

brunette, almost as formidable, who had a pair of eyes that seemed to burn holes in everything and everybody contemplated.

The same sweltering crowd harassed the clerks on the second, third and fourth floors, and on the fifth the sight of so many little drudges selling groceries or handling goods made one feel ashamed of the civilization that fostered such a condition of woman. The younger girls in many instances wore big check aprons to screen rather than save the worthless little dresses beneath. It was harrowing to see these children, boys of ten and twelve, and fragile girls of eleven, twelve, thirteen, and fourteen, carrying boxes of soap, starch, and candles, packages of buck-wheat, salt, and hominy, and cans filled with oils, sirups, vinegars, and the like. The men in charge had no hesitancy in commanding these transfers, calling Maggie and Mary as often as John or Dick to make the removal. I saw one little boy of slight build with a sweet but very sad face, dragging a bag of coffee that would have been a strain on the muscles of a strong man, and a little Swede girl who said she was thirteen in March, had a box of canned vegetables in her arms the weight of which made her black in the face.

There is a ruin of youth and beauty which is more appalling than age, and into such ruin has the youthful grace, vigorous beauty and the charm of gladness and trust of these immature lives fallen. There was no inclination to frolic, no merry bantering, and no semblance of childish glee among the little serfs.

A bridge of sighs spans the alley on the fifth floor, bringing the two stores of Messrs. C. W. & E. P. into communication. Across this covered passage in the P. store proper, is a small room in the rear of the floor which is used as a cafe by the female help of the B. store. The furniture consists of two narrow tables and three long benches extending the length of the apartment. The benches had no rung or rest for the back,

and here the young women and check-girls sit at noon over their lunch. On the wall is an expansive sheet of ecru paper bearing this inscription:

"Female clerks and check-girls: You are requested not to eat on the stairs or anywhere else. You will keep to the right coming up, and to the left going down. You will not talk on the way nor take hold of each other's hands, but walk by yourselves. Anyone breaking this rule will be discharged.

Apropos of signs I forgot to say that in the basement where the cloak-room is designated this notice appeared in bold relief:

The girl who took the silk umbrella Saturday is known. If it is not returned at once she will have to take the consequences.

Another less conspicuously placed sign read:

All female employes will be ready for work at 7:45 a. m., under penalty.

Miss Gannon who has charge of the kitchen, is the good angel of the place. She is a plump, nice-looking person of splendid presence, with mild eyes, a firm face, sweet voice, and a heart brimful of motherly tenderness. She makes tea and lemonade, which, with fresh milk is retailed at 3 cents a glass. The tea has cream in it and the three lumps of sugar that go with each cup are a gastronomical treat to the little ones who drink the Japan first and save the sugar cubes for desert.

When I found Mr. H. he called his assistant, the lowering brunette with the fiery eyes, who told me he had no opening—told it, too, with a degree of positiveness that left no room for