

The House of the Secret

"Perhaps I made a mistake, sir," said the driver, with the easy pliability of the Irish. "Anyhow, we'll soon see. I'll have ye there in a brace of shakes."

He drove up one street and down another with a speed and recklessness which made Maeve's heart quake. They reached the Square. They heard him count the numbers under his breath, with an ascending certainty.

"200!" he said, triumphantly, as he pulled up. "Sure everyone in Dublin knows the haunted house!"

They had halted at the door of a most forbidding building, cobwebbed and dingy amid its smart neighbours. The windows of the house behind their iron bars were covered thickly with dust. A pane here and there was broken. The paint of the hall door was faded and blistered. The dusty area railings were rusted. Beyond the bars and the grime it was possible to see that the lower windows were shuttered. Dreariness, dirt and neglect lay over everything.