

“ called nail ; but of a most convenient combi-
“ nation of the two : thus those parts which are
“ capable of being mutually brought in apposi-
“ tion, and which are employed in feeling for
“ minute objects, are fleshy ; while the nails are
“ placed externally, as a support to the former.
“ For the fingers are capable of holding soft sub-
“ stances, simply by the fleshy or soft part of
“ their extremity ; but they could not hold hard
“ substances without the assistance of nails ;
“ deprived of the support of which the flesh
“ would be forced out of its position. And on
“ the other hand, we could not lay hold of hard
“ substances by means of the nails alone ; for
“ these being themselves hard, would easily slip
“ from the contact of hard bodies.

“ Thus then the soft flesh at the tips of the
“ fingers compensating for the unyielding nature
“ of the nails, and the nails giving support to the
“ yielding softness of the flesh, the fingers are
“ hereby rendered capable of holding substances
“ that are both small and hard. And this will
“ be more evident, if you consider the effect of
“ an unusual length of the nails ; for where the
“ nails are immoderately long, and consequently
“ come in contact with each other, they cannot
“ lay hold of any minute object, as a small thorn
“ or a hair : while, on the other hand, if, from
“ being unusually short, they do not reach to
“ the extremities of the fingers, minute bodies