

wants to earn his bread, and, if possible, butter wherewith to flavour it. Like Britons in general, from Dick Whittington downwards, he thinks that the capital is the place in which to seek one's fortune, and to find it. He had not expected streets paved with gold, nor yet with the metaphorical plenty of penny loaves, but an indefinite disappointment weighs upon him as he passes through quarters fully as dingy and poverty-stricken as those in his own provincial town.

Still on—on—across "the province covered with houses;" sometimes in a great thoroughfare, where midnight is as noisy as noon-day, and much more glaring; sometimes through a region of silence and sleep, where gentility keeps proper hours, going to bed betimes in its respectable streets. Robert Wynn began to wonder when the journey would end; for, much as he knew of London by hearsay and from books, it was widely different thus personally to experience the metropolitan amplitude. A slight dizziness of sight, from the perpetual sweeping past of lamps and shadowy buildings, caused him to close his eyes; and from speculations on the possible future and the novel present, his thoughts went straight home again.

Home to the Irish village where his ancestors had long been lords of the soil; and the peasantry had deemed that the greatest power on earth, under majesty itself, was his Honour Mr. Wynn of Dunore, where now, fallen from greatness, the family was considerably larger than the means. The heavily encumbered property had dropped away piece by piece, and the scant residue clung to its owner like shackles. With difficulty the narrow exchequer had raised cash enough to send Robert on this expedition to London, from which much was hoped. The young man had been tolerably well educated; he possessed a certain amount and quality of talent, extolled by partial friends as far above the average; but the mainstay of his anticipations was a promise of a