

of SENSATION, communicated to animal matter by a nervous system. When any object comes in contact with my finger I am sensible of its presence, and my finger is said to possess sensation ; but if I compress, or cut across the nerve which passes from the brain to the finger, this faculty of sensation is suspended or destroyed : the same object may come in contact with my finger as before, but no feeling is excited indicating to me its presence. This phenomenon is well known, for every one must sometimes, in lying or sitting, have compressed the nerve of the arm or thigh, and occasioned a temporary numbness and loss of accurate feeling in the limb. I perceive, then, by my own experience, that sensation is inseparably connected with the presence and condition of the nerves ; and that in man and the vertebrated animals, the nervous influence is developed and transmitted by means of the brain and spinal marrow.

In examining the other divisions of the animal kingdom, the presence of a nervous system, more or less developed, may be detected ; and in the animals of the higher orders, nervous filaments can be distinctly traced, from their origin to their distribution in the various parts to which they communicate sensation. But in proportion as the system of absorbing, secreting, and circulating vessels, becomes less, a corresponding diminution takes place in the nervous fibres, till at length both the vessels and nerves elude our finite observation, and we are