

Correspondence

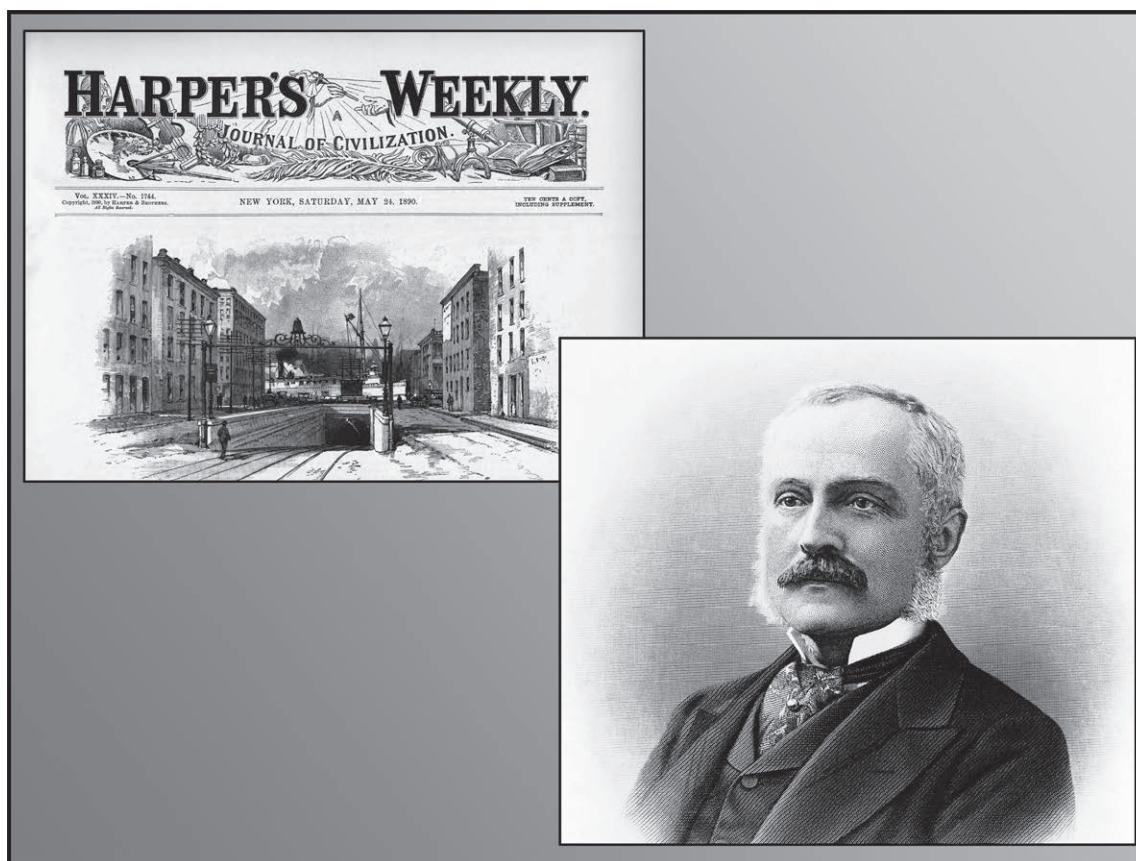
Address correspondence to Dr. Orser: beverley.orser@utoronto.ca

References

1. Zurek AA, Yu J, Wang DS, Haffey SC, Bridgwater EM, Penna A, Lecker I, Lei G, Chang T, Salter EW, Orser BA: Sustained increase in $\alpha 5$ GABA_A receptor function impairs memory after anesthesia. *J Clin Invest* 2014; 124:5437–41
2. Wang DS, Zurek AA, Lecker I, Yu J, Abramian AM, Avramescu S, Davies PA, Moss SJ, Lu WY, Orser BA: Memory deficits induced by inflammation are regulated by $\alpha 5$ -subunit-containing GABA_A receptors. *Cell Rep* 2012; 2:488–96
3. Wang DS, Kaneshwaran K, Lei G, Mostafa F, Wang J, Lecker I, Avramescu S, Xie YF, Chan NK, Fernandez-Escobar A, Woo J, Chan D, Ramsey AJ, Sivak JM, Lee CJ, Bonin RP, Orser BA: Dexmedetomidine prevents excessive γ -aminobutyric acid type A receptor function after anesthesia. *ANESTHESIOLOGY* 2018; 129:477–89

ANESTHESIOLOGY REFLECTIONS FROM THE WOOD LIBRARY-MUSEUM

Dr. C. R. Agnew's Choice: Cocaine Anesthesia Discoverer Over U.S. President



At a meeting in 1884 in Heidelberg, Germany, a paper was presented—the world's first on using cocaine as a topical (surface) anesthetic. The author was a surgical intern in Vienna named Carl Koller, M.D. (1857 to 1944). A conference attendee, New Yorker Henry Noyes, M.D., reported Koller's discovery in the October 11, 1884, issue of the *New York Medical Record*. One week later, Noyes's colleague, ophthalmologist Cornelius Rea Agnew, M.D. (1830 to 1888, right) was delighted to publish his own clinical cases confirming the effectiveness of Koller's cocaine anesthesia. Ironically, Agnew passed away in 1888 in New York, in the same year and city to which Koller would immigrate from Europe. A professional admirer of Koller, Agnew was quoted posthumously in *Harper's Weekly* (left) that he (Agnew) would rather have been “the discoverer of cocaine anaesthesia than President of the United States.” (Copyright © the American Society of Anesthesiologists' Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology.)

George S. Bause, M.D., M.P.H., Honorary Curator and Laureate of the History of Anesthesia, Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology, Schaumburg, Illinois, and Clinical Associate Professor, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio. UJYC@aol.com.