

Source B is an anonymous article called London Characters and the Humorous Side of London Life which was published in a magazine in 1871. The writer describes their experiences of living in London.

A man's first residence in London is a revolution in his life and feelings. He loses at once no small part of his individuality. He was a man before, now he is a "party." No longer known as Mr. Brown, he feels as one of many cogs in one of the many wheels of an incessantly wearing, tearing, grinding, system of machinery. His country notions must be modified, and all his life-long ways and takings-for-granted prove crude and questionable. He is hourly reminded "This is not the way in London; that this won't work here," or, "people always expect," and "you'll soon find the difference." Custom rules everything, and custom never before seemed to him half as strange, strong, or inexorable. The butcher always cuts one way and the greengrocer serves him with equal rigour. His orders never before seemed of so little importance. The independence and the take-it-or-leave-it indifference of the tradesmen contrast strongly with the obsequiousness of the country shop. However great a customer before he feels a small customer now. The tradesman is shorter and more saving of his words. He serves, takes your money, and turns away to some one else, whereas in the country they indulge you with a little talk into the bargain.

Competition in London is very rife. The cheap five-shilling hatter was soon surprised by a four-and-nine-penny shop opposite. Few London men could live but by a degree of energy which the country dealer little knows. The wear and tear of nerve-power and the discharge of brain-power in London are enormous. The London man lives fast. In London, man rubs out, elsewhere he rusts out. No doubt the mental stimulus of London staves off much disease, for idle men eat themselves to death and worry themselves to death; but in city life neither gluttony nor worry has a chance, but men give bail for their good behaviour from ten o'clock to five, and are kept out of much mischief's way by force of circumstances.

Many other things contribute to make our new Londoner feel smaller in his own eyes. The living stream flows by him in the streets; he never saw so many utter strangers to him and to each other before; their very pace and destination are different; there is a walk and business determination distinctly London. In other towns men saunter they know not whither, but nearly every passer-by in London has his point, and is making so resolutely towards it that it seems not more his way than his destination as he is carried on with the current; and of street currents there are two, to the City and from the City, so distinct and persistent, that our friend can't get out of one without being jostled by the other. This street stream he may analyse, and, according to the hour of the day or the season of the year, the number, trades, and characters obey an average. In the country Dr. Jones drives in one day, Mr. and Mrs. Robinson and family walk in the next. Sometimes fifty people may be counted, sometimes ten, but in London there is an ebb and flow in the Strand as regular and uniform as in the Thames. The City noise begins gradually about six with the sweeps and the milk-pails amongst the earliest calls, though ponderous market-carts and night cabs are late and early both. This fitful rumble deepens to a steady roar about nine, and there is no approach to silence till night, and after a very short night of repose the same roar awakens again; so City people live as in a mill, till constant wearing sound becomes to them the normal state of nature.

There is a good deal of education in all this. The mind is ever on the stretch with rapid succession of new images, new people, and new sensations. All business is done with an increased pace. The buying and the selling, the counting and the weighing, and even the talk over the counter, is all done with a degree of rapidity and sharp practice which brightens up the wits of this country cousin more than any books or schooling he ever enjoyed. All this tends greatly to habits of abstraction and to the bump of concentrativeness. The slow and prosy soon find they have not a chance; but after a while, like a dull horse in a fast coach, they develop a pace unknown before.