UTERINE MYOMATA AND THEIR TREATMENT.*

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Mr. President and Gentlemen:

I gladly accepted your very kind invitation, not only on account of the great honor you have conferred upon me, but also because it gives me the pleasure of once more mingling with my teachers and schoolmates. It carries me back to my earliest glimpses of medicine, and even now I have vague recollections of sitting on the anxious bench nervously awaiting the results of the University and Council examination.

The subject I have chosen is a familiar one everywhere, but strikingly so in the South, where the negro population is greater. In Baltimore, nearly one-tenth of all gynecological cases admitted to our wards have been uterine myomata. Dr. Kelly and I have been analyzing the material of the Johns Hopkins Hospital of the last fourteen years, and during that time considerably more than a thousand cases of myoma have been placed on record. In deciding upon the preferable operative procedure in a given case, it is necessary to bear in mind the different varieties of myomata, their situation and size, the various degenerative processes which they may undergo and the complications that may arise. Furthermore, certain symptoms will also serve as a guide for treatment. In order to make the present paper clearer, permit me to discuss briefly these points. The subject is not new, but we are every day adding little by little to our knowledge of it.

From the investigations of others as well as from our own studies, it would appear probable that in the beginning nearly all myomata are interstitial. As they increase in size they may remain so, or on the other hand, may push outward or inward, forming subperitoneal or submucous nodules. The number of myomata present in a uterus may vary greatly. Occasionally only one is present, but more frequently seven or eight, and in not a few instances twenty or more can be counted. Again, these growths usually vary much in size. Thus in a uterus there will often be found a myoma of many pounds' weight, while in its immediate vicinity is another myomatous nodule not larger than a pin-head. As we all know, myomata may occupy any part of the uterus, sometimes being located on the surface of the organ, or at other times pushing their way out between the folds of the broad ligament. Again, not infrequently they occupy the entire pelvis, and we find the body of the uterus lying on the top of them. These are the cervical myomata which at times are so difficult of removal.

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