

my way out I discovered the blazing furnace along the west wall which gave the cloak and toilet rooms their tropical climate. On this floor there must have been at least fifty persons, separated from the enfeebling heat and vitiated atmosphere by a mere wooden partition. I asked a man behind a pile of cottonades how he stood it, and he said:

"My God, a body can stand anything when he can't get bread for his children any other way. It's awful hard here these hot days, but we don't mind it in cool weather."

Although I felt as though I had been sick and was convalescing the hot-air bath did me good, for when I stepped from the elevator into the bright sunlight and free air of the main floor I was as happy and light-hearted as a nymph in fairyland. Mr. P. met me and escorted me to the running-stock placed on narrow counters running the whole length of the aisle. There were buttons at five cents a card, one trough full of penny handkerchiefs, and another at three cents each. A little farther along was a medley of ruchings dirt cheap, a sea of fifteen cent aprons with tucks and shirrings, and a fine line of cuffs and collars a nickel apiece. Midway were the toilet specials—Florida waters, bay rum, foreign and domestic colognes from five cents to forty cents a bottle, and a mountain of medicated paper rising from a bed of swans-down face powder, pink and white, only seven cents a box. Mr. P. told me to "take hold of the whole lot and sell anything I could." I took hold of the toilet waters and medicated paper, and the floor-walker brought me a book and showed me how to make out a check. I had only committed to memory the cologne stock—violet, lavender, anemonee, and queen—when a strange man from the other aisle called: "Hist there, come and wait on this lady." He led me to the lawn counter, where a lady wanted to see some "buff swiss." All the clerks were measuring off nainsook, bombazine, or cross-bar lawn and could not heed my application for "buff swiss." I read all the box la-

bels. Not one bore the Alpine legend. Presently my male confrere advised me and I pulled out a box, hit my nose with the off corner, and raised a dust when I dropped the heavy pasteboard on the counter. The box was full of white swiss, and the lady said it wouldn't do. I smiled and asked if she wanted to match.

"No; for a picnic hat."

I told her she wanted tarlatan, and that I had a lovely shade. I showed it to her.

"Won't do."

"But it gathers beautifully and is very becoming to your complexion," putting the stuff alongside her amber cheek. "Just get some black wings or a bunch of purple pansies to go with it and you will have a regular fete hat."

She succumbed and took half a yard—ten cents' worth. I borrowed my neighbor's scissors, and as I cut off the amount I could not but think that my first customer got a good deal out of me and Mr. P. for her money. When I made out the check and gave it to the man on my right to "please run," I went back to my perfumes, papers and powders. For the next few hours I did a rushing business with the one-cent handkerchiefs, which I boomed to the roof. I sold them to small boys and old men, to visiting gentlemen and ladies, and to scores of young mothers carrying babes in their arms. When I was thinking it was about time for some one to come and pour the oil of gladness on my head I learned that the handkerchiefs were a specialty and limited to two. I had been selling them in lots of from six to ten, and fearing the consequences I sneaked down to the aprons and endeavored to make a customer of every man, woman and child that came my way. A lady came along for two 3-cent handkerchiefs and while waiting for the change I showed her some German cologne. I noticed when I was removing the stopper to give her a smell that the vial was marked 40 cents, but as the large display card read