

THE HERITAGE.

BY JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

The Rich Man's Son inherits lands,
 And piles of brick, and stone, and gold ;
 And he inherits soft, white hands,
 And tender flesh that fears the cold—
 Nor dares to wear a garment old ;
 A heritage, it seems to me,
 One scarce would wish to hold in fee.
 The Rich Man's Son inherits cares ;
 The bank may break—the factory burn,
 A breath may burst his bubble shares ;
 And soft, white hands could hardly earn
 A living that would serve his turn.
 The Rich Man's Son inherits wants ;
 His stomach craves for dainty fare,
 With sated heart, he hears the pants
 Of toiling hands, with brown arms bare—
 And wearies in his easy-chair.

What does the Poor Man's Son inherit ?
 Stout muscles, and a sinewy heart,
 A hardy frame, a hardier spirit ?
 King of two hands, he does his part
 In every useful toil and art ;
 A heritage, it seems to me,
 A king might wish to hold in fee.
 What doth the Poor Man's Son inherit ?
 Wishes o'erjoyed with humble things ;
 A rank adjudged by toil-worn merit,
 Content from that employment springs
 A heart that in his labor sings !
 What doth the Poor Man's Son inherit ?
 A patience learnt by being poor ;
 Courage, if sorrow comes, to bear it ;
 A fellow-feeling that is sure
 To make the Outcast bless his door.

Oh ! Rich Man's Son, there is a toil
 That with all others level stands ;
 Large charity doth never soil,
 But only whiten soft white hands—
 This is the best crop from thy lands.
 A heritage, it seems to me,
 Worth being rich to hold in fee.

Oh ! Poor Man's Son, scorn not thy state ;
 There is worse weariness than thine,
 In merely being rich and great ;
 Toil only gives the soul to shine,
 And makes rest fragrant and benign ;
 Both, heirs to some six feet of sod,
 Are equal in the earth at last ;
 Both children of the same great God ;
 Prove title to your heirship vast
 By record of a well-spent past.
 A heritage, it seems to me,
 Well worth a life to hold in fee.

HOW STEEL PENS ARE MADE.

It was at first doubted that steel pens could be made in this country, but it was soon learned that the requisite skilled labor could be obtained for high wages, and the success of the pioneers led one manufacturer after another into the business, until now the field is pretty well supplied. Most of the work on these little instruments is done with the aid of very nice machinery worked by women and girls. The steel used is imported, because it is believed that the quality is more uniform than American steel. This uniformity of quality is necessary because of the very delicate tempering required in the manufacture of the pens. That mysterious quality of steel which gives different grades of elasticity and brittleness to different

colors of steel is a quality that requires expert manipulation on the part of the workman who does the tempering. He must know the nature of the material with which he works, and with that knowledge must exercise a celerity and skill that seizes upon the proper instant to fasten the steel at a heat which insures the requisite quality.

First the steel is rolled into big sheets. This is cut into strips about three inches wide. These strips are annealed ; that is, they are heated to a red heat and permitted to cool very gradually, so that the brittleness is all removed and the steel is soft enough to be easily worked. Then the strips are again rolled to the required thickness, or, rather, thinness, for the average steel pen is not thicker than a sheet of thin letter paper. Next the blank pen is cut out of the flat strip. On this the name of the maker or of the brand is stamped. The last is a very important factor. There are numbers that have come to be a valuable property to manufacturers. Many clerks say they cannot work to advantage unless they have particular styles of pens. The result is that by passing the word from one writer to another a market is soon created for a favorite style. Each steel pen has therefore to be stamped with sufficient reading matter to identify it thoroughly. The stamping is done with very nicely cut sharp dies that cut deep and clean, so that the reading matter will not be obliterated by the finishing process. Next the pen is moulded in a form which combines gracefulness with strength. The rounding enables the pen to hold the requisite ink, and to distribute it more gradually than could be done with a flat blade.

The little hole which is cut at the end of the slit serves to regulate the elasticity, and also facilitate the running of the ink. Then comes the process of hardening and tempering. The steel is heated to a cherry-red, and then, plunged suddenly into some cool substance. This at once changes the quality of the metal from that of a soft, lead-like substance to a brittle, springy one. Then the temper of the steel must be drawn, for without this process it would be too brittle. The drawing consists of heating the pen until it reaches a certain color. The quality of the temper varies according to the color to which the steel is permitted to run. It is the quick eye for color and the quick hand to fasten it that constitutes the skill of the temperer of steel. When the steel is heated for tempering, it is bright. The first color that appears is a straw color. This changes rapidly to a blue. The elasticity of the metal varies with the color, and is fastened at any point by instant plunging in cold water.

The processes of slitting, polishing, pointing and finishing the pens are operations requiring dexterity, but by long practice the workmen and workwomen become very expert. There have been few changes of late years, and the process of manufacture is much the same that it was twenty years ago, and the prices are rather uniform, ranging from 75 cents to \$4 a gross, according to the quality of the finish. The boxes sold almost universally contain a gross.

Fancies come and go in the styles of pens as in other fashions. One American maker alone turns out about 350 different patterns. Some are very odd, such as the stub pens, the draughtsman's pen, which makes two parallel lines at once ; the mammoth pen, suited to use on rough paper ; and the pen with the turned-up point, that writes a thick mark, yet runs smoothly over the paper. Then there are delicate pens for ladies, pens that make a fine hair line and yet can spring out to a heavy shading. Already the American steel pens have become famous abroad, and many are exported. Many pens are made of other metals besides steel. One kind is the German silver non-corrosive pen for red ink. Another is an imitation gold pen made of non-corrosive metal. There are pens of all colors and sizes for all trades and professions.—*New York Sun.*