

preciate harmony. When we so speak of it, we regard it as trained, and come to something like maturity; but in its original state, it is probably not much more than an instinct, and as such is given to every human being, which point we will first consider in the present essay.

We frequently hear the most positive and unhesitating assertions made on the subject of taste, as if it were thoroughly understood by every one, as a matter of course, and as if the laws which govern it were few and simple, and could easily be referred to; but of all dogmatic and absolute sentences, none is more often repeated than "No Taste." It is possible, indeed, that this is said without consideration of its literal meaning, and that it means much the same as "bad taste," of which we are also in the habit of hearing a good deal, and not the least often from those who, perhaps, hardly escape the charge themselves. For taste enters largely into sayings as well as doings, and without going very far for example, we might possibly name more than one of those whose criticisms on what are commonly called "matters of taste," have not been wholly free from offences against taste of the most elementary kind, *i. e.* consideration for others arising from the *instinct* of taste, good feeling.

But, be this as it may, I am disposed to think that it cannot be strictly true to say of every one, that he has "no taste." Every human being whose bodily structure is perfect, unharmed by disease, and not deprived of any of the members or organs belonging to that structure, is endowed with certain senses belonging to those members or organs, and the exceptions are not more than sufficient to prove the rule. The possession of mind and reason by every human being is even more inviolable than that of his bodily senses. Indeed, we believe it to be absolutely without exception, since, even in lunatics and idiots, there are traces, here and there, of that *something* which makes them men and not beasts; and they exhibit a degree of intelligence, together with habits and powers of discrimination, which prove that they do possess mental faculties, though in a morbid condition. If then, the existence of a body, with its organs and members perfect, is proof, or at least, a strong presumption in favour of the possession of bodily senses, why should not the existence of mind speak as to the possession of all its constituent elements and media of activity, though in very different degrees of perfection? The one is, at least, as much proved as the other, though after all, as Mr. Froude says, "the two lives are alike mysterious in origin, and visible only in their effects," and though the effects of taste seem sometimes far enough off, yet I believe that in some degree they may be traced in every single individual. Primarily, it is then not much more than an instinct, a spiritual instinct, using "spiritual" here