The inhabitants of Siberia conſiſt of the Aborigines or ancient inhabitants, the Tartars, and Russians,"

Some of theſe nations have no other religion but that of nature ; others are Pagans or Mahometans, and ſome of them have been converted to Chriſtiani­ty, or rather only baptiſed by the Ruffian miſſionaries.

SIBTHORPIA, in botany : A genus of plants be­longing to the claſs of didynamia, and to the order of angioſpermia ; and in the natural ſyftem claſſed with thoſe the order of which is doubtful. The calyx is ſpreading, and divided into five parts, almoſt to the base. The corolla is divided into five parts in the ſame man­ner, which are rounded, equal, ſpreading, and of the length of the calyx. The ſtamina grow in pairs at a diſtance from each other. The capſule is compreſſed, orbicular, bilocular, the partition being tranſverſe.— There are two ſpecies, the e*uropaea* and *evolvulacea.* The *eurοpaea,* or baſtard money-wort, is a native of South Britain. The ſtems of it are ſlender, and creeping. The leaves are ſmall, round, and notched. The flowers grow under the wings of the leaves, are ſmall, and of a pale red colour. It bloſſoms from J uly to September, and is found in Cornwall on the banks of rivulets.

SIBYLS, in pagan antiquity, certain women ſaid to have been endowed with a prophetic ſpirit, and to have delivered oracles, ſhowing the fates and revolu­tions of kingdoms. Their number is unknown. Plato ſpeaks of one, others of two, Pliny of three, Ælian of four, and Varro of ten ; an opinion which is universally adopted by the learned. Theſe ten Sibyls generally resided in the following places, Perſia, Libya, Delphi, Cumæ in Italy, Erythraea, Samos, Cumæ in Æolia, Marpessa on the Holleſpont, Ancyra in Phrygia, and Tiburtis. The most celebrated of the Sibyls is that of Cumæ in Italy, whom ſome have called by the different rames of Amalthæa, Demiphile, Herophile, Daphne, Manto. Phemonoe, and Deiphobe. It is ſaid, that Apollo became enamoured of her, and that to make her ſensible of his paſſion he offered to give her whatever ſhe ſhould aſk. The Sibyl demanded to live as many years as ſhe had grains of sand in her hand, but unfor­tunately forgot to aſk for the enjoyment of the health, vigour, and bloom, of which ſhe was then in poſſeſſion. The god granted her requeſt, but ſhe refused to gra­tify the paſſion of her lover, though he offered her per­petual youth and beauty. Some time after ſhe became old and decrepit, her form decayed, melancholy paleneſs and haggard looks ſucceeded to bloom and cheerfulness. She had already lived about 700 years when Æneas came to Italy, and, as ſome have imagined, ſhe had three centuries more to live before her years were as numerous as the grains of sand which ſhe had in her hand. She gave Æneas inſtructions how to find his father in the infernal regions, and even conducted him to the en­trance of hell. It was uſual for the Sibyl to write her prophecies on leaves, which ſhe placed at the entrance of her cave ; and it required particular care in ſuch as consulted her to take up there leaves before they were diſperſed by the wind, as their meaning then became incomprehensible. According to the moſt authentic his­torians of the Roman, republic, one oſ the Sibyls came to the palace of Tarquin the Second, with nine volumes, which ſhe offered to fell for a very high price. The mo­narch diſregarded her, and ſhe immediately diſappeared,

and ſoon after returned, when ſhe had burned three of the volumes. She aſked the ſame price for the remain­ing six books ; and when Tarquin refuſed to buy them, ſhe burned three more, and ſtill perfiſted in demanding the same ſum of money for the three that were left.— This extraordinary behaviour aſtoniſhed Tarquin ; he bought the books, and the Sibyl inſtantly vaniſhed, and never after appeared to the world. Theſe books were preserved with great care by the monarch, and called the Sibylline verſes. A college of prieſts was appointed to have the care of them ; and ſuch reverence did the Romans entertain for theſe prophetic books, that they were conſulted with the greateſt ſolemnity, and only when the ſtate seemed to be in danger. When the ca­pitol was burnt in the troubles of Sylla, the Sibylline verſes which were depoſited there perished in the con­flagration ; and to repair the loss which the republic· ſeemed to have ſuſtained, commiſſioners were immediate­ly ſent to different parts of Greece to collect whatever verſes could be found of the inspired writings of the Si­byls. The fate of theſe Sibylline verses which were collected after the conflagration of the capitol is un­known, There are now many Sibylline verſes extant» but they are reckoned universally spurious; and it is evi­dent that they were compoſed in the ſecond century by ſome of the followers of Chriſtianity, who wiſhed to convince the heathens of their error, by assiſting the cauſe of truth with the arms of pious artifice.

SICERA, a name given to any inebriating liquor by the Helleuiſtic Jews. St Chryſoſtom, Theodoret, and Theophilus of Antioch, who were Syrians, and who therefore ought to know the ſignification and nature of “sicera,” assure us, that it properly dignifies palm-wince Pliny acknowledges, that the wine of the palm tree was very well known through all the east, and that it was made by taking a buſhel of the dates of the palm-tree, and throwing them into three gallons of water ; then ſqueezing out the juice, it would intoxicate like wine. The wine of the palm tree is white : when it is drunk new, it has the taste of the cocoa, and is ſweet as ho­ney. When it is kept longer, it grows throng, and in­toxicates After long keeping, it becomes vinegar.

SICILIAN, in music, denotes a kind of gay sprightly air, or dance, probably invented in Sicily, ſomewhat of the nature of an Engliſh jig ; uſually marked with the characters 6/8 or 12/8, or . It conſiſts of two ſtrains ; the firſt

of four, and the second of eight, bars or meafures.

SICILY, is a large iſland in the Mediterranean Sea, adjoining to the ſouthern extremity of Italy, and ex­tends from latitude 36° 25' to latitude 38⁰ 25', and from longitude 12⁰ 50' to longitude 16⁰ 5' eaſt from London. Its greateſt length *210* miles, breadth 133, circumſerence 60; its form triangular, the three an­gles being the promontories of Pelorum, Pachynum, and Lilybæum, or as they are now called the Faro, Capo Passaro, arid Capo Boco. It is divided from Italy by the ſtraits of Meſſina, reaching from the Tower of Fa­ro, which is the moſt northerly part of the iſland, to the *Capo dell' Arm's,* or the Cape of Arms, the moſt ſou­thern part of Calabria. Theſe ſtraits, by the Latins called *Fretum Siculum,* by the Italians Il *Fare di Meſsina,* and by us the *Fare of Meſſina,* are between *12* and 15 miles over in the broadeſt places, and in the nar­rowest about a mile and an half ; inſomuch that when