threaten ſuffocation. For my part, I found diſtinctly in my breaſt that I had imbibed a part of it, nor was I free of an aſthmatic ſenſation till I had been ſome months in Italy, at the baths of Poretta, near two years afterwards.” Though the ſeverity of this blaſt ſeems to have paſſed over them almoſt inſtantaneouſly, it con­tinued to blow ſo as to exhauſt them till twenty minutes before five in the afternoon, laſting through all its stages very near six hours, and leaving them in a ſtate of the utmoſt deſpondency.

SIMPLE, ſomething not mixed or compounded ; in which ſenſe it ſtands oppoſed to *compound.*

Simple, in the materia medica, a general name for all herbs or plants, as having each its particular virtue, whereby it becomes a ſimple remedy.

SIMPLICITY in writing. If we examine the writers whoſe compoſitions have ſtood the teſt of ages, and obtained that higheſt honour, “ the concurrent ap­probation of diſtant times and nations,” we ſhall find that the character of ſimplicity is the unvarying circum­ſtance which alone hath been able to gain this universal homage from mankind. Among the Greeks, whoſe writers in general are of the ſimple kind, the divineſt poet, the moſt commanding orator, the fineſt hiſtorian, and deepeſt philoſopher, are, above the reſt, conſpicouſly eminent in this great quality. The Roman wri­ters rise towards perfection according to that meaſure of simplicity which they mingle in their works ; indeed they are all inferior to the Greek models. But who will deny that Lucretius, Horace, Virgil, Livy, Te­rence, Tully, are at once the ſimpleſt and beſt of Ro­man writers ? unleſs we add the noble annaliſt who ap­peared in after-times ; who, notwithſtanding the politi­cal turn of his genius, which ſometimes interferes, is ad­mirable in this great quality, and by it far ſuperior to his contemporaries. It is this one circumſtance that hath raiſed the venerable Dante, the father of modern poetry, above the ſucceeding poets of his country, who could never long maintain the local and temporary ho­nours beſtowed upon them ; but have fallen under that

just neglect which time will ever decree to thoſe who deſert a just ſimplicity for the florid colourings of ſtyle, contraſted phraſes, affected conceits, the mere trappings of compoſition and Gothic minutiae. It is this hath given to Boileau the moſt laſting wreath in France, and to Shakeſpeare and Milton in England ; eſpecially to the former, whoſe writings contain ſpecimens of per­haps the pureſt and ſimpleſt Engliſh that is anywhere to be found, except in the Bible or Book of Common Prayer. As it appears from theſe inſtances, that ſimplicity is the only univerſal characteriſtic of juſt writing, ſo the ſuperior eminence of the ſacred Scriptures in this quality hath been generally acknowledged. One of the greateſt critics in antiquity, himſelf conſpicuous in the ſublime and ſimple manner, hath borne this teſtimony to the writings of Moſes and St Paul ; and by parity of reaſon we muſt conclude, that had he been converſant with the other ſacred writers, his taſte and candour would have allowed them the ſame encomium.

It hath been often obſerved even by writers of no mean rank, that the “ Scriptures ſuffer in their credit by the diſadvantage of a literal verſion, while other an­cient writings enjoy the advantage of a free and embelliſhed tranſlation.” But in reality theſe gentlemens con­cern is ill-placed and groundleſs : for the truth is, “ that

moſt other writings are impaired by a literal tranſlation ; whereas giving only a due regard to the idiom of diffe­rent languages, the ſacred writings, when literally tranſlated, are then in their full perfection.”

Now this is an internal proof, that in all other wri­tings there is a mixture of local, relative, exterior orna­ment, which is often lost in the transfuſion from one lan­guage to another. But the internal beauties, which depend not on the particular conſtruction of tongues, no change of tongue can deſtroy. Hence the Bible preſerves its native beauty and ſtrength alike in every language, by the ſole energy oſ unadorned phraſe, natu­ral images, weight of ſentiment, and great ſimplicity.

It is in this reſpect like a rich vein of gold, which, under the ſevereſt trials of heat, cold, and moiſture, re­tains its original weight and ſplendour, without either loss or alloy; while baler metals are corrupted by earth, air, water, fire, and aſſimilated to the various elements through which they paſs.

This circumſtance, then, may be juſtly regarded as ſufficient to vindicate the compoſition of the ſacred Scriptures, as it is at once their chief excellence and greateſt ſecurity. It is their excellence, as it renders them intelligible and uſeful to all ; it is their ſecurity, as it preve nts their being diſguiſed by the falſe and ca­pricious ornaments of vain or weak tranſlators. We may ſafely appeal to experience and fact for the confir­mation of theſe remarks on the ſuperior ſimplicity, uti­lity, and excellence, of the ſtyle of the Holy Scripture, Is there any book in the world ſo perſectly adapted to all capacities ? that contains ſuch ſublime and exalted precepts, conveyed in ſuch an artleſs and intelligible ſtrain, that can be read with ſuch pleaſure and advan­tage by the lettered sage and the unlettered peaſant ?

SIMPLOCE. See Oratory, n⁰ 72.

SIMPSON ( Thomas), profeſſor of mathematics at the royal academy at Woolwich, fellow of the Royal Society, and member of the Royal Academy at Stock­holm, was born at Market Boſworth in Leiceſterſhire in 1710. His father, a ſtuff-weaver, taught him only to read Engliſh, and brought him up to his own busineſs ; but meeting with a ſcientifical pedlar, who like- wise practiſed fortune-telling, young Simpſon by his aſſiſtance and advice left off weaving, and professed aſtrology. As he improved in knowledge, however, he grew diſguſted with his pretended art ; and renouncing it, was driven to ſuch difficulties for the ſubſiſtence of his family, that he came up to London, where he worked as a weaver, and taught mathematics at his ſpare hours. As his ſcholars increaſed, his abilities became better known, and he publiſhed his Treatiſe on Fluxions, by ſubſcription, in 1737 : in 1740, he publiſhed his Trea­tiſe on the Nature and Laws of Chance ; and Eſſays in Speculative and Mixed Mathematics. After theſe appeared his Doctrine of Annuities and Reverſions ; Mathematical Dissertations ; Treatiſe on Algebra ; Elements of Geometry ; Trigonometry, Plane and Sphe­rical ; Select Exerciſes ; and his Doctrine and Appli­cation of Fluxions, which he professes to be rather a new work, than a ſecond edition of his former publica­tion on fluxions. In 1743, he obtained the mathema­tical profeſſorſhip at Woolwich academy ; and ſoon af­ter was choſen a member of the Royal Society, when the preſident and council, in conſideration of his mode­rate circumſtances, were pleaſed to excuſe his admission-