

HENRY MAYHEW

London Labour AND THE London Poor

Read by **David Timson**

London Labour and the London Poor is a rare and fascinating insight into the lives and struggles of the 19th-century poor. Written by journalist and reformer Henry Mayhew, a founder and editor of the satirical magazine *Punch*, it collects hundreds of testimonials from the lower strata of Victorian society. We encounter street entertainers, 'pure finders', cabinetmakers, gingerbread sellers, 'screeve-fakers', swindlers and burglars. We hear accounts from toshers finding items in sewers, people attempting to train pigs to dance, and witness the sale of everything from gilt watches and chickweed to needles, dog collars and eel soup. It is a remarkable work, said to have inspired the socially conscious fiction of Charles Dickens and William Makepeace Thackeray, who described it as 'a picture of human life so wonderful, so awful, so piteous and pathetic, so exciting and terrible, that readers of romances own they never read anything like to it'.



David Timson has made over 1,000 broadcasts for BBC Radio Drama. For Naxos AudioBooks he has written *The History of Theatre* and directed four Shakespeare plays. He has also read the entire *Sherlock Holmes* canon and Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*.

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