

Bodily Imperfections and Impediments. 19

the world to whom the boy and the bard have introduced us. They are not all lame : but they all think they have cause to be dissatisfied with the bodies God has given them. Perhaps they are simply ugly, and are aware that no one can look in their faces with other thought than that they are ugly. Now it is a pleasant thing to have a pleasant face, and an agreeable form. It is pleasant for a man to be large, well-shaped, and good-looking, and it is unpleasant for him to be small, and to carry an ill-shaped form and an ugly face. It is pleasant for a woman to feel that she has personal attractions for those around her, and it is unpleasant for her to feel that no man can ever turn his eyes admiringly upon her. A misshapen limb, a hump in the back, a withered arm, a shortened leg, a clubbed foot, a hare-lip, an unwieldy corpulence, a hideous lameness, a bald head—all these are unpleasant possessions, and all these, I suppose, give their possessors, first and last, a great deal of pain. Then there is the taint of an unpopular blood, that a whole race carry with them as a badge of humiliation. I have heard of Africans who declared that they would willingly go through the pain of being skinned alive, if, at the close of the operation, they could become white men. There are men of genius, with plenty of white blood in their veins—with only a trace of Africa in their faces—whose lives are embittered by that trace ; and who know that the pure Anglo-Saxon, if he follows his instincts, will say to him :