

Independently of this punctum cœcum, we have to observe that the whole surface of the retina is not equally sensible to light. There is a small spot, opposite to the pupil and in the axis of the eye, which is more peculiarly sensible to visual impressions. An attempt has been made to ascertain the diameter of this spot; and it is said, that a ray at an angle of five degrees from the optic axis, strikes exterior to this sensible part. But we shall, on the contrary, see reason to conclude, that the sensible spot is not limited to an exact circle, that it is not regularly defined, and that the sensibility, in fact, increases to the very centre.

Some have denied the existence of this extreme sensibility in the centre of the retina, attributing the distinctness of vision to the circumstance of the light being made to converge, through the influence of the humours, more correctly to this point. I shall, therefore, show how impossible vision would be, were it not that the sensibility of the retina increases gradually, from its utmost circumference, to the point which forms the axis of the eye.

We see objects by reflected light, at the very instant that direct light enters the eye. As the impression by the direct light is many times stronger than the reflected rays from the object, the vision of the object would be destroyed by the contrast, were there not this admirable pro-