

shepherd, his dead master in the Greyfriars Churchyard at Edinburgh, and whose life was in danger, because he belonged to nobody. His friends, the children in the tenements surrounding the churchyard, in terror for the life of their beloved little friend, collected in pence and half pence the seven shillings necessary for his license. Meanwhile the Lord Provost of Edinburgh had heard Bobby's story, and in the presence of the children fastened round his neck a collar with a shining brass plate on which was the inscription: "'Greyfriars Bobby.' From the Lord Provost, 1867. Licensed and bestowed on him the Freedom of the City. And he maun hae the collar so the police will ken 'im an' no ever tak' 'im up for a puir gaen-about dog." To-day outside the Greyfriars Churchyard is a fountain, with a low basin level with the curb, and sitting on the column above, looking through the churchyard gate, the sculptured image of Bobby, placed there by that lover of dogs and of children—the Baroness Burdett-Coutts.

(From *The American Journal of Nursing*.)

A METHOD OF STERILIZING SURGICAL NEEDLES THAT PREVENTS RUSTING.

By LOUISE SCHWARTNIG, R.N.

Because needles sterilized by boiling rust badly, because this makes them dull, and therefore hard to pass through the tissues in suturing, because it means much hard tedious work on the part of the nurses, whose task it is to scour and because even with the greatest pains only partial results are obtained in the removal of rust, we began experimenting by using in turn, vaseline, sweet almond oil, three-in-one-oil, cottonseed oil and mineral oil to saturate the gauze into which the needles had been stuck and then sterilizing them in the auto-clave in an open ointment jar, the cover of which was likewise sterilized and placed on the jar by means of sterile forceps before removal from the sterilizer to prevent contamination. These experiments resulted in partial successes or complete failures and led us to look further for a non-corrosive protective covering for the needles. The Sister in charge of the surgical pavilion then hit upon the idea of shaving a little parafin on to the gauze that held the needles, rolling it loosely and, as before, placing it in an open ointment jar and sterilizing it in the auto-clave. The result was perfect. The needles remained as bright as before sterilization. We have used this method for nearly five years before passing the suggestion on to others. To our great satisfaction, the needles do not rust; they stay sharp much longer, thereby materially reducing replacement cost; surgeons are pleased with the greater ease of using sharp needles, and the nurses are spared much time and thankless labour formerly spent in polishing needles which did not stay bright even through one sterilization by boiling. Sets of needles suitable for various operations are kept on hand ready for use. At the close of the operation the instrument nurse places them in a small basin containing a strong solution of lysol where they remain until they can be washed and prepared for the next sterilization. In this way rusting is prevented at every point in the process of use and preparation for use, and we find that fewer needles are lost than when they are thrown into the basin with the larger instruments. Incidentally we find that selecting needles for each operation much time was saved.