

“ expressly made for grasping that alone. Thus  
“ the smallest things of all we take up with the  
“ tips of the fingers; those which are a little larger  
“ we take up with the same fingers, but not with  
“ the tips of them; substances still larger we  
“ take up with three fingers, and so on with  
“ four, or with all the five fingers, or even with  
“ the whole hand: all which we could not do,  
“ were not the hand divided, and divided pre-  
“ cisely as it is. \_ For suppose the thumb were  
“ not placed as it is, in opposition to the other  
“ four fingers, but that all the five were ranged  
“ in the same line; is it not evident that in this  
“ case their number would be useless? For in  
“ order to have a firm hold of any thing, it is  
“ necessary either to grasp it all round, or at  
“ least to grasp it in two opposite points; neither  
“ of which would have been possible, if all the  
“ five fingers had been placed in the same plane:  
“ but the end is now fully attainable, simply in  
“ consequence of the position of the thumb;  
“ which is so placed, and has exactly such a  
“ degree of motion, as, by a slight inclination, to  
“ be easily made to cooperate with any one of  
“ the four fingers. And no one can doubt that  
“ nature purposely gave to the hands a form  
“ adapted to that mode of action, which they  
“ are observed to have<sup>ε</sup>; while in the feet, where  
“ extent of surface is wanted for support, all the

ε Lib. ii. cap. 9.