rently homogeneous in its texture and composition. It is impervious to fluids, although capable of imbibing moisture, and of slowly transmitting a portion to the subjacent textures. Its thickness varies exceedingly in different parts; being adapted to the kind of protection it has to afford against pressure, friction, or other causes of injury. As it is not nourished by vessels, its outer layer is liable to become dry, and unfit for use: and accordingly a separation of this outward layer generally takes place from time to time, the loss being speedily repaired by a fresh growth from the surface in contact with the skin. This process is often performed periodically, as is most remarkably exemplified in serpents.

Special provisions are made for preserving the cuticle in a healthy condition; and more particularly for defending it from the injurious action of the surrounding element. These sometimes consist of a supply of oily fluid, prepared in small cavities which are situated in the skin itself, and have minute ducts opening upon the surface. These cavities, termed *sebaceous follicles*, are generally interspersed in great numbers on different parts of the body, abounding more especially in those places where folds occur, and where there is the greatest friction. In fishes, mollusca, and other aquatic animals, the skin is at all times defended from the action of the water by a viscid or glutinous secretion, prepared in this manner, and continually poured out on the surface, through ducts, the orifices of which are easily seen with the naked eye, disposed in a line on each side of the body.

Connected with the skin, and more particularly with the cuticle, are structures of very various forms, intended for giving additional protection, occasionally contributing their aid in progressive motion, and sometimes fashioned into weapons of offence. In this class should be included all the varieties of hair, such as wool, fur, feathers, bristles, quills, and spines, as well as the more ordinary kinds of hair. All these resemble the cuticle in their chemical composition, differing only in their degrees of hardness and condensation. Horn is formed of the same material as hair; as are also the