with regard to the procreation of man. Rarely is there more than one female ovum fertilized by the male sperm cell, and why is this? but simply for the protection of the mother, for in the woman the evolution from the fertilized ovum to the perfect child takes place in the uterus and within the abdominal cavity, and whenever there happens to be an exception to this rule, and there is a plurality of fertilized ovums, nature, as it were to be revenged, either destroys the mother or part of the offspring. Here then again we observe the natural law of selection; one ovum is fertilized, the others perish.

It is different, however, with fouls whose offspring are evolved outside the uterus, and outside of the abdomen. Wild fowls, as a rule, only lay a certain number of ovums for the purpose of procreation, and as their young all come out on or about the same time we have a right to suppose that all of the female ovums are incubated by the male sperm cell at one and the same time. If this were not the case, the first laid egg would produce its young before the last laid egg, five or six days according to the number of eggs, which would be very inconvenient to the parent fowl, and in some degree dangerous to the life of her young.

We know that these fowls hatch their eggs for a certain number of days, but the commencement of the existence of the new creature is from the very moment that the cell of the female ovum is fertilized by the cell of the male sperm; therefore, if the different female ovums were fertilized at different periods of time, we would naturally expect that there would be just that time between what we might call the birth of each of the young.

Let us suppose, then, a wild water fowl, say a duck, lays twelve eggs, one each day; if all these ovums were not incubated at the same time, there should be a difference of twelve days between the appearance of the first and last duckling, so that the first duckling would starve before the last made its appearance, for while one remained in the shell the mother would not forsake her nest. This fertilization, or incubation, of many ovums at the same time is the natural law where the young are reproduced outside of the abdominal cavity; for example, it is a well-known fact to naturalists that the queen bee leaves the hive six days after her birth for the act of copulation, when she is fecundated for her lifetime, which lasts about three years, and in the height of her season she will lay three thousand eggs in twenty-four hours, all of which reproduce. These naturalists who give us this information add that, as soon as the drone or male bee fertilizes the queen, it immediately dies. We can understand this when we remember that the male or drone neither works nor makes honey like the working bee, and that he only exists for the one single purpose of procreation, and when he performs that act his usefulness is finished. For him to live would simply be to be a burthen to his community, so nature kills him off when his work is done. Does nature do the same with the placenta mammalia? Let us hope so, let us hope that none live longer than is necessary for the accomplishing of their work.

But, you may ask, why is it not with the domestic fowls as with the wild fowls, the chick, for example, that lays a greater number of eggs than she can possibly hatch? First, because that we have forced the hen to break natural laws to provide ourselves, with food. But, notwithstanding this, we find that after the hen has rejected a certain number of ovums she determines to hatch her eggs and bring forth her young, and the careful guardian of the hen, from the notice she gives, will save up a certain number of her last eggs, and set them, and in doing so will be sure to be recompensed by a full clutch of healthy chicks; whereas the guardian who does not observe these natural laws, but purchases eggs in the market or elsewhere, and sets them under the sitting hen, with the impression that that is all he has to do to secure a clutch of chicks finds himself grievously disappointed and out in his calculation, so that we see one farmer having a hen with twelve chicks, another with a hen and two, or even one; so we can easily see who is the intelligent farmer, in the very number of his barn-door fowls. And I have learned lately from good authority that fowls that get their food too easily—those fowls that don't work for their food that their eggs when set don't bring forth chicks, consequently there is a custom now amongst those who keep fowls to throw the grain amongst straw, or sand to compel the fowls to scratch for and search for their food. I can only explain this seemingly extraordinary fact on the physiological supposition that the production of healthy semen in the male and ovulation in the female is dependent upon the spinal cord, and that this scratching labour of the fowls is, through the sensory nerves, a stimulus to the spinal cord, which reacts upon the male and female organs of generation, through their special nerves. You may say that art has found a means of hatching the eggs. Yes, but art or the hen herself will not