

Curiously enough, the apparent combination of the military and the clerical in his gait and air suggested to me Sir Richard Steele's story, in the *Tattler*, "of the old officer who, acting in the double capacity of major and chaplain to his regiment, challenged a young man for blasphemy, and, after disarming, would not take him to mercy until he had first begged pardon of God upon his knees on the duelling-ground, for the irreverence with which he had treated His name. My curiosity regarding the stranger gentleman was soon gratified. Next Saturday I attended the Doctor's chapel, and saw the tall, spare, clerico-military looking man in the pulpit. I have a good deal of faith in the military air, when, in the character of a natural trait, I find it strongly marking men who never served in the army. I have not yet seen it borne by a civilian who had not in him at least the elements of the soldier; nor can I doubt that, had Dr. M'Crie been a Scotch covenanter of the times of Charles II., the insurgents at Bothwell would have had what they sadly wanted,—a general. The shrewd sense of his discourses had great charms for me; and, though not a flashy, nor, in the ordinary sense of the term, even an eloquent preacher, there were none of the other Edinburgh clergy his contemporaries to whom I found I could listen with greater profit or satisfaction. A simple incident which occurred during my first morning attendance at his chapel, strongly impressed me with a sense of his sagacity. There was a great deal of coughing in the place, the effect of a recent change of weather; and the Doctor, whose voice was not a strong one, and who seemed somewhat annoyed by the ruthless interruptions, stopping suddenly short in the middle of his argument, made a dead pause. When people are taken greatly by surprise, they cease to cough,—a circumstance on which he had evidently calculated. Every eye was now turned towards him, and for a full minute so dead was the silence, that one might have heard a pin drop. "I see, my friends," said the Doctor, resuming speech, with a suppressed smile,—"I see you can be all quiet enough when I am quiet." There was not a little genuine strategy in the rebuke; and as cough lies a good deal