

the poet of nature and of Christian philanthropy had found a refuge. As a lad he studied theology, and learned to lead the prayers of Christian men and women under Sutcliff, in Olney, not a stone's-throw from the Orchard House of William Cowper and Mrs. Unwin. It was in writing his sixty-eight Olney Hymns, the first and as yet only poet's gift to modern hymnology, that Cowper's genius recognized itself. It was in the seven years from 1780-86 that he poured forth his "Progress of Error," his "Truth," his "Table Talk," his "Expostulation," his "Hope," his "Charity," his "Conversation," his "Retirement," and then his great work, "The Task," which placed him forever in the rare position of the poet's poet, so that Mrs. Browning sang at his grave :

"O poets, from a maniac's tongue was poured the deathless singing!
 O Christians, at your cross of hope a hopeless band was clinging!
 O men, this man in brotherhood your weary paths beguiling,
 Groaned inly while he taught you peace, and died while ye were smiling!"

Cowper heads the procession of the century's poets and prose writers with his hymns of self-surrender, his strains of hope, his trumpet call for the slave, his praise of the evangelicals whom the world despised, his assertion of the right of every man to know the love of God in Christ.

If the world was waiting for such a man as William Carey, the Church was asleep. In England the Wesleys and Whitefield, in Scotland the "Marrow" divines and Secession fathers, in South India such workers as Schwartz, in ice-bound America and the West Indies the devotion of the Moravian Brethren, had led Cowper in 1782 to sing of the first echo of Gospel-preaching :

"That sound bespeaks salvation on its way,
 The triumph of a life-restoring day;
 'Tis heard where England's Eastern glory shines,
 And in the gulfs of her Cornubian mines,
 And still it spreads."

When Carey himself, four years after, wrote his survey of the religious state of the world, the only names of what would now be called foreign missionaries that he could give were Mr. Eliot, of New England, so long before as 1632; Mr. David Brainerd, who did not live long enough to dispense with an interpreter, Mr. Kirkland and Mr. Sergeant. The late Mr. Wesley is named as having "lately made an effort in the West Indies;" but a generation was to pass before the Wesleyan Methodists, who had a great missionary in Coke, were to follow the example of Carey's Society about 1817. Not an Englishman could be found to be sent forth by the Church Missionary Society till the same year. The Church of Scotland heard foreign missions denounced as preposterous by a minister whom it raised to the chair of Moderator of its General Assembly; while Dr. John Erskine, the friend of Sir Walter Scott and correspondent of Carey, was one of the few who protested against such blasphemy. Carey stood alone,