tioned, whether any one was ever allured to virtue by viewing the unattainable perfections of Grandison, or de­terred from vice by contemplating the superlative villany of Fathom. Besides, a picture of insipid excellence is at least harmless ; but there is a moral insanity about some men, which leads them not only to delight in, but some­times to emulate the achievements of fictitious desperadoes. The most striking passage in this novel, is the adventure in the forest, which creates terror as strong as the convulsions of laughter which reward the exploits of Trunnion and his myrmidons.

But although master of the passions of others, Smollett’s own were under very indifferent control. A wretch, called Peter Gordon, whom he had maintained for a series of years, and in support of whose credit he had been prevailed upon to indorse notes, suddenly withdrew into the verge of the court, where, by means of insulting letters and messa­ges, he provoked his benefactor to chastise him in such manner as to furnish grounds for an action of damages. The Hon. Alexander Hume Campbell, who was counsel for the plaintiff, having opened the proceedings with much gratuitous insolence towards the defendant and his wit­nesses, Smollett addressed a letter to that barrister, couched in very indignant and sarcastic terms, which afterwards found its way into the fifth volume of the European Maga­zine. This infamous prosecution terminated in the discom­fiture of Gordon, but the issue of Smollett’s dispute with Campbell is involved in obscurity. In the beginning of the year 1755, Smollett published his translation of Don Quixote, which was executed amid the anxiety of pecuniary embarrassment, and for which he had been paid by advance. This version is infinitely more spirited and elegant than that of his immediate predecessor Jarvis. But if Smollett has surpassed Motteux in maintaining the solemn fatuity of the knight, he is less happy in rendering the proverbial humour of the squire; for the corresponding phrases in English had already been appropriated, and he was reduced to the necessity of alteration, when there was no room for improvement. After the publication of Don Quixote, Smollett paid a visit to his native country. Upon his re­turn to England, he undertook the superintendence of the Critical Review. The editorship of that journal involved him in a thousand vexatious disputes with persons who were utterly unworthy of being promoted to the rank of his an­tagonists. A contemptuous critique on the Rosciad, of which he was entirely innocent, provoked the spleen of Churchill, whose brief career was a perpetual crusade against genius and virtue, and whose coarse and rancorous effusions are now consigned to merited oblivion ; for posterity has not realized the hopes of an undying name, so confidently expressed by the reverend bard, who proposed to annihilate the reputation of Pope, and who launched his slight javelins at the massy buckler of Johnson.

In 1757, Smollett published a popular compilation, en­titled *A Compendium of Authentic and Entertaining Voyages.* 7 vols. 12mo. During the same year was per­formed and printed *The* *Reprisal,* a comedy in two acts. The characters in this piece are strongly marked, and the dialogue is extremely spirited, but the situations are con­ceived with little dramatic artifice ; a species of knowledge which often enables the humble retainer of a playhouse to concoct a drama, which shall be admirably well adapted for the stage, and yet prove not more entertaining in the closet than a book of arithmetic. In the same year was published the “ Complete History of England, deduced from the Descent of Julius Cæsar to the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, 1748, containing the transactions of one thousand three hundred and three years.” 4 vols. 4to. This surprising effort of industry and genius, is said to have been begun and completed in the course of fourteen months. If not the most accurate and philosophical of historians, Smollett yields to few in the unaffected elegance of his style, and in the graceful animation of his narrative. He had been bred a Whig, and whatever were the motives that led to the poli­tical tergiversation which is manifested in this work, it would be uncharitable to suppose that they were those of self-in­terest ; a consideration which does not seem to have influ­enced any one action of his life.

In 1759, an article appeared in the Critical Review, anim­adverting in strong terms upon the conduct of Admiral Knowles, who had written a pamphlet to vindicate himself from the popular odium which attached to his character, in consequence of his share in a secret expedition to the French coast, which was planned and miscarried in 1757.@@1 The admiral having commenced a prosecution against the printer, of which the avowed object was to induce the writer to declare himself, and give him satisfaction of an­other kind, Smollett, in this dilemma, solicited the good offices of his friend Wilkes, whose rhetoric made no im­pression on the incensed commander. At this juncture, Smollett stepped boldly forth, and proclaimed himself the author of the obnoxious article, offering the aggrieved party any satisfaction that he might desire. Upon this declara­tion, the magnanimous flag-officer immediately withdrew his action against the printer, and entered a fresh suit against the reviewer. The result of the action was, that Smollett was fined one hundred pounds, and sentenced to three months imprisonment in the King’s Bench.

To cheer the gloom of his confinement, this indefatigable writer employed himself in composing *The Adventures of Sir Launcelot Greaves,* which first appeared in the *British Magazine* for 1760 and 1761, and was published in a separate form in 1762. The eye of criticism has always looked coldly upon this performance. Although it is one of those works, of which the execution must be admitted to surpass the conception, the story of the modem Don Quixote is no such incredible figment as it has been pro­nounced. Sir Launcelot Greaves is represented as a per­son of diseased understanding ; and who shall set bounds to the vagaries of insanity ? Nor does Captain Crowe appear to act out of character, in becoming a candidate for the honours of chivalry. For that original is in a state of happy ignorance concerning all terrestrial affairs ; and the profes­sion of a knight-errant appears to his unsophisticated un­derstanding to be as lawful a calling as that of a tide-waiter; and it is one which is not at all discordant with the head­long courage and extravagant generosity of a British sea­man.

To the modern part of Universal History, which was begun in 1759, and completed in 1764, Smollett contributed the histories of France, Italy, and Germany. In 1761 had appeared the first number of his *continuation of the His­tory of England,* which he finished in 1765 ; the narrative comprehending the transactions down to that period.

Upon the accession of George III., Smollett appeared in the character of a political partisan, and drew his pen in defence of the administration of Lord Bute, in a weekly paper, entitled *The Briton.* But being speedily tired of protecting from obloquy a minister who was indifferent to public opinion, he retired from the strife, leaving his an­tagonist, *The North Briton,* master of the field. This con­test terminated an intimacy of long standing between Smollett and Wilkes. Notwithstanding his inferiority in talents, that demagogue had some decided advantages over

@@@1 The offensive words were, “ He is an admiral without conduct, an engineer without knowledge, an officer without resolution, and a man without veracity.” Knowles was one of the heroes of Carthagena, at which memorable expedition be commanded the Weymouth, of 60 guns.