

“ rificd, will run down the throat of the pa-
 “ rent, and seek shelter in its belly in the same
 “ manner as the young of the oppossum retire
 “ into the ventral pouch of the old one. From
 “ this some have imagined that the viper is so
 “ unnatural as to devour its own young, but
 “ this deserves no credit, as these animals live
 “ upon frogs, toads, lizards, and young birds,
 “ which they often swallow whole, though the
 “ morsel is often three times as thick as their
 “ own body.”

The viper is capable of supporting very long abstinence, it being a well ascertained fact that some have been kept in a box six months without food; yet during the whole time their vivacity was not abated. They feed only a small part of the year, but never during their confinement; for if mice, their favourite diet, should at that time be thrown into their box, though they will kill, yet they will never eat them. When at liberty, they remain torpid throughout the winter; yet, when confined, they have never been observed to take their annual repose.

They are usually taken with wooden tongs, by the end of the tail, which may be done without danger; for, while held in that position,