Beginner's Luck

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Carol McCreary, T & C graduate of last spring, tells us the story of her job at Carson, Pirie, Scott & Company in Chicago.

"I work at the merchandising branch popularly called "Sales Supporting" at Carson, Pirie, Scott & Company. My actual position is assistant to two assistant buyers in one of the five coat departments on the Fashion Floor.

"I am steadily learning to conquer everything from Public Relations to supervising cleaning of the stock room. Everyday all things probable and possible seem to occur and need prompt attention.

"But first the particulars leading up to these strenuous days I lead at Carson's:

"The first contact I had with the Personnel department of the store was last February when I was interviewed by their representative on campus at Iowa State. In April, four of us from school received invitations for a week-end of further interviewing at Carson's expense in Chicago. We accepted and were well rewarded.

"From all over the country came a collection of 35 other college seniors all interested in the field of commerce and seeing at first hand how the business was operated. Besides being favorably impressed with various junior and senior executives we met, I appreciated the time and effort of personnel in seeing that we had opportunity to interview buyers in departments in which we were especially interested.

"In May I heard I was accepted and I answered that I would be available after Labor Day. That brings me up to the actual JOB.

"The first two weeks in the store I was placed on the Fashion Floor selling blouses; the next two weeks selling sportswear next to the College Shop. I considered myself fortunate starting off where I could use my background in textiles and clothing and a natural interest in fashion.

"For the next two weeks I did sales co-ordination work for the supervisor of the ready-to-wear floor. I emerged from this apprenticeship with a useful knowledge of the activities and personnel for the various 22 departments on the floor. Two weeks from my starting day at that job the buyer for the coat department, in which I am now more or less permanently installed, interviewed me for a vacancy as detail girl. That's the abbreviated form for assistant to the assistant buyers.

"This particular coat department includes one suit and two coat departments. Both the assistant buyers under which I work are recent college graduates.

"Being a college graduate I came into the store under the classification of "flyer," which means "on the Junior Executive program and subject to change." Bi-weekly changes, as I had them at first, are discouraging because of always being in the process of learning. But it is definitely a good thing, I feel, because the first position, usually selling, won't be a dead end. For instance, there are 4,000 employees at Carson's and the competition is keen. The Junior Executive Training program placed me on the eligible list for future vacancies.

"Also I was included on weekly meetings arranged by the Training Department for us in which we heard enlightening talks and discussions by executives in display, advertising, fashion shows, and telephone shopping. Everything is designed so that both the "flyer" and the store will have a good idea where she will be most effective. The more knowledge we have of store operation, the better able we are to find our spot.

"At regular intervals we are reviewed for salary increase - no small thing in an expensive city like Chicago!

"I sincerely hope that I've conveyed to you the thrill of the "FIRST JOB," the excitement as well as the uncertainties. Nothing can take its place."