

Upwards of 150 experiments were performed to ascertain the influence of chloroform on the heart and blood-pressure, particular attention being directed to demonstrate the influence of all possible conditions that seemed at all likely to affect the blood-pressure during the period of chloroform narcosis.

The conclusion arrived at by the Commission from these experiments is that when chloroform is given continuously by any means which ensures its free dilution with air it causes a fall in the mean blood-pressure. As this fall continues, the animal first becomes insensible, then the respiration gradually ceases, and, lastly, the heart stops beating. However concentrated the chloroform may be, it never causes sudden death from stoppage of the heart.

The above conclusions are directly opposed to the conclusions arrived at by a committee appointed by the British Medical Association a few years ago, and also to the experiments on animals by many independent investigators.

Drs. H. C. Wood and Hare of Philadelphia have recently (*Medical News*, Feb. 22, 1890) investigated this subject, and they arrive at the conclusion that it is possible for the heart and respiration to be practically simultaneously paralyzed by chloroform, and, further, that cardiac arrest may occur before respiratory arrest. They distinctly reaffirm the soundness of the opinions almost universally held up to the present time, "that chloroform acts as a powerful depressant poison both in respiration and circulation; that sometimes the influence is most felt at the heart, and death results from cardiac arrest; that in other cases the drug primarily paralyzes the respiratory centres, whilst in other instances it seems to act with equal force upon both medulla and heart."

The experiments of the Hyderabad Commission were conducted with the greatest care, and the only possible way to reconcile the conflicting statements of such competent observers in India, England and America is that the dogs in India are affected differently from those in England and America. After all, it is a very secondary matter how chloroform kills a dog; the living question is, *How does it kill man*, and what are the best means for combating this lethal tendency?