

he had to do from English poets and novelists than most scholars have from all the Greek and Roman classics.

His great power was in the pulpit and on the platform. He was early known as a rising preacher, although he was when young lank and ungainly—indeed he was a much finer looking man at sixty than at thirty. At first only the discerning saw the latent ability. On one of his first appearances he was greatly annoyed with a fellow in the gallery, who almost caused him to break down, by drawing his likeness with, of course, the hook nose. Cooke announced at the conclusion of the morning service that there would be service in the afternoon, and that he would preach, God willing, if the devil himself was in the church taking his picture. On another occasion he told the writer he never was so near breaking down as on seeing an old fellow with a long pipe smoking, after a council fashion, right before him in the gallery. Cooke soon emerged from obscurity, and entered on a career of fame. It was not, however, till he entered on the Unitarian controversy with the Arian preacher, who was sent from England to convert the orthodox, that he became famous. It was about this time the writer (then some ten or eleven years of age) first heard him—at a field preaching. The tent from which the preacher spoke was constructed by setting up two-wheel cars together, throwing a door between, resting on the wheels, the three sides and top being covered with a "Winnow Cloth." The only recollection I have of the orator is *the voice*, although I tried hard to remember both text and sermon, as I had been bantered previously by a lady friend, to see whether she or I would remember most of the discourse. Since then I have heard him some hundreds of times, and certainly it was a great privilege to listen to his expositions. Although unequal I cannot say I ever went away disappointed. He might be dull and drawling for a while, but it was only the smoke of the fire which was soon to burst into flame—and some of those burst of eloquence were of volcanic splendour. He generally commenced by

laying down principles, and then expounded the text according to the principles, clothing his reasonings with a gorgeous wealth of words. His sentences were often long and parenthetical, but always distinct and clear, and his words were so powerfully pronounced that the dullest mind did not lose the impression till at least the sentence was complete. His eloquence was acknowledged by the learned and unlearned. The wise man and the fool hung on his lips with almost equal rapture.

The pulpit, however, could not exhibit all his great qualities. It was in the popular assembly and on the platform that he won his great triumphs. In the Synod of Ulster, in single combat, those two intellectual gladiators, Cooke and Montgomery, fought. Montgomery was a man of gigantic stature, some six feet four inches, with enormous breadth of shoulders, and a head equal to its position. To his latest day he wore top boots, and his stride was like that of an Agamemnon. Cooke, on the other hand, was not greatly over the middle height—probably from five feet ten to eleven—thin, and at that time sallow. Montgomery's sentences were like those of Cicero. I venture to think that Cooke must have been indebted to Burke. Both were masters of sentences, of satire, and of scorn. I think they had studied one another, and prepared for the fight before it came to blows. At Cookstown, Ballymena and Lurgan, those who were present describe the debates as grand above the telling of words. I can well understand it from reading the reports of some of the speeches. Those at Lurgan were never reported, and are lost. Cooke's speech at Ballymena is still extant. The contest was not doctrinal, but about subscription to doctrine—about liberty and liberalism—the right of man to believe as it pleased him, especially of the Church man—the teacher of others to teach what appeared to him true, independently of creeds and confessions. Whatever may be said of the merits of the combatants, Cooke had the great majority in his favour, and the contest ended by the withdrawal of the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster from the Synod