

body, that the hand is, in effect, the principal organ of feeling, but merely because it is divided into many parts all moveable, all flexible, all acting at the same time, and are all obedient to the will; and which alone gives us distinct ideas of the figure and form of bodies. Feeling is no more than a contact of superficies, and the superficies of the hand are greater, in proportion, than that of any other part of the human body, because there is not any one which is so greatly divided. This advantage, when added to those derived from the flexibility of the fingers, suffices to render this part the most perfect organ to give us the exact and precise ideas of the form of bodies, and, if the hand had twenty fingers, it is not to be doubted but that the sense of feeling would be infinitely more perfect; and if we should suppose that it were divided into an infinity of parts we should have, even in the very moment of the touch, exact and precise ideas of the figure and difference of bodies, however small. If, on the contrary, the hand were without fingers, we should have but very imperfect and confused knowledge of the objects which surround us.

Animals which have hands appear to be the most acute; apes do things so resembling the  
mechanical