from the preſs, He now became a favourite at court, through the intereſt of madam d’Etiole, afterwards marchioneſs of Pompadour. He was appointed a gentleman of the bed-chamber in ordinary, and hiſtoriographer of France. He had frequently attempted to gain admittance into the Academy of Sciences, but could not obtain his wiſh till 1746, when he was the firſt who broke through the abſurd cuſtom of filling an inaugural ſpeech with the fulſome adulation of Richelieu ; an example ſoon followed by other academicians. From the ſatires occaſioned by this innovation he felt ſo much uneaſineſs, that he was glad to retire with the marchioneſs du Chatelet to Luneville, in the neighbourhood of king Stanislaus. The marchioness dying in 1749, Voltaire returned to Paris, where his ſtay was but ſhort. The king of Pruſſia now gave Voltaire an invitation to live with him, which he accepted towards the end of Auguſt 1750. On his arrival at Berlin, he was immediately preſented with the *Order of Merit,* the *key of chamberlain,* and a *pension* of 20,000 livres. From the par­ticular respect that was paid to him, his time was now ſpent in the moſt agreeable manner ; his apartments were under thoſe of the king, whom he was allowed to viſit at ſtated hours, to read with him the beſt works of either ancient or modern authors, and to assiſt his majeſty in the literary productions by which he relieved the cares of government. But a diſpute which aroſe between him and Maupertuis ſoon brought on his diſgrace. Maupertuis was at ſome pains to have it reported at court, that one day while ge­neral Manſtein happened to be in the apartments of Μ. de Voltaire, who was then tranſlating into French, The Memoirs of Russia, compoſed by that officer, the king, in his uſual manner, ſent a copy of verſes to be examined, when Voltaire ſaid to Manſtein, “ Let us leave off for the preſent, my friend ; you ſee the king has ſent me his dirty linen to wash, I will waſh your’s another time.” A single word is ſometimes ſufficient to ruin a man at court ; Maupertuis imputed ſuch a word to Voltaire, and ſucceeded. It was about this very time that Maupertuis publiſhed his very strange Philoſophical Letters ; and Μ. de Voltaire did not fail to heighten, with his utmoſt powers of raillery, every thing which he found, or could make, ridiculous, in the projects of Μ. Maupertuis, who was careful to unite his own cauſe with that of the king ; Voltaire was conſidered as having failed in reſpect to his majeſty ; and therefore, in the moſt reſpectful manner, he returned to the king his chamberlain’s key, and the croſs of his Order of Merit : ac­companied with four lines of verſe ; in which he, with great delicacy, compares his ſituation to that of a jealous lover, who sends back the picture of his miſtreſs. The king re­turned the key and the ribbon ; but they were not followed by an immediate reconciliation. Voltaire ſet out to pay a viſit to her highneſs the ducheſs of Gotha, who honoured him with her friendſhip as long as ſhe lived. While he re­mained at Gotha, Maupertuis employed all his batteries againſt him : Voltaire was arreſted by the king’s orders, but afterwards releaſed.

He now ſettled near Geneva ; but afterward being obliged to quit that republic, he purchaſed the caſtle of Ferney in France, about a league from the lake of Geneva. It was here that he undertook the defence of the celebrated family of Calas ; and it was not long before he had a second opportu­nity of vindicating the innocence of another condemned fa­mily of the name of *Sirven.* It is somewhat remarkable, that in the year 1774, he had the third time a ſingular opportunity of employing that ſame zeal which he had the good fortune to diſplay in the fatal cataſtrophe of the fami­lies of Calas and Sirven.

In this retreat Μ. Voltaire continued long to enjoy the pleasures of a rural life, accompanied with the admiration of a Vaſt number of wits and philosophers throughout all Europe. Wearied at length, however, with his ſituation, or yielding to the importunities of friends, he came to Paris about the beginning of the year 1778, where he wrote a new tragedy called *Irene.* By this time his underſtanding ſeems to have been impaired, either through the in­firmities of age, or continued intoxication by the flattery of others ; and he ridiculouſly ſuffered himſelf to be crown­ed in public with laurel, in teſtimony of his great poetical merit. He did not long ſurvive this farce : for having over­heated himſelf with receiving viſits, and exhauſted his ſpirits by ſupplying a perpetual fund of converſation, he was firſt ſeized with a ſpitting of blood ; and at laſt becoming reſtleſs in the night-time, he was obliged to uſe a soporific me­dicine. Of this he unluckily one night took ſo large a doſe, that he ſlept 36 hours, and expired a very ſhort time after awakening from it.

VOLUME, in matters of literature, a book or writing of a juſt bulk to be bound by itſelf. The name is derived from the Latin *vοlvere,* “ to roll up ;” the ancient man­ner of making up books being in rolls of bark or parch­ment. See Book.

VOLUNTARY, in muſic, a piece played by a muſician extempore, according to his fancy. This is often uſed be­fore he begins to ſet himſelf to play any particular compoſition, to try the inſtrument, and to lead him into the key of the piece he intends to perform.

VOLUNTEERS, persons who, of their own accord, either for the ſervice of their prince, or out of the eſteem they have for their general, ſerve in the army without being insisted, to gain honour and preferment, by exposing themſelves in the ſervice.

Such are the volunteers who have been long known in the army ; but the preſent age has witnessed whole regi­ments of volunteers arming themſelves for a ſtill more lau­dable purpoſe. In conſequence of thoſe democratical prin­ciples which, in 1793, had been imported into Scotland from the Jacobins of France, a number of gentleman in Edinburgh, eminent for their rank and reſpectability of character, associated themſelves for the purpoſe of preſerving the internal peace of the city. Making their object known to government, they were, in 1794, embodied in a regi­ment, called The Royal Edinburgh Volunteers, with officers appointed by his majeſty; and ſo assiduous were they in learning the exerciſe of the army, that, without incurring the imputation of national prejudice, we may venture to affirm, that there is not in the king’s ſervice a re­giment better diſciplined or more alert in their evolutions than the Edinburgh Volunteers, who conſiſt of lawyers, phyſicians, and opulent tradeſmen, attached to their king and the conſtitution of their country. They amount at preſent (1796) to 850. The example of the metropolis was quickly followed by many of the other towns in Scot­land ; and in Glaſgow, Aberdeen, Stirling, and Perth, &c. there are now volunteer regiments, which have certainly con­tributed to preſerve the internal peace of the country, and are prepared to repel any foreign invasion ſhould an enter­prize ſo daring be ever attempted. Similar armaments have been formed, we believe, in many of the towns in England ; and Great Britain, at preſent, can boaſt a mighty force, which, without receiving the pay of soldiers, is ready to fight *pro aris et focis.*

VOLVOX, in zoology ; a genus of animals belonging to the order of *vermes infusοria.* The body is round, simple, and pellucid. There are ten species, all of which live in water.

VOLUSENUS. See Wilson.

VOLUTA, in natural hiſtory ; a genus of animals be-