

In none of these cases did the ophthalmia seem to proceed from contagion, but appeared to arise sporadically, from the state of the weather, and the local peculiarities of the atmosphere.

In all these cases free depletion was immediately practised, and blood was allowed to flow until syncope was induced. On examination of the eye after the bleeding, the deep red tint of the conjunctiva was changed to a paler hue, the lids were less swelled and distended, and the pain and uneasiness was greatly diminished; in but one case was it necessary to repeat the bleeding, in consequence of a return in the severity of the disease. Active purgatives, such as salts and tartarized antimony, were freely administered; considerable advantage seemed to be obtained by the nauseating effect the antimony produced, which evidently held the ground that had been gained by the previous venæsection. When the deeper tissues of the eye were evidently influenced in the disease, calomel and opium was exhibited with marked effect; and in these cases the pain in the brow only subsided upon the constitution feeling the influence of the remedy.

The local applications to the eyes consisted, in the first place, in the frequent ablution of the part with lukewarm water, in those cases in which it seemed to sooth the pain and afford a feeling of comfort to the patient, it should be often repeated. In many of these cases, however, I have found the local application of cold water freely applied to the eyes produce great relief. I have never had an opportunity of using the douche as recommended by Dr. Gerick, but I am convinced from the experience I have had of it in other complaints, that it is a powerful antiphlogistic remedy, and deserves a trial in such cases.

As soon as the active inflammatory symptoms had began to subside, as was known by the diminution of pain, the feeling of distension, and the distinct appearance of the purulent discharge, an injection between the inflamed lids of a solution of alum (four grains to the ounce of water) was often repeated; and after several trials, if this was found to be borne with advantage, a weak solution of the nitrate of silver (two grains to the ounce) was used, and this was gradually increased in strength to ten or twelve grains as the discharge diminished, and the swelling and thickening of the lids subsided. Under this treatment the chronic inflammation of the conjunctiva soon subsided, and in most cases the opacity of the cornea was easily removed, and the cornea restored to its wonted transparency, perfect vision being the result; but in some cases, it must be confessed, the success was not so complete, for more or less opacity remained in consequence of the lymph deposited in the structure of the cornea.

It is curious to observe these different results, and difficult to explain them. A knowledge of the minute structure of the part may, perhaps, assist our judgment.