

with gratitude and affection ; we should, on the other hand, lose the beams of filial or parental love ; of which even a momentary smile outweighs an age of pain.

As in mathematical reasoning the truth of a proposition is sometimes indirectly proved by shewing that every process of proof but the one proposed would lead to an absurd conclusion : so, though the supposition of a general and total privation of light is on all probable grounds of reasoning inadmissible, it may yet serve to shew us indirectly the value of the good we enjoy. But it is sufficient to have given a few instances of the necessary effects of such a privation : and it will be a more grateful task to enumerate the actual benefits which we derive from the agency of light.

In the vegetable world, upon the products of which animal existence ultimately depends, light is the prime mover of every change that takes place, from the moment the germ emerges from the soil. Exclude the agency of light, and in a short time the most experienced botanist might possibly be at a loss to know the plant with which he is otherwise most familiar ; so completely obliterated are all its natural characters, whether of colour, form, taste, or odour. Thus the faded colour of the interior leaves of the lettuce and other culinary vegetables is the result of such a degree of compression of the body of