

"Bitter cold, master," said the old woman, shivering, and putting her skinny arms round the youngsters as they snuggled up to her.

If I were "writing a story," I could give you, if not a true, at any rate a full and particular account of my strange bedfellows' reasons for sleeping in the Tunnel; but as I am only relating an experience, I can merely say that they looked as if they had no one in the

world but one another to care for them, and as if they were fond enough of one another not to trouble themselves much about other people's care.

I ought to add that as we four sat up, rubbing our eyes and chatting with clattering teeth, some workmen came along from the Wapping side.

"Poor beggars!" said one of them, as they



stopped to look at us; "they look as if it was hard lines with them, Jim. I s'pose that's your mother, young man, and them's your kids? Let's give 'em a breakfast, mates."

And the good fellows subscribed halfpence for our refreshment at the nearest coffee-stall.

I should have liked some warm coffee and thick bread and butter, but cold and hungry

and thirsty though I was, I could not bring myself to diminish my companions' breakfast by taking a share of it. I felt somehow that it would be obtaining charity under false pretences.

But you will understand now how it was that I wanted to see the Thames Tunnel the other day, for the first time since I had slept in it.