

men first acquire the powers of procreation is less distinctly marked. His body must obtain a certain degree of growth, before the seminal fluid can be produced; and before it can be formed and perfected, that growth must become still greater. This usually happens between the age of twelve and eighteen; but the period at which the procreative faculty of man ceases, Nature seems to have left undetermined. At sixty or seventy, when age begins to enfeeble the body, the seminal fluid is less copious, and often unprolific; yet there are many instances of men still continuing to procreate at the age of eighty or ninety.

There also are examples of boys who have propagated at eight, nine, and ten years; and of girls who have conceived at seven, eight, and nine. But such facts are exceedingly rare, and ought to be classed as singular phenomena. The external sign of virility appears in infancy, but that is not sufficient; in order to accomplish the act of generation, there must be a previous production of semen; and this is never effected till the growth of the body is nearly finished. At first the quantity is very small, and for the most part unfruitful.