

CHAPTER V

"NEVER ! NEVER !"

SIXTEEN years which may work miracles with the suburbs of a city may very well leave the older portions almost untouched. Here, for lack of space to build in, building has ceased; the streets, the pavements, the outward aspect of things remain the same, however much of changing life has passed them by. It is here, in the heart of the city, that the returning traveller recognises his native place, and feels at home again. One could, for instance, feel a comforting sense of the permanence of things by just walking into the Stores of Angers and Son after a sixteen years' absence. Good old Angers' ! It gave one such a comfortable feeling to find it still there. Of course, in sixteen years Angers' had grown, but it had grown mostly into the air, so that its face was like that of a child who has grown taller without losing his familiar aspect. Successive coats of paint are only changes in modes of dressing and make no real difference. Inside, the changes were mostly in extent. There were openings upward and vistas where none had been before. There were more elevators; there were moving stairways; the aisles were wider; the departments larger; the whole concern bigger, busier, and more imposing. And yet one could not see much real change in Angers'.

Take the ribbon counter, for instance. In the course