

The cornea, is a term applied to the anterior transparent portion of the ball. It consists of six pellucid plates, and is received into a groove in the sclerotic coat, in the same way that a watch-crystal is received into its case. These plates are held together by a spongy elastic substance. Under the first plate are the little glands, which secrete an oily substance that gives the eye its brilliant appearance. When death approaches, this deposit turns gray, which is a sure indication of immediate dissolution.

The iris, is that dark curtain found behind the cornea, around which is deposited the coloring matter of the eye—black, blue, or hazel, as the case may be. In the centre of the iris is situated the *pupil*, a small orifice through which the rays of light pass to the focus, which is expanded or contracted, according to the quantity of light that enters it. Parrots and cats have a peculiar control over the pupil of the eye, contracting and expanding it at pleasure.

Behind the pupil are placed seventy folds, which act as faithful sentinels to prevent too much light from entering the eye.

The humors of the eye are three in number. The aqueous is situated immediately back of the cornea. It is supplied by little ducts, and never permitted to get dry. This fluid is also continually being drawn off, which prevents its growing stagnant. The crystalline humor, more dense than the others, resembles a common lens, being convex on both sides. The vitreous humor, is so called from its resemblance to melted glass, and occupies a much larger space than the rest.

The optic nerve resembles a cotton cord, about three quarters of an inch in length, which, when it reaches the back of the eye, divides into numerous filaments passing into the brain.

All animals destitute of hands, or any thing they can use instead of them, are provided with a third eye-lid, which slides from one angle of the eye to the other, having the office of clearing it from all obstructions. You may see the owl gazing at the sun all day; but he merely sees the light, for this eye-lid is drawn over the eyes to shelter them from the glare of the sun. Above the eye we find a row of glands, containing a fluid called tears, which is used for watering the ball of the eye. Without this wise provision the cornea would become dry and shrivelled. After the tears have watered the eye sufficiently, they pass through a bony tube into the nose, and thus perform the double office of watering the eye and preserving the sense of smell. There is also a row of glands at the edges of the eye-lids, containing oily matter, which is very useful when the eyes are inflamed; for at such a time the lids often adhere to each other, and it is by means of this oily deposit that they are separated. The reason why near-sighted persons cannot see distinctly is, that the cornea is too prominent. The image cannot be perfectly formed if it does not fall on the retina, and when the cornea is so, the image is formed before it reaches the retina, and thus produces near-sightedness. This can be remedied by the use of concave glasses. In old age the cornea flattens, and then the image is thrown behind the retina. On this account, those persons who have used glasses when young are enabled to dispense with them entirely in old age.

ALICE.

The Vision of Akiba.

In a remote country of the East, where continual summer ever smiles on fruitful fields, dwell the sage Taric l'Akiba. From infancy he had been nursed in the quiet vale where slept his fathers, and his maturer years knew no yearning to roam among foreign scenes. Skilled in the sacred mysteries of the Eastern Magi, and learned in all the philosophy of his time, his mind knew neither weariness nor void in its ignorance of the alternate song and wail that rose among the inhabitants of the distant valleys. The uncultured plains that stretched in amazing fertility around his humble home, amply supplied his wants; while the hills produced luscious fruit, sufficient to gratify the most pampered appetite. But amid all the beauties of which nature is so lavish in that voluptuous clime, the soul of Taric was discontented. The fountains of wisdom from which he had learned indif-

ference to his fellow men, had taught him contempt for their pursuits, and apathy to their pleasures—nothing remained on which he might bestow his affections. He had regarded the progress of the friends of his youth, those who commenced life's pilgrimage with himself. Various were the paths they chose. Some had sought wealth through toil and danger, and in its fruition found delight. Others had surrendered soul and sense to beautiful shapes of earth, vying with the radiant forms that flit through the bowers of paradise; and beguiled by their blandishments, the bright dream of life was passed without an awakening. But the wisdom of Akiba discovered to him that these were like the deceptive fruit that grew by the Dead Sea's basilisk waves. His days were spent in sighing for some object worthy the love of an exalted soul, and his nights in unavailing regrets that knowledge should make cheerless the lives of its votaries.

Thus were rapidly passing the years of Taric, when, at the close of a day, while reclining, as was his wont, in the door of his tent, he became absorbed in meditating upon his misfortune, that up-like threw its baneful shade over the sunlight of life. A repose, unlike that of mortal slumber, gradually stole over his senses, and the soul of the sage seemed invested with a new nature. Suddenly a form of more than earthly majesty burst upon his gaze. The locks of the stranger streamed in the air like the rays of the rising moon, and from his countenance beamed the light of all knowledge. A smile of ineffable sweetness played around the features of the visitor, as in tones which fell on the ear like the sound of running water to the desert traveller, he addressed the sage:

"Taric l'Akiba, thy prayers have been heard at the throne of Allah—the desire of thy life is granted. I am commissioned by him in whose hands are the keys of every truth, to reveal to thy dim gaze an object worthy a mortal's highest adoration. To him at whose nod I bow, are the workings of nature in earth's deepest recesses, and among the stars of heaven, of whose hidden and awful mysteries thy sages never dreamed. Follow, and thou shalt witness the consummation of thy wishes!"

Prompted by a resistless impulse, he obeyed. In a moment they stood on a lofty eminence, around whose base lay stretched in boundless space the wonders of the universe. "Behold!" said the guide. The eyes of the sage fell upon a Persian landscape, the high hills of which towered with many a feathery lit into the purple light of early day, while the shades of night yet hung over its vales. But the misty curtains quietly rose into upper space, and exposed to his gaze lake and vale, winding river and sinuous shore. The eye of Akiba had often looked on a scene like this, but by some mysterious sympathy he saw it in its true light. The broad lines of sparkling water swelled beneath the wings of the breeze, and the valley in many a mimic undulation glittered with the hues of innumerable flowers. From these waving censers morning sent up its incense as pure and sweet after the lapse of storm and age, as it rose at the hour of creation. The myrtle bowers that hung round the mountain's brow like a golden cincture, were replete with the songs of birds, and their varied tints shone through the leafy shade like a gleam from paradise. Still higher, groves of palm life-like tossed their broad arms in the gale, while from the festooning vine descended showers of purple fruit.

The circling hours flew on. It was high noon. Perfume and song had ceased to rise, for bird and flower slept beneath the triple light of an orient sun, and the infectious repose seemed stealing over the senses of Akiba. Anon soft showers descended from a clouded sky, and the rain-god's spanning bow rose in mid-heaven. As the sage looked upon the glowing arch, he felt that art could never reach its dimmest tints—that nature's richest colors were incomparably beyond the most gorgeous dyes from the looms of Cashmere.

Rapidly, like the shifting pictures of a panorama, the scenes passed before the bewildered gaze of Taric. The last of those magic hours was before him. The monarch of that day of beauty had sunk to his western home, surrounded by the cloudy forms of air, like a crimson panoply. Then rose the firmament to trace her path through the blue sky, in lines of silver light, and the starry spheres wheeled through their vast orbits. The