

the touch at one time, and cold at another, (although its real temperature has not varied,) according to the state of the organ induced by previous impressions: and a very different judgment will be formed of its temperature, when felt by each hand in succession, if the one has immediately before been exposed to cold, while the other has retained its natural warmth. Similar phenomena may be observed with regard to all the other senses: thus, the flavour of odorous, as well as sapid bodies, depends much on the previous state of the organ by which they are perceived; any strong impression of taste made on the nerves of the tongue, rendering them, for some time, nearly insensible to weaker tastes. Sounds, which make a powerful impression on the auditory nerves, will, in like manner, occasion temporary deafness with regard to faint sounds. The converse of this is observed when hearing has been suddenly restored in deaf persons, by the operation of perforating the ear-drum.* The sensibility of the auditory nerves, which had not been accessible to impressions of sound, is found to be increased to a morbid degree. This was remarkably exemplified in the case of a gentleman, who, for several years, had been very deaf, in consequence of the obliteration of the Eustachian tube, so that he could scarcely hear a person speaking in a loud voice close to his ear. As soon as the instrument which had made the perforation was withdrawn, the by-standers began to address him in a very low tone of voice, and were surprised at receiving no answer, and at his remaining immoveable in his chair, as if stunned by a violent blow. At length, he burst out into the exclamation, "For God's sake, gentlemen, refrain from crying out so terribly loud! you are giving me excessive pain by speaking to me." The surgeon,† upon this, retired across the room; unfortunately, however, the creaking of his boots caused the gentleman to start up in an agony from his chair, at the same time applying his hand instinctively to cover his ear; but in doing this,

* See the note in p. 307 of this volume.

† M. Maunoir, of Geneva, on whose authority I have given this account.