*Eels in* Vinegar. See Animalcule, n⁰ 9.

VINEYARD, a plantation of vines. The best ſituation of a vineyard is on the declivity of a hill facing the fouth.

VIO (Thomas de). See Cajetan.

VIOL, a muſical inſtrument of the same form with the violin, and, like that, struck with a bow.

VIOLA, in botany : A genus of plants of the claſs *ſyngenelia,* order *monogyniα ;* in the natural ſyſtem arranged under the 29th order, *Campanacea.* The calyx is penta- phyllous; the corolla five petaled, irregular, with a nectarium behind, horn ſhaped ; the capſule is above the germen, three valved, monolocular. There are 28 ſpecies; six of which are natives of Britain. The moſt important of theſe are, 1. The *palustris,* march violet. The leaves are ſmooth, reniform, two or three on each footſtalk : flowers pale blue, ſmall, inodorous. An infuſion of the flowers is an excellent teſt of the preſence of acids and alkalis. 2. The *οdorata,* purple ſweet violet, has leaves heart-ſhaped, notched: flowers deep purple, single ; creeping ſcions. The flowers of this plant taken in the quantity of a dram or two are ſaid to be gently purgative or laxative, and, according to Bergius and some others, they posseſs an anodyne and pectoral quality. 3. *Tricolor,* panſies, heart’s-eaſe, or three faces under a hood. The ſtems are diffuſe, procumbent, triangular ; the leaves ob­long, cut at the edges ; stipulæ dentated : the flowers pur­ple, yellow, and light blue ; inodorous.

This elegant little plant merits culture in every garden, for the beauty and great variety of its three-coloured flowers; and it will ſucceed anywhere in the open borders, or other compartments, diſpoſed in patches towards the front ; either by lowing the ſeed at once to remain, or by putting in young plants previouſly raised in a ſeed-bed : they will begin flowering early in summer, and will continue shooting and flowering in ſucceſſion till winter ; and even during part of that ſeason in mild weather.

The common violet is propagated by parting the roots, ſometimes by ſeed.

VIOLATION, the act of violating, that is, forcing a woman, or committing a rape upon her.—This term is alſo uſed in a moral ſenſe, for a breach or infringement of a law, ordinance, or the like.

VIOLET, in botany. See Viola.

Violet*-Crab,* in zoology. See Cancer.

VIOLIN, or Fiddle, a muſical inſtrument mounted with four ſtrings or guts, and ſtruck or played with a bow. The ſtyle and found of the violin is the gayeſt and moſt sprightly of all other inſtruments ; and hence it is of all others the fitteſt for dancing. Yet there are ways of touch­ing it, which render it grave, ſoft, languishing, and fit for church or chamber muſic.—It generally makes the treble or higheſt parts in conceits. Its harmony is from fifth to fifth. Its play is compoſed of baſs, counter-tenor, tenor, and treble ; to which may be added, a fifth part : each part has four fifths, which riſe to a greater ſeventeenth.

VIOLONCELLO, of the Italians, is properly our fifth violin ; which is a little baſs violin half the ſize of the com­mon baſs violin, and the firings bigger and longer in pro­portion : conſequently its sound is an octave lower than our baſs violin ; which has a noble effect in concerts.

VIPER, in zoology. See Coluber, Poison, and Serpent ; in which laſt article every thing concerning the poison of the *viper,* for which we referred from Poison, is already diſcussed.

VIRAGO, a woman of extraordinary ſtature and cou­rage ; and who, with the female ſex, has the mien and air of a man, and performs the actions and exerciſes of men.

VIRGIL, or Publius Virgilius Maro, the moſt ex­cellent of all the Latin poets, was the son of a potter of Andes, near Mantua, where he was born, 70 years B. C. He ſtudied firſt at Mantua ; then at Cremona, Milan, and Naples ; whence going to Rome, he acquired the eſteem of the greateſt wits and moſt illuſtrious perſons of his time; and among others of the emperor Auguſtus, Maecenas, and Pollio. He was well skilled not only in polite literature and poetry, but alſo in philoſophy, the mathematics, geo­graphy, medicine, and natural hiſtory. Though one of the greateſt geniuſes of his age, and the admiration of the Ro­mans, he always preſerved a singular modeſty, and lived chaſte at a time when the manners of the people were extreme­ly corrupt. He carried Latin poetry to ſuch an high per­fection, that be was juſtly eſteemed the prince of Latin poets. He firſt turned himſelf to paſtoral ; and being cap­tivated with the beauty and ſweetneſs of Theocritus, was ambitious to introduce this new ſpecies of poetry among the Romans. His firſt performance in this way is ſuppoſed to have been written U. C. 709, the year before the death of Julius Cæsar, when the poet was in his 25th year : it is intitled *Alexis.* Poſſibly *Palamon* was his second : it is a cloſe imitation of the fourth and fifth Idylls of Theocritus. Mr Wharton places *Silenus* next ; which is ſaid to have been publicly recited on the ſtage by Cytheris, a celebrated co­median. Virgil’s fifth eclogue is compoſed in alluſion to the death and deification of Cæsar. The battle of Philippi in 712 having put an end to the Roman liberty, the vete­ran soldiers began to murmur for their pay ; and Auguſtus, to reward them, diſtributed among them the lands of Man­tua and Cremona. Virgil was involved in this common calamity ; and applied to Varus and Pollio, who warmly recommended him to Auguſtus, and procured for him his patrimony again. Full of gratitude to Auguſtus, he composed the *Tityrus,* in which he introduces two ſhepherds : one of them complaining of the distraction of the times, and of the havock the soldiers made among the Mantuan formers ; the other rejoicing for the recovery of his eſtate, and promiſing to honour as a god the person who reſtored it to him. But our poet’s joy was not of long continuance; for we are told, that when he returned to take poſſeſſion of his farm, he was violently assaulted by the intruder, and would certainly have been killed by him if he had not eſcaped by ſwimming haſtily over the Mincio. Upon this unexpected diſappointment, he returned to Rome to renew his petition; and during his journey ſeems to have compoſed his ninth eclogue. The celebrated eclogue, intitled *Pollio,* was compoſed U. C. 714, upon the following occasion : The conſul Pollio on the part of Antony, and Maecenas on the part of Cæsar, had made up the differences between them ; by agreeing, that Octavia, half-sister to Cæsar, ſhould be given in marriage to Antony. This agreement cauſed an univerſal joy ; and Virgil, in his eclogue, teſtified his. Octavia was with child by her late huſband Marcellus at the time of this marriage ; and where­as the Sibylline oracles had foretold, that a child was to be born about this time, who ſhould rule the world, and eſtabliſh perpetual peace, the poet ingeniously ſuppoſes the child in Octavia's womb to be the glorious infant, under whoſe reign mankind was to be happy, the golden age to return from heaven, and fraud and violence to be no more. In this celebrated poem, the author, with great delicacy at the ſame time, pays his court to both the chiefs, to his patron Pollio, to Octavia, and to the unborn infant. In 715, Pollio was sent againſt the Parthini, a people of Illy­ricum ; and during this expedition, Virgil addresſed to him a beautiful eclogue, called *Pharmaceutria.* His tenth and laſt eclogue was addressed to Gallus.

In his 34th year, be retired to Naples, and laid the plan of his Georgics ; which he undertook at the intreaties of Maecenas, to whom he dedicated them. This wiſe and