

lives that would have been lost if their owners had remained at home—the health of the average has been impaired by the exposures of the soldier's life. The veteran has a greater number of days of sickness than other men of the like age-period, and, of course, has a somewhat less expectation of life.—*Journal of American Medical Association.*

DEATHS UNDER CHLOROFORM.—We regret to have to open the new year with a record of four further recent cases of death under chloroform. The first was that of Alfred George Smith, aged 45, a brewer's laborer, of Faversham, who died under chloroform at University College Hospital, on January 6th. Two years ago the deceased, who had cancer of the tongue, underwent an operation at the hospital, when a portion of his tongue and lower jaw were removed under the influence of an anæsthetic. A fresh growth on the roof of the mouth, affecting part of the jaw, having developed, another operation became necessary in order to prolong his life. Dr. Walter Tate, the resident medical officer, by whom the anæsthetic was administered, stated in his evidence before the coroner (Dr. Danford Thomas) that the deceased "took the anæsthetic badly from the start. He breathed with difficulty, and, after a very few minutes, became blue about the face." Witness added that he then stopped the inhalation, and the deceased was removed to the operating theatre, where more chloroform was administered, when his breathing ceased altogether. Recourse was had to artificial respiration, but the deceased never rallied. With the cancerous growth unremoved he could not have lived long in any case. On the first occasion he took the anæsthetic well. Dr. T. Wood, house surgeon, deposed that death was due to asphyxia whilst deceased was under the influence of the anæsthetic. The coroner remarked that it would have been almost impossible to perform so painful an operation without the administration of an anæsthetic. Considering the vast number of patients to whom anæsthetics were necessarily administered, it was marvellous how small was the proportion of deaths—something like 1 in 4,000 or 5,000 cases. A verdict of "death from misadventure" was returned. A further case which

formed the subject of an inquest at Guy's Hospital was that of George Clark, aged 50, a laborer. Dr. Reginald Freeland, the house surgeon, in his evidence, stated that he saw the deceased on his admission to the hospital. He was suffering from a simple fracture of both bones of the right leg. The injured limb was put in splints, and on the afternoon of January 7th, as he was unable to get into a satisfactory condition, he administered chloroform to the patient at 5 o'clock. He had only been under its influence for a few minutes (and had taken a small quantity, about half a drachm) when witness noticed that he turned a very bad color and began to breathe heavily. Directly after the witness had stopped giving the chloroform deceased ceased breathing. Witness then resorted to artificial respiration for 2½ hours, and used an injection. The man's heart kept beating all that time, but he never breathed again, and soon died. The *post mortem* examination showed that all the man's organs were perfectly healthy. Death was due to paralysis of the respiratory centre, due to the chloroform. In reply to the coroner, it was stated that it was impossible to have set the leg without the use of chloroform. A verdict of death from misadventure was also returned in this case. A third case was that of a carman, aged 47, admitted to the Middlesex Hospital on December 19th, who had suffered a great loss of blood from the bowel, the cause of which it was necessary to ascertain. Chloroform was administered from a Krohne and Sesemann's inhaler, with respiration indicator (a modification of Junker's) for this purpose. The patient took the chloroform well and passed through the intoxication stage, the face being but slightly congested. About four minutes after, when he had been lifted on to the operating table, the respiration ceased suddenly, the pulse continuing for a time to beat with regularity. Silvester's and Howard's methods of artificial respiration were resorted to, tracheotomy performed and other means tried, but without effect. The *post mortem* examination showed the lungs to be remarkably emphysematous, and the heart infiltrated with fat. A fourth case was that of a shepherd, named M'Laren, of Crieff, between 50 and 60 years of age, to whom chloroform was administered for the purpose of