

vision in the retina, that the direct light shall fall upon a part less sensible, the reflected light upon a part more sensible. If, in full day, and in the open field, the eye be directed southward, the rays from the sun enter the eye at the time that we are looking to certain objects: and it is perfectly clear, that if the sun's rays struck a part of the retina as sensible as the spot in the centre or axis, they would extinguish all secondary impressions: the glare would be painfully powerful, as when we look directly to the sun. If a momentary glance towards the sun produce a sensation so acute that we see nothing for some time after, would not the same happen were the retina equally sensible in all its surface? A similar effect takes place in a chamber lighted with candles; we do not see the person immediately on the other side of the candle: for there the direct light interferes with the reflected light, effacing the slighter impression of the latter.

We perceive, therefore, that if the retina were equally sensible over its whole surface, we could not see. Let us, then, observe how we do actually see, and how the organ is exercised. There is a continual desire of exercising the sensible spot, the proper seat of vision. When an impression is made upon the retina, in that unsatisfactory degree which is the effect of its striking any part but the centre, there is an effort made to direct the axis towards it, or, in