

We will later on more fully state the considerations which this involves. It is really instinct aiming at what is best in the species which induces a man to choose a beautiful woman, although the man himself imagines that by so doing he is only seeking to increase his own pleasure. As a matter of fact, we have here an instructive solution of the secret nature of all instinct which almost always, as in this case, prompts the individual to look after the welfare of the species. The care with which an insect selects a certain flower or fruit, or piece of flesh, or the way in which the ichneumon seeks the larva of a strange insect so that it may lay its eggs in _that particular place only_, and to secure which it fears neither labour nor danger, is obviously very analogous to the care with which a man chooses a woman of a definite nature individually suited to him. He strives for her with such ardour that he frequently, in order to attain his object, will sacrifice his happiness in life, in spite of all reason, by a foolish marriage, by some love-affair which costs him his fortune, honour, and life, even by committing crimes. And all this in accordance with the will of nature which is everywhere sovereign, so that he may serve the species in the most efficient manner, although he does so at the expense of the individual.