*tins,* or two asses and a half ; and when uſed in the plural, as in *quinquaginta ſestertium,* or s*estertia,* it was only by way of abbreviation, and there was always underſtood *Centena, millia,* &c.

This matter has been accurately ſtated by Mr Raper, in the following manner. The ſubſtantive to which ſeſtertius referred is either *as,* or *pendus ;* and sest*ertius as* is two aſſes and a half ; *ſeſtertium pondus,* two pondera and a half, or two hundred and fifty denarii. When the denarius passed for ten aſſes, the ſeſtertius of two aſſes and a half was a quarter of it ; and the Romans conti­nued to keep their accounts in theſe ſeſterces long after the denarius passed for ſixteen aſſes ; till, growing rich, they found it more convenient to reckon by quarters of the denarius, which they called *nummi,* and uſed the words *nummus* and s*estertius* indifferently, as ſynonymous terms, and ſometimes both together, as *ſestertius num­mus ;* in which case the word *ſeſtertius,* having loſt its original ſigniſication, was uſed as a ſubſtantive ; for *ſeſtertius nummus* was not two nummi and a half, but a ſingle nummus of four aſſes. They called any ſum un­der two thouſand ſeſterces so many *ſestertii* in the maſcu­line gender ; two thouſand ſeſterces they called *duo* or b*ina sestertia,* in the neuter ; ſo many quarters making five hundred denarii, which was twice the ſeſtertium ; and they ſaid *dena, vicena, &c. sestertia,* till the ſum amounted to a thouſand ſeſtertia, which was a million of ſeſterces. But, to avoid ambiguity, they did not uſe the neuter *ſestertium* in the singular number, when the whole ſum amounted to no more than a thouſand ſeſterces, or one ſeſtertium. They called a million of ſeſterces *decies nummum,* or *decies sestertium,* for *decies centena millia num­morum,* or sestertiorum (the maſculine gender), omit­ting *centena millia* for the ſake of brevity. They like- wiſe called the ſame ſum *decies sestertium* (in the neuter gender) for *decies centies sestertium,* omitting *centies* for the ſame reaſon; or ſimply *decies,* omitting *centena millia sestertium,* or *centies sestertium ;* and with the numeral ad­verbs *decies, vicies, centies, millies,* and the like, either *centena millia* or *centies* was always underſtood. Theſe were their most uſual forms of expreſſion ; though for b*na, dena, vicena J'eβertia,* they frequently ſaid *bina, dena, vicena millia nummum.* If the conſular denarius contained 6o troy grains of fine silver, it was worth ſomewhat more than eight-pence farthing and a half ſterling ; and the as, of 16 to the denarius, a little more than a half­penny. To reduce the ancient ſeſterces of two aſſes and a half, when the denarius passed for 16, to pounds ſter­ling, multiply the given number by 5454, and cut off six figures on the right hand for decimals. To reduce *nummi sestertii,* or quarters of the denarius, to pounds ſterling ; if the given ſum be conſular money, multiply it by 8727, and cut off six figures on the right hand for decimals; but for imperial money diminiſh the ſaid pro­duct by one-eighth of itſelf. Phil. Trank vol. lxi. part ii. art. 48.

To be qualified for a Roman knight, an eſtate of 400,000 *ſesterces* was required ; and for a ſenator, of 800,000.

Authors alſo mention a copper sest*erce,* worth about one-third of a penny Engliſh.

SESTERCE or sestertiu*s,* was alſo uſed by the ancients for a thing containing two wholes and an half of another, as *as* was taken for any whole or integer.

SESTOS, a noted fortress of European Turkey, situated at the entrance of the Helleſpont or Dardanelles, 24 miles ſouth-weſt of Gallipoli. This place is famous for the loves of Hero and Leander, ſung by the poet Musæus.

SESUVIUM, in botany ; a genus of plants belong­ing to the claſs of icoſandria, and to the order of trigy­nia. The calyx is coloured and divided into five parts; there are no petals ; the capſule is egg-ſhaped, three- celled, opening horizontally about the middle, and con­taining many ſeeds. There is only one ſpecies, the portulacastrum*,* purſlane-leaved ſeſuvium, which is a native of the West Indies.

SET, or Sets, a term uſed by the farmers and gar­deners to expreſs the young plants of the white thorn and other ſhrubs, with which they uſe to raiſe their quick or quick-ſet hedges. The white thorn is the belt of all trees for this purpose ; and, under proper regula­tions, its ſets ſeldom fail of anſwering the farmer’s utmoſt expectations.

*SET-off,* in law, is an act whereby the defendant ac­knowledges the juſtice of the plaintiff’s demand on the one hand ; but, on the other, ſets up a demand of his own, to counterbalance that of the plaintiff, either in the whole, or in part : as, if the plaintiff ſues for 10l. due on a note of hand, the defendant may ſet off 91. due to himſelf for merchandiſe ſold to the plaintiff; and, in cafe he pleads ſuch ſet-off, muſt pay the remain­ing balance into court. This anſwers very nearly to the *compenſatio* or ſtoppage of the civil law, and depends upon the ſtatutes 2 Geo. II. cap. 22. and 8 Geo. II. cap. 24.

SETACEOUS worm, in natural hiſtory, a name given by Dr Lifter to that long and Tender water- worm, which ſo much reſembles a horſe-hair, that, it has been ſuppoſed by the vulgar to be an animated hair of that creature. Theſe creatures, ſuppoſed to be living hairs,are a peculiar ſort of infects, which are bred and nouriſhed within the Todies of other infects, as the worms of the ichneumon flies are in the bodies of the caterpillars.

Aldrovand deſcribes the creature, and tells us it was unknown to the ancients ; but called *ſeta aquatica,* and *vermis setarius,* by the moderns, either from its figure reſembling that of a hair, or from the ſupposition of its once having been the hair of some animal. We gene­rally ſuppoſe it, in the imaginary ſtate of the hair, to have belonged to a horſe ; but the Germans ſay it was once the hair of a calf, and call it by a name signifying *vitulus aquaticus,* or the “ water calf.”

Albertus, an author much reverenced by the common people, has declared that this animal is generated of a hair ; and adds, that any hair thrown into ſanding water, will, in a very little time, obtain life and motion. Other authors have diſſented from this opinion, and ſupposed them generated of the fibrous roots of water- plants ; and others, of the parts of graſshoppers fallen into the water. This laſt opinion is rejected by Al- drovand as the most improbable of all. Standing and foul waters are most plentifully ſtored with them ; but they are ſometimes found in the eleareſt and pureſt ſprings, and ſometimes out of the water, on the leaves of trees and plants, as on the fruit-trees in our gardens, and the elms in hedges. They are from three to five inches long, of the thickneſs of a large hair; and are