

human fingers; and lastly, it is requisite that the organ be so constructed as to be capable of being readily applied, in a variety of directions, to the unequal surfaces of bodies; for the closer the contact, the more accurate will be the perceptions conveyed. In forming an estimate of the degree of perfection in which this sense is exercised in any particular animal, we must, accordingly, take into account the mobility, the capability of flexion, and the figure of the parts employed as organs of touch.

As touch is the most important of all the senses, inasmuch as it is the foundation of all our knowledge of the material world, so its relative degrees of perfection establish marked differences in the intellectual sagacity of the several tribes, and have a considerable influence on the assignment of their proper station in the scale of animals.

Although the power of receiving obscure impressions from the contact of external bodies, and of perceiving variations of temperature, is probably possessed by all animals, a small number only are provided with organs specially appropriated for conveying the more delicate sensations of touch. The greater part of the surface of the body in the testaceous Mollusca is protected by a hard and insensible covering of shell. The integuments of Insects, especially those of the Coleoptera, are in general too rigid to receive any fine impressions from the bodies which may come in contact with them; and the same observation applies, with even greater force, to the Crustacea. The scales of Fishes, and of Reptiles, the solid incasements of the Chelonia, the plumage of Birds, the dense coating of the Armadillo, the thick hides of the Rhinoceros, and other Pachydermata, are evidently incompatible with any delicacy of touch. This nicer faculty of discrimination can be enjoyed only by animals having a soft and flexible integument, such as all the naked Zoophytes, Worms, and Mollusca, among the lower orders, and Serpents, among the higher. The flexibility of the body or limbs is another condition which is extremely necessary towards procuring extensive and correct notions