

admired in this thickening of the cuticle is, that the sense of touch is not lost, or indeed diminished, certainly not at all in proportion to the protection afforded by the thickening of the skin.

The thickened cuticle partakes of the structure of the hoofs of animals: and we shall now attend to the nature of the hoof, as the best possible illustration of the manner in which the sensibility of the skin is in a due degree preserved whilst the surface is guarded.

The human nail is a continuation of the cuticle, and the hoof of an animal belongs to the same class of parts. In observing the manner in which the nerves enter the hoof, we have, in fact, a magnified view of the structure which exists, being only more minute and delicate, in the cuticular covering of the fingers. We may take the horse's foot as the example. When the crust or hoof, which is insensible, is separated from the part which, during life, possessed vascularity and sensibility, we see small villi* hanging from the vascular surface, and which have been withdrawn from the crust; looking to the inside of the crust, we perceive the pores from which these villi have been pulled. These processes from the vascular surface are not merely extremities

* VILLI, delicate tufts, like the pile of velvet, projecting from the surface of any membrane.