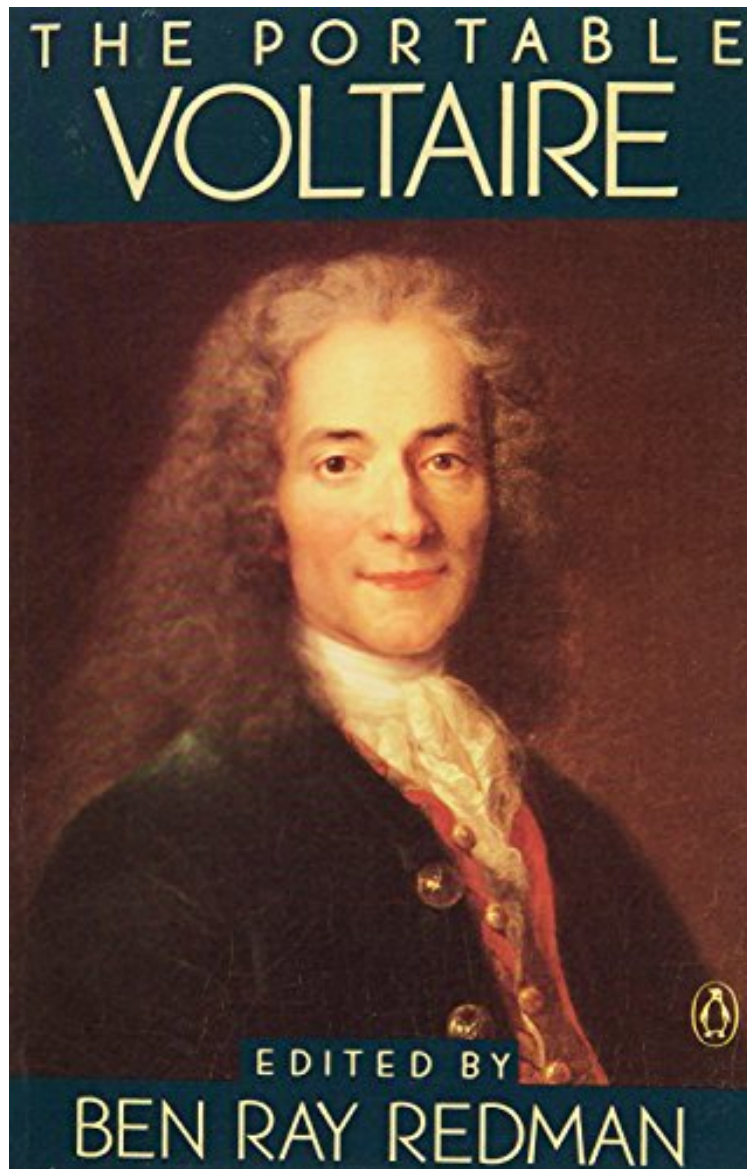


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About the AuthorFrançois-Marie Arouet, writing under the pseudonym Voltaire, was born in 1694 into a Parisian bourgeois family. Educated by Jesuits, he was an excellent pupil but one quickly enraged by dogma. An early rift with his father—who wished him to study law—led to his choice of letters as a career. Insinuating himself into court circles, he became notorious for lampoons on leading notables and was twice imprisoned in the Bastille.By his mid-thirties his literary activities precipitated a four-year exile in England where he won the praise of Swift and Pope for his political tracts. His publication, three years later in France, of *Lettres philosophiques sur les Anglais* (1733)—an attack on French Church and State—forced him to flee again. For twenty years Voltaire lived chiefly away from Paris. In this, his most prolific period, he wrote such satirical tales as “*Zadig*” (1747) and “*Candide*” (1759). His old age at Ferney, outside Geneva, was made bright by his adopted daughter, “*Belle et Bonne*,” and marked by his intercessions in behalf of victims of political injustice. Sharp-witted and lean in his white wig, impatient with all appropriate rituals, he died in Paris in 1778—the foremost French author of his day.