then the toes of the other, afterwards the remainder of the feet, and, laſtly, it eat off the fleſh of both his legs and thighs, leaving the bones bare.

Horned rye is not only hurtful to man, but to other animals; it has been known to deſtroy even the flies that ſettled upon it; ſheep, dogs, deer, geeſe, ducks, ſwine, and poultry, that were fed with it for experi­ment, died miſerably, ſome convulſed, others mortified and ulcerated.

SECANT, in geometry, a line that cuts another or divides it into parts. The ſecant of a circle is a line drawn from the circumference on one ſide to a point without the circumference on the other; and it is demonſtrated by geometers, that of ſeveral ſecants drawn to the ſame point, that is the longeſt which paſſes thro’ the centre of the circle. The portions, however, of theſe ſeveral ſecants that are without the circle are ſo much the greater as they recede from the centre, and the leaſt external portion is of that ſecant which paſſes through it.

Secant, in trigonometry, denotes a right line drawn from the centre of a circle, which, cutting the circum­ference, proceeds till it meets with a tangent to the ſame circle. See Geometry, n⁰ 24—28.

*Line of Secants,* one of thoſe lines or ſcales which are uſually put upon ſectors. How ſuch a ſcale is form­ed will be ſeen by a bare inſpection of fig. 53. Plate CCXV.; for C 10, C 20, C 30, &c. drawn from the centre C to the line of tangents BE, being the real ſe­cants of the arches B 10, B 20, B 3c, it is obvious that by marking off the diſtances B 10, B 20, B 30, upon any other line, we make that line a ſcale of ſe­cants.

SECEDERS, a numerous body of Preſhyterians in Scotland, who have withdrawn from the communion of the eſtabliſhed church. As they take up their ground upon the eſtabliſhment of religion from 1638 to 1650, which they hold to be the pureſt period of the Scottiſh church, we ſhall introduce our account of them by a ſhort review of eccleſiaſtical hiſtory from that period to the era of their ſeceſſion. With our uſual candour and impartiality we mean to give a fair ſtatement of thoſe events with which, as they ſay, their ſeceſſion is connect­ed.

James I. having for ſome time previous to his death entertained a wiſh to form the church of Scotland as much as poſſible upon the model of that in England, his ſon Charles, with the aſſiſtance of archbiſhop Laud, endeavoured to carry the deſign into execution, by eſtabliſhing canons for eccleſiaſtical diſcipline, and introdu­cing a liturgy into the public ſervice of the church.— Numbers of the clergy and laity of all ranks took the alarm at what they conſidered to be a bold and dan­gerous innovation; and after frequent applications to the throne, they at laſt obtained the royal proclamation for a free parliament and general aſſembly. The aſſem­bly met in 1638, and began their labours with a repeal of all the acts of the ſix preceding parliaments, which had favoured the deſigns of James. They condemned the liturgy, together with every branch of the hierar­chy. They cited all the Scottiſh biſhops to their bar; and after having excommunicated nine of them, and depoſed five from their epiſcopal office, they reſtored kirk-ſeſſions, preſhyteries, and ſynods provincial as well as national. See PresbytERians.

Theſe proceedings were ratified by the parliament which met in 1640. The law of patronage was in full force for ſeveral years after this period; yet great care was taken that no miniſter ſhould be obtruded on the Chriſtian people contrary to their inclinations; and in 1649 it was eboliſhed as an oppreſſive grievance.

The Reſtoration of Charles II. in 1660 changed the face of affairs in the church of Scotland. All that the general aſſembly had done from 1638 to 1650 was ren­dered null and void, their covenants were pronounced to be unlawful, epiſcopacy was reſtored, and the king was declared to be the ſupreme head of the church in all cauſes civil and eccleſiaſtical. During this period the Preſhyterians were ſubjected to fines and impriſonment, while numbers of them were publicly executed for their adherence to their political and religious tenets.

The Revolution in 1688 gave a different turn to the affairs of the church. The firſt parliament which met after that event, aboliſhed prelacy and the king’s ſupremacy in eccleſiaſtical affairs. They ratified the Weſt, minſter Confeſſion of Faith, together with the Preſbyterian form of church-government and diſcipline, “as agreeable to the word of God, and moſt conducive to the advancement of true piety and godlineſs, and the eſtabliſhment of peace and tranquillity within theſe realms.” That ſame parliament aboliſhed patronage, and lodged the election of miniſters in the hands of heritors and elders, with the conſent of the congrega­tion.

In the reign of Q. Anne the true Proteſtant religion was ratified and eſtabliſhed, together with the Preſbyterian form of church-government and diſcipline; and the unalterable continuance of both was declared to be an eſſential condition of the union of the two kingdoms in all time coming. In 1712 the law respecting pa­tronage was revived, in reſentment, it has been ſaid, of that warm attachment which the church of Scotland diſcovered to the family of Hanover; but the ſeverity of that law was greatly mitigated by the firſt parlia­ment of George 1. ſtat. 50. by which it is enacted, that if the preſentee do not ſignify his acceptance, the preſentation ſhall become void and null in law. The church, however, did not avail herſelf of this ſtatute; and an event which happened not many years afterwards gave riſe to the *ſeceſſion.*

In 1732 more than 40 miniſters preſented an addreſs to the general aſſembly, ſpecifying in a variety of inſtances what they conſidered to be great defections from the eſtabliſhed conſtitution of the church, and craving a redreſs of theſe grievances. A petition to the ſame effect, ſubſcribed by ſeveral hundreds of elders and pri­vate Chriſtians, was offered at the ſame time; but the aſſembly refuſed a hearing to both, and enacted, that the election of miniſters to vacant charges, where an ac­cepted preſentation did not take place, ſhould be com­petent only to a conjunct meeting of elders and heri­tors, being Proteſtants. To this act many objections were made by numbers of miniſters and private Chriſtians. They aſſerted that more than 30 to one in every pariſh were not poſeſſed of landed property, and were on that account deprived of what they deemed their natural right to chooſe their own paſtors. It was alſo ſaid, that this act was extremely prejudicial to the honour and intereſt of the church, as well as to the edi­fication of the people; and in fine, that it was directly