

of its thoughts; while these things obtrude themselves on notice, and, by calling attention to them, *direct* the train of thought into a channel it would not have taken of itself. Retinal impressions they can hardly be, for what is to determine the incidence of pressure or the arrival of vibrations from without upon a geometrically devised pattern on the retinal surface, rather than on its general ground. The effect of some cause in the nature of pressure I on one occasion experienced, and it manifested itself quite differently, viz:—as an Ocular Spectrum, consisting in a round, deep purple, feebly luminous spot, dying gradually away into darkness at the borders. It was not exactly in the middle of the visual area, and was caused by no external light: for it was perceived one morning immediately on waking in the morning twilight, and with the face shaded from a direct view of the window.

(15.) It is quite clear that a regular geometrical pattern cannot be suggested to the imagination by forms having no regularity, however presented to it: so that the explanation which in the other instances adduced might have a certain plausibility, breaks down in these cases. It may be said that the activity of the mind, which in ordinary vision is excited by the stimulus of impressions transmitted along the optic nerve, may in certain circumstances take the initiative, and propagate along the nerve a stimulus, which, being conveyed to the retina, may produce on it an impression analagous to that which it receives from light, only feebler, and which, once produced, propagates by a reflex action the sensa-