

HE THINKS HE'S THINKING,
You know him well, you've seen him oft,
The man who holds his head aloft,
And keeps his optics winking;
His mouth with teeth is smiling,
This man who would a thinker be,
This duncer who thinks he's thinking,
He to his friends has sought to say
The while he strolls along Broadway,
From them he's always shrieking;
He knows them, yet he sees them not,
Right past them he will brisken trot,
This wretch who thinks he's thinking,
Each morning for an hour he'll stand
With plate-glass mirror in his hand,
Indulging in much prinking;
For, though his friends be full to see,
Does himself he'll gaze with glee,
This one who thinks he's thinking,
So sometimes he'll at the corner wait,
As if deciding nation's fate,
Outlandish ideas linking
Together, all devoid of sense,
For common mortals too intense,
This fool who thinks he's thinking,
The while he in the street car sits,
His bulging brows he tightly knits,
And keeps his eyes a-blinking;
His stupid glasses upward aim,
He holds himself a child of fame,
This duncer who thinks he's thinking,
I've watched him sitting at his meals,
And while his sandwich he doth munch,
His glass of cider drinking,
His nose around with various gear,
As if smelling distant seas,
This fraud who thinks he's thinking,
And if he's ever late overboard,
And straight a rap to him is lowered,
To rescue him from sinking,
You'll see him also if every time,
Add to the duncer he'll quickly climb,
For now he's really thinking,
—Addison F. Andrews in Journalist.

QUEER DETECTIVE WORK.

How the Big Stores Find Out What Rivals Are Doing.

Clerks Sent Out on Bargain-Purchasing Tours—Efforts That Are Made to Walk Their Designs—Hustle Is the Word.

The proprietor of one of the largest dry-goods stores on Fourteenth street sat in his office last Monday morning looking over some marked advertisements in the Sunday newspapers. Presently he rang for the superintendent and that gentleman came in.

"Mr. Johnson," said the merchant, "these advertisements that I have marked here are worth inquiring into. It seems that some of our competitors are offering special inducements at this time in the matter of holiday goods. Attend to this at once, please, and let me hear from you."

Mr. Johnson bowed, took the papers and walked out. He devoted about half of the next hour to carefully reading over the advertisements referred to by his employer. Then Mr. Johnson turned around and, nodding to one of his clerks in the office, said:

"I wish you would find Miss Williams in the dress department. Tell her I would like to see her at once."

The clerk went out, and in a few moments returned with a young woman. She was a very pretty, demure and well-dressed girl. She was well spoken, and seemed to know why she had been sent for. She looked up at the superintendent with an inquiring glance as she said:

"You sent for me, sir?"

"Miss Williams," said Mr. Johnson, "we will have to send you out again to-day."

Miss Williams simply nodded, smilingly, and then Mr. Johnson took the marked papers and spread them out before her. Long conversation followed. Miss Williams made notes from the advertisements as she read them and repeated them over to herself a number of times as though committing them to memory. The superintendent said to her:

"Now, I would like to be able to repeat this matter to the firm by to-morrow, and if you are very spry you will be able to get around all these parties to-day before six o'clock."

Miss Williams now withdrew to the room in which the clerks hung their wraps. In a few moments she came out with basket, gloves and wrap, looking not unlike many of the stylish young women who were coming into the store that day's shopping. When she stepped out into the street she looked up and down for a moment as though undecided which way to go. Then she pursed up her pretty lips into a pout, nodded her head in a knowing way and tripped off at a lively pace toward Fifth avenue.

She had not gone far before she saw a throng of shoppers going into one of the big stores. She followed in their wake, and although the crowd in front of her was very large she managed in some way to get near the front at each counter with very little difficulty. At one of the counters she remained for some time.

"I want to see some of that such silk you've advertised," she said.

The clerk took down several bolts of the silk and she examined it critically.

"Thank you," she said.

A moment later she was at another counter, where large war dolls were being disposed of to a hungry crowd of shoppers. There were several clerks at this counter and the floor-walker also happened to be standing there. He let his eyes fall upon Miss Williams and he seemed to recognize her. He stepped up to her, standing so that he was between her and the counter, and said, in a voice slightly tinged with sarcasm:

way up to the counter. She bought several of the dolls after examining them very closely, paid for them and ordered them sent to a house in West Forty-fourth street. She stopped at several other counters and bought other articles, which she had sent to the same address.

In the meantime the floor-walker, whom she had so brusquely repulsed, had been talking to a young cash girl of more than usually intelligent appearance. Evidently he was not satisfied of his mistake so far as Miss Williams was concerned, for he said to the girl:

"You just follow her. Don't lose sight of her if it takes until to-morrow morning. If she goes into a house, wait for her. If she goes into a store follow her. If she stays there, find out whether she is a clerk or not. If she don't, keep on following her until you run her down."

In consequence, when Miss Williams again went into the street the little cash girl was following her at a respectful distance. After her experience with the floor-walker Miss Williams had become very wary. She had maintained with considerable success the haughty demeanor she had assumed, and even when she stepped out into the street she held her nose high in the air. But after she had gone about half a block, and had looked around several times to see if she was being followed, the success of her bluff tickled her so much that she burst out laughing. In a moment the laugh had departed and her face had resumed its usual demure expression, for she was sharp enough and experienced enough to know that such indulgence might prove fatal to her purpose.

There were several other stores along Fourteenth street in which Miss Williams stopped, and at nearly every one she purchased something and had it sent to the Forty-fourth street house. She frequently resorted, when her memory was at fault, to the notes she had made, but this was usually done on the street, and only with great caution within the stores.

From Fourteenth street she started up town on Sixth avenue. One of the first of the big stores that she came to was more than usually crowded because of certain advertisements that had appeared in the paper of the day before. Before entering this store Miss Williams spent several minutes in studying over her notes. As she looked up from them and was about to put them into her pocket her eye caught the young cash girl, who had been following her. There was hardly a change in her face to denote that she recognized the girl, and only for a moment did a shade of annoyance linger on her brow. Then she pretended to resume her study of the notes, but all the time she was watching the little girl out of the corners of her eyes. She had seen the girl in the store, and recognized her from this. It was now her aim to put the little girl off her track. She put her notes into her pocket with a decided air and turned about as though to retrace her steps. The little girl did not budge.

Miss Williams walked half a block away, then turned round as though back-slip, and saw that the little girl had still not moved. For a moment Miss Williams was in doubt as to whether or not she had been mistaken. As she stood there outside the door the little girl looked as though she were waiting for her mother to come out, and not as if she were playing the detective. To make certain, Miss Williams decided upon another test. She turned quickly and walked around the corner, stopping so she could see through the windows of the corner store on to Sixth avenue. A minute passed and the little girl had not appeared. Miss Williams was about to return when she saw the cash girl come slowly up the avenue, apparently with no special idea in mind. Miss Williams stepped back into a doorway and waited to see if the girl would pass, but she was too wise for that. After having waited several minutes Miss Williams' stock of patience was exhausted, and she came out. There was the little girl standing on the corner, calm as ever, with just a little hint of a confident smile on her face.

"You little rascal," said Miss Williams to herself, "you know I couldn't have gone to the other counter in so short a time, and you waited for me to come out of hiding. Well, we will see."

Miss Williams walked right along now as though she had really had some business in the house from which she had emerged, and returned to the dry-goods store she had started to enter when interrupted by the little girl. But all her unpleasant experiences were not yet ended. She was examining some toys when a clerk said, sharply:

"See here, what store do you come from?"

"What do you mean," returned Miss Williams, again assuming the airs of a queen.

"Oh, I know you," returned the clerk. "I have seen you before."

"How dare you insult me," said Miss Williams. "I shall report you."

"Oh, that's all right," said the clerk. "I don't want to insult you, but I won't sell you any thing. You can not buy any thing here."

Several other customers who were standing near looked up in surprise, while the little cash girl, who had smuggled herself in, leaned up against the adjoining counter and grinned from ear to ear.

"Well, we will see about that," said Miss Williams. "Where is the superintendent?"

"Here, cash," said the clerk, calling up a little cash girl, "take this lady to the superintendent."

The clerk said this in a very sarcastic manner, and for once Miss Williams' anger and indignation were not feigned. She did not go to the superintendent, however, but tried to outwit the clerk by going to another part of the store. The clerk was apprised of the fact, however, and got around in time to balk Miss Williams in her attempt to purchase.

The clerk could not, of course, refuse absolutely to sell to her, but overcame this obstacle by saying that every thing was sold. Miss Williams, who followed from counter to counter, and finally gave up in despair, having been able to purchase only one article of the many she had started to get in this store.

With few exceptions, however, in the

other stores she went to she found no difficulty in obtaining all that she desired. With the exception of a few minutes for lunch she was on her feet nearly the whole day. Several times she attempted to escape from the little girl who was following her, but each time was entirely unsuccessful. She stopped for half an hour at the house of a friend. When she came out she thought she had won out, for the little girl's patience, for she was not in sight, but several minutes later the little girl bobbed up again, having spent the meantime munching cakes in a bakery across the way from a house at which Miss Williams had been visiting.

When Miss Williams finally turned up at the store from which she had started, the cash girl was close behind her. She saw Miss Williams go up stairs and report to the superintendent, and managed, through a shrewd question or two, to find that she was employed there. Then, with a knowing nod of the head and a self-satisfied smirk, she gave up the chase. Miss Williams had been comparatively successful, and there were many articles awaiting her at home. Having announced this to the superintendent, she went home, and the next morning came to the store at the usual hour with a written report of her entire experience and the samples she had obtained. These were critically examined by the superintendent, and then taken to the head of the firm.

Nearly every Monday clerks from the various dry-goods houses go through this same experience, so that it has become a recognized custom. It is the only way in which the big retail merchants can keep themselves informed as to the inducements offered by their rivals. Monday is especially selected because the greatest bargains are usually advertised on the day previous. The object more particularly is to see whether the goods are really sold as advertised, and to enable each merchant to see for himself whether he is being undersold by a competitor in any particular article. Rarely does the same clerk go out for more than two or three weeks in succession. When the articles he or she has purchased are brought to the merchant, he compares them with the announcements in the advertisements, and if any of them are sold cheaper than in his own store, then the buyers of those particular articles are likely to be hauled over the coals.

"Some clerks," said the superintendent of one of the big stores recently, "go beyond their orders. I remember a girl who had been buying up bargains for a firm up town some time ago. She came to us and secured employment for the mere purpose of getting our prices and turning them over to the other firm. Of course no reputable clerk would do that and neither would a reputable firm countenance it. A very amusing instance of one firm's picking up the bargains offered by another firm occurred about a year ago, when an up-town firm advertised Webster's Unabridged Dictionary for less money than we could buy it from the publishers. Every one of our clerks received orders when they went out to luncheon to buy one of those dictionaries. Unfortunately the clerks in other houses had received similar instructions, and the dictionaries were disposed of long before half our men had been able to get to the store."

Not only do the firms endeavor to keep track of the bargains offered by their rivals, but they are fully as much interested in the prices of the regular stock goods. These are just as apt to vary as the prices of special bargains.

Modern Discoveries.
What Bell and Edison are to the telephone and electricity, says the Pittsburgh News, Dr. Franklin Miles, the well known specialist in nervous diseases, is to the nervous system and nerve fluid. Among his numerous discoveries his most active nervous was undoubtedly the greatest. It is unsurpassed in nervousness, dyspepsia, headache, epilepsy, neuralgia, backache, melancholy, sleeplessness, change of life, etc. Free trial bottles may be had of C. L. Cotting, druggist, and also Dr. Miles new book on "Nervous and Stomach Disorders" for the afflicted. Everyone should read this interesting, instructive and finely illustrated book.

Notice to Teachers.
Notice is hereby given that I will examine all persons who may desire to offer themselves as candidates for teachers of the public schools of this county, at Red Cloud on the third Saturday of each month.

EVA J. KING, County Supt.

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