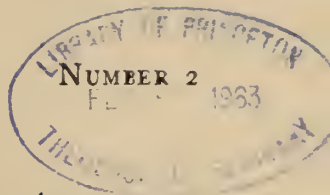


VOLUME XX

APRIL, 1922



The Princeton Theological Review

CONTENTS

Darius the Mede	177
R. DICK WILSON	
Peter Martyr and the Colloquy of Poissy	212
BENJAMIN F. PAIST, JR.	
Edward Irving	232
CLARENCE EDWARD MACARTNEY	
Dante Six Hundred Years Ago and Now	263
DAVID S. SCHAFF	
Christianity and Today	287
FRANCIS SHUNK DOWNS	
Notes and Notices	305
Medeba or the Waters of Rabbah, JOHN D. DAVIS	
Reviews of Recent Literature	311
Survey of Periodical Literature	354

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BOOKS REVIEWED

AMES, F., JR., <i>American Red Cross Work among the French People</i>	346
BACON, B. W., <i>Is Mark a Roman Gospel?</i>	326
BAKEWELL, C. M., <i>The Story of the American Red Cross in Italy</i>	346
BARTLET, J. V., and CARLYLE, A. J., <i>Christianity in History</i>	337
BOREHAM, F. W., <i>The Home of the Echoes</i>	351
BOUNDS, E. M., <i>Prayer and Praying Men</i>	348
BOUNDS, E. M., <i>The Ineffable Glory: Thoughts on the Resurrection</i>	348
BOUQUET, A. C., <i>Is Christianity the Final Religion?</i>	311
GADBURY, H. J., <i>The Style and Literary Method of Luke</i>	329
CHAMBERLAIN, H. S., <i>Mensch und Gott</i>	327
CLARK, C. A., <i>First Fruits in Korea</i>	349
EASTMAN, F., <i>Unfinished Business of the Presbyterian Church in America</i>	347
ECKMAN, G. P., <i>The Return of the Redeemer</i>	341
FARIS, W. W., <i>The Christian Home</i>	352
FYFE, G. B., <i>The Passing Legions</i>	346
GARVE, A. E., <i>The Christian Preacher</i>	344
HARDEN, J. M., <i>Dictionary of the Vulgate New Testament</i>	336
HASTINGS, J., Ed., <i>The Children's Great Texts of the Bible</i>	342
HÜGEL, F. VON, <i>Essays and Addresses on the Philosophy of Religion</i> ..	314
HUNGERFORD, E., <i>With the Doughboy in France</i>	346
KELMAN, J., <i>The Foundations of Faith</i>	312
LITTLE, E. F., <i>What Must the Church Do to be Saved?</i>	343
MAINS, G. P., <i>United States Citizenship</i>	351
MATHEWS, B., <i>The Argonauts of Faith</i>	352
OTTOMAN, F. C., <i>The Coming Day</i>	342
PRATT, J. B., <i>The Religious Consciousness. A Psychological Study</i> ..	316
RYAN, A. L., <i>When We Join the Church</i>	352
SCOTT, E. F., <i>The New Testament Today</i>	330
SMITH, C. R., <i>The Bible Doctrine of Society in its Historical Evolution</i>	315
STOCKMAN, P. J., <i>Manual of Christian Perfection</i>	348
<i>The Church and Industrial Reconstruction</i>	349
WEIR, T. H., <i>The Variants in the Gospel Reports</i>	333
WHITE, C. T., <i>Lincoln and Prohibition</i>	351
WHITE, H. G. E., <i>The Sayings of Jesus from Oxyrhynchus</i>	334
WOOD, I. E., <i>The Heroes of Early Israel</i>	319

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DARIUS THE MEDE

It is about six years since my first volume of *Studies in the Book of Daniel* was published; and now that the second volume is about to appear, it seems like an opportune time to reply to some of the criticisms of the reviewers of the first. The most elaborate of the criticisms was one by Professor Kemper Fullerton of the Oberlin Graduate School of Theology which appeared in the Bulletin of my alma mater, the Western Theological Seminary, at Allegheny, Pa., for October 1918. Had Professor Fullerton's criticism been confined to myself, I would have forever held my peace; but inasmuch as I am merely the occasion for a violent onslaught on the veracity of the book of Daniel, I shall be excused for referring at length to his strictures. It is high praise, though intended as blame, to be spoken of by him as a "bringer-up-to-date" of the work of such men as Hengstenberg, Keil, Pusey and Green, with whom I am classed as a belated example of the same anti-critical animus and unscientific method.

And, first, let me say, that I do not deem it a reproach to have produced "a typical example of the harmonistic method," which is one of the most serious charges brought against me by Professor Fullerton; but that I fail to see that I have used this method as distinct from the "historical" method, whatever that means. Words break no bones, it may be; but since Professor Fullerton evidently aims to put me in the wrong at the very start and, by necessary implication, all through my studies, by affirming that in my method I am harmonistic as distinct from historical, it is well to pause just here in order to come to an understanding

EDWARD IRVING

"You will see now; one day we will shake hands across the brook, you as first in literature, I as first in divinity, and people will say 'Both these fellows are from Annandale. Where is Annandale?'" Thus on one of their summer afternoon rambles by the shore of the Solway or along the coasts of Fife, spake a young licentiate to his taciturn and somewhat discouraged companion. It was a prophecy which was strangely fulfilled, for the day came when the young licentiate had become the most renowned preacher of Great Britain, and his moody and dyspeptic companion the greatest of living writers and prophets. Both scaled the heights of fame; both, especially the first in divinity, tasted the sorrows of Gethsemane.

My own recollection of that same Annandale region is very distinct, perhaps most distinct of all my recollections of any part of the Scottish country. It was one of those long summer evenings, and my brother and I had strolled out from little Ecclefechan, with its Carlyle house and the Carlyle graves back of the kirk, through high-walled lanes, and under ancient elms, till we found an opening that led us to a high bit of land, sort of a stone-quarry region, I think it was, with sudden and dangerous pits, and huge blocks of stone, and here and there slumbering sheep scattered about in the moonlight. Sitting on one of these stones we could survey the whole country for miles around. Below us and to our left, Ecclefechan; away beyond, forests that made one think of Birnam Wood, and somewhere beyond that, Gretna Green and the road to Carlisle. To our right lay the waters of Solway Firth, half silver, half white, in the moonlight, and here and there the twinkling of a light-house or a wandering ship. This was the cradle of Irving and Carlyle. Chalmers, once trying to describe the preaching of Irving, referred to his obscurity, his extravagance, added, "but now and then gleams of exquisite beauty." When I read the phrase not long since, that evening among

the rocks of Annandale, with the silent Solway in the distance—"gleams of exquisite beauty"—came back to me.

Edward Irving was born in 1792, in the village of Annan, not far from Ecclefechan, the birthplace of Carlyle, and near the border. His father was a tanner, his mother of a little higher order, but both father and mother of godly, self-respecting stock, a family, too, with sons of Anak on both sides. His first schooling was under Peggy Paine, a female relative of Tom Paine. That was followed by a term in the Academy at Annan, where Adam Hope was master, celebrated by Carlyle in the *Reminiscences*, not professing to know much, but what he did know, knowing "in every fibre to the very bottom." His black teeth were a mystery to young Carlyle, until he discovered that they were negotiable, carved out of cork by Adam's frugal pen-knife. There are no tales of precocity in the boy Irving, but at thirteen years of age, in company with an elder brother, he went up to the University of Edinburgh. He had there some triumphs in geometry and Latin, and at the age of eighteen was appointed master of the Academy at Haddington. In this town was a Doctor Welsh, with a bright-eyed daughter Jane. She evincing signs of rare talent, Irving was secured to tutor this uncommon mind.

His hours were from six to eight in the morning, and often when first arriving in the morning he would take the half-asleep child in his arms and tell her the names of the stars yet in the heavens. It was the beginning of a friendship that came near enough to something more than friendship. After a year or two there, Irving was chosen as the master of a school at Kirkcaldy, on the north coast of the Firth of Forth. There Carlyle, now out of college, joined him as teacher in a neighboring school. He bears testimony to the rich talks and the long walks by day and night over the sands and the moors with Edward Irving. In the manse of the minister of the town, Irving fell in with one of the daughters, Elizabeth Martin, whom, after a ten years' courtship, he finally wedded. Carlyle somewhat un-

graciously refers to her as having "muddy grey eyes, pock-marked, ill-shapen, triangular kind of face, with hollow cheeks and long chin." His later account of her when she became Irving's wife is a little more generous, for he speaks of her as one who "without any notable gifts of mind or manner or appearance contrives to be in general extremely agreeable." No one would gather from the affectionate letters which Irving addressed to his wife that his marriage was a crucifixion of the soul. But that it was such we know from the letters which passed between him and Jane Welsh during the period of Irving's engagement to Miss Martin.

It is plain that the great preacher entertained the deepest and most passionate affection for his former pupil, and that although neither one for a single moment thought of giving free rein to their love so long as the engagement between Irving and Miss Martin stood, both secretly hoped that the engagement might be broken and the obstacle to their union removed. Froude says definitely that Irving did seek release from Miss Martin and from her family. They refused, and there was nothing for an honorable man to do but to go on with the marriage. The marriage took place sometime after Irving's settlement in London. Froude's verdict on the marriage is that "Though faith and principle escaped unscathed, his intellect was shattered. He plunged deeper and deeper into the great ocean of unrealities. When his illusions failed him his health gave way, and after flaming for a few years as a world's wonder he died, still young in age, worn out and broken hearted." That his marriage with Elizabeth Martin "shattered his intellect" or was in any degree the calamity Froude intimates we cannot believe. His honorable carrying out the contract with her, instead of marrying the woman he loved, was, though painful, a moral victory of the highest sort, not the kind of victory that shatters the intellect, but gives it fibre and endows it with the strength of suffering. But it is easy to see that Irving's life might have been much happier had the way been open for him to marry Jane Welsh instead of

Elizabeth Martin. With a woman of Jane Welsh's intellect for his companion, it is possible that Irving might have been kept back from the abyss of "tongues" and speculations into which he at length plunged. Mrs. Carlyle, who knew him as well as anyone else, said towards the end of his career, "There would have been no tongues, had Irving married me"; and her own life, too, as the wife of Irving would have been much happier than it was as the wife of Carlyle.

The important thing about Irving's love for Jane Welsh and his marriage with Elizabeth Martin, is not the ill effect that it had on the subsequent career of the man, but that it was the first tragedy in a most tragic life. This relinquishment of Jane Welsh was Irving's gateway to his Garden of Gethsemane. He confessed that the struggle almost "made his faith and principle to totter." After it was plain that the Martins would not release him from the engagement, Irving wrote Jane Welsh a letter which reveals all too clearly the anguish of his soul, and also the Christian faith and fortitude with which he took up his burden. In this letter he commences:

My well beloved Friend and Pupil:—When I think of you my mind is overspread with the most affectionate and tender regard, which I neither know how to name nor to describe. One thing I know, it would long ago have taken the form of the most devoted attachment, but for an intervening circumstance, and showed itself and pleaded itself before your heart by a thousand actions from which I now restrain myself; and, forgetting my own enjoyments, may I be enabled to combine into your single self all that duty and plighted faith leave at my disposal. When I am in your company my whole soul would rush to serve you, and my tongue trembles to speak my heart's fulness. But I am enabled to forbear, and have to find other avenues than the natural ones for the overflowing of an affection which would hardly have been able to confine itself within the avenues of nature if they had all been opened. I stand truly upon ground which seems to shake and give way beneath me, but my help is in Heaven.

This letter is sufficient to let us hear the "cry of some strong swimmer in his agony." A letter written shortly after the marriage is yet sadder. It had been planned that Jane Welsh should visit the Irvings in London soon after

their return from their honeymoon tour in the Highlands. But Irving could not yet endure the trial:

My dear Isabella has succeeded in healing the wounds of my heart by her unexampled affection and tenderness; but I am hardly yet in a condition to expose them. My former calmness and piety are returning. I feel growing in grace and holiness; and before another year I shall be worthy in the eye of my own conscience to receive you into my house and under my care, which till then I should hardly be.

Although Irving had many bitter cups to drink in the course of his short life, there is no evidence that he passed through the crisis and struggle of doubt which has been a part of the history of so many great preachers. If he had to fight his doubts and lay the spectres of them, there is no echo of the conflict in his sermons. His suffering was of a different and more poignant nature.

During these seven years of teaching, Irving was a student for the ministry, and at length licensed in the kirk at Kirkcaldy. A vast throng, as is usual under these circumstances, assembled to see him take his first flight. He had just commenced to preach when his "paper" fell out of the Bible upon the table below the pulpit. The young giant reached over and seizing the paper with his great hand, thrust it into his pocket and went on with the greatest ease. This indifference to the "paper" ought to have commended him to the people; but the truth is that Scotland never took to Irving's style, and only flocked to hear him when he had been discovered elsewhere, and was world-renowned. He had "ower muckle gran'ner" (too much grandeur), the folk said, and "his chaotic splendours" were too much for them. Yet even then it was the kind of thing that you either liked or heartily disliked. Witness the red-faced baker, whom Carlyle describes sitting near him in the kirk one day, suddenly bolting angrily out of the church, banging the pew door behind him.

From Kirkcaldy, Irving went back to live in Edinburgh and pursue his studies. The long course of apprenticeship was over, the young licentiate stood ready for his task, but no door was open. Fully prepared to preach, nobody wanted

to hear him. Ready to go into the vineyard, but no man hath hired him. He was beginning to droop in spirits, as well he might have done, when he was requested to preach for Dr. Andrew Thomson, in St. George's church, Edinburgh. In the congregation, by careful arrangement, sat Dr. Chalmers, just then launching out in the experiment in St. John's parish in Glasgow, and looking for an assistant. Irving's hopes beat high, and then sank as the weeks passed and still no intimation from Chalmers. Despairing of any opening in Scotland, he resolved upon some apostolic missionary tour in Persia, going out with no connections or backing, but as the first disciples went forth to preach Christ. At Greenock he intended to take a boat that would go south to Solway, but once on board, found it starting for the Highlands. He leaped from the deck, and in a strange caprice boarded the first boat that he saw, one sailing for Belfast. In Ireland he was forthwith arrested as a suspicious character, but was rescued from jail by the Presbyterian minister, Dr. Hanna, the father of the biographer of Chalmers. In heedless gloom, he wandered about over the north of Ireland. Once, standing behind a pillar in St. Patrick's during high mass, a poor woman plucked him by the coat-tails till he was forced to kneel. At length he was handed a letter from his father, with an enclosure from Dr. Chalmers, not one word of which he had been able to decipher. This was an invitation to become Chalmers' helper at St. John's.

This call was the dawning of the day for him. He did little preaching, and when it was announced that he was to preach, he would meet groups of the kirk folk coming away from the door, saying one to the other "It's no himsel' the day." This must have been mortifying to Irving, with the consciousness of his great still slumbering parts. But his chief work was among the poor, then in great destitution and on the verge of revolt and insurrection. He carried with him a priestly air that was new for Scotland, and saluted every cottage he entered with the

words, "Peace be with you!" He had been there only two years when he was invited to become minister of the Scotch chapel in Hatton Garden, London, a poor, broken-down church, with a dispirited band of worshippers. He gladly accepted, and from the very first seems to have felt that he had come to his own. To Jane Welsh, whom he addresses as "my lovely pupil," he writes: "I have become all at once full of hope and activity. My intellect long unused to expand itself, is now awakening again, and truth is revealing itself in my mind. And perhaps the dreams and longings of my fair correspondent may yet be realized."

Within a year of his settlement in that obscure parish, and among that handful of people, Irving had reached the pinnacle of fame and renown. The London crowds fought for admission to his church, and orators, poets, philosophers, philanthropists, statesmen, soldiers, scientists, and members of the nobility were his constant hearers. It is generally said that Canning, who was responsible for the Monroe Doctrine, among other things, was responsible for making Irving the vogue in London. Sir James Mackintosh reported to Canning a phrase from the prayer of Irving the previous Sabbath, when he prayed for some bereaved children as "thrown upon the fatherhood of God." The phrase took the ear of Canning, who declared he must hear this man. He went the next Sabbath and was captivated. In the Commons that week, some bill about the Church of England was up, and a member supporting it spoke of the inevitable connection between talents and proper reward. Canning said that, on the contrary, in an obscure chapel, he had heard a poorly compensated minister of the Caledonian Church preach the most eloquent sermon he had ever listened to. If Canning said it, it must be so; and with that the great and notable began to frequent his church. Other men have had mobs hanging about their church doors, but here was a mob of the aristocrats of the British Empire.

Carlyle, then in London and still unknown, witnessed the meteoric rise of his Annandale companion to fame with

wise misgivings, and his letter to his brother John gives us a picture of the extraordinary popularity which burned so fiercely and so menacingly about Irving:

With three newspapers to praise him and three to blame, with about six peers and six dozen right honorables introduced to him every Sunday, tickets issuing for his church as if it were a theatre, and all the devout old women in the capital treating him with comfits and adulation, I know that ere now he is striking the stars with his sublime head. Well if he do not break his shins among the rough places of the ground, I wish we saw him safely down again and walking as other men.

A contemporary pamphlet thus pictures the scene about his church:

The crowds which thronged to the Caledonian chapel instantly doubled. The scene which Cross Street, Hatton Garden, presented on the Sabbath beggars all description. It was quite a Vanity Fair. Not one-half of the assembled multitude could force themselves into the sanctum sanctorum. For we ourselves were shut out among the vulgar herd. For the entertainment of the excluded, however, there was Mr. Basil Montagu preaching peace and resignation from a window.

There have been plenty of instances of preachers who had great popularity with the multitude, but whose qualities were little esteemed by scholars and thoughtful men, and on the other hand, of preachers declaiming to empty pews who were declared by a cultivated listener to be the greatest preachers of the times. The unusual thing about Irving is that the tribute of the people at large is more than matched by the judgment passed upon him by the chief intellectuals of his day and generation.

What was it that Scotland had neglected and that had stirred London in a way that she had never been stirred? There were many students of the man and his message who left behind them their impressions. Nearly all of them speak of the magnificent tabernacle in which the new spirit was lodged. Like his forbears, he was a son of Anak, measuring six feet four inches, and moulded accordingly. Anywhere, in the drawing room, on the street, or in the pulpit, he was the sort of man one would turn around twice to look at. The servant who announced him in a Glasgow

home to a lady who had left orders to admit no visitors, came to her mistress and said excitedly, "Mem! there's a wonderful grand gentleman called. I couldna say you were engaged to him. I think he maun be a Highland Chief!" Chalmers was informed that his members likened his new assistant to a brigand chief. "Very well; whatever they say, they never think him like anything but a leader of men." As for the impressions of his stature, on a late evening he stood on the shore of a loch waiting for the ferry to take him over. When half way across, the master of the ferry paused in the rowing and turned to look at the waiting figure. After a moment's hesitation he turned and rowed again to the other shore, much to the indignation of the impatient Irving. At length he returned bringing this time the horse ferry, for in the uncertain light he thought he had seen a man on horseback. Such he was, in intellect, stature, and eloquence—a man on horseback among the mob.

One of the most entertaining accounts of Irving's preaching is that of the quick-witted Hazlitt. He admits that Irving owed his vast popularity to no one quality, but to a combination of qualities, but he insists that without his great stature, he had never been heard of. "Put the case that Mr. Irving had been five feet high—would he ever have been heard of, or, as he does now, have bestrode the world like a Colossus? His imposing figure and dignified manner enable him to hazard sentiments or assertions that would be fatal to others. Take a cubit from his stature, and his whole manner resolves itself into an impertinence." With the great stature there went a wonderful voice. When he was preaching once at Monomail, in Fife, a woman at a window quarter of a mile distant heard distinctly all that he said. "A voice one of the finest and powerfulest," writes Carlyle, "but not a power quite on the heart as Chalmers' was." His head was the delight of Wilkie and other painters, and Correggio's head for John the Baptist is said to be a remarkable likeness. He read, but not slavishly, and was vehement in gesticulation.

Dr. Addison Alexander who visited Irving's services after he had been ousted from the Regent Square Church and had organized the Apostolic Church in Newman Street, gives a very unfavorable account of the service and of Irving himself. Yet he pays tribute to the man's voice. "His voice is harsh, but like a trumpet; it takes hold of one and cannot be forgotten. . . . He then stepped forward to the point of his stage, dropped on his knees, and began to pray in a voice of thunder."

A writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for June, 1835, thus pictures Irving:

When every part of the building had become densely and most oppressively crowded, the preacher appeared—tall, athletic, and sallow; arrayed in the scanty robe of the Scotch divines, displaying a profusion of jet black, glossy hair, reaching even to his shoulders, with a singular obliquity in one of his eyes, and a stern, calm solemnity of aspect, somewhat debased by an expression indicative of austere pride and conscious sanctity. His strong northern accent added to his singularity, which was still further increased by his violent and ungraceful, but impressive gesticulation. The peculiar characteristic of his style was a straining after originality of ideas, and the expressing them in the language of Milton, Jeremy Taylor, and the old divines; embellishing his discourse with the metaphors of poets and philosophers, and adding to the piquancy of his censures by personal allusions and homely truths.

This preacher with the magnificent head and body and the voice of thunder taught the people with authority. One cannot always follow him and will not always agree with him, but always there is the note of certainty and authority. Part of his popularity may be attributed to this characteristic. "Prophet" is the word that is most frequently employed by those who speak of him and his preaching, and what suggests the prophet in Irving is not any note of prediction, but the clear, definite, final, authoritative note which rings in his preaching, no matter what the subject is. The people ever like one who teaches them as one having authority. He may be a fanatic, charlatan, or imposter, or a good and sincere man, and his teaching may be good or bad, but to have any effect upon his hearers it must be with the note of authority. Whether he is talking about the pre-

Abrahamic Church, or about Melchizedek, or about the Atonement, or the Second Advent and Judgment to Come, Irving speaks as one who has arrived at truth and is declaring the Word of the Lord.

Another marked characteristic of Irving's preaching was his emphasis upon eschatology. In common with Chalmers and other renowned preachers Irving was a first rate mathematician. This appreciation of the order and spatial greatness of the universe is reflected in his theology where the government of God is presented in lofty and magniloquent terms. In Chalmers, the emphasis was placed upon what the Lord God had done in redeeming mankind. In Irving the emphasis was gradually centered upon the unfinished acts in the drama of redemption, or the future of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. When one gets on to ground like this one is standing upon lofty territory, far above the "low levels of prudential ethics." One has felt this even when listening to an inferior mind and spirit speaking on the grand themes of apocalyptic literature. How much more, then, when a mind like that of Irving's begins to range upon those remote fields.

Irving had not been long in London before a profound change began to steal over his thought as to the future of Christianity. The average Christian and, I take it, the average minister, never really faces the future in so far as it concerns, not the interests of the individual merely, but the whole jurisprudence of our species and the unfolding of the drama of divine redemption. Whither? To what end? And when? And how? The average minister has little to say here. He is like a soldier who sees only the cloud of smoke that hovers over his part of the battlefield and recks not how the conflict is going and when the victory will be won. Most Christians have some hazy conception of what is called a millennium, a period limited or unlimited, when righteousness shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. But as to the events which are to usher in that mild and glorious reign, they have little to

suggest. Those who dwell much upon the subject of eschatology are generally termed premillennarians or post-millennarians, according as they believe that our Lord Jesus will return in glory to this earth before or after the thousand years of peace and righteousness. As a matter of fact, the great majority of Christians are a-millennarian, not through the study of the subject, as some theologians may be, but through sheer neglect of the subject. They expect the Church to conquer, they look forward to the abolition of evil and the sway of Christ's kingdom on earth—some time and in some way, but *how* they do not venture. Perhaps the majority of Christians are what is called post-millennial, in that they look for the complete victory under the present dispensation, a gradual spread of the kingdom of Christ, the tide rising higher and higher, the light spreading further and further, until peace and good prevail upon the earth, and then comes Christ to crown it with His own glorious Presence.

In common with the majority of Christians, that seems to have been the expectation of Irving. But as his ministry proceeded he took an altogether different view of the world's conversion. The common expectation he speaks of as "that error under which the whole of the Church is lying, that the present world is to be converted unto the Lord and so slide by a natural inclination into the Church—the present reign of Satan hastening, of its own accord, into the millennial region of Christ." For this belief he began to substitute the "idea of a dispensation drawing towards its close," and of an altogether glorious and overwhelming revolution yet to come, in which all the dead society, churches, kingdoms, fashions of this world, galvanically kept in motion until the end, should be finally burned up and destroyed. Coleridge is said to have been partly responsible for this change of view in Irving as to the future of man and Christianity. In the dedication to his first publication *Missionaries after the Apostolical School*, Irving thus speaks of his debt to Coleridge:

I have partaken so much high intellectual enjoyment from being admitted into the close and familiar intercourse with which you have honoured me, and your many conversations concerning the revelations of the Christian faith have been so profitable to me in every sense, as a student and a preacher of the Gospel, as a spiritual man and a Christian pastor, and your high intelligence and great learning have at all times so kindly stooped to my ignorance and inexperience, that not merely with the affection of friend to friend and the honour due from youth to experienced age, but with the gratitude of a disciple to a wise and generous teacher, of an anxious inquirer to the good man who hath helped in the way of truth, I do now presume to offer you the first fruits of my mind since it received a new impulse towards truth, and a new insight into its depths, from listening to your discourse. Accept then in good part, and be assured that however insignificant in themselves, they are the offering of a heart which loves your heart, and of a mind which looks up with reverence to your mind.

All we can be sure of is that henceforth the hope of Christian victory through a gradual increase of what is now upon the earth is displaced by the belief in an imminent cataclysm which shall wind up the affairs of this planet.

Strange as it may seem, one of Irving's sources of apocalyptic inspiration was Roman Catholic. He took up one winter the study of Spanish and thus came upon a work *The Coming of the Messiah in Glory and Majesty*, professedly written by Juan Josafat Ezra, a Hebrew convert, but in reality the production of a Jesuit priest, called Lancunza. This book so captivated Irving that he translated it into English and published it. The next step in his studies was the Albury conferences.

A Mr. Hatley Frere had developed some scheme of prophetic interpretation. Irving heard and was glad, eagerly adopting the plan. He had come, too, under the influence of the banker and member of Parliament, Henry Drummond, who had already traveled far into that tangled maze of Daniel and the Apocalypse. At Albury, the beautiful country seat of Drummond, they began to hold their prophetic conferences, apparently a model for the order of these assemblies ever since. Henceforth, Irving speaks as a man who hails the imminent approach of the King and the end of the present order. Into that gorgeous and

cloudy phantasmagoria of Apocalyptic literature he fearlessly plunged, heedless, and heroically so, of what might be the consequences to his Church and his fame, and disregarding completely the counsel of sober-minded friends like Carlyle and Chalmers. The latter heard him one grey morning during the Edinburgh lectures, and said he understood not a word he said. "It was surely better, if instead of addressing himself to the faculty of curiosity, he dealt with the faculty of conscience."

This excursion into prophecy, Carlyle speaks of characteristically as "aberration," and attributes it to Irving's disappointment in finding that his dream of converting that great and notable world was not being fulfilled, and that slowly but surely, Canning, Brougham, Mackintosh, Lady Jersey, and all that high world that once thronged his church, were falling away and leaving him a still numerous, but far different constituency. "He was now, I gradually found, listening to certain interpreters of prophecy, thinking to cast his own great faculty into that hopeless quagmire along with them."

Convinced as Irving was as to the imminent coming of Christ and the preparatory tribulations and trials, his conduct was heroic and honorable. As his father-in-law puts the case,—“I am unable to see things as he and his friends do; nay, I am more and more convinced that they are wrong. But, supposing them to be right, and they doubtless imagine they are, his conduct, which many will be apt to represent as that of a mad man, is that of a generous lover of his fellow creatures.”

Irving was now entering upon a slow martyrdom. An unemployed clergyman sneaked into his church one night and carried away the tidings that he was preaching strange truths about the peccability of the nature of Christ. This cloud, at first no larger than a man's hand, grew in volume and blackness, and at length broke upon his head, when in the very church at Annan, where he had been dedicated in baptism and consecrated in ordination, he was deposed from

the ministry of the Church of Scotland. But before this sad ending, he had taken another plunge, he had countenanced the attempt to revive in the nineteenth century Church, the miraculous gifts of the Church of the first century. Only lack of faith, he affirmed, kept back from the modern Church the charisma, the gifts of the apostolic Church. It was therefore with unfeigned joy that he heard the news that came from Scotland, and soon stirred all Christendom.

In a lonely glen at the head of the Gairloch, Mary Campbell, pious, gifted, and beautiful, lay upon her farmhouse bed, sinking into a decline that medical men said would soon bring her to the grave. On a Sabbath evening her sisters were kneeling at her bed in prayer, when the dying invalid suddenly began to speak at great length and with great vigor in an unknown tongue. Raised up from her bed, she went up and down among her people as a prophetess, exercising her gift to the amazement and awe of all who heard her. The "gift" ere long began to work in Irving's congregation, though he himself never laid claim to the inspiration. His church was mobbed by curious throngs who came to hear the ecstatic utterances, Irving having reserved a part of the service for this awesome expression of faith. The result may readily be imagined—congregations rising from their seats in terror, unearthly sounds and screaming females; one part of the congregation remaining aloof, some sad, some disgusted, finally his trustees asking the Presbytery of London to put an end to it, which they did, deposing him from the pastorate and locking the doors on him and his enthusiasts. The faithful among his flock followed him to a hall, which he shared with the infidel, Robert Owen, of Lanark, and thence to an old studio on Newman Street, which had been used by the Philadelphia artist, Benjamin West. There the Holy Apostolic Catholic Church was organized, with prophets, apostles, elders, angels, and evangelists. Irving now begins to drop out of sight. The fashionable throngs which had gone to hear him preach and

were captivated with his eloquence, cared nothing for gifts of tongues, "angels," and all the paraphernalia of his new church, "Irvingite," as the people dubbed it.

In the Catholic Apostolic Church which was organized after his expulsion from Regent Square Church, Irving, although he generally conducted the services, does not seem to have taken a commanding position. He was not an apostle and was subject to the orders and directions of other men. The nature of the service conducted in Benjamin West's former studio is well described by Dr. Addison Alexander, of Princeton, who paid a visit to the church:

As we walked along we saw a lady before us arm in arm with a tall man in black breeches, a broad-brimmed hat, and black hair hanging down his shoulders. This was Irving himself with his "*cara spousa*." We followed them to the chapel. Soon after we were seated, the chairs below the pulpit were occupied by several respectable men. Another man and a woman took their seats upon the benches behind. While we were gazing at these, we heard a heavy tramp along the aisle, and the next moment Irving walked up to the altar, opened the Bible and began at once to read. He has a noble figure, and his features are not ugly with the exception of an awful squint. His hair is parted right and left, and hangs down on his shoulders in affected disorder. His dress is laboriously old-fashioned—a black Quaker coat and small clothes. His voice is harsh, but like a trumpet; it takes hold of one, and cannot be forgotten. His great aim appeared to be to vary his attitudes and appear at ease. He began to read in a standing posture, but had scarcely finished half a dozen verses when he dropped into the chair and sat while he read the remainder. He then stepped forward to the point of his stage, dropped on his knees, and began to pray in a voice of thunder; most of the people kneeling fairly down. At the end of the prayer he read the Sixty-sixth Psalm, and I now perceived that his selections were designed to have a bearing on the persecutions of his people and himself. The chapter from Samuel was that relating to Shimei. He then gave out the Sixty-sixth Psalm in verse, which was sung standing very well, Irving himself joining in with a mighty bass.

He then began to read the thirty-ninth chapter of Exodus, with an allegorical exposition, after a short prayer for divine assistance. The ouches of the breastplate he explained to mean the rulers of the Church. While he was dealing this out, he was interrupted in a manner rather startling. I had observed that the elders who sat near him kept their eyes raised to the skylight overhead, as if wooing inspiration. One in particular looked very wild. His face was flushed, and he occasionally turned up the white of his eyes in an ominous style. For the

most part, however, his eyes were shut. Just as Irving reached the point I have mentioned and was explaining the ouches, this elder burst out in a sort of wild ejaculation, thus, "Taranti hoiti faragni santi"—"O ye people, ye people of the Lord, ye have not the ouches; ye must have them, ye cannot hear, ye cannot hear." This last was spoken in a pretty loud whisper, as the inspiration died away within him. When he began, Irving suspended his exposition and covered his face with his hands. As soon as the voice ceased, he resumed the thread of his discourse, till the tongues broke out again in unknown strains! After these had again come to an end, Irving knelt and prayed, thanking God for looking upon the poverty and desolation of the Church amidst her persecutions. After he had finished and arisen from his knees, he dropped down again, saying, "One supplication more," and "one thanksgiving more." He now proceeded to implore the Divine blessing on the servant who had been ordained as a prophet in the sight of the people. After this supplementary prayer, he stood up, asked a blessing in a few words, and began to read in the sixth chapter of John about feeding on Christ's flesh. In the course of his remarks he said: "The priests and churches in our day have denied the Saviour's flesh, and therefore cannot feed upon him." He then prayed again (with genuflexion), after which he dropped into his chair, covered his face with his hands, and said, "Hear now what the elders have to say to you." No sooner was this signal given than the "tongue" began anew, and for several minutes uttered a flat and silly rhapsody, charging the church with unfaithfulness and rebuking it therefor. The "tongue" having finished, an elder who sat above him rose, with Bible in hand, and made a dry but sober speech about faith, in which, I believe, there was nothing outré. The handsome well-dressed man, whom I have mentioned, at Irving's left hand, now rose and came forward with his Bible. His first words were, "Your sins which are many are forgiven you." His discourse was incoherent, though not wild, and had reference to the persecution of the church. The last preacher on the occasion was a decent, ministerial-looking man in black, who discoursed on oneness with Christ. A paper was now handed to Irving, which he looked at, and then fell upon his knees. In the midst of his prayers he took the paper and read it to the Lord, as he would have read a notice. It was a thanksgiving by Harriet Palmer for the privilege of attending on these services today. After the prayer, they sang a Psalm, and then the meeting was dismissed by benediction. The impression made on my mind was one of unmingled contempt. Everything which fell from Irving's lips was purely flat and stupid, without a single flash of genius, or the slightest indication of strength or even vivacity of mind. I was confirmed in my former low opinion of him, founded on his writings. Mr. Mott who knew him when he was in Glasgow, says that his first éclat in London was owing to the notes which he had taken of Dr. Chalmers' sermons; and that when he was cast upon his own resources, he ap-

peared in his real character as a dunce. Dr. Samuel H. Cox and I flattered ourselves that he observed us and preached at us. I saw him peeping through his fingers several times, and I suppose he was not gratified to see us gazing steadfastly at him all the time for he took occasion to tell the people that it would profit them nothing without the circumcision of the ear. This he defined to be the putting away all impertinent curiosity and profane inquisitiveness—all gazing and prying into the mysteries of God, and all malicious reporting of his doings in the church.

In a sermon on "The Last Judgment" delivered when he was at the zenith of his popularity in London, Irving uttered these true and, in his own case, prophetic, words:

And whosoever is a servant of Christ must needs suffer persecution, in some of these six circles of suffering (hunger, nakedness, thirst, etc.). Though I am no enemy to the gradations of human life, nor setter forth of levelling doctrines, I must in justice to the present argument, say this much, that the world and the Saviour like each other not; and that in any rank of life, especially in the higher ranks, if a man make a determined stand for his Redeemer, he will have need of courage and resolution to keep his ground. Perhaps those of his own household may prove his foes. For certain the fashions of his rank will turn against him and treat him roughly; they will tempt, they will threaten, they will revile him; and in the end give him up for a wild and crazed mortal.

This was precisely what happened to Irving. When he began to speak of the end of things and especially when he began to permit the witnessing of the "tongues" in his church, the wealthy and fashionable, and that strange personality the crowd, forthwith began to tempt him and revile him, and in the end gave him up for a "wild and crazed mortal."

During that last year in Regent Street, before he was expelled, Thomas Carlyle, still loyal, and admiring the great mind and wonderful orator, never went to his church, sick, sad, disgusted. Touching indeed is his story of the last effort he made to win his old friend back to moderation and reason. He and his wife, sitting one day in Irving's parlor, actually heard the "Tongues" in the next room, a "shrieky, hysterical 'lah lall lall!'" to which Irving, with singular calmness, said only, 'There, hear you; there are the Tongues!' And we, too, except by our looks, which

probably were eloquent, answered him nothing, but soon came away full of distress, provocation and a kind of shame. 'Why was there not a bucket full of cold water to fling on that lah-lalling hysterical mad woman?' thought we, or said to one another, 'Oh, heaven, that it should come to this!'

Before leaving London, Carlyle and Jane, once his beloved pupil and who had entertained for him such high distinction, went for the last time to see Irving, and solemnly besought him to have done with the "Tongues" and all their associates. Irving's appeal to the Corinthians Carlyle answered by appealing to God's writings on the stars and the rocks and the brain and the heart of every mortal: "It did not beseem him, Edward Irving, to be hanging on the rearward of mankind, struggling still to chain them to old notions not now well tenable, but to be the foremost in the van, leading on by the light of the eternal stars across this hideous, delirious wilderness where we all were, towards promised lands that lay ahead." And thus for twenty minutes Carlyle continued, pleading with his, to him, deluded friend; "that friend sitting silent through it all, head downward and face indicating great pain; Jane Welsh, also silent, sitting at his right. Then, when Carlyle had done, lifting the sad, noble face, Irving "began with the mildest low tone, and face full of kindness and composed distress—'dear friend' and endeavored to make his apology and defense," which did not last very long or do anything to convince Carlyle, but in a style of "modesty and friendly magnanimity which no mortal could surpass and which remains to me at this moment dear and memorable and worthy of all honor."

The final break between Irving and the Church of Scotland was as dramatic as any in the annals of that church. Irving was put on trial before the Presbytery of Annandale, which had ordained him and in the very church where he had been baptized and set apart for the ministry. The charge brought against him was teaching the sinfulness

of the human nature of our Lord. It is a difficult question to discuss. The position of Irving seems to have been that our Lord did not take human nature as it existed in Adam, before the fall, but fallen human nature, and in that fallen human nature won for us all the great victory of perfect obedience. Against this position it was maintained that He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and the angel spake of the child who was to be born as "that holy thing." In the eloquent and impassioned plea which brought his trial to an end, Irving states his view:

He took your flesh and made it holy, thereby to make you holy; He came into your battle and trampled under foot Satan, the world, the flesh, yea, all enemies of living men, and he saith to everyone, "Be ye holy, for I am holy." Do you say that THAT man was unacquainted with grief—that He was unacquainted with the warrings of the flesh? I dare ye to say that His work was a holiday work. Is this your gratitude to the Captain of your salvation? Can you follow in his footsteps if He did not do the work? (Here he quoted the 40th Psalm.) "I waited patiently for the Lord; he inclined his ear, and heard my cry." But ye say he was never in the pit or clay. But I say HE WAS IN BOTH; and moreover that all the water floods of the Divine wrath passed over Him, and the Father left Him to mourn with a great mourning. Show me the Psalm where it is written that He does not call our sins His own. But was He sinful? No: but look ye; the very reverse of sin inhered in His soul.

As the Moderator was about to declare Irving deposed from the ministry, a voice suddenly was heard from one of the pews where sat an adherent of Irving, "Arise, depart! Arise, depart! Flee ye out of here!" Irving then arose to follow his friend out of the church, crying out as he did so with a mighty voice to those who obstructed his passage, "Stand forth! Stand forth! What! Will ye not obey the voice of the Holy Ghost? As many as will obey the voice of the Holy Ghost, let them depart." In the gloom of the March evening, with a single candle feebly flickering at the clerk's desk, the Presbytery then declared him no longer a minister of the Church of Scotland. The issue at dispute has been forgotten; but the gigantic shadow of Irving falls across the history of Scotland and of modern Christianity.

The last time Carlyle saw his old friend, the man who had encouraged him and had said "One day they will unearth you," was at No. 5 Cheyne Row. Carlyle was shocked at the change; an old man now, his head a year ago raven black, now grown grey, the face hollow, wrinkled, the mighty frame collapsed. Carlyle heard with sorrow and anguish that his friend was growing weaker and weaker, yet no sickness that physicians could describe. His Apostolic Church sent him on some prophetic or angelic mission to Glasgow, and there, only forty-three, his glorious intellect was quenched in the smoke of death and the silver trumpet of his voice—a voice that mankind had delighted in more, perhaps, than in the voice of any other that had ever spoken—was now forever stilled.

Shortly before his death, some of his associates in his new church asked him if it were not glorious thus to suffer for conscience' sake, to which Irving, with unutterable pathos responded, quoting the 69th Psalm, "Reproach hath broken my heart."

Carlyle's beautiful farewell best sums up his story:

What a falling of the curtain! upon what a drama! Rustic Annandale begins it, with its homely honesties, rough vernacularities, safe, innocently kind, ruggedly motherlike, cheery, wholesome, like its airy hills and clear rushing streams; prurient, corrupted London is the middle part, with its volcanic stupidities and bottomless confusions; and the end is terrible, mysterious, godlike and awful; what Patmos could be more so? It is as if the vials of heaven's wrath were pouring down upon a man, yet not wrath alone, for his heart was filled with trust in heaven's goodness withal. It must be said, Irving nobly expiates whatever errors he has fallen into. Like an antique evangelist, he walks his stony course, the fixed thought of his heart at all times, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him," and these final deluges of sorrow are but washing the faithful soul of him clear.

They buried him in the gloomy Cathedral at Glasgow, instead of among his kinsfolk in some sunlit Annandale churchyard. The shadows which had fallen across him during his life pursued him even to his grave, which, like his Lord's, was "with strangers," and in the gloom and damp of the Cathedral's crypt.

If the accounts of Irving's preaching and services indicate a marvellous, and, we may say with deliberation, an altogether unprecedented popularity, and one never since repeated by any preacher, they are accompanied and sustained by the most remarkable tributes to his pulpit eloquence which any preacher of the Gospel has received in the whole history of preaching. The tribute of the people in general was the great throng that crowded about him whenever it was known that he was to preach. As for the tributes of discerning individuals the following witnesses will suffice:

Carlyle's chief admiration of Irving was as a man and a friend, yet he recognized his pulpit power: "Grand forest avenues of his with their multifarious outlooks to right and left. . . . Noteworthy always; nobody could mistake it for the discourse of other than an uncommon man."

Coleridge, with whom Irving had become intimate, and whose "moonshine phantasm" he drank in eagerly, was an occasional hearer, and this is his testimony: "Irving the Scotch preacher is certainly the greatest orator I ever heard (N.B. I make and mean the same distinction between oratory and eloquence as between the mouth plus the wind-pipe and the brain plus the heart) is however a man of great simplicity, of overflowing affections and enthusiastically in earnest."

De Quincy describes him thus in his *London Reminiscences*:

"He had a fervid nature, a most energetic will, and aspirations after something greater than he could find in life."

Then he bears witness to his power as a preacher and orator:

He was unquestionably, by many, many degrees, the greatest orator of our times. Of him, indeed, more than of any man whom I have yet seen throughout my whole experience, it might be said, with truth and with emphasis, that he was a Boanerges, a son of thunder; and, in a sense, even awful and unhappy for himself, it might be affirmed that he had a demon, within himself.—He was the only man of our times who realized one's idea of Paul preaching at Athens, or defending himself before Agrippa. Terrific meteor! unhappy son of fervid

genius, which mastered thyself even more than the rapt audiences which at times hung upon thy lips! Were the cup of life once again presented to thy lips, wouldst thou drink again, or wouldst thou not rather turn away from it with shuddering abomination? Sleep, Boanerges! and let the memory of man settle only upon thy colossal powers, without a thought of those intellectual aberrations which were more powerful for thy ruin than for the misleading of others!

A minister who heard him preach in the Highlands thus describes him:

My own impression of Edward Irving is thirty years old, yet is the impression as fresh as the day on which it was made. I remember the very bend of the pavement where I first saw him; the raven locks flowing down his broad shoulders, his magnificent erect figure, the cloak thrown over his arm, and the giant air with which he marched, are ineffably present to my mind. He had come to Perth to preach. His text was taken from the 24th chapter of Matthew regarding the coming of the Son of Man. I remember nothing of the sermon save its general subject; but one thing I can never forget. While he was engaged in unfolding his subject, from out of a dark cloud, which obscured the church, there came forth a bright blaze of lightning and a crash of thunder. There was deep stillness in the audience. The preacher paused; and from the stillness and the gloom his powerful voice, clothed with increased solemnity, pronounced these words: "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be." You can imagine the effect.

As compared with that of his great contemporary, Chalmers, the preaching of Irving is lacking in order, perspicuity and objective. No better analysis of the two great preachers' sermon style has been made than that by Carlyle:

Irving's discourses were far more opulent in ingenious thought than Chalmers,' which indeed were usually the triumphant onrush of one idea with its satellites and supporters. But Irving wanted in definite head and backbone, so that on arriving you might see clearly where and how. That was mostly a defect one felt in traversing those grand forest avenues of his, with their multifarious outlooks to right and left. Sermons an hour long or more. It flowed along, not as a swift flowing river, but as a broad, deep and meandering one. Sometimes it left on you the impression almost of a fine noteworthy lake. Noteworthy always; nobody could mistake it for the discourse of other than an uncommon man.

"Prodigious want of tact," was the testimony of the impatient Chalmers, who had come to London to open his

new church for him, "in the length of his prayers—forty minutes. I undertook to open Irving's new church. The congregation in their eagerness to obtain seats had already been assembled three hours. Irving said he would assist me by reading a chapter for me. He chose the longest in the Bible, and went on for an hour and a half."

Irving definitely planned and promised that in his preaching he would strike out to an altogether new tone and manner. During the years when as a licentiate he sat in churches and listened to other preachers he gave much deliberation to the content and manner of sermons, and came to the conclusion that the ineffectiveness of preaching was due in large part to the manner of the preaching. This conviction appears in the preface to his first publication, *The Orations and the Argument for Judgment to Come*, where he says: "It hath appeared to the author of this book, from more than ten years' meditation upon the subject, that the chief obstacle to the progress of the divine truth over the minds of men is the want of its being sufficiently presented to them. This ignorance, in both the higher and the lower orders, of religion as a discerner of the thoughts and intentions of the heart, is not due so much to the want of inquisitiveness on their part as to the want of a sedulous and skillful ministry on the part of those to whom it is intrusted." In the flush of his own early success at London he believed that the enthusiastic hearing which was given him was due not, as was the case, to his superior genius, but to his different method of preaching. "They (meaning his brother ministers) prepare for teaching gipsies, for teaching bargemen, for teaching miners, by apprehending their way of conceiving and estimating truth; and why not prepare for teaching imaginative men, and political men, and legal men and scientific men, who bear the world in hand?"

The reader of the sermons and orations of Irving will not discern anything strikingly novel in his treatment of his subjects, save the lack of an orderly procession of ideas and

definiteness of aim; but it is evident from beginning to end that the audience Irving has in mind is composed not of gipsies, miners and bargemen, but imaginative men and legal men and scientific men, and political men who "bear the world in hand."

The student in our seminaries today is urged to be simple and plain in thought and speech, to address himself to the humblest intelligence before him, and he is reminded how the common people heard Jesus gladly. But here is the instance of a preacher who won tremendous popularity through his method of preaching to the superior and the cultivated minds in his congregation. I draw no inference, but merely state the fact. Here is a man who assumes the style of a century or more before his day and in that lofty and pompous strain speaks to men of imagination and importance of the world's affairs and gains their attention, and that of the common people too. As his popularity increased Irving—and naturally enough—began to feel that he had a special mission to speak to the mighty ones of earth. This conviction appears in the dedication of a volume of sermons to Basil Montagu where he says:

When the Lord, to serve his own ends, advanced me, from the knowledge of my own flock and the private walks of pastoral duty, to become a preacher of righteousness to this great city, and I may say kingdom—to the princes, and the nobles, and the counsellors of this great empire, whom He brought to hear me—I became also an object of attack to the malice and artifice of Satan, being tempted on the one hand to murmur because of the distance at which I was held from the affections of my evangelical brethren, whom I had never persecuted like Saul of Tarsus, but too much loved, even to idolatry.

A minister who had preached a powerful sermon during a thunder storm was asked by one of his hearers for permission to print and publish the sermon. "Yes," said the minister, "I give you permission to print the sermon, provided you print the thunder and the lightning also." Perhaps there is no celebrated preacher to whose sermons this saying more applies than it does to Edward Irving. The mighty voice, the towering stature, the grand prophetic

air, the thunder and the lightning are all gone. Irving's matter is weighty, and when I say that his sermons suffer more than those of any other preacher by reason of the absence of the living voice, I mean no disrespect to his sermon matter, but the contrary. His subjects are as a rule so profound and the argument so involved, particularly in his eschatological discourses, that the reader soon begins to labor heavily and feels the need of the great personality to lift the theme from the ground and carry it forward triumphantly. Irving made much of his new method of preaching, and in the preface to the *Orations* he says that he proposes to follow two models, one that of the ancient classical orators and the other, in the more argumentative doctrinal sermons, the ancient apologies.

. . . Moved by these feelings, I have set the example of two new methods of handling religious truths—the Oration, and the Argument; the one intended to be after the manner of the ancient Oration, the best vehicle for addressing the minds of men which the world hath seen, far beyond the sermon, of which the very name hath learned to inspire drowsiness and tedium; the other after the manner of the ancient Apologies, with this difference, that it is pleaded, not before any judicial bar, but before the tribunal of human thought and feeling.

His sermons today would be called rhetorical, so far as their style is concerned; indeed, even in the beginning of the last century, when pulpit discourse was much more stately and formal than at present, his sermons were regarded as artificial and pompous. The preachers of our day have gone to the opposite extreme. If there is anything that a modern preacher fears more than all else it is to be guilty of being called rhetorical. He essays no grand passages or flights of imagination. This has resulted in much deliverance, so far as pulpit weaklings are concerned. But it has had its losses and ill effects also, for strong and imaginative minds are kept back from the full use of their powers. Take the apostrophe, for example. Out of place, and in the mouth of a weakling, it is ridiculous, but in the mouth of a gifted man, what can be more effective? Yet today it is the last form of speech which one will find in pulpit discourses.

I feel, therefore, that it would be wholesome for many of the ministers of the present generation, were they to remind themselves that the most popular preacher that ever lived was that preacher who was the most exalted and dignified and formal in his utterance.

The following excerpts will give the reader some idea of Irving's handling of a subject:

From his "Farewell Sermon" at St. John's, Glasgow, a sermon with no order and no particular idea developed, and yet full of the eloquence of the heart. He describes his visits among the poor, and how he treasured their tears and smiles more than all the flattery of the world:

The manly tear that I have seen start into the eye of many an aged sire whose wrinkled brow and lyart locks deserved a better fate, as he looked to the fell conclusion of an ill-provided house, an ill-educated family, and declining religion, which hemmed him in at times when his hand was growing feeble for work, and the twilight of age setting in upon his soul,—that tear is dearer to my remembrance than the tear of sentiment which the eye of beauty swims with at a tale of distress; yea, it is as dear as the tear of liberty which the patriot sheds over his fallen country, and the blessings of the aged widow, bereft of the sight and stay of her children, and sitting in her lonely cabin the live-long day, at her humble occupation,—her blessings when my form, darkening her threshold, drew her eye,—the story of her youth, of her family, and her husband, wed away from her presence,—her patient trust in God and lively faith in Christ,—with the deep response of her sighs when I besought God's blessing upon the widow's cruse, and the widow's barrel, and that he would be the husband of her widowhood and the father of her children in their several habitations,—these, so oft my engagement, shall be hallowed for memory to flee to, and sacred materials for fancy to work with—while the heart doth beat within my breast.

From the Sermon on "The Second Advent of our Lord and His Everlasting Coming":

The Wonder is, not that He, Christ, should be visible, but that He should be invisible. I stand before you, as a man, as Christ was, a man having flesh and bones, as I have, even after his resurrection, as appears from his own declaration. Is it a wonder that he should be visible or invisible? The wonder is to be invisible. The Scripture then set about to explain how He should be invisible when He became man, and how He became invisible when in the grave from which He raised His body. That we should become invisible is easily understood,

because our bodies go down to the dust, but that He who had taken His body, for the purpose of manifesting His Godhead; that He should become invisible, this is the problem, and this is the wonder, which the Scripture takes pain to explain. Not that He should become seen, but that He should forever become unseen; and the person who goes to the Scripture to find the reason for believing that Christ shall not be seen again, is going to search for a thing out of the question. It is the property of a spirit to be invisible, and not of a man; but it is not the property of a spirit in a body, and the purpose of God was that His Son should be visible, in a body.

From the Sermon on "The Spiritual Use of the Faculties":

And time would fail me were I to tell of the crooked serpent, and the population of lakes and streams, and of the mighty deep; of creatures like behemoth, who sport and play in the waters; of creatures who gripe the rock for their bed, and cavern in the oozy channels of the deep; yea, of the numerous creatures which live in the unseen cells and chambers of the watery drop, and contend for the supremacy of a particle of dust; which, though they be tiny and unseen, do build fabrics in the ocean, and construct stately islands for man to dwell in; yea, are very master-workmen in the providence of God, at sea sinking great navies in their stately course, and on the land grubbing up the green herb, and consuming vegetation in its embryo state.

From the Sermon on "Religious Meditation":

Whosoever hath walked forth, like the Patriarch, about the eventide, into the silent and retired places of nature, and seen the dusky mantle of twilight falling upon the earth, must have felt stealing over his own breast a state of repose and a sober shade of thought, in harmony with the aspect of nature around him. For there is a twilight of contemplation in the soul, midway between the excitement of action, and the deadness of slumber; the stir of passion is at rest, the noisy calls of interest have subsided, a pensive mood cometh on rich with sober reflections, and the soul careth not for a companion to express herself before; and if, by chance, she hath one by her side, both she and her companion steal into themselves; and though they love each other dearly, they fear to intrude upon the sweet and unperturbed work, which the soul is carrying on in her sacred recesses; and the soul, being left alone, persueth herself, and meditates her condition; and the body keepeth harmony with the deep and solemn occupation of the mind by a slow and solemn pace; the eye to catch no disturbance casteth itself upon the ground, and the ear is conscious only to the stillness of nature, and we seem to hear the stream of time flowing past us. When outward nature is so stripped of its gay colouring and divested of its turbulent and noisy agitation, and the body hath also attuned itself to the mood of the soul, then cometh to the breast some

of the most profitable and delightful moods, which it ever partakes in this changeable being. The good and ill of the past come before us, dressed in sober colours; the gay divested of vain glory, the evil divested of remorse; everything sobered down like nature in its twilight varieties of dress; its splendors shaded, its defects veiled, its asperities smoothed, and altogether softened and harmonized by the witching influence of the solemn hour; and our present occupation cometh up for judgment before us and we meditate its usefulness and its end. Then errors are not ashamed to confess themselves, and the soul not averse to consider them, and better purposes and resolutions are engendered. The vanity of life now showeth itself without a preacher, —its speedy passage like a morning cloud, its disappointments, and its sorrows, and all its troubles. The soul becomes philosophical of her own accord; she wonders at her thoughtfulness, and the richness of her reveries afford her delight; then she ascendeth from herself to her Creator, from earth to heaven; and haply, to assist her meditations, she strayeth to the sacred habitations of the dead, or wandereth beneath the lonely ruins of ancient temples; when the solemn moon, queen of silence, stealeth forth to rule the darkness of the night, and the stars come forth to attend her course. Then looking up into the heavens, to the moon, and to the stars, which God hath ordained, we feel with the Psalmist, "What is man that thou art mindful of him, or the Son of man that thou visitest him?" And when we look upon the earth, falling asleep under the watchful moon, the birds silent in their nests, and the beasts on their grassy couches, and the hum of busy men silenced by sleep, the sister of the grave; then, if ever, the voice of immortality lifteth itself within the bosom of man; and he feeleth the dignity of nature, which the commerce of the world obscureth; he calmly looketh forward to his change, and he loveth the Saviour who opened up life and immortality beyond death and the grave; his soul passeth upwards to the communion of God; and in this recess from worldly turmoil, he hath the presence of divine thought, and a sort of intermediate state between the activity of life, and the rest of the grave.

From the Sermon on "The Last Judgment": (Showing his grand style.)

Had our occupation in this Discourse been that of the poet or the orator, we have now before us a subject which for the magnificence of the scenery, the magnitude of the transaction, and the effects which it draweth on, stands unrivalled in the annals of human knowledge;—a subject indeed, with which the powers of conception cannot be brought to contend. Imagination covers her wing, unable to fetch the compass of the ideal scene. The great white throne descending out of heaven, guarded and begirt with the principalities and powers thereof—the awful presence at whose sight the heavens and the earth flee away, and no place for them is found—the shaking of the mother

elements of nature, and the commotion of the hoary deep, to render up their long-dissolved dead—the rushing together of quickened men upon all the winds of heaven, down to the centre, where the Judge sitteth on his blazing throne.—To give form and figure and utterance to the mere circumstantial pomp of such a scene, no imagination availeth. Nor doth the understanding labour less. The archangel, with the trump of God, riding sublime in the midst of heaven, and sending through the widest dominion of death and the grave that sharp summons which divideth the solid earth, and rings through the caverns of the hollow deep, piercing the dull cold ear of death and the grave with the knell of their departed reign: the death of Death, the disinheriting of the grave, the reign of life, the second birth of living things, the reunion of body and soul—the one from unconscious sleep, the other from apprehensive and unquiet abodes—the congregation of all generations over whom the stream of time hath swept—this outstretches my understanding no less than the material imagery confuses my imagination.

From the Sermon on “The Issues of the Judgment”:
(Giving his idea of Hell.)

Now this is precisely the state of things in the nether world. There is no hope, there is no end, there are no good beings to hold the balance against evil, and there is no restraining providence of God. Were there nothing more, I hold this to be enough to constitute the hottest, cruellest hell. I ask no elemental fire, no furnace of living flames, no tormenting demons, nothing but a congregation of the wicked, in the wicked state in which they died, and appeared at the tribunal, driven together into one settlement, to make the best or the worst of it they can. Let every man arise in proper likeness, clothed in his proper nature, which he did not choose to put off, but to die with; let beauty arise with the same pure tints which death did nip, and with all its flashes and knowledge; with all its powers and policy, with all its address; let the generations of the unrighteous gather together;—and because of their possessing none of their qualities which God approves in his volume, nor caring to possess them, let them be shipped across the impassable gulf to some planet of their own, to carry on their several intrigues and indulgencies forever;—then here were a hell, which neither fire nor brimstone, nor gnawing worm, are able to represent.

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Here, then I say, is hell enough out of the natural workings of such a population without one interference of Almighty God. With what full swing power will rage and havoc. With what fell swoop the arm of revenge will bring its bloody stroke. Hosts encountering hosts in dubious battle, wounds, and bloodshed, and agony, and no relief of death. Knowledge will invent systems of slavery and arts of cruelty; and inventions for accomplishing the ends of wickedness,

beyond aught recorded of in history, will come forth from thoughtful and malicious brains. All the cruel acts of man will be played off remorseless; inquisitionary dungeons will arise anew, and racks and torments for the body of men will ply their ancient works. The ferocity of Canibs, and the dark cruelty of Malays and the torturing of American savages, and Sodom's lustfulness, and the Carthaginian fraud, and Rome's tyrant grasp, will all revive. And beauty will be there to light the cruel fires of jealousy, and arm nation against nation as heretofore. And poetry will be there to compose the war-song. And ambition to league revolts; and civil warfare, with every form of mischief this earth hath groaned beneath, all embittered and exasperated manifold.

From the Sermon on "The Character of David as a Psalmist":

There is not a thought which sinks from heaven to earth, or ascends in gratitude from earth to heaven; there is not a feeling which the spirit of man is capable of entertaining toward God, or one which God entertaineth to the spirits of men; that is not expressed in the Book of Psalms, in the truest and noblest forms. For the Psalmist had trodden all paths and passed through all trials, and had been made triumphant over all enemies.

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. . . "But the form of his character was vast; the scope of his life was immense. His harp was oft strained, and every angel of joy and sorrow swept the chords as he passed; but the music was always breathed of heaven. Such oceans of affection lay within his breast as could not always slumber in the breasts of a hundred men, yet here struggled together in the narrow continent of one single heart. And the scornful men of this world, whose life is one offense, whose heart is hard, without any streams of affection, without any noble thoughts, the scornful Pharisees have no sympathy for one so conditioned because he rules not with constant quietness the unruly host of adverse natures which dwelt within one breast soul.

In this noble account of David, Irving gives the most satisfactory account of himself, his aspirations, his sorrows. Like David, "The form of his character was vast; the scope of his life was immense. Such oceans of affection lay within his breast as could not always slumber in the breast of a hundred men, yet here struggled together in the narrow continent of one single heart."

There is a saying of Goethe, that there are many echoes but few voices. Irving was a voice, not an echo.

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