

by a very simple experiment. If the observer lie down on the floor, without a pillow, and then ascertain what part of the back of the head touches the ground, he will find that it is the portion of the occiput immediately above the lambdoidal suture, and not the occipital bone. When the Indian mother places a sufficiently high pillow for her infant, the tendency of the constant pressure will be to produce the vertical occiput; but where, as is more frequently the case, the board has a mere cover of moss or soft leather, then the result will be just such an oblique parietal flattening, as is shewn on a British skull from the remarkable tumulus near Littleton Drew, Wiltshire. *Crania Britannica*, Decade III. plate 24.

But there are other sources of modification of the human skull in infancy, even more common than the cradle-board. More than one of the predominant head-forms in Normandy and Belgium are now traced to artificial changes; and by many apparently trifling and unheeded causes, consequent on national customs, nursing usages, or the caprices of dress and fashion, the form of the head may be modified in the nursery. The constant laying of the infant to rest on its side, the pressure in the same direction in nursing it, along with the fashion of cap, hat, or wrappage, may all influence the shape of head among civilized nations, and in certain cases tend as much to exaggerate the naturally dolichocephalic skull, as the Indian cradle-board increases the short diameter of the opposite type. Such artificial cranial forms as that designated by M. Foville, the *Tête annulaire*, may have predominated for many centuries throughout certain rural districts of France, solely from the unreasoning conformity with which the rustic nurse adhered to the traditional or prescriptive bandages to which he ascribes that distortion. All experience shows that such usages are among the least eradicable, and long survive the shock of revolutions that change dynasties and efface more important national characteristics.

But now that attention has been directed to the subject of undesigned changes thus effected on the human head, its full bearings begin to be appreciated; and there is even, perhaps, a danger that more may be ascribed to them than is legitimate. Such was undoubtedly the effect on Dr. Morton's mind from his familiarity with the results of artificial deformation on American crania; and were we to follow his example, we should be tempted to designate all the extreme varieties of the elongated dolichocephalic, acrocephalic, and brachycephalic skulls of British barrows, as mere modifications of the same ethnical form.