

London

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London to-day is as London has always been for years and years, a timeless apparently impersonal town, everything but inviting yet strangely captivating with its self-willed endlessness and indistinct dark colours. Muddy, sooty, soaking wet when it rains, and yellowish—brown in the notorious fog which suddenly descends on the streets unexpectedly, making everything sticky, damply sweaty and desolate in a few minutes. But when the rare sun shines London is miraculously changed. This town can never entirely get rid of the fog, but then it is illuminated by the sun's rays and melts into a fine haze which clothes everything in delicate pastel shades. London

is enchanting and delightful then, with the surprising interplay of pink and pale bluish-grey tones. Thus the weather clothes London's buildings with a changing atmosphere that is profoundly impressive — these mighty buildings which have stood for ages, always whitish on one side and dark on the weather side, those unchanging palatial Government offices, the classic museums and the millions of brown three-storeyed houses which still have door-knockers and open fires. Sometimes they are built round quiet silent squares with railed-in gardens full of trees, but more frequently they stretch monotonously and endlessly out into the distant regions which are still London, all with the same unchanging and expressionless look. And what of the people who live in London? They too seem timeless. One still sees those elderly gentlemen with red cheeks, twirled moustaches, billycock hats, with an eyeglass and wearing a red carnation as a buttonhole, walking about in the St. James's district where there are the old and handy but very expensive tobacconists, hat shops and shoemakers' shops which their forebears dealt with for generations. One still sees those dignified but haggard ladies with long umbrellas, a velvet ribbon round their thin necks and a weakness for wearing striking lilac, and with hats boldly decorated with artificial flowers. They are all still there, and one wonders if London has stood still.

London to-day is as London has never been before—an enterprising town filled with a new spirit and keen on progress and activity, a town that erects enormous blocks of business premises and luxury flats provided with every comfort among the decaying houses of the old type. A town with an endless stream of traffic that flows incredibly smoothly, like a modern Babylon, and mysteriously undermined by underground railways where the trains race past like thunder, while the people make their way down to the depths by escalators whose walls and roofs are covered with large posters. No one in these tube trains is without a newspaper full of thrilling news and engrossing advertisements. A town that decorates its dull suburbs with the gay brilliance of huge hoardings, while the people in the heart

