

organ—the want of an external ear; which, were it present, would be at variance with all that we have most to admire in the shape of the bird and the direction of the feathers, as conducing to its rapid passage through the air. With this obvious defect of the external ear, can we admit that the internal ear is also imperfect, notwithstanding the very remarkable acuteness of hearing, which we know to result from this internal structure, and from it alone? Now we do, in fact, find a different structure in the ear of birds; but, yet nothing is wanting. The *columella* is a shaft of bone of exquisite delicacy, which is extended from the outward membrane of the ear to the labyrinth or proper seat of the nerve of hearing. It occupies the place and performs the office of the chain of four bones which belong to the ear of mammalia. We have no authority, however, for affirming that the incus is here wanting more than any other bone of the chain.

From this mode of inquiry, we find that the sense of hearing is enjoyed in an exquisite degree in birds: that the organ of the sense is not imperfect, but is adapted to a new construction, and a varied apparatus—suited to the condition of the bird: and that there is no accidental dislocation or substitution of something less perfect than what we find in other classes of animals.

If we now look to the structure of the mandible of the bird, we shall find as curious, though