SHEPPERTON, a village of the county of Middlesex, in the hundred of Spelthorne. It stands on the banks of the Thames, eighteen miles from London. The course of the river having been changed, a small part of the parish is now in the county of Surrey. There is a bridge here over the river, near to which are a number of piles, called Cowey Stakes, said to have been driven into the stream by the Britons, to prevent the army of Cæsar from fording the river. It is commonly asserted that the learned Erasmus passed much of his time, when in England, at the parsonage- house, with the incumbent, who was his intimate friend. There are many fine and pleasantly situated houses looking on the river in this place. The population amounted in 1821 to 782, and in 1831 to 847.

SHEPPEY, Isle of, an island, being part of the county of Kent, situated at the mouth of the Thames and Medway, and separated from the mainland by an arm of the sea, called the Swale, which is navigable for vessels of 200 tons burden, extending about eleven miles in length. Nearly four fifths of the island consist of rich marsh and pasture land, and the rest of very productive corn and clover lands. The best wheat of England is grown on this island, the land being well manured by the large flocks of sheep on the uplands, and by the cows and oxen on the rich mea­dows. Though fertile, it is deemed unhealthy ; and there is a scarcity of good water, though that has been of late partially remedied by a well sunk 330 feet.

The island is in none of the hundreds of Kent, but is a liberty of itself. It contains 18,340 acres of land, has with­in it the towns of Sheerness and Queenborough, four pa­rishes, and, in 1831, a population of 9867, of whom 4833 were males, and 5034 were females.

SHEPTON-MALLET, a town of the county of Somer­set, in the hundred of Whitestone, 116 miles from London. It is situated on the Mendip Hills, in a district abundantly supplied with coal, to which it is principally indebted for its prosperity. It is a place of considerable woollen manu­facture, chiefly of broad cloths and cassimeres. The streets are narrow and ill built. It has a large parish church ; and in the centre of the town a curious market-cross, erected in the year 1500, consisting of five arches, supported by that number of pentagonal columns. The manor of Shepton- Mallet is a portion of the duchy of Cornwall. There is a well-supplied market on Fridays. The population amount­ed in 1821 to 5021, and in 1831 to 5330.

SHER, a town in the Mahratta territories, in the province of Malwah, ninety miles north-east from Oojain. Long. 78. 55. E. Lat. 23. 58. N.

SHERBET, or Sherbit, a compound drink, first brought into England from Turkey and Persia, consisting of water, lemon-juice, and sugar, in which are dissolved perfumed cakes made of excellent Damascus fruit, containing an in­fusion of some drops of rose-water. Another kind of it is made of violets, honey, and juice of raisins.

SHERBORNE, a town in the hundred of its name, in the county of Dorset, 117 miles from London. It was for­merly a city, the see of a bishop, removed to Salisbury in the eleventh century. It is situated at the foot of a hill, with narrow and ill-built streets, and has no striking object except the old cathedral, now the parish church, one of the finest in the west of England. The only branch of indus­try is the silk trade, the throwing of which is carried on by machinery. Adjoining to the town is the magnificent seat of the Earl of Digby, Sherborne Castle, which was once the residence of Sir Walter Raleigh. The town is supplied with water by the river Ivel. There are markets on Tues­day, Thursday, and Saturday. The population amounted in 1821 to 3622, and in 1831 to 4075.

SHERBURN, a town of the west riding of the county of York, in the wapentake of Barkston Ash. It is situated on the great road from Doncaster to York, 185 miles from

London. It was once a place of more importance than it is at present, having been the seat of an archbishop, of whose palace no vestige now remains ; but there is a fine old church. The place is celebrated for its cherry-orchards, and for a peculiar kind of plums. The population of the town amounted in 1821 to 1144, and in 1831 to 1155; but the parish extends over six other townships, whose aggregate population amounted in 1821 to 2916, and in 1831 to 3068.

SHEREGUR, a town of the Sikh territories, in the pro­vince of Mooltan, seventy miles south-south-west from La­hore. Long. 73. 24. E. Lat. 30. 55. N.

SHERIBON. See Cheribon.

SHERIDAN, Thomas, D. D., the intimate friend of Dean Swift, is said by Shield, in Cibber’s Lives of the Poets, to have been born about 1684, in the county of Ca­van, where, according to the same authority, his parents lived in no very elevated state. They are described as being unable to afford their son the advantages of a liberal education; but he, being observed to give early indications of genius, attracted the notice of a friend of his family, who sent him to the college of Dublin, and contributed towards his support while he remained there. He afterwards en­tered into orders, and set up a school in Dublin, which long maintained a very high reputation, as well for the attention bestowed on the morals of the scholars, as for their profi­ciency in literature. So great was the estimation which this seminary enjoyed, that it is asserted to have produced in some years the sum of L.1000. It does not appear that he had any considerable preferment ; but his intimacy with Swift procured for him, in 1725, a living in the south of Ireland, worth about L.150 a year, which he went to take possession of, and, by an act of inadvertence, destroyed all his future expectations of rising in the church ; for, being at Cork on the 1st of August, the anniversary of King George’s birth-day, he preached a sermon which had for its text, “ Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.” On this being known, he was struck out of the list of chaplains to the lord lieutenant, and forbidden the Castle.

This living Dr Sheridan afterwards changed for that of Dunboyne, which, by the knavery of the farmers, and the power of the gentlemen in the neighbourhood, fell so low as L.80 per annum. He gave it up for the free school of Cavan, where he might have lived well in so cheap a coun­try on a salary of L.80 a year, besides his scholars ; but the air being, as he said, too moist and unwholesome, and being disgusted with some persons who lived there, he sold the school for about L.400 ; and having soon spent the money, he fell into bad health, and died on the 10th of September 1738, in his fifty-fifth year.

Lord Cork has given the following character of him. “ Dr Sheridan was a schoolmaster, and in many instances perfectly well adapted for that station. He was deeply versed in the Greek and Roman languages, and in their customs and antiquities. He had that kind of good nature which absence of mind, indolence of body, and carelessness of fortune, produce ; and although not over strict in his own conduct, yet he took care of the morality of his scho­lars, whom he sent to the university remarkably well found­ed in all kinds of classical learning, and not ill instructed in the social duties of life. He was slovenly, indigent, and cheerful. He knew books much better than men ; and he knew the value of money least of all. In this situation, and with this disposition, Swift fastened upon him as upon a prey with which he intended to regale himself whenever his appetite should prompt him." His lordship then men­tions the event of the unlucky sermon, and adds, “ This ill-starred, good-natured, improvident man returned to Dublin, unhinged from all favour at court, and even ba­nished from the Castle. But still he remained a punster, a quibbler, a fiddler, and a wit. Not a day passed without a rebus, an anagram, or a madrigal.”