male flower is roundiſh, the calyx is triphyllous, and there is no corolla. The amentum of the female flower reſembles that of the male. The ſtigma is bifid ; the fruit is a dry berry containing one feed. There are two ſpecies, the erectum and natans, both of them natives of Great Britain and Ireland. 1. The *Erectum,* great burreed, has a stem two or three feet high, erect, firm and branched ; the lower leaves are triangular, the upper ones plain. The male heads are much ſmaller than the female. This ſpecies flowers in July, and is frequent on the banks of rivers and lakes and near ſtagnant wa­ters. 2. The *Natans,* floating or little bur-reed, has a stalk about two feet long. The leaves float, are about a foot long, one-fourth of an inch wide at the baſe, and one-eighth in the middle, and end in a point. The male sphœrules ate generally three, and all ſeſſile ; the female are commonly three, the two lower being ſupported on peduncles, the uppermoſt ſeſſile. It flowers in July, and grows in pools and lakes, but is rare.

SPARMANNIA, in botany; a genus of plants be­longing to the claſs of *polyandria,* and to the order of m*onogynia.* The corolla conſiſts of four petals, and is bent back; the nectaria are numerous, and ſwell a little ; the calyx is quadriphyllous ; the capſule is angulated, quinquelocular and echinated. There is only one ſpe­cies, the *Africana.*

SPARROW, in ornithology. See Fringilla.

*SPARROW-Hawk,* in ornithology. See Falco.

SPARROW-Grass. See Asparagus.

SPARRY-acid. See FLUOR-Acid*,* and Chεmistry- Ind*ex.*

SPARTA, or Lacedæmon, the capital of the country of Laconia in Greece, an ancient and moſt re­nowned ſtate, the inhabitants of which have been in all ages celebrated for the Angularity of their laws and cha­racter.—The hiſtory of Sparta for many ages is entirely fabulous ; and the authentic accounts commence only with the celebrated lawgiver Lycurgus, who flouriſhed about 870 B.C. See the article Lycurgus.

After his death, the firſt important tranſaction which we find mentioned in the Spartan hiſtory is the Meſſenian war, which commenced in the year 752 B. C. and ended in the total reduction of the Meſſenian territory, as related under the article Messenia. During this period, according to ſome authors, a great change took place in the government of Sparta. This was the crea­tion of the ephori, which is aſcribed to one of the kings named *Theopompus.* This man perceiving that there was a neceſſity for leaving magiſtratcs to execute the laws, when the kings were obliged to be in the field, appointed the magiſtrates above mentioned, who after­wards made ſo great a figure in the ſtate (ſee Ephori). One great privilege of the ephori was, that they did not riſe up at the preſence of the kings, as all other ma­giſtrates did : another was, that if the kings offended againſt the laws, the ephori took cognizance of the of­fence, and inflicted a ſuitable puniſhment. From the firſt election of the ephori, the year was denominated, as at Athens, from the firſt election of the archons.

The conqueſt of Meſſenia gave Sparta the ſuperiority over the reſt of the ſtates, excepting only that of Athens, which for a long time continued to be a very troubleſome rival ; but the conteſts between theſe two rival states have been ſo fully related under the article At­tica, that nothing more isrequiſite to be added in the

place.—In the time of the Perſian war, Leonidas the Spartan king diſtinguiſhed himſelf in ſuch a manner, as to become the admiration not only of that but of every ſucceeding age. It being reſolved in a general council to defend the ſtraits of Thermopylae againſt. the Per­ſians, 7000 @@\* foot were put under the command of Leo­nidas ; of whom, however, only 300 were Spartans. Leonidas did not think it practicable to defend the paſs againſt ſuch multitudes as the Persian king commanded; and therefore privately told his friends, that his deſign was to devote himſelf to death for his country.

Xerxes advancing near the ſtraits, was ſtrangely ſurpriſed to find that the Greeks were reſolved to diſpute his paſſage ; for he had always flattered himſelf, that on his approach they would betake themſelves to flight, and not attempt to oppoſe his innumerable forces. However, Xerxes ſtill entertaining ſome hopes of their flight, waited four days without undertaking any thing, on purpoſe to give them time to retreat. During this time, he uſed his utmoſt endeavours to gain and corrupt Leonidas, promiſing to make him maſter of all Greece if he would come over to his intereſt. His offers being rejected with contempt and indignation, the king order­ed him by an herald to deliver up his arms. Leonidas, in a ſtyle and with a ſpirit truly laconical, anſwered, " Come thyſelf, and take them.” Xerxes, at this re­ply, tranſported with rage, commanded the Medes and Ciſſians to march againſt them, take them all alive, and bring them to him in fetters. The Medes, not able to ſtand the ſhock of the Greeks, ſoon betook themſelves to flight : and in their room Hydarnes was ordered to advance with that body which was called *Immortal,* and conſiſted of 10,000 choſen men ; but when theſe came to cloſe with the Greeks, they ſucceeded no better than the Medes and Ciſſians, being obliged to retire with great ſlaughter. The next day the Perſians, reflecting on the ſmall number of their enemies, and ſuppoſing ſo many of them to be wounded that they could not poſſibly maintain a ſecond fight, reſolved to make another attempt; but could not by any efforts make the Greeks give way : on the contrary, they were themſelves put to a ſhameful flight. The valour of the Greeks exert­ed itſelf on this occaſion in a manner ſo extraordinary, that Xerxes is ſaid to have three times leaped from his throne, apprehending the entire deſtruction of his army.

Xerxes having loſt all hopes of forcing his way through troops that were determined to conquer or die, was extremely perplexed and doubtful what meaſures he ſhould take in this poſture of affairs; when one Epialtes, in expectation of a great reward, came to him, and diſcovered a ſecret paſſage to the top of the hill which overlooked and commanded the Spartan forces. The king immediately ordered Hydarnes thither with his ſelect body of 10,000 Perſians; who marching all night, arrived at break of day, and poſſeſſed themſelves of that advantageous poſt. The Phocæans, who defend­ed this paſs, being overpowered by the enemy’s num­bers, retired with precipitation to the very top of the mountain, prepared to die gallantly. But Hydarnes neglecting to purſue them, marched down the mountain with all poſſible expedition, in order to attack thoſe who defended the ſtraits in the rear. Leonidas being now appriſed that it was impoſſible to bear up againſt the enemy, obliged the reſt of his allies to retire: but he ſtaid himſelf, with the Theſpians, Thebans, and 300

@@@[m]\* See Anachbarsis's Travels, vol. i. p. 468.