

LIFE OF WASHINGTON IRVING

BY

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THE life of Washington Irving was one of the brightest ever led by an author. He discovered his genius at an early age; was graciously welcomed by his countrymen; answered the literary condition of the period when he appeared; won easily, and as easily kept, a distinguished place in the republic of letters; was generously rewarded for his work; charmed his contemporaries by his amiability and modesty; lived long, wisely, happily, and died at a ripe old age, in the fullness of his powers and his fame. He never learned the mournful truth which the lives of so many authors force upon us:

“Slow rises worth, by poverty depressed”;

he never felt the ills which so often assail the souls of scholars:

“Toil, envy, want, the patron and the jail”;

he never wrote for his bread like Johnson and Goldsmith, and never hungered like Otway and Chatterton; but lived in learned ease, surrounded by friends, master of himself and his time—a prosperous gentleman. Born under a lucky star, all good things sought him out, and were turned by him to delightful uses. He made the world happier by his gifts, and the world honors his memory.