One of the volumes of Swift’s miscellanies consists al- ' most entirely of letters between him and the dean. He published a prose translation of Persius ; to which he added the best notes of former editors, together with many judi­cious ones of his own. This work was printed at London, 1739, in 12mo.

SHERIDAN, *Mrs.* *Frances,* wife of Thomas Sheridan, A. M. was born in Ireland about the year 1724, but descended from a good English family which had removed thither. Her maiden name was Chamberlaine, and she was grand­daughter of Sir Oliver Chamberlaine. The first literary performance by which she distinguished herself, was a little pamphlet at the time of a violent party-dispute relative to the theatre, in which Mr Sheridan had newly embarked his fortune. So well-timed a work exciting the attention of Mr Sheridan, he by an accident discovered his fair patroness, to whom he was soon afterwards married. She was a per­son of the most amiable character in every relation of life, with the most engaging manners. After lingering some years in a very weak state of health, she died at Blois, in the south of France, in the year 1767. Her Sidney Bid- dulph may be ranked with the first productions of that class in ours or in any other language. She also wrote a little romance, in one volume, called Nourjahad, in which there is a great deal of imagination, productive of an admirable mo­ral. She was likewise the authoress of two comedies, The Discovery, and The Dupe.

Sheridan, *Richard Brinsley,* a distinguished dramatist and politician, was bom at Dublin in the month of Septem­ber 1757, and baptized in St Mary’s Church on the fourth of the following month. His grandfather and father each attained a celebrity, by the friendship with which the for­mer was honoured by Swift, and by the competition, and even rivalry, which the latter so long maintained with Gar­rick. His mother, too, was a woman of considcrable ta­lents. Her affecting novel, Sidney Biddulph, could boast amongst its panegyrists Mr Fox and Lord North ; and in the tale of Nourjahad she employed the graces of oriental fiction to deceive her readers into a taste for true happiness and virtue.

At the age of seven years, Richard Brinsley Sheridan was, with his eldest brother Charles Francis, placed under the tuition of Mr Samuel Whyte of Grafton Street, Dublin; and after being little more than a year under his care, they were removed to England, where Mr and Mrs Sheridan had lately gone to reside. In the year 1762, Richard was sent to Harrow, Charles being kept at home as a fitter subject for the instructions of the father. At that time, Dr Sumner was at the head of the school, and Dr Parr, who to the massy erudition of a former age joined the free and en­lightened intelligence of the present, was one of the under masters. Both he and Dr Sumner endeavoured, by all pos­sible means, to awaken in Sheridan a consciousness of those powers which he manifestly possessed ; but remonstrance and encouragement were equally thrown away upon the good-humoured indifference of their pupil. One of the most valuable acquisitions he derived from Harrow, how­ever, was that friendship with Dr Parr, which lasted through­out his life, and which identity of political opinion tended not a little to invigorate.

On his leaving Harrow, where he continued until about his eighteenth year, he was brought home by his father, who, with the elder son, Charles, had lately returned from France, and taken a house in London. Here the two brothers for some time received private tuition from Mr Lewis Kerr, an Irish gentleman, who had formerly practised as a physician ; and they also attended the fencing and riding schools of Mr Angelo, at the same time receiving from their father instructions in English grammar and ora­tory. Of this advantage, however, the elder son appears alone to have availed himself; and Richard, determined to

owe all to nature, was found as impracticable a pupil at home as at school. But, however inattentive to his studies he may have been at Harrow, it is evident, from a letter of his school-fellow, Mr Halhed, that he had already distin­guished himself in poetry, and, in conjunction with his friend, had translated the seventh Idyl, and many of the les­ser poems of Theocritus. In the year 1770, when Halhed was at Oxford, and Sheridan with his father at Bath, they commenced a correspondence (of which Halhed’s share only remains), and, with all the hope and spirit of young adven­turers, began and prosecuted several works, of which none but their translation of Aristænetus ever saw the light.

In this copartnership of genius, their first joint produc­tion was a play in three acts, called *Jupiter,* written in imi­tation of the burletta of Midas. Of this piece Halhed, who had furnished the burlesque scenes, entertained great hopes ; nor were those of Sheridan less earnest and sanguine ; yet that habit of dilatoriness, which is too often attendant upon genius, and which, throughout life, was remarkable in the character of Mr Sheridan, prevailed so far, that though he received from his friend the sketch of this piece in 1770, it was not till May next year that the probability of the ar­rival of the manuscript was announced to Mr Foote. An­other of their projects was a periodical miscellany, the idea of which originated with Sheridan. The title intended by him for this paper was Herman’s Miscellany, to which Hal­hed objected, and proposed The Reformer, as a newer and better name. But this paper, for want of auxiliaries, never proceeded beyond the first number, which was written by Sheridan. It is the characteristic of fools to be always be­ginning ; and this is not the only point in which folly and genius resemble each other. Amongst the many literary works projected by Sheridan at this period, were a collec­tion of Occasional Poems, and a volume of Crazy Tales, to the former of which Halhed suggests, that “ the old things they did at Harrow, out of Theocritus,” might form a useful contribution. But neither of these came to any thing ; and the translation of Aristænetus was the only fruit of their literary alliance that, as we have already stated, ever arrived at sufficient maturity for publication.

The passion, however, that now began to take possession of his heart was little favourable to his advancement in se­rious studies. In the neighbourh∞d of Miss Linley, the arts and the sciences were suffered to fall asleep, and even the translation of Aristænetus itself proceeded but slowly. After various fortune, however, it at length made its appear­ance in August 1771, contrary to the advice of the book­seller, and, as it might have been expected, from the unpro­pitious season at which it appeared, complete failure was the consequence. The disappointment of the authors was no doubt proportioned to the sanguine expectations they had indulged. But as to Mr Sheridan, he sought for consola­tion in the society of Miss Linley, who had now become the star of his attraction, and the centre round which revolved all his hopes. This lady, indeed, notwithstanding the draw­back of her profession as a singer, appears to have spread her gentle conquests to an extent almost unparalleled in the annals of beauty. “ Her personal charms, the exqui­siteness of her musical talents, and the full light of publicity which her profession threw upon both,” says Mr Moore, “ naturally attracted round her a crowd of admirers, in whom the sympathy of common pursuit soon kindled into rivalry, till she became at length an object of vanity as well as of love. Her extreme youth, too (for she was little more than sixteen when Sheridan first met her), must have removed, even from minds the most fastidious and delicate, that re­pugnance they might have justly felt to her profession, if she had lived much longer under its tarnishing influence, or lost, by frequent exhibitions before the public, that fine gloss of feminine modesty, for whose absence not all the talents and accomplishments of the whole sex can atone.”