

less ornate than the Upper House. It occupies the site of old St. Stephen's Hall, and is 60 feet long, with a height and width of 45 feet.

The foundation stone of this vast pile was laid April 27th, 1840. The chief architect was Mr. Barry. In spite, however, of the great expense and the many years consumed in their erection, the constructive features of the British Houses of Parliament are very unsatisfactory. The nation is forced to note, with considerable uneasiness, the decay of the outside stonework and the rapid deterioration of the interior frescoes of their legislative halls, and must give untiring attention for their preservation.

Let us cross the Channel to the brilliant pleasure-city, Paris. I was much struck with its brand-new appearance. Almost everything that is old has disappeared before the march of modern improvement. I was also struck with the monotony—a splendid monotony it is true—of its street architecture. Broad boulevards and streets radiate from numerous points, so, according to Baron Haussmann's design, I was informed, as to be commanded by cannon from these strategic points. On either side of these streets rise uniform blocks and wedges of houses, of cream-coloured stone,—five, six, or seven stories high, with iron balconies, and bright shop fronts. Many of the boulevards are lined with noble trees, giving a refreshing shade and coolness amid the glare and heat of the city. Many of them are also paved with concrete or asphalt, which has the double advantage of being noiseless and of furnishing poor material for the erection of barricades—the favourite amusement of the Parisians in times of political excitement.

The public squares, of which there are many, are full of life and movement and rich in colour, adorned with noble trees, flashing fountains, and snowy statuary, and filled with brilliant equipages and promenaders, with everywhere the ubiquitous gens d'armes. Of all the parks in the world I suppose the Champs Elysées is the grandest—not so much in natural beauty, for it shares the splendid monotony of the city, but in the stately architecture by which it is surrounded, the noble vista it presents, and the brilliant concourse by which it is thronged; and over all is thrown an intense historic interest by the tragic memories with which it is haunted. On its broad Place de la Concorde, the guillotine began its bloody work with the execution of Louis