

ETIOLOGY.

H. C. Coe,² of New York, says that aside from neoplasms the principal cause of departure from the normal position of the uterus, as well as for the distressing symptoms which accompany this change of position, is not in overweighting of the uterus, nor in relaxation of its ligaments, nor in weakening of its pelvic supports, but is rather due to atony of the general abdominal and pelvic musculature. Some women carry large uterine myomata without any pressure symptoms. On the other hand, a flabby young woman may get up in three weeks from an easy labor and a perfectly normal convalescence, without evidence of puerperal lesions or subinvolution, but yet retroversion is present, and is accompanied by such dragging and bearing-down pains that the woman is a semi-invalid. This is from the general loss of tone and not from the local condition.

Many women who have perineal lacerations and a moderate prolapse of many years' standing, do not consult a gynecologist until after the menopause; this is due to the general loss of muscular tone at that period. All the uterine ligaments, of course, participate in this general loss of tone.

UTERINE LIGAMENTS.

When we study human anatomy,³ we find that the principle nature has applied to hold the various organs in place is that of suspension by ligaments. Briefly reviewing the organs of the human body, namely, the heart, the lungs, the liver, the spleen, the pancreas, the kidneys and the intestines, we readily admit that they are hung by ligaments from the bony framework of the body. Not one of them is held in place or receives support from anything placed beneath it. The ovaries and fallopian tubes hang on the posterior surface of the broad ligaments *by their ligaments*. Reasoning by analogy, and basing our conclusions upon the uniformity of nature's laws, the logical inference is that the uterus is held in place by its ligaments, and, weight for weight, no other organ in the body has so many ligaments.

That these ligaments are compelled to support the uterus is clearly demonstrated by the fact that, when the supporting power of the floor of the pelvis is absolutely destroyed by the perineum being torn clear through into the rectum, the uterus remains in place. The only exceptions to this rule are found in cases in which the uterus is displaced and dragged down-