Letter 5 (London), Part 2: The City

I return now, to some short description of the parts; hitherto I have been upon the figure and extent of the city and its out-parts; I come now to speak of the inside, the buildings, the inhabitants, the commerce, and the manner of its government.

It should be observed, that the city being now re-built, has occasioned the building of some publick edifices, even in the place which was inhabited, which yet were not before, and the re-building others in a new and more magnificent manner than ever was done before.

1. That beautiful column, called the Monument, erected at the charge of the city, to perpetuate the fatal burning of the whole, cannot be mentioned but with some due respect to the building itself, as well as to the city; it is two hundred and two feet high, and in its kind, out does all the obelisks and pillars of the ancients, at least that I have seen, having a most stupendous stair-case in the middle to mount up to the balcony, which is about thirty feet short of the top, and whence there are other steps made even to look out at the top of the whole building; the top is fashioned like an urn.
2. The canal or river, called Fleet-ditch, was a work of great magnificence and expence; but not answering the design, and being now very much neglected, and out of repair, is not much spoken of, yet it has three fine bridges over it, and a fourth, not so fine, yet useful as the rest, and the tide flowing up to the last; the canal is very useful for bringing of coals and timber, and other heavy goods; but the warehouses intended under the streets, on either side, to lay up such goods in, are not made use of, and the wharfs in many places are decay'd and fallen in, which make it all look ruinous.

The Royal Exchange, the greatest and finest of the kind in the world, is the next publick work of the citizens, the beauty of which answers for itself, and needs no description here; 'tis observable, that tho' this Exchange cost the citizens an immense sum of money re-building, some authors say, eighty thousand pounds, being finished and embellished in so exquisite a manner, yet it was so appropriated to the grand affair of business, that the rent or income of it for many years, fully answered the interest of the money laid out in building it: Whether it does so still or not, I will not say, the trade for millenary goods, fine laces, &c. which was so great above stairs for many years, being since scattered and removed, and the shops, many of them, left empty; but those shops, of which there were eight double rows above, and the shops and offices round it below, with the vaults under the whole, did at first, yield a very great sum.

Among other publick edifices, that of the hospital of Bethlehem, or Bedlam, should not be forgot, which is at the very time of writing this, appointed to be inlarged with two new wings, and will then be the most magnificent thing of its kind in the world.

Likewise the Custom-House, an accidental fire having demolished part of it, and given the commissioners opportunity to take in more ground, will, when it is finished, out-shine all the custom-houses in Europe.

The churches in London are rather convenient than fine, not adorned with pomp and pageantry as in Popish countries; but, like the true Protestant plainness, they have made very little of ornament either within them or without, nor, excepting a few, are they famous for handsome steeples, a great many of them are very mean, and some that seem adorned, are rather deform'd than beautified by the heads that contrived, or by the hands that built them.

Some, however, hold up their heads with grandeur and magnificence, and are really ornaments to the whole, I mean by these, such as Bow, St. Brides, the new church in the Strand, Rood-Lane Church, or St. Margaret Fattens, St. Antholins, St. Clement Danes, and some others, and some of the fifty churches, now adding by the county and charity of the government, are like to be very well adorned.

Three or four Gothick towers have been rebuilt at the proper expences of the fund appointed, and are not the worst in all the city, namely St. Michael at Cornhill, St Dunstan in the East, St. Christophers, St. Mary Aldermary, and at St. Sepulchre's.

But the beauty of all the churches in the city, and of all the Protestant churches in the world, is the cathedral of St. Paul's; a building exceeding beautiful and magnificent; tho' some authors are pleased to expose their ignorance, by pretending to find fault with it: ?Tis easy to find fault with the works even of God Himself, when we view them in the gross, without regard to the particular beauties of every part separately considered, and without searching into the reason and nature of the particulars; but when these are maturely inquired into, viewed with a just reverence, and considered with judgment, then we fly out in due admirations of the wisdom of the Author from the excellency of His works.

The vast extent of the dome, that mighty arch, on which so great a weight is supported (meaning the upper towers or lanthorn of stone work seventy feet high) may well account for the strength of the pillars and butments below; yet those common observers of the superficial parts of the building, complain, that the columns are too gross, that the work looks heavy, and the lower figures near the eye are too large, as if the Dorick and the Attick were not each of them as beautiful in their place as the Corinthian.

The wise architect, like a compleat master of his business, had the satisfaction, in his lifetime, of hearing those ignorant reprovers of his work confuted, by the approbation of the best masters in Europe; and the church of St. Peter's in Rome, which is owned to be the most finished piece in the world, only exceeds St. Paul's in the magnificence of its inside work; the painting, the altars, the oratories, and the variety of its imagery; things, which, in a Protestant church, however ornamental, are not allowed of.

If all the square columns, the great pilasters, and the flat pannel work, as well within as without, which they now alledge are too heavy and look too gross, were filled with pictures, adorned with carved work and gilding, and crowded with adorable images of the saints and angels, the kneeling crowd would not complain of the grossness of the work; but 'tis the Protestant plainness, that divesting those columns, &c. of their ornaments, makes the work, which in itself is not so large and gross as that of St. Peter's, be called gross and heavy; whereas neither by the rules of order, or by the necessity of the building, to be proportioned and sufficient to the height and weight of the work, could they have been less, or any otherwise than they are.

Nay, as it was, those gentlemen who in Parliament opposed Sir Christopher Wren's request, of having the dome covered with copper, and who moved to have had the lanthorn on the top made shorter, and built of wood; I say, those gentlemen pretending skill in the art, and offering to reproach the judgment of the architect, alledged, That the copper and the stone lanthorn would be too heavy, and that the pillars below would not support it.

To which Sir Christopher answered, That he had sustained the building with such sufficient columns, and the buttment was every where so good, that he would answer for it with his head, that it should bear the copper covering and the stone lanthorn, and seven thousand ton weight laid upon it more than was proposed, and that nothing below should give way, no not one half quarter of an inch; but that, on the contrary, it should be all the firmer and stronger for the weight that should be laid on it; adding, That it was with this view that the work was brought up from its foundation, in such manner, as made common observers rather think the first range of the buildings too gross for its upper part; and that, if they pleased, he would undertake to raise a spire of stone upon the whole, a hundred foot higher than the cross now stands.

When all these things are considered complexly, no man that has the least judgment in building, that knows any thing of the rules of proportion, and will judge impartially, can find any fault in this church; on the contrary, those excellent lines of Mr. Dryden, which were too meanly applied in allegory to the praise of a paltry play, may be, with much more honour to the author, and justice to this work, applied here to St. Paul's Church.

Strong Dorick pillars form the base,
Corinthian fills the upper space;
So all below is strength, and all above is grace.

Sir Christopher's design was, indeed, very unhappily baulked in several things at the beginning, as well in the situation as in the conclusion of this work, which, because very few may have heard of, I shall mention in publick, from the mouth of its author.

1. In the situation: He would have had the situation of the church removed a little to the north, that it should have stood just on the spot of ground which is taken up by the street called Pater-noster-Row, and the buildings on either side; so that the north side of the church should have stood open to the street now called Newgate-street, and the south side, to the ground on which the church now stands.

By this situation, the east end of the church, which is very beautiful, would have looked directly down the main street of the city, Cheapside; and for the west end, Ludgate having been removed a little north, the main street called Ludgate-street and Ludgate-Hill, would only have sloped a little W.S.W. as they do now irregularly two ways, one within, and the other without the gate, and all the street beyond Fleet-Bridge would have received no alteration at all.

By this situation, the common thorough-fare of the city would have been removed at a little farther distance from the work, and we should not then have been obliged to walk just under the very wall as we do now, which makes the work appear quite out of all perspective, and is the chief reason of the objections I speak of; whereas, had it been viewed at a little distance, the building would have been seen infinitely to more advantage.

Had Sir Christopher been allowed this situation, he would then, also, have had more room for the ornament of the west end, which, tho' it is a most beautiful work, as it now appears, would have been much more so then, and he would have added a circular piazza, to it, after the model of that at Rome, but much more magnificent, and an obelisk of marble in the center of the circle, exceeding any thing that the world can now shew of its kind, I mean of modern work.

But the circumstance of things hindered this noble design, and the city being almost rebuilt before he obtained an order and provision for laying the foundation; he was prescribed to the narrow spot where we see it now stands, in which the building, however magnificent in itself, stands with infinite disadvantage as to the prospect of it; the inconveniencies of which was so apparent when the church was finished, that leave was at length, tho' not without difficulty, obtained, to pull down one whole row of houses on the north side of the body of the church, to make way for the ballister that surrounds the cimetry or church-yard, and, indeed, to admit the light into the church, as well as to preserve it from the danger of fire.

Another baulk which, as I said, Sir Christopher met with, was in the conclusion of the work, namely, the covering of the dome, which Sir Christopher would have had been of copper double gilded with gold; but he was over-ruled by Party, and the city thereby, deprived of the most glorious sight that the world ever saw, since the temple of Solomon.

Yet with all these disadvantages, the church is a most regular building, beautiful, magnificent, and beyond all the modern works of its kind in Europe, St. Peter's at Rome, as above, only except ed.

It is true, St. Peter's, besides its beauty in ornament and imagery, is beyond St. Paul's in its dimensions, is every way larger; but it is the only church in the world that is so; and it was a merry hyperbole of Sir Christopher Wren's, who, when some gentlemen in discourse compared the two churches, and in compliment to him, pretended to prefer St. Paul's, and when they came to speak of the dimensions, suggested, that St. Paul's was

the biggest: I tell you, says Sir Christopher, you might set it in St. Peter's, and look for it a good while, before you could find it.

Having thus spoken of the city and adjacent buildings of London, and of the particulars which I find chiefly omitted by other writers, I have not room here to enter into all the articles needful to a full description: However, I shall touch a little at the things most deserving a stranger's observation.

Supposing now, the whole body of this vast building to be considered as one city, London, and not concerning myself or the reader with the distinction of its several jurisdictions; we shall then observe it only as divided into three, viz. the city, the Court, and the out-parts.

The city is the center of its commerce and wealth.

The Court of its gallantry and splendor.

The out-parts of its numbers and mechanicks; and in all these, no city in the world can equal it.

Between the Court and city, there is a constant communication of business to that degree, that nothing in the world can come up to it.

As the city is the center of business; there is the Custom-house, an article, which, as it brings in an immense revenue to the publick, so it cannot be removed from its place, all the vast import and export of goods being, of necessity, made there; nor can the merchants be removed, the river not admitting the ships to come any farther.

Here, also, is the Excise Office, the Navy Office, the Bank, and almost all the offices where those vast funds are fixed, in which so great a part of the nation are concerned, and on the security of which so many millions are advanced.

Here are the South Sea Company, the East India Company, the Bank, the African Company, &c. whose stocks support that prodigious paper commerce, called Stock-Jobbing; a trade, which once bewitched the nation almost to its ruin, and which, tho' reduced very much, and recovered from that terrible infatuation which once overspread the whole body of the people, yet is still a negotiation, which is so vast in its extent, that almost all the men of substance in England are more or less concerned in it, and the property of which is so very often alienated, that even the tax upon the transfers of stock, tho' but five shillings for each transfer, brings many thousand pounds a year to the government; and some have said, that there is not less than a hundred millions of stock transferred forward or backward from one hand to another every year, and this is one thing which makes such a constant daily intercourse between the Court part of the town, and the city; and this is given as one of the principal causes of the prodigious conflux of the nobility and gentry from all parts of England to London, more than ever was known in former years, viz. That many thousands of families are so deeply concerned in those stocks, and find it so absolutely necessary to be at hand to take the advantage of buying and selling, as the sudden rise or fall of the price directs, and the loss they often sustain by their ignorance of things when absent, and the knavery of brokers and others, whom, in their absence, they are bound to trust, that they find themselves obliged to come up and live constantly here, or at least, most part of the year.

This is the reason why, notwithstanding the encrease of new buildings, and the addition of new cities, as they may be called, every year to the old, yet a house is no sooner built, but 'tis tenanted and inhabited, and every part is crouded with people, and that not only in the town, but in all the towns and villages round, as shall be taken notice of in its place.

But let the citizens and inhabitants of London know, and it may be worth the reflection of some of the landlords, and builders especially, that if peace continues, and the publick affairs continue in honest and upright

management, there is a time coming, at least the nation hopes for it, when the publick debts being reduced and paid off, the funds or taxes on which they are established, may cease, and so fifty or sixty millions of the stocks, which are now the solid bottom of the South-Sea Company, East-India Company, Bank, &c. will cease, and be no more; by which the reason of this conflux of people being removed, they will of course, and by the nature of the thing, return again to their country seats, to avoid the expensive living at London, as they did come up hither to share the extravagant gain of their former business here.

What will be the condition of this overgrown city in such a case, I must leave to time; but all those who know the temporary constitution of our funds, know this, 1. That even, if they are to spin out their own length, all those funds which were given for thirty-two years, have already run out one third, and some of them almost half the time, and that the rest will soon be gone: 2. That as in two years more, the Government which receives six per cent, and pays but five, and will then pay but four per cent, interest, will be able every year to be paying off and lessening the publick debt, 'till, in time, 'tis to be hoped, all our taxes may cease, and the ordinary revenue may, as it always used to do, again supply the ordinary expence of the government.

Then, I say, will be a time to expect the vast concourse of people to London, will separate again and disperse as naturally, as they have now crouded hither: What will be the fate then of all the fine buildings in the out parts, in such a case, let any one judge.

There has formerly been a great emulation between the Court end of the town, and the city; and it was once seriously proposed in a certain reign, how the Court should humble the city; nor was it so impracticable a thing at that time, had the wicked scheme been carried on: Indeed, it was carried farther than consisted with the prudence of a good government, or of a wise people; for the Court envy'd the city's greatness, and the citizens were ever jealous of the Court's designs: The most fatal steps the Court took to humble the city, and which, as I say, did not consist with the prudence of a good government, were, 1. The shutting up the Exchequer, and, 2. The bringing a *quo warranto* against their Charter; but these things can but be touch'd at here; the city has outliv'd it all, and both the attempts turn'd to the discredit of the Court party, who pushed them on: But the city, I say, has gained the ascendant, and is now made so necessary to the Court (as before it was thought rather a grievance) that now we see the Court itself the daily instrument to encourage and increase the opulence of the city, and the city again, by its real grandeur, made not a glory only, but an assistance and support to the Court, on the greatest and most sudden emergencies.
Nor can a breach be now made on any terms, but the city will have the advantage; for while the stocks, and Bank, and trading companies remain in the city, the center of the money, as well as of the credit and trade of the kingdom, will be there.

Nor are these capital offices only necessarily kept in the city, but several offices belonging to the public oeconomy of the administration, such as the Post Office, the Navy, the Victualling, and the Pay Offices, including the Ordnance Office, which is kept in the Tower. In a word, the offices may, indeed, be said to be equally divided.

The city has all those above-mentioned, and the Court has the Admiralty, the Exchequer, and the Secretaries of State's Offices, with those of the Pay-Masters of the Army, &c.

Besides these, the Council, the Parliament, and the Courts of Justice, are all kept at the same part of the town; but as all suits among the citizens are, by virtue of their privileges, to be try'd within the liberty of the city, so the term is obliged to be (as it were) adjourned from Westminster-Hall to Guild-Hall, to try causes there; also criminal cases are in like manner tried monthly at the Old Baily, where a special commission is granted for that purpose to the judges; but the Lord Mayor always presides, and has the chair.

The equality, however, being thus preserved, and a perfect good understanding between the Court and city having so long flourished, this union contributes greatly to the flourishing circumstances of both, and the publick credit is greatly raised by it; for it was never known, that the city, on any occasion, was so assistant to the

government, as it has been since this general good agreement. No sum is so great, but the Bank has been able to raise. Here the Exchequer bills are at all times circulated, money advanced upon the funds as soon as laid, and that at moderate interest, not incroaching on the government, or extorting large interest to eat up the nation, and disappoint the sovereign, and defeat his best designs, as in King William's time was too much the practice.

By this great article of publick credit, all the king's business is done with chearfulness. provisions are now bought to victual the fleets without difficulty, and at reasonable rates. The several yards where the slips are built and fitted out, are currently paid: The magazines of millitary and naval stores kept full: In a word, by this very article of publick credit, of which the Parliament is the foundation (and the city, are the architectures or builders) all those great things are now done with ease, which, in the former reigns, went on heavily, and were brought about with the utmost difficulty.

But, to return to the city; Besides the companies and publick offices, which are kept in the city, there are several particular offices and places, some built or repaired on purpose, and others hired and beautified for the particular business they carry on respectively: As,

Here are several great offices for several societies of ensurers; for here almost all hazards may be ensured; the four principal are called, 1. Royal Exchange Ensurance: 2. The London Ensurers: 3. The Hand in Hand Fire Office: 4. The Sun Fire Office.

In the two first of those, all hazards by sea are ensured, that is to say, of ships or goods, not lives; as also houses and goods are ensured from fire.

In the last, only houses and goods.

In all which offices, the *premio* is so small, and the recovery, in case of loss, so easy and certain, where no fraud is suspected, that nothing can be shewn like it in the whole world; especially that of ensuring houses from fire, which has now attained such an universal approbation, that I am told, there, are above seventy thousand houses thus ensured in London, and the parts adjacent.
The East-India House is in Leadenhall-Street, an old, but spacious building; very convenient, though not beautiful, and I am told, it is under consultation to have it taken down, and rebuilt with additional buildings for warehouses and cellars for their goods, which at present are much wanted.

The African Company's house is in the same street, a very handsome, well-built, and convenient house, and which fully serves for all the offices their business requires.

The Bank is kept in Grocer's Hall, a very convenient place, and, considering its situation, so near the Exchange, a very spacious, commodious place.

Here business is dispatch'd with such exactness, and such expedition and so much of it too, that it is really prodigious; no confusion, nobody is either denied or delayed payment, the merchants who keep their cash there, are sure to have their bills always paid, and even advances made on easy terms, if they have occasion. No accounts in the world are more exactly kept, no place in the world has so much business done, with so much ease.

In the next street (the Old Jury) is the Excise Office, in a very large house, formerly the dwelling of Sir John Fredrick, and afterwards, of Sir Joseph Hern, very considerable merchants. In this one office is managed an immense weight of business, and they have in pay, as I am told, near four thousand officers: The whole kingdom is divided by them into proper districts, and to every district, a collector, a supervisor, and a certain number of gaugers, called, by the vulgar title excise men.

Nothing can be more regular, than the methods of this office, by which an account of the whole excise is transmitted from the remotest parts of the kingdom, once every six weeks, which is called a sitting, and the money received, or prosecutions commenced for it, in the next sitting.

Under the management of this office, are now brought, not only the excise upon beer, ale, and other liquors, as formerly, but also the duties on malt and candles, hops, soap, and leather, all which are managed in several and distinct classes, and the accounts kept in distinct books; but, in many places, are collected by the same officers, which makes the charge of the collection much easier to the government: Nor is the like duty collected in any part of the world, with so little charge, or so few officers.

The South-Sea House is situate in a large spot of ground, between Broad-Street and Threadneedle-Street, two large houses having been taken in, to form the whole office; but, as they were, notwithstanding, straighten'd for room, and were obliged to summon their general courts in another place, viz. at Merchant-Taylors Hall; so they have now resolved to erect a new and compleat building for the whole business, which is to be exceeding fine and large, and to this end, the company has purchased several adjacent buildings, so that the ground is inlarged towards Threadneedle-Street; but, it seems, they could not be accommodated to their minds on the side next Broad-Street, so we are told, they will not open a way that way, as before.

As the company are enlarging their trade to America, and have also engaged in a new trade, namely, that of the Greenland whale fishing, they are like to have an occasion to enlarge their offices. This building, they assure us, will cost the company from ten to twenty thousand pounds, that is to say, a very great sum.

The Post Office, a branch of the revenue formerly not much valued, but now, by the additional penny upon the letters, and by the visible increase of business in the nation, is grown very considerable. This office maintains now, pacquet boats to Spain and Portugal, which never was done before: So the merchants letters for Cadiz or Lisbonne, which were before two and twenty days in going over France and Spain to Lisbonne, oftentimes arrive there now, in nine or ten days from Falmouth.
Likewise, they have a pacquet from Marseilles to Port Mahone, in the Mediterranean, for the constant communication of letters with his majesty's garrison and people in the island of Minorca.

They have also a pacquet from England to the West-Indies; but I am not of opinion, that they will keep it up for much time longer, if it be not already let fall.

This office is kept in Lombard-Street, in a large house, formerly Sir Robert Viner's, once a rich goldsmith; but ruined at the shutting up of the Exchequer, as above.

The penny post, a modern contrivance of a private person, one Mr. William Dockraw, is now made a branch of the general revenue by the Post Office; and though, for a time, it was subject to miscarriages and mistakes, yet now it is come also into so exquisite a management, that nothing can be more exact, and 'tis with the utmost safety and dispatch, that letters are delivered at the remotest corners of the town, almost as soon as they could be sent by a messenger, and that from four, five, six, to eight times a day, according as the distance of the place makes it practicable; and you may send a letter from Ratcliff or Limehouse in the East, to the farthest part of Westminster for a penny, and that several times in the same day.
Nor are you tied up to a single piece of paper, as in the General Post-Office, but any packet under a pound weight, goes at the same price.

I mention this the more particularly, because it is so manifest a testimony to the greatness of this city, and to the great extent of business and commerce in it, that this penny conveyance should raise so many thousand pounds in a year, and employ so many poor people in the diligence of it, as this office employs.

We see nothing of this at Paris, at Amsterdam, at Hamburgh, or any other city, that ever I have seen, or heard of.

The Custom House I have just mentioned before, but must take up a few lines to mention it again. The stateliness of the building, shewed the greatness of the business that is transacted there: The Long Room is like an Exchange every morning, and the croud of people who appear there, and the business they do, is not to be explained by words, nothing of that kind in Europe is like it.

Yet it has been found, that the business of export and import in this port of London, is so prodigiously increased, and the several new offices, which they are bound to erect for the managing the additional parts of the customs, are such, that the old building, though very spacious, is too little, and as the late Fire burnt or demolished some part of the west end of the Custom House, they have had the opportunity in rebuilding, to enlarge it very much, buying in the ground of some of the demolished houses, to add to the Custom House, which will be now a most glorious building.

The keys, or wharfs, next the river, fronting not the Custom House only, but the whole space from the Tower stairs, or dock, to the bridge, ought to be taken notice of as a publick building; nor are they less an ornament to the city, as they are a testimony of the vast trade carried on in it, than the Royal Exchange itself.

The revenue, or income, brought in by these wharfs, inclusive of the warehouses belonging to them, and the lighters they employ, is said to amount to a prodigious sum; and, as I am told, seldom so little as forty thousand pounds per annum: And abundance of porters, watchmen, wharfingers, and other officers, are maintained here by the business of the wharfs; in which, one thing is very remarkable, That here are porters, and poor working men, who, though themselves not worth, perhaps, twenty pounds in the world, are trusted with great quantities of valuable goods, sometimes to the value of several thousand pounds, and yet 'tis very rarely to be heard, that any loss or embezzlement is made. The number of these keys extending, as above, from the bridge to the Tower Dock, is seventeen.

From these publick places, I come next to the markets, which, in such a mass of building, and such a collection of people, and where such business is done, must be great, and very many. To take a view of them in particular;

First, Smithfield Market for living cattle, which is, without question, the greatest in the world; no description can be given of it, no calculation of the numbers of creatures sold there, can be made. This market is every Monday and Friday.

There is, indeed, a liberty taken by the butchers, to go up to Islington, and to Whitechapel, and buy of the country drovers, who bring cattle to town; but this is called forestalling the market, and is not allowed by law.
There is also a great market, or rather fair for horses, in Smithfield every Friday in the afternoon, where very great numbers of horses, and those of the highest price, are to be sold weekly.

The flesh markets are as follow.

Leaden-Hall, Honey-Lane, Newgate, Clare, Shadwell, Southwark, Westminster, Spittle Fields, Hoxton (forsaken) Brook, Bloomsbury, Newport, St. James's, Hungerford.
N.B. At all these markets, there is a part set by for a fish market, and a part for an herb market; so that when I say afterwards, there are fish markets, and herb markets, I am to be understood, such as are wholly for fish, or for herbs and fruit. For example,

Fish markets	{	Billingsgate, Fishstreet Hill, and Old Fishstreet.
Herb markets		Covent Garden, and Stocks Market.
N.B. Cherry market, and apple market	}	At the Three Cranes.
Corn markets		Bear Key, and Queen Hith.

Meal markets	{	Queen Hith, Hungerford, Ditch-Side, and Whitecross-Street.
Hay markets	{	Whitechapel, Smithfield, Southwark, the Hay-Market-Street Westminster, and. Bloomsbury.
Leather market		Leaden Hall.
Hides and skins		Leaden Hall, and Wood's Close.
Coal markets		Billingsgate, Room Land.
Bay market		Leaden Hall.
Broadcloth market	}	Blackwell Hall.

N.B. The last three are, without doubt, the greatest in the world of those kinds.

Bubble market		Exchange Alley.

These markets are so considerable in themselves, that they will merit a longer and more particular description, than I have room for in this place. I shall, however, briefly mention them again in their order.

Of the fourteen flesh markets, or markets for provisions, seven of them are of antient standing, time out of mind: But the other seven are erected since the enlargement of buildings mentioned above. The old ones are, Leaden-Hall, Honey-Lane, Newgate Market, Southwark, Clare, St. James's, and Westminster; and these are so considerable, such numbers-of buyers, and such an infinite quantity of provisions of all sorts, flesh, fish, and fowl, that, especially the first, no city in the world can equal them. 'Tis of the first of these markets, that a certain Spanish ambassador said, There was as much meat sold in it in one month, as would suffice all Spain for a year. This great market, called, Leaden-Hall, though standing in the middle of the city, contains three large squares, every square having several outlets into divers streets, and all into one another. The first, and chief, is called, the Beef Market, which has two large gates, one into Leaden Hall Street, one into Gracechurch Street, and two smaller, viz. One by a long pav'd passage leading into Limestreet, and one under a gateway from the second square. In this square, every Wednesday is kept a market for raw hides, tann'd leather, and shoemakers tools; and in the warehouses, up stairs on the east and south sides of the square, is the great market for Colechester bayes.

The second square is divided into two oblongs, in the first is the fish market, and in the other, a market for country higlers, who bring small things, such as pork, butter, eggs, pigs, country dress'd, with some fouls, and such like country fare.

The north part of the fish market, the place being too large for the fishmongers use, are the stalls of the town butchers for mutton and veal, the best and largest of which, that England can produce, is to be bought there, and the east part is a flesh market for country butchers.

The third, and last square, which is also very large, is divided into three parts: Round the circumference, is the butter market, with all sorts of higglary goods, as before: The south part is the poultry market, and the bacon market, and the center is an herb market.

All the other markets follow the same method in proportion to the room they have for it; and there is an herb market in every one; but the chief markets in the whole city for herbs and garden-stuff, are the Stocks and Covent Garden.

There are but two corn markets in the whole city and out parts; but they are monsters for magnitude, and not to be matched in the world. These are Bear Key, and Queen Hith: To the first comes all the vast quantity of corn that is brought into the city by sea, and here corn may be said, not to be sold by cart loads, or horse loads, but by

ship loads, and, except the corn chambers and magazines in Holland, when the fleets come in from Dantzick and England, the whole world cannot equal the quantity bought and sold here.

This is the place whither all the corn is brought, which, as I have observed, is provided in all the counties of England, near the sea coast, and shipp'd for London, and no quantity can be wanted, either for home consumption, or for foreign exportation, but the corn factors, who are the managers of this market, are ready to supply it.

The other, which I call a corn market too, is at Queen Hith; but this market is chiefly, if not wholly, for malt; as to the whole corn, as the quantity of malt brought to this market is prodigious great, so I must observe too, that this place is the receiver of all the malt, the barley of which, takes up the ground of so many hundred thousand acres of land in the counties of Surrey, Bucks, Berks, Oxford, Southampton, and Wilts, and is called west country malt.

It is true, there is a very great quantity of malt, and of other corn too, brought to some other places on the river, and sold there, viz. To Milford Lane, above the bridge, and the Hermitage, below the bridge; but this is but, in general, a branch of the trade of the other places.

It must not be omitted, that Queen Hith is also a very great market for meal, as well as malt, and, perhaps, the greatest in England.

The vessels which bring this malt and meal to Queen Hith, are worth the observation of any stranger that understands such things. They are remarkable for the length of the vessel, and the burthen they carry, and yet the little water they draw; in a word, some of those barges carry above a thousand quarter of malt at a time, and yet do not draw two foot of water. *N.B.* A thousand quarter of malt must be granted to be, at least, a hundred tun burthen. *Note also* , Some of these large barges come as far as from Abbington, which is above one hundred and fifty miles from London, if we measure by the river.

The next market, which is more than ordinary remarkable, is the coal market at Billingsgate. This is kept every morning on the broad place just at the head of Billingsgate Dock, and the place is called Room Land; from what old forgotten original it has that name, history is silent. I need not, except for the sake of strangers, take notice, that the city of London, and parts adjacent, as also all the south of England, is supplied with coals, called therefore sea-coal, from Newcastle upon Tyne , and from the coast of Durham, and Northumberland. This trade is so considerable, that it is esteemed the great nursery of our best seamen, and of which I shall have occasion to say more in my account of the northern parts of England. The quantity of coals, which it is supposed are, *communibus annis* , burnt and consumed in and about this city, is supposed to be about five hundred thousand chalder, every chalder containing thirty-six bushels, and generally weighing about thirty hundred weight.

All these coals are bought and sold on this little spot of Room Land, and, though sometimes, especially in case of a war, or of contrary winds, a fleet of five hundred to seven hundred sail of ships, comes up the river at a time, yet they never want a market: The brokers, or buyers of these coals, are called crimps, for what reason, or original, is likewise a mystery peculiar to this trade; for these people are noted for giving such dark names to the several parts of their trade; so the vessels they load their ships with at New Castle, are called keels, and the ships that bring them, are called cats, and hags, or hag boats, and fly boats, and the like. But of that hereafter.

The increase of this consumption of coals, is another evidence of the great increase of the city of London; for, within a few years past, the import of coals was not, in the river of Thames, so great by very near half.

It must be observed, that as the city of London occasions the consumption of so great a quantity of corn and coals, so the measurement of them is under the inspection of the lord mayor and court of aldermen, and for the direction of which, there are allowed a certain number of corn meeters, and coal meeters, whose places are for life, and bring them in a very considerable income. These places are in the gift of the lord mayor for the time being, and are generally sold for three or four thousand pounds a piece, when they fall.

They have abundance of poor men employ'd under them, who are called, also, meeters, and are, or ought to be, freemen of the city.

This is, indeed, a rent-charge upon the buyer, and is a kind of gabel, as well upon the coals as the corn; but the buyer is abundantly recompensed, by being ascertained in his measure without any fraud; so that having bought his coals or corn, he is perfectly unconcerned about the measure, for the sworn meeters are so placed between the buyer and seller, that no injury can be offered, nor have I heard that any complaint of injustice is ever made against the meeters, who are generally men of good character, are sworn to do right, and cannot easily do wrong without being detected; so many eyes being about them, and so many several persons concerned in the work, who have no dependance one upon another.

There is one great work yet behind, which, however, seems necessary to a full description of the city of London, and that is the shipping and the Pool; but in what manner can any writer go about it, to bring it into any reasonable compass? The thing is a kind of infinite, and the parts to be separated from one another in such a description, are so many, that it is hard to know where to begin.

The whole river, in a word, from London-Bridge to Black Wall, is one great arsenal, nothing in the world can be like it: The great building-yards at Schedam near Amsterdam, are said to out-do them in the number of ships which are built there, and they tell us, that there are more ships generally seen at Amsterdam, than in the Thames.

As to the building part, I will not say, but that there may be more vessels built at Schedam, and the parts adjacent, than in the River Thames; but then it must be said;

1. That the English build for themselves only, the Dutch for all the world.
2. That almost all the ships the Dutch have, are built there, whereas, not one fifth part of our shipping is built in the Thames; but abundance of ships are built at all the sea-ports in England, such as at New-Castle, Sunderland, Stockton, Whitby, Hull, Gainsborough, Grimsby, Lynn, Yarmouth, Alborough, Walderswick, Ipswich and Harwich, upon the east coast; and
   at Shoram, Arundel, Brighthelmston, Portsmouth, Southampton, Pool, Weymouth, Dartmouth, Plymouth, besides other places, on the south coast.
3. That we see more vessels in less room at Amsterdam; but the setting aside their hoys, bilanders and schoots, which are in great numbers always there, being vessels particular to their inland and coasting navigation; you do not see more ships, nor near so many ships of force, at Amsterdam as at London.
4. That you see more ships there in less room, but, perhaps, not so many ships in the whole.

That part of the river of Thames which is properly the harbour, and where the ships usually deliver or unload their cargoes, is called the Pool, and begins at the turning of the river out of Lime-house Reach, and extends to the Custom-house-Keys: In this compass I have had the curiosity to count the ships as well as I could, *en passant* , and have found above two thousand sail of all sorts, not reckoning barges, lighters or pleasure-boats, and yatchs; but of vessels that really go to sea.

It is true, the river or Pool, seem'd, at that time, to be pretty full of ships; it is true also, that I included the ships which lay in Deptford and Black-Wall reaches, and in the wet docks, whereof, there are no less than three; but 'tis as true, that we did not include the men of war at the king's yard and in the wet dock there at Deptford, which were not a very few.

In the river, as I have observed, there are from Battle-Bridge on the Southwark side, and the Hermitage-Bridge on the city-side, reckoning to Black-Wall, inclusive,

Three wet docks for laying up Twenty two dry docks for repairing Thirty three yards for building	}	merchants ships.

This is inclusive of the builders of lighters, hoys, &c. but exclusive of all boat-builders, wherry-builders, and above-bridge barge-builders.

To enter into any description of the great magazines of all manner of naval stores, for the furnishing those builders, would be endless, and I shall not attempt it; 'tis sufficient to add, That England, as I have said elsewhere, is an inexhaustible store-house of timber, and all the oak timber, and generally the plank also, used in the building these ships, is found in England only, nay, and which is more, it is not fetched from the remoter parts of England, but these southern counties near us are the places where 'tis generally found; as particularly the counties of Berks and Bucks, Surrey, Kent, Sussex, Essex and Suffolk, and very little is brought farther, nor can all the ship-building the whole kingdom are able to build, ever exhaust those counties, tho' they were to build much more than they do.

But I must land, lest this part of the account seems to smell of the tarr, and I should tire the gentlemen with leading them out of their knowledge.

I should mention, for the information of strangers, &c. that the buildings of this great city are chiefly of brick, as many ways found to be the safest, the cheapest, and the most commodious of all other materials; by safe, I mean from fire, and as by Act of Parliament, every builder is bound to have a partition wall of brick also, one brick and half thick between every house, it is found to be, indeed, very helpful in case of fire.

And as I am speaking of fire and burning of houses, it cannot be omitted, That no where in the world is so good care taken to quench fires as in London; I will not say the like care is taken to prevent them; for I must say, That I think the servants, nay, and masters too in London, are the most careless people in the world about fire, and this, no doubt, is the reason why there are frequently more fires in London and in the out-parts, than there are in all the cities of Europe put them together; nor are they the more careful, as I can learn, either from observation or report, I say, they are not made more cautious, by the innumerable fires which continually happen among them.

And this leads me back to what I just now said, That no city in the world is so well furnished for the extinguishing fires when they happen.

1. By the great convenience of water which being every where laid in the streets in large timber pipes, as well from the Thames as the New-River, those pipes are furnished with a fire plug, which the parish officers have the key of, and when opened, let out not a pipe, but a river of water into the streets, so that making but a dam in the kennel, the whole street is immediately under water to supply the engines.
2. By the great number of admirable engines, of which, almost, every parish has one, and some halls also, and some private citizens have them of their own, so that no sooner does a fire break out, but the house is surrounded with engines, and a flood of water poured upon it, 'till the fire is, as it were, not extinguished only, but drowned.
3. The several ensurance offices, of which I have spoken above, have each of them a certain sett of men, who they keep in constant pay, and who they furnish with tools proper for the work, and to whom they give jack-caps of leather, able to keep them from hurt, if brick or timber, or any thing not of too great a bulk, should fall upon them; these men make it their business to be ready at call, all hours, and night or day, to assist in case of fire; and it must be acknowledged, they are very dextrous, bold, diligent, and successful. These they call fire-men, but with an odd kind of contradiction in the title, for they are really most of them water-men.

Having mentioned, that the city is so well furnished with water, it cannot be omitted, that there are two great engines for the raising the Thames water, one at the bridge, and the other near Broken Wharf; these raise so great a quantity of water, that, as they tell us, they are able to supply the whole city in its utmost extent, and to supply every house also3 with a running pipe of water up to the uppermost story.

However, the New-River, which is brought by an aqueduct or artificial stream from Ware, continues to supply the greater part of the city with water, only with this addition by the way, that they have been obliged to dig a new head or basin at Islington on a higher ground than that which the natural stream of the river supplies, and this

higher basin they fill from the lower, by a great engine worked formerly with six sails, now by many horses constantly working; so from that new elevation of the water, they supply the higher part of the town with the same advantage, and more ease than the Thames engines do it.
There was a very likely proposal set on foot by some gentlemen, whose genius seem'd equal to the work, for drawing another river, rather larger than that now running, and bringing it to a head on some rising grounds beyond Mary le Bonne.

This water was proposed to be brought from the little Coin or Cole near St. Albans, and the river, called Two Waters, near Rickmansworth, and as I have seen the course of the water, and the several supplies it was to have, and how the water-level was drawn for containing the current, I must acknowledge it was a very practical undertaking, and merited encouragement; but it was opposed in Parliament, and dropt for the present: This design was particularly calculated for supplying those prodigious additions of buildings, which I have already described at the west end of the town.
However, tho' this be laid aside, as also several water-houses in other parts, particularly one at Wapping, one near Battle-Bridge in Southwark, and the famous one at York-Buildings, yet it cannot be denied, that the city of London is the best supplied with water of any great city in the world, and upon as easy terms to its inhabitants. There were formerly several beautiful conduits of running-water in London, which water was very sweet and good, and was brought at an infinite expence, from several distant springs, in large leaden pipes to those conduits, and this was so lately, that several of those conduits were re-built since the Fire, as one on Snow-Hill and one at Stocks-Market, which serves as a pedestal for the great equestrian statue of King Charles II. erected there at the charge of Sir Robert Viner, then Lord Mayor, and who was then an eminent banker in Lombard-street; but his loyalty could not preserve him from being ruined by the common calamity, when the king shut up the Exchequer.

They tell us a merry story of this statue, how true it may be, let those testify who saw it, if any such witnesses remain, viz. That a certain famous Court lady, I do not say it was the D------ss of Portsmouth, being brought to bed of a son late in the night, the next morning this glorious equestrian statue had a pillion handsomely placed on it behind the body of the k------, with a paper pinned to the trapping of the pillion, with words at length, Gone for a midwife.

It is scarce worth while to give an account of the statues in this city, they are neither many, or are those which are, very valuable.

The statue of King Charles II. in marble, standing in the middle of the Royal Exchange, is the best beyond comparison; one of the same prince, and his father, standing in two large niches on the south front of the same building, and being bigger than the life, are coarse pieces compared to it.

The statues of the kings and queens, seventeen of which are already put up in the inside of the Royal Exchange, are tolerable, but all infinitely inferior to that in the middle.

There is a statue of Sir Thomas Gresham, the founder of the Royal Exchange, which outdoes many of those kings, only that it stands in a dark corner, and is little noticed; 'tis placed in a nitch under the piazza, in the north west angle of the Exchange, just regarding the Turky walk, and he has a bale of silk lying by him.

There is another equestrian statue, and but one, as I remember, within the city, and that is of King James the First on the north front of one of the gates of the city called Aldersgate: This was erected on the occasion of that king's entring the city at that gate when he arrived here from Scotland, to take the crown after the death of Queen Elizabeth; when that statue was finely painted and gilded, which is not usual, nor is the gilding yet worn off; there are some emblematick figures remaining, which were then suited to the occasion of his triumphal entry, and there was another arch form'd for the day at the bars, where the liberties of the city end, that way which is now called Goswell-street, but that was taken down soon after.

The gates of the city are seven, besides posterns, and the posterns that remain are four, besides others that are demolished. The gates are all remaining, two of them which were demolished at the fire, being beautifully re-built: These are Ludgate and Newgate; the first a prison for debt for freemen of the city only, the other a prison for criminals, both for London and Middlesex, and for debtors also for Middlesex, being the county gaol.

Moregate is also re-built, and is a very beautiful gateway, the arch being near twenty foot high, which was done to give room for the city Train'd Bands to go through to the Artillery Ground, where they muster, and that they might march with their pikes advanc'd, for then they had pikemen in every regiment, as well in the army as in the militia, which since that, is quite left off; this makes the gate look a little out of shape, the occasion of it not being known. Cripplegate and Bishopsgate are very old, and make but a mean figure; Aldersgate is about one hundred and twenty years old, and yet being beautified, as I have said, on the occasion of King James's entry, looks very handsome.

Aldgate was very ancient and decay'd, so that As old as Aldgate, was a city proverb for many years; but this gate was re-built also, upon the triumphant entry of K. James I. and looks still very well; on the east side of this gate are two statues in stone, representing two men, from the waste upward, and in armour, throwing down two great stones, supposing it to be on an enemy assaulting the gate, which I mention, because some time ago, one of these men in armour, whether tired with holding it so long, or dreaming of enemies assaulting the gate, our authors do not inform us; but he threw down the stone, or rather let it fall, after having held it upwards of an hundred years; but, as it happened, it did no harm.

Most of these gates are given by the city to the chief of the officers of the city to live in, and the houses are very convenient dwellings.

Temple-Bar is the only gate which is erected at the extent of the city liberties, and this was occasioned by some needful ceremonies at the proclaiming any King or Queen of England, at which time the gates are shut; the Herald at Arms knocks hard at the door, the sheriffs of the city call back, asking who is there? Then the herald answers, "I come to proclaim," &, according to the name of the prince who is to succeed to the crown, and repeating the titles of Great Britain, France and Ireland, &c. at which the sheriffs open, and bid them welcome, and so they go on to the Exchange, where they make the last proclamation.

This gate is adorned with the figures of kings below, and traytors above, the heads of several criminals executed for treason being set up there; the statues below are of Queen Elizabeth and King James I. King Charles I. and II. and this is the fourth statue of King Charles II. which is to be seen in the city of London, besides his picture nobly done at full length, which was set up formerly in the Guild-Hall.

There are in London, and the far extended bounds, which I now call so, notwithstanding we are a nation of liberty, more publick and private prisons, and houses of confinement, than any city in Europe, perhaps as many as in all the capital cities of Europe put together; for example:

Public GAOLS.

The Tower.	Whitechapel.
Newgate.	Finsbury.
Ludgate.	The Dutchy.
King's Bench.	St. Katherines.
The Fleet.	Bale-Dock.
Bridewell.	Little-Ease.
Marshalseas.	New Prison.
The Gatehouse.	New-Bridewell.
Two Counters in the city.	Tottil-Fields Bridewell

One Counter in the Burrough. St. Martin's le Grand. The Clink, formerly the prison to the Stews.	Five night prisons, called Round-houses, &c.

Tolerated PRISONS.

Bethlem or Bedlam. One hundred and nineteen Spunging Houses. Fifteen Private Mad-Houses. The King's Messengers Houses. The Sergeant at Arms's Officers Houses. The Black Rod Officers-Houses.	*Cum aliis.* Three Pest-houses. The Admiralty Officers Houses. Tip-staffs Houses. Chancery Officers Houses.

N.B. All these private houses of confinement, are pretended to be little purgatories, between prison and liberty, places of advantage for the keeping prisoners at their own request, till they can get friends to deliver them, and so avoid going into publick prisons; tho' in some of them, the extortion is such, and the accommodation so bad, that men choose to be carried away directly.
This has often been complained of, and hopes had of redress; but the rudeness and avarice of the officers prevails, and the oppression is sometimes very great; but that by the way.

In a word; To sum up my description of London, take the following heads; There are in this great mass of buildings thus called London,

Two cathedrals. Four choirs for musick-wor-ship. One hundred and thirty five parish churches. Nine new churches unfinished, being part of fifty appointed to be built. Sixty nine chapels where the Church of England service is perform'd. Two churches at Deptford, taken into the limits now describ'd. Twenty eight foreign churches Besides Dissenters meetings of all persuasions; Popish chapels; and One Jews synagogue. There are also, thirteen hospitals, besides lesser charities, call'd Alms-houses, of which they reckon above a hundred, many of which have chapels for divine service. Three colleges.	Twenty-seven publick prisons. Eight publick schools, called Free Schools. Eighty three Charity Schools. Fourteen markets for flesh. Two for live cattle, besides two herb-markets. Twenty three other markets, as describ'd. Fifteen Inns of Court. Four fairs. Twenty seven squares, besides those within any single building, as the Temple, Somerset House, & Five publick bridges. One town-house, or Guild- Hall. One Royal Exchange. Two other Exchanges only for shops. One Custom-house.

	Three Artillery Grounds. Four Pest-houses. Two bishops palaces; and Three royal palaces.

Daniel Defoe, *A tour thro' the whole island of Great Britain, divided into circuits or journies* (London: JM Dent and Co, 1927)