

scape like a web on a bleaching green, only not quite so straightly drawn out. It is a ribbon about half a mile in breadth, and it stretches away lengthwise above and below, far as the eye can reach. There rises over it on each side a gentle line of acclivity, that here advances upon it in flat promontories, there recedes into shallow bays, and very much resembles the line of a low-lying but exceedingly rich coast; for on both sides, field and wood, cottage and hedge-row, lie thick as the variously tinted worsteds in a piece of German needlework; the flat ribbon in the midst is bare and open, and through it there winds, from side to side, in many a convolution, as its appropriate pattern, a blue sluggish stream, deeply fringed on both banks by an edging of tall bulrushes. The pleasantly grouped village directly opposite, with the long narrow bridge in front, and the old handsome church and tall spire rising in the midst, is Olney; and that other village on the same side, about two miles further up the stream, with the exceedingly lofty trees rising over it, — trees so lofty that they overhang the square tower of its church, as a churchyard cypress overhangs a sepulchral monument, — is *Weston-Underwood*. In the one village Cowper produced "The Task;" in the other he translated "Homer."

I crossed the bridge, destined, like the "Brigs of Ayr," and the "Bridge of Sighs," long to outlive its stone and lime existence; passed the church, — John Newton's; saw John Newton's house, a snug building, much garnished with greenery; and then entered Olney proper, — the village that was Olney a hundred years ago. Unlike most of the villages of central England, it is built, not of brick, but chiefly at least of a calcareous yellow stone from the Oolite, which, as it gathers scarce any lichen or moss, looks clean and fresh after the lapse of centuries; and it is not until the eye catches the dates on the