



women — the latter inserted 'for the sake of colour' — and look on as someone drops their precious fruit basket. This part of the high street remains more or less empty of shops. The composition needn't be altered very much to capture the mood of the place today. It is a rare example of somewhere that has stood still.

Realistically, the modern high street demands not a Turner but a Hogarth to capture its human dimension. 'Four Times

of the Day', four paintings by the artist reproduced as engravings in the 1730s, offer some depressingly familiar sights. A woman looks past the cads and drunks loitering outside a coffee house. A dead cat lies in the gutter in the region of Charing Cross Road while people eat pie off the ground. An insalubrious barber cuts his client while shaving him and the homeless shelter beneath his windowsill. Only the area around Sadler's Wells looks in any

way desirable but then, it has a cow, which is long gone.

An illustrated book of the modern high street would be duller and less uplifting than Richards's and Ravilious's offering, but there may yet be potential between the cloned shops and the closed shops, the spartan windows and the to-let signs, for a continuing series as candid as Hogarth's and Estes's combined. Who anyway needs a plumassier when we have Greggs and its chicken bake?