

The Sewing Girls of New York.



NOT much statistically is to be said of them but much for them.

If Alexander the Great, Dumas, could have been induced to write this article, nothing in the shape of remuneration would have been withheld from him. We would have presented him with the sword of Washington, the cane of Franklin, and the pen of Cobb, and given him, besides, a life interest in the Mt. Vernon Association, with a certified autograph of Mr. Everett; and we would have added a season ticket to Mousseard's fiddle de dee concerts at the Academy of music.

But Dumas, unfortunately for our establishment, is not in town, and we must buckle on the harness for this milliner and mantua feature of New York city life.

THE SEWING GIRLS OF NEW YORK! Men sow their wild oats, and women "so-so" the men; but the sewing girls sew all around.

Last month we inserted a very interesting

568

article on the "Tyrant Fashion and Alameda his wife," written in the style of Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," in which the whole subject of the rise and fall of Fashion is scientifically and classically treated; but nothing was said of the ramified machinery by which all the varied mysteries of dress are put in motion, rotary and otherwise.

Without dress there would be no woman. Take that for a sentiment as profound as any of the sayings of Plato.

Commencing with that leading thought, and understanding by it the vast importance of millinery, let us proceed.

Had Eve been blessed with a milliner and a mantua maker, her dear, precious brain would have had no time to devote itself to a plate of apples, but been absorbed in the study of a Plato of Fashion: therefore we lost Eve, and in losing Eve, the naked truth stares us in the face; that millinery, no matter how crude, became an especial institution for the balance of the human race. Costume and needles rose with the fall of the leaf, and thus it is that fashions have their seasons, like the year. They green with the Spring, shade with the



THE MANTUA GIRL.

Summer, variegated with the Autumn, and weather the capes with the Winter. Blessed be the mariner's needle that guided Columbus across the stormy waves, but far more blessed the sewing girl's needle that steers the fleet of crinoline across the billows of Brussels carpets to the continent of fashionable life.

Mantua had its bard, and mantua-making its Mantilline; and if we were equal to the task, Millinery should have its Milton, to write the history of those angels who, if they could, would, on balloon-like sleeves of muslin, scale the heavens for the rainbow's ribbons.

See our first portrait. It is that of Miss Eliza Antoinette, who hires herself and needle out by the week. The dainty maid has reached the madame's door. There is a gentle manner all about her, a refined humility, and withal a modest pride, that fortifies her against the lady's *retroussé* nose, and the servant's insolence.

There is not much use in expressing, or showing anything of sentimentality about the fixed ordinances of fashionable society, and so we will not dwell upon the fluttering thoughts that stir Miss Eliza's breast, as for the first time she enters the house of her rich employer. She has promised to come at eight in the morning, and she is there as if by instinct, (for she has no watch,) at the appointed time. She enters the mansion. She stands one moment

in the vestibule to get her breath, and examine anything that may give her an idea of what sort of a place it is. Madame is not down stairs; madame is not out of bed; but madame's lady's maid is sent to see that Miss Eliza Antoinette is put to work at once, and by herself in a vacant room. No time for her to see what sort of a place it is, no mark by which to instruct her idea as to the manner of life, or mood of mind of the family, into whose circle she comes almost as an outcast; at all events, as a machine. Up stairs she is carried, and into a small vacant room she is seated; and the lady's maid, already half jealous of the poor stranger's quiet looks, speaks to her in tones of some incipient and anticipated quarrel, and then places before her the mysterious bundle of linen difficulty. All the morning she sits aloof from her own dear little room and the few friends who feel for her, and aloof from the people of the house in which she is to labor. She dines alone, her meals being sent up to her; she hears the tramp of many feet about the passage; she hears the humming song of children, who open the door and look in upon her slyly, and run away, not as if they were frightened, but as if they despised the sewing girl. Whatever is said to her at all is in command, or in complaint of work not exactly right—so hard to please is the wife of the rich man, who herself, perhaps, was not, in her

original days, half so good as her who works up stairs all by herself, busy with her bright needle and her dark thoughts. The week passes thus in labor and in silence and in solitude; and when all is done, her pitance is given to her by the rude hand of the braceletd tyrant; and she is free for the few hours of the Sabbath day.

Ye haughty rich, snub not the girl who does her duty in such a way, with so much toil and such denial of herself; for if she would, she could clothe herself in silks like yours, and wear a bracelet on her arm; and signal, perhaps, not unheeded to your husband or your groggy son. She has done your children's work herself, has cut out and stitched in, and looked upon the blank back yard, without a cheerful word, or a moment of recreation offered her, rather than wear a robe she could not buy without a sin. The poor girl is noble.

Now, here's another, but of the regular force, a mantua-maker. She is a real live shop girl. She lives in a Paradise of patterns, and modes, and flowers, a perfect garden of Damascus, or rather, one of the hanging gardens of the great queen Semiramis the Babylonish; flowers from every clime surround her, woven into garlands that Venus might like to wear, and caps to suit Mary Queen of Scots, or old Queen Bess, the lover-killer, would have placed upon her gray yellow hair, as she would a crown. Our maiden is taking work home. She is not afraid of snubs, or snobs, or sneer, and feels as independent as a wood-sawyer. In the shop she is a character and student of character. Wonder what she thinks when a dowager grocerette (retired, of course, is her husband, his goods' wagon changed into a heraldry-decorated coach) enters the shop—a lop sided woman, who has lived on cheese, and pancakes, and boiled pork, and cabbages up to the meridian of her life—and grandly squares her sharp, twisted figure to have it measured for a dress that would fit a Venus? Oh! what a polishing shop is your mantua-maker's! or, rather, a turner's shop! All forms are put upon the same lathe, and whist go the scissors, and a bloated, beer-drinking woman comes out in her full costume, as well formed as dear Mrs. ———, who, to my certain knowledgo, is wry-sided as a bigot's charity. A mantua-maker's establishment is a democratic form of government, for whoever goes into it must come out exactly like the rest, with the same rights, and for that matter, with the same lefts. Fashion is President, and Madame Mantua-maker is Secretary of the Foreign Department; all trade cut off with every other nation except Paris, and old fashion plates (but that's a

secret) got up a year ago in London, and sent over by the ton to meet the wants of the new style. We would like to know, *en passant*, what hidden Grand Lama of Thibet or Tobit, orders these ever-varying styles? What Mahomet of scissors, what Nero of needles, what Ozar of nonsense, commands the serfs to take no other mode of dress, but theirs. They wave from their cloud enveloped thrones, and lo! a mist spreads far and wide, and out of it drop muslin things of fabulous sizes, and affairs that look like chicken coops, or hogsheds without staves, and flounces like cumuli around the setting sun, and capes, and points, and basques, and cloaks, and fluis and that, until the very world is filled with a progeny of costume, born of the brainless, and by the brainless worn. Forgive us, Oh! ye sweet divinities of silk and Satan (we mean satin) and lay not your velvety hands upon us too rudely. We are but man, and human, and perhaps it is out of some sore experience that we speak, perhaps some wrong done to us when returning home at night—after a hard day's work is done, we find the place we hoped to rest in, filled with the spoils of empires, and dresses spoiled by ignorant workmanship, and over all the brooding face of gloom, fierce in the injury of patterns not cut right, and yards of dry goods wrecked upon the floor, where broken needles and dangerous pins threaten the slippered foot.

Here's the bonnet-maker at her work. Is it a bonnet she is trying to make, or is it a thing she is trying to make as little like a bonnet as she can? Certainly she has cut away all the forepart, and leaving about as much behind. Has she measured it by the wings of a butterfly and modeled it by them also; or has her genius, going with Byron to the margin of the sea, picked from the sand the fantail of a lobster, and brought it home as pattern for my lady's hat? Let thy light fingers ply gently and deftly, dear priestess of flimsiness, witch worker of cobwebs; for she who is to wear that which thou toilest at, will grind thee to the dust, if thou make her hat to fit her head. Call you that thing a bonnet which is neither bonnet or cap or covering? Call it rather a shelf on which Puck may sit at his ease, and scatter at his leisure along the street the mischief of his devilment. Put a flower here, and a mite's wing there, and solidify thy heaving breath in tulle, that the face of the wearer may look as if she was a fairy of the mist, or the mistress of a fool. Pardon us again, ye ministers of heavy bills, and ye who pay them; this outbreak of our ignorance, or something worse; but our mother wore a bonnet, and she was of the sex that wears upon the chilly



the thing of air, thin
and cold, of red
a frequent head
to working, sudden
the way, and let fashion
to be worn. Common
of even unbroken, not
is circumference, to p
the head (if) from the
man was is played out,
to the last remain
proper, and you will not
will be gone of the city
of some old master or
let it water their wit
to sharp-witted, have a
to make use of it.
The last color is the
any last room in my head
happens; the victs of
has ceased their petty
to various master, after
mind, patient and of
of the soul who gave
the "Song of the Stars"
and the glorious garden
man has withered, and
is hidden amid the perf
and laid aside for the
attention is now to be
that will require some
they are ragged and
perhaps the breath of
in and out of the lew



DONNET MAKER.

streets, this thing of air, this highest bidder for catarrh and cold, of red eyes, and nose that requires a frequent handling.

Let the working maiden do her work and get her pay, and let fashion have its dupe, and death its victim. Common sense would suggest a cotton umbrella, not a parasol four inches in circumference, to protect the belle and her bonnet (?) from the rain and sun; but common sense is played out, as you will see by referring to the last census; for look over all its pages, and you will not find it classified even with the geese of the citizens' barn-yard, though some old rooster or sagacious pullet, may tuck it under their wings; but even they, the sharp-witted, have to get up before daylight to make use of it.

The rose leaf color is fading from our page, the cozy back room in my lady's gilded mansion disappears; the visits of impertinent children have ceased their petty irritation—that was no serious matter, after all, to a well disciplined mind, patient and of long endurance, like that of the maid who gave her labor for a song, the "Song of the Shirt," or something like it; and the glorious garden of the Queen Semiramis has withered, and the brocade gown is folded amid the perfumes of jockey club, and laid aside for the next calico ball; and our attention is now to be directed to subjects that will require some care in the handling, for they are ragged and wet with tears, and perhaps the breath of fever has been stitched in and out of the bewildered seams.

Ah, put not this page aside, sweet lady of my lord, the banker; throw it not away, oh, beautiful belle of wondrous perfection; say not "what trash, these pert fellows write, and what horrid pictures they put in their good-for-nothing Magazine." Read on, and when to church you go next beaming Sabbath, and you sit in your fine pew, with your diamonds on your fingers, and your fingers turning over the psalms of David, (would you read them if they had not been written by a king?) think of the bony hands, crimped corpse-like, of the wretched, who, in their shadowy garrets, fight off temptations, and offer to your example, lives of humble self negation.

Here is one of them. Hard times have come upon her, and she has no work. Perhaps she is the same who dropped upon the street what we shall lay before you in a few moments, and when you examine it, you will find that she could do no more than stay at home and starve. The paper we will offer to your consideration is genuine, and came into our possession in this way. Going to our engraver's to see how he was getting on with the illustrations that form a feature of this article, one of his young men handed us a worn and soiled pass-book, and said, "This was picked up on the street, no doubt dropped by the girl."

Omitting names, though we are sorely tempted to publish the rascals who smote this poor thing who is sitting in her tears, we let you have the only entries that appear in this un-



WEeping AND STARVING.

happy record. It seems that after the one sore trial, she found that it was useless to attempt to live upon such terms as the employer offered, and so she gave the business up, and went away in her misery to do, as strong men have done before, weep and starve.

You will find that she had to deposit two dollars before they would trust her with the work, for they have to take it home to finish. The villains know the penury they inflict, and dread the pawn shop.

Here is the written shame, word for word, and figure for figure.

First we have the number of the shop, and the street honored by its presence, and after that these entries, &c.

Miss C. B. in ac. with C. Bros. & Co.		
1858		Dr.
June 16,	½ doz. Hickory Shirts.	
" 17,	½ " " "	
" 24,	½ doz. H. S.	
Cash,	87 cts.
		Cr.
June 16,	by deposit.....	\$2.00
" 24,	8 Hickory Shirts.....	41
" 27,	9 " " ".....	46

Now, there is a bill of life or a bill of death for you. Eighty-seven cents to support a woman from the sixteenth day of June, eighteen hundred and fifty-eight, to the twenty-seventh day of the same month of the same

christian year ; but we should calculate time, in this instance, by the Jewish method. Where is her bowl of tea and her slice of bread, and her little tiny mutton chop, to come from day by day, and only once a day at best, out of that *Eighty-seven cents*? *Twelve days to live, and Eighty-seven cents* to do it with! Why, very few people can die intentionally on that amount of money in five seconds. If you are going to cut your throat, you must buy a razor, and that will cost something; and you must take two or three drinks of brandy to warm your thorax up to the sticking point, and that would cost, at ten cents a glass, thirty cents. God bless us all, we should say; but in our present mood we cannot use that solemn name in such appeal for C. Bros. & Co. We would rather reverse the intention of the prayer and end it with the usual hard, but in this case, opposite anathema; but we must not indulge in anything like curses here; it will not quicken the vengeance of the Lord upon those who so grind for greed the souls and bodies of the poor.

What did your shirt cost you, my fine gentleman, with the gold chain round your neck, and eight dollar boots upon your feet? You are looking at that poor thing that passes round the corner, watching her with a bad look out of your bad eyes, and having an intention to do mischief. She made your shirt for you, noble viscount, and knows your full

... and he
... more brib
... each a week
... the you con
... at you have
... paying for it.
... Here again
... things who w
... by. You rai
... and, good p
... camel into t
... your own exp
... you. If she i
... lid to you; an
... least ladies'
... study and tre
... give them six
... they talk to th
... their forefinger
... pe out into th
... ing flowers; a
... then a piece
... old horse, to g
... better than the
... no lesson in th
... Seven cents.
... the cents a we
... man, and not
... woman, hard a
... forty cents a vi
... piece, or walki
... doing some o
... every year



FIVE CENTS A DAY.

value and her own; and believe us, you could no more bribe the woman who works for sixty cents a week, week in and week out, for years, than you could bribe your washerwoman to let you have your shirt from the wash without paying for it.

Here again, is a duet of troubles; two poor things who work for seven cents and a half a day. You raise your eyebrows and doubt our word, good people, because you have not examined into the matter; or, perhaps, because your own especial seamstress is well paid by you. If she is, that's well, and we are grateful to you; and indeed we know a good many honest ladies who pay their handmaidens decently and treat them properly; that is, they give them six shillings a day, and smile when they talk to them, and feel a little interest in their forefinger and thumb; and allow them to go out into the garden, and look at the growing flowers; and even go so far as to send them a piece of cake and a glass of wine at odd hours, to give them bodily strength; and better than that, to let them know that there are hearts in the world that beat.

Seven cents and a half a day makes forty-five cents a week, leaving out Sunday. "Enormous, and not to be endured." Those two women, hard at work in that old room, earn forty cents a week, and not by playing on the piano, or walking up and down Broadway, or turning short corners.

"Prove your assertion," says Mr. Longpurse.

"We will, sir, with mingled pain and pleasure."

There came to us this very morning, by appointment, a widow who has a married daughter, and that daughter has a child. The husband of the daughter long ago went off soldiering, or some similar deviltry, and has not been heard of since. This matron is an honest woman, if ever there was one, and we have known her long, and many a stitch has she done for us in the way of pantaloons mending, and even now she is at work for us on a grand morning gown; but let that go, and come we to our proof. She is on the stand, and this her testimony. Let us premise, that for cheaper living, she occupies a room or two in a withered dwelling, seven miles away from expensive landlords; and as it is, she has to do chores around among her neighbors, in order to eke out her bread and butter, and settle her rent in season.

She is a shirt-maker, and her daughter is a shirt-maker, and the child's profession is sickness; and besides making shirts, she makes drawers; *bureaus*, as we should call them in American society.

She is paid five cents for making a hickory shirt. Now, a hickory shirt is a check shirt, intended for the rough and ready men and boys. These rough and ready men and boys are the fellows that do all the hard out-door and in-door work of this world, and their garments should be stouter sown than those of Mr. Sap-

could be
hood. These
of bread, and
some lives by
t. best, and if
eye to day, and
! Why, say
that count
are going to
a man, and
we must like
to your
and that well
; can't. But
in our present
time is not
would under
per and out
in case, oppo
of which the
have into a
order of the

very few go
d your not,
: feet! You
that pass
with a lot
aving to be
a year that
we year of

plejack Codfish, who holds it to be a great labor to lift his hand to his head, except when he crooks it at the bar sinister, (suggestive of his armorial quarterings.) But these shirts for the rough and ready fellows are mere shreds and patches, done up to order, at five cents a piece; and this widow will, with her daughter, awhile ministering to the sick child, make out to finish four dozen shirts in two weeks—two dollars and forty cents a fortnight. Bright prospects for leaving money enough to bury the family dead, and paying for medicine for the "bairn."

Then she gets five cents for making a pair of brown drawers, and six cents for making a pair of white drawers, and she can make a pair and a half a day; that would do very well for a man who had three legs; but we don't have such cattle in this free country.

Then again, the employer has a machine, of course, lots of them; and he has other hands at cheap rates to prepare another species of drawers, good enough for dandies to wear; and after they are put in some sort of shape, they are handed over to our good friend, who is upon the witness stand, and she finishes them for seven cents. That's a great price. These drawers are of linen, and are required to be carefully stitched, so that the gallant gentleman who patronizes the bland Mr. Screw-hard will admit, that never, in all his life, did he see such a beautiful pair of burcaus. And then our shirt-maker gets the glorious price of seven cents, (seven is a lucky number, you know,) for making the beautiful figured shirt that we saw upon the back of the Viscount Broadway a little while ago, when he was watching Miss Five Cents turning the corner, on her way to her work, or the undertaker's.

Now again, this witness having been forced out of town, on account of high rents, has to go into the city to carry her work to the shop of Mr. Screwhard; and that costs this wealthy woman ten cents to go and ten cents to come back by the cars,—the price exactly that Viscount Broadway pays for two drinks, and just what Mr. Screwhard pays to this worthy woman for making four shirts.

Sanctify these shirt grinders to everlasting redemption, would Dogberry, of the King's Quorum, say, and so say we, for much do they need the prayers of all men. But would it not be well for the dear meddling Legislature to look into the matter of this such terrible and killing five cent work, and try and find a path between the counter of the employer and the grave of the employed.

This morning, while the poor woman was sitting looking at us with such a queer questioning in her expression at the interest we

were taking in this case, as if she thought us crazy or touched by some looney fancy, we took up the great Flood, whose volume, with appropriate coincidence, lay upon our little book desk, and slyly opening his pages, came we to his song; and then we sprang it upon her, giving whatever of a great player's touch and tone to it that we could, from time to time looking up to see how she took it. Took it! Why the poor thing sat by the window with her head bowed down, for the flood had come upon her brain, and the sluices of the eyes were opened, and down over her cheeks, that had bent so long over shirt and drawers in agony of labor, ran the rivulets of her sympathy. It was a cruel thing to do, and it reminded us of the story told of David, the great French historical painter, sketching for a crucifixion piece he was painting, the last looks of a man dying in a great agony. When we had finished, she looked over to us with the showery look of a bitter winter day, and said—"Did you write that?" "Oh no, but we are going to follow after that text, and call the dry eyes of the world to your wet ones."

She is one among the thousands and the tens of thousands in the same five cent category, and how long will it be that, in a free and equal land, such tyranny shall last? We pray you, good law-makers, think over this hideous wrong, and by the "fires of Lexington" and "smoke of Bunker Hill," redress it, ere it damns us all.

Draw we to a close.

She has brought her work to the counter, and she stands in the presence of the righteous (?) judge of "seams and gussets and bands." See how he examines it ere he gives her her enormous salary, grudgingly looking it over and trying to pick a flaw by which he can deduct a cent, or throw it back upon her to do over again; one week more, for thirty cents, deducted from the bond. Sweet Jew, for you we quote the lines of the inspired; read them and grin and grind, but when the Lord cometh, he will hold you by the justice you have done to those who labor to make you what you are—a bloated insult to poverty, a disgrace to wealth. You would send her back to her cold room unpaid, would you; because for five cents she has not done your dandy friend's shirt in a way to suit his highness, leaving out two stitches here, when she went to sleep after last midnight?

"With fingers weary and worn,
With eyelids heavy and red,
A woman sat, in unwomanly rage,
Plying her needle and thread.
Stitch! stitch! stitch!
In poverty, hunger, and dirt,
And still with a voice of dolorous pitch,
She sang the 'Song of the Shirt!'"



EXAMINING THE WORK.

"Work! work! work!
While the cock is crowing aloof!
And work! work! work!
Till the stars shine through the roof.
It's oh! to be a slave
Along with the barbarous Turk,
Where woman has never a soul to save,
If this is Christian work!

"Work—work—work!
Till the brain begins to swim;
Work—work—work!
Till the eyes are heavy and dim.
Seam, and gusset, and band—
Band, and gusset, and seam—
Till over the buttons I fall asleep,
And sew them on in my dream!

"Oh! men with sisters dear!
Oh! men with mothers and wives!
It is not linen you're wearing out,
But human creature's lives!
Stitch—stitch—stitch!
In poverty, hunger, and dirt,
Sewing at once, with a double thread,
A shroud instead of a shirt!"

There is a good deal more of that poem, oh frightened Mr. Screwhead, and we advise you to buy the work, and after you have read it over several times in your well-cushioned arm chair, in your snug little parlor, we have an idea that you will jump very rapidly to the conclusion that you are pretty considerable of a villain, after all your subscriptions to the "society for the prevention of cruelty to animals."

Fashion we have touched upon; not treating it with any severity, for after all, of itself it enables a great many people to live rather

comfortably. It enables the dame to feel satisfied that all irregularities of—form are blended in a crowd of crinoline; it gives the means of livelihood to the professors of design in stuffs and figures, employment remunerative to the chief of the millinery and mantua making establishments, and through them, to the young ladies who do the drudgery of putting ribbons and laces, and one thing and another, together in a proper and tasteful manner.

Much could we write upon the theme in all its bearings, but our pages are to be occupied with other, but not more important subjects, and we hasten to a conclusion; but ere we leave these thoughts to your serious consideration, one thing we must mention. Extravagance in dress leads to a great deal of trouble in this world and the next, but what those troubles are, we leave you to find out in the history of the criminal trials that are upon record in the English, European and American courts of justice. A wise man, Antisthenes by name, the Phrygian, had this impertinent habit. (He lived in Athens.) Whenever he saw a woman magnificently adorned, off he would put to her house and bid her husband bring forth his horse and his arms, and then if he had such things, he would give him leave to indulge in luxury, for that he had the means of defending himself; but if he had them not, then he would bid him strip his wife of her ornaments. Ladies and gentlemen, do you understand the dodge of the wise philosopher?

sincere, and artless woman, who had been wofully duped. How the affair eventuated I cannot say. If the bridal tour in this case was cheered in its commencement with flowers and smiles it certainly terminated very unhappily.

Cincinnati, with great propriety, is called the "Queen City." She looks like a queen, reclining on her elbow amid the green hills. Her face is mirrored in the glassy waters of the beautiful river that rolls at her feet, and her generous heart beats with the noblest impulses. She is a favorite, loved and cherished by a grateful people; and she wields an influence which is felt throughout the Republic.

In visiting Cincinnati one is impressed with the idea that it is not only a great city, but that it is destined to be one of the largest in the great valley of the West. It is laid out in regular streets, which are paved, and built up with magnificent blocks of stores and dwellings. It is a city of great commercial enterprise, and has more benevolent institutions and a higher order of schools in proportion to its population than any other city in the United States. It is full of democracy, yet has a proud aristocracy. One of the most interesting of its public buildings is the Observatory. It is built on a hill, with a front eighty feet long, three stories high in the center, and is supplied with one of the largest telescopes in the world. If you look through it at the right

moment you can see the "man in the moon" flogging his wife—a barbarous old chap, from whom his wife ought to have a divorce, and might have, if she would apply to any of the courts in Indiana.

A few hours' ride by railway transferred us from the banks of the Ohio River to the region of the great Northern lakes, a distance of nearly three hundred miles. Our route led us through the Miami and Scioto valleys, rich and productive beyond description. In fact the State of Ohio is the great central garden of the Union, and has a population which knows how to cultivate it. Without a rood of waste land, the State is unquestionably as capable of sustaining ten millions as two millions of population. It is not necessary to speak of her resources; it is sufficient to say they are immense. She has many growing and beautiful cities, one of which is often pronounced by travelers to be the most beautiful in the United States—

"The Forest City, the City of the Lakes."

Here we were welcomed on our arrival by many and kind friends, and here we came to the conclusion that "home, sweet home" is the dearest spot in the world. And here we take leave of the readers of our unpretending sketches, hoping that our Magazine acquaintance has not been entirely unprofitable, or destitute of interest.

ADVICE TO A YOUNG LAWYER.

BE brief, be pointed; let your matter stand
 In order, lucid, and compact at hand;
 Spend not your words on trifles, but condense;
 Strike with the mass of thought, not drops of sense;
 Press to the close, with vigor once begun,
 And learn—how hard the task!—to cease when done.
 Who draws a labored length of reasoning out,
 Puts straws in line, for winds to whirl about;
 Who draws a tedious length of reasoning o'er,
 Counts but the sands on ocean's boundless shore;
 The palm in law is gained, as battle fought,
 Not by the numbers, but the forces brought.
 What boots success in skirmish or in fray,
 If rout and ruin follow close the day?
 He who would win his cause, with power must frame
 Points of support, and look with steady aim;
 Attack the weak, defeat the strong with art,
 Strike but few blows, but strike them to the heart;
 All scattered fires but end in smoke and noise,
 The scorned of men, the idle jeer of boys.
 Keep, then, this first great precept ever near;
 Short be your speech, your matter strong and clear
 Earnest your manner, warm and rich your style,
 Severe in taste, yet full of grace the while;
 So may you reach the loftiest height of fame,
 And leave, when life is past, a deathless name.