

"Furthermore, Keutzer, I have talked it over with the principal, and we have decided the only thing for us to do is advise you to give up your pool shooting or be dismissed from the squad. It's up to you, Keutzer. You can tell me your decision tomorrow. You may go now."

What a blow this was to me! Well, there I stood at the crossroads of my life, being forced to give up either pool or basketball. It was common knowledge at the school that if anyone was dropped from the basketball squad it meant automatic dismissal from school as well. In all fairness, was it reasonable to ask a boy to give up his sole means of support? For the past three years I had been making all my money shooting nine-ball for fifty cents a game, and now the coach was asking me to cast it out of my life forever, or else! What a decision to have to make at such an early age!

I shall never forget how difficult it was for me to leave old Bali High. But there comes a time in every man's life when he must make a serious decision. Possibly, my decision was influenced by my girl friend, who positively refused to marry me unless I had a sound means of supporting her, such as playing nine-ball. However, I must admit that it does give me a great deal of satisfaction to note that Bali High hasn't won a basketball championship since I left.

I Learned From a Dime Store

Helen Tozier

A DIME store may seem to be merely a place where lower-priced merchandise is sold, but for me it was the place where I first opened my eyes to see some of the world as it really exists. It was my first job, and I was on top of the world when I was hired. To become a part of the working class just after my sixteenth birthday seemed something special to me. The glamour, at least I thought it was glamour, of saying, "I've got a job," appealed to me as did the pay envelope bearing my name and company number. Being able to perform a service, however menial, for my fellow man and being entrusted with money in large sums filled me with self-importance. I was the mainstay of the entire organization, or so I thought, until I reported for my first day's work.

My initiation into the working world opened my eyes to how business, small or large, is controlled by a few, and how the rest of the workers abide by the rules set down by these few. I came to realize that I was not the "director" running the show but merely one of the "chorus" who helped put it on. I learned right at the beginning the finesse of guiding a customer's buying ideas down certain lanes and of convincing her that she needed

something that she did not have, or something that I could sell her. I began to see that there was an art to handling all different kinds of people. Most important of all I learned that there are different types of people and that each individual has his own needs, which were to be satisfied by some merchandise I was to sell.

The idea that people are different was new to me. Then and there I began to grow up by observing the people whom I helped. In that store I learned to see through the cheap sophistication of an overly dressed woman, to sympathize with the poverty stricken person who wants to live just like others but by the standards of society cannot, and to understand the efforts of a deaf or mute individual who struggles to make his wishes known to a misunderstanding world. Mainly I learned that everyone is important and that the little word or action that says, "May I help you? I would really like to," can occasionally bring a little happiness into a life.

When the time came for me to receive my last pay envelope from this store, I felt that perhaps I should return the money in payment for what I had learned during my year and a half there. But I suppose nothing can actually be done to tell the people I worked with that I really appreciated the chance to grow up—a chance that many do not receive. Now that I have been away from that type of work for awhile, I have forgotten the tired feet after a ten-hour day, the disgust at having to miss a home town ballgame because of the late hours, and the insults of a few people who, so it seemed, were determined to be the worst customers on earth. I just remember multitudes of faces with a few standing out, such as the man at Christmas buying a sparkling tree ornament for the barefooted, bedraggled boy and the grinning glee on that little boy's face when he knew the ornament was his, or the lame woman at Easter buying a basketful of candy for the poor children. People like these made the long hours worth while. They taught me humility and pride, when to laugh and when to sympathize, how to question and how to remain silent, but mostly how to think of others; and they, the customers, are the reason for my saying that I can never repay that dime store for what I learned from it.

Tientsin

James H. Cox

I WAS first introduced to Tientsin, China, in 1945 while on a tour of duty with the Marine Corps and was at once fascinated and awed by the city and its inhabitants. It is located in northern China and is not unlike St. Louis, Missouri, in area or topography but supports twice as many people.