

of the uterus were shed, he made the mistake of mistaking a pathological condition for physiological process. It was not until June 23, 1886, at a meeting of the British Gynaecological Society in London that this theory was attacked. A very peculiar incident occurred on that memorable occasion. Dr. Bland Sutton, now Sir John Bland Sutton, and Dr. Arthur Johnstone the one man not knowing the other, nor the one man knowing what paper the other was to read at that meeting, both read a paper on the same identical subject, and that paper was on the conditions that prevail in normal menstruation, and by a very peculiar coincidence they both came to the same conclusion, namely, that the mucous membrane of the uterus is not shed during menstruation; What is shed, however, is the epithelial covering of the body of the uterus. The epithelial covering of the cervix and the tubes are not shed during menstruation. It has further been proved that during the time that the epithelial covering is on the body of the uterus, that the uterus is practically sealed over for a certain number of days in each month. This epithelium has no blood supply, and it has no nerve supply, and it is reasonable to suppose that in normal conditions there are a certain number of days during each month wherein pregnancy cannot take place.

This leads us, Gentlemen, to one of the most important points that we have to consider in regard to the causes of ectopic gestation. The function of the ciliated epithelium is to propel the ovum down to the uterus, where pregnancy normally takes place. At the same time it prevents the male

element from ascending the tube. When this ciliated epithelium of the Fallopian tube becomes destroyed, the ovum then has nothing to propel it down into the uterus. It will remain in the tube and impregnation take place there. The old belief that impregnation takes place in the Fallopian tube, we have found to be an erroneous deduction by investigations upon the lower animals. As a matter of fact, the Fallopian tubes do not exist as such, except in those animals that assume the upright position. Granting this hypothesis, and I cannot imagine a belief that can gainsay the truthfulness of it, the etiology of normal fecundation becomes much more intelligent. Sufficient knowledge of the functions, therefore, of the ciliated epithelium of the Fallopian tube establishes the fact that impregnation normally takes place in the uterine cavity. The cilia, by their peculiar formation and action, propel the ovum down the tubes to the uterus, at the same time preventing the spermatazoid from ascending. I repeat, therefore, when the ciliated epithelium becomes destroyed, the ovum will remain in the tube, and there being nothing to prevent the spermatazoid from ascending, it meets the ovum in the tube. There fertilization takes place, and there is nothing much more pathetic to think about than that little helpless ovum being caught in that way in the tube. It cannot retrace its steps, it cannot get through into the uterine cavity, and what is the poor little thing going to do. This delicate membrane, therefore, becomes of enormous importance in the regulation of the normal function of reproduction, and its destruction plac-