

men of mechanics or the lower grade of middle class people. Those who may be said strictly to belong to the poor,—viz. those whose incomes are barely sufficient for their support—seldom purchase fruit. In the first place they have no money to spend on such a mere toothsome extravagance; and, secondly, they require a stronger and more stimulating, and “staying” kind of food. The delights of the palate, we should remember, are studied only when the cravings of the stomach are satisfied, so that those who have strong stomachs have necessarily dull palates, and, therefore, prefer something that “bites in the mouth,”—to use the words of one of my informants—like gin, onions, sprats, or pickled whelks. What the poor term “relishes” are very different things from what the rich style the “delicacies of the season.”

I have no means of ascertaining the average number of ounces of solid food consumed by the poorer class of the metropolis. The whole of the fish, fruit, and vegetables, sold to the London costermongers, is not disposed of in the London streets—many of the street-sellers going, as we have seen, on country excursions with their goods. According to the result of the Government Commissioners of Inquiry, the labourers in the country are unable to procure for themselves and families an average allowance of more than 122 ounces of solid food—principally bread—every week; hence it has been justly said we may infer that the man consumes, as his share, 140 ounces (134 bread and 6 meat). The gaol dietaries allow 254 ounces, or nearly twice as much to all prisoners, who undergo continuous hard labour. In the construction of these dietaries Sir James Graham—the then Secretary of State—says, in his “Letter to the Chairman of Quarter Sessions” (January 27th, 1843), “I have consulted not only the Prison Inspectors, but medical men of the greatest eminence possessing the advantage of long experience.” They are proposed, he adds, “as the *minimum* amount which can be safely afforded to prisoners without the risk of inflicting a punishment not contemplated by law and which it is unjust and cruel to inflict; namely, loss of health and strength through the inadequacy of the food supplied.” Hence it appears not that the thief gets too much, but the honest

OF THE STREET-SELLERS OF GAME, POULTRY (LIVE AND DEAD), RABBITS, BUTTER, CHEESE, AND EGGS.

The class who sell game and poultry in the public thoroughfares of the metropolis are styled hawkers, both in Leadenhall and Newgate-market. The number of these dealers in London is computed at between 200 and 300. Of course, legally to sell game, a license, which costs 2*l.* 2*s.* yearly, is required; but the street-seller laughs at the notion of being subjected to a direct tax; which, indeed, it might be impossible to levy on so “slippery” a class.

working man too little—or, in other words, that the labourer of this country is able to procure, by his industry, only half the quantity of food that is considered by “medical men of the greatest eminence” to be “the *minimum* amount” that can be safely afforded for the support of the criminals—a fact which it would be out of place to comment upon here.

One word concerning the incomes of the London costermongers, and I have done. It has been before shown that the gross sum of money taken yearly, in the streets, by the sale of fish, fruit, and vegetables, amounts, in round numbers, to two million pounds—a million and a half being expended in fish, and a quarter of a million upon fruit and vegetables respectively. In estimating the yearly receipts of the costermongers, from their average gains, the gross “takings” of the entire body were concluded to be between a million and a quarter and a million and a half sterling—that is to say, each one of the 10,000 street-sellers of fish, fruit, and vegetables, was supposed to clear ten shillings a week all the year through, and to take fifty shillings. But, according to the returns furnished me by the salesmen, at the several metropolitan markets, the weekly “takings” of the ten thousand men and their families—for often both wife and children sell—cannot be less than four pounds per week all the year round, out of which it would seem that the clear weekly gains are about fifteen shillings. (Some costers we have seen take pounds in a day, others—as the nut and orange-women and children—only a few shillings a week; some, again, make cent per cent. profit, whilst others are obliged to sell at a loss.) This, from all I can gather, is well as from a comparison of the coster’s style of living with other classes whose weekly income is nearly the same, appears to be very close upon the truth.

We may then, I think, safely assert, that the gross yearly receipts of the London costermongers are two millions of money; that their clear annual gain, or income, is 425,000*l.*; and that the capital invested in their business, in the form of donkey-carts, barrows, baskets, weights, and stock-money, is 25,000*l.*;—half of this being borrowed, for which they pay upwards of 20,000*l.* interest per annum.

The sale of game, even with a license, was not legalised until 1831; and, prior to that year, the mere killing of game by an “unqualified” person was an offence entailing heavy penalties. The “qualification” consisted of the possession of a freehold estate of 100*l.* a year, or a leasehold for ninety-nine years of 150*l.* a year! By an Act, passed in the 25th year of George III., it was provided that a certificate (costing 3*l.* 13*s.* 6*d.*) must be taken out by all qualified persons

killing game. Since 1831 (1 & 2 William IV., c. 32.) a certificate, without any qualification, is all that is required from the game-killer.

Both sexes carry on the trade in game-hawking, but there are more than thrice as many men as women engaged in the business, the weight occasionally carried being beyond a woman’s strength. The most customary dress of the game or poultry-hawker is a clean smock-frock covering the whole of his other attire, except the ends of his trousers and his thick boots or shoes. Indeed he often, but less frequently than was the case five years ago, assumes the dress of a country labourer, although he may have been for years a resident in London. About forty years ago, I am informed, it was the custom for countrymen, residing at no great distance, to purchase a stock of chickens or ducks; and, taking their places in a wagon, to bring their birds to London, and hawk them from door to door. Some of these men’s smock-frocks were a convenient garb, for they covered the ample pockets of the coat beneath, in which were often a store of partridges, or an occasional pheasant or hare. This game, illegally killed—for it was all poached—was illegally sold by the hawker, and illegally bought by the hotel-keepers and the richer tradesmen. One informant (an old man) was of opinion that the game was rarely offered for sale by these countrymen at the West-end mansions of the aristocracy. “In fact,” he said, “I knew one country fellow—though he was sharp enough in his trade of game and poultry-selling—who seemed to think that every fine house, without a shop, and where there were livery servants, must needs be inhabited by a magistrate! But, as the great props of poaching were the rich—for, of course, the poor couldn’t buy game—there was, no doubt, a West-end as well as a City trade in it. I have bought game of a country poultry-hawker,” continued my informant, “when I lived in the City at the beginning of this century, and generally gave 3*s.* 6*d.* a brace for partridges. I have bid it, and the man has left, refusing to take it; and has told me afterwards, and, I dare say, he spoke the truth, that he had sold his partridges at 5*s.* or 6*s.* or more. I believe 5*s.* a brace was no uncommon price in the City. I have given as much as 10*s.* for a pheasant for a Christmas supper. The hawker, before offering the birds for sale, used to peer about him, though we were alone in my counting-house, and then pull his partridges out of his pockets, and say, ‘Sir, do you want any very young chickens?’—for so he called them. Hares he called ‘lions;’ and they cost often, enough, 5*s.* each of the hawker. The trade had all the charms and recommendations of a mystery and a risk about it, just like smuggling.”

The sale of game in London, however, was not confined to the street-hawkers, who generally derived their stock-in-trade immediately from the poacher. Before the legalisation of the sale, the trade was carried on, under the rose, by the salesmen in Leadenhall-market, and that to an extent of not less than a fifteenth of the sale now

accomplished there. The purveyors for the London game-market—I learned from leading salesmen in Leadenhall—were not then, as now, noble lords and honourable gentlemen, but peasant or farmer poachers, who carried on the business systematically. The guards and coachmen of the stage-coaches were the media of communication, and had charge of the supply to the London market. The purchasers of the game thus supplied to a market, which is mostly the property of the municipality of the City of London, were not only hotel-keepers, who required it for public dinners presided over by princes, peers, and legislators, but the purveyors for the civic banquets—such as the Lord Mayor’s ninth of November dinner, at which the Ministers of State always attended.

This street-hawking of poached game, as far as I could ascertain from the best-informed quarters, hardly survived the first year of the legalised sale.

The female hawkers of game are almost all the wives of the men so engaged, or are women living with them as their wives. The trade is better, as regards profit, than the costermonger’s ordinary pursuits, but only when the season is favourable; it is, however, more uncertain.

There is very rarely a distinction between the hawkers of game and of poultry. A man will carry both, or have game one day and poultry the next, as suits his means, or as the market avails. The street-sellers of cheese are generally costers, while the vendors of butter and eggs are almost extinct.

Game, I may mention, consists of grouse (including black-cocks, and all the varieties of heath or moor-game), partridges, pheasants, bustards, and hares. Snipe, woodcocks, plovers, teal, widgeons, wild ducks, and rabbits are not game, but can only be taken or killed by certificated persons, who are owners or occupiers of the property on which they are found, or who have the necessary permission from such persons as are duly authorised to accord it. Poultry consists of chickens, geese, ducks, and turkeys, while some persons class pigeons as poultry.

Birds are dietetically divided into three classes: (1) the white-fleshed, as the common fowl and the turkey; (2) the dark-fleshed game, as the grouse and the black-cock; and (3) the aquatic (including swimmers and waders), as the goose and the duck; the flesh of the latter is penetrated with fat, and difficult of digestion.

OF THE QUANTITY OF GAME, RABBITS, AND POULTRY, SOLD IN THE STREETS.

It appears from inquiries that I instituted, and from authentic returns which I procured on the subject, that the following is the quantity of game and poultry sold yearly, as an average, in the markets of the metropolis. I give it exclusive of such birds as wild-ducks, woodcocks, &c., the supply of which depends upon the severity of the winter. I include all wild birds or animals, whether considered game or not, and I use round numbers, but as closely as possible.

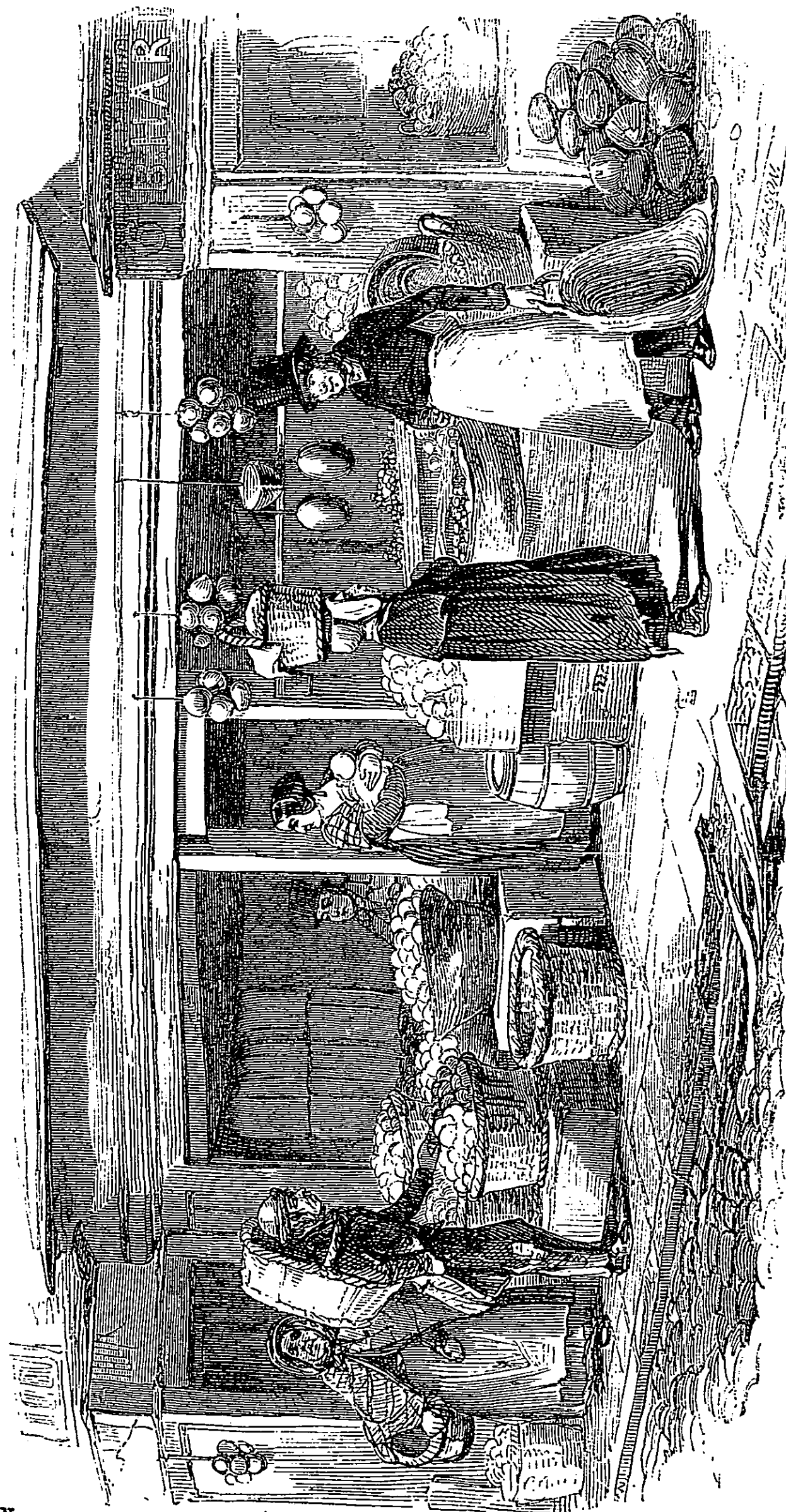
During the past Christmas, however, I may observe, that the supply of poultry to the markets has been greater than on any previous occasion. The immensity of the supply was favourable to the hawkers' profit, as the glut enabled him to purchase both cheaply and largely. One young poultry-hawker told me that he had cleared 3*l.* in the Christmas week, and had spent it all in four days—except 5*s.* reserved for stock-money. It was not spent entirely in drunkenness, a large portion of it

being expended in treats and amusements. So great, indeed, has been the supply of game and poultry this year, that a stranger, unused to the grand scale on which provisions are displayed in the great metropolitan marts, on visiting Leadenhall, a week before or after Christmas, might have imagined that the staple food of the London population consisted of turkeys, geese, and chickens. I give, however, an average yearly supply:

Description.	Leadenhall.	Newgate.	Total.	Proportion sold in the Streets.
GAME, &c.				
Grouse	45,000	12,000	57,000	One-eleventh.
Partridges	85,000	60,000	145,000	One-seventh.
Pheasants	44,000	20,000	64,000	One-fifth.
Snipes	60,000	47,000	107,000	One-twentieth.
Wild Birds	40,000	20,000	60,000	None.
Plovers	28,000	18,000	46,000	None.
Larks	213,000	100,000	313,000	None.
Teals	10,000	5,000	15,000	None.
Widgeons	30,000	8,000	38,000	None.
Hares	48,000	55,000	102,000	One-fifth.
Rabbits	680,000	180,000	860,000	Three-fourths.
	1,283,000	524,000	1,807,000	
POULTRY.				
Domestic Fowls	1,266,000	490,000	1,756,000	One-third.
— (alive)	45,000	15,000	60,000	One-tenth.
Geese	888,000	114,000	1,002,000	One-fifth.
Ducks	235,000	148,000	383,000	One-fourth.
— (alive)	20,000	20,000	40,000	One-tenth.
Turkeys	69,000	55,000	124,000	One-fourth.
Pigeons	285,000	98,000	383,000	None.
	2,808,000	940,000	3,748,000	
Game, &c.	1,283,000	524,000	1,807,000	
	4,091,000	1,464,000	5,555,000	

In the above return wild ducks and woodcocks are not included, because the quantity sent to London is dependent entirely upon the severity of the winter. With the costers wild ducks are a favourite article of trade, and in what those street tradesmen would pronounce a favourable season for wild ducks, which means a very hard winter, the number sold in London will, I am told, equal that of pheasants (64,000). The great stock of wild ducks for the London tables is from Holland, where the duck decoys are objects of great care. Less than a fifth of the importation from Holland is from Lincolnshire. These birds, and even the finest and largest, have been sold during a glut at 1*s.* each. Woodcocks, under similar circumstances, number with plovers (45,000), nearly all of which are "golden plovers;" but of woodcocks the costermongers buy very few: "They're only a mouthful and a half," said

one of them, "and don't suit our customers." In severe weather a few ptarmigan are sent to London from Scotland, and in 1841-2 great numbers were sent to the London markets from Norway. One salesman received nearly 10,000 ptarmigan in one day. A portion of these were disposed of to the costers, but the sale was not such as to encourage further importations. The returns I give show, that, at the two great game and poultry-markets, 5,500,000 birds and animals, wild and tame, are yearly sent to London. To this must be added all that may be consigned direct to metropolitan game-dealers and poulterers, besides what may be sent as presents from the country, &c., so that the London supply may be safely estimated, I am assured, at 6,000,000. It is difficult to arrive at any very precise computation of the quantity of game and poultry sold by the costers, or rather at the money



ORANGE MART, DUKE'S PLACE. [From a Photograph.]

value (or price) of what they sell. The most experienced salesmen agree, that, as to *quantity*, including everything popularly considered game (and I have so given it in the return), they sell one-third. As regards *value*, however, their purchases fall very short of a third. Of the best qualities of game, and even more especially of poultry, a third of the hawkers may buy a fifteenth, compared with their purchases in the lower-priced kinds. The others buy none of the best qualities. The more "aristocratic" of the poultry-hawkers will, as a rule, only buy, "when they have an order" or a sure sale, the best quality of English turkey-cocks; which cannot be wondered at, seeing that the average price of the English turkey-cock is 12s. One salesman this year sold (at Leadenhall) several turkey-cocks at 30s. each, and one at 3l. The average price of an English turkey-hen is 4s. 6d., and of these the costers buy a few: but their chief trade is in foreign turkey-hens; of which the average price (when of good quality and in good condition) is 3s. The foreign turkey-cocks average half the price of the English (or 6s.). Of Dorking fat chickens, which average 6s. the couple, the hawkers buy none (save as in the case of the turkey-cocks); but of the Irish fowls, which, this season, have averaged 2s. 6d. the couple, they buy largely. On the other hand they buy nearly all the rabbits sent from Scotland, and half of those sent from Ostend, while they "clear the market"—no matter of what the glut may consist—when there *is* a glut. There is another distinction of which the hawker avails himself. The average price of young plump partridges is 2s. 6d. the brace, of old partridges, 2s.; accordingly, the coster buys the old. It is the same with pheasants, the young averaging 7s. the brace, the old 6s.: "And I can sell them best," said one man; "for my customers say they're more tastier-like. I've sold game for twelve years, or more, but I never tasted any of any kind, so I can't say who's right and who's wrong."

The hawkers buy, also, game and poultry which will not "keep" another day. Sometimes they puff out the breast of a chicken with fresh pork fat, which melts as the bird roasts. "It freshens the fowl, I've been told, and improves it," said one man; "and the shopkeepers now and then, does the same. It's an improvement, sir."

In the present season the costers have bought of wild ducks, comparatively, none, and of teal, widgeons, wild birds, and larks, none at all; or so sparsely, as to require no notice.

OF THE STREET-PURCHASERS OF GAME AND POULTRY.

As the purchasers of game and poultry are of a different class to the costermongers' ordinary customers, I may devote a few words to them. From all the information that I could acquire, they appear to consist, principally, of those who reside at a distance from any cheap market, and

buy a cheap luxury when it is brought to their doors, as well as of those who are "always on the look-out for something toothy, such as the shabby genteels, as they're called, who never gives nothing but a scaly price. They've bargained with me till I was hard held from pitching into them, and over and over again I should, only it would have been fourteen days anyhow. They'll tell me my birds stinks, when they're as sweet as flowers. They'd go to the devil to save three farthings on a partridge." Other buyers are old gourmands, living perhaps on small incomes, or if possessed of ample incomes, but confining themselves to a small expenditure; others, again, are men who like a cheap dinner, and seldom enjoy it, at their own cost, unless it be cheap, and who best of all like "such a thing as a moor bird (grouse)," said one hawker, "which can be eat up to a man's own cheek." This was also the opinion of a poulterer and game-dealer, who sometimes sold "goods" to the hawkers. Of this class of "patrons" many shopkeepers, in all branches of business, have a perfect horror, as they will care nothing for having occupied the tradesmen's time to no purpose.

The game and poultry street-sellers, I am told, soon find out when a customer is bent upon a bargain, and shape their prices accordingly. Although these street-sellers may generally take as their motto the announcement so often seen in the shops of competitive tradesmen, "no reasonable offer refused," they are sometimes so worried in bargaining that they *do* refuse.

In a conversation I had with a "retired" game salesman, he said it might be curious to trace the history of a brace of birds—of grouse, for instance—sold in the streets; and he did it after this manner. They were shot in the Highlands of Scotland by a member of parliament who had gladly left the senate for the moors. They were transferred to a tradesman who lived in or near some Scotch town having railway communication, and with whom "the honourable gentleman," or "the noble lord," had perhaps endeavoured to drive a hard bargain. He (the senator) *must* have a good price for his birds, as he had given a large sum for the moor: and the season was a bad one: the birds were scarce and wild. they would soon be "packed" (be in flocks of twenty or thirty instead of in broods), and then there would be no touching a feather of them. The canny Scot would quietly say that it was early in the season, and the birds never packed so early; that as to price, he could only give what he could get from a London salesman, and he was "nae just free to enter into any agreement for a fixed price at a'." The honourable gentleman, after much demurring, gives way, feeling perhaps that he cannot well do anything else. In due course the grouse are received in Leadenhall, and unpacked and flung about with as little ceremony as if they had been "slaughtered" by a Whitechapel

journeyman butcher, at so much a head. It is a thin market, perhaps, when they come to hand. A dealer, fashionable in the parish of St. George, Hanover-square, has declined to give the price demanded; they were not his money; "he had to give such long credit." A dealer, popular in the ward of Cheap, has also declined to buy, and for the same alleged reason. The salesman, knowing that some of these dealers *must* buy, quietly says that he will take no less, and as he is known to be a man of his word, little is said upon the subject. As the hour arrives at which fashionable game-dealers are compelled to buy, or disappoint customers who will not brook such disappointment, the market, perhaps, is glutted, owing to a very great consignment by a later railway train. The *Inverness Courier*, or the *North of Scotland Gazette*, are in due course quoted by the London papers, touching the "extraordinary sport" of a party of lords and gentlemen in the Highlands; and the "heads" of game are particularized with a care that would do honour to a *Price Current*. The salesman then disposes rapidly of divers "brace" to the "hawkers," at 1s. or 2s. the brace, and the hawker offers them to hotel-keepers, and shopkeepers, and housekeepers, selling some at 3s. 6d. the brace, some at 3s., at 2s. 6d., at 2s., and at less. "At last," said my informant, "he may sell the finest brace of his basket, which he has held back to get a better price for, at 6d. a-piece, rather than keep them over-night, and that to a woman of the town, whom he may have met reeling home with money in her purse. Thus the products of an honourable gentleman's skilful industry, on which he greatly prided himself, are eaten by the woman and her 'fancy man,' grumblingly enough, for they pronounce the birds inferior to tripe."

The best quarters for the street-sale of game and poultry are, I am informed from several sources, either the business parts of the metropolis, or else the houses in the several suburbs which are the furthest from a market or from a business part. The squares, crescents, places, and streets, that do not partake of one or the other of these characteristics, are pronounced "no good."

OF THE EXPERIENCE OF A GAME HAWKER.

THE man who gave me the following information was strong and robust, and had a weather-beaten look. He seemed about fifty. He wore when I saw him a large velvet jacket, a cloth waistcoat which had been once green, and brown corduroy trousers. No part of his attire, though it seemed old, was patched, his shirt being clean and white. He evidently aimed at the game-keeper style of dress. He affected some humour, and was dogged in his opinions:

"I was a gentleman's footman when I was a young man," he said, "and saw life both in town and country; so I knows what things belongs." [A common phrase among persons of his class to denote their being men of the world.] "I never liked the confinement of ser-

vice, and besides the upper servants takes on so. The others puts up with it more than they would, I suppose, because they hopes to be butlers themselves in time. The only decent people in the house I lived in last was master and mis-sus. I won 20l., and got it too, on the Colonel, when he won the Leger. Master was a bit of a turf gentleman, and so we all dabbled—like master like man, you know, sir. I think that was in 1828, but I'm not certain. We came to London not long after Doncaster" [he meant Doncaster races], "something about a lawsuit, and that winter I left service and bought the goodwill of a coffee-shop for 25l. It didn't answer. I wasn't up to the coffee-making, I think; there's a deal of things belongs to all things; so I got out of it, and after that I was in service again, and then I was a boots at an inn. But I couldn't settle to nothing long; I'm of a free spirit, you see. I was hard up at last, and I popped my watch for a sovereign, because a friend of mine—we sometimes drank together of a night—said he could put me in the pigeon and chicken line; that was what he called it, but it meant game. This just suited me, for I'd been out with the poachers when I was a lad, and indeed when I was in service, out of a night on the sly; so I knew they got stiffish prices. My friend got me the pigeons. I believe he cheated me, but he's gone to glory. The next season game was made legal eating. Before that I cleared from 25s. to 40s. a week by selling my 'pigeons.' I carried real pigeons as well, which I said was my own rearing at Gravesend. I sold my game pigeons—there was all sorts of names for them—in the City, and sometimes in the Strand, or Charing-cross, or Covent-garden. I sold to shopkeepers. Oft enough I've been offered so much tea for a hare. I sometimes had a hare in each pocket, but they was very awkward carriage; if one was sold, the other sagged so. I very seldom sold them, at that time, at less than 3s. 6d., often 4s. 6d., and sometimes 5s. or more. I once sold a thumping old jack-hare to a draper for 6s.; it was Christmas time, and he thought it was a beauty. I went into the country after that, among my friends, and had a deal of ups and downs in different parts. I was a navvy part of the time, till five or six year back I came to London again, and got into my old trade; but it's quite a different thing now. I hawks grouse, and every thing, quite open. Leadenhall and Newgate is my markets. Six of one and half-a-dozen of t'other. When there's a great arrival of game, after a game battle" (he would so call a *battle*) "and it's-warm weather, that's my time of day, for then I can buy cheap. A muggy day, when it's close and warm, is best of all. I have a tidy bit of connection now in game, and don't touch poultry when I can get game. Grouse is the first thing I get to sell. They are legal eating on the 12th of August, but as there's hundreds of braces sold in London that day, and as they're shot in Scotland and Yorkshire, and other places where there's moors, in course

they're killed before it's legal. It's not often I can get them early in the season; not the first week, but I have had three brace two days before they were legal, and sold them at 5s. a brace; they cost me 3s. 3d., but I was told I was favoured. I got them of a dealer, but that's a secret. I sold a few young partridges with grouse this year at 1s. 6d. and 1s. 9d. a piece, allowing 2d. or 3d. if a brace was taken. They weren't legal eating till the 1st of September, but they was shot by grouse shooters, and when I hawked them I called them quails. Lord, sir, gentlefolks—and I serve a good many, leastways their cooks, and now and then themselves—they don't make a fuss about Game Laws; they've too much sense. I've bought grouse quite fresh and fine when there's been a lot, and bad keeping weather, at 1s. and 15d. each. I've sold them sometimes at 1s. 6d. and 2s. each, and 2s. 6d. the big ones, but only twice or thrice. If you ask very low at first, people won't buy, only a few good judges, 'cause they think something must be amiss. I once bought a dozen good hares, on a Saturday afternoon, for 10s. 6d. It was jolly hot, and I could hardly sell them. I got 1s. 6d. a piece for three of them; 2s. for the finest one; 1s. 3d. for five, no, for four; 1s. 10d. for two; and I had a deal of trouble to get a landlord to take the last two for 1s. 6d., to wipe off a bit of a drink score. I didn't do so bad as it was, but if it hadn't been Saturday, I should have made a good thing of 'em. It's very hard work carrying a dozen hares; and every one of that lot—except two, and they was fine leverets—was as cheap as butcher's meat at half-a-crown a piece. I've done middling in partridges this year. I've bought them, but mixed things they was, as low as from 10d. to 16d. a brace, and have made a profit, big or little as happened, on every one. People that's regular customers I always charge 6d. profit in 2s. 6d. to, and that's far cheaper than they can get served other ways. It's chiefly the game battles that does so much to cheapen partridges or peasants" (so he always called pheasants); "and it's only then I meddles with peasants. They're sold handier than the other birds at the shops, I think. They're legal eating on the 1st of October. Such nonsense! why isn't mutton made legal eating, only just at times, as well? In very hard weather I've done well on wild ducks. They come over here when the weather's a clipper, for you see cold weather suits some birds and kills others. It aint hard weather that's driven them here; the frost has drawn them here, because it's only then they're cheap. I've bought beauties at 1s. a piece, and one day I cleared 10s. 6d. out of twelve brace of them. I've often cleared 6s. and 7s.—at least as often as there's been a chance. I knew a man that did uncommon well on them; and he once told a parson, or a journeyman parson, I don't know what he was, that if ever he prayed it was for a hard winter and lots of wild ducks. I've done a little sometimes in plover, and woodcock, and

snipe, but not so much. I never plays no tricks with my birds. I trims them up to look well, certainly. If they won't keep, and won't sell, I sticks them into a landlord I knows, as likes them high, for a quatern or a pot, or anything. It's often impossible to keep them. If they're hard hit it's soon up with them. A sportsman, if he has a good dog—but you'll know that if you've ever been a shooting, sir—may get close upon a covey of young partridges before he springs them, and then give them his one, two, with both barrels, and they're riddled to bits. I may make 18s. a week all the year round, because I have a connection. I'm very much respected, I thinks, on my round, for I deal fair; that there, sir, breeds respect, you know. When I can't get game (birds) I can sometimes, indeed often, get hares, and mostly rabbits. I've hawked venson, but did no good—though I cried it at 4d. the lb. My best weeks is worth 30s. to 35s., my worst is 6s. to 10s. I'm a good deal in the country, working it. I'm forced to sell fish sometimes. Geese I sometimes join a mate in selling. I don't mix much with the costermongers; in coorse I knows some. I live middling. Do I ever eat my own game if it's high? No, sir, never. I couldn't stand such cag-mag—my stomach couldn't—though I've been a gentleman's servant. Such stuff don't suit nobody but rich people, whose stomach's diseased by over-feeding, and that's been brought up to it, like. I've only myself to keep now. I've had a wife or two, but we parted" (this was said gravely enough); "there was nothing to hinder us. I see them sometimes and treat them."

The quantity of game annually sold in the London streets is as follows:—

Grouse	5,000
Partridges	20,000
Pheasants	12,000
Snipes	5,000
Hares	20,000

STATEMENT OF TWO POULTRY HAWKERS.

Two brothers, both good-looking and well-spoken young men—one I might characterise as handsome—gave me the following account. I found them unwilling to speak of their youth, and did not press them. I was afterwards informed that their parents died within the same month, and that the family was taken into the workhouse; but the two boys left it in a little time, and before they could benefit by any schooling. Neither of them could read or write. They left, I believe, with some little sum in hand, to "start themselves." An intelligent costermonger, who was with me when I saw the two brothers, told me that "a costermonger would rather be thought to have come out of prison than out of a workhouse," for his "mates" would say, if they heard he had been locked up, "O, he's only been quodded for pitching into a crusher." The two brothers wore clean smock country frocks over their dress, and made a liberal display of their clean,

but coarse, shirts. It was on a Monday that I saw them. What one brother said, the other confirmed: so I use the plural "we."

"We sell poultry and game, but stick most to poultry, which suits our connection best. We buy at Leadenhall. We're never cheated in the things we buy; indeed, perhaps, we could not be. A salesman will say—Mr. H— will—'Buy, if you like, I can't recommend them. Use your own judgment. They're cheap.' He has only one price, and that's often a low one. We give from 1s. to 1s. 9d. for good chickens, and from 2s. 6d. mostly for geese and turkeys. Pigeons is 1s. 9d. to 3s. a dozen. We aim at 6d. profit on chickens; and 1s., if we can get it, or 6d. if we can do no better, on geese and turkeys. Ducks are the same as chickens. A' the year through, we may make 12s. a week a piece. We work together, one on one side of the street and the other on the other. It answers best that way. People find we can't undersell one another. We buy the poultry, whenever we can, undressed, and dress them ourselves; pull the feathers off and make them ready for cooking. We sell cheaper than the shops, or we couldn't sell at all. But you must be known, to do any trade, or people will think your poultry's bad. We work game as well, but mostly poultry. We've been on hares to-day, mostly, and have made about 2s. 6d. a piece, but that's an extra day. Our best customers are tradesmen in a big way, and people in the houses a little way out of town. Working people don't buy of us now. We're going to a penny gaff to-night" (it was then between four and five); "we've no better way of spending our time when our day's work is done."

From the returns before given, the street-sale of poultry amounts yearly to

500,000 fowls.
80,000 ducks.
20,000 geese.
30,000 turkeys.

OF THE STREET SALE OF LIVE POULTRY.

THE street trade in live poultry is not considerable, and has become less considerable every year, since the facilities of railway conveyance have induced persons in the suburbs to make their purchases in London rather than of the hawkers. Geese used to be bought very largely by the hawkers in Leadenhall, and were driven in flocks to the country, 500 being a frequent number of a flock. Their sale commenced about six miles from town in all directions, the purchasers being those who, having the necessary convenience, liked to fatten their own Christmas geese, and the birds when bought were small and lean. A few flocks, with 120 or 150 in each, are still disposed of in this way; but the trade is not a fifth of what it was. As this branch of the business is not in the hands of the hawkers, but generally of country poulterers resident in the towns not far from the metropolis, I need but allude to it. A few flocks of ducks are driven in the same way.

The street trade in live poultry continues only for three months—from the latter part of June to the latter part of September. At this period, the hawkers say, as they can't get "dead" they must get "live." During these three months the hawkers sell 500 chickens and 300 ducks weekly, by hawking, or 10,400 in the season of 13 weeks. Occasionally, as many as 50 men and women—the same who hawk dead game and poultry—are concerned in the traffic I am treating of. At other times there are hardly 20, and in some not 20 so employed, for if the weather be temperate, dead poultry is preferred to live by the hawkers. Taking the average of "live" sellers at 25 every week, it gives only a trade of 32 birds each weekly. Some, however, will sell 18 in a day; but others, who occasionally resort to the trade, only a dozen in a week. The birds are sometimes carried in baskets on the hawker's arm, their heads being let through network at the top; but more frequently they are hawked in open wicker-work coops carried on the head. The best live poultry are from Surrey and Sussex; the inferior from Ireland, and perhaps more than three-fourths of that sold by the hawkers is Irish.

The further nature of the trade, and the class of customers, is shown in the following statement, given to me by a middle-aged man, who had been familiar with the trade from his youth.

"Yes, sir," he said, "I've had a turn at live poultry for—let me see—someways between twenty and twenty-five years. The business is a sweater, sir; it's heavy work, but 'live' ain't so heavy as 'dead.' There's fewer of them to carry in a round, that's it. Ah! twenty years ago, or better, live poultry was worth following. I did a good bit in it. I've sold 160 fowls and ducks, and more, in a week, and cleared about 4l. But out of that I had to give a man 1s. a day, and his peck, to help me. At that time I sold my ducks and chickens—I worked nothing else—at from 2s. to 3s. 6d. a piece, according to size and quality. Now, if I get from 14d. to 2s. it's not so bad. I sell more, I think, however, over 1s. 6d. than under it, but I'm perticler in my 'live.' I never sold to any but people out of town that had convenience to keep them, and Lord knows, I've seen ponds I could jump over reckoned prime for ducks. Them that keeps their gardens nice won't buy live poultry. I've seldom sold to the big houses anything like to what I've done to the smaller. The big houses, you see, goes for fancy bantems, such as Sir John Seabright's, or Spanish hens, or a bit of a game cross, or real game—just for ornament, and not for fighting—or for anything that's got its name up. I've known young couples buy fowls to have their breakfast eggs from them. One young lady told me to bring her—that's fifteen year ago, it is so—six couples, that I knew would lay. I told her she'd better have five hens to a cock, and she didn't seem pleased, but I'm sure I don't know why, for I hope I'm always civil. I told her there would be murder if there was a cock to every hen. I supplied her, and made 6s. by the job. I have sold

live fowls to the Jews about Whitechapel, on my way to Stratford and Bow, but only when I've bought a bargain and sold one. I don't know nothing how the Jews kills their fowls. Last summer I didn't make 1s. 6d. a day; no, nor more than three half-crowns a week in 'live.' But that's only part of my trade. I don't complain, so it's nothing to nobody what I makes. From Beever (De Beauvoir) Town to Stamford Hill, and on to Tottenham and Edmouton, and turning off Walthamstow way is as good a round as any for live; it is so; but nothing to what it was. Highgate and Hampstead is middling. The t'other side the water isn't good at all."

Fancy chickens, I may add, are never hawked, nor are live pigeons, nor geese, nor turkeys.

The hawkers' sale of live poultry may be taken, at a moderate computation, as 6,500 chickens, and 3,900 ducks.

OF RABBIT SELLING IN THE STREETS.

RABBIT-SELLING cannot be said to be a distinct branch of costermongering, but some street-sellers devote themselves to it more exclusively than to other "goods," and, for five or six months of the year, sell little else. It is not often, though it is sometimes, united with the game or poultry trade, as a stock of rabbits, of a dozen or a dozen and a half, is a sufficient load for one man. The best sale for rabbits is in the suburbs. They are generally carried slung two and two on a long pole, which is supported on the man's shoulders, or on a short one which is carried in the hand. Lately, they have been hawked about hung up on a barrow. The trade is the briskest in the autumn and winter months; but some men carry them, though they do not confine themselves to the traffic in them, all the year round. The following statement shows the nature of the trade.

"I was born and bred a costermonger," he said, "and I've been concerned with everything in the line. I've been mostly 'on rabbits' these five or six years, but I always sold a few, and now sometimes I sell a hare or two, and, if rabbits is too dear, I tumble on to fish. I buy at Leadenhall mainly. I've given from 6s. to 14s. a dozen for my rabbits. The usual price is from 5s. to 8s. a dozen. [I may remark that the costers buy nearly all the Scotch rabbits, at an average of 6s. the dozen; and the Ostend rabbits, which are a shilling or two dearer.] They're Hampshire rabbits; but I don't know where Hampshire is. I know they're from Hampshire, for they're called 'Wild Hampshire rabbits, 1s. a pair.' But still, as you say, that's only a call. I never sell a rabbit at 6d., in course—it costs more. My way in business is to get 2d. profit, and the skin, on every rabbit. If they cost me 8d., I try to get 10d. It's the skins is the profit. The skins now brings me from 1s. to 1s. 9d. a dozen. They're best in frosty weather. The fur's thickest then. It grows best in frost, I suppose. If I sell a dozen, it's a tidy day's work. If I get 2d.

a-piece on them, and the skins at 1s. 3d., it's 3s. 3d., but I don't sell above 5 dozen in a week—that's 16s. 3d. a week, sir, is it? Wet and dark weather is against me. People won't often buy rabbits by candlelight, if they're ever so sweet. Some weeks in spring and summer I can't sell above two dozen rabbits. I have sold two dozen and ten on a Saturday in the country, but then I had a young man to help me. I sell the skins to a warehouse for hatters. My old 'oman works a little fish at a stall sometimes, but she only can in fine weather, for we've a kid that can hardly walk, and it don't do to let it stand out in the cold. Perhaps I may make 10s. to 14s. a week all the year round. I'm paying 1s. a week for 1l. borrowed, and paid 2s. all last year; but I'll pay no more after Christmas. I did better on rabbits four or five year back, because I sold more to working-people and small shopkeepers than I do now. I suppose it's because they're not so well off now as they was then, and, as you say, butchers'-meat may be cheaper now, and tempts them. I do best short ways in the country. Wandsworth way ain't bad. No more is parts of Stoke-Newington and Stamford-hill. St. John's Wood and Hampstead is middling. Hackney's bad. I goes all ways. I don't know what sort of people's my best customers. Two of 'em, I've been told, is banker's clerks, so in course they is rich."

There are 600,000 rabbits sold every year in the streets of London; these, at 7d. a-piece, give 17,500l. thus expended annually in the metropolis.

OF THE STREET SALE OF BUTTER, CHEESE, AND EGGS.

ALL these commodities used to be hawked in the streets, and to a considerable extent. Until, as nearly as I can ascertain, between twenty and thirty years back, butter was brought from Epping, and other neighbouring parts, where good pasture existed, and hawked in the streets of London, usually along with poultry and eggs. This trade is among the more ancient of the street-trades. Steam-vessels and railways, however, have so stocked the markets, that no hawking of butter or eggs, from any agricultural part, even the nearest to London, would be remunerative now. Eggs are brought in immense quantities from France and Belgium, though thirty, or even twenty years ago the notion having of a good French egg, at a London breakfast-table, would have been laughed at as an absurd attempt at an impossible achievement. The number of eggs now annually imported into this kingdom, is 98,000,000, half of which may be said to be the yearly consumption of London. No butter is now hawked, but sometimes a few "new laid" eggs are carried from a rural part to the nearest metropolitan suburb, and are sold readily enough, if the purveyor be known. Mr. M'Culloch estimates the average consumption of butter, in London, at 6,250,000 lbs. per annum, or 5 oz., weekly, each individual.

The hawking of cheese was never a prominent part of the street-trade. Of late, its sale in the streets, may be described as accidental. A considerable quantity of American cheese was hawked, or more commonly sold at a standing, five or six years ago; unto December last, and for three months preceding, cheese was sold in the streets which had been rejected from Government stores, as it would not "keep" for the period required; but it was good for immediate consumption, for which all street-goods are required. This, and the American cheese, were both sold in the streets at 3d. the pound; usually, at fair weights, I am told, for it might not be easy to deceive the poor in a thing of such frequent purchase as "half a quarter or a quarter" (of a pound) of cheese.

The total quantity of foreign cheese consumed, yearly, in the metropolis may be estimated at 25,000,000 lbs. weight, or half of the gross quantity annually imported.

The following statement shows the quantity and sum paid for the game and poultry sold in London streets:

5,000 grouse, at 1s. 9d. each	£	437
20,000 partridges, at 1s. 6d.		1,500
12,000 pheasants, at 3s. 6d.		2,100
5,000 snipes, at 8d.		160
20,000 hares, at 2s. 3d.		2,250
600,000 rabbits, at 7d.		17,500
500,000 fowls, at 1s. 6d.		37,500
20,000 geese, at 2s. 6d.		2,500
80,000 ducks, at 1s. 6d.		6,000
30,000 turkeys, at 3s. 6d.		5,250
10,000 live fowls and ducks, at 1s. 6d.		750
		£75,953

In this table I do not give the *refuse* game and poultry, bought sometimes for the mere feathers, when "undressed;" neither are the wild ducks nor woodcocks, nor those things of which the costers buy only exceptionally, included. Adding these, it may be said, that with the street sale of butter, cheese, and eggs, 80,000*l.* are annually expended in the streets on this class of articles.

OF THE SELLERS OF TREES, SHRUBS, FLOWERS (CUT AND IN POTS), ROOTS, SEEDS, AND BRANCHES.

THE street-sellers of whom I have now to treat comprise those who deal in trees and shrubs, in flowers (whether in pots, or merely with soil attached to the roots, or cut from the plant as it grows in the garden), and in seeds and branches (as of holly, mistletoe, ivy, yew, laurel, palm, lilac, and may). The "root-sellers" (as the dealers in flowers in pots are mostly called) rank, when in a prosperous business, with the highest "aristocracy" of the street-grocers. The condition of a portion of them, may be characterised by a term which is readily understood as "comfortable," that is to say, comparatively comfortable, when the circumstances of other street-sellers are considered. I may here remark, that though there are a great number of Scotchmen connected with horticultural labour in England, but more in the provincial than the metropolitan districts, there is not one Scotchman concerned in the metropolitan street-sale of flowers; nor, indeed, as I have good reason to believe, is there a single Scotchman earning his bread as a costermonger in London. A non-commissioned officer in an infantry regiment, a Scotchman, whom I met with a few months back, in the course of my inquiries concerning street musicians, told me that he thought any of his young countrymen, if hard pushed "to get a crust," would enlist, rather than resort, even under favourable circumstances, to any kind of street-sale in London.

The dealers in trees and shrubs are the same as the root-sellers.

The same may be said, but with some few exceptions, of the seed-sellers.

The street-trade in holly, mistletoe, and all kinds of evergreens known as "Christmas," is in the hands of the coster boys more than the men, while the trade in may, &c., is almost altogether confined to these lads.

The root-sellers do not reside in any particular localities, but there are more of them living in the outskirts than in the thickly populated streets.

The street-sellers of cut flowers present characteristics peculiarly their own. This trade is mostly in the hands of girls, who are of two classes. This traffic ranks with the street sale of water-cresses and congreves, that is to say, among the lowest grades of the street-trade, being pursued only by the very poor, or the very young.

OF THE QUANTITY OF SHRUBS, "ROOTS," FLOWERS, ETC., SOLD IN THE STREETS, AND OF THE BUYERS.

THE returns which I caused to be procured, to show the extent of the business carried on in the metropolitan markets, give the following results as to the quantity of trees, shrubs, flowers, roots, and branches, sold wholesale in London, as well as the proportion retailed in the streets.

TABLE SHOWING THE QUANTITY OF TREES, SHRUBS, FLOWERS, ROOTS, AND BRANCHES SOLD ANNUALLY, WHOLESALE, AT THE METROPOLITAN MARKETS, AND THE PROPORTION RETAILED IN THE STREETS.*

	Covent Garden.	Farringdon.	Total.	Proportion sold to Costers.
TREES AND SHRUBS.				
Firs	400 doz. roots	400	800	One-third.
Laurels	480 "	480	960	One-third.
Myrtles	1,440 "	1,120	2,560	One-fourth.
Rhododendrons	288 "	256	544	One-ninth.
Lilac	192 "	192	384	One-sixth.
Box	288 "	192	480	One-sixth.
Heaths (of all kinds)	1,600 "	1,440	3,040	One-fifth.
Broom and Furze	544 "	480	1,024	One-fourth.
Laurustinus	400 "	320	720	One-fourth.
Southernwood (Old Man)	960 "	480	1,440	One-half.
FLOWERS (IN POTS).				
Roses (Moss)	1,200 doz. pots	960	2,160	One-half.
Ditto (China)	1,200 "	960	2,160	One-half.
Fuchsias	1,200 "	960	2,160	One-half.
FLOWER ROOTS.				
Primroses	600 doz. roots	400	1,000	One-half.
Polyanthus	720 "	720	1,440	One-half.
Cowslips	720 "	480	1,200	One-half.
Daisies	800 "	600	1,400	One-half.
Wallflowers	960 "	960	1,920	One-half.
Candytufts	720 "	480	1,200	One-half.
Daffodils	720 "	480	1,200	One-half.
Violets	1,200 "	1,200	2,400	One-third.
Mignonette	2,000 "	1,800	3,800	One-sixth.
Stocks	1,600 "	1,280	2,880	One-sixth.
Pinks and Carnations	480 "	320	800	One-half.
Lilies of the Valley	144 "	144	288	One-fourth.
Pansies	600 "	480	1,080	One-fourth.
Lilies and Tulips	152 "	128	280	One-ninth.
Balsam	320 "	320	640	One-sixth.
Calceolarii	360 "	240	600	One-ninth.
Musk-plants	5,760 "	4,800	10,560	One-half.
London Pride	400 "	320	720	One-third.
Lupins	960 "	640	1,600	One-third.
China-asters	450 "	400	850	One-sixth.
Marigolds	5,760 "	4,800	10,560	One-eighth.
Dahlia	80 "	80	160	One-ninth.
Heliotrope	800 "	480	1,280	One-sixth.
Michaelmas Daisies	216 "	216	432	One-third.
FLOWERS (CUT).				
Violets	1,440 doz. bunches	1,280	2,720	One-half.
Wallflowers	3,200 "	1,600	4,800	One-half.
Lavender (green and dry)	1,600 "	1,200	4,120†	One-half.
Pinks	720 "	600	1,320	One-third.
Mignonette	2,000 "	1,600	3,600	One-half.
Lilies of the Valley	180 "	160	340	One-tenth.
Moss Roses	2,000 "	1,600	3,600	One-third.
China ditto	2,000 "	1,600	3,600	One-third.
Stocks	800 "	480	1,280	One-third.
BRANCHES.				
Holly	840 doz. bundles	720	1,640†	One-half.
Mistletoe	800 "	640	1,560†	One-half.
Ivy and Laurel	360 "	280	740†	One-half.
Lilac	96 "	64	150	One-half.
Palm	12 "	8	28†	One-half.
May	30 "	20	70†	One-half.

* The numbers here given do not include the shrubs, roots, &c., bought by the hawkers at the nursery gardens.
† These totals include the supplies sent to the other markets.