for his uſe of laudanum. He regulated his practice more by his own obſervations and inquiries, than by the method either of his predeceſſors or contemporaries.

SYDEROPŒCILUS, in natural hiſtory, the name of a ſtone mentioned by the ancients. It was found in Ara­bia, and ſeems to have obtained this name from its being ſpotted with a ferruginous colour. The deſcriptions of the ancients are, however, in this, as in many other inſtances, too ſhort to ſuffer us to gueſs what ſtone they meant.— This might poſſibly be a granite with ſpots of this peculiar colour.

SYENE, an ancient city of Egypt, ſituated, according to Mr Bruce, in north latitude 24⁰ 0' *45".* Pliny and Strabo both say that it lay directly under the tropic of Cancer. Whether Mr Bruce’s authority be ſufficient to overturn the evidence of Pliny and Strabo, we ſhall leave to others to de­termine.

Syene is remarkable for being the place where the firſt attempt was made to meaſure the circumference of the earth. This was done by Eratoſthenes, whom Ptolemy Euergetes had invited from Athens to Alexandria. In this attempt two poſitions were affirmed, viz. that Alexan­dria and Syene were exactly 5000 ſtadia diſtant from each other, and that they were preciſely under the same meri­dian ; but both theſe are denied by Mr Bruce, who has made many obſervations on the ſubject, which our limits will not allow us to take notice of at preſent. He tells us, that there is at Aſum an obeliſk erected by Ptolemy Euergetes, the patron of Eratoſthenes, without hieroglyphics, directly facing the ſouth, with its top firſt cut into a nar­row neck, then ſpread out like a fan into a ſemicircular form, with pavements curiouſly levelled to receive the ſhade, and make the ſeparation of the true ſhadow from the pe­numbra as diſtinct as poſſible. This is ſuppoſed by Mr Bruce to have been conſtructed with a deſign to vary the experiment of Eratoſthenes with a larger radius ; and the inquiry concerning the dimenſions of the earth, in our au­thor’s opinion, was the occaſion of many obeliſks being erected in this kingdom ; a demonſtration of which is, that the figure of the top is varied ; being ſometimes very ſharp, and ſometimes a portion of a circle, in order to get rid of the great impediment ariſing from the penumbra, which makes it difficult to determine the length of the ſhadow with preciſion. It is now called As*ſouan.*

SYLLA (Lucius Cornelius), was deſcended from the illuſtrious family of the Scipios. His behaviour in his young­er years by no means correſponded with the excellent edu­cation which he had received. But debauchery, inſtead of bringing along with it infamy and ruin, its uſual attendants, ſerved only to increaſe the wealth of this fortunate Roman ; for Nocopolis, a rich courtezan, whoſe affections he had gained, left him heir to her great eſtate.—He learned. the art of war under Marius, whom he attended to Numidia in quality of queſtor. Though hitherto unaccuſtomed to arms, he became in a ſhort time the moſt ſkilful ſoldier in the ar­my, while by his polite and obliging behaviour he gained the love and eſteem of every body. His courage and dex­terity contributed a great deal towards the ſucceſs of the war ; it was his eloquence in particular that perſuaded Boc­chus to deliver up Jugurtha. He ſerved afterwards in the ſocial war, where his actions entirely eclipſed thoſe of every other commander. As a reward for this conduct he was raiſed to the praetorſhip. It is pretended by ſome that Sylla purchaſed this dignity ; and that when he threatened one day to make uſe of the powers of h*is* office againſt Strabo the father of Pompey, that Roman replied with a ſmile, “ You are in the right to say ſo ; your office is cer­tainly *yours,* ſince you purchaſed it.” Be this as it may, after the concluſion of the ſocial war he was made conſul, and ſoon after declared general of the army which was to be ſent againſt Mithridates king of Pontus. Marius, at that time the moſt renowned of the Roman generals, ex­pected that the management of this war would have been committed to him, and was therefore much exaſperated at the diſappointment. The people were perſuaded by his in­trigues to reverſe the former decree, and ſubſtitute him in place of Sylla. Upon this he ſent down officers to take the command of the army ; but Sylla by this time had gained over the ſoldiers ; who, inſtead of obeying the de­cree of the people, slew Marius’s officers, and intreat­ed Sylla to lead them inſtantly to Rome. According­ly he entered the city ſword in hand, flew Sulpicius the con­ſul, obliged Marius to flee, new-modelled the laws, and af­terwards marched into the Eaſt, and immediately laid ſiege to Athens ; for that city, together with the rest of Greece, had fallen into the power of Mithridates. He wrote to the Amphyctions, who were aſſembled at Delphi, to lend him all the gold which was depoſited in the temple of Apollo, becauſe he stood in need of money ; promiſing, at the same time, to reſtore it again at the end of the war. When he received this treaſure, he obſerved, with an air of rail­lery, that he now no longer despaired of victory, ſince the gods themſelves furniſhed him with money to pay his troops. Famine ſoon obliged the Athenians to think of a ſurrender. Their ambassadors waited on Sylla, and began to harangue about Theſeus and Codrus, and Marathon and Salamis, —when he interrupted them, and exclaimed, “ Go, repeat theſe fine orations in your ſchools ; I have come hither, not to learn your history, but to chactiſe rebels.” Athens was at laſt taken by aſſault, and Sylla was upon the point of dest roving it, when he recollected its ancient glory, and ſpared (as he ſaid) the living for the sake of the dead. Af­ter burning the Piraeus, he gained two deciſive victories over the generals of Mithridates. In the second battle, which was fought at Orchomeniis, he was almoſt defeated ; his troops began to flee, when, leaping from his horſe, he Hatched up a standard, and advanced againſt the enemy, crying out, “ I will die here gloriouſly; and, ſoldiers, when you are aſked where you abandoned your general, anſwer, At Orchomenus.” This reproach recalled the courage of the Romans ; they followed him to the charge, and gained a complete victory. Mithridates, humbled by theſe diſaſters, ſent ambaſſadors to ſue for peace.

Mean time Cinna had declared againſt Sylla in Italy; and Marius returning from baniſhment, had taken the moſt ſevere vengeance on all his enemies. Sylla was declared a traitor ; his laws were reverſed, his friends murdered, and the government new-modelled. The news of theſe tranſactions induced Sylla to conclude a treaty with Mithridates, and match directly to Rome. His approach terrified the Ro­mans. Marius and Cinna were both dead ; but the conſuls made vigorous preparations to oppoſe him. A civil war was begun ; but Sylla in the end subdued all his ene­mies, and entirely ruined the Marian faction. He entered Rome at the head of his victorious army, and publicly af­firmed the ſurname of *Happy.* Happy, indeed, had he ceaſed to live when he ceaſed to conquer. The remainder of his life contains nothing elſe but a catalogue of the moſt abominable cruelties. He declared that every one who expected par­don for their late offences, muſt gain it by deſtroying the enemies of the ſtate. The ſword of the aſſaſſin was thus unſheathed, and murder encouraged as the path to power and diſtinction. The nobleſt of the Romans were every­where maſſacred ; ſlaves were rewarded for cutting off their maſters ; children were ſeen dragging their parents to exe­cution ; and brothers claiming a recompenſe for the mur-