

cated breeds are nearly twice as fertile as doves: the latter, however, when caged and highly fed, become equally fertile with house pigeons. I hear from Judge Caton that the wild turkey in the United States does not breed when a year old, as the domesticated turkeys there invariably do. The peahen alone of domesticated birds is rather more fertile, according to some accounts, when wild in its native Indian home, than in Europe when exposed to our much colder climate.³³

With respect to plants, no one would expect wheat to tiller more, and each ear to produce more grain, in poor than in rich soil; or to get in poor soil a heavy crop of peas or beans. Seeds vary so much in number that it is difficult to estimate them; but on comparing beds of carrots in a nursery garden with wild plants, the former seemed to produce about twice as much seed. Cultivated cabbages yielded thrice as many pods by measure as wild cabbages from the rocks of South Wales. The excess of berries produced by the cultivated asparagus in comparison with the wild plant is enormous. No doubt many highly cultivated plants, such as pears, pineapples, bananas, sugar-cane, &c., are nearly or quite sterile; and I am inclined to attribute this sterility to excess of food and to other unnatural conditions; but to this subject I shall recur.

In some cases, as with the pig, rabbit, &c., and with those plants which are valued for their seed, the direct selection of the more fertile individuals has probably much increased their fertility; and in all cases this may have occurred indirectly, from the better chance of some of the numerous offspring from the more fertile individuals having been preserved. But with cats, ferrets, and dogs, and with plants like carrots, cabbages, and asparagus, which are not valued for their prolificacy, selection can have played only a subordinate part; and their increased fertility must be attributed to the more favourable conditions of life under which they have long existed.

³³ For the eggs of *Gallus bankiva*, see Blyth, in 'Annals and Mag. of Nat. Hist.,' 2nd series, vol. i., 1848, p. 456. For wild and tame ducks, Macgillivray, 'British Birds,' vol. v. p. 37; and 'Die Enten,' s. 87. For wild geese, L. Lloyd, 'Scandinavian Adventures,' vol. ii. 1854, p. 413; and for tame geese, 'Ornamental Poultry,' by Rev. E. S. Dixon, p. 139. On the breeding of Pigeons, Pistor, 'Das Ganze der Taubenzucht,' 1831, s. 46; and Boitard and Corbié 'Les

Pigeons,' p. 158. With respect to peacocks, according to Temminck ('Hist. Nat. Gén. des Pigeons,' &c., 1813, tom. ii. p. 41), the hen lays in India even as many as twenty eggs; but according to Jerdon and another writer (quoted in Tegetmeier's 'Poultry Book,' 1866, pp. 280, 282), she there lays only from four to nine or ten eggs: in England she is said, in the 'Poultry Book,' to lay five or six, but another writer says from eight to twelve eggs.