

**Note on the penetration of the spermatozoon into the interior of the ovum /
by Martin Barry, M.D.**

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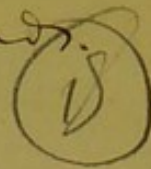
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NOTE ON THE
PENETRATION OF THE SPERMATOOZON
INTO THE
INTERIOR OF THE OVUM.

BY
MARTIN BARRY, M.D., F.R.S.

THE fact that the spermatozoon penetrates into the interior of the ovum was published by myself in the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London for 1840. Further observations enabled me to record the same as established, in the Philosophical Transactions for 1843. And in the Edinburgh New Philosophical Journal for October 1843, will be found a drawing I gave of an ovum of the Rabbit containing spermatozoa—nine in number, with the statement that I once counted more than twenty in an ovum of this animal.

These observations were held by physiologists to have been a mistake, an opinion which lasted up to the year 1852, when Nelson confirmed them in ova of an Entozoon, Keber in ova of the freshwater Mussels *Unio* and *Anodonta*, and Newport in ova of the Frog. And the present note contains, I believe, the first announcement in this country of their having been confirmed in the Mammalia themselves. I have just received a letter from a friend in Germany informing me of a paper published by Prof. Bischoff, dated March 15, 1854*, in which it is stated that spermatozoa have at length been seen within the *zona*, not only by R. Wagner, Henle, Baum, and Meissner, but even by Bischoff himself, who up to 1852 had considered my observations as "born of the imagination," but now candidly acknowledges that he had done me injustice, the mistake having been his own. And he remarks, that "Barry was certainly the first to see spermatozoa in the interior, not only of the mammiferous ovum, but of any ova." Professor Bischoff might have added, that for a dozen years Barry had a melancholy and not very enviable monopoly of the said observations. And it may now be mentioned that in this respect they resembled certain others, for confirmation of which I have always felt that I could afford to "bide my time." Thus I have at length received notice from a physiologist on the Continent of a work he is about to publish, containing a confirmation of my fact announced in Müller's *Archiv* for 1850, that cilia are composed of spirals.

* Entitled, "Bestätigung des von Dr. Newport bei den Batrachiern und Dr. Barry bei den Kaninchen behaupteten Eindringens der Spermatozoiden in das Ei."

