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Original Articles

SIMPLE METHODS, AND CARE IN THE USE OF GENERAL ANAESTHETICS.*

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In selecting this title, I do so because of the lack of opportunity that many well-qualified practitioners have in familiarizing themselves with the giving of anaesthetics.

At this date in the history of medicine and surgery, an apology is scarcely needed in urging that a scientific and more detailed knowledge in the giving of anaesthetics is necessary.

It is a lamentable fact that this branch in the greater practice of medicine has been very sadly neglected, and I believe, because of it, many fatalities, not the greater number of which has been recorded, can be traced directly to an overdose of the anaesthetic proving fatal on the table, or the choice of the wrong drug for that particular case, or, perhaps, the improper administration of the narcotic, which may result fatally, either on the table or subsequently.

Or again, if a fatal result does not occur, the health of the patient may be, more or less, permanently impaired. Many patients have told me from time to time that they have never been the same since they had an operation, although as far as could be seen the result of the operation had left nothing to be desired; but these patients will say that they "take weak or dizzy spells," and it will be found that sometimes they have slight attacks of jaundice or albuminuria. On inquiry, I have found the history something like

*Read before the Welland County Medical Society, April 23rd, 1910.