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ELECTRICITY IN GYNECOLOGY.

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As the treatment of diseases peculiar to women, by electricity, has in the last few years attained a high point of perfection and is now attracting attention all over Europe and America, owing to the writings of Apostoli, of Paris, and having lately had the pleasure of spending some time at his clinic, I thought it might be of interest to your readers to be furnished with some observations on this treatment. And although Apostoli himself is an enthusiast and therefore more impressed than anyone else with the advantages of his methods over all others, still there is so much reason in what he teaches, and his views are so thoroughly borne out by actual results, that no one can spend very much time under his tuition without becoming almost as much impressed with its advantages as he is himself.

Certainly the treatment of diseases of the uterus by electricity, either galvanic or faradic, has this in its favor, that it is the rational one for all diseases of that organ. Take, for instance, displacements; these all depend either on the womb being too heavy for its supports, or its supports being too weak to bear even a normal weight. In the first case the stimulating influence of a current applied to the muscular tissue or organ will have the effect of contracting its muscular fibres and consequently of diminishing its size and the calibre of the vessels supplying it with blood; for the muscular coats of the blood-vessels are made to contract, and the active and passive congestion is thereby diminished.

If on the other hand, the size and weight of the

organ remains normal and the displacement is due to defective action of the muscles which should support it, owing to their being in a state of degeneration, then no medication can be so effective as that which tends to tone them up and develop them to their normal strength. In most of our text books this cause of displacement is slightly dealt with. A year ago, at the meeting of the Canada Medical Association, at Quebec, in a paper which I had the honor of reading on Alexander's operation, I analysed the causes which lead to the uterus being held in place, and on my recent visit to Europe, the opinion I then expressed was fully endorsed by many of the leading authorities, whose views I obtained. Defective muscular tonus of the uterus and its muscular ligaments, and of the vaginal tube or column, and of the perineal muscles on which the end of that column rests, they all agreed was the cause of uterine displacements. This view is a rational one and is proven by the fact that they occur always in women whose muscular system is in a low state of development. Uterine displacements, I fancy, are unknown or at least very rarely met with in women living in a savage state, or among women of those countries where the manual labor is mostly performed by members of that sex. They are especially noticed among women of the higher classes, and among the lower classes living in a high state of civilization, whose muscular system, not only of the internal organs, but also of the limbs, is in a state of atrophy, amounting almost to wasting. In the dissecting-room we find cases in which the muscular system is so very much attenuated, that many of the muscles cannot be found. It is for this reason, doubtless, that in many cases for which the operation of shortening the round ligaments or round muscles has been performed, for the cure of retroflexions or retrodisplacements, the operator has been unable to find them. As women of very well developed uterine muscles rarely, if ever, have anything to complain of in that direction, it is, I fancy, rare to find these muscles well developed in cases of displacement. It was, therefore, with peculiar pleasure that I found Apostoli treating these cases by means of electricity. If we were called upon, for instance, to treat a case of lateral curvature of the spine depending upon the degeneration of the muscles of one or both sides, we would not be justified in trusting to artificial sup-