

plication of language to speak of any specially skilful use of it as an act of dexterity.

But the whole enquiry has to be reviewed *ab initio*, and various questions involved in it invite reconsideration. Is the superiority of the right hand over the left innate and congenital? Are there organic or constitutional reasons for the general preference? Or is it solely the result of acquired habit, consequent on the recognised convenience of simultaneous uniformity of action among members of the same community? A further question of considerable interest also invites inquiry, viz.: Is right or left handedness, however acquired, transmitted hereditarily?

The statistics of this enquiry have yet to be collected. Very different opinions have been expressed as to the proportion of left to right-handedness, and such evidence as exists seems to point to considerable variations in this respect at different times and among diverse nations. The general prevalence of righthandedness among savage nations is still a mere assumption. Its manifestations, apart from combined operations, in the rude arts of savage life, are obscure, and not likely to attract attention, unless sought for. But in their languages terms are to be met with, showing at an early stage the preferential use of one hand. Even in the rudest state of society, man as a tool-using animal has this habit engendered in him; and as he progresses in civilization, and improves on his first rude weapons and implements, there must arise an inevitable tendency to give the preference to one hand over the other, not only in combined action, but from the necessity of adapting certain tools to the hand. The Maories of New Zealand manifest a general righthandedness in the use of the musket, even in their wild war dances. Whether this should be regarded as an acquired European practice—no more, in fact, than a modified “Manual Exercise,” with what is practically a right-handed instrument,—or as the adaptation of native habits to a novel weapon, might seem of difficult solution; but it will be seen that the native language retains the evidence of right-handedness wholly independent of European influence.

The musket is fitted for a habitually right-handed people. So, in like manner, the adze, the plane, the gimlet, the screw, and other mechanical tools, must be adapted to one or the other hand. Scissors, snuffers, shears, and other implements specially requiring the action of the thumb and fingers, are all made for the right hand. A clasp-knife