valley of the Leven, in which Smollett first saw the light, is surpassed by no other spot in our island, either for the grandeur of its scenery, or for the venerable associations with which it is connected. Nor was the ground which had been dignified by the tread of Wallace, Bruce, Napier, and Buchanan, dishonoured by the steps of Smollett.

From the grammar-school of Dunbarton, in which he had imbibed the rudiments of classical learning, Smollett was transferred to the University of Glasgow, where he pro­secuted his more advanced studies with application and success. He was afterwards bound an apprentice to Mr. John Gordon, an eminent medical practitioner in that city. His elder brother James had adopted the profession of arms, an example which he was ambitious of following; but the old knight probably illustrated the advantages of the study of physic by reasoning which it would have been vain to controvert. When the young student had attained his eighteenth year, his grandfather died, without having made any adequate provision for the children of bis youngest son. For this omission, his descendant furnished him with a niche in *Roderick Random,* more conspicuous than de­sirable.

The term of his apprenticeship having expired in his nineteenth year, and being now thrown upon his own re­sources, Smollett proceeded to London, where he attracted the notice of Lord Lyttelton. He had carried with him his tragedy of *The Regicide,* a juvenile performance of un­common merit, but indifferently adapted to the purpose of re­presentation. The various efforts which he ineffectually used to bring his play upon the stage, are detailed with indignant prolixity in the preface to that production, which he sent to the press some years afterwards, with a view of heaping confusion upon the lukewarm patronage of Lyttelton, and upon the shuffling evasions of Garrick. The patron and the manager were visited with many other tokens of his displeasure ; but he lived to repent of the severe retribution which he had exacted for trivial wrongs, and made honour­able mention of both in his History of England.

Thwarted in his expectations of earning fame and profit as a writer for the stage, Smollett was glad to accept the situation of surgeon’s mate on board the Cumberland. That vessel, an eighty-gun ship, belonged to the armament which was bound to the West Indies, to join the fleet under the command of Admiral Vernon. Of the disastrous ex­pedition against Carthagena, Smollett inserted an animated narrative in *Roderick Random,* and afterwards published a more detailed account in the *compendium of Voyages.* When the discomfited squadrons returned to Jamaica, he quitted the service in disgust, and fixed his residence on the island. With Miss Lascelles, a fascinating West In­dian, he there formed an acquaintance, which afterwards ripened into a matrimonial union. In 1746 he returned to London, which then resounded with acclamations occasion­ed by the victory at Culloden. With these were mingled some expressions of indignation at the atrocities inflicted by the royal army upon the helpless families of the insur­gents. The voice of Smollett swelled the weaker cry, and he produced his pathetic ode, *The Tears of Scotland.* During the same year was published, *Advice, a Satire.* His next literary effort was *Alceste, an Opera,* which he wrote at the suggestion of Mr. Rich of Covent Garden Theatre. In consequence of some dispute with that patentee, the piece was withdrawn, and has never appeared in print. In 1747 he published *Reproof,* a second part of his former satirical production. The versification of these poems is sufficiently harmonious, and they abound with impetuous

invective ; but the rage of the satirist is without dignity, and rabid, without being infectious to readers of the present day. About this period he married Miss Lascelles, who was possessed of a small estate in the island of Jamaica ; a precarious species of property, from which her husband ap­pears to have derived little or no ultimate benefit.

In the year 1748, appeared *The Adventures of Roderick Random.* Fielding had already evinced himself a noble follower of Cervantes, and Smollett now stood forth, a no less worthy disciple of Le Sage. It must be owned that in this, and in all the other novels of Smollett, humour fre­quently appears in very loose attire. These scenes, how­ever, like sheet-lightning, are alarming, but perfectly in­nocuous. The solemn depravity of Rousseau is more dan­gerous than the ludicrous indecorum of Smollett. In 1749, *The Regicide* was published by subscription. During the same year Smollett took the degree of M.D., in what University has not been ascertained. In 1750 he went to Paris, where he is supposed to have occupied himself in composing *The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle,* which were published in

1. This admirable novel is disfigured by the introduc­tion of an impertinent episode, in which are detailed, with unrelenting minuteness, the tedious intrigues of Lady Vane ; who is said to have rewarded Smollett handsomely for the drudgery of compiling that durable record of her infamy. To compensate for this blemish, and for some rash sallies of humour, *Peregrine Pickle* is an absolute mine of character and adventure. The entertainment prepared by the learn­ed physician, in the manner of the ancients, is perhaps the most irresistible piece of pleasantry that w as ever devised by a ludicrous fancy. In his heroes and heroines, Smollett is not happy. For Random we have no respect; for Pickle we have no esteem ; and Narcissa and Emilia are only the objects of appetite. Since the days of Tom Bowling and the Commodore, we have seen many sailors in print, who display an accurate and profound knowledge of technical *minutiae;* but their humour, if they have any, will not pass muster ashore, the medium through which it is conveyed being to uninstructed ears a mere succession of unintelli­gible gibberish. And these modem tars have all a striking family likeness to each other, with the exception of some sentimental rope-haulers of the American school, who are evidently monsters of the imagination. But each of Smol­lett’s seamen, though drawn to the life, exhibits the strongest idiosyncrasy of character, and converses in a dialect which can be readily understood by those who have never seen a ship.@@1

The next production of Smollett’s pen was “ An Essay on the External Use of Water, in a letter to Dr.—;

with particular remarks upon the present method of using the Mineral Waters at Bath, in Somersetshire ; and a plan for rendering them more safe, agreeable, and efficacious.”

1. 4to. At the period of this publication, Smollett re­sided at Bath, where he solicited professional employment ; but the reputation of the satirist effectually marred the prospects of the physician. Despairing of success in bis profession, Dr. Smollett now hired a house at Chelsea, where he entirely devoted himself to literary pursuits. The first fruits of his retirement were, *The Adventures of Ferdinand count Fathom,* which appeared in 1753. The author’s object in this production is, to set up the principal character “ as a beacon for the benefit of the inexperienced and unwary.” This personage is as much below, as one of Richardson’s heroes is above, the standard of general nature. Few men are so virtuous or depraved as to have much sympathy with either ; and it may very reasonably be ques-

@@@1 The incident of Tom Pipes’s concealing in his shoe his master’s letter to Emilia, it is curious to trace to the following passage in Ovid’s Art of Love ; which has not escaped ιhe laborious research of Hugo, *De prima Scribendi Origine,* p. 154.

Cum possit solea chartas celare ligatae,

Et vincto blandas sub pede ferre nous.