

liquids break the action of all the causes which may occasion any shock, it can but very seldom be injured, and never without some violent shock be received by the mother. Although the sense of feeling depends, in a great measure upon the fineness of the skin, yet, as it can have but little exercise in the foetus state, so can it have but little sensation arising from feeling.

In a new-born infant, the hands remain as useless as in the foetus, because, by swaddling they are not permitted to make use of them, till the end of six or seven weeks; by this absurd custom, we retard the unfolding of this important sense on which all our knowledge depends; and therefore we should act more wisely, were we to allow the infant the free use of its hands the moment of its birth, as it would then sooner acquire ideas of the form of things; and who knows how far our first ideas have an influence over our subsequent ones? One man, perhaps, possesses more ingenuity, or capacity than another, merely because in his earliest infancy he was allowed to make a greater and readier use of this sense. As soon as children are indulged with the liberty of their hands, they endeavour to touch whatever is presented