

people who have plenty of money are not obliged to give an account to their neighbours of their expenditure. They were, however, discussing the very subject themselves upon the damask lounges, when the servant man entered and presented the seamstress's bill. Such a nicely folded paper always attracts the family's attention, and having looked at the bottom and the amount, exclaimed:

"Dear me, how high."

They then proceeded to examine the contents of the bundle which accompanied the bill.

"The work is done beautifully," said Miss Henrietta; "how superbly this lace is set on—how splendidly this is hemstitched. I declare, mother, I never intend to do any work myself again, it is so much better than I can make it look."

"But you forget," said the mother, "that it costs a great deal to hire all our sewing for a large family, if it be done ever so cheap;" yet she felt herself that it was very pleasant to have garments made.

"I wonder," said Sophia, a tall, graceful girl, of sixteen, to the little waiting seamstress in the entry,—"*What you would charge to make papa ten shirts? I have engaged to have them done by the first of May, and it is a long job, and so vexatious, I wish I could transfer them to you to finish.*"

The child was sent home to inquire of her mother, what she would charge to make ten shirts with full bosoms hem-stitched each side, and ruffled, of the nicest fabric, and workmanship to correspond.

The little girl returned and artlessly replied:

"Mother says how she shall charge a dollar; but if the young folks said they would not give it, rather than lose the job, she would say seventy-five cents a piece!"

Amused with the simplicity which ought to have excited sympathy rather than merriment, Sophia pretended that seventy-five cents was all that she expected to give; she had hoped to get them done for fifty cents. Mrs. Fuller only gave that, but she did not add that Mrs. F.'s shirts were unbleached, and very common work was put in them.—After some hesitation she brought them down, and doing up a large bundle dispatched it to the seamstress, adding:

"Now my poor head and eyes are relieved."

But let us see to whom this bundle was transferred. The same seamstress once had a husband who was a prosperous merchant, but he speculated unwisely, died suddenly, and left a widow with two small children to grapple with the hard fate of poverty and remembrance of "better days." They occupied but one room, and as her only employment was sewing, it was difficult to make both ends meet with the most untiring industry."

"Don't you think, mother," said little Ellen who brought home the work, "the young lady thought she ought to get the shirts made for fifty cents apiece. But mother, she surely could not have known what a slow process it is, to gather and hem-stitch, and ruffle, and do all the sewing just for a half week's rent, or she never would have said so."

The mother brushed a tear away. "No, child, she never sewed for a living."

"And mother, she told her sister that she was so glad to get rid of the tiring work, and she said her father would never know but what she did it all, and she would have fifty cents clear on every shirt, what could she mean?"

Mrs. A. had heard of such deception before, but she cared not to inform her daughter that the young lady was probably to receive one dollar and a quarter for each shirt. She felt that her business was only to finish her whole number as soon as possible. She immediately set about the task of cutting them by the pattern, assorting them into piles and getting the plainer parts ready for Ellen to hem, as she was very nice in needle-work as far as she had learned the art. But it was always near "school time," and the poor child but little relieved her mother.

It was at that season, too, when storms succeed each other in rapid succession, and the heavens are overcast, and as the tenebment of the widow was badly lighted, it began to make sad havoc of her vision.

Her eyes were weary from continual use, and when the long job was patiently accomplished, who could tell the aches and pains by which it was all the way attended? Miss Landon in speaking of such poor said:

"We little think how wearily
The aching head lies down."

Long before the promised time Ellen carried home the ponderous bundle of ten shirts.