

captain. And on nearing the village of Skirvington, he seemed to feel that the bonnet was not the sort of head-dress in which a demure Englishman looked most himself. 'It might do well enough for a Scotchman like me,' he said, "but not so well for him." I wore, by chance, a tolerably good hat, and proposed making a temporary exchange, until we should have passed the village; but fate declared itself against the transaction. The Englishman's bonnet would have lain, we found, like a coronet upon a cushion on the Scotch head; and the Scotch hat, on the other hand, threatened to swallow up the Englishman. I found myself in error in deeming him an acquaintance of our fellow-traveller the minister: he did not even know his name, and was exceedingly anxious to find it out, — quite fidgety on the point; for he was, he said, a profoundly able man, and, he was certain, a person of note. At the inn at Newport Pagnell, however, he succeeded, I know not how, in ferreting the name out; and whispered into my ear, as we went, that he was assured he was in the right in deeming our companion somebody: the gentleman in black beside us was no other than Dr. ———. But the doctor's name was wholly unfamiliar to me, and I have since forgotten it.

Newport Pagnell! I had but just one association with the place, besides the one formed as I had passed through its streets two evenings before, on the night of riot and clamor: it had been for many years the home of worthy, witty, bluff William Bull, — the honest Independent minister who used so regularly to visit poor Cowper in his affliction, ere Cowper had yet become famous, and whom the affectionate poet learned so cordially to love. How strangely true genius does brighten up whatever object it falls upon! It is, to borrow from Sir Walter's illustration, the playful sunbeam, that, capriciously selecting some little bit of glass or earthen ware in the middle of