editions, a life of the author by Dr. Birch, and a glossary, together with 32 plates from designs by Kent, must likewise be mentioned. Lond. 1751, 3 vols. 4to. Another edition of this poem, with notes critical and explanatory, was soon afterwards published by Ralph Church, A.M. Lond. 1758,

4 vols. 8vo. And about the same time appeared a new edi tion, with a glossary and notes explanatory and critical, by John Upton, A.M. Lond. 1758, 2 vols. 4to. An elaborate and complete edition of Spenser’s Works was at length published by Mr. Todd. Lond. 1805, 8 vols. 8vo. Nor must we fail to direct the reader’s more particular attention to Mr. Warton’s “ Observations on the Faerie Queen of Spen ser,” in 2 vols. 8vo. As a proof of the poet’s continental reputation, we may here refer to *Spenser’s Sonnetten, über­setzt durch Joseph von Hammer.* Wien, 1814, 8vo.

SPERMACETI, a whitish, unctuous, flaky substance, prepared from oil, but chiefly from the brains of a species of whale called *physeter macrocephalus.*

SPEUSIPPUS, an Athenian philosopher, the nephew and successor of Plato. Contrary to the practice of his mas ter, Speusippus required from his pupils a stated gratuity. He placed statues of the Graces in the school which Plato had built. On account of his infirm state of health, he was commonly carried to and from the Academy in a ve hicle. On his way thither he one day met Diogenes, and saluted him: the surly philosopher refused to return the sa 1ute, and told him, that such a feeble wretch ought to be ashamed to live; Speusippus replied, that he lived not in his limbs, but in his mind. At length being wholly incapacitated, by a paralytic stroke, for the duties of the chair, he resigned it to Xenocrates. He is said to have been of a violent temper, fond of pleasure, and exceedingly avaricious. Speusippus wrote many philosophical works, which are now lost, but which Aristotle thought sufficiently valuable to purchase at the expense of three talents. From a few fragments which remain of his philosophy, it appears that he adhered very strictly to the doctrine of his master.

SPEY, a river of Scotland, rises from a lake of the same name in Badenoch, and after a serpentine course of seventy six miles, passes by Rothes castle, and falls into the German ocean at Gamoch near Elgin.

SPHERE is a solid contained under one uniform round surface, every point of which is equally distant from a cer tain point in the middle called its *centre;* and is formed by the revolution of a semicircle about its diameter.

Sphere, in *Astronomy,* that concave orb or expanse which invests our globe, and in which the heavenly bodies appear to be fixed, and at equal distance from the eye.

SPHEROID, in *Geometry,* a solid approaching to the figure of a sphere. It is generated by the entire revolution of a semi-ellipsis about its axis. When the revolution is made round the largest axis, the spheroid is called *pro­late ;* and when round the shortest, *oblate.* This last is the figure of the earth, and probably of all the planets.

SPHINCTER, in *Anatomy,* a term applied to a kind of circular muscles, or muscles in form of rings, which serve to close and draw up several orifices of the body, and prevent the excretion of the contents.

SPHINX, in fabulous history, a monster which had the head and breasts of a woman, the body of a dog, the tail of a serpent, the wings of a bird, the paws of a lion, and a human voice. It sprang from the union of Orthos with the Chimæra, or of Typhon with Echidna. The sphinx had been sent into the neighbourhood of Thebes by Juno, who wished to punish the family of Cadmus, which she persecuted with immortal hatred ; and it laid this part of Bœotia under continual alarms, by proposing enigmas, and devouring the inhabitants, if unable to explain them. In the midst of their consternation the Thebans were told by

the oracle, that the sphinx would destroy herself as soon as one of the enigmas which she proposed was explained. In this enigma, she wished to know what animal walked on four legs in the morning, two at noon, and three in the evening. Creon king of Thebes promised his crown and his sister Jocasta in marriage to him who could deliver his country from the monster by a successful explanation of the enigma. It was at last happily explained by Oedipus, who observed, that man walked on his hands and feet when young, or in the morning of life ; at the noon of life he walked erect ; and in the evening of his days he supported himself by leaning on a stick. The sphinx no sooner heard this explanation than she dashed her head against a rock, and immediately expired. Some mythologists wish to unriddle the fabulous traditions about the sphinx by the supposition, that one of the daughters of Cadmus, or Laius, infested the country of Thebes, by her continual depredations, because she had been refused a part of her father’s possessions. The lion’s paw expressed, as they observe, her cruelty, the body of the dog her lascivious ness, her enigmas the snares which she laid for strangers and travellers, and her wings the dispatch which she used in her expeditions.

Among the Egyptians the sphinx was the symbol of re ligion, by reason of the obscurity of its mysteries ; and on the same account the Romans placed a sphinx in the pronaos or porch of their temples. Sphinxes were used by the Egyptians to show the beginning of the water’s rising in the Nile : as it had the head of a woman and the body of a lion, it signified that the Nile began to swell in the months of July and August, when the sun passes through the signs of Leo and Virgo. There are several of these still to be seen ; one in particular, near the Pyramids, much spoken of by the ancients. It is of a prodigious size, and cut out of the rock ; the head and neck ap pear only at present, the rest of the body being hid in the sand. This, according to Thevenot, is twenty-six feet high, and fifteen feet from the ear to the chin : but Pliny assures us, the head was no less than 102 feet in circumference, and sixty-two feet high from the belly, and that the body was 143 feet long, and was thought to be the sepulchre of King Amasis. The learned Mr. Bryant ob serves, that the sphinx seems to have been originally a vast rock of different strata ; which, from a shapeless mass, the Egyptians fashioned into an object of beauty and veneration.@@1 The Egyptians used this figure in their building ; from them the Greeks derived it, and afterwards improved it into an elegant ornament. It is also frequently used in modem architecture.

It may be proper to observe, that the sphinx of the Egyptians is said in the *Asiatic Researches@@2* to have been found in India. Colonel Pearse was told by Murari Pan dit, a man of learning among the Hindoos, that the sphinx, there called *singh,* is to appear at the end of the world, and as soon as he is born will prey on an elephant ; he is therefore figured seizing an elephant in his claws ; and the elephant is made small, to show that the *siηgh,* even a moment after his birth, will be very large in proportion to it. But in opposition to this account given by Murari Pandit, the late Sir William Jones, the learned and illustrious president of the Asiatic Society, was assured by several Brahmins, that the figure taken for a sphinx was a representation of a lion seizing a young elephant

SPICE, any kind of aromatic drug that has hot and pun gent qualities ; such as pepper, nutmeg, ginger, cinnamon, and cloves.

SPILSBY, a market-town of Lincolnshire, in the hundred of Bolingbroke and the division of Lindsay, thirty-one miles from the city of Lincoln, and 132 from London. It

@@@, Bryant's Ancient Mythology, vol iii. p. 532.

@@@, Vol. ii∙ p. 334.