

### THE HOUSELESS POOR.

On Wednesday night, at ten o'clock, the Lord Mayor, the Recorder, Mr. Under-Sheriff Anderton, and Mr. Bunting the City architect, visited the establishment for the Houseless Poor, where they found nearly a hundred persons, who, after being supplied with food, were accommodated with shelter for the night. They afterwards visited the West London Union, near Smithfield, and upon inquiry for the casual ward, were informed that this establishment was at Battle-bridge, a distance of two miles and a half off. They immediately repaired thither, and found the building to consist of a large stable, containing fourteen horse-stalls, the only provision for the lodging of the casual poor, some few men being huddled together round a fire. The place was totally destitute of either straw or bedding of any description whatever.

The poor creatures, in answer to inquiries made of them, stated that, upon entering the building, a small portion of bread had been given to them, but that it was the custom to turn them out in the morning without anything to eat, unless they first broke a certain quantity of stones, of which there was a large heap in the yard.

The Lord Mayor and his friends next entered an adjoining cattle-shed, where they found two destitute females huddled together on a rug, lying on the bare ground, almost perished with cold, and without either fire or food. These two persons were relieved by the visiting party with a small sum of money, for the purpose of enabling them to obtain the common necessaries of life in the morning.

The visiting party next proceeded to the City Gaol, at Holloway, where they found 455 prisoners snugly housed, in separate apartments, with an abundance of warm bedding and blankets, and other articles necessary for the personal comfort of mankind. The contrast between the provision for the criminal and the destitute was beyond conception.

Three inquests were held at the London Hospital, before Mr. W. Baker, coroner, on the bodies of three men, who had died from destitution. The first was upon Wm. Clark, labourer, who suddenly expired in Rosemary-lane, Whitechapel, and who had, it appeared from the statement of Mr. Ryan, surgeon, of Leman-street, sunk from the want of the common necessaries of life. The second inquest was upon the body of a person unknown, apparently from the dress a respectable mechanic, who had been found dead at two o'clock in the morning upon a doorstep in Mount-street, Whitechapel, and whose body had been immediately taken to the hospital, with the hope that life might not be extinct. The third was upon a Malay mariner, who was found in a state of great prostration, in a neighbouring street, on Tuesday afternoon, and expired the following morning. Mr. Samuel J. Burch, the resident medical officer of the hospital, stated in evidence that he was of opinion both these men died from exhaustion produced by privation. The jury returned a verdict in all these cases, that the deceased had died from "exhaustion, want, and privation." A strong feeling of indignation was displayed by most of the jury that in this Christian city three deaths from starvation should take place in one locality alone, and they strongly urged that the coroner should write to the Secretary of State, expressing, as their opinion on this important subject, that prompt measures should be adopted to provide for the houseless poor of this great metropolis. One jurymen remarked that the Whitechapel guardians refused relief to casual poor, and he has since favoured us with a copy of the notice posted at the Whitechapel workhouse gates:—

"Notice is hereby given that on and after the 23rd day of August, 1856, the casual relief ward will be closed, and no person admitted after that date."