

and the servants obsequious to my call, anxious to know and ready to supply my wants: wine there exhilarates my spirits, and prompts me to free conversation, and an interchange of discourse with those whom I most love; I dogmatise, and am contradicted; and in this conflict of opinion and sentiment I find delight."

The following anecdote is highly to Johnson's credit, and equally worthy of every one's attention. "Johnson was known to be so rigidly attentive to the truth," says Boswell, "that even in his common conversation the slightest circumstance was mentioned with exact precision. The knowledge of his having such a principle and habit made his friends have a perfect reliance on the truth of everything that he told, however it might have been doubted if told by many others. As an instance of this I may mention an odd incident, which he related as having happened to him one night in Fleet Street. 'A gentlewoman' (said he) 'begged I would give her my arm to assist her in crossing the street, which I accordingly did; upon which she offered me a shilling, supposing me to be the watchman.' This, if told by most people, would have been thought an invention; when told by Johnson, it was believed by his friends, as much as if they had seen what passed."

Davies, the bookseller, said, that he "laughed like a rhinoceros." It may be added he walked like a whale; for it was rolling rather than walking. "I met him in Fleet Street," says Boswell, "walking, or rather, indeed, moving along; for his peculiar march is thus described in a very just and picturesque manner, in a short life of him published very soon after his death:—'When he walked the streets, what with the constant roll of his head, and the concomitant motion of his body, he appeared to make his way by that motion independent of his feet.' That he was often much stared at," continues Boswell, "while he advanced in this manner, may be easily believed; but it was not safe to make sport of one so robust as he was. Mr. Langton saw him one day, in a fit of absence, by a sudden start, drive the load off a porter's back, and walk forwards briskly, without being conscious of what he had done. The porter was very angry, but stood still, and eyed the huge figure with much earnestness, till he was satisfied that his wisest course was to be satisfied and take up his burden again."

The progress of knowledge, even since Johnson's time, has enabled us to say, without presumption, that we differ with this