ning black colour (fays a Chineſe author) is to expoſe it for one, night to a white hoar-frost, or to cover it ſome time with snow.” For a method of imitating *Chineſe varnish, s*ee Turning.

Varnish alſo signifies a sort of shining coat, wherewith potter’s ware, delft-ware, china-ware, &c. are covered, which gives them a ſmoothness and lustre. Melted lead is generally uſed for the first, and ſmalt for the second. See Glazing.

Varnish, among medalists, signifies the colours antique medals have acquired in the earth.

The beauty which nature alone is able to give to medals, and art has never yet attained to counterfeit, enhances the value of them : that is, the colour which certain soils in which they have a long time lain tinges the metals withal: ſome of which are blue, almost as beautiful as the torquoiſe; others with an inimitable vermilion colour ; others with a certain shining polifhed brown, vastly finer than Brasil figures.

The most usual varnish is a beautiful green, which hangs to the finest strokes without effacing them, more accurately than the finest enamel does on metals.

No metal but brass is susceptible of this ; for the green rust that gathers on silver always ſpoils it, and it must be got off with vinegar or lemon juice.

Falsifiers of medals have a falſe or modern varnish, which they uſe on their counterfeits, to give them the appearance or air of being antique. But this may be discovered by its ſoftneſs ; it being ſofter than the natural varnish, which is as hard as the metal itſelf.

Some deposit their ſpurious metals in the earth for a conſiderable time, by which means they contract a sort of varnish, which may impoſe upon the leſs knowing ; others uſe ſal ammoniac, and others burnt paper.

VARRO (Marcus Terentius), the most learned of all the Romans, was born 28 years B. C. He was a ſenator of the first distinction, both for birth and merit ; and bore many great offices. He was an intimate friend of Cicero ; and this friendship was confirmed and immortalized by a mu­tual dedication of their learned works to each other. Thus Cicero dedicated his Academic Questions to Varro ; and Varro dedicated his treatiſe on the Latin tongue to Cicero. In the civil wars he was zealously attached to Pompey ; but after his defeat ſoon ſubmitted to Cæsar, who was reconci­led to him. Afterwards he applied his whole time to let­ters, and had the charge of the Greek and Latin libraries at Rome. He was above 70 when Antony proſcribed him ; however, he found means to eſcape and save his life, though he could not save ſome of his works and his library from being plundered by the ſoldiers. After this storm was over, he purſued his studies as usual ; and Pliny relates, that he continued to study and to write when he was 88 years of age. He was 80 when he wrote his three books *De re Rustica,* which are still extant. Five of his books *De lingua Latina,* which he addressed to Cicero, are alſo extant. There remain, too, divers fragments of his works, particularly of his Menippean Satires, which are medleys of proſe and verſe; and Scalliger has collected ſome of his epigrams from among the *CataleSa Virgilii.* His books *De lingua Latina,* and *De re Rustica,* were printed with the notes of Joſeph Scaliger, Turnebus, and Victorius, by Henry Stephens at Paris, 1573, in 8vo, and have been published ſeparately since among the A*uctores de lingua Latina,* and the A*uctores de re Rustica.*

There was another Varro of antiquity, called A*tacinus,* who was born about 10 years after the first, at a ſmall town near Narbonne. Though infinitely below the Roman in learning, he was at least as good, if not a better, poet ; which perhaps has made Lilius Gyraldus and other critics confound them. He compoſed many works in verſe ; ſome fragments of which were collected, and publiſhed with thoſe of other ancient poets, at Lyons in 1603. His chief works were, A poem on the war with the Sequani, a people of Gaul ; and the Agronomics, that went under the name of Planciades the grammarian; But the A*rgonautics,* in four books, was what gained him the greatest reputation : and though indeed nothing but a translaction of Apollonius Rho­dius, yet was ſo well done as to be commended by Quin­tilian.

VARRONIA, in botany : A genus of plants belonging to the claſs of *pentandria,* and to the order of *monogynia ;* and arranged in the natural ſystem under the 41st order, As*perifoliae.* The corolla is quinquifid ; the fruit a drupa, with a quadrilocular kernel. There are six ſpecies ; none of which are natives of Britain.

VASCULAR, ſomething consisting of divers vessels, as arteries, veins, &c.

VASE, a term frequently uſed for ancient vessels dug from under ground, or otherwiſe found, and preſerved in the cabinets of the curious. In architecture, the appella­tion *vase* is alſo given to thoſe ornaments placed on cor­niches, fochles, or pedestals, repreſenting the vessels of the ancients, particularly thoſe uſed in ſacrifice, as incenſe-pots, flower-pots, &c. See Portland-Vase.

VASSAL, in our ancient; customs, signified a tenant or feudatory ; or perſon who vowed fidelity and homage to a lord, on account of ſome land, &c. held of him in see ; also a slave or servant, and eſpecially a domestic of a prince.— *Vassallus* is ſaid to be *quasi inferior socius* ; as the vassal is in­ferior to his matter, and must ſerve him ; and yet he is in a manner his companion, becauſe each of them is obliged to the other. See Feodal*-System.*

VATICAN, a magnificent palace of the pope, in Rome, which is said to consist of ſeveral thouſand rooms : but the parts of it most admired are the grand staircaſe, the pope’s apartment, and eſpecially the library, which is one of the richest in the world, both in printed books and manuſcripts.

VAUBAN (Sebastian le Prestre, ſeigneur de), marshal of France, and the greatest engineer that country ever pro­duced, was born in 1633. He diſplayed his knowledge of fortification in the courſe of many ſieges, and his services were rewarded with the first military honours. He was made governor of Lille in 1668, commissary-general of the fortifications of France in 1678, governor of the maritime parts of Flanders in 1689, and a marshal of France in 1703. He died in 1707, after having brought the arts of attack­ing and defending fortified places to a degree of perfection unknown before. His writings on theſe subjects are in the highest esteem.

VAUDOIS, Valdenses, or *Waldenſes,* in ecclesiastical history, a name given to a sect of reformers, who made their first appearance about the year 1160.

The origin of this famous sect, according to Mosheim, was as follows : Peter, an opulent merchant of Lyons, surnamed *Valdensis,* or *Validisius,* from Vaux or Waldum, a town in the marquiſate of Lyons, being extremely zealous for the advancement of true piety and Christian knowledge, employed a certain priest called *Stephanus de Evisa,* about the year 1160, in translating from Latin into French the four Goſpels, with other books of Holy Scripture, and the most remarkable ſentences of the ancient doctors, which were ſo highly esteemed in this century. But no ſooner had he perused these ſacred books with a proper degree of attention, than he perceived that the religion which was now taught in the Roman church, differed totally from that which was originally inculcated by Christ and his apostles.