

ought analogous to ours, this speech would have an analogy to ours also. Supposing its thoughts were peculiar to its species, it still would hold discourse with those of its kind, a circumstance of which we should have heard had it been endowed with the powers of speech. So far then is the ape from having any thought like ours, that it has not even any order of thoughts of its own. As they express nothing by combined and settled signs, they of consequence are void of thought, or at most have it in a very small degree.

That it is from no organical defect animals are denied the gift of speech is plain, as several species of them may be taught to pronounce words, and even repeat sentences of some length. Perhaps many others might be found capable of articulating particular sounds*; but to make them conceive the ideas which such sounds denote is an impracticable task. They seem to repeat and articulate merely as an echo, or an artificial machine. It is not in the mechanical powers, or the material organs, but in the intellectual faculties, that they are deficient.

* Leibnitz mentions a dog which had been taught to pronounce several German and French words.