

in the same individual; this is the case with the great majority of Molluscans; the object of Providence, in this kind of organization, is evidently the greater multiplication of the species; but though hermaphrodites, in each individual possess the organs of both sexes, they are not so as to sexual union; reproduction can only take place when different individuals impregnate each other; this union takes place at the beginning of the spring, sooner or later, according to the heat of the season. Their courtship is singular, and realizes the pagan fable of Cupid's arrows, for, previous to their union, each snail throws a winged dart or arrow at its partner. About twenty days after coupling the snails lay at different times a great number of white eggs, varying at each laying from twenty-five to eighty, as large as little peas, enveloped in a membranous shell, which cracks when dried. They lay these eggs in shady and moist places, in hollows which they excavate with their foot, and afterwards cover with the same organ. These eggs hatch sooner or later, according to the temperature, producing little snails, exactly resembling their parent, but so delicate that a sun-stroke destroys them, and animals feed upon them; so that few, comparatively speaking, reach the end of the first year, when they are sufficiently defended by the hardness of their shell. The animal, at its first exclusion, lives solely on the pellicle of the egg from which it was produced. Providence—which, in oviparous and other animals, has provided for the first nutriment of the young in different ways, appropriating the milk of the mother to the young of quadrupeds; the yolk of the egg to those of birds, tortoises, and lizards; and the white of the egg to frogs and toads—has made this pellicle or coat the best nutriment of the young snail. In fact, this pellicle, consisting of carbonate of lime, united to animal substance, is necessary to produce the calcareous secretion of the mantle, and to consolidate the shell,