

Marx Hardy Machiavelli Joyce Austen
Defoe Abbot Melville Montaigne Cooper Emerson Hugo
Stoker Wilde Christie Maupassant Haggard Chesterton Molière Eliot Grimm
Garnett Engels Byron Schiller
Goethe Hawthorne Smith Kafka
Cotton Fitzgerald Dostoyevsky Hall
Baum Henry Kipling Doyle Willis
Leslie Dumas Flaubert Nietzsche Turgenev Balzac
Stockton Vatsyayana Crane
Burroughs Verne
Curtis Tocqueville Gogol Busch
Homer Tolstoy Whitman
Darwin Thoreau Twain
Potter Zola Lawrence Dickens Plato Scott
Kant Freud Jowett Stevenson Andersen Burton Harte
London Descartes Cervantes Wells Hesse
Poe Aristotle Wells Voltaire Cooke
Hale James Hastings Shakespeare Chambers Irving
Bunner Richter Chekhov da Shaw Wodehouse
Doré Dante Pushkin Alcott
Swift Chekhov Newton



tredition was established in 2006 by Sandra Latusseck and Soenke Schulz. Based in Hamburg, Germany, tredition offers publishing solutions to authors and publishing houses, combined with worldwide distribution of printed and digital book content. tredition is uniquely positioned to enable authors and publishing houses to create books on their own terms and without conventional manufacturing risks.

For more information please visit: www.tredition.com

TREDITION CLASSICS

This book is part of the TREDITION CLASSICS series. The creators of this series are united by passion for literature and driven by the intention of making all public domain books available in printed format again - worldwide. Most TREDITION CLASSICS titles have been out of print and off the bookstore shelves for decades. At tredition we believe that a great book never goes out of style and that its value is eternal. Several mostly non-profit literature projects provide content to tredition. To support their good work, tredition donates a portion of the proceeds from each sold copy. As a reader of a TREDITION CLASSICS book, you support our mission to save many of the amazing works of world literature from oblivion. See all available books at www.tredition.com.



The content for this book has been graciously provided by Project Gutenberg. Project Gutenberg is a non-profit organization founded by Michael Hart in 1971 at the University of Illinois. The mission of Project Gutenberg is simple: To encourage the creation and distribution of eBooks. Project Gutenberg is the first and largest collection of public domain eBooks.

Mystic London: or, Phases of occult life in the metropolis

Charles Maurice Davies

Imprint

This book is part of TREDITION CLASSICS

Author: Charles Maurice Davies

Cover design: Buchgut, Berlin - Germany

Publisher: tredition GmbH, Hamburg - Germany

ISBN: 978-3-8472-2242-2

www.tredition.com

www.tredition.de

Copyright:

The content of this book is sourced from the public domain.

The intention of the TREDITION CLASSICS series is to make world literature in the public domain available in printed format. Literary enthusiasts and organizations, such as Project Gutenberg, worldwide have scanned and digitally edited the original texts. tredition has subsequently formatted and redesigned the content into a modern reading layout. Therefore, we cannot guarantee the exact reproduction of the original format of a particular historic edition. Please also note that no modifications have been made to the spelling, therefore it may differ from the orthography used today.

MYSTIC LONDON:

OR,

PHASES OF OCCULT LIFE IN
THE METROPOLIS.

BY

REV. CHARLES MAURICE DAVIES, D.D.

AUTHOR OF "ORTHODOX" AND "UNORTHODOX LON-
DON," ETC.

*"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."*

Hamlet.

LONDON:

TINSLEY BROTHERS, 8, CATHERINE STREET, STRAND.

1875.

[All rights of Translation and Reproduction are reserved.]

LONDON:

SAVILL, EDWARDS AND CO., PRINTERS, CHANDOS STREET,
COVENT GARDEN.

INTRODUCTION.

It is perhaps scarcely necessary to say that I use the term Mystic, as applied to the larger portion of this volume, in its technical sense to signify my own *initiation* into some of the more occult phases of metropolitan existence. It is only to the Spiritualistic, or concluding portion of my work, that the word applies in its ordinary signification.

C. M. D.

[1]

MYSTIC LONDON.

CHAPTER I.

LONDON ARABS.

Of all the protean forms of misery that meet us in the bosom of that "stony-hearted stepmother, London," there is none that appeals so directly to our sympathies as the spectacle of a destitute child. In the case of the grown man or woman, sorrow and suffering are often traceable to the faults, or at best to the misfortunes of the sufferers themselves; but in the case of the child they are mostly, if not always, vicarious. The fault, or desertion, or death of the natural protectors, turns loose upon the desert of our streets those nomadic hordes of Bedouins, male and female, whose presence is being made especially palpable just now, and whose reclamation is a perplexing, yet still a hopeful problem. In the case of the adult Arab, there is a life's work to undo, and the facing of that fact it is which makes some of our bravest workers drop their hands in despair. With these young Arabs, on the contrary, it is only the wrong [2] bias of a few early years to correct, leaving carte blanche for any amount of hope in youth, maturity, and old age. Being desirous of forming, for my own edification, some notion of the amount of the evil existing, and the efforts made to counteract it, I planned a pilgrimage into this Arabia Infelix—this Petraea of the London flagstones; and purpose setting down here, in brief, a few of my experiences, for the information of stay-at-home travellers, and still more for the sake of pointing out to such as may be disposed to aid in the work of rescuing these little Arabs the proper channels for their beneficence. Selecting, then, the Seven Dials and Bethnal Green as the foci of my observation in West and East London respectively, I set out for the former one bleak March night, and by way of breaking ground, applied to the first police-constable I met on that undesirable beat for information as to my course. After one or two failures, I met with an officer literally "active and intelligent," who conveyed me through several of that network of streets surrounding

the Seven Dials, leaving me to my own devices when he had given me the general bearings of the district it would be desirable to visit.

My first raid was on the Ragged School and Soup Kitchen in Charles Street, Drury Lane, an evil-looking and unfragrant locality; but the institution in question stands so close to the main thoroughfare that the most fastidious may visit it with ease. Here [3] I found some twenty Arabs assembled for evening school. They were of all ages, from seven to fifteen, and their clothing was in an inverse ratio to their dirt—very little of the former, and a great deal of the latter. They moved about with their bare feet in the most feline way, like the veritable Bedouin himself. There they were, however, over greasy slates and grimy copy-books, in process of civilization. The master informed me that his special difficulties arose from the attractions of the theatre and the occasional intrusion of wild Arabs, who came only to kick up a row. At eight o'clock the boys were to be regaled with a brass band practice, so, finding from one of the assembled Arabs that there was a second institution of the kind in King Street, Long Acre, I passed on thereto. Here I was fortunate enough to find the presiding genius in the person of a young man engaged in business during the day, and devoting his extra time to the work of civilizing the barbarians of this district. Sunday and week-day services, night schools, day schools, Bands of Hope, temperance meetings, and last, not least, the soup kitchen, were the means at work here. Not a single officer is paid. The task is undertaken "all for love, and nothing for reward," and it has thriven so far that my presence interrupted a debate between the gentleman above-mentioned and one of his coadjutors on the subject of taking larger premises. The expenses were met by the weekly offerings, and I was surprised to see by a [4] notice posted in the room where the Sunday services are held, that the sum total for the past week was only 19s. 4d. So there must be considerable sacrifice of something more than time to carry on this admirable work. Under the guidance of the second gentleman mentioned above, I proceeded to the St. George's and St. Giles's Refuge in Great Queen Street, where boys are admitted on their own application, the only qualification being destitution. Here they are housed, clothed, boarded, and taught such trades as they may be fitted for, and not lost sight of until they are provided with situations. A hundred and fifty-four

was the number of this truly miraculous draught from the great ocean of London streets, whom I saw all comfortably bedded in one spacious dormitory. Downstairs were the implements and products of the day's work, dozens of miniature cobblers' appliances, machines for sawing and chopping firewood, &c., whilst, in a spacious refectory on the first floor, I was informed, the resident Arabs extended on a Friday their accustomed hospitality to other tribes, to such an extent, that the party numbered about 500. Besides the 154 who were fortunate enough to secure beds, there were twenty new arrivals, who had to be quartered on the floor for the night; but at all events they had a roof above them, and were out of the cruel east wind that made Arabia Petraea that evening an undesirable resting-place indeed. Lights were put out, and doors closed, when I left, as this is not a [5] night refuge; but notices are posted, I am informed, in the various casual wards and temporary refuges, directing boys to this. There is a kindred institution for girls in Broad Street. Such was my first experience of the western portion of Arabia Infelix.

The following Sunday I visited the Mission Hall belonging to Bloomsbury Chapel, in Moor Street, Soho, under the management of Mr. M'Cree, and the nature of the work is much the same as that pursued at King Street. The eleven o'clock service was on this particular day devoted to children, who were assembled in large numbers, singing their cheerful hymns, and listening to a brief, practical, and taking address. These children, however, were of a class above the Arab type, being generally well dressed. I passed on thence to what was then Mr. Brock's chapel, where I found my veritable Arabs, whom I had seen in bed the previous evening, arrayed in a decent suit of "sober livery," and perched up in a high gallery to gather what they could comprehend of Mr. Brock's discourse—not very much, I should guess; for that gentleman's long Latinized words would certainly fire a long way over their heads, high as was their position. I found the whole contingent of children provided for at the refuge was 400, including those on board the training ship *Chichester* and the farm at Bisley, near Woking, Surrey. This is certainly the most complete way of dealing with [6] the Arabs par excellence, as it contemplates the case of utter destitution and homelessness. It need scarcely be said, however, that such a work must enlarge its boundaries very much, in order to make any appreciable

impression on the vast amount of such destitution. Here, nevertheless, is the germ, and it is already fructifying most successfully. The other institutions, dealing with larger masses of children, aim at civilizing them at home, and so making each home a centre of influence.

Passing back again to the King Street Mission Hall, I found assembled there the band of fifty missionaries, male and female, who visit every Sunday afternoon the kitchens of the various lodging-houses around the Seven Dials. Six hundred kitchens are thus visited every week. After roll-call, and a brief address, we sallied forth, I myself accompanying Mr. Hatton—the young man to whom the establishment of the Mission is due—and another of his missionaries. I had heard much of the St. Giles's Kitchens, but failed to realize any idea of the human beings swarming by dozens and scores in those subterranean regions. Had it not been for the fact that nearly every man was smoking, the atmosphere would have been unbearable. In most of the kitchens they were beguiling the ennui of Sunday afternoon with cards; but the game was invariably suspended on our arrival. Some few removed their hats—for all wore them—and a smaller number still joined in a verse or two [7] of a hymn, and listened to a portion of Scripture and a few words of exhortation. One or two seemed interested, others smiled sardonically; the majority kept a dogged silence. Some read their papers and refused the tracts and publications offered them. These, I found, were the Catholics. I was assured there were many men there who themselves, or whose friends, had occupied high positions. I was much struck with the language of one crop-headed young fellow of seventeen or eighteen, who, seeing me grope my way, said, "They're not very lavish with the gas here, sir, are they?" It may appear that this "experience" has little bearing on the Arab boys; but really some of the inmates of these kitchens *were* but boys. Those we visited were in the purlieu of the old "Rookery," and for these dens, I was informed, the men paid fourpence a night! Surely a little money invested in decent dwellings for such people would be well and even remuneratively spent. The kitchens, my informant—who has spent many years among them—added, are generally the turning point between honesty and crime. The discharged soldier or mechanic out

of work is there herded with the professional thief or burglar, and learns his trade and gets to like his life.

The succeeding evening I devoted first of all to the Girls' Refuge, 19, Broad Street, St. Giles's. Here were sixty-two girls of the same class as the boys in Great Queen Street, who remain until provided with [8] places as domestic servants. A similar number were in the Home at Ealing. The Institution itself is the picture of neatness and order. I dropped in quite unexpectedly; and any visitor who may be induced to follow my example, will not fail to be struck with the happy, "homely" look of everything, the clean, cheerful appearance of the female Arabs, and the courtesy and kindness of the matron. These girls are considered to belong to St. Giles's parish, as the boys to Bloomsbury Chapel. So far the good work has been done by the Dissenters and Evangelical party in the Established Church. The sphere of the High Church—as I was reminded by the Superintendent Sergeant—is the Newport Market Refuge and Industrial Schools. Here, besides the male and female refuges, is a Home for Destitute Boys, who are housed and taught on the same plan as at St. Giles's. Their domicile is even more cosy than the other, and might almost tempt a boy to act the part of an "amateur Arab." I can only say the game that was going on, previously to bed, in the large covered play room, with bare feet and in shirt sleeves, was enough to provoke the envy of any member of a Dr. Blimber's "Establishment." The Institution had just had a windfall in the shape of one of those agreeable 1000*l.* cheques that have been flying about lately, or their resources would have been cramped; but the managers are wisely sensible that such windfalls do not come every day, [9] and so forbear enlarging their borders as they could wish.

Strangely enough, the Roman Catholics, who usually outdo us in their work among the poor, seemed a little behindhand in this special department of settling the Arabs. They have schools largely attended in Tudor Place, Tottenham Court Road, White Lion Street, Seven Dials, &c., but, as far as I could ascertain, nothing local in the shape of a Refuge. To propagate the faith may be all very well, and will be only the natural impulse of a man sincere in his own belief; but we must not forget that these Arabs have bodies as well as souls, and that those bodies have been so shamefully debased and neglected as to drag the higher energies down with them; and it is a

great question whether it is not absolutely necessary to begin on the very lowest plane first, and so to work towards the higher. Through the body and the mind we may at last reach the highest sphere of all.

Without for one moment wishing to write down the "religious" element, it is, I repeat, a grave question whether the premature introduction of that element does not sometimes act as a deterrent, and frustrate the good that might otherwise be done. Still there is the great fact, good *is* being done. It would be idle to carp at any means when the end is so thoroughly good. I could not help, as I passed from squalid kitchen to kitchen that Sunday [10] afternoon, feeling Lear's words ring through my mind:—

O, I have ta'en
Too little care of this. Take physic, pomp,
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
That thou mayst shake the superflux to them,
And show the heavens more just.

And now "Eastward ho!" for "experiences" in Bethnal Green.

[11]

CHAPTER II.

EAST LONDON ARABS.

Notwithstanding my previous experiences among the Western tribes of Bedouins whose locale is the Desert of the Seven Dials, I must confess to considerable strangeness when first I penetrated the wilderness of Bethnal Green. Not only was it utterly terra incognita to me, but, with their manifold features in common, the want and squalor of the East have traits distinct from those of the West. I had but the name of one Bethnal Green parish and of one lady—Miss Macpherson—and with these slender data I proceeded to my work, the results of which I again chronicle seriatim.

Passing from the Moorgate Street Station I made for the Eastern Counties Terminus at Shoreditch, and soon after passing it struck off to my right in the Bethnal Green Road. Here, amid a pervading atmosphere of bird-fanciers and vendors of live pets in general, I found a Mission Hall, belonging to I know not what denomination, and, aided by a vigorous policeman, kicked—in the absence of knocker or bell—at all the doors, without result. Nobody was there. [12] I went on to the Bethnal Green parish which had been named to me as the resort of nomade tribes, and found the incumbent absent in the country for a week or so, and the Scripture-reader afraid, in his absence, to give much information. He ventured, however, to show me the industrial school, where some forty children were employed in making match-boxes for Messrs. Bryant and May. However, as I was told that the incumbent in question objected very decidedly to refuges and ragged schools, and thought it much better for the poor to strain a point and send their little ones to school, I felt that was hardly the regimen to suit my Arabian friends, who were evidently teeming in that locality. I was even returning home with the view of getting further geographical particulars of this Eastern Arabia Petraea, when, as a last resource, I was directed to a refuge in Commercial Street. I rang here, and found myself in the presence of the veritable Miss Macpherson herself, with whom I passed two pleasant and instructive hours.

At starting, Miss Macpherson rather objected to being made the subject of an article—first of all, for the very comprehensible reason that such publicity would draw down upon her a host of visitors; and when I suggested that visitors probably meant funds, she added a second, and not quite so comprehensible an objection—that these funds themselves might alloy the element of Faith in which the work had been so [13] far carried on. She had thoroughly imbibed the spirit of Müller, whose Home at Bristol was professedly the outcome of Faith and Prayer alone. However, on my promise to publish only such particulars—name, locality, &c.—as she might approve, this lady gave me the details of her truly wonderful work. The building in which I found her had been erected to serve as large warehouses, and here 110 of the most veritable Arabs were housed, fed, taught, and converted into Christians, when so convertible. Should they prove impressionable, Miss Macpherson then contem-

plates their emigration to Canada. Many had already been sent out; and her idea was to extend her operations in this respect: not, be it observed, to cast hundreds of the scum of the East End of London upon Canada—a proceeding to which the Canadians would very naturally object—but to form a Home on that side to be fed from the Homes on this, and so to remove from the old scenes of vice and temptation those who had been previously trained in the refuges here. She has it in contemplation to take a large hotel in Canada, and convert it into an institution of this kind; and I fancy it was the possibility that publicity might aid this larger scheme which eventually induced the good lady to let the world so far know what she is doing. At all events, she gave me *carte blanche* to publish the results of my observations.

In selecting and dealing with the inmates of her [14] refuges, Miss Macpherson avails herself of the science of phrenology, in which she believes, and she advances good reason for so doing. I presume my phrenological development must have been satisfactory, since she not only laid aside her objection to publicity, but even allowed me to carry off with me her MS. "casebooks," from which I cull one or two of several hundred:—

"1. T. S., aged ten (March 5, 1869).—An orphan. Mother died in St. George's Workhouse. Father killed by coming in contact with a diseased sheep, being a slaughterman. A seller of boxes in the street. Slept last in a bed before Christmas. Slept in hay-carts, under a tarpaulin. Says the prayers his mother "taught him."

"2. J. H., aged twelve (March 5).—No home but the streets. Father killed by an engine-strap, being an engineer. Mother died of a broken heart. Went into — — Workhouse; but ran away through ill-treatment last December. Slept in ruins near Eastern Counties Railway. *Can't remember* when he last lay in a bed."

"3. A. R., aged eleven (March 5).—Mother and father left him and two brothers in an empty room in H— — Street. Policeman, hearing them crying, broke open the door and took them to the workhouse. His two brothers died. Was moved from workhouse by grandmother, and she, unable to support him, turned him out on the streets. Slept in railway ruins; lived [15] by begging. July 24, sent to Home No. 1 as a reward for good conduct."

Besides thus rescuing hundreds of homeless ones, Miss Macpherson has in many instances been the means of restoring runaway children of respectable parents. Here is an instance: —

"Feb. 25th. — S. W. T., aged fourteen, brought into Refuge by one of the night teachers, who noticed him in a lodging-house respectably dressed. Had walked up to London from N — —, in company with two sailors (disreputable men, whom the lodging-house keeper declined to take in). Had been reading sensational books. Wrote to address at N — —. Father telegraphed to keep him. Uncle came for him with fresh clothes and took him home. He had begun to pawn his clothes for his night's lodging. His father had been for a fortnight in communication with the police."

The constables in the neighbourhood all know Miss Macpherson's Refuge, and her readiness to take boys in at any time; so that many little vagrants are brought thither by them and reclaimed, instead of being locked up and sent to prison, to go from bad to worse. Besides this receptacle for boys, Miss Macpherson has also a Home at Hackney, where girls of the same class are housed. The plan she adopts is to get a friend to be responsible for one child. The cost she reckons at 6*l.* 10*s.* per annum for those under ten years, and 10*l.* for those above. [16]

But this excellent lady's good works are by no means catalogued yet. Besides the children being fed and taught in these Homes, the parents and children are constantly gathered for sewing classes, tea meetings, &c. at the Refuge. Above 400 children are thus influenced; and Miss Macpherson, with her coadjutors, systematically visits the wretched dens and lodging-houses into which no well-dressed person, unless favourably known like her for her work among the children, would dare to set foot. I was also present when a hearty meal of excellent soup and a large lump of bread were given to between three and four hundred men, chiefly dock labourers out of employ. It was a touching sight to notice the stolid apathy depicted on most of the countenances, which looked unpleasantly like despair. One of the men assured me that for every package that had to be unladen from the docks there were ten pair of hands ready to do the work, where only one could be employed. Many of the men, he assured me, went for two, sometimes three, days without food; and with the

large majority of those assembled the meal they were then taking would represent the whole of their subsistence for the twenty-four-hours. After supper a hymn was sung, and a few words spoken to them by Miss Macpherson on the allegory of the Birds and Flowers in the Sermon on the Mount; and so they sallied forth into the darkness of Arabia Petræa. I mounted to the little boys' bedroom, where the tiniest [17] Arabs of all were enjoying the luxury of a game, with bare feet, before retiring. Miss Macpherson dragged a mattress off one of the beds and threw it down in the centre for them to tumble head-over-tail; and, as she truly said, it was difficult to recognise in those merry shouts and happy faces any remains of the veriest reprobates of the London streets.

Let us hear Miss Macpherson herself speak. In a published pamphlet, "Our Perishing Little Ones," she says: "As to the present state of the mission, we simply say 'Come and see.' It is impossible by words to give an idea of the mass of 120,000 precious souls who live on this one square mile.... My longing is to send forth, so soon as the ice breaks, 500 of our poor street boys, waifs and strays that have been gathered in, to the warm-hearted Canadian farmers. In the meantime, who will help us to make outfits, and collect 5*l.* for each little Arab, that there be no hindrance to the complement being made up when the spring time is come?... Ladies who are householders can aid us much in endeavours to educate these homeless wanderers to habits of industry by sending orders for their firewood—4*s.* per hundred bundles, sent free eight miles from the City." And, again, in Miss Macpherson's book called "The Little Matchmakers," she says: "In this work of faith and labour of love among the very lowest in our beloved country, let us press on, looking for great things. [18] Preventing sin and crime is a much greater work than curing it. There are still many things on my heart requiring more pennies. As they come, we will go forward."

Miss Macpherson's motto is, "The Word first in all things; afterwards bread for this body." There are some of us who would be inclined to reverse this process—to feed the body and educate the mind—not altogether neglecting spiritual culture, even at the earliest stage, but leaving anything like definite religious schooling until the poor mind and body were, so to say, acclimatized. It is, of course, much easier to sit still and theorize and criticise than to do

what these excellent people have done and are doing to diminish this gigantic evil. "By their fruits ye shall know them" is a criterion based on authority that we are none of us inclined to dispute. Miss Macpherson boasts—and a very proper subject for boasting it is—that she belongs to no *ism*. It is significant, however, that the Refuge bears, or bore, the name of the "Revival" Refuge, and the paper which contained the earliest accounts of its working was called the *Revivalist*, though now baptized with the broader title of the *Christian*. Amid such real work it would be a pity to have the semblance of unreality, and I dreaded to think of the possibility of its existing, when little grimy hands were held out by boys volunteering to say a text for my behoof. By far the most favourite [19] one was "Jesus wept;" next came "God is love"—each most appropriate; but the sharp boy, a few years older, won approval by a longer and more doctrinal quotation, whilst several of these held out hands again when asked whether, in the course of the day, they had felt the efficacy of the text given on the previous evening, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep Thou the door of my lips." Such an experience would be a sign of advanced spirituality in an adult. Is it ungenerous to ask whether its manifestation in an Arab child must not be an anticipation of what might be the normal result of a few years' training? May not this kind of *forcing* explain the cases I saw quoted in the books—of one boy who "felt like a fish out of water, and left the same day of his own accord;" another who "climbed out of a three-floor window and escaped?"

However, here is the good work being done. Let us not carp at the details, but help it on, unless we can do better ourselves. One thing has been preeminently forced in upon me during this brief examination of our London Arabs—namely, that individuals work better than communities amongst these people. The work done by the great establishments, whether of England, Rome, or Protestant Dissent, is insignificant compared with that carried out by persons labouring like Mr. Hutton in Seven Dials and Miss Macpherson in Whitechapel, untrammelled by any [20] particular system. The want, and sorrow, and suffering are individual, and need individual care, just as the Master of old worked Himself, and sent His scriptless missionaries singly forth to labour for Him, as—on however

incommensurate a scale—they are still labouring, East and West, amongst our London Arabs.

[21]

CHAPTER III.

LONDON ARABS IN CANADA.

In the previous chapter an account was given of the Arabs inhabiting that wonderful "square mile" in East London, which has since grown to be so familiar in men's mouths. The labours of Miss Macpherson towards reclaiming these waifs and strays in her "Refuge and Home of Industry, Commercial Street, Spitalfields," were described at some length, and allusion was at the same time made to the views which that lady entertained with regard to the exportation of those Arabs to Canada after they should have undergone a previous probationary training in the "Home." A short time afterwards it was my pleasing duty to witness the departure of one hundred of these young boys from the St. Pancras Station, en route for Canada; and it now strikes me that some account of the voyage out, in the shape of excerpts from the letters of the devoted ladies who themselves accompanied our Arabs across the Atlantic, may prove interesting; while, at the same time, a calculation of their probable success in their new life and homes may not improbably stimulate those who cannot give their time, to give at [22] least their countenance, and it may be, their material aid, to a scheme which recommends itself to all our sympathies—the permanent reclamation of the little homeless wanderers of our London streets.

The strange old rambling "Home" in Commercial Street, built originally for warehouses, then used as a cholera hospital, and now the Arab Refuge, presented a strange appearance during the week before the departure of the chosen hundred. On the ground-floor were the packages of the young passengers; on the first floor the "new clothes, shirts, and stockings, sent by kind lady friends from all parts of the kingdom, trousers and waistcoats made by the widows, and the boots and pilot jackets made by the boys themselves." The dormitory was the great store-closet for all the boys' bags filled

with things needful on board ship; and on the top floor, we can well imagine, the last day was a peculiarly melancholy one. The work attendant upon the boys' last meal at the Refuge was over, and there, in the long narrow kitchen, stood the cook wiping away her tears with her apron, and the six little waiting maids around them, with the novel feeling of having nothing to do—there, where so much cutting, buttering, and washing-up had been the order of the day. When the summons came to start, the police had great difficulty in clearing a way for the boys to the vans through the surging mass of East London poverty. Some of the little match-box makers ran all the three [23] miles from Commercial Street to St. Pancras Station to see the very last of their boy-friends.

Derby was the stopping-place on the journey to Liverpool, and the attention of passengers and guards was arrested by this strange company gathering on the platform at midnight and singing two of the favourite Refuge hymns. Liverpool was reached at 4 a.m., and the boys filed off in fours, with their canvas bags over their shoulders, to the river side, where their wondering eyes beheld the *Peruvian*, which was to bear them to their new homes.

At this point, Miss Macpherson's sister—who is carrying on the work of the Refuge during that lady's absence—wrote as follows:—"Could our Christian friends have seen the joy that beamed in the faces of those hundred lads from whom we have just parted—could they know the misery, the awful precipice of crime and sin from which they have been snatched—we are sure their hearts would be drawn out in love for those little ones. If still supported," she continues, "I hope to send out another party of fifty boys and fifty girls while my sister remains in Canada, and shall be happy to forward the name and history of a boy or girl to any kind friend wishing to provide for a special case. In the broad fields of that new country where the farmers are only too glad to adopt healthy young boys or girls into their families, hundreds of our perishing little ones may find a happy home."

On Thursday, the 12th of May, the *Peruvian* [24] dropped down the river; and, as the last batch of friends left her when she passed out into the Channel, these one hundred boys, with Miss Macpher-

son, leaned over the bulwarks, singing the hymn, "Yes, we part, but not for ever."

From Derry Miss Macpherson wrote under date May 13th:—"With the exception of two, all are on deck now, as bright as larks; they have carried up poor Jack Frost and Franks the runner. It is most touching to see them wrap them up in their rugs. Michael Flinn, the Shoreditch shoeblack, was up all night, caring for the sick boys. Poor Mike! He and I have exchanged nods at the Eastern Counties Railway corner these five years. It is a great joy to give him such a chance for life."

The voyage out was prosperous enough, though there were some contrary winds, and a good deal of sea-sickness among the lads. The captain seems to have been quite won by the self-denying kindness of the ladies, and he lightened their hands by giving occupation to the boys. Then came out the result of training at the Refuge. Those who had been some time there showed themselves amenable to discipline; but the late arrivals were more fractious, and difficult to manage. These were the lads "upon whom," as Miss Macpherson says, "the street life had left sore marks." Even when only nearing the American coast, this indomitable lady's spirit is planning a second expedition. "As far as I dare make plans, I [25] should like to return, starting from Montreal July 16th, reaching the Home July 27th; and then return with another lot the second week in August. This second lot must be lads who are now under influence, and who have been not less than six months in a refuge." The finale to this second letter, written from Canada, adds: "The boys, *to a man*, behaved splendidly. The agent's heart is won. All have improved by the voyage, and many are brown hearty-looking chaps fit for any toil."

In the *Montreal Herald*, of May 27th, there is an account of these boys after their arrival, which says:—"Miss Macpherson is evidently a lady whose capacity for organization and command is of the very highest order; for boys, in most hands, are not too easily managed, but in hers they were as obedient as a company of soldiers.... These boys will speedily be placed in positions, where they will grow up respectable and respected members of society, with access to the highest positions in the country freely open to them.... We hope that