

Children, without perceiving it, imitate the habits, gestures, and manners of those they live with ; they have also a great propensity to repeat, and to counterfeit every thing they hear and see. Young persons who see nothing but by the corporeal eye, are wonderfully ready in perceiving ridiculous objects : every fantastic form affects, every representation strikes, every novelty moves them. The impression is so strong, that they relate them with transport and copy them with facility and grace. In a superior degree do they enjoy the talent of imitation, which supposes the most perfect organization, and to which nothing is more opposite than a large portion of good sense.

Thus, among men, those who reflect least are the most expert at imitation : and therefore it is not surprising that we meet with it in animals, who have no reflection. These ought to possess it in a higher degree of perfection, because they have nothing within them to counteract it ; no principle by which they may have the desire to be different from each other. Among men, it is from the mind that proceeds the diversity of our characters, and the variety of our actions. Brute animals, by having no mind, have not that *self* which is the principle
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