

tion which it contains is of vital importance, and may be the first item to which a doctor consulting the chart will desire to turn. In all operative cases, the record clerk should look for a report upon the pathological specimen.

While the number and variety of the examinations and tests made by the pathological laboratory of the up-to-date hospital is constantly increasing, the record librarian is tolerably certain to be confronted with at least those which have been mentioned above. It is well to remember, however, that while reports which give a positive result have a definite value, negative reports cannot always, by any means, be relied upon as evidence that a condition is not present.

The reports from the x-ray laboratory need little comment; they show abnormal bone conditions, as fractures and dislocations, areas of inflammation, as in sinus conditions, the presence of foreign bodies, etc. The gastro-intestinal series, taken after the ingestion of a substance which can be followed through the alimentary canal, gives much valuable information regarding the condition and efficiency of the digestive organs and the presence of tumor masses or ulcerations in the digestive tract. *Graham* test for visualization of the gall bladder is frequently made in conjunction with the gastro-intestinal series. Like the reports of tissue examinations, x-rays reports are a very important part of the case records to which they belong, often consulted and frequently used in court proceedings, and before filing a chart permanently the record librarian should make sure that it includes a report of every x-ray examination that has been made. It is impossible to guess how important such information may prove at some future time.

The references to micro-organisms in laboratory reports are sometimes obscure and confusing to the record room worker without medical training. *Bacteria* are vegetable organisms, the simplest forms of plant life known. *Protozoa* are single-celled animal organisms, some of which pass through a very elaborate life-cycle. There is also a group which appears to stand midway between the two; this includes the *Spirocheta pallida*, the cause of syphilis. The bacteria group is divided into *cocci*, which are ball-shaped, *bacilli*, which are rod-shaped, and *spirilla*, which are spiral-shaped. The *cocci* are again divided into *diplococci*, appearing in pairs, *streptococci*, which occur in long or short chains, and *staphylococci*, which form irregular masses or clumps. Bacteria are known as *acid-fast* if they are not easily decolorized by acids when stained; also as *Gram-positive* or *Gram-negative* according as they will or will not stain by the method devised by *Graham*.

The streptococci and staphylococci are concerned in conditions characterized by pusformation. The pneumococcus is the organism most commonly present in diseases of the lungs; the meningococcus is present in epidemic cerebrospinal fever; and the gonococcus is the causative factor in gonorrhea. Of these the first may be mentioned in sputum tests, the second in examinations of cerebrospinal fluid, and the third in examinations of material from the vagina or cervix. Prominent among the *Bacillus* family are the *Bacillus tuberculosis*, whose presence may be noted in sputum tests, cultures from infected glands, etc., the *Bacillus diphtheriae*, found in the throat and occasionally in other localities, and the *Bacillus typhosus*, the cause of typhoid fever. The best-known of the protozoa is the plasmodium malarie, or malarial parasite, part of whose life-cycle occurs within the human body and part within the anopheles mosquito.

Just a Minute, Please—An Obstetrical Pantomime

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(From "Trained Nurse and Hospital Review")

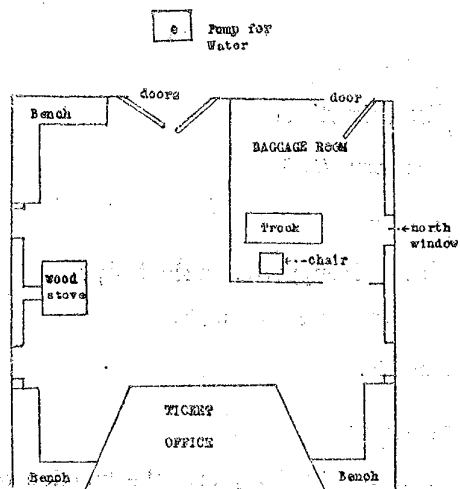
Time.—Early September—2 p.m.

Scene.—A country Rail-road Station, fairly clean, well lighted by several windows; equipped with a wood stove, baggage truck, pump water at the door.

Dramatis Personae.—Pregnant woman, nurse, an obliging station-master. A doctor and the woman's husband, who arrived later.

The woman had visited a relative in a nearby town. She was returning by train when the membranes ruptured.

The nurse on the train saw the need of getting the mother to some place where she could be delivered, for she could not wait to reach home with any degree of safety.



The Stage Setting

The train was stopped at the next small station. As the nurse alighted with the patient she made a mental inventory of the material at hand—it was evident that the doctor called from the nearest town by the train men could not arrive in time.

Two galvanized water pails ready for watering horses hung on the station pump. These were filled with water and put on to boil over a quickly made fire—thanks to kindling wood. A bundle of daily newspapers dropped from the train was used to cover the handy baggage truck. The woman was placed upon this improvised couch as it was an excellent height to work at and steady. In the woman's small bag was a night dress, towel, wash cloth, and three clean handkerchiefs. The night dress was folded and placed over the newspapers under the patient. The towel and handkerchiefs were dropped in the pail of boiling water.

The nurse's travelling bag yielded toilet soap, manicure scissors, a tube of cold cream, a towel, six fresh handkerchiefs, a clean night dress, a fine knit vest, some safety pins and a cotton crepe kimona. The towel, handkerchiefs, scissors, pins and the draw tape taken from the vest went into the pail to boil with other things, including a long stick.

A chair served as work tray when covered with newspapers. The nurse then rolled up her sleeves over the elbows, folded her night dress to make an apron, pinning it at the shoulders and well around the side. Then using a third pail as a basin she washed her hands for three minutes with toilet soap and hot water taken from the second pail on the stove and rinsed them with the remaining half. Towels were now wrung out of the boiling water, when secured with the stick. With as little delay as possible the patient was carefully washed and placed in the Sims' position. Towels were draped about patient and one handkerchief was placed on the newspaper on the chair while with another the nurse took the tube of cream and expressed on folds of a handkerchief to have ready to grease the baby. The pail of cooled sterile water was kept to clean patient later, the other handkerchiefs, tape, scissors, etc., were left in the pail which was placed on the widow sill until needed.

Preparations were completed just in time. The patient, already the mother of seven children, delivered a fairly good-sized baby without extra discomfort. The cord was tied with the tape in two places and cut between the ties with the manicure scissors. When baby's mouth was wiped out with one sterile handkerchief, she was greased with cold cream and another handkerchief, which had been boiled was used as a cord dressing. The knitted vest became the baby binder. The little lady was then wrapped in the crepe kimona and placed in the mother's coat before finding shelter in her travelling bag on the chair. The placenta was expressed in twenty minutes. The fundus was firm and after waiting twenty minutes more the sterile handkerchiefs were used to sponge off the mother and one left on as a pad.

At exactly this moment the husband and the doctor drove up. The doctor instilled silver nitrate in the baby's eyes, examined the cord and applied a dry sterile dressing. He also examined the placenta after which it was burned in the stove with all soiled newspapers. The doctor quietly examined the mother for bleeding and decided that it would be safe to remove mother and baby to their home in the farm wagon in which they had come. Fortunately, some thoughtful neighbor had put in two heavy comforters and a quilt on the floor covered with straw. The nurse had two flat stones in heating and placed one rolled in newspaper at the mother's feet and the other was used to warm the quilt in which the father carried the baby.

At five p.m. the noisy farm wagon rumbled away toward home because a nurse who had known what to do had quietly set about doing it with the gifts which the gods provide.