

## Darwin's Biographical Sketch of an Infant.

Under this title the current number of that admirable journal of philosophy, called *Mind*, contains a diary kept thirty seven years ago by Mr. Darwin with respect to one of his own infants. His chief object was expression, and his notes were used in his book on the subject; but, as he attended to some other points, he has now given his observations more fully. He notices the various reflex actions of the first seven days—such as hiccupping, yawning, stretching, and, of course, suckling and screaming. On the seventh day, when the naked sole of the foot was touched by a bit of paper the child jerked it away, curling at the same time his toes. A warm soft hand applied to his face excited a wish to suck, which, says Mr. Darwin, must have been a reflex or instinctive action. During the first fortnight he often started on hearing any sudden sound, and blinked his eyes." At sixty six days he started violently when Mr. Darwin sneezed. "A few days before this same date he first started at an object seen; but for a long time afterward sounds made him start and wink his eyes much more frequently than did sight." Other manifestations as to sound are given. When he was one hundred and fourteen and one hundred and twenty four days old, corresponding facts are noted as to vision. Thus, on each, as on the ninth day, the infant's eyes were fixed on a candle. Up to the forty-fifth day nothing else seemed to fix them. On the forty-ninth day his attention was attracted by a bright red tassel, etc. The movements of his limbs and body are next recorded. These were for a time vague and purposeless, and usually performed in a jerking manner. There was one exception—he could, from an early period before forty days old, move his hands to his own mouth. When seventy-seven days old, he took the sucking bottle in his right hand, and would not take it in his left hand till a week later. Yet he afterward proved to be left handed. Other notices of development of power of directing movement follow. When he was one hundred and thirty-two days old if an object were brought as near to his face as his own hands were, he tried to seize it, the convergence of his eyes apparently giving him the clue. Mr. Darwin next notices the manifestations of mental qualities.

*Anger.*—Something like the manifestation of anger appeared on the eighth day before crying, and at ten weeks old when milk too cold was given him. When nearly four months old he showed violent passion. When a little over seven months old he screamed with rage because a lemon slipped away from him. At eleven months he would push away a wrong plaything given him, and beat it. When two years and three months old he would throw books or sticks, etc., at any one who offended him.

*Fear.*—Mr. Darwin thinks that this is probably the earliest feeling experienced by infants, as shown by their starting at any sudden sound and crying. His infant cried at strange sounds at four and a half months; was ready to cry at his father standing before him with his back turned to him at one hundred and thirty-seven days. At two and a half years he was pleased with animals at the Zoological Gardens, but alarmed at the larger animals in cages. "May we not suspect," says Mr. Darwin, "that the vague but very real fears of children, which are quite independent of experience, are the inherited effects of real dangers and object superstitutions during ancient savage times?"