immediately within which lies the famous whirlpool of Charybdis, and by the rocks of Scylla, which a few miles below on the Calabrian ſhore project towards the weſt. The current runs with ſurpriſing force from one to the other alternately in the direction of the tide, and the tides themſelves are very irregular. Thus veſſels, by ſhynning the one, were in the utmoſt danger of be­ing ſwallowed up by the other.

At preſent, in moderate weather, when the tide is either at ebb or flood, boats paſs all over the whirl­pool: but, in general, it is like the meeting of two con­tending currents, with a number of eddies all around; and, even now, there is ſcarcely a winter in which there are not ſome wrecks.

“At the time when we paſſed the Straits (ſays Cap­tain Sutherland, from whom we have obtained this ac­curate information) the weather was as favourable as we could wiſh; and yet, in ſpite of a ſtrong breeze and the current, which hurried us on with ſurpriſing velo­city, the ſhip’s head was ſuddenly whirled round near three points; but the wind blowing freſh, in a few ſeconds ſhe daſhed through the eddy that had caught her; for, to avoid Scylla, and ſecure Meſſina, we had kept pretty cloſe to Charybdis.”

SCYROS, an iſland in the Ægean ſea, at the diſtance of about 28 miles north-eaſt from Eubcea. It is 6o miles in circumſerence. It was originally in the poſſeſſion of the Pelaſgians and Carians. Achilles retired there to avoid going to the Trojan war, and became father of Neoptolemus by Deidamia the daughter of king Lycomedes. Scyros was conquered by the Athe­nians under Cimon. It was very rocky and barren. Now *Sciro.* E. Long. 25. O. N. Lat. 38. 15.

SCYTALA laconica, in antiquity, a ſtratagem or device of the Lacedemonians, for the ſecret writing of letters to their correſpondents, ſo that if they ſhould chance to be intercepted, nobody might be able to read them.—To this end they had two wooden rollers or cylinders, perfectly alike and equal; one whereof was kept in the city, the other by the perſon to whom the letter was directed. For the letter, a ſkin of very thin parchment was wrapped round the roller, and thereon was the matter written; which done, it was taken off, and ſent away to the party, who, upon put­ting it in the ſame manner upon his roller, found the lines and words in the very ſame diſpoſition as when they were firſt written. This expedient they ſet a very high value on; though, in truth, artleſs and groſs enough: the moderns have improved vaſtly on this me­thod of writing. See Cipher.

SCYTAL1A, in botany: A genus of the monogynia order, belonging to the octandria claſs of plants; and in the natural method ranking with thoſe that are doubtful. The calyx is very ſhort, monophyllous, and ſomewhat quinquedentated; tire corolla pentapetalous; the filaments hairy at the baſe; the berry unilocular, with one ſeed of a ſoft pulpy conſiſtence. There is on­ly one ſpecies, viz. the *Sinensis,* a native of the Eaſt In­dies.

SCYTHIA, an ancient name for the northern parts of Aſia, now known by the name of *Tartary;* alſo for ſome of the north-eaſtern parts of Europe.

This vaſt territory, which extends itſelf from the Iſter or Danube, the boundary of the Celts, that is, from about the 25th to almoſt the 110th degree of eaſt longitude, was divided into Scythia in Europe and Scy­thia in Aſia, including, however, the two Sarmatias; or, as they are called by the Greeks, *Sauromatias,* now the Circaſſian Tartary, which lay between and ſevered the two Scythias from each other. Sauromatia was alſo diſtinguiſhed into European and Aſiatic; and was divided from the European Scythia by the river Don or Tanais, which falls into the Palus Meotis; and from the Aſiatic by the Rha, now Volga, which empties itſelf into the Caſpian ſea.

1. The Aſiatic Scythia comprehended, in gene­ral, great Tartary, and Ruſſia in Aſia; and, in par­ticular, the Scythia beyond or without Imaus, contained the regions of Bogdoi or Oſtiacoi, and Tanguti. That within, or on this ſide Imaus, had I urkeſtan and Mυngal, the Uſheck or Zagatai, Kalmuc and Nagaian Tartars; beſides Siberia, the land of the Samoiedes, and Nova Zembla. Theſe three laſt not being ſo ſoon inhabited as the former, as may be reaſonably ſuppoſed, were wholly unknown to the ancients; and the former were peopled by the Bactrians, Sogdians, Gandari. Sacks, and Maffagetes. As for Sarmatia, it contained Albania, Iberia, and Colchis; which makes now the Circaſſian Tartary, and the province of Georgia.

2. Scythia in Europe reached (towards the ſouth- weſt) to the Po and the Alps, by which it was divided from Celto-Gallia. It was bounded on the ſouth by the Iſter or Danube and the Euxine ſea. Its northern li­mits have been ſuppoſed to ſtretch to the ſpring-heads of the Boriſthenes or Nieper, and the Rha or Volga, and ſo to that of the Tanais—The ancients divided this country into Scythia Arimaſpaea, which lay eaſtward, joining to Scythia in Aſia; and Sarmatia Europeana on the weft. In Scythia, properly ſo called, were the Arimaſpæi on the north; the Getae or Dacians along the Danube, on the ſouth; and the Neuri between theſe two. So that it contained the European Ruſſia or Muſeovy, and the Leſſer Crim Tartary eaſtward; and, on the weſt, Lithuania, Poland, part of Hungary; Tranſilvania, Walachia, Bulgaria, and Moldavia. Sar­matia is ſuppoſed to have reached northward to that part of Swedeland called *Feningia,* now *Finland;* in which they placed the Games, Panoti, and Hippopodes. This part they divided from northern Germany, now the weſt part of Sweden and Norway, by the *Mare Sarmaticum* or *Scythicum,* which they ſuppoſed ran up into the northern ocean, and, dividing Lapland into two parts, formed the weſtern part of Sweden, with Norway, into one iſland, and Finland into another; ſuppoſing this alſo to be cut off from the continent by the gulph of that name.

Although the ancient Scythians were celebrated as a warlike people, yet their hiſtory is too uncertain and obſcure to enable us to give any detail which would not prove equally tireſome and unintereſting to the reader. Mr Pinkerton, in a diſſertation on their origin, endeavours to prove that they were the moſt ancient of nations; and he aſſigns for the place of their firſt habitation the country known by the name of Perſia. From Perſia, he thinks, they proceeded in numerous hordes weſtward, ſurrounded the Euxine, peopled Germany, Italy, Gaul, the countries bordering on the Baltic, with part of Britain and Ireland. That the Scythians were of Aſi-