

Animals which produce but a small number at a time, acquire the chief part of their growth before they are fit for engendering, whereas those which multiply numerously generate before they have received half their growth. The human species, the horse, the ass, the goat, and the ram, are not able to engender until they have obtained nearly the whole of their growth. It is the same with pigeons and other birds, who lay but a few eggs; but those which produce in great numbers, as poultry, fish, &c. engender much sooner. A cock is capable of engendering at the age of three months, when he has not attained a third part of his growth; a fish, which at the end of twenty years will weigh thirty pounds, engenders in the first or second year, when perhaps it does not weigh half a pound. But exact observations on the growth and duration of the life of fish are still wanting: their age may be nearly known by examining the annual layers of their scales; but we are not certain how far that may extend. I have seen carp in the Comte de Maurepas' canals, at his castle at Pont Chartrain, which were said to be 150 years old, and they appeared as brisk and lively as the common carp. I will not