

THE
BRITISH AMERICAN JOURNAL.

ORIGINAL COMMUNICATIONS.

ART. LVIII.—*On Chronic Ophthalmia.* By STEPHEN F. SMITH, Licentiate in medicine, U. C.

Every surgeon having anything to do with the eye will have frequently remarked, in cases of chronic ophthalmia with opacity of the cornea, how much greater and more rapid was the improvement in the lower margin of the cornea than in the upper; and this observation is borne out by the operation for artificial pupil, which in nine cases out of ten is performed in the lower half of the cornea more by reason of the opacity of the upper half than on account of the obstacle presented by the presence of the upper eyelid. This great difference in the clearing up of the cornea was particularly marked in a case which came under my notice in February last.

The patient, a girl of eighteen, had been suffering from inflamed eyes for two years, during the last eighteen months of which her sight had almost entirely failed her, she being but able to distinguish light from darkness. Large blood-vessels traversed the conjunctiva in all directions, completely hiding the pupils; and the whole membrane presented an appearance not unlike that of red flannel. The eyelids were very much swollen, somewhat inverted and strongly granular, the upper one particularly so. The Epiphora was so great that the eyelids were everted with some difficulty. She was of a very bilious temperament, and her general health was not good.

The usual treatment was adopted:—lids everted and touched with sulphate of copper—conjunctiva scarified, followed by application of nit. argenti—blisters perseveringly applied behind the ears, and the Bichloride Hydrarg. exhibited in the dose of one-sixth of a grain three times a day. To quiet the circum-orbital pain, a weak solution of Extract of Belladonna was applied daily around the eyes, and a pill administered every night, composed of Extracts of Taraxacum and Podophyllum.

Under this treatment there was marked improvement, the inflammation rapidly succumbing and the cornea gradually clearing up. By the month of May the lower margin of the cornea was quite clear and the pupil plainly visible by directing the patient's eyes upwards. The aqueous humor was unclouded and the iris free and obedient to the action of Belladonna, quite contrary to my expecta-