

never lived. I am acquainted with many persons who were for several years in habits of the closest intimacy with him and who associated with him in private under all circumstances; and they one and all concur in saying, that not only did they never know him perform an unkind action, but that they never heard an unkind expression escape his lips. The milk of human kindness did indeed flow in copious streams in his veins. At the very time that he was bitterly assailed both by the press and from many of the evangelical pulpits of London, was he known earnestly to pray for the forgiveness of his prosecutors, and to speak in terms of the greatest kindness of many of them by name.

He was a man of decided personal piety. The duties which he inculcated on others, he habitually practised himself. Those who knew him most intimately can best testify how holily and unblameably he had his conversation among men. With him it was a rule to invoke the blessing of God on every thing in which he engaged; even in matters which had no visible or immediate connection with religion. Several interesting instances of this have been furnished me by those who were his personal friends. I shall only mention one, namely, that when he had occasion to change his place of residence, he made a point of specially asking the blessing of God on the new house he had taken. In connection with this fact, I may mention that he was at all times most deeply impressed with a conviction of the close connection there exists between praying for specific blessings and the operations of a particular Providence. Need I add, after this that he recognised the hand of God, in the minutest incidents which occurred either to himself or to others?

But though Mr. Irving was a man of the most decided personal piety, his views of religion did not render him indifferent to the innocent amusements of life. It is true, that he was too much occupied with the duties of his office, to be in a condition to give many proofs that he could enjoy harmless recreations; but when the opportunity did offer, he frequently availed himself of it. A literary gentleman of distinguished reputation as an author, and himself one who can tell a humorous story as well as most men I have met with, has assured me that he never heard any one tell a laughable Scotch story with greater effect than Mr. Irving. He was also at times exceedingly happy when in a playful mood. On such occasions, he would, without a seeming effort, give utterance to observations remarkable for their point and felicity. When in one of his playful moods at a Presbytery dinner, at the time he was in the very zenith of his popularity, he rose to propose a particular toast, which he prefaced with a speech that afforded the greatest gratification to all present, but which produced a ludicrous impression on the mind of one of the company. Mr. Irving, in rising to propose the toast, said, "I am sure all\* present will drink it with the greatest cordiality. It relates to a lady to whom we are all under the deepest obligations; a lady who,

on our coming to London, received us with the greatest kindness: a lady —"

Here a little, country-looking, simple-minded man, considerably advanced in years, recently arrived from Scotland, and one of the elders of a Scottish church, whispered into the ears of the gentleman to whom I am indebted for the amusing anecdote, an expression of his wonder as to what particular *woman* Mr. Irving could mean. He was told to wait a little and he should hear her name.

"A lady," said Mr. Irving, "to whom I feel myself under a debt of infinite gratitude; for on my first coming here she received me into her arms—"

"Dear me! fa' or what can she be?" ejaculated the little Scotch elder, loud enough to be heard by several of the company.

"Yes; received me into her arms, pressed me to her bosom, and has ever since lavished her smiles upon me; a lady whom I am therefore bound to love."

"Oh! I see through it noo," again ejaculated the hitherto perplexed elder of the kirk. "Oh, I see it noo as clear as daylight; it's his sweetheart he's referring to."\*

"A lady," continued Mr. Irving, "who is all that is amiable; and who is the admiration of the whole world."

"Bless my heart!" once more whispered the little Scotchman into the ear of the gentleman who sat next to him, "the leddy must be a great beauty, and a guid woman into the bargain, when he praises her so much."

"A lady whose name has only to be mentioned to call forth a unanimous expression of your respect. The lady to whom I refer, my friends, is England. Here's prosperity to England!"

The Scotch elder, who by this time was burning with impatience to hear the name, as he supposed of Mr. Irving's sweetheart, looked as confounded on the toast being proposed, as if, to use his own expression, "the hoose itsel' in which they were met, had been dung doon (knocked down) about their lugs (ears)."

At the same Presbytery dinner, Mr. Irving, knowing the oddities of character as well as bluntness which the little Scotchman was in the habit of exhibiting, proposed the health of the elders of the Scottish Kirk. There was a unanimous call for Mr. B—— to return thanks. The honest unsophisticated elder rose, and after stammering out a few broken sentences respecting the honor done him and the deep attachment he felt for the Kirk of Scotland, made, to the utter astonishment of the company, an abrupt transition from a speech to a purely devotional prayer. A friend of mine, who was present, gently taking hold of him by the arm, whispered into his ear that he rose to return thanks for a toast and not to pray. He took the hint, abruptly terminated his devotions, and made an effort to say something by way of speech. The attempt, however, was a complete failure. The truth was, that being in the daily habit of praying, he found it

\* The company consisted exclusively of Scotchmen.

\* Mr. Irving was not married at this time.