

of such enormous complexity, that there is no real analogy between it and the phenomena of instinct: therefore the fact that Lamarckian principles cannot be applied to the case of language is no evidence that they do not hold good as regards instinct. Secondly, not only the construction, but still more the use of language is quite out of analogy with all the phenomena of instinct; for, in order to use, or speak, a language, the mind must already be that of a thinking agent; and therefore to expect that language should be instinctive is tantamount to expecting that the thought of which it is the vehicle should be instinctive—i.e. that human parents should transmit the whole organization of their own intellectual experiences to their unborn children. Thirdly, even neglecting these considerations, we have to remember that language has been itself the product of an immensely long course of evolution; so that even if it were reasonable to expect that a child should speak by instinct without instruction, it would be necessary further to expect that the child should begin by speaking in some score or two of unknown tongues before it arrived at the one which alone its parents could understand. Probably these considerations are enough to show how absurd is the suggestion that Darwinians ought to expect children to speak by instinct. But, now, although it is for these reasons preposterous under any theory of evolution to expect that children should be able to use a fully developed language without instruction, it is by no means so preposterous to expect that, if all languages present any one simple set of features in common, these features might by this time have grown to be instinctive; for these simple features, being common to all languages, must have been constantly and forcibly impressed upon the structure of human psychology throughout an innumerable number of sequent generations. Now, there is only one set of features common to all languages; and this comprises the combinations of vowel and consonantal sounds, which go to constitute what we know as articulate syllables. And, is it not the case that these particular features, thus common to all languages, as a matter of fact actually *are* instinctive? Long before a young child is able to understand the meanings of any words, it begins to babble articulate