

CHAPTER XVIII.

ON INSTINCT.

THERE is no department of Zoological Science that furnishes stronger proofs of the being and attributes of the Deity, than that which relates to the *Instincts* of animals, and the more so, because where reason and intellect are most powerful and sufficient as guides, as in man and most of the higher grades of animals, there usually instinct is weakest and least wonderful, while, as we descend in the scale, we come to tribes that exhibit, in an almost miraculous manner, the workings of a Divine Power, and perform operations that the intellect and skill of man would in vain attempt to rival or to imitate. Yet there is no question, concerning which the Natural Historian and Physiologist seems more at a loss than when he is asked—what is INSTINCT? So much has been ably written upon the subject, so many hypotheses have been broached, that it seems wonderful so thick a cloud should still rest upon it. It must not be expected, where so many eminent men have more or less failed, that one of less powers should be enabled to throw much new light upon this palpable obscure, or dissipate all the darkness that envelopes the *secondary* or intermediate *cause* of Instinct. Could even the bee or the ant tell us what it is that goads them to their several labours, and instructs them how to perform them, perhaps we might still have much to learn before we should have any right to cry with the Syracusan Mathematician, Εὐρηκα, I have unveiled the mystery. Still, however unequal to the task, I cannot duly discharge the duty incumbent upon me, who may be said to be *officially* engaged to prove the great truths of Natural Religion