Sir. As, thirty years ago I was among the first who expressed a strong opinion on the subject of field sports, and as with more accurate knowledge I hold the same opinions still, will you permit me to place the controversy between your correspondents, in which I have no time to take part, on its true grounds.

The assertion of the morality of fox hunting on the ground of cruelty to the fox is entirely futile and trivial. More pain is given to the draught horses of London in an hour by avariciously overloading them than to all the foxes in England by the hunting of the year. And there are more miserable deaths of human creatures caused by neglect in any country village back street of London in any one winter, in ill built country cottages, than the death-pangs by the death-pangs of any quantity of foxes.

The real evils of fox hunting are that it wastes the time — exhausts the energy — and exhausts the wealth of the upper classes of the country — and narrows the mental capacities and blunts the sensibility — debases the taste and abates the honour of the upper classes of this country: and instead of keeping as your correspondent Forester supposes — thousands of the poor out of the workhouse — it sends thousands of them annually — both there — and into the grave.

The athletic training given by fox hunting is excellent — and athletic training of such kind is vitally necessary to the upper classes. But it ought always to be in useful service of the country — in personal agricultural labour at the head of their tenantry and — and extending English life dominion in waste regions and against the adverse powers of nature: Let them become captains of emigration hunt down the Foxes that spoil the Wolds Vineyard and keep their eyes on the leader's hound, in packs of Men.

THE FIRST DRAFT OF "THE MORALITY OF FIELD SPORTS"