

to make privation a virtue, and mutilation a merit.

Infibulation is performed upon boys by drawing the prepuce forward, making an incision, and putting a coarse thread through it, till the cicatrice is healed; and then, in the room of that, is substituted a kind of ring, which remains as long as the person pleases who gave orders for the operation, and sometimes for life. The Oriental monks, who have made a vow of chastity, wear rings of a large size, in order that they may be compelled to observe this vow inviolate. We shall hereafter speak on the infibulation of girls; on this head nothing can be supposed too fantastic or absurd, which men, borne away by passion, or immersed in superstition, have scrupled to put in practice.

Though in infancy there is sometimes but one testicle in the scrotum, and sometimes not any, yet we must not suppose in either case that this is a real defect. It often happens, that the testicles are retained in the abdomen, from whence they at length extricate themselves, and descend to the natural place. This generally happens at the age of eight or ten years, though sometimes not till that of puberty.