

### Local Anæsthetics.\*

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In this paper I claim nothing new, nothing original, having merely grouped different authorities to suit the subject. Have copied from American system, English Pharmacopœia, Gorgas, Prof. N. S. Hoff, Prof. Sadtler, *Dental Cosmos* and *Catching's Compendium*.

In dentistry, local anæsthetics may be divided into two classes :

1. Those which obtund the pulp to overcome sensitiveness in excavating, or for relief of pain, viz. : creasote, carbolic acid, oil of cloves, to be used alone or combined with morphia. A mixture of acetate of morphia, with enough oil of cloves to form a paste, rarely fails to give relief.—*Gorgas*.

2. Those used to relieve pain in extracting. It is of the latter class I wish to speak. Our expectant eyes are eagerly watching for some reliable anæsthetic, because those we have are more or less uncertain—I almost said failures, chiefly owing to the density of the structures investing the teeth. Electricity was used thirty years or so ago, but gradually lost its popularity. But the interest has been revived of late years by means of the electric vitiator, which also yet has some advocates. I believe Dr. Smith, of Cornwall, has read a paper before this society on the subject ; so I will condense remarks on the vitiator. It seems to relieve pain chiefly by complicating the sensations, for it has no anæsthetic qualities. Some persons are very susceptible to electricity, and even a weak current is to them almost intolerable, yet, with others, one could wish for no better means ; thus its uncertainty is vexatious.

A Committee of the College of Dentists, of England, after very careful investigations with about fifty persons, reported : "That in no case was there anæsthesia, but that the good effects were due to—(1) Division of sensation ; (2) Less difficulty of extraction compared with other extractions ; (3) Syncope more or less marked ; (4) Differences in methods of operating."

Cold—or rather, freezing—is another old method, at one time much in vogue, produced by ether spray or rhigolene, before nitrous oxide became popular. Lately, freezing has attracted attention, owing to chloride of ethyl. Ether spray said to be efficacious ? likely, not only from freezing but during vaporization patient must inhale a certain amount, and thus produce systemic effects. Ethyl chloride is now the most convenient. No question

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