

"It is tiresome standing so long," she said with friendly sympathy.

"Mercy, Forty-five! Anybody'd think that countrified looking creature was the Queen of Sheba the way you're perlitte to her," jeered Sixty-four in a stage whisper.

"Oh, Forty-five'd be perlitte to a street sweeper," chimed in another.

"Every one to their likin'," said Sixty-four, with a shrug. "For my part, I don't think it pays."

"She makes me think of my mother," said Forty-five, gently. "And besides, she looks so tired."

"Guess we're tired, too, an' nobody asks us to sit down," complained Sixty-four.

The elderly woman did not seem to be listening; she was evidently watching some one at the farther end of the room, but she had sharp ears.

"Sh-sh! Here comes the boss," whispered Sixty-four. The next girl nudged her neighbour, and in an instant all the talking and tittering came to an end. The "boss" was the manager of the department, and when he made his round the most indifferent of the girls took good care to seem absorbed in business.

Forty-five, who at the moment was hurrying to the other end of the counter, did not see who was coming.

"Here's your change at last," she said. "It's too bad that you had to wait so long."

"Oh, thank you, my dear," said the old lady in her kind, motherly voice. "I was only afraid of losing my train."

She had thrown off her jacket, and Forty-five stopped to help her put it on.

"Why, Aunt Phoebe!" cried some one at her elbow. "Well! well! this is a surprise!" And there was the "boss," standing in front of the old lady with both her hands in his.

Forty-five, who had just finished buttoning her jacket, slipped quietly back to her place.

"That girl, David, is a lady," said "Aunt Phoebe," as she took her nephew's arm. "I don't know her name, but her number is 'Forty-five.' If all shop girls were equally courteous they would prove their right to be called 'salesladies.'"

"Forty-five, I must remember that," said the boss, stopping to jot down the number.

Forty-five was promoted the next day. Her courtesy, which had been borne of no selfish motive, did not fail of receiving reward and recognition.

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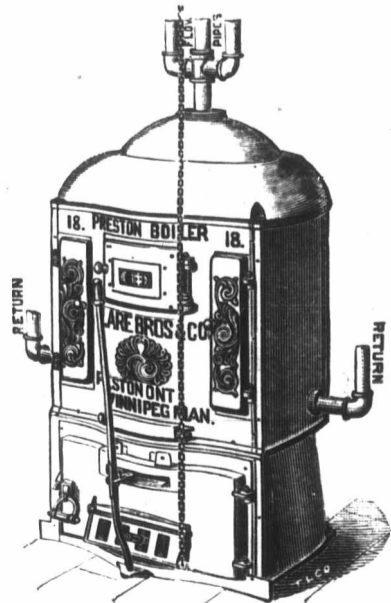
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