

131. Other animals cannot aspire to conceptions of this kind, they perceive only such objects as immediately strike their senses, and are incapable of continuous efforts of the reasoning faculty in regard to them. But their conduct is frequently regulated by another principle of inferior order still derived from the immaterial principle, called INSTINCT.

135. Under the guidance of Instinct, animals are enabled to perform certain operations, without instruction, in one undeviating manner. When man chooses wood and stone, as the materials for his dwelling, in preference to straw and leaves, it is because he has learned by experience, or because his associates have informed him, that these materials are more suitable for the purpose. But the bee requires no instructions in building her comb. She selects at once the fittest materials, and employs them with the greatest economy; and the young bee exhibits, in this respect, as much discernment as those who have had the benefit of long experience. She performs her task without previous study, and, to all appearances, without the consciousness of its utility, being in some sense impelled to it by a blind impulse.

136. If, however, we judge of the instinctive acts of animals when compared with acts of intelligence, by the relative perfection of their products, we may be led into gross errors, as a single example will show. No one will deny that the honey-comb is constructed with more art and care than the huts of many tribes of men. And yet, who would presume to conclude from this that the bee is superior in intelligence to the inhabitant of the desert or of the primitive forest? It is evident, on the contrary, that in this particular case we are not to judge of the artisan by his work. As a work of man, a structure as perfect in all respects as the honey-comb would indicate very complicated mental operations, and probably would require numerous preliminary experiments.

137. The instinctive actions of animals relate either to