in the law of the 12 tables, Ave sinistra *populi magister esto.*

Sinister, in heraldry. The ſiniſter side of an eſcutcheon is the left-hand side ; the ſiniſter chief, the left angle of the chief ; the ſiniſter baſe, the left-hand part of the baſe.

*Sinister Aspect,* among aſtrologers, is an appearance of two planets happening according to the ſucceſſion of the ſigns ; as Saturn in Aries, and Mars in the ſame de­gree of gemini.

SINISTRI, a ſect of ancient heretics, thus called becauſe they held the left hand in abhorrence, and made it a point of religion not to receive any thing there­with.

SINKING fund, a proviſion made by parliament, conſiſting of the ſurpluſage of other funds, intended to be appropriated to the payment of the national debt ; on the credit of which very large ſums have been bor­rowed for public uſes. See *National Debt* and Revenue.

SINOPICA terra, in natural hiſtory, the name of a red earth of the ochre kind, called alio *rubrius a sinopica,* and by ſome authors si*nοpis.* It is a very cloſe, com­pact, and weighty earth, of a fine glowing purple co­lour. It is of a pure texture, but not very hard, and of an even but duſty ſurface. It adheres firmly to the tongue, is perfectly fine and ſmooth to the touch, does not crumble eaſily between the fingers, and ſtains the hands. It melts very ſlowly in the mouth, is perfectly pure and fine, of an auſtere aſtringent taſte, and fer­ments violently with aquafortis. It was dug in Cappa­docia, and carried for ſale to a city in the neighbour­hood called *Sinope,* whence it had its name. It is now found in plenty in the New Jerſeys in America, and is called by the people there *bloodstone.* Its fine texture and body, with its high florid colour, muſt make it very valuable to painters ; and from its aſtringency it will probably be a powerful medſicine.

SINOPLE, in heraldry, denotes vert, or green co­lour in armories.—Sinople is uſed to ſignify love, youth, beauty, rejoicing, and liberty ; whence it is that letters of grace, ambition, legitimation, &c. are always ſealed with green wax.

SINUOSITY, a ſeries of bends and turns in arches or other irregular figures, ſometimes jutting out and ſometimes falling in.

SINUS, in anatomy, denotes a cavity in certain bones and other parts, the entrance whereof is very narrow, and the bottom wider and more ſpacious.

Sinus, in ſurgery, a little cavity or ſacculus, fre­quently formed by a wound or ulcer, wherein pus is col­lected.

SIPHON. See Hydrostatics, n⁰ 25.

SIPHONANTHUS, in botany ; a genus of plants belonging to the claſs of *tetrandia* and order of *mοnοgynia.* The corolla is monopetalous, funnel-ſhaped ; the tube is very narrow, and much longer than the ca­lyx. There are four berries, each containing one ſeed. There is only one ſpecies, the *indica.*

SIPONTUM, Sepuntum, or *SIPUS* (anc. geog.), a town of Apulia, ſo denominated (according to Stra­bo) from the great quantity of *ſepiae* or cuttlefiſh that are thrown upon the coaſt. Diomed is ſuppoſed by the ſame author to have been the founder of this place;

which appears from Livy to have become a colony of Roman citizens. In the early ages of Chriſtian hierar­chy, a biſhop was fixed in this church ; but, under the Lombards, his ſee was united to that of Beneventum. Being again ſeparated, Sipontum became an archiepiſcopal dioceſe in 1094, about which time it was ſo ill treated by the Barbarians, that it never recovered its ſplendour, but sunk into ſuch miſery, that in 1260 it was a mere desert, from the want of inhabitants, the decay of commerce, and the insalubrity of the air. Man­fred having taken theſe circumſtances into conſideration, began in 1261 to build a new city on the ſea-ſhore, to which he removed the few remaining Sipontines. (See the article Manfredonia). Sipontum was ſituated at the diſtance of a mile from the ſhore. Excepting a part of its Gothic cathedral, ſcarce one ſtone of the an­cient city now remains upon another.

SIPUNCULUS, in natural hiſtory, a genus of the *intestina* claſs of worms in the Linnæan ſyſtem. Its characters are theſe : the body is round and elongated ; the mouth attenuated and cylindrical ; and the lateral aperture of the body rugged. There are two ſpecies ; one found under ſtones in the European, and the other in the Indian ocean.

SIR, the title of a knight or baronet, which, for diſtinction’s ſake, as it is now given indiſcriminately to all men, is always prefixed to the knight’s Chriſtian name, either in ſpeaking or writing to them.

SIRCAR, any office under the government in Hindoſtan. It is ſometimes uſed for the ſtate of govern­ment itſelf. Likewiſe a province, or any number of Pergunnahs placed under one head in the government books, for conveniency in keeping accounts. In com­mon uſage in Bengal, the under banyans of European gentleman are called si*rcars.*

SIRE, a title of honour formerly given to the king of France as a mark of ſovereignty.

Sire, was likewiſe anciently uſed in the ſame ſenſe with sieur and se*igneur,* and applied to barons, gentlemen, and citizens.

SIRENS, in fabulous hiſtory, certain celebrated ſongſtreſſes who were ranked among the demigods of antiquity. Hyginus places their birth among the conſequences of the rape of Proſerpine. Others make them daughters oſ the river Achelous and one of the muſes@@\*. The number of the Sirens was three ; and their names were *Parthenope, Lygea,* and *Leucosia.* Some make them half women and half fiſh ; others, half wo­men and half birds. There are antique repreſentations of them ſtill ſubſiſting under both theſe forms. Pauſanias tells us, that the Sirens, by the persuaſion of Juno, challenged the Muſes to a trial of ſkill in ſinging ; and theſe having vanquiſhed them, plucked the golden fea­thers from the wings of the Sirens, and formed them into crowns, with which they adorned their own heads. The Argonauts are ſaid to have been diverted from the enchantment of their ſongs by the ſuperior ſtrains of Orpheus : Ulysses, however, had great difficulty in ſecuring himſelf from seduction See *Odyſ.* lib. xii.

Pope, in his notes to the twelfth book of the Odyſſey, obſerves, the critics have greatly laboured to explain what was the foundation or this fiction of the Sirens, We are told by ſome, that the Sirens were queens of certain ſmall iſlands named *Sirenusae,* that lie near Ca-

@@@[m]\* Ovid Men. lib. iv.