

CHAPTER VIII.

OF THE SENSES GENERALLY, INTRODUCTORY TO THE SENSE OF TOUCH.

ALTHOUGH we are most familiar with the sensibility of the skin, and believe that we perfectly understand the nature of the impressions upon it and the mode of their conveyance to the sensorium, yet there is a difficulty in comprehending the operations of all the organs of the senses—a difficulty not removed by the apparent simplicity of that of touch.

There was a time when the enquirer was satisfied by finding that in the ear there was a little drum and a bone to play upon it, with an accompanying nerve. This was deemed a sufficient explanation of the organ of hearing. It was thought equally satisfactory if, in experimenting upon the eye, the image of the object were seen painted at the bottom on the surface of the nerve. But although the impression be thus traced to the extremity of the nerve, still we comprehend nothing of the nature of that impression, or of the manner in which it is trans-