

The mechanism by which those external organs are suited to their offices, is highly interesting; it serves to shew (in a way that is level to our comprehension, as most resembling things of human contrivance) the design with which the fabric is constructed. Thus, the eye is so seated and so formed as to embrace the greatest possible field of vision; we can understand the happy effects of the convexity of the transparent cornea, the influence of three humours of various densities acting like an achromatic telescope; we can admire the precision with which the rays of light are concentrated on the retina, and the beautiful provision for enlarging or diminishing the pencil of light, in proportion to its intensity. But all this explains nothing, in respect to the perception that is excited in the mind by the impulse on the extremity of the nerve.

In like manner, in the complex apparatus of the ear, we see how this organ is formed with reference to a double course of impressions,—as they come through the solids or the body itself, and as they come through the atmosphere; we comprehend how the undulations and vibrations of the air are collected and concentrated; how they are directed, through the intricate passages of the bone, to a fluid in which the nerve of hearing is suspended; and we see how, at last, that nerve is moved. But we can comprehend