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IN MEMORIAM

JOHN OSBORN POLAK

MARCH 12, 1870-JUNE 29, 1931

WITH the death of John Osborn Polak on June 29, there passed an outstanding physician, teacher and citizen. He died as he had wished, "on the job"—suddenly, without apparent warning and without bodily pain. He was at the height of his very active and useful career, never more enthusiastic and hopeful in the consummation of the many important problems that he had planned for the future. He had no hobby save his task satisfactorily performed.

If John Polak had a guiding creed it must have been that proposed by Dean Briggs when he said, "Do your work—not just your work and no more, but a little more for the lavishing's sake; that little more that is worth all the rest. And if you suffer as you must, and if you doubt as you must, do your work. Put your heart into it and the sky will clear. Then out of your very doubt and suffering will be born the supreme joy of life."

His stimulating personality and indefatigable ability for work made those associated with him strive to always do better and better work. Leadership was a natural talent of John Polak's. He inspired enthusiasm and stimulated ambition. He commanded respect.

Dr. John Osborn Polak was born in Brooklyn, New York, March 12, 1870. His father was Karl Theodore Polak and his mother Mary Elizabeth Osborn Polak, whose family lived on Clinton Avenue, Brooklyn, for more than 100 years. He married Bertha Louise Pitkin on June 12, 1896—a lovable, kindly and devoted helpmate, ever mindful of his health and comfort—truly a doctor's wife. She died in 1924. One child—a daughter, Mary Osborn Polak—survives.

No citizen of Brooklyn was ever more proud of his "home town" than Dr. Polak. He was always "from Brooklyn" and was ever on the alert for Brooklyn's best interests—medical, educational and civic.

He gave freely of his time and money for the upbuilding of better medicine, higher standards of medical education and better civic conditions throughout the Borough of Brooklyn, and indeed throughout the nation. How he crowded the multiplicity of his interests into the "days of his life" still remains a mystery to those who knew him intimately.

Dr. Polak obtained his education at Rutgers Grammar School and from Rutgers College from which he received the Bachelor of Science degree in 1889 and the Master of Science in 1901. He was graduated in medicine from both the Long Island College Hospital of Brooklyn and the University of Vermont in 1891. He was awarded the Dudley Medal for Surgery upon his graduation from the Long Island College Hospital. Thus Dr. Polak, at the age of 21 years, began his medical career with signal attainments. With such a background it is little wonder that at the age of 61 years he had gained wealth, honor, and fame.

As a physician, Dr. Polak was kind-hearted, lovable, skillful; as an executive, able, equitable, sagacious; as a man, friendly, affable, inspiring—truly a gentleman. He had countless admirers—yes, many friends—all over the world. He was equally well known in the East, West, North and South.

As a teacher he was forceful, explicit, impressive. He had many loyal friends amongst his ex-students. His "boys" were ever dear to his heart. They had received instruction from him; he had received stimulation from them. One of his "boys" wrote in the "1931 Lichonian," the student yearbook of the Long Island College of Medicine, the following—"For twenty-five years his eyes have been directed toward the future while his hand and mind have dealt with the present and his heart has opened to his 'boys.' For twenty-five years he has carried the College on the crest of his fame and he has been the dynamic factor in every advance it has made. For twenty-five years he has sent his students into practice with a confidence born of his teachings. His name and that of the College are synonymous. Where Gynecology and Obstetrics are practiced his name is a byword. His surgical skill is tradition and his teaching is the model for thousands who are emulating him."

The world, unfortunately, is still heavily laden with "charity patients" and Dr. Polak had his share of these—and more. He radiated sunshine and happiness to countless numbers of poor, tired, sick and unhappy women. He thrilled in their appreciation of his encouragement. Dispensary and ward patients received from him the best he could give. He reveled in their gratitude. No private patient got more of him. Dr. Polak must have believed, with James Allen, that "there is no physician like cheerful thought for dissipating the ills

of the body; there is no comforter to compare with good-will for the dispersing the shadows of grief and sorrow."

Dr. Polak lived a temperate life. He indulged in no excesses save his work. He died too young—far too young—for he might have accomplished even greater things had he lived through that useful decade just ahead of him. As with Jerome Bell, in the beautiful poem "Mystery," we wonder

"What is this mystery men call death?
My friend before me lies; in all save breath
He seems the same as yesterday. His face
So like to life, so calm, bears not a trace
Of that great change which all of us so dread.
I gaze upon him and say: He is not dead,
But sleeps; and soon he will arise and take
Me by the hand. I know he will awake
And smile on me as he did yesterday;
And he will have some gentle word to say,
Some kindly deed to do; for loving thought
Was warp and woof to which his life was wrought.
He is not dead. Such souls forever live
In boundless measure of the love they give."

—*Harvey Burleson Matthews.*



John Osborn Polak

1870-1931

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IN MEMORIAM

JOHN OSBORN POLAK
1870-1931

ON JUNE 29, 1931, Brooklyn lost one of her most distinguished citizens, John Osborn Polak, a man known for his enormous energy, overflowing enthusiasm and charming personality. He was an outstanding physician and teacher. He died as he had wished "on the job," suddenly, without apparent warning, as the result of coronary thrombosis. If he had any premonitions of such an ailment they were never divulged to his immediate colleagues, although a few weeks previous to his death he had a mild attack of cardiac pain, which, in his characteristic way, he allowed to pass without ado or alarm. His determination to continue his routine, despite the solicitations of his family and close associates, undoubtedly hastened his untimely death. Alas! do not physicians all too often succumb to the vicissitudes of their indifference.

If John Polak had a guiding creed it must have been contained in the expression "work satisfactorily performed is the delight of the soul." He had no hobby save his "work"—the practice and the teaching of medicine. An almost unlimited capacity for work, coupled with his stimulating personality and enthusiasm, made those associated with him strive to always do better and better work. He had courage, fortitude and confidence. Leadership was a natural talent. He inspired enthusiasm and stimulated ambition. He commanded respect.

Dr. John Osborn Polak was born in Brooklyn, N. Y., March 12, 1870. His father was Karl Theodore Polak and his mother was Mary Elizabeth Osborn, whose family had lived in Brooklyn for upwards of one hundred years. He married Bertha Pitkin on June 12, 1896, whose family also lived in Brooklyn for many years, and was prominent in Brooklyn affairs. She was a kindly devoted helpmate, ever mindful of the Doctor's comfort—truly a physician's wife. She died in 1924. A daughter, Mary Osborn Polak, survives.

Dr. Polak grew up in Brooklyn, acquiring his primary education in the public schools of his native city. Later he attended Rutgers Grammar School, after which he was graduated from Rutgers College (New Brunswick, N. J.), receiving the Bachelor of Science degree in 1889 and the Master's degree in 1891. He immediately took up the study of medicine and graduated from both the Long Island College Hospital and the University of Vermont in 1891. He was awarded the Dudley Medal for proficiency in surgery upon his graduation from the Long Island Col-

lege Hospital. Thus Dr. Polak, at the age of 21 years, began his medical career with signal attainments.

No citizen of Brooklyn was ever more proud of his "home town" than Dr. Polak. He was always "from Brooklyn" and was invariably on the alert for Brooklyn's best interests—medical, educational and civic. He gave freely of his time and energy for the betterment of medical education and the improvement of the practice of medicine in Brooklyn and indeed throughout the nation. He traveled and lectured extensively in this country and in many parts of Europe. His last appearance abroad was as guest speaker before the Seventh British Congress of Obstetrics and Gynecology, held in Dublin, Ireland, in April, 1929.

As an executive, Dr. Polak was able, equitable, sagacious; as a man, friendly, affable, inspiring. He had countless admirers and many friends all over the world. Possessed of a remarkable memory, he never forgot a face and seldom a name. The "unknown man" was always remembered and given the hand of good fellowship with a cordiality that was gracious and encouraging. Many visitors to his clinic have commented upon this outstanding characteristic.

As a physician, Dr. Polak was kind-hearted, lovable, skillful. His patients were devoted, satisfied and loyal. His practice, therefore, was always large and constantly increasing. For 25 years he worked among "charity patients" in various dispensaries throughout Brooklyn and New York, who received from the best he could give. He radiated sunshine and happiness to countless numbers of poor, sick and discouraged women. He rejoiced in their appreciation of his encouragement. Dr. Polak believed as did James Allen, that "there is no physician like cheerful thought for dissipating the ills of the body; there is no comforter to compare with good will for dispersing the shadows of grief and sorrow."

As a teacher, Dr. Polak was explicit, forceful, impressive. Few men could hold the attention of his hearers better. He literally "threw himself" into his subject. Undergraduate, postgraduate or lay audiences gave their undivided attention to what he was saying. He was not a brilliant orator. He always had something to say and said it with brevity, sincerity and enthusiasm—leaving the salient points well stamped upon the minds of his listeners. Truly the great teacher! Postgraduate students from everywhere came to his clinics. Undergraduate students crowded to his lectures and operative clinics. His "boys" were ever dear to his heart. For twenty-five years he sent his students out into practice with a confidence born of his teachings. His name and that of the Long Island College of Medicine are so closely entwined that one cannot be separated from the other. Indeed! he lived that the college might progress, for only those who worked with him know the difficulties under which he labored for the upbuilding of the college.

Dr. Polak contributed volumiously to medical literature. Textbooks,

monographs and innumerable journal articles bear his name as author. His writings are characteristic of his life—buoyant, interesting, instructive. How he crowded the multiplicity of his interests into the “days of his life” still remains a mystery to those who knew him intimately.

Dr. Polak lived a temperate life. He engaged in no excesses save perhaps his work. He died young—far too young—for he might have accomplished even greater things had he lived through that useful decade just ahead of him. He had many plans for the future. His energy still seemed unbounded; his enthusiasm remained undimmed; and his confidence unshaken, even to the hour of his death.

A LIST OF DR. POLAK'S ACHIEVEMENTS

Hospital Connections

Attending Gynecologist, Williamsburg Hospital, 1894-1906; Brooklyn Eastern District Hospital, 1891-1898; Deaconess Hospital, Brooklyn, 1899-1907; Jewish Hospital, 1906-1922; People's Hospital, New York City, 1909-1912; Chief, Gynecological Department, Polhemus Clinic, Long Island College Hospital, 1906-1911; Director, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Methodist Episcopal Hospital, 1906-1914; Director, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Israel-Zion Hospital, 1924-1929; Consulting Gynecologist and Obstetrician, Jewish, Israel-Zion, Caledonian, Bushwick, Coney Island and South Hampton Hospitals. Consulting Obstetrician, Methodist Episcopal, Mary Hitchcock, and Nyack Hospitals. Elected President of the Board of Regents, Long Island College Hospital, March, 1931.

Teaching Positions

Instructor in Histology and Obstetrics, Long Island College Hospital, 1892-1895. Instructor in Gynecology, New York Post Graduate, 1894-1898; Adjunct Professor, 1898-1901; Professor of Gynecology, 1901-1907. Professor of Obstetrics and Clinical Professor of Gynecology, Dartmouth Medical School, 1902-1912. Assistant Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Long Island College Hospital, 1900-1910; Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Long Island College Hospital, 1911-1931.

Medical Societies

Fellow of the American Gynecological Society, 1908; Fellow of the American College of Surgeons, Regent, 1927-1930; Fellow of the American Association of Obstetricians, Gynecologists and Abdominal Surgeons, President, 1927; Fellow of the Royal Academy of Medicine of Ireland and Guest Speaker at the British Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, 1929; Fellow of the American Medical Association and Member of the House of Delegates from the Section of Obstetrics and Gynecology; Fellow of the New York Academy of Medicine; Fellow of the New York Obstetrical Society, President, 1916; Member: New York State Medical

Society; Medical Society of the County of Kings, President, 1915; Associated Physicians of Long Island; Brooklyn Medical Society; Williamsburg Medical Society; Brooklyn Pathological Society.

Publications

Collaborator: *Clinical Gynecology by Eminent American Teachers*, edited by Keating and Coe, 1895; Collaborator: *Practice of Obstetrics by American Authors*, 3rd edition, 1907, edited by Chas. Jewett; *Manual of Obstetrics*, 1915, two editions, D. Appleton & Co.; *Manual of Gynecology*, three editions, 1915-1922-1927, Lea & Febiger; *Pelvic Inflammation in Women*, 1921, Vol. 1, D. Appleton Series; *Nelson Loose Leaf Living Surgery*, Chapter of Puerperal Infections, Vol. 7, 1928; Editor of *Practical Medicine Series of Year Books*, Volume on Gynecology, 1928-1929-1930-1931.

Member of the Editorial Board of the following journals: *Surgery, Gynecology and Obstetrics*; *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology*; *Medical Times and Long Island Medical Journal*, *American Journal of Surgery*.

Contributed annually for many years, to the leading medical journals.

HARVEY B. MATTHEWS.



JOHN OSBORN POLAK
1870-1931

JOHN OSBORN POLAK.

1870—1931.

THE sudden death of John Osborn Polak in Brooklyn has left his friends with a sense of irreparable loss. For many years he has been one of the outstanding men in the profession, and gynaecologists at home and abroad have felt that a visit to New York was not complete without a visit to his clinic in Brooklyn.

Dr. Polak was born in Brooklyn, educated at Rutgers College, Long Island College Hospital, and at the University of Vermont, being graduated from both the latter schools with the degree of Doctor of Medicine in 1891. From an internship at the Long Island Hospital in 1891-92 to the Professorship in Obstetrics and Gynaecology in the same institution in 1910 until his death, is the story of his medical life, with numerous associations with other hospitals and medical schools in and around New York, as well as a professorship in his speciality in Dartmouth Medical School. He was a Fellow and member of many medical organizations, as well as President of the American Association of Obstetricians, Gynaecologists and Abdominal Surgeons, Vice-President of the American Gynaecological Society, Vice-President of the New York Academy of Medicine, President of both the New York and Brooklyn Gynaecological and Obstetrical Societies, and a member of the Royal Academy of Medicine in Dublin. In 1929 he was guest speaker at the British Congress of Obstetrics and Gynaecology in Dublin, at which time he made many friends in Great Britain. His literary work comprises manuals of obstetrics and gynaecology; he was a co-author of "Clinical Gynaecology," "The Nelson Looseleaf Living Surgery," and "Practice of Obstetrics," and innumerable papers in medical periodicals. He was contributing editor to the *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology*, *American Journal of Surgery*, *Medical Times*, and the *Long Island Medical Journal*.

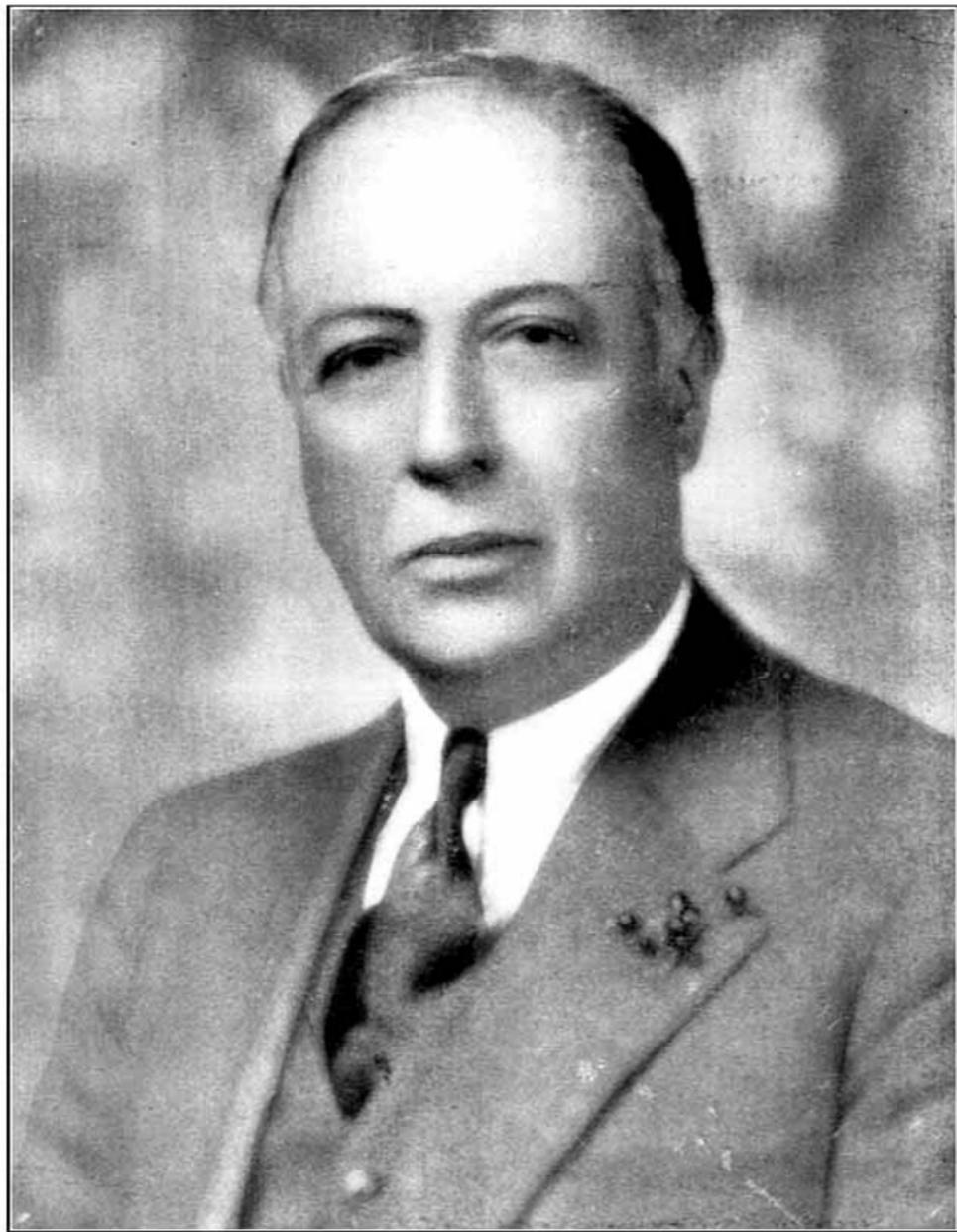
Although not strong as a child, he developed into a man capable of tremendous work. His energy was proverbial. Dr. Polak was a man with a hobby, which was the practice of medicine and the advancement of medical education. He was a

skilful operator, an excellent teacher, an expert diagnostician, and an able executive. He was devoted to his patients and an inspiration to his medical students. He trained men to follow him. Beck, Matthews, McCord, and others, who are now occupying positions of responsibility, received their start and inspiration from him. He was completely absorbed in his work, and had an amazing capacity for intense application. In addition to his teaching, his clinical work, and his practice, he devoted much time to writing, as is evidenced by the numerous textbooks, monographs, and papers which bear his name as author. He was a finished speaker. Few men had greater ability in closing a discussion and presenting points in such a logical manner that his hearers carried with them a crystallized opinion concerning the subject in hand. He devoted much of his time to developing the standards of obstetrics and gynecology in America. He conducted many courses for practitioners, spending a week in sections in the middle west in order to give the general practitioners the benefit of his training and knowledge.

He was especially beloved and prized by his professional friends. He was an extremely loyal colleague and friend. His personality, character, affability, scholarship, and professional attainments were of the highest quality.

One of the last of the many gestures betokening the esteem in which he was held by all in the College was indicated when, on April 23rd, 1931, at an informal and personal dinner given by his staff, a bronze plaque was presented to him, inscribed with the words "Presented by his staff as a token of appreciation, esteem, and affection."

FRANK W. LYNCH.



JOHN OSBORN POLAK
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MEMOIRS

JOHN OSBORN POLAK

Born March 12, 1870—Died June 29, 1931

IN the passing of John Osborn Polak the American College of Surgeons shares with the medical world the loss of one of the great gynecologists and obstetricians of our day. He was a Founder and Life Member of the College, a Governor 1913-16 and 1926-31, and a Regent since 1927.

During eighteen years, since the organization of the College, he was active in its work. He aided in formulating its ideals, in its vision and support of the scientific specialist in surgery, in its effort to better the environment of surgical practice, in its practical research, and in its stand for ethical transactions among physicians and surgeons.

Doctor Polak was wise in counsel, and he was uncompromisingly for safe administration. He was an ardent supporter of our partnership with the public, and ungrudgingly gave of his time at our annual congresses, and at our numerous sectional meetings throughout the United States and Canada, so many of which he attended.

The officers, Regents, and administrators of the College will miss his friendly greeting, his companionable spirit, and his staunch advocacy of those things that are right.

This friend, so suddenly and prematurely taken away, was ever loyal to the past, confident of the present, and trustful for the future. He possessed great strength of character, and many fine human attributes. It is difficult to realize that our personal friendship of many years has ended. FRANKLIN H. MARTIN.

DOCTOR POLAK was born in Brooklyn, New York, home of four generations of his family, on March 12, 1870, the son of Karl T. and Mary E. (Osborn) Polak. In 1896, he married Bertha L. Pitkin, of Brooklyn, who died in 1924. There is one daughter, Mary Osborn Polak.

He received his early education in the public schools of New Brunswick; B.Sc., Rutgers College, in 1889; M.D., Long Island College Hospital and University of Vermont, 1891, at which time he received the Dudley Medal for Surgery; M.Sc.,

Rutgers, 1901; interne, Long Island College Hospital, 1891-92; resident, Midwifery Department, New York Postgraduate, 1892-93; instructor in histology and obstetrics, Long Island College, 1892-95; instructor in obstetrics, New York Postgraduate, 1894-98; adjunct professor, 1898-1901; professor of obstetrics, 1901-7; assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology, Long Island College, 1900-1910.

In 1902, he succeeded the late Dr. Paul Munde as professor of obstetrics and clinical professor of gynecology, Dartmouth Medical School, serving for ten years. He succeeded the late Dr. Charles Jewett as professor in the department of obstetrics and gynecology in the Medical School of Long Island College Hospital, in 1912, and on March 26 last was elected president of the Board of Regents of the hospital; chief obstetrician and gynecologist, Long Island College Hospital, 1911; attending gynecologist, Williamsburgh Hospital, 1894-1906; Brooklyn E. D. Hospital, 1896-98; Jewish Hospital, Brooklyn, 1906-22; Deaconess Hospital, 1899-1907; People's Hospital, New York, 1909-12; chief, gynecological department, Polhemus Clinic, 1899-1910; obstetrician, Methodist Episcopal Hospital, 1906-14; director, department of obstetrics and gynecology, Israel-Zion Hospital, 1924-29; consulting gynecologist, Jewish Israel-Zion, Caledonian, Bushwick, Coney Island, and Southampton Hospitals; consulting obstetrician, Methodist Episcopal, Mary Hitchcock, and Nyack Hospitals.

Fellow, Royal Academy of Medicine (Ireland); member, American Gynecological Society (councilor, 1921; vice-president, 1924), American Association of Obstetricians, Gynecologists and Abdominal Surgeons (president, 1927), New York Obstetrical Society (president, 1916), Brooklyn Gynecological Society (president, 1910), American Medical Association (chairman, section on obstetrics, 1921), New York Academy of Medicine, New York State Medical Society, Medical Society County of Kings (president, 1915), Long Island Medical Society, Associated Physicians of Long Island, Brooklyn Medical Society, Williamsburgh Medical Society, Brooklyn Pathological Society.

Collaborator, Keating and Coes Gynecology, 1894; and Text Book of Obstetrics by American authors, 1906; author, Manual of Obstetrics, 1913 and 1922; Students' Manual of Gynecology, 1915, 1922, and 1927; Pelvic Inflammation in Women, 1921 and 1931. Also author of many scientific articles pertaining to original work in his specialties.

Editor, Department of Obstetrics, INTERNATIONAL ABSTRACT OF SURGERY; member, Editorial Boards of the *American Journal of Surgery* and the *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology*; and chairman of the Sub-committee on Parental, Maternal, and Early Infant Care, of the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection.



Theobald Stark

JOHN OSBORN POLAK, M.Sc., M.D.
(1870-1931)

BY PALMER FINDLEY, M.D., OMAHA, NEBRASKA

IN THE passing of John Osborn Polak our Association has sustained an irreparable loss; American Obstetrics is deprived of a leader whose contributions have enriched its literature and whose masterly discussions in society proceedings have inspired and instructed his colleagues. We who knew him intimately felt the charm of his forceful personality and warm loyalty, and we honor his memory even as he honored us and our Association.

He died in the fulness of his powers. Providence was kind to him, for he was spared prolonged physical suffering and the heartaches of enforced retirement. He died in the prime of life while enjoying, in full measure, the fruition of his hopes. Doubtless other honors awaited him had his life been prolonged, but of honors he had full measure in recognition of his sterling qualities and accomplishments. He profited by a large clientele, but his services to the poor were as freely given as they were arduous.

His alert and inquiring mind was ever bent on adding to his store of knowledge and skill. He traveled widely, always to learn and often to instruct. An inspiring teacher, a forceful debater, and a leader of men, he gave his time and his talent unsparingly to the advancement of obstetrics, and his contributions have added greatly to this end. I have often said of him that he was the most dynamic force in American Obstetrics. In a large measure he was a self-made man. His indomitable will-power and his capacity for work were boundless and beyond the comprehension of his associates. Perhaps the thing that engrossed his interests most was medical education and more particularly the teaching of obstetrics and gynecology. In the crusade for greater recognition of the claims of obstetrics in our teaching institutions he maintained a leadership to the end.

It is chronicled that John Osborn Polak was born in Brooklyn, New York, March 12, 1870. His father was Karl T. Polak and his mother Mary E. Osborn Polak. In 1896 he married Bertha L. Pitkin. He is survived by a daughter, Mary Osborn Polak. Educated in the public schools of New Brunswick, he graduated from Rutgers College in 1889 and received his M.D. degree in 1891 from the Long Island Medical School. From 1900 to the time of his death he served on the teaching faculty of his Alma Mater. In 1912 he succeeded Dr. Charles Jewett as Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology in the Long Island Medical School and Hospital. Through his untiring efforts he built his depart-

ment into one of the strongest in the country. His staff positions in the hospitals of Brooklyn were many, and, as President of the Board of Regents of Long Island Hospital, he was active in hospital organization and management.

Among his medical society affiliations were the following—Fellow, Royal Academy of Medicine (Ireland); Fellow, American Gynecological Society (councilor, 1921; vice president 1924), American Association of Obstetricians, Gynecologists and Abdominal Surgeons (president 1927), Brooklyn Gynecological Society (president 1910), New York Obstetrical Society (president 1916), American Medical Association (chairman, section on Obstetrics, 1921), New York Academy of Medicine, New York State Medical Society, Medical Society County of Kings (president, 1915), Long Island Medical Society, Associated Physicians of Long Island, Brooklyn Medical Society, Brooklyn Pathological Society, and Williamsburg Medical Society.

He was collaborator of Keating and Coe's "Gynecology," 1894, and of "Textbook of Obstetrics" by American authors, 1906; author of "Manual of Obstetrics," 1913-22; "Student's Manual of Gynecology," 1915-22-27; "Pelvic Inflammation in Women," 1921-31. He was a prolific writer of scientific articles related to obstetrics and gynecology.

Such, in brief, is a sketch of the life and works of John Osborn Polak. It has not been an easy task for me to prepare these memoirs for I have been possessed of the fear that, because of my affection for him, I might overstep the bounds of discretion or, in restraining my emotions, I might fall short of doing him the honor which is his due. This Association honored him as Councilor and as President; he, in return, gave to the Association the best that was in him. We will not soon see his like again.

JOHN OSBORN POLAK, M.Sc., M.D.
(1870-1931)

BY THURSTON SCOTT WELTON, M.D., BROOKLYN, N. Y.

JOHN OSBORN POLAK died suddenly on the morning of June 29, 1931. It was an excessively hot week-end. Most of his staff were out of town. Doctor Polak should have been taking his ease under the aged trees at his place at Easthampton, Long Island, but he had promised to do a chapter for a forthcoming book and must remain in the sweltering city to get it done. He worked that Sunday until near midnight. A few hours later a heart attack closed a brilliant career.

His was a successful life. He was one of America's outstanding gynecologists and obstetricians. He was honored at home and abroad. He loved work and his vocation and avocation were the same—his professional activities. He lived up to a rigid routine. He was an early riser. He held operative clinics Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays; the odd mornings were devoted to teaching and ward rounds. He saw patients at his office three afternoons a week, limiting the number to fifty. His free afternoons he filled with committee, faculty, regents and other meetings, and in between attended to his writing and correspondence. When in the city he visited the hospital and saw particularly sick patients before he turned in for the night. Poor and rich received the same unhurried, courteous, kind treatment. One Sunday a month he held a meeting of his staff. He was devoutly interested in medical education and constantly led the fight for better obstetrical teaching in American medical colleges. He gave freely of his time to young men. For them he had a great attraction. He trained many who today have arrived and are making solid reputations in their chosen field. His intimate staff and housemen held him in great affection. To them he was known as "father." It was an instance in which a man was a hero to his co-workers. He was generous. He provided the necessary funds to start many a young man in the practice of medicine. He gave freely to all manner of charities but always kept his donations from being public knowledge. Just before he died he had built a laboratory for his college and paid the bill in full. He left his college (Long Island College Hospital) a quarter of a million dollars towards the building of a new maternity. He left his library and five thousand dollars to his county medical society.

In honor of his being the first physician elected president of the Board of Regents, his personal staff tendered him a dinner on April 23, 1931, the last function he attended. The talks by the senior men stressed their great love for him and they voiced the hope there would be no age

limit applied in his case. He was given a bronze plaque, suitably inscribed, in a hand tooled leather case. Doctor Polak to those present, less than twenty-five, outlined the projects he had in mind for the future. They were of a magnitude to keep three men busy. Perhaps it was well he went while up to his neck in work. He was not the type who could idle and enjoy lazy convalescence.

Doctor Polak was born in Brooklyn, New York, on March 12, 1870. Four generations of his family had resided in Brooklyn. In 1896 he married Bertha L. Pitkin, of Brooklyn. His wife died in 1924. A daughter survives, Mary Osborn Polak.

He attended the public schools of New Brunswick, New Jersey. In 1889 he received his B.Sc. and in 1901 the degree of M.Sc. from Rutgers College. He graduated from medicine at the Long Island College Hospital and University of Vermont in 1891. At his graduation he received the Dudley Medal for Surgery. After an internship at the Long Island College Hospital and a residentsip in midwifery at New York Post-graduate Hospital, he was appointed an instructor in obstetrics at the latter named institution, at which he became an adjunct professor and then professor of obstetrics (1901-1907). At the Long Island College Hospital he was assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology from 1900 to 1910, at which time, following the death of Professor Charles Jewett, he was elevated to the chair. In 1902 he was made professor of gynecology at Dartmouth Medical School, in which capacity he served for ten years. On March 12, 1931 he was elected president of the Board of Regents of the Long Island College Hospital.

In 1911 Doctor Polak was made chief obstetrician and gynecologist, Long Island College Hospital. He was attending gynecologist, Williamsburgh Hospital, 1894 to 1910; Brooklyn Eastern District Hospital, 1896-98; Jewish Hospital, Brooklyn, 1896-1922; Deaconess Hospital, 1899-1907; People's Hospital, New York, 1909-1912; obstetrician, Methodist Episcopal Hospital, 1906-1914; director and gynecology, Israel-Zion Hospital, 1924-29; consulting gynecologist, Jewish, Israel Zion, Caledonian, Bushwick, Coney Island, and Southampton Hospitals; consulting obstetrician, Methodist Episcopal, Mary Hitchcock (Hanover, N. H.), and Nyack Hospitals.

Doctor Polak was a Fellow, Royal Academy of Medicine (Ireland); member, American Gynecological Society (councilor, 1921; vice president, 1924), Fellow of the American Association of Obstetricians, Gynecologists and abdominal Surgeons (president, 1927), New York Obstetrical Society (president, 1916), Brooklyn Gynecological Society (president, 1910), American Medical Association (chairman, section on obstetrics, 1921), New York Academy of Medicine, New York State Medical Society, Medical Society of the County of Kings (Brooklyn) (presi-

dent, 1915), Long Island Medical Society, Associated Physicians of Long Island, Brooklyn Medical Society, Williamsburgh Medical Society, Brooklyn Pathological Society.

He was the author of scores of articles dealing with various phases of his specialty. He was collaborator, Keating and Coes Gynecology, 1894; Text Book of Obstetrics by American Authors, 1906; author, Manual of Obstetrics, 1913 and 1922; Manual of Gynecology, 1915, 1922, and 1927; Pelvic Inflammation in Women, 1921 and 1931; member of Editorial Board, The American Journal of Surgery, and the American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology; editor, department of obstetrics, International Abstract of Surgery. He conducted the Year Book, section on gynecology, for the past three years. He was chairman of the Subcommittee on Parental, Maternal, and Early Infant Care, of the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection.

John Osborn Polak was a likable man. He had friends everywhere. He was temperate in his habits, simple in his personal tastes, loyal, and ever strove to induce those in medicine to high ideals. Because of his untimely death American medicine lost a valuable member; gynecology and obstetrics in this country is minus one of its giant props; many will miss an agreeable companion, teacher and friend.

"His life was the rounding out of all good human possibilities through conscientious endeavor, hard work and unselfish ideals."