Adversaria Literaria.

Some more of the printed proposals to disperse. Sr Cyril Wyche, who accompanied me hither, is altogether transported with it, and thinks the project so discreetly contriv'd, that it cannot miscarry. Here is D' Fuller with his spouse. The D' gave us a sermon this morning in an elegant and trim discourse on the 39. Psalm, which I find had ben prepar'd for the court, & fitter for that audience than our poore country churches. After this you will not expect much intelligence from hence, tho' I shall every day long to heare of ye progresse you make in this glorious enterprize, to which I augure all successe and prosperity, and am

Worthy D' y' &c.


Translation of a Passage in Tacitus, by the late Mr. Pitt.

A gentleman once observed in the presence of Mr. Pitt, that Murphy had totally failed in his translation of a beautiful passage in the Dialogue on Oratory; but that he did not himself see how the words could in English be expressed as concisely as in the original. "Magna eloquentia, sicut fiamma, materia alterat, motibus excitatur, et uendo clarescit." "Oh! yes;" said Mr. Pitt, "I would translate them thus: It is with great eloquence as with a flame. It requires fuel to feed it, motion to excite it, and it brightens as it burns."

On a peculiar Signification of the words δίμας and σώμα.

In consequence of being at present engaged in translating into English the Commentaries of Proclus on the Timæus of Plato, and meeting in page 99 with the following Orphic line,

Τῶν πάντων δὲ δίμας ἐξεν ὃι γαστήρις κοιλη,

it occurred to me that Aristotle, also, in the second Book of his Meteors, uses the word σώμα in precisely the same sense in which it is used in the above verse. For in the Orphic line, it signifies the whole: Jupiter, or the Demiurgus, of whom Orpheus is here speaking, being supposed to contain the whole of all things in himself causally prior to the production of the universe. Hence, as Proclus well observes, the Demiurgus is all things intellectually, but the world sensibly. Aristotle, likewise, speaking of the sea, says, ἢ μὲν ὁ τὸν αἰτία ἐπὶ τοῦ πρώτου εἰσὶν τὴν ἀλλατταν ἄρχιν εἶναι καὶ σώμα τοῦ παντός ὢδατος, ἢ δὲ τὸν πάντος ὢδατος καθέστερ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων στοιχείων ἰστὶν ἀριστεύον πάντος ὢδατος,
New Translation from the Hebrew. 203

καὶ ἐρχομένη τοίς πλῆθοις. Here it is evident that by the body of all water, Aristotle means the whole of water, or, in Platonic language, the ἀόρης of it. It is evident, also, that according to Aristotle, each of the other elements is a whole, or, as he calls it, ἄθροιστος ἔλατνος, a collected mass or bulk, as well as water. And this is perfectly conformable to the doctrine of Plato, in the Timæus, that the universe is ὀλὼν ἐκ ὀλῶν ἄπάντων. But the several wholes of which the universe consists are, the spheres of the stars, and the spheres of the elements. Each of these wholes, too, both according to Plato and Aristotle, is perpetual.

Thomas Taylor.

NEW TRANSLATION FROM THE HEBREW.

I have been requested, through the medium of your useful publication, to reconcile the expression of the Prophet Elisha with truth. See 2 Kings viii. 10. And Elisha said unto him, Go say unto him, Thou mayest certainly recover: howbeit, the Lord hath shewed me that he shall surely die. We are told by infidel writers—"Let the advocates for the Bible read this passage, and blush for the man—for the prophet of God, who here declares a falsehood, unequivocally." It certainly is much to be lamented, that for so many ages this most incongruous passage should have been retained, as so formidable a prop to infidelity. During all the revisions which have been made of the sacred scriptures, in all Christian nations, this, among hundreds of the same description, is retained. Surely it is absolutely necessary, for the sake of harmony and good order, that all Christian governments should attend to these important things. Surely it is their duty to aid the cause of individuals, who devote their time, talents, and strength, to works of this nature. And I must say, in justice to him who sways the destinies of the British empire, that I hope others will follow his liberal example for the encouragement of a work which is intended to enable (particularly the clergy) to stop the torrent of abuse which infidels pour out against the sacred Volume.

If I read this passage in the original Hebrew, I cannot find any thing to reconcile—I can only find fault with the translators in all the Christian ages; and it is a very unpleasant thing to find fault: I have been very liberally abused for so doing; but then it has been by those who know nothing of the Hebrew language, and still assert, that the common version was translated from Hebrew, or rather revised, in the time of James; on which account, and because such writers will not sign their articles for fear of exposure, I have omitted sending many articles for your insertion.