

are, perhaps, one or two flat ingots of the same precious metal, worth many hundreds more.

He is going to the rolling mill—"flattening mill" was the London name of it, *vide* Cowper's poem on the subject—to get the metal prepared for use. The ingots he is going to have rolled out into what is technically called "flat," and the roll of gold ribbon is to be reduced to thinner gauges for various uses. Arrived at the rolling mill, he "weighs in" his gold at the office before passing inside, and he diligently watches his trust through its various processes, whether being passed under polished steel rollers, or annealed in a reverberatory furnace, technically called a "muffle." When it has become too hard and brittle for further rolling, (it is rolled in a cold state), it has to be annealed again and again until it is gradually brought to the required thinness. When it has at last been brought to this state it is frequently rolled up into one package for the last annealing, and, hanging this on to a piece of bent wire, its guardian goes to the office to "weigh out." Having satisfied himself that the metal has not lost more than a due proportion in the process, he goes boldly on his way to the workshop, satisfied that if any evil disposed person endeavors to take it from him he will find it too hot for his fingers. But although considerable quantities of the precious metal are carried about the streets thus openly, there are few robberies. There have, however, been times in Birmingham when "hot-pots" have been known by the police to exist. These were crucibles of the kind used for melting gold, kept constantly at the fusing point, so that any haul of gold or silver might be dropped in and at once lose its identity. The agents of these nefarious receivers have sometimes assaulted the gold porters in the street and got off clear with their booty, but it speaks well for the police arrangements that this kind of crime is now exceedingly rare.

The work bench at which the goldsmith works is of a peculiar shape; its superficies may be described as rectangular, with a semi-circular scollop on each of three sides, the remaining side being fixed against the wall. In each of the three scollops sits a workman, and in front of him hangs down a tanned sheep-skin, suspended in such a manner as to catch any filings or small bits and cuttings that may fall in the course of his work. Near him is a gas-flame, carried by a swivel fixture, so constructed as to turn down the gas when it is pushed away from him, and to make the flame larger when he draws it towards him. He uses, for uniting the various parts of the articles he constructs, a solder composed of various proportions of gold, silver, copper, and zinc, fusing the same by directing the gas flame upon it by means of a mouth blowpipe. He uses borax for a flux.

On the goldsmith's bench are gathered the products of various trades. The die-sinker has cut the dies in which are struck the shell work for ear-rings, brooches, or rings, some of them of great beauty and clearness of form. Wires of various shapes have been produced by the wire drawer. The lapidary has cut the precious stones with their numerous facets. It is the work of the goldsmith to unite these parts into the beautiful whole, which gradually grows under his hands. While he is working at it, beauty of form is manifest, but it is of a dirty and oxydized color. It is only when it is polished by the polisher, or "colored" by being subjected to the action of saltpetre in a vivid state of combustion, that its full glory appears. The last process burns out the alloy from the surface and leaves a skin, so to speak, of pure gold. Only the higher qualities of gold work are susceptible of this treatment. Great care is taken to preserve all the "lemel"—a word, the origin of which I have been unable to find, and which means the filings and bits that the goldsmith