

IN MEMORIAM

REUBEN PETERSON
1862—1942

REUBEN PETERSON died at Duxbury, Massachusetts, on November 25, 1942, at the age of eighty. His death came rather unexpectedly after an illness of two months.

He was a direct descendant of George Soule, one of the Mayflower Pilgrims. He was educated at Harvard University, and after receiving his medical degree in 1889 he practiced in Grand Rapids, Michigan, for eight years. From 1898 to 1901 he was professor of gynecology at the Post Graduate Medical School of Chicago, and assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology at Rush Medical School.

His period of service at the University of Michigan as head of obstetrics and gynecology lasted thirty years, 1901 to 1931. It was here that he became famous as a teacher and developed the department into an excellent University Teaching Clinic. His proudest accomplishment was the organization of a system for the training of assistants. Strange indeed, in so doing he encountered actual opposition and criticism from heads of other departments. He was proud to have one of his own trained associates succeed him upon his retirement.

Dr. Peterson was chiefly a clinician. This no doubt was due to the period in which he studied and practiced. As laboratory methods developed he always eagerly embraced each new idea. But to him the laboratory was always an adjunct to his clinical work. He believed obstetrics and gynecology were inseparable and he taught and practiced both. He made many contributions to literature. *The Index Medicus* and the *Cumulative Index* recorded 219.

Dr. Peterson was greatly respected by his associates for the brilliancy of his work, his masterful ability to organize, and for his clear-cut teaching clinics. He was deeply loved for his homely virtues. Simplicity, honesty, kindness, and generosity were his outstanding traits.

He was beloved by all the medical students. His lectures were always interesting, well delivered and well organized, and sprinkled with many of the anecdotes for which he was so famous.

He received abundant recognition for his professional accomplishments. He was secretary and also chairman of the Section on Obstetrics and Gynecology and Abdominal Surgery of the American Medical Association, a founder of the American College of Surgeons, and was certified by the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology.

In 1897 he was elected to membership in the American Gynecological Society and served as its president in 1911. He was a member of the Advisory Editorial Board of the *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology* from the year of its founding until he retired from professional work. During this period he maintained a constant interest in the publication and nominated his successor at the University of Michigan, Dr. Norman Miller, to take his place on the Board. He was a member of numerous medical societies. During World War I he was a Major in the Medical Corps of the United States Army and had charge of medical recruiting in Michigan. In 1936 the University of Michigan granted him the honorary degree of Doctor of Science.

In 1889, immediately after graduation in medicine, Dr. Peterson married Miss Josephine Davis. Four children were born to them.

His was a rich life, full of accomplishments, and well lived. His memory will be a constant inspiration. We, his associates, with his many friends, will miss him.

George Kamperman.