

majority of his patients to have a normal labor, on account of the severity of the pain and the weakness of the muscles.

There is yet another way in which the sedentary life which the higher education of women entails, renders maternity difficult, and that is by reducing the size of the pelvis. It is a law of physiology that the more that muscles are used, the larger they grow, and not only the muscles, but the bones to which those muscles are attached, also develop. When children are kept many hours a day sitting at a desk, their abdominal muscles are not used, and consequently they atrophy; in girls this is a serious matter, for the round muscles of the uterus only contract when the abdominal muscles do so, being supplied by the same nerves. As the keeping of the uterine fundus forwards where it ought to be depends upon the contractile power of these little cords, and as the slightest exertion will push the uterus back if these cords fail to do their work, weakness of the round muscles almost surely entails retroversion. Of course, retroversion means that the bowels come upon the anterior surface of the uterus and drive it downwards, until it is lying on the pelvic floor, almost at the outlet of the vulva. If, on the other hand, the round muscles are used hundreds of times a day, as they undoubtedly are when girls are running and playing and jumping, they would be well developed, and so strong that they could pull the fundus forward in normal anteversion, until it touched the pubic symphysis, before the bowels had time to be forced by intra-abdominal pressure in front of it. The uterus can stand an unlimited amount of pressure on its back, because the symphysis pubis then receives the weight of it, while it can bear very little on its anterior surface because there is nothing to stop it from falling backwards, until it is lying helplessly on its back on the pelvic floor. As a rule retroversion incapacitates a woman from performing her duties, and yet how common this condition is may be judged from the fact that the writer has had to operate on over five hundred cases, besides five hundred others whom he has cured by pessaries and other means. That the trouble is increasing as education increases may be inferred from the fact that twenty-five years ago it was so rare for a young girl to have any disease of the womb, that we seldom felt justified in making a vaginal examination; while now, so large a proportion of the cases are young girls, that we are justified in examining them whenever hygienic treatment fails to cure them in a reasonable time.

In conclusion, I am happy to say that, owing to recent im-