On the other hand, certain conditions being fulfilled, sulphuric ether is of all anæsthetics the safest, and therefore the only one worthy of entire confidence These conditions are pure ether, not oxidised through imperfect corking, containing no alcohol, sulphurous acid or volatile oils, the presence of which is apt to produce imperfect etherization and cause bronchial irritation. When ether, free from these impurities, is administered, statistics of its use demonstrate its perfect safety The committee appointed some years ago by the Massachusetts Medical Society to report upon anæsthetics, state most unhesitatingly, that a "death really attributable to the inhalation of sulphuric ether has yet to be recorded," and quote in support of this statement several eminent authorities, both in Europe and America.

In 1857 it was affirmed that, in the civil and hospital practice of the city of Lyons, ether was exclusively used for eight years consecutively, and that during that period no deaths from the inhalation of anæsthetics occured, and this assertion was substantiated by reference to the Civic Registry Again, from the first administration of sulphuric ether in Boston, to the present time, where it has been used in some thousands of cases, no fatal consequences have followed.

From the frequent deaths from chloroform, a healthy spirit of enquiry has been excited amongst even its most strenuous supporters, and we find such men as Ricord and Erichsen inveighing against its use, the former speaking of its exhibition as an accident that complicated an operation, the latter stating that "when a patient was fully under chloroform, he was on the verge of death."

Erichsen again in his Science of Surgery states very plainly the reasons for the use of chloroform. He says, certainly ether is a safer agent than chloroform, no death having as yet resulted from its administration, and the only argument in favour of the use of chloroform over ether is: chloroform is the most convenient agent, its effects being produced more quickly and no disagreeable smell left behind, as is the case with ether In fact we use chloroform in preference to ether, on the same principle that induces us to incur the increased risk of an express, rather than submit to the slower but safer progression of a parliamentary train. In a note to Druitt's Chapter on anæsthetics he quotes on the authority of the *Westminster Review* that the total number of deaths from chloroform up to