sprightly comedies, your majesty would be amused, and thus your money would not be lost. All this appears so evident, that I should certainly be convinced of it if I wore as great a king as I am now a poor unfortunate man.”

Although Scarron wrote comedies, he had neither time nor patience to study the rules and models of dramatic poetry. Aristotle and Horace, Plautus and Terence, would have frightened him ; and perhaps he did not know that there was ever such a person as Aristophanes. He saw an open path before him, and he followed it. It was the fashion of the times to pillage the Spanish writers. Scar­ron was acquainted with that language, and he found it easier to use the materials which were already prepared, than to rack his brain in inventing a subject ; a restraint to which a genius like his could not easily submit. As he borrowed liberally from the Spanish writers, a dramatic piece did not cost him much labour. His labour consisted not in making his comic characters talk humorously, but in keeping up serious characters ; for the serious was a foreign language to him. The great success of his *Jodelet Maître* was a vast allurement to him. The comedians who acted it eagerly requested more of his productions. They were written without much toil, and they procured him large sums. They served to amuse him. When the office of historiographer became vacant, he solicited for it without success. At length Fouquet gave him a pension of sixteen hundred livres. Christina queen of Sweden having come to Paris, was anxious to see Scarron. “ I permit you,” said she to Scarron, “ to fall in love with me. The queen of France has made you her valetudinarian, and I create you my Roland.” But Scarron did not long enjoy that title. He was seized with so violent a hiccough, that every person thought he would have expired. “ If I recover,” he said, “ I will make a fine satire on the hiccough.” His gaiety did not forsake him to the last. Within a few minutes of his death, when his domestics were shedding tears about him, “ My goods friends,” said he, “ I shall never make you weep so much for me as I have made you laugh.” Just before expiring, he said, *“* I could never believe before that it is so easy to laugh at death.” He died on the l4th of October 1660, in the fifty-first year of his age.

His works have been collected and published by Bruzen de la Martiniere, in ten volumes 12mo, 1737. There are, 1. The Æneid travestied, in eight books. It was afterwards continued by Moreau de Brasey. 2. Typhon, or the Gi- gantomachia. 3. Many comedies, as Jodelet, or the Mas­ter Valet, Jodelet Cuffed, Don Japhet d’Armenie, the Ri­diculous Heir, Every Man his own Guardian, the Foolish Marquis, the Scholar of Salamanca, the False Appearance, and the Prince Corsaire, a tragi-comedy. Besides these, he wrote other pieces in verse. 4. His Comic Romance, in prose, which is the only one of his works that deserves at­tention. It is written with much purity and gaiety, and has contributed not a little to the improvement of the French language. Scarron had great pleasure in reading his works to his friends as he composed them, which he called trying his works. Segrais and another of his friends coming to him one day, “ Take a chair,” said Scarron to them, “ and sit down, that I may examine my Comic Romance.” When he observed the company laugh, “ Very well,” said he, “ my book will be well received, since it makes persons of such delicate taste laugh.” Nor was he deceived. His romance had a prodigious run. It was the only one of his works that Boileau could submit to read. 5. Spanish novels trans­lated into French. 6. A volume of Letters. 7. Poems, consisting of songs, epistles, stanzas, odes, and epigrams. The whole collection abounds with sprightliness and gaiety.

SCEAUX, an arrondissement of the department of the Seine, in France, to the south of Paris. It extends over 23,909 hectares, equal to 53,796 acres, or eighty-four square miles, and is divided into four cantons, and these into forty-

three communes, which, in 1836, contained 87,708 inhabi­tants. The chief town, which is of the same name, had for­merly a fine palace and park ; but the orangery only now remains. It has considerable manufactories of china, and contains 1670 inhabitants.

SCENE, in its primary sense, denotes a theatre, or the place where dramatic pieces and other public shows are ex­hibited. It does not appear that the ancient poets were at all acquainted with the modern way of changing the scenes in the different parts of the play, in order to raise the idea of the persons represented by the actors being in different places.

The original scene for the acting of plays was as simple as the representations themselves. It consisted only of a plain plot of ground proper for the occasion, which was in some degree shaded by the neighbouring trees, the branches of which were made to meet together, and their vacancies sup­plied with boards, sticks, and the like ; and to complete the shelter, these were sometimes covered with skins, and some­times with only the branches of other trees newly cut down, and full of leaves. Afterwards more artificial scenes, or scenical representations, were introduced, and paintings used instead of the objects themselves. Scenes were then of three sorts ; tragic, comic, and satiric. The tragic scene represented stately magnificent edifices, with decorations of pillars, statues, and other things suitable to the palaces of kings. The comic exhibited private houses with balconies and windows, in imitation of common buildings. And the satiric was the representation of groves, mountains, dens, and other rural appearances ; and these decorations either turned on pivots, or slid along grooves as those in our theatres.

Scene is also a part or division of a dramatic poem. Thus plays are divided into acts, and acts are again subdivided into scenes ; in which sense the scene is properly the per­sons present at or concerned in the action on the stage at such a time. Whenever, therefore, a new actor appears, or an old one disappears, the action is changed into other hands ; and therefore a new scene then commences.

It is one of the laws of the stage, that the scenes be well connected ; in other words, that one succeed another in such a manner as that the stage be never quite empty till the end of the act.

SCENOGRAPHY, from the Greek *σχηvη, scene,* and γϑαοη, *description,* in perspective, is a representation of a body on a perspective plane ; or a description of it in all its dimensions, such as it appears to the eye.

SCEPTIC, σχηπτχος, from *σχεπτομαι, I consider, look about,* or *deliberare,* properly signifies considerative and in­quisitive, or one who is always weighing reasons on one side and the other, without ever deciding between them. It is chiefly applied to an ancient sect of philosophers founded by Pyrrho, who, according to Laertius, had various other denominations. From their master they were called Pyr- rhonians ; from the distinguishing tenets or characteristic of their philosophy they derived the name of *Aporetici,* from *ἀποϑειv*, to *doubt ;* from their suspension and hesitation tlιey were called *ephectici,* from *ἐπεχειv, to stag* or *keep back ;* and, lastly, they were called *zetetici,* or seekers, from their never getting beyond the search of truth.

That the sceptical philosophy is absurd, can admit of no ' dispute in the present age ; and that many of the followers of Pyrrho carried it to the most ridiculous height, is not less true. But we cannot believe that he himself was so extra­vagantly sceptical as has sometimes been asserted, when we reflect on the particulars of his life, which are still preserv­ed, and the respectful manner in which we find him men­tioned by his contemporaries and writers of the first name who flourished soon after him. The truth, as far as at this distance of time it can be discovered, seems to be, that he learned from Democritus to deny the real existence of all