lumes, commenced in 1786. By this edition, we are informed, the two proprietors “ are said to have cleared a net profit of L.42,000, besides being each paid for their respec­tive work in the conduct of the publication as tradesmen ; Mr. Bell as engraver of all the plates, and Mr. Macfarquhar as sole printer.”

Smellie afterwards embarked in a speculation which did not prove so lucrative. This was “ The Edinburgh Maga­zine and Review,” of which the first number appeared in the month of October 1773. The editor was Dr. Stuart, whose temper and discretion were not equal to his talents and learning. Smellie was one of five partners, including the editor ; and besides printing the work at the ordinary rates, he “ was regularly to compile the last half-sheet of every number, to consist of foreign and domestic occur­rences, or the news-department, and other articles ; to keep the accounts of the concern ; to answer all letters relative to the concern ; and to review certain articles, as should be agreed upon between him and Dr. Stuart.” The work only extended to five volumes, closing with the number for Au­gust 1776. It was conducted with so much ability, that it might have run a more prosperous career, if the personali­ties of the editor, displayed within so narrow a field, had not excited a degree of hostility with which it was hopeless to contend. But the history of this work will be resumed in our notice of Gilbert Stuart.

Of the Society of Antiquaries, instituted at Edinburgh in 1780, Smellie was an original member. In 1781 he was elected Superintendent of the Museum of Natural History, which they proposed adding to their antiquarian cabinet. He afterwards published an “Account of the Institution and Pro­gress of the Society of the Antiquaries of Scotland.” Edinb. 1782, 4to. To this account he added a second part in 1784. He was elected to the office of secretary in 1793. This new institution excited the jealousy of some other learned bodies. The senate of the university presented a memo­rial to the lord advocate, remonstrating against the grant of a royal charter to the Society of Antiquaries, on the al­legation that Scotland was too limited a country for two literary Societies; and proposing, that instead of granting such a charter, the king should incorporate a society under the designation of the Royal Society of Scotland. They further suggested “ that the Society of Antiquaries would intercept the communication of many specimens and ob­jects of natural history, which would otherwise be deposit­ed in the museum of the university, and of many docu­ments tending to illustrate the history, antiquities, and laws of Scotland, from being deposited in the library of the Fa­culty of Advocates. They likewise noticed that the pos­session of a museum of natural history might enable and induce the Society of Antiquaries to institute a lectureship of natural history, in opposition to the professorship in the university.” Nor did the curators of the Advocates Library remain inactive. They represented to the lord advocate that the grant of a charter to the Antiquaries “ might prove injurious to that magnificent library, by intercepting ancient manuscripts and monuments illustrative of the history and antiquities of Scotland, which would be more useful when collected into one repository than in a state of division.” To all these representations the Society returned an elabo­rate answer, in the form of a memorial addressed to the lord advocate ; and the royal charter was finally ratified in the month of May 1783. It is scarcely necessary to add, that few or none of the multifarious evils which had thus been predicted, were found to result from the incorporation of this Society, which has proved almost as harmless as any institution in the kingdom. The Royal Society of Edin­burgh soon afterwards obtained its charter; and as a mem­ber of the Philosophical Society, Smellie was incorporated on the 23d of June 1783.

At the request of the Society of Antiquaries, he had in 1781 digested the plan of a statistical account of all tl>e parishes of Scotland. The circulation of this plan did not excite much industry ; but, at no distant period, it was fol­lowed by an extensive and important work. As superin­tendent of the museum, he was authorized to deliver in their hall a course of lectures on natural history. “ His object was to deliver lectures on the philosophy of natural history, which is a subject totally different from what a public pro­fessor is obliged to teach. A professor must instruct his students in the technical and elementary part of the science ; but the private lecturer was to confine himself to general views of the economy of nature.”@@1 The professor of natu­ral history, who certainly had reason to fear such a rival, was alarmed at what he considered as an encroachment on his province, und this plan of lectures was reluctantly aban­doned. On the death of Dr. Ramsay in the year 1775, Smellie had offered himself as a candidate for the professor­ship ; but his claims were disregarded, and it was bestowed upon Dr. Walker, at that time minister of Moffat, and af­terwards of Colinton.

Smellie however continued to prosecute his favourite study, and he published “ Natural History, general and particular, by the Count de Button : translated into English. Illus­trated with above 200 copper-plates, and occasional notes and observations by the Translator.” Edinb. 1781, 8 vols. 8vo. “ Much the greater portion of this extensive work,” says Mr. Kerr, “ was executed in a small correcting room or closet connected with his printing-office, where he was continually liable to interruption, from the introduction of proof-sheets for correction, and revises for comparison, and to the almost perpetual calls of customers, authors, and idle acquaintances : yet such was his accuracy of self-possession, that, as usual with almost every thing he wrote, he gave it out page by page, as fast as written, to his compositors, and hardly ever found it necessary to alter a single word after the types were set up from his first uncorrected manu­script. Although, to have enabled him to execute this translation in the excellent manner in which it is done, Mr. Smellie must necessarily have possessed a very thorough knowledge of the French language, it appears that he had acquired this entirely by means of his own private study, and without the assistance of any teacher ; for we have been assured by those who knew him very intimately, that he was quite unacquainted with the pronunciation of French.” A second edition of his translation, in nine volumes, follow­ed in the year 1785. Other three editions, all of them ex­tensive, were afterwards published ; so that the work may be considered as having been eminently successful. The translator’s notes were allowed to have added no inconsider­able value to the text; and the chief fault imputed to him was the use of provincial idioms. He was honoured with the correspondence of Buffon, and likewise of Pen­nant.

The firm of Balfour and Smellie having been dissolved, that of Creech and Smellie began business on the 14th of September 1782, and continued it till the close of the year 1789- Creech, well-known as a bookseller, was in all cases difficult to bring to a settlement of accompts, when he had any reason to believe the balance to be on the wrong side. The affairs of this copartnery, being some­what intricate, were submitted to arbitration, and a balance was ultimately found due to Smellie; but the decision was so long deferred, that it was not pronounced till some time after his death. After the termination of these different partnerships, he continued the business on his own ac­count. Lord Kames died in the year 1782; and he was now indebted to the kindness of Lord Gardenstone, who became his surety to the banking-house of Sir W. Forbes and Co.

@@@1 Smellie's Account of the Society of Antiquaries, part ii. p. 21.