

What exquisite description! And who, acquainted with Cowper, ever walked in a wood when the sun shone, and the wind ruffled the leaves, without realizing it! It was too dead a calm to-day to show me the dancing light and shadow where the picture had first been taken: the feathery outline of the foliage lay in diluted black, moveless on the grass, like the foliage of an Indian-ink drawing newly washed in; but all else was present, just as Cowper had described half a century before. Two minutes' walk, after passing through the avenue, brought me to the upper corner of the park, and "the proud alcove that crowns it,"—for the "proud alcove" does still crown it. But time, and the weather, and rotting damp, seem to be working double tides on the failing pile, and it will not crown it long. The alcove is a somewhat clumsy erection of wood and plaster, with two squat wooden columns in front, of a hybrid order between the Tuscan and Doric, and a seat within. A crop of dark-colored mushrooms cherished by the damp summer had shot up along the joints of the decaying floor; the plaster, flawed and much stained, dangled from the ceiling in numerous little bits, suspended, like the sword of old, by single hairs; the broad deal architrave had given way at one end, but the bolt at the other still proved true; and so it hung diagonally athwart the two columns, like the middle bar of a gigantic letter N. The "characters uncouth" of the "rural carvers" are, however, still legible; and not a few names have since been added. This upper corner of the park forms its highest ground, and the view is very fine. The streamless dell—not streamless always, however, for the poet describes the urn of its little Naiad as filled in winter—lies immediately in front, and we see the wood within its hollow recesses, as if "sunk, and shortened to the topmost boughs." The green undulating surface of the park, still more deeply