

against the superstitious religion, indeed, against every form of tyranny. Voltaire felt deeply on all subjects connected with man and he could not sit idle and allow the abuses of man's right to go on. His pen was his only means of attack and he used that to best advantage. The follies and vices of every station in life became subjects for his wit to play upon. All through his writings are scattered bits of incisive irony. In the tale called *Zadig* he mocks the inconsistency of the actions of men and the fickleness of human nature; he laughs at the wise doctor, Hemes, who "wrote a book to prove that *Zadig's* eye ought not to have been cured;" and speaks, perhaps with sarcasm, concerning "a learned man, who had composed thirteen volumes on the properties of the Griffin." His writing is full of vivacity and life because he himself was so thoroughly alive; and through it all is his very evident love of humanity. Such work could not fail to have its effect and so we find beginning with the promise of a better era. Perhaps he may be said to have had more to do with the overthrow of the Ancient Regime than had any other influence. This ridicule of Voltaire's was what is often called dry humor, effected merely by recounting the exact conditions which he wishes to satirize in such a manner that their utter foolishness is evident. Thus he assails the weaknesses of his own time through little romances, in themselves apparently quite fictitious and perhaps laid far away from France.

Dickens' method of ridicule is very different, he brings to light the existing evils in England not by stray bits of pointed irony, as Voltaire did, but by caricaturing his people, exaggerating them to show the absurd, and carrying these caricatures through whole books as a kind of hidden, underlying method of onset. "*Little Dorrit*" is an example of this in its disclosure of the cruelty of the debtors' prison. Along with a certain pleasure in the aptness of his ridicule people began to realize wrong as they would never have done had he spent his time in long harangues or written arguments. They felt the folly of it, were in some way impressed by the truth of his view, and, underneath his charming manner and queer characters, readers saw the evils around them in new light. When once men are awakened to an interest in affairs some action is sure to result and so in this case Dickens' ridicule had its effect.

Perhaps no one, however, has had the weapon of ridicule more completely in control than had Addison. His was a genial, kindly