

different hospitals of Paris, where it was administered for the purpose of reducing dislocation of the head of the humerus.

On the other hand, compression of the vagus is perfectly free from any danger whatever to life. I have used it in the most varied circumstances, and have never yet witnessed any instance whatever to inspire me with anxiety or doubt as to any fatal consequence.

To the ordinary observer the effects of vagal pressure appear to be attended with considerable danger, which is, however, more apparent than real. In the case of an individual falling to the ground as if struck by lightning with all the symptoms of insensibility so graphically described by Aristotle, the heart is always found to be pulsating, and the respiration in play, moreover the physiologist knows of no means of permanently affecting the muscular irritability of the heart by any agents, either mechanical or electrical, applied to the trunk of the vagus. Indeed the two vagi may be divided, as is well known, without arresting the action of the respiratory or the circulatory organs.

It is quite different with the ordinary anæsthetics, particularly chloroform, whose influence continues to accumulate in the various muscular organs, especially the heart, gradually destroying their irritability so insidiously that death may be imminent without our being aware of it. The only way to ascertain this death of the heart in the case of an animal is to expose and subject it to galvanism, when we observe that the toxic influence of the chloroform has destroyed its power of reacting under the influence of electricity and other agents.

We cannot shut our eyes to the fact that the danger attending the administration of chloroform is still considerable in the laboratory of the physiologist, even in the comparatively healthy subjects with which he has to deal, and until this danger can be obviated it is almost hopeless to expect perfect immunity in the operating room.

Guided by the ideas I have above enounced, regarding the nature of the cases where vagal pressure is most applicable, I have lately tried it in a case of tooth extraction. A molar tooth was extracted from an out-patient of the Hôpital Cantonal by one of the house-surgeons. While the patient was seated I was prepared at the back of the chair to apply pressure on both vagi. As soon as the key was gently applied round the tooth I began the pressure, and gave a sign for the operator to commence. The result was perfectly satisfactory. According to the statement of the patient she had suffered no pain, and was most enthusiastic in her thanks to me. At the moment of extraction the