

ultimate result. From this contrariety of circumstances, the essential nature of the disease is evidently clothed in great obscurity, and offers a fit subject for our investigation.

That the chief symptom, the great intolerance of light, is dependent upon disease of the retina, it is difficult to conceive. We have but to observe how very readily and powerfully the slightest causes act upon the retina, causing blindness: while the length of the continuance of this complaint, its speedy removal without any ill consequences to vision, must convince us that at least it is not dependent upon organic disease. I have seen this symptom exceedingly severe, while the admission of the rays of light into the eye were prevented to a very great extent by a thick capsular cataract. If it is dependent upon an affection of the retina, it must be a species of sympathetic neuralgia, in which the sensibility only of the expanded nerve is greatly exalted; but I confess I am inclined to look upon the disease more as a neuralgic affection of the iris, ciliary nerves, and sometimes all the branches of the fifth pair supplying the eye. The observations of Mr. Lawrence, regarding injuries of the fifth pair of nerves, go to bear out this suggestion, and shew a vast sympathy between the retina and the ophthalmic branches of this nerve, which has not yet been explained.

The treatment of this disease for the most part was by purgative and alterative medicines, often repeated for a considerable period, and these were combined or followed with bark or steel, when there was any marked debility in the patient. A point of the utmost importance was a necessary attention to the diet, which should be light, nutritious, and not easily running into the acetous fermentation. I may mention a marked case of the influence of diet upon this disease. A little boy, about ten years of age, had had this complaint for eight or ten months, had been shut up in a dark room, his eyes covered with bandages, and the most feeble rays of light prevented from reaching the eye. He had been leeches, purged, and blistered, but to no effect; for still the intolerance of light continued as severe as ever. On inspection of the eyeball but the slightest traces of disease were visible. A few purgations of rhubarb, calomel, and jalap were exhibited, followed by grey and rhubarb powder; the eyes directed to be freely exposed to the air and light, having a green shade to intercept the more direct rays; a diet consisting of coffee and crackers for breakfast and supper, a little underdone fresh beef, with rice or custard pudding for dinner, was recommended. The symptoms rapidly subsided under this treatment, and in a few days I met him out walking before the house, greatly delighted that he could go to play. After a few days I called again, and was concerned to find that the intolerance of light had greatly returned. On questioning him, I found that he