diseases, the restorer of sight to the blind, the giver of a tongue to the dumb, the founder of hospitals. . . . Another grows from cruelty to animals, to being a kidnapper, and enslaver, and seller of men, women, and children."\(^{44}\)

Over time, humane values were incorporated into formal systems of education. Indeed, kindness to animals was an important element in the object teaching method associated with the doctrines of the State Normal School at Oswego, New York and its president Edward A. Sheldon (1823-1897). Oswego, while not the first, became the most important of the proliferating normal (teacher training) schools. Sheldon was influenced by the pedagogical doctrines of Swiss educator Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827), who placed the child at the center of all educational activity and saw the work of the school as continuous with that of the domestic environment. The Pestalozzian tradition was Romantic, viewing each child as a garden plant, to be tended, nurtured, and cultivated to his or her fullest potential. Powerfully influenced by Rousseau, Pestalozzi's approach diverged from then rigid modes of instruction relying on authoritarian control, absolute obedience, corporal punishment, and forced rote memorization. Instead, Pestalozzi's methods relied on the natural instincts of the child to generate the motivation

\(^{44}\) Horace Mann, *Twelve Sermons Delivered at Antioch College* (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1861), 121.
for learning. His lessons centered upon the experience and observation of things, including natural objects, rather than on books and reading. Animals and plants were among the most important items in Pestalozzi’s system for developing the child’s senses of sight, touch, and sound.

Pestalozzian education gained a foothold in antebellum America through the brief existence of New Harmony, Indiana, Robert Owen’s utopian community. Its lasting influence came through post-Civil War exponents, especially Edward Sheldon. Sheldon’s curriculum centered on lessons that introduced children to objects they might find around them at home. The emphasis was on varieties of learning experience rather than specific subjects. “The natural history of the animal creation furnishes abundant materials for instruction,” Sheldon proclaimed. “First, of a religious character; for the wisdom and goodness of the Creator are manifestly proclaimed in the wonderful construction and beautiful adaptation of animals.” More pointedly, Sheldon’s endorsement of using animals in object teaching acknowledged its influence upon moral character. By awakening interest in animals, he wrote, “kind and humane feelings are promoted, which those who have witnessed the pleasure even very young children take in tormenting creatures over which they have any power, will acknowledge to be an object of no small importance.”

welfare of animals. All of the major figures in animal protection invested their energies in it. Even Henry Bergh, better known for his zealous pursuit of specific cruelties, and much less optimistic about human nature than Angell, found time to endorse and encourage humane education work. Bergh’s vehicle was Our Dumb Chattels, a pamphlet the ASPCA published and made available for the use of the new societies springing up in other cities. While he was not the author, the pamphlet conveyed both Bergh’s cultivated sensitivity to animal pain and his stern convictions about punishment. Many tales in Our Dumb Chattels were of a Hogarthian character, depicting youthful protagonists forced to endure cruelties analogous to those they had inflicted upon animals. The punitive measures taken by parents in some of these tales were calculated to frighten children into upright behavior, an approach humane authors and publishers later abandoned. 

In Philadelphia, too, humane education efforts followed the founding of anti-cruelty organizations. Rebecca Willing, a board member of the Women’s Branch of the Pennsylvania Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (PSPCA), played a crucial role. In 1872, the Women’s Branch organized its first contest for essays on kindness to animals. Subsequently, Willing and other humane workers, including Mary F. Lovell and Caroline Earle White, launched a society for boys called the Young American Humane Union. They attempted to organize student groups in the city’s grammar schools, where they read selections concerning the habits and treatment of animals, and awarded badges

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46 Our Dumb Chattels (New York: ASPCA, 1867); Bergh to Ferdinand Coxe, 16 Aug. 1867, and Bergh to Emily Appleton, 16 Aug. 1867, in ASPCA-NY, LBK 3: 8-11; and “Mr. Bergh at the Five Points House of Industry,” Frank Leslie’s, 23 Nov. 1867, ASPCA-NY, SBK 3: 168.
and other prizes. In the 1880s, at White's urging, the campaign expanded into the Catholic schools.47

For his part, George Angell, influenced by Horace Mann, stressed humane education's utility for ensuring public order, suppressing anarchy and radicalism, smoothing relations between the classes, and reducing crime. Humane education would be the solution to social unrest and revolutionary politics, he believed, and a valuable means for socializing the young, especially the offspring of the lower classes. Angell also appreciated the significance of the public school system as a forum for socialization, especially in an increasingly secular society. He told the annual meeting of the AHA in 1885 that "the public school teachers have in the first fortnight of each school year, about four times as many children, and have them more hours, than the Sunday school teachers do during the whole year."48

In support of his grand vision for humane education, Angell created a "missionary fund" to support the distribution of educational materials all over the country. Most of the money went to support the formation of "Bands of Mercy." The English temperance movement's Bands of Hope, which served to rally children by means of a pledge against alcohol consumption and related evils, provided the model. Band of Mercy members


48 George T. Angell, "How Can We Humanely Educate the Hoodlums?" ODA 38 (Mar. 1906), 146; idem, "Fire-Bugs and Humane Education," ODA 38 (Aug. 1905), 47; and idem, "The Power of the Public Schools," ODA 18 (Dec. 1885), 264.
pledged themselves to "be kind to all harmless living creatures, and try to protect them from cruel usage." Angell and Thomas Timmins, a minister who had assisted with the development of the Bands of Mercy in his native England, introduced the concept to the United States in 1882. Timmins worked to form bands while Angell strove to raise money and awareness.49

Years later, in 1889, this initiative coalesced as the American Humane Education Society (AHES), which incorporated and extended the premises of the Band of Mercy program.50 Angell saw humane education as vital to the long-term survival and acceptance of the anti-cruelty movement. The Band pledge was

simply the opening up of a door. . . . [Each] Band is thus provided with the very best material for the humane education of its members, and through them of their fathers and mothers and the communities in which they reside. Very soon acts of cruelty and kindness begin to be noticed as never before; and talked about. . . . The humane sentiment of the community is gradually uplifted—then comes a demand for the enactment and enforcement of laws—then comes the Humane Society to crown the whole.51

Such holism—a view that all parts of society could be reached, and all brought into harmony with humane values—lay behind virtually every initiative undertaken by the MSPCA and the AHES until Angell's death in 1909.


51 "What Do the Bands of Mercy Amount To?" ODA 20 (Mar. 1888), 118.
From the 1870s onward, Angell had been on the lookout for suitable reading material for guiding the young toward the values of kindness. He found his ideal vehicle in *Black Beauty*, the novel dictated by a dying British invalid, Anna Sewell, to her mother, and first published in 1878. In 1890, Angell circumvented copyright laws and brought out the first American edition under the auspices of the AHES. This was the first in a succession of AHES editions, normally incorporating appendices relevant to the work and ideas of his several societies. Some editions included a special index that guided readers to instances of cruelty and kindness in the novel. In just two years, over one million copies were in circulation, an unprecedented accomplishment in publishing.\(^5^2\)

The other books in the AHES series anchored by *Black Beauty*—*Our Goldmine at Hollyhurst* (1893), *The Strike at Shane’s* (1893), *Four Months in New Hampshire* (1894), and *For Pity’s Sake* (1897)—would remain mainstays of humane literature well into the twentieth century. The books, along with cash awards, medallions, badges, and rewards of merit, were distributed in schools in recognition of good behavior, recitations, essays, acts of kindness, and other attainments. In addition, an energetic cadre of humane society workers and supporters purchased and sold copies to sustain their own work.

*Black Beauty* cast a long shadow over the field, and Angell, wishing to inspire a canine analogue, advertised a contest for the purpose. The winning entry was *Beautiful*

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Joe, by Margaret Marshall Saunders of Nova Scotia.\textsuperscript{53} Later, a spate of autobiographical works—authored by a host of maltreated animals—appeared, and the animal autobiography became a staple of humane literature.\textsuperscript{54} The movement's celebration of such titles elevated certain authors to special status as harbingers of a humane world. Saunders herself was the best known of these, but Gene Stratton-Porter, who would later become famous as a children's author, began her career anonymously with The Strike at Shane's.\textsuperscript{55} In early adulthood, Ralph Waldo Trine (1866-1959), who went on to become a best-selling mind cure author, won an AHES contest for the best essay on humane education as a way of preventing crime. Trine later wrote Every Living Creature, advocating kindness to animals as an essential element in enlightened character.\textsuperscript{56}

Humane education literature reflected animal protection's roots in the culture of sentiment that drove much of American reform in the nineteenth century. Sympathy with animals reflected the Victorian era's privileging of the heart over the head. Humane education drew heavily on the gospel of the heart for its language and its lesson plans.


\textsuperscript{55} While neither Stratton-Porter nor Angell ever acknowledged her authorship, Judith Long has made a convincing case in Gene Stratton-Porter, Novelist and Naturalist (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1990).

\textsuperscript{56} Ralph Waldo Trine, Every Living Creature: or, Heart-Training Through the Animal World (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1899); and "Ralph Waldo Trine," ODA 39 (Jan. 1907), 120.
The religion of the heart appealed to both secular and evangelical animal advocates who decried the emphasis on practical knowledge at the expense of moral culture and ethical and emotional development. Education of the intellect did nothing to inculcate compassion and mercy.  

Sentimental fiction, usually authored by women, was a special locus and medium for what some called “heart culture.” As literary scholar Jane Tompkins notes, a novel in this genre was “a political enterprise, halfway between sermon and social theory,” that attempted to codify and to mold the values of its time. Both Uncle Tom’s Cabin and Black Beauty were products of this culture, sentimental works with great designs and ambitions.  

In the post-Civil War period, historian David Pivar has suggested, the formation of character became “a new social religion and the dynamic for social change,” especially for feminists and moral reformers. The properly instructed child could resist temptation and internalize a morality consistent with middle class ideals of social purity. Such preoccupation with youthful virtue provided humane advocates with both rationale and wider opportunities. The promotion of humane education as an antidote to depraved

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57 On the conflict between heart and head in the Victorian era, see James Turner, Reckoning with the Beast: Animals, Pain, and Humanity in the Victorian Mind (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), 75-78, 101-4.


character and a panacea for numerous social ills brought animal protection into closer alignment with other reform movements of the era.

During the 1880s, George Angell attempted to further the spread of the kindness-to-animals ethic by launching a campaign to make humane education compulsory in Massachusetts. He found a key ally in Charles L. Flint, president of the Boston School Board, through whose influence Angell gained easy access to the schools. Angell gathered signatures for petitions in an effort to persuade the legislature to require that children be taught not to molest birds and other animals. Ultimately, the campaign to secure specific legislation failed, but its spirit was honored. By November 1886, Angell was publishing correspondence with the Massachusetts Board of Education that confirmed the teaching of humane precepts. The promotion of kindness to animals was “the legal and moral duty of every teacher in the Commonwealth” as part of the requirement to comply with an extant public statute requiring “the teaching of humanity, universal benevolence, etc.” The Massachusetts campaign set a precedent and a standard toward which advocates in other states would work in the decades ahead.

Prosecution versus Persuasion

Virtually every society for the prevention of cruelty to animals had the power to make arrests under the anti-cruelty statute in its state, and many published relevant statistics in their annual reports. However, prosecution and arrest records were just one

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60 “Resolutions and Petition,” ODA 18 (Apr. 1886), 302; “Our Work with the Legislature,” ODA 18 (May 1886), 312; “To Massachusetts Teachers,” ODA 19 (Nov. 1886), 49; and “The Honorable Charles L. Flint,” ODA 21 (Apr. 1889), 127.
among many elements in any society’s annual report, along with accounts of education outreach, public speaking engagements, humane inventions, endowed fountains, donor and bequest information, and other details of the work. The diverse items contained in these reports suggest that the character of such organizations is shaped more by their chosen scope of activity than by their legal authority. The ability to make arrests was not the defining characteristic of a society for the prevention of cruelty to animals. Prevention did not rest upon punishment.

Early on, many leading animal protectionists concluded that other strategies, especially public education, were of better service to the cause. Humane advocates also recognized that arrests and prosecutions were not feasible approaches for dealing with all of the cruelties that they targeted. Some SPCAs could not even afford the salary of an agent. Thus, they sought to balance prosecution with other activity.

The statistical analysis of humane society investigation records is fraught with difficulty, because reporting practices, statutory definitions, and legal authority varied from organization to organization, along with campaign priorities, personnel levels, and practical resources. Even so, such analysis permits three conclusions. First, the preponderance of cases investigated and prosecuted involved the neglect and mistreatment of horses. Second, the majority of those who mistreated these laboring animals were working class people. Third, as the years passed, the humane movement’s reliance on arrest and prosecution steadily declined.

Outright brutality toward horses, like that represented in the SPCA seal, was certainly common, especially in the early years of humane work, and the organizations
were vigilant and unyielding in their efforts to suppress violent conduct. But humane society agents investigated numerous offenses that came within the category of neglect, examining horses in their community for lameness, sores, bad shoeing, glanders, and disability. In these instances, intervention generally involved the dispensation of advice or veterinary literature, a warning, or—in the case of a very sick or debilitated animal—an order for destruction.

As much any figure in early animal protection, George Angell embodied the movement's preference for persuasion over prosecution, an inclination he and others made explicit in MSPCA publications. In 1868, an anonymous editorial in Our Dumb Animals judged Henry Bergh's approach in New York City more "'heroic' than would be acceptable or most successful in New England." In its first decade (1868-1878), the MSPCA investigated 18,389 complaints, prosecuting 1,893 (10 percent) of them. Apparently, the MSPCA officials exercised good judgment in deciding which cases to pursue, as 1,564 (83 percent) of the cases that Angell and his agents chose for prosecution resulted in convictions. By mid-1883, six percent (2,284) of a total of 36,717 cases investigated by the MSPCA had ended with convictions. Educating the public about animal care, and warnings about mistreatment, neglect, and abandonment, seemed to be making a difference, and, in 1888, Angell proudly quoted an agent's comment that "we find it very difficult now to get cases of cruelty in Boston sufficiently aggravated to
sustain a prosecution in the courts.” In 1906, Angell cited a newspaper report that confirmed the higher reliance of the ASPCA on prosecution.61

Bergh’s ASPCA was certainly more vigorous in advocating and pursuing prosecutions. Yet, despite apparent differences in the approach taken there, the trend in New York also involved a shift away from prosecution to persuasive means. In 1892, four years after Bergh died, the ASPCA reported that in 27 years its agents had investigated 51,253 complaints and prosecuted offenders in 18,927 (37 percent) of these cases.62 Over the following six years, however, the prosecution rate fell below 3 percent, as the overall number of incidents investigated swelled. Moreover, after 1894, when the ASPCA made 1,010 arrests, the total number of annual arrests declined steadily every year.63

A declining rate of prosecution also held for the Pennsylvania Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (PSPCA), which reported in 1885 that it had

61 “Our Work,” ODA 1 (June 1868), 1; “How Many Prosecutions Have You Commenced?” ODA 1 (Aug. 1868), 1; “A Brief History of the Work,” ODA 5 (June 1872), 209; “Tenth Annual Report,” ODA (May 1878), 93–94; American Humane Association (AHA), Ann. R. 1884, 64; “How Many Prosecutions Have You Made?” ODA 20 (Feb. 1888), 106; “The Comparative Value of Prosecutions,” ODA 38 (Dec. 1905), 100; and “The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Boston and New York,” ODA 38 (May 1906), 174. In Imperiled Innocents: Anthony Comstock and Family Reproduction in Victorian America (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), Nicola Beisel claims that the New York anti-vice movement was more aggressive than that of Philadelphia because New York reformers were more preoccupied by the “perceived political impotence of the native born in cities increasingly dominated by immigrants.” This suggests that Bergh and his supporters might also have found greater public tolerance for a hard-hitting strategy of prosecutions and arrests in New York City than was possible in Philadelphia. On the other hand, Beisel argues that Boston anti-vice crusaders were also aggressive in their tactics because of nativist anxieties. In that city, given Angell’s suasionist approach, the correlation breaks down. Angell chose to work through public education and he was satisfied with the results of this approach.

62 ASPCA, Ann. R. 1893, 20. Through the end of 1881, approximately 7,456 (82 percent) of the 9,121 cases the ASPCA prosecuted involved cruelty to horses; ASPCA, Ann. R. 1882, 13.

investigated 19,006 complaints in 18 years of activity, and made arrests in just under 15 percent (2,764) of those cases. In Philadelphia as in Boston, humane agents seemed to have learned what it would take to establish cruelty in the court system, as 2,405 of these arrests (87 percent) resulted in convictions.\textsuperscript{64} In 1897, surveying 28 years of activity, the PSPCA noted that its agents had made arrests in less than three percent of the cases it investigated. Breaking this into four divisions of seven years each, the PSPCA reported that its arrest rate had declined from ten percent over the first seven years, to four percent, and then to two percent in succeeding periods. Sometime later, record keeping at the PSPCA changed, inflating the number of cases investigated. Under the new formula, the PSPCA reported in 1914 that it had prosecuted fewer than two percent (14,352) of the 770,794 cases it had investigated in 47 years of activity.\textsuperscript{65}

Beyond the statistical record, some societies had reputations for restraint and fairness. In 1883, noting that the Connecticut Humane Society made very few arrests, its president Rodney Dennis reminded his audience that “the highest civilization is indicated, not by the frequency and severity of punishments, but rather by the pressure of a sentiment which prevents the necessity of it.” In Philadelphia, the Women’s Pennsylvania Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (WPSPCA) sometimes reduced fines, replaced worn-out horses its agents had confiscated, and provided other forms of assistance to the indigent. In 1911, a Philadelphia teamster, speaking of a deceased WPSPCA agent, remarked that the officer “never wanted to prosecute, but


always gave one a chance, advising the drivers and showing them how to do right by the horse that helped to make their living. 66

Humane advocates also proved flexible in their attitudes toward observing the letter of the law. Occasionally, for example, they acknowledged that the penalties inflicted under anti-cruelty statutes might be too severe. This issue surfaced in Illinois, where the 1869 law assessed a fine of $50 for every act of cruelty. SPCA authorities there felt constrained from prosecuting cases where they believed that the parties might be unable to pay such a heavy fine. "To extort it in a good many cases," they judged, "would have been greater cruelty than it was designed to punish." Within a year of its passage, the law was amended to encompass a range of fines from $5 to $100, according to the severity of the offense. 67

There were other limits to humane enforcement practices. Although reliable statistics concerning employment are elusive, it is clear that very few humane societies had more than one salaried agent. In 1878, the PSPCA had four salaried agents on the streets. The PSPCA's Women's Branch (later to become the WPSPCA) employed two agents (both male) of its own. In 1879, the MSPCA reported that three agents were on


the payroll, and, within two years, the society added a fourth. In 1881, the MSPCA listed 400 volunteer agents around the state.\textsuperscript{68}

Even for well-funded organizations, some cruelties proved extremely difficult to police, let alone to suppress. Animal fighters, for example, developed elaborate means of staging their events in secret, outside the reach of authorities. Sometimes, too, humane societies chartered for operation within an entire state found it difficult to have their authority acknowledged outside their home counties. It was a cause of celebration when the Philadelphia-based PSPCA secured its first conviction in neighboring Montgomery County, eighteen years into the society’s work.\textsuperscript{69}

The SPCAs quickly discovered that education and propaganda were the only means by which certain abuses could be halted. “A large proportion of the complaints which reach us,” Pliny Chase wrote in the PSPCA’s 1872 annual report, “are for cases against which the law provides no remedy. Some of this class, such as those which are practiced in private stables, and out of the way of witnesses, are, in their very nature, beyond the reach of any possible legal enactment.” This led humane societies to invest in


publications designed to educate citizens working with animals about their needs and behavior.\textsuperscript{70}

Quite apart from their prosecution policies, humane societies frequently demonstrated compassion toward offenders, especially when they were poor. SPCA leaders understood that cruelty, neglect, and mistreatment often resulted from poverty, the exigencies of survival, or inadequate knowledge of animals. They tried to take these factors into account when dealing with lower class offenders. In an 1874 review of the ASPCA’s recent prosecutions, the \textit{New York Times} noted that the “willful and deliberate offender, goaded on by evil passions and an utter disregard to all humanity, is severely dealt with by the present Police Justices.” In contrast, “those who, from sheer necessity, are often compelled to work horses in an unfit state to provide themselves and families with food, are cautioned, and their animals cared for by the society.”\textsuperscript{71}

\textbf{Conclusion}

As a dynamic promoter of animal protection, George Angell not only inspired the formation of humane societies across America, he sometimes participated directly in their organization. In 1870, Angell spent four months in Chicago, where he helped John C. Dore and Edwin Lee Brown found the Illinois Humane Society. In 1880, he played a role in the organization of the Wisconsin Humane Society. In 1881, he helped to launch the

\textsuperscript{70} PSPCA, \textit{Ann. R.} 1872, 14; ASPCA, \textit{Vices Practiced by Horses, Such as Baulking, or Inability to Proceed, Cribbing, or Gnawing Mangers and Stalls, Tearing of Their Blankets, Etc., With Some Suggestions for their Correction} (New York: 1866); and Henry Bergh, \textit{The Horse: His Comfort, Discomfort, and Torture} (New York: 1875).

\textsuperscript{71} “Justice to the Dumb Race,” \textit{N. Y. Times}, 1 Feb. 1874, 8.
Connecticut Humane Society and the Washington, DC Humane Society. Within a few years, all of these became strong and influential societies in their own right.\footnote{Angell, \textit{Autobiographical Sketches}, 37-38, 58, 65, 66-67, 69-70.}

Angell even influenced the programs of Great Britain's Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA), reversing the flow of ideas and tactics across the Atlantic. In the spring of 1869, after a strenuous first year of activity, he traveled to Europe for a long rest. However, it soon became a working vacation. Angell's enthusiasm about \textit{Our Dumb Animals} soon prompted the English society to launch its own journal, \textit{The Animal World}. Angell also pressed the need for an organized campaign of humane education, persuading Baroness Angela Burdett-Coutts to head a committee on the subject for the RSPCA. Years later, when Angell imported the Band of Mercy concept to America, he drew on the fruits of the effort he had helped to instigate during his stay in England.\footnote{"George T. Angell," \textit{Animal World} 3 (1 June 1872), 129-30.}

Angell embodied the humane movement's preference for education over enforcement. His two organizations distributed hundreds of thousands of pamphlets, books, and other items. Whatever the subject, his appeals to the public reflected his faith in the better nature of his fellow citizens, and his optimism about the transformative power of the kindness ethic. Angell was at the forefront of efforts to bring the immense suffering of animals in transportation and slaughter to public attention. Turning his attention to humane education, Angell introduced a model of activism that others could emulate. He was, unquestionably, the greatest popularizer of humane education both
within and outside the humane movement. Both his suasionist approach, and his enthusiasm for the humane education of youth, would steadily gain adherents during the post-1880 phase of humane work.