

in the London of to-day,—of the people, the places and the things one sees there—then my little labour of love will not have been quite in vain.

It would give me great pleasure to be able to secure the services of that magic carpet mentioned in the Arabian Nights, and with its friendly aid to transport my readers to the top of the thirty-foot gilded cross which surmounts St. Paul's Cathedral, 404 feet above ground.

Given one of these bright days, with a blue sky and bright sun, which,—despite popular belief to the contrary—do occur in London, I would bid him gaze around him, and thus impress him with the magnitude of a subject with which I make a feeble attempt to deal.

I would bid him note the unbroken sequence of streets and houses for sixteen miles, from Acton in the west to Stratford in the east, from Highgate in the north to Sydenham in the south ; the Alexandra Palace on one horizon and the Crystal Palace on the other—both well within the limits of London—but further apart than two feudal strongholds of the mediæval barons may have been.

I would point out to him how that vast city of which Defoe tells us, which was decimated by fire and plague, would—if the Great Fire of London should occur again—leave a burnt spot relatively no larger than the pip of an orange.

I would impress him with the fact that the scenes of Jack Sheppard's hanging, of John Gilpin's wedding-day adventures, of the rendezvous of Catesby and Guy Fawkes, whence to witness the upheaval of the House of Commons, of a host of other incidents which song or story have placed at various distances from London, are now parts of one town. When I had properly imbued and saturated his mind with a just idea of the vastness of this monstrosity among towns I might say with Saint Paul, "I am a citizen of no mean city." In no place may be seen more of life's ironies and life's contrasts than in modern London. There one may see the senile crossing-sweeper devoting his life to a daily task of keeping clear a narrow strip across which lords and ladies, or noble dukes may find daily occasion to walk. There one may see the ragged, half-starved, but ever impudent street arab, hold open the door of a cab for the man who juggles daily