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Number and Nature of Robberies in London and Liverpool during the Year 1838

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*Number and Nature of Robberies in London and Liverpool during  
the Year 1838.*

THE following statements of the amount of property known to be stolen in the Metropolitan Police District, and in Liverpool, during the last year, will be interesting. Of course they include only the felonies which came under the cognizance of the Police, and it is impossible to conjecture what proportion these bear to the number actually committed; they will serve, however, to prove the exaggeration of the estimate put forth by Mr. Colquhoun at the commencement of the present century, in his work upon the Police of the Metropolis. That author estimated the amount of the depredations annually committed on public and private property in the metropolis and its vicinity, at 2,000,000*l.*, consisting of—

1. Small thefts—of metal, furniture, household materials, goods from shops, wearing apparel, &c. &c. . . . .	£. 710,000
2. Thefts upon the rivers and quays of merchandize and ships' stores . . . . .	250,000
3. Thefts in the dock-yards and warehouses on the Thames . . . . .	200,000
4. Burglaries, highway-robberies, private stealing, picking pockets, cattle and fruit stealing . . . . .	280,000
5. Coining base money. . . . .	310,000
6. Forging bills, swindling, &c. . . . .	250,000
	£2,000,000

If this amount be compared with the following return for the past year, it will be seen that—making every allowance, on the one hand, for the city of London being omitted from the latter statement, and for the present improved system of police; and, on the other, for the wider circle to which the Metropolitan Police District extends, and the great increase of population and wealth since the commencement of the century—the above estimate must be very incorrect, for it cannot be credited that less than 2 per cent. of the felonies committed should become known to a numerous and vigilant police.

No comparison can be instituted between London and Liverpool, as the return for the former is incomplete, from the city not being included, and the population of the two districts cannot be stated with any degree of accuracy: but the following points are worthy of notice. Of the total amount of property stolen only  $8\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. was recovered in London, and  $11\frac{1}{4}$  per cent. in Liverpool. The return for London, however, includes a very large robbery of jewels, to the amount of 2000*l.*, which have not been recovered. As a general result it may be stated, that of property stolen and reported to the police only one-tenth is likely to be recovered. In the Metropolitan District the number of felonies is given; and, therefore, the average amount of property stolen upon each occasion may be estimated. If the above large robbery be included, it is only 49*s.* 4*d.*, and if it be excluded, 46*s.* In Liverpool more than one-fourth of the property stolen was taken by prostitutes; in the Metropolitan District only one-twenty-fourth. As the large proportion in the former town arises from the number of sailors who frequent that port, and as the same cause appears to exist in the metropolis, it is difficult to account for so great a difference, unless such offences come under the cognizance of the city police.

Such statements as these are highly valuable, as indicating the character and tendency of crime in different places, and as calling attention to the measures which it behoves individuals, as well as the Government, to adopt, in order to check its progress, and remove as far as possible the inducements to its perpetration.

*Return of the Number of Felonies committed within the Metropolitan Police District, distinguishing those for which the Police were responsible from those which could not have been prevented by any vigilance on the part of the Police, with the Amount of Property Stolen and Recovered, in the Year 1838.*

NATURE OF FELONIES.	Police Responsible.		Police not Responsible.		Amount since Recovered.
	Number.	Loss.	Number.	Loss.	
Burglary . . . . .	92	£. 827	..	..	£. 62
Breaking into a dwelling- house, &c. . . . .	41	213	..	..	22
Breaking into a building, shop, &c. . . . .	55	317	..	..	67
Embezzlement . . . . .	..	..	225	733	66
Forgery . . . . .	..	..	13	184	7
Fraud . . . . .	..	..	162	206	31
Horse-stealing . . . . .	19	128	..	..	64
Robbery on highway . . . . .	41	64	..	..	2
Sheep and cattle-stealing . . . . .	17	20	..	..	2
<i>Larcenies (Common).</i>					
Goods, &c., exposed for sale . . . . .	..	..	2,143	1,377	204
Tools, lead, glass, &c., from unfinished houses . . . . .	450	395	..	..	16
From carts or carriages . . . . .	..	..	315	794	142
Linen, &c., exposed to dry . . . . .	..	..	452	317	25
Poultry, &c., exposed in an outhouse . . . . .	581	394	..	..	11
<i>Larcenies in a Dwelling-house, &amp;c.</i>					
By false keys only . . . . .	..	..	280	2,461	18
„ lodgers . . . . .	..	..	1,266	2,132	245
„ servants . . . . .	..	..	1,125	3,809	954
„ doors being left open . . . . .	..	..	1,282	2,891	237
„ false messages, &c. . . . .	..	..	387	962	81
„ lifting up window or breaking glass . . . . .	417	1,312	..	..	14
„ means unknown . . . . .	446	5,174	..	..	92
<i>Larcenies from the Person.</i>					
Picking pockets . . . . .	653	2,003	..	..	55
From drunken persons . . . . .	..	..	273	643	23
„ children . . . . .	107	67	..	..	1
By prostitutes . . . . .	..	..	747	1,196	44
Total . . . . .	2,919	10,914	8,670	17,705	2,485
Total Police Responsible	..	..	2,919	10,914	..
Total . . . . .	..	..	11,589	28,619	..

