called from *ſeptem* and *zona,* by reaſon it conſiſted of ſeven ſtories, each of which was ſurrounded by a row of columns.

SEPTUAGESIMA, in the kalendar, denotes the third Sunday before Lent, or before Quadrageſima Sunday : ſuppoſed by ſome to take its name from its being about ſeventy days before Eaſter.

SEPTUAGINT, the name given to a Greek verſion of the books of the Old Teſtament, from its being ſuppoſed to be the work of ſeventy-two Jews, who are uſually called *the seventy interpreters,* becauſe ſeventy is a round number.

The hiſtory of this verſion is expreſsly written by Arillæas, an officer of the guards to Ptolemy Philadel­phus, the ſubſtance of whoſe account is as follows : Ptolemy having erected a fine library at Alexandria, which he took care to fill with the moſt curious and valuable books from all parts of the world, was inform­ed that the Jews had one containing the laws of Moſes, and the hiſtory of that people ; and being deſirous of enriching his library with a Greek tranſlation of it, ap­plied to the high-prieſt of the Jews ; and to engage him to comply with his requeſt, ſet at liberty all the Jews whom his father Ptolemy Soter had reduced to ſlavery. After ſuch a ſtep, he eaſily obtained what he deſired ; Eleazar the Jewiſh high-prieſt ſent back his ambaſſadors with an exact copy of the Moſaical law, written in letters of gold, and six elders of each tribe, in all ſeventy-two : who were received with marks of reſpect by the king, and then conducted into the iſle of Pharos, where they were lodged in a houſe prepared for their reception, and ſupplied with every thing neceſſary. They ſet about the tranſlation without loſs of time, and finiſhed it in ſeventy-two days: and the whole being read in the preſence of the king, he admired the profound wiſdom of the laws of Moſes ; and ſent back the deputies laden with preſents, for themſelves, the high- prieſt, and the temple.

Ariſtobulus, who was tutor to Ptolemy Phyſcon, Philo who lived in our Saviour’s time, and was contem­porary with the apoſtles, and Joſephus, ſpeak of this tranſlation as made by 72 interpreters, by the care of Demetrius Phalereus in the reign of Ptolemy Philadel­phus. All the Chriſtian writers, during the firſt 15 centuries of the Chriſtian era, have admitted this ac­count of the Septuagint as an undoubted fact. But ſince the reformation, critics have boldly called it in queſtion, becauſe it was attended with circumſtances which they think inconſiſtent, or, at leaſt, improbable. Du Pin has aſked, why were 72 interpreters employed, ſince 12 would have been ſufficient ? Such an objection is trifling. We may as well aſk, why did king James I. employ 54 tranſlators in rendering the Bible into Engliſh, ſince Du Pin thinks 12 would have been ſuffi­cient ?

1. Prideaux objects, that the Septuagint is not writ­ten in the Jewiſh, but in the Alexandrian, dialect ; and could not therefore be the work of natives of Paleſtine. But theſe dialects were probably at that time the ſame, for both Jews and Alexandrians had received the Greek language from the Macedonians about 50 years before.

2. Prideaux farther contends, that all the books of the Old Teſtament could not be tranſlated at the ſame time; for they exhibit great difference of ſtyle. To this it is

ſufficient to reply, that they were the work of 72 men, each of whom had ſeparate portions aſſigned them.

3. The Dean also urges, that Arillæas, Ariſtobulus, Philo, and Joſephus, all directly tell us, that the law was tranſlated without mentioning any of the other ſacred books. But nothing was more common among writers oſ the Jewiſh nation than to give this name to the Scrip­tures as a whole. In the New Teſtament law is uſed as ſynonymous with what we call the Old Teſtament. Beſides, it is expreſsly ſaid by Ariſtobulus, in a fragment quoted by Euſebius (*Preep. Evan.* 1. I.),that the whole Sacred Scripture was rightly tranſlated through the means of Demetrius Phalereus, and by the command of Philadelphus. Joſephus indeed, says the learned Dean, aſſerts, in the preface to his Antiquities, that the Jewiſh interpreters did not tranſlate for Ptolemy the whole Scriptures, but the law only. Here the evi­dence is contradictory, and we have to determine, whe­ther Ariſtobulus or Joſephus be moſt worthy of credit. We do not mean, however, to accuse either of forgery, but only to inquire which had the beſt opportunities of knowing the truth. Ariſtobulus was an Alexandrian Jew, tutor to an Egyptian king, and lived within 100 years after the tranſlation was made, and certainly had acceſs to ſee it in the royal library. Joſephus was a native of Paleſtine, and lived not until 300 years or more after the tranſlation was made, and many years after it was burnt along with the whole library of Alexandria in the wars of Julius Cæsar. Suppoſing the veracity of theſe two writers equal, as we have no proof of the contrary, which of them ought we to conſider as the beſt evidence? Ariſtobulus ſurely. Prideaux, indeed, ſeems doubtful whether there was ever ſuch a man; and Dr Hody ſuppoſes that the Commentaries on the five books of Moſes, which bear the name of Ariſtobulus, were a forgery of the ſecond century. To prove the exiſtence of any human being, who lived 2000 years be­fore us, and did not perform ſuch works as no mere man ever performed, is a taſk which we are not dispoſed to undertake ; and we believe it would not be leſs dif­ficult to prove that Philo and Joſephus exiſted, than that ſuch a perſon as Ariſtobulus did not exiſt. If the writings which have paſſed under his name were a for­gery of the ſecond century, it is ſurprising that they ſhould have impoſed upon Clemens Alexandrinus, who lived in the ſame century, and was a man of abilities, learning, and well acquainted with the writings of the ancients. Euſebius, too, in his *Prœp. Evan.* quotes the commentaries of Ariſtobulus. But, continues the learned Dean, “ Clemens Alexandrinus is the firſt au­thor that mentions them. Now, had any ſuch commen­taries exiſted in the time of Philo and Joſephus, they would ſurely have mentioned them. But is the circumſtance of its not being quoted by every ſucceeding author a ſufficient reaſon to diſprove the authenticity of any book ? Neither Philo nor Joſephus undertook to give a liſt of preceding authors, and it was by no means the uniform practice of theſe times always to name the authors from whom they derived their information.”

4. Prideaux farther contends, that the ſum which Ptolemy is ſaid to have given to the interpreters is too great to be credible. If his computation were juſt, it certainly would be ſo. He makes it L. 2,000,000