

the administration of anæsthetics are unduly frequent during comparatively insignificant operations such as the extraction of teeth and the removal of ingrowing toe-nail.

Such a disastrous result as this—a death from chloroform in a dentist's office—should impress upon every physician or surgeon the serious responsibility he assumes in each and every case when he undertakes to administer an anæsthetic. A perfectly safe anæsthetic has not yet been discovered, and probably never will be. Profound anæsthesia brings our patient close to the next world, how close, in many a case, we may possibly have no idea. Let us ever endeavor to choose the anæsthetic which is best suited for each individual case. Let us ever look carefully for those symptoms which indicate danger. Let us ever be prepared to counteract these dangerous symptoms when they appear. In a general way we may say that in most cases of exhaustion or debility ether is safer than chloroform, but when there is bronchial or renal disease chloroform should be preferred.

#### THE STUDY OF CHEMISTRY.

SOME members of our profession appear to think that chemistry is one of the comparatively useless subjects to the medical curriculum. When taught or studied in a perfunctory manner it is certainly of little use, but we happen to have reached that period in the history of medical education where we cannot ignore its vast importance. From this point of view the following quotation from the *British Medical Journal* will be found very interesting: "Of all the pure sciences, chemistry is that which is most necessary to the physician and practitioner. To say the least, it requires study, diligent study. Chemistry presents many features which excites a young man's interest. The student's exuberant zeal requires control in respect to the preparation of malodorous, poisonous or explosive compounds, yet the discipline of the practical chemistry laboratory is calculated to stand in good stead in after life. The handling of reagents, testing for poisons, and cleaning of apparatus after use, all prepare him for the duties of the sick room and operating theatre. They demand observation, caution and cleanliness."

#### NOTES.

KANKAKEE.—There is perhaps no department in medicine in which greater progress has been made in modern times than in the treatment of insanity, and these improved methods are seen to the best advantage in the large asylum at Kankakee, Illinois.

That institution now accommodates sixteen hundred and forty patients, and the non-restraint system is carried out to its fullest extent.

The greater number of the patients live in cottages and are allowed to roam about at will. About four hundred are confined in the main building. The latter are partly made up of the convict insane and partly of acute and curable cases who are under medical treatment. A large number of those who live in the cottages have their meals together in an immense dining hall. They go into the dining room in a quiet, orderly manner, and while at dinner the only difference noticed in the behavior of the patients is that there was very much less noise than one would expect from the same number of sane people. There was scarcely any talking, a few muttered to themselves.

No restraint is practiced with those confined in wards. A strong canvas suit is used with those who would otherwise tear their clothing.

There seem to be two principal features in the modern management of the insane which render the old restraint system unnecessary. (1) A careful selection of patients, and (2) a thorough training of the assistants. One would be surprised to see how soon a raving maniac could, in many instances, be calmed down by a skilful nurse.

Various industries have been introduced so that all patients who can be induced to work, are employed. In this way the cost of maintenance is much lessened and the health of the patients is improved.

Dr. Dewey, the Medical Superintendent of the institution from its commencement, has every right to be proud of this vast and enduring monument of his industry and perseverance. Through his efforts the cottage system has been established as a successful method in the management of insanity.

Thirty-five per cent. who have passed out of the institution have been sent out cured. This is an excellent result when it is remembered that