

syllables; and I do not know that a more striking fact can be adduced at the present stage of the Weismann controversy than is this fact which he has thus himself unconsciously suggested, namely, that the young of the only talking animal should be alone in presenting—and in unmistakably presenting—the instinct of articulation. Well, such being the state of matters as regards this particular case, in the course of a debate which was held at the Newcastle meeting of the British Association upon the heredity question, I presented this case as I present it now. And subsequently I was met, as I expected to be met, by its being said that after all the faculty of making articulate sounds might have been of congenital origin. Seeing of how much importance this faculty must always have been to the human species, it may very well have been a faculty which early fell under the sway of natural selection, and so it may have become congenital. Now, be it remembered, I am only adducing this case in illustration of the elusiveness of Weismann's theory. First of all he selects the faculty of articulate speech to argue that it is a faculty which ought to be instinctive if acquired characters ever do become instinctive; and so good does he deem it as a test case between the two theories, that he says *from it alone* we should be prepared to accept the doctrine that acquired characters can never become congenital. Then, when it is shown that the only element in articulate speech which possibly could have become congenital, actually has become congenital, the answer we receive is a direct contradiction of the previous argument: the faculty originally selected as representative of an acquired character is now taken as representative of a congenital one. By thus playing fast and loose with whatever facts the followers of Darwin may adduce, the followers of Weismann bring their own position simply to this:—All characters which can be shown to be inherited we assume to be congenital, or as we term it, "blastogenetic," while all characters which can be shown not to be inherited, we assume to be acquired, or as we term it, "somatogenetic"—and this merely on the ground that they have been shown to be inherited or not inherited as the case may be. Now, there need be no objection to such assumptions, provided