

I should also add, in passing, that the normal sexual desires in women who evidence a tardy onset of menstruation are not necessarily influenced prejudicially in this respect. In fact I know of a number of women, and we may also perhaps include this woman, in whom the determination to enter the marriage state was expedited by the exaggeration of sensualistic propensities. One of these women had, to my knowledge, five children and had never menstruated. This observation, as well as many others, has convinced me in spite of the strong antagonism of giants in gynecology—like the late Lawson Tait—that the older authors were right when they claimed that there was a “community of interest” between the ovaries and the uterine mucosa and that the sanguineous discharge from the uterine interior was inspired by an influence derived from the ovary. While this is unquestionably the rule, still every gynecologist of experience has met with exceptions in which ovulation, perhaps for years, has been active during the state of adolescence and preceding puberty, as well as at the other end of life, and, perhaps, for years after the woman had passed the change of life. The opposite condition have we also met with, particularly after double oöphorectomy in which menstruation continued for varying periods of time and which had to be explained by the assumption that an undiscovered third ovary had been left behind, or that the operator had unwittingly left a fragment of ovary in the stump, or that the menstruating “habit” of the uterus had not been eliminated even after complete extirpation of both adnexa. In other words I am trying to lead you up to my own conviction and that is that ovulation may be going on without menstruation and menstruation without ovulation under certain physiological as well as pathological conditions. The appearance of this woman and the circumstance that she has borne children convinces me that, even if she had not menstruated six months after her marriage, she would nevertheless have conceived, because I have the strongest of impressions that the ovaries were functioning in a normal manner. I make this statement deliberately and advisedly because of one trenchant experience. A woman had given birth to five children