

IV. *Spermatozoa observed within the Mammiferous Ovum.*

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AS the results of my researches in Embryology have all been communicated to the Royal Society*, it seems proper to offer to its notice a single observation which I have lately made.

On a former occasion† I stated that at certain periods an orifice was sometimes visible in the thick transparent membrane (“*zona pellucida*”) of the mammiferous ovum; and that once I had seen an object very much resembling a spermatozoon in the orifice. But spermatozoa, so far as I am aware, have never been described as seen *within* the ovum of any animal. It may therefore be interesting to physiologists to be informed that about a fortnight since, in examining some ova of the Rabbit of twenty-four hours, from the Fallopian tube,—in which the orifice above-mentioned was no longer visible,—I unexpectedly discerned a number of spermatozoa in their interior. These ova were submitted to the inspection of Professor OWEN, and I afterwards showed one of them to Professors SHARPEY and GRAINGER, all of whom agreed that the spermatozoa were *contained within the ovum*‡.

London, 21st November, 1842.

* Philosophical Transactions, 1838–39–40–41.

† Ibid. 1840, p. 533.

‡ [The ova were in that state in which the essential part—the germ—consists of two cells. The spermatozoa lay around and between these cells; and when the ova were first examined I thought I discerned traces of spermatozoa even *within* the cells.

While the paper is going through the press, the opportunity is afforded me for mentioning that I have this day confirmed the observation above recorded; several ova from the Fallopian tube of another rabbit, in a somewhat earlier stage, having presented spermatozoa in their interior;—i. e. (as in the first observation) within the thick transparent membrane (“*zona pellucida*”) brought with the ovum from the ovary.—31st March, 1843.]