

W. H. Waite, of Liverpool, in a lecture before a chemical society of that city, and subsequently by Dr. Thomas W. Evans, of Paris, the latter not only visiting London expressly for that purpose, and demonstrating its applicability on various occasions, but, in addition, very liberally presenting to the Dental Hospital of London "one hundred pounds [\$500], to be used for the purchase of apparatus and materials to manufacture nitrous oxide gas," so that the agent might be thoroughly tested in that institution, has met with the most decided opposition on the part of a number of medical writers. The most prominent among these is Dr. B. Ward Richardson, well known as the discoverer of local anaesthesia by means of the ethereal spray, whose name has been frequently referred to in the most favourable manner in this magazine by the writer. Had this gentleman restricted himself to animadversions of the indiscriminate use of nitrous oxide on the part of ignorant and unprincipled persons (who have not only removed thousands of teeth which might have been saved for many years of valuable service, but, in addition, have placed the lives of those who have come under their hands in jeopardy, by using a potent remedy of whose composition they knew nothing, and therefore likely to employ an impure as a pure article, and in cases of impending death from its employment would be unprepared to meet such an emergency with any prospect of saving the life of the patient), there would have been much propriety in his objections. When, however, employing such strong language as the following (in italics), he indicates not only strong prejudice, but, in addition, a want of familiarity with its employment as an anaesthetic in the practice of surgery. At a recent meeting of the Medical Society of London, as reported in the *Lancet*, he remarked: "It was painful to see the childish excitement with which nitrous oxide and its effects had recently been dwelt upon. The gas had been treated as an unknown, wonderful, and perfectly harmless agent; whereas, in simple fact, it was one of the best known, least wonderful, and most dangerous of all the substances that had been applied for the production of general anaesthesia. No substance had been physiologically studied with greater scientific zeal or more rigid accuracy, and no substance had been more deservedly given up as unfit and unsafe for use. It had caused death in the human subject, and on animals it was so fatal that, with the utmost delicacy in its use, it was a critical task thoroughly to narcotise an animal with the gas without actually destroying life." What the mortality attendant upon its use may have been abroad I know not, and any cases reported there have not come under my notice. In this country, notwithstanding the thousands of times which it has been and still is employed (too often, alas!