

Hanover ebbed away for want of opportunities of exerting itself. And, meanwhile, on opponents as on friends, the freedom which the revolution had brought with it was doing its work.

It was to the patient influence of this freedom that Walpole trusted; and it was the special mark of his administration that, in spite of every temptation, he gave it full play. Though he dared not touch the laws that oppressed the Catholic or the dissenter, he took care that they should remain inoperative. Catholic worship went on unhindered. Yearly bills of indemnity exempted the non-conformists from the consequences of their infringement of the test act. There was no tampering with public justice or with personal liberty. Thought and action were alike left free. No minister was ever more foully slandered by journalists and pamphleteers, but Walpole never meddled with the press.

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THE PREACHING OF WHITEFIELD.—LECKY.

[The great Methodist revival dates from the later years of Walpole's ministry. The Church of England was in a state of great stagnation, and a group of Oxford students, among whom John and Charles Wesley were the most prominent, determined to regenerate it. But the wonderful preaching of Whitefield was the main instrument in spreading the movement, especially among the lower classes.]

His eloquence had nothing of that chaste and polished beauty which was displayed in the discourses of the great French preachers, and which, in the present century, has led so many men of fastidious taste to hang spell-bound around the pulpit of Robert Hall. It had none of that force of reasoning, that originality of thought, or that splendor of language, which constituted the great charm of the sermons of

Chalmers. Yet, while exercising a power which has, probably never been equaled on the most ignorant and the most vicious, Whitefield was quite capable of fascinating the most refined audiences in London, and he extorted the tribute of warm admiration from such critics as Hume and Franklin, from such orators as Bolingbroke and Chesterfield. His preaching combined almost the highest perfection of acting with the most burning fervor of conviction. No man ever exhibited more wonderfully that strange power which great histrionic talent exercises over the human mind—investing words which are, in truth, the emptiest bombast with all the glow of the most majestic eloquence, and imparting, for a moment at least, to confident assertions more than the weight of the most convincing arguments. His gestures were faultless in their beauty and propriety, while his voice was so powerful that Franklin, who was the most accurate of men, ascertained by experiment that it could be heard distinctly in the open air by 30,000 persons. It was, at the same time, eminently sweet, musical, and varied, and it was managed with perfect skill. Garrick is reported to have said, with a pardonable exaggeration, that Whitefield could pronounce the word *Mesopotamia* in such a way as to move an audience to tears. With the exception of a slight squint of one eye, which was much dwelt on by his satirists, his person was unusually graceful and imposing, and, like Chatham, the piercing glance of a singularly brilliant eye contributed, in no small measure, to the force of his appeals.

To these gifts we must add a large command of vivid, homely, and picturesque English, and an extraordinary measure of the tact which enables a practiced orator to adapt himself to the character and dispositions of his audience. We must add, above all, a contagious fervor of enthusiasm, which, like a resistless torrent, bore down every obstacle. Of no other preacher could it be more truly said that he preached "as a dying man to dying men." His favorite