
A table of contents for *Bibliotheca Sacra* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bib-sacra_01.php

to those who are simply imperfect. As Neander remarks: "A magnificent prospect is thus presented of the final triumph of the work of redemption, which was first opened to the mind of the great apostle in the last stage of his Christian development by means of that love which impelled him to sacrifice himself for the salvation of mankind." [1]

The seat of the consummated kingdom of God Paul regards as the glorified earth (Rom. viii. 19–22). As the body of man is not to be completely destroyed, but to be glorified, so with this terrestrial κόσμος. The relation of believers to God, as long as sin is not yet destroyed, is only through the mediation of Christ; but after they are glorified into his image, this mediation is no longer necessary, and Christ will give back to God the power which he received for the redemption of humanity and the establishment of the divine kingdom (1 Cor. xv. 28).

ARTICLE VII.

RECENT THEORIES ON THE ORIGIN OF LANGUAGE.

BY REV. JOHN O. MEANS, BOSTON HIGHLANDS.

How did man first come to speak? Was it instinctive and spontaneous, as soon as he was fairly afloat? Or was there a prolonged period when man was mute, or uttered inarticulate animal cries, from which he slowly learned to speak? If he learned, who taught him? Did he teach himself — invent speech by the natural exercise of his faculties working upon the materials around him? Or did some superior teach infant man at first, as subsequently some superior has taught every infant who has learned to to speak?

How he came by the marvellous possession of language is one of the most interesting and important, as it is one of the

[1] History of the Planting of Christianity, Vol. i. p. 531 (Bohn's ed.).

most difficult, questions which science is trying to answer. New significance attaches to the various theories now, because of the direct bearing of them upon the larger problem of the origin of the human race, and its antiquity which are the problems of to-day. Those who hold that language is of purely human invention assume vast antiquity as indisputable; and if their view is correct, it is, in turn, a specific and conclusive proof of vast antiquity of the race. Then, as to the origin of mankind, the theory that we came up into the possession of language out of a mute state is a weighty contribution to Mr. Darwin's doctrine. In fact, Professor Whitney, one of the most recent and able supporters of this theory, scarcely disguises his leaning to Darwinism.

Scientific men do not pretend to have reached solid conclusions on this subject. We are as yet in the region of speculative theories. With one voice the eminent philologists confess that their investigations do not reveal the origin of language. Some of them honestly declare that linguistic researches never can reveal the origin; that this necessarily lies beyond the scope and outside the range of purely philological inquiries; that, however they push towards the beginning, touch it they never can. Ernest Renan places it among the things which are ante-historical, and which must remain so. Max Müller declares that it is not for the philologist to pronounce upon the point, and proposes to take no definite ground himself. Professor Whitney says that, so far as any decision can be reached, the decision must be upon general considerations and analogies. While speaking thus, however, so fascinating is the question that no philologist is content to pass it by. Neither of these scholars refrains from arguing, and that dogmatically, in favor of his own theory. It is in a special treatise bearing the very title of "The Origin of Language," and devoted to the discussion and determination of this question, that M. Renan declares that the origin lies beyond the range of

[1] De L'Origine du Language. Par Ernest Renan Membre de L'Institut, (3me ed.). Paris, 1859.

historical scrutiny. Max Müller[1] in two of his most important volumes employs argument and ridicule to overthrow one theory and set up another. Professor Whitney,[2] in turn, in an able chapter of his admirable work, endeavors to demolish the theories of Renan and Müller, and to set up again that which they imagine they have demolished.

There are two possible methods in which primitive man may have come into possession of speech: He may have been taught it by some supernatural communication, interference, or provision special to this end; or he may have acquired it in the natural outplay and movement of his own faculties. The first method is discarded by the most recent writers. Differing among themselves, they are agreed in antagonism to anything properly supernatural in the commencement of speech. Most of them recognize divine supervision and providence, so far as endowing man with needful faculties and surrounding him with appropriate materials and motives for speech, while they deny a divine origin in any special sense. By nothing more distinctly miraculous than breathing and eating, constructing a house to shelter him, and wearing cloth to cover his body — in some purely human method — they severally maintain that language originated.

We will endeavor very briefly to state the theories by which, from the purely human plane, it is attempted to account for the first speaking of mankind, and what may be said for and against them severally.

We shall do well to begin with a sharp discrimination of the precise point of inquiry.

The question is not what is the origin of any one speech or language now in use. It is generally agreed that all existing languages are the results of growth and development: that, however they have come to differ, all can be traced up to three or two stocks, and possibly to one stock or family. Even Renan, who is singular in maintaining

[1] Lectures on the Science of Language. By Max Müller. London. 1861. Second Series. London. 1864.

[2] Language and the Study of Language. By Wm. Dwight Whitney. New York. 1868.

that the primitive speech was not one homogeneous language, or a few such languages, but manifold heterogeneous dialects; that dialects are not offshoots from uniformity, suckers, deteriorations, but the original stocks, which in process of ages have grown together and built themselves into a certain uniformity of structure, through the impact of historic movements, — Renan agrees with all others that there are certain germs or roots from which all tongues have grown. For instance, *day*, *dawn*, and their compounds, evidently have one origin, and may be easily traced back to it. The English *day*, moreover, is the German *tag*, the Latin *dies;* and we can still further track out these and other words in our modern tongues to a common Sanskrit home. If thus we should take the more than hundred thousand words in Webster's Dictionary, and reduce them to their primitives, the vast volume of English words would shrink as the mist shrinks in the sunlight. It is marvellous how small is the number of primitives in all languages. Hunt down the multitudinous winged words, four-footed beasts, and creeping things, which constitute the languages in possession of all the tribes of earth, past and present, and we find less than five hundred words, all told. There are but four or five hundred elements of all speech, "nuclei of gradual accretions," "entities representing a few of the most sensible phenomena in ourselves and nature." Now, what we wish to ascertain is, where these entities came from, how they became accepted as signs of thought and things. Whoever first spoke used, not necessarily these bald roots of speech, but possibly modifications of them, or of something like them. The question is: How did he happen to do it? How did his fellows come to understand him?

Still further, it is not about the faculty of speech, but the fact of speech, that we are in debate. It is conceded that man has a faculty of speech; that is, he is so constructed that he is capable of speech in appropriate circumstances. But what sets this speech faculty in motion? How and why did it come to utter certain articulations, and not others?

and how did the articulations of one man become comprehensible to another man?

There are two theories which propose to explain this on the purely human plane; in fact there are three, but the third is simply a combination of the two, and as the two are inconsistent with, and even antagonistic to, each other, the mixture of them, which Farrar attempts, is self-destructive.

The two theories have received, each from the friends of the other, the descriptive and felicitous nicknames, one, of the "ding-dong" theory, the other, of the "bow-wow and pooh-pooh" theory.

Both, as has been said, admit the divine origin of language in a general way, but deny it in any special sense — deny any distinctively supernatural interposition in it; maintain that the origin was wholly by natural processes. One theory, however, and here begins antagonism, holds that speech was by a spontaneous and unconscious effort; the other, that it was a conscious and voluntary contrivance to serve an end. One holds that it was preceded, at least need have been preceded, by no savagery of mutism; the other holds that man gradually came to speak, and probably after long pupilage in mutism. The ding-dong theory scouts the notion of a convention or agreement by which certain sounds were accepted as signs of thoughts and things, and maintains that thoughts and things echoed in sounds which of themselves and instinctively were intelligible to man primeval. The bow-wow theory scouts the ding-dong notion that sounds of themselves express sense, and maintains that by hearing and mimicking sounds in nature, and by instinctive cries, men came to an understanding by which they accepted certain sounds as signs for purposes of communication.

Let us hear now more particularly what each theory has to say for itself.

First in order is the ding-dong theory, which owes its present form to Professor Heyse of Berlin, whose lectures have been published since his death by Dr. Steinthal, who

has also himself defended it in several learned works.[1] It is adopted essentially by Max Müller and Bunsen,[2] and, with qualifications, by Ernest Renan, and it has leaked somewhat into R. W. Emerson's philosophising and that of Dr. Bushnell, and many others.

"There is a law," we are told,[3] "which runs through nearly the whole of nature, that everything which is struck rings. Each substance has its peculiar ring. We can tell the more or less perfect structure of metals by their vibrations — by the answer which they give. Gold rings differently from tin, wood rings differently from stone; and different sounds are produced according to the nature of each percussion. It was the same with man, the most highly organized of nature's works. Man in his primitive and perfect state was endowed not only, like the brute, with the power of expressing his sensations by interjections, and his perceptions by onomatapoeia. He possessed likewise the faculty of giving more articulate expression to the rational conceptions of his mind ..... This faculty gave to each conception as it thrilled for the first time through the brain a phonetic expression." Farrar translates more literally as follows:[4] "At the origin of humanity the soul and the body were in such natural dependence that all the emotions of the soul had their echo in the body, principally in the organs of respiration and in the voice. This sympathy of soul and body, still found in the infant and the savage, was intimate and fruitful in the primitive man. Each intuition awoke in him an accent or a sound." The theory is thus aptly called the ding-dong theory. It represents man as originally a kind of bell, and when an idea struck him, naturally he rang.

[1] Heyse, Prof. K. W. L., System der Sprachwissenschaft. Berlin. 1856. Steinthal, Prof. H., Der Ursprung der Sprache. Berlin. 1858.

[2] Outlines of the Philosophy of Universal History, applied to Language and Religion. Vol. ii. London. 1854.

[3] Max Müller, Lectures, First Series, ix. (English ed.). pp. 369–371.

[4] F. W. Farrar, M. A., late Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. An Essay on the Origin of Language, based on Modern Researches, and especially on the Works of M. Renan. London. 1860. p. 48, and passim. Chapters on Language. London. 1865. p. 248, and passim.

"We wonder," says Professor Whitney, "it was not added that, like other bells, he naturally rang by the tongue."

Ridiculous as it sounds under the stroke of such an assailant, however, the theory is not to be dismissed without careful examination. In fact it is only a fresh statement of the notion which Plato entertained, and which in some form has prevailed from the earliest times. Words have been regarded as the types of objective realities; not only as signs of things, but as in some way partaking the nature and expressing the character of the things themselves. Man has been supposed to be so adjusted to nature that phenomena mirror themselves upon the soul; conceptions are the reflection of realities and, of course, precisely correspond to them. Bunsen and Max Müller call words phonetic types.[1] Renan characteristically plays with this theory somewhat warily and hesitates to adopt the precise statements of Heyse or Steinthal. Yet Renan perceives that it is not answering the question as to the origin of speech to say in general that nature impresses its character upon the delicate organization of primitive man, but that it must be shown how this impression takes the form of articulate sound. Just here is Heyse's modification of the other theories; and Renan is compelled to declare that nature produces an echo in the soul, which is returned in words.[2]

It is made a strong point of the ding-dong theory that speech was not in any sense the result of convention, or of slow attainment after prolonged fumbling in the dark. It was spontaneous, and without conscious intention. Man had no season of mutism. As soon as he came to full development he spoke.

But the objections to the theory seem to be overwhelming. To begin with, there is no such nice adaptation of body

[1] "The mouth is the primitive phonetic telegraph. Words express not the subjective impressions, the affections of the mind, but the qualities of things." Bunsen, p. 132, 137.

[2] Les hommes primitives,— trouvaient en eux-mêmes un écho secret qui repondait à toutes les voix du dehors, et les rendait en articulations en parole." pp. 142, 143.

and soul to nature that echoes of nature resound from the soul. The savage and the infant do not show any such thing to be true. Thus the theory falls to the ground at once. Its fundamental basis is an assumption of a physical condition which is open to inspection; and inspection does not show any such condition of things. So far as a negative can be proved, it proves the negative of this assumption. "New cognitions and deductions thrill through the brains of men without setting their tongues swinging." An infant cries if a pin pricks it, and it cries if it is hungry, and both cries are alike; the cry because of a hurt is not distinguishable from the cry because of hunger. There is no quality in the sound which corresponds to the specific sensation, emotion, or thought. No one can pronounce, when he hears "an infant crying in the night," that it is "an infant crying for the light"; so far as the voice indicates, it may be an infant crying for the lactary.

Then, in the second place, if it be proper to say in a figurative sense that sensations echo themselves in the body, it is not specially the voice and organs of speech which vibrate, but it is rather the whole frame which responds. According as different objects affect us we scowl, we shrug our shoulders, we laugh, we shudder; the voice gives almost the least emphatic echo of emotions.

Still further, if words are the echoes of things, and the soul rings under sensations and perceptions, it is evident that there should be but one language for mankind. Renan anticipates this difficulty, and endeavors to meet it by saying that it is owing to difference of organization, of climate, and outward circumstances, that the same thought or emotion produces different echoes in different races. But, as the elder critics were wont to say, this explanation is more ingenious than solid. If it could be proved that the internal structure of man changes with climatic changes, still, tribes living in the same climate, and having the same organic structure, speak languages unintelligible to each other.

If there was nothing else against it, it would be fatal to

this theory that it assumes a condition of things to have once existed which does not now exist, and of whose existence we have no proof. The theory concedes that this sensibility of the soul by which primitive man created language is now lost. "Among the early races," says Farrar,[1] almost literally translating from Renan, "there was a delicate tact, enabling them to seize on those attributes which were capable of supplying them with appellatives, the exquisite subtilty of which we are unable any longer to conceive." Renan distinctly claims that the power to create language was exceptional; that humanity in those far distant ages was subjected to influences which no longer bear upon it.[2] To the question, Why, if man once invented language, he cannot now? he adds: "The reply is very simple: because there is nothing more to invent—the era of the creation has passed." The reply *is* very simple!

The whole theory breaks down at this point. For it is agreed among scientific thinkers, if anything is, that if we undertake to explain events by natural causes we must not recognize any agencies or influences as previously operating which we cannot see to be now operating, nor assume that formerly nature and the world were governed by laws different from what they are now. To say things were once different, and that cause and effect were not as now, is to say there were once miracles. When we are rigorously excluding the miraculous, then we are bound to explain things by such causes as are now discoverable. If we are to show how man invented speech, we must take man as he actually is, as we see him, enveloped in the laws now surrounding him, not man of an imaginary structure and in imaginary circumstances. In assuming that in primitive times man was peculiarly constituted, and so enabled to construct language, this theory confesses that it cannot explain the origin of speech by any causes which science can recognize;

[1] "Origin of Language," p. 68.

[2] "L'humanité à ces epoques reculées, etait soumise à des influences qui non plus maintenant d'analogues, on qui ne saurait plus amener les mêmes effets," p. 238; also, pp. 243, 246.

that it must go out of the range of the present laws of nature to solve the problem; in a word, that while volubly denying the miraculous, it is endeavoring to take refuge behind a clumsy disguise of the miraculous.

Finally, if it could be proved true in every other particular, the ding-dong theory would not explain the origin of language — it would simply explain the origin of words. Let it be granted that words are the soul's echoes of sensations and perceptions; words by themselves are not language. There must be connection and relation of words. Renan himself confesses that sounds no more constitute language than sensations constitute man.

Spiritual, imaginative, beautiful as the ding-dong hypothesis seems in many aspects, it must be regarded as an ingenious speculation without a shadow of fact to substantiate it.

The bow-wow and pooh-pooh theory, which stands in sharp antagonism to it, has unquestionably the advantage on the side of natural phenomena and also on the side of logic. Professor Whitney states it, and maintains it with great ability. Farrar in his two volumes also supports it; but he fastens it on to the previous theory without seeming aware that the two positively contradict each other. Wedgewood is much more scholarly and acute in his contribution to the hypothesis.[1]

The bow-wow dogma speaks for itself thus:

The earliest names of objects and actions were produced by imitations of natural sounds, which is styled Onomatapoeia. Animals were named from some characteristic feature; the dog was called a bow-wow; the voice of the wind was imitated in an utterance which was finally accepted as the word "whistling"; the movement of water suggested imitative sounds like rippling and plashing, and these sounds became words to represent these movements; the explanations and interjections we utter when excited, the ohs and ahs, the poohs and pshaws, contributed other elements. Such were the germs of language.

[1] On the Origin of Language. By Hensleigh Wedgewood. London. 1866.

In proof it is alleged that words are now made in this way; that it is the natural and easy and practical method in which strangers communicate with each other. An Englishman in a Chinese eating-house, ignorant of the celestial dialect and prone to indulge his carnal appetite, points with his finger to the savory dish from which he is making a hearty meal, and gesticulates the interrogative to the waiter, "quack-quack?" The waiter gives the pleasant and natural response by a significant shake of the head and the exclamation "bow-wow."

The theory, as has been said, denies that speech was spontaneous and instinctive, affirms that man learned to speak because he found it necessary. He felt his way towards it by slow degrees. He consciously contrived language. With faculties appropriate and sounds suggestive, he constructed the marvellous instrument. There may have been, probably there was, a season of mutism before he groped his way to articulate speech.

Undoubtedly many words in all languages may be traced to the onomatapoetic, or to the interjectional principles; but these principles do not seem adequate to explain the origin of speech.

The origin of *all* words is not thus accounted for. No one pretends that words expressive of moral convictions and the like can have originated from exclamations, interjections, or imitations of natural sounds. The first condition of a true theory in science is that it include all known facts. When Newton guessed at one of his great laws, some phenomena, as then observed, could not be reconciled to it and were not satisfied by it. At once he set the hypothesis aside; it was not large enough to cover all the phenomena, therefore it could not be the right one. It was only when it was found, years afterwards, that the facts had been incorrectly reported, and that they were accounted for by the hypothesis, that Newton promulgated it, and the world received it as true. It is not enough for Professor Farrar to say: "Almost all words may be thus explained." The

fact that certain classes of words do not admit of such origin must set the theory aside.

Moreover, the arguments urged in its favor do not seem fairly to prove it. Professor Whitney says:[1] "Nineteen twentieths of the speech we speak is demonstrably, in this sense, our own work. Why should the remaining twentieth be thought otherwise?"

It is just this last twentieth, or rather this first twentieth, that is perplexing. Because, with languages to start upon, and with the raw material of words to work up, men modify and mould them into new forms, it by no means follows that it is equally easy to originate a language with no intelligible words and with no common speech to serve as a basis of mutual understanding and communication. It is generally conceded that there are certain elements of speech out of which all languages have come. All changes have been simply as to form. The number of these elements has neither been increased nor diminished. No new radical has been added, so far as we can perceive, any more than new matter has been added to the created universe. All that has taken place is merely development from these elemental forms. Now Professor Whitney is hardly justified in asserting that "the power to develop is one in essential nature with the power to originate." It is *essentially* a different power. "The origin of language is divine," he says, "in the same sense in which man's nature, with all its capacities and acquirements is divine." Is not precision of thought and statement lacking here? A careful discrimination surely must be made between capacities and acquirements. Would Professor Whitney maintain that, since a man's acquirements depend upon his own efforts, therefore his original capacity depends upon himself? "It is but childish philosophy," he declares, "which can see no other way to make out a divine agency in the formation of language than by regarding that agency as specially and miraculously efficient in the first stage of formation of language. We may fairly compare it

[1] p 400.

with the wisdom of the little girl who, on being asked who made her, replied: 'God made me a little baby so high' (dropping her hand to within a foot of the floor), 'and I grew the rest.'" We accept the comparison. Because the child grew as to nineteen twentieths of her body, does it prove that she originated the other twentieth? No more does it follow that, if it can be proved that man made nineteen twentieths of his speech, therefore he originated the germinal twentieth, out of which all the rest has grown. It is the germ, not the body, of language we are trying to account for.

We are also reminded[1] that God did not build houses and make clothing for man, but gave him capacities for handicrafts, placed him where necessity urged him, and where materials abounded, and he clothed and housed himself; therefore he was left to himself in manufacturing speech.

This comparison of language to carpentering and brick-making and tailoring — strangely belittling — misses the point in the same way. Did man originate the clay and the fibrous material for his houses and his clothing? Did man create the germ of the tree out of which he contrived to supply his wants? The question of the origin of language is: Who made the raw material, and then wove it into the garment of intelligible speech?

This hypothesis, like the ding-dong theory, simply accounts for the origin of words, not of language. Let it be granted that the sound of rustling leaves suggests the word "rustling," and that interjections express emotions, that ah! means pain or pleasure. Words must be linked together to make language. The intention of joining them and the comprehension of them as related to each other is necessary to constitute language. It is pithily said that language begins where interjections end. They are only the outskirts of speech.

Moreover, for the construction of language out of words gathered from sounds of nature there must have been something like a convention to agree upon certain signs for

[1] Whitney, pp. 402, 403.

certain sounds. But the notion of any such convention, or of anything approaching it, is utterly inadmissible.

On the ding-dong theory, words express, as Bunsen phrases it, the qualities of things. What thrills through one mind, of course, thrills through all minds. Thus the word which echoes the thought is mutually intelligible to all. Unfortunately for this theory, as is the case in regard to so many other points of Bunsen's speculative and confident dogmatizing, the assertion is not true. It is a groundless assumption. Words have no such expressive quality. When one man frames a word, there is no guaranty that it shall be intelligible to another man. Men must mutually agree that a certain articulation shall be the sign of a specific thing. A Frenchman and an Englishman hear a musket discharging. As the sound "rings in" upon Johnny Crapo, he exclaims: "Pouf!" When the report rattles through John Bull's head, he roars out: "Bang!" The same noise, the same sensation and conception, find utterance in words so dissimilar. Now which shall stand for the sound of a musket — pouf, or bang? It can only be amicably arranged by a conference of the two powers for mutual agreement. But if men can already communicate sufficiently to agree upon the meaning of sounds, and to attach signs to sounds, they do not want language; they can hold intercourse well enough without. They are doing already as precise and difficult a thing as they can ever do with language itself. There is no process so complicated and requiring such nice instruments as to construct a language. Those who can communicate well enough to construct it can communicate well enough to dispense with it.

"Speech," Professor Whitney well says,[1] "is not a personal possession, but a social. What we may severally choose to say is not language, until it is accepted and employed by our fellows. The whole development of speech is wrought out by the community. That is a word, and only that, which is understood in a community. Their mutual under-

[1] p. 404.

standing is the tie which connects it with the idea. It is a sign which each one has acquired from without, from the usage of others." Now, then, how is it conceivable that, without the use of language, this mutual understanding can be arrived at? He speaks of two persons as mutually devising language. Devising, in this sense, is inventing. But invention is a solitary act, and must be. Two inventors, having no language as a medium of communication with each other, cannot bring their minds into contact, and help on towards a common invention. One man may invent a part of a machine; another may take up this invention and advance upon it; but each invents alone. Suppose one is devising language, how, without the use of language, is he to tell his companion how far he has proceeded? Gesture cannot tell him; for the very point is to make sound a sign of gesture. To imagine that he can signify sound by gesture, is to imagine that he has already done the thing he is seeking help to do. How can his companion, without language to take up and forward the invention, make out mutually intelligible speech?

Speech, it is conceded, is a social possession and a social product. Sounds, no matter how intelligible as signs of ideas to an individual, are not language, unless they are signs of the same idea to other persons. As there is no inherent quality in the sounds, making them instantly and inevitably intelligible to all, they can gain meaning only by common agreement. But how can people agree upon significations of words, when such a thing as a word is what as yet nobody knows, and such a thing as signification what nobody as yet understands?

The bow-wow theory, like the ding-dong, is not framed in accordance with the recognized methods of scientific investigation. That method is to observe how phenomena now take place, and conclude that the same phenomena formerly took place in the same way. Here is the phenomenon of language, of the origin of language. Men come into the world in-fants — speechless. They have faculties of

eech; the world "rings in" upon them sensations; per-
ptions "thrill through" them. But the only way in
nich speech ever originates is by the communication from
thout, by the teaching of a superior. A child only speaks
it is taught. Left alone, it never speaks. It does not
nitate the sounds of nature; it imitates the sounds of its
achers. A Greek infant brought up in an English family
es not speak Greek, but English. Language is acquired
nen taught; that specific language is acquired which is
ught. What reason to think it was not so always? The
ly reason is the assumption that there was a time when
ere was no one to teach the first infant. But was there
er such a time? Was there no being capable of teaching
imitive man?

If we follow out rigidly the method which science applies
all other questions, we must conclude that the first man
as taught speech by a superior. It is admitted on all
nds that every one since the first has come in possession
language in this way. To say that the first man did not,
say that he constructed it, made it out of nothing, made
out of bow-wows and pooh-poohs, is renouncing science
d following guesses. What right to say his case was
ceptional? What reason for guessing that he did not
gin to speak as all others have?

The conclusion seems inevitable that these recent theories,
nich assume to be eminently rational and logical, are
terly inadequate to explain the origin of language. The
st, at the very outset, departs from the scientific method
an *a priori* speculation; which speculation not only is
t supported by facts but is contradicted by them. The
ter, which sets out to be rigidly scientific, at the last step,
nen the real difficulty is reached and first begins to press,
aves the method of science and betakes itself to a guess.

Are we, then, to fall back upon the supernatural theory?
not that still less defensible?

Whether or not the supernatural theory be true is of no
nsequence, so far as these other ones are concerned. The

naturalistic theories so far brought forward seem clearly to be failures. Without undertaking to maintain the supernatural origin of language, however, it may be proper to say some things about it, and let them have what weight they deserve.

Undoubtedly the form in which the view is stated may beget a prejudice against it which a modification of the statement would possibly remove. When it is baldly said that God revealed language, that a voice from heaven told man what to say, one may be reluctant to assent to the statement. But put the matter in another form, and no theist need hesitate, if need be, to admit that it is possibly true. As thus: God made man capable of speech, placed him where it was needful, amid sights and sounds designed to furnish materials of language. Having done this, he taught the infant man how to use his faculty, gave him the germs of language, assisted him to connect words and things, as a father now teaches his child. The first man was taught by a superior intelligence, as every other man is. There was no superior man. God took it upon himself. It was *dignus vindice nodus*.

Concede that there is a God, and that he can communicate with man, and all difficulty seems to vanish. Imagine God at man's creation taking him into his own companionship, conversing with him, teaching him; concede, as the Christian believes, that God has really come thus directly into speech and hand-grasp with man, and does not the difficulty vanish?

It is unscientific to believe that man was once gifted with a marvellous faculty of speech-creation which is now lost. It is equally unscientific to believe that man, as he now is, with no teaching from a superior intelligence, learned by his unaided struggles to frame words and sentences. Science looks at phenomena as they are. Science asks: How have men begun to speak, so far as is known? The answer is: By being taught by a superior. Has any one ever been known to begin in any other way? No. Has ever any one origi-

nated speech from his own faculties? No. "Then," says Science, "the inference is that the first man did not. The only logical inference is that the first man was assisted to speak by a superior intelligence, by living long enough in his society, and learning as a child learns."

We do not undertake to say that this is demonstrably certain. It may be true.

The fact of human language, the origin of which does not seem to be accounted for on any other scientific basis, becomes thus, perhaps, in turn, an intimation that there is some being superior to man — an intimation that man is the child of God, and was once under the direct and special pupilage of his Father.