XXX. *Notes on the Walls of ancient Rome. Communicated by Mr. Wray.*

Read at the SOCIETY of ANTIQUARIES, May 6, 1756.

THE measure of the walls of ancient Rome, is a point whereupon antiquaries have widely disagreed. The passage in Pliny's Nat. Hist. lib. iii. c. 5. to which they all refer, stands thus. "Moenia ejus collegere ambitu, Impp. Censs.que Vespasianis, anno conditae DCCCXXVI, passus XIII.M.cc." Lipsius adds another x, and makes the circuit ten miles larger: But this insertion has with very good reason been rejected by the succeeding critics. One of the best, Nardini, recites upon the occasion Dionys. Halicarn. who, in his Antiq. Lib. iv. makes Rome a small matter bigger than the ἀστυ (the quarter of the citadel) of Athens, the measure of which Nardini gathers from Thucydides, lib. ii. cap. 13. where that part of the ἀστυ, not shut in between the long wall and the Phaleric-wall (which both ran from the city towards the sea) is said to be XLIII stadia in length; and then supposing the part included between those walls to be some small matter less, under XL stadia, for example, he concludes, that the whole circuit of the ἀστυ measured about 80 stadia = x.M. passus; a number by no means agreeing with the present text of Pliny, and which would make Rome exceed the ἀστυ by nearly a third. But this antiquary should have consulted the scholiast upon his quotation from Thucydides, who makes the space between the two walls only XVII stadia, and the whole circuit, consequently LX stadia = VII.M.D passus. These passages from the two Greek authors, thus brought together, confirm the emendation of Pliny's numbers offered by Fabretti, in his Differt. iii. De Aquaeductibus (though he never mentions the place in Thucydides); who, by the gentle alteration of x into v, reads, instead of XIII.M.cc passus, for the circuit of Rome, VIII.M.cc passus = the circuit of the ἀστυ + DCC passus, and exceeding it by less than a tenth part.

FABRETTI's map of the country about Rome, in the fore-cited work, is made upon this supposition of the measure of the walls. That learned and laborious Antiquary spent his life in enquiries of this kind, constantly travelling over the Campagna. How much rather is he therefore to be trusted, than the Critics, who sit in their studies, and settle the situation of places, which they never saw? And it is with good reason, that Lipsius cries out, in lib. De Magnitud. Rom. "Cur non Romae nunc paucos dies sum? Cur
"non obambulo, video, metior? cur non cum viris doctis inibi
"confero? Firmius fortasse certiusque definirem."

THESE disputes about the measure of the antient walls have nothing at all to do with the question about the actual size of Rome in its glory; that city, like London, at present, and all flourishing capitals of great kingdoms, was not to be estimated by the measure of its walls; the suburbs making far the greater part. Dion. Halicarn. says, they were prodigiously large, and that the walls were so built against, as hardly to be traced: yet Rome was not arrived at the height of its glory and magnitude in the time of Augustus, under whom Dionysius lived.

N. B. MR. WRAY, in a subsequent note, January 10th, 1765, informs us of a disingenuity of Mr. Danville, a member of the French Academy of inscriptions and belles lettres, and eminent for his geographical labours; who, in a Memoir of his, published the last year, in the xxxth Volume of the Transactions of that Academy, insists on this correction of Pliny's text, without taking any notice of what Fabretti had before suggested on this head (whose work he quotes however more than once) much less of those authorities, in support of the emendation, from the Greek authors above cited.

THIS, Mr. Wray thought proper to mention to the Society, in order to ascertain the date of the discovery of what is doubtless the true measure of the walls of Rome. At the same time acknowledging the obligation the lovers of Antiquity have to Mr. Danville for confirming this truth, by a careful consideration and measurement of the accurate and beautiful plan of Rome, published by Nolli in 1748.

XXXI. *A Copy of a Letter from Florence ; by Mr. John Talman, to the Dean of Christ Church ; relating to the Italian Drawings.*

S I R,

I HAVE lately seen a collection of Drawings, without doubt, the finest in Europe, for the method and number of rare designs; nor is the price, considering the true value, at all too much. Mr. Envoy is of the same opinion, and has desired me to let an abstract of my catalogue, which I am making with all exactness, be copied out, to send to my Lord President.—I send an abstract with this post, as I have done to Mr. Topham.——

THIS collection belonged to Monsignor Marchetti, bishop of Arezzo, now in possession of Chevalier Marchetti of Pistora, nephew to the said bishop; which collection is to be sold. It consisteth of 16 volumes, folio, (14 inches broad, and 20 high) gilt, and bound in red Turkey leather: They were at first collected by the famous Father Resta, a Milanese, of the oratory of Philipppo Neri at Rome; a person