*Si-iAKB-Stones, Ammonitae,* in natural hiſtory, the name of a large genus of foſſil ſhells, very few if any of which are yet known in their recent ſtate, or living either on our own or any other ſhores ; ſo that it ſeems won­derful whence ſo vaſt a number and variety of them ſhould be brought into our ſubterranean regions. They ſeem indeed diſperſed in great plenty throughout the world, but nowhere are found in greater numbers, beau­ty, and variety, than in our iſland.

Mr Harenberg found prodigious numbers of them on the banks oſ a river in Germany. He traced this river through its ſeveral windings for many miles, and among a great variety of belemnſtse, cornua ammonis, and cochlitæ, of various kinds ; he found alſo great quantities of wood of recent petrifaction, which ſtill preſerved plain marks of the axe by which it had been cut from the trees then growing on the ſhore. The water of this river he found in dry ſeaſons, when its natural ſprings were not diluted with rains, to be conſiderably heavier than common water ; and many experiments ſhowed him that it contained ferruginous, as well as ſtony particles, in great quantity, whence the petrifactions in it appear­ed the leſs wonderful, though many of them of recent date.

Oſ the cornua ammonis, or ſerpent-ſtones, he there obſerved more than 30 different species. They lie immerſed in a bluiſh foſſil ſtone, of a ſoft texture and fatty appearance, in prodigious numbers, and of a great va­riety of ſizes, from the larger known forts down to ſuch as could not be ſeen without very accurate inſpection or the aſſiſtance of a microſcope. Such as lie in the ſofteſt of theſe ſtones are ſoft like their matrix, and eaſily crumble to pieces ; others are harder. In a piece of this ſtone, of the bigneſs of a finger, it is common to find 30 or more of theſe foſſils ; and often they are ſeen only in form of white ſpecks, ſo minute that their fi­gure cannot be diſtinguiſhed till examined by the mi­croſcope.

They all conſiſt of ſeveral volutae, which are different in number in the different species, and their striae alſo are extremely various ; some very deep with very high ridges between them, others very flight ; ſome ſtraight, others crooked ; others undulated, and ſome termina­ting in dots, tubercles, or cavities, towards the back, and others having tubercles in two or three places. They are all compoſed of a great number of chambers or cells, in the manner of the *nautilus Gracorum,* each having a communication with the others, by means of a pipe or ſiphunculus. There is a ſmall white ſhell fiſh of Barbadoes, which ſeems truly a recent animal of this genus ; and in the Eaſt Indies there is another alſo, ſmall and greyiſh ; but the large and beautifully marked ones are found only foſſil.

They are compoſed of various foſſil bodies, often of quarry ſtone, ſometimes of the matter of the common pyrites, and of a great variety of other ſubſtances ; and though they appear uſually mere ſtones, yet in ſome the pearly part of the original ſhell is preſerved in all its beauty. Sometimes alſo, while the outer ſubſtance is of the matter of the pyrites, or other coarſe, ſtony, or mineral matter, the inner cavity is filled with a pure white ſpar of the common plated texture. This gives a great beauty to the ſpecimen. The cornua ammonis, or snake-ſtones, are found in many parts of England, particularly in Yorkſhire, where they are very plentiful in the alum rocks of ſeveral ſizes.

*SHAKE-Root,* in botany. See **Polygala.** *SNAKE-Weed,* in botany. See **Polygonum,** SNAPEDRAGON, in botany. See **Antirrhi­num.**

SNEEZING, a convulſive motion of the muſcles of the breaſt, whereby the air is expelled from the noſe with much vehemence and noiſe. It is cauſed by the ir­ritation of the upper membrane of the noſe, occaſioned by acrid ſubſtances floating in the air, or by medicines called st*ernutatory.*

This irritation is performed either externally, by ſtrong ſmells, as marjoram, roſes, &c. or by dust float­ing in the air, and taken in by inſpiration ; or by ſharp pungent medicines, as creſſes and other ſternutatories, which vellicate the membrane of the noſe ; or internally, by the acrimony of the lympha or mucus, which natu­rally moiſtens that membrane. The matters caſt south in ſneezing come primarily from the noſe and throat ; the pituitary membrane continually exuding a mucus thither ; and, ſecondarily, from the breaſt, the trachea, and the bronchia of the lungs.

The practice of ſaluting the perſon who ſneezed exiſted in Africa, among nations unknown to the Greeks and Romans. The accounts we have of Monomotapa inform us@@\*, that when the prince ſneezes, all his ſub­jects in the capital are advertiſed of it, that they may offer up prayers for his ſafety. The author of the con­queſt of Peru aſſures us, that the cacique of Guachoia having ſneezed in preſence of the Spaniards, the In­dians of his train fell proſtrate before him, ſtretched forth their hands, and displayed to him the accuſtomed marks of reſpect, while they invoked the ſun to enlighten him, to defend him, and to be his conſtant guard.

Every body knows that the Romans ſaluted each other on theſe ocaſions : and Pliny relates @@\*, that Tiberius exacted theſe ſigns of homage when drawn in his chariot. Superſtition, whoſe influence can debaſe eve­ry thing, had degraded this custom for ſeveral ages, by attaching favourable or unfavourable omens to ſneezing according to the hour of the day or night, according to the ſigns of the zodiac, according as a work was more or leſs advanced, or according as one had ſneezed to the right or to the left @@\*. If a man ſneezed at rising from table or from his bed, it was neceſſary for him to sit or lie down again. You are ſtruck with aſtoniſhment, ſaid Timotheus to the Athenians, who wiſhed to return in­to the harbour with their fleet @@\*, becauſe he had ſneezed; you are ſtruck with aſtoniſhment, becauſe among 10,000 there is one man whoſe brain is moiſt.

Polydore Virgil pretends, that in the time oſ Gre­gory the Great, there reigned in Italy an epidemic diſtemper, which carrried off by ſneezing all thoſe who were ſeized by it ; and that this pontiff ordered prayers to be made againſt it, accompanied by certain ſigns of the croſs. But beſides that, there are very few cases in which ſneezing can be considered as dangerous, and that it is frequently a favourable ſymptom @@\* : it is evi­dent, that we ought not to date from the sixth century the origin of acuſtom which lofes itſelf in the obscurity of antiquity. Avicenna and Cardan ſay, it is a fort of convulsion, which gives occaſion to dread an epilepſy, and that this diſeaſe is endeavoured to be warded off by prayers. Clement of Alexandria conſiders it as a mark of intemperance and effeminacy, which ought to be proſcribed. And he inveighs bitterly againſt thoſe

@@@[m]\* Strada, Prol. Acad.

@@@[m]\* Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. ii. cap. 2.

@@@[m]\* Spond. Homeri. Comment.

@@@[m]\* Frontin. lib. i. cap. 11.

@@@[m]\*Hippocrat. Halleri. Phys.