

Such then is, I think, the sound position in regard to spinal anæsthesia, far as this position is from that of Professor Jonnesco. It is idle to prophesy of the future, but for us of to-day in the matter of general anæsthesia there is as yet no new star risen.

---

## AN APPARATUS FOR RECTAL ANÆSTHESIA.

BY

E. M. VON EBERTS, M.D.,

Outdoor Surgeon, Montreal General Hospital, Montreal.

I have assembled for your inspection an apparatus for the administration of ether per rectum which in its simplicity and general construction follows closely that devised by Cunningham of Boston.

Chiefly through the investigations of Cunningham, Leggett and Dumont, the administration of a general anæsthetic per rectum has reached a degree of safety which compares favourably with the inhalation method. With improvement in apparatus and technique the unsatisfactory results and occasional fatalities encountered by earlier investigators have been largely eliminated. These favourable results depend mainly upon two factors: first, the relief of ileo-cæcal spasm through the induction of primary anæsthesia by inhalation, and secondly, the regulation of the temperature of the ether vapour so that condensation does not occur within the bowel.

Primary anæsthesia may be induced by the administration of ether, chloroform, or ethyl chloride. A further important factor is the preparation of the patient. A purgative should be given twenty-four hours before operation, and shortly before anæsthesia the large bowel thoroughly emptied by soap enemata. The rectal tube should be introduced as far as possible and a gloved finger retained within the rectum. As a preliminary, in order to get rid of other gases in the bowel, the colon should be several times inflated and emptied, the expulsion of the gas being aided either by manipulation of the finger beside the tube or the release of the lateral valve. Kneading of the descending colon and sigmoid is a further aid.

Cunningham has not found the administration of oxygen generally necessary, although the lateral valve provides for the attachment of an oxygen supply. Dumont has recently employed a glass bulb interposed between the ether jar and the rectal tube. The ether is conveyed into the bulb through a smaller tube which curves downward, facilitating the collection in the bottom of the bulb of any droplets of condensation.