

as already stated, administered by the most ignorant quacks), but two fatal cases have occurred: in the first of which an autopsy revealed the fact that the lungs of the patient were perfectly riddled with tubercles, and in the second place death was caused by swallowing a cork placed between the teeth to keep the jaws open. This speaks volumes in support of the fact that of all anæsthetic agents this is evidently the least dangerous which can be used. With respect to its employment in connection with animals, having had no opportunities of observing its administration under such circumstances, I am unable to say anything; but the reference to them reminds me of a peculiar exhibition I witnessed when a student at the Jefferson Medical College, some twenty years ago. A much respected and deservedly eminent obstetric teacher, Prof. Charles D. Meigs, who had conceived a very strong prejudice against sulphuric ether, particularly in obstetric practice (and who frequently asserted that the pains of labour which a mother bore made her love her child the more, and that an obliteration of such suffering by anæsthetics would have a tendency to lessen maternal affection), informed the class one day that he would demonstrate to the students what a very dangerous agent sulphuric ether was, by administering it in their presence to some animals. An old sheep and a lamb were accordingly brought into the lecture-room, and after considerable trouble, the expenditure of much time, and by *cutting off the supply of atmospheric air entirely*, the young animal died, but the old one most obstinately and pertinaciously refused to do so, although most decided efforts were made by the attendants to induce suffocation, and continued for an hour and a half, when at last it was decided to let the poor creature alone. Notwithstanding the large amount of ether used, and the improper administration, the animal did not appear particularly affected by it.

It is matter of regret, for Dr. Richardson's own sake, that he should have assumed such a decided opposition to an agent which, in this country, has been employed with advantage, not only in minor surgery, but also in numerous capital operations. It looks very much indeed as if his judgment had been warped by a too fond regard for local anæsthesia. The experience acquired by him in connection with his observations on the coagulation of the blood should have induced more discretion than is manifested by the espousal of such a cause as opposition to the use of nitrous oxide. In the case referred to, after writing a most elaborate and apparently exhaustive work on the "COAGULATION OF THE BLOOD" (*the Sir Astley Cooper Prize Essay for 1856*), wherein it is stated most emphatically, as the result of carefully conducted and frequently repeated experiments, that the coagulation of the blood is due to the escape