

intended that this sentient being shall be capable of perceiving. As these objects can, in the first instance, make impressions only on the organs situated at the surface of the body, it is evidently necessary that some medium of communication should be provided between the external organ and the brain. Such a medium is found in the *nerves*, which are white cords, consisting of bundles of threads or filaments of medullary matter, enveloped in sheaths of membrane, and extending continuously from the external organ to the brain, where they all terminate. It is also indispensably requisite that these notices of the presence of objects should be transmitted instantly to the brain; for the slightest delay would be attended with serious evil, and might even lead to fatal consequences. The nervous power, of which, in our review of the vital functions, we noticed some of the operations, is the agent employed by nature for this important office of a rapid communication of impressions. The velocity with which the nerves subservient to sensation transmit the impressions they receive at one extremity, along their whole course, to their termination in the brain, exceeds all measurement, and can be compared only to that of electricity passing along a conducting wire.

It is evident, therefore, that the brain requires to be furnished with a great number of these nerves, which perform the office of conductors of the subtle influence in question; and that these nerves must extend from all those parts of the body which are to be rendered sensible, and must unite at their other extremities in that central organ. It is of especial importance that the surface of the body, in particular, should communicate all the impressions received from the contact of external bodies, and that these impressions should produce the most distinct perceptions of touch. Hence, we find that the skin, and all those parts of it more particularly intended to be the organs of a delicate touch, are most abundantly supplied with nerves; each nerve, however, communicating a sensation distinguishable from that of every other, so as to enable the mind to discriminate between them, and