

peaked gable points, 1682, 1611, 1590, that one can regard the place as no hastily run up town of yesterday, but as a place that had a living in other times. The main street, which is also the Bedford road, broadens towards the middle of the village into a roomy angle, in shape not very unlike the capacious pocket of a Scotch housewife of the old school : one large elm tree rises in the centre ; and just opposite the elm, among the houses which skirt the base of the angle, — *i. e.* the bottom of the pocket, — we see an old-fashioned house, considerably taller than the others, and differently tinted ; for it is built of red brick, somewhat ornately bordered with stone. And this tall brick house was Cowper's home for nineteen years. It contains the parlor, which has become such a standard paragon of snugness and comfort, that it will need no repairs in all the future ; and the garden behind is that in which the poet reared his cucumbers and his Ribston pippins, and in which he plied hammer and saw to such excellent purpose, in converting his small greenhouse into a summer sitting-room, and in making lodging-houses for his hares. He dated from that tall house not a few of the most graceful letters in the English language, and matured, from the first crude conceptions to the last finished touches, " Truth," " Hope," " The Progress of Error," " Retirement," and " The Task." I found the famed parlor vocal with the gabble of an infant school : carpet and curtains were gone, sofa and bubbling urn : and I saw, instead, but a few deal forms, and about two dozen chubby children, whom all the authority of the thin old woman, their teacher, could not recall to diligence in the presence of the stranger. The walls were sorely soiled, and the plaster somewhat broken ; there was evidence, too, that a partition had been removed, and that the place was roomier by one-half than when Cowper and Mrs. Unwin used to sit down in it to their evening tea.