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A Surgical Kit containing all the Essentials for Aseptic Operations at Private Residences.

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A SURGICAL KIT CONTAINING ALL THE ESSENTIALS
FOR ASEPTIC OPERATIONS AT PRIVATE RESIDENCES.

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[WITH SIX ILLUSTRATIONS.]

Every surgeon who is called upon to operate frequently in private residences has, or ought to have, solved the problem of how an aseptic operation can be secured. To attain this end with the least work, and consequently the least possible friction, requires considerable thought, experience, and close attention to details.

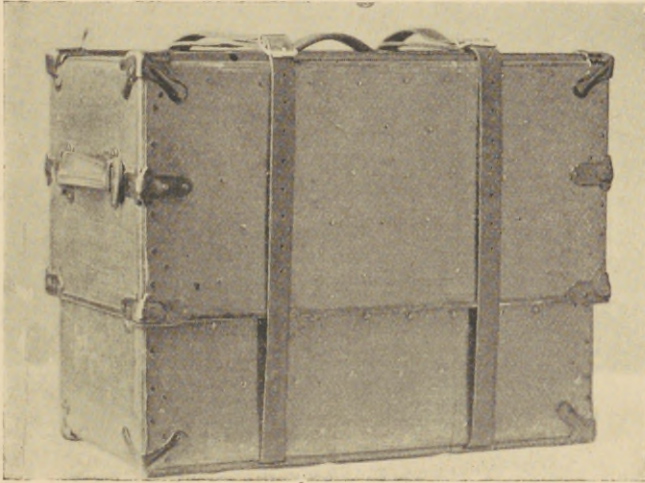


FIG. 1.—Surgical kit packed and ready for transportation.

The writer's apology for the present short paper is that when he was grappling with the problem of how to develop a technique which



would be applicable to a private house, he could find little or nothing published upon the subject. Many articles descriptive of hospital technique have appeared in the journals from time to time, but it is

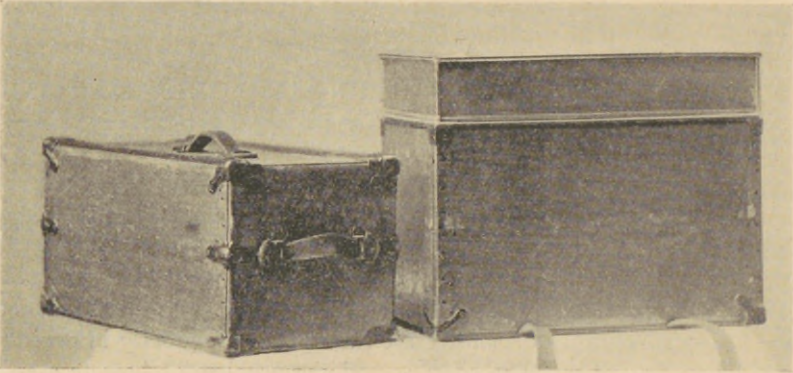


FIG. 2.—Cover removed, showing copper boiler.

evident that many changes must be made in such a technique in order that it may be employed in operations at private residences.

While the advantages of a well-equipped and well-managed hospi-

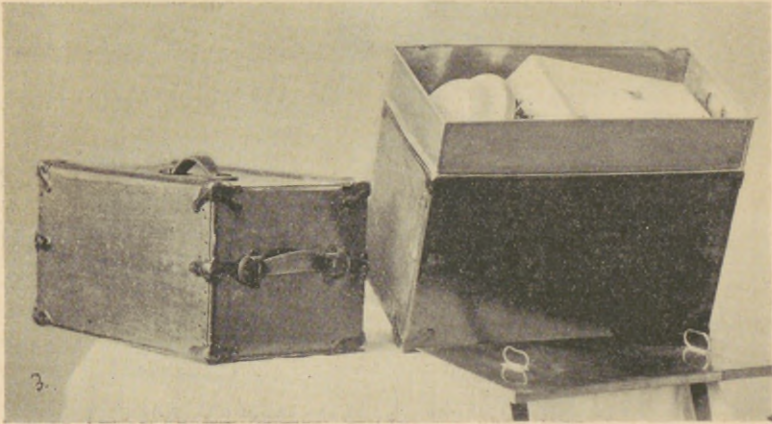


FIG. 3.—Sponge basin and ligature pan inside of boiler.

tal over a portion of a dwelling which has been temporarily transformed into a hospital are immense, there will always be a great deal

of surgical work performed in private houses. We are seeing more and more clearly the important part the mind plays in surgical shock, and the necessity in capital operations of eliminating anxiety and fear as much as possible if the best results are to be obtained. We, as surgeons, become accustomed to hospitals and their surroundings, and often fail to realize the dread and even horror some people have of these institutions. It has been the writer's experience that patients operated upon at their own homes are far more tranquil and less apprehensive than when the work is done in a hospital; this may prove an important factor in the case of weak and nervous patients, and may be the straw which will turn the scale in favor of a successful result.

The writer is convinced, from what he has observed of operations performed in private residences, that an aseptic operation is of rare

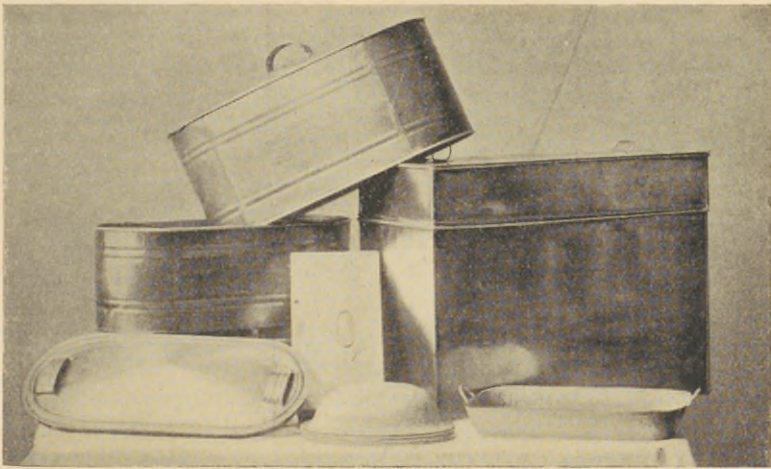


FIG. 4.—Basins and pans removed, showing Arnold steam sterilizer without hood.

occurrence. A little carbolic acid or corrosive tablets and boiled water are often all that is employed by the surgeon, not because he does not know what is necessary for a clean operation, but because he has not taken the trouble to develop a system whereby this can be obtained. Certain articles which he supposes every family possesses are found missing on the morning of the operation, and therefore he gets along the best he can, oftentimes at a sacrifice of surgical cleanliness. For one who is doing much surgical work there is absolutely no excuse for this, even in emergency cases. It is his duty to over-

come all obstacles and to be prepared at all times. If he has found that household utensils are far from suitable for operative work, and often in such a condition as to prevent asepsis being obtained,

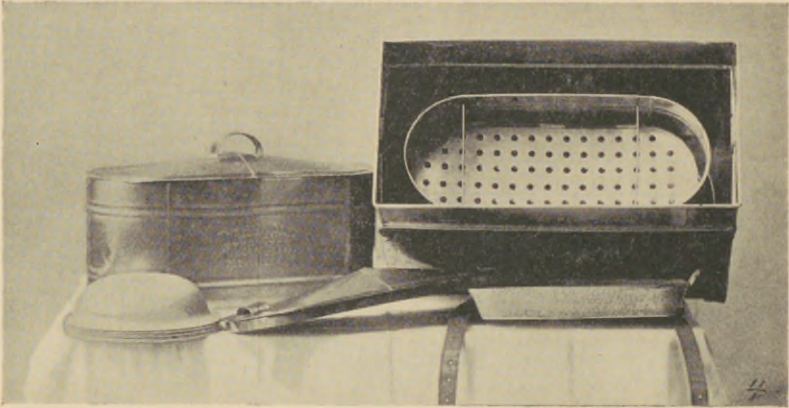


FIG. 5.—Contents of kit.

he should see to it that his surgical kit contains all the necessary articles.

The surgeon himself should either see to the details of the preparation for the operation, or leave it in the hands of a trained assistant or nurse. The surgical kit should be at the field of operation, if possible, the evening before, in order that there may be plenty of time for deliberate and painstaking preparation.

The outfit should be simple and at the same time complete. It should be packed in a bag which is sufficiently light to be carried in a buggy and strong enough to be forwarded by express or baggage, where it is certain to receive hard usage. The trunk telescopes made by the Leatheroid Manufacturing Company, of Kennebunk, Maine, will be found to answer all the requirements. These cases are used by commercial travelers for samples, and are at once light and durable; any size can be procured. The one from which the accompanying photograph was taken is twenty-four inches long, twelve inches wide, and fourteen inches deep (Fig. 1).

Every house, to be sure, has a wash boiler, but this is not always kept surgically clean. Hence it is never safe, especially in abdominal operations, where large quantities of sterilized water may be required, to depend upon the house boiler, which may be rusty and un-

fit for surgical purposes. To overcome this difficulty a copper boiler can be made which will just fit inside the inner case. The telescopic arrangement of the cover allows the boiler to be made of any depth, according to what may be desired to be packed within it. The one shown in the photographs is eighteen inches deep. The cover of the boiler should be made flat so that it may not be jammed by the case cover.

Operating gowns, towels, and dressings, which have been sterilized in some manner, are essential to an aseptic operation. The apparatus best adapted for making these articles sterile is some form of the Arnold Steam Sterilizer, made in Rochester, New York. By sending the inside measurements of the boiler to this firm any size of sterilizer can be secured. A sterilizer of this kind is of great convenience and can always be used, for even the dirtiest hovels have a stove. All the towels, gowns, etc., can be packed either inside the sterilizer or between it and the sides of the boiler. Inside the boiler and on top



FIG. 6.—Pans, basins, and trays arranged for the operation.

of the sterilizer there is also plenty of room to pack six granite iron basins ten inches and three quarters wide. These can always be kept perfectly clean, which can not be said of all basins in private houses. The number is none too large for an operation of any

magnitude, and if they are carried in a kit, the hurrying to the neighbors at the last moment for a basin can be dispensed with, and thus the wasting of valuable time can be avoided.

A nest of instrument pans such as is figured in the photograph can be procured of any instrument maker and packed inside the sterilizer. Plenty of room will also be found for all the ordinary instruments, although it is better to have a separate bag which will contain them and other smaller articles which may possibly be of use at the operation. They can be carried in a hand bag to the house on the morning of the operation, as it is only necessary to boil them ten minutes in a soda solution to make them perfectly aseptic if they have been properly cared for after the last operation.

Equipped with the articles described, a trained surgical nurse can easily turn any well-lighted room into a very fair operating room, and the operation can be conducted under as good aseptic conditions as obtain in a hospital. Everything essential having come in the kit, the family are not inconvenienced or thrown into a flurry by demands for pans, pots, or kettles. The operation being completed, the kit can be repacked in a very short time, and the soiled linen and instruments quickly removed and taken care of elsewhere. This spares the feelings of the family and does away with a great deal of talk in the servants' quarters.

PYTHIAN TEMPLE BUILDING.

