

skin may be the seat of excruciating pain, and yet the surface, which to the patient's perception is the seat of that pain, will be altogether insensible to cutting, burning, or any mode of destruction! "I have no feeling in all the side of my face, and it is dead; yet surely it cannot be dead, since there is a constant pricking pain in it." Such were the words of a young woman whose disease was at the root of the nerve of sensibility near the brain.* The disease destroyed the function of this nerve of the head, as to its property of conveying sensation from the exterior; and substituted that morbid impression on the trunk of the nerve, which was referred to the tactile extremities.

If we use the term common sensibility, we can do so only in reference to touch: as it is the sense that is most necessary to animal existence; and as it is enjoyed by all animals from the lowest to the highest in the chain of existence.

Whilst this sense is distinct from the others, it is the most important of all; since through it alone some animals possess the consciousness of existence; and to those which enjoy many organs of sense, that of touch, as we shall presently show, is necessary to the full development of the powers of all the other organs.

* See papers by the author in the Philosophical Transactions.