

a record of the impressions of a man who operated both without and with anesthesia. Charles Clay began his work before the discovery of chloroform, and one would have imagined that he would have viewed the introduction of anesthesia with unmixed satisfaction; yet, in 1863, when he had performed one hundred and eight ovariectomies, with seventy-four recoveries, he appeared to be distinctly doubtful of the value of anesthesia; for in a paper entitled "Observations on Ovariectomy," we find this curious passage: "With regard to the use of chloroform, I am not certain if this agent has really added to the success of ovarian operations. The first fourteen of my cases were undertaken before it was discovered, and of these fourteen, nine recovered. But, though I willingly admit the almost impossibility of obtaining the consent of females (at the present time) to submit to so formidable an operation without the aid of this valuable agent, and though I am equally convinced that chloroform is of itself one of the greatest boons to suffering humanity, yet, if it could be accomplished I should infinitely prefer to operate without it, as the patient would bring to bear on her case a nerve and determination to meet so great a trial, which would assist beyond all value the after-treatment; it would also relieve the case from that most distressful retching and vomiting so common after all abdominal operations where it is used to the extent that is required in ovariectomy."

Anesthesia and improvements in *technique* conspicuously lowered the mortality of ovariectomy by lessening two of the great risks; namely, shock and hemorrhage; but even so, the mortality was still very high. In 1878, when Spencer Wells had completed nine hundred cases, there were seventeen deaths in his last one hundred. This was because the greatest danger, that of septicemia, had not been removed, and it was reserved for Lister to defeat this formidable enemy of the surgeon and of mankind. It is through his labors, and those of his disciples all over the civilized world, that we, at the present day, can undertake these serious operations with light hearts; and when I record before you my last ten years' results, with a mortality of a little over 2 per cent., I do so in no spirit of boastfulness or self-aggrandizement; but in doing so I place a wreath of veneration and gratitude on the shrine of the mighty dead.

The admission of ovariectomy to a recognized place in surgery was, of course, not a sudden event that could be assigned to a particular date, or even a particular year. The growth of its recognition was gradual, but we may say that twenty-five years ago this recognition was an accomplished fact. By this time, many sur-