

INTRODUCTION

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pilot their pupils to points where history was enacted; and, no doubt, by a little judicious whetting of the appetite the day will come when a London County Council scholar will pray for the mountains to fall on him who cannot instantly give an intelligent account of Wine Office Court, the Rosetta Stone, and the Golden Grasshopper above the Royal Exchange.

During many a period of suspense when Zeppelins were on their way to London, the writer resisted anxiety by re-reading James's *Psychology*. In that book there is something to the effect that we see just what the brain is prepared to see. Thus a totally uninformed man would pass from the Bank to Charing Cross without observing anything worth mentioning; while another whose mind was well stored would, especially on a first visit, be in a state of exaltation. Our country-cousins may not have the same kind of information which Branwell Brontë possessed, who was able, although he had never been in London, to direct a Londoner by a short cut from one place to another. It is often the case, though, that a provincial whose intelligence is attracted by the Metropolis is prepared beforehand to make the most of his time. He will probably be half-stunned with bewilderment as he emerges from the archway of St. Pancras Station, and filled with fear lest he shall be run down by a motor-bus, or have his purse stolen; but soon the great associations of this noble city will fill his mind with other thoughts.

We can think of no better way of knowing London than by associating persons with places, or other persons. The old, wooden method of learning history by memorising dates of accessions and battles has gone by the board. We know that the life of a monarch is not essentially the history of England during the period of