day paſſed without a rebus, an anagram, or a madrigal. His pen and his fiddleſtick were in continual motion ; and yet to little or no purpoſe, if we may give credit to the following verſes, which ſhall ſerve as the concluſion of his poetical character :

“ With muſic and poetry equally bleſs’d,

“ A bard thus Apollo most humbly addreſs’d ;

“ Great author of poetry, muſic, and light,

“ Inſtructed by thee, I both fiddle and write ;

“ Yet unheeded I ſcrape, or I ſcribble all day,

My tunes are neglected, my verſe flung away.

“ Thy ſubſtitute here, Vice-Apollo diſdains

“ To vouch for my numbers, or lift to my ſtrains.

“ Thy manual ſign he refuſes to put

To the airs I produce from the pen or the gut :

“ Be thou then propitious, great Phœbus, and grant

“ Relief, or reward, to my merit or want.

“ Tho’ the Dean and Delany tranſeendently ſhine,

“ O ! brighten one ſolo or ſonnet of mine :

“ Make one work immortal, ’tis all I requeſt.

“ Apollo look’d pleas’d, and reſolving to jeſt,

“ Replied — Honest friend, I’ve consider’d your caſe,

" Nor diſlike your unmeaning and innocent face.

“ Your petition I grant, the boon is not great,

“ Your works ſhall continue, and here’s the receipt, “ On rondeaus hereafter your fiddle-ſtrings ſpend,

“ Write verſes in circles, they never ſhall end.”

“ One of the volumes of Swift’s miſcellanies conſiſts almoſt entirely of letters between him and the Dean. He publiſhed a proſe tranſlation of Perſius ; to which he added the best notes of former editors, together with many judicious ones of his own. This work was print­ed at London, 1739, in 12mo. *Biographical Dictionary.*

Sheridan (Mrs Frances), wife to Thomas Sheri­dan, M. A. was born in Ireland about the year 1724, but deſcended from a good Engliſh family which had removed thither. Her maiden name was Chamberlaine, and ſhe was grand-daughter of Sir Oliver Chamberlaine. The firſt literary performance by which ſhe diſtinguiſhed herſelf was a little pamphlet at the time of a violent party-diſpute relative to the theatre, in which Mr Sheridan had newly embarked his fortune. So well-timed a work exciting the attention of Mr Sheridan, he by an accident diſcovered his fair patroneſs, to whom he was ſoon afterwards married. She was a perſon of the moſt amiable character in every relation of life, with the most engaging manners. After lingering ſome years in a very weak ſtate of health, ſhe died at Blois, in the south of France, in the year 1767. Her “ Sydney Biddulph” may be ranked with the firſt productions of that claſs in ours or in any other language. She alſo wrote a little romance in one volume called *Nourjahad,* in which there is a great deal of imagination productive of an admirable moral. And ſhe was the authoreſs of two comedies, “ The Diſcovery” and “ The Dupe.”

SHERIFF, an officer, in each county in England, nominated by the king, inveſted with a judicial and miniſterial power, and who takes place of every noble­man in the county during the time of his office.

The ſheriff is an officer of very great antiquity in this kingdom, his name being derived from two Saxon words, ſignifying the *reeve, bailiff,* or *officer* of the ſhire He is called in Latin *vice-cοmes,* as being the deputy of the earl or *cοmes,* to whom the cuſtody of

the ſhire is ſaid to have been committed at the firſt diviſion of this kingdom into counties. But the earls, in proceſs of time, by reaſon of their high employments and attendance on the king’s perſon, not being able to tranſact the buſineſs of the county, were delivered of that burden ; reſerving to themſelves the honour, but the labour was laid on the ſheriff. So that now the ſhe­riff does all the king’s buſineſs in the county ; and tho’ he be ſtill called *vice-cοmes,* yet he is entirely indepen­dent of, and not ſubject to, the earl ; the king, by his letters patent, committing *custodian comitatus* to the ſhe­riff, and to him alone.

Sheriffs were formerly choſen by the inhabitants of the ſeveral counties. In confirmation of which it was ordained, by ſtatute 28 Edw. I. c. 8. that the people ſhould have an election of ſheriffs in every ſhire where the ſhrievalty is not of inheritance. For anciently in ſome counties the ſheriffs were hereditary ; as we apprehend they were in Scotland till the ſtatute 20 Geo. II. c. 43; and ſtill continue in the county of Weſtmoreland to this day ; the city of London having alſo the inheritance of the ſhrievalty of Middleſex veſted in their body by char­ter. The reaſon of theſe popular elections is aſſigned in the ſame ſtatute, c. 13. “ that the commons might chooſe ſuch as would not be a burden to them.” And herein appears plainly a ſtrong trace of the democrati­cal part of our conſtitution ; in which form of govern­ment it is an indiſpenſable requiſite, that the people ſhould chooſe their own magiſtrates. This election was in all probability not abſolutely veſted in the com­mons, but required the royal approbation. For in the Gothic conſtitution, the judges of their county-courts (which office is executed by the ſheriff) were elected by the people, but confirmed by the king : and the form of their election was thus managed ; the people, or *incolae territorii,* choſe twelve electors, and they no­minated three perſons, *ex quibus rex unum confirmabat.* But, with us in England, theſe popular elections, grow­ing tumultuous, were put an end to by the ſtatute 9 Edw. IL ft. 2. which enacted, that the ſheriffs ſhould from thenceforth be aſſigned by the chancellor, trea­ſurer, and the judges ; as being perſons in whom the ſame truſt might with confidence be repoſed. By ſtatutes 14 Edw. III. c. 7. 23 Hen. VI. c. 8. and 21 Hen. VIII. c. 20. the chancellor, treaſurer, preſident of the king’s council, chief juſtices, and chief baron, are to make this election ; and that on the morrow of All Souls, in the exchequer. And the king’s letters patent, appointing the new ſheriffs, uſed commonly to bear date the sixth day of November. The ſtatute of Cambridge, 12 Ric. II. c. 2. ordains, that the chan­cellor, treaſurer, keeper of the privy ſeal, ſteward of the king’s houſe, the king’s chamberlain, clerk of the rolls, the juſtices of the one bench and the other, barons of the exchequer, and all other that ſhall be called to or­dain, name, or make juſtices of the peace, ſheriffs, and other officers of the king, ſhall be ſworn to act indiffe­rently, and to name no man that ſueth to be put in of­fice, but ſuch only as they ſhall judge to be the beſt and moſt ſufficient. And the cuſtom now is (and has been at leaſt ever ſince the time of Forteſcue, who was chief justice and chancellor to Henry the ſixth), that all the judges, together with the other great officers, meet in the exchequer chamber on the morrow of All Souls yearly, (which day is now altered to the morrow