
PREFACE.

THE object of the following work is, to fill up a chasm in the annals of history, respecting the manners, customs, and achievements of the association of Free-booters ;—whose exploits, (especially those detailed in the last chapter of this volume), were, in fact, so astonishing, as, in the opinion of Voltaire, to surpass all the actions ever performed by the Romans, or any other people, whose conquests have desolated the globe.

On surveying the various periods of antient and modern history, in which either nations or societies of armed men have distinguished themselves by a long-continued display of extraordinary courage, M. von Archenholtz observed, that the history of the Free-booters had never yet been treated in a regular and uniform method ; the notices concerning them by the Abbé Raynal and Voltaire being too brief and too superficial to present an accurate view of this uncommon race of men. Many of these Pirates themselves wrote journals of their transactions in various languages, French, English, Dutch: some of these, both printed and manu-