

one party rise at such a moment, with a pocket full of affidavits, and proceed to read them very much at his leisure, consuming the time of the court, and keeping the business waiting. "Are you ready for the plaintiff, brother Sharp?" asks the judge. "Yes, my lord," replies the barrister. "Is the counsel for the defendant ready?" No one answers. "Let a default be entered. *Brown v. Smith* stands next." And *Brown v. Smith* is on trial in a moment. The first witness takes the stand. The leader for the plaintiff rises at the same moment, and proceeds to interrogate him briskly and pointedly, and never sits till he is done with him. Meanwhile the junior is taking minutes, and there is no waiting for mending of pens, folding of papers, opening and shutting of tobacco boxes, chatting with clients or the miscellaneous hangers-on of a court room, or laboriously reducing to writing every syllable uttered by the witness. As soon as the plaintiff's counsel has finished his interrogatories, the defendant's counsel is on his feet, and at work with great vigour; and the instant he concludes, the sharp cry of the usher, "Step down, Sir," is uttered, and the witness vanishes in a second, and another takes his place.

The arguments of counsel, whether addressed to the court on questions of law or to a jury, are remarkable for brevity and point. There is no wandering from the questions at issue, no waste of labour upon irrelevant or inconsequential points, no personalities, no bombast, no high-flown flourishes of rhetoric, no long-winded and pointless stories, no wearisome iteration and re-iteration of the commonplace axioms of the legal profession.—Nothing can exceed the summary manner in which motions and questions of law are disposed of. It is the "ne plus ultra" of despatch, consistent with thoroughness and accuracy. In citing authorities, a barrister would as soon think of reading the litany as reading an entire case. The book, page and title of the action is given, and the sentence relied upon read, in general without more, the court being supposed to recollect the facts, and to be familiar with the reasonings. Of course, at times you hear the facts stated, but always succinctly and very briefly. The art of condensing into a nut-

shell a statement of facts which an American lawyer would feel justified in spending half an hour in narrating, seems to be perfectly understood and almost universally practised. The court are fully awake, and the barristers speak as if the motto were ever in their minds, "Millions are behind us." If you would be impressed with the value of half hours and minutes, spend a day in Westminster Hall.

As a specimen of the manner of conducting criminal trials, take the following:—

CENTRAL CRIMINAL COURT. OLD BAILEY.

*Before the Recorder (Law) and Mr. Alderman Gibbs.*

Charles Edwards, clerk, aged twenty-six, and William Johnson, sweep, aged twenty-one, were indicted for stealing one piece of cloth, value seventeen pounds, the property of Samuel Summers, in his dwelling-house. Johnson pleaded guilty, Edwards not guilty. The prosecutor swore to the cloth. One witness testified that he had seen the prisoner, Edwards, in the neighbourhood of the prosecutor's shop. A cabman testified that Edwards bespoke a cab of him; that while he was arranging the harness, Johnson, the other prisoner, came up with the cloth and got into the cab with Edwards; that immediately the hue and cry was raised, and both of them were arrested. This was all the testimony.

In defence of himself, Edwards (who seemed to be a Frenchman) remarked in broken English, that he knew nothing of Johnson, or of the cloth, and that he was very much surprised to find a man jumping into a cab which he had hired, and still more so to find himself held responsible for that man's crime. Johnson confirmed Edwards's statement in every particular.

Recorder.—"Gentlemen of the jury—It is for you to say whether you believe the prisoner's story or not, and to return your verdict accordingly."

The jury, without leaving their seats, found the prisoner "guilty."

Recorder.—"What have you to say in arrest of judgment or mitigation of sentence?"

Johnson.—"I should like to have time to send for my employer, who will give me a good character."