

thirteen being successful—a record which was not beaten until the advent of antiseptic surgery.

McDowell is described as a tall, strikingly handsome man, with an erect and commanding figure and lustrous black eyes, which seemed to penetrate the very thoughts of those who looked into them. His refinement and intellectual powers were of the highest type. Many stories are told illustrative of his abilities of mind: his unflinching adherence to duty in the face of adversity and difficulties seems to have been one of his strongest points. Stories are told of his adventurous rides through the woods, of fording rushing torrents filled with ice and driftwood, and other anecdotes which illustrate the nobility and force of the man's character. He might well have stood for the original of MacLure, Ian MacLaren's justly famous hero.

McDowell was a man of strong religious convictions, and we have left to us a very forcible petition offered by him to Almighty God, a few hours before the appointed time to make the first ovariectomy. Who will say that it was not in answer to this prayer that his hand was guided to bring to a successful termination his momentous and trying experiment, fraught with interest, not only to the operator, but to humanity? It was certainly a trying hour to him, and we can well understand that he should have asked for strength and guidance where he thought he could best obtain them. His biographer says: "His abiding faith in the efficacy of prayer was beautiful, and no doubt his remarkable success in the field of surgery can be largely attributed to his strong convictions and unwavering faith in the Great Jehovah."

After McDowell no operations of this kind were done until 1821, when Dr. Nathan Smith, Professor of Surgery in Yale College, performed a successful ovariectomy. He was just as much entitled to the honors of a discoverer as was McDowell, for he had never heard of the Kentucky surgeon or of his operation. His methods were different, but the result was just as good.

The third successful ovariectomist was Dr. Alban C. Smith, of Danville, who had been a partner of McDowell's. He operated in 1823. A few scattering operations were done after that, but it was not until 1843-44 that a new impulse was given by the success of Dr. John L. Atlee, which was still further aided by his brother, Dr. Washington L. Atlee, of Pennsylvania. After this, cases became more common, and, taking the country at large, several were reported every year, until in 1855 there were twenty-one cases, with six successes and fifteen deaths. This heavy