carriages in plush breeches and silk stockings, are no longer the most turbulent in the theatres; no longer have private riots of their own, of a character quite as formidable as those of the denizens of St. Giles's. A singular state of manners is presented in the following record of a scene which took place on the 11th of May, 1764. "A great disturbance was created at Ranelagh-house, by the coachmen, footmen, &c., belonging to such of the nobility and gentry as will not suffer their servants to take vails. They began by hissing their masters; they then broke all the lamps and outside windows with stones; and afterwards, putting out their flambeaux, pelted the company in a most audacious manner with brickbats, whereby several were greatly hurt, so as to render the use of swords necessary." * Can we have better evidence of the disorder of all society, in which the valet emulated the indecorum of his master, and the drunken mechanic copied the drunken lord.

The Police of London in the last ten years of George II., and through the remaining years of the century, was a system that combined the hateful and the ridiculous to an extent that requires some strong power of relying upon evidence to believe in. The character of the watchman may be found in every novel. A sober traveller sums up the qualifications of these protectors of life and property: "London has neither troops, patrols, nor any sort of regular watch; and it is guarded during the night only by old men chosen from the dregs of the people, who have no other arms but a lanthorn and a pole; who patrole the streets, crying the hour every time the clock strikes; who proclaim good or bad weather in the morning; who come to awake those who have any journey to perform; and whom it is customary with young rakes to beat and use ill, when they come rioting from the taverns where they have spent the night." † A curious example of the influence of routine upon public functionaries is given by Wraxall. He went out amidst the mob on the worst night of the riots of 1780, whilst the premises of Mr. Langdale, the distiller, were burning on Holborn Hill, and a frantic mob was raging in the street. "While we stood by the wall of St. Andrew's churchyard, a watchman, with his lanthorn in his hand, passed us, calling the hour as if in a time of profound tranquillity." ‡ The police-officer of that day was called a "thief-taker,"—he was in no sense of the word a detective or a preventive functionary. He knew the thieves, and the thieves knew him. His business was to "let the matter ripen" when he had information of a house to be broken open or mail to be robbed. When he was

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* "Annual Register," vol. vii.

† Grosley, vol. i. p. 48.

‡ "Historical Memoirs," vol. i. p. 329.

sure of a capital conviction, he took his man, and obtained forty pounds "blood-money." It was a thriving trade. "I remember," said Townsend, the Bow Street runner, "in 1783, when sergeant Adair was Recorder, there were forty hung at two executions."

The horrible state of the Prisons in 1738 has been already shown in some notice of a Report of a Parliamentary Committee.* We may trace in the writers of fiction how little the dominion of cruelty, neglect, and extortion had been diminished at the accession of George III. Fielding's Mr. Booth is committed by an ignorant justice to Bridewell, upon a charge of assaulting a watchman, when he had only interfered to prevent an outrage by two men of fortune, who bribed the constable to let them escape. When he goes to prison a number of persons gather round him in the yard, and demand "garnish." The keeper explained that it was customary for every new prisoner to treat the others with something to drink. The young man had no money; and the keeper quietly permitted the scoundrels to strip him of his clothes. All persons sent to Bridewell were treated alike, so far as the prison discipline was concerned. Three street robbers, certain to be hanged, were enjoying themselves over a bottle of wine and a pipe; the man without a shilling in his pocket, had the prison allowance of a penny loaf and a jug of water.† Felons and debtors were in some cases separated; but there was little distinction in the treatment of the burglar and the bankrupt. Those who could pay exorbitant fees had privileges and indulgences—a full meal and unlimited liquor. In 1773, John Howard, in his capacity of high Sheriff of Bedfordshire, had his eyes opened to the disgraceful condition of the prisons of England, and the enormities committed in them. Before 1775 he had personally inspected nearly every one of these abodes of vice made more wicked; of innocence corrupted; of human beings, whether innocent or guilty, subjected to filth, starvation, contagious disease, and the capricious temper of savage and mercenary gaolers. In 1777 he published his book "On Prisons." He awakened public attention to the evil; and the Legislature adopted some measures for its remedy—measures, however, founded upon no enlarged principles,—mere palliatives, that fitted a state of society in which expediency might suggest a few obvious changes, but where principle made no attempt to go to the root of one of the most difficult of social questions,—the mode of dealing with the criminal population. The system of the Hulks was commenced in 1776. In nineteen years 1999 convicts were ordered to be punished with hard labour on the Thames, and in Langston and Portsmouth har bours. It was something to have given fewer victims to the devouring maw of the gallows; but it was more than ten years before these offerings to Moloch had been diminished. But the Hulks utterly failed in producing the reformation of offenders. "Most of them, instead of profiting by the punishment they have suffered, forgetting they were under sentence of death, and undismayed by the dangers they have escaped—immediately rush into the same course of depredation and warfare upon the public." * The system of transporation to New South Wales commenced in 1787.

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* *Ante*, vol. v. p. 436.

† "Amelia."

The efforts of individuals to compensate for the neglect of the government, by associating benevolent persons in attempts to remedy social evils, were at this period very remarkable. The reform effected by Howard was the seed in good ground. But it was not always that energy such as that of Howard could be found in companionship with his practical sense; or, at any rate, that the objects aimed at by philanthropy should be so little liable to misdirection, and so certain in their results, as his purification of the prison system. Thomas Coram, the master of a merchant vessel, had seen in the neighbourhood of Rotherhithe infants exposed in the streets—left to perish by their unnatural mothers. He laboured hard to establish a Foundling Hospital; and in 1739 obtained a charter for that institution which now possesses enormous funds from subscriptions and from estates, but which had originally very inadequate means compared with the number of those who rang a bell at the gate of the hospital, left a child with a particular mark upon it, and waited its admission or rejection. In 1756, the governors obtained a parliamentary grant of 10,000*l.*, and during the subsequent fifteen years had received more than half a million of the public money, to distribute in a manner calculated to produce far greater evils than those which they sought to remedy. The wise legislators stipulated, when the grant was first made, that all children above the age of two months should be received. The age was afterwards limited to six months. A basket was hung at the gate, in which the deserted child was deposited. Purveyors of Foundlings started up in the country districts, who carried infants to London in panniers slung across a horse. Many died on their journey. In four years from 1756, children to the number of 14,934 were taken under the management of this institution, of which only 4400 lived to be apprenticed. Parliament then interfered, and declared "that the indiscriminate admission of all children under a certain age into the hospital had been attended with many evil consequences, and that it be discontinued." The

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* Colquhoun—"Police of the Metropolis," p. 470, ed. 1800.

charity had offered a large premium for vice, and had been perfectly successful in the encouragement of what we now properly call "the great social evil." Another philanthropist, towards the close of the reign of George II., established two societies, which were incorporated in the subsequent reign. The one was "the Magdalen Asylum,"—the other "the Marine Society." To take distressed boys out of the streets, educate them for the seaman's life, and place them in the merchant service or the royal Navy, was an object of no doubtful good. Jonas Hanway, whose exertions mainly established these two charities, is stated to have been "the first man who ventured to walk the streets of London with an umbrella over his head."

Amidst a good deal of selfish indulgence in their own pleasures, about the middle of the eighteenth century, by the noble and the rich, there is abundant evidence that a feeling had been awakened of consideration for the miseries of the lowly and the indigent. Hospitals for the reception of the sick and the maimed were freely supported by voluntary contributions. The Westminster Hospital was the first of this character, having been instituted in 1719. St. George's Hospital dates from 1733; the London Hospital from 1740, in which year the Middlesex Hospital was also established; and the Small Pox Hospital was opened in 1746. But no benefit to society was greater than that produced by the partial extension of education to the humblest classes of the community. The old foundation-schools had, in too many instances, been wholly diverted from their original purpose of general instruction, to provide sinecures for clergymen, who pretended to instruct the few pupils to whom they could not refuse admission. Their funds were wasted and misappropriated till, in our own day, a man of extraordinary vigour tore down the cobwebbed screen that patronage and venality had raised up, to defraud the children of this land of their inheritance. What were called the Free Schools, or Charity Schools, dispensed reading and writing to select parties of boys and girls, marked out for the ridicule of their companions by a grotesque and antiquated costume. These boys were fortunate if they obtained a sufficient knowledge of arithmetic to serve behind a counter without a Ready Reckoner. Fielding has touched upon the state of popular instruction in his day, according to the experience of Joseph Andrews: "Joey told Mr. Adams that he had very early learnt to read and write, by the goodness of his father, who, though he had not interest enough to get him into a charity school, because a cousin of his father's landlord did not vote on the right side for a churchwarden in a borough town, yet had been himself at the expense of sixpence a week for his learning." The extension of instruction to which we have referred was the work of Robert Raikes, the proprietor of the "Gloucester Journal." This excellent man was struck by the degraded state of the children in the suburbs of his city. On a Sunday their numbers were increased; and their filth and disorderly conduct more revolting. He procured a few womem to teach some to read on the Sunday; he persuaded them to go to church with clean hands and face and combed hair; he gave them Testaments. Their self-respect was raised; from outcasts they became capable of honest industry. The good example was rapidly followed; and Sunday Schools were established all over the kingdom, after the successful experiment of 1781.

As we approach the period we have assigned as the limit to this general view of Manners, we find that there has been, in some degree, an awakening of society to a more decorous, and, we may therefore presume, to a more virtuous exhibition of character and conduct. Literature has been very materially purified. Scenes and expressions in writers of fiction, which were held to be natural and amusing in the middle of the century, were deemed gross and revolting towards its close. Whether these exceptionable passages were derived from the tone of the age—which is most probable; or were the oozings out of the impure thoughts of the writers, which we are unwilling to believe—it is certain that they have condemned Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne to an oblivion from which their great powers would otherwise have saved them. We see, also, that the miseries of poverty and the degradation of ignorance had stirred up some feeling of what was required for the mitigation of evils not absolutely associated with humble station. In high life, the example of the Court was working a gradual reformation. But there were influences more potent in operation to produce a more vital change then Literature or Fashion.

The observant Frenchman to whom we have several times referred, M. Grosley, says, of "the sect of the Methodists,"—"this establishment has borne all the persecutions that it could possibly apprehend in a country as much disposed to persecution as England is the reverse." * The light literature of forty years overflows with ridicule of Methodism. The preachers are pelted by the mob; the converts are held up to execration as fanatics or hypocrites. Yet Methodism held the ground it had gained. It had gone forth to utter the words of truth to men little above the beasts that perish, and it had brought them to regard themselves as akin to humanity. The time would come when its earnestness

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* "Observations on England," vol. i. p. 356.

would awaken the Church itself from its somnolency, and the educated classes would not be ashamed to be religious. There was wild enthusiasm enough in some of the followers of Whitefield and Wesley; much self-seeking; zeal verging upon profaneness; moral conduct strangely opposed to pious profession. But these earnest men left a mark upon their time which can never be effaced. The obscure young students at Oxford, in 1736, who were first called "Sacramentarians," then "Bible Moths," and finally "Methodists," to whom the regular pulpits were closed, and who then went forth to preach in the fields—who separated from the Church more in form than in reality—produced a moral revolution in England which probably saved us from the fate of nations wholly abandoned to their own devices.

The individuality of opinion and conduct which is so characteristic of England—so different to the "all men alike" of France—led the two founders of Methodism into different paths. The principle of individuality originally isolated them from the torpid religion and the lax morality of the college life. It sent them to preach to the neglected poor wherever vice and ignorance most abounded, without much regard to the discipline of the Church of which they were members. But the characters of Whitefield and Wesley were in some respects very different. Whitefield was satisfied with rousing the sinful and the indifferent by his own fervid eloquence, without providing for the systematic continuance of his personal efforts. His preaching created a host of followers, who, branching off in their several localities, were content to be led by men without education. Starting up as teachers from the lowest ranks, such men, although too vain and presumptuous to see their own incompetence, were nevertheless better judges, in many cases, than the educated clergy, of the mode in which rude natures could be most effectually awakened to penitence for sin. Wesley, on the other hand, saw the danger of this indiscriminate admission of every fanatic to be a gospel-preacher; and he instituted and perfected by his incessant labours that remarkable organization known as Wesleyism. The exertions of these two men, each pursuing tracks not essentially diverging however separate, had produced effects in half a century of which their opponents could have formed no adequate estimate. The clergy, who preached and wrote against the excesses of coarse enthusiasts—the wits, who exhibited hypocrisy and credulity upon the stage, in the endeavour to laugh down the Methodists—could not wholly shut their eyes to the conviction that there was a real power at work which touched other natures than such as those of the Mawworms and Mrs. Coles. The power could not be despised which made floods of tears roll down the sooty cheeks of the colliers of Kingswood; and which, penetrating to Scotland, had called the lowest of the population of Glasgow to go forth to Cambuslang, and there, "at the foot of the brae near the kirk," hear the Word preached in the open fields, and surrender themselves to an irresistible influence, such as was wielded by the Puritans of old. To assist in "the extraordinary work of Cambuslang" Whitefield came, and saw thirty thousand persons assembled to receive the Sacrament. There was beheld, upon the largest scale, scenes that were familiar in England amongst the earliest converts to Methodism—shrieks, violent agitations of body, shaking and trembling, fainting and convulsions. These manifestations were, by one party in the Church of Scotland, ascribed to the delusions of Satan; by another party to the influence of the Holy Spirit; and by a third party, to natural causes, produced by sermons addressed "not to the understanding of the hearers, but to their imaginations and passions."* These early effects of the fervid preaching of the new sect passed away. But the gradual influence of a more earnest sense of religion was diffused through the whole community of Britain. The members of the Churches of England and Scotland ceased to ridicule even such extravagances as were seen at "the Cambuslang conversions." The separation between Establishment and Dissent became less marked by bitter hostility. The principle of individuality was not less strong; but it gradually put off the form of intolerance, for that honest rivalry in the attempt to do good which has, more than any other cause, enabled us to look back upon the morals and manners of the last century as a condition of society not likely to return.

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* Sinclair—"Statistical Account of Scotland," vol. v.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Retrospect of Indian affairs.—Hastings Governor-General.—Rohilla war.—New Council at Calcutta.—Hastings and the Council opposed to each other.—Nuncomar.—His execution.—Dissentions at Madras.—Mahratta war.—Capture of Gwalior.—Hyder Ali.—The Carnatic ravaged.—Hyder defeated by Coote.—Death of Hyder.—Succeeded by his son Tippoo Saib.—Benares.—Oude.—The Begums.—Committee of the Houses of Parliament on Indian Affairs.

In June 1783, when the news arrived at Calcutta that the preliminaries of peace had been signed between Great Britain and France, the misfortunes that had at one time foreboded the downfall of the British power in India had been mainly overcome. The war with Tippoo Saib and his French auxiliaries was still maintained; although it was evident that the energy of Warren Hastings had succeeded in averting the danger in the East, which, not long before, appeared to threaten as calamitous results as those which had attended our arms in the West. Before we resume our narrative of civil affairs at home, it will be proper that we should take up the history of events in India, from the period of the appointment of Hasting as the first Governor-General.*

Previous to the nomination of Hastings to this high office by the Act of 1773, he had, in his capacity of Governor of Bengal, struck out a line of policy, in which we alternately admire his sagacity and blush, as his countrymen, for his unscrupulousness. In 1772, he was labouring, as an honest statesman, to repair as far as possible the miseries produced by the famine of 1770, and by judicious fiscal arrangements to overcome the consequent embarrassments in the collection of the revenue of the depopulated districts. He freed the country from bands of robbers, by appointing local officers to maintain authority. He secured the administration of justice, by instituting local courts of law. If he could have met, by just means, the unceasing demands of the Directors of the East India Company for lacs of rupees, he would not have resorted to those modes of gratifying the cupidity of his masters for which many apologies have been offered, but for which no adequate defence has ever been established. He was a faithful sevant to the Company, not waiting for direct orders to commit injustice, but securing

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* *Ante*, vol. vi. p. 154.