

in calculating the influences that made this Frenchman the man he was.

The very different state of things in the British nation was one element in determining Wesley's great career. Such a government as that of France would no doubt have tempted an assault from such a man as Wesley. But the long-continued conflict of the English people against the feudal impositions was just about at an end. The career of unparalleled prosperity upon which England entered during the twenty years' administration of Robert Walpole was by this time at its height. The population of the country had been growing with unprecedented rapidity under the stimulus of great material prosperity. A country village arose as if by magic into a town, and towns were swollen into great cities. Artisans from the loom, and forge, and mine, were peopling the lone valley and silent moor.

But the Established Church, not to be compared with that of France at the same time, was in no sense awake to its responsibilities to these crowding multitudes. The parish churches had been built for a far less numerous generation. They were wholly inadequate to the demands of the time. It never occurred to the pleasure-loving clergy that a work of Church extension would regenerate the kingdom. They read their stately services, and their diluted sermons, with a due regard to the proprieties of the sanctuary; but no enkindling passion ever thrilled the hearts of the living men who heard. Among these neglected people came Wesley with a heart throbbing with passionate feeling and sympathy; and with him, and after him, came plain men of the people, whose utterances were all aflame with intense feeling, and their sermons were as firebrands among the

standing corn. And these newly arising conditions of life in the nation had as much to do with the far-reaching influence of his work, and its permanency, as the abuses in the French Church and State had to do with the gaining for Voltaire the ear of France.

But why, under these conditions of society, so much alike in the two nations, and yet in other respects so different, should Voltaire become the rampant infidel, and Wesley the devoted evangelist? The later was, in his way, as much at variance with the Established Church of England as the former with that of France. He saw selfishness, idleness, vice, and contempt of doctrine and morality in leading ecclesiastics as well as Voltaire. All around him, in England as in France, he saw the many neglected by the teachers of religion; without the encouragement in life and the comforting support in death which Christianity alone could give. The Church was but a means for the aggrandisement of the few. But his plan was to seek purification from within rather than to employ scourging from without. Whips never yet cured a fever, but internal remedies have often aided a patient. Voltaire used the whips, Wesley the internal remedies.

And yet more, if abuse should ever drive an man into extremes, Wesley had this reason beyond anything Voltaire ever knew. His name was always regarded as a mark for satire, contempt, falsehood, without foundation or qualification, from great magnates in Church and State, as well as from blaspheming ruffians, drivelling drunkards, and foul libertines. It has yet to appear that this black hailstorm of causeless calumny ever led him to swerve in the least degree from his appointed course.

The fact is, and explanation or apology can never alter it, that