

The skin of the eye-lids is also longer in the Oriental than in other nations. The skin is a substance similar to that of the prepuce ; but what relation, in point of growth, can subsist between two so distant parts ?

Girls in several parts of Arabia, towards the Gulph of Persia and the Red Sea, are equally subjected to this operation as boys. But in these countries, as there is no previous overgrowth of the *nymphæ*, they are not circumcised till they have passed the age of puberty. In other climates this exuberance is indeed far more early ; and it is so general among the inhabitants of certain countries, as those near the river Benin, that they circumcise girls as well as boys within eight, or at most fifteen days after their birth. The circumcision of females is of great antiquity in Africa ; and even Herodotus mentions it as being a custom of the Ethiopians.

Circumcision may have been founded on necessity, yet infibulation and castration could never have taken place but from jealousy, or from some gloomy and superstitious frenzy, some wretched antipathy to the human race, or from some envious tyrant who enacted laws
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