grain-export season. The principal church, completed in 1867, is a large and costly building with an imposing dome. Sistova was one of the first of the Bulgarian towns to introduce the national language into its schools (1833), some of which are now well-endowed and flourish­ing. More than half the inhabitants, who numbered 11,560 in 1881, are Bulgarians, the rest being Turks, Walachians, and Gipsies.

Sistova is identified with the old Roman colony *Novas* mentioned by Ptolemy and others. The exact site appears to have been Staklen, *a* cluster of vineyards with remains of ancient buildings to the west of the present town, which has gradually moved eastward since the 16th century, when it was reduced by the Turkish wars to a miserable village. It was at Sistova that the peace of 1790 was signed, by which the Austrian-Turkish boundary was deter­mined. The town was burned in 1810 by the Russian general Saint Priest ; but subsequent to 1820 it began to revive, and the introduction of steam traffic on the lower Danube (1835) restored its prosperity in spite of the effects of the Russian war of 1828-29, when the Walachian town of Alexandria was founded by fugitives from Sistova. In 1877 the Russians entered Bulgaria by passing the river just below Sistova.

SISTRUM, a kind of rattle used by the ancient Egyp­tians in religious ceremonies, especially in the worship of Isis. It consisted of a frame through which passed four rods ; attached to the frame was a handle. When shaken the rods rattled and produced the sound. After the in­troduction of Egyptian worships into Italy the Romans became familiar with the sistrum. It is described by Apuleius *(Metam.,* xi. 4). An ancient sistrum formerly existed in the library of Ste Geneviève at Paris. In paint­ings found at Portici a priest of Isis and a woman are represented rattling the sistrum. The instrument is said to be still in use in Nubia and Abyssinia.

SISYPHUS, a famous character of Greek mythology, was a son of Æolus and Enarete and brother of Cretheus, Athamas, and Salmoneus. He built Ephyra (Corinth), and married Merope, daughter of Atlas, by whom he had a son Glaucus. According to Pausanias (ii. 3, 11) Sisyphus succeeded Medea in the sovereignty of Corinth. Having found the body of the drowned Melicertes lying on the shore of the isthmus, Sisyphus buried him and instituted in his honour the Isthmian games. From Homer onwards Sisyphus was famed as the craftiest of men. His name (formed by reduplication from the same root as *σoϕός*) means the Wise, Wise One. When Death came to fetch him, Sisyphus put him into fetters, so that no one died till Ares came and freed Death, and delivered Sisyphus into his custody. But Sisyphus was not yet at the end of his resources. For before he died he told his wife that when he was gone she was not to offer the usual sacrifice to the dead. So in the under world he complained that his wife was neglecting her duty, and he persuaded Hades to allow him to go back to the upper world and expostulate with her. But when he got back to Corinth he positively refused to return to Deadland ; so he lived to a good old age, and even then Hermes had a tough job to carry him off. In the under world Sisyphus was compelled to roll a big stone up a steep hill ; but before it reached the top of the hill the stone always rolled down, and Sisyphus had to begin all over again. The subject was a commonplace of ancient writers, and was depicted by the painter Polygnotus on the Lesche at Delphi.

The way in which Sisyphus cheated Death is a common incident in folk-tales. Thus in a Venetian story the ingenious Beppo ties up Death in a bag and keeps him there for eighteen months ; there is general rejoicing ; nobody dies, and the doctors are in high feather. In a Sicilian story an innkeeper corks up Death in a bottle ; so nobody dies for years, and the long white beards are a sight to see. In another Sicilian story a monk keeps Death in his pouch for forty years. (See Crane, *Popular Italian Tales,* Nos. 63, 64, 65, 66, with the translator’s notes.) The German parallel is Gambling Hansel, who kept Death up a tree for

seven years, during which no one died (Grimm, *Household Tales,* No. 82 ; in his notes Grimm cites a number of German parallels). The Norse parallel is the tale of the Master Smith (Asbjörnsen og Moe, *Norske Folke-Eventyr,* 21 ; Dasent, *Popular Tales from the Norse,* p. 106). For a Lithuanian parallel, see Schleicher, *Litauische Mährchen, Sprichwörte, Rätsel, und Lieder,* p. 108 *sq.)*;for Slavonic parallels, Krauss, *Sagen und Mährchen der Südslaven,* ii., Nos. 125, 126.

SITÁPUR, a British district in Sitápur division or commissionership of Oudh, under the jurisdiction of the lieutenant-governorship of the North-Western Provinces of India. It lies between 27° 7' and 27° 53' N. lat. and between 80° 21' and 81° 26' E. long., and it is bounded on the N. by Kheri district, on the E. by that of Bahraich, from which it is separated by the Gogra river, and on the S. and W. by Bara Banki, Lucknow, and Hardoi districts, the Gumti river forming the boundary. Sitápur district is elliptical in shape ; its greatest length from south-east to north-west is 70 miles, and its extreme breadth from north-east to south-west 55 miles; its area is 2251 square miles. Being without hills or valleys, and devoid of forests, Sitápur presents the appearance of a vast plain sloping imperceptibly from an elevation of 505 feet above sea-level in the north-west to 400 feet in the south-east. The country is, however, well wooded with numerous groves, and well cultivated, except in those parts where the soil is barren and cut up by ravines. It is inter­sected by numerous streams, and contains many shallow ponds and natural reservoirs, which overflow during the rains, but become dry in the hot season. Except in the eastern portion, which lies in the doabs or alluvial plains between the Kewáni and Chauka and the Gogra and Chauka rivers, the soil is as a rule dry, but even this moist tract is interspersed with patches of land covered with saline efflorescence called “ reh.” The principal rivers are the Gogra, which is navigable by boats of large tonnage through­out the year, and the Chauka. Nylghau, many varieties of deer, wild hog, wolf, jackal, and fox are common, but none of the larger wild animals are found within the district. The climate is considered healthy, and the cantonments of Sitápur are famous for the low mortality of the British troops stationed there. The average annual rainfall is about 33 inches. The district contains no railway, but it is well provided with good unmetalled roads.

In 1881 the population was returned at 958,251 (505,986 males and 452,265 females) ; Hindus numbered 818,738, Mohammedans 138,733, and Christians 443. Sitâpur contains but two towns with more than 10,000 inhabitants,—namely, Khairabad, 14,217, and Laharpur, 10,437. The administrative headquarters of the district are at Sitápur town, which is prettily situated on the banks of the Saráyan river, with good groves in all directions, and with a population in 1881 of 6780. Of the total district area 1455 square miles are cultivated and 510 are cultivable. The principal staples are wheat, barley, joar, gram, bajra, and rice; besides these a considerable quantity of sugar-cane is raised, as also oil seeds, cotton, and tobacco. The only manufactures of any note are tobacco and tazias at Biswán, with a little cotton printing and weaving in most of the towns. The history of Sitápur is closely associated with that of the rest of Oudh. The district figured prominently in the mutiny of 1857, when the native troops quartered in the cantonments rose in mutiny and fired on their officers, many of whom were killed, as were also several military and civil officers, with their families, in attempting to escape. Order being restored in 1858, the Government offices were re-opened, and nothing has since occurred to disturb the peace of the district.

SITTINGBOURNE, an ancient town of Kent, is situated on a navigable creek of the Swale, and on the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway, at the junction for Sheerness, 7 miles south from the latter town and 45 east-south-east of London. It consists principally of one long street and the northern suburb of Milton, formerly celebrated for its oysters, the fishery of which used to employ a large number of the inhabitants. Brickmaking is a very important industry, and there are large paper-