Jos Parker
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UNNOTICED LONDON

CHEYNE ROW

UNNOTICED LONDON

BY

E. MONTIZAMBERT

WITH TWENTY-FOUR
ILLUSTRATIONS

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PREFACE

The following brief account of a few of the things that have interested me in London is not intended for the use of the inveterate sight-seer, for whom so many admirable and complete fingerposts to the study of old London have been written, by such experts as Mr. Bell, Mr. Wilfred Whitten, Mr. E. V. Lucas, Mr. Ordish and Mr. Hare. It is meant for the people who do not realise one-eighth of the stories packed into the streets of London, the city which, as Sir Walter Besant, that great London lover, once said, has an unbroken history of one thousand years and has never been sacked by an enemy. For, in talking about the extraordinary beauty of London, I became aware of a vast public who have eyes and see not, who thoroughly dislike the idea of sight-seeing yet acknowledge their pleasure in a chance discovery made *en route* to tea at the Ritz,—people who are appalled at the very idea of entering a museum. Then there are the travellers who say vaguely that when they can find time they really mean to see something of London, but they turn their backs on the greatest city of the world without having seen much more than

Bond Street, because they are obsessed by the idea that to see London requires some occult store of knowledge and energy, and their eyes are sealed to the interest and beauty that lie around their path. Finally there are people like the old lady who, when she heard I was writing a book about old London, asked with astonishment, "Is there anything old left in London?"

I hasten to add that I have not tried in the following pages to tell of every interesting place or even of all there is of interest in the places visited,—only enough, I hope, to make people go and see for themselves and have the pleasure of discovering the rest. I am not afraid that if they once go to the Chapter House they will miss any of its beauties: my dread is lest they fail to go there, from the vision of a plethora of things they think they have no time to see. For I want more than anything else to prick the curiosity of the travellers up and down the streets of the city who miss so much pleasure that they might have so easily, because they are not alive to all the interesting and unexpected things that wait for their coming just round the corner.

A little further afield there are so many other treasures waiting to be noticed,—Hogarth's pleasant house in Chiswick, that, like many another London visitor, I am promising myself to see the first time I have a free Monday, Wednesday or Saturday;—Eltham, with its

sunk garden surrounding the remains of the old palace of the English kings, where John of Eltham, Edward II.'s son, was born;—Southwark, with its cathedral and the remains of the Marshalsea Prison that not everyone knows how to find;—and Islington, with the Canonbury Tower and the house in Duncan Street, No. 64, where Lamb lived for four years. But these I must leave regretfully for another day.

In conclusion, I should like to express my thanks to the *Montreal Gazette* and to the *Daily Express* for permission to reprint one or two sketches which originally appeared in their pages, and to all those friends for whose kindly help and encouragement I am much indebted

To

SIR SQUIRE SPRIGGE

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"Sir, the happiness of London is not to be conceived but by those who have been in it."

DR. JOHNSON

UNNOTICED LONDON

CHAPTER I

CHELSEA

"I have passed manye landes and manye yles and contrees, and cherched many full straunge places, ... Now I am comen home to reste."

SIR JOHN MAUNDEVILLE.

IF a hurried traveller had only time to roam about one of the London boroughs I think he should choose Chelsea, because in that small area of houses built along a mile and a half of the Thames riverside there is much that is typical of quite different phases of London life, from the sixteenth century to the present day.

It lies between the Kings Road and the Embankment, beginning at Lower Sloane Street —Chelsea Bridge Road, and is reached by the district railway to Sloane Square Station or by the No. 11 bus passing the Strand, Trafalgar Square and Victoria: by Nos. 19 or 22 from Hyde Park Corner, and from Kensington by the 31, with its terminus at Limerston Street, and by the Nos. 49 and 49a.

Perhaps the reason why this quarter has always been beloved is because while other districts

have had their moment of fame and now live on their past in somnolent content, Chelsea has fallen in and out of fashion with a fine carelessness and has always guarded the creative gift of dwellers of all ranks, so that the name of the little village has been famous for such a diversity of things as literature and custards, art and water-works, china and buns, horticulture and learning.

There is something cosy and charming about the name Chelsea, a good old Anglo-Saxon word that once meant, "The Gravel Isle, Chesel-sey." It has not become quite so unrecognisable as its neighbour Battersea, but it has no more just cause for converting into "sea" the ey that means island with which it once ended. But you cannot lay down stern rules for a name that has taken the bit between its teeth like Chelsea. It started its career in the Domesday Book as Cealchylle, and by the time it got to the sixteenth century Sir Thomas More is dating a letter to Henry VIII. "At my pore howse in Chelcith."

Of the two Thomases whose memory pervades Chelsea, Sir Thomas More is perhaps the most lovable. His son-in-law once said of him: "whom in sixteen years and more, being in his house conversant with him, I could never perceive as much as once in a fume.

It is in Roper's *Life* that you read how his neighbours loved him with reason. Once, when he had been away on a mission to Cambrai in

1528, he went to report to the King at Woodstock, and then heard that part of his house and barns in Chelsea had been burnt. He had no thought of his own loss, but sent to comfort his wife and tell her to find out the extent of his neighbours' loss and indemnify them as far as possible.

There have been many other saintly men whom one reveres, but surely none with such wide sympathies. He entertained Erasmus with learned talk, but he also entertained John Heywood the playwright and Court jester. He was wise, but he was also witty, and of which modern philosopher could it be told "that when an interlude was performed, he would make one among the players, occasionally coming upon them with surprise, and without rehearsal fall into a character, and support the part by his extemporaneous invention and acquit himself with credit."

Dear Sir Thomas More of delectable memory —it is good to come across signs that you still live in English hearts, even if they take the form of stucco decorations on a Lyons tea house in Carey Street.

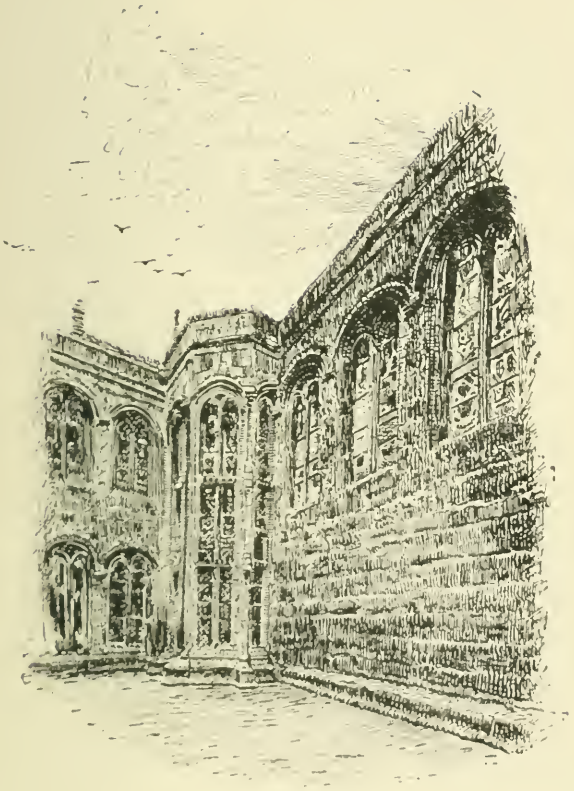
It was Sir Thomas More who first made Chelsea the fashion, though an old Manor house that stood near the church had many lordly owners before Henry VIII. bought it and, following More's example, built himself the big country mansion of which there are still traces in the basements of the houses on the corner of

Cheyne Walk and Oakley Street. The King is also said to have had a hunting lodge near by and part of it still exists at the end of Glebe Place in a small rather dilapidated building.

Sir Thomas More had built his house on the site of the present Beaufort Street and it stood there till Sir Hans Sloane, the Chelsea Baron Haussmann of that day, pulled it down in 1740. The lovely gardens went down to the river. Henry VIII. used to come and dine here, and walk with his arm round the neck of the friend he afterwards brought to the block, and here More received his other famous friends, among them Erasmus, and Holbein, who stayed with him for three years, painting many portraits.

It is pleasant to think that the spirit of More's hospitality lived again during the war and curiously enough at this very place and in one of his own houses. For though his country home was destroyed, his town house, Crosby Hall, built as the great town mansion of Sir John Crosby, a merchant prince, in 1466, was brought from Bishopsgate piece by piece in 1910, and four years later the marvellous timbered roof looked down on the groups of Belgian fugitives that were sheltered there.

If you ask the porter at More's Gardens, a big block of flats on the south-east corner of Battersea Bridge, for the key of Crosby Hall, he will unlock a door in an ugly hoarding facing the embankment, close to Chelsea Old Church.



CROSBY HALL

You step through it into a remote space where a mediæval building stands in the midst of the little rock gardens planted by the Belgian refugees to while away their anxious, tedious hours. Many men have passed through the old hall since Sir John Crosby built it, for at different times it had belonged to the Duke of Gloucester (Richard III.), Sir Thomas More, his son-in-law William Roper, and various ambassadors and nobles. In 1609 it was the home of that Countess of Pembroke whose charms evoked from William Browne the epitaph so often attributed to Ben Jonson:

> Underneath this sable herse
> Lies the subject of all verse;
> Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother;
> Death! ere thou hast slain another
> Fair and learned and good as she,
> Time shall throw a dart at thee.

One wonders what they would all have thought of these latest comers to the old mansion which carried on the English tradition of hospitality so well that the poet among the visitors wrote, and you may see his words on a brass tablet opposite the fireplace:

> Je sens dans l'air que je respire
> Un parfum de Liberté,
> Un peu de cette terre hospitalière,
> . . . . .
> Le sol de l'Angleterre.

The reconstitution of Crosby Hall was never finished; first because of the death of King Edward, who took a great interest in the

scheme, and then owing to the war; but there it stands, its perpendicular lines, mullioned windows and oriel and the wonderful oaken roof making it one of the best examples that remain to us of fifteenth-century domestic architecture.

Chelsea is full of memories of every period since Sir Thomas More's day.

Queen Elizabeth as a child stayed at her father's manor house here, and later, as a girl of thirteen, she went to live for a time at Sir Thomas More's house, when it had passed into the hands of her stepmother, Catherine Parr.

The charming Georgian houses of the Cheyne Walk of to-day carry on the tradition of the beautiful Chelsea homes of those times, such as Shrewsbury House which stood on the west side of Oakley Street before it was pulled down in 1813. Once owned by the husband of the famous Bess of Hardwicke it probably harboured Mary Queen of Scots in her captivity.

The delightful little houses in Paradise Row with their dormer windows and tiled roofs were pulled down only a few years ago. Pepys said that one of them was "the prettiest contrived house that ever I saw in my life." Ormonde Court now reigns in their stead, so there is no trace to-day of the little house in Paradise Row that the fair but frail Duchesse de Mazarin, niece of Anne of Austria's Cardinal Prime Minister, rented from Lord Cheyne when she had fallen on such evil days that her aristocratic

guests used to leave money under their plates to pay for their dinner. She was not the only favourite of Charles II. to have a summer home in Chelsea. Nell Gwynne lived at the Sandford Manor House and the route by which the Merry Monarch rode to visit her is still called the King's Road.

I hesitate to tell that Nell Gwynne's very house is still in existence for fear of taxing too much the ready courtesy of the occupants, two members of the staff of The Imperial Gas Works Co., owners of the property, who divide the house between them.

My kindly guide had disquieting doubts as to whether Nell ever really lived there, but he admitted that a thimble, unquestionably hers, and a masonic jewel belonging to the King, were found in the house when it was being repaired. Thimbles are not usually associated with the memory of "pretty witty Nellie," but the Chelsea air may have moved her to industry. At all events there is the Jacobean house, shorn now of its top story to lessen the weight on the bulging walls, and with its brick carving but faintly seen under successive coats of rough plaster. But not even the Queen Anne door can destroy the picture any lively imagination may summon of the nonchalant Nell tripping up and down the same staircase to be seen to-day, its design of six steps and a door repeated to the top of the house, belying the legend that Charles once rode his pony up the stairs. The

walnut trees Nell planted have disappeared, but what is left of the old house stands in a pleasant green hollow, an oasis in the acrid surroundings of a gas factory, the paling of which separates it from the outside world not a stone's throw from unsuspecting passengers on a No. 11 bus.

Joseph Addison lived for a time in the old Manor House, and two of his letters, written to the Lord Warwick whose mother he afterwards married, describe the bird concerts in the neighbouring woods.

If anyone wants to know exactly what the place looked like in Nell Gwynne's day, a very interesting account of it may be found in a book written by a French London-lover, called *Fulham Old and New*. It is now out of print, but may be consulted at the Fulham Public Library, reached by any of the buses travelling westward along the Fulham Road.

All this is ancient history, of which there is little trace to-day. The shades of Sir Robert Walpole, Dean Swift, Fielding and Smollett, and good Dr. Burney, Fanny's father, who was organist of Chelsea Hospital and buried in its now closed cemetery, may still haunt Chelsea; but the actual homes of the people of living memory make a more vivid appeal. Chelsea still keeps up the reputation of being the haunt of famous people. Unlike the inhabitants of the Paris Latin Quarter, artists and poets who have once breathed her air do not remove to more

fashionable Mayfair streets when they have "arrived."

And what a brilliant band of them were found in the Chelsea of the nineteenth century! Meredith wrote *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* at No. 7 Hobury Street; Charles and Henry Kingsley spent their youth in the old rectory in Church Street when their father was rector of Chelsea Old Church; George Eliot moved her household gods to No. 4 Cheyne Walk, the beautiful house where Daniel Maclise, the early Victorian painter, had lived, only three short weeks before her death; and Cecil Lawson, the painter of *The Harvest Moon* in the Tate Gallery, lived at No. 15.

A volume might be written about Cheyne Walk alone; those pleasant red-brick houses with their wrought-iron railings were the homes of some of the greatest geniuses of the Victorian age. Turner lived at 118 for the four years before his death in 1851: Rossetti lived at No. 16 with Swinburne and W. M. Rossetti. Meredith had some idea of joining this *ménage*, but recoiled at the sight of Rossetti's oft-quoted poached eggs "bleeding to death" on cold bacon very late in the morning. He paid a quarter's rent and decided to live by himself. The Rev. Mr. Haweis was a later tenant of this famous house, which, in spite of popular tradition, has no connection with Catherine of Braganza. Mrs. Gaskell, the authoress of *Cranford*, was born at No. 93. Whistler spent

twelve years at No. 96, and here he painted the portraits of his mother and Carlyle.

The painter had many Chelsea houses, from 101 Cheyne Walk, where he lived for four years from 1873, to the White House in Tite Street which he built, and, after his quarrel with the architect, adorned with a truly Whistlerian inscription, now removed, "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it. This house was built by Mr. X."

William de Morgan and Leigh Hunt lived in Chelsea, but the man whose memory is the most vivid of all this brilliant group was Thomas Carlyle. His house at 24 Cheyne Row is a memorial museum open to any visitor on the payment of one shilling, sixpence on Saturday. The house is kept exactly as it was in the days which Mr. Blunt has so charmingly described in his book *The Carlyles' Chelsea Home.*

I can tell no more about it except from hearsay, for the terrible loneliness of Hugo's house in the Place des Vosges and of Balzac's in the Rue Raynouard in Paris dissuaded me from visiting any more houses turned into museums of their owners' belongings.

I would rather go to the Chelsea Hospital, that is very much alive with the presence of remarkably long-lived old men: one of them lived till he was 123 years and another to 116. They think nothing there of mere centenarians —they even tell you of one pensioner who had served for eighty-five years and married at the

age of 100. They think that was a mistake on the whole, but they are secretly proud of it, and also of the lady warriors—one of them had the domestic-sounding name of Hannah Snell —who lie buried in the old churchyard among their comrades.

Visitors can see the hospital every week-day from 10 till dusk, except for an hour from 12.45 to 1.45, and they may attend the chapel services on Sunday at 11 A.M. and 6.30, when the pensioners in their brave scarlet coats remind one of Herkomer's picture. My advice to you, if you want to see Chelsea Hospital really well, is to enlist one of the pensioners as guide. He will show you the old leather black-jacks, and Grinling Gibbons' statue of Charles II. in a toga, and the colonnades of the old Wren building, so fine in its severe simplicity — and the flags in the chapel, so filmy now with age that they look as if a breath of wind would blow them to pieces—and the old portraits and many other arresting things. But what he will like best to exhibit will be the fragments of the bomb that hit one of the buildings during an air-raid. He won't allow you to hold on to the belief that Nell Gwynne had anything to do with the foundation, but he will tell you a lot of interesting details about the regulations of the Hospital —how very little like an institution it is, and you will leave the building with an added respect for Charles II.

After strolling about Chelsea one's mind

turns with insistence to the thought of buns, "r-r-rare Chelsea buns," as Swift wrote to Stella. There is now nothing left but the name of Bunhill Place, at the corner of Union Street and the Pimlico Road, of the famous shop where 100,000 buns used to be sold of a Good Friday Eve one hundred and forty years ago, and where the Georges and their Queens used to drive to fetch their buns. It was taken down in 1839, but the fasting sightseer—being in Chelsea and not in Bloomsbury or Bayswater—can easily find other places to stay his hunger. If he does not belong to the decorative sex, the phrase is Mr. Wagner's, not mine—he will doubtless follow that very knowledgeable guide and betake him to the "Six Bells," 195 King's Road—a short distance from the Chelsea Town Hall, and there find the comfort that attracts its artist *clientèle*.

There are other restaurants that are much frequented by the artists of the quarter:—the "Blue Cockatoo," in Cheyne Walk, near Oakley Street, and the "Good Intent," 316 King's Road, and a new and yet more attractive one on the corner of Arthur Street with the enticing name of "The Good Humoured Ladies."

Chelsea is full of interesting shops. The Chelsea Book Club is on the Embankment by Church Street—its delights must be sampled to be realised—and next door there is a queer hand-made toy shop called Pomona—why Pomona?

Across the road is Chelsea Old Church, with

its high seventeenth-century tower. To me its interior is the most satisfying in London. The spirit of ancient days dwells there, untouched by modern currents of unrest, and in the tranquil beauty there is no jarring note. Sir Thomas More was one of its celebrated parishioners—you may see his monument and the epitaph he wrote himself.

What a pleasant, kindly, independent spirit had this great Chancellor, who donned the humble surplice of a parish clerk and sang in the choir unperturbed by the remonstrances of even so great a personage as the Duke of Norfolk. I always liked the tale of how the latter came to dine with Sir Thomas in Chelsea and "fortuned to find him at the church in choir with a surplice on his back singing, and as they went home together arm in arm, the duke said, 'God's Body, God's Body, my Lord Chancellor, a parish clerk—a parish clerk! You dishonour the King and his office!' And Sir Thomas replied mildly that he did not think the duke's master and his would be offended with him for serving God his Master or thereby count his office dishonoured."

I love Chelsea Old Church better than any other London church. It has nothing of the heavy solidity that smacks of broadcloth and thick gold watch-chains. The congregation on a summer Sunday evening might be met with in any village in England. The very altar has no pomp of embroidered frontal and massive

ornaments; it looks almost like a Jacobean dining-room with its simple oaken table and dignified chairs on either side.

The church is filled with enchanting old treasures—chained Bibles and old monuments to the great dead who worshipped there, but I cannot find it in my heart to catalogue them for you as if it were a museum. Enter those dim walls and see for yourself, and you will love it as did that lover of England from across the sea whose epitaph is not the least among the beautiful things of Chelsea Old Church:

> In memory of Henry James, Novelist
> Born in New York, 1843. Died in Chelsea, 1916
> Lover and interpreter of the fine
> amenities of brave decisions and generous
> loyalties: resident of this parish, who
> renounced a cherished citizenship to give his
> allegiance to England in the first
> year of the Great War.

In other churches with their solemn balconies and air of chill emptiness, it is difficult to imagine the things that have happened there in other days. But in Chelsea Old Church, which somehow always seems peopled with friendly ghosts and never lonely, one can almost see Henry VIII. being married secretly to Jane Seymour before the public ceremony, and hear the cadence of Dr. John Donne's voice as he preached the funeral oration of the woman he had immortalised in *The Autumnal Beauty*.

> No spring nor summer beauty hath such grace
> As I have seen in one autumnal face.

I think of all the great people who lie buried here the most fascinating is this Lady Danvers, George Herbert's mother, whose "great and harmless wit, cheerful gravity and obliging behaviour," attracted so many friends and among them Dr. Donne. She must have been an adorable mother. I sometimes wonder if the care of her ten children ever made her late for church, and if it were some memory of his boyhood days that made her saintly son write with the cheerful gravity he may have inherited,

> Oh be drest,
> Stay not for the last pin
> Thus hell doth jest away thy blessings and extremely flout thee
> Thy clothes being fast but thy soul loose about thee.

Mrs. Herbert came to live in Chelsea when she married Sir John Danvers, after she had "brought up her children carefully and put them in good courses for making their fortunes." Danvers House, where she and her husband lived, gave its name to Danvers Street, at the corner of which Crosby Hall now stands.

The Chelsea Physic Garden

> "God Almighty first planted a garden."
> Bacon.

One of the things I like best in Chelsea is the old herb garden, the Chelsea Physic Garden, that makes a green triangle with its base on the Embankment and its western angle at the

beginning of Cheyne Walk and the end of the Royal Hospital Road, once called the Queen's Road in honour of Catherine of Braganza, Charles II.'s Queen.

My friendship with the garden is based on no intimate acquaintance, for not to every one is it given to pass the iron gates that guard its fragrant stillness. If you would do more than gaze through the iron bars at this enchanted space that dreams away the year round undisturbed, you must write to the Clerk of the Trustees of the London Parochial Charities, 3 Temple Gardens, E.C.4, and ask for a ticket of admission to the most ancient Botanical Garden in England.

Once you have taken the trouble to secure this card you may stroll along the paths of the Chelsea Physic Garden that are much as they were when Evelyn went there on 7th August, 1685, to visit " Mr. Wats, keeper of the Apothecaries' Garden of Simples at Chelsea," and admire the innumerable rarities there, the " tree bearing Jesuit's bark, which had done such wonders in Quartan agues."

The Apothecaries' Society laid out the garden about two hundred and fifty years ago. They leased the ground at that time, but later on Sir Hans Sloane gave them the freehold with one of those quaint conditions attached that lend a refreshing grace to a legal transaction.

The Apothecaries had to despatch 2000 specimens of distinct plants, grown in the garden

well dried and preserved and sent in batches of 50, every year to the Royal Society. One would like to know what the Royal Society did with them, but the most interesting things in history are so often left out.

In 1899 the garden was handed over to the Trustees of the London Parochial Charities, who maintain this delectable if deserted London corner for the teaching of botany and for providing opportunity and material for botanical investigation.

Perhaps it was the attraction of the Physic Garden that influenced the choice of the Huguenot market gardeners who settled in Chelsea when they were driven from their own country by the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. It startled me to find that at the time when England was merry, the Guilds were every bit as dictatorial as the Trades Unions are to-day. More so, in fact, for while a goodly percentage of our miners and nearly all our waiters are now said to be foreigners, none of the foreign workmen of the seventeenth century were allowed to carry on their trades in London and compete with their English confrères.

So the hatters went to Wandsworth and the silk mercers to Spitalfields, and the nurserymen chose the village of Chelsea lying two miles out of London along the river bank.

Their spirits may still hover among the perfumed beauty of the annual Chelsea Flower Show of the Royal Horticultural Society. It is

held in the grounds of the Chelsea Hospital once a year at the end of May or the beginning of June, when the delicate loveliness of the flowers attracts an immense number of garden lovers.

And now to tell you how to reach the Chelsea Hospital, the Flower Show and Ranelagh Gardens.

I have never been able to discover whether the extreme reluctance of the British to give a detailed address is due to a naïve belief that everyone is born into this world with an intimate knowledge of the topography of London, or to a malicious delight in puzzling the ignorant, but I have a deeply-rooted conviction that the maze was an English invention. So to the stranger bewildered by the laconic "Chelsea" on the cards of admission to the Flower Show I would say that it is reached either by the District Railway to Sloane Square station and then a short walk down Sloane Street to Pimlico Road, or by the 11 or the 46 bus that stops at the corner of Pimlico Road and Lower Sloane Street. The Flower Show is one of the most charming events of the London season.

In no other city in the world may you see anything like this meeting of the great brotherhood of gardeners of every social rank gathered to admire the gorgeous achievements of the grand masters of the art of growing flowers; where peeresses humbly consult horny-handed experts and frivolous young men reveal unsuspected enthusiasms for blue aquilegias.

The adjacent Ranelagh Gardens are often called Chelsea Hospital Gardens, perhaps to avoid confusion with the grounds of the Ranelagh Club at Barnes. They are closed to the general public during the three days of the Flower Show, so if you go to see the flowers you have the added and unexpected pleasure of wandering through the green glades of Ranelagh undisturbed by the shouts of the Pimlico children.

There are no flowers in these gardens, but they have a peculiar charm of their own. There is none of the flatness of Hyde Park—the undulating paths and quaint bosquets belong to another day when powdered courtiers pursued fair ladies in the pleasure gardens that were so much the fashion. The story of Ranelagh is bound up with the history of the Georgian period. There is not a book of memoirs but mentions this famous pleasure resort. Walpole said of it, "Nobody goes anywhere else; everybody goes there. My Lord Chesterfield is so fond of it that he says he has ordered all his letters to be directed there."

It is quite true that everybody went there. Johnson, whom I find as hard to keep out of the description of any part of London as Mr. Dick found it to keep King Charles's head out of his memorial, was very fond of going to Ranelagh. Boswell says that, to the remark that there was not half a guinea's worth of pleasure in seeing Ranelagh, he answered, "No,

but there is half a guinea's worth of inferiority to other people in not having seen it."

There is little left of the actual gardens where Johnson, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Oliver Goldsmith, Walpole, the beautiful Duchess of Devonshire, the King of Denmark, the Spanish ambassadors and the entire English Court used to take part in the merry-making, but you may be sure they all walked up the broad avenue of trees that once shaded the brilliant scene. In the seventeenth century the property belonged to Viscount Ranelagh, an Irish nobleman by whose name the gardens are still called.

When the estate was bought by a syndicate after his death a huge rotunda was built with boxes all round. It must have been something like the Albert Hall, and every night the place was filled with fine ladies and wits, rubbing shoulders with all classes of society come to gaze at the attractions and listen to the music. The vogue of Ranelagh lasted many years and only ended when the rotunda was pulled down at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Every now and then one meets pessimistic creatures, usually artists, who shake their heads and say that Chelsea is going to the dogs—by which they mean that all the old studios are being taken by speculators with the intention of converting them into flats.

But the Chelsea of to-day is as charming as it ever was. There are just as many famous inhabitants. Sargent, Derwent Wood, Augustus

John, Glyn Philpot, Wilson Steer and many another well-known genius, all live within sound of the " Six Bells " and some studios must have been saved from the speculator judging from the number of Chelsea addresses in this year's Academy catalogue.

CHAPTER II

KNIGHTSBRIDGE TO SOHO

KNIGHTSBRIDGE

"Go where we may—rest where we will,
Eternal London haunts us still."

MOORE.

FEW people think of connecting the name of Knightsbridge with anything less modern than the big departmental shops, the Barracks or the cosy houses on the fringe of Mayfair and Belgravia.

Yet there was a town of Knightsbrigg in the fourteenth century, in Edward the Third's day, when the Black Prince and his knights must often have crossed the Westbourne stream by the bridge built just where the Albert Gate now stands. Mr. Davis in his *History of Knightsbridge* gives as the origin of the name the story that "in ancient time certain knights had occasion to go from London to wage war for some holy purpose. Light in heart if heavy in arms, they passed through this district on their way to receive the blessing awarded to the faithful by the Bishop of London at Fulham. For some cause or other, however, a quarrel ensued between two of the band, and a combat

was determined upon to decide the dispute. They fought on the bridge which spanned the stream of the Westbourne, while from its banks the struggle was watched by their partisans. Both fell, if the legend may be trusted; and the place was ever after called Knightsbridge in remembrance of their fatal feud."

Walking down the Brompton Road from the Knightsbridge Tube station it is difficult to realise that not a hundred and fifty years ago "the stream ran open, the streets were unpaved and unlighted, and a Maypole was still on the village green."

Yes, a few hundred years ago, on that very triangle of green grass you see to-day outside Mr. Tattersall's big gateway, diagonally facing the Knightsbridge Tube station, men and maidens danced round the maypole on the Knightsbridge village green.

I have a special weakness for that three-cornered grass plot. People pass it every day and look scornfully at it—if they look at all. No one knows that it is all that is left of a piece of Merrie England. Little by little it has been pared away. The last maypole was taken down at the end of the eighteenth century, and the watchhouse and pound that Addison mentions in the *Spectator* disappeared about a quarter of a century later. The little bit of green has watched the evolution of the tiny chapel of the Elizabethan lazar-house that once existed near by into the stately and uninteresting

Holy Trinity Church, and the gradual rise of the immense departmental shops to take the place of the village silk mercers of yesterday.

There is a tradition that part of the green was once used as a burial ground in the time of the Great Plague, but since there is no record of this gruesome fact, I refuse to believe it.

TATTERSALL'S

"Satirists may say what they please about the rural enjoyments of a London citizen on Sunday."

WASHINGTON IRVING.

One was brought up to believe in the country Sunday after-dinner inspection of property, where unlucky week-end visitors are paraded to admire their host's corn and cattle, but I have often wondered what the English nation did with itself when in town of a Sunday afternoon. I know now. They go to Tattersall's and look at the horses to be sold next day. Tattersall's on a fine Sunday afternoon in the season is like a big reception by a not too exclusive hostess. Pretty young girls in charming frocks make the tour of the stables with their menfolk, and very horsey-looking people try to persuade their neighbours that they know as much about horses as the more unobtrusive individuals at whose nod grooms fly to strip their charges for inspection.

Since Richard Tattersall, the last Duke of Kingston's training-groom, opened his auction mart when his patron died in 1773, and founded

his fortunes by buying Highflier for £2500, Tattersall's has grown into a national institution with a world-wide reputation. It still belongs to the same family, but they moved in 1865 from Grosvenor Place to the present buildings, where every Monday all the year round the auctions take place, and every Sunday in the season dukes and jockeys, horse dealers and country squires, society ladies and trainers' wives, stroll up and down admiring the horses.

Ely House

"Queen Bess was Harry's daughter."
RUDYARD KIPLING.

As you come out of the Tube station, the view of Dover Street with its irregular skyline is a very modern one. It looks a rather dull, uninteresting place, given over to commerce and clubs, but like most of the Piccadilly and Pall Mall quarter, it is very reminiscent of the Stuart period. The history goes back to the respectable date of 1642, when the Clarendon estate was cut up into Dover, Albemarle, Bond and Stafford streets.

Out of Peckham, that haunt of the prosperous City man of those times, had come Sir Thomas Bond, the forerunner of the Messrs. Cubitt of 1921, with his syndicate, dealing death to historical associations and possessing none of the delicacy of feeling that made John Evelyn turn his head the other way when he drove by with Lord Clarendon the late owner.

Evelyn himself lived here, close to the house of Lord Dover, whose name was given to the street. Pope's friend, Dr. Arbuthnot, and Lady Byron, both lodged in Dover Street, but by far the most interesting house is No. 37, a brick building of unobtrusive, classic simplicity, that has a story connecting it with the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

You might pass up and down Dover Street many times without noticing the significant bishop's mitre, carved in stone halfway up the middle of the façade. This was once the distinguishing mark of the town house of the bishops of Ely that they bought in 1772 from the Government in exchange for all claim on their Hatton Garden property in Ely Place. Nowadays one thinks of diamond merchants in connection with Hatton Garden, but in Elizabeth's day it was the Naboth's vineyard that she coveted on behalf of her handsome Chancellor, Sir Christopher Hatton. The bishops were forced to grant him a lease for the rent of a red rose, ten loads of hay, and ten pounds, the right to walk in their rival's gardens whenever they chose, and to gather twenty baskets of roses every year.

The bone of contention brought no luck to anyone. Hatton was imprudent enough to borrow the money for improvements from his queen. She insisted on the bishops conveying the property to her till the sum should be repaid, and when one of them jibbed at carrying out the

terms of this settlement, the Queen wrote him an Elizabethan epistle:

Proud prelate! I understand you are backward in complying with your agreement: but I would have you understand that I, who made you what you are, can unmake you; and if you do not forthwith fulfil your engagement, by God, I will immediately unfrock you, Elizabeth.

Sir Christopher Hatton was never able to repay his mistress's loan. It broke his heart, says an old chronicler, and though the queen relented at the end, and came to visit him, "there is no pulley can draw up a heart once cast down, though a Queen herself should set her hand thereunto." He died disconsolate, in his coveted palace of Ely, in 1591.

After all these vicissitudes, the diocese got back its property at the Restoration, but in 1772 they gave up all claim to it in exchange for the mansion in Dover Street.

The latter is a stately house, with a long marble hall and staircase, and the bishops of Elizabeth's day would doubtless be mildly surprised if they knew that it is now used by the men and women belonging to the Albemarle Club.

LONDON MUSEUM

"I turned me from that place in humble wise."
JOHN DRINKWATER.

Quite near Dover Street, if you only knew it, is the one place where you may read the story of London spread out before you page by page better than anywhere else. But very few people can even tell you how to find it.

I once saw Lancaster House called the Cinderella of London museums—perhaps because it is so charming and so neglected. It is near no bus route nor railway station, yet this London Carnavalet is not so very far from the Dover Street Tube station and either of the two routes by which it is reached from that point are delightful walks. You may enter Green Park and stroll along the Queen's Walk till you come to a passage-way to the left—not the first little narrow one where two people have to walk Indian file into St. James's Place, but the second, that leads through a wider gateway, closed at 10 p.m., into Stable Yard.

Or else you can go down St. James's Street, past the passage leading into the quaint little eighteenth-century courtyard of Pickering Place, towards St. James's Palace with its beautiful old sixteenth-century brick gateway in Cleveland Row. Skirt the Palace to the right and you will come to Stable Yard, and in Stable Yard is Lancaster House.

It is a stately place. Queen Victoria once said to the Duchess of Sutherland: "I come from my house to your palace," but shorn of the groups of chairs and tables and the stately company moving up and down the magnificent staircase, the yellow and red marble walls seem cheerless and repellant.

Now and then a little white notice is pasted on the door with the announcement that the museum, which is usually open on summer

Fridays and Sundays from 2 to 6, and all other days from 10 to 6 and till 4 o'clock in winter, will be closed to the public for an afternoon or evening. The Government are entertaining distinguished strangers in the spacious salons, and then Lancaster House lives again for a few hours the brilliant existence it had in the nineteenth century, when it was called Stafford House and the Duke of Sutherland dispensed splendid hospitality there.

Amusing tales of these political parties, and of the guests, and of many other things, are told in Mr. Arthur Dasent's delightful *Story of Stafford House*, that is sold for a modest sum just inside the door.

In 1913 Lord Leverhulme bought the remainder of the lease that expires in 1940, from the Duke of Sutherland, and handed it over to the trustees of the London Museum to house the collection of London antiquities then exhibited in Kensington Palace.

The name of Stafford House was changed to Lancaster House as a compliment to the King, who is Duke of Lancaster, and in memory of the generosity of a Lancashire man.

It is an entrancing place, where you can trace this great city's history from the time men used flints to the war that is too near for its souvenirs to be anything but harrowing.

One may walk through the ages, from the Prehistoric room, through Roman, Saxon and Mediæval rooms, on the ground floor, and, then,

going up the grand staircase, see how men lived in London in Tudor, seventeenth-century, Cromwellian and Charles II.'s days, and so on, through the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century rooms, to the costume and Royal rooms, where you pause dumbfounded before the going-away dress of stiff white silk poplin embroidered with gold that Queen Mary wore the day of her wedding, 6th July, 1893.

Down on the ground floor, past the Temple Crusader with the Mestrovic countenance, in the west corridor, is the Gold and Silver Room, with the beautiful jewellery that some bygone Jacobean jeweller buried in Wood Street, perhaps when the menace of the Great Fire was upon him.

Of what happened to him there is no trace, and the lovely chains and rings lay buried for two and a half centuries. They may for all we know have been stolen and buried by thieves who met their end on Tyburn Tree before they could enjoy their booty. Admirers of Lalique's work in the Place Vendôme will see how this unknown Englishman solved the same problems of the great French artist 250 years ago. The delicate enamel chains and lovely cameos and carved chalcedony and glass and onyx are prettier than many a jeweller's stock to-day, and they must look disdainfully across at the case of heavy Victorian atrocities which our grandmothers wore so complacently.

St. James's Church

I do not remember ever seeing anyone cross the paved courtyard of St. James's Church, Piccadilly, on a week-day, for though it was one of Wren's favourites among the churches he built, and inside there is a font carved by Grinling Gibbons, it has an air of sanctimonious respectability that is not very alluring, but the font with its carving of the Fall of Man, etc., is well worth seeing.

The Haymarket Shoppe

" Only for memories stray
Of a past once lovely, . . ."
Walter de la Mare.

I have asked many people if they know where to find a perfect example of an eighteenth-century shop, bow windows, little flight of steps and all, a stone's throw from Piccadilly Circus —and they look at me in blank astonishment.

Yet there it stands, at 34 Haymarket, two doors down from Coventry Street on the left-hand side, its pot-bellied windows filled with quaint jars and bottles and more modern packages of the upstart cigarette, that has ousted the honest snuff which was sold there for two hundred years.

It belongs to another day and generation, and through the old doorway the 20th-century passer-by can see the oaken shelves with their rows of old wooden boxes and snuff jars that used to contain the " King's Morning Mixture," as supplied to His Majesty King George IV.

The old shop has had many royal customers, and going through the beautiful Adam screen into the back room, one may be shown, if the courteous proprietor is not too busy, the accounts of Queen Charlotte, who bought her snuff here for nineteen years, of the Dukes of Cumberland and Sussex and the Princesses Charlotte and Elizabeth, who also indulged in the best rappee.

Most of the great names of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century England may be found in these old ledgers. David Garrick and Inigo Jones were customers, and so were my Lord Halifax, Lady Shrewsbury and the Duchess of Grafton. Beau Brummell's accounts lie, cheek by jowl as he would have them, with those of the Earl of Dorchester and the Duke of Bedford, and the long array of famous names of men and women to be found in the yellowing papers might well have served as a list of guests present at any brilliant political function of the time.

The snuff-taking of those days has passed with the lace jabots and the silk knee-breeches, but the fashion died hard, and so recent a figure as Lord Russell of Killowen was one of the last of the famous snuff-takers. The twentieth century turns up its nose at what it calls a disgusting habit, yet it had its graces and was responsible for the creation of the beautiful boxes and bottles now treasured as heirlooms.

The actual owners of this fascinating shop have carried on the business in their family

THE OLD SNUFF HOUSE, 34 ST. JAMES'S, HAYMARKET

since 1780, when the founder, M. Fribourg, retired. One of the present partners, Mr. George Evans, has written a delightful monograph on the Old Snuff House of Fribourg and Treyer, "At the Rasp and Crown, at the upper End of the Haymarket, London." It is a charming book, filled with illustrations and reminiscences of the leisurely days before the arrival of the departmental store, when an old-established firm had time to have intimate courtly relations with its customers.

What Lord Petersham could now change his mind and return 216 pounds of anything and be urbanely credited with £75 12s.; and do grateful customers now make presents of gold-lined amboyna snuff boxes to mark their satisfaction?

If they do, I am as ignorant of the fact as the ordinary pedestrian of the historical interest of the unnoticed shop he passes daily on his way to Piccadilly Circus.

A King in Soho

"Man calleth thee his wealth, who made thee rich
And while he digs out thee, falls in the ditch."

George Herbert.

Few Londoners can tell you where a king lies buried in Soho. Shelley may have been thinking of him when he gave his mad invitation to the old lady in the Highgate bus, to "sit upon the ground and tell sad stories of the deaths of kings," but if so his knowledge is not shared by many people.

If I have made you curious, walk along Coventry Street from Piccadilly Circus, leaving Leicester Square, that "pouting-place of princes," on your right, and turn up Wardour Street past Lisle Street and Gerrard Street that was fashionable in Charles II.'s day and where Dryden and Burke and Lord Mohun lived and where Johnson and Reynolds founded the Literary Club that still exists in another meeting-place. Then, crossing Shaftesbury Avenue, you will come to the old graveyard at the back of the church of St. Anne, which is now a playground and only open till four in the winter months and during the hours of service on Sundays. On the wall you will find a tablet to the memory of the unlucky Theodore, King of Corsica, who fled from France, a bankrupt, only to be seized on his arrival in London and flung into the Fleet prison. "Near this place," runs the inscription, "is interred Theodore, King of Corsica, who died in this neighbourhood Dec. 11, 1756, immediately after leaving the King's Bench Prison by the Benefit of the Act of Insolvency. In consequence of which he registered his Kingdom of Corsica for the use of his Creditors." To which Horace Walpole has appended the following stanza:

> The grave, great Teacher, to a level brings
> Heroes and beggars, galley-slaves and kings.
> But Theodore this moral learned ere dead;
> Fate poured its lessons on his living head.
> Bestowed a kingdom, but denied him bread.

The kindly soul who bailed out fallen Majesty

a fortnight before his death and then gave him decent burial, was, according to the verger of St. Anne, an Italian candle merchant from Old Compton Street, on the site of whose shop is now that excellent non-profiteering restaurant known as Le Dîner Français. But I prefer, with the Blue Book, to think that the Samaritan was a tailor, grown rich, perhaps, snipping the embroidered waistcoats of H.R.H. Frederick, Prince of Wales, when the latter squabbled with his royal parents and removed in a pettish mood to Leicester House hard by.

The only other interesting things I could find in this old church were the tomb of Hazlitt, immediately below King Theodore's memorial stone,—the old wooden drain pipes, lately disinterred, that lie on the Shaftesbury Avenue side of the church, and the tablet within, to the memory of "The Beloved Mother-in-Law."

St. Anne's was built in 1685, a significant year in the annals of this neighbourhood. It was the date of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, which sent the Huguenots flocking to London, to take up their residence here, and of the Battle of Sedgemoor, when the Duke of Monmouth, who had a mansion in the Square, used as his watchword the cry "So Ho!" and unconsciously christened the whole district.

CHAPTER III

TRAFALGAR SQUARE TO FLEET STREET

"For such things do go on in Fleet Street as no man has written yet." RICHARD JEFFERIES.

ONE of the most enthralling and endearing things about London is the way the memory of the great people, whose names are so familiar that you feel you would know their bearers if you met them, pervades the city and crops up in such very unexpected places. If business ever took you through that evil-smelling fishy Lower Thames Street, you would discover that Chaucer lived there for six years when he was Comptroller of the Petty Customs in the Port of London. You stroll through the little Cloisters in Westminster Abbey, of all places in the world, and some one tells you that Lady Hamilton once lived in the Littlington Tower, when she was servant to Mr. Hare and had no thought that she would ever inspire a hero to great victories. You think that when you have seen Sir Thomas More's tomb in Chelsea Old Church, and Crosby Hall near by, you have exhausted the souvenirs of his life, but you find him again in Westminster Hall, where he was condemned to death—in the Deanery where he spent two months in charge of the Abbot of Westminster, —in Lincoln's Inn—in Milk Street in the City, where he was born, "the brightest star that ever shone in that Via Lactea"—in the church

of St. Lawrence Jewry where he lectured, and in the Tower where he died.

Dr. Johnson, of course, was ubiquitous. He went everywhere and usually said something noteworthy about everything. One of the great difficulties in writing this book has been to refrain from quoting him too frequently, and Pepys is even worse. The kindly official in the Clothworkers' Hall (where I lunched once on a special occasion) said to me: "Samuel Pepys, Ma'am, Pepys the great Diarist—you may have heard of him," and I felt like replying: "My good man, I have been with your Pepys through Chelsea—and in St. Margaret's, Westminster, where he was married—I have seen his portrait at the Royal Society Rooms in Burlington House and his house in Buckingham Street—the church of St. Bride, where his birth was registered—St. Lawrence Jewry, where he was disappointed with Wilkins' sermon—All Hallows, Barking, that, as he wrote on the 5th September, 1666, only just escaped the Great Fire—his parish church of St. Olave's, where he worshipped, and Hyde Park, where he used to go driving with his wife."

The Strand

"Through the long Strand together let us stray,
With thee conversing I forget the way."

Gay.

Of all delightful places to meet memories of famous bygone people, the most intriguing is

the Strand. A superficial glance at this modern bustling street shows little of the past still clinging about it. But a little further on you will discover, if you look for them, a bit of Roman London, a Renaissance chapel, a statue with a history, a lovely group of eighteenth-century houses, the water gate of a former fine mansion on the riverside, and a church that links us to the time of the Danish invasion.

The Londoner would probably tell you that Piccadilly Circus is the centre of his city; the historian, St. Paul's; but to the foreigner, the visitor from overseas, or to the Anglo-Indian back from the East, the centre will always be Charing Cross.

It has been a starting-point for the traveller from the days when the little old village of Charing was used as a halting-place on the way to the City or to the Royal Palace of Westminster. Probably that is the true derivation of the name; "La Charrynge" meant the Turning, the great bend where the two roads met, but a prettier tradition derives its name from Edward I.'s dear queen ("chère Reine"). Another cross to her memory once stood here, the most beautiful of all those set up by the sorrowing king wherever her bier rested on its journey from Grantham to Westminster Abbey. Cromwell's Parliament, with its passion for destruction, pulled it down in 1647, and the column which now stands in the courtyard in front of the station is only a memorial modelled

as far as possible on the original design. It was set up by Barry about sixty years ago, but it is already so weather-beaten that many people are under the amiable delusion that it is the very cross erected in 1291.

The exact position of the old cross is now covered by King Charles I. on horseback, facing the scene of his death in Whitehall, and this statue has had an even more adventurous history.

It was cast originally in 1633 and after the king's execution it became so unpopular that Parliament sold it to a brazier to be melted down. With an eye to the possibilities of the future that a diplomat might envy, this man cannily buried the statue and did a roaring trade with the Royalists in relics supposed to have been made from the fragments. After the Restoration the statue quietly came to light again, and was set up in its present position in 1674 with popular rejoicings. Its tribulations were not yet over. About the time of Queen Victoria's Coronation, some curio-hunting thief stole the sword, a real one of the period, that hung at the side and it has never been replaced.

Another curious thing about this statue lies in the absence of girths to the saddle or trappings on the horse, and it is said that when this oversight was pointed out to the sculptor Le Sueur, he was so overcome with mortification that he committed suicide on the spot.

In the days when London was no bigger than

one of our second-rate provincial towns, Charing Cross was its market square. Here stood the pillory, even as late as the beginning of the last century; here were read the Royal proclamations, and here were the booths of the showmen who dealt in giants and fat ladies,—it was here, too, that Punch made his first appearance in England in 1666. Where the railway station now stands was Hungerford Market, and Trafalgar Square occupies the yard of what were once the Royal Mews, where the king's falcons were kept till they were replaced by the king's horses. It is rather odd that the word "mews" is now always associated with stables, for it once meant the pens or coops in which moulting falcons were kept (from the French *muer*—to moult). Geoffrey Chaucer, who lodged at Westminster, was in his time Clerk of the King's Works and of the Royal Mews.

Water Gates

"In some parts of London we may go back through the whole English history, perhaps through the history of man."

Leigh Hunt.

People seem to think that a great deal of time and energy must be spent if they wish to see anything of historic London, and they pass by, unnoticed, many of the most interesting reminders of bygone periods, just because they may see them every day.

Buckingham Street, leading out of the Strand,

is only a stone's throw from Trafalgar Square and Charing Cross and it is full of historic memories. What stories the beautiful old water gate at its foot could tell of the days when the silver Thames washed up and down its grey stone steps, and of the famous people who used to take boat there!

It was built by my Lord Duke of Buckingham, that hated favourite of James and Charles the First, who cuts such a sorry figure in English history books and such a romantic one in the pages of Dumas. He was the father of the extravagant, erratic George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, whom Scott describes in *Peveril of the Peak*, and

> Who in the course of one revolving moon,
> Was chemist, fiddler, statesman and buffoon.

Lely painted a wonderful portrait of the son. It hangs in the National Portrait Gallery, but even more interesting is the Vandyck picture of him with his brother Francis, painted when they were boys, and lately bought for the National Gallery.

With his father murdered, and his property confiscated by the Commonwealth and given to General Fairfax, the duke solved his problem by marrying the General's daughter and heiress, a solution for which Cromwell made him pay by a sojourn in the Tower, where he was an intermittent resident. But in spite of his wife's fortune the man who, "was everything by

turns and nothing long" was obliged to sell the magnificent mansion that his father had re-built in 1625 on the site of the old York House.

The earlier mansion had been the home of the Bishop of Norwich in Henry VIII.'s time, of Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, of the Archbishop of York, who gave the house its name, and of Sir Francis Bacon who loved the place and only left it for the Tower.

In 1672 the second York House was sold for £30,000, with the stipulation that the streets built on the site were to be given the Duke's names. They are quite easy to trace: there is George Court, with the George Tavern, where you may eat your chop to the sound of an orchestra of singing birds; hard by are Villiers and Duke Streets; "Of" Lane has been rechristened York Place,—and now we are back in Buckingham Street.

The new quarter soon had famous tenants. John Evelyn lived for a year in Villiers Street, and forty years later Sir Richard Steele had a house there. No. 14, Buckingham Street, has been much remodelled since Samuel Pepys lived there and walked down the steps of the water gate on his way to visit his friend Mr. Cole in Brentford. There is a tablet on the house to tell the passer-by that the Earl of Oxford, William Etty and Clarkson Stanford, the marine painter, also lived here.

The house opposite looks far more modern,

but within the very new outer walls of the offices of the Royal National Pension Fund for Nurses are preserved much of the exquisite carving, ceiling paintings, and elaborate stucco work that belong to the time when Peter the Great, Czar of all the Russias, came over to England in 1698 and lodged in these very rooms. David Hume, Rousseau, Fielding and Black all lived at No. 15, now incorporated in No. 16, but the Dickens lover will ignore these famous names and only remember that the rooms at the top of the house are the very ones taken by Miss Betsy Trotwood for David Copperfield.

With the exception perhaps of that Shah of Persia who spent a happy holiday in England in the reign of the late Queen Victoria, I suppose we never had a more eccentric royal visitor than Peter the Great. No doubt that is the reason why the memories of his brief stay here still seem to cling about so many parts of London. This strange being, half-barbarian, half-genius, had great ambitions and achieved them. As Voltaire says: "He gave a polish to his people and was himself a savage; he taught them the art of war, of which he was himself ignorant; inspired by the sight of a small boat on the river Moskwa, he erected a powerful fleet and made himself an expert and active shipwright, pilot, sailor and commander; he changed the manners, customs and laws of the Russians, and lives in their memory as the father of his country."

Ships and shipbuilding were his passion. He went to Holland and worked in the yards there as a mechanic, calling himself Pieter Timmermann, until he had mastered the manual part of his craft. Then he came to England to study the theory of shipbuilding. King William III. placed the house in Buckingham Street, so conveniently close to the river, at his disposal, and invited him to Court when he felt inclined. But Pieter hated crowds and ceremonies and preferred to spend his days in hard work and his evenings drinking and smoking with boon companions.

At the end of a month, finding himself too far from the dockyards, he moved to Deptford, and put up at Sayes Court, kindly lent to him by John Evelyn. He was a dreadful tenant. We all know how Evelyn loved his garden, —but the Czar and his rough crowd trampled the flower-beds and spoilt the grass-plots, and trundled wheelbarrows through the diarist's pet holly-hedge for exercise. "There is a house full of people *right nasty!*" wrote Evelyn's indignant servant to his master. They ate and drank enormously,—eight bottles of sack after dinner were nothing to Pieter, and listen to this for a breakfast menu for twenty-one persons: half a sheep, a quarter of lamb, ten pullets, twelve chickens, three quarts of brandy, six quarts of mulled wine, seven dozen of eggs, with salad in proportion.

Much of his time, when he was not gathering

WATER GATE, YORK HOUSE

the vast store of information that he afterwards used to such excellent advantage, the Czar spent sailing on the river, and in the evening he would repair with favoured members of his suite to a public-house in Great Tower Street. The old tavern has been rebuilt, but the name "The Czar of Muscovy," and later "The Czar's Head," that it adopted as a compliment to its imperial visitor, is there to this day, and you may see it close to the city merchant's house at No. 34 that is noticed in another chapter.

The "right nasty" people did not stay long, luckily for Evelyn's peace of mind, but returned to London for another month or two. Then saying good-bye to King William, who had certainly treated him very well, the Czar pressed into his hand a little twist of brown paper, in which was found a ruby valued at £10,000, and sailed away home for Russia, taking with him no fewer than 500 English captains, scientists, pilots, gunners, surgeons, sail-makers, anchor-smiths, coppersmiths and the like, all ready for adventure in the unknown, according to the tradition of their race.

To come back to the Strand. It is fairly certain that the rather heavy and unattractive stone archway and steps at the bottom of Essex Street (at the other end of the Strand) formed the water gate of old Essex House, once occupied by the Earl of Essex, Queen Elizabeth's favourite.

It compares very badly with the water gate

in Buckingham Street, which was designed by Inigo Jones in 1625, and built by Nicholas Stone the master mason, who carved one of the lions on its frontage. The London climate has blurred the outline of the arms of the Villiers family on the south side, and the motto "Fidei Coticula Crux" on the north, and the raising of the Embankment now prevents the waters of the Thames from swirling round the old stone steps. No monarch had passed through the water gate since the days of Charles II. until Queen Alexandra came to open the new building in Buckingham Street in 1908. Its glory has departed, but there it stands, useless, unnoticed and forgotten, yet how beautiful!

The Adelphi

"I like the spirit of this great London which I feel around me." C. Brontë.

Retracing your steps up Buckingham Street, turn to the right along Duke Street and John Street, and you will find yourself in the Adelphi, that oasis of calm quiet so near the roar of the bustling Strand, where literary stars of the present day like to pitch their luxurious tents. Note the steep hill up which you climb. This is the roof of the arches which the brothers Adam built over the site of old Durham House in order that they might erect their elegant houses on a level with the Strand. You can still wander

in these vaults, if you are lucky enough to find an open gate; they are curious, and were once a fine rendezvous for evil characters.

The Duke of Buckingham's names are not the only ones to be perpetuated here. The architects, Robert John James and William Adam, all had streets named after them, and they called the whole quarter the Adelphi because they were brothers.

William Street has lately been rechristened Durham House Street, to remind us that the Adelphi was built on the site of Durham House, where Lady Jane Grey was born.

Probably the Adelphi will have to go some day, when a proper bridge for Charing Cross is built across the river here, but lovers of this little bit of unspoiled Georgian London will miss its old-world charm and dignity.

St. Clement Danes

"Blith be thy chirches, wele sownyng be thy bellis."
DUNBAR.

Nowadays, looking eastward up the Strand, the eye is caught by the two churches of St. Mary-le-Strand and St. Clement Danes, standing isolated in the centre of the roadway, whilst the traffic roars past on either side. In the Middle Ages you would still have seen St. Clement's, though half engulfed in a rookery of ill-smelling, crazy old timbered houses, with so narrow a passage between that coachmen

called it the " Straits of St. Clement's." But on the site of St. Mary's stood a maypole, one hundred feet high, dear to the heart of the city youth for the merrymakings that took place around it. Such giddy proceedings vexed the Puritans, who swept it away in an outburst of righteous indignation, but old customs die hard, and at the Restoration another and still lordlier pole was set up with royal approval, and dancing and junketings went on around it for many a long day.

The church of St. Clement's takes us back to very ancient history. Some say that beneath it lie the bones of King Harold and other Danish invaders. What is pretty certain is that the original church was built, after the expulsion of the Danes, by the few settlers who, having married English wives, chose to remain behind, on condition that they did not stir out of the strip of land that lay between the Isle of Thorney, now Westminster, and Caer Lud, now Ludgate.

Travellers from all over the world who have shared the common traditions of childhood, feel a queer sense of kinship when they pass along the Strand and suddenly hear the old bells ringing out the familiar tune of " Oranges and lemons, say the bells of St. Clement's." The bells of the nursery-rhyme are not those of St. Clement Danes, but of the St. Clement's, Eastcheap, which for centuries has been in the centre of the dried fruit trade.

ST. CLEMENT DANES

The bells were famous even in Shakespeare's day. "We have heard the chimes at midnight, Master Shallow," says Falstaff in *Henry IV.* Those chimes are gone, but the present peal of ten bells, cast in 1693, is as famous for its music.

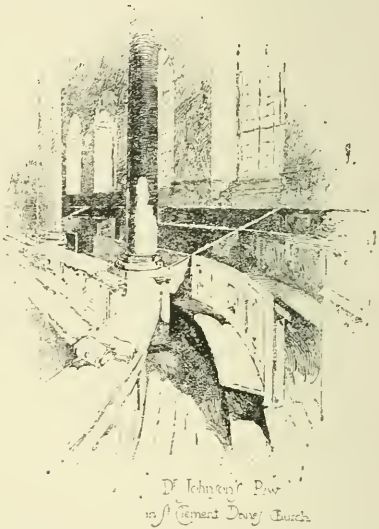
One might write a whole history of church bells, from the time when Turketul, Abbot of Croyland in Lincolnshire, in the ninth century, presented his abbey with the great bell GUTHLAC, and added six others with the rhythmic names of PEGA, BEGA, BETTELIN, BARTHOMEW, TATWIN and TURKETUL, to make a peal.

In the early monkish days they looked upon bells as the voices of good angels: they were blessed and dedicated: the passing bell was tolled to keep off evil spirits from the dead. Henry VIII., that ruthless iconoclast, cared little for superstition, and in the general destruction of the religious houses hundreds of old bells were sold or melted down. But the pious people of those days would point out how the Bishop of Bangor, who sold his Cathedral bells, was shortly afterwards stricken with blindness, and that Sir Miles Partridge won the Jesus Bells of St. Paul's from King Henry at play and, proceeding to remove them and have them melted down, was hanged soon after on Tower Hill.

The bells of St. Clement's were added after the church had been rebuilt in 1692, under the supervision of Sir Christopher Wren, who gave

his services for nothing in his usual generous-hearted way.

St. Clement's is dear to all true Londoners as Dr. Johnson's church. You may see the very pew where he sat, and there is something about



the solid, handsome structure that seems to fit the thought of the ponderous great man who worshipped there Sunday by Sunday, striving "to purify and fortify his soul and hold real communion with the Highest." It is a fine and a prosperous church, and so richly endowed that at one time all the paupers of the neighbourhood used to flock there for the sake of

what they could get. That they were well looked after, the carefully kept parish registers bear witness as far back as 1558. There are other interesting entries in the old registers. You may read of the baptism of Master Robert Cicill, the sonne of ye L. highe Threasurer of England, and of the marriage of Sir Thomas Grosvenor with Mary Davies, the child heiress of Ebury Manor, who brought to her husband all those lands of Pimlico and Belgravia from whose rents the Dukes of Westminster draw the bulk of their colossal fortune. Her life story has been published recently by Mr. Charles T. Gatty in his two volumes, *Mary Davies* and *The Manor of Ebury*.

Chapel Royal of The Savoy

"It is a wonderful place . . . this London . . . and what do I know of it?"—Lord Beaconsfield.

From St. Mary's and St. Clement's it is but a few minutes' walk back along the Strand to the Chapel Royal of the Savoy, that once served all the district, but it is now perhaps the tiniest parish in London west of Temple Bar. There it stands in its quiet graveyard, all that is left to remind us of "the fayrest manor in England." The old palace of the Savoy was built by Simon de Montfort, that "Cromwell of the Middle Ages," on land granted by Henry III. to his wife's uncle, Peter of Savoy, for which the said Peter had to pay the not very exorbitant rent

of three barbed arrows. Afterwards it came into the possession of the Dukes of Lancaster. Here it was, in 1357, that the Black Prince, riding on a little black hackney, brought his prisoner King John of France, who stayed here, with brief intervals, till his death, as nobody seemed able to raise the money for his ransom. And here lived John of Gaunt, with his numerous household, not least of whom was Geoffrey Chaucer. Later came Henry IV., who annexed the manor, and since his time it has always belonged in a particular manner to the reigning house.

Nothing is left, though, to tell of it, save the chapel, which was begun by Henry VII. in place of a more ancient one fallen into decay,—and that strange judicial survival, the Court Leet with view of Frankpledge of the Manor and Liberty of the Savoy. Few people know that once a year the jury of the Court, headed by the Beadle with his silver-topped and carved staff of office, solemnly makes the round to inspect the boundary marks of the Manor. One is in Child's Bank, another on the Lyceum stage, one in Burleigh Street, one by Cleopatra's Needle, another in Middle Temple Lawn, where many scuffles have taken place in the past between the jurymen and indignant Benchers and officers of the Inns of Court concerning the question of trespass. The Court itself, which dates back to Saxon days, sits annually about Easter time, and still does "what is usually

called everybody's business, and nobody's business," as a former High Bailiff wrote.

The old Roman Bath in Strand Lane is a little beyond St. Clement Dane's, and next to the Tube station. That belongs to a later chapter, but a short way further, on the same side of the road, is another bit of unnoticed London.

Prince Henry's Room

"London, thou art the flour of Cities all."—Dunbar.

Prince Henry's room is one of those charming links with the past that lie unnoticed in the path of thousands who never stop to heed the story. At No. 17, Fleet Street, close to the ceaseless traffic of the Law Courts, is an unobtrusive timbered house. Through a low archway you see an eighteenth-century oaken stairway that leads to a sedate Jacobean room, where very few people ever come to disturb the peaceful, dignified atmosphere. The Council of the Duchy of Cornwall is supposed to have once met here regularly and I believe that from time to time Prince Henry's room is now used for the meetings of various associations, but if you visit it any day between ten and four you will almost certainly find no one to disturb the ghosts of bygone cavaliers but the war veteran who passes his days there ruminating on the delinquencies of historians.

The house is one of the oldest in the City. It

was built in 1610, the year that Henry, the elder son of James I. of England, was created Prince of Wales; and the room is known as Prince Henry's room. Look at the lovely Jacobean art of the panelling on the west wall, and the decorated plaster ceiling, where in the centre you will find the device of this lamented "prince of promise," who died at the early age of eighteen.

Most people say, "Prince Henry! *who* was Prince Henry?" and very few connect the name with that little known prince who steals like a shadow across the pages of our history books. But his memory deserves to be kept green if only for the reason that he was a true friend to Sir Walter Raleigh, that unfortunate victim of petty-minded James. After one of his visits to Raleigh in the Garden House of the Tower, Prince Henry said: "No man but my father would keep such a bird in a cage." A stained glass window sets forth his titles in old French,

Dv . treshavlt . et . trespvissant . Prince . Henry : Filz . Aisne . dv . Roy . Nre . Seign . Prince . de . Gavles : Duc : de : Cornvaile : et . Rothsay . Comte : de . Chestre . Chevalier . dv . tresnoble . Ordre . de . la . Iartierre . enstalle . le . 2 . de . Iuliet . 1603.

He was in many ways the prototype of our own Prince of Wales and held almost as high a place in the affections of his people. He was everything that a king's son should be. He was handsome, well-grown and athletic; he was scholarly

and brilliant, having all James' love of learning without his folly and effeminacy. If he was a paragon of erudition, he also loved the practical side of shipbuilding, and he liked to give and receive hard knocks in the miniature tournaments that he organised at Whitehall, when he and his friends would engage the whole evening in mighty battles with sword and pike. And in addition to all this he seems to have had the generous mind and temper of the truly great. It is no wonder that his untimely death evoked a cry of mourning throughout England.

He was playing tennis, threw off his coat and caught a mortal chill. Everything that the doctors of that day could do was done. They even applied pigeons to his head and a split cock to his feet. Sir Walter Raleigh, who loved the youth, sent from his prison in the Tower the recipe of a potent "quintescence"; it did more good than the pigeons or the split cock, but could not save him. Prince Henry died in 1612, when not quite nineteen years of age.

This is what they wrote of him after his death:

Loe! Where he shineth yonder,
A fixed star in heaven;
Whose motion heere came under
None of your planets seaven.
If that the moone should tender
The sunne her love, and marry,
They both would not engender
So great a star as Harry.

The Temple

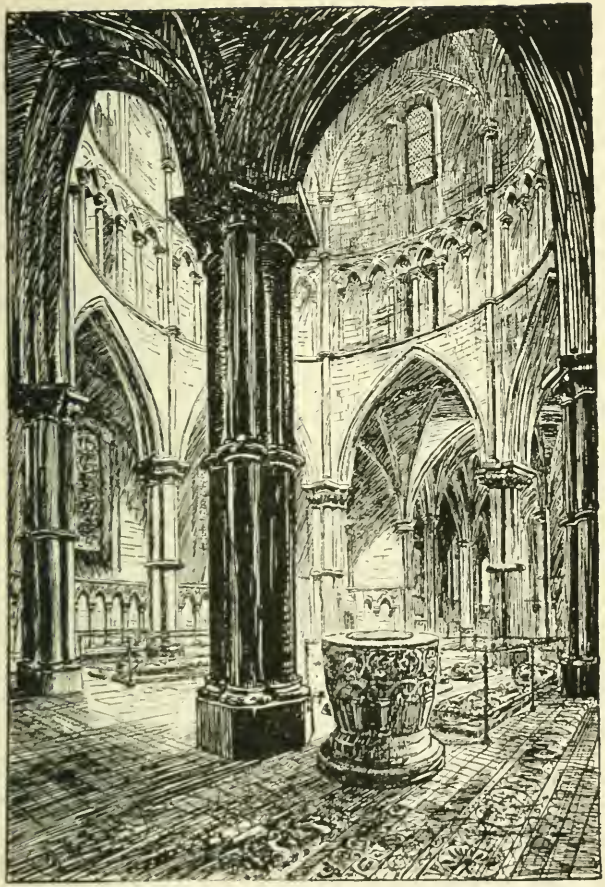
"He didn't understand the whispers of the Temple fountain though he passed it every day."—Dickens.

I know of a public school and university man who has lived all his life in London and protests that he has never seen Westminster Abbey: there are certainly hundreds of people who have never seen the Temple.

It would be a marvel to me that anyone should leave London without having wandered at least once in those courts, if I had not taken so long to find my own way there. One knows vaguely that it is a charming place, but going there is postponed for that *fata morgana*, a day of leisure, that recedes as it is approached, and time passes and the train whistles and steams slowly out of Euston or Victoria, leaving behind one of the very loveliest corners in old London, —so easy to reach if one had but tried.

You have only to turn through the old gate-house that Wren built in 1684 to wander about in another world,— a world where it is possible to imagine dear Charles Lamb moving among his guests on a Wednesday evening, with Mary hovering in the background, or Goldsmith giving those rackety supper parties at No. 2 Brick Court that disturbed his studious neighbour Blackstone.

Few places in London are so filled with the memories of brilliant Englishmen as the Temple. If you want to know all about when and where



THE TEMPLE CHURCH. THE ROUND

they lived, go to the wigmaker who conducts the Temple affairs from his little shop in Essex Court, and he will provide you with Mr. Bellot's fascinating *Story of the Temple.*

Expert sightseers of course know all about it. They will tell you that Lamb was born in No. 2, Crown Office Row, and that Thackeray lived at No. 19; that Goldsmith died at No. 2, Brick Court, Middle Temple Lane, and that Johnson's Buildings are on the site of Dr. Johnson's rooms in Inner Temple Lane, and if you share their predilections you can go and peer at the actual bricks that have once sheltered these great men. But if you want to feel the real spirit of the place, unhampered by gazing at any particular pile of bricks and mortar, go to the old Temple Church on a Sunday morning.

Take any bus along the Strand past Temple Bar, where Dr. Johnson used to say that if he stationed himself between eleven and four o'clock, every sixth passer-by was an author,—and go through the second entrance to the Temple called Inner Temple Lane. Or else take the Underground to the Temple and, walking along the Embankment, go up the Essex Street steps and turn into the Temple courts by the first gate you find open, even if that means going round into Fleet Street.

The service in the Temple is an unforgettable revelation. There is no reason why psalms should not be sung in every Anglican church

in the world as they are sung in the Temple, but no one seems to have thought of it, except the Temple choirmaster, who has trained his choristers to sing the words as if they had a profound meaning.

Has anyone ever found fitting phrases to describe the peculiar beauty of the Temple Church, with its carved Norman porch, that twelfth-century Round Church, where nine recumbent Crusaders rest in peace, and gleaming marble pillars support both the choir and the Round? It must be seen to be believed, but I pity the traveller who leaves London without seeing it.

In the courts of the Temple there lie embalmed so many stories of so many ages, that everyone finds what suits his fancy. You may wander as Spenser did among

> Those bricky towers,
> Where now the studious lawyers have their bowers,
> There whilom wont the Templar Knights to bide,
> Till they decayed through pride.

Or you may choose a century later and go to York and Lancastrian times, and listen to Suffolk saying:

> Within the Temple Hall we were too loud,
> The garden here is more convenient;

and Richard Duke of York's reply,

> Let him that is a true-born gentleman,
> And stands upon the honour of his birth,
> If he suppose that I have pleaded truth,
> From off this briar pluck a white rose with me:

and the Duke of Somerset:

> Let him that is no coward nor no flatterer,
> But dare maintain the party of the truth,
> Pluck a red rose from off this thorn with me.
> . . . . . .
> This brawl to-day,
> Grown to this faction in the Temple Garden,
> Shall send, between the red rose and the white,
> A thousand souls to death and deadly night.

It seems a pity that the Temple authorities do not so far unbend as to subscribe to the pretty legend by re-planting the gardens with red and white roses. It would give immense pleasure to countless transatlantic visitors, whose history books are fairly impartial on York and Lancastrian questions.

Then there are all the memories of gallant Elizabethan days, when the queen came and dined with the benchers in the great Middle Temple Hall and *Twelfth Night* was first performed here. It was by his dancing at one of the famous revels that the handsome youth Christopher Hatton first attracted the notice of Elizabeth, a moment when as our allies would say he lost a good chance of remaining quiet. The Hall is shown to visitors before twelve o'clock and after three on week-days and after church on Sundays. Peter Cunningham says the roof is the best piece of Elizabethan architecture in London.

What feasts they had there in the days when lawyers had time to make merry. Here is the account of one old chronicler:

> For every feast the steward provided five fat hams with spices and cakes, and the chief butler seven dozen

gilt and silver spoons, twelve damask table-cloths and twenty candlesticks. The constable wore gilt armour and a plumed helmet, and bore a pole axe in his hands. On St. Thomas's Eve a parliament was held, when the two youngest brothers, bearing torches, preceded the procession of benchers, the officers' names were called and the whole society passed round the hearth singing a carol. On Christmas Eve the minstrels, sounding, preceded the dishes, and dinner done, sang a song at the high table; after dinner the oldest masters of the revels and other gentlemen sang songs.

It sounds very cheerful and amiable, but it is difficult to imagine our modern lawyers passing round the hearth singing a carol.

I suppose that the three best-loved dwellers in the Temple were Oliver Goldsmith, Dr. Johnson and Charles Lamb, and none of them were lawyers. Johnson was living in No. 1 Inner Temple Lane when Topham Beauclerk and Mr. Langton knocked him up at three in the morning to see if he could be persuaded to finish the night with them, and he came out with a poker and his little black wig on, and said when he understood their errand, "What, is it you, you dogs, I'll have a frisk with you."

The story of Goldsmith's tenancy of the Temple reminds one of the tales told of Balzac whose tastes and weaknesses he shared. Always in financial difficulties, as soon as he made a little money he bought quantities of clothes and furniture and ran into debt to his tailor, perhaps for the very red velvet coat with lace ruffles that you may see to-day in the London Museum at Lancaster House. Goldsmith had many

London lodgings and only came to the Temple in 1764. When he died there ten years later the staircase of this improvident, extravagant genius was crowded with the poor he had managed to help. No one seems to know exactly where he lies buried in the Temple churchyard.

Lamb was a true child of the Temple as he was born there. It may be heresy, but I have always wished he had not called it "the most elegant spot in the metropolis"; he loved it more than that, as all readers of *The Old Benchers of the Inner Temple* know well.

No one leaves the Temple without pausing in Fountain Court, where Ruth Pinch used to meet Tom. It is by far the most charming of all the courts of the Temple. "I lived in Fountain Court for ten years," wrote Arthur Symons, "and I thought then and I think still, that it is the most beautiful place in London."

CHAPTER IV

ROUND ABOUT THE TOWER

"I do not like the Tower, of any place."—*Richard III.*

HAVING amused myself many times in Paris by hunting up the pieces of the old wall that Philippe Auguste built before he departed to the Holy Land on one of his Crusades, I set out one day to see how much remains of the wall the Romans built round London.

I discovered some bits of it, but I discovered a great many other things in the process.

There is very little left of the city that the old Romans called Augusta and the older Britons Llyn-Din—that some say means "the Lake Fort" and some "The Hill by the Pool." In the Guildhall and London museums there are statues and vases and ornaments and mosaic pavements belonging to those times, but in the city streets there are hardly any traces to-day of the Roman occupation. Watling Street, a piece of Roman road that still bears an Anglo-Saxon name, runs citywards from the back of St. Paul's, but that may better be reached from Cheapside. Most of the Roman wall that remains is now below ground level. The best places to see what is visible are in St. Olave's, Hart Street; at Trinity Place, Tower Hill; at

Barber's bonded warehouses in Cooper's Row; and at The Roman Wall House at No. 1, Crutched Friars, a new building whose plans were altered by the Sadlers' Company so as to preserve a good specimen of the old wall in one of the basement rooms.

I began my search for Roman remains in Strand Lane, which lies next door to the Strand station on the Holborn tube, and can be reached either by bus along the Strand or by District train to the Temple, whence you go uphill up Arundel Street and, turning to your left along the Strand, find it after two or three minutes' walk. Half-way down the little winding passage that once led to the waterside there is on the left a dingy sign, "The Old Roman Bath."

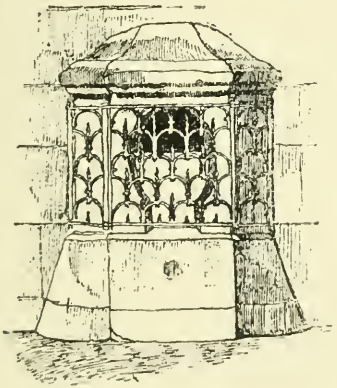
The English reputation for liking cold baths must have been a legacy from the Romans. Time was when the venerable cold spring bath was used daily. David Copperfield had many a cold plunge in it when he was living in Peter the Great's house at the lower end of Buckingham Street. But now it is only open from 11 to 12 on Saturday mornings to the very occasional visitor who turns aside to look at this 2,000-year-old relic of the London of the past.

As in the Frigidarium of the Cluny Museum in Paris, it seems as if one steps back into the world as Julius Cæsar knew it, across the threshold into the little vaulted chamber where the waters from the spring, once famed for miraculous cures, flow through the marble walls

of the identical bath used by our Roman conquerors. The Romans contented themselves with a brick lining that still exists under the marble slabs, but the latter have an interest of their own, for they came from the famous bath built in the Earl of Essex's house near by, which Queen Bess herself is said to have been the first to use. The spring comes from the old Holy Well, that gave its name to Holywell Street, on the North side of the Strand, a street destroyed to make room for Kingsway and Aldwych.

There is a Roman bath of a different kind underneath the Coal Exchange in Lower Thames Street, but on your way to this from the Temple station (or bus 13 from the Strand), get out at Cannon Street, where in a sort of cage against the wall of St. Swithin's Church, directly opposite the station, is the very oldest relic in the whole of the city of London,—London Stone, the stone that the Romans set up to mark the centre of the city; the starting point from whence they marked the miles along their branching highways. As long as history has been written in this land, there has been mention of London Stone. Do you remember how, in *Henry VI.*, Shakespeare makes Jack Cade proclaim himself King of the City, striking his staff against the block? Once it was a big pillar and set on the other side of the way, but famous stones are seldom allowed to rest in peace, and time, the weather, and clumsy mediæval cart-wheels have chipped and worn it to its present size.

Now take the train again, or another 13 bus, and go on to the Monument, where King William IV. stands on the very spot where Falstaff and Prince Hal made merry at the "Boar's Head," Eastcheap. Going down by the beautiful column which Sir Christopher Wren built to commemorate the Great Fire, hard by



LONDON STONE, CANNON STREET

where it started in Pudding Lane, turn to your left in Lower Thames Street opposite the church of St. Magnus, and walk along this unattractive causeway till you come to the Coal Exchange with its Corinthian porch. You will find the porter through a door up the side-street of St. Mary-at-Hill. Do not go on Monday, Wednesday or Friday afternoons, for those are market-days or whatever the correct term is on Coal Exchanges), and, as that most agreeable porter

explained to me: "We found it didn't do, Ma'am; for when the genelmen on the Exchange see me taking a lady or genelman or it might be a party down below into the cellar, they naturally says to me 'What for?' And when I say 'Roman bath,' they say 'Roman bath, Jones! Did you say Roman bath? You don't mean to say there's a Roman bath below and me here forty years and never know it!' And down they goes with all their friends, all equally surprised, and business gets neglected. That's how it is, Ma'am."

Business in the coal trade has been too much neglected for anyone to wish to hinder it further, so go on a Tuesday, Thursday or Saturday afternoon. It is quite worth the exertion, for this hot-air or sweating chamber, with its fire-blackened bricks, forming part of an elaborate system of baths, is even more interesting than the Roman bath in the Strand.

The Coal Exchange, with its curious rotunda floor of inlaid wood, was only built in the middle of the nineteenth century, but it has two more unexpected links with the past. I am indebted to Messrs. Thornbury and Walford for pointing out that the black oak used in the woodwork is part of a tree, four or five centuries old, that was discovered in the River Tyne, and the blade of a dagger in the shield of the City arms is made of wood from a mulberry tree that Peter the Great planted when he worked as a shipwright in Deptford Harbour.

Turning up St. Mary's-at-Hill into Great Tower Street, I found, nearly opposite All Hallows, Barking, a prosperous merchant's house still standing practically untouched, as it was built a year or two after the Great Fire. At No. 34, an ordinary-looking archway leads into a courtyard fronting a perfect example of the home of a wealthy citizen of Charles II.'s time. A flight of steps leads up to the doorway, from which you catch a glimpse of panelled walls and noble staircase. The counting-house is on the right, and upstairs are the living rooms where the merchant lived with his wife and family and servants, in the fashion of those times. They entertained, too, after the day's work was done, for amongst the private papers still treasured here is one complaining of the excessive noise of carriages and coaches turning in the cobbled courtyard at night.

It is worth while pushing open the door of the fifteenth-century perpendicular church of All Hallows, Barking, just opposite, to see the Norman pillars and the fine brasses. The best one is in front of the litany desk, and in the corner to the right is a brass to the memory of William Thynne and his wife.

This is not the Thynne who has such a gruesome monument in Westminster Abbey, but a more worthy sixteenth-century ancestor, who was "chefe clerk of the Kechyn of Henry VIII.," and who published the first edition of the entire works of Chaucer. Both of them are

descendants of that John of the Inn whose soubriquet became the name of the Bath family.

All Hallows gets its surname from the Abbess of Barking, the head of the seventh-century Benedictine convent of Barking. She was a powerful lady,—one of the four abbesses who was a baroness *ex officio*, and she held the lands of the king by a baronage, furnishing her share of men-at-arms. Only an old gateway of the Chapel of the Holy Rood, eight miles out of London by the Fenchurch Street railway, is left of the nunnery, but All Hallows, which was connected with it, survived the Great Fire and is still intact.

Turning your back on the old church, and walking up Seething Lane, where Pepys went to live in 1660 and kept his diary for nine years, you come to St. Olave's Church on the corner of Hart Street, where his pretty young wife was buried. Church manners have vastly changed since Pepys' day. When a bomb from an avion fell just outside the Verdun Cathedral one Sunday morning, two months before the big attack, no one turned his head except one little acolyte, who couldn't resist a surreptitious grin at his comrade in the front pew. But listen to Pepys:

6 June, 1666. To our own church, it being the common Fastday, and it was just before sermon; but Lord! how all the people in the church stared upon me to see me whisper (the news of the victory over the Dutch at sea) to Sir John Minnes and my Lady Pen. Anon I saw people stirring and whispering

below, and by and by comes up the sexton from my Lady Ford to tell me the news, which I had brought, being now sent into the church by Sir W. Batten in writing, and passed from pew to pew.

The church of St. Olave's has a proud history. There are records of the parish in Henry I.'s day, and in 1283 of a church dedicated to St. Olaf, an exiled Norwegian. The present building dates from about 1450. It is one of the eight existing churches that escaped the Great Fire.

The mid-Victorian Vandals who filled up the marble crypt, and removed the old galleries and square pews, with their candlesticks, have mercifully left the fine roof intact, and St. Olave's possesses a number of quaint Elizabethan treasures. On the door there is one of the few remaining sanctuary knockers used by a fugitive from justice if he wanted to claim sanctuary protection: on four of the six bells in the church peal is engraved "Anthony Bartlet made mee 1662." The crown on the weather vane is supposed to commemorate the visit of Queen Elizabeth in 1554 when she gave silken bell-ropes as a thank-offering for her release from the Tower, and on the front of the organ gallery are the wrought-iron hat-stands with which the clergy of those days emphasised their protest against men wearing their hats in church.

The beautifully wrought iron sword-stands are used to this day when the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs attend an official service at St. Olave's

The old church has been intimately connected with the navy since the days when the Admiralty lodged in Mark Lane and Crutched Friars, and it is still the parish church of the Master and Brethren of Trinity House, who come humbly on foot, *via* Catherine Court and Seething Lane, to the annual special service on Trinity Sunday, H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, as Master, making his pilgrimage like the rest.

But for the ordinary visitor who has no part in these ceremonial happenings the great interest of St. Olave's lies in the memories connected with its greatest parishioner, Samuel Pepys, Esq., Secretary to the Admiralty.

The fame of his *Diary* has rather obscured Pepys' well-merited reputation as an admirable and faithful public servant at a time when these qualities were rare. He was living at the Navy Office in Seething Lane in 1666, and it is thanks to his sagacity in ordering all the workmen from the Royal Dockyards to blow up the intervening houses that St. Olave's, Hart Street, Allhallows Staining, and Allhallows Barking were saved from the Great Fire.

Pepys and his pretty wife are both buried in their parish church of St. Olave's. Mrs. Pepys died when she was only twenty-nine, and though he had teased the jealousy of "my wife, poor wretch," Pepys ordered her bust to be carved, not in the usual profile, but with the lovely head turned so that he could see

THE TOWER OF LONDON. BYWARD TOWER

it from where he sat in his gallery pew on the other side of the church.

There are other interesting things to be seen at St. Olave's: the doorway to the old churchyard that Dickens-lovers will recognise from his description in the *Uncommercial Traveller,* the carved pulpit and quaint vestry and several fine old monuments, and, as I mentioned before, part of the old Roman wall.

If you have no passion for discovering bits of ancient walls, there are other more beautiful things near the bottom of Seething Lane. One of them is very new, so new that when I saw it all the scaffolding had not been removed from the buildings at its base—I mean the great tower of the Port of London Authority. I hear that Sir Joseph E. Broodbank has just written a fascinating *History of the Port of London,* that will waken everyone who has three guineas to spare to the interest of London's immense docks and the organisation that has power over seventy miles of the Thames. The beautiful tower of the new buildings, with its fine groups of statuary, is worth a special pilgrimage to see. It is not very far from Trinity House, that unique institution that, as Mr. Cunningham says, has for its object "the increase and encouragement of navigation, the regulation of lighthouses and sea marks, and the general management of matters not immediately connected with the Admiralty."

The Guild of Trinity House was founded in 1529 by Sir Thomas Spert, Henry VIII.'s

Controller of the Navy and commander of the magnificent four-master, the *Harry Grace de Dieu*, which took the King to Calais on his way to the Field of the Cloth of Gold. You can see exactly what it looked like in the picture of Henry VIII.'s embarkation at Dover that hangs in Hampton Court Palace.

One of the delusions I have had when hastening through the streets of London filled with excitement at the thought of seeing some ancient place associated with more colourful days than our own, was caused by Mr. Wagner's enticing account of the Crooked Billet in his fascinating book on old London inns.

Alas, the Crooked Billet, at the eastern extremity of Tower Hill, has nothing left of its former magnificence. The panelled walls and carved chimney-pieces have been ruthlessly taken away,—some say to that bourne overseas whither pass so many treasures of the Old World it affects to despise. There is nothing left but the sordid dirty rooms of slum tenements, with here and there the remains of a fine ceiling and a few wall cupboards. The old building that was once a royal palace, and since the days of Henry VIII. has been a lordly inn, has fallen into the state of drab degradation that is the forerunner of the pick and shovel of the *démolisseur*. Only the rich façade remains to remind the passer-by of its vanished glories!

The Tower

Having wandered so long in its neighbourhood, let me hurriedly make the shamefaced confession that I share Richard III.'s opinion about the Tower and that I have never seen it. I have skirted it, I have gazed into its asphalted

THE TOWER OF LONDON

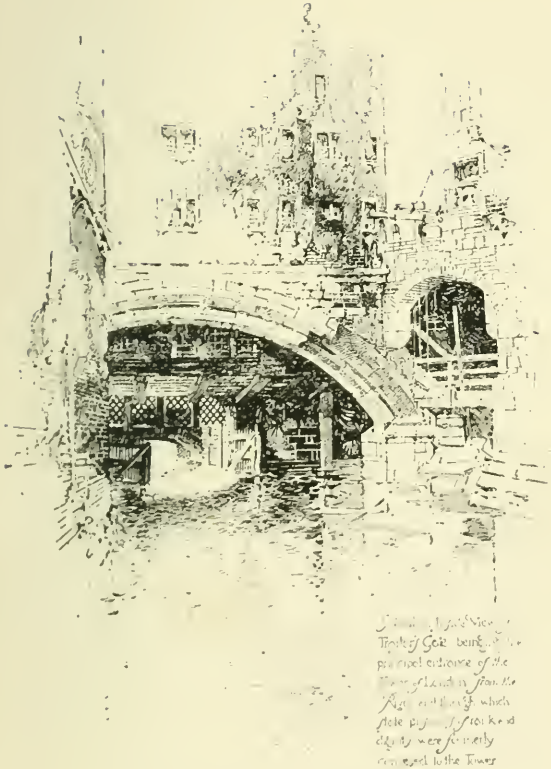
moat, I have looked with awe on its battlemented towers,—but I have never crossed the drawbridge.

To me it is the storehouse of mistakes—a place redolent with the memory of bygone blunders—where the great men of the nation, like Sir Thomas More, Archbishop Cranmer and Sir Walter Raleigh, and innocent, beautiful

things like the little Princes and Lady Jane Grey, were done to death. There must surely be left something of Lady Jane's agony when she saw the headless body of her young husband carried past her on the morning when she knew that she too was to die—something of the sickening sense of injustice that great men like Raleigh and More must have felt as their doom approached.

Of course, for less squeamish people there is an unending interest in the historical and architectural features of the Tower. It is open every week-day from ten to six in summer and ten to five in winter, and on Saturdays the fees to the White Tower and the Jewel House are not necessary. It is staffed by a constable, a lieutenant, a resident governor and about 100 yeomen warders called Beefeaters, all of which information, as well as the fact that the best way to reach it is from Mark Lane station on the Underground, is writ large in Mr. Muirhead's excellent Blue Book on London.

Writ more small are tales that almost make me want to go and see for myself the place where Charles d'Orleans, the royal French poet, who wrote such haunting songs as "Dieu qu'il la fait bon regarder," was held a prisoner for fifteen long years. Other things it seems besides murders happened in the Tower,—Henry the Eighth made two of his marriages here, James the First lived here for a time (a fact that does not mitigate my distaste for the Tower), and



TRAITOR'S GATE, TOWER OF LONDON

Charles the Second slept here the night before his coronation in 1661. No monarch has done that since his day. Then, if guide-books may be believed, there are hundreds of things in the armouries and weapon room and small-arms room, the cloak on which Wolfe died in far-off Quebec, a Grinling Gibbons carved head of Charles the Second, and armour and weapons of every period.

Most of these historic places are sepulchres of bygone crimes, but the Tower has known tragedy within its walls in these latter hideous years, for nearly a score of our enemies were put to death there in the Great War.

One or two of them were brave men, serving their country even as we served ours; one likes to think that they were treated as such. The story of Carl Lody has already been published, but I give it again because it redeems some of the Tower's tragic history.

I believe he had asked to be allowed to testify to the fair and just treatment he had received, and just before the shooting the German said to the Provost-Marshal: "I suppose you wouldn't care to shake hands with a spy?"—and the English answer came without hesitation, "I am proud to shake hands with a brave man."

CHAPTER V

ROUND ABOUT CHEAPSIDE

"O Cheapside! Cheapside! Truly thou art a wonderful place for hurry, noise and riches."—GEORGE BORROW.

CHEAPSIDE and Fleet Street have points of resemblance, for they are both narrow highways to the City, crowded and bustling and full of history, but Fleet Street, in spite of its literary associations, has not much attraction. Something of the mud of the old Fleet Ditch still seems to cling about it, some taint of disreputable Alsatia in Whitefriars, once the haven of roystering thieves and cut-throats, very different from the hive of grandiose newspaper offices that it is now.

But in Cheapside it is easy to call up memories of noisy apprentices and busy trafficking. Here is the home of the true Cockney, born within the sound of those bells of Bow Church that still chime as cheerfully as when Dick Whittington heard them from Highgate Hill, or when they summoned dilatory citizens to bed at nine o'clock. The very name evokes the idea of buying and selling, even if one does not know that the old word "chepe" means a market. It was once the shopping centre of the City of London, and the names of the streets branching

off on either side, Bread Street, Milk Street, Honey Lane and the rest, are the names of the various commodities that were sold there. Friday Street was so called from the fish to be bought there on a Friday. Round about, in Ironmonger Lane, Bucklersbury, and most of the streets on the northern side, busy artisans worked at their trades, and if we think it a noisy thoroughfare nowadays, what must it have been when it was paved with cobble-stones and thronged all day long with an endless stream of horsemen, carts and coaches, vociferating porters, citizens cheerful or quarrelling as the case might be, sellers calling their goods on either hand, and the bells of innumerable churches, priories and religious houses clanging incessantly to prayer. Always there was something going on in Chepe—a tournament to see, with stands set up at the side of Bow Church, or pageants, cavalcades and processions passing by. The London youth of those days had a diverting life. Read what Chaucer says of the prentice in Edward III.'s reign:

> At every bridale would he sing and hoppe;
> He loved bet the taverne than the shoppe—
> For when ther eny riding was in Chepe
> Out of the shoppe thider wold he lepe,
> And til that he had all the sight ysein,
> And danced wel, he wold not come agen.

We have most of us read in our history books of the "beau geste" of Queen Philippa, wife of Edward III., in saving the lives of the burghers

of Calais; this seems to have been a habit that started early with her. In 1330, just after the birth of the Black Prince, a tournament was held in Cheapside to celebrate the event, and a fine wooden tower erected to accommodate the young queen and her ladies. No sooner had they mounted than it collapsed. There was much screaming and a scene of terrible confusion, from which they all emerged, however, more frightened than hurt. The king was so enraged that he ordered the instant execution of the careless workmen, but Philippa, who might well have been even more annoyed, at once flung herself on her knees and pleaded for their pardon until the king forgave them.

But "Safety first" was a motto with King Edward, he wanted no more wooden scaffoldings. A stone platform was built, just in front of the old church of St. Mary-le-Bow (making it extremely dark on the street side), from which he and his court could view the tournaments with minds at peace; for centuries this was the regular royal stand, whenever there was a procession or other fine doings in the City. Look at Bow Church, that glory of Cheapside, the work of Sir Christopher Wren, and, in the stone gallery running round the graceful steeple, you will see how, ever mindful of tradition, he commemorated this fact when he built his new tower to flank the pavement adjoining the site of the old grand-stand.

When I last went into Bow Church I chatted

with the lady who was engaged in scrubbing the floor, and she told me the curious fact that in this English church in an English city, with its memories stretching through the ages (for it is built on the site of a much older one and you may still see the fine old Norman crypt), the Russians in London were then assembling, Sunday by Sunday, for a service in their own ritual, St. Mary's congregation amiably going to another church near by. The City Churches that were missed so sorely, after the Great Fire, by the merchants, tradesmen, shopkeepers, apprentices, with their families, maids and servants, who lived all round about them and dutifully worshipped there, now stand empty and neglected. Here and there, as in the tiny fourteenth-century church of St. Ethelburga's in Bishopsgate Street, the magnet of eloquent wisdom and sincerity draws men and women from all over London to worship, so that the seats are never empty, but in the majority of the City churches, a perfunctory service connotes a perfunctory congregation of caretakers and their wives, inhabitants of a quarter that is only populated in the working week-day hours. The best time to see any of the City churches is at the lunch hour, when they are sure to be open. In many of them short musical services are then held. I know few odder sensations than to walk in the City on a Sunday morning and hear all the sweet bells of the fifty-odd churches calling to prayer in the

silence of the solitary streets. Practical people would pull the half of them down and devote the money from the sale of their sites to other much-needed religious purposes. But, even if these little churches no longer serve their original object, they are still shrines of the past, each one with some special memory, some special charm, and typical all together of a great phase of English architecture.

There is little of this past now actually left in busy Cheapside, except No. 37, of which I shall speak presently, two tiny houses at the corner of Wood Street, the handsome seventeenth-century façade (restored, of course) of the Mercers' Chapel at the corner of Ironmonger Lane at the Lower Bank end, and No. 73 opposite, that was built by Wren for Sir William Turner who was Lord Mayor in 1668. It is still known as the Old Mansion House.

Probably it was his own house and he went on living in it till his death. Where, then, did the lord mayors stay officially during their term of office from that time till the present Mansion House was built in 1739? I am indebted to Mr. Leopold Wagner for supplying the answer by showing me the way to one of the most fascinating spots in the City. This third old Mansion House still exists, but in a corner so obscure, so tucked away, that I have passed within a stone's throw of it a dozen times and never had the least suspicion of its existence.

It is at No. 5, Bow Lane, hard by Bow Church,

in a narrow passage, with a sign directing you, if you are fortunate enough to see it, to Williamson's Hotel. Follow the passage and you will find yourself remote from the world, with the quaintest old creeper-clad Restoration house imaginable surrounding three sides of the courtyard. Yet this quiet spot was once the hub of civic life,—there is a stone let into the charming little octagonal-shaped parlour (now called the reading room) that is supposed to mark the very centre of the City. Here for a few years the lord mayors after Sir William Turner dwelt in state, and here came William III. and Mary to dine, and give, as a memento of their visit, the handsome iron gates, now much corroded and covered with thick green paint, through which you seek the entrance.

Later on, in the early seventeen hundreds, the original Williamson started his hotel. It would have been described as "high-class residential," had they known those terms, for in those days, when country squires and their families came up to town, they found the City as convenient a centre as anywhere. The forty bedrooms, the long salon, now a bar, where you may see, still hanging on the wall where it has been for centuries, an ancient map of London Bridge,—the pleasant rambling up-and-down passages, with their deep embrasures and window-seats, the low-ceilinged coffee-room with its only bell-pull marked "Boots," and

elegant little parlour where now no ladies ever sit,—all speak of a past of consequence.

But nowadays, apart from the birds of passage who pass a night in the huge station caravanserais, does anyone put up in the City? Only a few "commercials," such as I saw lunching at Williamson's, on the very excellent "ordinary" of lamb, green peas, new potatoes, cauliflower, cherry tart and cheese, winding up with coffee, liqueur and a fat cigar, over which they discuss the latest prices, and the latest sporting news. Williamson's, in fact, does not cope with modern notions—"Take it or leave it" is their motto. The all-invading business girl has not yet dared to put her nose in here—she would probably create a revolution if she did. But if you want to get right back into the atmosphere of Dickens, in a place where electric bells, smart waitresses, music, flappers and foolish ideas of the value of time are not, conscript a friend and take a meal at the Old Mansion House.

Coming out into Bow Lane, on the right, at the opposite corner where Watling Street crosses it, you will find the Old Watling Restaurant, one of the first houses built in London after the Great Fire: a very delightful example of its kind, with its dormer windows and heavy-beamed ceilings.

In Cheapside, at No. 37 at the corner of Friday Street, where Messrs. Meakers carry on a business appropriate enough to the shop that tradition

assigns to John Gilpin, is another house that claims, on the insufficient evidence of an undated cutting from the *Builder*, to have been standing even before the Fire.

Everything goes to refute this story. The very beautiful staircase dates from the Restoration period, the brickwork is similar to that of other buildings erected at this time, but, more than this, it is quite certain that the house stands on the site of the older "Nag's Head," a tavern with an overhanging timbered structure, that may be seen in a print of Cheapside showing the procession to welcome Marie de Medici when she came in 1638 to visit her daughter Henrietta Maria. The sign on the frontage now is no Nag's Head, but a Chained Swan, once the heraldic badge of King Henry IV., but debased, like so many other noble devices, to become the sign of a hostelry. Innkeepers were fond of calling their houses after the swan, for this poor bird has always had an undeserved reputation for being fond of strong drink; on the other hand, it holds a special place in English history, for when Edward III., jousting at Canterbury in 1349, put on his shield the device of a white swan with the motto:

> Hay, hay, the wythe Swan,
> By Gode's Soule I am thy man,

this was the very first time that the English tongue was used at Court since the Conquest, and the White Swan made fashionable a

language that has since spread all over the world.

At the sign of the "Chained Swan" is certainly the most interesting house in Cheapside. Quite probably it was really the first to be erected in the City after the Fire, as it is a four-storied house of some importance.

Cross the road to Wood Street, and, if you look through the railings at the back of the two diminutive shops that are shadowed by the great and famous plane-tree, you will see that they are built of the same red brick as No. 37 and bear a tablet with this inscription:

Erected at ye sole Cost and Charges,
of ye Parish of St. Peter's Cheape
Ao. Dni. 1687.

WILLIAM HOWARD, JEREMIAH TAVERNER, } *Churchwardens.*

The owners of these little houses are forbidden by their leases to add a second story, so the tree remains, bringing a breath of the country to City dwellers, reminding them of Wordsworth's thrush, whose habit of continuous singing used to amaze my childhood:

At the corner of Wood Street, when daylight appears
Hangs a thrush that sings loud, it has sung for three years.

In Wood Street lived Launcelot Young, that master glazier of peculiar tastes who, finding the head of James IV., the King of Scots who was slain at Flodden Field, among a lot of old

rubbish in the lumber room of the Duke of Suffolk's place at Sheen, took it home with him and kept it till it lost its novelty.

When I said that there is little to remind one of the past in Cheapside, I forgot the churches that crop up round every corner. They have a wealth of memories clustering about them, and the moment you dive into the narrow courts and passages off the beaten track, you will lose the sense of modernity. In the dark, queer little lanes, most of them with a public-house tucked away in some obscure corner, may be found the London of Dickens' day, if of no earlier. And what romance in the odd names—Gutter Lane, by Wood Street, named after Gutheran the Dane, who lived here before the time of the Conqueror; Huggin Lane that unites them farther up, called after one Hugan or Hugh; Addle Street, where King Adel the Saxon had a mansion; Love Lane of dissolute memory.

City Companies

"Thy famous Maire, by pryncely governaunce, with sword of justice thee ruleth prudently."—Dunbar.

Wandering in Cheapside, I came across some massive emblazoned coats-of-arms over great doorways, and found they always announced the halls of the City Companies of London, those great mediæval trade unions that survive to-day—so taken for granted by the

Londoner that few people remark their amazing existence.

Yet most of the real history of the old City is bound up with the tale of the rise to wealth and power of these great companies. They once numbered a hundred, and about seventy-six still survive. I see that in one recent guide-book the Pattenmakers are quoted as extinct, but though this ancient guild, founded in 1300, might be supposed to have received its death-blow a hundred years ago, when the improvement in the streets made pattens unnecessary, they are still made for country use and the company has recently renewed its vitality by association with the rubber boot and shoe industry.

I like the quaint names of the companies that are now no more. The occupation of the Bowyers and the Horners is fairly obvious, but who would guess that the Fletchers were makers of arrows, or the Lorriners makers of bridles and bits, and I leave you to discover the lugubrious meaning of the Worshipful Company of Upholders.

They were the trade unions of the Middle Ages, but they had this great difference, that they were a combination of the masters for the benefit of their particular industry, whereas now the trade unions are composed of the workmen, who combine for their own benefit even if it ruins the industry. Comparisons may be odious but they are inevitable. Our present

trade unions, which seem to be growing almost as powerful as their forerunners, are exclusively concerned with the question of wages, but the guilds, whilst jealously guarding the privileges of their members and craftsmen, not only guaranteed a fixed wage, but administered even-handed justice as between master and men, and, more important still, insisted on a high standard of workmanship. Nothing but the best satisfied them, and they built up the tradition of English excellence which our present distaste for honest work puts us in a fair way to lose.

For in this matter we compare badly with our forefathers. Their ruthless methods might well be copied in this age of the meretricious and shoddy. In 1311 there was a bonfire in Cheapside (at the instance of the Hatters' and Haberdashers' Company) of forty grey and white and fifteen black "bad and cheating hats," which had been seized in the shops of dishonest traders, and other defective goods were publicly burnt in the same place from time to time, but so rarely as to show how high was the usual standard of trade honesty. Nowadays, such seizures would provide almost enough fuel to tide us through another coal strike.

The City Companies were an autocracy, but, given the conditions of the time, they were a benevolent autocracy, and the guilds laid the foundations of the vast commercial wealth

which has made London what she is. For centuries the Lord Mayor, their civic head, has been chosen almost always from amongst the members of the twelve great companies, and enjoys a prestige abroad only second to that of the king, as anyone who has lived in France can testify. Trade in England has always been honourable. The merchants of the Middle Ages belonged almost exclusively to families of good position; often they were younger sons of the landed gentry, for whom a commercial life, in days when there were no engineers, journalists, or bankers, was the usual opening if they did not go into the Church or Law. Whittington was the son of a Gloucestershire knight: Sir Thomas Gresham, that finest type of City magnate and honoured friend of Elizabeth, came of a good old stock and was educated at Cambridge. For centuries our kings and queens have been pleased to come to banquets in the Guildhall and the halls of the greater companies, though they might not nowadays look favourably upon that lord mayor with whom Charles II. dined, who became so drunk that when the king got up to leave he rushed after him and dragged him back, good-naturedly protesting, " to finish t'other bottle."

The old power of the guilds has gone, but in what other country would you find bodies of merchants, each with a vast revenue at its disposal of which it need give account to no man, using that wealth, generation after genera-

GUILDHALL

tion, for the public good instead of for private profit? They spend it either in maintaining excellent schools or in generous gifts to various charitable objects, or in subscriptions for the advancement of science (the City Companies are responsible for the City and Guilds Institute), but in whatever they do they uphold the best traditions of integrity and generosity of the City merchant.

The centre of all this civic activity is the Guildhall. From Oxford Circus a tube to the Bank or any bus along Holborn takes you along Cheapside and past King Street, at the end of which you see the Guildhall. If you start from the neighbourhood of Charing Cross any train to the Mansion House brings you to Queen Victoria Street, out of which Queen Street, a few minutes' walk to your right, leads through directly to King Street.

Of course the great civic event of the year is the well-known and oft-described procession and the banquet given on the 9th November by the new lord mayor, chosen on Michaelmas Day, and the sheriffs to the members of the Cabinet and other distinguished guests. No women are permitted to be present and to hear the important political speeches often made at these dinners, but there are other times when their presence is tolerated. I have seen the big wooden figures of Gog and Magog in the gallery of the great hall look down on a recruiting meeting early in the war—on the gathering

of one of those organisations that now and then are the temporary guests of the City Corporation, and on the ceremony of presenting the Freedom of the City to an overseas Prime Minister.

The hall is open to the public at the usual hours, 10–5.30, so go in and nod to Gog and Magog and look at the fifteenth century two-light window in the south-west corner — the only old one in the hall.

Coming out of the Guildhall on the left is the passage leading to the Museum and the Library. The latter is a fascinating place, with less red tape about consulting the books than in any other place of the size in London. You simply write your name and the book you want on a slip of paper, and the affair is done. If you seek information on a certain point, and do not know where to find it, the courteous director and his no less willing staff take the greatest trouble to help. I went there lately on such a quest, and book after book was produced for me by three assistants till the director in charge, who had evidently been doing some private research on my behalf, appeared triumphantly with the volume that gave the solution to my problem. It is a long, pleasant room, as indeed all book-lined rooms must be, with seven book-lined bays on either side. The collection contains about 200,000 volumes, besides many manuscripts. If you are a Shakespearean enthusiast you will find there among its rare treasures, the first, second and

fourth folios of Shakespeare's plays and a document bearing Shakespeare's signature.

Naturally the library rather specialises on books about London, and the museum in the basement beneath (entered from Basinghall Street) is nearly filled with London relics — Roman antiquities, mediæval shop-signs, some of the lovely Jacobean jewellery found in Wood Street, the rest of which is in Lancaster House, instruments of torture from Newgate, and many other things that tell of the City life in mediæval days.

Round about and within a few minutes' walk of the Guildhall cluster the halls of the City Companies. The most important in the order of precedence are the Mercers, Grocers, Drapers, Fishmongers, Goldsmiths, Skinners, Merchant Taylors, Haberdashers, Salters, Ironmongers, Vintners and Clothworkers. Their halls are not supposed to be open to the general public, but it is possible to see most of them on application.

The history of the guilds is such a long one that their beginning is lost in Time's mist. Mr. Muirhead says that " the chief object of their foundation was to afford religious and temporal and social fellowship, and trade supervision and help to the members of their fraternity or mistery,"—but they were not incorporated till the reign of Edward. Most of their halls date from the days of Henry VIII., when, grown rich and powerful, they looked about them for a home and were glad to buy from the avaricious

king the houses of fugitive monks or favourites fallen into disgrace. But property so acquired was doomed to perish, and in the Great Fire of 1666 the ancient halls, almost without exception, were burnt to the ground. "Strange it is to see Clothworkers' Hall on fire, these three days and nights in one body of flame, it being the cellar full of oyle," says Pepys, who was a Master of the company. They have a fine collection of gold plate only used at state banquets, with a gold tray presented by Pepys in 1677 and also an immense loving-cup richly chased, that is now shown in a glass case on the sideboard, as it began to show signs of much handling.

The halls were rebuilt afterwards,—some, like the Vintners' in 68 Upper Thames Street, and possibly the Haberdashers' in Gresham Street, by Wren,—but by the beginning of the eighteen hundreds most of them seem to have fallen into such disrepair as to require rebuilding again.

One at least, the Merchant Taylors', the largest hall of all, which faces Threadneedle Street, stands as originally erected, with its little crypt beneath it, in the latter part of the fourteenth century, for though the roof and walls were damaged by the Great Fire, the main building is still intact. This is a rich and proud company, with its income of £60,000 a year, and its fine gallery of royalties and distinguished personages, numbering many kings among its freemen. Yet not so proud as the Mercers', first on the list, which will not admit visitors to its

hall in 87 Cheapside. Whittington and Sir Thomas Gresham were mercers. Within the walls is kept the famous Legh cup (1499), always used at City banquets and supposed to be one of the finest pieces of English mediæval plate in existence. The chapel adjoining the hall, whose handsome front, erected immediately after the Great Fire, you may inspect at any rate, is on the site of Thomas à Becket's house.

Close by in Prince's Street, opposite the Bank of England, is the hall of the Grocers, once called the Pepperers, a guild with advanced notions for the Middle Ages, for they apparently believed in the equality of women. The wives of the Grocers were members as well, and were even fined if they were absent from the banquets for any avoidable reason. "Grocer" is one of those words that have grown less honourable with time, for a grocer formerly meant one who dealt *en gros* (wholesale).

The halls of the Goldsmiths' and the Fishmongers' Companies have so many mediæval relics that they well repay a visit, and a card of admission is usually granted on application. The Goldsmiths are in Foster Lane, Cheapside, just behind the G.P.O., and amongst their plate you may see the cup from which Queen Elizabeth is said to have drunk at her coronation. In the Court Room is an old Roman altar, found when the present foundations were dug. The Goldsmiths still keep their ancient privilege of assaying and stamping all articles of gold

and silver manufacture in Great Britain, just as the Fishmongers still have the less remunerative right to "enter and seize bad fish." The hall of this guild is, appropriately enough, on the banks of the river, just at the north end of London Bridge, and in one of the rooms is a chair made out of the first pile driven in the construction of Old London Bridge, said to have been under the water for 650 years.

The hall of the Stationers' Company in Paternoster Row was stone-faced a mere 121 years ago, but the attics still have horn-paned windows and part of it was built before the Great Fire. Visitors are shown the hall and the old relics, and every good American likes to see the compositor's stick that Benjamin Franklin used when he came to London as a journeyman printer and lived in Bartholomew Close.

Stationers' Hall is the headquarters of the Royal Literary Fund for assisting Authors in Distress, and among their treasures are the daggers used by Col. Blood and his accomplice when they tried to steal the crown jewels in Charles II.'s reign.

Most of the bare facts about the other chief companies can be found in any London guidebook, but if a reader wants to know more of these interesting survivals of the day when the craftsman loved his craft, he will find a detailed account in Mr. P. H. Ditchfield's *The City Companies of London*, 1904, and Mr. George Unwin's *The Gilds and Companies of London*.

CHAPTER VI

ROUND ABOUT HOLBORN

" Yet London lacks not poetry,
She has her voices, whose deep tones
Are human laughter and human moans,
And all her beauty, all her glory,
Spring from or blend with man's strange story."

MAXWELL GRAY.

TAKE that chilly-sounding gateway, the Marble Arch, as a *point de départ* for a walk some idle afternoon, and I will show you what I found the day I turned my back on it. It looks as bored by its inactivity as Théophile Gautier's Obélisque; perhaps it regrets the days when it faced Buckingham Palace and feels it came down in the world when it was moved to its present position some seventy years ago.

And that, too, is another indignity. Very many people ask why the Marble Arch is stranded all by itself, like a rock from which the flood has receded. The reason is as simple as most utilitarian things. The press of traffic at the Marble Arch was so great that the space had to be widened. It would have been too costly a matter to move the Marble Arch back, so the park railings were moved and the Arch left high and dry, no longer a gateway but only an object of interest.

I grant you that at first sight the Oxford Street and Holborn of to-day have a blatantly modern look. There is little to remind one in the kaleidoscopic vista of badly-dressed shop windows, gaudy buildings and dingy offices, that Roman soldiers once tramped along this very road. It took about a thousand years from the time that Agricola recalled his Roman legions from England for the discomfort of the Holborn mudholes to become unendurable, and for Henry V. to follow in 1417 the earlier example of his French *confrère* Philippe Auguste and cause the king's highway to be paved at his expense. The paving does not seem to have been kept in good repair, for the garrulous Pepys says, 250 years later, that the king's coach was overturned in Holborn.

Travellers along Holborn, at the other end of the social scale, shared in the royal benefit, for from 1196 to 1783 condemned criminals were brought in carts from Newgate Prison to Tyburn Tree. Everyone has heard of the famous gallows, but few people know that the exact spot where it stood is marked to-day by a triangular stone set in the roadway, almost opposite the beginning of the Edgware Road. A bronze plate on the railings of the Park, on the other side of the road, commemorates the fact, but if both stone and plate elude you, the friendly policeman who is always on duty here will point them out.

From the Marble Arch to Holborn there is nothing to look at but interminable shops till

you come to the quaint old houses of Staple Inn, as disdainfully out of keeping with their vulgar surroundings as an orchid would be in an onion bed.

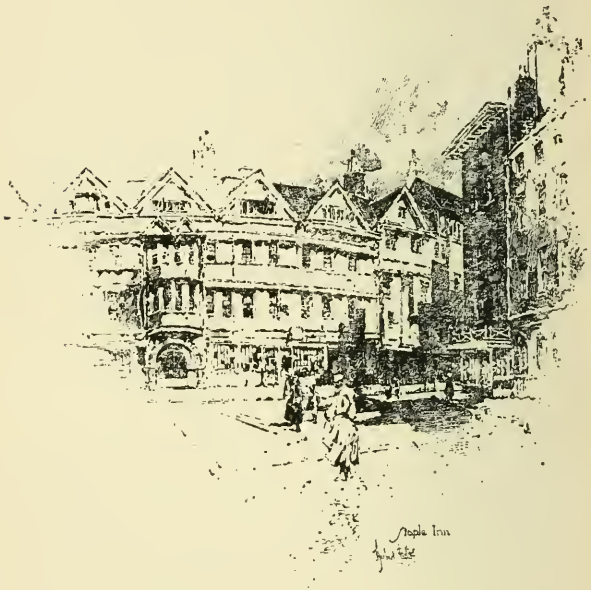
Staple Inn

"I went astray in Holborn through an arched entrance, over which was Staple Inn."—Hawthorne.

Staple Inn is one of the most delicious things in London. Out of the roar and hurry of Holborn you pass through the old Jacobean gateway with the façade of oaken beams into the tranquil old-world court where the noise suddenly dies away, and you can sit peacefully under the shade of the plane-trees, as far removed from the bustle and racket without the gate as if you had been suddenly transported a hundred miles on a magician's carpet. From a kindly porter may be bought, for one shilling and sixpence, a delightful little history of this "fayrest Inne of Chancerie," where Johnson wrote his *Rasselas* in a week, to pay for the expenses of his mother's funeral.

When you are tired of sitting quietly in this "veriest home of peace," go across the courtyard to the hall of the Inn and look at the carved oaken roof and the grotesque ornaments, at the Grinling Gibbons clock-case and the old stained glass windows, and before you leave Staple Inn go through the second court and look at the old sunk garden that is so unconcernedly green in the very heart of this big city. At the back of the

Patent Offices that make the southern boundary of Staple Inn is Took's Court—the Cook's Court where Mr. Snagsby of *Bleak House* lived—once a



place of those curious semi-prisons called sponging-houses that were like debtors' boarding-houses with the bailiff for the landlord.

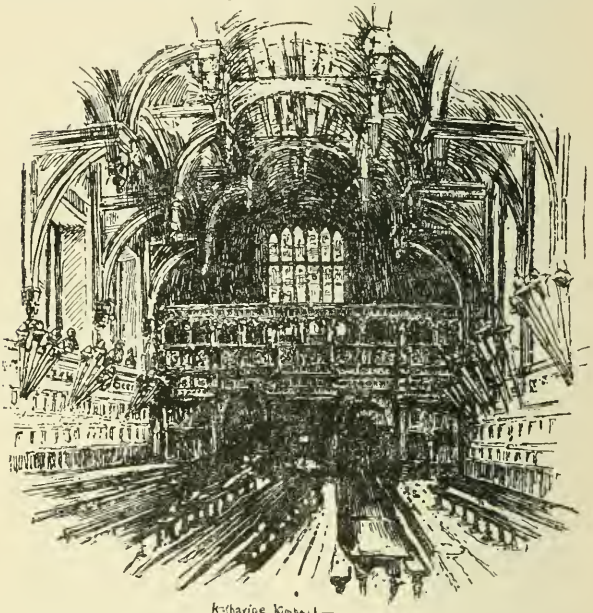
Took's Court is a sordid enough place now, and some of it may soon disappear, but it has a vicarious interest because Sheridan spent some of the last years of his life in a sponging-house here.

Gray's Inn

" Whene'er through Gray's Inn porch I stray
I meet a spirit by the way;
I roam beneath the ancient trees,
And talk with him of mysteries;
He tells me truly what I am—
I walk with mighty Verulam."

Gray's Inn, another of the gracious, leisurely London corners that few of London's visitors discover, lies to the north of Holborn in the Gray's Inn Road. Any of the buses along Holborn will take you there, and it is only a few minutes' walk behind Chancery Lane Station on the Central London Railway. You could once wander in the old gardens more freely than in the other Inns, and if you slipped his *Essays* in your pocket could read what Sir Francis Bacon wrote about gardens in the very garden that he made. Bacon was once Treasurer of Gray's Inn and he interested himself in the laying out of " the purest of human pleasures " that he found there. Gray's Inn Gardens used to be as fashionable a place for a walk as Hyde Park is to-day. Pepys the Chatterer related the doings of numberless people when he wrote: " When church was done my wife and I walked to Gray's Inn to observe fashions of the ladies, because of my wife's making some clothes." Pepys must have gone there very often, for two months later the frivolous Secretary wrote: " I was very well pleased with the sight of a fine lady that I have often seen walk in Gray's Inn Walks."

Times have changed and fine ladies are no longer allowed to walk in Gray's Inn Gardens, unless indeed they have relations among the



GRAY'S INN HALL

benchers who are complaisant in the matter of keys.

The Hall is the oldest and most beautiful thing in Gray's Inn. Queen Elizabeth once came to a banquet here, and it was here that the *Comedy of Errors* was first performed. The old Inn has

had many famous names among its members, the Sydneys, Cecils, Bacons, etc., and a man no less distinguished in another circle, Jacob Tonson, had his first bookshop just inside Gray's Inn Gate.

The old bookseller and publisher's name has a very modern interest, even for the London visitor who never turns the pages of Pope or Walpole, because his house at Barn Elms is now used as the Ranelagh Club. The people who go out to Ranelagh of a fine afternoon to drink tea and watch the polo, are following the footsteps of the members of the famous Kit-Cat Club founded in 1700, it is popularly supposed as an outcome of the dinners Tonson offered to his patrons. The club, of which Tonson became secretary, consisted of thirty-nine members—authors, wits and noblemen—their portraits hang in the halls of the Ranelagh Club to-day.

Tonson published for Addison and Pope, and was the first man to print cheap editions of Shakespeare. He had innumerable friends, and his portrait shows him as a genial creature who must have merited the description of him, written in 1714, that I found in *Old and New London*:

> While in your early days of reputation,
> You for blue garters had not such a passion;
> While yet you did not live, as now your trade is,
> To drink with noble lords and toast their ladies,
> Thou, Jacob Tonson, were to my conceiving,
> The cheerfullest, best, honest fellow living."

Tonson moved from the Gray's Inn Gateway in 1712 to his more celebrated bookshop in the Strand that stood on part of the present site of Somerset House. I hear that another old landmark connected with this prince of publishers is doomed to disappear, for the Upper Flask, in Heath Street, Hampstead, that was known in Tonson's day as the "Upper Bowling Green House," used as the summer quarters of the Kit-Cat Club, may have to give way to the new buildings of some philanthropic institution.

Gray's Inn takes its name from the Grays of Wilton. There is a document registering the transferring in 1505 of the "Manor of Portpoole, otherwise called Gray's Inn" from Edmund Lord Gray of Wilton to a Mr. Denny. The public, alas, are never admitted to the Gardens, but any visitor may see the Hall on a week-day between the hours of 10 and 12.15.

Hatton Garden

"My Lord of Ely, when I was last in Holborn,
I saw good strawberries in your garden there."
Richard III.

Staple Inn and Gray's Inn are not the only old-world souvenirs to be found in prosaic Holborn. A little further east, on the left-hand side as one strolls towards the City, lies another sordid street whose name is redolent of Elizabethan romance.

Hatton Garden, named after the queen's

handsome chancellor and now the haunt of the diamond and pearl merchant, and also of organ-grinders and ice-cream vendors, is built on the site of the gardens of Ely Palace, the town house of the Bishops of Ely whose story is noted on another page. Round the corner is Ely Place, the most astonishing little square in London.

If you pass this spot on the stroke of the hour after ten o'clock on a summer's evening, you may well rub your eyes and wonder if time has been rolled back and you are suddenly living in the London of two centuries ago. For the iron gates of the little place are closed, and out of the tiny porter's lodge in the middle comes an important person with a gold-laced hat, who solemnly makes the tour of the square, crying five or six times, "Past ten o'clock and all's well!"

The crying of the hours by the night watchman is not the only custom of this old-world corner, so carefully guarded by the commissioners in whose hands the rights of Ely Place are vested. The little square, now given over to law offices and business premises, was once a "sanctuary," a place where law-breakers could take refuge and where the civil authorities had no right of arrest. To this day the caretakers who form the bulk of the resident population of Ely Place are inordinately proud of the fact that they are independent of police protection, having their own standing army of three porters,

who take eight-hour turns in guarding the tranquillity of their self-contained domain.

They even have a public-house of their very own, for in the tiny passage that connects Ely Place with Hatton Garden is a dim little inn of dubious antiquity, that takes its name of the "Mitre" from the carved stone mitre set in the façade which once formed part of the old palace of the bishops of Ely. The innkeeper is very proud of the remains of a Methuselah of a cherry-tree now incorporated in one corner of the house. You can see the whitewashed remains of the tree that may have shaded good Queen Bess if you peer through the left-hand corner window.

At ten of the clock the iron gate leading into Hatton Garden is duly fastened, and the "Mitre" is closed to the outside world.

I have kept the best and most amazing of the treasures of Ely Place until the last.

Walk down the left-hand side of the square to the far corner, and you will find your way into one of the most beautiful things in London, —a thirteenth century chapel practically intact. It is so beautiful that if it were necessary to pay a high entrance fee or write for cards of admission, it would probably be the Mecca of every artist and antiquarian. But since it is in London, prodigal of such treasures, and anyone may walk in and look at its beauty undisturbed at any hour, St. Etheldreda's Chapel is only known to a few people.

It was built in the last decade of the thirteenth century by a certain Bishop de Luda, as the chapel for Ely House, the town residence of the bishops of Ely.

John of Gaunt took refuge here and must have heard mass within these very walls. Shakespeare reminds us, in *Richard II.*, of John of Gaunt's death in Ely House, and it was in these cloisters that Henry VIII. first met with Cranmer. Queen Elizabeth's chancellor, Sir Christopher Hatton, worshipped here till his unlucky tenancy of Ely House was ended by his death in 1591, and so did his nephew's imperious widow, the famous Lady Hatton who married and flouted Sir Edward Coke, the great lawyer and rival of Bacon for her hand.

It was at "Elie House in Holborne" in the reign of James I. that the last mystery play was represented in England, before the Spanish Ambassador Gondemar, who was a next-door neighbour to Ely Palace. The later history of the chapel may be briefly told. When the bishops finally sold the property to the Crown in 1772 and betook themselves to Dover Street, it was bought by an architect who preserved the chapel for the use of the residents of the houses he built in Ely Place. Afterwards it passed through several hands, being finally bought by the Fathers of Charity from the Welsh Episcopalians in 1871. When the work of restoration was finished, St. Etheldreda's, the only pre-Reformation place of worship restored to the

Roman Catholic Church, was reopened on St. Etheldreda's Day, the 23rd of June, 1876.

St. Sepulchre's

"Here lies one conquered that hath conquered kings."
Epitaph to Capt. John Smith, 1631.

A little further along Holborn, in Giltspur Street, you come to the old Church of St. Sepulchre, where we meet again the Tyburn prisoners. Everybody who has heard the *Beggar's Opera* (and who has not?) will remember the picture Polly Peachum draws of Macheath on the road to Tyburn: "Methinks I see him already in the cart, sweeter and more lovely than the nosegay in his hand." It was at St. Sepulchre's that the amorous highwayman would have got his nosegay, on the steps of the church, for an old benefactor had left money to provide flowers for every criminal going to be hanged. It was St. Sepulchre's bell that tolled the hour of their hanging, and another legacy provided for an admonition and prayers for the condemned.

There are more cheerful memories connected with the old church. There is a mention of it in the twelfth century records. It was rebuilt in the middle of the fifteenth century—the south-west porch still remains a thing of beauty—and after it was nearly destroyed in the Great Fire in 1666, Wren practically rebuilt the church with its four weathercocks, whose

differences of opinion about the wind gave rise to the saying of Howell: "Unreasonable people are as hard to reconcile as the vanes of St. Sepulchre's tower."

Two very noteworthy Elizabethans lie buried in St. Sepulchre's, one a scholar, the other a brilliant adventurer. The former was Roger Ascham, the queen's tutor, and the latter, Captain John Smith, "sometime Governor of Virginia and Admiral of New England," of Pocahontas fame. Captain Smith's adventures in America have rather overshadowed his earlier exploits. Mr. Walter Thornbury, in his wonderful *Old and New London*, tells that he fought in Hungary in 1602, and in three single combats overcame three Turks and cut off their heads, for which and other equally brave deeds Sigismund, Duke of Transylvania, gave him his picture set in gold with a pension of three hundred ducats, and allowed him to bear three Turks' heads proper as his shield of arms. Pocahontas, who you remember found the English climate too much for her, lies buried in the parish church of St. George, Gravesend. In 1914 the Society of Virginian Dames placed two stained glass windows to honour her memory.

Stone Effigies

Not the least of the quaint things that the seeing eye may note in London streets are the small statues and reliefs that give an odd variety to some of the houses.

At No. 78, Newgate Street, five minutes' walk from St. Sepulchre's, and on the same side of the road, is a bas-relief (probably an old shop-sign) of a giant and a dwarf. These were William Evans and Sir Jeffery Hudson, freaks whom it pleased Charles II. to keep about him at the Court, as readers of *Peveril of the Peak* will remember.

Just opposite is Panier Alley, so called from the basket-makers who once lived here. On the left, cased in glass in order to preserve it from the weather, is a somewhat battered effigy of a fat boy sitting upon a panier, and, underneath, this inscription:

> When ye have sought the citty round,
> Yet still this is the highest ground.
> August the 27th, 1688.

It was put up a few years after the Great Fire, that landmark in the history of the City. I am told its claim is not strictly founded on fact, and that part of Cannon Street is a few feet higher, but one would like to believe the cherub.

Another bas-relief of a fat boy, at the corner of Cock Lane, even nearer to St. Sepulchre's, I mention in another chapter, and there is a quaint old vintner's sign of an infant Bacchus on a barrel, to be found at the junction of Liverpool Street and Manchester Street, in the rather depressing vicinity of King's Cross. It is believed to be the only one of its kind left in London.

LINCOLN'S INN

CHAPTER VII

DOWN CHANCERY LANE

Lincoln's Inn Fields

"London, Michaelmas term lately over, and the Lord Chancellor sitting in Lincoln's Inn Hall.—Dickens.

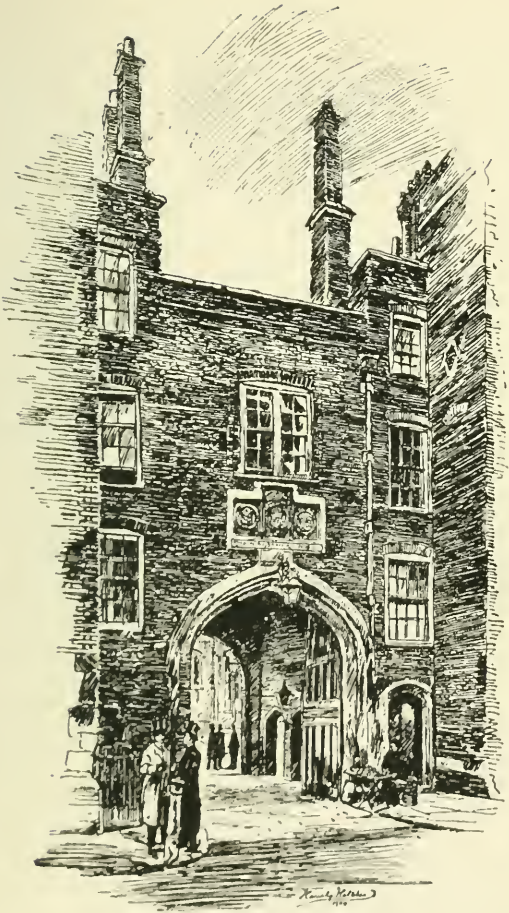
The charming rustic-sounding name of Lincoln's Inn Fields is known to everyone — did not Mr. Tulkinghorne live there?—but few people stray into the old square except those who are at odds with their neighbours and come to consult the men of law living there, as they did in Dickens' day. The habitués come from Kingsway through Great Queen Street or Sardinia Street—the stranger takes the Piccadilly Tube to Holborn Station and, turning to the right along High Holborn, follows the first passage on the south side of the street that almost manages to conceal itself behind a protruding house.

This narrow winding Little Turnstile, and the Great Turnstile, a short distance farther along, are the only entrances from the north to Lincoln's Inn Fields. An ugly lane, connecting these two passages and parallel with Holborn, is dignified by the disconcerting name of Whetstone Park. To-day it is only a row of stables,

but Milton once had a lodging in one of the houses, that were always squalid and *mal habitées*, as Dryden's plays attest.

Coming out of the tortuous Little Turnstile, you enter the spacious square of Lincoln's Inn Fields. The very name is alluring enough to make anyone want to go there, but there is nothing about the gardens to-day to show that they are among the oldest in London. They are as trim and well cared for as if they had been laid out yesterday. "Well cared for" means that all the pleasant green lawns and shady plane-trees are jealously railed off from the public, who loll somnolently on the many benches, their back turned to the lovely green oasis. It does not occur to any of the Fields' frequenters to turn some of the seats round, so that they will have a more refreshing view than the dusty asphalt of the wide paths or the uninspiring sight of the slumbers of the unemployed, some of whom look as if they had slipped out of the frames of the Hogarth pictures in the Soane Museum.

It must be confessed that the interest of Lincoln's Inn Fields lies not so much in the gardens—modernised out of every semblance of their seventeenth-century appearance—as in the beautiful old houses surrounding them—noble, dignified mansions some of those on the west side, built by Inigo Jones and once owned by Milords of Lindsay, Somers and Erskine. At the South Kensington Museum there is a



LINCOLN'S INN GATEWAY

wonderful panelled staircase, a perfect specimen of its kind, that formerly graced the hall of No. 35.

Lindsay House, now Nos. 59 and 60, one of the Inigo Jones houses, was built for the Earl of Lindsay, who died fighting for Charles I. at Edgehill. Peter Cunningham says that it was called Ancaster House when the fourth earl was created Duke of Ancaster, and that he sold it to the proud Duke of Somerset—I do not know why Mr. Cunningham insists on his pride in italics—who married the widow of the Mr. Thomas Thynne whose murder by Count Koenigsmarck is so dramatically portrayed on his tomb in Westminster Abbey.

No. 66, at the corner of Great Queen Street, was once occupied by the Duke of Newcastle, George II.'s prime minister.

We have travelled far searching for freedom in the last 250 years and one would like to know how the Wellsian attitude is regarded by the ghost of the creator of this old house—the Marquis of Powis, who built it in 1686, before he was outlawed by William and Mary because of his loyalty to James II. He probably chose the site because it was near the chapel of the Sardinian Ambassador—the oldest Roman Catholic chapel in London—where the Roman Catholics used to go when they were deprived of their churches, and where Fanny Burney was married in 1793. It was removed, unluckily, in 1910.

There have been poets, too, in Lincoln's Inn Fields, before the men of law took possession.

Milton and Thomas Campbell lived at No. 61 and Lord Tennyson at No. 58, where, you remember, Mr. Tulkinghorne of *Bleak House* had his rooms.

It is a house also haunted with memories of Nell Gwynne, for she had lodgings here and gave birth to the first Duke of St. Albans, while she was still acting in the nearby theatre in Portugal Row!

This Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre stood just at the back of the Royal College of Surgeons, on the south side of the square. Three theatres called the Duke's Theatre were successively built on the same spot. The first one was a pioneer in its way, for it was here that regular stage scenery was introduced in England and that women's parts were first played by women. The ubiquitous Pepys was a regular frequenter of the theatre, and duly recorded his meeting with Nell Gwynne and that here he saw *Hamlet* played for the first time.

Though it is seventy-three years since the last theatre was taken down to enlarge the museum of the Royal College of Surgeons, and there is nothing to be seen of it to-day, I like to keep its memory green because it was here, on the night of January 29th, 1728, nearly two hundred years ago, that Lavinia Fenton, the first Polly Peachum, sang herself into the heart of the Duke of Bolton, when John Rich produced Mr. Gay's *Beggar's Opera*. It ran for sixty-two nights in one season and made " Gay rich and Rich gay."

Soane Museum

"Thus the great city, towered and steepled,
Is doubly peopled,
Haunted by ghosts of the remembered past."
London Poems.

There is one museum in London that I do not want to call a museum because in some ways it is so unlike one. Very few people ever go there. It is like the palace of the Sleeping Beauty. If you shut your eyes at the south-west corner of Lincoln's Inn Fields and try not to notice the tentacular Lyons that unblushingly intrudes its smug modern shopfront into this old-world square, but stroll through the gardens to the north side, you will see the Soane Museum at No. 13. This is one of the most curious and neglected corners I have found in London. There are priceless things here like Hogarth's *Rake's Progress*, but for every hundred visitors who go to the National Gallery of British Art to see the *Marriage à la Mode* only one comes to this quaint caravanserai of all sorts of objects.

Sir John Soane must surely have been the most agreeable bricklayer's son who ever made his fortune as a great architect and had a pretty taste in art. You have only to look at his portrait by Lawrence, one of the last that great painter finished, to see what a kindly, benevolent man he was. Why, oh why, did he exact that his collection should remain unaltered! I know that the guide-books all extol the ingenuity

with which so many things have been fitted into a small space, but if only one could sweep away the superfluous and unnecessary and rearrange the house like a perfect specimen of a home of the period, with the great pictures hung to the best advantage in the largest rooms and the basement reserved for the sarcophagus in its present place, with the best of the larger treasures that would be incongruous in the upper rooms! As it is, you must diligently hunt for what you want to see, for the delightful catalogue is more useful as a souvenir than a present help in finding anything.

There are things of human interest, like the watch Queen Anne gave to Sir Christopher Wren, or the pistol that Peter the Great collared from a Turkish Bey in 1696, that Alexander I. gave to Napoleon at Tilsit in 1807, and that Sir John Soane provokingly says he purchased under very peculiar circumstances—or the flamboyant jewel of Charles I. found among the royal baggage after the battle of Naseby—or Rousseau's autograph letter—or those exquisite old books of Hours richly illuminated and written with such patient skill by some old Flemish monk five hundred years ago.

But the jewels of this unnoticed casket are the pictures. The courteous guardians, who all look like retired librarians, show with a certain melancholy pride the way to the tiny room where hang Turner's fine painting of *Van Tromp's Barge* and two of his water-colours,

Watteau's *Les Noces,* and the greatest treasures of the whole collection, Hogarth's pictures of *The Rake's Progress* and the four big canvases of *The Election.*

Besides all this there are wonderful Flemish wood carvings and manuscripts, and, in the crypt, the interesting three-thousand-year-old tomb of Seti I., King of Egypt, whose inscriptions Sir John did not live to see deciphered.

There was an air of wistfulness about the place. It had been arranged with so much loving care, and so few people profit by it though the reward of going is great.

Perhaps Sir John Soane did not want anybody but art-lovers to see his collection, or he would surely not have closed it to the public on Saturday, Sunday and Monday all the year round and for the entire months of September, December, January and February. It is true that students and other visitors may apply to the curator for admission at other times, and foreigners are admitted on presentation of their visiting card on any day except Sunday and Bank Holidays, but what Londoner, with richer collections open every day in the week, could be expected to remember the capriciousness of the guardians of Sir John Soane's treasures, who are like the suburban hostess announcing her reception days as first and third Tuesdays and fifth Friday? In despair of remembering when the good lady was at home, you would never call on her. No, if you want to see the Hogarths,

my advice is to wrap yourself in the cloak of a foreigner and present your card at the door of this neglected London museum between the hours of ten and five.

Lincoln's Inn

"The Walks of Lincoln's Inn
Under the Elms."

Ben Jonson.

Lincoln's Inn Fields are bordered on the east side by Lincoln's Inn, but I like better to approach the old squares by the brick gate-house in Chancery Lane. It is the oldest part of Lincoln's Inn, and a very fine example of Tudor brickwork. The Sir Thomas Lovel who built it in 1518 put his own arms over the gateway, never dreaming that when his name would mean nothing to the passer-by, the name of a bricklayer, one Ben Jonson who worked, with a trowel in one hand and a book in the other, at the adjoining buildings about a hundred years later, would need no coat of arms to preserve his memory. People like Mr. Muirhead, who see things in the light of cold reason, argue that in 1617 Jonson was forty-four and already famous, so he had probably laid down the trowel, —but I prefer to believe old Fuller, who said Ben Jonson helped in the building of the new structure in Lincoln's Inn.

There are four of these old Inns of Court, that have lasted since the thirteenth century—

the Inner Temple, the Middle Temple, Lincoln's Inn and Gray's Inn. Few visitors to London go out of their way to stroll in their shady courtyards, but there are not many corners of London where you can so easily shake off the oppression of the blare of machinery and recapture the spirit of a time when the study of the law was not thought incompatible with many pleasanter, more frivolous things.

One old chronicler says: "There is both in the Inns of Court and the Inns of Chancery, a sort of academy or gymnasium where they learn singing and all kinds of music, and such other accomplishments and diversions (which are called revels) as are suitable to their quality and usually practised at court. All vice is discouraged and banished. The greatest nobility of the kingdom often place their children in those Inns of Court—not so much as to make the law their study but to form their manners."

I have no predilection for the legal profession, being, like most of my kind, filled with amazement at the lack of logic and the crass inconsequences that attend the administration of justice in any country. In fact I have a fellow-feeling for Peter the Great, who knew his own mind and had no herd opinions. When he was taken into Westminster Hall, he inquired who those busy people were in wigs and black gowns. He was answered, "They are lawyers." "Lawyers?" said he, with a face of astonishment "Why, I have but two in my whole dominions,

and I believe I shall hang one of them the moment I get home."

I suppose in no country in the world is the study and practice of the law surrounded with such debonair amenities as in London. Who would not be a lawyer, since that profession is the Open Sesame to shady gardens, lodgings in history-haunted rooms, and a prideful possession in such rare buildings as the Church of the Knights Templars?

Lincoln's Inn takes its name from a thirteenth century Henry de Lacy, Earl of Lincoln, who had a mansion in Chancery Lane near the first church of the Knights Templars. His arms are carved over the brick gateway, separated from those of the builder, Sir Thomas Lovel, by the royal arms of England. None of the existing buildings are later than Tudor times.

The old Inn has had many illustrious members, lodgers and visitors. Oliver Cromwell used to come here to see Thurloe, his secretary of state, who lived at 24 Old Buildings, and there is the story of how he nearly killed a young clerk he found apparently asleep when he had been plotting with Thurloe to seize Prince Charles. Thurloe dissuaded him by passing a lighted candle before the young man's eyes to prove he was really asleep, and the clerk lived to warn the prince, who when he became king paid several visits to Lincoln's Inn. Both Pepys and Evelyn record his presence at the "revels," when learning was encouraged by

indulgence in dancing. In the Admittance Book are the signatures of Charles II., the Duke of York, Prince Rupert and the Duke of Monmouth, written in 1671.

Dr. John Donne and Sir Thomas More were both connected with Lincoln's Inn. Dr. Donne laid the foundation-stone and preached the consecration sermon of the chapel that Inigo Jones designed in 1623, since so disastrously restored. It is built on arches, so you can walk about under the Gothic roof, as Pepys said he did "by agreement" on the 27th of June, 1663, but you will not see the six seventeenth-century windows, for they were shattered by an explosion in October, 1915.

Sir Thomas More has a more intimate connection with the Inn, for his father and grandfather held the office of butler and steward, and for their long and faithful services were rewarded by admission into the Society of Lincoln's Inn and by the much-prized office of Reader.

The wonderful law library is now housed in the new red-brick hall, decorated with Watts' fresco of "The Lawgivers of the World," but the old hall built about 400 years ago is still in use, though it, too, has suffered from the hands of the restorer.

Only the benchers and members of Lincoln's Inn may use the elm-shaded gardens. They not only fulfil Pepys' prophecy that they would be very pretty, but they had a useful war record, as a memorial tablet shows.

I am told that the Curfew is still rung at Lincoln's Inn. At a quarter to nine each evening the chief porter climbs to the tower of the chapel and when the hour has struck he sounds the curfew fifty times. The bell used was brought from Cadiz by the Earl of Essex in 1596.

Record Office

"Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty."

Wordsworth.

Coming out into Chancery Lane once more and turning down towards Fleet Street, you will see on your left a huge grey building in Tudor style, where once stood the House of the Converts.

It was called by that name when Henry III. founded a House in 1232 to receive converted Jews. I hardly like to tell you that the present name is the Record Office. It is too pompous and official-sounding, and perhaps that is why people pass the House of the Converts never suspecting the presence of the entrancing, memory-evoking things within.

You enter the enchanted room by descending a short flight of stone steps, after going through a forbidding portal and along a green sward into a modern grey building in one of the very busiest of the London streets.

You will know why I call it an enchanted room as soon as you see the beautiful chapel-

like precincts named the House of the Converts nearly 700 years ago, before it was used from Edward III.'s time as the Chapel of the Rolls.

The stained glass windows give a mellow light to the admirable Torrigiano monument of a sixteenth century Master of the Rolls and the delicately carved alabaster tomb of Richard Alington and his wife Jane. Near by is the recumbent figure of another Master, with the little figures of his children kneeling below, one of them the little daughter born on Christmas Day and married when she was only twelve years old, "a pretty red-headed wench," to William Cavendish, afterwards Earl of Devonshire, in the year of grace 1608.

There are all sorts of other treasures in this mysterious room, that is open to all comers between the hours of two and four, any day in the week except, alas, Saturday or Sunday.

You may look on the handwriting of "Jane the Quene," in one of the very few documents signed by Lady Jane Grey during her nine days' reign, or read the pathetic letter written by Mary Queen of Scots to Sir William Cecil, "Mester Cessilles," she calls him in the queer Scottish-English sometimes used by "yowr richt asured good friend, Marie R."

For here are guarded poignant souvenirs of long-dead men and women, of whose sorrows and anguish of mind nothing is left but the yellowing paper covered with the almost illegible writing of their times. You will find the cry of

Sir Philip Sidney to Jaen Wyer the Court surgeon of His Highness of Cleves, written when he lay dying from his wound at the battle of Zutphen: "Come, my Weier, come. I am in danger of my life and I want you here. Neither living or dead shall I be ungrateful. I can write no more, but I earnestly pray you to make haste. Farewell. At Arnem. Yours, Ph. Sidney." And Sir Walter Raleigh's letter to Queen Anne, the wife of James the First, where he says: "My extreme shortness of breath doth grow fast on me, with the dispayre of obtayning so mich grace to walke with my keeper up the hill within the Tower."

The letters are not all sorrowful, but they all have the power to breathe life into the dry bones of history. Not far from the heart-felt appeal of the great Cardinal Wolsey to Henry VIII., praying for "grace, mercy, remissyon and pardon," and signed "Your Graces moste prostrat poor chapleyn, creature, and bedisman," is a letter from ten-year-old William of Orange, quaint letters from Leicester and Essex to their fickle queen, and a dignified epistle, lamenting the outbreak of war between France and England, but renouncing his fealty and homage to Richard II., from a fourteenth century member of that noble Picardie family whose proud device was:

Roy ne suis,
ne prince ne duc,
ne comte aussy:
Je suis sire de Coucy.

Old letters are not the only treasures in this corner belonging to another age. There are beautiful fourteenth-century chests, a bulla carved by Benvenuto Cellini, that prince of goldsmiths and autobiographers, and indeed the greatest treasure of all, that I have kept till the last.

One first hears of the Domesday Book in the days when one has visions of a vast tome with some vague connection with the Day of Judgment. Not even *Little Arthur* could dispel the prodigious respect and awe one felt for it. I confused it with the book in which one's manifold sins are recorded, and even mature age does not prevent a little secret satisfaction that has nothing historical at the sight of those fat, brown hundreds-of-years-old books that we owe to William the Conqueror's Norman love for exact accounts.

The Domesday Books used to be kept in the Chapter House at Westminster and were only moved to the Record Office in 1839.

Nevill's Court

"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."—Dr. Johnson.

A stone's throw from the east end of the Record Office is one of the most curious unnoticed corners of old London. Go up Fetter Lane, which is the next turning to Chancery Lane out of Fleet Street, and at No. 34, close

to the Moravian Chapel, you will see a narrow passage called Nevill's Court. This passage leads you straight into one of the oldest bits of London still existing, for here in the very heart of newspaper land are little ancient seventeenth-century houses with cottage gardens. They give one the same feeling of unexpectedness as those other queer little wooden houses with their high gables that you may see in Collingwood Street, just on the other side of Blackfriars Bridge (I think it is the third turning to the right). They stand beside the church, just as they stood nearly three hundred years ago, when the Thames washed right up to their doorsteps.

At No. 6 Nevill's Court, secluded in its walled garden, is a big seventeenth-century house, which must once have been inhabited by citizens of wealth and position. It is extraordinary that Time and the Vandal have left it still intact. I think the reason must be that they have never been able to find it, like those other old houses in Wardrobe Court near St. Paul's, whose whereabouts certainly ought to be set as a problem in a London taxi-driver's examination.

But before seeking the house, there is something to notice in Nevill's Court. The main entrance to the Moravian Chapel is in Fetter Lane, at No. 33. I once went to the service there at three o'clock on a Sunday afternoon under the influence of the story of the messenger sent while Bradbury was preaching, to announce

Queen Anne's death and the safety of the Protestant succession. I hoped to find something to remind me of the chapel's great age: it is the oldest place of Protestant worship in London, going back to Queen Mary's day, when persecuted Protestants are supposed to have met in the sawpit of the carpenter's yard on this site.

Down the long, narrow passage, I found a bare, uncompromising chapel, with a high, wooden pulpit, that I looked at with more respect than its ugliness warranted, remembering that Baxter had preached here in 1672, and that John Wesley and Whitefield had addressed crowded congregations during the year Wesley spent with the Moravians between the time that he left the Church of England and the founding of the Methodist persuasion in 1740. The boundary line between St. Bride's, Fleet Street, and St. Dunstan's in the West is just in front of the pulpit, so the preacher and his congregation are in different parishes.

The chapel has been used by the Moravian sect since 1738, and as their lease does not expire for about another 250 years, it is not likely to change ownership, in spite of the dwindling congregation.

It has been so many times restored and rebuilt that one gets a much better idea of the antiquity of the building from the back entrance in Nevill's Court, for this is the only part that could possibly have existed before the Great Fire.

Clifford's Inn

"Oh! London! London! our delight,
Great flower that opens but at night."
R. le Gallienne.

Between Chancery Lane and Fetter Lane is the entrance to Clifford's Inn, the oldest of all the Inns of Chancery. In January, 1921, big flaunting notice-boards announced that Clifford's Inn would be sold by auction, but no immediate purchaser was found, and this quiet corner is still unmolested, though by the time this book is printed it may have received its *coup de grâce* from the pickaxe.

Go and look at it while you may. It was founded in 1345 and takes its name from a certain Robert Clifford of Edward II.'s reign. Sir Edward Coke, the great Elizabethan lawyer, was a member of Clifford's Inn and left it for the Middle Temple in 1572.

Some of the Inn survived the Great Fire, and in the crazy-looking little old hall the judges sat who decided the many boundary disputes after that catastrophe. At the moment it is the headquarters of some society "duquel je ne sçais pas le nom."

Samuel Butler lived at No. 15 Clifford's Inn for thirty-eight years, and many an admirer of the genius of the man who wrote *Erewhon* and *The Way of all Flesh* has made a pilgrimage to the quiet corner hidden away a few yards from bustling Fleet Street.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CHARTERHOUSE AND ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S

"At length they all to mery London came,
To mery London my most kyndley nurse."

SPENSER.

IN days of old, when London's present meat-market was the fashionable jousting-ground of the time, the knights and squires used to ride to Smithfield up a road still called Giltspur Street, either from the armourers who dwelt there, or from the jingling of the champions' spurs as they clattered by.

Any Holborn bus will take you to the corner of St. Sepulchre's where the dismal bell tolled the passing to Newgate of the condemned criminals. On the right side of Giltspur Street is St. Bartholomew's Hospital, that survived the Great Fire only to be rebuilt in 1730. The history of this great London hospital goes back eight hundred years, for it belonged to the Priory, but Sir Thomas Gresham's father persuaded Henry VIII. to refound the institution in 1546.

There was once a naïve inscription under the statue of the fat boy whose stone image is still to be seen at the corner where Cock Lane joins Giltspur Street, on the left. At this point, once

known as Pye Corner, the Fire of London was stopped in 1666 by blowing up the houses, and the writing underneath the figure of this extremely obese youth reminded the passer-by that "the Great Fire . . . was occasioned by the sin of gluttony." I do not know what authority there was for this allegation. Whoever was responsible for the tablet probably had running in his muddled head the names of Pye or Pie Corner and Pudding Lane in Thames Street where the conflagration started. The fact that it was from the house of a baker that the flames first spread may likewise have influenced him, though it is unusual to be gluttonous on bread alone.

The Fire gave the moralist good cause for thought. It was an event so tremendous, so far-reaching, so overwhelming, that it is strange that the history books of England do not linger over its significance. For in less than a week practically every landmark that went to make up the most interesting old mediæval city in the world was swept away. The ancient cathedral of St. Paul's, 89 churches, 4 city gates, 460 streets and 13,200 houses perished in the flames. With the exception, perhaps, of the burning of Rome, there has never been so terrible a fire. Pepys wept to see it.

A wonderful account has been left us by Evelyn:

> The conflagration was so universal, and the people so astonished, that from the beginning, I know not by what despondency or fate, they hardly stirr'd to

quench it, so that there was nothing heard or seene but crying out and lamentation, running about like distracted creatures, without at all attempting to save even their goods, such a strange consternation there was upon them, so as it burned both in breadth and length, the Churches, Public Halls, Exchange, Hospitals, Monuments, and ornaments, leaping after a prodigious manner from house to house and streete to streete, at greate distances one from ye other; for ye heate with a long set of faire and warme weather, had even ignited the air, and prepar'd the materials to conceive the fire, which devour'd after an incredible manner, houses, furniture, and everything. Here we saw the Thames cover'd with goods floating, all the barges and boates laden with what some had time and courage to save, as, on ye other, ye carts, &c., carrying out to the fields, which for many miles were strew'd with moveables of all sorts, and tents erecting to shelter both people and what goods they could get away. Oh the miserable and calamitous spectacle! such as haply the world had not seen the like since the foundation of it, nor to be outdone till the universale conflagration. All the skie was of a fiery aspect, like the top of a burning oven, the light seen above forty miles round about for many nights. God grant my eyes may never behold the like, now seeing above 10,000 houses all in one flame; the noise and cracking and thunder of the impetuous flames, ye shrieking of women and children, the hurry of people, the fall of Towers, Houses, and Churches, was like an hideous storme, and the aire all about so hot and inflam'd that at last one was not able to approach it, so that they were forc'd to stand still and let ye flames burn on, wch they did for neere two miles in length and one in bredth. The clouds of smoke were dismall, and reach'd upon computation neer fifty miles in length. Thus I left it this afternoone burning, a resemblance of Sodom, or the last day. London was, but is no more!

Everyone lent a hand; even King Charles came down from Whitehall and worked hard

beside his meanest subject—doing something useful for once in a way. But it was a case of saving what one could and fleeing. Some stacked their treasures in the churches (the booksellers of Paternoster Row stored their books in St. Paul's), but of the churches nothing was left. Some buried their valuables underground and perhaps recovered them two years afterwards, when the last of the rubbish was cleared away. By the end of that fatal September the whole of the large district of Moorfields, north of the city, was one vast camp of the homeless, and there they stayed in shacks and shelters till the city was rebuilt, much as the unfortunate people of devastated France were living during the years of the Great War.

The trade of London ceased for a time; there were no shops, the merchants had lost their goods, the warehouses were gutted, all records of debts and commercial transactions were destroyed, there were no schools, no almshouses.

Yet in four short years the English, with the same dogged energy that they were putting recently into the making of trenches and dugouts, had practically rebuilt their capital city. The churches, of course, took a long time to finish; the beautiful and numerous halls of the City Companies were not replaced in a day, but nearly 10,000 houses were up, and since those seventeenth-century workmen were just Englishmen, with no foreigners at hand to tell them to

"ca' canny," everything was in a fair way to completion.

As for Sir Christopher Wren, that amazing architect who stamped the impress of his genius on the great city as we know it, who shall give him enough honour? He designed and erected over forty public buildings, amongst them the lovely and unique cluster of churches that lie around St. Paul's, yet for this work he was rewarded by the miserable salary of £100 a year, with £200 a year for the rebuilding of the great cathedral.

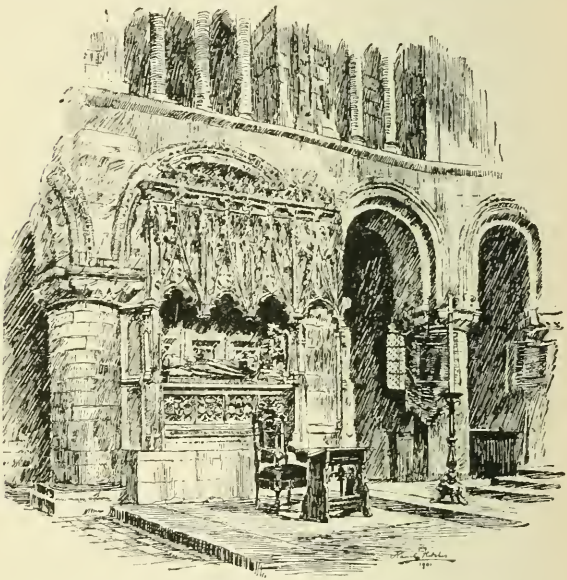
St. Bartholomew the Great

"The citye of London that is to me so dere and sweete."
CHAUCER.

Opposite St. Bartholomew's Hospital is Smithfield, new and blatant, and smelling hideously of raw meat. Take courage and go on northwards, for in a few minutes you will come to the most wonderful old church in London—older than any other except the chapel in the White Tower. There is something about the almost primitive simplicity of its massive stone pillars that carries one back more directly to the times of the Norman conquerors than a thousand long descriptions gathered from history books.

What you see is only the choir and transept of a much larger church built for the Priory of St. Bartholomew by the founder Rahere in or about the year 1102. His tomb is on the left

as you enter, and high up on the right is the lovely oriel window where Prior Bolton, who died in 1532, could sit or kneel at his ease, without even the trouble of coming downstairs



RAHERE'S TOMB IN ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH

from his house, and look down into the church he did so much to rebuild and restore.

St. Bartholomew's has had a turbulent history. There is the dramatic story of Archbishop Boniface of Lambeth Palace, a Savoyard who took it into his crafty head that he would like

to annex the offertory of St. Bartholomew's. On a certain Sunday morning he set out from Lambeth, with a train of attendants with mail armour under their robes. The description of what happened is delicious in Matthew Paris's words, as quoted by Stowe:

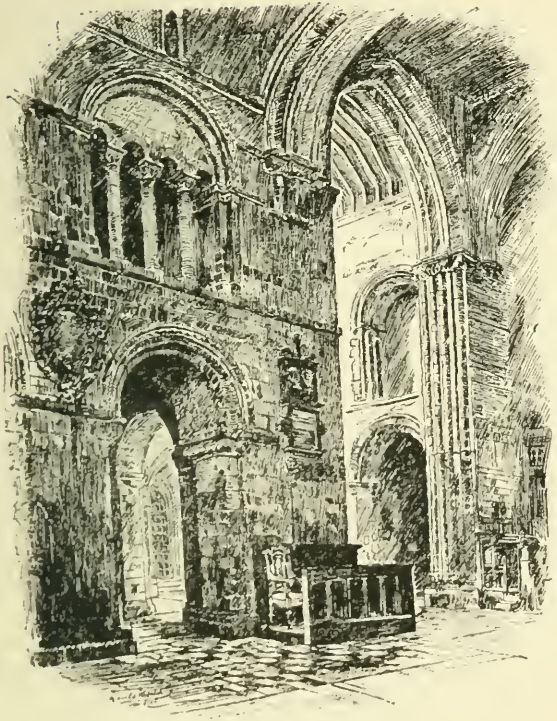
Amongst other memorable matters, touching this priorie, one is of an Archbishop's Visitation, which Matthew Paris hath thus. Boniface (sayeth he) Archbishoppe of Canterbury, in his Visitation came to this priorie, where being received with procession in the most solemne wise, hee said that hee passed not upon the honor, but came to visite them, to whom the Canons aunswered that they having a learned Bishop, ought not in contempt of him to be visited by any other; which aunswere so much offended the Archbishop that he forthwithe fell on the Supprior, and smote him on the face, saying, indeede, indeede, dooth it become you English Traytors so to aunswere mee, thus raging with oaths not to bee recited, hee rent in peeces the rich Cope of the Supprior, and trode it under his feete, and thrust him against a pillar of the Chauncell with such violence, that hee had almost killed him: but the Canons seeing their supprior thus almost slayne, came and plucked off the Archbishoppe with such force that they overthrewe him backwardes, whereby they might see that he was armed and prepared to fight, the Archbishoppe's men seeing theyr master downe, being all strangers and their master's countrimen born at Prowence, fell upon the canons, beat them, tare them, and trod them under feete, at length the Canons getting away as well as they could, ran bloody and myry, rent and torne, to the Bishoppe of London to complaine, who had them goe to the king at Westminster, and tell him thereof, whereupon some of them went thether, the rest were not able, they were so sore hurt, but when they came to Westminster, the king would neither heare nor see them, so they returned without redresse, in the

mean season the whole Citie was in an uprore, and ready to have rung the Common bell, and to have hewed the Archbishoppe into small pieces, who was secretly crept to Lambhith, where they sought him, and not knowing him by sight, sayd to themselves, where is this Ruffian, that cruell smiter, hee is no winner of soules, but an exactor of money, whome neyther God, nor any lawfull or free election, did bring to this promotion, but the king did unlawfully intrude him, being utterly unlearned, a stranger borne, and having a wife etc: but the Archbishop conveyed himselfe over, and went to the king with a great complaint against the Canons, whereas himself was guilty.

But in spite of Henry III.'s refusal to see the outraged sub-prior and his loyal canons they had their revenge in time.

The final result of that little Sunday morning jaunt of Archbishop Boniface was that he was obliged to build the chapel of Lambeth Palace about the year 1247 as a penance for having tried to encroach on the right of the holy Prior of St. Bartholomew's.

The quaint gateway by which one enters the scene of the exploits of these energetic churchmen adds a special charm to the place. The timbers of the old Elizabethan house above it were only discovered in 1915, when some of the tiles that long concealed them were loosened.



CHURCH OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW THE GREAT

St. John's Gate

"For knighthood is not in the feats of Warre,
As for to fight in quarrel right or wrong.
But in a cause which truth can not defarre."

Stephen Hawes.

Not very far away, stretching across St. John's Lane, on the other side of Smithfield and the Charterhouse Road, is another gate, dating from 1504, with the arms of Prior Docwra, who built it, above the archway. This was once the south entrance of the great Priory of the Knights Hospitallers of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, one of the richest and most powerful of the religious houses that spread over London in the Middle Ages. With the exception of this gate and of the Norman crypt in the church of St. John adjoining (the keys are at the caretaker's, 112 Clerkenwell Road), nothing is left of that great monastery that the people grew to hate for its pride. When Wat Tyler led his band of peasants to burn and pillage, they burnt and pillaged with special zest the manors of the Knights Hospitallers of St. John, wherever they found them, and particularly the priory in London, incidentally beheading the Grand Prior. The buildings rose again and lasted till the reign of Edward VI., when they were blown up and pulled down and some of the stone used to build the Somerset House of the day.

But the old gate still stands, austere and

turret-crowned, and we may still "behold it with reverence," like Dr. Johnson. The modern representatives of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, which devotes itself to ambulance and hospital work and did admirable service in the war, went back in 1887 to live within its ancient walls.

There are many things of interest in the gate-house that make the trouble of writing to the secretary of the Order for permission to see them worth while. There are relics from Malta and Rhodes, an Elizabethan chimneypiece in the chancery, and other souvenirs, but the coffer that contains these treasures is more interesting than anything it holds, and that every passer-by may see.

The Charterhouse

"I never think of London, which I love, without thinking of that palace which David built for Bathsheba."—Lowell.

Coming back to Charterhouse Street and turning to the left, five minutes' walk will bring you to Charterhouse Square, where you can find one of the most lovely and gracious things in all London.

People often bewail the passing of old London without knowing that within this short distance from Holborn Circus they can see a perfect specimen of a sixteenth-century nobleman's house. There it stands, only needing the addition of a little furniture of the period, that

L

would never be missed from South Kensington Museum, and you could see exactly how my Lord Howard lived when he entertained—and plotted against—his royal mistress three hundred years ago.

One does not like to think of the number of people who leave London without ever having seen the Charterhouse. It is one of the most beautiful places in all London, and its story is packed with romance, intrigue, adventure and benevolence.

The tale falls into three parts. It is begun by that gallant Hainaulter, Sir Walter de Manny, as the English called Walter, Lord of Mausny near Valenciennes, who came over to England in the train of Philippa of Hainault.

According to Froissart he was a " very gentil parfyte knighte," and when he saw the ghastly heaps of dead bodies of plague-stricken people lying in the streets in 1349, he bought from St. Bartholomew's Hospital a piece of land called No Man's Land and caused the dead to be decently buried there. Their bodies at rest, he had thought for their souls, and on March 25, 1349, he laid the foundation-stone of a chapel where the relations might pray for their dead. Twenty years later Sir Walter Manny laid another stone, that of the first cell for the Carthusian monks he brought over from France. The wives and sisters of the dead had prayed so long in the chapel that the right could not be taken from them, so for once the strict

Carthusian rule was relaxed and a special place was set apart for the womenkind to come and pray.

Sir Walter Manny died in 1372. He was buried at the foot of the step of the great altar in the chapel that may be seen to-day, and in the Charterhouse his Carthusian monks prayed according to the tenets of their faith for a hundred and sixty-five years more before the last prior, John Houghton, having been hung on Tyburn Tree, and many of the brothers tortured, the rest submitted to the king's will. The House of the Salutation of the Mother of God in the Charterhouse near London was dissolved shortly afterwards.

The second phase of the Charterhouse story is a very different one. Twice during the following years it was prepared for the coming of a fair queen, whose head was bowed on Tower Hill instead of in the old chapel.

Charterhouse was granted to that wily old courtier, Sir Edward North, in 1545, and eight years later he " conveyed " it to John Dudley, Earl of Northumberland, the father-in-law of Lady Jane Grey. The Earl of Northumberland never wanted it for himself, as he had already Durham House in the Adelphi, but there was his son Guildford with his fair young wife to be lodged fittingly. So he brought up much furniture from Kenilworth and stored it hard by, little dreaming that his bold plans would miscarry and that he would die on Tower Hill a

year before the children whose home he had planned shared the same fate.

North was granted the Charterhouse again by Queen Mary, and when Elizabeth came to the throne in 1558 she stayed six days there before her coronation.

Three years later she paid the old house another visit, but North died in 1564 and Charterhouse passed into the hands of crafty, brilliant, fickle Thomas Howard, fourth Duke of Norfolk.

Once more Charterhouse, now known as Howard House, was to be prepared for a royal mistress, and in a royal manner.

The new owner, buoyed with hopes of a marriage with Mary, Queen of Scots, began to put his new house in order. He added the screen in the great hall and the "Tarrass Walk," the lovely tapestry room, the duchess's withdrawing-room and the magnificent great staircase.

On the 6th of August, 1568, Elizabeth came in state from Hampton Court to Howard House, to pay a visit to her disloyal servant, already plotting against her and arranging the duchess's salon for her rival. The air was thick with intrigue, and by the autumn the rumour of the marriage with Mary had reached Elizabeth. Norfolk denied it, but a year later the truth came out, and he spent some time in the Tower,

to be released, under surveillance, when the Black Death threatened that district.

He had learned no lesson. Either a devouring ambition or the attraction of the most fascinating woman in Europe lured him on. Plots and counterplots were hatched in the long gallery that now forms part of the upper-story quarters of the Master and Registrar of Charterhouse. Mary's emissaries were seized—one of them, called Bailly, has carved the lesson these events taught him in the Beauchamp Room in the Tower—and the luckless queen was betrayed in her turn, even as Elizabeth had been, by the man who so short a time before had decorated the Charterhouse to receive her as a bride.

He told, like a coward, the place where her cipher was hidden under a tile in the Charterhouse, but nothing could save his own neck, and he followed his father and his two girl cousins, Anne Boleyn and Katherine Howard, in June 1572.

The next owner of Howard House, Philip Howard, Earl of Arundel, was only a boy of fifteen when he inherited his father's property, but he was of sterner stuff, for he refused to abjure the Roman Catholic faith he had embraced, even to see his wife and children, before he died, worn out, and under sentence of death, in 1595. Elizabeth had kept him prisoner in the Beauchamp Tower for ten years, and it

THE CHARTERHOUSE FROM THE SQUARE

was there, in 1587, that he carved the words, "The more suffering for Christ in this world, so much the more glory with Christ in the life to come."

He had lived very little at the Charterhouse, and when it passed into the hands of his half-brother Thomas Howard, Earl of Suffolk, the fortunes of the old house changed with the advent of the great English Admiral who could swear with truth "'Fore God I am no coward," when he was admiral of the squadron at Flores in the Azores, "and the little *Revenge* ran on right into the heart of the foe."

Lord Thomas Howard was one of the honoured, trusted servants of Elizabeth, and she came once more in 1603, not long before her death, to pay him a visit in the Charterhouse.

In a few months James I. came there, even as she had done, to spend the days before his coronation as the guest of the son of the man who had been his mother's false suitor.

But brave Lord Thomas Howard was building a new house at Audley End, and needing money he sold Howard House for £13,000 to Sir Thomas Sutton. The brilliant days of the Charterhouse as a nobleman's mansion were at an end—another chapter was concluded and the third phase of the story was to begin.

Sir Thomas Sutton, the new owner, was the Lord Rhondda of the sixteenth century. He was a Lincolnshire man with a wide knowledge of men and things, whose military profession

never prevented his having a keen eye for business. He made a large fortune before he died in 1611, leaving the provision to found a hospital for eighty impoverished gentlemen and a school for forty boys, under the name of the Hospital of King James in Charterhouse.

There was much discussion, "about it and about," before Sir Thomas Sutton's chosen trustees could carry out his wishes. James I., true son of his father Darnley, had to be placated by a *pourboire* of £10,000, and even Bacon, jealous at not being among the trustees, tried to belittle the bequest and advise that the money should be used for his master's benefit instead of for the poor. Sir Edward Coke, Lady Hatton's husband, steered the hospital through the shoals that surrounded its launching and the more dangerous peril of the king's genial idea that the Charterhouse revenues might fitly be used to pay for his army. The Charterhouse was founded, and for three hundred years the school has produced great Englishmen and the hospital harboured men who have found that in the evening of a working life the stars do not always appear.

Among the Charterhouse scholars have been the bearers of great names such as Lovelace and Crashaw, Addison and Steele, John Wesley, Sir Henry Havelock, Thackeray, Leech, Thomas Lovell Beddoes, Lord Alverstone and many others. The school was removed in 1872 to Godalming, and the buildings were taken over

by the Merchant Taylors' Company for their boys' school.

The hospital for the poor brothers no longer harbours eighty men. Their number is reduced to sixty owing to the depreciation in the value of Sir Thomas Sutton's land and the fact that since the Charterhouse has always been considered a wealthy foundation no further bequests have ever been made to bring the number once more up to the four score of the founder's intention.

That, briefly told, is the dramatic tale of the Charterhouse. You will readily believe it all if you take the District Railway to Aldersgate Street and go and see the Charterhouse for yourself. Its beauty is unimpaired by time. The Guesten Hall where the poor brethren take their meals, the great sixteenth century carved staircase, the chapel where Colonel Newcome sat, the false duke's arcade, and the old gatehouse—all are there and many more things to recall the most dramatic pages of England's history.

CHAPTER IX

A STROLL IN WHITEHALL AND WESTMINSTER

"And all that passes inter nos,
May be proclaimed at Charing Cross."

SWIFT.

DR. JOHNSON once said, "Why, sir, Fleet Street has a very animated appearance, but I think the full tide of human existence is at Charing Cross."

Certainly Charing Cross is the best of all starting-points for exploring expeditions, and by Charing Cross I mean the south-east corner of Trafalgar Square.

From there you may wander along the Strand, or north into Bloomsbury, or through Cockspur Street into the realms of Mayfair, or southward to the Thames, and in every direction there are unnoticed stories to be found.

UNITED SERVICES MUSEUM

"More kindly love have I to that place than to any other in yerth."—CHAUCER.

One day I turned my back on Charing Cross to go to St. Margaret's *via* Whitehall, blissfully unconscious of the fact that it happened to be Saturday and that the church closes its doors every day at 4 p.m. and for all day on Saturdays.

At the corner of the Horse Guards Avenue I paused undecided, having taken months to summon up courage to pass the giant at the entrance to the United Services Museum!

He snorts with such a supercilious sniff at the would-be visitor that you have to remember it may possibly be only the good-natured contempt of one service for another, and that the Orion's figurehead may really be elevating his nose at the Horse Guards across the way, on which I notice that Spencer Compton, 8th Duke of Devonshire (b. 1833, d. 1908) also bends a grave and somewhat disapproving eye from his elevated statue in the middle of the road.

Mr. Street, in his delicious *Ghosts of Piccadilly*, says, "There is ever a Devonshire filling his eminent position, calm, retiring, imperturbable, and never an amusing thing to tell of any one of them," and this statue tells you to believe him.

To come back to the United Services Museum —a thing that far too few people do, for it is one of London's many buried treasures—don't be misled by any optimistic guide-book that tells you the admission is sixpence. That is only true on Saturday afternoon; at other times you part with a shilling unless you are a soldier or sailor in uniform, or one of the many troops of schoolchildren that are admitted free every week.

There are myriads of things to delight any childish heart—cunningly contrived models of ships, plans of battles, the actual walking-stick

and snuff-box of Sir Francis Drake, Oliver Cromwell's sword, the very bugle that sounded the Charge of the Light Brigade, a room devoted to souvenirs of Lord Wolseley, and rows of other treasures with heroic stories of brave men.

I have yet to find a museum without a Napoleonic souvenir, and here there is a startling one—" Marengo's " skeleton. You are so engrossed by the relics of General Wolfe and Nelson and Wellington and other heroes, that you almost forget what you came to see—the Old Banqueting Hall where they are lodged, the beautiful Palladian structure that Inigo Jones built in 1622—all that is now left of the old palace of Whitehall.

The nine ceiling paintings that Rubens did at Charles I.'s request look as fresh as if they had been painted yesterday, having been restored too many times. Rubens got £3000 for them, while Wren only received £100 a year for rebuilding all the City churches and £200 a year for rebuilding St. Paul's—but Wren was an Englishman and Rubens a foreigner.

The Banqueting Hall was all that James I. accomplished of the great palace he meant to let Inigo Jones build for him in Whitehall, and just outside the hall Charles I. met his death, a short distance from the statue where

> Comely and calm he rides
> Hard by his own Whitehall

on his Grinling Gibbons pedestal.

A little crowd clusters every morning at

UNITED SERVICES MUSEUM

eleven to see the guard relieved at the Horse Guards, now the office of the C.I.C. of the Home Forces.

On the king's birthday, June 3rd, the Trooping of the Colour at the Horse Guards is an unforgettable pageant.

The English have not, like the French, the courteous custom of saluting their flag, but on this occasion every civilian head is bared as the drums beat and swords flash, and the uplifted colours are borne slowly round the parade ground to the strains of *God Save the King* and the old regimental marches, played by the band of the Life Guards in their magnificent uniforms.

It is a gallant sight, and a goodly thing to see.

Westminster Abbey

"It is a wonderful place . . . a nation, not a city."

Even more than of the British Museum I feel that it would be an impertinence to speak of Westminster Abbey as a London corner unnoticed by Londoners,—and yet I have known people who have left London and gone back across the seas with never a thought for the cloisters nor a "memorie" of Jane Lister, "dear childe," who lies buried there, people who may have perfunctorily "done" the Abbey with a guide but have never lingered there at the uncrowded hours till the exquisite beauty

of its many corners has become a possession they can carry away with them.

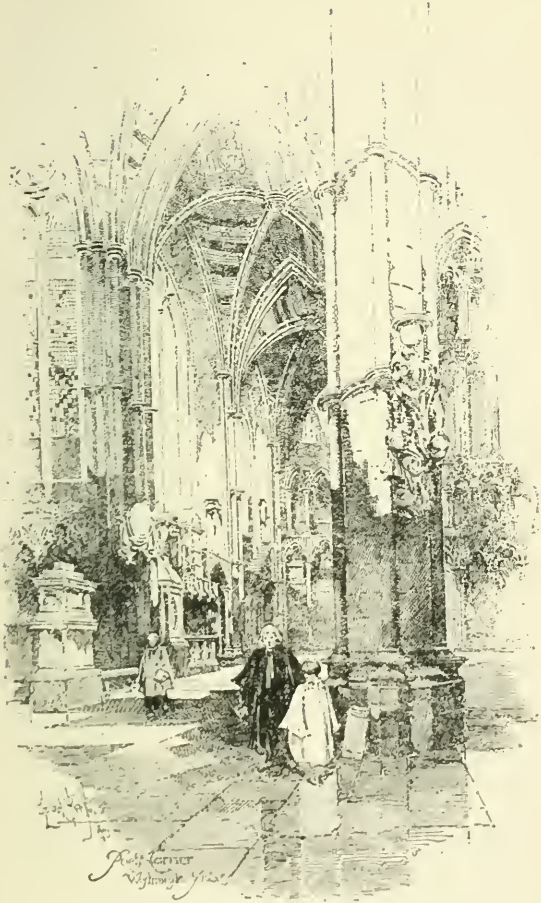
I can make no attempt to point out the manifold interest of the Abbey, but there are certain places that I love that I would not willingly let anyone miss.

There is no need to write of the interior. No one was ever known to miss the Poets' Corner, or the Coronation Chair, or Henry VII.'s Chapel, or the Chapel of Edward the Confessor, but I have known people who visited Westminster Abbey and missed seeing the Chapter House.

To miss seeing that thirteenth-century octagonal room is a calamity. It is not only very beautiful, with a beauty that reminds you at once of the Sainte Chapelle, but there is an atmosphere about it that takes you back through the centuries to the time when Simon de Montfort was laying the foundations of constitutional government, and the first parliament of twenty-three barons, one hundred and twenty ecclesiastics, two knights from each shire and two burghers from each town met in this very room.

The House of Commons was born within these grey walls nearly five and a half centuries ago, when the Commons were told to go to "leur ancienne place en la maison du Chapitre de l'Abbeye de Westminster." The members met here till they moved to the Chapel of St. Stephen, within the walls of Westminster Palace, in 1547.

Turn your back on the ugly cases of the seals



POETS' CORNER, WESTMINSTER ABBEY

and charters that should have been removed to the Record Office with the rest of the public records that were stored here since Elizabethan days, and look instead at the faint fourteenth-century mural decoration of Christ surrounded by the Christian virtues. Even the unsightly cases cannot destroy the sense of the lovely proportions of the shaft-supported roof and the arcaded walls with the six noble windows, filled with glass none the less beautiful because it happens to be modern, and all the more interesting because it honours the memory of that great lover of Westminster, Dean Stanley.

When Edward the Confessor about 1050 built the first round Chapter House on this spot for his Benedictine monks to transact the business of their monastery, they little thought to what varied uses it would be put. The present octagonal room has seen the age-long struggle of the people for their liberties. It was damaged in the Civil Wars and suffered from repairs in the eighteenth century. It has had its painted walls concealed by unsightly cupboards, when the public records were stored there. It has housed the Domesday Book till it and the records were removed in 1862, and now that it has been restored as nearly as possible to its old beauty, it exists, spacious and dignified as ever, to remind the passing visitor of the value of tradition and the history of a great nation.

A few steps farther along the cloister is another less well-known corner, the Chapel of

the Pyx—not so ecclesiastical a chamber as it sounds, "pyx" meaning only a chest or box where the standard of references for testing the coins of the realm used to be kept. Nowadays they make these tests at the hall of the ancient Company of Goldsmiths, at the corner of Foster Lane and Gresham Street.

Long ago the king's treasure was kept here, and only the king and my Lord Chancellor and the Abbot of Westminster had the keys, a fact that was very inconvenient when a robbery occurred, as at least one abbot found to his cost. He and forty of his monks saw the inside of the Tower in consequence, but punishment was not always so light, as the pieces of human skin still to be seen nailed to the door will show.

Inside the seven-locked door with its gruesome lining, that is only opened to visitors on Tuesdays and Fridays, you find a low vaulted room supported by rounded Romanesque arches on thick short pillars, and a stone altar—the earliest in the Abbey.

After leaving the Chapel of the Pyx, stroll along the Norman cloister to the left, past the Norman undercroft, where, if you have a mind to pay a small fee to the verger in the Poets' Corner, you can see any day in the week the quaint effigies that used to be carried at royal funerals. Through the dark entry you come to the Little Cloister, a part of the old monastery, that ought only to be seen on a hot summer's day, for in the winter-time it is dreary and

your thoughts tend to turn to the smug ingratitude that allowed the woman Nelson loved to die in poverty,—for she once lived in the tower built by Abbot Littlington and originally the bell tower of the church.

Turn back through the south walk of the Great Cloister and come into the Deanery Yard.

It is customary to write to the dean for permission to see the Jerusalem Corner, but, if you go without this formality and he happens to be absent, the caretaker will show it to you and tell quite unique stories which I will not steal his thunder by repeating.

You go through the sixteenth-century Jericho Room first, and it too is interesting, with its linenfold deal panelling. It is the ante-room to the Jerusalem Chamber, and is now used as a sort of vestry room for the cathedral. In the Jerusalem Chamber, as every schoolboy knows, King Henry IV. died in 1413. I refuse to quote Shakespeare on this occasion. It is a fine fourteenth-century cedar-panelled room, and the light through fragments of very ancient glass in the windows shines on early seventeenth-century tapestries and a very old mediæval portrait of Richard II. It is a gracious place, but when the authors of the Revised Version of the Bible worked here in 1870, it failed to inspire them with the same sense of the beauty of words that made their predecessors produce the finest literature in the world.

Many famous men have lain in state in the

Jerusalem Room before their interment in the Abbey — Congreve and Addison were both honoured in this way, and that seventeenth-century poet-diplomatist, Matthew Prior, who was so esteemed by Louis XIV. that he sent him a bust by the great Coysevox. With one of those piquant inconsistencies that enliven history, Nance Oldfield, Mrs. Bracegirdle's rival, also lay in state in the Jerusalem Chamber before she was buried in the Abbey. Mrs. Bracegirdle lies in front of the entrance to the Chapter House, but Nance Oldfield was the only actress honoured by burial within the Abbey walls.

The Jerusalem Chamber was originally the drawing-room of the Abbot of Westminster, and in James the First's day a banquet was given here to the French Ambassadors who came over to arrange the marriage of Prince Charles and the daughter of Henri IV.

Ashburnham House

"If ever princess put all princes down,
For temperance, prowess, prudence, equity;
This, this was she, that, in despite of death.
Lives still admired, adored, Elizabeth!"

Anon.

Coming out of Dean's Court and passing through the gateway in the east side of Dean's Yard, you find another enticing and little-known corner in Westminster School in Little Dean's Yard.

Every monastery had to have its school, so

the monks of St. Peter's started theirs—the forerunner of the Westminster School or St. Peter's College founded by Queen Elizabeth in 1560. Ben Jonson went to school here, and so did George Herbert and Dryden and Cowper and Southey, Hakluyt of *Voyages* fame, and Wren and Locke and Warren Hastings and many other famous men I do not know, including Prior.

The school sergeant at the lodge will show the Edward III. College Hall, with its minstrel gallery and oaken tables made from the beams of the Spanish Armada. Forty years ago the school annexed Ashburnham House, another interesting unnoticed corner that can be seen any Saturday afternoon, on application to the hall porter. This charming house was built in the seventeenth century by Webb, a famous disciple of Inigo Jones. Alas, his celebrated staircase is given over to dust and spiders, and only restored to a semblance of its former beauty on state occasions, such as Founders' Day in November or at Christmas, when the boys perform their well-known Latin plays.

There are many interesting things about the school and the buildings that I leave untold, so go and see for yourself this quiet backwater of London.

St. Margaret's Church

"That, if I chance to hold my peace,
These stones to praise Thee may not cease."
GEORGE HERBERT.

St. Margaret's Church, if you can go there of a morning, is interesting not only for its architectural beauty, but for its many associations and since 1916 it has had a deepened interest for the British Dominions beyond the Seas, as it was then created their parish church.

Pepys, who simply refuses to be left out of anything, was married here to his pretty wife, of whom he was so proud that she need not have been jealous of Mrs. Knipp.

In the chancel lies Sir Walter Raleigh, buried in St. Margaret's after his execution in front of Westminster Palace in 1618. Admiral Blake lies in the churchyard, and there is a fine window in his honour on the north side.

The celebrated east window has had a career that is not without its comic side. It was originally sent over to England by Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain as a betrothal gift to Prince Arthur, the eldest son of Henry VII., with whom they had arranged the marriage of their daughter Catherine.

Before the window arrived the bridegroom had died, and Henry VIII., who married the bride, did not want a window with a portrait of Prince Arthur and Catherine. He sent it to

Waltham Abbey, and from that time its history is a moving one.

At the dissolution of the monasteries, the last abbot sent the window to New Hall in Essex, later bought by the Villiers family, who buried it. At the Restoration General Monk set it up again till its next owner took it down, and had the window packed away in a case till he found a purchaser for fifteen guineas. In 1758 the churchwardens of St. Margaret's bought back the window for four hundred guineas, but its troubles were not ended.

The Dean and Chapter of Westminster thought the window a superstitious image, and it was only after a lawsuit lasting seven years that the churchwardens were allowed to keep their window.

As usual, I have not told of half the beauty and interest of this fifteenth-century parish church, only of enough, I hope, to make a reader go and discover the rest for himself, but let him take thought to go in the morning and not on a Saturday.

CHAPTER X

MUSEUMS

British Museum

"O place! O people! Manners! framed to please
All nations, customs, kindreds, languages!"

Herrick.

I am rather diffident about putting any name on this chapter, for no one would ever think of calling the British Museum an unnoticed place. It has what the newspapers call a world-wide reputation. Its very name smacks of solid worth with nothing unexpected about it. It is an institution looming large and august, its massive masonry dominating Bloomsbury as its reputation does the universe, and absorbing an unending queue of earnest-minded people intent on storing their minds with knowledge.

And yet, every time my frivolous feet have strayed through that solemn portico, I have longed to tell the thousands of people who never dream of coming so far north as Great Russell Street, W.C. 1, of unexpected things they could find there if they would. I remember as a small person being made to recite the names of the seven wonders of the world, and I used to repeat solemnly, " The Temple of Mausolaus at Halicarnassus — the Pyramid of Cheops —

the Lighthouse of Alexandria—the Colossus of Rhodes—the Hanging Gardens of Semiramis —the Statue of Jupiter at Olympus, and the Temple of Diana at Ephesus,—with a considerable amount of annoyance that I could never hope to see these ancient splendours. When I found the remains of two of them in the British Museum, I felt, like the Queen of Sheba, that the half had not been told to me, and since that first moment of delighted surprise how many unexpected things I have found there which make me long to say to all the unwitting London visitors, " Don't be put off by the solemnity of its name and the distance from Bond Street, but go, only go, and you will be rewarded."

The proper way to make friends with a museum, as with people, is to get to know it slowly, or its very excellences will give you a surfeited memory. I once avoided the beautiful old Cluny Museum in Paris for many years, because I had been oppressed by the fact that it contained 11,000 objects of interest. No one had shown me how to ignore their number and get to love the very walls of Cardinal Jacques d'Amboise's stately house, by never crossing the sunny courtyard to see more than one sort of exhibit at a time.

I think this plan is even more applicable to the British Museum, that great collection, partly bequeathed by Sir Hans Sloane and opened to the public in 1759. There are two things the hurried visitor can do so as to carry

away the possession of a definite memory of one phase of the treasures contained in the vast building in Great Russell Street. He may choose to go there at the hours of 12 or 3 P.M. and follow one of the two expert lecturers who conduct people each day to see a different group of exhibits and listen to their story. (Lists of these lectures are given at the door.) Or he may choose for himself the sort of thing he finds most interesting and sternly traverse the other rooms intent only on the objects of his choice. In either case he is luckier than the visitors in the early days of the museum's existence, who were herded in companies of only fifteen for a two hours' visit.

To-day one is diffident about directing any choice; as the old guardian said, "Most people 'as their fancies!" They may lie in the direction of the mummy rooms, where the prehistoric man, so startlingly like a modern, crouches in his grave, with his stone flints within reach, or in the room of gold ornaments and gems, where lie the necklaces that rose and fell on breasts dead these thousand years, necklaces that differ nowise from the amethyst and jade trinkets to be seen in Bond Street to-day.

Or you may like best to stroll in that pleasant place the King's Library—a long, gracious apartment where the sunlight gilds the warm brown of the lovely tooled bindings of George III.'s books.

Into this spacious room come all sorts of people—small boys in knickerbockers anxious

to consult the postage stamp collections, artists to pore over delicately illuminated pages of fifteenth-century manuscripts, students to worship at the shrine of first editions of Shakespeare and Spenser, and people who are touched with the human interest of poignant letters like that of Mary Queen of Scots to "ma bonne sœur et cousine Elizabeth."

But when I am fancy-free, and come to the British Museum, perhaps with only an hour to spare and no very definite idea about what I want to see, I choose one of two courses. Either I spend the entire hour in walking briskly through the galleries and taking a sort of bird's-eye view of the different kinds of treasures that the museum guards, without making an attempt at intimacy with any one of them—or I turn to the left of the big entrance hall, pass through the Roman and Greco-Roman rooms and spend the whole time in the western wing, because there I can see the art of three great nations of the ancient world and the greatest of all the museum's treasures—the Elgin Marbles. In the galleries surrounding them are the stupendous sculptures of Egypt and Assyria; statues of the Egyptian kings who lived 3000 years ago; colossal bulls, human-headed, that once guarded the gate of the palace that belonged to the father of one Sennacherib, King of Assyria, who "came up against all the defenced cities of Judah and took them," and fragments from his own great palace of Nineveh.

Théophile Gautier's words:

> Tout passe.—L'art robuste
> Seul a l'éternité:
> Le buste
> Survit à la cité,

come into one's mind, for the bas-reliefs show the effect of the fire of the Babylonians and Medes when they destroyed "Nineveh that great city" in 609 B.C., yet they survived and the city is as dust! What a people they must have been, the folk who built the Lycian tombs, you can see best when you are half-way down the steps into the Mausoleum room, where lie the tremendous fragments of one of the seven wonders of the ancient world—the tomb that his wife and sister built for Mausolos, Prince of Caria, in a little town in Asia Minor some 2275 years ago.

Traces of another of the seven wonders are in the Ephesus room, where remains of the vast Temple of Artemis, "Diana of the Ephesians," are gathered, and this room leads to the greatest wonder of them all, the pediment groups of statues from the Parthenon at Athens, that most of us call *tout court* the Elgin Marbles.

I believe that a great many people have a vague idea that Thomas Bruce, seventh Earl of Elgin, did a little "scrounging" when he was British ambassador to the Porte in 1801, and that our possession of these sculptures is due to a mixture of luck and audacity.

It is really due to the common sense, artistic

perception and generosity of a statesman who at great inconvenience and a cost to himself of £70,000, only half of which sum he later received from the English Government, removed the treasures that were daily being destroyed by the Turkish bombardment and that, but for his action, would have been irretrievably lost to the world.

One does not need to be an artist nor learned in artistic lore to feel the peculiar charm of the Elgin Marbles. I have seen quite ignorant people approach them with unseeing eyes and some flippancy about their mutilation on the lips, but after a few minutes' contemplation, something of the calm beauty of the pose, the benignant sweep of the drapery, damp with the sea-spray, the mystery of those nostalgic figures, penetrates the onlooker and the work of Pheidias and his craftsmen has wrought its spell.

Now and then the official lecturer tells the story of what they had in their minds when they carved those noble statues, carved every inch of them, even the parts they thought would never again be seen by any human eye once they were placed on the pediment of the Great Temple, and you come away feeling that your eyes have been opened to a great beauty and the truth of it sinks into the soul.

It is not possible in these brief notes to mention more than a very few of the unnoticed treasures in the British Museum. As the old porter said, there is something to interest everyone.

If you search you may come across the manuscript of Rupert Brooke's immortal sonnet, the toys small children played with 2,000 years ago, Mrs. Delaney's curious paper flowers in the students' room of the print collection and many, many other things to draw you there.

Foundling Hospital

"O what a multitude they seemed, these flowers of London town,
Seated in companies they sit, with radiance all their own!"
Blake.

Not far from the British Museum is the Foundling Hospital in Guilford Street. One hears of it vaguely as an orphan asylum where the children wear quaint costumes that may be seen at the service in the chapel on Sunday mornings, when the singing attracts many visitors.

But there are more reasons than that to take you to this corner off the beaten track of the West End. For one thing, it may not be there very long. Already there are rumours that the Foundling Hospital may be moved to the country and one more link with eighteenth-century London be snapped.

Institutions as a rule are about as dull to see as to live in, but the Foundling Hospital is an exception. Handel, Hogarth and Dickens all gave tangible proof that they loved the place, and people from all over the world come to see

it, attracted either by the reputation of the choir, the fame of the pictures in the museum, or the pathetic interest of the children, who indeed look merry, healthy little creatures.

Its story is almost too well known to need repetition: A seventeenth-century sea-captain, living during the latter half of his life in Rotherhithe, was distressed by the sight of deserted children he saw on his way to and from the city. It took good Captain Thomas Coram seventeen years of hard work to turn his dream of a well-endowed hospital for deserted children into a reality, but in 1739 he got a royal charter and a house was opened for them in Hatton Garden. The Foundling Hospital, as we know it, was begun in 1742.

Hogarth has painted a wonderful portrait of the founder, and looking at the cheerful benevolent face one can understand why he wrote, "The portrait I painted with the utmost pleasure and in which I particularly wished to excel was that of Captain Coram for the Foundling Hospital." The kindly eyes that Hogarth drew were forever seeing something to be done for his fellow men, for the Foundling Hospital was only one of the old sea-captain's philanthropies, to which he literally gave away all he had. In his old age, when he was asked if he would mind accepting a pension collected from his friends, he said quite simply, "I have not wasted the little wealth of which I was formerly possessed in self-indulgence or vain expenses, and am not

ashamed to confess that in this my old age I am poor." He accepted a pension of a little more than £100, and is buried in the vaults under the Foundling Hospital Chapel. That is the story of Thomas Coram, whose statue is at the entrance gate and whose name is remembered in Great Coram Street and Little Coram Street.

The best time to see the hospital is at the Sunday morning service at eleven o'clock, and the easiest way to reach it is by the tube to Russell Square. Turn to the right on leaving the tube and walk down Grenville Street and Guilford Street, and the Foundling Hospital will be seen to the left.

Go up to the gallery if you want to see the children seated on each side of the organ, dressed in the quaint costume that has never altered since it was decreed by the founder.

Dickens, who loved the hospital and had a seat in the chapel during the ten years he lived in Bloomsbury, makes Mrs. Meagles say in *Little Dorrit:*

> Oh, dear, dear, . . . when I saw all those children ranged tier above tier, and appealing from the father none of them has ever known on earth, to the great Father of us all in Heaven, I thought, does any wretched mother ever come here, and look among those young faces, wondering which is the poor child she brought into this forlorn world.

But the rules of the Foundling Hospital have changed since Thomas Coram's time. Only the children of known mothers are now received, and

FOUNDLING HOSPITAL

if later in life the mother marries and can prove that she is able to support her child, she can claim it again. The children are never allowed to be adopted. They are sent to foster-mothers in the country when first received, and only come to the hospital when they are six. The girls with few exceptions are trained for domestic service and the boys as regimental bandsmen, if they show talent, or they are apprenticed to different trades when they are fourteen.

There is something infinitely touching in the sight of these rows of small creatures, chanting with their trained treble voices, " Let me never be confounded," when life had confounded them at its very gates. But seeing them later on, as every Sunday morning visitor is allowed to do, happily eating their dinners in their pleasant rooms, it is obvious that the life of the little brown-coated boy or white-capped girl in Thomas Coram's Foundling Hospital has many things in its favour. One may compare their lot with that of more sophisticated children in the London slums, for whom it is necessary to have a society for their protection from the parents who have ill-treated over 100,000 in England in the last year.

One does not ordinarily associate a foundling hospital with the fine arts, but, as I said before, this is an exception. Hogarth not only painted the founder's portrait and one or two other pictures that he gave to the hospital, but he persuaded his friends to do likewise. Sir Joshua

Reynolds gave a portrait of Lord Dartmouth, Gainsborough a view of Charterhouse, Kneller a portrait of Handel, and the exhibition of these gifts, including a beautiful cartoon of Raphael's *Massacre of the Innocents*, was a forerunner of the exhibitions of the Royal Academy. The pictures alone are worth going to Guilford Street to see. Some of them are in the picture gallery with the cases holding tokens that in the old days before 1760 used to be left to identify the foundling. In the board-room, which is supposed to be one of the most beautiful rooms in London, hangs Hogarth's *March to Finchley*, of which I believe there is a copy in the ugly "Adam and Eve" public-house, built on the site of the "Adam and Eve" Inn of the picture, at the corner of the Tottenham Court Road and Euston Road.

The tale of how the hospital came to get the picture is rather quaint. Hogarth painted soldiers marching to Finchley in a state that their French *confrères* would call "*débraillés*." He then asked George II. to buy it, but that monarch—the last English king to go into battle—was so enraged at this presentation of his soldiers, that he indignantly refused, and Hogarth, not being able to dispose of the picture elsewhere, issued lottery tickets for it. About sixty tickets were left on his hands, so he gave them to his favourite hospital, which won the picture, and there it is to-day.

The careful training of the child choir, and

the choice of a musical career for the boys whenever possible, is only carrying on one of the earliest traditions, for Handel rivalled Hogarth in his interest and his gifts to the Foundling Hospital. He used to conduct performances of the *Messiah* in the chapel to crowded audiences, and as he induced the performers to give their services, the proceeds that he handed over sometimes amounted to nearly £1,000. In a glass case is carefully preserved the gift the great master bestowed on the hospital of the MS. of his oratorio, and near by is the autograph copy of the number of *Good Words* containing the story Dickens wrote about the Foundling Hospital.

In the secretary's room is a fine old Jacobean oak table but lately retrieved from the kitchen premises where it had been in use for centuries.

South Kensington Museum

"Were I a physician I would prescribe nothing but Recipe, CCCLXV drachm. Londin."—Walpole.

One of the nicest things about the South Kensington Museum is the lively way it keeps in touch with what happens to be interesting Londoners at the moment.

Is there a loan exhibition of Spanish pictures at Burlington House, at once everything Spanish that the Museum possesses is gathered together so that the different phases of Spanish art may be conveniently noted, and there is nearly

always some extra little exhibition of special interest, either in celebration of the centenary of some great artist or to introduce the work of some foreigner of outstanding merit like Mestrovic.

The lectures given here daily by expert guides at 12 and 3 p.m. would probably be crowded if they cost a guinea. With that curious apathy towards what is not expensive that is one of our less pleasing attributes, only a few people take advantage of these pleasant scholarly talks. If they were known to be very exclusive and costly, the thousands of excellent people with modest incomes and no occupation who live in Bloomsbury and Earl's Court boarding-houses, would sigh for the privilege of sharing these hour-long strolls through the museum, when the lecturer gives no disconnected account of individual objects but deftly traces the development of the art of different countries and ages, illustrating his teaching by the treasures under his care.

I think this apathy is largely due to lack of initiative and imagination, as well as to the aforesaid deeply-rooted idea that what costs nothing cannot be worth much. I have found so many people who have never heard of these lectures that another cause of the small attendance may be that the news of their existence is not sufficiently widely spread.

There is, alas, no one at Claridge's or the Ritz or the Savoy to tell mothers who bring their girls over here to buy clothes and do the

theatres, that there is also a way open to them to gain something that will still be theirs when the memory of the play has faded—in most cases let us hope so—and the clothes have been cast aside—since no one nowadays wears clothes long enough to wear them out.

The South Kensington Museum is the finest museum of applied art in the world. That is why it is the Mecca of students who come here to study and draw inspiration from the lovely things fashioned by our forefathers in gold and silver and bronze and leather, in silk and lace and precious stones, in the furnishings and decorations of the houses and persons of other times and other nations. There are paintings and sculpture as well: the Raphael cartoons are one of the glories of the place.

There is something, indeed, to appeal to everyone's taste in this most marvellous museum. For the little schoolgirls who seem to throng the place in cohorts, in the charge of apathetic teachers, there are the dolls and dolls' houses that their great-grandmothers played with—the former as delicately waxen and elegantly dressed as any to be found to-day. Furniture lovers may study here the finest specimens of every period, from the handsome Jacobean chairs and settles that harmonise so well with the background of panelled walls and decorated ceilings taken from old English houses, to the marvellous ornate escritoires, toilet tables and gilt couches of French royal palaces. There is

less formality about the English furniture, but it was not more comfortable; and the heavy projecting carvings even on the back of the little children's chairs may well have been the reason for the erect bearings used for odious comparisons in one's youth. They say that the beds of our forefathers were comfortable. That may be true, but they were certainly depressing, and the state bed from Boughton House, Northampton, in which William III. slept, with its dingy hangings and horrible hearse-like plumes, reaching into the lofty roof, makes you thankful for the airier ideas of to-day.

For book-lovers there are upstairs the old, old missals and books of hours, illuminated with such skill and patience by monks in mediæval monasteries—some with colours almost as perfect, the ink as black, the paper as white as when they were first executed in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. As marvellous, and perhaps even more exquisite as works of art, are the slender Persian volumes, love-poems and prayers, inscribed in delicate characters of the East, with pictures of shahs and houris, and leather covers, so wonderfully embossed and inlaid and beautifully coloured that no description could give the faintest idea of their perfection.

Even people who are not musicians love the gallery where musical instruments of the past stand silent in their cases: guitars that troubadours in parti-coloured hose twanged dolorously to their lady-loves; virginals belonging to Queen

Elizabeth and that other Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia, who was a daughter of James I.; the harpsichord that Handel bequeathed to George II.; the great harp of the famous blind Welsh harper. Zithers are there, and other instruments of cunning workmanship, lovely to see and with names as melodious as the sounds they once gave forth: dulcimers and clavicords, lutes and ceteras, pandores and clavecins. Here are the spinets of our grandmothers, and what must be the veritable father of the hurdy-gurdy, and a little pianino made by Chappell more than one hundred years ago, so small that you could carry it about from place to place.

Then there is the jewellery—bracelets, girdles, necklaces, earrings, rings chosen and worn by "Flora la Belle Rommaine" and her sisters of other ages and countries, but so like, both in design and execution, the work of the modern goldsmith.

There is an interesting and beautiful collection of the peasant jewellery of continental countries—wonderful gilt crowns of Russian and Norwegian brides and curious rings of gigantic size and significant names, charm rings, motto rings, incantation rings, iconigraphic rings, Gnostic rings and rings with all sorts of devices.

These are only a tithe of the treasures in the Victoria and Albert Museum that can easily be reached by District Railway and Inner Circle to South Kensington Station or by the Piccadilly Tube and the Brompton Road.

Wallace Collection

"Ce qui nous a tous profondément touchés, c'est moins la grandeur de vos largesses, qui ont été immenses, que la bonne grâce spirituelle avec aquelle vous les avez faites."

Sarcey.

People say vaguely, "The Wallace Collection? Oh, yes, I really must go some day; I've heard of it so many times," and the "some day" recedes and London is left behind and that most delightful place remains unseen.

And yet this treasure-house is so easy to reach. The shopper at Debenham and Freebody's need only turn up Duke Street at the corner where Wigmore Street embraces Lower Seymour Street, and there is Manchester House at the far side of Manchester Square.

If you have only a short time to spend there, give it all to the French pictures. They are the *pièce de résistance* of the Wallace Collection, gathered by two men who loved France and spent most of their lives there. The story of the Hertfords who made the Wallace Collection is almost as interesting as anything in their house. The first Marquess of Hertford had thirteen children, and the portraits he asked Reynolds to paint of two of his daughters (Nos. 31 and 33) were the nucleus of the collection. The second marquess only added Reynolds' "Nelly O'Brien" and the Romney "Perdita."

His son was the celebrated Marquess of Hertford whose meteoric career enlivened the first half of the last century—the original of both

Thackeray's Marquis of Steyne and Lord Beaconsfield's Coningsby, whose wealth, wit and reckless egoism provided food for gossip for many a year. It was for him that Decimus Burton built St. Dunstan's in Regent's Park, and he filled it with *objets d'art* of all kinds, and a number of pictures, chiefly of the Dutch school.

His son, Richard Seymour-Conway, fourth Marquess of Hertford, spent his life in amassing, with the help of Sir Richard Wallace, the collection that is now the property of the British nation. M. Yriarte, a French art expert who knew this eccentric nobleman well, published an account of his curious life in the *Pall Mall Magazine* for September 1900, but it is not possible to give the details now.

Sir Richard Wallace inherited his wealth and his pictures. His name is legendary here in England, but in Paris it is a household word, for every thirsty street urchin calls the graceful bronze drinking fountains he put all over the city "un Vallace."

M. Francisque Sarcey, who never met Sir Richard Wallace, has expressed in the dedication of his *Le Siège de Paris* something of the feeling Parisians had for this Englishman who stayed in the city, sharing their perils and discomforts and proving his sympathy by immense gifts. Luckily for us, his friendship did not induce him to leave the Hertford Collection to France. He had always shared his father's

passion for collecting, and began to buy pictures as a young man. The Corot, Rousseau's lovely *Forest Glade*, and the enchanting fresco on plaster of a *Boy Reading* by the Milanese artist Foppa, are among the works he bought.

To come back to the French pictures: there is no example of Chardin's work (to see "Le Bénédicité" you must go to the Louvre), but there are eight pictures by his pupil Fragonard, and if the Louvre has "The Music Lesson," Hertford House has the "Gardens of the Villa d'Este."

I think the Fragonards must be seen if there is time for nothing else; not because Fragonard is a greater artist than the others, but because his work may be better studied here than in his own country.

There is a lovely interior of Fragonard's in the National Gallery, and a "Lady with a Dog" in the Tennant Collection, 34 Queen Anne's Gate, but I am informed that the present occupiers of the Glenconner mansion do not follow the generous custom of the owners in admitting the public on Wednesdays and Saturdays from two to six.

The eccentric Marquess's statement, "I only like pleasing pictures," perhaps accounts for the number of Greuze canvases—over a score; but the collection is particularly rich in eighteenth-century French painters — Largillière, Watteau, Nattier, Lancret, Vernet, Van Loo, Boucher, etc.

If you have time for two visits, spend the second with the Dutch pictures, where the Rembrandt portraits almost console me for the absence of Vermeer's. One must go to the National Gallery to see the "Lady at the Virginal."

Among the fifty-seven artists represented, there are many old friends, Frans Hals, Brouwer, Van Ostade, Gerard Dou, Terborch, Wouverman with his inevitable white horse, six of the excellent Ruysdaels—that somehow never give me as much pleasure as Metsu's charming pictures—Hobbema, the Flemish Teniers, and eight Rubens (he is more likeable here than in the Louvre).

Of course there are numberless other treasures. A very complete catalogue will tell you all about them, but I hope I have made you want to go and buy that catalogue.

Geffrye Museum

"So I set out on my walk to see the wonders of the big city, and, as chance would have it, I directed my course to the East."—G. Borrow.

I have never met anyone who knew of this Benjamin among museums—it was only opened the year the war came upon us—except the man of learning who told me that, tucked away in the heart of the manufacturing district of Shoreditch, there was a wonderful collection of period furniture arranged in an old almshouse.

So one day I climbed into a 22 bus at Piccadilly Circus and asked the conductor to discard me at the Geffrye Museum in the Kingsland Road. We travelled for miles along streets where every second shop seemed to be a cabinet-maker's, and then stopped conveniently at the very gate of the quiet, spacious courtyard where elderly people were taking the air on the old oak benches. It was past six of the clock on a warm evening in June, but a misguided guide-book had said the museum was open till eight in summer.

That halcyon arrangement disappeared with the fashion of the eight-hour day, and the museum now closes at six o'clock like its older *confrères*. It is also closed on Sunday morning and all Monday.

The people who used to live in the fourteen quaint little brick almshouses have been transferred to a building in the country, and the London County Council has bought this property for their museum from the Ironmongers' Company, from whose seventeenth-century "Master," Sir Robert Geffrye, it takes its name. It is a fascinating place; like a rather badly arranged old curiosity shop. There are old staircases—one from Boswell's house in Queen Street is the most beautiful—and lovely panelled rooms and all sorts of things that demonstrate how beautiful interior decoration was before the age of machine-made furniture.

There is a charming room from New Court, Lincoln's Inn, and many other interesting

exhibits including a beautiful lacquered Chinese palanquin, but what I liked best were the fragile, unbelievable wood carvings of Grinling Gibbons.

If there were nothing else to see in the Geffrye Museum, it would be worth while to go to look at what a master hand can do with a block of wood. Evelyn thought Grinling Gibbons "the greatest master both of invention and rarenesse of work that the world ever had in any age."

I had cherished the mistaken belief that Gibbons was an Englishman for so long that it was with regret I found that this great artist was born in Rotterdam and only came to England in 1667 when he was twenty-four years old.

It is many long years since I was first shown some of Grinling Gibbons' marvellous work—so many that only the effect it had on me remains, while the date and place have gone from me. I never willingly miss seeing what his hand has carved, and if any reader of these pages is in the habit of coming to London often and making friends on each trip with another of the men of genius who have given the city its proud record, I can tell them where they may study the wizardlike work of this master craftsman and great artist.

The most magnificent piece of work he carved is in the choir of St. Paul's, but there are long festoons of flowers in St. Mary Abchurch, in Abchurch Yard, off Abchurch Lane, a turning

out of Cannon Street. In old St. Mary Abchurch you will also find a wonderful painted dome by Sir James Thornhill, Hogarth's father-in-law, whose house in Dean Street, Soho has only lately been pulled down. St. James's, Piccadilly, that suave building that breathes mid-Victorian portliness, broadcloth and self-satisfaction, has a lovely marble font carved by Grinling Gibbons, but the cover was stolen. Another place where you pass Grinling Gibbons' work very often is in Trafalgar Square, for he carved the pedestal to King Charles I.'s statue, and over the mantelpiece in the vestry of St. Dunstan's-in-the-East, between Great Tower Street and Lower Thames Street, you will find another carving.

The rest I will leave you to hunt out for yourself. Some of it is in unlikely places, one of them not a hundred miles from Clifford's Inn. I do not know if there is any trace of the pot of flowers Grinling Gibbons carved when he lived in Belle Sauvage Court on Ludgate Hill, and which Walpole said "shook surprisingly with the motion of the coaches that passed by."

He lived for forty-three years in Bow Street, Covent Garden. The house fell down, says an old record, in 1701, "but by a genial providence none of the family were killed," and they seem to have propped up their house, for they went on living there till Grinling Gibbons died in 1721.

CHAPTER XI

PARKS

Hyde Park

"Is there a more gay and graceful spectacle in the world than Hyde Park . . . in the merry month of May or June?"—Beaconsfield.

The London parks certainly do not deserve the epithet "unnoticed," but I have met few people who knew anything about their story. Foreigners coming to London for the first time always exclaim at their beauty, but the Londoners take them as a matter of course, and hardly anyone stops to inquire their history or even the reason for their names. Yet much of the city's history is bound up with that of the parks, and their story is a mirror of the changing fashions of London.

Hyde Park, for instance—that vast space of 390 acres in the very heart of the city, enjoyed by prince and plutocrat and pauper with equal freedom so long as they keep on their feet, for the rule of the roadway is not so democratic—what a tale it could tell of the brave sights it has seen since it was first enclosed in 1592! Before Charles I.'s time the park, that took its name from the Manor of Hyde, was only to be

enjoyed by the king and court, who hunted and hawked there; but in Stuart days there were foot and horse races and drives and merry-making. It has always been a favourite haunt of Mayfair. Evelyn used to "take the aire in Hide Park," very annoyed at having to pay one shilling and sixpence for the privilege, and so did Pepys, obviously gratified that his wife attracted attention. De Gramont, the witty observer of Charles II.'s court, is quoted as saying: "Hyde Park everyone knows is the promenade of London—the promenade of beauty and fashion."

In the days of Charles II. all the world went to the Ring, a circular course of about 350 yards laid out by the Merry Monarch, between the Ranger's Cottage and the present tea-house. How fashionable the drive was Pepys tells us when he says: "Took up my wife and Deb and to the park, where being in a hackney and they undressed, was ashamed to go into the Tour but went round the park and so with pleasure home."

In those days there was a cake-house, where cheese-cakes, syllabub and tarts were sold—refreshments probably more attractive than those of to-day.

Places of refreshment might so easily add enormously to the amenities of the London parks and gardens if good food, attractively and quickly provided, could be obtained. Nature has furnished an exquisite background for a

sylvan meal, but anyone who has ordered tea at one of these places carries away a regret for what might have been. Perhaps that is why it has never been fashionable to take tea in the park since the Georgian days when people stood on chairs to see the beautiful Miss Gunnings pass by.

The latest fashions were always worn first in Hyde Park. The daring of any Paris *mannequin* at the Grand Prix pales before the effect made by the Lady Caroline Campbell of George III.'s reign, who "displayed in Hyde Park the other day a feather four feet higher than her bonnet."

In Victorian days the smart world strolled on the south walk between Hyde Park Corner and Alexandra Gate, but to-day that is given over to the curious strata of society, vomited up from a volcanic war, that now fill the stalls in the theatres and the restaurants that used to call themselves exclusive.

Fashion is slowly retiring—first to the part of the park opposite Park Lane and then to the northern side opposite Lancaster Gate. Perhaps it is making the tour, and when the profiteer and his family have discovered that they are in sole possession of this south-east part of the park, they will move off and the wheel will turn once more.

Why the big statue close to Hyde Park Corner is called the Achilles Statue is one of London's mysteries for which there is no more reason than the nursemaid had when she familiarly desig-

nated Watts' "Physical Energy" in Kensington Gardens as "The Galloping Major." "Achilles" is a copy of one of the horse trainers of the Monte Cavallo in Rome. The Pope gave the cast, the Ordnance Department gave the metal of the cannon taken in the battles of Salamanca, Vittoria, Toulouse and Waterloo, and the women of England subscribed £10,000 to this memorial of the Iron Duke and his comrades-in-arms. Where Achilles comes in, I do not know.

Each of the great London parks is associated with some special English sovereign. Charles II. is the godfather of St. James's Park; Regent's Park, like Regent Street, was planned for the glorification of the man who was afterwards George IV.; Battersea is associated with Prince Albert the Good, and we owe Kew to the Princess Augusta, mother of George III.

Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens owe their allegiance to Queen Caroline, George II.'s queen. It was she who converted the ponds and the Westbourne stream into the fifty acres of water of the Serpentine which, now derived from the Thames, feeds the ornamental water in Buckingham Palace Gardens and St. James's Park. The king thought she was doing it all out of her own purse and smiled at all her schemes, little dreaming that with Walpole's aid she was letting him in for some £20,000—a fact he only discovered after her death.

Unfortunate Parisians, who are obliged to skirt the Tuileries gardens, closed inexorably at

seven o'clock on a summer evening, envy the Londoner who may enjoy the leafy cool of his parks till long after dark, the carriage entrances not being closed till midnight.

You may see an extraordinary number of quite different phases of English life in Hyde Park. There are the loafers, including the errand boys and that mysterious class of people who seem to have nothing to do in life but "invite their soul" at eleven o'clock of a fine morning. Unless they are content with a bench, the peace has made this feat more expensive than it used to be, for when the price of everything else was happily falling, the rusty individual who was wont to interrupt true lovers' conversations by heartlessly demanding a penny, was suddenly inspired to double the price of the chairs that have been hired in the park for the last hundred years.

Then there is the gallant sight of Rotten Row, named from the Route du Roi that William III. used when he rode from Whitehall to Kensington. The present Rotten Row was made by George I. when he wanted a shorter cut through the park. The best time to see the riders is the early morning, and the bathers have to get up still earlier if they want to plunge into the Serpentine, for the bathing is over at 8.30 a.m.

In the afternoon the Hyde Park orator comes into his own and the whole of the Marble Arch corner turns into a factory for letting off steam. It is let off by the partisans of different religions

who vociferate side by side, each demonstrating that his particular set of tenets is the only means to salvation. It is let off by socialists and communists and bolsheviks, and everyone who fancies he can alter the existing conditions to his own advantage,—and behind all these fiery-tongued speechmakers stand the placid good-natured policemen who look on with all the indulgence of a kindly nurse towards a fractious child, answering an amused inquiry with a paternal: "It don't 'urt anyone and it does them a power of good to get it off their chests!"

Among the phases to be noticed are the picnic parties who come to the park prepared to make a day of it, and the children of every class of society, and the nursemaids whose very name reminds one of his Majesty's forces both military and naval, who are also ardent patrons of the park.

There are many minor points of interest,—the queer little dogs' cemetery near the Victoria Gate on the north side, the dell, a sub-tropical garden near the east end of the Serpentine not far from the fountain with the charming Artemis statue—but the most delightful way to see the park at its very best is to go there in the early morning carrying a picnic breakfast and take a boat at the boathouse south of the rangers' lodge. I have always envied the park ranger who lives in this mansion. The first of his race was appointed by Henry VIII. at the princely salary of sixpence a day, but when this was

objected to by the Government economy enthusiasts of that time, it was reduced to fourpence.

The tiny stone cottages of the keepers, with the classic architecture that makes them look so ridiculously important, are not really the smallest houses in London. I think that honour must surely belong to the porter's lodge at the Fetter Lane entrance to the Record Office, unless you count as a house No. 10, Hyde Park Place. Though it certainly has a street door all to itself, it has only one room.

The paternal L.C.C., so careless when it is a matter of eating and drinking, is careful to provide more artistic pleasures for the Hyde Park crowds. Bands play there on many summer evenings—the announcements are made in the Press—and now and then the League of Arts arranges an entertainment, when thousands of people flock to see the Morris dancing or some old play performed with a background of green trees.

Kensington Gardens

"Sometimes a child will cross the glade."
Matthew Arnold.

Henry James once expressed the opinion that the view from the bridge that crosses the Serpentine where Hyde Park joins Kensington Gardens has an "extraordinary nobleness," and there is something indescribably beautiful and unexpected about it. The grey buildings in the distance look like some palace of the

fata morgana over the shimmering water. I do not know if Sir James Barrie is responsible for the feeling that you would not be surprised at anything that might happen in Kensington Gardens. Who would be bold enough to assert that when the last child has left the Peter Pan statue the squirrels do not come and play with their stone brothers? Kensington Gardens are the paradise of the child and the flower lover. There are ugly things in it, of course, like the Albert Memorial, though everyone does not think it ugly: I was once startled at hearing that souvenir of Victorian taste fervently admired by some fellow bus passengers. But the Serpentine, and the Round Pond on a sunny morning when the fleet is engaged in serious manœuvres—and the Broad Walk: Wren's orangery—the lovely sunk garden with its pleached walk of lime trees with the avenue Queen Caroline planted—and above all, the Flower Walk in the sunlit air after a shower, —if visitors to London have time for nothing else they should carry away a memory of Kensington Gardens.

Green Park and St. James's

"Satirists may say what they please about the rural enjoyments of a London citizen on Sunday."—W. Irving.

Walking along Piccadilly from Hyde Park Corner on the "sulky" side, as Mr. Street calls it in his charming *Ghosts of Piccadilly*, many

PETER PAN STATUE IN KENSINGTON GARDENS

people wonder at the meaning of the ledge on the curb of the pavement nearly opposite the entrance to 128, Piccadilly. It owes its existence to a benevolent old clubman who, from his comfortable window armchair, noticed the porters bearing heavy burdens on their backs and toiling up the slope of Piccadilly. The ledge was fixed at the right height, so that they might rest their burdens without unfastening them.

Green Park was once much larger than its present sixty acres or so, but George III. took some of it in 1767 to enlarge the gardens of old Buckingham House. It is now the happy hunting-ground of the gentlemen who love to lie full length on the grass—the not inconsiderable army of people who would dread communism if they ever thought about anything, and would bitterly regret under any other régime the halcyon days when the out-of-work dole of a benevolent government of bourgeois permitted these free Britons to lounge at peace.

Their presence is perhaps the reason why the Green Park is not a fashionable rendezvous, like Hyde Park, although some of the great London houses, Stafford House, Bridgewater House, Spencer House, etc., border it on the east side. The wrought iron and gilded gates bearing the Cavendish crest and motto that were formerly used as the entrance to Devonshire House have now been placed in Green

Park opposite the building they guarded so long. These beautiful old gates have had a chequered history. Seven generations ago, in the eighteenth century, they began their existence at Turnham Green, where they guarded the approach to the house of the second Lord Egmont and bore the arms of the Perceval family. The house changed owners and was pulled down, and in 1838 the gates were bought by the sixth Duke of Devonshire for his Chiswick house. They stayed there for fifty-nine years, before they came to spend a brief quarter of a century watching the ebb and flow of Piccadilly.

The Duke of Devonshire already had beautiful gates at Chiswick when he bought these, for the Earl of Burlington who got the house in 1727 and whose daughter and sole heiress married a Duke of Devonshire, was also a connoisseur in gates, and had begged a beautiful pair of Inigo Jones design from Sir Hans Sloane, who did not appreciate them. When they were being moved, Pope wrote:

Passenger. Oh Gate! how cam'st thou here?
Gate. I was brought from Chelsea last year,
Battered with wind and weather;
Inigo Jones put me together,
Sir Hans Sloane
Let me alone,
So Burlington brought me hither.

Green Park has another gate, part of which I am sure is unnoticed, for how many people know that in the Wellington Arch at the top of Constitution Hill, at the upper end of the

Green Park, sixteen policemen and an inspector have their happy home. Their special task is to direct the traffic at Hyde Park Corner, no easy matter in the season or when the king and queen and other notabilities come driving out to take the air. From their bedroom in the Arch they can climb on to the wide flat top, and under the shadow of the splendid group of Peace in her flying chariot, look over a wonderful vista of park and palace and highway.

St. James's Park

"La beauté de Londres n'est pas dans ses monuments mais dans son immensité."—Zola.

What would old Lenôtre, Louis XIV.'s court gardener, who laid out St. James's Park, think if he could see his handiwork to-day? He would make a witty jest of it, perhaps, for he was a charming old man of a guileless simplicity that made him beloved of everyone, even in the most artificial court in Europe. Charles II. invited the famous French landscape gardener, who had created Versailles out of a sandhill, to come and transform the swampy meadow that adjoined the palace Henry VIII. had fashioned out of the twelfth-century Lepers Hospital, dedicated to St. James the Less, which has given its name to the palace and park.

St. James's has always been a very royal park since the days when the young Princess

Elizabeth rode through it from her father's new palace to the court at Whitehall, attended "with a very honourable confluence of noble and worshipful persons of both sexes." Charles I. took his last walk through it on his way to the scaffold in Whitehall, and Charles II. spent much of his time playing with his dogs and feeding his ducks there, and he planted some of the oaks from the acorns of the royal oak at Boscobel. His aviary on the south side is still remembered in the name of Birdcage Walk, and the tradition is carried on by the aquatic birds that used to haunt the ornamental water before the war.

Walpole in his reminiscences quotes George I. as saying:

> This is a strange country. The first morning after my arrival at St. James's, I looked out of the window, and saw a park with walls, canal, etc., which they told me were mine. The next day, Lord Chetwynd the Ranger of *my* Park, sent me a fine brace of carp out of *my* canal; and I was told I must give five guineas to Lord Chetwynd's servant for bringing me *my own* carp out of *my own* canal *in my own garden.*

I always loved, too, the reply of Walpole's father to Queen Caroline when she asked how much it would cost to close St. James's Park for the royal use and he answered, "only three crowns, Madam."

Regent's Park

"London is before all things an incomparable background."—F. M. Hueffer.

Regent's Park to most people spells the Zoo, the place where one may see the best menagerie in the world. It is the successor of Marylebone Park, a royal hunting-ground until Cromwell's day. It was laid out in its present style after 1812 by Nash, the man who designed Regent Street, and named after the Prince Regent, who thought he would build a country house here.

It is so far removed from Mayfair that its glories have been neglected, but now that fashion has drifted north of Hyde Park and even Bloomsbury is having its recrudescence, Regent's Park may wake up any day and find itself famous. It is beautifully laid out and tended, and garden lovers from other lands will like it immensely if they take a tube to Baker Street and spend an hour or so there, either boating on the lovely lake or walking in the gardens.

The Royal Botanic Gardens, enclosed by a circular walk, are reached from York Street by a road running north between Bedford Women's College and the Toxophilite Society (which ordinary people are content to call the Archery Club). It is only open to the general public on Mondays and Saturdays on payment of one shilling.

On this west side of the park is St. Dunstan's Lodge, the home of Mr. and Mrs. Otto Kahn, who gave their house for some years to the late Sir Arthur Pearson for his hostel for the education of the blind.

It was once the home of the Marquess of Hertford, who was the original of Thackeray's Marquis of Steyne in *Vanity Fair*

Battersea Park

"It takes London of all cities to give you such an impression of the country."—Henry James.

Battersea Park is another of London's lovely gardens. It takes its name from the old parish and manor of Battersea, a gradual corruption of the Patricesy or Peter's Isle, by which it was known in Domesday Book as belonging to the Abbey of St. Peter at Westminster.

There is nothing very interesting historically about the park, as it was only laid out in 1852, on Battersea Fields, the scene of a duel in 1829 between the Duke of Wellington and the Marquis of Winchelsea, but it is one of the favourite parks of London and the only one that fringes the borders of the Thames. It has a lovely sunk garden, that is a dream of beauty in the summer time, and letters are always appearing in the papers about the birds that nest among its trees. Four of the 188 acres are laid out as a sub-tropical garden. There is a lake with

rowing boats to hire, and arrangements are made for cricket and other sports.

If the park has no history, one can find curious bits of old London quite close to it by turning out of the west gate and asking the way to Church Road, off the Battersea Bridge Road, and near the river. First there is the old church of St. Mary's, ugly enough in itself, but it was where William Blake was married, and where Turner used to sketch the wonderful effects on the Thames. Lovers of quaint epitaphs will find a delicious one composed by himself to the famous Henry St. John, Lord Bolingbroke, who "was Secretary of State under Queen Anne and in the days of King George I. and King George II. something more and better."

Lord Bolingbroke was a true Battersea man, for he was born there in 1678 and died in 1751. His second wife, who shares the honour of his monument, was a niece of Madame de Maintenon. Battersea has been closely connected with the St. John family for four hundred years, though they sold their manor to the Spencers in 1763. A bit of it may still be seen in the adjoining flour mills, where, I believe, it is possible to see the wonderful ceiling and staircase, and the lovely cedar-panelled room overlooking the river, where Pope wrote his *Essay on Man*.

Kew Gardens

"Go down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from London)."
Alfred Noyes.

Kew is too far afield to be called unnoticed London, but it is the most wonderful of all the London gardens and so easy to reach that to miss it would be a matter for perpetual regret.

Anyone can tell you the way to get there: either from Waterloo to Kew Bridge, when you will have to walk across the bridge to get to the main entrance of the gardens, or by the District Railway to Kew Gardens station, or by tram from Hammersmith.

There is so much to see there that over-much direction destroys the greatest pleasure of finding out what you like best, and everyone has his own opinion as to what time of the year the gardens are most beautiful. The poet loves "Kew in lilac-time," the lover of gorgeous colour goes down to see the regiments of tulips, massed as they are nowhere else outside Holland. Kew in rhododendron and azalea time ought not to be missed, but I think the loveliest sight of all is Kew in bluebell time, when it looks as if a bit of the sky had fallen earthwards on either side of the Queen's Walk, and in the middle of the wilderness you come across the deserted little ivy-clad cottage, the sea of blue sweeping up to the very door to which no pathway now leads.

It was once the Queen's Cottage, built by

George III. for Queen Charlotte, in the days when they led the domestic existence that Fanny Burney described in her *Diary*; but no one now uses it and it stands there with a mute air of resignation at its fallen fortunes, little dreaming how much its unexpected beauty adds to the pleasure of the discoverer of this lovely corner.

Kew, like the other parks, had its royal origin. Its founder was the Princess Augusta of Saxe-Gotha, the wife of Frederick Prince of Wales, who, eight years after her husband's death, interested herself in the laying out of the exotic garden at Kew that was the nucleus of the vast collection of 24,000 different varieties of plants.

Kew has always been beloved by artists. Sir Peter Lely had a house at Kew Green and Johann Zoffany the painter, whose fame has so lately been augmented by the publication of his life and memoirs, lived in Zoffany House at Strand-on-the-Green, a delightful old-world riverside village close to Kew Bridge. He is buried in the early eighteenth-century church of St. Ann, where Gainsborough also lies.

And now come back to London and I will show you a Lilliputian park I am sure you have never noticed. It is so tiny; long ago it was the churchyard of St. Botolph without Aldersgate, dedicated to that kindly patron of all travellers, but now it is a charming retreat with an additional attraction that I leave you to discover, and because it is so close to the General Post Office it is always called The Postman's Park.

There are other lovely unnoticed oases of green round about London town; Brockwell Park with its fine old walled garden, and Dulwich and Southwark. Their tales must wait for another time, for now it only remains for me to say with Pope:

Dear, damn'd, distracting town, farewell.

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