

On inquiry respecting their homes, and where they slept on the preceding night, it appeared that—

82 slept in Casual Wards, 36 in Refuges, 8 in Lodging-houses, 6 in Covent Garden, 3 in Pottery Kilns, 2 in Sewers, 5 in Loft, Shed, &c. and 1 slept in a crevasse of Blackfriars' Bridge, 1 walked about all night; 18 without home under 3 months; 17 do. do. 6 months; 17 do. do. 9 months; 13 do. do. 12 months; 24 do. do. 18 months; 7 do. do. 24 months; 22 do. do. 36 months; 11 do. do. 48 months; 6 do. do. 60 months; 5 more than 60 months; 4 indefinite, of whom one was "always" without a home, born in a workhouse.

Their moral character, so far as imprisonment could indicate it, was shown by—

130 never having been in prison, 12 in prison for dishonesty once, 2 in prison for dishonesty twice.

Three-fourths of the 150 who attended were found to be forlorn and wretched, squalid and half-naked. Many were quite barefooted. Questions were put and answered variously, thus:—"How do you get your living?" "I sell fuses and begs." "I holds horses." "I carry parcels." "Oh, I do anything." "Have you any parents?" "No," or "Yes" "but I don't know where they are;" "I've a mother, and she drinks, and she's on the streets, like me;" and so on.

Eager was the expectation as to supper after the poor little fellows came in out of the rain and took their seats. Their behaviour was good; some of them were noticed trying to cleanse their faces by scrubbing them with their damp caps.

At last the "waiters" placed the first half of the supper on the tables. Be it here observed that the shoemakers' and carpenters' shops were cleared out, and made ready for this unique supper-party. First of all, half a pound of good roast-beef and a large roll were placed before each guest, and were quickly disposed of; then came a pint of coffee, with a pound of excellent plum-pudding. These good things were served out under the superintendence of the master and matron, and enjoyment was mingled with wonder on the part of some, and of real gratitude in the case of others.

It had been expected that at least 100 would have received and accepted the invitation to supper, while only about one-third did so. When those who came were asked the reason of the small attendance, one said, "They won't come 'cos it would be lots of jaw" (speech-making, or good advice) "and nuffin to eat;" another said, "Becos they don't like bobbies (policemen) askin' questions; and a third said, "Cos they knowed jolly well what a sell it would be, and they wouldn't be fooled." The suspicion and want of confidence here indicated are easily accounted for. These children never knew what disinterested kindness was; and Christianity, if it had occasionally been brought up before their thoughts, had not been of that divine pattern set by Him who, while He yearned over the souls, and sought above all things to woo and win to Himself the "sheep without a Shepherd," yet frowned on the disciples who said, "Send them away," and answered, "Give ye them to eat," and then Himself supplied the

necessities of the famishing throng. Now, thank God! this belief of the outcasts of the streets in "jaw" without bread for the hungry, or money for the unsheltered and unlodged, has been scattered to the winds. When the next invitations are sent out, depend upon it, their knowledge of the "grand supper and four real pennies" will be a talisman of irresistible attraction.

*Results.*—On the day of my visit to Queen Street Refuge, I found, as already stated, that fifty-four of the boys who had partaken of the supper had presented themselves to the master, had been taken in, and were, as I myself witnessed, happy and busy in their respective and chosen trades. Since then many other boys have been received.

We have now to record that greater results than those already narrated are about to be achieved; for, immediately after the famous supper, there was a general adjournment to the great room of the refuge up-stairs, and Lord Shaftesbury addressed a series of interrogatories to the boys who had been feasted that evening. "Let all those boys that have ever been in prison hold up their hands," said Lord Shaftesbury. From twenty to thirty held up their hands. Then, "Let those who have been in prison twice hold up their hands." About ten did so. "How many in prison three times? Five hands were upraised. "Is it the case, that most of you boys are running about the town all day, and sleeping about the town where you can at night?" "Yes," was the general response. "Supposing," said Lord Shaftesbury, "that there were a big ship large enough to contain a thousand boys, would you like to be put on board to be taught trades, or trained for the navy and merchant service?" A forest of hands was raised. Do you think that as many more boys out of the streets would say the same?" Answer, "We do."

"There had never been anything," says the 'Ragged School Magazine,' "more touching in the way of benevolent experience than the earnestness of those shouts, and the eager looks with which they were accompanied. On more than one face among the visitors tears were to be seen, and those most steeled to spectacles of human misery evinced, by the twitching of their muscles, the struggle it cost them to maintain some appearance of *sang-froid*. But what a case it is for us to consider? What a case, for example, for the citizens of London; for the wise and good everywhere; for those especially who profess to be guided by religious principles, and to be actuated by benevolent motives! The streets are the great preparatory schools for the jails, and society pays more for this sort of education than it would cost to remove by force the whole of these unhappy pupils, and keep them in idleness for the rest of their days.

"There can be no doubt that the greater part of the juvenile vagrants of the metropolis could be reclaimed, and that such a work of mercy would bear temporal fruit, as well as that higher and holier fruit which it is the chief object of the philanthropist to cultivate. Already at the Bloomsbury Refuge, shelter, food, and teaching are given to about 100 desolate boys; and if the public would furnish the needed