

the introduction of Emmet's operation, which, according to Jenks, marks "one of the greatest advances in modern gynæcology," an opinion not even yet so generally held in England as it ought to be.

The introduction of anæsthesia did not lead to any great improvement in the practice of obstetrics; the medical practitioner could now relieve the patient from the worst pangs of parturition, and therefore could well afford to wait in normal labour for completion by the natural process. But it was soon found that the production of anæsthesia was not all gain. It was found that the prolonged administration of chloroform brought on inertia of the uterus, tedious labour and post-partum hæmorrhage. The tediousness of the labour made the "gossips uneasy," and the most conservative of practitioners was too often driven by the appeals and reproaches of the patient and her friends to the application of the forceps. In fact, the consciousness that the final pangs of labour and the acute suffering which would otherwise be produced by the application of the forceps could be entirely relieved by the administration of an anæsthetic had for its practical effect a great extension of operative midwifery. Lacerations of the perineum became much more frequent than under the old practice of delay, and as it was quite unusual to suture these lacerations as is now the universal practice, incontinence of urine, owing to vaginal sloughing, was replaced by incontinence of fæces resulting from complete laceration of the perineum. The lacerations of the cervix and vagina and their relation to parametritis were either unobserved or not understood until Emmet taught the medical world their importance. Just as the practice of the first period made material for the special beneficent work of Marion Sims, so the abuses of the second period provided the opportunities which Emmet had the genius to recognize and to use. He was the first to observe and describe the injury that had been inflicted, and to teach the gynæcologist the method by which it could be repaired.

*Anæsthetics plus Antiseptics*—The advent of the *third period*, that of anæsthetics combined with antiseptics, dates from 1870 to 1873, or somewhat later. About that time began those triumphs of abdominal and pelvic surgery applied to the diseases of women of which men of our special branches of medicine are so justly proud. The operations in general surgery also took on a new phase, and our students, accustomed to witness in the hospital the audacity with which the modern surgeon, depending upon anæsthetics and antiseptics, could deal with new growths and surgical injuries, were influenced, perhaps almost unconsciously, by what they