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ANIMAL INSTINCT.

When the various tribes of inferior creatures, and their innumerable curious actions and works, are observed, it becomes most naturally our earnest inquiry, What is the power of faculty by which they are all so wonderfully guided—in a manner so uniform in all their different species—and in many respects to results so superior to any thing the higher reason of man could attain? This faculty has ever by common consent been denominated, INSTINCT—and has most frequently, in order to our gaining a correct idea of its nature, been contrasted with *reason*. To intend a result, and to plan and arrange for its accomplishment, is the process of reason. But to act from instinct, is to be guided to the performance of a number of pre-arranged actions which will bring about a certain result, while the creature performing those actions neither knows nor intends the result they will effect, nor, of course, could plan the arrangement of means with a view to its accomplishment. Instinct acts its part with unerring precision, without intelligently knowing what or why it does so. This is confessedly a most curious, inexpli-

cable faculty. That these labours, many of them requiring great efforts and self denial, should be voluntarily undertaken, diligently prosecuted, and most successfully completed, in entire ignorance of their design, is such a mixture of skill and knowledge with blind impulse, as confounds us. It is one of the wonders of God. We have before us a faculty, in one respect as much above reason, as it is below it in another. Where reason errs and stumbles, this steady light infallibly guides; and where reason walks in clear day-light of knowledge, this faculty works in total darkness. Instinct is confined to narrow limits, but within them it never mistakes. Reason expatiates in more ample bounds; but how often bewildered, confounded, and perplexed!

The process of reason and contrivance in men are capable of almost endless degrees of imperfection or improvement. Defects in previous arrangements of means are perpetually being detected, and remedied: and new, and long-unthought-of contrivances are the offspring of ingenious minds, to effect what beforehand