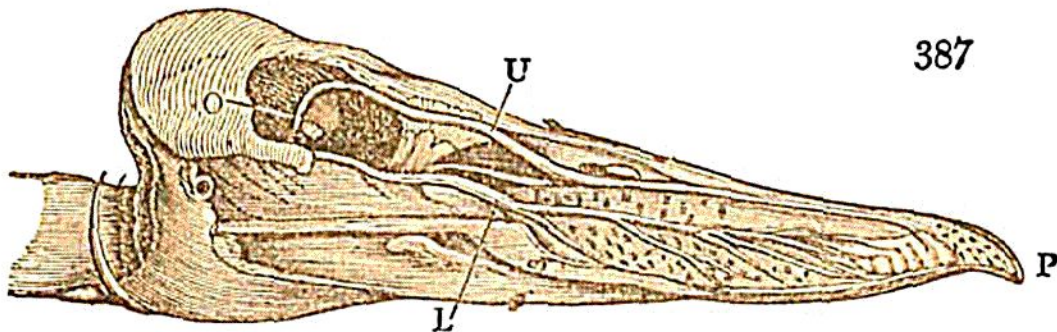


in Fig. 387, passing out through the orbit of the eye (o) in two large-branches, an upper one (u,) and a lower one (L,) the ramifications of which are spread over the mandibles,



both within and without. For the protection of the highly sensible extremity of the beak against the injurious impressions of hard bodies, a horny process (r,) similar, both in form and office, to the human nail, is attached to it, and its edges guarded by a narrow border of the same horny material; these receive a first, and fainter impression, and admonish the animal of approaching danger; if none occur, the matter is then submitted to the immediate scrutiny of the nerves themselves, and is swallowed or rejected according to their indication.*

It has been generally asserted that Vultures, and other birds of prey, are gifted with a highly acute sense of smell; and that they can discover by means of it the carcass of a dead animal at great distances: but it appears to be now sufficiently established by the observations and experiments of Mr. Audubon, that these birds in reality possess the sense of smell in a degree very inferior to carnivorous quadrupeds; and that so far from guiding them to their prey from a distance, it affords them no indication of its presence, even when close at hand. The following experiments appear to be perfectly conclusive on this subject. Having procured the skin of a deer, Mr. Audubon stuffed it full of hay; and after the whole had become perfectly dry and hard, he placed it in the middle of an open field, laying it down on

* Such is the account given by Sir Busick Harwood, in his "System of Comparative Anatomy and Physiology," p. 26.