

Less than a year later, the modest Caledonian building which seated only 500 was regularly besieged by crowds of 1000 - 1500 thronging to hear the man who has come to be known as the greatest orator of his day. Plans soon began to be made for a much larger edifice (completed in 1827) to seat 1800. Irving was popular with every class and was heard by such notables as Charles Lamb, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, William Wordsworth, Sir Walter Scott, and William Gladstone.

Unfortunately, Irving's decline was about as swift as his ascendancy. By 1832 Irving had been found guilty of heresy, dismissed from his church and deposed from the ministry in the Presbyterian denomination. The charge of heresy concerned the practice of speaking in tongues which Irving had allowed to become a regular part of his Sunday services. Dallimore gives the full story of the outbreak of tongues and revelations, the religious excitement that preceded it, and Irving's acceptance of and submission to what he considered to be the voice of God.

Dallimore focuses primarily on the tongues issue, perhaps because of the recent renewed interest in Irving on the part of many Charismatics. But Irving was involved in other controversial issues as well. A year before his being deposed from the Presbyterian ministry, he had been tried for heresy regarding his peculiar teachings concerning the sinful nature of Christ. Although Irving's writings on