

Save as to ill-kept closets on the three upper floors and a scarcity even of that undesirable kind, the sanitary condition of the premises is fair, light and ventilation being abundant. Of the 305 employes 220 are males and eighty-five are females. The wages of the latter range from \$3 to \$10 a week, averaging about \$5, and the male average is \$12.50.

"Aren't you from *THE TIMES*?" asked one of the forewomen in a quizzical way.

"Do I look like a woman?"

"You might be 'Nell Nelson' disguised in pants for all I know. But I don't care if you are; I'll tell you all I know."

"*Facilis descensus averni*" doesn't apply to going downstairs in this factory, because it isn't easy to get down, and the lower you get—that is to say, the nearer you approach the manager's desk—the more heavenly the situation. Ceilings rise in gradation and stairways expand until Mr. M's handsome office is reached.

"The health department claims that there should be one closet for every twenty employes," said the inspector.

"But ours are only for use in case of emergency," replied Mr. M. "We didn't put them in for the accommodation of our help, and they are not expected to visit them during working hours; their time belongs to us. It is work that we want from them."

This was said partly in self-defense and partly in repartee, but even with apologetic explanation it grates harshly on the ear. By an expenditure of a few hundred dollars, the health, safety and comfort of 300 persons employed by a firm having hundreds of thousands of dollars invested could be assured. And at the same time it must be admitted that this is one of the very best regulated establishments of the kind in Chicago. The story told by the inspector did not relate to the J. M. company.

THE GIRLS DO PRETTY MUCH AS THEY PLEASE AT E. BROS. NECKTIE ESTABLISHMENT, AND THEY CAN EARN ABOUT SEVEN DOLLARS A WEEK THE YEAR ROUND.

Neckwear is the source of E. Brothers' wealth, at whose factory, Market street, cravats, slip-ties, dude ties flat scarfs, four-in-hands, and bow-knots, are turned out by the hundred gross every week. Thither I went to make ties and the acquaintance of the tie-makers. The insolent treatment I received at H. S. & M. and S. L. & Co.'s, though anticipated was not encountered at E's. I had taken the wrong entrance and the politeness of the men in the elevator and stock-rooms was most refreshing. In the forewoman I found a slovenly pudgy spinster of negative beauty and address, not at all inclined to be affected by the woeful condition of her sex. She was reluctant about giving me work because it took so much time to teach a green hand. I told her that was not my hue, that I was dextrous with the needle, and an experienced (?) cloak and coat maker.

"Then why don't you work at one of the trades? Either pays better than neckties."

Remembering the pittance I had received at some other places and how I had battled for them, I felt dubious about the truth of her assertion, but argued that my health had proved treacherous and the work too heavy for hot weather. I told her I was a "hustler," and would like to try a week or so till I learned the business.

"A week? Well, you'll do well if you learn it in a year. But take off your hat and I'll let you have a scarf."

In answer to my query regarding wages, I received the stereotyped answer of the august "forelady," viz., "different prices." With so much specification I began to make scarfs.