

THE SCENERY
OF LONDON
PAINTED BY
HERBERT MARSHALL
DESCRIBED BY
G. EMITTON



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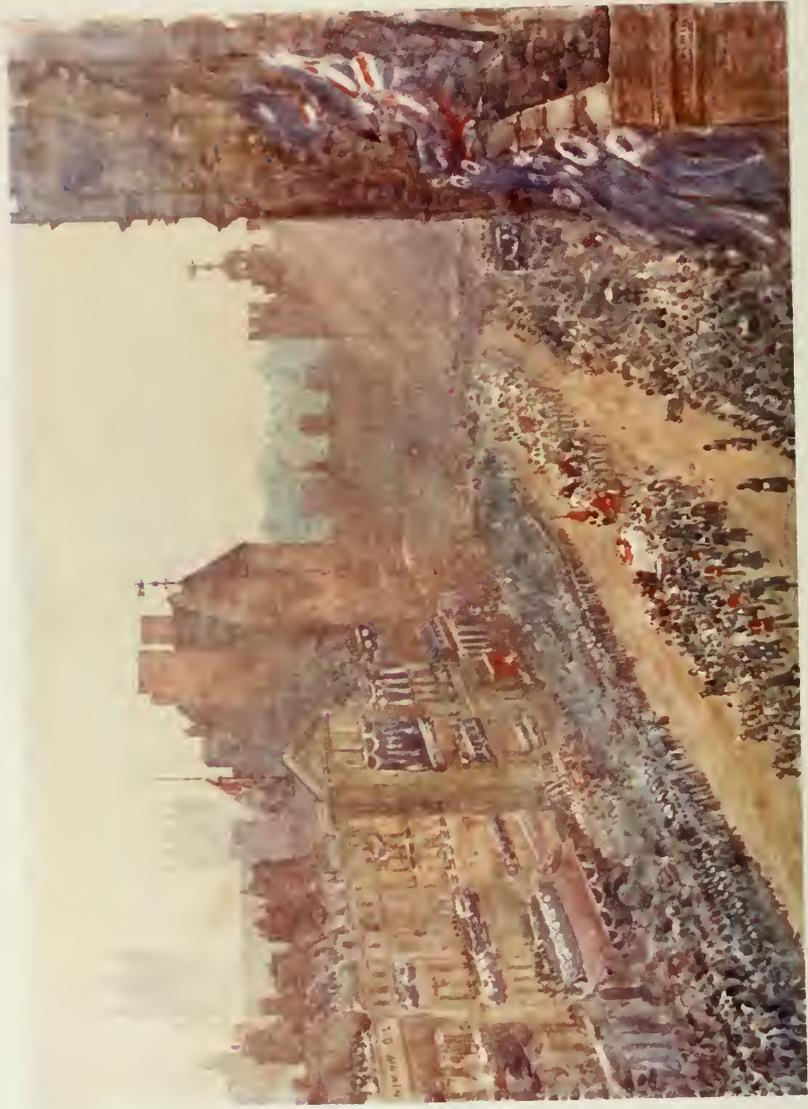
THE SCENERY OF LONDON



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QUEEN VICTORIA'S FUNERAL, FEB. 2, 1901

The procession is passing up St. James's Street.

THE SCENERY OF
LONDON · PAINTED BY
HERBERT M. MARSHALL
R.W.S. · DESCRIBED BY
G. E. MITTON · PUBLISHED
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Preface

No attempt has been made by either artist or author to give in this book a stereotyped and exhaustive survey of London, that has been done better elsewhere; it is rather the book of two people who love London in all her varying moods, with her wonder, her unexpectedness, her dear familiarity. The questions, "Have I represented this or that or the other?" or "Will not the public miss so and so which always appears in every book of London?" have never once been asked.

Artist and author alike have painted and written out of love, and out of their knowledge of the most wonderful city the world has ever known. It is rather as though they said, "Have you ever seen London like that? Do you know just that peculiar atmosphere that comes in the grey morning or wintry evening? Have you realised that the streets are glorious with the records of the great dead? Can you see them, princes, statesmen, bishops, nobles, men of letters, men of science, walking about by-gone London, the same city at heart but so different in aspect from what it is now?"

Scenery of London

This is all I have to say,—for statistics, for minute catalogues of names, for many other highly useful things, look elsewhere ; this book is painted and written by two who love London for those who would be, or are, her lovers also.

The Artist and Publishers desire me to take this opportunity of thanking those owners whose names are printed in the List of Illustrations, for kindly lending the original pictures to be reproduced in the volume.

G. E. MITTON.

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LONDON AS A PIECE OF MOSAIC

CHAPTER I

PROEM : LONDON AS A PIECE OF MOSAIC

LONDON is not one homogeneous whole, alike in all her parts, but rather a glittering piece of mosaic work, consisting of innumerable facets, each separate in itself yet united with the rest, and forming together a wondrous and intricate pattern. There are mud-coloured lines and dark patches as well as ruby points : seen from one angle the total result is grey confusion, seen from another the radiant points so scintillate as to conceal the darker parts. Both visions are true, both are equally London, yet neither is the whole truth, for neither of mud nor of rubies is the great city made.

The casual visitor, and the foreigner who looks at her from afar, can never know London. To the latter all detail is lost, her majesty only is manifest ; he sees the magnificence of the whole, heightened by the value of her position, and the permanence of her historic setting, but he sees none of the light and shade, the infinite diversity of detail which are really London. The casual visitor sees the detail prominently enough,

Scenery of London

but sees part of it only. He is impressed by one aspect, probably "the dust and din and steam of town," and carries that away with him as his mental reference to London. Therefore it is not the foreigner or the stranger who knows her as she should be known. That knowledge comes only after years of patient intimacy ; by slow growth, like the growth of the one friendship of a lifetime ; by adding facet to facet and interweaving the mosaic as a part of the background of daily life : thus only can one know the mystery and the fascination of London, and feel it in one's blood until it becomes a love second only to the strong love felt for the home of one's childhood.

The aspect most familiar to the stranger, and probably one of the most repellent, is that of the streets at mid-day on one of those days so frequent in the climatic cycle through which we are passing. A day of grey skies and mud-brown streets, when the drab and stone-coloured walls put on their dingiest tones, and the passers-by form a stream as monotonous and uninteresting as a lowland brook.

Any street will do as the background for such a picture. Take the Piccadilly end of Shaftesbury Avenue as a specimen. Here several omnibuses stand at the corner, and the passers-by thread their way amid the inert loiterers. Here is a man moving briskly, he knows what he wants, and thinks little of what may be correctly deemed a "shove"—hardly a push—in order to attain it. He is short without being exceptionally so, spare without actual thinness ; his fair hair and



HYDE PARK CORNER



London as a Piece of Mosaic

moustache are sparse and straw-coloured, his face not noticeably differing from them in hue. He is decently and even warmly clothed, yet he cannot, by any stretch of the imagination, be called well dressed. Age and position can only be guessed approximately, for he may be anything from five-and-twenty to forty, and in position from a plumber to a clerk. Multiply him by the million, and you have the men who make the wheels go round, with so little pleasure or profit to themselves in the process that the wonder is that the momentum which started them is sufficient to keep them running. And yet perhaps the exertion required to come to a full stop would be greater.

Here comes a boy in buttons pulling on white thread gloves as he walks, a putty-faced lad with abnormally smooth hair, and an expression which may be termed unwholesome. Two elderly ladies in passing hold up their skirts unnecessarily high, and display square-toed boots the worse for wear ; they are of a better class than the young man who jumped on to the 'bus before them, "ladies" in the usual, not the shop-girl's, sense of the word. In every line of their clothes, in every movement they make, they betray the price they have paid for this gentility, namely, the loss of freedom and the narrowness of the stultified lives they lead. A bold girl comes next, with her hair in curl papers, her eyes bright and roving ; you feel she is ready, on the smallest provocation, to emit the scream which with her is the sign of enjoyment ; over her arm she carries a black linen cloth concealing some finished clothes which she

Scenery of London

has been machining for the "sweater." Two nondescript men of an altogether unascertainable rank, but well dressed and smoking cigars, part at the street corner with much affectionate handshaking and returning for another last word. Their very exuberance of friendship, in contrast with their narrow faces and untrustworthy expressions, speaks of their attempts to get the better of each other. These figures and many like them are set in a grey atmosphere, overhung by leaden skies; the surroundings are drab houses, and a muddy street.

It is an unlovely crowd in an unlovely environment; and this is the view they take of it who see only the mud-coloured stripes that run throughout the whole mosaic of London.

Take another point of view. Here is a young officer, very young, and fresh as a public-school boy; he is vicious neither by inclination nor habits. He comes of a good stock, which is as much as to say, in London parlance, that he "knows every one"; he has money in his pocket, and gets away from his rather dreary station for a day or so in London. It is summer, and he plays polo at Hurlingham or Ranelagh surrounded by the fairest Englishwomen, exquisitely dressed; he dines in private houses where the appointments are perfect, the guests entertaining, beautiful, witty, or clever, at any rate never dull. He goes to the first night at a theatre where he sees a play by a well-known playwright. In the stalls some of the most notable men and women in England are pointed out to him, and all

THE PAVILION AT "LORD'S"

Sketch from the Grand Stand.



London as a Piece of Mosaic

the time he is surrounded by an atmosphere of comfort from which mud, dirt, and the rough edge of life are carefully excluded. He has in the interspaces of other amusements, one of the best clubs in Piccadilly open to him, where the difficulty is to find that crumpled rose-leaf that so enhances appreciation. After the theatre or the music hall he may go to the Carlton with a party for supper. Here are the best-dressed women in Europe. At that table not far off a cabinet minister is supping with a party, beyond him is a man whom England calls her finest general. The women are all beautiful or have, what is more attractive than beauty, distinction. The soft swish of silk and satin, the delicate yet audacious combinations of colour in the gowns, the priceless laces, the scintillating jewels ; the atmosphere of the right warmth, with just a suggestion of scent ; the music which blends with conversation ; the menu chosen by the highest connoisseur in London—that is to say in the world, and the noiseless waiting ; all form a picture appealing to every sense, and soothing all. The young soldier goes back to his barracks, and the mental picture of London he carries with him is one of flashing radiance ; the rubies have been his portion.

The gold of London is apparent to those whose tastes are cultivated, who are literary, artistic, scientific, or musical. In London are to be found the men who are at the top of their professions, celebrated authors, artists, and musicians. Even without being aught but a nonentity it is open to all to hear the best music composed by men famed all the world over, to see the great master-

Scenery of London

pieces of painting, to attend lectures by the men who are in the vanguard of science. Priceless objects of art, rare books, ancient treasures, are open free for the inspection of the poorest ; these things are the real gold of the richest city in the world. Yet some find it in the evidences of wealth so apparent in what is called the season. In Hyde Park on a summer afternoon, a triple and quadruple line of carriages stretches for a mile or more from Hyde Park Corner upwards, and were the occupants to sit on golden seats they could not proclaim their wealth more certainly. The pair of roans champ-ing their bits with haughty pride are almost priceless, and they are not exceptional, carriage after carriage in its admirable appointments speaks of money ; this is one detail by which to measure the wealth of London. The Opera on a gala night may claim to rank equally, so far as display goes, for here is a "dream of fair women," exquisitely clothed and sparkling with jewellery difficult to estimate in terms of money ; these women are born to wealth, and live on swansdown.

But what of the dark lines that run throughout the pattern, culminating here and there in black patches of terrible poverty, or of vice with or without the accompanying poverty ? These lines and patches are very obvious. Of the darker side of vice this is not the place to speak, but it is well known ; the lines of poverty are not generally so much noticed. Take this one, for instance, and follow it out. Stand outside the gates of the Green Park at 4.30 A.M. It is a raw November morning without wind, and all traffic is for



GREEN PARK

GREEN PARK



London as a Piece of Mosaic

a while at rest. Near at hand may be heard in the darkness hoarse breathing, and many a husky cough, which, if it emanated from any of those you love, would madden you with anxiety. Then there is the grinding of a key in the lock, the opening of a gate, and that wretched sodden handful of men and women who have paced the wet pavements all night, with the command to "move on" breaking in on any intermittent slumbers, pass through into the wide green spaces where permission to sleep is graciously accorded them. Sleep! What mockery; with the dawn of a damp winter morning enwalling them round, with the terrible darkness of the sky for a ceiling overhead; with the soaking, tufted grass for mattress upon a bed of sodden soil. For furniture in this vast bedroom, a few dripping trees, and soaked seats. What could one want more? If it were summer the weary ones would fling themselves in all attitudes on the grass, looking like bundles of old clothes, and lie there half the day, men and women alike, until maybe the sun had put a little reviving life into their chill bodies. But in winter even those stiff and tired limbs decline the inviting "bed," and prefer the hard wooden seat, which does not strike so chill to rheumatic bones, and sitting there at an angle, which ensures with perfect certainty a cricked neck, the miserable, empty, ill-clad creatures sleep in sheer exhaustion until the rumble of the omnibuses in Piccadilly has long been heard; sleep until the sun is well risen, a disc of burnished copper against a sky of solid slate; sleep until the string of brisk clerks of both sexes tramp

Scenery of London

along the diagonal path which crosses the wide green space. These outcasts, when they at length bestir themselves, make a rough toilet in the park in view of all the world. There the women shake out their battered, shapeless hats, and wipe their faces with a dirty bit of rag, smoothing their tangled shreds of hair with their hands. There may be seen a man, in a faded green coat, tying the bit of knotted string that holds his "boot" together. They are pulling themselves up to face once more the infinity of days that stretches before them.

Then they sally forth to "pick over" the refuse of the dust-bins, and find therein treasures. They may be seen any morning before the dust-carts have removed the contents of those prim, cylindrical zinc receptacles on which the British householder prides himself. These grim, gaunt creatures, never young and never very old, prowling around with furtive air, turning over filth that makes a decent man sick to look at, and grasping at the revolting details to carry them away. Take as a specimen this one drawn from life, a small man with a woolly black beard and matted hair, who shuffles along in a pair of enormous flat boots that turn up at the toes and look as if they had no feet in them. His trousers are split at the seams and hang in tatters touching the ground, in places they are caked with ancient mud; his coat is of many shades of weather-worn green, bulging at the pockets with the treasure-trove found in the dust heaps, and hangs at the back in rags, showing several linings; the man is a human kite living on offal, and degraded inexpressibly.



KNIGHTSBRIDGE

View westward from St. George's Hospital.



London as a Piece of Mosaic

In the neighbourhood of Shaftesbury Avenue, about nine o'clock there may often be seen an irregular army of shabby men, worn and pinched with hunger, scattering to the right and left across the roadway ; these are the rejected of the men who give out sandwich boards ; they have been unable to obtain a " job " even of the lowest sort, others have been preferred before them. These instances are but lines and threads of that blackness that is woven throughout the pattern. It needs the vocabulary of a Carlyle to describe London, so we will end with straight-spoken Thomas :—

London City, with all its houses, palaces, steam-engines, cathedrals, and huge immeasurable traffic and tumult. What is it but a Thought, but millions of Thoughts made into one ; a huge immeasurable Spirit of a Thought, embodied in brick, in iron, smoke, dust, palaces, parliaments, hackney-coaches, Katherine Docks, and the rest of it !

THE COLOUR OF LONDON

CHAPTER II

THE COLOUR OF LONDON

A RAILING accusation has been brought against this our famous city that she has no colour ; no colour, not figuratively speaking but actually, no colour like the brilliant tones that make harmonies of the meanest streets in Japan, or such as the clear air reveals in every fabric and texture in Paris. Of all unfounded accusations this is the most untenable ! Colour we have in quantity, crude in startling variety, strewn along our streets, and about our parks and open spaces ; colour on the hoardings and in the shops, colour massed in the baskets of the flower women, colour in the never-ending procession of brilliant-hued omnibuses that pass along our streets.

This much must be in all honesty granted, but altering the point of the indictment it may be asserted querulously that this colour is to be found only on mean objects of a common sort, and is not worthy of mention. What then of the boasted colour of Japan ? Is it made of gold and precious stones ? Where lies it but in lanterns and paper walls, in screens and fans of

Scenery of London

the flimsiest, veritable child's toys? What gives the gorgeousness to these slight textures and materials is the warm living atmosphere, sunlight pouring down in a golden flood that enriches even paper until its very flimsiness and transparency become valuable assets in its colour-producing properties, by giving it that transparent glow to be seen in a wild rose growing on a hedge, never on that same wild rose in a room. Granted is the brilliance of the sunlight; our sunlight is comparatively pale at the best; we are never bathed in amber; but we have an atmosphere of our own as wonderful in its colour effects as sunlight itself, and bringing forth pictures of hues as superior to mere clarity as a Turner is to a prim pastel.

Look now on this picture, and see it for once with eyes cleared of prejudice, or the mist that grows of long looking, and acknowledge it beautiful. Regent Street on a winter's evening when the lights are lit, and the shops not yet closed. The street is wet, of course; it has been raining; and the lights flash on the wet harness of the brown-flanked horses, and on the water-proof capes of their drivers. The very roadway is a living river of light and colour, for each swiftly moving lamp, be it yellow or red or white or green, sends a flashing, swaying pyramid behind it or before, to mingle and interlace with other pyramids. Darting hither and thither above this rippling river are the fireflies from which the flashes emanate, moving to and fro, crossing and recrossing in a mystic maze. Here and there their continuity is broken by a broad band of



THE APPROACH TO WESTMINSTER





The Colour of London

startling colour as an omnibus heaves itself into the wide reflection of the electric lights of a gay shop-window—a band of colour seen an instant and gone.

This brilliant vision is lined on each side by founts of colour. Here are displayed, behind protecting glass, fabrics fresh as flowers in their tints; and here is a flower shop with a wealth of scarlet poinsettias resting near a bank of violets; “deep tulips dashed with fiery dew”; a loose bunch of giant chrysanthemums in amber and terra-cotta, gorgeous anemones make spots of blood-red amid their green, contrasting with the sulphur-yellow fronds of mimosa; if the time be ever so little into the New Year garlands of pink roses and brilliant daffodils will be mingled with the rest; and the whole is banked by green and white. In the other division of the same shop fruit is displayed, the purple and gold of grapes and oranges contrasting with red and green apples in piles, while deeply tinted apricots and downy peaches rest against the greeny purple of fresh figs. In another window near at hand flashes a marvellous arrangement of sequin-covered gowns in Prussian blue, crimson, and silver; they vie in their coruscating light with the contents of a window filled with admirable paste ornaments, set off by turquoise and white velvet. A great confectioner’s near has the daintiest arrangement of heliotrope and *eau-de-nil*, upon which sweets of every variety and device lie in silver-lined trays. These items might be multiplied indefinitely.

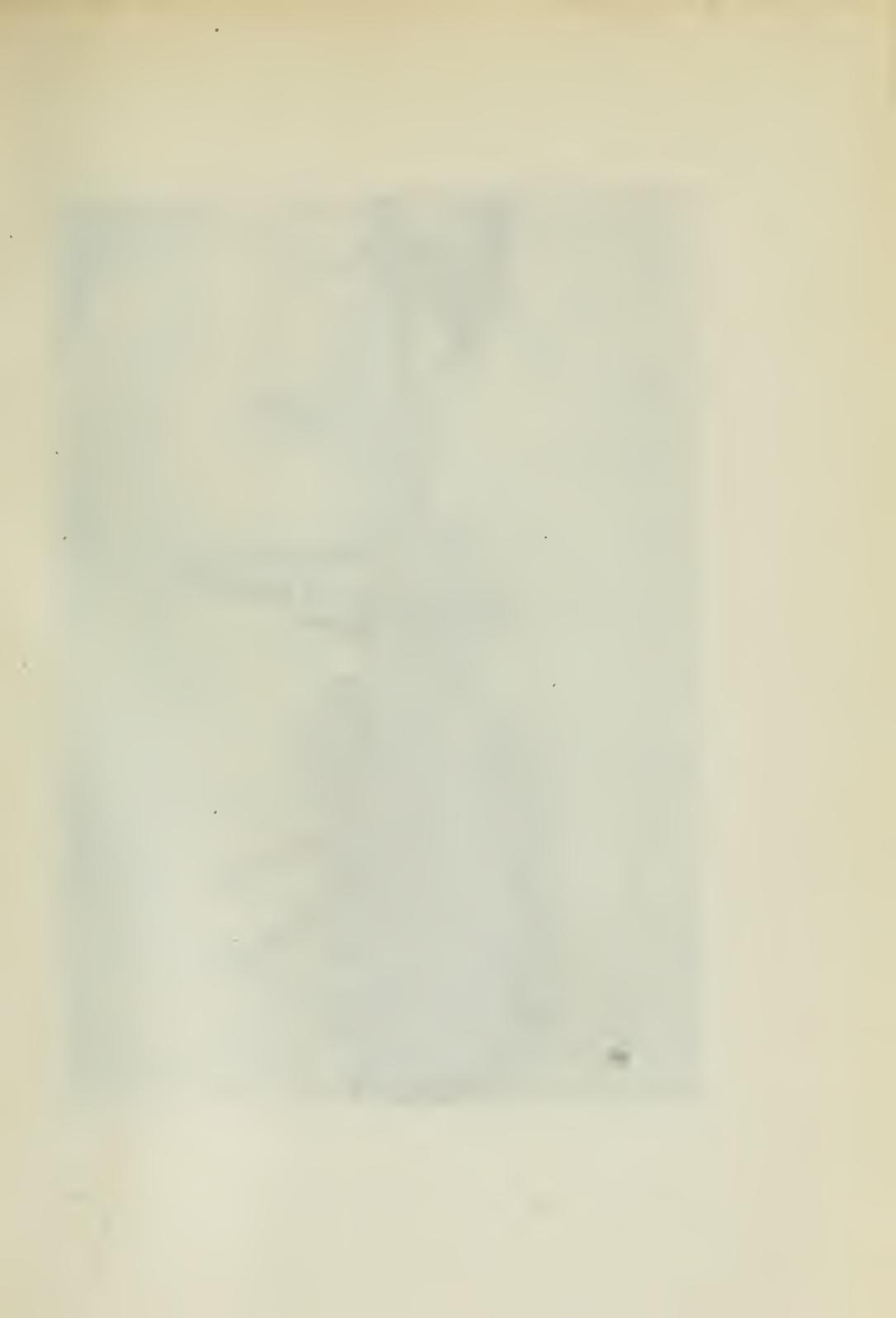
I granted just now that London street colour is

Scenery of London

ofttimes crude ; it lacks the tender tones and shades of Japan, and this is noticeably true of the omnibuses. It may be due to the colour-blind condition of a large percentage of our population. We have omnibuses of orange and vermilion and green and blue, but we have no intermediate tones, no purple or primrose, magenta or rose pink. Our omnibus managers, be it presumed, are business men, they work to suit the public taste ; when the bolder and simpler colours are exhausted, and it is desired to put a new line of omnibuses on the streets, what does the manager do ? Start a new colour ? Not at all. He knows that to the man in the street crimson and vermilion are both simply "red," and that therein would result confusion. So he varies his colours, by the device of a stripe, white upon green, red upon chocolate, and so on, and adds greatly to the gay aspect of the streets in so doing, but fails to educate the public taste one whit.

In lines of omnibuses at present running I can recall of simple colours, blue, green, orange, red, white, and chocolate ; and of mixed colours, white upon blue (if white may for the moment be granted as a variation in colour), upon green, and upon red ; red upon green, and blue, and yellow ; blue upon chocolate, and upon red ; also red upon yellow.

In regard to this same colour-blindness has it not often seemed that it must be a matter of education solely ? We see what we are trained to see ; in nurseries where children are carefully brought up no child is allowed to call scarlet and crimson alike red. Yet



HAY BARGES LYING OFF THE HORSE-
FERRY AT WESTMINSTER



The Colour of London

to the untrained mind all tones of blue, from turquoise to indigo, even including purple, are blue only. Some time ago it was the fashion to carry out one line of colour throughout a costume ; if the dress were trimmed with blue or brown, the hat must show items of blue or brown also, hence the terrible falsities of colour seen on the hat of the street girl whose "Reckitt" blue skirt positively shrieked at her peacock blue bow. Now it has dawned upon that same girl, whose education consists wholly in imitation of those above her, that contrasts are fashionable, hence she adopts a violently puce hat with velvet of moss green reposing on it, for has she not seen some well-dressed woman in a becoming costume of indigo and emerald? And to her, blue and green of all shades and tones are merely blue and green.

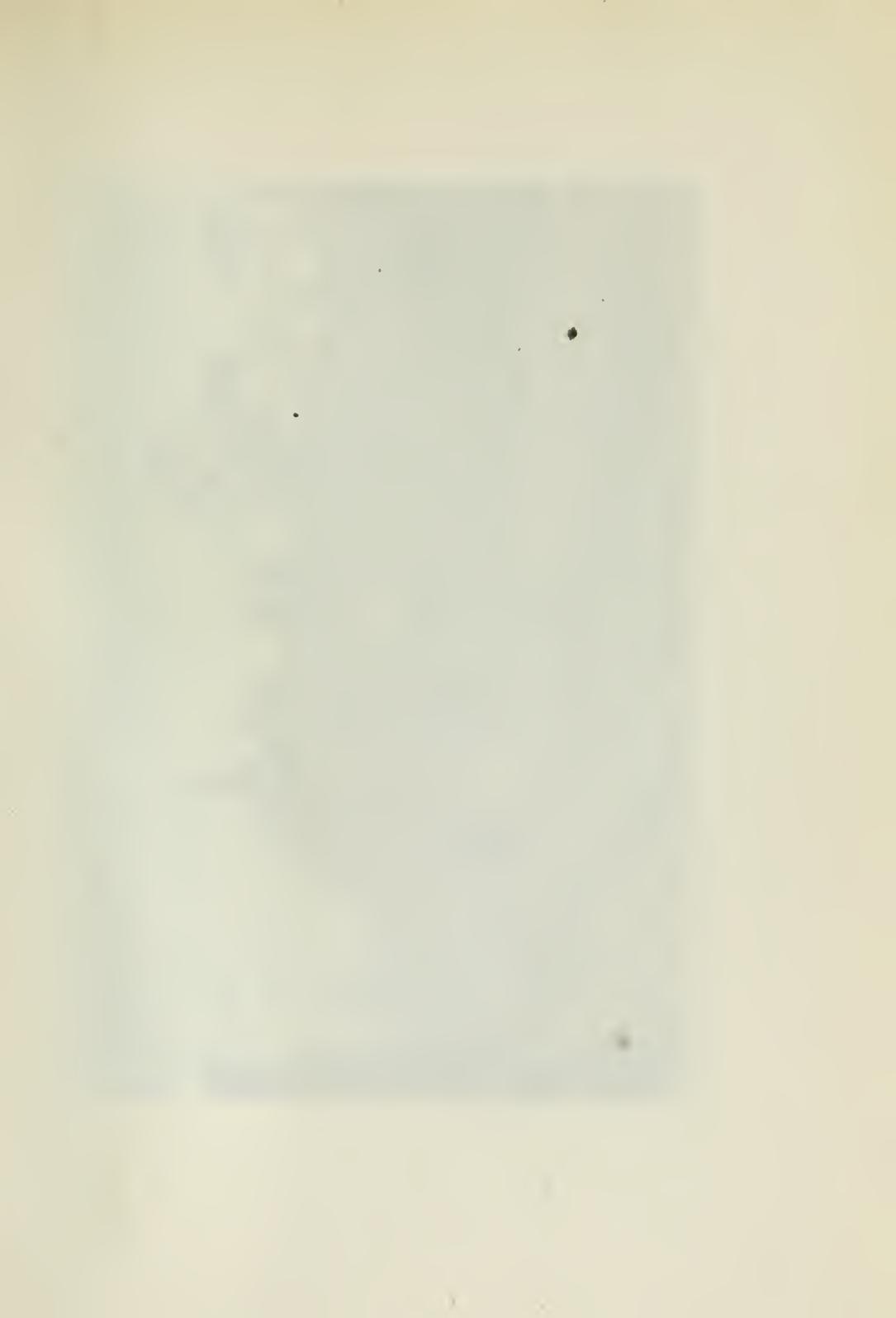
Let us consider now for a while those atmospheric effects of which we make such a proud boast ; there is little possibility of exhausting the subject. The atmosphere of London is a soft ashen grey that refines all outlines, and forbids all crude black patches. This is seen at its best on a clear frosty morning, when the sun is apparently scarce twenty yards above the horizon, when the zenith is clear blue, pale, but deepening every moment, and the sides of the great dome drop downwards to ashen grey. Stand in an open space like that at Hyde Park Corner, and look across to the leafless trees in the Green Park. Around and about the interlacing boughs the shadows are all of tender shades of grey, so soft, so artistic, that they melt and fade imperceptibly

Scenery of London

into one another, while the vistas hold the greyness as if it were a tangible substance. This surprising atmosphere is often overlooked, for it is so inseparable from the object it enfolds, that it is not easily noticed. But go to one of our black northern towns where there is nothing of the same sort, where blacks and hard browns are the predominating characteristics, and you will be amazed by the contrast with this elusive atmosphere of London, so beautiful, so gentle, but so unobtrusive. Go, if you like, to Kensington Gardens, and see this tender grey enclosed by the overarching branches of the trees in the Broad Walk ; here it is unbroken, untouched, and easily noticed. To it are due the principal tones in the London streets in the daytime. Trafalgar Square, apart from its ever-moving traffic, is a delicate harmony of olive tints, pearl greys, and drabs. Our principal buildings are mostly grey and drab. Heine's description of London, besides being offensive, is inaccurate. He says :—

I anticipated great palaces, and saw nothing but mere small houses. . . . These houses of brick, owing to the damp atmosphere and coal smoke, are all of a uniform colour, that is to say, of a brown olive green, and are all of the same style of building, generally two or three windows wide, three stories high, and finished above with small red tiles, which remind one of newly extracted bleeding teeth, while the broad and accurately squared streets, which these houses form, seem to be bordered by endlessly long barracks.

Red tiles have never taken hold of modern London's imagination, and even at Heine's date were not common.



PONT STREET, CHELSEA

It crosses here the Westbourne stream, which runs
down Sloane Street into the Thames at Chelsea.



The Colour of London

Red brick has only recently come into fashion again. In the precincts of Sloane Street it may be seen, and in some new buildings made of pinkish brick faced with Bath stone, but it does not form a noticeable element in our streets ; Portland stone has ever been the favourite material, with its leprous white patches and deep indigo stains showing up like shadows on the surface, as in the recesses on St. Paul's Cathedral. The National Gallery, nearly all Wren's churches, the Law Courts, the great buildings in the City, such as the Bank of England, and many another are of this material. The yellowish olive tinge of limestone is not so fascinating, yet is to be seen very frequently ; its chief exponent being the Houses of Parliament. Stucco is frankly ugly, especially the smooth drab variety, and too many of our buildings date unfortunately from the era when stucco spelt gentility. Yet after all, taken in with the grey and the olive, it has its appointed place in the street vistas.

Carlyle's account of London is better than Heine's :

All lies behind me like an . . . infinite potter's furnace sea of smoke, with steeples, domes, gilt crosses, high black architecture swimming in it, really beautiful to look at from some knoll-top while the sun shines on it . . . some half dozen miles out the monster is quite buried, its smoke rising like a great dusky-coloured mountain melting into the infinite clear sky.

We have seen a street at night ; let us take one at mid-day, the Strand for choice. Here the hoardings are very conspicuous in places, owing to the great alteration that is going on ; they make sheets of colour, giant picture-books covering an appreciable part

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of an acre of space ; and in most cases, though ablaze with colour, they strike no offensive note but rather the reverse, some among them being positively artistic. The omnibuses in the roadway no longer flash in and out as seen by lamplight, but make two moving continuous ribbons on each side of the roadway. Added to their own proper colours, there is the gamboge of the wheels and bodies, the raw terra-cotta or yellow-ochre of the seats ; and with the advertisements hedging them around with every variegated hue and divers-coloured lettering, on the whole it may be admitted that they are not only gay but positively gaudy. Flecked here and there in the moving crowd is the dominant note of government in a scarlet pillar box, or postal van. A blue-bloused lad darts hither and thither under the very noses of the chestnut horses in pursuit of his road-scraping work. Here glitters a bicycle ; there a group of flower women are making a perfect garden with their baskets of yellow daffodils, cream-tinted and pink roses, violets here as elsewhere, pearl-white lilies lying in sheaths of delicate green, brilliant scarlet anemones, and deep rich brown wallflowers. Throughout the traffic in the roadway are the spinning wheels of the hansoms picked out in blue and red. It may be that a man with frail coloured balloons stands by the kerb, and his shimmering wares hover like gigantic bubbles on their pole. The newspaper placards, green and orange, lie scattered in the roadway, or form aprons for yelling boys. Among other touches that add here and there to the gaiety of the streets may be mentioned the green

The Colour of London

cab shelters with their flower boxes and the sandwich-men with their many-hued boards.

And the people themselves, that swaying, eddying crowd, hurrying this way and that, threading, interlacing, with exactly as much seeming consistency and motive as ants in an ant-hill, do they add nothing to the scene in the way of colour? Well, it must be confessed, not much. Occasionally there may be a glint of colour in a hat or a blouse, or the lining of a coat swinging open, to strike one note more in the great colour opera of the eye; but in the main they are sombre, clad in blacks and browns and greys, and often in the olive greens that harmonise with much of the background. As a nation we do not patronise bright colours freely; our climate does not permit it. The frequent rain and the liquid brown mud are disastrous to rich or light hues; we want something that does not "show the dirt." It is only carriage folk and those who throng the parks in fashionable hours who can afford brilliance, and they are not in evidence in the streets. Even the children are not gay; beyond a scarlet tam o' shanter or a blue muffler, they add little to the colour scheme, and to find brightly dressed children we must go to that strange foreign quarter in Soho where two out of every three persons passed in the street are talking French or Italian. Heredity, or a reminiscence of a sunnier, drier land, outweighs considerations of economy here, and a black-eyed, brown-faced mite in a crushed strawberry coat with a blue tam o' shanter and a yellow muffler, or a little lad in blue knickers, brown velveteen coat, and scarlet cap, is not an

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uncommon sight. Here are a few instances taken at random from a cursory glance into the street : a little girl in a puce dress, white pinafore, and striped red-and-green woolly cap, with a light blue bow ; another in a turquoise frock, white pinafore, and navy cap with a scarlet feather stuck in it ; a third in magenta frock and blue cap, with a bow of scarlet ribbon ; another in a much-soiled pink frock, *eau-de-nil* coat, and turquoise cap, and such instances might be multiplied indefinitely.

Speaking of the parks, where the fashionable world is seen to advantage at its own times and seasons, it must be admitted that here colour is at all events rightly appreciated, though most of us are too work-a-day to use it. At no time during the last century could one have seen a crowd more daringly or brilliantly attired. To be assured of it, go to the fashionable tea place near the bridge over the Serpentine at five o'clock on a fine summer day. There the gayest of striped awnings and great Japanese umbrellas shade a number of dainty and audacious colour schemes, which even a Japanese crowd could not excel. Apple green and turquoise blue, heliotrope and amber, pale pink and purple, are only a few among those that strike the sight ; no combination remains unsought by those who follow no machine-made laws but judge by the eye alone, if it may be risked. The sunshades in themselves are a flower garden, with fluttering petals of old rose, and daintily interwoven shades. At the other end of the great expanse of open space, near Hyde Park Corner, in the spring, what masses of colour may be found in banks of rhododen-



THE SOUTH FORESHORE OF THE POOL
FROM THE TOWER BRIDGE



The Colour of London

dron, deep crimson, salmon, white and pink forming a background to the gay crowds who gather for church parade, though it is true this parade is somewhat fallen from its former popularity. The beds of laid-out flowers by Park Lane show colour at all seasons of the year, and here colour design is followed in the interweaving patterns of the bulbous plants.

Let us go from one extreme of the social scale to the other, from the heights of fashion to the depths of "the nether world." The Rembrandtesque effects of light and shade, of colour and costume, belonging to lower London have often been described, but almost always in connection with the East End. There is, however, no need to go to the East End to find such scenes, for the West can hold its own. Beyond the highly respectable neighbourhood of South Kensington, beyond the less fashionable but still popular district of Earl's Court, there lies a road called the North End Road. Visit this on a Saturday night, and all the colours on your palette will hardly suffice to do the scene justice. The butchers' shops are in their glory, and attract scores of working-class women on the look-out for a "tasty bit" for Sunday's dinner. The crude vermilion of the meat rising tier above tier is illumined by flaring gas jets, and breaks with wild effect on the blazing blue of the butcher's apron as he stands at one end, elevated on a block and shouting with all his might; for here whoso makes the most noise gets the most custom. As likely as not he may be decorated with a huge wreath of chrysanthemums hung around his brawny chest, as if he

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himself were about to play the *rôle* of sacrificial ox. The clothes of all the people who block the roadway and line the side-walks are black, but this only serves to set off the brightness of the stalls that line the street from end to end in a double row. The flaring naphtha lights hiss and glow on the fruit barrows festooned with bunches of pale green and purple grapes. Below are spread out in attractive array richly tinted oranges, ruddy apples, and shining red tomatoes; there are yellow bananas in clusters, and pomegranates, laid open and showing purple-red in gashes; tufted celery and terra-cotta carrots complete the picture, and this stall is only one among a dozen similar ones. On another stall near by are shell-fish; pink shrimps in piles, mussels, whelks, and sea snails. Beyond this bunches of blue and red tam o' shanters are clustered like the fruit of some Gargantuan plant, and children's pinafores, pink and white, with "lengths" of blue and lilac spotted prints lie in heaps. Tinware, boot stalls and confectionery are predominant in the next batch of stalls; the last named surpassing in its exceeding pinkness all other imaginable material. At a corner a man waves a huge brilliantly coloured flag, the while he lectures to a half-amused, half-uncomprehending audience, while another, literally clothed in green and yellow and red spotted bandana handkerchiefs, distributes his wares by this curious form of self-advertisement as he goes along. And through it all the patient 'bus horses move step by step; they know it is Saturday night as well as any mortal in the crowd.



THE INDIA OFFICE FROM THE HORSE
GUARDS' PARADE



1871
P. 10

The Colour of London

So far we have dealt almost exclusively with the more obvious and brilliant colours, but those who know London, and study her every aspect as they study the changes of expression on the face of a dear friend, need no vivid contrasts, which are only adduced to convince the sceptic. To these lovers of London the vistas she offers, apart from extraneous objects, are in themselves perfect in tone and colour. The Embankment on a spring morning is a dream of delight ; on the one side rolls the leaden-grey river, lightened by ripples silver-lined, and on the farther bank rises a marvel in greys and drabs ; buildings, yards, and wharves alike toned and softened by the wonderful atmosphere. Stretching ahead is the grey granite Embankment, turning a hundred sombre hues beneath the climatic influences. Above it, like a line of softly fluttering ribbon, is the line of young planes showing as tender a green as any on earth ; to the left are the giant hotels, towering above a shrouded base of green, and farther on arise the red buildings of the Temple, old and new.

Or stand on the bridge crossing the ornamental water in St. James's Park and face eastward ; the great Government buildings arise in silver-grey, and the leaden water and the green tints are the same as on the Embankment. Everything is covered with a veil of grey as with a fairy web. Green, grey, and silver, with olive green in shadow, these are the real tones in the colour scheme of London. Occasionally, once or twice in a year maybe, London wakes up to play at being Paris. She has donned for the nonce the

Scenery of London

brilliantly clear atmosphere of the sister city, and looks as if she had been washed in sparkling water during the night. The atmosphere is clear as crystal, the street vistas look different, and we wonder we never noticed this and that before; every brick in the buildings and every leaf in the parks stands out, distinct and beautiful. One almost holds one's breath, it is wonderful, but it is a trick, a whim, and lasts but a very short time. Then we go back to the London we know and love the best, for after all it is London we want and not Paris.

We have left until the last one of the glories of London immortalised by the devotion of her greatest painter. We shrink from the task, for how can one put on paper with black ink the sunsets which Turner's brush could hardly paint?

To describe sunsets in general terms is truly impossible, yet all who live in London, and especially those whose release from business sends them westward at or about the sunset hour in autumn, will know how the walls of straight, high, slate-grey houses often frame a glowing, diffused light in the western sky. This is seen at its best in the wider thoroughfares, such as the Cromwell Road. Half the sky is alight with glory, shading from orange red to palest yellow, with wisps of smoky cloud floating against the background. The upper lines and angles of the houses are touched with gold, while the lower parts melt into that soft grey green so evanescent, so elusive, the grey-green of the short-lived twilight.

LOW TIDE AT SOUTHWARK



The Colour of London

To see the sunset in its perfection it is necessary to go to one of the bridges on the river, and one such sunset seen from Battersea Bridge is as clearly imprinted on the retina as a poem learnt by heart is on the mind. The predominant colour was red-gold, a sort of smoky glory, fading at its darkest into dun, and rising at its lightest into primrose. These colours were sketched in and emphasised by immense wisps of transparent cloud rising from the horizon like feathery columns of smoke blown hither and thither. Above, in a sky of clearest, palest blue swam detached and heavy clouds like small islands on a sea of glass; they were gold-lined by the glory that caught them from beneath, and the bays and indentations in their rugged sides were of a green as pale and rare as the blue sky around, a green probably caused by the combination of the yellow rays striking across the blue.

The year of sunsets, however, was 1883, the year of the eruption of Krakatoa, when night by night skies of blood-red were to be seen vivid and almost awful in their grandeur.

The accusation that will be brought forward by some readers of this chapter we anticipate and rebut by quoting once again the sage :—

You are an enthusiast (are you?) Make Arabian nights out of dull foggy London, with your beautiful imagination shape burnished copper castles out of London fog . . . are you not all the richer and better that you know the essential gold? . . . I honour such alchemy.

THE CITY

CHAPTER III

THE CITY

To a vast number of people the City is a *terra incognita*; even among those who consider that they know London "very fairly" there are many who have but a vague idea of the limits of the City. One lady at least, who had lived all her life in London, believed that anything beyond Charing Cross was the City. To such as these the doings of the Diamond Jubilee came as a revelation. Many who had rarely been on the top of an omnibus before, whose carefully sheltered lives, spent in drawing-rooms and broughams, had never led them beyond the Army and Navy Stores or at the farthest Charing Cross Station on the way to the Continent, hired private omnibuses, and from that vantage point surveyed the City as a strange and foreign land. The wisest started by the south side of the river and worked back across London Bridge, and who that saw that sight will ever forget it? Lines of green moss, wreathed with flowers and glittering with coloured electric lights, ran on both sides; at the north end rose the ghostly steeple of St. Magnus,

Scenery of London

opposite the substantial walls of the Fishmongers' Hall, while the summit of the Monument was lost in the darkness above. Outlined in fire were the great group of buildings, near the Bank, including the Royal Exchange and the Mansion House, while the Insurance offices near throbbed and blazed with colour ; for once the City was in festival garb.

Yet those who know the City, glad though they were to see what she could do in the way of finery, love her best in everyday attire. It is a sight of sights to go, on the top of an omnibus for choice, to the meeting of the ways, the great heart of London, at mid-day. The medley of traffic is perfectly controlled, no vehicle goes a wheel's breadth out of its own ground ; the pavements are filled with top-hatted, hurrying men intent on the business of the moment, which is with most of them at that hour lunch ; this makes a picture full of life and one that stimulates the blood till it runs quicker than its wont. On the left is the long, low building of the Bank, four-square, which encloses within its secret recesses a real garden in which real trees grow. The Bank is the outward and visible representation of the solidity and credit of England. Opposite is the great façade of the Royal Exchange, with flower-sellers and newspaper-vendors grouped in front of it ; within, the hall rises in two stories and the walls are lined by great cartoons representing scenes in the history of the City. The first Royal Exchange was built by Sir Thomas Gresham in imitation of that of the merchants of Antwerp. Until that time the English merchants had

ST. DUNSTAN'S, FLEET STREET ; LAW
COURTS IN THE DISTANCE

It is said that the design of the tower was suggested
by the lantern of St. Helen's at York.



The City

no common place for business, but had met in Lombard Street haphazard, an excellent commentary on the English method of muddling along, which somehow produces as great results as if all plans had been cut and dried beforehand. Sir Thomas Gresham's Exchange was made of small blocks of Turkish hone-stones, some of which are incorporated into the present building. It bore on all its pinnacles his own crest, a grasshopper, and it was destroyed in the Great Fire. It was soon replaced, but its successor suffered the same fate, also perishing by fire in 1838 ; hence the present building.

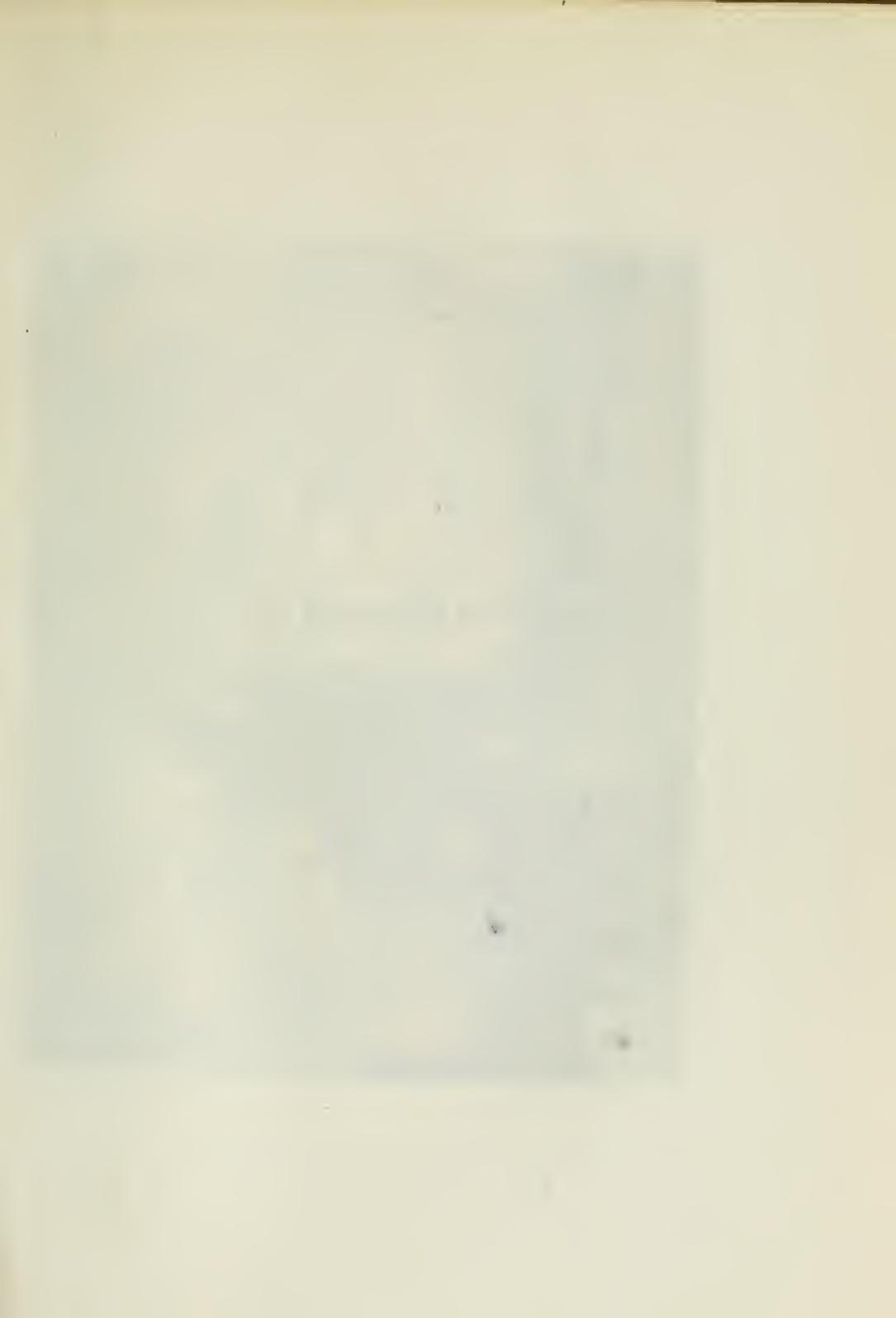
Besides being a place of business, the first Exchange was a centre for amusement and recreation. The citizens, who were then real citizens living in the City, used to walk there with their wives and daughters in the evenings ; it formed a pleasant change from the fields outside the City walls. There were shops set thickly round " well furnished according to that time ; for then the milliners or haberdashers in that place sold mouse-traps, bird-cages, shoeing-horns, lanterns, etc." There was an upper pawne or gallery, also well set with shops, where the young men bought ribbons and laces for their sweethearts, and flirted with the shop girls in doing so. The youths, the apprentices of the City, played football in the wide courtyard until it was forbidden by law.

A strange place that City, very different from the one we now know as a place well peopled by day and empty at night. Have you ever been to the heart of the City at midnight ? It is very silent. By the Bank

Scenery of London

a few stray omnibuses on their last journey pass sleepily, the strong, well-fed policeman goes his rounds trying door and bolt and fastening, and inquiring if he sees lights still in an office to make sure that it is an uncommonly industrious partner working late, and not a burglar intent on spoil. In the modern City the ways are still narrow and winding, and of recent years an enormous outburst of carved and hewn-stone ornament has appeared on the new buildings and offices. Some of these additions are really artistic, and show that pains have been taken with their design, others are mere meaningless imitations overloaded with an abundance of ornament. But at any rate time and money have been spent on the architecture, showing some care and love for this daytime habitation.

In the old days men not only worked in the City, but lived and slept there, and knew each other as neighbours. Even in the eighteenth century the City life and the City society were still quite apart from that of the West End. The merchant, who was not quite what we call a merchant now, lived over his shop, and kept two or more apprentices, who did part of the housework, while his wife and daughters did the rest, with possibly the help of a kitchen-maid. On festival occasions, these people might go as far as Vauxhall, or any of the other gay resorts where fashion was wont to assemble, but as a rule they kept aloof. They were not in the fashionable set; the cut of their clothes, and their manners betrayed them. Clad in gowns of rich and sumptuous stuffs, silks of the best and cloths of the



ON THE TOWER BRIDGE



The City

most superfine, yet the style was alien to the style of the fine ladies. They had, however, plenty of society among themselves. They knew not the lack of money, their table was always laden with good things, and a City merchant's capacity for food and drink seems to have been unlimited. In the evenings, if it were fine, they could walk in the wide Moorfields, curtailed of their ancient extent, it is true, but still open and far-reaching.

The merchant himself was a person of no small consequence ; he had behind him generations of forebears who had not been afraid to stand before kings. From the days of the Plantagenets the City had had a corporate life and a mind of its own, and when our kings were forced to ask, humbly or otherwise, for funds "on loan" from the City, the citizen had the whip hand. It was in the reign of William III. that the last of these "loans" was requested, after that the king went to the Bank. Picture it then, this life so different from that of our own times. The well-to-do merchant, a man of self-respect and dignity, who acknowledged without shame that the nobility and gentry were of a very different class from himself, but who had no wish to mingle with them or to cringe to them ; picture his lively apprentices, his blooming, unaffected daughters, and his good lady, inclining early to embonpoint ; the diversions and the street scenes, the neighbourly intercourse, the bustle without hurry. The same merchant in all important attributes may be traced back almost as far as the history of London extends ; though his opulence

Scenery of London

varied with the trade of London, and he was at his greatest in the days of trade-expansion in the time of Queen Elizabeth. Look at him as he was before the Fire, living in a house which for picturesqueness could hardly be matched. "The houses were timbered with tiled roofs ; the fronts all covered with carvings painted and gilded ; there were scattered here and there substantial stone houses." Gable ends, overhanging stories, the pinnacles and the wood-carving, the houses not in alignment but set each at its own angle to the street, made vistas which to-day we should regard with admiration, though of the sanitation in such dwellings the less said the better. Paving was a very late improvement, and, until after the Fire, only composed of the rounded cobble stones still in use in some provincial towns. There was no footway at all, and the suggestion that a row of posts should mark off the foot traffic from the wheeled was a distinct innovation ; the mud holes caused much splashing, so that to walk in the streets at all was a danger. At many corners there were great heaps of rubbish—laystalls—where every one tilted their refuse, and which were occasionally pitched into the river. To counterbalance this nearly every house had its garden, extending over a considerable area and well cultivated, filled with old-fashioned, sweet-scented blooms, such as stocks, gillyflowers, and pinks. The Londoners loved their flowers and some of them had additional gardens on the open ground at Moorfields.

Where the Mansion House stands was formerly an open space in which was a pair of stocks for the punish-



LOOKING DOWN LUDGATE HILL FROM
THE STEPS OF ST. PAUL'S



The City

ment of evildoers. In 1282, Henry Waleys, sometime Mayor, built here a market called the Stocks, where were sold at first flesh and fish, and later various commodities. The place prospered exceedingly, and "the butchers of the Stokkes" several times appear in the City chronicles. That they were kept under strict supervision is shown by the fact that when one of the number so far forgot himself as to attempt to sell putrid flesh he was condemned to stand in the pillory, with the offensive meat under his nose, an example of poetic justice which is rare. Sir Robert Vyner put up a statue of King Charles II. on horseback in the market at his own expense; this was greatly admired until it was discovered that it had originally been a statue of John Sobieski trampling a Turk underfoot, and that the economical Sir Robert had bought it abroad cheaply and had only gone to the expense of altering John's head to that of Charles, and the Turk's to represent Cromwell, on whom unfortunately the sculptor had left the Turk's turban, which led to the exposure of the fraud! The market was removed to Farringdon Street in 1757.

Of this London, this beautiful, insanitary, picturesque, fascinating London, we possess but few remnants, and these we shall consider in detail presently. Of London after the Fire there are not many good examples either, but one such I found in a house near Billingsgate which report says to have been Sir Christopher Wren's own City house, though here, as frequently elsewhere, report speaks hastily, and on insufficient premises. At any rate we may take it that this house forms a very good

Scenery of London

specimen of the kind of mansion the City merchant of that date preferred. It is admirably proportioned, built of red brick, with quoins and string-courses of stone. The front door faces a yard, and has stone steps leading up to it on each side ; beneath them is a kennel for a dog. In the hall black and white marble tiles form the pavement ; the stairs with carved balusters bear date 1670, that is to say, just subsequently to the Fire, when all around lay in ashes, and the air was thick with complaints and actions as to "meum and tuum." However did they settle it, we wonder, when all landmarks were swept away ?

On the first floor of this beautiful old house are four doors with heavily carved architraves, rich in foliage and fruit, in the style of Gibbons. The upper rooms have decorated ceilings, with heavy mouldings ; in one room the mantelpiece and fireplace is of marble of different tints, and in the centre is an exquisite plaque of a sleeping child in relief. On the ground floor is a small room completely lined with oil paintings on panels reaching from floor to ceiling ; these are dark with age, though in good preservation, and were painted in 1696 by "R. Robinson." The ceiling here is also carved in wood, and though paint and varnish overlies most of the carving on stairs and ceilings, still one can see the care and the loving attention which the man who owned the house had given to its details.

Many attempts were made by the English sovereigns to stop the growth of London. There were edicts issued against the building of houses, for it was feared

The City

that the population would get beyond the control of the authorities. The measures were taken in all good faith, but seem to us naïve in their simplicity, for an order of a very different sort is now in force, that whosoever pulls down the houses of the poor shall erect other houses for them.

Let us consider the gradual growth of London. In the very earliest days, when the importance of the Thames as a waterway had been noted and proved, the merchants settled along its banks on the site of the present City. Down the centre of this settlement ran the Wallbrook ; on the west was the Fleet, and on the east the Lea. About the year 360 A.D. the enclosing wall, which played a large and important part in the history of London, was built ; but it remains now only in fragments, in St. Giles's Churchyard, near All Hallows on the Wall, and possibly at the Tower.

Pass on six hundred years, and we find the same City extending over something like the same limits, though probably with a largely increased population. The houses are poor and mean, built for the most part of wattle and clay with a strengthening of wood. There are many churches ; from the earliest date the City has been a city of churches. In 1135 this mean City was burnt from end to end, and was rebuilt in much better style. The London that arose from the ashes had schools and a fine trade ; the citizens already had a good social life with opportunities for recreation as well as work. Let us pass on another three hundred years : this brings us to the reign of the pious King Henry VI., and, as

Scenery of London

we should expect, churches and religious houses then abounded. The pinnacles and spires of the churches arose in all parts of the City, and the religious houses also cluster thickly around the walls on the outside. Old London Bridge, still for many a long year the only bridge at London, was covered with irregular houses, and had a chapel on it, dedicated to St. Thomas of Canterbury, a very gem of work. It was of two stories, richly decorated, and supported by clustered columns. On the south side of the river there were houses around St. Mary Overies, and a line by the water-side, but beyond that was nothing but fields.

To the north stretched the Moorfields, open and reaching up to the far heights of Highgate. The Town ditch was still in evidence and full of water ; it needed continual cleansing year by year, and was a source of much expense to the authorities. Complaint was frequently made that the houses were built right on to it, overlapping it, and that their gardens reached down the banks ; considering the repeated assurances of the "filthy" state of the ditch we wonder at the audacity, and immunity from germs of our predecessors ! It is difficult to think of the City as thickly set with the houses of nobles, but so it was in the Middle Ages. In Aldersgate lived the Earls of Northumberland, Westmoreland, Thanet, and the Marquis of Dorchester ; the Earls of Arundel had their town house in Botolph Lane ; the Earls of Worcester in Worcester Lane ; the Duke of Buckingham lived on College Hill ; Edward the Black Prince was domiciled in Fish Street Hill ; the



FROM CANNON STREET STATION

The view is taken nearly opposite the London Stone.



The City

Earls of Oxford were at one time in St. Mary Axe, and Cromwell, Earl of Essex, in Throgmorton Street ; the Earls of Leicester were in the Old Bailey ; besides these, scattered about within the limits of the City, were the town houses of the Beaumonts and the Huntingdons, the Lords Mountjoy and Berkeley, the Earls of Richmond and of Pembroke ; and the palaces of kings, such as the Erber, Cold Harbour, Baynard's Castle, Tower Royal, and Crosby Hall. All these within the narrow limits of a square mile of space. The parts remaining of the ancient City are very few. If we set aside for the moment the venerable Tower and the oldest part of the Guildhall, all there is to be seen amounts to a few fragments. Among these is numbered Crosby Hall, built in 1466, which was the town house of Richard III., the residence of the Lord Mayors of London, and of Sir Thomas More. It is now turned into a restaurant, and must be visited of course. The stained-glass windows and the dark-painted woodwork will make us feel we have come by mistake into some ancient chapel. The luncheon here is largely patronised by the more wealthy strata of the City men, also by those having ladies as their guests, and the place is so crowded that it is often difficult to get a seat at all. A very short way northward is the tiny church of St. Ethelburga, with shops projecting from its frontage ; a piscina and other details here survived the Fire. The noble Church of St. Mary-le-Bow in Cheapside is so intimately associated with Old London, that to be born "within sound of Bow Bells" was once synonymous

Scenery of London

with being a cockney. Times have changed since then ; the great spaces of "wider London" are beyond the sound of the sweet bells of Bow, and a present-day Dick Whittington would have left fields far behind him before he came within reach of their encouraging tones. Bow Bells are still famous for their chimes, and though the bells are not the same as in Whittington's day they are ancient enough, having been put up in place of those destroyed by the Fire. Unfortunately they are seldom rung, for lack of funds. Six times a year is the rule. Bow Steeple soars grandly, rising like a dart that would pierce the sky, but by far the oldest parts of the church are the Norman Chapel and crypt, which, with those of St. Paul's and Clerkenwell, and part of St. Bartholomew's Church, are reckoned among the most ancient fragments of Old London remaining. The Chapel of St. Mary's, which lies 18 feet below the level of the street (a fact caused by the enormous débris of the Fire, and to be noted in all old City buildings), is Norman work, with massive, rough-hewn stone. Wren ran a wall through it in order to utilise these solid foundations for the support of his new church. At a very little lower level is the crypt, with some beautiful Norman pillars with "cushion" capitals ; on one of these is moulding, a spear-head, a very uncommon addition in those days of severe simplicity. Eight hundred coffins are walled up in the crypt. Leaving St. Mary-le-Bow we may go northward to St. Giles's, Cripplegate, built in the fourteenth century, and though restored and repaired, yet to all general observation a fourteenth-century church

CHEAPSIDE

Nearly opposite Bow Church, in the distance, is the corner of Wood Street, the scene of Wordsworth's "Reverie of Poor Susan."



The City

as different from Wren's churches as a heron is from a sleek city pigeon. The side facing the street is quaint in colouring, composed of worn stone, and brick, brown with age. At one end rises the curious tower with an upper story of brick. Unfortunately some charming old houses over an entry have been done away with. In the churchyard is a bastion of the ancient City wall, looking wonderfully fresh and white beside the smoke-blackened ivy that grows near it. The pleasant green sward of the churchyard is fenced in by the heavy iron railings which line the right of way, and there is no possibility of sitting in this quiet spot dreaming of Old London and of Milton, as one ought to be able to do. If the late restoration had done away with the high heavy railings and restored the sacred green patch to the dreamer and the enthusiast, it would indeed have been a restoration worth the name.

Just within the Liberties of the City westward, being in fact the first numbers in Holborn, are the ancient Elizabethan houses beneath which runs the entrance to Staple Inn. These have been carefully restored and, being in good hands, may stand for many a day yet, and as they, with Crosby Hall, are the only specimens of Elizabethan domestic architecture remaining to us in the City of London, well may they be cherished.

There is one more pre-Fire fragment, for which we have to go a long way, namely London Stone, set in the south wall of St. Swithin's Church, opposite Cannon Street railway station. No one knows the age of this stone, or why it was first adopted as London Stone.

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Some have supposed it to be a Druidical remnant, others the Roman milestone set up to mark the beginning of mile measurements, others again that it was a fragment of a large monument ; or that it was the place from which proclamations were made. At any rate, in 1540 Jack Cade, the rebel, thought there was some particular virtue in striking the stone as a sign of his possession of the City, which showed that it was regarded as a talisman. It is sadly diminished from what it was ; Stow speaks of it as a "great stone," but perhaps after his time it was damaged in the Fire. It was placed in its present position under a grill in 1869, and there it remains, a suggestive fragment for the imagination to work upon.

There are other details of ancient work preserved and rebuilt into later fabrics, as at St. Alphage's Church, and the Dutch Church in Austin Friars has walls dating back to the thirteenth century, but we have seen all the recognised parts of Old London. Of London subsequent to the Fire there is of course a good deal more, though not so much as might be supposed. Into one after another of Wren's churches we may wander finding all of the same pattern with small varieties and modifications, and everywhere we see the same wood-carving. The wide vestibules, the heavy galleries, the rectangular plan, and the dark woodwork make a strong family likeness ; and though the churches are but a percentage of their old number, they are still very thickly set in the modern City. The Monument is of course of the same date ; it boasts no architectural beauty ; but in



CANNON STREET—SUMMER EVENING

The roar of the traffic is gradually quieting down as
the City empties itself.



The City

by-streets and courts may be found beautiful bits of Jacobean work, notably in the carved pediments above the doors on College Hill and Laurence Pountney Hill, pediments, heavy with foliage, fruit, and cherubs in relief. The City was of course immensely changed by the opening up of the two great modern streets—Cannon Street and Queen Victoria Street. These cut through any number of narrow passages and tiny courts, and entirely obliterated some. The improvement was really an improvement, as one must sadly also admit of the new Kingsway, yet it did away with many attractive peeps, notably one looking down Paul's Chain at St. Paul's Churchyard to the River, framed between irregular houses, with the red walls of St. Benet's in what is artistically but not euphonically termed the "middle distance."

Of the modern City we have said a little already in reference to the wonderful outburst of stone ornament, which is of recent growth, and this is perhaps the salient characteristic ; but there are others which would strike a stranger with almost equal force. One of these is the tortuousness of the little streets, too narrow for two vehicles abreast, leading into secluded courts as at Austin Friars. Courts like these are often *cul-de-sac* or else have only an alternative footway leading through the base of some enormous hive of industry into another street. This footway, really part of the house above, forms a public passage for all and sundry, and re-echoes to the clang of heels the whole of the working day. Peering down other entries into other blind alleys, we

Scenery of London

may note the great window reflectors put up to take advantage of every ray of light that filters down from the grey strip of sky above. And yet in these narrow alleys and dark offices an enormous amount of business is done. City offices are not, however, by any means all dark ; several have a delightful outlook, where some graveyard, a reminder of a long-vanished church, is still regarded as sacred ground and remains unbuilt on ; so that its waving planes and green grass are a continual refreshment to the eyes of those whose windows surround it. Such is the graveyard of the now demolished church on Laurence Pountney Hill. Here are the two beautiful old houses, already referred to, with carved pediments, uprights and lintels of date 1703 ; the cornice is also carved, but these details are not well seen by reason of the narrowness of the lane. Under No. 3 on this hill is the crypt of the Manor of the Rose, the stately mansion of Sir John Poulteney, who gave the Cold Harbour to the Earl of Hereford for "one rose at midsummer," from which the name is said to have arisen.

And amid the modern houses, in the modern streets, what of the men who spend their days in the City ? They are of course of a totally different type from the old merchant, who was a City man through and through ; now the distinction between east and west is broken down, as it was beginning to be in the time of the Stuarts ; it is nothing derogatory to a man of any station and any rank to be "something in the City," if that something be of a satisfactory

VIEW FROM THE TOWER BRIDGE

The Church of St. Magnus and London Bridge in
the distance.



The City

and honest nature. Men of all classes spend their days in the City and send their sons there after a university education. In the evening they go back to a social life of any kind whatever up to the highest. Of course, with so wide a gamut the type must vary. The man who has got together a small business, and who is in himself but little above the better tradesman, is very far removed from the partner in an old-established business, himself a gentleman and well connected. It is impossible to generalise too freely, but the same life, the rubbing shoulders, the give and take, and the community of interest produce some characteristics which may be set down without straining the generalisation too far. The City man as a rule is alert and shrewd, with an air of good-fellowship, or at least the desire to give that impression; he is pleasant, tolerant, and trustworthy. At his best and at his worst he is of course a very different being. At his best courteous, dignified, yet good-natured, at his worst a sycophant with greasy, ingratiating manners, who mistakes familiarity for ease, slyness for shrewdness, and taking a mean advantage for business ability. A creature of this sort has his lair as a rule in the underground basement of one of the huge modern buildings, where hundreds of offices are collected under one roof. Here, in a tiny box of a room, top-lighted and furnished with a couple of shabby chairs, a few reference books and a "ledger," he dictates to some poor typist girl, at fifteen, or even twelve, shillings a week, the letters and advertisements by which he hopes to lure flies into his web.

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The City may be divided roughly into zones, each with its special types. Westward, in the district about and near St. Paul's Churchyard, are the great warehouses, to which may or may not be attached manufactories in the provincial towns; in many of these the clerks dine "in," and the stores of Honey Lane market are ransacked by the caterers to provide beef and mutton enough. About the Bank and Stock Exchange are, as might be expected, the offices of the stockbrokers and jobbers; with these the tendency is to go northward towards Finsbury Circus, but never south of Cornhill; near the appropriately named Australian Avenue are colonial warehousemen; down about Mincing Lane are the merchants. The shipping offices may be said to have headquarters along Fenchurch Street, while in Thames Street the river is lined by wharfingers, and interspersed amid all the districts are innumerable odd offices dealing with every variety of commerce known to man.

Among the men who work in the City, by far the largest proportion are the clerks; in the same way that there are numbers of privates to one officer, so each City man who is the head of a firm represents a greater or less number of clerks. The status of the clerks varies a good deal with the business of their employers. Those who are in the warehouse businesses have a chance of rising to the very top of the tree, becoming partners and eventually retiring to a "place in the country," there to found a family; and even short of this the incomes are in some cases enormous. There

ST. PAUL'S AND LUDGATE HILL



The City

is many a Dick Whittington who, beginning with the modest ten shillings a week of an office boy, has found his income running into thousands of pounds yearly, after diligent and steady work. In many, many cases the managing clerk has gradually got the business into his own hands by reason of the slackness of attendance and carelessness of his principal. He is then master of the situation and able to make his own terms. Take him at his best, the City clerk is a good fellow, methodical, industrious, cheerful, and inclined to have a genuine pride in "our office," and to rate the advantages of his employment high. He probably lives out at Camberwell or Peckham or some other suburb easily reached from London Bridge. If he be a bachelor, he makes his small stipend go wonderfully far. He is always well dressed, is never seen to fail in the immaculateness of his collar, and probably owns a bicycle. He shares to a large extent in the qualities which are the result of his environment. First, he is tolerant: "live and let live" is his unspoken motto; life would be unbearable if he strove to mould the heterogeneous crowd with which he comes in contact to his own views, and to be annoyed at trifles would result in a perpetual state of irritation; therefore he goes his own way and interferes with no one else. This attitude of mind carries with it a corresponding defect—there is more tolerance of evil as well as of mere divergence of opinion, less rigid principle and less keenness in holding opinions than there used to be.

The number of clerks who find time to play at

Scenery of London

dominoes for half the afternoon is something amazing. They go to and fro on business, and are not accountable for every minute of their time ; so long as the work is done no inquiries are made, therefore it is that between two and four on any day but Saturday they may frequently be seen deep in a contest of dominoes in some restaurant. The average clerk is independent also, and does not mind showing it ; bound in office hours to give obedience, which he does cheerfully—is it not reckoned in his pay ?—he yet holds his independence sturdily. Were all the partners and the senior clerks to be suddenly incapacitated he would cheerfully assume all responsibility for the conduct of affairs until the arrival of a higher authority. He is secretly quite persuaded of his own ability to “run the show” better than his chief. In fact sometimes the difficulty is to check what becomes officiousness ; in the language of Korah and his company he “takes too much upon him.” His willingness to take responsibility, however, is a large asset in his character, not often drawn upon, but well worth the endurance of self-assertion and cheekiness, which goes with it. It is said that Germans make better clerks as machines, they work harder, take less pay, and are neater than Englishmen, but they will not take responsibility. It is true that real responsibility is not often demanded of a clerk, but the fact of his willingness to take it in small matters as in large makes him worth extra money to his employer. Initiative is a much rarer and correspondingly more valuable quality than willingness to take responsibility ;

The City

perhaps there was never a time when this commodity was so eagerly sought and so highly paid. For a hundred men who will use judgment and discretion in business, there is only one who will make suggestions and initiate reforms, in fact get his head above the rut. These qualities are more often seen in "travellers" than in ordinary clerks, for the business of a "traveller" cultivates initiative; hence it has been more than once that a large commercial firm has taken a "traveller" into partnership sooner than a more highly paid clerk of longer service.

The girl clerks or typists are rapidly increasing in the City, and are, as a whole, eminently trustworthy; they show strength in the very qualities in which women might be supposed to be deficient, as in reticence, regularity, and perseverance. They are frequently of a higher social class than the men clerks, and are treated by the latter with courtesy. But there is not much intermingling out of office hours. The wide scattering to all suburbs, east, north, and south, that follows the day's work is against social intercourse; men and girls alike have frequently only just time to catch their trains, and then they are carried away miles from each other until they appear again at the office next morning, when routine and discipline forbid any but the barest human intercourse. A City clerk is in fact very hard beset to find "ladies'" society; he may live in rooms by himself, rooms to which he only returns late at night, and his brother clerks, possibly similarly situated, are far away; there is none of the mutual interchange of sisters

Scenery of London

that makes for marriages in a country town. Many and many a young fellow goes from week's end to week's end associating only with other men. To remedy this state of affairs the late Professor Shuttleworth organised a club which proved a brilliant success. It is a club for both City men and City women, and includes many recreations, such as concerts and dances, and is run upon sensible and sound lines. The club has prospered marvellously, and so many have been the marriages resulting from it that the professor used to be chaffed upon his "matrimonial agency."

But any account of the City, however general and discursive, would be incomplete without a reference to the king of the City, the Lord Mayor, and his court of aldermen and sheriffs. The Lord Mayor is a very great personage indeed, his office was established in Richard I.'s reign, though never acknowledged by Richard. The glory of Lord Mayor's show has unfortunately sadly fallen off since the days of the City giants and the pageantry, or from the time of the river fêtes and the splendid barges, and seems likely to decline still further, till it becomes a mere procession with bands and State carriages. Yet the Lord Mayor still meets the Sovereign on State occasions at Temple Bar, and hands him the keys of the City, and no royal person from abroad feels satisfied that he has really seen London until he has been received by the Lord Mayor. The great civic dinners of the City are not at all diminished in grandeur, and the menus of some of them would make a bygone merchant open his eyes, though he

GROCCERS' HALL



The City

might think our ideas of delicacies for the table as strange as we think his "prunes in soup, honey poured over roast mutton, pigeons stuffed with green gooseberries, and turkey with cloves." The City Companies too keep up their reputation in this respect, and any one who has partaken of the hospitality at one of the Halls will not soon forget it. It is the custom on these occasions to entertain men only, and as well as offering a profusion of good fare to send each guest away with a present, of what the Americans call "candies," the French "bonbons," and for which we use the unsatisfactory word "sweets"; doubtless intended as a reminder to the wife at home that though of inferior degree, not worthy to partake of a City Company's dinner, she is kindly remembered.

The Companies' Halls are in themselves in many cases interesting and, in some cases, ancient, that is to say, since the Fire. The carving and the pictures and the plate are worth seeing, and, though the number of the companies has diminished, they make a brave show, from the lordly Goldsmiths, Mercers, and Drapers down to the humble Tallow Chandlers.

GREAT BUILDINGS



DEAN'S YARD, WESTMINSTER



CHAPTER IV

GREAT BUILDINGS

THE reader need not fear that he will be led into a dissertation on the architectural excellences or enormities of our public buildings ; these shall be left aside, and, save as it occurs incidentally, architecture shall not be so much as mentioned in what follows. There are many books treating of our great national buildings, and therein may be found details that do not lie within the scope of our present discursive narrative.

The two great Churches of St. Paul and St. Peter are of course the two buildings that stand out pre-eminently in London, by reason of their tradition of antiquity and their sacred character ; of the two the Abbey comes in for the largest share of attention from foreigners and visitors. A stranger able to see but one would undoubtedly choose the Abbey, because in many points it has the advantage of St. Paul's ; the points easily noticeable are the fact that it is the crowning-place of our sovereigns, and connected with all the State pageantry of these occasions ; that it is a much older building than St. Paul's ; and that it has always been

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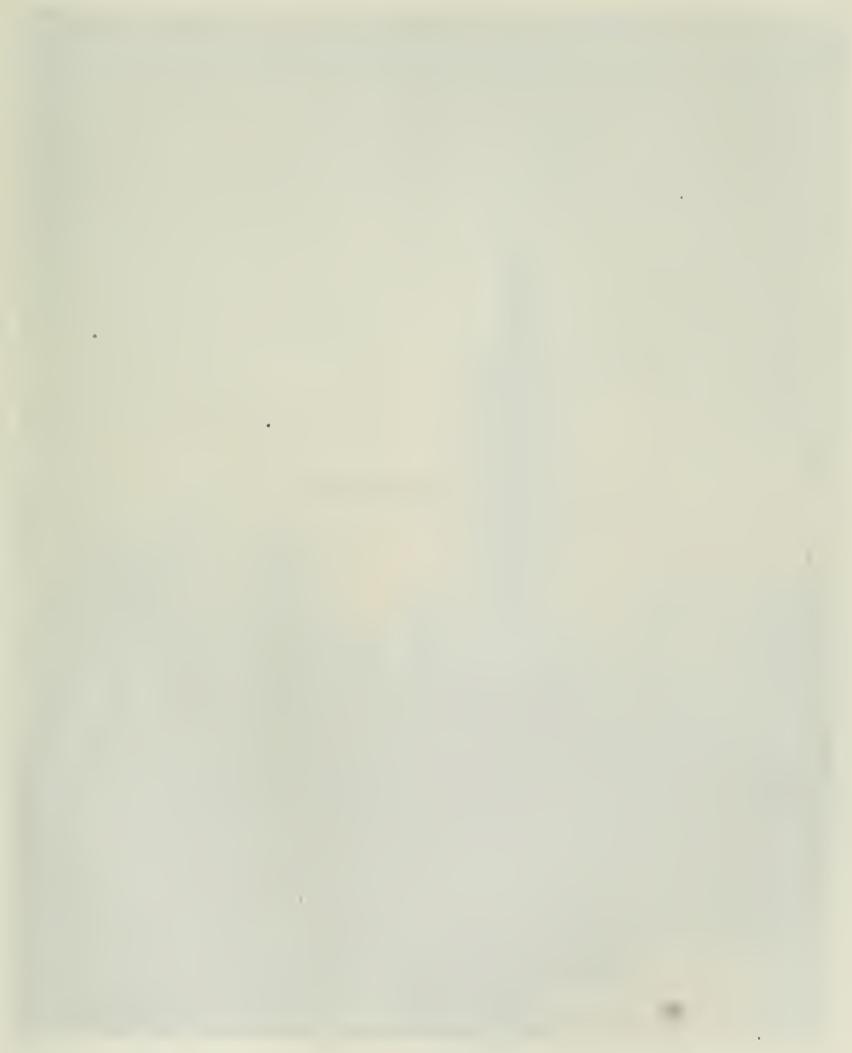
the burial-place of those whom the nation "delights to honour."

The coronations make a magnificent record: a procession of kings from Edward the Confessor to Edward VII., with every variation of dress and detail, but always the same great ceremony, a tradition momentous enough to throw a feeling of solemnity over the most flippant mind.

The principal personages who took part in these coronation ceremonies no doubt each seemed final unto themselves, the embodiment of the present, and had the idea firmly fixed in their minds that now had arrived the great event for which time had been hastening onward, now was a ceremony eclipsing all that had yet been.

From the time when the monks lived on the island of brambles but slightly above the level of the water and easily overflowed, hard by the ford at which the pilgrims and the travellers from north and south crossed the river, before even the building of London Bridge, the ground whereon the Abbey stands has been sacred ground. Thus the second point is conceded; as a building also we may grant it to be intrinsically more interesting than St. Paul's by yielding to it the palm in age.

Edward the Confessor's Abbey was in the Norman style, crowned by a cupola of wood, and the whole occupied almost as great an area as the present Abbey. Of this little now remains, and as successive kings were crowned, the Abbey altered in size and shape, always retaining some of the ancient work while new was added, until it attained its present grandeur by the slow growth



THE BRIDGE AT WESTMINSTER



Great Buildings

of centuries. This it is that gives it its charm, dates are written in stones and style as surely as geological periods in different strata, and the ages of the cathedral may be gauged definitely by inspection ; here are the stones of Edward the Confessor, there the work contributed by Edward I.

Richard II. did his share : in the reign of Henry VII. was built the magnificent chapel still known by his name, and Wren's two Western Towers complete the architectural cycle.

On the third count St. Paul's yields again, for though there are names whose glory is second to none buried there, yet Westminster is in a peculiar sense the National Valhalla, the Hall of Heroes, and her aisles are crowded thickly with notable names as well as those considerably less notable, and but for their presence here already forgotten. Among Kings and Queens, this is the burial-place of Edward the Confessor ; of the I., III., and VI. Edwards ; of Richard II. ; of Henry V., VII., and VIII. ; both the James I. ; Charles II. ; the two Queen Marys and their unhappy sister of Scotland ; Elizabeth and Anne, both remembered with love and gratitude though they were the antithesis in character ; William III. ; and George II. Of statesmen, soldiers, poets, and authors ; of artists, historians, and men of science, the names are legion ; were Westminster to have no other title to our love and veneration than these mighty names of the past, it would still occupy a high place. The very air is thick with memories ; it is impossible for the eye to rest anywhere without encountering

Scenery of London

some memorial of the great past. Yet granted all this, granted the points enumerated, still in the minds of many Londoners, Westminster takes a place second to St. Paul's.

The reason for this is difficult to find, but shall be entered upon presently. Before leaving Westminster it is well to notice its external beauties, and the points of view from which it can best be seen. Coming up Victoria Street on a night when the moon is high overhead, the ghostly and glorious outlines of Wren's two Western Towers can be seen at their best, with all their beautiful stonework, their pinnacles and niches traced as in ivory.

A view less known and full of detail is that from the front of the House of Lords, where every fretted pinnacle of Henry VII.'s chapel is shown in relief, where the platform for the intended spire is full in view and many an angle and turret, and where the white outlines of St. Margaret's are in the background. This is perhaps the finest sight of all. From the river again, where those two fretted towers rise grandly, and the Abbey seems to crouch like a lion behind the Houses of Parliament, it is beautiful also; at every point, down every vista, something may be seen that cannot be attained in any other way. For dignity the ancient Abbey is unapproachable, it needs no spire to call attention to its merits; though it is long-backed, somewhat squat in its dimensions, unequal in its parts, it bears in every line the impress of its growth throughout the ages.



THE END OF VICTORIA STREET,
WESTMINSTER



Great Buildings

The services in Westminster, beautiful as they are, lack something ; it may be that the monuments piled in every available space, or the dust of ages lying thickly, deaden and muffle the sound of sweet singing ; it may be the peculiar construction of the interior, where the transepts are occupied by the worshippers, who thus sit across the cathedral, and do not see the long nave ; or the feeling of having the choir on the wrong side ; from one or other of these causes, or all combined, there is never the perfect satisfaction about a service in Westminster that there is in St. Paul's.

Who that has sat beneath St. Paul's mighty dome and heard the grand hymn—

O God, our help in ages past,

sung by the full choir with the deep notes of hundreds of voices, each in themselves of small compass, but fervent in utterance, can forget it? St. Paul's is the national church in a way that Westminster can never be, and the feeling that she inspires is a deep sense of citizenship. Yet this is strange, because the style of Westminster, the Pointed or Early English, is far more national than the classical outlines of St. Paul's. From the vast dome that rears itself high over the surrounding houses, to the mighty nave in which the very atmosphere of London is enclosed, St. Paul's strikes a note of our nation. Westminster has its coronations, St. Paul's its thanksgiving processions, and though, with the exception of the Jubilee celebrations, these cannot compare with the coronations for pageantry, they touch sometimes

Scenery of London

another note, not reverence only, but glad thanksgiving.

The present cathedral is due to Wren, who—though to strengthen the foundations he altered the axis of the church—built on the site of the old cathedral, first founded, according to Bede, in 604. There are no remnants of Old St. Paul's except some monuments and the foundations of the Chapter House, uncovered on the south side.

The Sunday afternoon services, as at present held, bear witness that faith is not dead among us. There, gathered together, Sunday by Sunday, may be found a great crowd of all ages and both sexes, mostly of the middle classes, the comfortably off, comfortably clad people, who keep up a tradition of honest living and hard work, with respectability among us. It is a wonderful sight : the grey distances, the dimness of the towering dome, the long-drawn aisles, and the crowd soberly dressed in black, and brown and dingy colours ; a crowd reverent, attentive, joining a service that for singing and music can hardly be surpassed. The boys' voices of St. Paul's are well known for their beauty ; wandering down the narrow streets of the neighbourhood on a week day you may chance to hear a song sweeter than any lark's, a boy's clear treble, rising higher and higher, until you catch your breath to listen as the fresh young voice goes up, up, lending wings to the soul ; and suddenly with its cessation you come back into a very work-a-day world, a world of hurrying people, of huge carts, of crowded omnibuses,

BLACKFRIARS REACH FROM WATERLOO
BRIDGE



Great Buildings

of muddy streets and grey skies ; a world filled with the essence of the commonplace, from which you had been carried away by the practising notes of one of the choir boys of St. Paul's in the school hard by the cathedral.

To return to the congregation, why is it that the commonplace crowd appeals to us so ? Is it because of the love of humanity that beats in our veins ? Is it because we feel that here, in the mass of men and women, are the characteristics to which none of us are strangers, and that, therefore, if these characteristics could by a miracle become visible, and the excrescences of personal idiosyncrasies be taken away, the remnant would be those feelings and qualities common to all ? In fact that we should see humanity in the abstract ? It is difficult to express the idea in words, but to those who feel this responsive beat St. Paul's appeals with force. It utters the voiceless cry of those who cannot speak for themselves ; it embodies the national ideals. It is the uplifting of those who toil and those who think. The same crowd that gathers in St. Paul's on a Sunday afternoon may be seen any day in the Underground trains about six o'clock, men and women soberly dressed, hard working, keenly alive ; intelligent men and women who have opinions and character, who are selfish, imperfect, grasping, and unclean, but who yet have ideals, and with more or less ardour strive to live up to them ; who are rarely destitute of self-respect and independence ; who form the large majority of Londoners, outnumbering all other classes by ten to one, and who

Scenery of London

make the "wheels go round." From them, when successful, spring the aristocrats of the future, the landed proprietors, the great commercial princes, the peers ; from them, if unsuccessful, come the scavengers and scamps, the wastrels and worse. Always it goes on, this falling and rising, without cessation, and yet like a lake into which a river flows in and flows out, the bulk of the commonplace remains the same.

But we have gone far from St. Paul's. Of its past there are two pictures on which I like to dwell. One is Paul's Cross, with its eager fanatics preaching to an excited crowd, to those who held their religion dear enough to go to the stake and brave the fire for it.

The exact site of the Cross has been ascertained. The old cathedral was not exactly on the same site as the present one, but, to use an expressive word, was "skewed" round a little, and the north-east angle of the present cathedral cuts the spot where stood the Cross of St. Paul. It was of unknown antiquity, and in early days folkmotes were gathered here, and later proclamations of all kinds were issued from it, so as to make it, as Dean Milman says, "the pulpit . . . almost of the Church of England." This pulpit was occupied by men whose names will last as long as English history lasts, Ridley, Latimer, Gardiner, Coverdale, Laud, etc., who were attended by vast crowds and eagerly heard.

From the time when jousts and tournaments were held in Smithfield, and even hard by in Chepe itself, to the time when first one doctrine and then another



SOUTHWARK BRIDGE AND ST. PAUL'S
CATHEDRAL



Great Buildings

found utterance according to the tenets of the reigning sovereign, through that era when fire and stake claimed many victims, when religion was not a theory to be aired on Sundays in company with respectability, but a living, pregnant thing that might bring forth any day death by torture, on to the time of the civil wars, when, by order of Parliament in 1643, it was pulled down, Paul's Cross was the scene of the discussion of all the burning questions of the day. The stones around were trodden by an innumerable multitude of men of all ages seeking light. Picture it if you can, this company of the ghosts of the past. Where now you sit on a hard-backed seat and your eyes rest on brilliant green grass, where flocks of opal-hued pigeons bill and coo, where plane-trees wave gracefully and the roar of the traffic comes gently subdued ; these crowds ran to and fro, now gathering together and anon turning away for discussion ; eyes sought eyes with fear that said, " We also are in danger, " and the very crackling of the faggots seemed to rise on the still air as all that great assemblage hung upon the words of the preacher.

We have several prints of Paul's Cross, one very fine, in which the old cathedral is shown in the background with its flying buttresses and square tower, shorn of the spire, which was burnt in 1561. Against the wall is a sort of grand stand or canopy, where King James I., his Queen, and his son Charles are seated. In the foreground are many people decorously sitting in rows, while a few gallants in cloaks loiter about behind them ; one man whips a dog that makes his presence too

Scenery of London

obtrusive, and others lead away a couple of horses, possibly those that have brought the King to listen to the Bishop of London, Dr. John King.

One more scene that always haunts St. Paul's, that of the time when it was turned into a house of shopkeepers. St. Paul's aisle in the sixteenth century was the regular meeting-place for merchants who wished to discuss business, gallants who wished to be in the fashion, and those who had assignations. "The south alley for usurye and poperye ; the north for simony and the horse fair, in the midst for all kinds of bargains, meetings, brawlings, murthers, conspiracies." The centre walk or "Pervyse" was a lounge for idlers and wits, gallants and cheats. Bishop Corbet says :— "When I past Paul's and travell'd in that walk where all our Britaine sinners sweare and talk," and Captain Bobadil in *Every Man in His Humour* is described as a "Paul's man," otherwise a loiterer and roysterer. It was also a thoroughfare, porters bearing burdens frequently came in at the north door and crossed out by the south ; beside bookshops there were tobacco shops and "semsters" ; such a den of thieves is almost incredible, and that this sacrilege was suffered to go on speaks badly for the powers that were. A curious custom was that the choir boys had the right to demand a fee from any one entering the cathedral during service time with spurs on ; "the boys will swarm about you like so many white butterflies ; when you in the open quire shall draw forth a perfumed embroidered purse . . . and quoit silver into the boys' hands."



INTERIOR OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S
BEFORE RESTORATION



Great Buildings

A delightful training in decorum and reverence for the youngsters!

In the time of the Fire all the booksellers of Paternoster Row hastened to place their stores in St. Paul's for safe custody, but the stores were burnt with the cathedral. Of all glimpses of St. Paul's, that where it comes suddenly upon you as you pass westward up Cheapside, and the towering dome appears unexpectedly high overhead above the green trees, where the tones of the building run the gamut from indigo to ash-grey, is the most striking. A much better known but less striking view is that of the approach by Fleet Street, where the height of the dome is measured by the pointed spire of St. Dunstan's.

We have lingered long enough over the two great churches, and must note, even if only to mention them, other buildings. Of these there is one other church that every Londoner should know, St. Bartholomew's the Great, hard by Smithfield, where Norman work is to be seen in its full beauty. This church is only a fragment, the choir, in fact, of the old Priory Church of St. Bartholomew built in 1123. Across the water is another priory church, that of St. Mary Overies, now known as St. Saviour's, and here some remnants of the earliest building may be seen, though a great deal of the fabric is modern.

Of entirely new ecclesiastical buildings the magnificent Roman Catholic cathedral in Westminster is a striking example; the style Byzantine, carried out in red brick, is alien to the spirit of the Londoner, as is

Scenery of London

also the towering campanile, which he is apt to liken to a mill chimney. But none the less, in spite of the half-concealed aversion which leads him to mistrust anything to which he is not accustomed, he is bound to confess that seldom has a finer building been raised for the worship of God in his own age; for, with the exception of Truro Cathedral, we have ceased to build these mighty worship-houses, trusting to those already in existence through the piety of our ancestors.

London has many Palaces, but the first example, first because the London residence of the King, Buckingham Palace, hardly deserves the name at all, being merely a large mansion of stucco, well described in the favourite auctioneer's term "commodious." Of St. James's, with its quaint courts, its Tudor clock-tower, and its lovable red brick, we shall speak again. We could linger long about St. James's, picturing many scenes, from the touching farewell between that most loving father, Charles I., and his young children, to the time of the hated Georges, when fat and rude George I. dragged poor Lady Nithisdale half across the great reception-room, as she caught at the skirts of his coat while on her knees before him imploring for the life of her husband. It was in St. James's Palace that the unhappy child destined to be known as the Pretender was born, and here died clever little Queen Caroline, by far the best of the consorts of the Georges. Levées are still held at St. James's, though drawing-rooms take place at Buckingham Palace.

Kensington Palace speaks still more loudly of the

ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S SQUARE

The site of the old Smithfield Cattle Market. St. Bartholomew's Hospital and the spire of St. Sepulchre are the chief landmarks.



Great Buildings

Georges ; though it was bought and rebuilt by William III., who suffered from asthma, and was persuaded that the "gravel pits" of Kensington were good for that complaint. The view of Kensington Palace usually seen, that from the Park, is not striking, it appears but a uniform building of a dull-coloured brick ; to see it to advantage it is necessary to pass to the long semi-private road that skirts the west side, and there it is transformed into a heterogeneous medley of red-tiled, creeper-covered brick buildings standing amid green fields, a group that might be a hundred miles away in the country ; with all the reposeful look so delightful in the midst of a busy world. Queen Anne spent most of her time at Kensington Palace, after her accession, living a lonely, dull life ; bereft of her husband and children, and without sufficient brains to care for reading, it is hardly wonderful that she succumbed to apoplexy, brought on by too liberal an indulgence in the pleasures of the table. Her negative virtues at all events earned her the title of "good."

Far beyond Kensington, on the outskirts of the London that now is, lies the Palace of Fulham, the official residence of the Bishops of London. Situated as it is, easy transit by water was first among its advantages, and the older bishops in their splendid barges passed up and down the river in the ordinary course of the day's work, for long and dangerous country roads, boggy and miry and "infested by footpads," lay between them and the old Cities of London and Westminster. Even so late as the eighteenth century, the Earl of

Scenery of London

Peterborough, who had a house, a country house of course, in what is now the New King's Road, was stopped by footpads on his way to it and robbed ; one at least of the robbers was caught, and turned out to be a student of the Temple, who had done this thing not for a practical joke but as a serious contribution towards his living expenses !

One of the courtyards at Fulham Palace dates from the reign of Henry VII., and there are few places that preserve more completely their ancient aspect. Red brick and creepers as usual form the two main elements in the scene, and the fine gateway tower adds character to the long, comparatively low, wings. Other parts of the Palace, like so much elsewhere, have been spoilt by the rebuilding of a later age. At the present time the question whether the See of London can afford to keep up the Palace has been mooted, and the voices of those who would pull asunder all links of continuity with the past, who would rob London life of all that reminds us of our historical record, and would tear down all save that which is strictly utilitarian, are sure to be loudly heard. But the day when the Bishop deserts Fulham Palace will be one of blackness to those who love their London and would preserve her scanty relics of the past, even at the cost of a little additional expense.

From Fulham to Lambeth we may go by water, though unless we have a private steam-launch or boat we shall not in these days, these boasted days, find so much as a wherry to take us there. It is down stream, however,



LAMBETH PALACE

Moonrise.



Great Buildings

so unless against the tide the work of rowing will not be arduous.

Lambeth is a monument of venerable dignity and far less known than it should be, because, though easily accessible, it stands upon what to London, in general, is the wrong side of the water. It has been the dwelling of the archbishops since the days of Archbishop Fitzwalter in 1197, who proposed at first to found here a college for canons, but being opposed by the Pope, founded a town-house for the See of Canterbury instead. The great gateway at Lambeth is the finest of those remaining from the Tudor period, it is bold and high with battlements and towers, red brick and white stone being the materials used. The part of the palace used by the archbishops for their living-house dates only from the beginning of the nineteenth century. The Lollards' Tower is of grey stone and abuts from the chapel. It had formerly an image of St. Thomas à Becket in the niche in its walls, to which the watermen of former days would touch their caps in passing. The crypt in the chapel is supposed to be one of the oldest parts, dating from the original building by Fitzwalter. During the time of the Commonwealth the soldiers, out of hatred for Laud, broke into the chapel and destroyed the stained-glass windows, and subsequently the palace was used as a prison, as it had been frequently used before ; later still it was sold, and the chapel for the time turned into a dancing-room. Such was the reign of the godly Cromwell. It was afterwards restored and rebuilt.

Of the vanished palaces of Westminster and

Scenery of London

Whitehall we speak in the chapter on Westminster, but one vanished palace is so closely associated with one of the greatest of our Queens that it cannot be passed over.

This is Greenwich, so far off that it can hardly rank as London, though it lies within the limits of our Greater London of to-day.

When the first royal palace of Greenwich was built we have no record, but that there was a royal residence here in the time of Edward I. is stated by Lysons. The best-known view is that of "Placentia," the palace of Duke Humphrey of Gloucester, to whom the land had been granted by Henry VI., and this, though altered and having its front rebuilt by succeeding sovereigns, became a royal palace after Duke Humphrey's death. Henry VIII. was born at Greenwich and was very fond of residing here. Here were born also Mary and Elizabeth, and here died the poor little King Edward VI. The glory of Greenwich reached its height in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, who gave splendid entertainments at the palace, and occupied it in preference to any of her other residences. Charles II. ordered it to be taken down, and began rebuilding, though lack of funds caused the work soon to cease. Queen Mary II., inspired by the example of Chelsea, made it one of her dearest wishes to see a fine home for seamen built on the site of the ancient palace, and after her death her husband carried out her wishes, but the seamen ceased to live within the building in 1869, when the scheme was changed, and the pensioners

GREENWICH

The twin towers of the Hospital in the distance.



Great Buildings

received pensions in money, and went to live with their friends. The Royal Naval School was opened instead in 1873.

The fine frontage and the domes of Wren's building are well seen from the river, and the great painted hall, decorated by Thornhill, attracts many visitors. Wren's design was given freely as a magnificent contribution to the great scheme. Though Greenwich retains some parts of Charles II.'s work and that of other sovereigns, it has none of the real flavour of antiquity; it is splendid, but romance seems to have departed from it, and it does not kindle feelings of enthusiasm.

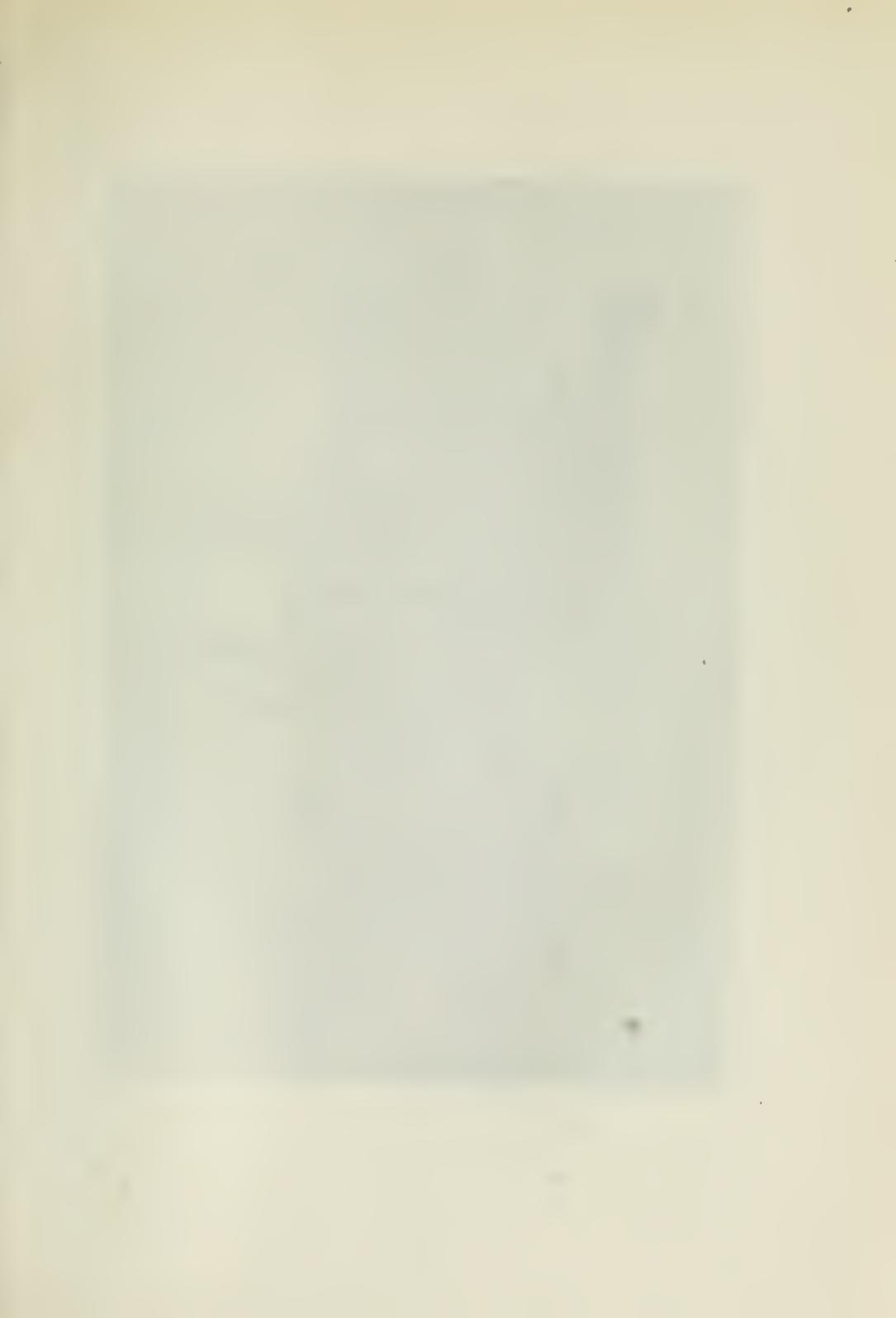
Of the great public buildings not yet described the first in rank is of course the Tower. The arrangements have been so much improved of late years that it is now quite possible for the visitor to attain some idea of the plan of a first-rate medieval fortress. It is still a barrack and a store for artillery, but all the older parts are open to view, and we wander as we will over the site of the palace and its garden, or through the grim prison-like passages and halls of the keep and its chapel. We note that, till the modern doorways were made, the entrance must have been by a ladder, and what look like dungeons were the royal apartments of the Conqueror and his family. The inscriptions in some of the flanking towers are of a single period, but the Tower as a prison is only one of the three aspects in which the building should be studied. When we know it as a palace, as a fortress, and as a prison, we are presented with its modern phase and find it a most

Scenery of London

interesting, well arranged, and carefully labelled museum. But we have seen museums elsewhere. It is outside, on the grass, under the trees, or by the river's edge that we love to linger. About the whole place there is an air of sleepy quiet. Perhaps the voices of the officers drilling soldiers in the moat rise sharply ; the rumble of a great dray over the cobble stones comes softened by distance ; the shrill scream of a tug in the river cuts the air like a knife ; but these are items which only serve to measure the general sense of stillness. Go to the front of the Tower on the quay ; here at any time on a fine day the seats will be full of people, who sit there indolently enjoying without analysis the general sense of well-being that the scene imparts. The swiftly flowing water below probably brings up with it a whiff of salt from the sea. Beneath the quay whereon we sit flowed the water to the moat, and here came in those who entered by the Traitors' Gate, and who had little hope in those grim days that justice would fight expediency to the victory.

The grey walls of the turreted White Tower peep over the brown bricks and fixed walls of the Lieutenant's lodging, and in front is the fresh green of a strip of vivid grass.

Go over the drawbridge, and pass under the portcullis of Bloody Tower—which deserves its name if ever a place did so—and seated on Tower Green wait until the spirit of the place has enfolded you. Apart from its historical interest, which is of course paramount, there is another interest that appeals with potency to



THE TOWER OF LONDON



Great Buildings

some, and this is the fact that those whose impatience had been dulled by long-deferred hope to a quiet resignation ; those whose bitter tears became fewer as the inevitable end approached ; whose beating hearts had grown so used to the grim spectre of fear that he had become almost a friend, were nearly all of culture and of birth. Queens, princes, princesses, nobles, and men of learning and of piety, the salt of the earth, were they who suffered here. This is no common gaol, but little did they who endured the long imprisonment and ignominious end imagine that instead of infamy they had earned glory, that in times to come their names would be classed in a hierarchy of the noblest of England.

In the beautiful Chapel of St. Peter to the north, every stone in the chancel and aisle covers the dust of some murdered man or woman. As Macaulay says, "there is no sadder spot on earth than this little cemetery." Here are buried two queens, Anne Boleyn and Katharine Howard ; Lady Jane Grey, who, from the range of building to the south of the Beauchamp Tower, saw her husband's headless body brought back in a cart ; Devereux, Earl of Essex ; Margaret, Countess of Salisbury. All these were executed on Tower Green on the railed-in space before us, then covered with green grass, now paved with rough cobble stones and gently shaded by young planes. In the chapel also lie the Duke of Monmouth and the Scots Lords, brought here from Tower Hill. As Stow quaintly wrote, in the days when the Earl of Essex, the last of the six persons beheaded in the Tower from

Scenery of London

1536 to 1601, had but just suffered, "There lyeth before the High Altar, two Dukes between two Queens, to wit the Duke of Somerset and Duke of Northumberland between Queen Anne and Queen Katharine, all four beheaded."

Modern barracks occupy part of the space within the walls, and in the centre rises sternly and splendidly the White Tower. Its facings of Portland stone, due to Wren, have added to its appearance, so that we do not grumble at the change; the interior is as grim and gloomy as in the days when it was first built as a house of defence and a strong tower. The narrow, winding staircase connecting battlements through many stories to vast vaults underground for storage; the well for water; and the secret access to the moat, all prove it capable of being held without difficulty by those besieged, and the walls, thirty feet thick in parts, promised ill for the success of any besiegers that should surmount the moat and wall outside to attack it at close quarters.

St. John's beautiful Norman chapel, with its double crypts; and the airless, lightless cells—one well named with a strange, jesting humour, "Little Ease"—though slightly changed in small details still carry one's mind back through the centuries.

What is supposed to be part of the old Roman City wall stands near the White Tower, and from here a fine view of the Tower Bridge gives one of those peeps which are found in abundance about the Tower. Its charm lies in its heterogeneity, its unexpectedness, its mixture of styles, its marks of growth; he who would



THE WATERWAY TO LONDON FROM
ABOVE CHERRY GARDEN PIER



Great Buildings

know the Tower well would have to live there many a day.

After the Tower all other buildings seem small and uninteresting, yet the Guildhall, which has existed since the earliest corporate existence of London, has a dignity of its own, in spite of what Mr. Wheatley calls the "mongrel substitute" of the frontage put up in 1789. This is the only part of the building generally seen, and is far from lacking beauty, with its delightful irregularity of design and the whiteness of its Portland stone. The walls of the great Hall date from the rebuilding of 1411, and the roof, a modern addition but of oak in the hammer-beam style, cost £100,000. The crypt is probably the part least seen, and yet, from an architectural point of view, it is infinitely the most interesting. It dates from 1411 also, and from each pillar spring sixteen ribs to form the groins, a curious and almost unique design. It has been repaired, and is in good preservation. This was not always a crypt, but was once upon the street level, as the windows now blocked up tell. The pavement outside is ten feet or more above it now, for the same reason that we found in Bow Church. The Guildhall has many memories, its courts, its City banquets, and ceremonies being mingled with scenes of history, of which the most memorable is the trial of Lady Jane Grey. The Art Gallery, the Museum, and the Library are all well known both to strangers and citizens.

The Royal Exchange, the Bank, and the Mansion House serve to make a group, which if not beautiful

Scenery of London

is at all events inoffensive, and they speak of the age of solidity in which they were erected. Associated as they are with the wonderful and ever-varying scenes passing continually before them, the Londoner at all events learns to love the massive columns of the Exchange and the long, low lines of the Bank ; here if nowhere else he feels he really is in London.

North-westward of the City is the hoary Charterhouse, where still stands the ancient gateway from which dripped the blood of the last prior, in the reign of the tyrant Harry. Upon part of the grounds are the modern and fine buildings of the Merchant Taylors' School, for the famous Charterhouse School, which includes in its roll the names of Wesley, Thackeray, Leech, and others, is removed into the country. The old pensioners, gowned and well cared for, spend peaceful days in this strange backwater, separated only from the rushing tide of traffic in the Clerkenwell Road by an ancient wall on which fig-trees grow.

Not far off is St. John's Gate, to be mentioned again in connection with Dr. Johnson. It is the only ancient gate left standing across a street in London. It formed the entrance to the priory of St. John of Jerusalem, and the offices of the re-established Order of the same name are here to-day.

Among other public buildings to be mentioned are the Houses of Parliament, forming a well-known river view,—I mean the view from the east, where the bridge draws a line across the front, and the towers rise behind a foreground of barges and rippling water ; and

HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT FROM
LAMBETH



Great Buildings

if this view is seen set against the smoky splendour of a sunset sky, its beauty is enhanced tenfold. The glory of the Houses of Parliament is Westminster Hall, built by William Rufus, who designed to rebuild altogether the old palace of Edward the Confessor, and afterwards enlarged by Richard II. Strange scenes has the Hall beheld, and now it stands empty, swept, and garnished, a wide open stone space, with the feet of continual passers-by echoing on its pavement and dying away in the vast timbers of the ancient hammer-beam roof. Once the empty Hall was full of life and movement; at one end was the Court of Exchequer and at the other the Court of Chancery and King's Bench. Up and down amid the rabble and riff-raff that always hang on to any law case walked men with straws in their shoes, signifying that they were to be bought as witnesses! Part of the Hall was occupied with the stalls and shops of booksellers, mathematical-instrument makers, haberdashers and sempstresses. Many historical trials were held here, from Sir William Wallace onward, through those of Sir Thomas More and Queen Anne Boleyn, to that of Warren Hastings. Impassioned pleading, agony of expectation, resignation or loss of hope, the Hall has seen them all, and mingled with them what Carlyle calls the "roaring flood of life" passing in and out, persons cynical, humorous, callous, and seeking opportunities for self-advancement.

Besides the crypt of St. Stephen's the hall is the only part of the ancient palace left.

Of galleries and museums in London the less said

Scenery of London

the better. The National Gallery is adorned with the colonnade that formerly fronted Carlton House. The British Museum contrives to give exactly the impression which its contents inspire,—absolute trustworthiness ; here you may find all that you can possibly want, and any fact found is vouched for with all the tremendous weight of official authority. The Museum building says as clearly as if it were written across the frontage, “I am the National Storehouse, and I live up to a full sense of my responsibility.”

What the new South Kensington Museum will be remains to be seen as it sheds its scaffolding poles ; it is to be hoped that it will in some degree neutralise the effect of the hideous Noah’s Ark next to it. The Imperial Institute, lamentably as it has failed in the purpose for which it was intended, is externally by far the most graceful and harmonious building in this quarter.

But time fails us, of Somerset House, of Burlington House, of the Tate Gallery, of all Wren’s churches, we would fain talk by the hour, yet such discourse might fail to be profitable, and could not altogether fail of being wearisome. We forbear, and leave this chapter, with the impressions already gained of the Houses of Parliament outlined against a glowing, smoky, sunset sky ; of the stately dome of St. Paul’s rising high above the roofs and line of quivering planes ; of ancient red-brick, stone-quoined gateways ; and of the mighty Tower, concrete English History.



AUTUMN MORNING, MILLBANK



WESTMINSTER



NORTHUMBERLAND AVENUE

Coaches starting.



CHAPTER V

WESTMINSTER

A VISITOR from the United States of America woke up in his hotel in Northumberland Avenue, on his first morning in the old country, and hardly waited to do justice to his breakfast before sallying forth to inspect all the historical marvels of London, which exercise such a potent fascination over the minds of those who live in a new country. He was in a position to inspect these marvels with greater ease than any man before his date, for he had brought over with him the first working time-machine ever constructed, and by its aid he intended to see for himself how cities are made, and to be present at every detail of the growth. He attracted but little attention in the street; his secret had been well kept, or the mob would have made a fair trial impossible; and the machine was eyed by the passers with only a slight glance of wonder as if it had been some new-fangled sort of motor tricycle. Quivering with anticipation the visitor made his way to the north side of Trafalgar Square.

He saw before him the sight so familiar to us all, the

Scenery of London

dun pavement and the splashing fountains, the little green trees against a background of drab stucco, and beyond them the vista of Whitehall, where rise the towers of the Houses of Parliament. At the north end of Trafalgar Square were the high columns and the dome of the National Gallery, and close at hand was the arcade of St. Martin's Church. Early as it was, the seats in the open space held their complement of loafers, those men "who do nothing, and have nothing," and yet contrive to live apparently with no small degree of comfort. Children going to school dressed in woollen mufflers and red caps looked furtively at each other in passing ; a cab laden with boxes made its way up Charing Cross Road toward one of the great stations ; at the corner of the Square a couple of well-set-up stout sergeants talked ingratiatingly with two weedy, nondescript youths ; omnibus horses struggled past them up the incline ; errand boys on small cycle carts went spinning along. It was a students' day at the National Gallery, and several students of both varieties, distinguishable rather by the carelessness of their costumes than for any special artistic taste in their arrangement, mounted the steps ; they seemed to know one another, and exchanged greetings freely. A girls' school, leaving in its wake an impression of peculiar giggling insipidity, passed at a uniform march ; and all these objects toned in with the drabs and the greys and the greens of the Square. How changed it would all be, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye ! The visitor's hand was on the spring. He whizzed backward through space ; in the



ST. MARTIN'S, TRAFALGAR SQUARE



Westminster

middle of the eighteenth century he stopped the machine with a thump, and behold—before him stretched a walled-in space. He was well versed in local history, this visitor, and he needed not to be told this was the Royal Mews; in the centre was a curious and ancient building called Queen Elizabeth's Bath, though with what justice it is difficult to say. The façade of the Mews was very new and elegant, having been rebuilt but about twenty years, and it was surmounted by three stone cupolas. In ancient times it had housed the king's falcons, and here were now stabled the King's horses, the breed of cream-coloured Hanoverians lately introduced, and the wonder of England. The neighbourhood of the Mews was not unfashionable. Houses had been built for the gentry and nobility on the north side, and bowling greens there established; but to the north-east the district was very squalid; a perfect rookery of narrow lanes and malodorous alleys stood there, popularly known as the Caribbean Islands. The Church of St. Martin's was the only object that remained the same in spite of the visitor's incursion into time, but it was difficult to see because of the intervening houses. It had only been rebuilt some five-and-twenty years. Close before it ran a narrow lane stretching down to Charing Cross, and this the visitor must needs follow. Here the scene was utterly changed and was quite strange and unfamiliar. Instead of Northumberland Avenue there was a splendid house with a frieze of large capital letters across the façade. The house was built round about a square

Scenery of London

courtyard, and the gardens, covering several acres, reached down to the river.

As he sat there surveying it, the hand of the visitor touched the spring of the machine almost unconsciously, and slowly he went back through the ages. In the earlier part of the sixteenth century the house had disappeared, and there in place of it was a small religious house, St. Mary Rounceval. It had escaped so far the reforming tendencies of Henry VIII., but was to be suppressed in the reign of his son. Behind it was a large plot of ground enclosed with brick, where the Kings of Scotland were wont to lodge in ancient days when they came to the Parliament of England; this was later known as Scotland Yard. The visitor, glancing at his time register saw that he was now in the year 1529, a date that enabled him to appreciate what happened a little later.

To his right, on the spot where now stands the statue of Charles I., arose a stately cross of white Caen stone, pure as the day it was erected in 1289, and the model of which we may see in Charing Cross station yard to this day. The condition of the pure cross drew the stranger's attention to the difference of the atmospheric conditions from those of the time when he had started; behind and all around him stretched fields, and the air was as clear as that of the country on a May morning. To the northward there was no church, but fields only, in the which Henry VIII. was to found, six years later, the first Church of St. Martin's in the Fields. At the beginning of the long, muddy country road called

CHARING CROSS STATION FROM THE
RIVER



Westminster

the Strand was another small religious house, where a few tumble-down cottages and quaint gabled houses made up the village of Charing. Yet even then it was a busy place. A man jogged past on a solid, broad-backed mare ; a lad in charge of a flock of sheep exchanged a greeting with him ; an itinerant vendor, a comely woman, singing a song of indistinguishable words in a loud, cheery voice, made the air resound ; these and several other passers dressed in clothes of bright colours, but in a quaint, unfamiliar style, stopped and gazed open-mouthed at a gay cavalcade that swept suddenly into view and turned down Whitehall. Satisfied that he was himself totally invisible, the visitor turned to gape also. There must have been at least seven or eight hundred people, some on horseback, some running on foot, and all alike dressed in shining armour, in scarlet and in blue. They parted just abreast of the visitor, who saw with astonishment, riding in the midst of them an ecclesiastic, with a strong, heavy masculine face, magnificently mounted on a black horse covered with trappings of crimson and gold. The very saddle was of crimson velvet, and the man himself so shone and glittered with precious stones that he seemed like the sun in his rising. But Wolsey's sun was nearly set.

The cavalcade turned into a gateway of the palace on the east side of Whitehall below Scotland Yard. The palace was a congeries of red-brick buildings, not unlike St. James's, but more rambling and confused ; glimpses of courts filled with eager, restless servitors

Scenery of London

and men-at-arms could be descried from the rough roadway.

A sudden desire to see the end of this palace, to see it melt and fall, seized upon the visitor, he pressed his finger on the spring marked "forward" and came slowly upwards toward our own time, but after a short time he stopped and remained spell-bound. The palace was still there though much altered and enlarged. Recent attempts had evidently been made at renovation, for there now stood facing the roadway a majestic building of Portland stone in a very different style from the old ruinous red-brick walls around it. It had a row of windows across the frontage, and altogether it seemed strangely familiar. Where had he seen it that very morning? Why, in the guide-book of course, as a representation of the Banqueting Hall, still standing, the only fragment that was ever executed of Inigo Jones's great design for a new palace of Whitehall. But as he gazed on it he noted how it was half hidden by a great platform that rose to the lower sills of the upper-storey windows; and on the platform there was a man, slight and small and timid-looking, and in the group round him were soldiers in uniform, a bishop in full robes, and men in state dress, yet none was so conspicuous or so dignified as that slight, small figure partially disrobed. The waiting multitudes beneath, hemmed in by horsemen, so that they could not reach the scaffold, looked on with upturned faces in which awe, anxiety, and deep dread were mingled. Presto! The scene had changed, the machine had slipped on, but



MORNING IN WHITEHALL



Westminster

stopped, it seemed, almost immediately, though so fast it went that in reality ten or eleven years had intervened. The crowd was now gathered about the upper part of Whitehall, where the cross had stood, and there on a gallows erected for the purpose four of the regicides, who had taken part in the murder of their king, were hanged and then quartered. Faugh! with a sensation of disgust the visitor turned away; men had coarser stomachs in those days. He resumed his way down toward Westminster, but stopped short at the sight of the magnificent Holbein gateway standing right across the roadway south of the palace, a gateway built by Henry VIII. shortly after the date when the visitor had witnessed Wolsey in his glory. It had two high side towers, hexagonal and crowned with battlements. Windows gemmed its sides in profusion. Every niche was filled with carving, and the variegated brick made a rich background. Passing through this the visitor perceived on the left the wide spaces of the neatly-laid-out Privy Gardens, and on the right a tilting ground. He was now confronted by a second gate with dome-capped towers, rich enough, but lacking the profuse ornament of the first one.

Passing through this he found himself in King Street, that narrow street through which all the pageantry of royalty had to pass for many generations. Funerals and marriages, christenings and state ceremonials had been crowded in between those overhanging houses, three and four storeys high, with carved work and escutcheons and blazoned arms on their frontage. No

Scenery of London

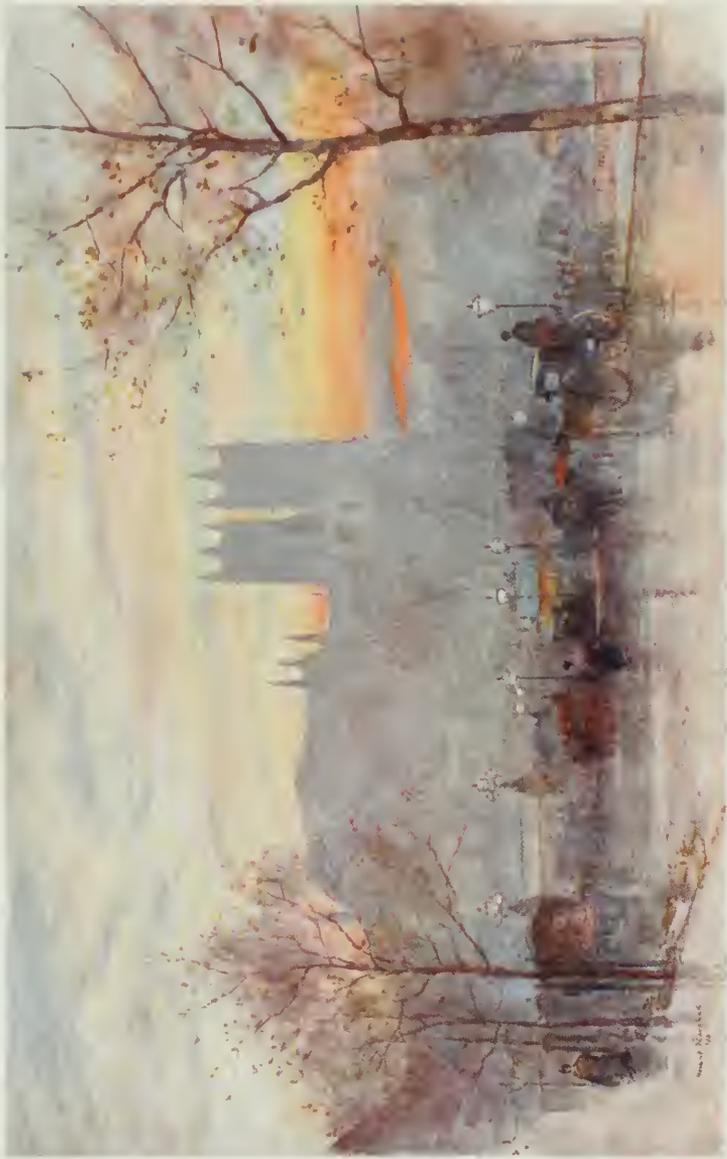
attempt at any sort of pavement was there on this royal road ; large mudholes were traps for the unwary and the depression in the centre of the roadway was filled by a stream, into which, as he watched, women from the adjacent houses emptied their pails ; one deluge of water, shot from an upper storey, narrowly missed his head, and quickening his pace he was glad to find himself in the peace of the Abbey precincts. A space of green stretched before him and behind it rose the Abbey, very much as we know it now, though without Wren's two noble western towers, venerable and dignified, with St. Margaret's Church close under its shelter. But except for Westminster Hall the whole aspect in the direction of the river was strange. On the north side was New Palace Yard with a handsome clock tower ; from this ran houses of wealthy and substantial merchants. On the east of it was the Star Chamber. It stood close to a pier running out into the river, for here there was no bridge until nearly a hundred years later. The congeries of irregular buildings grouped around Westminster Hall were mean and undignified, and numbered among them many private houses of the same gabled overhanging style as those in King Street.

The visitor knew that here had stood the great palace occupied by our kings up to the time of the transference to Whitehall, and he gazed in wonder, speculating which of the buildings he now saw were the remnants of this palace. The Chapel of St. Stephen was apparent enough, rising high on the south ; here sat



LIGHT AFTER RAIN

Westminster Abbey from the end of the Embankment.





Westminster

the House of Commons, but of the others which he knew must still be there, the Painted Chamber and the Court of Requests, once Edward the Confessor's living-rooms, he could divine nothing, nor of the Prince's Chamber and the Council Room, all of which vanished later in the fatal fire of 1834.

Turning away westward somewhat sadly, the visitor found his attention attracted by a massive and sombre square keep of blackened stone, standing on the site of the present Guildhall ; he approached it wondering at its windowless condition, and surmising on the darkness within, when he realised that this must be the famous Sanctuary, the refuge of hunted criminals, and his attention redoubled. The little narrow, irregular, pointed windows strongly barred, the old bastion projecting from the straight undecorated wall, and the low doorway riveted his attention. Here noble and subject, prince and pauper, the innocent and the guilty had fled in days when retribution was swift and inquiries none too certain. It had served its purpose, this grim citadel, sheltering all alike until means could be found of proving innocence or providing for escape. Twice did Queen Elizabeth, wife of Edward IV., fly here ; and while within this rough, dark dwelling the first time gave birth to her elder boy, to be a king in name but never in fact. Looking away from this place of dark memories the visitor saw almost immediately another tower, like and yet unlike the Sanctuary ; like in its lack of ornament and its plain severity of outline, but differing in that it was a double gateway and not a solid building. The

Scenery of London

two gates were at right angles, one leading from Dean's Yard, and the other being the entrance into the Abbey precinct from the direction of Tothill. This gateway formed a prison in two parts, on one side for the Bishop of London's "clerks convict," and on the other for prisoners of the City of Westminster. Many notable men have languished within the walls, noblest of all Sir Walter Raleigh the night before his execution. Hampden, Lilly, and Lovelace, the Cavalier poet, were here also, and some thirty years after the date at which the visitor surveyed it even the garrulous Pepys was to spend a short time within the walls, in consequence of having been accused of too tender a regard for the absent James II.

The man of the time-machine had seen nearly enough ; his brain could no longer contain all the mystery and the wonder of this ever-changing City. Merely for the sake of contrast he pressed the button "forward," and found himself once more brought up sharply in the present century on the day on which he had started. Before him stretched Victoria Street, grim and grey, with the asphalt shining between the precipitous houses like a river of ice in a deep cañon. Offices on every floor and part of a floor were to be found in those tall buildings. A motor car whizzed past, slackening speed behind a string of omnibuses, a telegraph lad on a red bicycle caught on to the back for a moment to balance himself. The cabmen exchanged jokes at the cabstand in the middle of the street. Farther on a vast modern emporium attracted crowds of buyers, who followed



WHITEHALL

The fan-shaped group of trees is within the grounds of Montagu House.





Westminster

each other in a continuous string in at one door and out at another.

Turning down a side street, the stranger came suddenly upon a huge cathedral in red brick, the very latest of the ecclesiastical buildings in the Metropolis, and then he let his machine go backward once more. Vanished in a flying haze were the houses, the buildings, and the streets ; except for a line of picturesque almshouses a little to the east, there was nothing but a wide open space of green, with two large marshy ponds enclosed in its low-lying ground.

The machine ran backwards, slowly and more slowly, and stopped suddenly at the date 1256. The fields were alive with people. Booths, and tents, and pavilions, decorated with streamers and flags, occupied all the available space. Men-at-arms hastened from one tent to another. Pages, bearing dishes, got inextricably mixed up with them in their hurry. The horses, a goodly number in brilliant trappings, champed and stamped a space apart ; all was bustle, confusion, and haste. Then in a moment the bustle ceased, every man stood erect and steady in his place. Two glistening lines of men-at-arms formed a lane down which rode a gay cavalcade of men and women on horseback, rainbow-hued, with garments and trappings of cloth of gold, of crimson, and azure, and as they passed not a head but was bared before them, while a mighty shout drowned even the fanfaronade of trumpets, and all at once there rushed upon the visitor's mind the words of that ancient chronicler Stow, whose writings he knew by heart.

Scenery of London

John Maunsell the King's Councillor and Priest, did invite to a stately dinner the kings and queens of Scotland and England, Edward the king's son, and earls, barons, and knights, the Bishop of London and several citizens, whereby his guests did grow to such a number that his house at Totehill could not receive them, but that he was forced to set up tents and pavilions to receive his guests, whereof there was such a multitude that seven hundred messes of meat did not serve for the first dinner.

With renewed interest at the thought of the goodly company he was keeping, the visitor watched the arrival of the royal party at a gorgeous tent set at one end of the field. He noted the ladies as they alighted, and marked the high pointed head-dresses and the flowing wimples; he saw their gowns, blue and green, red and gold, sweeping the ground in folds; he saw the unrivalled embroidery of their cloaks, and the inlaid armour of the men; when in his eagerness leaning forward he accidentally touched the spring of his machine, and flick! the show had disappeared, but in its place was another of the year 1571.

There was a great space cleared, about the length of a cricket pitch either way, and around it, raised on platforms, as on a grand stand, were a number of people whose high degree was evidenced by the beauty and costliness of their costumes. Behind them, crowding every vantage-point where a view of the cleared space could be obtained, was a vast crowd of men and women, soldiers and lads, jostling each other in their



EMMANUEL HOSPITAL, WESTMINSTER,
NOW DESTROYED

The almshouses were built in the reign of
Queen Anne.





Westminster

excitement. The pushing increased tenfold when, from a tent of gaily striped awnings, there stepped forth a man dressed in crimson satin breeches, a cloak, and a black velvet hat with a red feather in it. He was led into the square, where he bowed with great ceremony, east, west, north, and south, and then proceeded to strip himself of his finery until he stood forth bare-legged and bare-headed before all that great assemblage. In front of this champion was borne a gauntlet upon a sword's point, and after him a long staff tipped with horn and a leather shield. It was evidently an ordeal by battle. And Stow's account of the "combat appointed to have been fought for a certaine manour and demaine lands in the Ile of Hartie adjoining the Ile of Sheppie in Kent" came into the visitor's mind. He was to be the privileged beholder of one of the last cases of ordeal by battle. However, there seemed to be some hitch, for though the other combatant presently entered the lists with much the same ceremony as the former one, the battle did not begin, and this, to one so versed in the history of Stow, needed no interpretation; was it not stated that after some time when the principal or employer of the second man, he on whose behalf the combat was to take place, made no appearance, the trial went by default to the first? It was all clear enough: the Lord Chief Justice, who was conducting the case, willed that the foremost man should "render againe" the gauntlet to his adversary, whereupon the former man objected and wished to have fought all the same, so as to have given the onlookers a show, but the second

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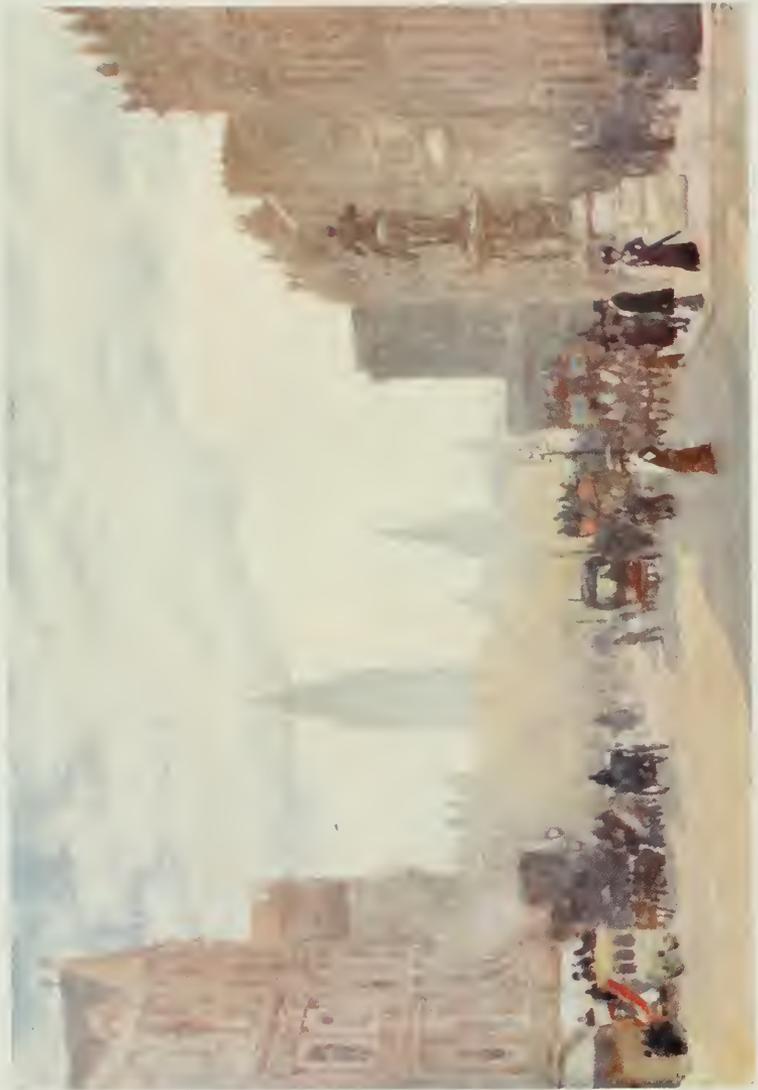
man not being of so pugnacious a disposition, the matter hung fire.

Somewhat tired of waiting while so much arguing went on and such long speeches were made, which by reason of the distance he could not hear, the visitor set his machine forward once more.

Once again flick ! and behold a fair with booths, and shows, and punchinellos, stalls for merchandise, and a goodly gathering of purchasers and sightseers. The visitor watched with interest the aspects of the fair, and concluded that it was much the same as in our own day, much scampering about and talking, much haggling over prices and advertising of wares, and in all a great running to and fro and but little done. Wearily he turned on his machine once more, when behold ! an awful spectacle. Numbers of rough, strongly built carts laden with dead bodies ; a solemn and awful procession ; a great pit, shallow enough in all conscience, wherein the bodies were laid in rows and rows, dressed as they were. Even afar off, and in spite of the rags and soil stains of their clothes, it could be seen that they were in some sort of uniform, and this the visitor understood. He hardly needed to glance at his dial to see the date 1652, for well he knew that these hundreds of dead men were the prisoners who had been taken at the battle of Worcester, and were Scotsmen, who had been brought to London and had died in sorrow and sickness far from their native land. So badly buried were they that loads of extra soil had afterwards to be laid upon the shallow graves.



AT CHARING CROSS FROM THE BASE OF
THE NELSON COLUMN





Westminster

With a quick movement of the hand the visitor was back in the present day. He had seen enough ; and, a wiser man than when he started, he made his way back to Northumberland Avenue, with a gallery of mental pictures in his brain.



A CIRCLE OF ASSOCIATIONS



CHAPTER VI

A CIRCLE OF ASSOCIATIONS

IT is trite to recommend the top of an omnibus as the best means of seeing London, the point is generally conceded, so let us concede it and get on.

The omnibus route forms the thread on which the pearls of old associations are conveniently strung, and if the route be chosen with care, the pearls be sure will be thickly strung.

Beginning at the Marble Arch we have the Edgware Road stretching away northward ; it was part of the old Roman Road called Watling Street, which name may still be found belonging to a small street in the City. Watling Street did not at first run through the City at all ; it went down the line of what is now Park Lane to the marshes at Westminster, where it struck the river at the ford.

When London Bridge was first built, pilgrim and trader alike found it preferable to go that way rather than encounter the mists and swamps at Westminster, with the certainty of a disagreeable plunge into the river at the end. The course of the main highroad there-

Scenery of London

fore was altered, and instead of passing down Tyburn Lane (Park Lane) it followed Tyburn Road (Oxford Street) to the City, and of the whole length of this great highway only the small Watling Street above referred to retains the ancient name.

Tyburn Lane kept on the high ground above Tyburn stream, which ran to the river. Tyburn is associated with the execution of criminals during many centuries, and though the name must be familiar to all sorts and conditions of people it is doubtful if one Londoner in a hundred has the least idea where the place of execution was.

The gallows were put up across the end of Edgware Road, at its junction with the Bayswater Road, and the executions ranked high in popular favour as delightful entertainments for rich and poor alike, entertainments which the authorities were not niggardly in providing. In Tudor times the sight was richer than mere hanging could ever be, for the custom of the time permitted the barbarity of half-hanging, and then the poor wretch, dimly conscious, was cut down and his still faintly palpitating heart torn from his bosom, or his limbs severed the one from the other. To the agony of death were added its worst horrors. Yet callousness, doubtless springing from familiarity with such sights, made the criminals of less sensitive mould than we are apt to imagine. In the eighteenth century, of which we have full and complete records, though the chopping up and disembowelling had gone out of fashion, the victim had to endure what to any modern youth would

A Circle of Associations

be the long torture of a slow procession from Newgate to the gallows. Apparently, however, he looked upon it as a triumphal procession, and would have felt himself defrauded of his rights had it been omitted. From the prison to St. Giles's, where he drank his last bowl of ale, from St. Giles's to Tyburn, he was accompanied by a singing, dancing, cheering, jeering mob, largely made up of his fellow-associates in crime, both men and women. What more could any one desire? For the time being he was paramount, with none to dispute his sovereignty; even those who had slighted him as being a child in evil had to take a second place that day. Down the road he came, a king in his glory, his throne a jolting, springless cart, for his foot-stool his open coffin, beside him as attendant a priest in exhortation. His dying speech, a little premature maybe, but none the worse for that, was being hawked about the crowd, the rival vendors frequently coming to blows. It sold better than even the nuts and oranges and other delicacies retailed in profusion. Incidents there lacked not; the road was miry, totally unmade in fact according to our notions; sometimes one wheel went deep into a mud-hole, the coffin was nearly flung off the cart with the jolt, and the gaolers and attendants had to put their shoulders to the wheel to send it flying outward and onward. Children were held up by their parents to see the victim, young women climbed on carts and stands, and kissed their hands to him; men madly jostled each other to get a better view. We are told that 200,000 persons witnessed the execution of the famous Jack

Scenery of London

Sheppard, who was only a boy of twenty-two at the time of his death, but this was a mere handful compared with the crowd that attended Jonathan Wild six months later to the same end, and Jonathan Wild, execrated by authorities and mob alike, cannot be supposed to have enjoyed *his* procession.

Arrived at Tyburn, the young man who was to "make a public holiday" saw a much more respectable crowd awaiting him. Where the Marble Arch now is stood a grand stand or scaffolding of wood, where seats were let at a price, and in tiers above tiers rose the heads of the gentility. The balconies, close to the gallows, were occupied by the sheriffs and a favoured few.

The last execution at Tyburn was in November 1783, and then the scene was transferred to Newgate, but it was not until 1868 that executions took place in private.

As for Oxford Street, Pennant, writing *circ.* 1790, calls it a "deep hollow road and full of Sloughs, with here and there a ragged House the lurking-place of Cutthroats."

To the north of Oxford Street in the open ground the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of the City "did hunt a hare and killed her," and after dinner,—a mayoral banquet at the Banqueting House in Stratford Place—they went forth and killed a fox with much holloaing and blowing of horns. This was on the occasion of their visit to their conduits in the year 1562, and as mayoral dinners were not reputed to be in that year any less magnificent than they have always been, all that one can say is that it was a remarkable feat.



WESTWARD FROM HYDE PARK CORNER

The Park on the right.





A Circle of Associations

If we go down Park Lane and, changing omnibuses at Hyde Park Corner, pass along Piccadilly, we encompass on two sides the aristocratic district of Mayfair, which came into prominence about the end of the seventeenth century, when Berkeley Square was built, while Hyde Park Corner was still the end of the world so far as Londoners were concerned. Mayfair bears a very apparent significance ; the fair in which it had its origin was granted in James II.'s reign, and was held during the first fifteen days of May, and, though fallen into disrepute, was not abolished until the end of the eighteenth century. Piccadilly, long simply "the road to Reding," is now lined by palatial clubs. The old tale that the depression in Piccadilly which causes the bus horses so much effort is due to the selfishness of a magnate, who had the ground hollowed out in order to improve the view from his house windows, is absurd. The depression is somewhere about the place where ran the Tyburn stream above referred to, and is a natural conformation of the ground. Beyond it we rise on to a line of heights whose steep slopes may be marked down the Haymarket and lower part of Regent Street. Few indeed are the lovers of London who can pass down Piccadilly without admiration. In the springtime, from the great open spaces at Hyde Park Corner one looks along a vista of tree-bordered park, and the line of grey, irregular buildings ; no slavish conformity here as in Nash's ideal, Regent Street. Or at night, coming westward, when the lights, topaz and white and ruby, flash from the other side of the Park like a brilliant necklet

Scenery of London

of jewels of intricate pattern, when the roadway before us, seen to perfection by that onerous dip, is covered with flitting lights, and over all the great white arc lights shed a soft radiance, one feels that that indescribable fascination, never to be put into words, is about us and around us in its full force. In imitation of the joyous country girl, who, getting a whiff of the Underground, exclaimed with enthusiasm, "Oh, how lovely! Now I really feel the Season," we cry, "Oh, how lovely! Now we really feel London!"

Near Piccadilly Circus stood the Gaming House in which so many persons lost not only their own fortunes but those entrusted to them. We have preserved for us a pitiful picture of the two Miss Sucklings, who came crying to the place for fear their brother Sir John, who was an inveterate gambler, should lose "all their portions," and therewith, no doubt, poor damsels, their chance of a suitable settlement in life.

But before reaching the Circus, by glancing down St. James's Street we get one of the prettiest street vistas in London; framed at the foot of the hill is the Tudor gateway of St. James's Palace, one of the very few remnants of that style of architecture that we have left, and for that reason, rambling and inconvenient as the palace is, highly cherished. By its means we may picture the more readily the ancient Palace of Whitehall. From the time of Henry VIII. who rebuilt the old leper hospital, up to the reign of the Fourth George, who preferred Buckingham Palace and doubtless admired it more also, St. James's was one of the principal

ST. JAMES'S STREET FROM THE NEW
UNIVERSITY CLUB





A Circle of Associations

London residences of our sovereigns ; indeed after the burning of Whitehall in the reign of William III. the only one.

St. James's Street and Pall Mall are the heart and centre of Clubland ; it is true Piccadilly now vies with them, but without the same traditions behind it.

All clubs, as Addison somewhere remarked, "are founded upon eating and drinking," but this does not prevent their variety being considerable, from the highly respectable to the fast, and the almost domestic to the risky. Fortunately in the present day, though the clubs have reached a height of luxury in appointments which leaves little to be attained, they do not exactly take the place in the lives of the adult male population that they used to do. In the palmy days of the eighteenth century, when men lost their whole fortune at a sitting, when £2000 or £3000 was no uncommon evening's loss, the lives of the womenkind connected with these men must have been somewhat precarious. "At Almack's," Walpole writes in 1770, "the young men of the age lose ten, fifteen, twenty thousand pounds an evening." At the Cocoa Tree he speaks of a cast at hazard of £180,000, and at Almack's, "Mr. Thynne having won only 12,000 guineas in two months, retired in disgust." But whatever the faults of those times in Clubland, they are toned down by that beautiful perspective, which, like the atmosphere of London itself, enriches the details and hides the unsightliness ; and looking back to the pictures which most of us have gained from reading the novels dealing with Clubland

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in the eighteenth century, we seem to see a procession of infinitely attractive young men, gay and gallant, if a little wild, clad in blue satin with exquisite lace ruffles, and yet not dandies, but ready to flash out with the sword on all possible provocation ; and to match them girls brought up in the utmost delicacy, with bewitching eyes and fair skins, the fairer for the provoking little patches ; who combined the daintiness of a princess with the spirit of a modern girl ; who got themselves into all sorts of impossible situations but issued therefrom in the last chapter with virtue unsmirched, to be married to the man of their heart, who had — appearances being notoriously deceitful—loved none other than his one dear lady all the time. Who would lose such a setting for such figures ?

But among these figures there are others, darkly outlined, those of the sneak and the bully and the real gamester, who made a fortune out of other men not so cunning or so sharp witted, and these are not so pleasant. Clubland seems to enter less and less into the life of the middle-class householder ; he has no time for his club ; his work in these strenuous days, and his home, absorb all his energies, and there are many London men who belong to no club, though well able to afford it, and yet never feel the want of one.

As for Pall Mall, who that has read it can ever forget the picture given by Evelyn of “ pretty Nelly ” leaning out of the window of her house to discuss the time of day with Charles II. out for an airing in the

A Circle of Associations

Green Park below. Kings were unsophisticated in their manners two hundred and fifty years ago.

Right across the foot of Regent Street, now called Waterloo Place, where at present steps give access to the Park, stood Carlton House, in the time of the Regency the scene of the maddest orgies, under the presidency of the Prince of Wales, afterwards George IV. Here his daughter Charlotte was born, and here her marriage took place. Turning eastward with the omnibus we pass through part of Pall Mall, seeing the magnificent Carlton Hotel, where suppers take place at which every table has its titled persons or celebrities ; and also His Majesty's Theatre, on the site of the Opera House for which nearly all Handel's operas were composed, and through which the names of Grisi, Rubini, Mario, and Jenny Lind first became familiar to Londoners.

Then we come to Trafalgar Square, of which a small boy from a provincial town, on paying his first visit to London, asked with great solemnity, " Is this the market-place of London ? "

Charing Cross and its associations we have already dealt with, but the modern Whitehall, now one of the finest streets in the Metropolis, is well worth a longer look than we can give in passing. On the west are the stern Government Offices, and on the east is the new War Office, while the towers and spires of the Houses of Parliament rise over the buildings at the far end and over the trees of Montagu House.

Passing Charing Cross we enter the Strand, and here

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it is difficult to speak of the bygone associations, so thickly do they crowd upon us. From a winding country road to a strand whereon the nobles built their palaces, and again in the whirligig of time to a street of shops, and it must be confessed mean buildings, the Strand has touched the wheel of life at every point. Even now, in spite of its mean buildings, it has views to show, as we shall presently see. Charing Cross Station replaces Hungerford Market, which stood on part of the ground occupied by the great house of the proud favourite Buckingham. His water-gate is left, and can be seen at the foot of Buckingham Street, where it is literally stranded, high and dry, and far from the water. Before Buckingham House stood here York House, the property of the Archbishop of York. In this house Bacon was born ; before that again the house belonged to the Duke of Suffolk, and originally was the town residence of the bishops of Norwich. This grand pedigree of owners may be taken as typical of the Strand houses ; to mention them all would become a tedious catalogue, therefore only those salient facts that make the dry bones live will be here entered. On the site of the Adelphi was the town house of the lordly prince-bishops of Durham, who exchanged it with Henry VIII. for Cold Harbour and other City houses. The King himself did not disdain to make merry in Durham House, and held here great festivities on his marriage with the poor plain Anne of Cleves. Within its walls Lady Jane Grey was married. When it belonged to Queen Elizabeth, she bestowed it on Sir



ASPHALTING IN THE STRAND





A Circle of Associations

Walter Raleigh, who lived in it, and had a study looking out upon the water. Near it was afterwards built the New Exchange, a fashionable place for shops and flirtations.

The huge Cecil Hotel has a right to its name, for it stands where once stood a mansion of Sir Robert Cecil, second son of Lord Burghley. Next to it was Worcester House, in which Anne Hyde was married to the Duke of York, afterwards James II. Opposite was Exeter House, built by Lord Burghley. Down Savoy Street we have one of those peeps which are the charm of London; here are a quiet churchyard, waving green trees, and a small church, shut in and surrounded by high business premises, forming an oasis. This is royal property, belonging to the Duchy of Lancaster; and the title to it goes very far back, even to John of Gaunt, from whom the Lancastrian sovereigns descended, and who, through Henry VII., is the ancestor of our present king. The Savoy, as we see it represented in old prints, was a great fortress-like building with its foundations reaching down to the water. It was in turn Palace, Prison, and Hospital. King John of France, whom Edward the Black Prince treated with so much civility, was a prisoner here. John of Gaunt's extravagance so incensed the mob that in the great riots of Wat Tyler's time his palace was one of the first to be sacked. A hospital for one hundred poor people was afterwards founded here by Henry VII.; and later still the place was partly a military prison.

From the part of the Strand near the Savoy we see in

Scenery of London

their full beauty the two churches, St. Mary-le-Strand and St. Clement Danes, standing in a line, and backed up by the Law Courts. The late Strand improvements, by opening out the streets around, have set St. Mary's in a much better position, and the effect of a mysterious duplication is seen in the storied tower of St. Clement's rising behind it.

On the north is the huge building of the new Gaiety Theatre in a classical style, and beyond it acres of brick and dust lying in heaps on the desolate ground. Somerset House, formerly Somerset Palace, owes its name to the Protector Somerset, who used enough stones from other buildings, religious and secular, to have made his house a veritable cry of "Shame," if stones had tongues. In pursuance of his selfish policy he did not scruple to pull down buildings not actually decayed, including the beautiful cloister on the north side of St. Paul's, where was the famous painting called the Dance of Death. The Protector himself had to go the way of death while still a comparatively young man, about forty-six, and his great new building, which had involved so much disregard of property, was unfinished. Later it was the assigned dwelling of Queen Henrietta Maria and her French attendants, who seem to have been rather too much for the Court at Whitehall. Inigo Jones, the architect, died in Somerset House. The present building, put up in 1776-86, houses several great Government departments, and in the courtyard volunteers assemble on half holidays.



ST. MARY-LE-STRAND

The church stands as a wedge in the roadway of the Strand.



A Circle of Associations

Beyond Somerset House and King's College, which is in a wing of it, though apparently it will not long remain there, is Strand Lane with one of the oldest relics London possesses, a Roman bath, computed to be about two thousand years old, and shaming into insignificance such mushroom growths as even the oldest Somerset House. When London was still encompassed by the City wall, some of the better-class Romans saw the advantage of houses on the river-side. There was then no egress by Ludgate, which had not been opened, nor was there a bridge over the Fleet river; but they had access to the Thames from Holborn along a slight ridge, which ran from north to south, and ended at the foot of what is now Essex Street and Milford Lane. Here they formed a community or small village. Many remnants of their occupation have been discovered, and this ancient bath probably marks the site of the house of some magnate, who in luxury and understanding of detail was more superfine than we are now. Arundel House gardens possibly once enclosed this relic, for Arundel House came next to Somerset House, and the fine gardens stretched between, reaching down to the water. Of Arundel House we have a charming illustration in an old print, of groups of old buildings standing around a courtyard. The gable ends are decorated, the sloping roofs are tiled, and timber framework supports the houses. The stable and the chapel are both to be seen, and the view is dated 1646. Milford Lane is specially noted by Gay:—

Scenery of London

Where the fair columns of St. Clement's stand
Whose straitened bounds encroach upon the Strand.

Forth issuing from steep lanes the collier's steeds
Drag the black load ; cart after cart succeeds,
Team follows team ; crowds heaped on crowds appear
And wait impatient till the road grows clear.

Trivia.

We come next to the group of streets once covered by Essex House and its gardens. The unfortunate and foolish Earl of Essex shut himself up in this mansion, and defied the Queen. The salient point in the attack seems to have been the mounting of artillery on the tower of St. Clement's Church in order to drive him out. How the street-gazers would revel in such a sight at the present time ! We now employ more peaceful methods to bring people to order, methods exemplified in the near neighbourhood of the Law Courts and the Temple.

The changes in this part of London have been enormous, and were Dr. Johnson to sally forth in order to occupy his old pew in St. Clement Danes he would speedily lose himself. The great crescent of Aldwych sweeps down to the church ; gone is Booksellers' Row or Holywell Street, with its secondhand-book shops and quaint houses ; gone is Lyons Inn, and many another house. All that can be said is that the alteration *is* an improvement, and therefore the price paid is not too heavy. The building of the Law Courts, in 1868, made the first inroads into the antiquity and the unsavouriness of a neighbourhood that had seen better

A Circle of Associations

days ; and many a foul rookery and noisome tenement was cleared away. Among the lanes thus demolished was Shear or Shire Lane, where was a famous tavern in which met the Kit-Kat Club, and from which Addison dated many of his essays.

Butcher Row, running on the north side of the church, was at one time a very fashionable place of residence ; here lodged the French Ambassador De Rosny, when he came to England. Of the house he occupied we have a print in its old days, with its overhanging storey falling forward and its lines sadly out of the perpendicular ; it was a picturesque, dilapidated, tumble-down old mansion. In place of these fearful joys there are now the much-discussed Law Courts, with the trimly kept green grass, the fat pigeons, and the row of cabs beside the church.

Temple Bar, one of those famous obstructions to traffic in which our ancestors delighted, was removed in 1878, and the Griffin, familiarly known as the "Dragon," put up in its place ; the griffin himself is not a "bad beast," but his "too too solid" pedestal is hardly to be classed among things artistic, yet the whole monument performs the very useful function of marking the extreme westerly limits of the City, and as a symbol cannot be overlooked. Temple Bar, familiar to every one from prints, and still standing in the park at Cheshunt, was the work of the great Sir Christopher. Not that its predecessor was burnt, for the Fire was stayed before it reached so far, but because the old gate was considered dilapidated and unsightly. This earlier gate was a very

Scenery of London

solid edifice, with three rounded gateways, the central one large and the two side ones smaller ; it had four engaged pilasters running up the frontage, and a somewhat flattened penthouse roof, higher than many of the houses near it. These, with their gables and dormer windows, with their broad beams and diamond panes, must have made a good setting for the cumbrous old gateway. One of the uses of Temple Bar was to carry on spikes the heads of traitors, and it is said that in a high wind these heads occasionally, especially if they had been there for some time, broke away from their supports and fell down upon the passers-by !

The narrow attractive entries of Middle and Inner Temple invite an excursion, and the precincts within are well in keeping. Brick is the distinctive material of the Temple, and has been so from the first. It is said that the brick buildings of the Temple stopped the Fire, which had before reaching them grown lusty on a diet of wooden houses. Brick, toned by the smut and dust and age of generations, attains that indescribably russet hue of a gentle old age that is still hale ; and this is seen to perfection in the Temple. The same colour may be seen in the dwelling of the canons of St. Paul's in Amen Court, but here the hue is of one age and generation only, in the Temple there is every variety of brick, brick new and still unchastened, brick worn and wrinkled, brick richly glowing, brick brown with time, and all enhanced by being seen through trees or across wide spaces of smooth green. The quaint names of the old courts are still the same as in the sixteenth century,

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Figtree Court, Pump Court, Hare Court, and Paper Buildings ; and the quaintness is in keeping with the spirit of the place. The Temple, as the name confesses, was first held by the Knights Templars, and their church still remains one of the few old relics of Norman London. When the property came into the hands of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem they let it to the Law Students, on whom it was conferred in perpetuity by James I. The Outer Temple meantime had been granted to Stapleton, Bishop of Exeter, who was beheaded in 1326, and on this site was afterwards built Essex House, already referred to ; hence it comes that there is no Outer Temple, a fact which has puzzled many persons.

On the days of the Temple Flower Show, when the wide green lawns are covered with women in the most beautiful colours and fabrics that art can produce, when great marquees are piled high with gorgeous blossoms, and the air is filled with gay voices, the Temple wakes up from its philosophic calm ; in the dusty chambers barristers entertain their friends, and windows thrown wide show many an unexpected bit of colour in a floating scarf or a brilliant sunshade ; law books are hurried away, the accumulated dust of months is displaced, and a surge from the outer world sweeps up over the Temple.

Having arrived at the City, our limit in this direction is reached, for the City is described elsewhere. Leaving Fleet Street with its busy newspaper life, which reaches its full tide of activity at midnight, we turn northward

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up Chancery Lane, narrower than is common even in a London street, but until the completion of Kingsway still the only direct connection between the two great highways running east and west. At the low end of the Lane near Fleet Street once lived Izaak Walton. To the east rises the fair fabric of the new Record Office, a building worthy of this age, though too much hemmed in to be seen to advantage. The best view is from Clifford's Inn Gardens. The fine Tudor gateway of Lincoln's Inn is one of the few remaining specimens of this style, with the gateway of St. James's, already mentioned, and that of Clerkenwell and Lambeth Palace.

Lincoln's Inn, with its air of seclusion, its worn red brick and new stone, with its smooth green lawns and leafy trees, is one of those oases so much appreciated by the lover of London, where the charm of the great City seems concentrated. Here in the fourteenth century stood the house and garden of the Earl of Lincoln; the garden was of twenty acres, and yielded bushels of roses, besides other flowers and many vegetables. Lincoln's Inn Fields was once part of Ficketts Fields, a place of jousting. Amid the wide cobble-stone spaces where cabs stand aimlessly about, where errand boys pause to play with the well-to-do pigeons, where a few of the waifs and strays of humanity forget for a while their woes on the seats in the centre garden, there is the same air of aloofness, of detachment, as in the Temple; it is a real eddy or backwater in the great rushing stream of strenuous life. Yet even this quiet

HOLBORN HILL





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spot is stained with blood. The execution of William, Lord Russell was carried out here in 1683, for it was feared that the mob, who held him a high-souled patriot, might rise to the rescue were it to take place on the better-known Tower Hill. After the Babington conspiracy no less than fourteen men were "hanged, bowelled, and quartered" here. Seven of them, including Babington, were drawn on hurdles from Tower Hill "unto a fielde at the upper end of Holborne, hard by the high-way side to St. Giles's, where was erected a scaffold convenient for the execution." It is said that Babington himself was still alive when the last tortures were being inflicted, and that he exclaimed aloud in his agony, "Jesu, Mercy!" so that Elizabeth, hearing of it, directed that the rest, who were to be hanged the following day, should be hanged until they were dead. The effect of these doings on the natures of those who performed them, it is not difficult to conceive. The Viaduct has now done away with the "heavy hill" up from the valley of the Fleet, and Holborn runs a level course. New Oxford Street was made in 1840, and before that time the highway curved through Broad Street and High Street. To the north of New Oxford Street, beyond the spot where now stand the stern walls of the British Museum, were fields, which, like all these large open spaces once surrounding London, spaces now completely enclosed or built over, were a resort for the citizens and a theatre for fights and rowdyism. Even duels of a sort took place here, and one gave rise to the legend of the Forty Footsteps, for it was said

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that two brothers had slain each other while the lady they both desired to win looked on, and that thereafter no grass grew on the places where their feet had trodden.

There is nothing beautiful about this part of London: the houses in some of the great squares are well and comfortably built; from an inside point of view they are desirable enough, but externally the huge squares and wide streets, equally with the poor and narrow ones, are dreary in the extreme. It may perhaps be taken as typical of the English character that, to use a common but expressive phrase, we do not "put all our goods in the shop window." Go where you will in London, in the west-central district about Bloomsbury, in the south-western district around Cromwell Road, in the western district about Paddington, in all those districts which may, according to a recent satirical writer, be termed "stuccovia," and you find the same thing, long dreary lines of houses plastered with stucco in smooth drab, or stucco that apes stone without enough verisimilitude to deceive a child, and the effect is not beautiful. To a country man it would seem impossible to occupy one of these houses, so monotonously alike, so square and solid and unrelenting they seem, but go into one of them that is already occupied, and in a moment the exterior aspect is forgotten. As likely as not a fair garden stretches away at the back, the sun shines into the living-rooms, which are large, airy, of a good shape, and prettily furnished; and a Londoner soon learns that a dull wall of blank stucco may conceal

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many treasures, and that very few of the houses lack gardens or are shut off from sunlight.

But this is a digression. Near St. Giles's Church, as we have seen, the condemned criminal on his journey Tyburnwards consumed his last bowl of ale ; but St. Giles's had another enviable distinction that brought custom to its ale-houses and filled its landlords' pockets. That was the fact that in the beginning of the fifteenth century it had a gallows of its own, and a place of execution at the end of the High Street. At this spot, now covered by perpetually recurring waves of traffic, Sir John Oldcastle was hung in chains, and slowly roasted to death.

We have a map showing us this district as it was in 1570. Open fields lie between Drury Lane and St. Martin's Lane, which were then real lanes with hedges. The fields are crossed by footpaths, one of which is now Long Acre, and, according to the map, tenanted by monstrous cows, which in proportion to the size of the houses are veritably big enough to have been dieted on the "food of the gods." Along the north side of Broad Street there is a row of small houses, and the precinct of St. Giles's, enclosed by a wall, is lozenge-shaped, and has several trees within it, besides the buildings of the ancient hospital and the church, not the same church as at present. It must have been a pleasant country walk to go to St. Giles's-in-the-Fields from London. Another Brobdingnagian bull disports himself behind the hedge that lines the north side of the High Street, and his pasture runs right up to the "Way to Totten-

Scenery of London

hall," while beyond him there is nothing but fields so far as eye can see. Southampton House stands by itself to the east in an enclosure with a gate. Altogether it is a pastoral scene. Hog Lane, as Charing Cross Road was formerly called, ran—up to within forty years of Stow's time—between "fair hedgerows of elms with pleasant bridges and easy stiles to pass over into the pleasant fields, very commodious for citizens therein to walk, shoot, or otherwise recreate and refresh their dull spirits in the sweet and wholesome air."

Passing on westward we get a glimpse of Soho, one of the prettiest squares in London, with exceptionally fine trees. The Duke of Monmouth brought this district into fashion by building a mansion for himself on the south side of the square; and here in the eighteenth century Mrs. Cornelys's parties "by subscription" attained enormous dimensions, attracting crowds to the neighbourhood. Now this is largely the French and Italian quarter; if you pass down the street and hear two men talking eagerly with many gesticulations, it is three to one they are Frenchmen, or if you go into a small shop for fruit or a newspaper, the man who serves you will have difficulty in understanding your English. See that mite of a child, whose head is hardly level with the counter, lay a halfpenny down in a milk shop, and the woman give her a "ha'porth" of milk, explaining "she can't speak a word of English, poor mite."

Of Oxford Street proper there is nothing particular to say until we arrive at the Circus, whence we may admire the dimensions of Nash's pet Regent Street,

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and notice the angle at which the church tower and spire of All Souls is advanced to be in a line with the street vista. Nash certainly had ideas, and did not slavishly run in the rut, but whether his ideas were admirable is another matter.

Of Oxford Street, between this and the Marble Arch, we spoke at the time of starting, so our circle of associations is complete.



NAME ASSOCIATIONS



CHAPTER VII

NAME ASSOCIATIONS

So little is left of the old London, the London of history and association, that we are in danger of forgetting amid what historic scenes we move as we go daily to our business or our pleasure. But in the street names, if properly considered, we can always find a reminder; no 133rd Street or 98th Avenue has yet been adopted by our Borough Councils to obscure past memories, and it is safe to say that that day will never come for London, any more than with all the improvements and reconstructions will she ever be a town of right angles and straight lines.

The subject of these street names is a large one, and it is difficult to do full justice to it in view of the countless examples that crowd upon the mind. To attempt to deal with them in any sort of topographical order is useless; therefore they shall be chosen haphazard, as a child draws counters from a bag.

Knightrider Street :—What visions this name evokes of tall and well-mounted men, with plumes waving from their helmets, riding two by two down a narrow street

Scenery of London

between houses of timber and plaster, gable and pinnacle, and storeys so much overhanging that they almost shut out the light of the sky. Knightrider Street lies between St. Paul's Churchyard and Queen Victoria Street, and is roughly parallel with both, running into the latter where it turns up to the Mansion House. Stow says it was so called from the fact that the knights "well armed and mounted," starting from Tower Royal, went this way to Smithfield, where the great tournaments and tilts were held. But the real reason why this street was selected for the title rather than others is that Lord Fitzwalter, who lived at Castle Baynard, used to assemble the City train-bands at his mansion before proceeding to Smithfield, and it was the number of knights passing this way to the rendezvous that originated the name. The street now called Giltspur Street was formerly known as Knightrider, and with more justification, leading as it does to Smithfield, where the chief tournaments took place.

The Strand speaks for itself. A Strand indeed it was. Stretching by the side of the river long before an Embankment was ever thought of; a fair strand and yet withal miry, and crossed by several hundred rivulets, some so wide that bridges were built over them, as Ivy Bridge and Strand Bridge. The Strand gave its name to the village that sprang up thereon, according to Maitland, and itself was the main road between the Cities of London and Westminster, a road full of deep holes and interrupted by "thickets and bushes." Paternoster Row and Ave Maria Lane speak of days prior to the

AUTUMN AFTERNOON—FROM SOUTH-
WARK BRIDGE





Name Associations

Reformation, when Aves and Paternosters were bartered daily. A Paternoster meant originally a rosary, but in time the term came to include also one who made rosaries, and the salesmen in Paternoster Row supplied rosaries, and all other objects of devotion, such as crucifixes, candles, service books, etc., to the faithful who worshipped at St. Paul's. Ave Maria Lane was so called, says Stow, "because of stationers and text writers who wrote and sold there all sorts of books then in use, namely A. B. C. with the Paternoster, Ave, the Creed, the Graces, etc."

St. Marylebone has been taken by some to mean St. Mary-le-bonne; but this is not the right derivation: the name was taken from the situation of the church, which stood on the banks of the Tyburn stream, and was consequently St. Mary at the Bourne or burn.

Earl's Court has a pleasant aristocratic flavour. One involuntarily imagines an earl holding a small court in state, where much ceremonial was used, and men and women of noble birth forgathered and displayed their gorgeous clothes and fought secretly but bitterly for precedence. This surmise is but an empty vision; an earl there was truly enough, the Earl of Oxford, who was lord of the manor, and here certainly he held his court, but it was a court of justice not of ceremonial. The court-house stood on the site of Barkston Gardens, near the present Underground Railway, and was still there so late as 1878, though nearly one hundred years previously the courts had been transferred elsewhere.

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The name of Bayswater has doubtless caused some people to reflect gravely, and there is certainly nothing in the present district that could give a clue to the name. In older maps it is marked "Bayswatering." Now, as Maitland tells us, there was in the year 1439 a very important "head of water" in Paddington, "containing twenty-six perches in length and one in breadth," and this was granted by the Abbot of Westminster to the mayor and citizens of London, and it was called Baynard's watering-place, though who or what Baynard was no one seems able to ascertain. There was certainly a Juliana Baysbolle, who had held land in Paddington, and she may have been connected with the "head of water," but this is pure conjecture.

Regent Street bears its date in its name, as a street may well do. John Nash, the chief architect in the days of the Regency, propounded an idea royal in magnificence, nothing less than to build a street of exceptional width from the Prince Regent's town house, Carlton House, to a country mansion to be built for His Royal Highness in Regent's Park. Nash brought stucco into fashion, and his completed street is the great example of stucco in London. It is well known that there was at first a colonnade of columns in front of the shops, but this was found to darken the windows so much that it was subsequently removed. Regent Street was finished about the time that George IV. ascended the throne. Nash had at first designed to make a straight line up Portland Place, but he finally abandoned

Name Associations

this idea and formed the turn as we now see it. The country house in Regent's Park was never built.

The name of Holborn is easily solved. There was, until the making of the viaduct, a deep depression in Holborn down to which the thoroughfare sloped steeply, and in this depression ran the river or bourne known in its lower part as the Fleet. It was most likely referred to colloquially as the burn or bourne in the hole, hence Holebourne.

Cheapside has a derivation certain and clear ; it was the way that ran by the side of the chepe or market, from time immemorial the most important market in the City. At first this was lined by stalls or open sheds, and these afterwards grew into closed shops. The streets leading out of Cheapside proclaim what was sold in various parts of the market : we have Bread Street, Milk Street, Honey Lane, Ironmonger Lane, and Poultry. Probably very few of the people who constantly pass through it guess that the last name is a true reminder that once there was here the greatest poultry market in London. Stow says, "then employed by poulterers that dwelt in the High Street from the Stocks market to the great Conduit. Their poultry which they sold at their stalls were scalded there. The street doth yet bear the name of the Poultry, and the poulterers are but lately departed from thence into other streets." There was another poultry market at Westminster.

Eastcheap has of course the same origin, having been the eastern market. Gracechurch Street is akin

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to the Haymarket in its meaning, though certainly the derivation does not lie on the surface. Both streets were markets for grass or dried grass, thus Graschirche (as it was originally spelt) and Haymarket, though at Gracechurch there seems to have been traffic in various kinds of herbs as well as hay. This name was frequently corrupted into Gracious, and is so spelt by some old writers, which is misleading. In Gracechurch Street was also the great corn market, to which corn came from all parts, the memory of which may be traced in the adjacent Cornhill. Cannon Street has gone far from its original spelling, for it was at first written chiefly Candlewike, but with many varieties, such as Candlewright and Canewyke. There seems, however, to be little doubt that the name was connected with the manufacture of candles; it was the candlemakers' quarter, and their hall is on Dowgate Hill close by. In Newcourt's map of 1658 the street first appears under its present spelling.

Jewry was of course the Jews' quarter. At the first coming of the Jews to London they received this convenient and central site for their residence, and their synagogue stood at the north-eastern corner. The precinct was walled round, and fines were inflicted on Christians found there after nightfall. In 1290, when the Jews were banished, their synagogue was given to the Fratres de Sacca, an order of friars.

Lombard Street was in like manner the quarter of the Lombards or Italian merchants, who came over at first as collectors of the papal revenue, and afterwards



PICCADILLY, NEAR DOWN STREET





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stayed to carry on trade. So successful was this foreign enterprise that Lombard Street became the regular place of mart or exchange with the London merchants before the building of the Royal Exchange. The name of Fenchurch Street has been commonly derived from its being situated in a fenny or marshy place, but as there seems to have been very little marsh about here an attempt has been made to derive it from the French *foin*, hay ; in the same way that Gracechurch was the grass market so Fenchurch would be the hay market ; Professor Skeat admits this as just possible, if it comes through the Anglo-French word *fein*, but thinks it unlikely.

Of Leadenhall there seems to be no ascertainable derivation, and the curious word Threadneedle is lost in antiquity, though it has been suggested it may have originated with some house bearing the sign of the Three Needles.

The word Piccadilly, belonging to such a well-known part of the town, and being so peculiar, has attracted much attention. It has generally been stated to be connected with the enormous Pickadillas or ruffs worn by the fashionable in the time of the Tudors ; these ruffs made the fortune of one Higgins a tailor to whom the land belonged. Others have taken it from the same word meaning a wide hem or edge of a skirt or other garment, and suggested that the last house in the suburbs, as a famous house in Piccadilly at one time was, might have been denominated the edge or skirt house. Pennant traces the name to piccadillas, meaning

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turnovers or cakes, which may have been sold here. But the derivation suggested by Mr. W. J. Loftie is the most likely. "Robert Baker," he says, "who died in 1623, is described as of Piccadilly Hall. This was a kind of tea-garden, a place of amusement. There can be no reasonable doubt that Baker meant to describe his house and garden as a place it would be a peccadillo to visit."

Mayfair needs no such dubious endeavour, for, as already stated, a May fair there was beyond all cavilling.

Chelsea was anciently written Chelchith, of which the termination *hith* meant a haven. Gravelly banks or pebble stones frequently occur in the form of "Chesel," as in Winchelsea, and so some sort of gravelly bank with a bay or landing-place may originally have been the distinctive mark of Chelsea in the eyes of the primitive men who used the great waterway.

The limits of the ancient City within the walls may easily be traced by the names of its gates or posterns. Beginning on the west, we have Ludgate, Newgate, Cripplegate, Aldersgate, Moorgate, Bishopsgate and Aldgate, but the Liberties, now all included in the City, reach far beyond this, and our present City begins at Temple Bar.



CHELSEA STAITH





OMNIBUS MEN



CHAPTER VIII

OMNIBUS MEN

THE omnibus drivers and conductors are so typical of the spirit of everyday London condensed, and, as a class, so peculiar to London, that a book of this kind on London would be incomplete without some reference to them.

We have probably all talked to bus drivers, for they are so convenient to approach, though, be it noted, omnibus etiquette forbids that they should begin a conversation. We have, perhaps, gleaned various facts as to their work and manner of livelihood, and we have come away with the impression that a 'bus driver is "an uncommonly good fellow." So he is, and without going so far as to say that none but good fellows need apply for these posts, it is pretty certain that the bad ones get weeded out. There are far more black sheep, far more habitual drunkards among cabmen than ever there are in the ranks of 'bus drivers. The whole environment of the two sets of men is different, and tends to develop the character differently. A cabman is his own master, even though he does not own a cab.

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He is free to dawdle and loiter and go where he will, and a very large part of his day is perforce spent in loitering, in reading halfpenny papers, in gossiping with his brother-cabmen, and smoking ; so that a man used to this life becomes gradually unfitted for any other requiring steady concentration. So long as he be not recklessly drunk, the cabman can drive as well as when he is sober, sometimes even better, and it would probably astonish the Londoner if he knew how many night cabmen were drunk habitually, and how many day cabmen went home every night with more than was good for them.

Omnibus drivers are under much closer supervision, a man constantly drunk would almost certainly be reported, and besides one with a tendency that way would assuredly by the end of the day be in a condition to call down notice on himself. The average omnibus goes five journeys a day. After driving, it may be, eight miles, it would seem natural enough for a driver to have a drink, yet if he yields to this and takes a drink at each end of each journey he consumes ten drinks a day, exclusive of what he has at meal-times ! In these circumstances men with any sense see that they must not give way to a drink at each end of the journey, and soon learn to do without it.

In the matter of money, a driver gets regular wages, 6s. a day for the first year and thereafter 6s. 6d. ; or, if on a "non-relief line," 1s. more. He regulates his expenditure accordingly. With the cabman it is "lightly come and lightly go." He may make a



VICTORIA TOWER AND EAST END OF
WESTMINSTER ABBEY





Omnibus Men

pocketful of money one day, whereupon he has a "roaring spree," and stays off work the next. But the uncertainty of his gains prevents his attempting to put by for a rainy day ; he takes the rainy and the shining days as they come. Consequently cabmen as a class are utterly unthrifty ; generous enough and free in their treatment of comrades, but improvident. If the truth be confessed, each set of men looks down on the other, the drivers holding the cabmen to be a shiftless, thriftless lot, and the cabbies looking on the drivers as slow old stagers who are in service, while they themselves are free men. It is curious that while numbers of drivers become cabmen, hardly ever a cabman passes to the more regular life of the omnibus. But one virtue both classes have in common, they are full of *esprit de corps*, and a "whip round" for the widow of a comrade never fails to produce a good result.

Let us take a day in the life of an ordinary omnibus driver. He will belong to a yard, that is to say, the Company have accepted his license, and he is an "odd" man until he gets a service of his own. In the early morning, six o'clock at all events, even if he live near the yard, he must be up, and off. There are no omnibuses then to take him to his destination, so in the grey of the wintry morning, it may be, he walks through the silent streets to the great yard, where a few horse-keepers are harnessing the first pair to go out. It is a curious sight this yard ; the dim vastness of the roof holds grey fog in its arch ; the omnibuses, blue and red and gold, have a forlorn appearance, standing side by side packed

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like dominoes in a box. As each omnibus comes in at night it takes up its appointed place ; it is easy enough for the first man, who has plenty of room to manœuvre in, but the last one has a very tight fit indeed, and has to display great skill in driving. From one end of the yard an inclined plane like a greatly magnified hen-walk, is the staircase for the horses, and leads to the upper storey of the stables.

From the stables comes a sound of munching and moving. There are numbers of horses there, probably three hundred altogether, separated by swinging bales only, so low that the row of sturdy, glossy backs can be seen in a line. Eleven horses belong to each omnibus, two for each journey and one out,—the odd horse,—so that each gets one day's rest in turn. The driver takes his pairs in any order he chooses ; if he thinks one horse a little tired from the day before he can tell the horse-keeper to put him on for the last journey, so that he gets a longer rest. He takes an interest in his horses too, knows them by name, and can discourse eloquently on all their peculiarities. The average life of a 'bus horse, it is said, is about five years, but some live much longer. They are well fed, they have regular work, one journey out and back once a day, and a veterinary surgeon is ready to inspect them and to prescribe for all their ailments. Numbers of the young horses come over from Ireland and are a little shy of the London streets at first, but the weight of the omnibus and the companionship of a steady old horse soon sober them down.



FROM THE CORNER OF RICHMOND
TERRACE



Omnibus Men

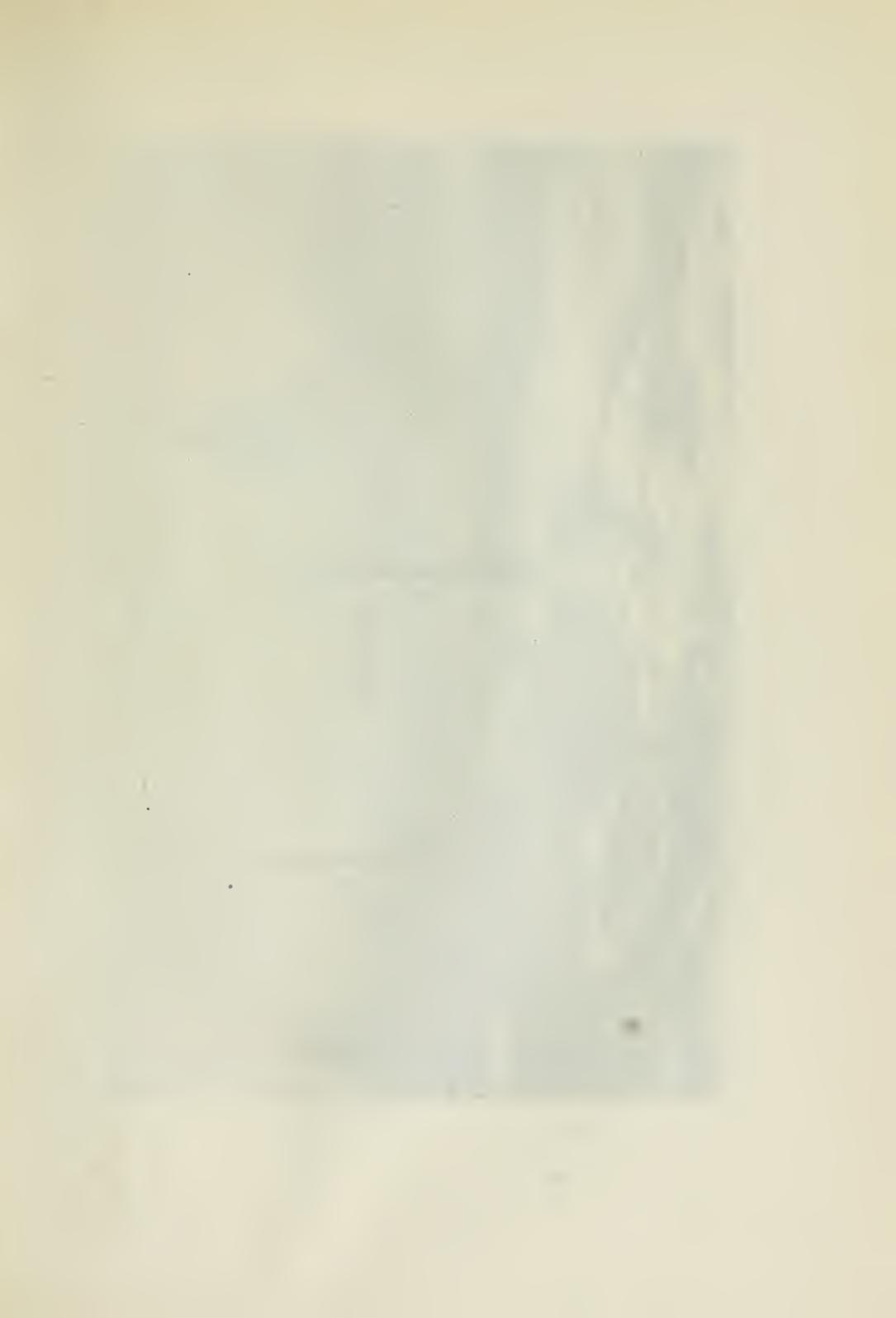
The driver who takes the first omnibus is at the yard in good time, buttoning up his stout gloves, and feeling in his pockets for the tip that the horse-keeper reminds him of, for though 'bus drivers are looked upon as people to be tipped, they have lesser "tippees" attendant on them. Our friend the new driver has provided himself with a whip, and gloves, and a tarpaulin cape, all of which are his private property, and not supplied by the Company ; he will find later, when he gets "a service," that there are other expenses too, curb chains for instance, if he wants to use them, and the wooden boards to protect his legs from the cold as he sits on the box seat. But he has not arrived at this yet. Early as he is, there are three men there before him, who will take precedence of him, so he sits down on a wooden block and thinks regretfully of that last cup of scalding tea he had to leave behind. As each omnibus is ready the men, driver and conductor, appear just in time, having learnt the exact knack by long training ; the conductors sign on for their tickets, and off they go at intervals of four minutes.

The system of "relief" is so well worked that even at the risk of boring some people a word must be given to it here. The Road Car Company has relief on all its lines, and the "General" on some. By this system the men have fifteen hours' work one day and nine the next, making the average of twelve demanded at the great 'bus strike. For every four drivers there is one relief driver. The omnibuses are, say, A, B, C, and D. Each bus goes five journeys a day, counting

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there and back as one. On the morning of Monday the odd driver takes the first two journeys of A. He has the middle journey to himself, and takes the last two journeys of B. The next day he takes C's first two journeys in the morning, and D's last two at night. Consequently driver A begins at the third journey on Monday, and as each journey is reckoned at about three hours, he gets a day of nine hours. The next day he is at work all the time—five journeys of three hours each. On Wednesday morning off again, and so on Friday. The following week the odd driver begins with B in the morning and takes A in the afternoon, so that this week driver A begins as usual but goes off after the third journey, getting his afternoon free, and he has a full day alternately as before. The odd driver has therefore a regular twelve-hour day, but always the middle of the day off, and the others get mornings off on alternate days one week, and afternoons off alternate days another week. The process is just the same with the conductors. Many men prefer the odd work and keep to it all the time, but these regular odd men—to use a contradiction in terms—must not be confounded with the other odd men whom we are considering, and who wait about in the yard on the chance of a day's work.

If there are sixty 'buses on what is called a three minutes' line, there will be a difference of three hours between the first and last. The first man starts at seven in the morning and, on a full day, finishes at ten at night ; while the last begins at ten in the morning and



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Omnibus Men

ends at one o'clock midnight ; and to these hours must be added the time taken in going to and from work : then, if any buses are running, the drivers may go free on them. On non-relief lines the men were asked to reply by a plebiscite whether they would have an extra shilling a day or take the full work, and when the majority declared for the extra shilling the thing was established. These men take as an average two days a fortnight off on their own account, of course forfeiting their day's pay, but it is a recognised thing that they should make this break, as no man could go on day in and day out driving fifteen hours !

The conductors on these lines of course keep the same hours as the drivers ; they begin on a relief line at 4s. 6d. and rise to 5s., and they get an extra 1s. on non-relief lines.

The odd men who are waiting to get a service receive precisely the same pay as the others, but of course are not sure of a full week's work ; as a rule they can count on an average of five days in the week.

It may be that the first odd man waiting for a job gets put on to an omnibus of which the driver is ill and will not return to work for three weeks, in which case the odd driver remains on that omnibus for the three weeks. There is great luck in this. Our odd man may chance to wait three hours, and then he may get put on an omnibus where he has to do a full day of fifteen hours. He has already waited three, and therefore his day's work has lasted eighteen hours ! But he accepts it all philosophically ; another's turn to-day,

Scenery of London

his to-morrow ; with which consolatory reflection he gives a small boy a penny to take a note to his "missus," telling her to be at the corner by the "Salisbury" at two o'clock and to bring along the remains of that beef-steak pudding for his dinner, swings himself on to his box seat, and is off.

It is hard work this driving, it makes men with muscles like steel and bones like iron. To be at it for fifteen hours, with alternate intervals of ten minutes and twenty minutes each three hours, this is no light task. It is not like driving a carriage horse with a mouth of silk ; pull as you may you can make no impression on the mouth of a 'bus horse. Any one handling the reins for the first time would find to his surprise that the whole driving is pulling ; sometimes when there is a young horse with his head set homeward you may see the man hanging on to the reins with all his force. So hard is the work that if a man goes off for a week or a fortnight's holiday he gets stiff at once, and on resuming suffers until his muscles are in training again. The odd men pretty soon get a service of their own, whether as "regular" odd driver, which some of them prefer, as they can always get home to dinner, or with a service of their own and alternate half days. Our friend of this morning left his house at half-past six, and will not return until two o'clock A.M., but this is exceptional.

Wet and shine, storm and fine, the drivers face the world cheerily ; their tolerance of minor annoyances is unbounded ; it is almost impossible to provoke an



LIMEHOUSE REACH

Craft coming up on a flowing tide.



Omnibus Men

omnibus driver. The policeman may domineer ; the slow traffic may prefer to go along in the centre of the road a couple of yards from the kerb ; the roadway may be up for an unwarrantable time, necessitating a détour which cuts off nearly the whole of that precious twenty minutes' rest at Liverpool Street ; the conductor may be a fool, never looking round before he starts, and so constantly starting and stopping again ; yet all these things the omnibus driver bears lightly. The only thing that does vex his soul and make him commiserate his lot in heartfelt accents to any one who will listen, is when the foreman of the yard has a spite against him, and will make up his stud of the worst horses in the stable ; for the driver loves his horses, and is as proud of them as if they belonged to him.

In many other things besides his tolerance is he the epitome of London street character—for instance, in his general knowledge of what is going on, and his lack of profundity. He knows all about the topics of the day, can discuss the King's speech, the fiscal policy, or the latest *cause célèbre*, with any one, but his knowledge of these things is gathered from casual conversation, from the contents bills seen in his daily journey, or at the most from a halfpenny evening paper. And the amazing power even of contents bills to quicken a man's intelligence is seen in the contrast between him and his brother of the country, who strides behind his cart between leafy hedges, and never sees a placard, unless it be that of an enterprising tradesman who announces on a gatepost that his "Boots are the

Scenery of London

Best in Britain." The 'bus driver's quick wit and his knowledge of affairs are only equalled by his utter want of what may be called "reading capability"; he never opens a book; when he gets in, to sleep and eat are all he cares about; if he has a bit of time off, jobs for the wife, or play with the children, or an outing, fill up his short recreation time; the 'bus driver who reads is rare indeed. Equally, he never enters a church; he never has the opportunity. The only service attended by 'bus drivers in any numbers is the midnight service on New Year's Eve, which is considered to be a condonation for the sins of the past year. Smart in person, kindly at heart, tolerant, and shrewd, and capable, he is a citizen well worth having. His sense of responsibility is always being indirectly called upon, and no man readier than he or more cool-headed when an accident happens. Does a horse go down? He never stirs, but gives comprehensive directions to his conductor without moving. Does some unmanageable van or other knock against his vehicle and take the paint off, he hardly shows he notices it, yet nothing escapes him. Though apparently looking straight ahead he sees the almost imperceptible nod with which the woman on the off pavement signifies that she wishes him to stop; he can distinguish to a hair's-breadth between the nervous lady who is waiting for his 'bus to pass before crossing, and she who is gathering up her skirts to board him when he shall stop for her. His driving is a marvel; with the most unwieldy vehicle in the world he judges its limits to a nicety. At the time of the great Jubilee,

Omnibus Men

when 'buses, jammed for hours, had struggled slowly on a couple of yards at a time, after having made the circuit of London from the south side of the river, and through the City westward, I said to the driver, "You only touched once." "Twice," he answered, though with a grin of pride; "I felt one of them things just lay against the back end of my 'bus for a second a while ago."

The life is popular; it is regular, lived in the open air, and full of incident. "There's always something going on," said one 'bus driver, "whether it's a horse down, or a street fight, or a regiment of soldiers passing by; you can't very well be dull; and then to hear the talk behind you, well it would make you laugh sometimes; them foreigners think the National Gallery is St. Paul's, and the Nelson Column the Monument; they don't know anything, not so to speak."

These things happen to be on the line of his route, so he is intimate with them; of the rest of London he is profoundly ignorant, but like another great man he might be represented as saying—

What I know not is not knowledge.



THE RIVER

ON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE

Night scene.



CHAPTER IX

THE RIVER

A LONDONER'S love for London may be tested by his regard for the river. If he remark that he has seen rivers wider, and that he cannot discover any beauty "in all that rubbish," indicating the wharves and chimneys of the Surrey side, give him up; he is hopeless, and time will only be wasted on him. You might take him to Westminster Bridge at night, when the river is full to the brim, flooding up to the Embankment in great swirling pools, and the three-quarter moon hangs low in the sky, making a clear pathway of silver down the water; beyond which in the uncertain light the houses on the farther shore are transformed into shadowy castles. You might point out the spires and pinnacles of the Houses of Parliament rising against an indigo sky, and the solemn yellow light of Big Ben hanging midway in air; you might show him the ripples of gold starting from the reflections of the lamps on the bridge, and lapping against the sides of the ebony barges, and he will turn away and light a cigarette and say, "It's a jolly night certainly."

Scenery of London

For those who love the river there is ever something new, something wonderful, and for the first time disclosed, whenever they see her. They never noticed before just that point of view, or just that effect; the whole course of the river may be likened to a gorgeous picture-book, of which each leaf in turning displays itself in familiar outlines but with new colouring,—a fairy book indeed.

The river belonging to London may be said to begin at Hammersmith Bridge, and Hammersmith Bridge, with its airy outlines and general openness, seems fitting amid its surroundings. On the south side, higher up the stream, stretch long, low green banks, and the sheets of water of a water company's reservoirs glitter in the sun. The characteristic moment of Hammersmith Bridge is on a fine Sunday morning, when the ground is still touched by the lingering rime of a night frost, when the sun is getting higher every moment and diffusing around a yellow watery splendour, when cyclists race past to Richmond, and the ripples lap gently against the boats drawn up in Sunday peace on the strip of muddy foreshore.

The Mall on the north side was once a very fashionable place, where Catherine of Braganza came when a widow; and where a celebrated court physician lived in the days of Queen Anne. It is still desirable, and has some fine old houses and two elms of respectable antiquity. The river takes a great turn below Hammersmith, sweeping round on one side past Barn Elms, a favourite place for picnics in the days of the



CHELSEA



The River

Stuarts, and on the other passing near Brandenburgh House, where lived the unhappy Queen Caroline, wife of George IV., whose treatment by her husband made England contemptible in the eyes of the nations. Market gardens still stud the Fulham bank, though in greatly diminished area. Soon the red roof of the old part of the Bishop of London's palace rises above the trees, and we can see the windows of the rooms occupied by Laud.

Putney Bridge is, like London Bridge, of white stone, with wide arches,—a fine bridge. At either end the square towers of the neighbouring churches stare at each other with a half-defiant, half-subdued expression, and on Sunday mornings, when the congregations are dispersing, there is a double stream of people coming and going, and not one passes without a look up or down the stretch of shining water. It may be merely a personal idiosyncrasy, but to the writer the atmosphere always seems to be clear at Putney, clear though soft. The lines of the wall embanking Bishop's Park stand out distinctly ; every rope and stick on the barges lying by the Putney side is clearly noticeable ; even far up the river a boat with its rhythmic sweep of oars can be distinguished. There is a wide stretch of clear grey water, sometimes even blue in the summer sun ; the air is fresh, clean, and invigorating, with no smoke hanging in it, and the wind blows free at Putney Bridge.

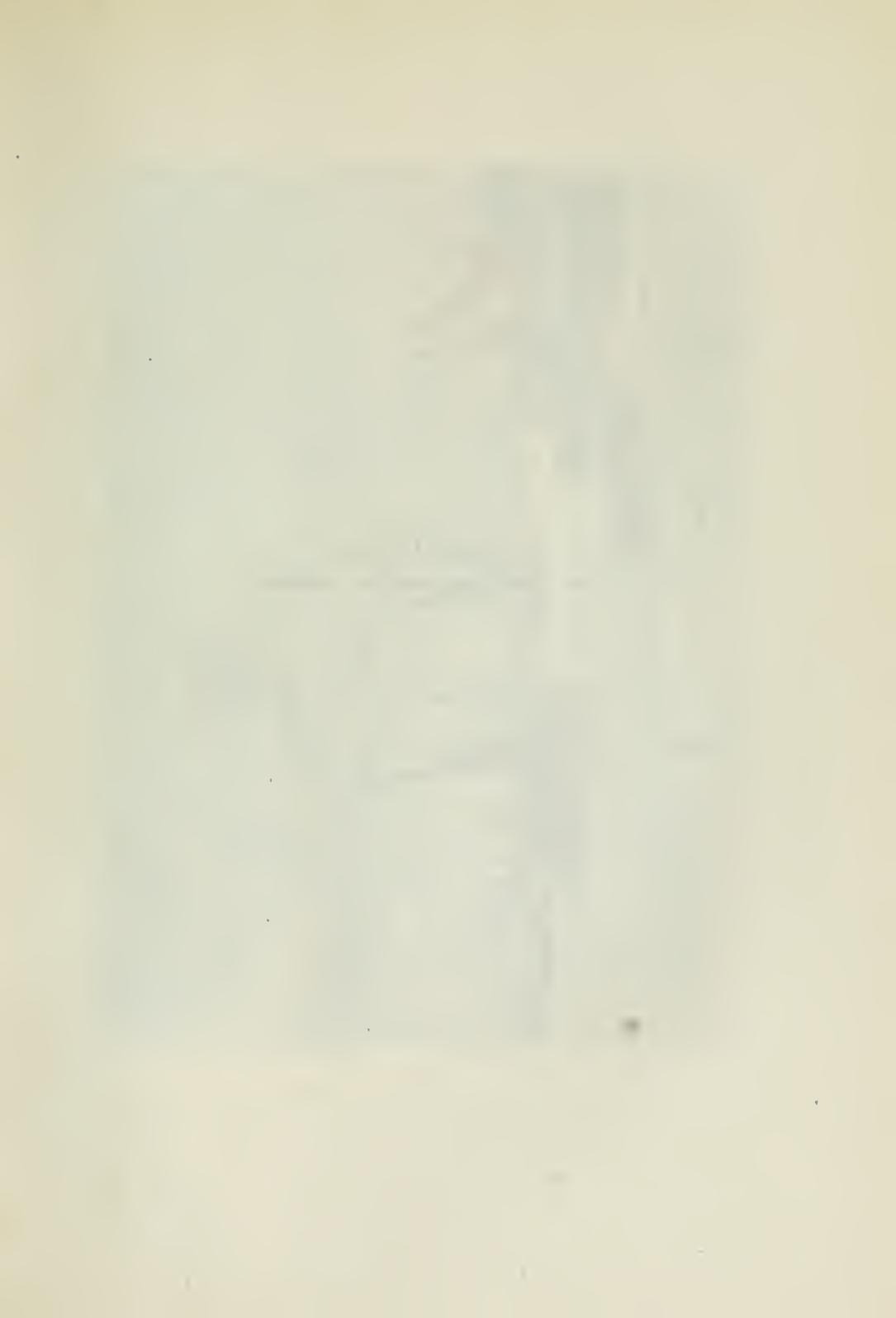
The green banks of Hurlingham come next and the gas-works and wharves of Wandsworth on the other side ; it is a dull bit of water until we reach the dullest of

Scenery of London

the bridges, namely Wandsworth, and so far as Battersea there is nothing to make an impression, nothing to remember. We must solace ourselves by thinking of the water-picnics that Pepys went, sometimes with Mrs. Pepys, but oftener by himself ; and of the barges of the bishops with their richly decorated canopies and the long steady sweep of the oars in times considerably earlier than Pepys'. The river pageants and the old barges have been described so often, and so much has been written about them from time to time, that we are here concerning ourselves more with the river as it is than as it was.

By Chelsea, however, history asserts itself with a force that cannot be denied. We see in mental reverie the gardens of Sir Thomas More's house, gay with roses, reaching down to the water ; we see the gorgeous barge of the king, with others in attendance like a flock of gigantic and unknown birds, waiting by the stairs, while the monarch himself strolls up and down the greensward with his arm round his chancellor's neck.

Just above Battersea Bridge, where the river makes a little bay, is a small house, sunk below the level of the ground and dingy in appearance. Here Turner came, under an assumed name, to revel in the sunsets and their reflections on the river. But the scene does not always show a smiling face at Chelsea ; there are days when a thick haze obscures all but objects that are very near ; when the river itself is flat and discoloured like a bad looking-glass, with scarcely a ripple on its oily surface ; when the sun, a pale golden globe, shifts



BATTERSEA REACH

Taken opposite Turner's house, No. 119 Cheyne
Walk.



The River

about in it with the slight wash ; and sea-gulls swoop lazily to meet their own reflections on the surface.

The quaint old church with its brown brick tower and white clock is a well-known object. The tower was built in the latter part of the seventeenth century, so Sir Thomas, who added a chapel to the building, would hardly know it again were he to return. The green trees of the gardens in Cheyne Walk hide the narrow Row where Carlyle lived. The high, light suspension bridge called Albert Bridge reminds us of that at Hammersmith. The long green line of Battersea Park is on the south, and the trees on the Chelsea side rise above the solid granite, giving only glimpses of the charming houses of red brick in ancient style already toned by age that are behind them. At this part we may see in mid-stream a string of barges with burnt-sienna sails and hulls painted Noah's Ark greens and reds, laden perhaps with piles of hay, floating lazily, or it may be dragged by a fussy little black steam-tug, and so low in the water that the wash laps over at every yard. We used to see the pleasure-steamers with their cargoes of people making black their decks, but now these are no more a familiar sight. Chelsea Bridge also is a suspension bridge, a fine piece of work, and as we near it we catch a glimpse of the old men's hospital standing back behind a long expanse of grass, and bearing in every line its date of the reigns of William and Anne. Scarlet-coated pensioners may linger to watch us pass, and the traffic of the 'buses flows unendingly across the bridge.

Scenery of London

I have seen Chelsea Reach bathed' in the misty light of a summer evening, when the rough-hewn barges are softened by the opalescence of the atmosphere, and again on a baking day of midsummer, when everything is hard and staring. By the side of a hideous iron railing and glaring footway is a clay-coloured working-man, with his loose voluminous clothes lying on him in disorder, and the red handkerchief falling from his furrowed, sun-baked neck, sleeping a dead sleep of drink or exhaustion, and down below on the foreshore, uncovered by the receding tide, children paddle and bathe, shrieking with delight at the feeling of the slimy ooze, from which, so tradition goes, the lowest kind of margarine is made!

Water-works, gas-works, and chimneys line the next part of the river, and, pity that it is, the Embankment ceases, the road running inland not to emerge again, with the exception of a strip near Lambeth Bridge, until Westminster is passed. If the Embankment stretched along the whole of the river's length we should have a promenade unrivalled in Europe.

The new bridge at Vauxhall, and the Tate Gallery are conspicuous before Lambeth Bridge is reached, and then we come to a spot dear to artists, and to all who have an eye for scenery. Here we find a bay and a foreshore. The dull blues and greens and rusty browns, associated with barges, are seen in plenty on the muddy, shingly incline, and beyond rises the Victoria Tower of the Houses of Parliament, grand and stately.

The less said of Lambeth Bridge the better. As we

WESTMINSTER TOWERS



The River

pass under it, the dark red brick and stone-capped battlements of Lambeth Palace are close at hand. Close in one sense, but much farther than they were in the days when the water lapped up around their base, and the empty niche in St. Thomas's Tower held the image of the saint almost overhanging the flood, to which the boatmen used to touch their caps. The grey stone of this tower and of the adjacent church contrasts well with the brick. In mid-stream are strings of barges at anchor, laden with coal and timber and other commodities. Between Lambeth and Westminster unhappy wretches, who had incurred the penalty of the law by a heinous crime, were dragged across at the tail of a boat! The ferry here has made this a crossing-place from time immemorial, and before that was, in harder, more reckless times, the ford, when men waded through thinking little of the danger and discomfort. The river was much wider then and shallower, and stakes guided the pilgrim from where the marshes began, about where Buckingham Palace is now, down to the river near the Abbey. The quaint towers of St. John's Church, "an elephant upside down," appear on the northern bank, and Westminster Abbey is seen in a blue-grey haze behind the Houses of Parliament. If it be the time of sunset, and the sun be going down in a sky of angry yellows and reds, then every buttress on the Houses stands out in gilt on sepia.

We have a picture showing us the river just below Westminster Bridge as it was in 1751—a gay scene. Two fine ladies fan themselves in a small rowing-boat

Scenery of London

in the foreground, while several barges shoot about on the stream in various directions ; in some of them men stand up at the prow to "discourse sweet music," if they were capable of it. A gallant hands a lady into a boat at the steps where now are the neat little pier houses, and work-a-day barges and boats are bestrewn in quantity sufficient to satisfy the artist's fancy. The Houses of Parliament, up to the rebuilding, seemed a medley of buildings seen from the river. Dominating all the roofs rose Westminster Hall, and at the south end, no mean rival, St. Stephen's Chapel. But trees and roofs at every angle and height fill in the foreground.

Westminster Bridge was the second bridge at London in order of time, and it was not built until 1739, so up to that date London Bridge was the only one. The river seemed to know when the question was first mooted, and rose with a strong spring-tide, so that it flooded to a depth of two feet into Westminster Hall. This was by no means the first time it had done so ; in the reign of Elizabeth "Westminster Hall was drowned and moche fishe left there in the pallace yard, when the water returned to her channel, for whoso list to gather up." The walls of the palace of Whitehall, with the stairs and piers, have long vanished, as also the line of palaces succeeding, whose garden walls curbed the flood of the river in the same way as an embankment does. Charing Cross railway bridge is frankly hideous. Beyond it the river gives a great sweep round, so that for the moment the first sight of St. Paul's leads one to suppose that it has been landed by mistake on the wrong



SUNRISE AT LAMBETH



The River

side of the water! But as the course of the stream curves, it shifts back imperceptibly, and we have a vision of its beautiful dome and lesser towers, rising, it may be, in the clear blue of a spring sky, itself softened with the blue-grey cloudiness to be seen in an opal. Of the Strand palaces that formerly lined the water-side, some mention has already been made; not one, alas, remains.

The long range of the upper storey of Somerset House looks as if it were covered by hoar-frost; and a medley of smoke-coloured stone, red brick, and green leaves carries us onward to Blackfriars, where the London that most people know ceases, and the sternly work-a-day commercial line of wharves begins. Poor Thames Street, how hast thou fallen from the days when princes of the blood, royal dukes, and mighty men walked thy stones! From the days of palace and fortress and noble tower and turret!

Thames Street can still show some beautiful peeps,—note that at Queenhithe, with St. Michael's spire behind,—but it is overweighted, crushed, by the huge monster of Cannon Street station, which lies behind Southwark Bridge.

With Southwark Bridge we are reminded of the London over the water, of which so far, since Lambeth, there has been little or nothing to say. Now we are passing Bankside, where stood some of the earliest theatres in London, also bear-baiting and bull-baiting gardens. The Southwark side was the resort of numbers of the citizens, who very commonly employed

Scenery of London

the watermen to row them over, thereby causing great prosperity to the fraternity, who at a later date cried out bitterly, when they heard that theatres were to be built on the north side of the river, that it would ruin their trade. Nevertheless Southwark cannot claim the first theatre, for when plays were no longer allowed in the City in the time of Elizabeth, Burbage built a theatre at or near Holywell Street in Shoreditch, and at the end of the sixteenth century this house was taken down, and all its building materials transferred to the Globe, across the water at Bankside. Shakespeare's company rented the Globe in 1603, and the great dramatist himself lived near the bear-garden. Other theatres, the Rose, the Hope, and the Swan, soon followed the first, and Bankside became noted for its amusements and its taverns, most famous of which was the Falcon. Like all theatres of the time, these were constructed of wood and only partly covered, so that the rain could fall upon the audience, who stood in the pit or "yard." At the other or east end of Bankside were the houses of the Bishops of Winchester and Rochester. Winchester House was magnificent, having ten courts and a park of seventy acres.

The pinnacled tower of St. Saviour's rises conspicuously near London Bridge, marking the old religious house of St. Mary Overies. The present London Bridge is two hundred feet farther westward than its predecessor. With St. Saviour's at one end and the Fishmongers' Hall and the white tower of St. Magnus' at the other, it has a splendid position, of

AN ARCH OF LONDON BRIDGE ; TOWER
BRIDGE IN DISTANCE



The River

which it is well worthy, its wide flattened arches of white stone being graceful and simple. Not until we have passed under it do we see the finest modern building Thames Street can show, that is, the Custom House. The frontage to the Thames, as it is now, was erected in the worst period of style—1825,—but it is nevertheless fine and dignified, and with the foreground of the forest of masts and funnels belonging to the ships that have come up through the Tower Bridge, it presents a fitting picture of the receipt of custom belonging to a great sea-nation.

Of all the reaches we have passed, the next, between London and the Tower Bridges, is the noblest ; for, see them at what point of view we may, under any conditions, at any hour of the day, these two, the ancient Tower and the modern bridge are picturesque and satisfying to the eye of man. The great gateway of the bridge guarding the entrance to the river, the fortress that so long was stronghold, palace, and prison, each in its way is symbolic of the sovereignty of the great city.

Below the bridge we are in the Pool, which has been always a favourite subject with artists. Here are the colours of the river in abundance, her beautiful livery of olive-green and silver-grey, with its facings of russet and drab. Steamers and barges, boats and wharves are all alike clad in these tones, and all alike softened and refined by the atmosphere. Fussing steam tugs, clumsy leviathan dredgers, stupid slow-moving barges, busy industrious steamers, make a

Scenery of London

world in miniature, and each vessel has a character of its own. Where St. Katherine's docks now are, was once the cloistral shade of a religious house for nuns. Beside their ancient church, under the shadow of the trees, within sound, it may be, of the rippling water, lived women whose lives were secluded from all active interests. They beheld the life of the water, but were not of it. But before the day of the great outburst of energy, the days of glorious "Eliza," their house had been taken from them, and they had been dispersed. When down the water started the ships that went to fight the Spanish Armada, the ships on whom the existence of England depended, they were no longer there to see. When such men as Drake and Frobisher, and Gilbert and Raleigh went out to find new worlds, so that the heart of every boy leapt with longing, St. Katherine's stood dismantled, but still beautiful, a ruin that we should have treasured and jealously guarded had it remained until our time.

By glimpses of forests of tall masts resting mysteriously inland, by glimpses of vast stretches of blue water explaining their presence there, we traverse the Pools, upper and lower, and dive due southward by the Isle of Dogs ere we reach the last great building London shows on this side, Greenwich Hospital, with its dome-capped towers. Here once stood Greenwich Palace or Placentia, from which the dying boy-king, Edward VI., watched his ships go down to the east captained by men who were carrying the name of England far and wide, and building up that great dominion that he would

THE TOWER AND UPPER POOL



The River

never live to see. They were going to new lands, to carve out careers of splendour for themselves ; their sun was rising, his was setting ; and as the vessels melted into the greyness of the distance the boy perhaps turned his face to the west, a symbol that his own short day was drawing toward its evening-time.

GREAT MEN

OLD ESSEX WHARF

A few of the clinker-built houses that still remain
along the river frontage of Stepney.



CHAPTER X

GREAT MEN

To chronicle the names and residences of all the great men connected with London would be a task beyond the powers of any mere mortal, at least if those who have lived in London at any period of their lives were to have a place in the hierarchy. If we took only the statesmen who have governed England, and who by virtue of their office have come to Westminster, their names would furnish forth many a volume. Clearly the area must be more circumscribed.

A lesser ambition might be to enumerate those who are in reality Londoners, men born within the limits of the great City, her own children, and not those adopted sons and daughters she has made her own by right of residence ; by this means we should exclude such men as Shakespeare and Carlyle. Yet even so the task would be too great, the burden too heavy to be borne ; selection must be made. Therefore, considering that this book is of London first, and of her history and her life, it has been thought advisable to choose men eminent for genius, who are Londoners in the most characteristic

Scenery of London

sense, whether by birth or adoption, and who have lived in London at intervals of a century more or less, so that we may trace the growth of London in their lives. For this purpose we have selected Chaucer, 1340-1400; Spenser, 1552-1599; Milton, 1608-1674; Dr. Johnson, 1708-1784; Dickens, 1812-1870.

CHAUCER

It would be difficult to name one street principal above all others in the London of to-day, there are so many chief in their own department, be it in the world of fashion or of trade; but it would be yet a greater problem to ninety-nine Londoners out of a hundred to name what was undoubtedly the principal street in old London, the London within the walls. When it is named they will no doubt have a vague idea that they have heard of it before, but they will not be able to say if it exists, and still less where it begins and ends. This once principal street, Thames Street, does exist, and to walk down it in the day-time is dangerous. Huge cranes swing overhead, threatening to descend upon any luckless skull, yawning trap-doors gape for unwary feet; brawny men, intent on their own ends, jostle loiterers aside, and a step into the roadway would possibly bring destruction beneath the wheels of some mighty dray.

The Thames Street of to-day, as may have been gathered, is not inordinately wide; it is lined on one side by wharves, through which glimpses of the grey-green river may be seen. Alas, one of the prettiest of these



VIEW FROM WATERLOO BRIDGE



Great Men

peeps was done away but a few years ago! This was at Paul's Wharf, on which was a house projecting over the water, in the old style, and with a strong-room, a real old-fashioned strong-room, dating from before the days of banks or "running cashes," down below. The strong timber uprights of the wharf framed as charming a bit of river scenery as London could show. Now it is gone, all gone, and Paul's Wharf has been added to the new brick structures standing at intervals by the side of the Thames.

The only time to explore Thames Street with safety to life and limb is on a Saturday afternoon, or on a Sunday, when, if the day be fine and sunny, the peaceful houses throw long shadows on the causeway, and it is easy to imagine one has been transported into the quaint, narrow, irregular street of some old Continental town.

Yet nothing is left of the real old Thames Street as it was in the days of its glory; it was all swept away in the disastrous Fire, and long before that the magnificent palaces and princes' houses that lined it had fallen into decay.

Let us reconstruct the street at the time when the poet Chaucer, the little boy who was to bear the proud title of the "Father of English Poetry," was born therein.

Not far from the station of St. Paul's at Blackfriars Bridge is a small and narrow dock called appropriately enough Puddle Dock; here the water laps about the green lichened posts, and gently covers or lays bare

Scenery of London

the slimy mud, as day by day the tide creeps up and recedes. This was at one time a place of vast bustle and importance; lading and unloading went on all day long, as the goods of London were sent abroad, such things as iron, wool, and hides from the earliest times and later manufactured materials, and imports were freely landed. Not far from Puddle Dock stood the mighty castle of Baynard, built about the time of the Norman Conquest, and held at the date of Chaucer's birth by the Earls of Clare. The castle had been dismantled in the reign of King John in revenge for its owner's taking part with the Barons, but the Earl had been later forgiven and had rebuilt his stronghold. After Chaucer's time it was to be burnt down and again rebuilt completely, on a slightly different site, and it was to witness the proclamation of Edward IV., the acceptance of the crown by his sons' murderer, and to be a residence of Henry VIII. But those days were not yet, for Edward III. was on the throne.

The house of Chaucer's father, who was a vintner, was at the beginning of Lower Thames Street, hard by the site of the present Cannon Street station, and not half a mile from the castle of Baynard. This and the neighbouring tower of Montfichet, the stern walls of Bridewell seen across the Fleet, with the monastic houses of Black and White Friars, must have been familiar objects to the small boy as he loitered in the street. Not so agreeable a sight, and one that must have struck any one sensitive with disgust, was a place near at hand where the butchers of the city used to



THE FORESHORE AT SOUTHWARK



Great Men

throw the reeking remains of the carcasses of killed beasts into the water ; but an order was made in the reign of Edward III. that this disgraceful practice should be abolished, and the remains otherwise disposed of.

Two or three large houses followed Baynard's Castle, one of which was taken from the abbey of Fécamp by Edward III. and given to Sir Simon Burley. At Paul's Wharf there was a free right of taking water, a right disputed in Chaucer's day when an attempt was made to get rents from those who so used the wharf. Near this there was another great house called Beaumont's Inn, and not far off was the house of the abbots of Chertsey. Near Broken Wharf was a large mansion or castle belonging to the King's brother, Thomas, Earl of Norfolk, and then came the great Port of Queenhithe, where fish was continually landed in enormous quantities. East of Queenhithe was the Vintry Wharf, where the merchants of Bordeaux landed their wines, and it was not far from here that Chaucer the vintner, known to posterity as the father of his son, lived. It is of little advantage to enumerate further the line of great houses by the river in Thames Street, or to note in detail the houses of the well-to-do merchants and citizens farther inland, above which rose the splendid Cathedral of old St. Paul's, and near it the Bishop's Palace. Enough has been said to show what the street was like in the time of Chaucer's boyhood : a fashionable street, full of coming and going, where men-at-arms and knights and esquires were continually to be seen, where gallants in blue and gold and silver paraded up and down amid busy merchants

Scenery of London

and the lading and unloading of goods. People always coming and going, always some sight, some scene to look upon; an ideal place to live according to a boy's notions, but hardly the place where one would imagine the growth of a poet. Here the boy lingered on holidays and on his way to and from school; here he listened to the disputes about the water and the butchers' offal; here he learned to know by sight the princes and princesses of the Royal household. Not far northward was Tower Royal, where Queen Philippa kept her Wardrobe, and with which Chaucer was to become very familiar in later days. Of all the splendid houses in this part the only one standing which would be familiar to Chaucer, could he revisit the scene, would be the Tower. Chaucer's father was evidently well-to-do; it is even supposed that he held some Court appointment himself in earlier life. He was able, at all events, to give his son a good education. Yet the vast gap between those times and our own is instanced by the petty details of life, such as the fact that paper was not then in use, forks not thought of; at a dinner two persons shared one plate; even in a well-to-do household the furniture would be of a rough kind, trestle tables, wooden benches and trenchers. Chaucer must have been seventeen or thereabouts, according to the latest researches, when he entered the service of the King's son Lionel, Duke of Clarence, as a page. Thereafter he moved about with the household of his master, seeing Windsor, Woodstock, Hatfield, and many another place. In 1359 he went on an expedition to France,



LAVENDER WHARF, ROTHERHITHE



Great Men

and took his part in the war. His life was full and eventful, a life of observation spent among men and things. He was soldier, courtier, and man of affairs as well as poet. We know his outward aspect sufficiently well : a short, stout man, with small head and hands, a forked beard, and a habit of looking "ever on the ground" ; yet those downcast eyes took in all there was to see, and were shrewd with wondrous observation.

We pick up the thread of his life again, so far as we are concerned, in his residence over the gateway at Aldgate in 1374. He was then in prosperous circumstances ; he had married Philippa, supposed to have been Lady of the Chamber to the Queen ; he enjoyed a pension from John of Gaunt ; and he had been appointed Comptroller of the Customs. Besides all these marks of grace he had the right to a special pitcher of wine, to be received from the hands of the King's butler every day. He had the lease of the upper storey and cellar of Aldgate on condition he kept the building in repair. Here he remained for twelve years. Though his married life was apparently not happy, we can imagine him well contented, writing his poems, visited by his friend Gower, and going to and from the Custom House, which was rebuilt at the end of his time of service, and stood farther east than the present one. During this period of his life he wrote a great deal, including the poem of "Troilus and Cressida," and several of those tales afterwards incorporated into the famous *Canterbury Tales*. Of course these were copied out by hand, for the days of printing were not yet. Chaucer also went abroad

Scenery of London

frequently on diplomatic errands, so he had certainly no cause to complain of his lot. In 1382, Richard II. having been then on the throne about five years, he was further appointed Comptroller of the Petty Customs. But his prosperity did not last. In 1386 he was dismissed from both offices, whether for incapacity or merely by reason of the caprice of the times is not known. It is supposed also that his wife died about this time. However, he still held two pensions, the second one being from the King. He left the gatehouse, and where he lived in London or elsewhere is not known; probably he travelled about England or went on his pilgrimage to Canterbury. Three years later he was appointed Clerk of the King's Works, in which capacity he had charge of the King's mews for falcons at Charing Cross, a place we have already visited. He held this office for two years only, giving us reason to suspect that, like most geniuses, he was not satisfactory as a man of business. He received another appointment as Forester from the Earl of March, and in 1394 King Richard gave him an annuity. Up to 1399 his place of residence cannot be traced. He was in London certainly several times to receive his pension, but whether he lived there or not there is no means of knowing. In 1399 King Henry IV., the son of a former patron, John of Gaunt, ascended the throne, and gave him an additional pension, so that he must have been well off. He then leased a house at the east end of Westminster Abbey, on the site now occupied by Henry VII.'s Chapel, but before he had been here a



FROM WHITEHALL COURT



Great Men

year he died, in October 1400, and was buried in the Abbey, near which his last days had been spent.

Westminster must have been familiar to him, for he had sat as "Knight for the Shire of Kent" in the House of Parliament, and must often have been at and about the Palace, then, with the Tower, the principal residence of the King. Around the Abbey and Palace clustered what there was of Westminster, and beyond a stream running over the course of Gardener's Lane there was open country with fields.

As for the Palace, it was a town in itself. In Richard II.'s reign there were three hundred and forty-six artificers living in the precincts; these, with their wives and families, were the King's servants to make what he required. Of the commissariat department, clerks, ushers, and so on, there were two hundred and ten, besides an army of servants. Then there were chaplains, scribes, stewards, accountants, maids of honour, pages, and "valets." This town of people was surrounded by a wall, and to this busy, crowded scene Chaucer would have free admittance. For the last years of his life he had been busy completing and collecting his *Canterbury Tales*, and doubtless these were read aloud and much enjoyed at Court.

From the beginning to the end of his life Chaucer had been closely connected with London, and we may fittingly end with his own words:—

Also the citey of London that is to me so dere and sweete,
in which I was forth growen; and more kindly love have I
to that place than to any other in yerth.

Scenery of London

SPENSER

The gap between the times of Chaucer and Spenser is enormous, not so much if measured in years, though one hundred and fifty years elapsed between the death of one and the birth of the other, but because the discovery and rapid growth of printing in the interval had transformed England. Where Chaucer's works were slowly and laboriously copied out by hand on vellum, Spenser's were sent to the printer to be struck off in any number of copies. Spenser had access to books, which were but as names or unknown to Chaucer; to him lay open the whole field of literature. The output of the printing presses in Elizabeth's time was immense, and all the books were new; there were no reprints, but everything was fresh; the whole field of literature was accessible. We see the result of this in the brilliant outburst of literary, and especially of poetic, talent: Shakespeare, Jonson, Marlowe, Massinger, Beaumont and Fletcher, Raleigh, and many another poet. Sir Thomas Browne, Francis Bacon, Stow, and Grafton among the prose writers belong to this age, and all these names are household words yet. In this wonderful world, this world of learning and chivalry, this world of culture and romance, Spenser took his place.

He was the son of a clothmaker who lived in East Smithfield, on the east of the Tower, not to be confounded with the much better known West Smithfield. His father was then working in the service of Nicholas

Great Men

Peele of Bow Lane. The date was somewhere near 1552.

On one side lay the moat of the Tower and the strong walls of the citadel, and here, ere the boy could speak plainly, Lady Jane Grey was beheaded and Princess Elizabeth imprisoned. From his earliest years the going to and fro and the beheadings of the State prisoners must have formed the theme of the conversation around him, and the vast crowds gathered on the green slopes of Tower Hill to witness executions must have been a familiar sight. Northward from the Tower ran the Town Ditch, that Town Ditch into which the citizens emptied all their refuse, and which constantly needed cleaning. At Smithfield itself there was an open space where on Aggas's Map a woman is represented drying clothes, and to the north and to the south were the dismantled religious houses, St. Katherine's by the Tower, Eastminster, Holy Trinity Priory, and others. Some of the churches still stood. Here was a bit of cloister, there an enclosing wall, but all the houses were now turned from their uses and stood forlorn. This revolution of things that had seemed as firm as the mountains was still fresh in the minds of men. Beyond Smithfield were open fields all the way as far as eye could see to where the little church of Stepney stood on the horizon.

On his way to the newly founded Merchant Taylors' School in Suffolk Lane, Dowgate, the boy would pass over the Ditch, threading his way through the streets with their wooden houses and by many a spired church.

Scenery of London

The school was not far from London Bridge, and after school hours, no doubt, he, among others, would hurry down to the old bridge with its narrow deep arches and wonderful houses; he would envy those who lived above the rushing flood, and long to live there too.

His school was part of the fine old mansion of The Rose, which had been held by the Earl of Hereford, the Dukes of Exeter and of Buckingham, and many another noble, and at intervals by the Crown. Even as a schoolboy the lad wrote verses, and very shortly after he left, a collection of poems, now generally considered to have been from his pen, though issued under a false name, appeared in print. He went from school to Cambridge University, and afterwards stayed in the country with relatives, until in 1578 he became a member of the household of the Queen's favourite, the Earl of Leicester. The Earl then occupied the house adjoining the Temple, later known as Essex House, and partly on the site now covered by Essex Street. The Strand was then in the fulness of its glory, and had replaced Thames Street as the fashionable quarter, for in London fashion ever shows a tendency to move westward. Here were the splendid palaces of the nobles we have already noticed, Arundel and Somerset Houses, Durham and Worcester Houses, and others. In his daily life Spenser was brought into friendly relations with many a brilliant courtier, many a cultured gentleman, and formed friendships with Sidney and Raleigh that were only ended by death. Sidney was nephew to the Earl of Leicester, and no doubt a



MILLBANK, WESTMINSTER

There is still an outfall here of the Tyburn stream
which used to turn the Abbots' mill.



Great Men

frequent guest at his house. Raleigh was at that time probably occupying Durham House, which had been granted to him by the Queen, and was within a short walk of his friend ; and but a little farther westward was York House, where, some twenty years before, a man, who was to earn a greater name than he, Francis Bacon, had been born.

The *Shepherd's Calendar* was written and published and the *Faerie Queen* begun while the poet was at Leicester House. In 1580 Spenser was appointed secretary to Lord Grey de Wilton, who was going as deputy to Ireland, and though he revisited England later, from this time Ireland remained his residence until shortly before his death. He came back after the rebellion of 1598 a broken and ruined man ; his house had been burnt and his possessions destroyed by the rebels. He took lodgings in King Street (p. 91) in Westminster, and died there. Ben Jonson, his famous contemporary, and a Londoner too, having been born in Westminster, declared that he perished for lack of bread, which must have been an exaggeration. In any case it is certain that his last days were embittered by want. Yet that the nation was not unmindful of his genius is shown by the fact that he was buried in Westminster Abbey, only a short way from the last resting-place of Chaucer, his splendid predecessor.

MILTON

Milton is the third of that wonderful line of London poets who stand out pre-eminent in genius. He was

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faithful to his mother city, and never left her but of necessity, and then not for long. He was born within the walls of the City, he had at different times ten residences in London, and by the whole cast of his mind he was a Londoner of the Londoners. Very familiar must the streets have been to the pale, dignified man, noted for "temperance, sobriety, and chastity"; deeply must the scenes known from boyhood have been engraved upon his brain, so that even after he lost his sight he could see them with the "inward eye." He was born, as every one knows, in 1608 in a house in Bread Street, which, like all the other London houses with which he was connected, has disappeared, though its successor is marked by a tablet. Milton's tender feeling for the home of his youth is shown in the fact that, when the house became his own property after his father's death, he retained it, in spite of all vicissitudes of fortune, until it was destroyed by the Great Fire. It is exceedingly difficult for us to reconstruct the London that Milton knew when he as a boy, with a "thoughtful little face, that of a well-nurtured towardly boy," came out of the house to go to school in St. Paul's Churchyard. Every day he must have seen a London where every vista was a picture in itself. Above the houses hung signs, his father's sign being the Spread Eagle. Timber and tile, plaster and carving were the rule everywhere. Bread Street is narrow enough now, so narrow that in working hours the huge drays pass down it at a foot's pace, but it must have been darker and narrower then. Forth from this

Great Men

picturesque street the boy went to the school which was to be so highly honoured by numbering him among its scholars. "From the twelfth year of my age," he says, "I hardly ever went to bed before midnight." His brother Christopher was seven years younger than himself. John Milton does not seem to have made many schoolboy friendships. Only one, that with Diodati, is mentioned; probably Milton was a solitary boy, for he was old for his years, and certainly of far higher mental calibre than the ordinary boy. In his essay on Education, written many years later, his curriculum for the ordinary schoolboy includes Hebrew, Chaldee, Syriac, and Italian. Milton himself had a splendid memory and great facility in foreign tongues. He passed on in due course to Cambridge, and afterwards joined his father at Horton in Buckinghamshire, whither the elder Milton had retired about 1632. He does not seem at any time to have had any pressure put upon him to enter into a commercial life; indeed his is one of the rare instances where parents seem to have recognised the true worth of genius in a child, and let him do what fancy prompted him; and it is impossible to read of Milton at all without recognising in him the calm self-possession which, without haste or scuffle, took the position of superiority to which he was entitled. It never seems to have occurred to him to "strive or cry in the streets"; from the first genius followed its own bent, and went undisturbed upon its way. He stayed at Horton until his famous tour abroad, and on his return, as his younger brother was now living with his widowed

Scenery of London

father, Milton undertook the education of the fatherless sons of his sister, Mrs. Phillips. "He took him a lodging in St. Bride's Churchyard at the House of one Russel a taylor," and here he remained until 1640. St. Bride's, otherwise St. Bridget's, was destroyed in the Great Fire, but rose again after Wren's designs, and stands still, hemmed in by houses, but visible from Fleet Street. His very short stay here, about a year, was due to "necessity of having a place to dispose his books in, and other goods fit for the furnishing of a good handsome house, hastening him to take one, and therefore a pretty garden-house he took in Aldersgate Street." This house was in a court now called Maidenhead Alley, opening into Nicholl Square, and not far from the quiet church of St. Giles, where he was at last to rest. He was now just outside the wall and within the liberties of the City. Here he occupied himself in training his young nephews, and after three years, by a sudden and totally unexpected movement, he took a wife from the camp of the enemy in the person of Mary Powell, daughter of Richard Powell, a staunch Royalist. This marriage was a disaster. The gay young girl brought suddenly into a household so austere as that regulated by Milton, must have been obliged to occupy her mind with high things, when probably her first idea of a marriage and going to live in London would have been an escape to a freer, more joyous life than the quiet one of the country. She shortly left her husband and went back to her own home. During all the time he was at Aldersgate, Milton

ST. GILES', CRIPPLEGATE

Milton's burial-place.



Great Men

brought forth nothing but prose, in the form of tracts and essays. Two years later, going to visit a kinsman in St. Martin's-le-Grand Lane, where the General Post Office now is, he was surprised to find his wife there, and the meeting, arranged by her people, became a reconciliation. He was at this time on the eve of moving once more, though not very far,—the residences chosen by himself being generally within the neighbourhood of St. Paul's.

The new house was in the Barbican, and here the young wife once more took up her duties. This house, long since vanished, formed the scene of many domestic events. The whole family of the Powells, ruined by the success of the Roundheads, came to seek refuge with their Puritan son-in-law, and the result, as might have been expected, was not successful. A man who lived by line and rule, who loved quiet and was rigid in all his ways, as Milton was, must have found himself perpetually jarred by a household consisting of two young nephews and other pupils, an uncongenial wife, and a whole family of people-in-law. Here both his own father and Mr. Powell, his father-in-law, died, and his eldest daughter was born to him.

Shortly after this Milton removed to a house in High Holborn, "not since identified," leaving the remainder of the Powells to find their own lodging. Here he stayed until his appointment as Government Secretary on account of his wonderful fluency in Latin, in which language all State communications were then made. This was in 1649, and he took a house in

Scenery of London

Spring Gardens in order to be near his work, but was very soon afterwards persuaded to remove to apartments in Scotland Yard adjoining the rambling old palace of Whitehall.

In 1652, however, he went to Petty France in Westminster, now called York Street, and was there for eight years. Here his youngest daughter was born, and his wife died. He married again, and after a little more than a year was left a widower a second time. He had lost the sight of one eye when he came to Petty France, and two years later was totally blind, though he still retained his Government post with the aid of an assistant. It is noticeable that his love of gardens always led him to a garden house, or one in which there was easy access to an open space. The house which he occupied in Petty France stood until 1877. It must, in his time, have been an ideal residence, for it overlooked St. James's Park, in which he was free to walk. The Park was then a mere common, with grass and trees growing irregularly and a few small ponds; it was not until after the Restoration that it was put into shape by Charles II. When the Restoration was announced, Milton, as one who had ever been a prominent Puritan, was forced to go into hiding, which he did without quitting London, staying for some time in the house of a friend in Bartholomew Close, Smithfield. The danger over and amnesty proclaimed, he came forth; but he did not return to Westminster, probably because it was in proximity to the Court, but took a house again in Holborn temporarily. From

Great Men

here he went back to near his former quarters at Barbican, renting a dwelling in Jewin Street. His eldest daughters were about thirteen and fifteen at this time, and their unfilial conduct made a deep and bitter impression on their father. It is but fair to say that when the girls are spoken of with reprobation, allowance has hardly been made for their youth, their motherless condition, and their disadvantages under such a stern father as Milton must have been. It is natural that they should have revolted from tasks they abhorred, such as reading aloud languages they did not understand, and that when called up in the night to take down verses whereof Dr. Garnett says, "not one of which the whole world could have replaced," their sleepy eyes and ears should have failed to appreciate the beauty. In Jewin Street, however, Milton cannot have had an unhappy time, for his friends Andrew Marvell and Thomas Ellwood, the Quaker, frequently called on him; he was occupied in the great work which was to place him supreme as "prince of poets," and he brought home his third wife, who seems to have been just the sort of pleasant, good-tempered person to be a suitable companion for a genius. After two years in this house he moved to his last London residence in Artillery Walk, near Bunhill Fields. The house had a small garden both back and front, and here he finished *Paradise Lost*. In July 1665 he left London to escape the Plague, and went to Chalfont St. Giles, in Buckinghamshire, where stands the only one of his numerous houses that still remains

Scenery of London

to form an object of pilgrimage. Yet he retained the house in Bunhill Fields, and here he returned when London was reduced to a heap of ashes. The Fire had stopped before Bunhill Fields, but the air must have been thick with lamentation and crying, and the one topic of conversation must have been of the great disaster, the result of which Milton could not see. We have several word-pictures of him as he was at Bunhill Fields, one "sitting in a coarse grey cloth coat at the door of his house, in warm, sunny weather, to enjoy the fresh air," again indoors, "in an elbow chair, black clothes, and neat enough, pale but not cadaverous, his hands and fingers gouty and with chalk stones." In his sixty-eighth year he died quietly, and was buried in the chancel of St. Giles, near which his home had been. His tombstone may be seen there, and a bust of him, executed by the elder Bacon.

After the account of the lives of these three how ludicrous sounds Heine's exclamation: "Send a philosopher to London, but for your life no poet!"

DR. JOHNSON

The nearer we get to the present time, the less interesting is the reconstruction of London. Yet the London of Dr. Johnson was in many respects as different from our own as that of the Stuarts or Tudors. We have only to look at the old prints, of which there are many, depicting the Strand or Charing Cross to realise that London was then below the level



LITTLE BRITAIN, ALDERSGATE



Great Men

of some sleepy old provincial town of our own day, though Boswell did speak enthusiastically of its animated scenes. The streets were paved with rounded cobbles, and the noise of the iron-tired wheels of the high coaches and heavy carts rattling over it must have been deafening. There were posts along the side of the footways, and the footways themselves so narrow that ladies with the huge hoops of the period could not possibly pass any one they met, and even when they had the whole pavement to themselves had to use a graceful sideway movement to prevent their hoops wiping all the mud and filth from every post. Along the houses, nearly all of which had balconies overhanging the street, were an assortment of signs of every hue and design, swinging and creaking in the wind. There were hackney coaches to be had, but the river was still the universal highway, and on it plied numbers of covered boats called tilt boats, that ran from stairs to stairs and conveyed people as omnibuses do now. Fashion had deserted the Strand, as it had before deserted Thames Street, and had moved westward; all the part about Mayfair was filled with the new houses of the wealthy, though Hyde Park Corner was the end of London in this direction. Belgravia was still "The Five Fields," with the Westbourne stream flowing through them. But far more strange than any details of buildings is the fact that the men of that century, so comparatively near to our own time, went to see the Tyburn executions as a show, and viewed with indifference the spiked heads on Temple Bar. To this London, Johnson

Scenery of London

came as a man of twenty-eight, and took lodgings in Exeter Street, Strand. He was at this time married, but had left his wife behind him. He was unprepossessing, big, loose-jointed, clumsy, marked with scrofula, blind of one eye, and with a terrible affliction which made him involuntarily twitch his limbs and roll his head; but he was common-sense incarnate, with the common-sense that is akin to genius, and his broad brain recognised no limits to the possibilities of acquirement. He had very little money, and dined for eightpence, "a cut of meat for sixpence, and bread for a penny, and gave the waiter a penny," and thus made his first acquaintance with the London taverns which were to play so large a part in his life.

The east end of Exeter Street has vanished before the onward march of great Kingsway and Aldwych, and Johnson would be sadly puzzled if he found himself in the neighbourhood now. He was only a few months in Exeter Street when he returned to Lichfield, and on coming back to London subsequently he brought his wife with him. Their lodgings were for a time in Woodstock Street, near Hanover Square, and afterwards in Castle Street, near Cavendish Square. There was of course then no Regent Street. Bond Street was in existence, and Great Swallow Street ran right through between Piccadilly and Oxford Street. When they lived near Hanover Square they were almost in the country, the houses to the north of the Oxford Road being confined to a few streets about Cavendish Square, and reaching northward to Marylebone Gardens, a place

Great Men

of entertainment, while northward and on either side there was nothing but fields. Johnson now worked for Cave on the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and spent his time at its offices in Clerkenwell Gate. Clerkenwell Green had been, but a short time before his acquaintance with it, a fashionable place, surrounded by large houses with gardens, one of them belonging to the Duke of Newcastle, but it had fallen from its greatness, and many of the houses were let in tenements.

To follow his various movements in detail would be unprofitable, so a list of his lodgings and residences is appended, as Boswell preserved it to the world; and we go on to that life in Fleet Street with which he is peculiarly associated:—

Exeter Street, Strand, 1737; Greenwich, 1737; Woodstock Street, Hanover Square, 1737; 6 Castle Street, Cavendish Square, 1738; Boswell Court; Strand; Strand again; Bow Street; Holborn; Fetter Lane; Golden Anchor, Holborn Bars, 1748; Gough Square, 1748; Staple Inn, 1758; Gray's Inn, 1 Inner Temple Lane, 1760; 7 Johnson Court, Fleet Street, 1765; 8 Bolt Court, Fleet Street, 1776.

It will thus be seen that he altogether outnumbered Milton in his London residences.

Johnson was the spirit of eighteenth-century London incarnate. No man so "clubable" as he, no one who understood so perfectly the art of interesting and amusing the men who gathered round the tavern tables. Clubs were at first intimately associated with taverns, and their object was purely social. A man of

Scenery of London

that date would look with surprise on the clubs of the present day, where solitude is considered to be one of the inalienable privileges of members, and for one man to address another without good cause little less than an affront. In Johnson's day to sit down at the same table with a man in a tavern was an introduction ; clubs were established for the purpose of intercourse, not aloofness, and in the extraordinary outburst of literary and conversational ability at his date there must have been many things that passed in clubs which would have been well worth preserving in permanent form.

Johnson's first residence near Fleet Street was in Gough Square, where he began his great dictionary ; later he was in Johnson's Court, and then in Bolt Court, where he gathered together the forlorn folk who had somehow crept within the protection of his great heart. His Government pension of £300 a year was well employed in housing so large a family of such incongruous items. Established near his beloved Fleet Street, Johnson had found his corner ; though he travelled to Paris, Wales, and Scotland, and on many a lesser excursion, he knew that London was native to his spirit, even as Lichfield was his native place in the body. In spite of his strenuous work and enormous output he was constitutionally lazy, and when not forced by necessity, loved to pass his time in idling. This is the account given of his day by one who knew him :—

About twelve o'clock I commonly visited him, and frequently found him in bed or declaiming over his tea, which he drank very plentifully. He generally had a levée of morning



THE SHOT TOWER, ETC.



Great Men

visitors, chiefly men of letters; Hawkesworth, Goldsmith, Murphy, Langton, Steevens, Beauclerk, etc., and sometimes learned ladies, particularly I remember a French lady of wit and fashion doing him the honour of a visit. . . . I never could discover how he found time for his compositions. He declaimed all the morning, then went to dinner at a tavern, where he commonly stayed late, and then drank his tea at some friend's house, over which he loitered a great while, but seldom took supper.

His favourite tavern was the Mitre in Fleet Street, which stood on the site of part of Hoare's Bank. Here he met Boswell and Goldsmith and other intimates, who affectionately spoke of him as the "big man." The Turk's Head Coffee-house in the Strand was another favourite resort, and after the formation of the Literary Club in the Turk's Head, Gerrard Street, Soho, he went there. This club was an epitome of the society then to be found in London; the list of its original members includes besides himself and Goldsmith, Sir Joshua Reynolds, who helped him to found it, Edmund Burke, Nugent, Topham Beauclerk, Sir John Hawkins, Chamier, and Langton, and the names of the members within a few years included those of Gibbon, Adam Smith, Garrick, Sheridan, Lord Palmerston, Charles James Fox, the Duke of Leeds, and the Bishops of Dromore, Killaloe, Clonfert, Peterborough, and Salisbury.

Johnson's excessive tea-drinking—he is said at one time to have consumed twenty-five cups at a sitting—and his sociability were prominent characteristics as well as his kindness of heart. He delighted in going to

Scenery of London

places of amusement in good company, but he was equally zealous in his attendance at church. His pew in St. Clement Danes is marked by a brass plate.

Boswell tells us that he and Johnson once took boat at the Temple stairs and were rowed to Old Swan stairs, and then walked to Billingsgate, thence again by boat to Greenwich, where he read aloud from the Doctor's *London* the words :—

On Thames's banks in silent thought we stood,
Where Greenwich smiles upon the silver flood ;
Pleased with the seat which gave Eliza birth,
We kneel and kiss the consecrated earth.

What with such an ardent admirer as Boswell always at hand to soothe his self-love, with the society of such intellects as those mentioned, with kind friends like the 'Thrales, and the sense of his own great and worthily recognised ability, we can imagine that in spite of all his engrained melancholy Johnson managed to enjoy his life. His utterances in regard to London were always those of warm eulogium :—

Sir, if you wish to have a just notion of the magnitude of this city, you must not be satisfied with seeing its great streets and squares, but must survey the innumerable little lanes and courts. It is not in the showy evolutions of buildings, but in the multiplicity of human habitations which are crowded together that the wonderful immensity of London consists.

He confessed that London was "too big"; what would he have said to the huge city now?

Again, he observed that a man stored his mind better



ST. CLEMENT'S AND THE LAW COURTS



Great Men

in London than anywhere else ; no place cured a man's vanity or arrogance so well as London, for as no man was either great or good *per se*, but as compared with others not so good and great, he was sure to find in the metropolis many his equals and some his superiors.

“You find no man at all intellectual who is willing to leave London. No, sir, when a man is tired of London he is tired of life; for there is in London all that life can afford.” “There, and there alone, a man's house is truly his castle.”

Johnson died at the age of seventy-five, and, like two of his great predecessors mentioned already, was buried in Westminster Abbey.

DICKENS

The London of Dickens is generally understood to mean the London which he has peopled with his characters, the old curiosity shop near Lincoln's Inn Fields ; Newgate and Holborn, where the scenes of the riots took place; the Marshalsea prison for debtors; and so on, but here we have no space to dilate upon these places that he has made his own. The London of Dickens is to us the London that he knew and lived in. His actual residences are not so interesting as those of the men of letters that have gone before, because the aspect of the houses is familiar to us, the streets are as we see them now with but little alteration, though the districts are changed.

Dickens came to London first at two years old, but was only here for two years, and did not return again

Scenery of London

until he was a boy of nine. The family then went to Bayham Street, Camden Town, where the boy was a little family drudge, cleaning boots and running errands, yet his wide topographical acquaintance with London began then, for he often visited two uncles, one at Limehouse, and one in Gerrard Street, Soho, and his wanderings backwards and forwards to these two made a deep impression on his mind. When the family moved to 4 Gower Street North, a new era began. His father was carried to the Marshalsea, and the poor sickly little lad was employed to make bargains with pawnbrokers and to sell books to second-hand dealers. He sank still lower in being put to work in the terrible blacking warehouse so vividly described in *David Copperfield*. This was at Old Hungerford Stairs, near Hungerford Market, where Charing Cross railway station now is, and the boy in his wanderings during the dinner hour grew familiar with every court and lane in the neighbourhood. The market was then in a dilapidated condition, and was rebuilt seven or eight years subsequently, and ten years before Dickens's death he saw it superseded by the railway station. At the time when the delicate, exquisitely sensitive little boy worked at this toilsome occupation, Northumberland House still stood in its glory; Trafalgar Square had not been begun, but a network of dirty slums stretched over the ground near the church, and the Royal Mews were still to be seen where the fountains now play.

A little later, at his own earnest request, he was taken from Camden Town, where he had been sent to



TRAFALGAR SQUARE



Great Men

lodge on the removal of the family from Gower Street, and was allowed to lodge beside the Marshalsea Prison, with which he became thoroughly acquainted. The Marshalsea has now completely vanished, but its site may be known by Angel Court, the first narrow passage north of St. George's Church in the Borough High Street.

When the family were released from the debtors' prison they went to Hampstead, then to Seymour Street, then to Bentinck Street, Manchester Square, while Charles attended an "Academy" in the Hampstead Road as a day boy for nearly two years, and afterwards worked for a while as a clerk in Gray's Inn. Later he was engaged as a reporter at the House of Commons, the old House of Commons, of course, where the Prince's Chamber, the Painted Chamber, the Star Chamber, and St. Stephen's Chapel still formed part of the group of buildings representing the old Palace of Westminster. Three years after Dickens's first connection with the House all these were swept away in the Great Fire of 1834. Dickens had chambers in Furnival's Inn for a time, on the north side of Holborn. It was not an old fabric, having been rebuilt in 1818, and now it has completely gone, its site being covered by the large red buildings of the Prudential Assurance Company. In 1837 he went to Doughty Street (No. 48), close to the Foundling Hospital. He was now a married man with a son; here he remained for two years, and then went to Devonshire Terrace, near the Marylebone Road. Dickens found inspiration in the turmoil of the

Scenery of London

London streets, which has driven many another writer to despair. When he was abroad he literally craved for the streets. "Put me down on Waterloo Bridge at eight o'clock in the evening," he wrote, "with leave to roam about as long as I like, and I would come home, as you know, panting to go on"; and again at Lausanne he says he finds production at a rapid pace a great difficulty. "I suppose this is partly the effect of two years' ease, and partly of the absence of streets and numbers of figures. I can't express how much I want these. It seems as if they supplied something to my brain which it cannot bear when busy to lose." In 1850 he moved into Tavistock House, Tavistock Square, which he sold after ten years, when he made Gadshill, Rochester, his permanent residence.

In his life Dickens saw many changes in London; for example, every one of the great London railway stations was built; South Kensington practically came into existence with the great Exhibitions; Trafalgar Square, as we have said, was made; Barry's wonderful Houses of Parliament rose on the ashes of the old ones; New Oxford Street, Charing Cross Road, and Shaftesbury Avenue demolished many terrible slums, including the district of Seven Dials, which, though still partly standing, is rendered comparatively harmless by the neighbourhood of broad and respectable thoroughfares. The Fleet Prison and the Marshalsea were abolished. Just before his death the new Law Courts were begun, and many another improvement was made. Abuses were shown up by his vigorous pen, and he himself may be

Great Men

considered the incarnation of the spirit of a time when men began to regard humanity and cleanliness as first principles.

We have been made acquainted with the few selected as representative men of their age, but there remains yet the vast army of those who by birth or adoption have been the children of London, and whose names are associated with dwellings in her streets. What a magnificent host it is : men of letters, statesmen, artists, actors, poets, architects, and others ! Even to give representative names is a huge task, and the list below is in no sense intended to be exhaustive or to indicate that there are not variations in ability high as the mountains or deep as the seas. Yet listen to the roll-call of this splendid regiment as it marches past :— Camden, Bacon, Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Inigo Jones, Isaac Walton, Cromwell ; these by birth belong to the sixteenth century, Cromwell indeed being born only within its last year. Sir Thomas Browne, Evelyn, Dryden, Pepys, Sir Isaac Newton, Strype, Sir Godfrey Kneller, the Duke of Marlborough, Defoe, Swift, Addison, Steele, Gay, Pope, Richardson, Hogarth : these are the contribution of the seventeenth century.

Fielding, Pitt, Hume, Gray, Horace Walpole, Garrick, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Gainsborough, Goldsmith, Burke, Romney, Savage, Fox, Sheridan, Mrs. Siddons, Samuel Rogers, the Duke of Wellington, S. T. Coleridge, Lamb, Turner, Hazlitt, Palmerston, De Quincey, Kean, Byron, Cruikshank, Shelley, Keats, Hood, and Carlyle were born in the eighteenth century, though of course, as in

Scenery of London

previous lists, those near the end of the century belong by right of their lives to the succeeding one. Macaulay, Lord Lytton, Beaconsfield, Darwin, Thackeray, Browning, Leech, George Eliot, and Ruskin, not to mention names of living persons, are in the roll-call of the nineteenth.

These lists, as said at the beginning, are not intended to be exhaustive, but show something of the diversity of talent, the splendid record of this the greatest of cities.

COMMONPLACE SCENES

CHAPTER XI

COMMONPLACE SCENES

THE street life of London can only be illustrated by the slightest of vignettes ; it would be easy, perhaps, to invent scenes full of excitement, but they would not show the streets as they are day by day, and these are what one wants.

Take Bow Street about mid-day. What a curious medley it is ! Along the pavement comes marching a solid file of sturdy, clean policemen, wholesome and healthy, and good to look upon, going to report themselves at the Bow Street Station. Round the corner, with that peculiar fussiness assumed by the working-class woman when she is on an errand of importance, come two women dressed in their very best clothes. The elder is stout, and has a hat laden with crape, but in style suitable for a much younger woman ; her dress also is black, with crape sewn on vertically in lines ; the younger is not quite so stout, and though evidently in mourning too, has not been able to resist wearing a bit of rabbit fur round her neck ; by her side is a small boy, obviously uncomfortable in his stiff Sunday grey suit,

Scenery of London

and half awed by the solemnity of the occasion, half self-assertive. He makes a run for the entrance to the police court, but is dragged back and steered round to another entrance at the back. Evidently it is not the first time the stout woman in crape has been there, for she knows her way about. On either side of the street shops full of theatrical properties, such as wigs of various colours, glittering false jewellery and other requisites, alternate oddly with the open shops or stalls, where fruit is sold wholesale, and where consequently the vendor puts on an air of leisurely unconcern altogether different from the active energy of the retail man. A group of theatrical young ladies outside the stage door blocks the pavement; they are altogether rather high-pitched in colouring, tone, and style, and they chatter freely with several men of the same calibre. A highly respectable newspaper office belonging to one of the great dailies ends the street, and beside it a newsvendor sells his wares, making a free display of them on the pavement.

At the same hour the eating-shops in the Strand and elsewhere are crowded, "A.B.C.s" and "Lyons" being highly in favour. They are largely patronised by the clerks from the offices near, for here wholesome food may be purchased at a marvellously cheap rate. Every one chooses to suit his pocket, from the office-boy who has a steaming large cup of coffee and a "milk scone," though it is not in the least what a Scot would understand by a scone, to the young man who spends a lordly shilling on pie and potatoes, with prunes and

Commonplace Scenes

cream to follow. Day by day the place is ever full, always the same class of people, the same smell, the same food. It may be noted as a curious *trait* that the Londoner likes his food well seasoned, and of course as he likes it he gets it. Popular taste approves steak and kidney pie radiating essence of dried herbs, apple pies thick with cloves, and milk puddings with nutmeg ; even the veal and ham pie is not without its flavouring, and in addition to these condiments mustard is largely used.

The young ladies who serve are trim and neat and self-possessed, though not without a demure smile for a favoured customer. The average of marriages in this class is very high, so that though the pay is not, there are always any number of applicants for a vacancy. It is strange how the use or rather misuse of the word "lady" has grown with strides of late years ; every shop-girl is now a young lady, and the American joke about the "washer-lady" will soon cease to have any significance. There is some peculiar saving clause about the qualifying adjective "young," be it noted ; whatever the age of a shop-assistant, she is a "young lady," and, further than this, shopmen are beginning to be spoken of by one another as "young gentlemen," a term formerly used exclusively by servants and hall porters to denote public-school boys. Whether the qualifying adjective will remain as a saving grace or be altogether discarded, so that all classes save real gentlewomen and gentlemen will become "ladies" and "gentlemen," remains to be seen.

Scenery of London

In the matter of shops I have often wondered how they can all exist. The prosperity of the large ones, of course, and the well-known ones can be understood. There is much money in London; witness the extraordinary celerity with which any fund mounts that has touched the public sympathy. An anonymous donor gives, it may be £100, on condition that twenty others do the same, and very shortly the sum is made up; others give enormous sums to charity, £20,000 and £50,000 as easily as an ordinary man gives half-a-crown. Yes, there is much money in London, and those who have it like to have the best of everything, and care not what they pay, so that the large shops and the fashionable shops are well supported. The most fashionable are oftentimes the least ostentatious; none of the Bond Street shops has a large window space, and in some of the streets leading off Bond Street it seems to be considered aristocratic to make as little display as possible. Madame, who orders a "little thing" at fifty guineas, does not need to see similar garments displayed in the window in order to ensure her custom; in fact, she prefers her own to be unique. It is not the smart shops, nor yet the large modern store-shops where everything can be obtained under one roof, that have difficulty in keeping themselves financially afloat, but rather the small shops with a fairly large window space, shops that pay comparatively high rents, have a large staff of assistants, and yet sell cheap goods. In these everything is cheap, from the tea-gown at 19s. 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. to the "pearl" pins at 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. the dozen, and everything, lace,



SOUTH END OF WATERLOO BRIDGE



Commonplace Scenes

fur, and jewellery, is all sham. These shops are getting more and more behindhand, as the people from the outlying streets and the suburbs come up to London to the well-known ones, and their takings must sometimes be very meagre. It is pitiful to see the row of expectant girls and the obsequious shopwalker with his "What is your pleasure, madam?" and to hear the order, it may be a reel of black cotton and a hair net! Such shops are soon "competed" out of existence, and the business tends more and more to the store-shops.

Let us take another scene where the characteristics of Londoners come out strongly. It is a damp, foggy November afternoon, not a real fog, but enough to distil depression and paralysis of energy as the thin solution of dirt and moisture is distilled in a meagre rain. From a seat near the door of an omnibus a long vista of flickering street lamps can be seen shining on the wet roadway. Inside Waterloo Station things are not much better. There is a certain amount of bustle, but also a good deal of dejection. We come suddenly upon a group of persons, numbering quite a hundred and fifty, standing on the grey cold stone pavement of the station, all staring in one direction, and seemingly afraid to move their eyes for an instant. Such an eagerness has one seen in a crowd facing a cinematograph, or even, in unsophisticated districts, a magic lantern, but here what all are staring at is a large indicator with the names of the places from which expected trains are coming, and blank spaces for the numbers of the platform at which such trains will arrive. It is now 4.20,

Scenery of London

and you may note that the 2.30 has not yet arrived. These people have been waiting here nearly two hours, it is impossible to doubt it, waiting patiently and without exasperation ; the fog has delayed the train, the railway officials can give no idea when "she" will be in, and they have friends to meet, possibly friends from the country who would be lost if they arrived alone in the whirlpool of London, and therefore wait they must. They cannot move, fascination holds them there ; when the magic number appears they have only time to race across bridge or roadway and be in at the arrival of the train. While we watch a number is put up, not that of the 2.30 for which the whole crowd seems to be waiting, but of a less important one ; some straggling members of the group detach themselves and hurry away ; the rest close up their ranks, and their eyes are still fastened on the indicator. There is not a single seat within sight of the indicator, which stands in the draughtiest, least interesting part of the station. Were there seats to sit on, or a large bookstall to amuse the weary, matters would be improved ; but no, there are none of these things, and yet the stolid Londoner complains not ; he is used to "putting up" with things, and has long learnt that he cannot make the world go round to suit his own convenience. While we watch the crowd a tired woman with a heavy sleeping child in her arms, who has been shifting from one foot to another, makes her way to a seat at some distance, but, finding she cannot possibly see the indicator, returns almost immediately. A train comes in at this platform, and a detachment of privates

Commonplace Scenes

alight ; they are eagerly awaited by their sweethearts, and for a few minutes there is babel of chatter, then the men form up and march out, leaving the wistful girls, who have spent two hours in expectation of a glimpse of them, to go home through the wet streets. A Sister of Mercy passes with white flapping cap ; she paces up and down, up and down austerely, with her eyes on the ground. Two small lads, having a penny to put in a slot machine, spend a happy ten minutes debating whether chocolate, dates, or figs will yield the most for the money. At last, at last, up goes the number, the crowd disperses hastily, there is a rush for the stairs, over the bridge, and patience is rewarded.

Such a scene suggests many things to a student of human nature, but chiefly those qualities for which the Londoner is famous, his tolerance and good-humour. It is the first lesson he learns. Coming perhaps from a home where he has been of some importance, and where his wishes are at least considered, he is plunged into a mass of men like himself, and becomes one among hundreds. His wishes, his convenience affect no one ; he may get angry, he may, if he be of the educated class, write letters to the papers complaining of his woes, but if he be of malleable mould he soon gets this knocked out of him, and he learns to put up with things. The marvellous patience of the streets we have seen exhibited by the omnibus men, but the average Londoner has his share of the quality too.

Take another street scene. It is a week-day evening ; the pavement is sticky and the street greasy ; the garish

Scenery of London

light of a public-house at the corner struggles with and overcomes that of a wan moon. Groups of workmen in soiled clothes are standing at the street corner, and more of them are in the public-house. A knot of Salvationists are holding a meeting in an entry, with a lamp propped up on a tripod to give them light, and their harsh voices ring out above the thunder of the passing omnibuses. On the Nonconformist Chapel hard by is a huge placard, a couple of yards deep, announcing that next Sunday the Rev. Mr. Hardapple will discourse on "Hell and what We may expect There." A woman comes along dressed in black, with a certain worn neatness in her apparel; she looks timidly in at the glass door of the public-house, then swings it open with a defiant push that would be bold were it not so nervous. A tiny red-haired, left-handed boy is playing a joyful game all to himself, kicking his much too large slippers off against the wall of the house, and trying to catch them as they rebound. Two larger lads, with heads close together, are eating fried fish out of a piece of newspaper; presently they throw the empty paper into the kerb and go away; the small left-handed boy pounces upon it with glee, and licks it with great enjoyment. Presently a weary-looking youth wheels up a coster barrow on which is a small baby; he lifts the child off, and sets it down on the wet pavement, tips up the barrow in a dark passage, and picking up the child as if it were a parcel, strides into the passage, obviously a widower, or worse. Another young man of the same type, with a worn face and a half-silly expres-

Commonplace Scenes

sion, as if he were "not quite all there," comes round the corner with a bundle in his hand. He goes into the public-house, and, unrolling his parcel, discloses a much soiled and worn pair of boots; finding no satisfaction within, he returns to the street and offers the boots to the working men, who examine them critically; one even measures them against his own foot, others tap the soles, but no one buys, and the young man goes wearily on his way. A blind man taps the kerb impatiently to attract attention, but none of the working men stir; presently the small boy runs across and leads him over the dangerous crossing. Two smart, dapper artillerymen stop for a moment in passing, and cheekily mimic two girls of the loosely bloused, dishevelled type, who pass on grinning at the witticisms. An old grizzled cabman pulls up at the kerb before the public-house and gives his mare her nose-bag, speaking to her meantime more affectionately than maybe he has ever spoken to his wife. Then he counts his gains, a good big fistful of silver, and goes in to "have a glass."

A knuckle-kneed horse wearily tugging at a laundry cart stops with a jerk, and the man driving it descends; he has his wife and baby with him, seated among the great bags of linen, and he fetches her out a glass of porter, "with a head on it," before they go on again. The barman saunters about outside for a moment, the picture of good-natured vulgarity, the very man for the place, big, and not too squeamish, ready for anything, from a passing joke to the "chucking out" of an obstreperous customer.

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By this time the Salvationists have departed, and a barrel-organ comes upon the scene and begins an excruciating tune. Two girls spring up from somewhere, and begin twirling each other round and round on the wooden pavement. Then the tune changes to a schottische, and half a dozen young fellows and other girls join in, but all dance strictly with their own sex, men with men, and girls with girls, a kind of deliberate, rather slow toe-and-heel movement ; as the music grows faster the crowd gathers, and people come out of the public-house to watch the performance. The bus-drivers drive benevolently on the far side of the street not to interrupt the fun, but the carts and cabs are not so considerate, and the dance is frequently broken into. Suddenly the weary grinder stops, and out come handkerchiefs, and there is much mopping of faces ; the street ball is over. Thus run out the lives of the poor in mean streets after working hours are over.

Take another view. It is a glorious August afternoon at the Oval. Abel is in, having nearly one hundred runs to his credit, and the score stands at over two hundred for two wickets. To any but an enthusiast the game might seem a little bit monotonous, but not so to the Surrey crowd ; they are real cricket-lovers ; it is the game, the strokes, they care to see ; they know to a nicety how many the popular little hero wants to complete his thousand in first-class cricket, and when he gets it a cheer will break out simultaneously with as great a *verve* as ever it would for the winning stroke in a match. In the sixpenny seats there is no sitting

Commonplace Scenes

room ; every available inch of hard backless bench is packed, and at the back many men stand for hours on the grilling asphalt. Pocket-handkerchiefs are slung from bowlers and caps to shield the necks from the sun, but the faces are hot and red and perspiring all the same. It is a good-humoured crowd too ; there is no grumbling, no selfishness displayed ; the men edge up just that extra half-inch that makes all the difference between fair comfort and real discomfort, with all the pleasure in life, if thereby some one else can sit on an unoccupied fraction of seat at the end. The chaff goes on all the time, and also remarks on the game, showing that every one is intent on the cricket, and nothing else. A limping little man who comes round with refreshments in the shape of packets of lemon drops tied up in white paper, and carried in a shiny black leather bag, does a roaring trade ; every one seems to have an odd copper to spend. Every one also has already paid sixpence for entry to the ground, and yet it is a working day, no half-holiday, and these men one and all are of the working class. Here is a Guardsman admitted free by right of his uniform ; his being here is understandable enough, but next to him is a clerk ; what does he do here in the middle of the afternoon ? He is too well dressed to be out of work. Next to him is a man who is a plumber, if ever plumber was written on a man's outward appearance ; a row of nondescript youths, evidently in some trade, follow ; they may be men who have night work, composers or the like, but the whole of the thousands that surround the

Scenery of London

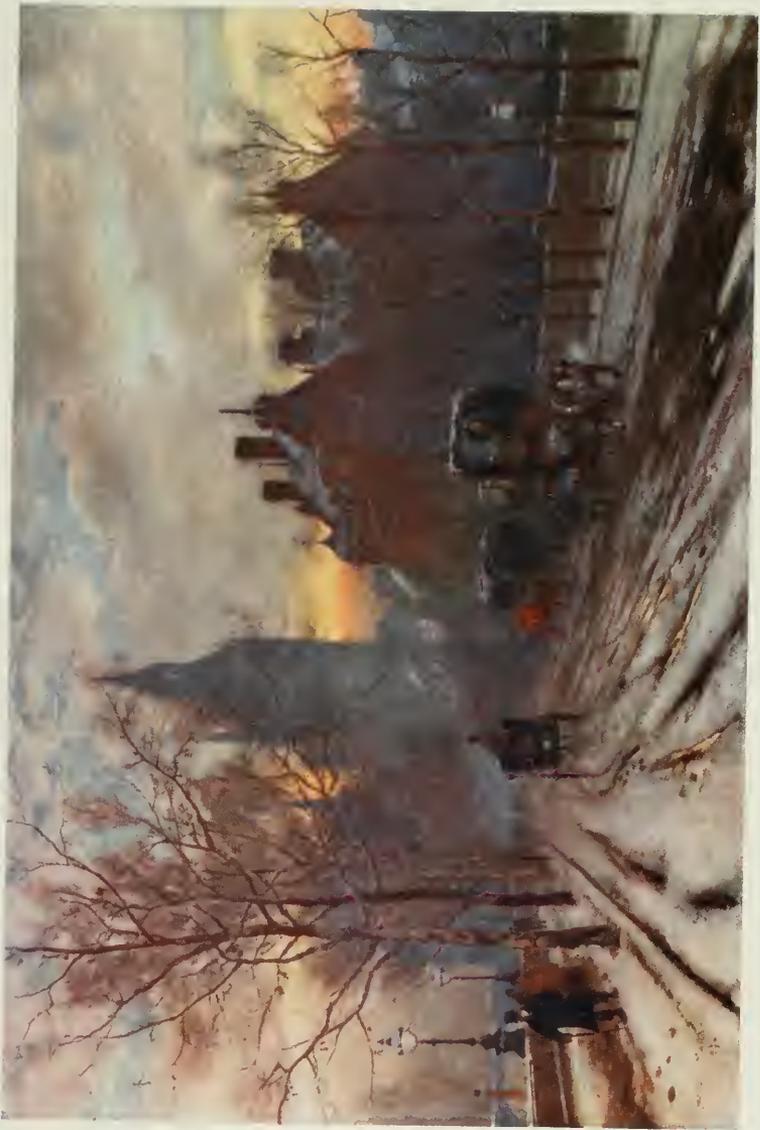
ground cannot have night work, and the fact of their having sixpence to spend on pleasure speaks eloquently of the fact they are not out of work. Go any day, every day, all through the summer, and you would swear it was the same identical crowd, though it may be made up of different units. The problem is insoluble. A vast sea of men and lads, well fed and comfortably dressed, with money in their pockets, and the great majority wearing that strip of stiff white linen which in London is the outward and visible sign of respectability. Allow for the soldiers, the shopkeepers, the compositors, the railwaymen, and you have yet hardly touched the fringe of thousands who assemble day by day just to watch cricket.

The fogs of London are too characteristic of the great city to be omitted without comment. There are many varieties of fog, by no means to be confounded with one another by the real Londoner ; there is, for instance, the white fog, the yellow fog, the black fog, and the fog that hangs overhead but does not descend. The last named is very curious ; suddenly, without warning, the darkness of night falls upon a part of London, maybe only a small part, for this kind of fog is apt to be local ; electric lights spring out on all sides, and working London continues its task without intermission. The streets are clear, there is no difficulty in transit, but overhead like a black pall hangs the fog until the wind wafts it away.

The white fog is very often the most opaque, though the air is quite light, and there is no need of



THE WESTMINSTER EMBANKMENT—
WINTER EVENING



Commonplace Scenes

artificial lights. This fog hangs in thick folds, as if layers of linen were before one's face. One involuntarily tries to brush it away ; it is provoking not to be able to see in a good light ; it seems to muffle sound too, more than the others, and crossings are dangerous.

The yellow fog happily is not common ; it is choking, stifling, and creeps into rooms and houses in spite of all efforts to keep it out. The atmosphere can only be compared to the Underground at its worst, that is to say, at Blackfriars or Gower Street. The ordinary black fog is the most common ; this may or may not be opaque, according to its density ; at its worst it is very dangerous indeed. One is isolated, an atom certain only of the foot-space on which one stands ; cabs crawl by the kerb, omnibus conductors lead the horses, holding the lamp in their hands and going slowly foot by foot. The lamps are seen as round or oval discs emitting no rays, and at a few yards' distance they vanish altogether ; the roadway is greasy with precipitated moisture, and the footpaths disgusting. Here and there, where the Underground Railway runs in a cutting, is heard the hoarse bark of the fog signals. There is a feeling of weirdness, of menace, over all, as if something terrible were about to happen.

Yet, considering the situation of London, it is hardly to be wondered at that all devices for minimising the fogs have failed entirely. London is built on marshes. So much have artificial buildings and roads of man's making swept away natural outlines that it is seldom realised that we are on the marshy banks of a river.

Scenery of London

The land slopes very gradually up from the bed of the Thames to the heights on the north, and the slopes were aforesaid traversed by numberless rills, and by at least four streams of some magnitude, namely the Westbourne, Tybourne, Fleet, and Wallbrook. Picture this locality many years ago when man had not planted his city, that was to be, on the river-side. The Thames then flowed over a far wider channel than at present ; it made its way to the sea in a vast shallow stream, here and there breaking into lagoons and swamps, or completely cutting off the part of the land by surrounding it, as at the island of Thorney, where is now Westminster. Here is Sir Walter Besant's account : " There was as yet (after the Roman period) no Westminster, but in its place a broad and marshy heath spread over the whole area now covered by the City of Westminster, Millbank, St. James's Park, Chelsea, and as far west as Fulham. Beyond the wall on the north lay dreary uncultivated plains, covered with fens and swamps, stretching to the lower slopes of the northern hills. All through this period, therefore, and for long after, the City of London had a broad marsh lying on the south, another on the west, a third on the east, while on the north there stretched a barren swampy moorland."

Picture it, this broad bed of the river extending over many acres, and lined by low marshy ground liable to inundations. From this valley there rose continually a winding-sheet of thick white mist, extending far to north and south, and it is this mist which,

The first of the snow was a soft, gentle fall, and it was not long before the ground was covered with a thin layer of white. The children were delighted, and they ran about in the snow, building snowmen and making snowballs. The snow was so soft and so white, that it was like a blanket of heaven. The children were so happy, that they did not notice the cold. The snow was so soft and so white, that it was like a blanket of heaven. The children were so happy, that they did not notice the cold.

A SNOWY MORNING, WHITEHALL

The snow was so soft and so white, that it was like a blanket of heaven. The children were so happy, that they did not notice the cold. The snow was so soft and so white, that it was like a blanket of heaven. The children were so happy, that they did not notice the cold. The snow was so soft and so white, that it was like a blanket of heaven. The children were so happy, that they did not notice the cold.



Commonplace Scenes

now mingling with the smoke of man's making, becomes fog.

The fog is oftentimes very local. It may be quite clear in the City and dense in Kensington, or dense in Soho and clear at Chelsea ; but some spots are peculiarly liable to be enshrouded, and of these one is that part of Piccadilly from Devonshire House to the Circus. If the fog is at all general it is always to be found here at its worst.

Turning for a while from the fog, which is a peculiar London characteristic, and world-wide in its notoriety, we may consider London under another aspect, that of snow. We do not often have heavy snowfalls in London. When we do, armies of men with spade and shovel set to work to clear it off the pavements ; it is carried away in carts and cast into the river, but not before the passing traffic has churned what lay on the roadways into a peculiar rich-brown paste, which spurts up from the flying wheels. Snow exercises a deadening effect on the atmosphere ; it seems to muffle the sound rays as the fog does the light rays. The vehicles are ghostly silent, making no noise, the air is still, even the shrill whistle of the street boy seems a tone lower than usual, and the city shows itself under a new aspect.

Let us finish with a few notable points in the demeanour of the "man in the street." His manners are as a rule good ; it is much easier to pass down a busy London street than even a quiet provincial one ; every one is quick to perceive the intention of those he meets, and gives a little for his own part ; there is no

Scenery of London

bucolic slowness. Where there is mind there is always to some extent manner, for mind supposes imagination and the power of realising another's position ; hence in crowded tram or in the Twopenny Tube there is seldom need for a woman to stand long before a seat is courteously offered.

The policeman must be mentioned. In the eyes of a Frenchman he occupies a place second only to the Lord Mayor in any conception of London. For this his dignity is largely responsible, and dignity, whether natural or acquired, is a valuable asset in these days of easy familiarity.

With this we may end this general and discursive survey of the London we have tried to depict, the London of the streets and of the people ; the work-a-day London of mud and fog, but of glowing golden-red sunsets ; the London that holds an unrivalled heritage in its historical records and names of its noble sons ; the London that has won the hearts of the people as no great city has ever done before.



GROSVENOR ROAD, PIMLICO



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