

the Ko-Lao makes its headquarters in Hunan and Honan, the central provinces. It claims to represent the pure Chinese race, the sons of Han, to whom the inhabitants of the south and west are almost as much foreign as are the Tartars. These malcontents look behind the Ming dynasty, as the name "Elder Brother" implies, to the imperial line of Tang, which is supposed to be extinct long ago, but doubtless a scion will be forth-coming when the throne is vacant. The society consists of soldiers mostly, but it is understood that some affiliates occupy very high positions indeed, as we should expect when they advocate such a policy. A very desperate and disreputable band they are by all accounts, numbering a large proportion of the bad characters in those districts where they have influence. Mr. Balfour says, however, "There is not the slightest doubt that if one of their old generals were to raise the standard of rebellion, he might have a hundred thousand men about him in the time it takes to spread the news from Nanking to Hankow."

The Ko-Lao is, in fact, a military conspiracy. Its agents commonly travel as doctors, carrying news from one centre to another, and making proselytes as they go. The ceremonial of initiation is said to be elaborate, but I have heard no details. An association of old soldiers designed to overthrow the civil power is naturally turbulent. The Ko-Lao has broken out several times during its brief existence. In 1870 and 1871 it raised serious disturbances in Hunan, but the grand movement was disconcerted by a lucky chance. A secret letter containing the plan for blowing up the powder-magazine at Hukow was delivered to the

wrong person. It named several of the chief conspirators, who were seized and promptly executed. In that neighborhood the society was suppressed for a while. But its attraction for the men of the central provinces, who hate their kinsfolk all round, must be very strong.

Many other societies are known, but I must dismiss them briefly. The Mohammedians, who number not less than twenty millions by official report—perhaps twenty-five millions, or even more—have a secret league, the Hwuy-Hwuy Jin. A neophyte must be purified before initiation, and this is done by thrashing him heartily. Afterwards he is put to the *question à l'eau*—made to drink a prodigious quantity of soap and water—which scours the pork out of him, if any. But since the awful massacres of Kashgar these sectaries have been intimidated. Tien-Tsin has the Tsai-li Hwuy—apparently a religious association. Members dress in white alone, even to their hats and shoes; they abstain from alcoholic drinks, opium, and tobacco, and fall into ecstasies when praying. They have been much persecuted of late, being easily distinguishable. Other societies, of which the secret is utterly unknown, are the Tsze T'wan Keäou and the Tan Pei Keäou. The single fact ascertained touching the former is the practice of eating small dumplings, doubtless symbolical. The latter kneel upon a large carpet and pray; at a certain moment the four corners of it are raised and fastened above their heads, when the heap of devotees inside fall into a trance and prophesy. But our information on these points is suspect, coming from their enemies the Mandarins. As for semi-secret associations for good works, they are legion.

LONDON—PLANTAGENET.

BY WALTER BESANT.

II.—PRINCE AND MERCHANT.

IT is by no means safe to adopt in blind confidence the conclusions of the antiquary. He works, you see, with fragments: here it is a passage in an old deed; here a few lines of poetry; here a broken vase; here the capital of a column; here a drawing cramped and out of proportion and dwarfed, from an illuminated

manuscript. This kind of work tends to small things: the splendid city presently becomes, in the mind of the antiquary, a mean little town; King Solomon's Temple, glorious and vast, shrinks to the dimensions of a village conventicle; Leviathan himself becomes an alligator; all history, read through this reducing lens,

becomes a series of patriotic exaggerations. For instance, the late Dr. Brewer, a true antiquary if ever there was one, could see in mediæval London nothing but a collection of mean and low tenements standing among squalid streets and filthy lanes. Any city, ancient or modern, might, of course, be described as consisting of mean and squalid houses, because in every city the poor outnumber the rich, and the small houses of the poor are more frequent than the mansions of the wealthy. But that this estimate of the city is wholly incorrect I shall now attempt to show.

When one who wishes to reconstruct a city of the past has obtained from the antiquary all he has discovered, and from the historian all he has to tell, there is yet another field of research open to him before he begins his task. It is the examination of the place itself, the site of the town, or the modern town upon the site of the old. I will give an example to show the necessity of examination on the spot. Fifty years ago a certain learned antiquary and scholar visited for a day or two the site of a certain Syrian city, now little more than a village. He looked casually at the place; he read whatever history has found to say of it; he made no attempt at exploring the extent of the ruins or at examining the site; he proceeded at once to prove that the place could never have been more than a small and insignificant town composed of huts and inhabited by fishermen. Those who spoke of it as a magnificent city must have been enthusiasts. Forty years passed: then another man not only visited the site, but examined it, surveyed it, and explored it. He discovered that the insignificant place had formerly possessed a mighty wall two miles in length; an acropolis, strong and well situated, protecting a noble city with splendid buildings. The antiquary, you see, dealing with fragments, could not rise above them; his fragments belonged to a whole which in his mind became puny and insignificant. This was the once famous city of Tiberias, by the shores of the Galilean lake.

In exactly the same way he who would understand mediæval London must walk about modern London, but after *he has read his historian and his antiquary*, not before. Then he will be astonished to find how much is left, in spite of fires, reconstructions, and demolitions, to illus-

trate the past. Here a quaint little square accessible only to foot-passengers, shut in, surrounded by merchants' offices, preserves the form of a court in a suppressed monastery.

Again, another little space set with trees, like a Place in Toulon or Marseilles, shows the former court of a royal palace. Here a venerable name survives; here a dingy little church-yard marks the site of a church as ancient as any in the city.

London is full of such survivals, which are known only to one who prowls about its streets, note-book in hand, remembering what he has read. Not one of them will he get from the book antiquary, or from the guide-book. As one after the other is recovered the ancient city grows to the student not only more vivid, but more picturesque and more splendid. London a city of low mean tenements? Why, I see great palaces along the river-bank between the quays and ports and warehouses. In the narrow lanes that rise steeply from the river I see other houses fair and stately, each with its gateway, its square court, and its noble hall, high-roofed, with its oriel-windows and its lantern. Beyond these narrow lanes, north of Watling Street and Budge Row, more of those houses, and still more, till we reach the northern part, where the houses are all small, given over to the meaner sort, and those who carry on the least-desirable trades.

You have seen that London was full of rich monasteries, nunneries, colleges, and parish churches, inasmuch that it might be likened unto the Ile Sonnante of Rabelais. You have now to learn, what I believe no one has yet pointed out, that if it could be called a city of churches, it was much more a city of palaces. There were, in fact, in London itself more palaces than in Verona and Florence and Venice and Genoa all together. There was not, it is true, a line of marble *palazzi* along the banks of a Grand Canal: there was no Piazza della Signoria, no Piazza dell' Erbe, to show these buildings. They were scattered about all over the city; they were built without regard to general effect, and with no idea of decoration or picturesqueness; they lay hidden in the labyrinthine streets; the warehouses stood beside and between them; the common people dwelt in narrow courts around them; they faced each other on opposite sides of the lanes.

These palaces belonged to the great nobles and were their town houses: they were capacious enough to accommodate the whole of a Baron's retinue, consisting sometimes of four, six, or even eight hundred men. Let us remark that the continual presence of these lords and those following did much more for the city than merely to add to its splendor by the erecting of great houses. By their presence they kept the place from becoming merely a trading centre or an aggregate of merchants; they kept the citizens in touch with the rest of the kingdom; they made the people of London understand that they belonged to the realm of England. When Warwick, the King-maker, rode through the streets to his town house, followed by five hundred retainers in his livery; when King Edward IV. brought wife and children to the city and rode out to fight for his crown; when a royal tournament was held in Chepe—the Queen and her ladies looking on—even the boys understood that there was more in the world than mere buying and selling, importing and exporting; that everything must not be measured by profit; that they were traders, indeed, and yet subjects of an ancient crown; that their own prosperity stood or fell with the well-doing of the country. This it was which made the Londoners ardent politicians from very early times; they knew the party leaders; they felt bound to take a side; and they quickly perceived that their own side always won, which gratified their pride. In a word, the presence in their midst of king and nobles made them look beyond their walls. London was never a Ghent; nor was it a Venice. It was never London for itself against the world, but always London for England first, and for its own interests next.

The city palaces, the town houses of the nobles, were never, it must be remembered, fortresses. The only fortress of the city was the White Tower. They were neither castellated nor fortified nor garrisoned. They were entered by a gate, but there was neither ditch nor portcullis. The gate led into an open court round which the buildings stood. Examples of this way of building may still be seen in London. For instance, Staple Inn, or Barnard's Inn, affords an exact illustration of a mediæval mansion. There are two square courts, with a gateway leading from the road into the inn. Between the

courts is a hall with its kitchen and buttery. Those who walk down Queen Victoria Street in the city pass on the north side a red-brick house standing round three sides of a quadrangle. This is the Herald's College: a few years ago it preserved its fourth side with its gateway. Four hundred years ago this was the town house of the Earls of Derby. Restore the front and you have the size of a great noble's town palace, yet not one of the largest. If you wish to understand the disposition of the building, compare it with the quadrangle of Clare, or that of Christ's, Cambridge. It was burned down in the Fire, and was rebuilt without its hall, kitchen, and butteries, for which there was no longer any use. As it was before the Fire, a broad and noble arch with a low tower, but showing no appearance of fortification, opened into the court, which was used as an exercising-ground for the men-at-arms. In the rooms around the court was their sleeping accommodation; at the side or opposite the entrance stood the hall where the whole household took meals; opposite to the hall was the kitchen with its butteries; over the hall was the room called the Solar, where the Earl and Countess slept; beyond the hall was another room called the Ladies' Bower, where the ladies could retire from the rough talk of the followers. The houses beside the river were provided with stairs, at the foot of which lay the state barge, in which my Lord and my Lady took the air upon the river, and were rowed to and from the Court at Westminster.

There remains nothing of these houses. They are, with one exception, all swept away. Yet the description of one or two, the site of others, and the actual remains of one sufficiently prove their magnificence. Let us take one or two about which something is known. For instance, there is Baynard's Castle, the name of which still survives in that of Baynard's Castle Ward, and in that of a wharf which is still called by the name of the old palace.

It stood on the river-bank close to the Fleet Tower and the western extremity of the wall. There was no house in the city more interesting than this spot. Its history extends from the Norman Conquest to the Fire—exactly six hundred years; and during the whole of this long period it was a great palace. First it was built by one Baynard, follower of William. It

was forfeited in A.D. 1111, and given to Robert Fitzwalter, son of Richard, Earl of Clare, in whose family the office of Castellan and Standard-bearer to the City of London became hereditary. His descendant, Robert, in revenge for private injuries, took part with the Barons against King John, for which the King ordered Baynard's Castle to be destroyed. Fitzwalter, however, becoming reconciled to the King, was permitted to rebuild his house. It was again destroyed, this time by fire, in 1428. It was rebuilt by Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, on whose attainder it reverted to the crown. Richard, Duke of York, next had it, and lived here with his following of four hundred gentlemen and men-at-arms. It was in the hall of Baynard's Castle that Edward IV. assumed the title of King, and summoned the Bishops, Peers, and Judges to meet him in council. Edward gave the house to his mother, and placed in it for safety his wife and children before going out to fight the battle of Barnet. Here Buckingham offered the crown to Richard.

"Alas, why would you heap these cares on me?
I am unfit for state and majesty.
I do beseech you—take it not amiss—
I cannot, nor I will not, yield to you."

Henry VIII. lived in this palace, which he almost entirely rebuilt. Prince Henry, after his marriage with Catherine of Aragon, was conducted in great state up the river from Baynard's Castle to Westminster, the Mayor and Commonalty of the city following in their barges. In the time of Edward VI. the Earl of Pembroke, whose wife was sister to Queen Catherine Parr, held great state in this house. Here he proclaimed Queen Mary. When Mary's first Parliament was held, he proceeded to Baynard's Castle, followed by "2000 horsemen in velvet coats with their laces of gold and gold chains, besides sixty gentlemen in blue coats with his badge of the green dragon." This powerful noble lived to entertain Queen Elizabeth at Baynard's Castle with a banquet, followed by fireworks. The last appearance of the place in history is when Charles II. took supper there just before the Fire swept over it and destroyed it.

Another house by the river was that called Cold Harbrough, or Cold Inn.

This house stood to the west of the old Swan Stairs. It was built by a rich city merchant, Sir John Poultney, four times

Mayor of London. At the end of the fourteenth century it belonged, however, to John Holland, Duke of Exeter, son of Thomas Holland, Duke of Kent, and Joan Plantagenet, the "Fair Maid of Kent." He was half-brother to King Richard II., whom here he entertained. Richard III. gave it to the heralds for their college. They were turned out, however, by Henry VII., who gave the house to his mother, Margaret, Countess of Richmond. His son gave it to the Earl of Shrewsbury, by whose son it was taken down, one knows not why, and mean tenements were erected in its place for the river-side working-men.

We are fortunate in having left one at least, or a fragment of one, house out of the many London palaces. The Fire of 1666 spared Crosby Place, and though most of the old mansion has been pulled down, there yet remain the hall, the so-called throne-room, and the council-room. The mansion formerly covered the greater part of what is now called Crosby Square. It was built by a simple citizen, a grocer and Lord Mayor, Sir John Crosby, in the fifteenth century; a man of great wealth and great position; a merchant, diplomatist, and ambassador. He rode north to welcome Edward IV. when he landed at Ravenspur; he was sent by the King on a mission to the Duke of Burgundy and to the Duke of Brittany. Shakespeare makes Richard of Gloucester living in this house as early as 1471, four years before the death of Sir John Crosby, a thing not likely. But he was living here at the death of Edward IV., and here he held his levees before his usurpation of the crown. In this hall, where now the city clerks snatch a hasty dinner, sat the last and worst of the Plantagenets, thinking of the two boys who stood between him and the crown. Here he received the news of their murder. Here he feasted with his friends. The place is charged with the memory of Richard Plantagenet. Early in the next century another Lord Mayor obtained it, and lent it to the ambassador of the Emperor Maximilian. It passed next into the hands of a third citizen, also Lord Mayor, and was bought in 1516 by Sir Thomas More, who lived here for seven years, and wrote in this house his *Utopia* and his *Life of Richard the Third*. His friend Antonio Bonvici, a merchant of Lucca, next lived in the house. To him More wrote his

well-known letter from the Tower. William Rupert, More's son-in-law, and William Rustill, his nephew; Sir Thomas d'Arcy; William Bond, Alderman and Sheriff, and merchant adventurer; Sir John Spencer, ancestor of Lord Northampton; Mary, Countess of Pembroke, and sister of Sir Philip Sidney—

"The gentlest shepherdess that lived that day;
And most resembling, both in shape and spirit,
Her brother dear";

the Earl of Northampton, who accompanied Charles I. to Madrid on his romantic journey; Sir Stephen Langham—were successive owners or occupants of this house. It was partly destroyed by fire—not the Great Fire—in the reign of Charles II. The hall, which escaped, was for seventy years a Presbyterian meeting-house; it then became a packer's warehouse. Sixty years ago it was partly restored, and became a literary institution. It is now a restaurant, gaudy with color and gilding. The Duc de Biron, ambassador from France in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, was lodged here, with four hundred noblemen and gentlemen in his train. And here also was lodged the Duc de Sully.

Half a dozen great houses do not make a city of palaces. That is true. Let us, if we can, find others. Here, then, is a list, by no means exhaustive, made from the pages of Stow. The Fitz Alans, Earls of Arundel, had a town house in Botolph Lane. Billingsgate, down to the end of the sixteenth century. The street is, and always has been, narrow, and, from its proximity to the fish-market, unsavory. The Earls of Northumberland had houses successively in Crutched Friars, Fenchurch Street, and Aldersgate Street. The Earls of Worcester lived in Worcester Lane, on the river-bank; the Duke of Buckingham on College Hill: observe how the nobles built their houses in the most busy part of the town. The Beaumonts and the Huntingdons lived beside Paul's Wharf; the Lords of Barkley had a house near Blackfriars; Doctors' Commons was the town house of the Blounts, Lords Mountjoy. Close to Paul's Wharf stood the mansion once occupied by the widow of Richard, Duke of York, mother of Edward IV., Clarence, and Richard III. Edward the Black Prince lived on Fish Street Hill—the house was afterwards made an inn. The De la Poles had a

house in Lombard Street. The De Veres, Earls of Oxford, lived first in St. Mary Axe, and afterwards in Oxford Court, St. Swithin's Lane; Cromwell, Earl of Essex, had a house in Throgmorton Street. The Barons Fitzwalter had a house where now stands Grocers' Hall, Poultry. In Aldersgate Street were houses of the Earl of Westmoreland, the Earl of Northumberland, and the Earl of Thanet, Lord Petre, and the Marquis of Dorchester. Suffolk Lane marks the site of the "Manor of the Rose," belonging to the Suffolks and the Buckingham; Lovell's Court, Paternoster Row, marks the site of the Lovells' mansion; between Amen Corner and Ludgate Street stood Abergavenny House, where lived, in the reign of Edward II., the Earl of Richmond and Duke of Brittany, grandson of Henry III. Afterwards it became the house of John Hastings, Earl of Pembroke, who married Lady Margaret, daughter of Edward III. It passed to the Nevilles, Earls of Abergavenny, and from them to the Stationers' Company. Warwick Lane runs over Warwick House. The Sidneys, Earls of Leicester, lived in the Old Bailey. The Staffords, Dukes of Buckingham, lived in Milk Street.

A list of thirty-five palaces—which is not exhaustive, and does not include many town houses of the Bishops, nor the halls of the companies, many of them very noble, nor the houses used for the business of the city, as Blackwall Hall and Guildhall—is quite sufficient to prove my statement that London was a city of palaces.

Nothing has been said about the houses of the rich merchants. Crosby Hall, as has been seen, was built by a merchant. In Basing Lane (now swallowed up by those devourers of old houses, Cannon Street and Queen Victoria Street) stood Gerard's Hall, with a Norman crypt, and a high-roofed hall where once they kept a May pole and called it Giant Gerard's Staff. This was the hall of the house built by John Gisors, Mayor in the year 1305. The Vintners' Hall stands on the site of a great house built by Sir John Stodie, Mayor in 1357. In the house called the Vintry, Sir Henry Picard, Mayor, entertained a very noble company indeed; among them were King Edward III., King John of France, King David of Scotland, the King of Cyprus, and the Black Prince. After the banquet the Lord Mayor defended his hall against all comers with dice

and hazard. The King of Cyprus lost his money, and, unfortunately, his royal temper as well. The latter was a common misfortune among kings. The royal rage of the proverb is one of those subjects which the essayist enters in his notes and never finds the time to treat. Then up spake Sir Henry, with admonition in his voice: Did his Highness of Cyprus really believe that the Lord Mayor, and a merchant adventurer of London, whose ships rode at anchor in the port of Famagusta, would seek to win the money of any king? "My Lord and King," he said, "be not aggrieved. I court not your gold, but your play; for I have not bidden you hither that you might grieve." And so gave the King his money back. But John, King of France, and David, King of Scotland, and the Black Prince murmured and whispered that it was not fitting for a king to take back money lost at play. And the good old King Edward wagged his gray beard.

Another entertainer of Kings was Whittington. What sayeth the wise man?

"Seest thou a man diligent in his business? He shall stand before kings."

They used to show an old house in Hart Lane, rich with carved wood, as Whittington's, but it must have been in his parish of St. Michael's, Paternoster Royal, and, one is pretty certain, close to the site of his college, which stood on the north side of the church. Here he entertained Henry of Agincourt, and his bride, with a magnificence which astonished the King. The cost of such a banquet was more than repaid by the respect for the wealth and power of the city which it nourished and maintained in the kingly mind. The memory of it, we may be very sure, had its after-effect even upon those most masterful of sovereigns Henry VIII. and Queen Bess. On this occasion it was nothing that the tables groaned with good things, and glittered with gold and silver plate; it was nothing that the fires were fed with cedar and perfumed wood. For the princely Mayor fed these fires after dinner with nothing less than the King's bonds to the amount of £60,000. In purchasing power that sum would now be represented by a million and a quarter.

A truly royal gift.

It was not given to many merchants, "sounding always the increase of their winning," thus to thrive and prosper. Most of them lived in more modest dwell-

ings. When, with the great commercial advance of the fourteenth century, space by the river became more valuable, the disposition of the hall, with its little court, became necessarily modified. The house, which was warehouse as well as residence, ran up into several stories high—the earliest maps of London show many such houses beside Queenhithe, and in the busiest and most crowded parts of the city; on every story there was a wide door for the reception of bales and crates; a rope and pulley were fixed to a beam at the highest gable for hoisting and lowering the goods. The front of the house was finely ornamented with carved woodwork. One may still see such houses—streets full of them—in the ancient city of Hildesheim, near Hanover.

On the river-bank, exactly under what is now Cannon Street Railway Station, stood the Steelyard—*Guilda Aula Teutonicorum*. In appearance it was a house of stone, with a quay towards the river, a square court, a noble hall, and three arched gates towards Thames Street. This was the house of the Hanseatic League, whose merchants for three hundred years and more enjoyed the monopoly of importing hemp, corn, wax, steel, linen cloths, and, in fact, of the whole trade with Germany and the Baltic, so that until the London merchants pushed out their ships into the Mediterranean and the Levant their foreign trade was small, and their power of gaining wealth in proportion. This strange privilege grew by degrees. Unless the foreign merchants of the Hanse towns and of Flanders and of France had brought over their wares they could not have sold them, because there were no London merchants to import them. Therefore they came, and they came to stay. They gradually obtained privileges; they were careful to obey the laws and give no cause for jealousy or offence; and they kept their privileges, living apart in their college, till Edward VI. at last took them away. In memory of their long residence in the city, the merchants of Hamburg, in the reign of Queen Anne, presented the church where they had worshipped, All Hallows the Great, with a magnificent screen of carved wood. The church, built by Wren after the Fire, is a square box of no architectural pretensions, but it is glorified by this screen.

Between the merchant adventurers, who sometimes entertained Kings and had a

fleet of ships always on the sea, and the retail trader, there was as great a gulf then as at any after-time. Between the retail trader, who was an employer of labor, and the craftsman, there was a still greater gulf. The former lived in plenty and in comfort. His house was provided with a spacious hearth, and windows of which the upper part, at least, was of glass. The latter lived in the mean and low tenements which, according to Dr. Brewer, made up the whole of London. There were a great many of these, because there are always a great many poor in a large town. Nay, there were narrow lanes and filthy courts where there was nothing but one-storied hovels built of wattle and clay, the roof thatched with reeds, the fire burning in the middle of the room, the occupants sleeping in old Saxon fashion, wrapped in rugs around the central fire. The lanes and courts were narrow and unpaved, and filthy with every kind of refuse. In those crowded and fetid streets the plague broke out, fevers always lingered, the children died of putrid throat, and in these places began the devastating fires that from time to time swept the city.

The main streets of the city were not mean at all; they were broad, well built, picturesque. If here and there a small tenement reared its timbered and plastered front among the tall gables, it added to the beauty of the street; it broke the line. Take Chepe, for instance, the principal seat of retail trade. At the western end stood the Church of St. Michael le Quern, where Paternoster Row begins. On the north side were the churches of St. Peter West Chepe, St. Thomas Acon, St. Mary Cole, and St. Mildred. On the south side were the churches of St. Mary le Bow and St. Mary Woolchurch. In the streets running north and south rose the spires of twenty other churches. On the west side of St. Mary le Bow stood a long stone gallery, from which the Queen and her ladies could witness the tournaments and the ridings. In the middle was the "Standard," with a conduit of fresh water: There were two crosses, one being that erected by Edward the First to mark a resting-place of his dead Queen. Round the "Standard" were booths. At the west end of Chepe were *selds*, which are believed to have been open bazars for the sale of goods. Another cross stood at the west end, close to St. Michael le Quern. Here executions of citizens were held; on

its broad road the knights rode in tilt on great days; the stalls were crowded with those who came to look on and to buy. The street was noisy with the voices of those who displayed their wares and called upon the folk to buy. You may hear the butchers in Clare Market or the costers in Whitecross Street keeping up the custom to the present day. The citizens walked and talked; the Alderman went along in state, accompanied by his officers; they brought out prisoners and put them into the pillory; the church bells clashed and chimed and tolled; bright cloth of scarlet hung from the upper windows if it was a feast-day, or if the Mayor and Aldermen had a riding; the streets were bright with the colors of that many-colored time, when the men vied with the women in bravery of attire, and when all classes spent upon raiment sums of money, in proportion to the rest of their expenditure, which sober nineteenth-century folk can hardly believe. Chaucer is full of the extravagance in dress. There is the young squire—

"Embrowdid was he, as it were a mede
Al ful of fresshe flowures, white and reede."

Or the carpenter's wife—

"A seynt [girdle] sche wered, barred al of silk;
A barm-cloth eek as whit as morne mylk
Upon hir lendes [loins], ful of many a gore.
Whit was hir smok, and browdid al byfore
And eek byhynde on hir coler aboute,
Of cole-blak silk, withinne and eek withoute."

Or the wife of Bath, with her scarlet stockings and her fine kerchiefs. And the knights decked their horses as gayly as themselves. Now the city notables went clad in gowns of velvet or silk lined with fur; their hats were of velvet with gold-lace; their doublets were of rich silk; they carried thick gold chains about their necks and massive gold rings upon their fingers.

With all this outward show, this magnificence of raiment, these evidences of wealth, would one mark the small tenements which here and there, even in Chepe, stood between the churches and the substantial merchants' houses? We measure the splendors of a city by its best, and not by its worst.

The magnates of London, from generation to generation, showed far more wisdom, tenacity, and clearness of vision than can be found in the annals of Venice, Genoa, or any other mediæval city. Above all things, they maintained the

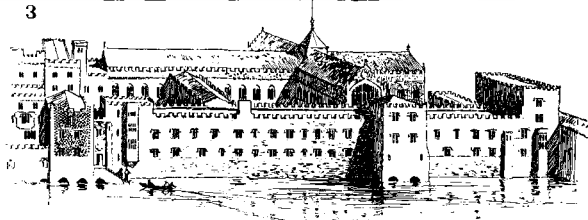
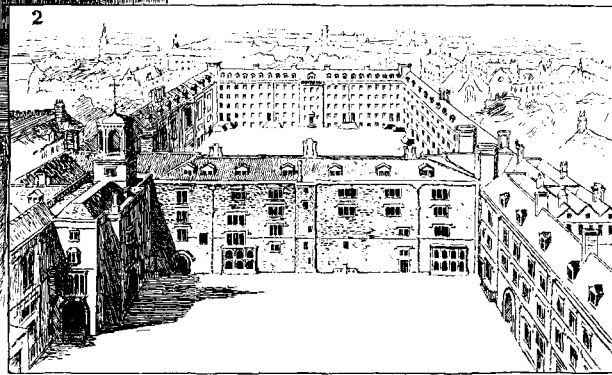
city liberties and the rights obtained from successive Kings: yet they were always loyal so long as loyalty was possible; when that was no longer possible, as in the case of Richard the Second, they threw the whole weight of their wealth and influence into the other side. If fighting was wanted, they were ready to send out their youths to fight, nay, to join the

wanted as many ships as he could get for his expedition into France, Sir John gave him all his own, with Mercer's ships and the Spanish prizes so well.

Toward the end of the fourteenth century began the first grumblings of the great religious storm that was to burst upon the world a hundred years later. The common sort of Londoners, attached to their Church and to its services, were as yet profoundly orthodox and unquestioning. But it is certain that in the year 1393 the Archbishop of York complained formally to the King of the Mayor, Aldermen, and Sheriffs—Whittington



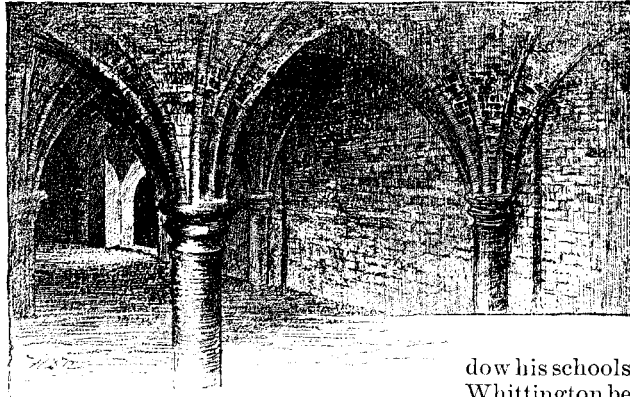
army themselves: witness the story of Sir John Philpot, Mayor in 1378. There was a certain Scottish adventurer named Mercer. This man had gotten together a small fleet of ships, with which he harassed the North Sea and did great havoc among the English merchantmen. Nor could any remonstrance addressed to the crown effect redress. What was to be done? Clearly if trade was to be carried on at all, this enemy must be put down. Therefore, without more ado, the gallant Mayor gathered together, at his own expense, a company of a thousand stout fellows, put them on board, and sallied forth, himself their admiral, to fight this piratical Scot. He found him, in fact, in Scarborough Bay with his prizes. Sir John fell upon him at once, slew him and most of his men, took all his ships, including the prizes, and returned to the port of London with his spoils, including fifteen Spanish ships which had joined the Scotchman. Next year the King was in want of other help. The arms and armor of a thousand men were in pawn. Sir John took them out. And because the King



1. THE COLLEGE OF ARMS, OR HERALDS' OFFICE. 2. BRIDEWELL.
3. VIEW OF THE SAVOY FROM THE THAMES.

was then one of the Sheriffs—that they were *male creduli*, that is, of little faith; upholders of Lollards, detractors of religious persons, detainers of tithes, and defrauders of the poor. When persecutions, however, began in earnest not a single citizen of position was charged with heresy. Probably the Archbishop's charge was based upon some quarrel over tithes and Church dues. At the same time no one who has read Chaucer can fail to understand that men's minds were made uneasy by the open scandals of religion, the contrast between profession and practice. It required no knowledge of theol-

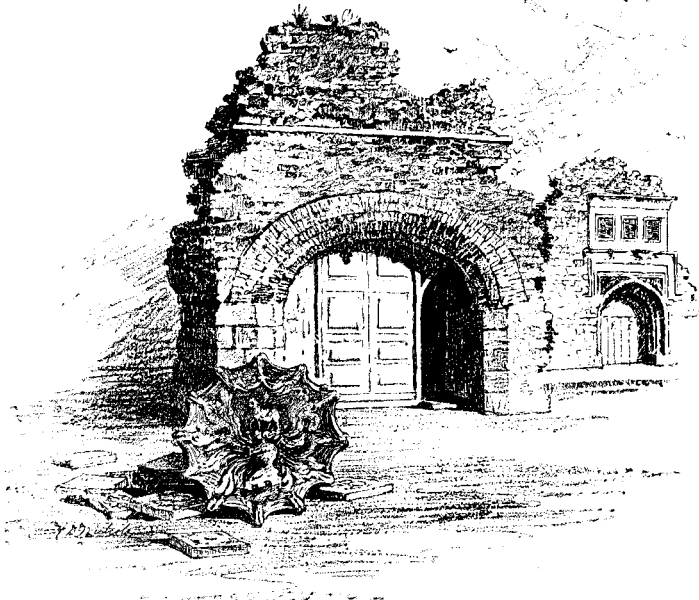
ogy to remark that the monk who kept the best of horses in his stable and the best of hounds in his kennel, and rode to the chase as gallantly attired as any young knight, was a strange follower of the Benedictine rule. Nor was it necessary to be a divine in order to compare the lives of the Franciscans with their vows. Yet the authority of the Church seemed undiminished, while its wealth, its estates, its rank, and its privileges gave it enormous power. It is not pretended that the merchants of London were desirous of new doctrines, or of any tampering with the mass, or any lowering of sacerdotal pretensions. Yet there can be no doubt that they desired reform in some shape, and it seems as if they saw the best hope of reform in raising the standard of education. Probably the old monastery schools had fallen into decay. We find, for instance, a simultaneous movement in this direction long before Henry VI. began to found and to en-



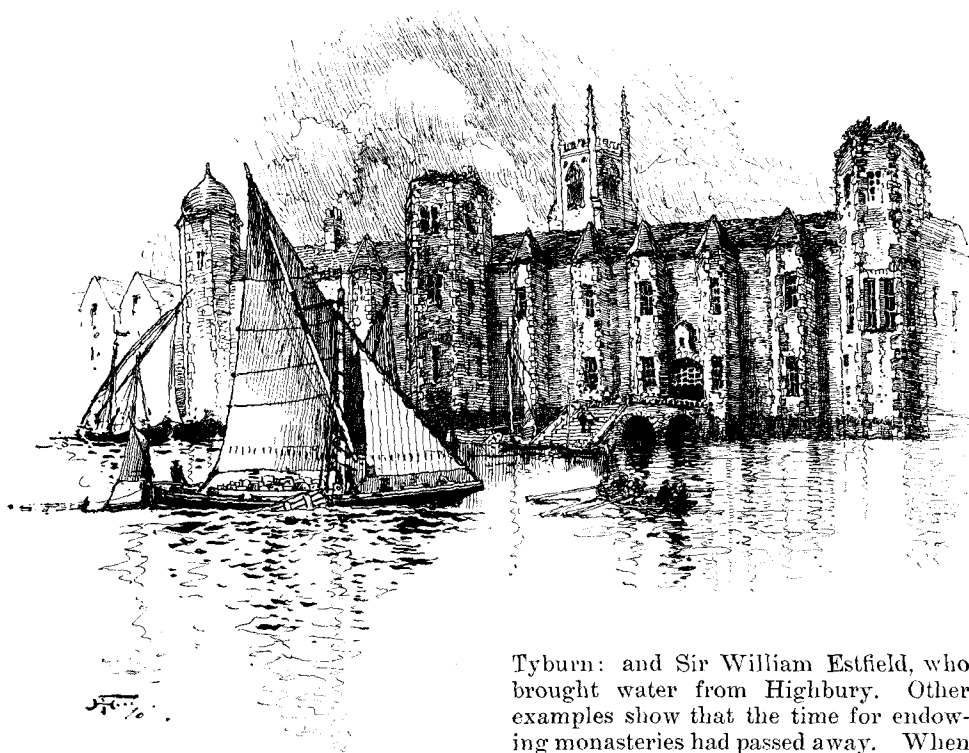
GERARD'S HALL.

ate a library for the Grey Friars; his close friend and one of his executors, John Carpenter, Rector of St. Mary Magdalen, founded the City of London School, now more flourishing and of greater usefulness than ever; another friend of Whittington, Sir John Nicol, who was the Master of St. Thomas Acon, petitioned the Parliament for leave to establish four schools; Whittington's own company, the Mercers, founded a school—which still exists—soon after his death. The merchants rebuilt churches, bought advowsons and gave

them to the corporation, founded charities, and left doctrine to scholars. Yet the century which contains such men as Wycliff, Chaucer, Gower, Occleve, William of Wykeham, Fabian, and others, was not altogether one of blind and unquestioning obedience. And it is worthy of remark that the first Master of Whittington's Hospital was that Reginald Pecock who afterward, as Bishop of Chichester, was charged with Lollardism, and imprisoned for life as a punishment. He was kept in a single closed chamber in Thorney Abbey, Isle of Ely.



GATEWAY, ETC., IN CROSBY SQUARE (NOW DESTROYED).



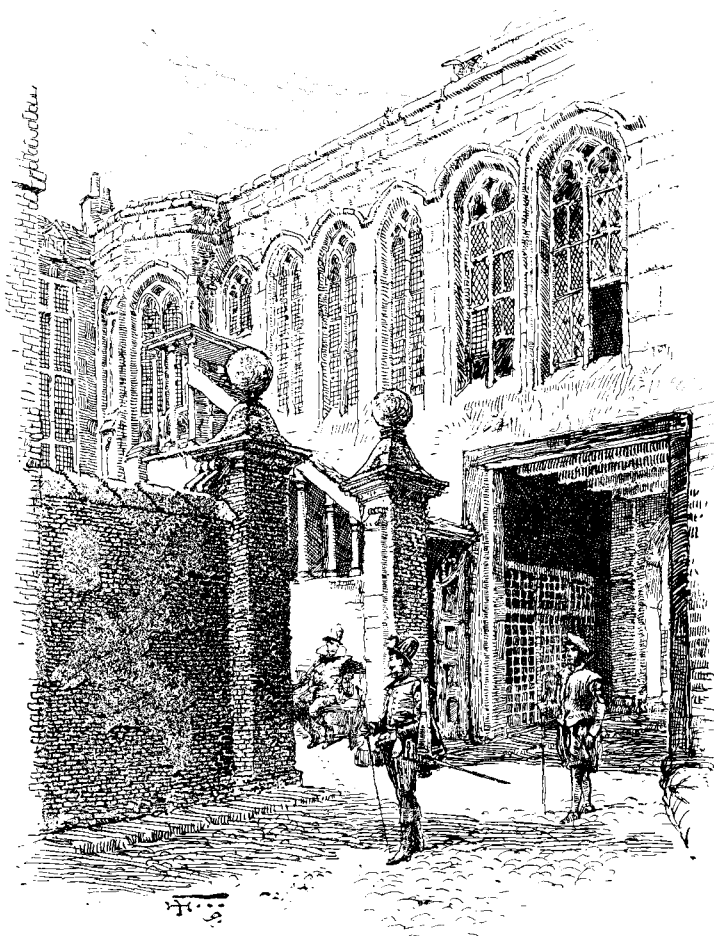
VIEW OF THE SOUTH FRONT OF BAYNARD'S
CASTLE, ABOUT 1640.

He was never allowed out of this room: no one was to speak with him except the man who waited upon him: he was to have neither paper, pen, ink, nor books, except a Bible, a mass-book, a psalter, and a legendary.

Among the city worthies of that time may be introduced Sir William Walworth, the slayer of Jack Cade: Sir William Sevenoke, the first known instance of the poor country lad of humble birth working his way to the front; he was also the first to found and endow a grammar-school for his native town: Sir Robert Chichele, whose brother Henry was Archbishop of Canterbury and founder of All Souls', Oxford; this Robert, whose house was on the site of Bakers' Hall, in Harp Lane, provided by his will that on his commemoration day two thousand four hundred poor householders of the city should be regaled with a dinner and have two pence each in money: Sir John Rainwell, who left houses and lands to discharge the tax called the Fifteenth in three parishes: Sir John Wells, who brought water from

Tyburn: and Sir William Estfield, who brought water from Highbury. Other examples show that the time for endowing monasteries had passed away. When William Elsing, early in the fourteenth century, thought of doing something with his money, he did not leave it to the Franciscans for masses, but he endowed a hospital for a hundred blind men; and a few years later John Branes gave the city a strong-box with three locks, containing a thousand marks, which were to be lent to young men beginning business—an excellent gift. When there was a great dearth of grain, it was the Lord Mayor who fitted out ships at his own expense and brought corn from Prussia, which lowered the price of flour by one-half. In the acts of these grave magistrates one can read the deep love they bore to the city, their earnest striving for the administration with justice of just laws, for the maintenance of good work, for the relief of the poor, for the provision of water, and for education.

Tradition—which is always on the side of the weak—maintains that the great merchants of the past, for the most part, made their way upward from the poorest and most penniless conditions. They came from the plough-tail or from the mechanic's shop; they entered the city paved with gold friendless, with no more than two pence, if so much, in their pockets; they received scant favor and put up with



CROSBY HALL.

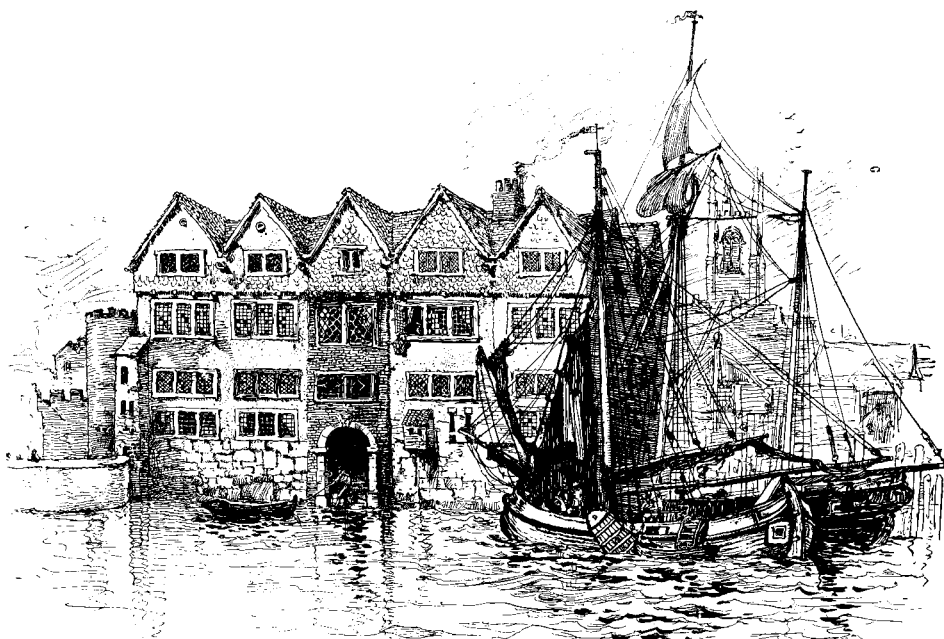
rough fare. Then tradition makes a jump, and shows them, on the next lifting of the curtain, prosperous, rich, and in great honor. The typical London merchant is Dick Whittington, whose history was blazoned in the chapbooks for all to read. One is loath to disturb venerable beliefs, but the facts are exactly the opposite of those set forth. The merchant adventurer, diligent in his business, and therefore rewarded, as the wise man prophesied for him, by standing before princes, though he began life as a prentice, also began it as a gentleman. He belonged, at the outset, to a good family, and had good friends both in the country and the town. Piers Plowman never could and never did rise to great eminence in the city. The exceptions, which are few in

of Mansell, and was a cousin of the Fitzwarrens. The Whittingtons were thus people of position and consideration, of knightly rank, *armigeri*, living on their own estates, which were sufficient, but not large.

For a younger son in the fourteenth century the choice of a career was limited. He might enter the service of a great lord and follow his fortunes. In that turbulent time there was fighting to be had at home as well as in France, and honor to be acquired, with rank and lands, by those who were fortunate. He might join the army of the King. He might enter the Church; but youths of gentle blood did not in the fourteenth century flock readily to the Church. He might remain on the family estate and become a bailiff.

deed, prove the rule. Against such a case as Sevenoke, the son of poor parents, who rose to be Lord Mayor, we have a hundred others in which the successful merchant starts with the advantage of gentle birth. Take, for example, the case of Whittington himself.

He was the younger son of a Gloucestershire country gentleman, Sir William Whittington, a knight who was outlawed for some offence. His estate was at a village called Pauntley. In the church may still be seen the shield of Whittington, empaling Fitzwarren — Richard's wife was Alice Fitzwarren. His mother belonged to the well-known Devonshire family



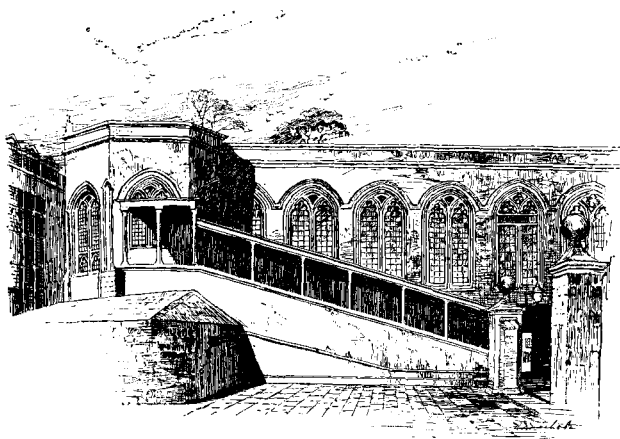
He might go up to London and become a lawyer. There were none of the modern professions—no engineers, architects, bankers, journalists, painters, novelists, or dramatists; but there was trade.

Young Dick Whittington therefore chose to follow trade; rather that line of life was chosen for him. He was sent to London under charge of carriers, and placed in the house of his cousin, Sir John Fitzwarren, as an apprentice. As he married his master's daughter, it is

VIEW OF COLD HARBOR, IN THAMES STREET,
ABOUT 1600.

reasonable to suppose that he inherited a business, which he subsequently improved and developed enormously. If we suppose a single man to be the owner of the

Cunard line of steamers, running the cargoes on his own venture and for his own profit, we may understand something of Whittington's position in the city. The story of the cat is persistently attached to his name; it begins immediately after his death; it was figured on the buildings which his executors erected; it formed part of the decorations of the family mansion at Gloucester. It is therefore impossible to avoid the conclusion that he did himself associate the sale of a cat—then a



CROSBY HOUSE, BISHOPSGATE STREET.



INTERIOR OF CROSBY HALL.

creature of some value and rarity—with the foundation of his fortunes. Here, however, we have only to do with the fact that Whittington was of gentle birth, and that he was apprenticed to a man also of gentle birth.

That good old antiquary, Stow, to whom we owe so much, not only gives an account of all the monuments in the city churches, with the inscriptions and verses which were graven upon them, but he also describes the shields of all those who were *armigeri*—entitled to carry arms. Remember that a shield was not a thing which could be assumed at pleasure. The heralds made visitations of the coun-

ties, and examined into the pretensions of every man who bore a coat of arms. You were either entitled or you were not. To parade a shield without a proper title was then much as if a man should now pretend to be an Earl or a Duke. If one wants a shield in these days it is only necessary to invent one; or the Heralds' College will connect a man with some knightly family and so confer a title: formerly the herald could invent or find a coat of arms only by order of the sovereign, the fountain of honor. By granting a shield the King admitted another family into the ranks of gentleness. For instance, when the news of Captain Cook's death reached England, King George the Third granted a coat of arms to his family, who were thus promoted to the first stage of nobility. This, how-

ever, seems to have been the last occasion of such a grant.

What do we find, then? The churches are full of monuments to dead citizens who are *armigeri*. Take two churches at hazard. The first is St. Leonard's, Milk Street. Here was buried John Johnson, citizen and butcher, died 1282, his coat of arms displayed upon his tomb; also, with his shield, Richard Ruyener, citizen and fish-monger, died 1361. The second church is St. Peter's, Cornhill. Here the following monuments have their shields: that of Thomas Lorimer, citizen and mercer; of Thomas Born, citizen and draper; of Henry Acle, citizen and grocer;

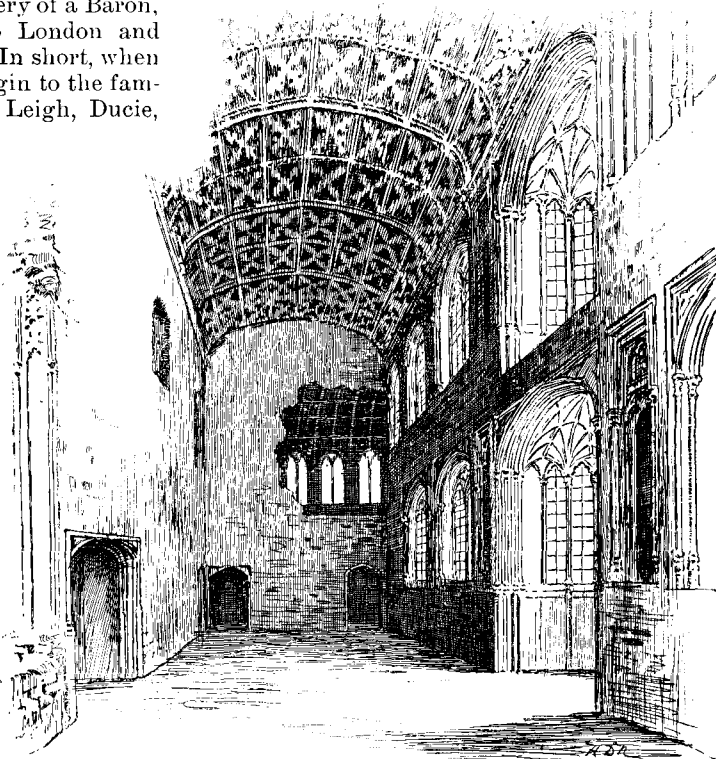
of Henry Palmer, citizen and *pannarius*; of Henry Aubertner, citizen and taylor; and of Timothy Westrow, citizen and grocer.

The residence and yearly influx of the Barons and their followers into London not only, as we have seen, kept the city in touch with the country and prevented it from becoming a mere centre of trade, but it also kept the country in touch with the city. The livery of the great Lords compared their own lot, at best an honorable servitude, with that of the free and independent merchants, who had no overlord but the King, and were themselves as rich as any of the greatest Barons in the country. They saw among them many from their own country, lads whom they remembered in the hunting-field, or playing in the garden before the timbered old house in the country, of gentle birth and breeding, once, like themselves, poor younger sons, now rich and of great respect. When they went home they talked of this, and fired the blood of the boys, so that while some staid at home and some put on the livery of a Baron, others went up to London and served their time. In short, when we assign a city origin to the families of Coventry, Leigh, Ducie, Pole, Bouverie, Boleyn, Legge, Capel, Osborne, Craven, and Ward, it would be well to inquire, if possible, to what stock belonged the original citizen, the founder of each. Trade in the fourteenth century, and long afterward, did not degrade a gentleman. That idea was of an earlier, and of a later date. It became a law during the last century when the county families began to grow rich and the value of land increased. It is fast

disappearing again with the shrinkage of land values, and the city is once more receiving the sons of noble and gentle. The change should be welcomed as helping to destroy the German notions of caste and class and the hereditary superiority of the ennobled house, which has done the people of Great Britain so much harm during the last two hundred years.

It was in this fourteenth century that the city experienced the most important change in the whole history of her constitution, more important than the substitution of the Mayor and Aldermen for the portreeve and sheriff, though that was nothing less than the passage from the feudal county to the civic community. The new thing was the formation of the city companies, which incorporated each trade formally, and gave the fullest powers to the governing body over wages, hours of labor, output, and everything which concerned the welfare of each craft.

There had been many attempts made at combination. Men, at all times, have



INTERIOR OF PART OF CROSBY HALL, CALLED THE COUNCIL-ROOM,
LOOKING EAST.



NORTHEAST VIEW OF CROSBY HALL, SHOWING PART OF THE INTERIOR OF THE GREAT HALL.

been sensible of the advantages of combining; at all times and in every trade there is the same difficulty—that of persuading everybody to forego an apparent present advantage for a certain benefit in the future; there are always blacklegs; yet the cause of combination advances.

The history of the city companies is that of combination successfully carried out, so that it became part of the constitution and government of the city—but, what was not foreseen at the outset, combination in the interests of the masters, not of the men.

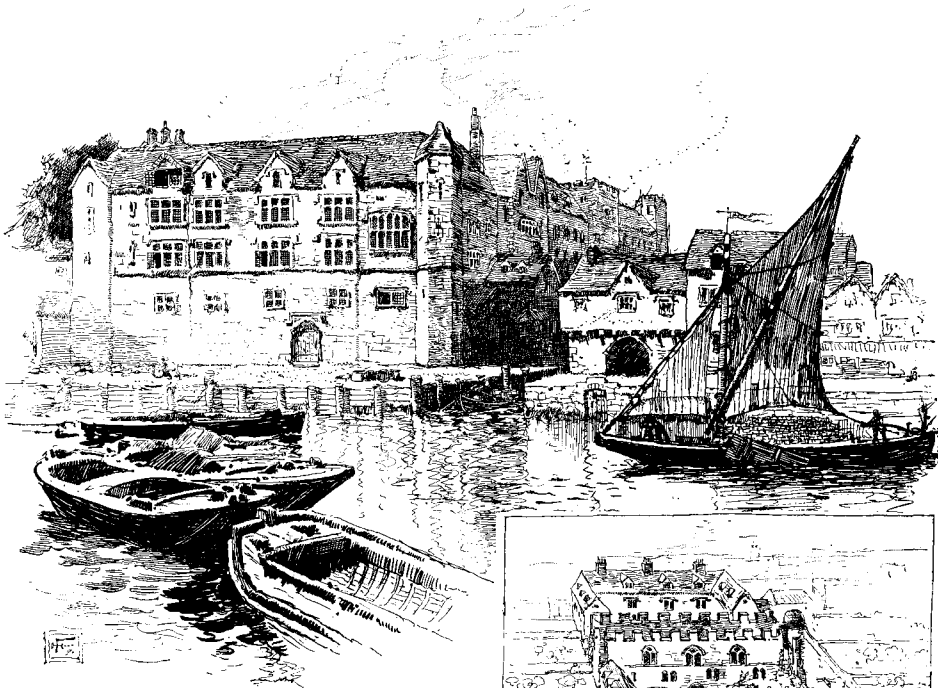
The trades began forming associations, which they called guilds. These aroused suspicion. The King did not at first regard any combination of his subjects with approbation. The guilds were ostensibly religious: they had each a patron saint—St. Martin, for instance, protected the saddlers; St. Anthony the grocers—they held an annual festival on their saint's

day. But they must be licensed: eighteen such guilds were fined for establishing themselves without a license. Those which were licensed paid for the privilege. The most important of them was the Guild of Weavers, which was authorized by Henry the Second to regulate the trades of cloth-workers, drapers, tailors, and all the various crafts and “misteries” that belong to clothes. This guild became so powerful that it threatened to rival in authority the governing body. It was therefore suppressed by King John, the different trades afterward combining separately to form their own companies.

By the end of the fourteenth century, then—to sum up—the government of London was practically complete and almost in its present form. The Mayor, become an officer of the highest importance, was elected every year, the Sheriffs every year; the Aldermen and the Common Councilmen were elected by wards. The

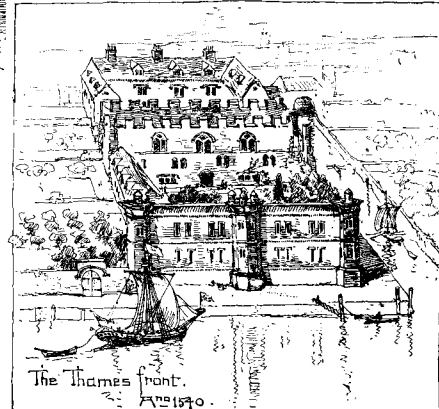
Mayor was chosen from the great companies, which comprised all the merchant venturers, importers, exporters, men who had correspondence over the seas, masters, and employers. Every craft had its own regulations; no one could trade in the city who did not belong to a company;

is silenced. And he remains silent until, by covins and conspiracies which Whittington put down so sternly, he has become a greater power in the land than ever he was before. Even yet, however, and with all the lessons that he has learned, his power of combination is imperfect,



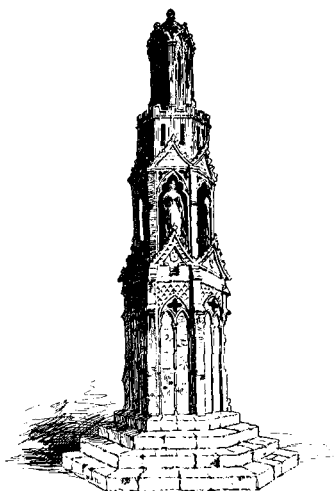
BRIDEWELL PALACE, ABOUT 1660, WITH THE ENTRANCE TO THE FLEET RIVER, PART OF THE BLACK FRIARS, ETC.

no one could work in the city, or even make anything to be sold, who did not belong to a company. Wages were ordered by the companies; working-men had no appeal from the ruling of the warden. From time to time there were attempts made by the craftsmen to make combinations for themselves. These attempts were sternly and swiftly put down. No trades-unions were suffered to be formed; nay, even within the memory of man trades-unions were treated as illegal associations. The craftsman, as a political factor, disappears from history with the creation of the companies. In earlier times we hear his voice in the folk-mote; we see him tossing his cap and shouting for William Longbeard. But when Whittington sits on the Lord Mayor's chair he



his aims are narrow, and his grasp of his own power is feeble and restricted.

For my own part, I confess that this repression, this silencing of the craftsman in the fourteenth century seems necessary for the growth and prosperity of the city. For the craftsman was then incredibly ignorant; he knew nothing except his own craft; as for his country, the conditions of the time, the outer world, he knew nothing at all; he might talk to the sailors who lay about the quays between voyages, but they could tell him nothing that



CHARING CROSS.

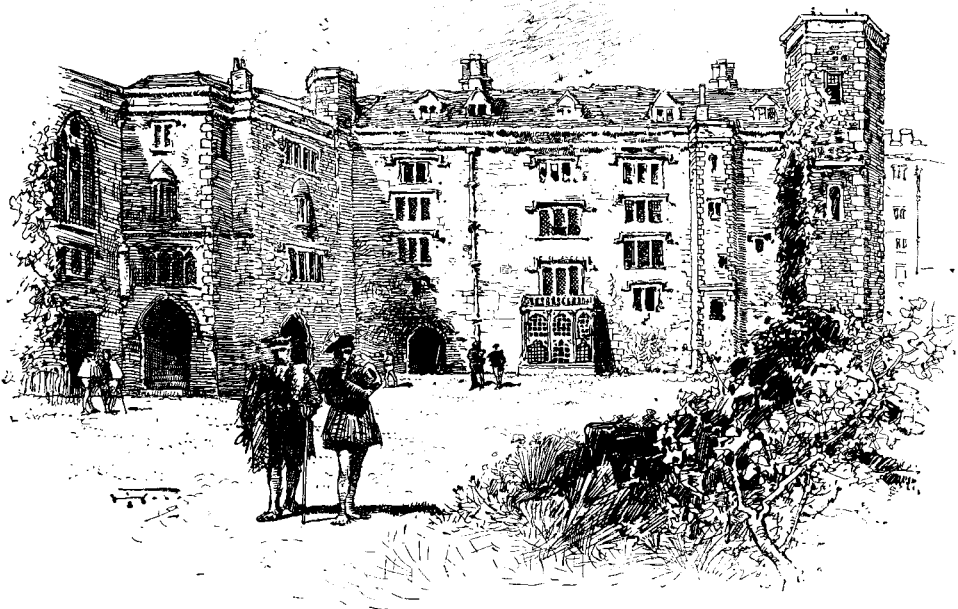
Erected by Edward I. in memory of Queen Eleanor of Castile.

would help him in his trade; he could not read; he could not inquire, because he knew not what questions to ask or what information he wanted; he had no principles; he was naturally ready, for his own present advantages, to sacrifice the whole world; he believed all he was

told. Had the London working-man acquired such a share in the government of his city as he now has in the government of his country, the result would have been a battle-field of discordant and ever-varying factions, ruled by demagogues.

It was a happy circumstance for London that the government of the city fell into the hands of an oligarchy, and still more happy that the oligarchs themselves were under the rule of a jealous and watchful sovereign.

So far it was well. It would have been better had the governing body recognized the law that they must be always enlarging their borders. Then they would have begun in earnest the education of the people. We who have taken this work in hand only for twenty years may not throw stones. But the voice of the craftsman should have been heard long ago. Then we should perhaps have been spared many oppressions, many foolish wars, many cruelties. But from the fourteenth to the nineteenth century the craftsman is silent. Nay, in every successive generation in this long period he grows more silent, less able to speak, till he reaches the lowest depth ever arrived at by Englishmen—and that was about a hundred years ago.



ANCIENT PARTS OF BRIDEWELL PALACE.



UNDER THE MINARETS.

BY F. HOPKINSON SMITH.

I.

IT was a small, not over-clean, and much-crumpled card, and it bore this inscription:

*Isaac Isaacs,
Dragoman and Interpreter,
Constantinople.*

It was held very near my nose, and above the heads of a struggling, snarling pack of Turks, Armenians, Greeks, and Jews, all yelling at the tops of their voices, and all held at bay by a protecting rail in the station and two befezzed officers attached to the custom-house of his Serene Highness.

Beyond this seething mass of Orientals was seen an open door, and through this only the sunlight, a patch of green grass, and the glimpse of a minaret against the blue.

Yes; one thing more—the card.

The owner carried it aloft, like a flag of truce. He had escaped the tax-gathering section of the Sublime Porte by dodging under the guarded rail, and with fez to earth was now pressing its oblong proportions within an inch of my eyeglasses.

“Do you speak English?”

“Ev’ting: Yerman, Franche, Grek, Tearkish—all!”

“Take this sketch-trap, and get me a carriage.”

The fez righted itself, and I looked into the face of a swarthy, dark-bearded mongrel, with a tobacco-colored complexion and a watery eye. He was gasping for breath and reeking with perspiration, the back of his hand serving as sponge.

I handed him my check—through baggage Orient Express, two days from Vienna—stepped into the half-parched garden, and drank in my first breath of Eastern air.

Within the garden—an oasis, barely kept alive by periodical sprinkling—lounged a few railroad officials hugging scant shadows, and one lone Turk dispensing cooling drinks beneath a huge umbrella.

Outside the garden’s protecting fence wandered half the lost tribes of the earth, each one splitting the air with a combination of shouts, sounds, and cries that would have done justice to a travelling menagerie two hours late for breakfast. In and out this motley mob slouched the dogs—away out in the middle of the street, under the benches, in everybody’s way and under everybody’s feet: everywhere dogs, dogs, dogs!

Beyond this babel straggled a low building attached to the station. Above rose a ragged hill crowned by a shimmering wall of dazzling white, topped with rounded dome and slender minarets. Over all was