

Birch's famous iced punch. He entered the odd little shop, one of the landmarks of the City, by the Royal Exchange. Here he met one or two friends who, like himself, were spending an idle hour, and enjoying their idleness the more by its contrast with the humming life of the wide streets outside. It was approaching midday when Mr Thawne bought a gardenia from a flower-girl who stood on the curb outside the offices of Rothschild's, and strolled towards the scene of his labours.

The offices of Slygne & Co. were situated on the west side of a narrow street not a quarter of a mile from the Mansion House.

Burdett Street connected two thoroughfares, but it was too narrow for ordinary traffic. Only an occasional hansom cab rattled over the macadam, on its way to Cannon Street Station, and none of the great vans of Mincing Lane or Tower Street were to be found there. The street was not occupied by commercial houses. Not a single merchant of repute had his offices there; no established business had chosen it for its headquarters, yet every floor in the tall buildings was tenanted; a plate with a more