

ANESTHESIOLOGY REFLECTIONS FROM THE WOOD LIBRARY-MUSEUM

S. S. Cox's Laughing Gas in J. F. Keppler's "Rotten to the Core"



In his illustration "Rotten to the Core" in a November 1883 issue of the American magazine *Puck*, political cartoonist Joseph F. Keppler (1838 to 1894) satirized the United States as "Uncle Sam" (*left*) awaiting the extraction of his aching tooth by the two arms of Congress. Supposing that he had "to have the derned thing out," the hapless Sam is seated under a sign (*enlarged right*) advertising "Washington / Dental / Association / S.S. Cox's Laughing Gas / Mild & Harmless." Although that dental association was fictional, its name parodied the many franchises of the Colton Dental Association that were scattered around the United States. By substituting "S.S. Cox" for the name of Philadelphia nitrous-oxide purveyor S. S. White, the cartoonist was highlighting the good humor of U.S. Representative Samuel S. Cox (1824 to 1889), a Democrat then representing New York's Sixth Congressional District. (Copyright © the American Society of Anesthesiologists' Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology.)

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