

REMARKS
ON
CHLOROFORM
IN
ALLEVIATING HUMAN SUFFERING.

ADDRESSED PARTICULARLY TO THE FEMALE SEX,

SHOWING THAT THERE IS

NO SCRIPTURAL AUTHORITY

TO INTERDICT ITS ADMINISTRATION

FOR THE

MITIGATION OF PHYSICAL PAIN UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.

BY
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FELLOW OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS, LONDON; HONORARY SURGEON TO
THE LIVERPOOL NORTHERN HOSPITAL; LECTURER ON CLINICAL SURGERY;
AND LECTURER ON PHYSIOLOGY TO THE LIVERPOOL COLLEGIATE INSTITUTION;
LATE SURGEON-ACCOCHEUR TO THE LADIES' LYING-IN CHARITY.

LONDON:
PUBLISHED BY S. HIGHLEY, 32, FLEET-STREET.

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PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.

THE great importance of the subject which I am about to bring before you, and the experience which I have had respecting it, have led me to consider it a duty which I owe to the public, to add my own testimony to that of many others, to the great advantages of a discovery in science, which has for its object the mitigation of human suffering.

It appears to me, therefore, that if I can correct the mistaken views, and remove the prejudices which, to a considerable extent, prevail against its employment, I shall contribute in no slight degree to the great object of all our professional services—the *diminution of danger*, and the *alleviation of pain*, under whatever *form* or *circumstances* they may be presented to our notice.

The boasting empiricism of designing men, and the self-delusion even of the sincere, render great caution necessary in the adoption of all new systems, and the decision as to the degree of confidence to be placed in all novel remedies.

This prudent hesitation especially appertains to the medical profession, who are the natural guides and guardians of the public on all subjects of this nature; and we ought not to be surprised if they have sometimes carried it beyond reasonable bounds.

Truth, however, always emerges the more clearly the more deeply it is investigated; and the greater the doubts and the stronger the opposition which it encounters, (if it is able to overcome them,) the more full and perfect is its ultimate confirmation.

If this cautious prudence is requisite even in minor innovations, it is more especially so when the mind is startled by the proclamation of an agent, by which intellect triumphs over our bodily nature, and hence, all that can be done in advocating its adoption, is to bring forward the evidence which has been accumulated, relying on the ultimate certainty of a right decision.

The objections which have been advanced against the use of Chloroform, and which it is my wish in the present pamphlet, if possible, to overcome, arise more particularly, as I almost daily witness, in the minds of the female sex themselves, on religious grounds.

Some, indeed, of our profession coincide in these objections; but their hesitation or opposition is founded chiefly in the supposed danger which may attend its administration, either immediately or in its results.

This latter class of objections, every additional day's experience proves to be more and more chimerical; and

the statistical accounts from various hospitals have already sufficiently proved, that there is not only perfect unconsciousness of pain, under the most severe and protracted surgical operations, but that the result of such operations is infinitely in favour of its exhibition, the cure being more easily effected and the mortality much diminished.

I will therefore endeavour to show, that no Scriptural authority can be adduced to interdict its administration; that no danger attends its exhibition when due caution is observed; and then point out the great and almost incalculable advantages which it affords.

The importance of Chloroform in alleviating suffering, stands out among the wonderful discoveries of the day in which we live, as the most valuable of all to the interests of humanity; and it is especially valuable to that sex who through all ages have been the saddest sufferers.

Being yet new, some hesitation may well exist in accepting the blessing. It is but right and reasonable we should know whither the path leads on which we may be entering, and not rush blindfold on our way.

Looking upon women to be not only reasonable but intellectual beings, I shall simply endeavour to offer them such facts as may make them so far conversant with this subject as to enable them to form their own decision respecting its value. My own practice has added conviction upon conviction to my own mind. I look

upon the discovery of the uses of Chloroform as a boon and a blessing to the world—a boon and a blessing which I dare not, even if I would, withhold. And I am not alone in this faith. I have with me many of the names illustrious in medical science, such as Dr. Simpson, physician-accoucheur to her Majesty in Scotland, Dr. Conquest, Dr. Rigby, Dr. Protheroe Smith, Mr. Curling, and a host of others, who are all advocating the practice with that zeal which a warm and earnest humanity can alone inspire. The mention of these names will prove that the higher and more educated classes in our own country have, to a great extent, gratefully accepted the administration of Chloroform in Nature's most trying hour, that in London and Edinburgh especially, the practice is prevailing; and though I would make no invidious comparisons, yet we all know that our Scottish neighbours are eminent both for extreme caution and rigid piety, and that, consequently, their example must have a just and prevailing influence. Other countries also are enjoying the blessing, more especially France, Germany, and America. Shall our great town of Liverpool be last, where in all honourable and intellectual competition we would wish it to take a leading part? It belongs chiefly to that moiety of our community whom I am principally addressing to determine this point.

I wish it to be perfectly understood, that I am not writing for my medical brethren. I am well aware that

many able pamphlets have been published on this subject addressed exclusively to the profession. Mine, however, is intended for the public: offered with all humility, but with that deep conviction which I would fain see transferred to other minds. Remembering, then, to whom I am writing, I shall use no *professional language*; I shall simply adduce those reasons which have appeared conclusive to the minds of those practical and scientific men who have advocated the administration of Chloroform, and which seem to be unanswerable, because they are yet unanswered, joined to some arguments which have arisen in my own mind; but as experience, after all, is the safest test of truth, I shall give the results of my own practice as the strongest argument and ground for my own belief.

REMARKS, &c.

It is not without a feeling of surprise, that at this enlightened period a sense of duty should induce me to endeavour to prove the Scriptural right of availing ourselves of a great discovery in science to mitigate human suffering.

Had arguments been required to prove its efficiency, we should all at once have acquiesced in the justice of the demand. But no, this is not the case. It is not a question of power, but of lawfulness; not of efficacy, but of sinfulness. Nay, the very competency of the agent to the required end is distorted into a ground of rejection. Because it is powerful, it is sinful; because it controls nature, it is against nature; because it mitigates pain, it must be a device of Satan; because it relieves suffering mortality, it cannot be from God.

Such are the objections that I almost daily meet with, and which common humanity commands me to answer with simplicity and integrity. I desire also to do this with the deepest respect, for religious scruples demand our highest consideration. They who draw motives of conduct from another world, and look for the rewards of self-denial beyond the grave, are entitled to our highest esteem. Their very prejudices ought to be approached with delicacy. It is thus that my regret has been the

deeper, when I have been met with mistaken but conscientious objections against the administration of Chloroform from that sex whom, I hesitate not to say, God himself designed to be the greatest gainers by its reception; and it is as much for their sake as for the sake of truth, that in the midst of the duties of a profession which allows little rest either to mind or body, I have taken up my pen to offer such arguments as I think must be conclusive to every candid and reasonable mind.

The question is, whether there is any Scriptural authority to "interdict the administration of Chloroform for the mitigation of physical pain under any circumstances." To answer this great question we must refer to divine authority, and carefully examine the bearing of those texts upon which it rests.

We will look back to Adam in a sinless Paradise, and what do we see there? Adam fallen into a deep sleep. Not a *natural*, but a *supernatural* sleep. And for what purpose? That God himself might extract from his side that portion of mortal material from which he designed to frame the future sharer of his happiness. It would have been an equally easy exercise of creative power for the Almighty to have formed Eve as he had done Adam, from the dust of the earth; but had he done so, there would have been two separate creations of mortality, with divided interests. The *oneness* of our race would have been destroyed. It could no longer have been said that in Adam all died, or that in Christ all were made alive. It is, however, most remarkable that this deep sleep should have been sent down on Adam for the very purpose for which we advocate the administration of Chloroform. It may be said that Adam not having sinned, was not yet liable to suffering.

True, but his nature had been made capable of suffering, and this sleep was the divinely applied means of sparing him its infliction.* We have here a surprising prototype, a remarkable example, prefiguring the wonderful results which science has been permitted to attain in our own days.†

If we read that portion of the third chapter of Genesis which gives the brief history of the first daring act of disobedience, we shall be struck with one circumstance. The serpent is cursed for man's sake; the ground is cursed for man's sake; *but man is not cursed; woman is not cursed*; a sentence of *punishment* is pronounced, but no curse. That punishment is labour. Labour is imposed upon woman, not only as man's assistant in his various tasks, but also, as she was the first transgressor, in the additional form of those physical efforts from which man is exempt, and which are denoted in the sentence, "*In sorrow*," &c.

It is remarkable, as stated by Professor Simpson,‡ that the Hebrew word ETZEBH, which, in our version of Genesis, 3d chapter, 16th verse, stands translated "*sorrow*," literally signifies *physical effort*, and not

* "God caused a deep sleep to fall upon him, *which was intended not only as an expedient for the performance of the wonderful operation upon him without sense of pain, but as a trance, or ecstasy likewise*, (for so the seventy have translated the word) wherein was represented to his imagination both what was done to him and what was the mystical meaning of it, and whereby he was prepared for the reception of that divine oracle concerning the sacred institution of marriage, which presently, upon his awaking, he uttered."—*Vide Stackhouse's History of the Bible. Book I, chap. 1, page 10.*

† "Dazzled and spent, sunk down; and sought repair
Of sleep, which instantly fell on me, call'd
By nature as in aid, and closed mine eyes.
Mine eyes he closed, *but open left the cell*
Of fancy, my internal sight; by which,
Abstract as in a trance, methought I saw,
Though sleeping, where I lay, and saw the shape
Still glorious before whom awake I stood."—
Vide Paradise Lost. Book VIII, line 457.

‡ See his "Answer to the Religious Objections," &c.

that *bodily suffering* which it is commonly supposed to express; while, on the other hand, corporeal anguish, whether attendant on this or any other casualty, is plainly denoted by two totally different words, "HHIL" and "HHEBHEL." Giving one instance of the application of each of these Hebrew words will answer all the purpose of accumulating a long list, and I shall therefore offer no more. In our Bible version of the 127th Psalm, the word "ETZEBH" is introduced into the second verse, as plainly signifying *physical exertion*. "It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of ('ETZEBH') sorrows." While in opposition to this, the words "HHEBHEL" and "HHIL," as plainly point to *bodily pain*, in the 22d chapter of Jeremiah and the 23d verse, "When ('HHEBHEL') pangs come upon thee, the ('HHIL') pain as of a woman, &c."*

In the days of innocence no labour was required from man, as the earth brought forth her fruits spontaneously, and there was neither pain, nor sickness, nor death; and children would have been born without *pain* or *effort*, as the ripe fruit falls from its parent tree.

But when sin entered into the world, all this was changed; the earth was cursed for man's sake; the sentence of "labour" was entailed upon all the descendants of Adam, and they were "to eat their bread with the sweat of their brow." This sentence of "labour" extended to woman also, as the helpmate of man; and as she was the first and perhaps chief transgressor, the great function of her sex as the mother of mankind was to be attended with much physical exertion, ("ETZEBH,") with multiplied efforts, which in a state of innocence

* "Is in (HHIL) pain, and crieth out in her (HHEBHEL) pangs."—*Vide Isaiah, 26th chap. 17th v.*

would have been wholly absent. "I will multiply thy sorrow ('ETZEBH') and thy conception;" or, as it is better rendered, "I will multiply thy *sorrow* (i. e., thy efforts) in thy conception," i. e., "thou shalt bring forth thy children with multiplied efforts."

In this interpretation you will see that no allusion is made to *actual pain* or *suffering* attending these efforts; they may be either greater or less, or, in some cases, almost wanting, and vary from numerous causes. Nor are we anywhere forbidden to mitigate or remove them if we are able.

We cannot prevent the physical efforts (the ETZEBH;) they are essential to the performance of the function; they are the penalty denounced which we cannot take away; but we can mitigate or remove the *pain* attending them, because it is not necessarily included in the sentence; and hence, if we are warranted in employing every means which a beneficent Creator may place in our hands, surely it must be a grievous error that would persuade us to withhold them.

Those who imagine that the good and beneficent God pronounced a curse on woman in her hour of suffering, which they seem to consider a sin to attempt to lighten or remove, ought narrowly to examine a doctrine which impugns the mercy of a Father who loves us as his children, and who has made the most costly of sacrifices to save us from every injury. But now let us consider one or two objections against a theory so injurious both to God and to ourselves. If the suffering attending the performance of the function to which I have been now referring be a divine decree, it must be universal throughout the whole world. Is it so? Assuredly it is not, excepting in a very modified degree. Those females who are excluded from the blessings of civilised life,

are exempted from its evils also; for the delicacy of organisation, which entails upon European women the excess of bodily suffering, is chiefly to be attributed to the enervating effects of a sort of hot-bed cultivation. The squaws of an Indian Chief know but little of the tortures that sometimes almost drive reason from her throne, and transform a high-minded intellectual woman into a raving maniac. Extremes of climate do not make the difference. In icy regions, as well as burning zones, the same immunities from the sufferings consequent upon excessive refinement are to be found. In Abyssinia, Greenland, the West Indies, among the red-skinned tribes of North America, and the dark children of Morocco, we find the same exemption from that which mistaken theology would consider the Almighty's irrevocable and universal curse. But we have shown that it is not *universal*, and we hope also to show that it is not *irrevocable*. If a high degree of luxurious and refined cultivation have produced or augmented the evil, I earnestly trust that science, under God's blessing, and, as it ever should be, working as his agent for good, may have the glory of offering the remedy, and that *that* remedy may be accepted with a right-minded thankfulness, instead of being rejected under mistaken views of submission to his will.

It appears to me that there is one fact which, I am inclined to think, has been too often overlooked in theology, though I venture to say so with much diffidence, which is, that *God did not curse either Adam or Eve*, as we generally take it for granted from early-received impressions, and which at once overturns every scruple to the employment of means of mitigating an infliction which we conceived to be divinely appointed.

There is another point of view in which this matter

ought to be considered, which also offers a distinct and positive refutation of every conceivable objection. If the Almighty had pronounced a sentence, that sentence *could not be annulled*, and all our attempts to avert it would have been in vain. And thus, instead of acting in rebellion against him, we have the inspiring hope of being obedient to his will, in endeavouring to overcome all opposition to what is intended for the good of mankind and the alleviation of the sufferings of our fellow-beings.

We all know that the curse which Almighty Justice has really pronounced upon our fallen race is immutable as far as all human agency is concerned, though we look forward in the hope of faith to its abolishment through the Saviour's perfect satisfaction for our sins. Death is that curse. Not one amongst us would dare to say that science could rescue man from this execution of God's judgment. We must all die. We are universally agreed in this appalling truth. Sad are the sufferings which lead us to the grave, which end but in the grave. This is the true curse. This we cannot reverse. Supposing, then, that you will not be convinced that woman's "*sorrow*" is not her curse, let us for a little while consider it in that light, and let us place it by the side of this unquestionable curse—death, and see how the arguments on one side affect the other.

If it be wrong to endeavour to mitigate the sufferings of one sick bed, it is wrong also to endeavour to mitigate the sufferings of another. Death is a positive sentence. It is the will of God. Why do we not leave the sufferer to his sufferings? Why do we not leave the dying to die? The Mahometan, in the lethargy of his fatalism, lifts up his eyes in pious apathy and exclaims, "It is the will of God." The natives of New Zealand carry their aged parents into the woods, and leave them to the Great Spirit

to perish, bereft of all care. But what says Christianity? You remember the parable of the Samaritan: that gives us the answer by example. The spirit of Christianity inspires every being who receives it with the desire to do good. It is wo unto them if they do it not. And what is good? To relieve the sick, as well as the sorrowful. In the Old Testament the medical profession is frequently alluded to with eulogy: in the New, one of the Evangelists was a "beloved physician;" but more, far more, honour than this did Christ himself confer upon us in assuming the character of the "Great Physician." We all know he healed the sick, restored sight to the blind, made the lame to walk, cleansed the leper, healed all manner of diseases among the people—diseases that must have terminated in death. So, too, gifted by him with the power, did the Apostles. Medicine, then, is an art sanctioned and sanctified by God himself. However humbly and weakly, those who practise it may follow the example of the Saviour. It is therefore perfectly untenable to suppose that we are not justified in using every means that improving science can suggest in alleviating, or, better still, removing the "ills that flesh is heir to."

I take it for granted that not one of the zealous opposers of the administration of Chloroform would venture to carry their own principle to its full extent, and say, that we ought to withhold all the aids of science from the suffering and the dying, and yet a principle is valueless if it will not bear this extension. The principle on which *we act* is the very reverse of this strange dogma. It is to do good to the utmost extent of which we are capable. Where, indeed, are we justified in stopping short? At what point shall humanity pause in her labours? When shall religion say, "I have done

enough?" Yet there are difficulties which must all be settled if we could measure the extent of our services, of scruple at what point we shall leave our patients to their own unassisted sufferings.

Even while I write, the amazement grows upon me that individuals should be found who professedly, on conscientious and religious grounds, oppose the mitigation of human suffering. But the opposers of this new branch of science will say, "*We do not oppose the mitigation of human suffering.*" Then where is our difference? "*This species of suffering is an exception.*" What! the greatest of all sufferings the exception to relief? "*It is the curse of God.*" I trust that I have shown you that it is not a curse, but if it were, so is all sickness—so is death. "*It is sent of God.*" So are all human sufferings. And the same God who has sent them has commanded us to relieve them. What right has one human being to withhold relief from another? They who keep back the good commit the sin. God has only entrusted them with the means of relief as stewards. "*You may relieve up to a certain point.*" Up to a certain point! At what point of succour dare I stop, when the sufferer is before me, and God has placed the means of help in my hands? Are we to do good by halves? "*But we object to this mode of relief.*" Then on the same principle must all modes of relief be objected to, for Chloroform stands precisely on the same footing as any other medical appliance—with the simplest herb that the cottager gathers in the field, or the commonest drug the mother fearlessly administers to her child. Who ever scrupled, on conscientious grounds, to take an opiate? And what is Chloroform but an opiate? I do but urge upon a sufferer whose "*sorrow*" seems too great for human nature to bear, and which all my professional

experience will not enable me to regard with indifference, the use of a medicine which I know, from continued trials, to be efficacious and safe. Can there be a choice between mortal agony and possible death on the one hand, speaking ever, as I trust, in humble submission to the divine will, and mitigation of pain, or exemption, with ultimate safety, on the other ?

There can be no difference of opinion that *labour* was Adam's temporal punishment for disobedience ; and the sentence which a merciful God pronounced in the first moment of transgression assumes an aspect of the strictest impartiality, if we consider Eve's in the same light also. Their sin was the same, and it is in accordance with our ideas of God's justice that their punishment should also be similar. It may possibly be objected that Eve's sin, being the first, was, in being so, the greater evil. But even allowing that our first mother's transgression was the greatest, and supposing that her punishment was, like our first father's, *physical effort*, it can scarcely be disputed that her portion is, in truth, the heaviest. And is not this the very reason why it should be lightened ? In our own day it would be perfectly superfluous to attempt to prove the lawfulness of sparing the aching flesh and the strained sinews of our poor labourers by the substitution of machinery ; but it has not always been thus. All the great discoveries of science have been met by opposition. Printing, the greatest blessing of any and every age, diffusing not only the arts of civilisation but religion, valuable to time, more valuable to eternity, was looked upon as sorcery. Vaccination, another blessing which mistaken prejudice opposed with all its power, and on exactly the same principles of right feeling but wrong reasoning, which we now find armed against the use of this wonderful remedial agent. I

remember some five and twenty years ago a lady thus objecting to have her only child vaccinated. "If I did so I should expect the Almighty would send some worse infliction." Do we not all smile with pity at these prejudices now? Let us beware lest we imitate and repeat them. There is no interdict in Scripture against the relief of bodily pain, any more than there is an interdict against lightening manual labour. Nay, the whole spirit of Revelation breathes exhortations to this duty. Were there no sorrowers there could be no solacers. As well might we object to the ploughshare because it was more efficient than the spade in lightening the labour of that sentence pronounced on Adam—"by the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat bread"—as raise an opposition against the use of Chloroform, when applied to the alleviation of woman's "*sorrow*;" and the day is not far distant when we shall wonder at the one as much as we now smile at the other.

But as all ultra views are injurious to truth, I earnestly desire to avoid even their semblance. Death is the dread sentence pronounced by a righteous God against sin, and all bodily suffering, according to its degree, approximates more or less towards the accomplishment of this general doom. Excess of labour produces suffering, and in this sense the "*sorrow*" apportioned to the daughters of Eve becomes indeed a part of the curse—the curse of death—the curse of the whole human race, *and not a curse exclusively pronounced on woman.*

Looking at it, then, for a moment, in the light of a real curse, let us consider whether the sufferers should be left to bear it for themselves. When God gave us a Saviour did he not with him freely give us all things? He gave us not only all that we had forfeited, but

treasures of blessings which we had never known before. At first he placed us in an earthly Paradise, but then he gave us an inheritance in heaven; from being his creatures we became his children, and he who was no less than equal with the Father became our brother. Is it possible, then, that God, who gave his well-beloved son to save us from our sufferings, can have any pleasure in hearkening to the groans and cries of his tortured children? Did not our Saviour shed tears over human suffering, and can you think that he beholds yours unmoved? Is ours a God who finds satisfaction in our anguish? Let all that he has done for us answer the question. Can bodily pain, think you, expiate sin? Why, then, did Christ die for us? Is there one presumptuous enough to say, "Why does he inflict this sorrow?" Have I not been endeavouring to prove to you that its aggravated form is not *His infliction*—if it were so, it would be general throughout the world—but the result of the enervating habits of over refinement? If, however, this "*sorrow*" were really the curse, it was certainly the curse of the *first* and not of the *second* dispensation. There is no curse in the New Testament—there is nothing but blessings. Would you go back to the old law, and reject the glorious liberty of the Gospel? You know that old things have passed away, and all things have become new. Would you bear the curse for yourselves, and not suffer Christ, who is so willing, to bear it for you? Christ, who voluntarily died that he might stand in your stead, and bear every curse that sin had ever brought down upon itself.

* I have just looked up a letter which a clergyman wrote to a medical friend, in which he declares "that Chloroform is" (I quote his own words) "a decoy of Satan, apparently offering itself to bless woman; but, in the end," (he continues,) "it will harden society, and rob God of the deep earnest cries which arise in time of trouble for help."—*Vide Appendix, Scriptural Authority, &c. By Protheroe Smith, M.D., page 43.*

Would you take your own place as an offender against God, and for yourself endure His wrath and His curse? And yet this is the very thing you are insisting upon doing. You say that God has pronounced a curse, and you are resolved to bear it. Where, then, is Christ? You cannot bear a part, and expect him to bear the rest. He must be all in all to us, or nothing. We must be either in Christ or out of Christ. There are no half-measures. I leave this argument with regret. It ought to be convincing to every Christian mind. Has Christ left me under any curse? Was there any curse which he either could not or would not save me from? The answers to these simple questions ought to be sufficient to silence every objection of a religious nature; and every one born in a Christian land can answer such questions without one moment's hesitation.

If there are some women who suppose that God has ordained seasons of suffering to which they feel it a duty to submit, and that the word "*sorrow*" means either mental or bodily pain, or both, they will do well to remember, that the sentence does not determine either its amount or its duration, and we know that the amount of suffering varies with almost every sufferer. The anguish is heavier on the one, lighter on the other, and even with all the aid of this wonderful and valuable remedy it must still remain so. For pain is in all cases more or less endured, before it would be prudent to administer Chloroform.

Those remedies which for ages women have never thought of scrupling to accept stand on precisely the same ground as Chloroform, only less efficacious and less useful in their degree. If these were lawful, so too is Chloroform. They ameliorated pain to a certain degree, but with unpleasant consequences; *this to a still*

higher degree, and with the happiest and most harmless results.

In concluding this part of my subject, I would only add, that I firmly believe it requires but a little time to disperse those mists of prejudice which obscure the truth in honest and conscientious minds, respecting the use of Chloroform in alleviating not merely physical pain, but also the dreaded anticipation of approaching suffering.

Having now, as I hope, sufficiently proved, that not only are we warranted by all Scriptural authority and analogy, but that it is our duty also to avail ourselves of every boon which a kind Providence has afforded for the alleviation of human suffering, I will endeavour to give you a brief account of the nature of this great agent, Chloroform, and the mode of its operation.

By this discovery, we are not only able to mitigate many bodily sufferings, but also much mental anxiety, which renders those physical evils so much more intense and dangerous. Its benefits extend to the practitioner also, as it not only relieves him from witnessing sufferings which are so distressing to every feeling mind, but enables him, without unnecessary or injurious haste, to apply his professional services, unembarrassed by the cries and struggles of his patient.

Many objections have been made to the administration of Chloroform, but chiefly by those who have had little or no practical experience of its effects, and as I hope to show, with no substantial foundation. The public, however, in general, as well as that sex to whom it offers the greatest advantages, are competent to judge for themselves. Every succeeding day serves to increase the number of those who, having experienced the blessing of this valuable remedy, are adding their testimony to its beneficial results. For my own part, in directing

attention to this subject in plain and simple language, divested of medical technicalities, I do so in the conviction that "he that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."

The discovery of anæsthetic remedies marks a new era in the science of medicine. The application of the vapour of Ether was, I believe, first practised by Dr. Morton, in America, for the alleviation of pain in dental operations. The strong and penetrating mind of Dr. Simpson, of Edinburgh, at once appreciated its value; and to him the honour is due for perfecting and recommending its administration in obstetric practice.*

Let me here remark that I shall confine my observations solely to Chloroform, as I have found it, after many trials, far superior to any other form of anæsthetic agent with which we are at present acquainted. I fully believe that it may be given with perfect safety; its effect is more rapid and transient than that of Ether, and more readily suspended when it may be considered desirable; it produces no unpleasant symptoms, such as headache, giddiness, sickness, or incoherent talking, but on the contrary is followed by a train of agreeable sensations.

Before proceeding further, however, it is necessary that I should offer to my readers some explanation of the physiological action of Chloroform, to enable them to understand the nature of its effects upon the system; first briefly stating, that it is a fragrant volatile fluid, obtained by the distillation of spirits of wine over powdered chloride of lime. The physiological action of Chloroform, or the mode in which its effects are

* "The first instance in which Ether was adopted occurred in my own practice in Edinburgh on the 19th January, 1847." "The first case in which I employed Chloroform occurred on the 8th of November, 1847."—*Dr. Simpson's Report on the Early History, &c.*

manifested on the system, is of great interest and importance. The first effect is that of gentle excitement, which, however, under cautious administration, is generally so transient as scarcely to be observed, and which is speedily followed by repose or gradual depression.

This influence is first manifested on the cerebral system, and *sensation* or *volition* are either partially or wholly suspended, while the vital functions remain unaffected, or are even performed with greater vigour. In this first stage of its influence, when all outward perception and sensation are suspended, *the mental actions may continue in operation*, and are described as being of a placid and delightful nature, similar to those so beautifully alluded to by our poet Milton in the case of our first father, Adam.

In some instances *consciousness remains unimpaired*, and individuals are fully aware of all the steps of a formidable operation performed upon them, while they are perfectly insensible to pain. Surely this cannot but be regarded as a great additional blessing to mankind.

It is essential also to bear in mind, that the same amount of Chloroform which suspends the action of one portion of the nervous system will act as a *stimulus* to others. Thus, for instance, the quantity which is sufficient to deaden sensation of pain will excite the voluntary muscles; if the quantity be further increased, the voluntary muscles are paralysed, and the involuntary ones *excited*. This is the extent to which it must be carried in order to facilitate, and prevent the dangerous consequences which follow *parturition*; as, in this case, the muscular fibres are *stimulated to increased action*, whilst the voluntary and antagonising muscles are rendered quiescent; and hence the period

of labour is shortened, whilst its pains are wholly unfelt.

If the inhalation should be carried too far, the power of the reflex or involuntary system of nerves may become eventually suspended; and in this final stage of its effects great danger to life might ensue. But an over-dose of any of the powerful remedies which we are daily in the habit of administering, such as Prussic Acid, Opium, and others, would be more hazardous and equally fatal; and it is indeed truly surprising, that in so many cases in which it has been exhibited, (in many instances neither cautiously nor judiciously,) so few dangerous or fatal consequences have been recorded. We are not, therefore, to abandon its employment from vague ideas of danger, but to regulate it with judgment and caution. There is also this advantage in the administration of Chloroform, that its effects are gradual, and much more speedily discerned and regulated than those of medicines taken into the stomach; and its effects on the system may at *any moment be suspended*. And thus it is essential that its influence should not be carried further than what is sufficient to produce the precise effect intended.*

Dr. Protheroe Smith, in his published report, says, that having used anæsthetic agents in his practice for more than a year, he never found them produce injurious effects, although he kept up the influence for terms varying from half an hour to twenty-eight hours. Dr. Conquest, in his "Letters to a Mother," throws the strongest weight of testimony into the same scale, adducing the evidence of some trying and dangerous

* I cannot now enter more fully upon the physiological effects of this agent; but to those who may take an interest in this subject, I hope to have an opportunity shortly of entering upon a fuller explanation in my Lectures at the Collegiate Institution.

cases in which he resorted to the aid of Chloroform with the happiest and most beneficial results; and in rendering to Dr. Simpson his due meed of praise, he goes on to say, "My own experience fully substantiates all his statements, and confirms the accuracy of all his deductions." Mr. Imlach, of Edinburgh, says, "That out of above three hundred cases in which I have employed Chloroform, I have never seen the least deleterious effects result from its use, *but the reverse*." And again, "I have seen or traced no after bad consequences of any kind whatever." Dr. Simpson's own evidence is full, clear, and comprehensive; giving the results of an extensive practice, calling into operation all the combinations of a powerful mind. He gives the stubborn truth of facts—a whole array of cases in which the administration of Chloroform appears to have been a blessing sent especially from heaven for the sparing earth's suffering children from the severest of human pangs. His language is, "I never had the pleasure of watching over a series of more perfect or more rapid recoveries; nor have I once witnessed any disagreeable results to either mother or child." Several, also, of my own medical brethren have expressed to me their conviction of the value and safety of Chloroform; amongst these I may mention my friend and colleague, Mr. Stubbs,—Mr. Bickersteth, Mr. Batty, Mr. Manifold, Mr. Atcherly, Dr. Watson, Dr. Sandie, and Mr. Harris. In a note which the latter gentleman kindly forwarded to me, he states, "I can at this moment recal to my mind about nine or ten *cases* in which I have administered Chloroform, in which anæsthesia has been induced: the periods which the patients were kept under its (Chloroform) influence varied from eight hours to half an hour. Three of the *cases* were first children, in which insensi-

bility to pain was maintained for eight, six, and four hours." He then adds, "Nor have I observed at any time objectional effects follow—rather the reverse." So far, then, if the testimony of honourable and skilful men is to be relied on, danger to life, instead of being increased, is materially lessened. Many of the reports put into circulation respecting the fatalities resulting from inhalations being mere idle stories, have died natural deaths, and it would be worse than useless to raise their ghosts for the sake of laying them. Prejudice now is the only spirit that we should wish to cast out.

Another of the objections which have been brought against Chloroform is, that in preventing pain we retard recovery, pain being necessary to the cure of the patient; and this I really confess myself to be at a loss to answer, having always been accustomed to consider pain as the very condition of disease which we most desire to obviate. In numberless cases pain and disease are so inseparable that we cannot cure the one without curing the other. In common acceptation pain and disease are one, for pain is a mere result of a cause, and that cause is the disease we wish to cure. If we cure the disease we remove the pain, and if we allow the pain we necessarily allow the disease also. In some cases pain alone, in comparatively trivial diseases, is sufficient to destroy life. "Pain in excess," (says Mr. Travers, a distinguished surgeon,) "exhausts the principle of life; so that either its continuance without interruption, or the super-addition of the slightest shock subsequent to its endurance for a certain period, is fatal." We know that protracted pain in the cases of which I am more particularly speaking, often leads to fatal results. Long suffering may extinguish

life as certainly as the most vital ailment. Here again let us turn to the *evidence of facts*, which prove beyond the shadow of a doubt that suffering becomes dangerous in proportion to its duration. From tables published by Dr. Collins in his Report of the Dublin Lying-in-Hospital, we find that of those whose sufferings were terminated within *two hours*, only one in *three hundred and twenty* of the mothers died; that where it varied in duration from *two* to *six* hours, one in *one hundred and forty-five* died; in those in whom it continued from *seven* to *twelve* hours one in *eighty* died; where it endured from *twelve* to *twenty-four* hours one in *twenty-six* died; and out of all those whose sufferings were prolonged beyond *thirty-six* hours, one in every *six* perished. If, then, it be true that pain can kill, what can be meant by the strange assertion that it is necessary for the cure of the patient?

But it has been said that Chloroform cannot be administered without danger to the patient, or as a safe remedial agent. Is Prussic Acid a safe medical agent? Is Arsenic a safe medical agent? Is Calomel a safe medical agent? Is Opium a safe medical agent? Yet these are all given and taken both by practitioner and patient. Undoubtedly Chloroform requires, like all other powerful remedies, care in its administration, but not more, nay, I fearlessly say, not so much as several of the above-named agents, which are daily and hourly used in practice. In operative and dental surgery it has been received by thousands upon thousands, and numbers have taken it from mere motives of curiosity or amusement, or even from very idleness, to test the nature of its operation, and they have all done this with impunity, for, as far as I know, not the slightest accident or injurious result has arisen from even this

careless and injudicious (not to say presumptuous) trifling with this wonderful agent. One circumstance alone goes far to guarantee its safety—the *moment* the Chloroform is withdrawn and inhalation ceases, its effects begin at once to disperse, and the respiration of the common air arouses the sleeper. The effects cease as soon as the cause is withdrawn. In fact, it may be truly asserted, that Chloroform may be administered by those who understand it, with even a more accurate estimate of its results than any other medicine. Still I am far from allowing that it ought ever to be entrusted to any but authorised hands. The medical man alone can judge of its applicability or eligibility. There are constitutional peculiarities and diseases of the system which render its application unsuitable and even hazardous, and in those cases in which it is most desirable, an accurate knowledge of *degree* and *duration* is essential. Under these restrictions I do not hesitate to assert that Chloroform is a safe agent. I speak from convictions founded on my own experience. I have given it to the young, middle-aged, and old, not only without injurious consequences, but with abundant cause for thankfulness for its benefits. I have seen it render patients wholly unconscious of all pain, during the most fearful operations. I have seen it given in cases where acute spasm has existed, in mania, locked-jaw, asthma, and in the last stage of consumption; and in all these with decided benefit, and without the slightest bad symptom resulting from its use. With reference to the mitigation of spasmodic action in various convulsive diseases, I would here mention, that the convulsions of cholera have been found in many cases to be alleviated or removed by it.

It is no part of my object in this pamphlet to describe

the various remedies for this disease which have been latterly so much *obtruded* on the public as being not only efficacious, but *infallible*. I cannot, however, forbear stating, that some harm may have been done in the way of creating unnecessary alarm in the public mind, by communicating the idea of the great and almost insuperable fatality of this epidemic. We know that imagination, that hope, and fear, have each a most powerful influence on the progress and intensity of diseases. The fear of cholera alone may convert the simplest and most ordinary diarrhoea into an intensity somewhat approximating to it, and nothing can be more likely to give efficiency to the disease, if it should unhappily occur, than the great dread of its occurrence, which these formidable precautions give rise to. It would, I conceive, have been much better to meet the casualty, if it should occur, in a more quiet and unostentatious manner, and not by placards and proclamations to have created so general a fear as will render the people less able to contend against its actual onset. It would be well, therefore, if the idea were more generally entertained that *cholera* is not, in its early stages at least, of so formidable a character as is usually supposed; that it does not ordinarily commence with the intensity which it subsequently manifests, but is ushered in by various premonitory symptoms, which, if not overlooked or neglected, may be readily removed.

We will now return to our more immediate subject. There is one class of sufferers on whose account, I think, we shall have no differences of opinion respecting the administration of Chloroform. I speak of operations on little children. What a blessing to them to be spared the fearful anticipation of pain in their young minds—anticipation often more fearful than reality! What a

blessing to them to be spared the actual agonies of pain ! And still further, what a double blessing to a parent to be spared suffering tenfold their child's tortures in beholding them ! Dr. Simpson says, that if " we look back with sorrow and pity upon the prejudices of our ancestors in supposing that pain is a desirable part of cure, our successors, enjoying the blessings of Chloroform, will look back on us with like pity, if we are slow in embracing its benefits and blessings."

Hard, indeed, would it be on woman, if after the abolition of every other curse she alone should be left to suffer ! Hitherto, in highly civilised and luxurious communities, woman has passed through scenes over which it is well to draw the veil. Is it still necessary that she should go on enduring ? The means of exemption to a very great degree are offered as a blessing from God. When Satan urged the Saviour to prove his divinity by casting himself down from the topmost tower of Jerusalem, he refused to tempt God by rushing into unnecessary danger. And is it not equally tempting God if we refuse escaping danger when the means are offered ? Chloroform offers this escape. Its effects are wonderful, almost miraculous, in the hour of *nature's sorrow*. While assisting the necessary physical effort it relieves from all physical anguish. It accelerates the result by preventing the exhaustion which continued pain produces : in saving human suffering it also saves human life. Those who have once experienced the blessing of the exemption it affords from the distress and pain, which, as Dr. Denman observes, " Seem to be more than human nature would be able to bear under any other circumstances," will never more be found willing to encounter this dreaded trial in their own strength. They not only thankfully accept, but imperatively

demand this amelioration of their sufferings. And if now we are obliged, for the sake of every feeling of humanity, to urge the beneficial practice on our patients, the time is not far distant when we shall not have the power, even if we had the inclination, to withhold it from them.

But there is another important point connected with the subject which ought not to be overlooked. If protracted suffering, according to its duration, has a tendency to retard convalescence, or even to threaten death, its abridgment is followed by a proportionate speed of recovery. The after consequences of severe bodily pain being so injurious, the constitution is thus saved from the shock, and the recovery is usually remarkably rapid. In women of a highly nervous temperament, and indeed with all in a greater or less degree, the climax of suffering is so great that I have seen the powers of the mind almost lost from the excess of bodily agony. In these cases, during the three or four following days, reaction supervenes consequent on the great exhaustion of body and mind, accompanied with high fever, and frequently with delirium. The mother is thus not only placed in great danger, but rendered incapable of affording her newly-born its natural sustenance. These evil results are wholly prevented by the administration of Chloroform: at least such is my experience in all the cases that I have witnessed, the usual greeting on my second visit being, *"I feel as well as ever I did in my life, and as if nothing had happened."*

There are many other evil concomitants which I could enumerate, and which sometimes result, more or less affecting the mother at subsequent periods, but I will not enter upon them, as they are less common,

though not less disastrous. I would, however, state that these also I have found happily counteracted by the use of this valuable medicine. I would also glance at the advantages of Chloroform in surgical operations, where it has been used with marked and wonderful effect, preventing all suffering, and those consequences which must inevitably follow, as well as that anguish of apprehension which, at such a moment, must fill up the cup of personal suffering to overflowing. I cannot, however, dwell longer on these points, but must return to those cases to which I have more generally alluded in this pamphlet.

The after recovery, which in itself is so desirable a blessing, not only for the mother's sake, but also for that of the child, (I can affirm from my own experience,) I have invariably found more rapid than in former cases, more uniform, and more permanent. Ladies are frequently down in their drawing-rooms within the fortnight; and I recollect one very delicate patient who walked (to my astonishment) a distance of two miles before the expiration of the third week. I can also fully confirm the testimony of my professional brethren as to the harmlessness as well as potency of this administration. *There is no after penalty entailed on present immunity.* The inhalation offers nothing *repugnant* or *repulsive*. The sensations which ensue are of the most agreeable nature. The repose is sweet and complacent, while frequently consciousness of passing events remains. Sometimes (but only in very severe cases) unconsciousness wraps the sleeper in its happy mantle. Awakening from this pleasing and blessed supineness, the mind appears to be all sunshine. How often have I heard such an exclamation as this, "Why did you awake me? I felt as if I were in heaven!" And can there be found

one human being who would prefer the tortures that sometimes render a woman frantic in her hour of trial, to such a state of tranquillity and immunity from pain? Can there be found one who will still persist in preferring a prejudice to a blessing?

But even allowing that mistaken views, acting upon that *singular disinterestedness* which is in truth so marked in the feminine character, should induce persistence in rejection, there is *one last* consideration which I must offer, and which I know will act on a mother's best feelings. It is her maternal affection, which appeals to her in behalf of her child. If she is indifferent to the advantages offered to herself, she cannot be careless to those offered to her infant. Experience proves that the advantages of Chloroform are not confined to mothers alone, the children being almost invariably more healthy and more animated, while not unfrequently the very life of the babe has been spared through the influence of Chloroform.* I do not, however, wish to say that in *every case* Chloroform is necessary, there being many so abrupt, and, in comparison, attended with so little suffering, that the very shortness of the time allows no opportunity for its inhalation; but my own experience, judging from the safe and simple manner in which it may be given, by all who have a proper knowledge of its effects on the system, lead me to say that every mother may take it with advantage, from my conviction of its utility, *in preventing after consequences*. In the higher walks of society the practice is gaining ground from its salutary counteraction of the enervating habits which have a tendency to retard the recovery of the patient, as well as

* For results of the administration of Chloroform, both on mothers and children, see Appendix.

supporting the cheerfulness and equilibrium of the spirits, and the equability and serenity of the mind.

It would extend these pages beyond their due limits were I to give a full report of those cases in which Chloroform has been employed with the most extraordinary results; I shall therefore confine myself to a few that have occurred in my own practice, not because they are either more interesting or convincing, but simply because I consider it the duty of every medical man to give the result of his own experience in preference to that of others. Though I have had one object particularly in view in offering these remarks, yet the benefits resulting from the administration of Chloroform are by no means limited to one class of cases. And as its general applicability may serve to inspire confidence, I shall offer one or two distinct instances in which I have resorted to its aid with especial advantage. Even while writing these "Remarks" I have had cause to rejoice in the power of this valuable remedy.

A very interesting little girl, about 12 years of age, has been suffering for several years from frequent attacks of asthma. These have at times been so distressingly severe as to cause some individuals to suppose that disease of the heart also existed. It was not only painful to witness her during these attacks, but there was some ground for apprehension that their extreme severity might prove fatal. I determined, therefore, on the next occasion to administer Chloroform, in the hope of carrying her safely through the paroxysm. It was about ten o'clock at night when I was sent for to visit her while she was suffering intensely. She had passed the previous night in a most restless state, and during the whole day had breathed with the greatest difficulty. I found her kneeling in her bed, with her body bent

nearly double over her pillow, trying thus to place herself in the best possible posture to relieve the excessive labour of inspiration. She was extremely patient, although her countenance was pale, and indicated great anxiety. Her pulse was very small, and beating with great rapidity. She had taken no sustenance during the day, was constantly vomiting, and her situation was one of sorrowful apprehension to all her friends. Feeling, no doubt, a dread of suffocation, I had some difficulty in persuading her to change her posture; but when this was effected I at once proceeded to administer Chloroform, during which she did not show the slightest excitement, nor even the movement of a muscle. Her pulse became immediately *fuller* and *slower*; her painful and laborious inspiration was immediately relieved; and in twenty-five minutes she fell into a quiet sleep, which lasted for half an hour. On her awakening I again repeated the Chloroform, which in ten minutes produced the same salutary result. I left her enjoying a calm, refreshing sleep, and on the following morning I found her breathing naturally, and free from all pain and suffering.

Passing on from this very pleasing case, I will mention one of a totally opposite character. I had occasion, in conjunction with a medical friend, to visit a man labouring under furious delirium. He possessed great physical strength, and was exhausting his energies in maniacal struggles. We found him raving in his bed, with difficulty held down by four men as powerful as himself; his mind distracted by the impression that he was suffering from hydrophobia, having, as we were informed, been bitten by a rabid cat some eleven years previously. The herculean frame of this unhappy man was labouring under the powerful impetus of his

distracted mind, and in the hope of allaying his torments, we at once determined on trying the effects of Chloroform. It was accordingly administered, and in five or six minutes he was sleeping as peacefully as an infant. When he awoke from that sleep he was still undoubtedly a maniac, but he was tranquil, and his violence greatly subdued. He also for a few minutes recognised his wife, which proved how wonderfully the Chloroform had restored the natural condition of his "perturbed spirit." Subsequently he required much less restraint, and the Chloroform being repeated every night and morning, for a week or ten days, daily improvement was observable, and at the end of that time he went into the country with his reason completely regained, and he continues up to this moment in the enjoyment of perfect health, both of mind and body.

Another instance of the efficacy of this very valuable medicine I have just witnessed ; the beneficial result of which will, I trust, induce others to try it under similar circumstances. This was a case of consumption, where the patient had frequent vomitings of blood. Amongst many other painful symptoms, perhaps the most distressing was that of an extreme nervous irritability, producing a state of great anxiety. No relief could be obtained from the most powerful soporifics. Chloroform was in this case administered with extreme caution, and largely diluted with atmospheric air. The smallest possible quantity was sufficient. The agitation of the system was immediately subdued, the pulse quickly abated in frequency, and the poor sufferer, with a serene and placid countenance, sank into repose with the expression that she felt as if in heaven.

Mr. Liston, a few weeks before his death, standing over a patient during a protracted operation, suddenly exclaimed, "It is fortunate for the poor patient that

there is such a thing as ether," and often have I had occasion to experience the truth of his remark. Indeed it is difficult, from our present limited experience, to determine in what diseases the exhibition of Chloroform may be most beneficial; but I hope sufficiently to exemplify its value in that class of cases to which it was my particular object to direct your attention.

In these cases, nature unaided has to pass through a trial of extreme severity; but by this agent we are able to subdue its violence, and to obviate many of its more serious consequences. I shall therefore offer one or two instances of its beneficial effects in this class of cases. The first was a case in which both the mother and child appeared to be saved through the instrumentality of this marvellous remedy. This lady was expecting to become a mother for the second time. On the first occasion she had suffered much, and her child was not born alive. Her extreme feebleness rendered me deeply apprehensive for the result of this second trial. During the last five or six months she had been almost incapable of moving, and unable to take adequate nourishment. Her sufferings and anxiety were so great that I was sent for several times before my attendance became actually necessary. When at length the period did really arrive, my apprehensions were fully verified. The natural efforts were so severe and protracted, and her debility was so extreme, that I feared she might not have strength to rally. For eleven hours her sufferings continued, without appearing likely soon to cease, until the full effects of Chloroform were produced. As soon as I considered it expedient, I placed her partially under its influence, which instantly afforded her great relief. This condition was continued for about three hours, at the termination of which,

finding that her pain was beyond her powers of endurance, I continued to administer it, so as to render her wholly unconscious, and in this happy state she became, in the course of one hour, the mother of a fine and healthy boy. She remained in a *quiet slumber* for some time, and on awakening received the joyful intelligence, scarcely being able to reconcile to her own feelings that her anxiety and fears were terminated. In spite of her long previous sufferings she was the next day wonderfully well, and her recovery was so surprisingly rapid, that at the end of three weeks she left home with her infant to enjoy the benefit of the country air.

These instances are, however, extreme ones, and which I have only given to show you the great value of this important agent in almost hopeless cases. I will conclude by alluding to one of ordinary occurrence.

This lady was extremely delicate, and hitherto her convalescences had been greatly retarded by one particular consequence, which had always previously attended, in spite of every precaution. This she entirely escaped through the means of this medicine; and its beneficial result was strikingly manifested by her being able to walk a distance of two miles, at the expiration of three weeks. When I administered the Chloroform to this lady, I gave her so small a quantity that I was astonished to find that she fell at once into a calm slumber; but not knowing, from her extreme quietness, to what extent it had operated, I gave her a gentle tap to ascertain, and to my surprise she awoke perfectly conscious, with this exclamation, "Oh! why do you awaken me from such a delightful sleep? Pray let me sleep on." She remained in this *precise condition* until at last I aroused her, to congratulate her on her infant being born, which, having been unconscious of it, she acknowledged with still greater gratitude.

It would be easy for me to multiply exemplifications, but my limits preclude me from offering them. I have endeavoured to place the subject before my readers in its true light. This is but one of the wonders which science has lately wrought, but it is one, perhaps, the most important and beneficial to suffering humanity. Half a century ago it would have been looked upon as visionary had we been told that the time was coming when we should travel at the rate of sixty, or even eighty miles an hour, or speak to each other, by means of electricity, in the space of a few seconds, hundreds of miles intervening between us. Let these reflections banish incredulity, and let us rejoice that we live in this the nineteenth century. I trust that my statements have been satisfactory to that class of my readers to whom they have chiefly been offered. I have endeavoured to show that all religious scruples ought to be set at rest, and that some of the most eminent and cautious of our practitioners have testified their sense of the value of this discovery by adopting it in their daily practice; that the higher classes of educated women, both in France and Germany, as well as in our own country, have gladly accepted the blessing. I have explained the mode of its operation, and given instances of invariably successful results from its safe and judicious administration; and, more than all, I have referred my readers to those tables of statistics which prove how large a proportion of female and infant life has been saved through the instrumentality of Chloroform. These are indeed happy and beneficial results; and it will ever be to me a source of high gratification, if I should have succeeded in removing any of those mistaken feelings which have hitherto prevented the more general adoption of those means by which they are offered to mankind.

APPENDIX.

WITH regard to the results of the administration of Chloroform, both on mothers and children, I am indebted for much valuable information to Professor SIMPSON, of Edinburgh, who has accumulated evidence from various practitioners, which fully confirms the safety and advantages of its exhibition. In his own experience of 150 cases, he states* "All the children were born alive, except one which had been dead some time before its birth. The mother had previously borne several premature dead children. Nor am I aware that any of the children suffered under 'cerebral effusions,' or 'convulsions,' or 'hydrocephalus,' or any other of the affections which have been prophesied as certain to befall all such infants as would be borne in labours rendered painless by art." And of the 150 mothers: "The more immediate and direct effect of Chloroform has been the alleviation or abolition of physical sufferings attendant upon the latter stages of labour." "Since following the practice of anæsthesia, my strong conviction is, that I have seen both more rapid recoveries than formerly, and fewer puerperal complications." He also adds, "Besides thus alleviating and abolishing the sufferings of the mother during labour, the practice of anæsthesia carries along with it other advantages. A number of patients have spontaneously told me, that the prospect of being enabled to pass through the ordeal of parturition with the assistance of Chloroform, and without their usual painful agonies, has destroyed, in a great measure, that state of anxiety and dread of anticipation, which, in former periods, had, for weeks and months previously, silently annoyed and haunted them. But not only does this practice save the mother from the endurance of unnecessary mental anxiety and unnecessary physical agony; it saves her also from some of the *dangers* attendant upon her

* Dr. Simpson's Report on the "Early History," &c.

condition, by *husbanding her strength*, and warding off the effects of that *exhaustion* and *nervous depression* which the pains and shock of her exertion tend to produce. We ward off, I believe, to a more or less marked extent, the chances and dangers of those *secondary vascular excitements* which are always apt to follow indirectly upon them. We increase the chance of a more *speedy* and a more *healthy convalescence*." In continuation, Dr. Simpson quotes numerous authorities on the same subject ; I must content myself by briefly mentioning a few.

It is stated by Dr. KEITH : " I can state most positively that I have seen no serious symptom which could be traced to the Chloroform, in any one case, either as affecting the mother or the child. Most of the mothers have made uncommonly good recoveries. Those who have had children previously have, almost without exception, stated to me, that they felt very decidedly stronger after delivery than on former occasions. All the mothers are now in their usual health."

Also by Dr. MOIR : " I have not met with a *single case* where any unpleasant effects, either to mother or child, can be traced to its use."

Also by Dr. MALCOLM : " Although, in a few cases, my patients and their friends have at first objected to the use of anæsthesia, to abolish pains which they considered 'natural,' yet every one has afterwards expressed to me sincere gratitude for saving them from their agonies ; and I am sure not one who has experienced the beneficial effects of the practice will ever submit to these agonies again, now that they know that they are so totally unnecessary, and can be so *easily* and *safely* abolished."

Also by Mr. CARMICHAEL : " I have met with no case of flooding whatever. I have heard it alleged that it drives away the milk ; but I have not found it so, as my patients have all been able to nurse. In all my cases it was administered with the *greatest ease* and with *perfect success*, and, in no case, with any *bad results*. The recoveries have certainly been more than *usually speedy*. All the children were *born alive*, and are *doing well*."

Also by Dr. BURN : " All the mothers made rapid recoveries, and the children did not appear to suffer from its use."

Also by Dr. FINLAY, Newhaven : " But every trial has emboldened me to employ it with greater confidence on future occasions. In none of my cases did hæmorrhage occur, and they all made excellent recoveries."

Also by Dr. CUMMING : " All the children were born alive, and are so still, and I am rapidly approaching to the conviction, that, *if there be any sin connected with Chloroform, it is chargeable on those who refuse to administer it.*"

Also by Dr. GRIGOR, of Nairn: "Dr. Allan, of Forres, and myself would as soon think of going to a case without our Chloroform phial, as we would of going to bleed a patient without a lancet. I have only used it in about 24 cases, in all of which it came up to all you have written about it—*no still-born children—mothers recovering well—fewer after pains, &c.*"

Dr. DYCE, lecturer on midwifery in Marischal College, Aberdeen, writes: "I have met with no instance of Chloroform failing in producing its usual effects in a very few minutes. The recoveries in every case have been most satisfactory. They appeared even more rapid than under ordinary circumstances."

From Mr. LAWRENCE, Montrose: "I have seen no injurious consequences of any kind."

From Dr. PATON, Dundee: "Employed it in upwards of 50 cases, and with the *best effect*. All the children have been born alive. The recoveries of the mothers have been more favourable than in former instances."

From Mr. SPENCER, Douglas, Isle of Man: "I have used it frequently, with invariable success, so far as *it* is concerned. There have been no still-born children from its use, and all the children have continued to thrive well; none as yet have had a fit from teething. This I consider a great matter."

From Mr. CEELY, Aylesbury: "In all the cases in which I have employed Chloroform, the patients and their friends have been perfectly satisfied and gratified with the results, and abundantly thankful for the boon."

From Mr. STALLARD, Leicester: "In the 30 cases I have attended I have not had a single case of flooding, and two individuals had never been free from it on former occasions."

From Dr. PROTHEROE SMITH, London: "I have records in my own practice of 125 cases of anæsthetic labour, and, with one exception, all have done well. In several thus treated no hæmorrhage has ensued, though in previous labours there was flooding. In nearly all the getting up has been more speedy, requiring no aid of opiates or aperients; and it is my sincere conviction that Chloroform lessens the chance of puerperal inflammation and fever."

From Dr. RIGBY, London: "Of course I use the Chloroform in midwifery."

