

which, according to Chardin, is the most effectual remedy ; he adds, that circumcision is attended with infinite pain when performed on grown persons ; that they cannot stir abroad after it for three weeks or a month, and that sometimes it proves fatal to them.

In the Maldivia islands they circumcise their children at the age of seven ; and previous to this operation they bathe them in the sea for six or seven hours, in order to render their skin more soft. The Israelites made use of a sharpened flint, a custom which the Jews still continue in most of their synagogues. The Mahometans, however, use a common knife, or a razor.

Were it not for their precaution in cutting it in childhood, the Turks, it is alledged, and the inhabitants of many other countries in which circumcision is practised, would naturally have their prepuces too long. Boulaye tells us, that in the deserts of Mesopotamia and Arabia, on the banks of the Tigris and the Euphrates, he saw a number of Arabian boys, whose prepuces were so long, that, without the aid of circumcision, he imagined they would be unfit for procreation.