

STARTLING STATEMENT BY A YOUNG WOMAN.

In the middle of last week the *London Star* published the results of certain inquiries by one of its reporters who stated that several women of the "unfortunate" class in Whitechapel allege that the previous murder was committed by a man whose name they do not know, but whom they call "Leather Apron," because he wears an apron of leather and carries a knife about with him, professing to be a slippermaker. They say that this man has ill-used several of their class, and one of them finding him on the street called the attention of the police to him; but the police at that stage would not arrest him. A representative of the Press Association, in pursuing his investigations in the same district on Sunday night, heard the following statement made in presence of the police. The informant, he says, was a young woman named Lyons, of the class commonly known as unfortunates. She stated that at three o'clock on Saturday afternoon she met a strange man in Flower and Dean Street, one of the worst streets in the East End of London. He asked her to go to Queen's Head public-house at half-past six and drink with him. Having obtained from the young woman a promise that she would do so he disappeared, but was at the house at the appointed time. While they were conversing, Lyons noticed a large knife in the man's right hand trousers pocket, and called another woman's attention to the fact. A moment later Lyons was startled by a remark which the stranger addressed to her—"You are about the same style of woman as the one that's murdered." "What do you know about her?" asked the woman, to which the man replied, "You are beginning to smell a rat. Foxes hunt geese, but they don't always find them." Having uttered these words, the man hurriedly left. Lyons followed until near Spitalfields Church, and turning round at this spot and noticing that the woman was behind him, the stranger ran at a swift pace into Church Street, and was at once lost to view. One noteworthy fact in this story is that the description of the man's appearance is in all material points identical with the published description of the unknown and up to the present undiscovered "Leather Apron." Over two hundred common lodging-houses have been visited by the police in the hopes of finding some trace of the mysterious and much-talked-of person, but he has succeeded in evading arrest. The police have reasons for suspecting that he is employed in one of the London sweating dens as a slippermaker, and that, as it is usual to supply food and lodgings in many of those houses, he is virtually in hiding. Though "Leather Apron's" figure is well known to many policemen in Whitechapel district, prior to the murder of Mrs Nicholls in Bucks Road, the man has kept himself out of the way since, and this is regarded as a significant circumstance.