

## LADY HESKETH AND "JOHNNY OF NORFOLK"

A CENTURY has passed away since Cowper died, and the centenary year has brought a revival of interest in both himself and his work. Very little fresh material concerning him has come to light, and the poet's letters still remain his best biography—those delightful letters in which he engages our sympathy and affection not only for himself, but also for the correspondents, who by their faithful service and unswerving devotion did all that was humanly possible to enlighten the heavy burden of his later years. Among these the two cousins, Lady Hesketh and the Rev. John Johnson, commonly called "Johnny of Norfolk," played a leading part. It will be remembered that during the three years that Cowper was articled to a London solicitor, he spent much of his leisure at the house of his uncle, Mr. Ashley Cowper, and became a great favourite with his cousins Harriet and Theodora. With Theodora he fell in love, but an engagement was forbidden on account of the near relationship of the pair. Harriet, however, kept up a correspondence with her sister's lover until the change in his religious opinions temporarily alienated her sympathies from him, and the friendship was suspended for a period of twenty years. Meanwhile Harriet had become the wife of Sir Thomas Hesketh, and spent the greater part of her married life abroad. After her husband's death in 1778,