

she returned to England, and settled down at Bath, where she became a familiar figure in the social life of the period.

Her cousin, William Cowper, was now famous, and after reading his "John Gilpin," published in 1785, Lady Hesketh felt a strong desire to renew the old ties of affection that had once existed between them. A letter from her called forth a warm response from the poet, and thenceforward until his death in 1800, a regular correspondence was kept up between them. When her own infirmities and his unhappy state prevented her from visiting him, she wrote every week to "Johnny of Norfolk," then curate of East Dereham, who took charge of his cousin during these later years, and tended him with a filial devotion. A number of letters addressed by Lady Hesketh to Mr. Johnson have recently come to light, and though they add nothing to Cowper's fame, yet they contain many little intimate touches which will not be without interest to lovers of the poet, as well as several curious allusions to the life and manners of the period. Lady Hesketh is revealed in these letters as a kind-hearted but somewhat fussy old lady, inordinately proud of her relationship to Cowper, reigning like a little queen at Bath, and made much of by everybody wherever she went, from the Royal Family downwards.

In 1794, Mrs. Unwin had become so enfeebled, both mentally and physically, through a paralytic stroke, that her companionship once all-sufficing, only aggravated the poet's melancholy. Lady Hesketh's knowledge of this fact, and perhaps some touch of natural jealousy, led her to write of the poor lady with an asperity, not to say spitefulness, which was hardly worthy of so innately kind-hearted a woman. In the summer of 1794 she is staying at Weston, and sends the following curious communication from thence to "Johnny of Norfolk," on the subject of an old tea-pot of Mrs. Unwin's, which he had apparently received permission to exchange for a new one :

Rare indeed, my good Sir John, and valuable as rare ! Why what a costly packet did you send us last night ! . . . I have the satisfaction to inform