

deeply versed in the hidden springs of human nature.

Pope's rank as a poet has been variously estimated, and doubtless there will always be great difference of opinion; in the judgment of some he stands almost without a rival, others would deny him the title of poet altogether, but his popularity has always been great. In contrasting Pope's earlier with his later poems, it has been well remarked that his early gaiety of spirits must have been heightened by the "voluntary vein" of the "Rape of the Lock," which established his reputation, and by the success of his "Homer," which

the first playful effort of satire without ill-nature, at once gay, elegant, and delightful :

'Belinda smiles, and all the world is gay.'

"The man of severer thought now appears in the 'Essay on Man.' The same vein shows itself in the 'Moral Essays,' but the investigation is directed to individual failings, and mingled with spleen and anger. In the later satires we witness the language of acrimony and bitterness. The 'Dunciad' closes the prospect, and we there behold the aged bard among a swarm of enemies, who began his career all innocence, happiness, and smiles."



LADY HOWE'S VILLA AND POPE'S GROTTTO. (From a Drawing by G. Banet, 1850.)

rendered him independent in his circumstances. Mr. Bowles has an interesting note, comparing the succession of Pope's original productions with the progress of his mind and character:—"In his earliest effusion—the 'Ode on Solitude'—all is rural quiet, innocence, content, &c. We next see, in his 'Pastorals,' the golden age of happiness, while the—

'Shepherd lad leads forth his flock
Beside the silver Thame.'

"His next step, 'Windsor Forest,' exhibits the same rural turn, but with views more diversified and extended, and approaching more to the real history and concerns of life. The warm passions of youth succeed, and we are interested in the fate of the tender Sappho or the ardent and unfortunate Floise. As the world opens, local manners are displayed. In the 'Rape of the Lock' we see

Dr. Johnson, in his "Life of Pope," writes as follows with reference to the respective excellences of Pope and his model and predecessor, Dryden. "Dryden," he says, "knew more of man in his general nature, and Pope in his local manners; the notions of Dryden were formed by comprehensive speculation, those of Pope by minute attention. There is more dignity in the knowledge of Dryden, more certainty in that of Pope. Dryden is sometimes vehement, Pope always smooth; Dryden's page is a natural field, Pope's a velvet lawn. If the flights of Dryden are higher, Pope continues longer on the wing. If of Dryden's fire the blaze is brighter, of Pope's the heat is more regular and constant. Dryden often surpasses expectation, and Pope never falls below it. Dryden is read with frequent astonishment, and Pope with perpetual delight."

Thackeray says of the concluding verses of the