

contributions to the literature. In such a spirit let us review the little that we have done in gynecology, and think of what remains to be accomplished.

In his scholarly presidential address before the American Gynecological Society in 1896, Dr. William M. Polk presents an admirable summary of the advances in obstetrics and gynecology since the birth of the Society, twenty-one years before. Ten years more have passed, and we can chronicle still greater changes, not only in the line of improved surgical technic, but, what is to me far more gratifying than mere operative statistics, the scientific application to diagnosis and treatment of the facts furnished by the patient workers in the laboratory. It is unnecessary to remind you to what degree bacteriology has aided us during the last decade, or how the misnamed "luck" (I hate that word) of the past has become the calm certainty of to-day. Gynecology and Obstetrics, especially the former, have suffered most at the hands of their over-enthusiastic followers. In no branch of medicine have there been so many fads and fancies, so much of what old Virchow humorously denominated "Gehirn-schweiss; keine echte Secretion." It seems almost incredible to us, who have passed through the storm and stress period, that such wild and varied theories could have been championed by such distinguished leaders of medical thought. Rivers of ink (and blood) flowed in the days when that brilliant meteor of science, Lawson Tait, flashed across the sky. His pen was almost as mighty as his sword, and rash were those who entered into a controversy with him. The mighty impetus which he gave to abdominal surgery has reached its highest level in that little town in Minnesota, whither we all wend our ways to learn real lessons, not only in surgery, but in that broad humanity which makes one feel that the spirit of the Great Physician still broods over this commercial age. From Birmingham to Rochester, from Tait to the Mayos, is a far cry; but let us not forget what we owe to the brilliant, though erratic, surgeon who at one time rightly boasted that he "tapped the clientèle of the world."

I shall never forget, on my return from foreign study in 1884, whither I had gone fresh from the school of Sims and Emmet and Thomas, returning with a mixture of advanced German and conservative English views, to find that Tait had thrown the surgical world into a ferment by forcing upon its attention not new theories, but convincing *facts*. Thomas, quick to assimilate recent ideas and prompt to work them out practically, had already begun to diagnose and operate for tubal disease. I recall the fact that,