ship, he pursued his course wholly unfettered by party con­nection ; and he differed with his illustrious friend upon the two most critical emergencies of his life, the question of peace with France in 1795, and the impeachment of Lord Melville ten years later. Mr Wilberforce married, in the year 1797, Miss Barbara Spooner, daughter of a banker of that name in Birmingham. By this lady he had six chil­dren, of whom four sons still survive, his two daughters having died before their father. (b. q.)

WILEIKA, a circle of the Russian government of Minsk, extending in north latitude from 54° 24' to 54° 58', and in east longitude from 26° 7' to 28° 22'. In the west part it is filled with sandy heaths, and in the east with morasses. Between these are extensive woods, with portions among them of land highly productive of corn, hemp, and flax. Se­veral rivers have their sources within the circle, the most considerable of which are the Wilia and the Beresina. A canal of thirty miles in length has been constructed, which unites the river Duna with the Beresina ; but, from want of a sufficient head of water, it is only navigable in the spring of the year, even by small barks. The capital of the circle is of the same name, on the river Wilia. It has nothing re­markable, and contains scarcely more than 1000 inhabitants. It is 554 miles from St Petersburg. Long. 26. 40. E. Lat. 54. 35. 30. N.

WILKIE, William the author of the Epigoniad, was born in the parish of Dalmeny and county of Linlithgow on the 5th of October 1721. His father was a small farmer, and was not very fortunate in his worldly affairs. He how­ever gave his son a liberal education, the early part of which he received at Dalmeny school ; and at the age of thirteen he was sent to the university of Edinburgh, where he was soon distinguished as a young man of genius. Among his fellow-students were Dr Robertson the historian, Mr Home the poet, and some other eminent literary characters. In the course of his education he also became acquainted with David Hume and Adam Ferguson. Before he completed his studies at the university, his father died, leaving him only the stock and unexpired lease of his farm, with the care of three sisters, one of whom being afterwards married to an experienced farmer, Wilkie availed himself of his prac­tical knowledge. He formed a system of farming which fully answered his own expectations, and secured to him the approbation of all his neighbours. After becoming a licentiate of the church of Scotland, he still continued his former mode of living, cultivating his farm, reading the classics, and occasionally preaching for the ministers in his neighbourhood. In 1753, he was presented to the living of Ratho by the earl of Lauderdale, who was sensible of his worth, and admired his genius. The duties of his new office he discharged with fidelity, and was celebrated for his impres­sive mode of preaching, while he did not neglect the amuse­ments of husbandry, and the study of polite literature. In 1757 he published, at Edinburgh, “The Epigoniad, a Poem, in nine books,” which is said to have been the result of four­teen years study. Hume endeavoured to promote its suc­cess by addressing a commendatory letter to the editor of the Critical Review. A second edition of the poem was published at London in 1769. In 1759 Wilkie was elected professor of natural philosophy in the university of St An­drews. His whole fortune, when he removed to this place, did not exceed L.200, which he laid out in the purchase of a few acres of land in the vicinity of the city. He lived at St Andrews in the same studious and retired manner as he had done at Ratho. In 1766 the university conferred upon him the degree of D. D. He ended his poetical ca­reer by publishing a volume of Fables. Lond. 1768, 8vo. After a lingering illness, he died on the 10th of October 1772, having only completed the fifty-first year of his age. The personal character of Dr Wilkie exhibited many sin­gularities ; but the very distinguished individuals with whom he was acquainted were all disposed to regard him as a man of talents as well as learning. The subject of his Epigoniad was injudiciously chosen ; nor is it surprising that he did not acquire the reputation of a great epic poet.

WILKINS, John, an eminent philosopher and divine, the son of Walter Wilkins, a goldsmith of Oxford, was born in 1614, at Fawsley, near Daventry in Northamptonshire, in the house of his maternal grandfather, John Dod, a non-con­formist. After being trained in a private school at Oxford, he was entered of New Inn Hall in 1627, but was not long afterwards removed to Magdalen Hall, where he took his degrees in arts. On receiving holy orders, he became chaplain to Lord Say, and afterwards to Charles Count Pa­latine of the Rhine. To the favour of this prince his knowledge of mathematics was a strong recommendation. At the age of twenty-four he published “ The Discovery of a New World ; or, a Discourse tending to prove that 'tis probable there may be another habitable World in the Moon : with a Discourse concerning the Possibility of a Passage thither.” Lond. 1638, 8vo. This was followed by “ A Discourse concerning a New Planet; tending to prove that it is probable our Earth is one of the Planets.” Lond. 1640, 8vo. Both these works appeared without his name. He next produced “ Mercury ; or, the secret and swift Messenger ; shewing how a man may with privacy and speed communicate his thoughts to a friend at any distance.” Lond. 1641, 8vo. Another of his works bears the title of “ Mathematical Magick ; or, the Wonders that may be per­formed by Mechanical Geometry.” Lond. 1648, 8vo. These four tracts were long afterwards reprinted in a collection of his Mathematical and Philosophical Works. Lond. 1708, 8vo. Lond. 1802, 2 vols. 8vo. The earliest of his theo­logical works was his “ Ecclesiastes ; or, a Discourse of the Gift of Preaching, as it falls under the Rules of Art.” Lond. 1646, 8vo. The ninth edition was printed in 1718. This publication was succeeded in 1649 by “ A Discourse con­cerning the Beauty of Providence, in all the rugged pas­sages of it ;” and in 1653 by “ A Discourse concerning thc Gift of Prayer.”

On the commencement of the civil wars he adhered to the parliament, and took the solemn league and covenant. The committee for reforming the university appointed him warden of Wadham College. On the 12th of April 1648 he was created B. D., and was next day admitted to the office, for which his learning, as well as his talents and temper, eminently qualified him. Next year he was created D. D., and about the same period married Robina, the sister of Oliver Cromwell, and the widow of Dr French, canon of Christ Church. The protector granted him a dispensation for retaining the wardenship, notwithstanding his marriage. In 1659 Richard Cromwell appointed him master of Trinity College, Cambridge, but he was ejected in the course of the following year. The Restoration did not however deprive Dr Wilkins of all hope of preferment. He soon afterwards became preacher at Gray’s Inn, and rector of St Lawrence- Jewry. His next promotion was to the deanery of Ripon. It was about this period that he published the most remarkable of his works, “ An Essay towards a Real Character and a Philosophical Language.” Lond. 1668, fol. Of this essay a Latin version was completed by Ray, but was never pub­lished. During the same year, 1668, he was advanced to the bishopric of Chester ; and his consecration sermon was preached by Dr Tillotson, who had married his step-daugh­ter, Elizabeth French. The high preferment which he so well merited he did not long enjoy. Wilkins was the fourth bishop appointed to this see since the year 1660. His fatal disease was a suppression of urine, which was mis­taken for the stone. He died at Dr Tillotson’s house in Chancery-lane, London, on the 19th of November 1672, having only attained the age of fifty-eight. His funeral