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VIII. *Account of a new Operation lately performed with Success in France, for restoring Sight in certain Cases of Blindness.* By C. DEMOURS.

C. DEMOURS, who performed this new and ingenious operation, presented a memoir on the subject to the National Institute, which was read on the 15th of June last. From this memoir the present account has been extracted.

The eye is a ball or globe filled with different transparent humours, which are contained in several membranes. The outermost of these membranes is called the cornea; it is transparent, and placed before the iris, which is the coloured part of the eye, and which itself forms a second membrane; but the latter is not transparent, and would prevent the rays of light from penetrating to the hind part of the globe of the eye, were it not pierced with a round hole, called the pupil. A little beyond this hole is the crystalline humour, forming a kind of lens, through which the rays of light are obliged to pass; and by means of which they form distinct images on the retina at the bottom of the eye. The humour contained in the inside of the globe is called the vitreous humour; it is perfectly transparent, as is also the aqueous humour, which is placed between the transparent cornea and the crystalline.

C. Sauvages, on whom C. Demours performed the operation which is the subject of this article, had for several years an abscess in the cornea, in consequence of which the aqueous humour was entirely wasted, and the transparent part of the cornea had become totally white and opaque in the right eye, and for about four-fifths in the left eye. This eye is represented in the annexed engraving (Plate V. fig. 5). The transparent cornea, C, suffers to be seen towards the upper part but a small portion of the iris. The white spot covers entirely the round hole or pupil, which exists in the centre of the iris, and through which alone the rays of light can pass.

C. Demours, taking advantage of the transparency which still existed towards the upper part of the cornea, made there a small aperture, denoted by the letter A; and having introduced

roduced into that aperture a delicate pair of scissors, made a small hole in the iris, of the size of a seed of sorrel, indicated in the engraving by the letter D.

Through this hole, made in a non-transparent membrane, the rays of light now enter, and form images on the retina at the bottom of the eye. It is, therefore, an artificial pupil which supplies the place of that covered by the white spot of the cornea. But as behind this new pupil there is no crystalline humour to collect the rays with sufficient accuracy on the retina, C. Sauvages is obliged, in order to read, to make use of a very convex glass, such as is used by persons who have undergone an operation for the cataract, and who have lost the crystalline humour. He does not employ the glass, however, except in cases which require more distinct vision; and he still possesses the invaluable advantage of seeing well enough to direct his way, and to discern perfectly every object around him. By means of this ingenious operation, sight in future may be restored to the greater part of those who have lost that faculty by large spots or white scars, cases hitherto considered as incurable; provided that some part of the cornea, opposite to the iris, has remained transparent.

IX. On the Cultivation and Use of the Syrian Silk-Plant.

By J. A. MÖLLER, Director of the Westphalian Patriotic Society.*

I. Description. THE silk-plant, *Asclepias Syriaca* LINN. known by the old botanists and our gardeners under the name of *Apocynum Syriacum*, came originally from Syria and Egypt. It is indigenous also in North America, and thrives so well in Europe, that it would appear that it is suited for all countries and climates. The root is perennial, and will last from ten to twenty years. In the month of April it throws out, like asparagus and hops, a great number of shoots, the principal stem of which rises to the height of seven or eight feet. This stem, which is as thick

* From the *Transactions of the Academy of the Useful Sciences at Erfurt.*