

OF THE STREET-SELLERS OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES.

OF THE KINDS AND QUANTITY OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES SOLD IN THE STREETS.

THERE are two kinds of fruit sold in the streets—"green fruit" and "dry fruit."

In commerce, all fruit which is edible as it is taken from the tree or the ground, is known as "green." A subdivision of this green fruit is into "fresh" or "tender" fruit, which includes currants, gooseberries, strawberries, and, indeed, all fruits that demand immediate consumption, in contradistinction to such productions as nuts which may be kept without injury for a season. All fruit which is "cured" is known as "dry" fruit. In summer the costers vend "green fruit," and in the winter months, or in the early spring, when the dearth or insufficiency of the supply of green fruit renders it unsuited for their traffic, they resort, but not extensively, to "dry fruit." It is principally, however, when an abundant season, or the impossibility of keeping the dry fruit much longer, has tended to reduce the price of it, that the costlier articles are to be found on the costermonger's barrow.

Fruit is, for the most part, displayed on barrows, by the street-dealers in it. Some who supply the better sort of houses—more especially those in the suburbs—carry such things as apples and plums, in clean round wicker-baskets, holding pecks or half-pecks.

The commoner "green" fruits of home produce are bought by the costermonger in the markets. The foreign green fruit, as pine-apples, melons, grapes, chestnuts, coker-nuts, Brazil-nuts, hazel-nuts, and oranges, are purchased by them at the public sales of the brokers, and of the Jews in Duke's-place. The more intelligent and thrifty of the costers buy at the public sales on the principle of association, as I have elsewhere described. Some costermongers expend as much as 20% at a time in such green fruit, or dry fruit, as is not immediately perishable, at a public sale, or at a fruit-warehouse, and supply the other costers.

The regular costermongers seldom deal in oranges and chestnuts. If they sell walnuts, they reserve these, they say, for their Sunday afternoon's pastime. The people who carry oranges, chestnuts, or walnuts, or Spanish nuts about the town are not considered as costermongers, but are generally, though not always, classed, by the regular men, with the watercress-women, the sprat-women, the winkle-dealers, and such others, whom they consider beneath them. The orange season is called by the costermonger the "Irishman's harvest." Indeed, the street trade in oranges and nuts is almost entirely in the

hands of the Irish and their children; and of the children of costermongers. The costers themselves would rather starve—and do starve now and then—than condescend to it. The trade in coker-nuts is carried on greatly by the Jews on Sundays, and by young men and boys who are not on other days employed as street-sellers.

The usual kinds of fruit the regular costers deal in are strawberries, raspberries (plain and stalked), cherries, apricots, plums, green-gages, currants, apples, pears, damsons, green and ripe gooseberries, and pine-apples. They also deal in vegetables, such as turnips, greens, brocoli, carrots, onions, celery, rhubarb, new potatoes, peas, beans (French and scarlet, broad and Windsor), asparagus, vegetable marrow, seakale, spinach, lettuces, small salads, radishes, etc. Their fruit and vegetables they usually buy at Covent-garden, Spitalfields, or the Borough markets. Occasionally they buy some at Farringdon, but this they reckon to be very little better than a "haggler's market,"—a "haggler" being, as I before explained, the middle-man who attends in the fruit and vegetable-markets, and buys of the salesman to sell again to the retail dealer or costermonger.

Concerning the quantity of fruit and vegetables sold in the streets, by the London costermongers. This, as I said, when treating of the street-trade in fish, can only be arrived at by ascertaining the entire quantity sold wholesale at the London markets, and then learning from the best authorities the proportion retailed in the public thoroughfares. Fully to elucidate this matter, both as to the extent of the metropolitan supply of vegetables and fruit, ("foreign" as well as "home-grown," and "green" as well as "dry") and the relative quantity of each, vended through the agency of the costermongers, I caused inquiries to be instituted at all the principal markets and brokers (for not even the vaguest return on the subject had, till then, been prepared), and received from all the gentlemen connected therewith, every assistance and information, as I have here great pleasure in acknowledging.

To carry out my present inquiry, I need not give returns of the articles *not* sold by the costermongers, nor is it necessary for me to cite any but those dealt in by them generally. Their exceptional sales, such as of mushrooms, cucumbers, &c., are not included here.

The following Table shows the ordinary annual supply of *home grown fruit* (nearly all produced within a radius of twelve miles from the Bank) to each of the London "green" markets.

A TABLE SHOWING THE QUANTITY OR MEASURE OF THE UNDERMENTIONED HOME GROWN FRUITS AND VEGETABLES SOLD THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, WHOLESALÉ IN THE METROPOLITAN "GREEN" MARKETS, WITH THE PROPORTION SOLD RETAIL IN THE STREETS.

Description of Fruits and Vegetables.	Covent Garden.	Borough.	Spitalfields.	Farringdon.	Portman.	Total.	Proportion sold by Costermongers.
GREEN FRUIT.							
Apples	360,000 bushels	25,000	250,000	35,000	16,000	686,000	One-half.
Pears	230,000 "	10,000	83,000	20,000	10,000	353,000	One-half.
Cherries	90,000 doz. lbs.	45,000	15,000	12,000	11,200	173,200	One-half.
Plums*	93,000 bushels	15,500	45,000	3,000	20,000	176,500	One-fifteenth.
Green Gages*	2,000 "	333	1,500	1,000	500	5,333	One-fiftieth.
Damsons*	19,800 "	3,150	4,500	9,000	1,200	16,450	One thirtieth.
Bullace	1,800 "	1,620	400	540	540	4,900	One-half.
Gooseberries	140,000 "	26,200	91,500	12,000	7,000	276,700	Three-fourths.
Currants (Red)*	70,000 sieves	15,000	75,000	6,000	9,000	171,000	One-half.
Ditto (Black). . . .	45,000 "	12,000	45,000	6,000	4,000	108,000	One-eighth.
Ditto (White). . . .	3,800 "	3,000	15,000	3,000	2,000	24,000	One-eighth.
Strawberries†	638,000 pottles	330,000	396,000	15,000	148,500	1,527,500	One-half.
Raspberries	22,500 "	3,750	2,500	3,500	3,000	35,250	One-twentieth.
Mulberries	17,496 "	57,600	7,064	17,281	22,500	121,940	One-fourth.
Hazel Nuts	2,700 bushels	1,000	648	5,400	270	9,018	Two-thirds.
Filberts	221,400 lbs.	72,000	43,200	144,000	37,800	518,400	One-thirtieth.
VEGETABLES.							
Potatoes	161,280,000 lbs.	48,384,000	64,512,000	24,152,000	12,096,000	310,464,000	One-fifteenth.
Cabbages‡	33,600,000 plants	19,200,000	12,000,000	8,400,000	16,472,000	89,672,000	One-third.
Brocoli and Cauliflowers	1,800,000 heads	3,780,000	2,880,000	5,322,000	546,000	14,326,000	One-twentieth.
Turnips	18,800,000 roots	4,800,000	4,800,000	3,500,000	748,000	32,648,000	One-tenth.
Turnip Tops	300,000 junks	500,000	600,000	250,000	200,000	1,850,000	One-third.
Carrots	12,000,000 roots	1,571,000	2,400,000	1,500,000	546,000	16,817,000	One-thirtieth.
Peas	270,000 bushels	50,000	100,000	14,000	4,000	438,000	One-half.
Beans	100,000 "	20,000	10,000	2,400	1,000	133,400	One-fifteenth.
French Beans	140,000 "	9,600	12,000	50,000	9,600	221,100	One-tenth.
Vegetab. Marrows	10,800 dozen	3,240	3,600	432	1,800	19,872	One-third.
Asparagus	12,000 dz. bun.	3,600	1,080	1,440	1,440	19,560	One-fortieth.
Celery	15,000 "	4,800	6,000	3,000	6,000	34,800	One-eighth.
Rhubarb	7,200 "	48,000	28,800	2,400	4,800	91,200	One-tenth.
Lettuces	734,400 plants	1,080,000	2,073,600	129,600	475,200	4,492,800	One-eighth.
Radishes	6,912 dz. hands	43,200	36,000	18,000	28,800	132,912	One-tenth.
Onions	500,000 bushels	398,000	400,000	9,600	182,000	1,489,600	One-third.
Ditto (Spring)	36,000 dz. bun.	10,800	21,600	21,600	14,400	94,000	One-fourth.
Cucumbers	2,160 bushels	10,800	24,000	12,000	38,400	87,360	One-eighth.
Herbs	7,200 dz. bun.	9,600	9,400	7,800	3,900	32,900	One-tenth.

* The above fruits are not all home grown. The currants, I am informed, are one-fifteenth foreign. The foreign "tender" fruit being sent to the markets, it is impossible to obtain separate returns.

† A common sale of strawberries in the markets is "rounds." I have, however, given the quantity thus sold less technically, and in the measures most familiar to the general public.

‡ The cabbages, turnips, &c. are brought in loads to the great wholesale markets, a load varying from 150 to 200 dozen, but being more frequently nearer 200, and not unfrequently to fully that amount. Not to perplex my reader with too great a multiplicity of figures in a tabular arrangement, I have given the quantity of individual articles in a load, without specifying it. In the smaller market (for vegetables) of Portman, the cabbages, &c., are not conveyed in waggons, as to the other markets, but in carts containing generally sixty dozens.

The various proportions of the several kinds of fruit and vegetables sold by the costermongers are here calculated for all the markets, from returns which have been obtained from each market separately. To avoid unnecessary detail, however, these several items are lumped together, and the aggregate proportion above given.

The foregoing Table, however, relates chiefly to "home grown" supplies. Concerning the quantity of foreign fruit and vegetables imported into this country, the proportion consumed in London, and the relative amount sold by the costers, I have obtained the following returns:—

TABLE, SHOWING THE QUANTITY OR MEASURE OF THE UNDERMENTIONED FOREIGN GREEN FRUITS AND VEGETABLES SOLD WHOLESALÉ THROUGHOUT THE YEAR IN LONDON, WITH THE PROPORTION SOLD RETAIL IN THE STREETS.

Description.	Quantity sold wholesale in London.	Proportion sold retail in the streets.
FRUIT.		
Apples	39,561 bush.	seven-eighths.
Pears	19,742 "	seven-eighths.
Cherries	264,240 lbs.	two-thirds.
Grapes	1,328,190 "	one-fiftieth.
Pine-apples	200,000 fruit	one-tenth.
Oranges	61,635,146 "	one-fourth.
Lemons	15,408,789 "	one-hundredth.
NUTS.		
Spanish Nuts }	72,509 bush.	one-third.
Barcelona " }		
Brazil "	11,700 "	one-fourth.
Chestnuts	26,250 "	one-fourth.
Walnuts	36,088 "	two-thirds.
"Coker"-nuts	1,255,000 nuts	one-third.
VEGETABLES.		
Potatoes	79,654,400 lbs.	one-half.

Here, then, we have the entire metropolitan supply of the principal vegetables and green fruit (both home grown and foreign), as well as the relative quantity "distributed" throughout London by the costermongers; it now but remains for me, in order to complete the account, to do the same for "the dry fruit."

TABLE, SHOWING THE QUANTITY OF "DRY" FRUIT SOLD WHOLESALÉ IN LONDON THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, WITH THE PROPORTION SOLD RETAIL IN THE STREETS.

Description.	Quantity sold wholesale in London.	Proportion sold retail in the streets.
Shell Almonds	12,500 cwt.	half per cent.
Raisins	135,000 "	quarter per cent.
Currants	250,000 "	none.
Figs	21,700 "	one per cent.
Prunes	15,000 "	quarter per cent.

OF THE FRUIT AND VEGETABLE SEASON OF THE COSTERMONGERS.

The strawberry season begins about June, and continues till about the middle of July. From the middle to the end of July the costers "work" raspberries. During July cherries are "in" as well as raspberries; but many costers prefer working raspberries, because "they're a quicker sixpence." After the cherries, they go to work upon plums, which they have about the end of August. Apples and pears come in after the plums in the month of September, and the apples last them all through the winter till the

month of May. The pears last only till Christmas. Currants they work about the latter end of July, or beginning of August.

Concerning the costermonger's vegetable season, it may be said that he "works" greens during the winter months, up to about March; from that time they are getting "leathery," the leaves become foxy, I was told, and they eat tough when boiled. The costers generally do not like dealing either in greens or turnips, "they are such heavy luggage," they say. They would sooner "work" green peas and new potatoes.

The costermonger, however, does the best at fruit; but this he cannot work—with the exception of apples—for more than four months in the year. They lose but little from the fruit spoiling. "If it doesn't fetch a good price, it must fetch a bad one," they say; but they are never at a great loss by it. They find the "ladies" their hardest or "scaliest" customers. Whatever price they ask, they declare the "ladies" will try to save the market or "gin" penny out of it, so that they may have "a glass of something short" before they go home.

OF COVENT GARDEN MARKET.

On a Saturday—the coster's business day—it is computed that as many as 2,000 donkey-barrows, and upwards of 3,000 women with shallows and head-baskets visit this market during the forenoon. About six o'clock in the morning is the best time for viewing the wonderful restlessness of the place, for then not only is the "Garden" itself all bustle and activity, but the buyers and sellers stream to and from it in all directions, filling every street in the vicinity. From Long Acre to the Strand on the one side, and from Bow-street to Bedford-street on the other, the ground has been seized upon by the market-goers. As you glance down any one of the neighbouring streets, the long rows of carts and donkey-barrows seem interminable in the distance. They are of all kinds, from the greengrocer's taxed cart to the coster's barrow—from the showy excursion-van to the rude square donkey-cart and bricklayer's truck. In every street they are ranged down the middle and by the kerb-stones. Along each approach to the market, too, nothing is to be seen, on all sides, but vegetables; the pavement is covered with heaps of them waiting to be carted; the flag-stones are stained green with the leaves trodden under foot; sieves and sacks full of apples and potatoes, and bundles of brocoli and rhubarb, are left unwatched upon almost every doorstep; the steps of Covent Garden Theatre are covered with fruit and vegetables; the road is blocked up with mountains of cabbages and turnips; and men and women push past with their arms bowed out by the cauliflowers under them, or the red tips of carrots pointing from their crammed aprons, or else their faces are red with the weight of the loaded head-basket. The donkey-barrows, from their number and singularity, force you to stop and notice them. Every kind of ingenuity has been exercised to

construct harness for the costers' steeds; where a buckle is wanting, tape or string make the fastening secure; traces are made of rope and old chain, and an old sack or cotton handkerchief is folded up as a saddle-pad. Some few of the barrows make a magnificent exception, and are gay with bright brass; while one of the donkeys may be seen dressed in a suit of old plated carriage-harness, decorated with coronets in all directions. At some one of the coster conveyances stands the proprietor, arranging his goods, the dozing animal starting up from its sleep each time a heavy basket is hoisted on the tray. Others, with their green and white and red load neatly arranged, are ready for starting, but the coster is finishing his breakfast at the coffee-stall. On one barrow there may occasionally be seen a solitary sieve of apples, with the horse of some neighbouring cart helping himself to the pippins while the owner is away. The men that take charge of the trucks, whilst the costers visit the market, walk about, with their arms full of whips and sticks. At one corner a donkey has slipped down, and lies on the stones covered with the cabbages and apples that have fallen from the cart.

The market itself presents a beautiful scene. In the clear morning air of an autumn day the whole of the vast square is distinctly seen from one end to the other. The sky is red and golden with the newly-risen sun, and the rays falling on the fresh and vivid colours of the fruit and vegetables, brightens up the picture as with a coat of varnish. There is no shouting, as at other markets, but a low murmuring hum is heard, like the sound of the sea at a distance, and through each entrance to the market the crowd sweeps by. Under the dark Piazza little bright dots of gas-lights are seen burning in the shops; and in the paved square the people pass and cross each other in all directions, hampers clash together, and excepting the carters from the country, every one is on the move. Sometimes a huge column of baskets is seen in the air, and walks away in a marvellously steady manner, or a monster railway van, laden with sieves of fruit, and with the driver perched up on his high seat, jolts heavily over the stones. Cabbages are piled up into stacks as it were. Carts are heaped high with turnips, and bunches of carrots like huge red fingers, are seen in all directions. Flower-girls, with large bundles of violets under their arms, run past, leaving a trail of perfume behind them. Wagons, with their shafts sticking up in the air, are ranged before the salesman's shops, the high green load railed in with hurdles, and every here and there bunches of turnips are seen flying in the air over the heads of the people. Groups of apple-women, with straw pads on their crushed bonnets, and coarse shawls crossing their bosoms, sit on their porter's knots, chatting in Irish, and smoking short pipes; every passer-by is hailed with the cry of, "Want a basket, yer honor?" The porter, trembling under the piled-up hamper, trots along the street, with his teeth

clenched and shirt wet with the weight, and staggering at every step he takes.

Inside, the market all is bustle and confusion. The people walk along with their eyes fixed on the goods, and frowning with thought. Men in all costumes, from the coster in his corduroy suit to the greengrocer in his blue apron, sweep past. A countryman, in an old straw hat and dusty boots, occasionally draws down the anger of a woman for walking about with his hands in the pockets of his smock-frock, and is asked, "if that is the way to behave on a market-day?" Even the granite pillars cannot stop the crowd, for it separates and rushes past them, like the tide by a bridge pier. At every turn there is a fresh odour to sniff at; either the bitter aromatic perfume of the herbalists' shops breaks upon you, or the scent of oranges, then of apples, and then of onions is caught for an instant as you move along. The brocoli tied up in square packets, the white heads tinged slightly red, as it were, with the sunshine,—the sieves of crimson love-apples, polished like china,—the bundles of white glossy leeks, their roots dangling like fringe,—the celery, with its pinky stalks and bright green tops,—the dark purple pickling-cabbages,—the scarlet carrots,—the white knobs of turnips,—the bright yellow balls of oranges, and the rich brown coats of the chesnuts—attract the eye on every side. Then there are the apple-merchants, with their fruit of all colours, from the pale yellow green to the bright crimson, and the baskets ranged in rows on the pavement before the little shops. Round these the customers stand examining the stock, then whispering together over their bargain, and counting their money. "Give you four shillings for this here lot, master," says a coster, speaking for his three companions. "Four and six is my price," answers the salesman. "Say four, and it's a bargain," continues the man. "I said my price," returns the dealer; "go and look round, and see if you can get 'em cheaper; if not, come back. I only wants what's fair." The men, taking the salesman's advice, move on. The walnut merchant, with the group of women before his shop, peeling the fruit, their fingers stained deep brown, is busy with the Irish purchasers. The onion stores, too, are surrounded by Hibernians, feeling and pressing the gold-coloured roots, whose dry skins crackle as they are handled. Cases of lemons in their white paper jackets, and blue grapes, just seen above the sawdust are ranged about, and in some places the ground is slippery as ice from the refuse leaves and walnut husks scattered over the pavement.

Against the railings of St. Paul's Church are hung baskets and slippers for sale, and near the public-house is a party of countrymen preparing their bunches of pretty coloured grass—brown and glittering, as if it had been bronzed. Between the spikes of the railing are piled up square cakes of green turf for larks; and at the pump, boys, who probably have passed the previous night in the baskets about the market, are

washing, and the water dripping from their hair that hangs in points over the face. The kerbstone is blocked up by a crowd of admiring lads, gathered round the bird-catcher's green stand, and gazing at the larks beating their breasts against their cages. The owner, whose boots are red with the soil of the brick-field, shouts, as he looks carelessly around, "A cock linnet for tuppence," and then hits at the youths who are poking through the bars at the fluttering birds.

Under the Piazza the costers purchase their flowers (in pots) which they exchange in the streets for old clothes. Here is ranged a small garden of flower-pots, the musk and mignonette smelling sweetly, and the scarlet geraniums, with a perfect glow of coloured air about the flowers, standing out in rich contrast with the dark green leaves of the evergreens behind them. "There's myrtles, and larels, and boxes," says one of the men selling them, "and there's a harbora vitus, and lauristiners, and that bushy shrub with pink spots is heath." Men and women, selling different articles, walk about under the cover of the colonnade. One has seed-cake, another small-tooth and other combs, others old caps, or pig's feet; and one hawker of knives, razors, and short hatchets, may occasionally be seen driving a bargain with a countryman, who stands passing his thumb over the blade to test its keenness. Between the pillars are the coffee-stalls, with their large tin cans and piles of bread and butter, and protected from the wind by paper screens and sheets thrown over clothes-horses; inside these little parlours, as it were, sit the coffee-drinkers on chairs and benches, some with a bunch of cabbages on their laps, blowing the steam from their saucers, others, with their mouths full, munching away at their slices, as if not a moment could be lost. One or two porters are there besides, seated on their baskets, breakfasting with their knots on their heads.

As you walk away from this busy scene, you meet in every street barrows and costers hurrying home. The pump in the market is now surrounded by a cluster of chattering wenches quarrelling over whose turn it is to water their drooping violets, and on the steps of Covent Garden Theatre are seated the shoeless girls, tying up the halfpenny and penny bundles.

OF "GREEN" FRUIT SELLING IN THE STREETS.

The fruit selling of the streets of London is of a distinct character from that of vegetable or fish selling, inasmuch as fruit is for the most part a luxury, and the others are principally necessities.

There is no doubt that the consumption of fruit supplies a fair criterion of the condition of the working classes, but the costermongers, as a body of traders, are little observant, so that it is not easy to derive from them much information respecting the classes who are their customers, or as to how their custom is influenced

by the circumstances of the times. One man, however, told me that during the last panic he sold hardly anything beyond mere necessities. Other street-sellers to whom I spoke could not comprehend what a panic meant.

The most intelligent costers whom I conversed with agreed that they now sold less fruit than ever to working people, but perhaps more than ever to the dwellers in the smaller houses in the suburbs, and to shopkeepers who were not in a large way of business. One man sold baking apples, but not above a peck on an average weekly, to women whom he knew to be the wives of working men, for he had heard them say, "Dear me, I didn't think it had been so late, there's hardly time to get the dumplings baked before my husband leaves work for his dinner." The course of my inquiries has shown me—and many employers whom I have conversed with are of a similar opinion—that the well-conducted and skilful artisan, who, in spite of slop competition, continues to enjoy a fair rate of wages, usually makes a prudent choice of a wife, who perhaps has been a servant in a respectable family. Such a wife is probably "used to cooking," and will oft enough make a pie or pudding to eke out the cold meat of the Monday's dinner, or "for a treat for the children." With the mass of the working people, however, it is otherwise. The wife perhaps has been reared to incessant toil with her needle, and does not know how to make even a dumpling. Even if she possess as much knowledge, she may have to labour as well as her husband, and if their joint earnings enable them to have "the added pudding," there is still the trouble of making it; and, after a weary week's work, rest is often a greater enjoyment than a gratification of the palate. Thus something easily prepared, and carried off to the oven, is preferred. The slop-workers of all trades never, I believe, taste either fruit pie or pudding, unless a penny one be bought at a shop or in the street; and even among mechanics who are used to better diet, the pies and puddings, when wages are reduced, or work grows slack, are the first things that are dispensed with. "When the money doesn't come in, sir," one working-man said to me, "we mustn't think of puddings, but of bread."

A costermonger, more observant than the rest, told me that there were some classes to whom he had rarely sold fruit, and whom he had seldom seen buy any. Among these he mentioned sweeps, scavengers, dustmen, nightmen, gas-pipe-layers, and sewer-men, who preferred to any fruit, "something to bite in the mouth, such as a penn'orth of gin." My informant believed that this abstinence from fruit was common to all persons engaged in such offensive trades as fiddle-string making, gut-dressing for whip-makers or sausage-makers, knackers, &c. He was confident of it, as far as his own experience extended. It is, moreover, less common for the women of the town, of the poorer sort, to expend pence in fruit than in such things

as whelks, shrimps, or winks, to say nothing of gin. Persons, whose stomachs may be one week jaded to excess, and the next be deprived of a sufficiency of proper food, seek for stimulants, or, as they term it, "relishes."

The fruit-sellers, meaning thereby those who deal principally in fruit in the season, are the more intelligent costermongers. The calculation as to what a bushel of apples, for instance, will make in half or quarter pecks, puzzles the more ignorant, and they buy "second-hand," or of a middle-man, and consequently dearer. The Irish street-sellers do not meddle much with fruit, excepting a few of the very best class of them, and they "do well in it," I was told, "they have such tongue."

The improvement in the quality of the fruit and vegetables now in our markets, and consequently in the necessities and luxuries of the poorer classes, is very great. Prizes and medals have been deservedly awarded to the skilled and persevering gardeners who have increased the size and heightened the flavour of the pine-apple or the strawberry—who have given a thinner rind to the peach, or a fuller gush of juice to the apricot,—or who have enhanced alike the bloom, the weight, and the size of the fruit of the vine, whether as regards the classic "bunch," or the individual grape. Still these are benefits confined mainly to the rich. But there is another class of growers who have rendered greater services and whose services have been comparatively unnoticed. I allude to those gardeners who have improved or introduced our *every day* vegetables or fruit, such as now form the cheapest and most grateful and healthy enjoyments of the humbler portion of the community. I may instance the introduction of rhubarb, which was comparatively unknown until Mr. Myatt, now of Deptford, cultivated it thirty years ago. He then, for the first time, carried seven bundles of rhubarb into the Borough market. Of these he could sell only three, and he took four back with him. Mr. Myatt could not recollect the price he received for the first rhubarb he ever sold in public, but he told me that the stalks were only about half the substance of those he now produces. People laughed at him for offering "physic pies," but he persevered, and I have shown what the sale of rhubarb now is.

Moreover, the importation of foreign "pines" may be cited as another instance of the increased luxuries of the poor. The trade in this commodity was unknown until the year 1842. At that period Mr. James Wood and Messrs. Claypole and Son, of Liverpool, imported them from the Bahamas, a portion being conveyed to Messrs. Keeling and Hunt, of London. Since that period the trade has gradually increased until, instead of 1000 pines being sent to Liverpool, and a portion of them conveyed to London, as at first, 200,000 pines are now imported to London alone. The fruit is brought over in "trees," stowed in numbers from ten to thirty thousand, in galleries constructed fore and aft in

the vessel, which is so extravagantly fragrant, that it has to be ventilated to abate the odour. But for this importation, and but for the trade having become a part of the costermonger's avocation, hundreds and thousands in London would never have tasted a pine-apple. The quality of the fruit has, I am informed, been greatly improved since its first introduction; the best description of "pines" which Covent-garden can supply having been sent out to graft, to increase the size and flavour of the Bahaman products, and this chiefly for the regalement of the palates of the humbler classes of London. The supply from the Bahamas is considered inexhaustible.

Pine-apples, when they were first introduced, were a rich harvest to the costermonger. They made more money "working" these than any other article. The pines cost them about 4d. each, one with the other, good and bad together, and were sold by the costermonger at from 1s. to 1s. 6d. The public were not aware then that the pines they sold were "salt-water touched," and the people bought them as fast as they could be sold, not only by the whole one, but at 1d. a slice,—for those who could not afford to give 1s. for the novelty, had a slice as a taste for 1d. The costermongers used then to have flags flying at the head of their barrows, and gentlefolk would stop them in the streets; indeed, the sale for pines was chiefly among "the gentry." The poorer people—sweeps, dustmen, cabmen—occasionally had pennyworths, "just for the fun of the thing;" but gentlepeople, I was told, used to buy a whole one to take home, so that all the family might have a taste. One costermonger assured me that he had taken 22s. a day during the rage for pines, when they first came up.

I have before stated that when the season is in its height the costermonger prefers the vending of fruit to the traffic in either fish or vegetables; those, however, who have regular rounds and "a connection," must supply their customers with vegetables, if not fish, as well as fruit, but the costers prefer to devote themselves principally to fruit. I am unable, therefore, to draw a comparison between what a coster realises in fruit, and what in fish, as the two seasons are not contemporary. The fruit sale is, however, as I have shown in p. 54, the costermonger's harvest.

All the costermongers with whom I conversed represented that the greater cheapness and abundance of fruit had been anything but a benefit to them, nor did the majority seem to know whether fruit was scarcer or more plentiful one year than another, unless in remarkable instances. Of the way in which the introduction of foreign fruit had influenced their trade, they knew nothing. If questioned on the subject, the usual reply was, that things got worse, and people didn't buy so much fruit as they did half-a-dozen years back, and so less was sold. That these men hold such opinions must be accounted for mainly by the increase in their

numbers, of which I have before spoken, and from their general ignorance.

The fruit of which there is the readiest sale in the streets is one usually considered among the least useful—cherries. Probably, the greater eagerness on the part of the poorer classes to purchase this fruit arises from its being the first of the fresh "green" kind which our gardens supply for street-sale after the winter and the early spring. An intelligent costermonger suggested other reasons. "Poor people," he said, "like a quantity of any fruit, and no fruit is cheaper than cherries at 1d. a pound, at which I have sold some hundreds of pounds' weight. I'm satisfied, sir, that if a cherry could be grown that weighed a pound, and was of a finer flavour than ever was known before, poor people would rather have a number of little ones, even if they was less weight and inferior quality. Then boys buy, I think, more cherries than other fruit; because, after they have eaten 'em, they can play at cherry-stones."

From all I can learn, the halfpenny-worth of fruit purchased most eagerly by a poor man, or by a child to whom the possession of a halfpenny is a rarity, is cherries. I asked a man "with a good connection," according to his own account, as to who were his customers for cherries. He enumerated ladies and gentlemen; working-people; wagoners and carters (who "slipped them quietly into their pockets," he said); parlour-livers (so he called the occupants of parlours); maid-servants; and soldiers. "Soldiers," I was told, "are very fond of something for a change from their feed, which is about as regular as a prison's."

The currant, and the fruit of the same useful genus, the gooseberry, are sold largely by the costermongers. The price of the currants is 1d. or 2d. the half-pint, 1d. being the more usual charge. Of red currants there is the greatest supply, but the black "go off better." The humbler classes buy a half-pint of the latter for a dumpling, and "they're reckoned," said my informant, "capital for a sore throat, either in jam or a pudding." Gooseberries are also retailed by the half-pint, and are cheaper than currants—perhaps ½d. the half-pint is the average street-price. The working-classes do not use ripe gooseberries, as they do ripe currants, for dumplings, but they are sold in greater quantities and may be said to constitute, when first introduced, as other productions do afterwards, the working-people's Sunday dessert. "Only you go on board a cheap steamer to Greenwich, on a fine summer Sunday," observed a street-seller to me, "and you'll see lots of young women with gooseberries in their handkerchiefs in their laps. Servant-maids is very good customers for such things as gooseberries, for they always has a penny to spare." The costers sell green gooseberries for dumplings, and sometimes to the extent of a fourth of the ripe fruit. The price of green gooseberries is generally ½d. a pint dearer than the ripe.

When strawberries descend to such a price

as places them at the costermonger's command, the whole fraternity is busily at work, and as the sale can easily be carried on by women and children, the coster's family take part in the sale, offering at the corners of streets the fragrant pottle, with the crimson fruit just showing beneath the green leaves at the top. Of all cries, too, perhaps that of "hoboys" is the most agreeable. Strawberries, however, according to all accounts, are consumed least of all fruits by the poor. "They like something more solid," I was told, "something to bite at, and a penny pottle of strawberries is only like a taste; what's more, too, the really good fruit never finds its way into penny pottles." The coster's best customers are dwellers in the suburbs, who purchase strawberries on a Sunday especially, for dessert, for they think that they get them fresher in that way than by receiving them from the Saturday night, and many are tempted by seeing or hearing them cried in the streets. There is also a good Sunday sale about the steam-wharfs, to people going "on the river," especially when young women and children are members of a party, and likewise in the "clerk districts," as Camden-town and Camberwell. Very few pottles, comparatively, are sold in public-houses; "they don't go well down with the beer at all," I was told. The city people are good customers for street strawberries, conveying them home. Good strawberries are 2d. a pottle in the streets when the season is at its height. Inferior are 1d. These are the most frequent prices. In raspberries the coster does little, selling them only to such customers as use them for the sake of jam or for pastry. The price is from 6d. to 1s. 6d. the pottle, 9d. being the average.

The great staple of the street trade in green fruit is apples. These are first sold by the travelling costers, by the measure, for pies, &c., and to the classes I have described as the makers of pies. The apples, however, are soon vended in penny or halfpenny-worths, and then they are bought by the poor who have a spare penny for the regalement of their children or themselves, and they are eaten without any preparation. Pears are sold to the same classes as are apples. The average price of apples, as sold by the costermonger, is 4s. a bushel, and six a penny. The sale in halfpenny and penny-worths is very great. Indeed the costermongers sell about half the apples brought to the markets, and I was told that for one pennyworth of apples bought in a shop forty were bought in the street. Pears are 9d. a bushel, generally, dearer than apples, but, numerically, they run more to the bushel.

The costers purchase the French apples at the wharf, close to London-bridge, on the Southwark side. They give 10s., 12s., 18s., or 20s. for a case containing four bushels. They generally get from 9d. to 1s. profit on a bushel of English, but on the French apples they make a clear profit of from 1s. 3d. to 2s. a bushel, and would make more, but the fruit some-

times "turns out damaged." This extra profit is owing to the French giving better measure, their four bushels being about five market bushels, as there is much straw packed up with the English apples, and none with the French.

Plums and damsons are less purchased by the humbler classes than apples, or than any other larger sized fruit which is supplied abundantly. "If I've worked plums or damsons," said an experienced costermonger, "and have told any woman pricing them: 'They don't look so ripe, but they're all the better for a pie,' she's answered, 'O, a plum pie's too fine for us, and what's more, it takes too much sugar.'" They are sold principally for desserts, and in penny-worths, at 1d. the half-pint for good, and ½d. for inferior. Green-gages are 50 per cent. higher. Some costers sell a cheap lot of plums to the eating-house keepers, and sell them more readily than they sell apples to the same parties.

West Indian pine-apples are, as regards the street sale, disposed of more in the city than elsewhere. They are bought by clerks and warehousemen, who carry them to their suburban homes. The slices at ½d. and 1d. are bought principally by boys. The average price of a "good street pine" is 9d.

Peaches are an occasional sale with the costermongers', and are disposed of to the same classes as purchase strawberries and pines. The street sale of peaches is not practicable if the price exceed 1d. a piece.

Of other fruits, vended largely in the streets, I have spoken under their respective heads.

The returns before cited as to the quantity of home-grown and foreign green fruit sold in London, and the proportion disposed of by the costermongers give the following results (in round numbers), as to the absolute quantity of the several kinds of green fruit (oranges and nuts excepted) "distributed" throughout the metropolis by the street-sellers.

343,000	bushels of apples, (home-grown)
34,560	" apples, (foreign)
176,500	" pears, (home-grown)
17,235	" pears, (foreign)
1,039,200	lbs. of cherries, (home-grown)
176,160	" cherries, (foreign)
11,766	bushels of plums,
100	" greengages,
548	" damsons,
2,450	" bullaces,
207,525	" gooseberries,
85,500	sieves of red currants,
13,500	" black currants,
3,000	" white currants,
763,750	pottles of strawberries,
1,762	" raspberries,
30,485	" mulberries,
6,012	bushels of hazel nuts,
17,280	lbs. of filberts,
26,563	" grapes,
20,000	pinces.

OF THE ORANGE AND NUT MARKET.

IN Houndsditch there is a market supported principally by costermongers, who there purchase their oranges, lemons, and nuts. This market is entirely in the hands of the Jews; and although a few tradesmen may attend it to buy grapes, still it derives its chief custom from the street-dealers who say they can make far better bargains with the Israelites, (as they never refuse an offer,) than they can with the Covent-garden salesmen, who generally cling to their prices. This market is known by the name of "Duke's-place," although its proper title is St. James's-place. The nearest road to it is through Duke's-street, and the two titles have been so confounded that at length the mistake has grown into a custom.

Duke's-place—as the costers call it—is a large square yard, with the iron gates of a synagogue in one corner, a dead wall forming one entire side of the court, and a gas-lamp on a circular pavement in the centre. The place looks as if it were devoted to money-making—for it is quiet and dirty. Not a gilt letter is to be seen over a doorway; there is no display of gaudy colour, or sheets of plate-glass, such as we see in a crowded thoroughfare when a customer is to be caught by show. As if the merchants knew their trade was certain, they are content to let the London smoke do their painter's work. On looking at the shops in this quarter, the idea forces itself upon one that they are in the last stage of dilapidation. Never did property in Chancery look more ruinous. Each dwelling seems as though a fire had raged in it, for not a shop in the market has a window to it; and, beyond the few sacks of nuts exposed for sale, they are empty, the walls within being blackened with dirt, and the paint without blistered in the sun, while the door-posts are worn round with the shoulders of the customers, and black as if charred. A few sickly hens wander about, turning over the heaps of dried leaves that the oranges have been sent over in, or roost the time away on the shafts and wheels of the nearest truck. Excepting on certain days, there is little or no business stirring, so that many of the shops have one or two shutters up, as if a death had taken place, and the yard is quiet as an inn of court. At a little distance the warehouses, with their low ceilings, open fronts, and black sides, seem like dark holes or coal-stores; and, but for the mahogany backs of chairs showing at the first floors, you would scarcely believe the houses to be inhabited, much more to be elegantly furnished as they are. One of the drawing-rooms that I entered here was warm and red with morocco leather, Spanish mahogany, and curtains and Turkey carpets; while the ormolu chandelier and the gilt frames of the looking-glass and pictures twinkled at every point in the fire-light.

The householders in Duke's-place are all of the Jewish persuasion, and among the costers a

saying has sprung up about it. When a man has been out of work for some time, he is said to be "Cursed, like a pig in Duke's-place."

Almost every shop has a Scripture name over it, and even the public-houses are of the Hebrew faith, their signs appealing to the followers of those trades which most abound with Jews. There is the "Jeweller's Arms," patronised greatly of a Sunday morning, when the Israelite jewellers attend to exchange their trinkets and barter amongst themselves. Very often the counter before "the bar" here may be seen covered with golden ornaments, and sparkling with precious stones, amounting in value to thousands of pounds. The landlord of this house of call is licensed to manufacture tobacco and cigars. There is also the "Fishmongers' Arms," the resort of the vendors of fried soles; here, in the evening, a concert takes place, the performers and audience being Jews. The landlord of this house too is licensed to manufacture tobacco and cigars. Entering one of these houses I found a bill announcing a "Bible to be raffled for, the property of —." And, lastly, there is "Benjamin's Coffee-house," open to old clothesmen; and here, again, the proprietor is a licensed tobacco-manufacturer. These facts are mentioned to show the untiring energy of the Jew when anything is to be gained, and to give an instance of the curious manner in which this people support each other.

Some of the nut and orange shops in Duke's-place it would be impossible to describe. At one sat an old woman, with jet-black hair and a wrinkled face, nursing an infant, and watching over a few matted baskets of nuts ranged on a kind of carpenter's bench placed upon the pavement. The interior of the house was as empty as if it had been to let, excepting a few bits of harness hanging against the wall, and an old salt-box nailed near the gas-lamp, in which sat a hen, "hatching," as I was told. At another was an excessively stout Israelite mother, with crisp negro's hair and long gold earrings, rolling her child on the table used for sorting the nuts. Here the black walls had been chalked over with scores, and every corner was filled up with sacks and orange-cases. Before one warehouse a family of six, from the father to the infant, were busy washing walnuts in a huge tub with a trap in the side, and around them were ranged measures of the wet fruit. The Jewish women are known to make the fondest parents; and in Duke's-place there certainly was no lack of fondlings. Inside almost every parlour a child was either being nursed or romped with, and some little things were being tossed nearly to the ceiling, and caught, screaming with enjoyment, in the jewelled hands of the delighted mother. At other shops might be seen a circle of three or four women—some old as if grandmothers, grouped admiringly round a hook-nosed infant, tickling it and poking their fingers at it in a frenzy of affection.

The counters of these shops are generally

placed in the open streets like stalls, and the shop itself is used as a store to keep the stock in. On these counters are ranged the large matting baskets, some piled up with dark-brown polished chestnuts—shining like a racer's neck—others filled with wedge-shaped Brazil-nuts, and rough hairy cocoa-nuts. There are heaps, too, of newly-washed walnuts, a few showing their white crumpled kernels as a sample of their excellence. Before every doorway are long pot-bellied boxes of oranges, with the yellow fruit just peeping between the laths on top, and lemons—yet green—are ranged about in their paper jackets to ripen in the air.

In front of one store the paving-stones were soft with the sawdust emptied from the grape-cases, and the floor of the shop itself was whitened with the dry powder. Here stood a man in a long tasselled smoking-cap, puffing with his bellows at the blue bunches on a tray, and about him were the boxes with the paper lids thrown back, and the round sea-green berries just rising above the sawdust as if floating in it. Close by, was a group of dark-eyed women bending over an orange-case, picking out the rotten from the good fruit, while a sallow-complexioned girl was busy with her knife scooping out the damaged parts, until, what with sawdust and orange-peel, the air smelt like the pit of a circus.

Nothing could be seen in this strange place that did not, in some way or another, appertain to Jewish customs. A woman, with a heavy gold chain round her neck, went past, carrying an old green velvet bonnet covered with feathers, and a fur tippet, that she had either recently purchased or was about to sell. Another woman, whose features showed her to be a Gentile, was hurrying toward the slop-shop in the Minorities with a richly quilted satin-lined coat done up in her shawl, and the market-basket by her side, as if the money due for the work were to be spent directly for housekeeping.

At the corner of Duke's-street was a stall kept by a Jew, who sold things that are eaten only by the Hebrews. Here in a yellow pie-dish were pieces of stewed apples floating in a thick puce-coloured sauce.

One man that I spoke to told me that he considered his Sunday morning's work a very bad one if he did not sell his five or six hundred bushels of nuts of different kinds. He had taken 150l. that day of the street-sellers, and usually sold his 100l. worth of goods in a morning. Many others did the same as himself. Here I met with every attention, and was furnished with some valuable statistical information concerning the street-trade.

OF ORANGE AND LEMON SELLING IN THE STREETS.

Of foreign fruits, the oranges and nuts supply by far the greater staple for the street trade, and, therefore, demand a brief, but still a fuller, notice than other articles.

Oranges were first sold in the streets at the

close of Elizabeth's reign. So rapidly had the trade increased, that four years after her death, or in 1607, Ben Jonson classes "orange-wives," for noisiness, with "fish-wives." These women at first carried the oranges in baskets on their heads; barrows were afterwards used; and now trays are usually slung to the shoulders.

Oranges are brought to this country in cases or boxes, containing from 500 to 900 oranges. From official tables, it appears that between 250,000,000 and 300,000,000 of oranges and lemons are now yearly shipped to England. They are sold wholesale, principally at public sales, in lots of eight boxes, the price at such sales varying greatly, according to the supply and the quality. The supply continues to arrive from October to August.

Oranges are bought by the retailers in Duke's-place and in Covent-Garden; but the costermongers nearly all resort to Duke's-place, and the shopkeepers to Covent-Garden. They are sold in baskets of 200 or 300; they are also disposed of by the hundred, a half-hundred being the smallest quantity sold in Duke's-place. These hundreds, however, number 110, containing 10 double "hands," a single hand being 5 oranges. The price in December was 2s. 6d., 3s. 6d., and 4s. the hundred. They are rarely lower than 4s. about Christmas, as there is then a better demand for them. The damaged oranges are known as "specks," and the purchaser runs the risk of specks forming a portion of the contents of a basket, as he is not allowed to empty it for the examination of the fruit: but some salesmen agree to change the specks. A month after Christmas, oranges are generally cheaper, and become dearer again about May, when there is a great demand for the supply of the fairs and races.

Oranges are sold by all classes connected with the fruit, flower, or vegetable trade of the streets. The majority of the street-sellers are, however, women and children, and the great part of these are Irish. It has been computed that, when oranges are "at their best" (generally about Easter), there are 4,000 persons, including stall-keepers, selling oranges in the metropolis and its suburbs; while there are generally 3,000 out of this number "working" oranges—that is, hawking them from street to street: of these, 300 attend at the doors of the theatres, saloons, &c. Many of those "working" the theatres confine their trade to oranges, while the other dealers rarely do so, but unite with them the sale of nuts of some kind. Those who sell only oranges, or only nuts, are mostly children, and of the poorest class. The smallness of the sum required to provide a stock of oranges (a half-hundred being 15d. or 18d.), enables the poor, who cannot raise "stock-money" sufficient to purchase anything else, to trade upon a few oranges.

The regular costers rarely buy oranges until the spring, except, perhaps, for Sunday afternoon sale—though this, as I said before, they mostly object to. In the spring, however, they stock their barrows with oranges. One man told

me that, four or five years back, he had sold in a day 2,000 oranges that he picked up as a bargain. They did not cost him half a farthing each; he said he "cleared 2l. by the spec." At the same period he could earn 5s. or 6s. on a Sunday afternoon by the sale of oranges in the street; but now he could not earn 2s.

A poor Irishwoman, neither squalid in appearance nor ragged in dress, though looking pinched and wretched, gave me the subjoined account; when I saw her, resting with her basket of oranges near Coldbath-fields prison, she told me she almost wished she was inside of it, but for the "childer." Her history was one common to her class—

"I was brought over here, sir, when I was a girl, but my father and mother died two or three years after. I was in service then, and very good service I continued in as a maid-of-all-work, and very kind people I met; yes, indeed, though I was Irish and a Catholic, and they was English Protestants. I saved a little money there, and got married. My husband's a labourer; and when he's in full worruk he can earn 12s. or 14s. a week, for he's a good hand and a harrud-worruk man, and we do middlin' thin. He's out of worruk now, and I'm forced to thry and sill a few oranges to keep a bit of life in us, and my husband minds the childer. Bad as I do, I can do 1d. or 2d. a day profit better than him, poor man! for he's tall and big, and people thinks, if he goes round with a few oranges, it's just from idleness; and the Lorrud above knows he'll always worruk whin he can. He goes sometimes whin I'm harrud fired. One of us must stay with the childer, for the youngist is not three and the ildest not five. We don't live, we starruve. We git a few 'taties, and sometimes a plaice. To-day I've not taken 3d. as yit, sir, and it's past three. Oh, no, indeed and indeed, thin, I don't make 9d. a day. We live accordingly, for there's 1s. 3d. a week for rint. I have very little harrud to go into the public-houses to sill oranges, for they begins flyng out about the Pope and Cardinal Wiseman, as if I had anything to do with it. And that's another reason why I like my husband to stay at home, and me to go out, because he's a hasty man, and might get into throuble. I don't know what will become of us, if times don't turn."

On calling upon this poor woman on the following day, I found her and her children absent. The husband had got employment at some distance, and she had gone to see if she could not obtain a room 3d. a week cheaper, and lodge near the place of work.

According to the Board of Trade returns, there are nearly two hundred millions of oranges annually imported into this country. About one-third of these are sold wholesale in London, and one-fourth of the latter quantity disposed of retail in the streets. The returns I have procured, touching the London sale, prove that no less than 15,500,000 are sold yearly by the street-sellers. The retail price of these may be

said to be, upon an average, 5s. per 110, and this would give us about 35,000l. for the gross sum of money laid out every year, in the streets, in the matter of oranges alone.

The street lemon-trade is now insignificant, lemons having become a more important article of commerce since the law required foreign-bound ships to be provided with lemon-juice. The street-sale is chiefly in the hands of the Jews and the Irish. It does not, however, call for special notice here.

OF NUT SELLING IN THE STREETS.

THE sellers of foreign hazel nuts are principally women and children, but the stall-keepers, and oftentimes the costermongers, sell them with other "goods." The consumption of them is immense, the annual export from Tarragona being little short of 8,000 tons. They are to be found in every poor shop in London, as well as in the large towns; they are generally to be seen on every street-stall, in every country village, at every fair, and on every race-ground. The supply is from Gijon and Tarragona. The Gijon nuts are the "Spanish," or "fresh" nuts. They are sold at public sales, in barrels of three bushels each, the price being from 35s. to 40s. The nuts from Tarragona, whence comes the great supply, are known as "Barcelonas," and they are kiln-dried before they are shipped. Hence the Barcelonas will "keep," and the Spanish will not. The Spanish are coloured with the fumes of sulphur, by the Jews in Duke's-place.

It is somewhat remarkable that nuts supply employment to a number of girls in Spain, and then yield the means of a scanty subsistence to a number of girls (with or without parents) in England.

The prattle and the laughter (according to Inglis) of the Spanish girls who sort, find no parallel however among the London girls who sell the nuts. The appearance of the latter is often wretched. In the winter months they may be seen as if stupified with cold, and with the listlessness, not to say apathy, of those whose diet is poor in quantity and insufficient in amount.

Very few costermongers buy nuts (as hazel nuts are always called) at the public sales—only those whose dealings are of a wholesale character, and they are anything but regular attendants at the sales. The street-sellers derive nearly the whole of their supply from Duke's-place. The principal times of business are Friday afternoons and Sunday mornings. Those who have "capital" buy on the Friday, when they say they can make 10s. go as far as 12s. on the Sunday. The "Barcelonas" are from 4½d. to 6d. a quart to the street-sellers. The cob-nuts, which are the large size, used by the pastry-cooks for mottos, &c., are 2d. and 2½d. the quart, but they are generally destitute of a kernel. A quart contains from 100 to 180 nuts, according to the size. The costermongers buy somewhat largely when nuts are 3d. the quart;

they then, and not unfrequently, stock their barrows with nuts entirely, but 2s. a day is reckoned excellent earnings at this trade. "It's the worst living of all, sir," I was told, "on nuts." The sale in the streets is at the fruit-stalls, in the public-houses, on board the steamers, and at the theatre doors. They are sold by the same class as the oranges, and a stock may be procured for a smaller sum even than is required for oranges. By the outlay of 1s. many an Irishwoman can send out her two or three children with nuts, reserving some for herself. Seven-eighths of the nuts imported are sold, I am assured, in the open air.

Some of the costermongers who are to be found in Battersea-fields, and who attend the fairs and races, get through 5s. worth of nuts in a day, but only exceptionally. These men have a sort of portable shooting-gallery. The customer fires a kind of rifle, loaded with a dart, and according to the number marked on the centre, or on the encircling rings of a board which forms the head of the stall, and which may be struck by the dart, is the number of nuts payable by the stall-keeper for the half-penny "fire."

The Brazil nuts, which are now sold largely in the streets at twelve to sixteen a penny, were not known in this country as an article of commerce before 1824. They are sold by the peck—2s. being the ordinary price—in Duke's-place.

Coker-nuts—as they are now generally called, and indeed "entered" as such at the Custom-house, and so written by Mr. McCulloch, to distinguish them from cocoa, or the berries of the cacao, used for chocolate, etc.—are brought from the West Indies, both British and Spanish, and Brazil. They are used as dunnage in the sugar ships, being interposed between the hogsheds, to steady them and prevent their being flung about. The coker-nut was introduced into England in 1690. They are sold at public sales and otherwise, and bring from 10s. to 14s. per 100. Coker-nuts are now used at fairs to "top" the sticks.

The costermongers rarely speculate in coker-nuts now, as the boys will not buy them unless cut, and it is almost impossible to tell how the coker-nut will "open." The interior is sold in halfpenny-worths and penny-worths. These nuts are often "worked with a drum." There may be now forty coker-nut men in the street trade, but not one in ten confines himself to the article.

A large proportion of the dry or ripe walnuts sold in the streets is from Bordeaux. They are sold at public sales, in barrels of three bushels each, realising 21s. to 25s. a barrel. They are retailed at from eight to twenty a penny, and are sold by all classes of street-traders.

A little girl, who looked stunted and wretched, and who did not know her age (which might be eleven), told me she was sent out by her mother with six halfpenny-worth of nuts, and she must carry back 6d. or she would be beat. She had no father, and could neither read nor write.

Her mother was an Englishwoman, she believed, and sold oranges. She had heard of God; he was "Our Father who art in heaven." She'd heard that said. She did not know the Lord's Prayer; had never heard of it; did not know who the Lord was; perhaps the Lord Mayor, but she had never been before him. She went into public-houses with her nuts, but did not know whether she was ever insulted or not; she did not know what insulted was, but she was never badly used. She often went into tap-rooms with her nuts, just to warm herself. A man once gave her some hot beer, which made her ill. Her mother was kind enough to her, and never beat her but for not taking home 6d. She had a younger brother that did as she did. She had bread and potatoes to eat, and sometimes tea, and sometimes herrings. Her mother didn't get tipsy (at first she did not know what was meant by tipsy) above once a week.

OF ROASTED CHESTNUTS AND APPLES.

How long the street-trade in roasted chestnuts has been carried on I find no means of ascertaining precisely, but it is unquestionably one of the oldest of the public traffics. Before potato-cans were introduced, the sale of roasted chestnuts was far greater than it is now.

It is difficult to compute the number of roasted chestnut-sellers at present in the streets. It is probable that they outnumber 1,000, for I noticed that on a cold day almost every street fruit-seller, man or woman, had roasted chestnuts for sale.

Sometimes the chestnuts are roasted in the streets, in a huge iron apparatus, made expressly for the purpose, and capable of cooking perhaps a bushel at a time—but these are to be found solely at the street-markets.

The ordinary street apparatus for roasting chestnuts is simple. A round pan, with a few holes punched in it, costing 3d. or 4d. in a marine-store shop, has burning charcoal within it, and is surmounted by a second pan, or kind of lid, containing chestnuts, which are thus kept hot. During my inquiry, chestnuts were dear. "People don't care," I was told, "whether chestnuts is three and six, as they are now, or one and six a peck, as I hope they will be afore long; they wants the same pennyworths."

Chestnuts are generally bought wholesale in Duke's-place, on the Sunday mornings, for street sale; but some street-dealers buy them of those costermongers, whose means enable them "to lay in" a quantity. The retail customers are, for the most part, boys and girls, or a few labourers or street people. The usual price is sixteen a penny.

Roasted apples used to be vended in the streets, and often along with roasted chestnuts, but it is a trade which has now almost entirely disappeared, and its disappearance is attributed to the prevalence of potato cans.

I had the following account from a woman, apparently between sixty and seventy, though she said she was only about fifty. What she

was in her youth, she said, she neither knew nor cared. At any rate she was unwilling to converse about it. I found her statement as to chestnuts corroborated:—

"The trade's nothing to what it was, sir," she said. "Why when the hackney coaches was in the streets, I've often sold 2s. worth of a night at a time, for a relish, to the hackney-men that was waiting their turn over their beer. Six and eight a penny was enough then; now people must have sixteen; though I pays 3s. a peck, and to get them at that's a favour. I could make my good 12s. a week on roasted chestnuts and apples, and as much on other things in them days, but I'm half-starved now. There'll never be such times again. People didn't want to cut one another's throats in the street business then. O, I don't know anything about how long ago, or what year—years is nothing to me—but I only know that it was so. I got a penny a piece then for my roasted apples, and a halfpenny for sugar to them. I could live then. Roasted apples was reckoned good for the tooth-ache in them days, but, people change so, they aren't now. I don't know what I make now in chestnuts and apples, which is all I sells—perhaps 5s. a week. My rent's 1s. 3d. a week. I lives on a bit of fish, or whatever I can get, and that's all about it."

The absolute quantity of oranges, lemons, and nuts sold annually in the London streets is as follows:

Oranges	15,400,000
Lemons	154,000
Spanish and Barcelona nuts	24,000 bushels
Brazil do.	3,000 "
Chestnuts	6,500 "
Walnuts	24,000 "
Coker-nuts	400,000 nuts

OF "DRY" FRUIT SELLING IN THE STREETS.

The sellers of "dry fruit" cannot be described as a class, for, with the exception of one old couple, none that I know of confine themselves to its sale, but resort to it merely when the season prevents their dealing in "green fruit" or vegetables. I have already specified what in commerce is distinguished as "dry fruit," but its classification among the costers is somewhat narrowed.

The dry-fruit sellers derive their supplies partly from Duke's-place, partly from Pudding-lane, but perhaps principally from the costers concerning whom I have spoken, who buy wholesale at the markets and elsewhere, and who will "clear out a grocer," or buy such figs, &c. as a leading tradesman will not allow to be sent, or offered, to his regular customers, although, perhaps, some of the articles are tolerably good. Or else the dry-fruit men buy a damaged lot of a broker or grocer, and pick out all that is eatable, or rather saleable.

The sale of dry fruit is unpopular among the costermongers. Despite their utmost pains, they cannot give to figs, or raisins, or currants, which may be old and stale, anything of the bloom and

plumpness of good fruit, and the price of good fruit is too high for them. Moreover, if the fruit be a "damaged lot," it is almost always discoloured, and the blemish cannot be removed.

It is impossible to give the average price of dry fruit to the costermonger. The quality and the "harvest" affect the price materially in the regular trade.

The rule which I am informed the costermonger, who sometimes "works" a barrow of dried fruit, observes, is this: he will aim at cent. per cent., and, to accomplish it, "slang" weights are not unfrequently used. The stale fruit is sold by the grocers, and the damaged fruit by the warehouses to the costers, at from a half, but much more frequently a fourth to a twentieth of its prime cost. The principal street-purchasers are boys.

A dry-fruit seller gave me the following account:—By "half profits" he meant cent. per cent., or, in other words, that the money he received for his stock was half of its cost price and half profit.

"I sell dry fruit, sir, in February and March, because I must be doing something, and green fruit's not my money then. It's a poor trade. I've sold figs at 1d. a pound, —no, sir, not slang the time I mean—and I could hardly make 1s. a day at it, though it was half profits. Our customers look at them quite particler. 'Let's see the other side of them figs,' the boys'll say, and then they'll out with—'I say, master, d'you see any green about me?' Dates I can hardly get off at all, no!—not if they was as cheap as potatoes, or cheaper. I've been asked by women if dates was good in dumplings? I've sometimes said 'yes,' though I knew nothing at all about them. They're foreign. I can't say where they're grown. Almonds and raisins goes off best with us. I don't sell them by weight, but makes them up in ha'penny or penny lots. There's two things, you see, and one helps off the other. Raisins is dry grapes, I've heard. I've sold grapes before they was dried, at 1d. and 2d. the pound. I didn't do no good in any of 'em; 1s. a day on 'em was the topper, for all the half profits. I'll not touch 'em again if I aint forced."

There are a few costers who sell tolerable dry fruit, but not to any extent.

The old couple I have alluded to stand all the year round at the corner of a street running into a great city thoroughfare. They are supplied with their fruit, I am told, through the friendliness of a grocer who charges no profit, and sometimes makes a sacrifice for their benefit. As I was told that this old couple would not like inquiries to be made of them, I at once desisted.

There are sometimes twenty costermongers selling nothing but dry fruit, but more frequently only ten, and sometimes only five; while, perhaps, from 300 to 400 sell a few figs, &c., with other things, such as late apples,

the dry fruit being then used "just as a fill up."

According to the returns before given, the gross quantity of dry fruit disposed of yearly in the streets of London may be stated as follows:

7,000 lbs. of shell almonds,	
37,800	" raisins,
24,300	" figs,
4,200	" prunes.

OF THE STREET-SALE OF VEGETABLES.

The seller of fruit in the streets confines his traffic far more closely to fruit, than does the vegetable-dealer to vegetables. Within these three or four years many street-traders sell only fruit the year through; but the purveyor of vegetables now usually sells fish with his cabbages, turnips, cauliflowers, or other garden stuff. The fish that he carries out on his round generally consists of soles, mackerel, or fresh or salt herrings. This combination of the street-green-grocer and street-fishmonger is called a general dealer."

The general dealers are usually accompanied by boys (as I have elsewhere shown), and sometimes by their wives. If a woman be a general dealer, she is mostly to be found at a stall or standing, and not "going a round."

The general dealer "works" everything through the season. He generally begins the year with sprats or plaice: then he deals in soles until the month of May. After this he takes to mackerel, haddocks, or red herrings. Next he trades in strawberries or raspberries. From these he will turn to green and ripe gooseberries; thence he will go to cherries; from cherries he will change to red or white currants; from them to plums or green-gages, and from them again to apples and pears, and damsons. After these he mostly "works" a few vegetables, and continues with them until the fish season begins again. Some general dealers occasionally trade in sweetmeats, but this is not usual, and is looked down upon by the "trade."

"I am a general dealer," said one of the better class; "my missis is in the same line as myself, and sells everything that I do (barring green stuff.) She follows me always in what I sell. She has a stall, and sits at the corner of the street. I have got three children. The eldest is ten, and goes out with me to call my goods for me. I have had inflammation in the lungs, and when I call my goods for a little while my voice leaves me. My missis is lame. She fell down a cellar, when a child, and injured her hip. Last October twelvemonth I was laid up with cold, which settled on my lungs, and laid me in my bed for a month. My missis kept me all that time. She was 'working' fresh herrings; and if it hadn't been for her we must all have gone into the workhouse. We are doing very badly now. I have no work to do. I have no stock-money to work with, and I object to pay 1s. 6d. a week for the loan of 10s. Once I gave a man 1s. 6d. a week for ten months for the loan of 10s., and that nearly did me up. I

have had 8s. of the same party since, and paid 1s. a week for eight weeks for the loan of it. I consider it most extortionate to have to pay 2d. a day for the loan of 8s., and won't do it. When the season gets a bit better I shall borrow a shilling of one friend and a shilling of another, and then muddle on with as much stock-money as I can scrape together. My missis is at home now doing nothing. Last week it's impossible to say what she took, for we're obliged to buy victuals and firing with it as we take it. She can't go out charing on account of her hip. When she is out, and I am out, the children play about in the streets. Only last Saturday week she was obligated to take the shoes off her feet to get the children some victuals. We owe two weeks' rent, and the landlord, though I've lived in the house five years, is as sharp as if I was a stranger."

"Why, sir," said another vegetable-dealer, who was a robust-looking young man, very clean in his person, and dressed in costermonger corduroy, "I can hardly say what my business is worth to me, for I'm no scholar. I was brought up to the business by my mother. I've a middling connection, and perhaps clear 3s. a day, every fine day, or 15s. or 16s. a week; but out of that there's my donkey to keep, which I suppose costs 6d. a day, that's seven sixpences off. Wet or fine, she must be fed, in course. So must I; but I've only myself to keep at present, and I hire a lad when I want one. I work my own trap. Then things is so uncertain. Why, now, look here, sir. Last Friday, I think it was—but that don't matter, for it often happens—fresh herrings was 4s. the 500 in the morning, and 1s. 6d. at night, so many had come in. I buy at Billingsgate-market, and sometimes of a large shopkeeper, and at Covent-garden and the Borough. If I lay out 7s. in a nice lot of cabbages, I may sell them for 10s. 6d., or if it isn't a lucky day with me for 8s., or less. Sometimes people won't buy, as if the cholera was in the cabbages. Then turnips isn't such good sale yet, but they may be soon, for winter's best for them. There's more bilings then than there's roastings, I think. People like broth in cold weather. I buy turnips by the 'tally.' A tally's five dozen bunches. There's no confinement of the number to a bunch; it's by their size; I've known twelve, and I've known twice that. I sell three parts of the turnips at 1d. a bunch, and the other part at 1½d. If I get them at 3s. 6d. the tally I do well on turnips. I go the same rounds pretty regularly every day, or almost every day. I don't object to wet weather so much, because women don't like to stir out then, and so they'll buy of me as I pass. Carrots I do little in; they're dear, but they'll be cheaper in a month or two. They always are. I don't work on Sundays. If I did, I'd get a jacketing. Our chaps would say: 'Well, you are a scurf. You have a round; give another man a Sunday chance.' A gentleman once said to me, when I was obligated to work on a Sunday: 'Why don't you leave it off, when you know it ain't right?' 'Well, sir,' said I,

and he spoke very kind to me, 'well, sir, I'm working for my dinner, and if you'll give me 4s. or 3s. 6d., I'll tumble to your notion and drop it, and I'll give you these here cowcubbers,' (I was working cowcubbers at that time) 'to do what you like with, and they cost me half-a-crown.' In potatoes I don't do a great deal, and it's no great trade. If I did, I should buy at the warehouses in Tooley-street, where they are sold in sacks of 1 cwt.; 150 lbs. and 200 lbs., at 2s. 9d. and 3s. the cwt. I sell mine, tidy good, at 3 pound 2d., and a halfpenny a pound, but as I don't do much, not a bushel a day, I buy at market by the bushel at from 1s. 6d. to 2s. I never uses slangs. I sold three times as many potatoes as I do now four years back. I don't know why, 'cept it be that the rot set people again them, and their taste's gone another way. I sell a few more greens than I did, but not many Spinach I don't do only a little in it. Celery I'm seldom able to get rid on. It's more women's work. Ing-uns the same."

I may add that I found the class, who confined their business principally to the sale of vegetables, the dullest of all the costermongers. Any man may labour to make 1s. 6d. of cabbages or turnips, which cost him 1s., when the calculation as to the relative proportion of measures, &c. is beyond his comprehension:

Pursuing the same mode of calculation as has been heretofore adopted, we find that the absolute quantity of vegetables sold in the London streets is as follows:

20,700,000	lbs. of potatoes (home grown)
39,800,000	" (foreign)
23,760,133	cabbages,
3,264,800	turnips,
616,666	junks of turnip tops,
601,000	carrots,
567,300	brocoli and cauliflowers,
219,000	bushels of peas,
8,893	" beans,
22,110	" french beans,
25,608	dozens of vegetable marrows,
489	dozen bundles of asparagus,
9,120	" rhubarb,
4,350	" celery,
561,600	lettuces,
13,291	dozen hands of radishes,
499,533	bushels of onions,
23,600	dozen bunches of spring onions,
10,920	bushels of cucumbers,
3,290	dozen bunches of herbs.

OF THE "ARISTOCRATIC" VEGETABLE-SALE.

In designating these dealers I use a word not uncommon among the costermongers. These aristocratic sellers, who are not one in twenty, or perhaps in twenty-five, of the whole body of costermongers, are generally men of superior manners and better dressed than their brethren. The following narrative, given to me by one of the body, shows the nature of the trade:—

"It depends a good deal upon the season and the price, as to what I begin with in the 'aristocratic' way. My rounds are always in the



THE IRISH STREET-SELLER.

"Sweet Chany. Two a pinny Or-r-ranges—two a pinny!"
[From a Photograph.]

suburbs. I sell neither in the streets, nor squares in town. I like it best where there are detached villas, and best of all where there are kept mistresses. They are the best of all customers to men like me. We talk our customers over among ourselves, and generally know who's who. One way by which we know the kept ladies is, they never sell cast-off clothes, as some ladies do, for new potatoes or early peas. Now, my worst customers, as to price, are the ladies—or gentlemen—they're both of a kidney—what keeps fashionable schools. They are the people to drive a bargain, but then they buy largely. Some buy entirely of costermongers. There's one gent. of a school-keeper buys so much and knows so well what o'clock it is, that I'm satisfied he saves many a pound a year by buying of us 'stead of the greengrocers.

"Perhaps I begin the season in the aristocratic way, with early lettuces for salads. I carry my goods in handsome baskets, and sometimes with a boy, or a boy and a girl, to help me. I buy my lettuces by the score (of heads) when first in, at 1s. 6d., and sell them at 1½d. each, which is 1s. profit on a score. I have sold twenty, and I once sold thirty score, that way in a day. The profit on the thirty was 2l. 5s., but out of that I had to pay three boys, for I took three with me, and our expenses was 7s. But you must consider, sir, that this is a precarious trade. Such goods are delicate, and spoil if they don't go off. I give credit sometimes, if anybody I know says he has no change. I never lost nothing.

"Then there's grass (asparagus), and that's often good money. I buy all mine at Covent-garden, where it's sold in bundles, according to the earliness of the season, at from 5s. to 1s., containing from six to ten dozen squibs (heads). These you have to take home, untie, cut off the scraggy ends, trim, and scrape, and make them level. Children help me to do this in the court where I live. I give them a few ha'pence, though they're eager enough to do it for nothing but the fun. I've had 10s. worth made ready in half an hour.

"Well, now, sir, about grass, there's not a coster in London, I'm sure, ever tasted it; and how it's eaten puzzles us." [I explained the manner in which asparagus was brought to table.] "That's the ticket, is it, sir? Well, I was once at the Surrey, and there was some macaroni eaten on the stage, and I thought grass was eaten in the same way, perhaps; swallowed like one o'clock," [rather a favourite comparison among the costers.]

"I have the grass—it's always called, when cried in the streets, 'Spar-row gra-ass'—tied up in bundles of a dozen, twelve to a dozen, or one over, and for these I never expect less than 6d. For a three or four dozen lot, in a neat sieve, I ask 2s. 6d., and never take less than 1s. 3d. I once walked thirty-five miles with grass, and have oft enough been thirty miles. I made 7s. or 8s. a day by it, and next day or two perhaps nothing, or may-be had but one customer. I've

sold half-crown lots, on a Saturday night, for a sixpence; and it was sold some time back at 2d. a bundle, in the New Cut, to poor people. I dare say some as bought it had been maid-servants and understood it. I've raffled 5s. worth of grass in the parlour of a respectable country inn of an evening.

"The costers generally buy new potatoes at 4s. to 5s. the bushel, and cry them at 'three-pound-tuppence;' but I've given 7s. a bushel, for choice and early, and sold them at 2d. a pound. It's no great trade, for the bushel may weigh only 50 lb., and at 2d. a pound that's only 8s. 4d. The schools don't buy at all until they're 1d. the pound, and don't buy in any quantity until they're 1s. 6d. the 25 lb. One day a school 'stonished me by giving me 2s. 6d. for 25 lb., which is the general weight of the half bushel. Perhaps the master had taken a drop of something short that morning. The schools are dreadful screws, to be sure.

"Green peas, early ones, I don't buy when they first come in, for then they're very dear, but when they're 4s. or 3s. 6d. a bushel, and that's pretty soon. I can make five pecks of a bushel. Schools don't touch peas 'till they're 2s. a bushel.

"Cowcubers were an aristocratic sale. Four or five years ago they were looked upon, when first in, and with a beautiful bloom upon them, as the finest possible relish. But the cholera came in 1849, and everybody—specially the women—thought the cholera was in cowcubers, and I've known cases, foreign and English, sent from the Borough Market for manure.

"I sell a good many mushrooms. I sometimes can pick up a cheap lot at Covent Garden. I make them up in neat sieves of three dozen to eight dozen according to size, and I have sold them at 4s. the sieve, and made half that on each sieve I sold. They are down to 1s. or 1s. 6d. a sieve very soon.

"Green walnuts for pickling I sell a quantity of. One day I sold 20s. worth—half profit—I got them so cheap, but that was an exception. I sold them cheap too. One lady has bought a bushel and a half at a time. For walnut catsup the refuse of the walnut is used; it's picked up in the court, where I've got children or poor fellows for a few ha'pence or a pint of beer to help me to peel the walnuts."

OF ONION SELLING IN THE STREETS.

THE sale of onions in the streets is immense. They are now sold at the markets at an average of 2s. a bushel. Two years ago they were 1s., and they have been 4s. and up to 7s. the bushel. They are now twisted into "ropes" for street sale. The ropes are of straw, into which the roots are platted, and secured firmly enough, so that the ropes can be hung up; these have superseded the netted onions, formerly sold by the Jew boys. The plating, or twisting, is done rapidly by the women, and a straw-bonnet-maker described it to me as somewhat after the mode of her trade, only that the top, or projecting portion of the stem of the onion, was twisted within the straw,

instead of its being plaited close and flat together. The trade in rope onions is almost entirely in the hands of the Irish women and girls. There are now, it is said, from 800 to 1000 persons engaged in it. Onion selling can be started on a small amount of capital, from 6d. to 1s., which is no doubt one inducement for those poor persons to resort to it. The sixpenny ropes, bunches, or strings (I heard each word applied), contain from three to four dozen; the penny bunches, from six to twenty roots, according to size; and the intermediate and higher priced bunches in proportion. Before Christmas, a good many shilling lots are sold. Among the costermongers I heard this useful root—which the learned in such matters have pronounced to be, along with the mushroom, the foundation of every sauce, ancient or modern—called ing-guns, ing-ans, injens, injyens, inions, innons, almost everything but onions.

An Irishwoman, apparently of thirty-five, but in all probability younger—she did not know her age—gave me the following account. Her face, with its strongly-marked Irish features, was almost purpled from constant exposure to the weather. She was a teetotaller. She was communicative and garrulous, even beyond the average of her countrywomen. She was decently clad, had been in London fifteen years (she thought) having been brought from Ireland, *vid* Bristol, by her parents (both dead). She herself was a widow, her husband, "a bricklayer" she called him (probably a bricklayer's labourer), having died of the cholera in 1849. I take up her statement from that period:

"Yes, indeed, sir, he died—the heavens be his bed!—and he was prepared by Father M—. We had our trials together, but sore's been the cross and heavy the burthin since it plased God to call him. Thin, there's the two childer, Biddy and Ned. They'll be tin and they'll be eight come their next burreth-days, 'plase the Lorrud. They can help me now, they can. They sells ing-guns as well. I ropes 'em for 'em. How is ing-guns roped? Shure, thin—but it's not mocking me your 'onnur is—shure, thin, a gintleman like you, that can write like a horrus a-galloping, and perhaps is as larned as a praste, glory be to God! *must* know how to rope ing-guns! Poor people can do it. Some say it's a sacrit, but that's all a say, or there couldn't be so many ropes a-silling. I buy the sthraw at a sthraw-daler's; twopinn'orth at a time; that'll make six or twelve ropes, according to what they are, sixpinny or what. It's as sthraight as it can be grown, the sthraw, that it is indeed. Och, sir, we've had many's the black day, me and the childer, poor things; it's thim I care about, but—God's name be praised!—we've got on somehow. Another poor woman—she's a widdur too, help her!—and me has a 2s. room for the two of us. We've our siprate furnithur. She has only hersilf, but is fond of the childer, as you or your lady—bliss her! if you've got one—might be, if you was with them. I can read a little mysilf, at laste I could oncte, and I gits them a bit o'

schoolin' now and thin, whin I can, of an evenin' mostly. I can't write a lether; I wish I could. Shure, thin, sir, I'll tell you the thruth—we does best on ing-guns. Oranges is nixt, and nuts isn't near so good. The three of us now makes 1s. and sometimes 1s. 6d. a day, and that's grand doin's. We may sill bechuxt us from two to three dozin ropes a day. I'm quick at roping the ing-guns. I never noted how many ropes an hour. I buy them of a thradesman, an honist gintleman, I know, and I see him at mass ivery Sunday, and he gives me as many as he can for 1s. or what it is. We has 1d., plase God, on ivery 6d.; yis, sir, perhaps more sometimes. I'll not tell your 'onnur a bit of a lie. And so we now get a nice bit o' fish, with a bit of li'er on a Sunday. I sell to the thradesmen, and the lodgers of them, about here (Tottenham-court-road), and in many other parruts, for we thravels a dale. The childer always goes the same round. We follows one another. I've sould in the sthreetes ever since I've been in this country."

The greatest sum of money expended by the poor upon any vegetable (after potatoes) is spent upon onions—99,900*l.* being annually devoted to the purchase of that article. To those who know the habits of the poor, this will appear in no way singular—a piece of bread and an onion being to the English labourer what bread and an apple or a bunch of grapes is to the French peasant—often his dinner.

OF POT-HERBS AND CELERY.

I use the old phrase, *pot-herbs*, for such productions as sage, thyme, mint, parsley, sweet marjoram, fennel, (though the last is rarely sold by the street-people), &c.; but "herbs" is the usual term. More herbs, such as agrimony, balm (balsam), wormwood, tansy, &c., used to be sold in the streets. These were often used for "teas," medicinally perhaps, except tansy, which, being a strong aromatic, was used to flavour puddings. Wormwood, too, was often bought to throw amongst woollen fabrics, as a protective against the attack of moths.

The street herb-trade is now almost entirely in the hands of Irishwomen, and is generally carried on during the autumn and winter at stalls. With it, is most commonly united the sale of celery. The herbs are sold at the several markets, usually in shilling lots, but a quarter of a shilling lot may be purchased. The Irishwoman pursues a simple method of business. What has cost her 1s. she divides into 24 lots, each of 1d., or she will sell half of a lot for a halfpenny. An Irishwoman said to me:

"Thrade isn't good, sir; it falls and it falls. I don't sell so many herrubs or so much ciliry as I did whin mate was higher. Poor people thin, I've often been said it, used to buy bones and bile them for broth with ciliry and the beautiful herrubs. Now they buys a bit of mate and ates it without brothing. It's good one way and it's bad another. Only last Sathurday night my husband—and a good husband he's to me, though he is a London man, for he knows how to make

a bargain—he bought a bit of mutton, afore the stroke of twilve, in Newgit-markit, at 2½*d.* the pound. I don't know what parrut it was. I don't understand that, but he does, and tills me how to cook it. He has worruk at the docks, but not very rigular. I think I sill most parrusley. Whin frish herrings is chape, some biles them with parrusley, and some fries them with ing-guns. No, sir; I don't make sixpence a day; not half-a-crown a week, I'm shure. Whin herrubs isn't in—and they're autumn and winther things, and so is ciliry—I sills anything; gooseberries and currants, or anything. If I'd had a family, I couldn't have had a shoe to my futt."

GROSS VALUE OF THE FRUIT AND VEGETABLES SOLD ANNUALLY IN THE LONDON STREETS.

To complete the present account of the costermonger's trade, we must now estimate the money value of the fruit and vegetables disposed of by them throughout the year. The money annually spent in fish by the humbler portion of the metropolitan population comes to, as we have seen, very nearly one million five hundred thousand pounds sterling—the sum laid out in fruit and vegetables we shall find is but little more than a third of this amount.

GREEN FRUIT.

377,500 bushels of apples, at six a penny or 4s. per bush. (288 to the bushel) . . .	£75,500
193,700 bushels of pears, at 5s. per bushel . . .	48,400
1,215,360 lbs. of cherries, at 2 <i>d.</i> per lb. . .	10,000
11,700 bushels of plums, at 1 <i>d.</i> per half pint . . .	6,270
100 bushels of greengages, at 1½ <i>d.</i> per half pint . . .	80
548 bushels of damsons, at 1½ <i>d.</i> per half pint . . .	430
2,450 bushels of bullace, at 1½ <i>d.</i> per half pint . . .	1,960
207,500 bushels of gooseberries, at 3 <i>d.</i> per quart . . .	83,000
85,500 sieves of red currants, at 1 <i>d.</i> per pint (three half-sieves to the bushel) . . .	15,300
13,500 sieves of black currants, at 1 <i>d.</i> per pint (three half-sieves to the bushel) . . .	2,400
3,000 sieves of white currants, at 1 <i>d.</i> per pint (three half-sieves to the bushel) . . .	530
763,750 pottles of strawberries, at 2 <i>d.</i> per pottle . . .	6,360
1,760 pottles of raspberries, at 6 <i>d.</i> per pottle . . .	40
30,485 pottles of mulberries, at 6 <i>d.</i> per pottle . . .	760
6,000 bushels of hazel nuts, at 1½ <i>d.</i> per half pint . . .	2,400
17,280 lbs. of filberts, at 3 <i>d.</i> per lb. . .	200
26,563 lbs. of grapes, at 4 <i>d.</i> per lb. . .	440
20,000 pine apples, at 6 <i>d.</i> each . . .	500

15,400,000 oranges, at two for 1 <i>d.</i> . . .	32,000
154,000 lemons, at two for 1 <i>d.</i> . . .	320
24,000 bushels of Spanish and Barcelona nuts, at 6 <i>d.</i> per quart . . .	19,200
3,000 bushels of Brazil nuts (1500 to the bushel), at fifteen for 1 <i>d.</i> . . .	£1,250
6,500 bushels of chestnuts (1500 to the bushel), at fifteen for 1 <i>d.</i> . . .	2,700
24,000 bushels of walnuts (1750 to the bushel), at ten for 1 <i>d.</i> . . .	17,500
400,000 coker-nuts, at 3 <i>d.</i> each . . .	5,000

Total expended yearly in green fruit

DRY FRUIT.

7,000 lbs. of shell almonds, at 20 a penny (320 to the lb.) . . .	£460
37,800 lbs. of raisins, at 2 <i>d.</i> per lb. . .	300
24,300 lbs. of figs, at 2 <i>d.</i> per lb. . .	200
4,800 lbs. of prunes, at 2 <i>d.</i> per lb. . .	40

Total expended yearly on dry fruit

VEGETABLES.

60,500,000 lbs. of potatoes, at 5lbs. for 2 <i>d.</i>	£100,800
23,760,000 cabbages, at ½ <i>d.</i> each . . .	49,500
3,264,800 turnips, at 1½ <i>d.</i> per doz. . .	1,700
601,000 carrots, at 2½ <i>d.</i> per doz. . .	520
567,300 brocoli and cauliflowers, at 1 <i>d.</i> per head	2,360
616,666 junks of turnip tops, at 4 <i>d.</i> per junk	10,270
219,000 bushels of peas, at 1s. 6 <i>d.</i> per bushel	16,420
8,890 bushels of beans, at 1s. 6 <i>d.</i> per bushel	660
22,110 bushels of French beans, at 6 <i>d.</i> per peck, or 2s. per bushel	2,210
25,608 vegetable marrows, at ½ <i>d.</i> each	50
489 dozen bundles of asparagus, at 2s. 6 <i>d.</i> per bundle (4 <i>d.</i> or 6 <i>d.</i> a doz. heads) . . .	730
9,120 dozen bundles of rhubarb, at 2s. 6 <i>d.</i> per doz.	1,140
4,350 dozen bundles of celery, at 3 <i>d.</i> per bundle	650
561,602 lettuces, at 3 a penny	780
13,291 dozen hands of radishes, at 3 bunches for 1 <i>d.</i> , and 6 bunches to the hand . . .	1,330
499,530 bushels of onions, at 4s. per bushel	99,900
10,920 bushels of cucumbers, at 1 <i>d.</i> each (60 to the bush.) . . .	2,730
3,290 dozen bundles of herbs, at 3 <i>d.</i> a bundle	490

Total expended yearly in vegetables

£292,240

Putting the above sums together we have the following aggregate result:—
 Expended yearly in green fruit . . . £333,420
 Expended yearly in dry fruit . . . 1,000
 Expended yearly in vegetables . . . 292,000

Gross sum taken annually by the London costermongers for fruit and vegetables } £626,420

Then adding the above to the gross amount received by the street-sellers of fish, which we have before seen comes to as much as £1,460,850, we have for the annual income of the London costermongers no less a sum than £2,087,270.

OF THE STATIONARY STREET-SELLERS OF FISH, FRUIT, AND VEGETABLES.

OF THE NUMBER OF STREET STALLS.

Thus far we have dealt only with the itinerant dealers in fish, fruit, or vegetables; but there are still a large class of street-sellers, who obtain a living by the sale of the same articles at some fixed locality in the public thoroughfares; and as these differ from the others in certain points, they demand a short special notice here. First, as to the number of stalls in the streets of London, I caused personal observations to be made; and in a walk of 46 miles, 632 stalls were counted, which is at the rate of very nearly 14 to the mile. This, too, was in bad weather,—was not on a Saturday night,—and at a season when the fruit-sellers all declare that “things is dull.” The routes taken in this inquiry were:—No. 1, from Vauxhall to Hatton-garden; No. 2, from Baker-street to Bermondsey; No. 3, from Blackwall to Brompton; No. 4, from the Hackney-road to the Edgeware-road. I give the results.

	F.	FR.	V.	M.	T.
No. 1 . . .	9	28	5	7	49
” 2 . . .	37	50	4	14	105
” 3 . . .	90	153	30	40	313
” 4 . . .	75	52	23	15	165
	211	283	62	76	632

F. denotes fish-stalls; Fr. fruit-stalls; V. vegetable-stalls; M. miscellaneous; and T. presents the total:

The miscellaneous stalls include peas-soup, pickled whelks, sweetmeats, toys, tin-ware, elder-wine, and jewellery stands. Of these, the toy-stalls were found to be the most numerous; sweetmeats the next; tin-ware the next; while the elder-wine stalls were least numerous.

Some of the results indicate, curiously enough, the character of the locality. Thus, in Fleet-street there were 3, in the Haymarket 5, in Regent-street 6, and in Piccadilly 14 fruit-stalls, and no fish-stalls—these streets not being resorted to by the poor, to whom fruit is a luxury, but fish a necessity. In the Strand were 17 fruit and 2 fish-stalls; and in Drury-lane were 8 stalls of fish to 6 of fruit. On the other hand, there were in Ratcliffe-high-way, 38 fish and 23 fruit-stalls; in Rosemary-lane, 13 fish and 8 fruit-stalls; in Shoreditch,

28 fish and 13 fruit-stalls; and in Bethnal-green Road (the poorest district of all), 14 of the fish, and but 3 of the fruit stalls. In some places, the numbers were equal, or nearly so; as in the Minories, for instance, the City-road, the New-road, Goodge-street, Tottenham-court Road, and the Camberwell-road; while in Smithfield were 5, and in Cow-cross 2 fish-stalls, and no fruit-stalls at all. In this enumeration the street-markets of Leather-lane, the New Cut, the Brill, &c., are not included.

The result of this survey of the principal London thoroughfares is that in the mid-route (viz., from Brompton, along Piccadilly, the Strand, Fleet-street, and so *via* the Commercial-road to Blackwall), there are twice as many stalls as in the great northern thoroughfare (that is to say, from the Edgeware-road, along the New-road, to the Hackney-road); the latter route, however, has more than one-third as many stalls as route No. 2, and that again more than double the number of route No. 1. Hence it appears that the more frequented the thoroughfare, the greater the quantity of street-stalls.

The number of miles of streets contained within the inner police district of the metropolis, are estimated by the authorities at 2,000 (including the city), and assuming that there are on an average only four stalls to the mile throughout London, we have thus a grand total of 8,000 fish, fruit, vegetable, and other stalls dispersed throughout the capital.

Concerning the character of the stalls at the street-markets, the following observations have been made:—At the New-cut there were, before the removals, between the hours of eight and ten on a Saturday evening, ranged along the kerb-stone on the north side of the road, beginning at Broad-wall to Marsh-gate (a distance of nearly half-a-mile), a dense line of “pitches”—at 77 of which were vegetables for sale, at 40 fruit, 25 fish, 22 boots and shoes, 14 eatables, consisting of cakes and pies, hot eels, baked potatoes, and boiled whelks; 10 dealt in nightcaps, lace, ladies’ collars, artificial flowers, silk and straw bonnets; 10 in tinware—such as saucepans, tea-kettles, and Dutch-ovens; 9 in crockery and glass, 7 in brooms and brushes, 5 in poultry and rabbits, 6 in paper, books, songs, and almanacs; and about 60 in sundries.

OF THE CHARACTER OF THE STREET-STALLS.

The stalls occupied by costermongers for the sale of fish, fruit, vegetables, &c., are chiefly constructed of a double cross-trestle or moveable frame, or else of two trestles, each with three legs, upon which is laid a long deal board, or tray. Some of the stalls consist merely of a few boards resting upon two baskets, or upon two herring-barrels. The fish-stalls are mostly covered with paper—generally old newspapers or periodicals—but some of the street-fishmongers, instead of using paper to display their fish upon, have introduced a thin marble slab, which gives the stall a cleaner, and, what they consider a high attribute, a “respectable” appearance.

Most of the fruit-stalls are, in the winter time, fitted up with an apparatus for roasting apples and chestnuts; this generally consists of an old saucepan with a fire inside; and the woman who vends them, huddled up in her old faded shawl or cloak, often presents a picturesque appearance, in the early evening, or in a fog, with the gleam of the fire lighting up her half somnolent figure. Within the last two or three years, however, there has been so large a business carried on in roasted chestnuts, that it has become a distinct street-trade, and the vendors have provided themselves with an iron apparatus, large enough to roast nearly half a bushel at a time. At the present time, however, the larger apparatus is less common in the streets, and more frequent in the shops, than in the previous winter.

There are, moreover, peculiar kinds of stalls—such as the hot eels and hot peas-soup stalls, having tin oval pots, with a small chafing-dish containing a charcoal fire underneath each, to keep the eels or soup hot. The early breakfast stall has two capacious tin cans filled with tea or coffee, kept hot by the means before described, and some are lighted up by two or three large oil-lamps; the majority of these stalls, in the winter time, are sheltered from the wind by a screen made out of an old clothes horse covered with tarpaulin. The cough-drop stand, with its distilling apparatus, the tin worm curling nearly the whole length of the tray, has but lately been introduced. The nut-stall is fitted up with a target at the back of it. The ginger-beer stand may be seen in almost every street, with its French-polished mahogany frame and bright polished taps, and its foot-bath-shaped reservoir of water, to cleanse the glasses. The hot elder wine stand, with its bright brass urns, is equally popular.

The sellers of plum-pudding, “cake, a penny a slice,” sweetmeats, cough-drops, pin-cushions, jewellery, chimney ornaments, tea and table-spoons, make use of a table covered over, some with old newspapers, or a piece of oil-cloth, upon which are exposed their articles for sale.

Such is the usual character of the street-stalls. There are, however, “stands” or “cans” peculiar to certain branches of the street-trade. The most important of these, such as the baked-

potatoe can, and the meat-pie stand, I have before described, p. 27.

The other means adopted by the street-sellers for the exhibition of their various goods at certain “pitches” or fixed localities are as follows. Straw bonnets, boys’ caps, women’s caps, and prints, are generally arranged for sale in large umbrellas, placed “upside down.” Haberdashery, with rolls of ribbons, edgings, and lace, some street-sellers display on a stall; whilst others have a board at the edge of the pavement, and expose their wares upon it as tastefully as they can. Old shoes, patched up and well blacked, ready for the purchaser’s feet, and tin ware, are often ranged upon the ground, or, where the stock is small, a stall or table is used.

Many stationary street-sellers use merely baskets, or trays, either supported in their hand, or on their arm, or else they are strapped round their loins, or suspended round their necks. These are mostly fruit-women, watercress, blacking, congreves, sheep’s-trotters, and ham-sandwich sellers.

Many stationary street-sellers stand on or near the bridges; others near the steam-packet wharfs or the railway terminuses; a great number of them take their pitch at the entrance to a court, or at the corners of streets; and stall-keepers with oysters stand opposite the doors of public-houses.

It is customary for a street-seller who wants to “pitch” in a new locality to solicit the leave of the housekeeper, opposite whose premises he desires to place his stall. Such leave obtained, no other course is necessary.

OF FRUIT-STALL KEEPERS.

I HAD the following statement from a woman who has “kept a stall” in Marylebone, at the corner of a street, which she calls “my corner,” for 38 years. I was referred to her as a curious type of the class of stall-keepers, and on my visit, found her daughter at the “pitch.” This daughter had all the eloquence which is attractive in a street-seller, and so, I found, had her mother when she joined us. They are profuse in blessings; and on a bystander observing, when he heard the name of these street-sellers, that a jockey of that name had won the Derby lately, the daughter exclaimed, “To be sure he did; he’s my own uncle’s relation, and what a lot of money came into the family! Bless God for all things, and bless every body! Walnuts, sir, walnuts, a penny a dozen! Wouldn’t give you a bad one for the world, which is a great thing for a poor ’oman for to offer to do.” The daughter was dressed in a drab great-coat, which covered her whole person. When I saw the mother, she carried a similar great-coat, as she was on her way to the stall; and she used it as ladies do their muffis, burying her hands in it. The mother’s dark-coloured old clothes seemed, to borrow a description from Sir Walter Scott, flung on with a pitchfork. These two women were at first very suspicious, and could not be made to understand my object in questioning,