ration, conſiſting of a preſident, council, and fellows, for promoting natural knowledge ; and to give their inveſtigations, againſt which ſtrange prejudices were entertain­ed, every poſſible ſupport, he sometimes honoured their meetings with his preſence.

Their manner of electing fellows is by balloting. Their council are in number 21, including the preſi­dent, vice-preſident, treaſurer, and two ſecretaries ; 11 of which are continued for the next year, and 10 more added to them; all choſen on St Andrew’s day. Each member at his admiſſion ſubſcribes an engagement that he will endeavour to promote the good of the ſociety ; from which he may be freed at any time, by ſignifying to the preſident that he deſires to withdraw. The charges have been different at different times, and were at firſt irregularly paid ; but they are now five guineas paid to the treaſurer at admiſſion ; and 13 s. per quar­ter ſo long as the perſon continues a member : or, in lieu of the annual ſubſcription, a compoſition of 25 gui­neas in one payment.

Their deſign is, to “ make faithful records of all the works of nature or art which come within their reach; ſo that the preſent as well as future ages may be enabled to put a mark on errors which have been ſtrengthened by long preſcription ; to reſtore truths that have been neglected ; to puſh thoſe already known to more va­rious uſes ; to make the way more paſſable to what re­mains unrevealed,” &c. To this purpoſe they have made a great number of experiments and obſervations on moſt of the works of nature ; and alſo numbers of ſhort hiſtories of nature, arts, manufactures, uſeful en­gines, contrivances, &c*.* The ſervices which they have rendered to the public are very great. They have im­proved naval, civil, and military architecture ; advanced the ſecurity and perfection of navigation ; improved agriculture ; and put not only this kingdom, but alſo Ireland, the plantations, &c. upon planting. They have regiſtered experiments, hiſtories, relations, obſer­vations, &c. and reduced them into one common ſtock; and have, from time to time, publiſhed thoſe which they reckoned moſt uſeful, under the title of *Philoſophical Transactions, Sec.* and laid the rest up in public regiſters, to be nakedly tranſmitted to poſterity, as a ſolid ground­work for future ſyſtems.

They have a library adapted to their inſtitution ; to­wards which Mr Henry Howard, afterwards duke of Norfolk, contributed the Norfolcian library, and which is, at this time, greatly increaſed by a continual ſeries of benefactions. The muſeum or repoſitory of natural and artificial rarities, given them by Daniel Colwal, Eſq; and ſince enriched by many others, is now remo­ved to the Britiſh muſeum, and makes a part of that great repoſitory. Their motto is *Nullius in verba;* and their place of aſſembling is Somerſet-houſe in the Strand. Sir Godfrey Copley, baronet, left five guineas to be given annually to the perſon who ſhould write the beſt paper in the year, under the head of experimental philoſophy. This reward, which is now changed to a gold medal, is the higheſt honour the ſociety can beſtow. It is conferred on St Andrew’s day.

2. *The Royal Society of Edinburgh,* was incorporated by royal charter on the 29th of March 1783, and has for its object the cultivation of every branch of ſcience, erudition, and taſte. Its rise and progreſs towards its preſent ſtate was as follows : In the year 1718 a literary

ſociety was eſtabliſhed in Edinburgh by the learned Ruddiman and others, which in 1731 was ſucceeded by a ſociety instituted for the improvement of medical knowledge. In the year 1739 the celebrated .-Maclaurin conceived the idea of enlarging the plan of this ſociety, by extending it to ſubjects of philoſophy and literature. The inſtitution was accordingly new-mo­delled by a printed ſet of laws and regulations, the number of members was increaſed, and they were di­ſtinguiſhed from that time by the title of *The Society for Improving Arts and Sciences,* or more generally by the title of *The Philoſophical Society of Edinburgh.* Its meetings, however, were ſoon interrupted by the diſorders of the country during the rebellion in 1747 ; and they were not renewed till the year 1752. Soon after this period the firſt volume of the Tranſactions of the Philoſophical Society of Edinburgh was publiſhed, un­der the title of Essays *and Obſervations, Phyſical and Li­terary,* and was followed by other volumes of acknow­ledged merit. About the end of the year 1782, in a meeting of the profeſſors of the univerſity of Edinburgh, many of whom were likewiſe members of the Philoſo­phical Society, and warmly attached to its interests, a ſcheme was propoſed by the Rev. Dr Robertſon, prin­cipal of the univerſity, for the eſtabliſhment of a new ſociety on a more extended plan, and after the model of ſome of the foreign academies. It appeared an expe­dient meaſure to ſolicit the royal patronage to an inſti­tution of this nature, which promiſed to be of nation­al importance, and to requeſt an eſtabliſhment by char­ter from the crown. The plan was approved and a~ dopted ; and the Philoſophical Society, joining its in­fluence as a body in ſeconding the application from the univerſity, his majeſty, as we have already obſerved, was moſt graciouſly pleaſed to incorporate The Royal Society of Edinburgh by charter.

This ſociety conſiſts of ordinary and honorary mem­bers ; and the honorary places are reſtricted to per­ſons reſiding out of Great Britain and Ireland. The election of new members is appointed to be made at two ſtated general meetings, which are to be held on the fourth Monday of January and the fourth Mon­day of June. A candidate for the place of an ordi­nary member muſt ſignify by a letter, addreſſed to one of the members, his wiſh to be received into the ſociety. He muſt then be publicly propoſed at leaſt a month before the day of election. If the propoſal be ſeconded by two of the members preſent, his name is to be inſerted in the lift of candidates, and hung up in the ordinary place of meeting. The election is made by ballot, and is determined in favour of a candidate, if he ſhall have the votes of two thirds of thoſe preſent, in a meeting conſiſting of at leaſt 21 members. The gene­ral buſineſs of the ſociety is managed by a preſident, two vice preſidents, with a council of 1*2,* a general ſecretary, and a treaſurer. Theſe officers are choſen by ballot annually on the laſt Monday of November. All public deeds, whether of a civil or of a literary nature, are tranſacted by this board, and proceed in the name of the preſident or vice-preſident.

As it was thought that the members would have a greater inducement to punctual attendance on the meet­ings of the ſociety, if they had ſome general intimation of the nature of the ſubjects which were to be conſi­dered, and made the topics of converſation, it was there­