

As all language supposes a chain of thought, it is on that account that brute animals have no speech, for even allowing something in them which resembles our first apprehensions, our most gross and mechanical sensations, they still will be found incapable of forming that association of ideas which can alone produce reflection; and in this consists the essence of thought. To this inability of connecting and separating ideas it is that they are destitute of thought and speech, as also that they neither can invent nor improve any thing. Were they endowed with the power of reflection, even in the most subordinate degree, they would be capable of making some kind of proficiency, and acquire more industry; the modern beaver would build with more art and solidity than the ancient; and the bee would daily be adding new improvements to its cell; for if we suppose this cell as perfect already as it can be, we ascribe to the insect an intelligence superior to our own; by which it could discern at once the last degree of perfection to which its work might be carried, while we ourselves are for ever in the dark as to this degree, and stand in need of much reflection, time, and practice, in order to perfect even one of our most trivial arts.

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