

board the Dutch eel-vessels. There's nothing to be got out of scaly fur'ners (foreigners.) I sell to the herring, and mackarel, and oyster-boats, when they're up. My great sale is in public-houses, but I sometimes sell 2*d.* or 3*d.* worth to private houses. I go out morning, noon, and night; and at night I go my round when people's having a bite of supper, perhaps, in the public-houses. I sell to the women of the town then. Yes, I give them credit. To-night, now (Saturday), I expect to receive 2*s.* 3*d.*, or near on to it, that I've trusted them this week. They mostly pay me on a Saturday night. I lose very little by them. I'm knocked about in public-houses by the Billingsgate roughs, and I've been bilked by the prigs. I've known at least six people try my trade, and fail in it, and I was glad to see them broke. I sell twice as much in cold weather as in warm.'

I ascertained that my informant sold three times as much as the other dealers, who confine their trade principally to an evening round. Reckoning that the chief man of business sells 3 gallons a day (which, at 1*d.* the quarter-pint, would be 8*s.*, my informant said 7*s.*), and that the other three together sell the same quantity, we find a street-expenditure on hot green peas of 25*0l.* and a street consumption of 1870 gallons. The peas, costing 2*s.* the two gallons, are vended for 4*s.* or 5*s.*, at the least, as they boil into more than double the quantity, and a gallon, retail, is 2*s.* 8*d.*; but the addition of vinegar, pepper, &c., may reduce the profit to cent. per cent., while there is the heaping up of every measure retail to reduce the profit. Thus, independent of any consideration as to the labour in boiling, &c. (generally done by the women), the principal man's profit is 21*s.* a week; that of the others 7*s.* each weekly.

The capital required to start in the business is—can, 2*s.* 6*d.*; vinegar-bottle and pepper-box, 4*d.*; saucers and spoons, 6*d.*; stock-money, about 2*s.*; cloth to wrap over the peas, 4*d.* (a vendor wearing out a cloth in three months); or an average of 9*s.* or 10*s.*

#### OF CATS' AND DOGS'-MEAT DEALERS.

The supply of food for cats and dogs is far greater than may be generally thought. "Vy, sir," said one of the dealers to me, "can you tell me 'ow many people's in London?" On my replying, upwards of two millions; "I don't know nothing 'vater," said my informant, "about millions, but I think there's a cat to every ten people, aye, and more than that; and so, sir, you can reckon." [I told him this gave a total of 200,000 cats in London; but the number of inhabited houses in the metropolis was 100,000 more than this, and though there was not a cat to every house, still, as many lodgers as well as householders kept cats, I added that I thought the total number of cats in London might be taken at the same number as the inhabited houses, or 300,000 in all.] "There's not near half so many dogs as cats. I must know, for they all knows me, and I sarves about 200 cats

and 70 dogs. Mine's a middling trade, but some does far better. Some cats has a hap'orth a day, some every other day; werry few can afford a penn'orth, but times is inferior. Dogs is better pay when you've a connection among 'em."

The cat and dogs'-meat dealers, or "carriers," as they call themselves, generally purchase the meat at the knackers' (horse-slaughters') yards. There are upwards of twenty of such yards in London; three or four are in White-chapel, one in Wandsworth, two in Cow-cross—one of the two last mentioned is the largest establishment in London—and there are two about Bermondsey. The proprietors of these yards purchase live and dead horses. They contract for them with large firms, such as brewers, coal-merchants, and large cab and 'bus yards, giving so much per head for their old live and dead horses through the year. The price varies from 2*l.* to 5*0s.* the carcass. The knackers also have contractors in the country (harness-makers and others), who bring or send up to town for them the live and dead stock of those parts. The dead horses are brought to the yard—two or three upon one cart, and sometimes five. The live ones are tied to the tail of these carts, and behind the tail of each other. Occasionally a string of fourteen or fifteen are brought up, head to tail, at one time. The live horses are purchased merely for slaughtering. If among the lot bought there should chance to be one that is young, but in bad condition, it is placed in the stable, fed up, and then put into the knacker's carts, or sold by them, or let on hire. Occasionally a fine horse has been rescued from death in this manner. One person is known to have bought an animal for 15*s.*, for which he afterwards got 150*l.* Frequently young horses that will not work in cabs—such as "jibs"—are sold to the horse-slaughters as useless. They are kept in the yard, and after being well fed, often turn out good horses. The live horses are slaughtered by the persons called "knackers." These men get upon an average 4*s.* a day. They begin work at twelve at night, because some of the flesh is required to be boiled before six in the morning; indeed, a great part of the meat is delivered to the carriers before that hour. The horse to be slaughtered has his mane clipped as short as possible (on account of the hair, which is valuable). It is then blinded with a piece of old apron smothered in blood, so that it may not see the slaughterman when about to strike. A pole-axe is used, and a cane, to put an immediate end to the animal's sufferings. After the animal is slaughtered, the hide is taken off, and the flesh cut from the bones in large pieces. These pieces are termed, according to the part from which they are cut, hind-quarters, fore-quarters, cram-bones, throats, necks, briskets, backs, ribs, kidney pieces, hearts, tongues, liver and lights. The bones (called "racks" by the knackers) are chopped up and boiled, in order to extract the fat, which is used for greasing common harness, and the wheels of carts and drags, &c. The bones themselves are sold for

manure. The pieces of flesh are thrown into large coppers or pans, about nine feet in diameter and four feet deep. Each of these pans will hold about three good-sized horses. Sometimes two large brewers' horses will fill them, and sometimes as many as four "poor" cab-horses may be put into them. The flesh is boiled about an hour and 20 minutes for a "killed" horse, and from two hours to two hours and 20 minutes for a dead horse (a horse dying from age or disease). The flesh, when boiled, is taken from the coppers, laid on the stones, and sprinkled with water to cool it. It is then weighed out in pieces of 112, 56, 28, 21, 14, 7, and 3½ lbs. weight. These are either taken round in a cart to the "carriers," or, at about five, the carriers call at the yard to purchase, and continue doing so till twelve in the day. The price is 14s. per cwt. in winter, and 16s. in summer. The tripe is served out at 12 lb. for 6d. All this is for cats and dogs. The carriers then take the meat round town, wherever their "walk" may lie. They sell it to the public at the rate of 2½d. per lb., and in small pieces, on skewers, at a farthing, a halfpenny, and a penny each. Some carriers will sell as much as a hundred-weight in a day, and about half a hundred-weight is the average quantity disposed of by the carriers in London. Some sell much cheaper than others. These dealers will frequently knock at the doors of persons whom they have seen served by another on the previous day, and show them that they can let them have a larger quantity of meat for the same money. The class of persons belonging to the business are mostly those who have been unable to obtain employment at their trade. Occasionally a person is bred to it, having been engaged as a lad by some carrier to go round with the barrow and assist him in his business. These boys will, after a time, find a "walk" for themselves, beginning first with a basket, and ultimately rising to a barrow. Many of the carriers give light weight to the extent of 2 oz. and 4 oz. in the pound. At one yard alone near upon 100 carriers purchase meat, and there are, upon an average, 150 horses slaughtered there every week. Each slaughter-house may be said to do, one with another, 60 horses per week throughout the year, which, reckoning the London slaughter-houses at 12, gives a total of 720 horses killed every week in the metropolis, or, in round numbers, 37,500 in the course of the year.

The London cat and dogs'-meat carriers or sellers—nearly all men—number at the least 1,000.

The slaughtermen are said to reap large fortunes very rapidly—indeed, the carriers say they coin the money. Many of them retire after a few years, and take large farms. One, after 12 years' business, retired with several thousand pounds, and has now three large farms. The carriers are men, women, and boys. Very few women do as well as the men at it. The carriers "are generally sad drunkards." Out of five hundred, it is said three hundred at least spend 1l. a head a week in drink. One party in

the trade told me that he knew a carrier who would often spend 10s. in liquor at one sitting. The profit the carriers make upon the meat is at present only a penny per pound. In the summer time the profit per pound is reduced to a half-penny, owing to the meat being dearer on account of its scarcity. The carriers give a great deal of credit—indeed, they take but little ready money. On some days they do not come home with more than 2s. One with a middling walk pays for his meat 7s. 6d. per day. For this he has half a hundred-weight. This produces him as much as 11s. 6d., so that his profit is 4s.; which, I am assured, is about a fair average of the earnings of the trade. One carrier is said to have amassed 1,000l. at the business. He usually sold from 1½ to 2 cwt. every morning, so that his profits were generally from 16s. to 1l. per day. But the trade is much worse now. There are so many at it, they say, that there is barely a living for any. A carrier assured me that he seldom went less than 30, and frequently 40 miles, through the streets every day. The best districts are among the houses of tradesmen, mechanics, and labourers. The coachmen in the mews at the back of the squares are very good customers. "The work lays thicker there," said my informant. Old maids are bad, though very plentiful, customers. They cheapen the carriers down so, that they can scarcely live at the business. "They will pay one halfpenny and owe another, and forget that after a day or two." The cats' meat dealers generally complain of their losses from bad debts. Their customers require credit frequently to the extent of 1l. "One party owes me 15s. now," said a carrier to me, "and many 10s.; in fact, very few people pay ready money for the meat."

The carriers frequently serve as much as ten pennyworths to one person in a day. One gentleman has as much as 4 lbs. of meat each morning for two Newfoundland dogs; and there was one woman—a black—who used to have as much as 16 pennyworth every day. This person used to get out on the roof of the house and throw it to the cats on the tiles. By this she brought so many stray cats round about the neighbourhood, that the parties in the vicinity complained; it was quite a nuisance. She would have the meat always brought to her before ten in the morning, or else she would send to a shop for it, and between ten and eleven in the morning the noise and cries of the hundreds of stray cats attracted to the spot was "terrible to hear." When the meat was thrown to the cats on the roof, the riot, and confusion, and fighting, was beyond description. "A beer-shop man," I was told, "was obliged to keep five or six dogs to drive the cats from his walls." There was also a mad woman in Islington, who used to have 14 lbs. of meat a day. The party who supplied her had his money often at 2l. and 3l. at a time. She had as many as thirty cats at times in her house. Every stray one that came she would take in and support. The stench was so great

that she was obliged to be ejected. The best days for the cats' meat business are Mondays, Tuesdays, and Saturdays. A double quantity of meat is sold on the Saturday; and on that day and Monday and Tuesday the weekly customers generally pay.

"My father was a baker by trade," said a carrier to me, "but through an enlargement of the heart he was obliged to give up working at his trade; leaning over the trough increased his complaint so severely, that he used to fall down, and be obliged to be brought home. This made him take to the cats' and dogs' meat trade, and he brought me up to it. I do pretty comfortably. I have a very good business, having been all my life at it. If it wasn't for the bad debts I should do much better; but some of the people I trust leave the houses, and actually take in a double quantity of meat the day before. I suppose there is at the present moment as much as 20*l.* owing to me that I never expect to see a farthing of."

The generality of the dealers wear a shiny hat, black plush waistcoat and sleeves, a blue apron, corduroy trousers, and a blue and white spotted handkerchief round their necks. Some, indeed, will wear two and three handkerchiefs round their necks, this being fashionable among them. A great many meet every Friday afternoon in the donkey-market, Smithfield, and retire to a public-house adjoining, to spend the evening.

A "cats' meat carrier" who supplied me with information was more comfortably situated than any of the poorer classes that I have yet seen. He lived in the front room of a second floor, in an open and respectable quarter of the town, and his lodgings were the perfection of comfort and cleanliness in an humble sphere. It was late in the evening when I reached the house. I found the "carrier" and his family preparing for supper. In a large morocco leather easy chair sat the cats' meat carrier himself; his "blue apron and black shiny hat" had disappeared, and he wore a "dress" coat and a black satin waistcoat instead. His wife, who was a remarkably pretty woman, and of very attractive manners, wore a "Dolly Varden" cap, placed jauntily at the back of her head, and a drab merino dress. The room was cosily carpeted, and in one corner stood a mahogany "crib" with cane-work sides, in which one of the children was asleep. On the table was a clean white table-cloth, and the room was savoury with the steaks, and mashed potatoes that were cooking on the fire. Indeed, I have never yet seen greater comfort in the abodes of the poor. The cleanliness and wholesomeness of the apartment were the more striking from the unpleasant associations connected with the calling.

It is believed by one who has been engaged at the business for 25 years, that there are from 900 to 1,000 horses, averaging 2 cwt. of meat each—little and big—boiled down every week; so that the quantity of cats' and dogs' meat used throughout London is about 200,000 lbs. per

week, and this, sold at the rate of 2½*d.* per lb., gives 2,000*l.* a week for the money spent in cats' and dogs' meat, or upwards of 100,000*l.* a year, which is at the rate of 100*l.*-worth sold annually by each carrier. The profits of the carriers may be estimated at about 50*l.* each per annum.

The capital required to start in this business varies from 1*l.* to 2*l.* The stock-money needed is between 5*s.* and 10*s.* The barrow and basket, weights and scales, knife and steel, or black-stone, cost about 2*l.* when new, and from 15*s.* to 4*s.* second-hand.

#### OF THE STREET-SALE OF DRINKABLES.

The street-sellers of the drinkables, who have now to be considered, belong to the same class as I have described in treating of the sale of street-provisions generally. The buyers are not precisely of the same class, for the street-eatables often supply a meal, but with the exception of the coffee-stalls, and occasionally of the rice-milk, the drinkables are more of a luxury than a meal. Thus the buyers are chiefly those who have "a penny to spare," rather than those who have "a penny to dine upon." I have described the different classes of purchasers of each potable, and perhaps the accounts—as a picture of street-life—are even more curious than those I have given of the purchasers of the eatables—of (literally) the diners out.

#### OF COFFEE-STALL KEEPERS.

THE vending of tea and coffee, in the streets, was little if at all known twenty years ago, saloop being then the beverage supplied from stalls to the late and early wayfarers. Nor was it until after 1842 that the stalls approached to anything like their present number, which is said to be upwards of 300—the majority of the proprietors being women. Prior to 1824, coffee was in little demand, even among the smaller tradesmen or farmers, but in that year the duty having been reduced from 1*s.* to 6*d.* per lb., the consumption throughout the kingdom in the next seven years was nearly trebled, the increase being from 7,933,041 lbs., in 1824, to 22,745,627 lbs., in 1831. In 1842, the duty on coffee, was fixed at 4*d.*, from British possessions, and from foreign countries at 6*d.*

But it was not owing solely to the reduced price of coffee, that the street-vendors of it increased in the year or two subsequent to 1842, at least 100 per cent. The great facilities then offered for a cheap adulteration, by mixing ground chicory with the ground coffee, was an enhancement of the profits, and a greater temptation to embark in the business, as a smaller amount of capital would suffice. Within these two or three years, this cheapness has been still further promoted, by the medium of adulteration, the chicory itself being, in its turn, adulterated by the admixture of baked carrots, and the like saccharine roots, which, of course, are not subjected to any duty, while