

being out of date. To be successful we must vary our anæsthetic and our methods of using it, according to the requirements of the case we have in hand.

The modern anæsthetist has at his disposal not only a considerable number of anæsthetics, mixtures of anæsthetics, and succession of anæsthetics, but also a variety of methods of administration. Of the simple anæsthetics there are four which we have time to briefly discuss, viz., nitrous oxide, ether, chloroform and ethyl chloride. Of the mixtures, that known as C. E. is worthy of notice, and of the successions the following are the most useful:

The nitrous oxide—ether sequence.

The ethyl-chloride—ether sequence.

The C. E.—ether sequence.

The nitrous oxide—ether-C. E. sequence.

In deciding on the means to be employed for producing anæsthesia, in ordinary or routine practice, one of the most important considerations should be the *safety of the patient*.

Two questions here present themselves as to the safest anæsthetic—(1) for short operations, not requiring total relaxation, and (2) for operations requiring deep or continuous anæsthesia. With regard to the first question, it is admitted that nitrous oxide is the safest general anæsthetic known. When administered with oxygen or air, in order to eliminate the asphyxial element, its inhalation is practically free from risk to life. Even when pure, the risk to life is so slight as to be overlooked. It is not unpleasant to inhale, and rapidly destroys consciousness, while there are rarely any unpleasant after effects. On the other hand, the heaviness of the storage cylinders, the comparative lightness of the anæsthesia, the tendency to muscular rigidity, and movement, and asphyxia during the administration of pure gas, and the somewhat lengthy experience required to obtain good results in all cases, combine to limit its employment.

Many small operations, such as the removal of small tumors, the opening of abscesses, the dressing and examining of wounds, removal of teeth, breaking down of adhesions, may be performed under this anæsthetic without the slightest after effects, if the patient is properly prepared.

Within recent years (since 1902-03) ethyl chloride has come into extensive use for brief surgical operations, its great advantages over nitrous oxide being that it is more portable, more manageable, and easier to administer. But from somewhat numerous accidents that have occurred under its influence, the