

**INSTINCT,
OR REASON?**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649614417

Instinct, or Reason? by Julia Lockwood

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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JULIA LOCKWOOD

**INSTINCT,
OR REASON?**

INSTINCT; OR REASON?



The young Midshipman's return.

INSTINCT; OR REASON?

SECOND SERIES.

DEDICATED TO
THE HON. JOHN SCOTT NAPIER,
BY HIS GRANDMOTHER,
THE LADY JULIA LOCKWOOD,

AUTHOR OF "FIRST SERIES OF INSTINCT OR REASON," AND "CYRUS."

"Oh Lord, how manifold are Thy works! in wisdom hast Thou made them all."
PSALM 104, ver. 24.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY G. H. H.



LONDON:
SAUNDERS, OTLEY, & CO., 66, BROOK STREET,
GROSVENOR SQUARE.

1862.

250. g. 20.

Instinct ; or Reason ?

CHAPTER I.

Johnnie. You have written a nice book for Markie, dear grandmamma ; do now, dear, dear grandmamma, write one for me, and tell us all a number of other stories.

All the Boys at once. Yes, grandmamma ; this is a famous day for story-telling and listening. Oh, grandmamma, do you happen to know any stories about ants ? As we were calling at Mrs. Belfield's, we saw a book lying on a table, with an ant printed on the cover. What did that mean ?

Gran. I suppose the picture on the outside meant to indicate that industry was one of the subjects within. Napoleon the First had an N. marked at two corners of his pocket-handkerchiefs,

and a Bee at the other two corners, which was intended as an emblem of his desire to be industrious, and to teach others to be so; and certainly he never was idle for a moment.

Johnnie. Did you ever see one of his pocket-handkerchiefs ?

Gran. Yes, and I even possessed one for many years; but at last it was lost, which I regret, as it would have been a greater and more interesting relic now than ever it was.

Well, you have learnt enough to know that the instinct of ants is most wonderful. In hot climates they attain to a large size, and are extraordinarily prolific. In the West Indies they commit dreadful havoc, and rewards are offered for their extirpation.

An Engineer officer at Trinidad attempted to get rid of them by mining and blasting the soil; but though he blew the ants up in the air, they appeared to have sustained but little injury, and were soon as destructive as ever. In some parts of the West Indies they make use of the red ant to destroy the black, which are so destructive to the fruit.

On placing a few red ants at the bottom of a

tree, they may soon be observed climbing the trunk, and attacking every black ant they meet. In a few moments the black ant is bitten in two, and the red seeks other enemies.

Some West Indians allege that the red ants compel the black to work for them as slaves. So destructive are these insects, that trees are frequently denuded of every leaf in a single night.

I had a most beautiful tall tree in my garden at Sa Maison, called the Nilotica. It was the pride of the garden, and grew in an umbrella shape ; the leaves were like those of the acacia, and the flower like that of the caper plant, only somewhat larger, and very abundant. This tree grew very near the windows of my little corridor, and your father and I used to admire it constantly. Suddenly, it began to fade and perish, and at last your papa advised me to cut it down, as it was evidently dead, and only cumbered the ground. With great reluctance and sorrow I gave the order, and your father saw it executed, and desiring me to come to the spot, showed me the once beautiful but now prostrate tree, which we then perceived was perfectly devoured by ants, the inside of

the stem being alive with those animals. I walked away with feelings of positive disgust and anger, and ordered the whole to be instantly consigned to the flames. These same ants used to attack my maid's head for the sake of the oil or pomatum she used, and she had no rest at night till I gave her little tin saucers to put the feet of her iron bedstead in, which invention kept them from crawling over her any more when she was in bed. My brother General Gore tells me that in the West Indies it is dangerous to sit down upon English-made chairs, for the wood of which they are constructed, being deal or some other soft wood, easily becomes a prey to the ants, and they lose no time in excavating them ; so that, if you incautiously sit down, you may fall to the ground, as the chair instantly crumbles under your weight. There is an ant called the Parasol Ant ; it is always observed holding a small leaf over its back, and the natives of the West Indies believe it does this for the purpose of obtaining shade, and frequently a row of leaves is seen moving across a road, and on examination it is found that each leaf is carried by an ant, who is taking it to the general store.