

# GINGER TALKS

*I—THE TALKS OF A SALES  
MANAGER TO HIS MEN*

BY

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## PREFACE

There is gunpowder in every man, if you can only get the spark to it.

There is latent power in every salesman—often more than he himself dreams he possesses. All that is necessary is to light the flame of his enthusiasm by showing him his own opportunities and possibilities.

Do but this much for him, and the hidden gunpowder within him will make him explode into sudden and irresistible action.

“Ginger Talks” are sparks to reach the gunpowder.



To John H. Patterson, president of the National Cash Register Company, this book is dedicated, in recognition of his genius as a teacher and sales-manager and as a token of appreciation of the training the author himself formerly received in the sales and advertising departments of the National Company, and from two years of Mr. Patterson's daily personal tuition in committee and directors' meetings.

*W. C. Holman.*



I wish to preach, not the doctrine of ignoble ease, but the doctrine of the strenuous life—the life of toil and effort, of labor and strife; to preach that highest form of success which comes, not to the man who desires mere easy peace, but to the man who does not shrink from danger, from hardship, or from bitter toil, and who out of these wins the splendid ultimate triumph.

—*Theodore Roosevelt.*



**FIRST GINGER TALK OF A  
SALES MANAGER TO  
HIS MEN**







W. C. HOLMAN

## FIRST TALK

On the great clock of *Time* there's but one word—*Now*.  
Let's take the instant by the forward top.

—*Shakespeare*

You men who get the orders are the chaps who are expected to keep the smoke coming out of the factory chimney. The volume of smoke emitted from our chimney during the past two summer months hasn't been large enough to darken the landscape to any great extent. Now that the dog-days are over and the business-revival season has begun, we are addressing to you a short, sharp request on this subject: We want more smoke!

You are in this business to make money. So is the company. And what we make we must make together. Ours is a mutual benefit association of the most extreme type, though we don't wear any insignia or "put on dog" in a lodge-room. We can't increase our receipts from you without increasing your receipts from us. Every time we pocket the profit on a sale you pocket a commission. All these things being so, we don't feel any coyness in urging you to get out and do a little wholesale hustling.

We haven't pushed you much for business during the last two months. July and August weath-

er will naturally put a check on fast travelling. So far as your arrival with orders is concerned, the figures show that most of you came in on the freight—and some of you were not in the caboose, at that! But this month we are running express. We are going through on schedule time, and there will be no stops for berry-picking.

We hope you were all down at the station bright and early this morning when the whistle blew, and that everybody is on board the flyer who belongs there.

Get the right start. Hold a little convention with yourself, and make up your mind that the first ten days of the month shall produce as many orders as the last ten. It is just as easy to start to get business on Monday morning of the first week as it is on Tuesday afternoon of the third. Time in this business is capital. When you waste a day you are throwing away commissions that belong to you—you are committing petty larceny against yourself.

Get the right start. Take a leaf out of the Jap's book. The day that war with Russia was declared was the day that the little islanders began to fight. Their torpedo-destroyers made their first dash into Port Arthur harbor before the ink was dry on the official pronouncement that a state of hostilities existed.

Admirals and pugilists know that it's a great point in a fight to get in a good hard smash at the enemy as early in the game as possible.

You've had a slack season in which many of you have taken things easy and rested up. You ought to be as full of fight as an unconquered game-cock that has never had a touch of the gaff.

With all your knowledge of unanswerable reasons why merchants should handle our line, and with the accumulated energy and vitality that have been piling up inside you all summer, you ought to hit like a landslide the first half-dozen "prospects" you meet to-day, and carry them completely off their feet. And when you've made a good start, you ought to keep the good work up right through the month.

Don't hang around the office the first week waiting for the fellow to come in and buy! Go out and fetch him. He's there waiting for you, but he won't come, unless you go after him. The man who waits for things to turn up often turns up himself in the poor-house or the jail. Of all men who should shake this waiting habit, the salesman is the chiefest. Business is like ore: you have to dig for it. You don't expect even the richest mine to waft nuggets to you on the spicy gales! Nuggets are usually anchored fast in a hard hillside, and it takes a lot of good stiff pick-and-shovel work to loosen them up and start them rolling down the hill. It's the same way with orders. If it were not, we wouldn't pay commissions to a force of salesmen. Nothing is going to roll your way, unless you go out and start it yourself.

You may be handicapping yourself at the start by the feeling that you haven't as good a chance as some other fellow. Salesmen have a way of cracking up other men's territories and taking a knock at their own. It is always the far pasture that looks greenest, but you will generally find, when you actually set foot on the distant field, that the color turns out to be about the same shade of dull green verging on brown that tinted the patch you left. It isn't the territory that gets orders—it's the man.

There is a tale extant of a soldier who broke his sword in a battle. He had been putting up a poor sort of a fight anyway, and when his blade broke off in the middle, he threw the remaining half of the sword away and took to his heels, exclaiming: "I can't fight with that thing!" A fellow soldier who had been defending himself as best he could with a short dagger seized the discarded sword with a whoop of joy and made such rattling good play with it that he put to rout both his own antagonist and the man who had fought with his runaway companion.

Some men can do more with a broken sword than others with a complete arsenal of perfect weapons. The opportunities that some of us would throw away as useless other men would find it impossible to fail with. Every sales manager can point to scores of territories where four, five, or six men failed, one after the other, before the right man came along and made a

barrel of money. The possibilities of those territories were there all the time, but the men that failed couldn't see them. They didn't look hard enough.

Some one has truly said that, while Opportunity knocks at least once at every man's door, the party inside has no right to expect the panels to be kicked in. And it may be added that, if the expectant party is a salesman, he had best not wait inside at all. The only way in which he can ever hope to catch a glimpse of Opportunity is to get outside the door and do a lot of active searching for her up and down the street.

We advise you to begin your search to-day. When we balance up our books at the end of the month, you want to be on the right side of the ledger. The first essential in the process of getting there is to start now. You can't secure orders in the past or in the future; you must get them TO-DAY.



**SECOND GINGER TALK OF  
A SALES MANAGER  
TO HIS MEN**



### ENTHUSIASM BREAKS ALL BONDS.

**G**ULLIVER was a giant whom the dwarfs captured while he was napping by binding him with tiny threads. Each man was a trifle which he could easily have snappd by itself. But he didn't wake, and the dwarfs wound the threads around him in such number that at last he found himself a prisoner. Are you a modern Gulliver? Do you lack enthusiasm? Are you letting the devils of indifference get the best of you? If so, wake up and scatter them.

## SECOND TALK

The salesman's personal force is an influence that emanates directly from his own unlimited belief in his proposition. It is the magnetic power of sheer earnestness.

Sand in a hurry, please, gentlemen! We need it in no uncertain quantity on this toboggan slide we've struck. It's time to stop slipping back and begin to climb. A few more slumps like that of yesterday and we shall hit the bottom, with the quota for the month lost beyond recovery.

And we had so much faith in you at the start-off two weeks ago! We believed that when the month's returns were all in, the sales department would have to go up in a balloon to read your scores. That's where you fooled us. There has been nothing high this month except our hopes. We've been thinking it all over—hard. And now we want to say a few plain, helpful words to you. Let each man paste them in his hat, and wear them around until they strike in through the top of his head and become a permanent part of his mental equipment.

A chief quality of a successful salesman is earnestness. The reason you are not selling more goods to merchants is that you haven't all sold yourselves yet. You've got to believe in your product yourself before you can make any one

else believe in it. It's no use to try to start a flame of enthusiasm in somebody else, if your own mind is full of icy doubts.

Why did that man over on the avenue turn you down yesterday morning? Because he could tell by the look in your eye that you half expected him to do so. And the fellow you called on in the afternoon sized you up the same way. You didn't get anywhere near him. He listened to what you said—but it was with a cold and fishy eye. True, he nodded his head in assent as you talked—but two minutes after you started his mind was wandering. And when you came to put your finger on him at the end to get the order signed, he was like the Dutchman's famous flea—he wasn't there.

You had lost him. You hadn't impressed him—why? BECAUSE YOU HADN'T BEEN IMPRESSED YOURSELF. And he knew it. You couldn't fool him. He didn't feel any electric sparks of enthusiasm jumping the space from your mind to his. Nothing but a live wire could give him a sensation, and you were trying to magnetize him with words of wood.

You put up a smooth enough line of talk, yes—but there wasn't any conviction back of it. It takes belief, earnestness, enthusiasm, warm human personality, to sell goods. If it didn't, we'd discharge all our salesmen and enlist a force of phonographs, or a troop of wooden Indians.

Now, here's our word to you: Don't try now

for a while to sell any goods to business men. Go off around a corner somewhere, where you can be alone, and sell YOURSELF a line of the article we make. Think over its value; realize it; burn it into your mind. Enumerate its good qualities one after the other; get a realizing sense of each one. Consider what our product will do for a business man, the money it will make for him, the saving it will effect. Sweep out of your mind, like so many cobwebs, any apologetic feeling regarding it. You are not trying to persuade the business man to waste money. You are not trying to trick or cajole him into doing something that he can't afford to do. You are selling him something that he needs. You are helping him to increase his profits. You are doing him as great a favor as he does you, and you must make him see this.

Say these things over to yourself. Think them in your heart; realize them—they're all true. Light the flame of your enthusiasm and fan it into a good, brisk blaze. Then, when you've sold yourself—when you believe in your own proposition, heart and soul—go back and tackle that same man a second time. Greet him quietly and courteously. Tell him that you don't believe you made your proposition quite clear when you saw him before—and begin again. You are in earnest this time. He'll feel the change. There'll be an atmosphere about you that will carry respect. He'll listen to you. His mind won't wander any

more than the mariner's needle wanders from the pole.

Make your arguments actual and personal. Bring them home to him. Stab every point into his mind, so that he can't miss it or forget it. Make him feel each one.

There's as much difference between understanding a thing theoretically and having a practical sense of it as there is between a boxer's love-tap and a prize fighter's deadly punch in the solar plexus. And it takes solar plexus punches to sell goods these days. Merchants are hard-headed and thick-skinned, and they're all in training against you salesmen. You can hit as smilingly and gracefully as you please, but you've got to hit hard to get inside an up-to-date business man's guard.

You haven't half made your point with your man, if when you get through, he looks upon our product merely as something he would do well to use in his business. Make him feel that he CAN'T GET ALONG WITHOUT IT. Make him see that he's losing valuable time and labor in his place of business—that real dollars are slipping through his fingers every day he is without it. Many a man who won't reach out very hard for an extra dollar will mighty hard grab hold of the dollar he already has, and shout murder, if anyone tries to take it away from him! If you can once show a man that he is actually losing money, and that you can stop the loss, you won't need to

supply him with any enthusiasm—he will take fire himself like a lace curtain in a gas jet. But you've got to be earnest in making these facts plain to him. Enthusiasm, conviction, earnestness—these are the qualities that sell goods, and do everything else worth doing. “Nothing great was ever done without enthusiasm.”

There are two weeks left in the month. If you men all get to work to-day with the right spirit, there may yet be time to arrange for that balloon ascension of the sales department after all.



**THIRD GINGER TALK OF A  
SALES MANAGER TO  
HIS MEN**



## THIRD TALK

You can read my book in an hour, but it cost me a lifetime of concentrated attention. I made it my study by day and my dream by night, the alpha and omega of my aims and objects. So must a man study to do any work well.

—*Montesquieu*

The first rule for driving a nail into a board is to get your eye on the nail. Similarly, the first rule for driving a fact into a man's mind is to see that fact clearly yourself. It takes a long time to explain what you don't know. A man can't sail a catboat in a straight line, unless he picks out some particular object to point at, and a salesman can't talk with any effect, unless his mind is fixed on definite, specific ideas.

It isn't enough, when you begin to talk a proposition, to have a general idea of what you are going to say.

Suppose a hunter out with a gun should remark, "I know in a general sort of way what I am aiming at. I've got a kind of idea of where I want these pellets to go. I'll start in and shoot a few rounds at random, and, after I have been firing for a while, I'll begin to find out what I want to hit."

If there were a thousand birds within range

of his gun, that kind of hunter couldn't bag enough game to furnish a kitten a square meal!

I'm convinced from a study of last month's selling records that a good many of you men talk generalities about our product to prospective customers. If you got down to brass tacks and put its advantages before them in a definite, specific fashion, it would be impossible for you to lose out on so many sales. The specific merits are there in the goods as thick as plums in a pudding, but nobody is going to see them, unless you point them out.

The trouble with some of you is that you don't see all these points clearly yourself. Your eyes are out of focus—you don't know your own product. You've got a general sort of idea that it's a good thing, and you can talk a lot of loose hot air about it, but you don't get down to hardpan and make the customer see just what it will do and exactly what each one of its advantages means to him. If you did, you wouldn't have to sell it—it would sell itself.

The first rule for selling an article is to know the article. Know it inside and out, at every angle and from every point of view. Have a chart of its good points worked out in your mind and carefully classified down to the last detail. Know three unanswerable arguments, a couple of sets of figures, and a handful of illustrations to enforce every point. Never stop studying your product. Every time you look at it hard you'll

see something new in it that's good, or some new and telling way of driving an advantage home in the mind of a prospective customer.

The second rule for selling an article is to know all the objections to it and the answer to every one of them before you face a customer.

There's some good answer to every objection, if you can only lay hold of it—remember that. We've sent you a book full of these—get them all into your head. Study them up in advance before you make your calls. Never let a customer spring an objection on you that will take you by surprise. Whenever he throws out an objection, your answer ought to go back at him as a return ball rebounds into a boy's hand when he throws it at the sidewalk. You are at the bat, and the customer is trying to strike you out. No matter what kind of ball he pitches you, it's up to you to hammer his delivery. See that you make good hot line hits—don't pop up any feeble flies or fouls.

You should be so familiar with the answer to each objection that it will automatically jump into your mind and out at your lips when the proper moment comes, just as an actor's speech springs into life when he hears his cue.

But don't let your familiarity with the answer dull your appreciation of its value, or get you into a mechanical way of repeating it to the customer. If you want him to sit up and take notice, you must tell it to him as impressively as

you would announce that a long-lost uncle of his had just died and left him a fortune.

Half-way knowledge is all right, if you only want to go half-way to the goal of success. If you want to get across the line and score a touch-down, you've got to know the fine points of the game as you know your own front hall in the dark. You can't compromise on a knowledge of the price-list.

These college kickers who score the long goals upon the field that forty thousand people travel miles to see didn't pick up the ability casually. The trick looks easy enough. You see the lad take a couple of quick steps and the ball goes sailing across the bar for four points and a victory. It's all over before you can catch your breath. But before the young man learned to take those two steps and swing his foot just right he put in a lot of time in sharp practice and hard work, kicking his leg off in futile efforts to catch the knack of it.

It takes a lot of deep study and a long spell of hard trying before you can learn to do anything in this world that's worth doing.

There's one man who knows a lot about your business and doesn't charge anything for imparting his knowledge. That fellow is the user of your article. He is generally a keen observer, and if you go at him right, it's an easy matter to get good suggestions from him. It pays to be friendly with a user. Ask him questions. He'll

know what he is talking about, because he has his money invested in your article, as against your knowledge, and it's dollars to doughnuts that a man is going to keep his eye on his investment and try to learn all he can about it. Go around and see him when you have a spare ten minutes. Your interview will pay you in dividends of knowledge. The salesman who stores up more knowledge of his business in his mental warehouse than is necessary to make his quota is banking extra capital with which to buy a better position with his company.

This business is like human nature: it has a good many more twists and knots in it than show on the surface.

There's only one way to get a grasp on them, and that can be summed up in two words, "Study" and "Work." Hard work was invented a long time ago, and in a good many thousand years nobody has ever been able to contrive a satisfactory substitute for it. If there is any shorter cut to success in this business, we shall be indebted to the salesman who will wire it to us at once at our expense—and he needn't send a night message either!



**FOURTH GINGER TALK OF  
A SALES MANAGER  
TO HIS MEN**



### ONE KIND OF DEAD MAN.

**S**OME men are dead long before they are buried. It is a delusion that a man has to wait fifty or sixty years to die. If the spirit of the man—the soul of hope and courage within his breast has been extinguished, he is as dead as he ever will be, even though his body continues to walk the streets. His relatives and friends might just as well get together and hold a funeral service over him now as any time. He has allowed his light to flicker out—the vital spark has fled. He has lost the essential quality of life and manhood—Courage.

## FOURTH TALK

The law of worthy life is fundamentally the law of strife; it is only through labor and painful effort, by grim energy and resolute courage, that we move on to better things.

—*Theodore Roosevelt*

Napoleon was no prouder of the matchless soldiers who conquered Europe under his command than our company is of the salesmen who have made good in this business.

You are our Old Guard.

Whenever any of you come in from the firing line for a call at headquarters we feel like ordering a royal salute of twenty-one guns.

Once in a while, however, we receive a call that makes us want to drape our colors with black and play a slow, sad dirge.

Yesterday one of our salesmen came in and informed us that he had about made up his mind to quit the business; he said he found it too hard to make sales, and didn't think there was much demand for our goods—he didn't seem to find any in his territory! He hated to be turned down so often—had come to expect to be turned down every time he made an approach, so guessed he'd try some other business—didn't know just what—hadn't decided yet—but he didn't think there was any use of staying on with us!

We had him inspect our monthly sales statement and note the long list of men who are making money selling our product. We also pointed out to him figures showing that the man who had his territory before him had cleaned up large commissions.

Well, that might be, he said, but he thought ours was a hard business to make good in, nevertheless; he didn't seem to make a go of it himself—guessed he'd try something else. He would be willing to stay, however, if we'd take him off commission and put him on a salary.

Ten minutes later he was out of our employ for all time.

Some men are dead long before they are buried! It is a delusion to think that a man has to wait fifty or sixty years to die. If the spirit of the man—the soul of hope and courage within his breast—has been extinguished, he is as dead as he ever will be, even though his body continues to walk the streets.

This salesman is one of that kind of dead men. His relatives and friends might just as well get together and hold a funeral service over him now as any time. He has allowed his light to flicker out—the vital spark has fled. He has lost the essential quality of life and manhood—COURAGE.

Of course he can't sell any more goods. No man can who lacks grit. An agreeable presence, a pleasant manner, the tactful ability to approach

men without rubbing them the wrong way—these all count for nothing, unless supported by nerve and backbone.

A salesman without nerve is like a jellyfish. The jellyfish is an inoffensive sort of animal, with no disagreeable qualities to excite prejudice; but he has no spine. Consequently his only possible method of progression is to drift. He washes along with the slow tide and never arrives anywhere. When there is anything worth while doing in the fish world, Brother Jellyfish is never among those present.

There is a point here for all salesmen, if they are only willing to see it—and the good men are. The others we don't bother about.

Selling goods is a battle, and only fighters can win out in it. We may not like these conditions, but we didn't have the making of them, and we can't alter them. They are Nature's laws. It is just as well that we can't change them. A fight has valuable uses for those who have the nerve to take part in it. Nothing develops strong qualities like opposition. Kites always rise against the wind, not with it. No man ever worked his way in a dead calm. Courageous men know this. They glory in manly strife, providing only it is fair. The world in general loves a fighter and hates a quitter. It takes off its hat to the man who dares, and stands aside to make respectful room for him whenever and wherever he appears. All other men it tramples on.

Think these truths over, Brother Salesman. Take your courage with you when you enter the selling game; if you don't you'll strike out every time you come to bat, and score nothing higher than a string of goose-eggs! No man ever made a three-base hit who was afraid of the pitcher—remember that. The fellow who knocks the cover off the ball, or lifts it over the fence for a home run, is always the chap who steps up to the plate with grim determination in his heart. He has no more awe of the lightning shoots that hurtle by him than if they were so many darting swallows on the wing.

You must have this same grim spirit of determination every time you go to land a sale. You must approach every customer expecting to encounter indifference, prejudice, objection, strenuous opposition. Be prepared to meet these—go loaded for bear. Then you cannot be disheartened. Believe that under the guise of a polite interview you are going to have a FIGHT. Either you or the other fellow will come out of it victor. Set your jaw and determine that you will be that man.

Say to yourself, whenever you approach a customer: "This man ought to use my product. It will be to his advantage to do so. He doesn't know this now; he won't believe it when I first tell it to him. I don't expect him to. If he had had any desire for my product, he would have bought it before, and there would be no sense in

my calling on him. It is precisely because he doesn't want it that I am here, and for no other reason in the world. It is my business to make him want it. Like many another man, he doesn't know his own best interests. Millions of men go contrary to their best interests every day—willfully blind to the things that would help them and make them better off. I can increase this man's profits, and I am going to make him realize it. There will be a fight, but I shall win out, and when it is over we shall both be better off."

Suppose you fail after all to make the sale. What then?

Well, suppose the fullback in a football game fails to make his distance when given the ball for a plunge. What then? Down at the bottom of the heap, with a dozen men piled on his legs, he hears the referee call out, "No gain!" Does the young man lie still on the ground and mutter, "No use! I can't break that line. I guess I'll retire from the game"?

Not much! There is only one thought in the dogged brain above that bulldog jaw—only one request its owner has to make of the quarterback: "Give me the ball again! I failed before, but I'll smash that line this time or know the reason why!"

Pound! Pound! Pound! he goes at the fighting guards and tackles, barely making his two yards at each charge. But the repeated attacks soon begin to tell. Suddenly the weakening line op-

posed to him gives way altogether, and he bursts through like an exploding cannon-shell and dashes away for a touch-down.

Pluck scored that touch-down—sheer grit, courage, nerve, determination.

These are the qualities that win football games, and these are also the qualities that sell goods, and do everything else worth doing.

The fact that a man has repeatedly said "No" to you is no sign that he won't say "Yes," if you go back at him once more with a little better aim and ammunition. The Japs charged 203 Meter Hill a dozen times before they finally carried it, then lost it—and finally regained it. After that they held it. The Duke of Wellington exclaimed, during the awful carnage at Waterloo: "Hard hammering, gentlemen! We'll see who can hammer longest!" Almost every great thing ever done was wrought into a success after a string of failures. It is ceaseless pounding that puts things through. The tired runner that forces himself to sprint at the finish is the one who wins the race, and the salesman who has the nerve to return to the charge after repeated failures is the one who finally turns defeat into victory.

Courage! That's what every salesman needs. Without it you might as well quit the business. You must have courage—courage to approach men for the first time, courage to go back to them, courage to keep after them until they are landed; courage to believe in your ultimate success as a

salesman, and courage to fight for it day after day until you realize it—courage to keep on pushing toward the goal through all discouragements and over all obstacles. No success can be withheld from the salesman with grit—no achievement is too high for him to reach.

Success is a matter of red corpuscles in the blood—that's all.



**FIFTH GINGER TALK OF A  
SALES MANAGER TO  
HIS MEN**



## DON'T DROP THE ANCHOR!

**W**HEN a salesman hits his office in the morning he ought to grab his sample-case and fly out again as a rubber ball bounces out of a barrel. The place for him to put in his time is where the money is—among his possible customers. His chances for making money are all outside his door. A loss of two hours a day means before the end of the year two whole months crossed off the calendar and the loss of two months' entire commissions.

## FIFTH TALK

There is not an hour of life but is trembling with destinies—not a moment of which, once past, the appointed work can ever be done again, or the neglected blow struck on the cold iron.

—*Ruskin*

One of the things a man has to learn before he can achieve any large success in this world is the value of time.

A good many of you salesmen go on the principle of old man Methuselah. Methuselah never moved out of a walk. Whenever he had anything to do, he took his time about it. If he wanted to sit down and rest, or gossip with the neighbors for a while, or knock off work altogether and go fishing for a year or two, he did it. There was always time enough when he came back to finish what he had been working on.

This sort of thing was all right in his case, but your case isn't exactly parallel. Methuselah had a good deal more time to be reckless with than you have—about nine hundred odd years more, if I remember my boyhood Sunday-school lessons aright. He could afford to slop around and lose a couple of hundred years without accomplishing anything; when he got through he had still a small matter of seven hundred years or so up his sleeve.

You are no Methuselah. If you waste a day or two every now and then, you are going to run out of time in a little while. The days in which you can sell goods, or do anything else with all your might, are few enough at best. Youth doesn't last forever. Enthusiasm gets cold and energy begins to walk on crutches as a man grows older. You want to make every day count. The hours flash by as fast as telegraph poles fade away behind a night express, but a good many of you chaps are like the passengers that snore in the Pullman sleepers—dead to all realization of the speed with which you are travelling. I'm the porter, trying to wake you up before you reach the end of the road.

A good many salesmen begin to waste time as soon as they roll out of bed in the morning. It takes them longer to get a-going on a day's work than it takes a played-out freight engine to start a train of forty coal cars on an up grade.

The conscientious study which these men bestow upon the morning paper at breakfast would make the proof-reader's inspection seem like a mere casual glance.

They feel it a sacred duty, before they start out after orders, to post themselves minutely on recent events in Thibet, the late progress of astronomical research, Bryan's chances of being elected President in 1916, the rumors that Jimmy Britt has changed his training diet, and the latest details of the massacres in Armenia.

If some salesmen took the same feverish interest in business that they take in Willie Keeler's batting average, and followed up customers as closely as they follow the number of strikeouts chalked up to the credit of Iron Man McGinnity, they'd have a lot more money coming to them in commissions at the end of the month!

Prolonged study of the newspapers in the morning never helped a salesman to secure a collection of customers' autographs in the lower right-hand corner of his order-blanks. A glance over the headings and the reading of an article here and there is all that is necessary to keep an intelligent man in touch with progress.

There's only one worse place than the breakfast table to spend an hour or two reading a paper or discussing its contents, and that's down at the office. When a salesman hits his office in the morning, he ought to grab his sample-case and fly out again as a rubber ball bounces out of a barrel. The place for him to put in his time is where the money is—among his possible customers. His chances for making money are all outside his door. He should get out on the street and stay there—unless he can bring a customer to the office with him.

Yet the average salesman haunts his office as if he were tied to it with a string. His first act on his arrival in the morning is to anchor himself at the desk and plunge into a mass of details. A clerk at seven or eight dollars a week

would relieve him of all this work and sift the mail matter that comes in, so that only essentials would be called to his attention. The extra commission he could earn in the time saved would pay the clerk's wages and leave a good-sized balance to salt down in the bank.

But the salesman can't see it. He never has done this, so why should he make a change now? The good old way is good enough for him—the same old gait is fast enough—a quiet, easy jog like that of grandfather's mare. What's an hour or two in a whole day? The salesman lights a good cigar and wades through his mail—all of it—business letters, personal letters, advertising pamphlets, stray magazines—everything he finds on his desk.

Then he answers a few telephone calls, writes a couple of personal letters, asks a friend who drops in how he liked the show the night before, and gets his opinion of the weather, converses at length with Tom, Dick, and Harry, who call to ask him to buy something, or do something, or see something, and he hears the courthouse clock clang out ten long strokes before he finally puts on his hat and goes out to make some money.

Only two hours gone! But two hours spent in learning new sales arguments every morning would have transformed that agent inside of six months into a selling wizard able to coax money out of a customer's pocket as easily as Hermann draws rabbits and coon babies out of a top hat.

A loss of two hours a day means before the end of the year two whole months crossed off the calendar and the loss of two months' entire commissions.

Sitting in an office chair ought to be a dull sort of amusement to a man who is losing money, but a good many salesmen seem to be fitted out with an abnormal sense of humor.

Some of you chaps can charge up the loss of a great deal of valuable time to the fact that you are such good fellows. You meet a friend on the street who asks you to stand up somewhere and partake of a little liquid refreshment at his expense. Then he leads you into a quiet corner where there's a table and a couple of chairs and keeps you corralled for an hour, entertaining you with a variety of conversation, none of which puts any money in your pocket.

You would call for the police, if any one stole your pocketbook; you'd shoot the man who broke into your house and tried to carry off your silver; you'd risk a bullet to save your watch from a hold-up man. But your time, the most valuable thing you possess—your time, the raw material out of which you can make, if you use it properly, a thousand watches or a row of houses with a rent roll—this you will let any casual acquaintance steal from you in any quantity at any time, and you will throw in a cheerful smile to show there's no hard feeling—if he merely takes the precaution to begin by asking you to have a drink.

Your time is your capital, your stock in trade. It is the only kind of capital that costs you nothing to get and everything to lose. The successful salesman hoards minutes and hours as a miser hoards gold. The spendthrift of time is a sure candidate for failure.

Boring crawfishes have ruined more dikes than sudden tempests. It is the little things that count. The loss of ten minutes here, an hour there, a day there, will in the end sink any man's ship of success. The salesman who lets the habit of killing time fasten on him is assassinating his main chance of getting on in the world.

A good many salesmen who aim at success are mere tendencies all their lives. Be an Accomplished Fact. You never can do so till you learn the value of time.

**SIXTH GINGER TALK OF A  
SALES MANAGER TO  
HIS MEN**



### THE STAR SALESMAN'S SECRET.

THE tail-ender of the sales force, who had been sitting around hoping that business would spruce up, put this question to the star salesman of his concern: "How do you manage to get so many orders, while I don't seem to get any at all?"

"Well," said the other, dropping his voice to an impressive whisper, "I make it a point to wear out the soles of my shoes instead of the seat of my trousers. That's one of the fine distinctions that some people overlook."

## SIXTH TALK

The door to the temple of success is never left open. Every one who enters makes his own door, which closes behind him to all others.

—The ship never comes in to the loafer on the dock.

It was the Tail-endor of the sales force who approached the Star Salesman of the organization one day and asked, "How do you manage to make such big sales, while I don't seem to sell enough goods to pay expenses?"

"Well," said the holder of many medals, "there's a secret about it. I've been in the business a good many years, and I've finally solved the selling puzzle. You are a new man, and I'm willing to give you a pointer. But remember that it's a secret."

"I will," said the Tail-endor, beaming with eager anticipation. "Now for the answer: How do you manage to be so successful?"

The Star Salesman dropped his voice to an impressive whisper. "I'll tell you," he said; "I always make it a point to wear out the soles of my shoes instead of the seat of my trousers."

In selling goods, as in every other line of human activity, nine-tenths of the prescription for success consists of plain, every-day, honest, hard work.

Some salesmen seem unable to absorb this simple truth. A good many never make the attempt. Philosophers long ago gave up seeking for the principle of perpetual motion, but there are a lot of salesmen who are still hoping to discover some principle of perpetual rest! Every sales force has its complement of floaters, drifters, waiters, and dreamers—luck-seekers hoping to ride into the harbor of success on the crest of some fortunate wave that will relieve them of the necessity for effort.

They forget that the current runs always out of that harbor, not into it. If a salesman wants to get his boat past the frowning headlands at the entrance, he's got to settle down to a long spell of hard rowing. He's bound to have blistered hands, a tired back, before he can step ashore on the golden sands, and he might as well make up his mind to it first as last.

No amount of talent will free a man from the necessity for hard work. Daniel Webster said: "I have worked twelve hours a day for fifty years." Humboldt rose at four o'clock in the morning for thirty years. During most of his life, into which were crowded the achievements of a hundred men of giant intellect, Napoleon slept only four hours a night. Cornelius Vanderbilt, who made two hundred million dollars, was asked the secret of success. "There's no secret to it," he answered. "It's just dig, dig, dig." When some one said to Edison, "Don't

you believe that genius is inspiration?'' the man who has taken out more patents than any other inventor who ever lived replied: ''No, genius is perspiration.'' In this world a man can't get something for nothing. He may do it once, but if he attempts to make a living on that principle, he's bound to land eventually in the morgue, the poor-house, or the jail. You can have as much success as you like, but you've got to be willing to pay its price in the only coin that passes current in the market where it is sold—hard work.

There's only one way to make luck come your way, and that is to go out after it with a sand-bag, as a hold-up man goes out after victims. No one is going to besiege your house at night in a frantic effort to get in and force orders on you. There are bunches of money hanging on every tree in the Forest of Prospective Customers, but whistling won't entice any of it into your pockets. You've got to climb a tall trunk for every dollar, and be willing to skin your knees and bark your shins all the way up.

A salesman's territory is like a corn-field: it won't yield a harvest without cultivation. Weeds are the only crop that will come up of themselves. The Indian squaw who used to scratch over the soil in the tribal corn-patch with a stick, drop a few casual grains of corn here and there, and go off in the wake of a hunting expedition until harvest time, never needed any towering granaries to contain the crop she raised. If her pack

of starveling papooses got a dozen square meals all around as a result of her entire season's farming, they could count themselves lucky above the ordinary lot of red-skinned youngsters.

It is the same way with a salesman's cultivation of his territory. The man who expects to secure results in his field must get out into it promptly at sun-up, and stay until sun-set. He must be willing to work on occasion by the light of the moon. He must do a lot of preparatory plowing and harrowing among his prospective customers. He must have the right kind of argument for seed, and throw it out with both hands. He must coax the reluctant soil with daily caressing touches of an ingratiating and vigorously wielded hoe. When he gets his crop started, he must sprint all over the field early and late to keep the weeds down. The amount and quality of the harvest he gathers will depend entirely on the amount and quality of the efforts he puts forth in bringing it up. There is absolutely no other factor that counts in the result.

I say "quality of efforts": it isn't enough for a salesman merely to keep busy—he must keep busy in the right way. He must use system and method in his work. It isn't enough to be always doing something—you've got to get something done.

Some salesmen are like nothing so much as a switch-engine in a freight-yard. No matter how

much they puff up and down, they never get anywhere in particular. The wheels go around all right and the bell rings, and the whistle is blowing all the time, but there is never any progress toward a definite destination.

These men are always snowed under in a drift of unfinished effort—lost in a wilderness of loose ends and criss-cross purposes—swamped in a mire of rag-tag and bob-tail! Selling goods is no catch-as-catch-can game. It is high art based on distinct scientific principles, and the first rule of the game after you learn the various holds is to work out a definite plan of strategy in using them.

How many salesmen go at their life work backwards, as a woman gets off a moving street-car! It is not strange when you think of it that both meet with sudden and unexpected disaster. A little forethought and planning will save a lot of running about. A little clear seeing will save a whole lot of looking.

A great railroad recently did three hundred thousand dollars of increased business one month, and used but six more freight cars in doing it. Why? Because the cars were handled so that side-tracking was reduced to a minimum; because they were loaded with an ingenuity that increased the carrying capacity of each car; because the traffic campaign was so planned that no car moved a mile either way without a full load.

It is moving empty cars that cuts down a rail-

road's profits, and it is effort mechanically expended in unintelligent activity that cheats a salesman out of high commissions.

The June-bug is the only thing with wings that never picks a course before he starts to fly. That's the reason he brings up against so many obstacles with such thundering hard bumps. You are under no moral obligation to imitate the June-bug. When you get a-going, go as hard as you are able, but first be sure that you are headed in the right direction.

Think out a plan for every day's work in the morning before you begin to turn on the steam of effort. Divide your day up into sections and decide in advance just what you want to accomplish as a whole and just how you are going about each part of it. At the beginning of the Franco-Prussian war the great German general, Von Moltke, taught the world a lesson in method that it will never forget until the end of time. Some one woke him up at midnight with the announcement that war with France had been declared. He was the only man in Germany that took the news calmly. "Look in the upper right-hand pigeon-hole of my desk," said Von Moltke. "You will find there some papers that will tell you what to do." Then he rolled over in bed and went to sleep again.

An hour later regiments and divisions and army corps were in motion all over Germany, and the great general who had planned every last

detail for every least part of the activity of half a million men was still slumbering quietly in his bed. It is no wonder that with such a leader in the brief whirlwind campaign which followed the German army checkmated every single move made by the astonished Frenchmen, overwhelmed the French frontiers, toppled Napoleon III from his throne in Paris, and exacted an indemnity large enough to make France practise rigorous economy for a dozen years.

Hard work alone will accomplish remarkable results, but hard work with method and system will perform seeming miracles. No one can profit more by a realization of these truths than the man who sells goods for a living.



**SEVENTH GINGER TALK OF  
A SALES MANAGER  
TO HIS MEN**



### JARRED TO THE EXPLOSION POINT.

**A**LWAYS remember that when you are talking to a prospective customer you are like a man walking around in a dynamite factory—the slightest misstep is likely to blow you out through the roof, so far as any chance of landing a sale is concerned. Your customer isn't a bag of sand or a load of rock. He is a man—made up of combustibles—pride, prejudices, vanity, sensitiveness, conceit. Be careful not to touch a match to any of these; avoid friction—it throws out sparks. Make your advances with caution, as a man feels his way in the dark.

## SEVENTH TALK

Cheerfulness is God's medicine. Everybody ought to bathe in it. Grim care, moroseness, anxiety—all the rust of life, can be scoured off with the oil of cheerfulness.

A genial laugh sells goods. Invest a smile—and get an order.

A cheerful manner makes an immediate wireless connection with the heart of a prospective customer and transmits an irresistible call for business.

A great man once remarked, "When a cheerful man comes into a room, his arrival has the same effect on every one present as the lighting of another candle in the circle around a hospitable table."

Another great man said, "Cheerful men move through life as a band of music moves down the street, flinging out pleasure on every side through the air to every one—far and near—that can listen."

There are some salesmen whose entrance into the presence of a prospective customer is like the advent of spring after a hard winter. They bring a burst of sunshiny weather. The tired and ill-humored customer, who has been sitting on the mourner's-bench all day nursing his troubles, loosens his hold on his grouch in the

presence of that insistent optimism. It is as if some one had opened a window in a stuffy house; he feels the invigorating effect of ozone in the air. Cheerfulness is contagious. No man can look a good-natured fellow man square in the face and hang on to a fit of ill-humor.

Every good salesman knows this. He understands the market value of a smile. A tactful well-mannered approach will break down a prospect's guard and hold his attention in play during the first three minutes of an interview better than any oratorical jabs and swings or left-hand solar plexus arguments ever invented.

Many a salesman has walked straight into the liking and confidence of a prospective customer with the utterance of his opening sentence, merely by the ingratiating power of a pleasant manner.

Courtesy and cheerfulness are legal tender in every clime. They make up half the salesman's stock in trade. They are his passports through the anterooms of guardian clerks—his introduction into the privacy of inner offices.

Armed with these and with persistence, a salesman can secure an interview with any citizen of the American republic. With these he can announce his errand on even terms of dignity with any prospect. With these he can ward off rebuff, dispel impatience, conquer prejudice, shame abuse into apology—make headway where no other human power could penetrate.

Anger is powerless when met with good humor. Indifference is transformed into interest by the magnetic power of tact. Gruff and surly moods are dissolved into friendly feeling by the active chemicals of courtesy and an appealing personality.

A prospective customer's mind is a castle that cannot be carried by storm nor taken by stealth; but there is a natural way of approach and a gate of easy entry open to the salesman who carries the magical keys of courtesy and cheerfulness. Fit these properly in the lock and the most heavily barred door will turn on its hinges.

Sometimes the salesman will be invited inside and offered a comfortable chair before the warm glow of the hearth; sometimes he is merely received for a moment and quietly sent on his way. But he has at least gotten in, and if he fails to accomplish his purpose, he is free to return later.

Not every sale is made at the first call, but the first call always has a great deal to do with every sale that is made.

It's worth going out of your way to make every new acquaintance feel glad he has met you, even if you don't do a stroke of business with him.

You never can tell when the business may come. The man who declines to buy even a monkey-wrench to-day may want an automobile to-morrow. If he does, the impression you made at your first call is going to determine whether you or some other fellow will get the order.

The world is full of salesmen who fail to realize the importance of a proper manner towards customers.

Conscious of the merit of their product and their own knowledge of their business, these egotistical, self-important chaps lay at the door of the prospective customer the blame for every turn-down they receive.

"Too stupid to see the advantages of our goods," they report to the house. "A pig-headed fool who wouldn't listen to me." "A miserly curmudgeon unwilling to spend a dollar to increase his business."

Next day along comes a salesman of a rival house—a chap with better manners.

Armed with personality—the irresistible power of tact and courtesy—he gains a hearing with the "stupid," the "pig-headed," and "miserly" customers—all three—gets them to listen patiently to his story in spite of themselves, drives home his arguments without exciting their antagonism, proves his case, and wins his orders, walking out with the signatures in his pocket.

He had the same goods, the same prices, the same knowledge of the business as the first man. The difference between losing and winning the orders was the cheerfulness, the tact and courtesy that the second man threw into his approach.

The first step to a sale is to secure a man's good will. He gets an impression for or against you the minute he looks at you.

When some salesmen come into a room, it is as if a cellar-door had been opened suddenly—they bring a chilling draught of clammy atmosphere.

How many salesmen walk into offices with long-drawn, funereal countenances, like mourners stepping beside a hearse! How many face a prospect wearing exactly the same expression they would assume in swallowing a dose of castor-oil!

That “I-know-I’m-not-going-to-like-this” sort of expression proclaims as plainly as words, “There’s no fun for me in what I am about to do; but I’ve got to do it, so here goes!”

How many go about combatively with chips on their shoulders, expecting prospective customers to knock them off, and ready to hand out verbal left hooks and solar plexus punches in return!

There are some salesmen who live in a perpetual grouch. When they open their mouths, the act is like the removal of a door in front of a bear-cage—you hear nothing coming out but grunts and growls—growls at the house and at the business when they are at the home office or among their fellow salesmen, and grunts at the customer’s ideas or wishes or objections when they are trying to land sales.

Now, you can’t warm a customer’s heart toward you by pouring ice-water down his spine, or by jabbing his prejudices with a sharp-pronged pitch-fork of criticism.

The world hands back to a man exactly what

he gives out to it. Life is too short for a customer to waste time on cross-grained, crabbed salesmen who receive objections as if made with purposes of personal attack. Unless it pleases you to please the prospective customer, you might as well get up and go out of his office; if you don't, he himself will more or less literally throw you out in the end. It's only a question of time when you will find yourself out on the sidewalk with an unsigned order-blank in your hand, wondering why you didn't close the sale.

The man who is looking for trouble always finds people ready to accommodate him. The salesman who combats his prospects, opposes their ideas without tact, meets their objections with ridicule, and allows himself to be led into an open controversy has no more chance of making a sale than a lawyer has of winning a jury's verdict by threatening its members with an axe!

The first principle of salesmanship is never to antagonize a customer actively. Show him the fallacy of his ideas, but do so without reflecting in any way on his own personal intelligence in adopting or following these ideas.

If he is set in his opinions, try to get around them by careful strategy—don't smash straight into them with bungling frontal attacks! Never forget that half your power consists in what you say to a man and the other half consists in the way you say it.

Always remember that, when you are talking

to a prospective customer, you are like a man walking around in a dynamite factory—the slightest misstep is likely to blow you out through the roof, so far as any chance of landing a sale is concerned. Your customer isn't a bag of sand or a load of rock. He is a man—made up of combustibles—pride, prejudices, vanity, sensitiveness, conceit. Be careful not to touch a match to any of these; avoid friction—it throws out sparks. Walk gently—make your advances with caution, as a man feels his way in the dark. And at every stage of the proceedings remember that a spoonful of smile is worth more than a gallon of growl.

Cheerfulness, courtesy, and tact in a salesman's work are like oil on a machine: they help every wheel go around. Discourtesy and gloom are like sand on the axle: they hold everything back. A grouch never sold any goods; a smile thrown in with an explanation costs nothing and wins trade. Some salesmen have customers who couldn't be driven away with a club—it's safe to gamble that they didn't get them by growling at them.

Cultivate the smile that won't come off. It pays.



**EIGHTH GINGER TALK OF  
A SALES MANAGER  
TO HIS MEN**



### THE MORNING AFTER.

THE average salesman would be ashamed to treat a second-hand lawn-mower with as little consideration as he extends to the delicate mechanism of his own body. He will put ten layers of ten kinds of indigestible food into his stomach from seven till ten o'clock at night and sit up the rest of the night pouring himself full of deadly alcoholic mixtures—and then wonder for the remainder of the week why he doesn't feel up to his work.

## EIGHTH TALK

Strong races and strong individuals rest on natural forces.

Physical exuberance, surcharge of arterial blood, a strong heart and a bounding pulse—these are the basis of the powers that make men and nations great.

In the last analysis great human achievement rests on perfect physical health.

—*Emerson*

I solved a mystery yesterday—one that had puzzled me for months.

It had to do with one of our salesmen. I'll call him Jones, because that isn't his name.

Jones has been with us several years.

He always had a good record—up to six months ago. Then his sales began to fall off, and they have been falling off ever since. Last month was the climax—the worst slump of his career with us.

Yesterday I was passing through Jones's town. It occurred to me to stop off the train and call on him.

I reached his office at about eleven A. M. Of course he wasn't expecting me.

I found him sitting with his feet propped up on his desk, staring out the window at the brick wall opposite.

He looked about as cheerful as a conscientious undertaker at a funeral!

As soon as the first greetings were over, I re-

ferred to his melancholy expression and asked him what was the matter.

"Oh, I don't know," he said. "I'm discouraged, that's all. Don't seem to land any business—don't know why it is—I used to get it all right. But I've had no luck lately—no luck at all. This sort of thing is hard—takes all the ambition out of a fellow. I'm not the same man I used to be. I guess this territory's about worked out, to tell the truth."

I listened while Jones talked. At twelve o'clock we went out to lunch. He was still reciting his tale of woe when we sat down at the table, but he stopped long enough to make an intent study of the bill of fare.

It being the middle of the day, I contented myself with ordering a chicken sandwich and a glass of milk.

Jones started off with a cocktail. Then he proceeded to introduce into his startled interior in rapid succession a glass of ice-water, a plate of hot soup, a large steak smothered in onions, an assortment of French fried potatoes and other vegetables, half a dozen hot biscuits, a generous piece of mince pie, and a large cup of coffee.

Even at that he finished soon after I did. Then he arose with a melancholy sigh, walked wearily to the cigar counter, bought half a dozen fat black cigars, lit one, and put the rest into his pocket.

"No," he remarked, continuing his doleful discourse as we reached the sidewalk, "I don't seem

to get the business that I used to. It's very discouraging—takes all the ambition out of a fellow. I can't understand it, because I used to be able—"

I broke in suddenly, "Jones, what did you have for breakfast this morning?"

Jones stared. I repeated my question.

"Have for breakfast?" said Jones, wonderingly. "Why, I believe I had some fried sausage and buckwheat cakes."

"Three or four plates of cakes, I suppose?"

"Why, yes, I guess so."

"And a couple of helpings of sausage?"

"Think likely I did—though I don't remember."

"I've been with you since eleven o'clock. In that time you've smoked three cigars. Do you keep that pace up all day long?"

"I smoke seven or eight cigars a day, I guess—sometimes more. Never thought about it. Why do you ask?"

"You like a cocktail with your meals, I noticed. Do you generally take a drink or two in the evening?"

"If I happen to meet a friend, yes."

"Sometimes five or six drinks?"

"Well—I suppose there have been such occasions."

I stopped in the middle of the sidewalk. "Jones," I said, "if you'll agree to live the simple life in the matter of diet for one week's time and put some limit on yourself in the consump-

tion of cigars and cocktails, I'll back you to beat the best week's selling record you ever made with this company. But if you keep on handing your stomach and nervous system the kind of knock-out blows I've seen you deal out to them to-day, your sales will drop so low in another month that I'll have to fire you. You can take your choice—the matter is up to you."

We had a little more talk in the office before I left, but I had said all that was essential right there on the sidewalk.

I took the train for home.

And now I'm going to keep an eye on Jones.

I expect to be able to tell by the number of orders he sends in just what he has for breakfast, lunch, and dinner every day for the next two weeks.

Every selling force has its quota of Joneses. The woods are full of them, and they are the most illogical class of citizens to be found within the borders of the American republic.

There is no profession that calls for more physical vitality than the salesman's. He must have courage, and courage, the great psychologists tell us, is nothing but a plus condition of mind and body—a state of superabundant vitality.

The salesman must have enthusiasm. There can be no enthusiasm without strong pulsing of the blood in the brain and arteries. He must have self-confidence, persistence, determination, hope, and cheerfulness. All of these are manifestations

of mental power, and mental power is absolutely dependent upon and proportional to physical health. You can't have the first without the second, any more than you can have steam without heat.

Courage, enthusiasm, optimism, hope—all these are essential qualities of salesmanship, yet how many salesmen cancel their possibilities of having any of the four by their habits at the table!

Many a salesman is made a black pessimist for a week at a time by the disorganizing effect of too heavy a Sunday dinner.

In all this world there's no outside source of discouragement so altogether and completely discouraging as a stomach that won't digest food, so take care of your stomach.

You can't expect to carry around an atmosphere of hope and radiate optimism to any great extent, if your internal organism is all puckered up in a hopeless fight with the dinner you've sent down to it!

No man can hope to be light and buoyant in his manner, if he is experiencing the sensation of carrying around a section of lead pipe in the pit of his stomach!

The human body is a machine, just like a steam-engine or an automobile, and deserves at least an equal show with these iron pushers and haulers.

The average salesman would be ashamed to treat a second-hand lawn-mower with as little

consideration as he extends to the delicate mechanism of his own body.

He wouldn't expect even a tough old road-roller to get up a head of steam, if he filled the grate up with clinkers and poured a mixture of kerosene and nitroglycerine into the boiler; but he will put ten layers of ten kinds of indigestible food into his stomach from seven till ten o'clock at night and sit up the rest of the night pouring himself full of deadly alcoholic mixtures—and then wonder for the remainder of the week why he doesn't feel equal to his work!

If he used the same quality of reasoning in dealing with his customers that he uses in his own ponderings upon these phenomena, he wouldn't be able to make a sale once in four years.

Nine-tenths of all human ills can be traced to the digestive system.

It is true, as some one has said, that most men dig their graves with their teeth.

A small percentage of the medical fraternity is engaged in ameliorating human suffering due to accidents, heredity, or other unavoidable causes. The rest of the immense army of doctors is engaged in salvaging wrecks of humanity that have deliberately run upon the rocks of ruined health in broad daylight—ninety-nine out of one hundred across the dangerous shoals of digestion's violated laws!

And no class of derelicts among these wrecks

has a larger representation than the salesman's profession.

Travelling men are subjected to harder conditions in the way of irregular hours and meals in strange places than any other class of men, yet, strange to say, they have less realization of their danger and less disposition to avoid it than any other class of men.

I am not delivering a sermon or reading from a medical treatise. I am speaking purely from a business standpoint. Experience has taught me that a man can't sell goods for any length of time with any degree of success, unless he maintains his physical condition. I am discussing health purely as a money-making proposition.

The assistant general manager of one of the largest manufacturing concerns in America recently said in a health talk to several hundred of his salesmen: "If we could do nothing else at this convention but induce the men in our sales force to eat the right food and chew it properly, we should increase our orders 20 per cent. in the coming year."

A salesman's health is his chief asset—the main part of his capital.

His nerve force is his bank deposit.

He can draw on it just so many drafts of so much each—and then he is through for all time.

Nature honors no over-drafts. When that deposit is exhausted, the salesman is out of business—he might just as well put up the shutters

and lock the door of his office, for he can't land another customer.

The officials of the bank of health never make any mistakes in figuring; every trifling amount drawn is entered up by a remorseless bookkeeper. The cashier warns you from time to time in sundry ways as the amount gets low. Be careful how you disobey that warning, if you don't want to land in the court of physical bankruptcy. Once there, you can't do any more business.

The heaviest draft you can draw on the bank of health is the cocktail draft.

Every time a salesman takes a dose of alcohol he puts a mortgage on his success and gives a bond to an unrelenting enemy.

Jags cost commissions. A hang-over from the night before never yet helped close a sale the day after. The salesman who stumbles up stairs in the evening as a result of too much conviviality with the boys is bound to fall down the next day when he tries to land a customer.

Eight hours of good sound sleep every night will do more to fit a salesman for success in the long run than an acquaintance with the best closing arguments mortal mind ever invented. The argument is the salesman's arrow, but his personality, his nerve force, his vitality—these are the only bow that can drive the arrow home. Without these the salesman is like a dumb man in a crowd of ordinary mortals—he may know what he wants to say—but he can't express it

in a way that will make it impressive to any one else.

Health means Power, and Power spells Success.

“For performance of great work,” says Emerson, “it needs extraordinary health. If Eric the Northman is in robust health and has slept well and is at the top of his condition, and thirty years old, at his departure from Greenland, he will steer west and his ships will reach Newfoundland. But take out Eric, and put in a stronger and bolder man—a Biorn or a Thorfin, with even greater vitality—and the ships will, with just as much ease, sail six hundred, one thousand, fifteen hundred miles farther, and reach New England.”

It is the man with the greatest vitality who wins, no matter what his work or profession may be.

It is the salesman who bounds out of bed after a night's sleep and hits the floor with a bounce like a rubber ball—the man with a clear head, a strong heart, and the glow of health in every vein—who can be depended on to run down the most customers before the close of the day.

He can do four times the work, bear four times the strain, think four times as quickly and effectively, and show ten times the pluck and persistence of the man who crawls around carrying a load of dyspepsia, dulness or drowsiness of head, or other physical disability.

It is a grand thing to meet a healthy, hearty, cheery salesman, whose hand-shake is an inspiration and the very tones of whose voice proclaim his power. And these magnetic forces are within the reach of all of us. Give that wonderful machine, your body, some kind of respect and consideration. Treat it half as well as you would your horse or bicycle or the furnace in the basement of your house—and watch the result in your work. You'll draw larger commissions every week of your life.

**NINTH GINGER TALK OF  
A SALES MANAGER  
TO HIS MEN**



## THE CEMETERY OF OPPORTUNITIES.

EVERY selling force has a number of incapables who drift along on the current of the day as a water-soaked log drifts down a sluggish stream. Their work drags interminably. When a paper demanding action falls into the hands of one of these men it becomes forthwith a dead document—entombed for weeks, months or all time in a convenient pigeon-hole. Such a man's desk is a cemetery; his office is a place of stagnation more choked with dead matter than a stagnant pond. A man of this sort has no more initiative than a load of sand.

## NINTH TALK

A day is a more magnificent cloth than any muslin, the mechanism that weaves it is infinitely cunninger, and you shall not conceal the sleazy, fraudulent, rotten hours you have slipped into the piece, nor fear that any honest thread or straighter steel or more inflexible shape will not testify in the web.

—Emerson

I inspected one of our sales offices in a neighboring State last week.

That's why we have a new manager there this week.

I dropped in at the office quite informally, without notifying the manager that I was coming. Seated in a broad, comfortably cushioned chair, he looked as peaceful and placid—and inert—as a blinking frog on a lily-pad. I wondered how long he had been sitting in that chair without moving.

"How's business?" I inquired.

"O, very fair," he said cheerfully. "Nothing rushing, but as good as we can expect at this time of year."

Nothing rushing, but good as we could expect! I choked a snort before it escaped me.

"How many orders yesterday?" I asked.

The placid manager turned over a lot of pa-

pers on his desk. "Where are those salesmen's reports?" he inquired of his stenographer.

"I put them on your desk as requested," the girl replied.

"Then they must be here somewhere," he said. He pawed over the mass of disordered papers.

I waited.

"I must have mislaid them," he announced at length, with a cheerful smile. "I've been intending to sort these papers out for the last four days, but I haven't had time to get around to them yet."

He settled back in his comfortable chair, sighed contentedly, and glanced at the clock. "Quarter before twelve," he exclaimed. "Suppose we go out to lunch."

"Wait a bit," I remarked. "Did you receive a big batch of advertising matter from the company last week?"

"I did."

"Have you sent it out into the territories of your men?"

The manager fished in his pockets—peacefully, placidly—one after the other.

I waited.

And waited.

And waited.

At length he drew forth a ragged envelope. On the back was scrawled a tangle of figures.

He pondered these for a moment, then remarked: "I have made a note of all I have sent

out, but these entries are not up to date. I had a later statement, but I don't seem to find it. Guess I must have left it at home." He began to fish in his pockets anew.

"What are these papers on your desk?" I asked.

"Correspondence. I haven't had an opportunity to answer it all yet, but I'll get caught up in a day or two."

I picked up a letter. It read: "Send your salesman down to-day—before three o'clock, if possible."

I looked at the heading.

The letter was dated two days back.

"Have you had a salesman make that call?" I inquired.

The manager took the letter from my hand. "Oh, that call!" he exclaimed. "No—not yet. I didn't have a man free the day that letter came in, and since then I've had so much to do that I overlooked it. I'll send a man around in the morning."

I made no comment. I had seen and heard enough.

I didn't stay to lunch.

I left for home.

Three hours later I was interviewing the president of our company.

"I hate to let him go," said the president. "He is a first cousin of my wife's, and she will make a tremendous fuss. But business is business. It

takes live men to get orders—we can't carry dead weight and get ahead. You have my permission to make a change in the management of that office."

I made the change.

I appointed as the new manager a salesman who had a record as a business-getter—an aspiring young chap, nervous as a thoroughbred horse and overflowing with spirit and energy. He went into that office as a full head of steam pounds into an engine cylinder—and forthwith every wheel in the organization began to move with the whiz and whirl of power.

In four days' time the sales of the office jumped up fifteen per cent.

The place had awakened from its long slumber.

The manager we let go was a fair type of the common or garden variety of business man—the easy-going, neutral-tinted, second-rate dawdler.

Every selling force has a number of these incapables—men who do business as a beggar lives upon the street—from hand to mouth. They drift along on the current of the day as a water-soaked log drifts down a sluggish stream. The atmosphere about them is loaded with delay. Their work drags interminably—their mail goes unanswered—their appointments are postponed—documents pile up before them—orders get cold before they are filled—they carry about important

data on scraps of paper in Heaven-knows-what pocket of the Lord-knows-which suit of clothes!

When a paper demanding action falls into the hands of one of these men, it becomes forthwith a dead document—entombed for weeks, months, or all time in a convenient pigeon-hole.

Such a man's desk is a cemetery; his office is a place more choked with dead matter than a stagnant pond.

A man of this sort has no more initiative than a load of sand. He attends from day to day to the casual details—or some of them—that turn up of themselves at his elbow and force themselves upon his attention. But he has no perspective—no view of his work as a whole, no clear conception of the main objects that he should accomplish—no systematic method of covering all the points that offer opportunities for profitable action—no scheme of unearthing fresh possibilities and continually throwing out new lines of attack.

He has no mind to plan and no steam to push a plan through to completion. He lacks every quality of an executive.

Yet how numerous he is in business!

How many men are attempting to fill the positions of business generals, whereas they ought to be carrying water in the army's rear—and will be doing this before the war is over! ✓

How many leaders are conducting on to failure business enterprises which under proper manage-

ment would march straight forward over every obstacle to success!

Men of this type do not necessarily neglect business for other pursuits.

Their trouble lies deeper than that.

They get down to the office at the regulation time, they remain at work the regulation time, they knock off work—or their semblance of work—at the regulation time. They put in the regulation number of hours all right—but they might as well be a thousand miles away asleep under a shade-tree, so far as actual accomplishment of anything valuable is concerned.

They are all the time doing things, but they never get anything done.

The business world demands results—and these men cannot get results.

It calls in thunderous tones for productive action—and they can only imitate productive action as a stage soldier imitates marching by marking time.

They start out, but they never arrive anywhere—they set sail, but they never make port.

Every stay is slacked on board their business craft—every bolt is loosened—their working equipment is slipping and sliding all over the deck—the compass is out of order—the sails are unbent—the engine is choked with rust—nothing is ship-shape or in working order. Like abandoned derelicts they go drifting and dodging across the business sea, doubling and redoubling

on their track, headed everywhere in general, and bringing up nowhere in particular.

They are tranced in inertia, steeped in postponement—paralyzed with procrastination. They are Rip Van Winkle sleepers—in a world that sets its highest premium on being wide awake.

And because these men are asleep, they do not realize their own condition. There is nothing in this earthly frame of things more marvellous than the infinite self-complacency with which a slow-going, jog-trot man moves on his sluggish jog-trot way. Uncle Obadiah's old mare upon a country road is a skittish thoroughbred in comparison!

Such a man is conscious of no fault in his methods. He believes that he is moving as fast as anybody.

And if he isn't, what difference does it make? He is sure that he will arrive all right in the end.

A jog is a fast enough pace for him. "Fairly good is good enough," is the basic principle of his easy-going philosophy. "O, that will do well enough" is the expression most frequently on his lips.

He is content to be just holding his own—just getting along. So on he goes—jog, jog, jog—his mind full of peace—even though his pocket be empty of coin.

The jog-trot traveller esteems himself a business man because he is in business.

One may as well say a mud-turtle is a pickerel

because he happens to crawl into a pond frequented by pickerel!

/ A business man is a man who does business—who gets results.

The first requisite to result-getting is ambition—the kind of ambition that fills a man's daytime thoughts and disturbs his dreams—that wakes him up on occasion in the dead of night and sets him to pacing up and down the floor—the divine discontent with present conditions that makes inaction or sluggish action an agony to him.

Luke-warm water won't take a locomotive anywhere, and luke-warm purposes won't lift a man to any height of achievement in the business world.

The great things of history were never done by jog-trot men, take-your-time men—self-complacent plodders—placid, peaceful rut-travellers—easy-going followers of routine.

All of these are men in different stages of slumber.

It takes a live man to get things done in this world—a man intensely wide awake—a man palpitating with eager energy, his head full of the fire of ambition, his heart full of the hunger of achievement, his veins full of red blood.

Business is a battle, but many men in business have no more fight in them than has a feather-bed! They are constitutional Quakers—they keep peace with all the world and with every obstacle, attacking nobody and nothing—not even their dif-

ficulties. They are drab-colored, half-hearted, in-offensive non-combatants—camp-followers hanging around the edge of the business scrimmage and never plunging straight into the thick of the fray, where the hard knocks are dealt out and all the glory and prizes are to be won.

Genius is intensity. The man who gets anything worth having is the man who goes after his object as a bulldog goes after a cat—with every fibre in him tense with eagerness and determination.

It takes force and fierceness, grit and gumption to run down success.

Life is no dressing-gown-and-slippers game. It is a fight fiercer than a street riot. Destiny is trying to down you. Square off and hit out at her as hard as you are able.

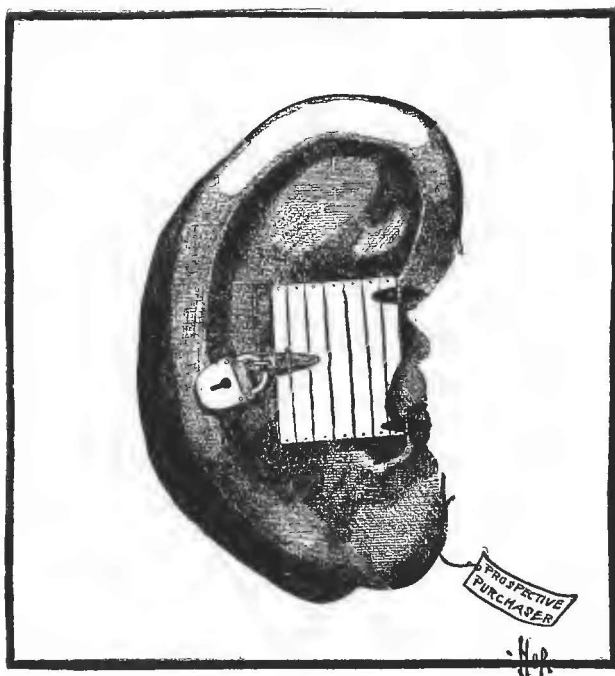
You alone can save yourself from failure. Be on your guard against your weaknesses. Get a grip on yourself. Take your habit of puttering and dawdling by the throat and choke the life out of it!

Stop loitering! Quit lagging at the tail of the procession, where you have to take every one else's dust! Hit up the pace—break out of the rear ranks—make a dash for the front of the parade, where you can get a view of the prospect ahead and hear the music of the band-wagon. Bring all your powers into play—go in for all you are worth. Do something—if it be only for a single occasion—with all your earthly might.

Key yourself up to concert pitch.

Don't be a lump of dough! Set a little yeast  
at work in yourself and see if you can't rise.

**TENTH GINGER TALK OF  
A SALES MANAGER  
TO HIS MEN**



### THE RIGHT KEY GAINS ENTRANCE.

**D**O YOU ever meet a man who refuses to listen to you? He has locked you out. But that's all right—you carry a bunch of keys to fit any lock. If you know your man, you'll know what key to use—the right approach to suit his particular case. Just insert it in the keyhole, give it a twist and the business is done in a jiffy. He's bound to open up and listen. Knowledge of human nature is the key that opens all doors to the salesman.

## TENTH TALK

When I'm getting ready for an argument with a man, I spend one-third of my time thinking about myself and what I'm going to say, and two-thirds thinking about him and what he is going to say.

—*Abraham Lincoln*

Study your prospect before you call on him.

Find out what manner of man he is before you put your proposition up to him.

If you were a prize-fighter with a hard mill ahead of you, you wouldn't step into the ring without first getting some kind of line on your opponent and his methods. If you did, you'd deserve to catch a knockout blow in the first round.

Success is the product of fore-knowledge and preparation.

Admiral Togo knew all about the ships, armament, officers, and men of Rojestvensky's fleet before he sailed out to wipe that fleet off the map.

That's one of the chief reasons why he was able to do the job in record time.

There is information obtainable about every prospect, if you are willing to take the trouble to go after it.

The facts you need to know about the men you call on are not sealed up in safety-deposit vaults.

No business man's character, mental temperament, business habits, attitude toward life in gen-

eral, and toward salesmen's propositions in particular, can be kept as matters of private record—wholly inaccessible!

No matter who the man is, there are many people who know all about him, and usually you can find one of them, if you do a little careful looking.

Hunt one of these men up and ask him a few tactful questions before you call on your prospect.

If you can, learn also the conditions in the prospect's business and lay before him something worked out to fit his particular case.

Five salesmen out of ten never bother to do this.

They make the call first and think about the prospect's particular case and personal characteristics later—on the way out of the office after they have been turned down.

It is true that you can't always learn in advance the things you would like to know about a prospect, but you've got to find some of these things out before you can close the sale. That makes it all the more necessary for you to begin to study your man the minute you step into his office. If ever you needed your wits about you, this is the time. Watch out sharp, or you are lost. Keep your eye peeled and your ears wide open. Don't miss a move your prospect makes. Some little sign—some trifling indication—is going to give you your clue, if you are quick and ready

enough to perceive it. Wide awake's the word now.

Size your man up as a pitcher sizes up a new batter. Try to decide from his general style and from the look in his eye what kind of delivery will stand the best chance of striking him out.

You can't pitch the same assortment of curves to every man that comes up to the plate.

Every prospect you approach is different.

The approach that will take you straight into Smith's confidence and lead direct to a sale will land you in a couple of minutes out on the sidewalk with an unsigned order-blank in your pocket, if you try it on Jones.

Smith and Jones are two different individuals. Both have their approachable side—their vulnerable point—but these are not the same points.

If you fail to get started with Jones, it will be because you try to fit the wrong key in his lock. If Jones is a busy man, you won't get a chance to try another key. Your chance for a sale will be over the minute you make that first vital blunder.

The art of making sales is based primarily on a knowledge of human nature. There are some salesmen, strange as it may seem, who never learn this lesson. Intent on telling their story, they enter an office with their minds concentrated wholly on that story and on themselves, and not at all on the individual they are to face.

These dull-witted fellows make every approach

in the same mechanical fashion, begin in every case with the same old worn-out formulas, and continue with the same old parrot-like line of talk—until they are cut off suddenly and thrown out.

All prospects look alike to them.

A wound-up phonograph, propelled into an office and turned loose upon the ambient air, would make as effective an approach as a good many of these mechanical, Waterbury-watch, wind-up-and-run-down chaps!

Hard bumps teach them nothing. Misfortune dogs them—calamity follows on their trail—but they never comprehend the reason. They attribute their strings of failures to hard luck, to faults in their product, to the reputation of their house, to the weather, to the condition of the stock market, the state of crops in Montana, and the rumors of war in Abyssinia—to anything under Heaven but the real cause—the single fact that they don't know enough about human nature to be able to make an effective approach.

Avoid their example as you would the plague. Line up with the quick-witted, artful salesmen, the keen observers and ready interpreters of slight signs.

Watch your man as you talk to him. Don't orate off into the general atmosphere like a temperance lecturer addressing a crowd! Talk directly to your prospect, and observe him every moment.

Feel your way along. Pick and choose amid

the mass of arguments you have at your command, and watch the effect of each as you spring it on him.

Try to discover the point of contact at which his interest can be made to touch your proposition. Be quick to catch the look in his eye that shows you have caught his closer attention, and instantly throw the whole force of your batteries upon the vulnerable point that he has disclosed.

There are two chief classes of men that you will approach: one ruled chiefly by reason, the other by impulses, emotion, prejudices, enthusiasm, likes and dislikes.

The first-named class can be sold only by matter-of-fact mathematical arguments—the kind of evidence that will pass a judge in court. The minds of these men are clear, cold, logic engines. They are impressed only by facts and figures, and will do no business with salesmen who offer them anything else.

The other class—of impulsive or emotional men—is amenable to persuasion.

You will not find it so necessary to convince their reasons. Give them the best evidence you have, but mix it with something more.

Be careful of their prejudices, watch out for the revelation of their likes and dislikes, discover their enthusiasms, suit yourself to their moods.

Sooner or later, if you know your business, you will uncover the vulnerable spot, and when you learn the vulnerable spot in an emotional man, he

is yours. Strike him with the right kind of persuasion and you can walk out with his order.

Study your prospects. Learn to read the book of human nature. The formulas for success in selling are written on its pages.

**ELEVENTH GINGER TALK OF  
A SALES MANAGER  
TO HIS MEN**



### KEEP A-GOING!

**T**HE man who wins in the selling game is not the chap who starts out to cut a few fancy figures of eight and do eye-opening stunts like the Long Roll and the Outer Edge. Fancy skaters are seldom strong on endurance, and selling, like distance skating, is a game that calls for staying powers. The fellow with the long, steady stroke and never-tiring stride is the chap who shows up at the finish line when the prizes are being handed out.

## ELEVENTH TALK

The slow penny is surer than the quick dollar. The slow trotter will out-travel the fleet racer. Genius darts, flutters, and tires, but perseverance wears and wins.

—*Marden*

Keep a-going!

Don't think you've crossed the finish line because you've made a good start!

The fact that you led the field at the break-away doesn't prove that you won't be distanced in the stretch.

The race isn't won until you pass under the wire. You won't have any prize ribbons pinned on your coat for starting. The men in at the finish are the only chaps who will have a chance to parade in front of the judges' stand and get a piece of the money.

Hit up the pace! Go right on reaching out! Hold every inch you gain!

Keep a-going!

The bulldog's claim to fame is based on a single great quality: he can hang on.

When he attaches himself to anything, it is safe to gamble that time will elapse before he lets go, and if you want to attain to his certainty in securing results, you've got to imitate his methods.

Most men are strong on starting but weak on

finishing. They catch "that tired feeling" right after they get under way, and they drop out of the race. Then they walk back to the head of the course to rest up and get ready to start in the next race.

Fifty starts won't make one finish, and the finish is the only thing that has any value.

When you're travelling to Europe, you haven't arrived until you've walked down the gang-plank on the other side. If you stop half a mile off the coast, you might just as well have never put out from New York. If you can't cover that last half-mile, you have paid your fare and spent your time for nothing—your entire voyage is wasted.

There's only one way to get profit out of any piece of work, and that is to keep at it till it's done.

The salesman who makes a great beginning with a set of prospects the first week, neglects them the second, and follows them up spasmodically during the third, won't have any prospects by the time the fourth week comes around. The men he calls on will either have forgotten his name or placed their orders with some one else.

You can't set your success a-going, then go off and leave it and expect it to run on of itself.

Every time you stop pushing it, it's bound to back-slide like a freight-train on an up-grade, and go to everlasting smash.

Getting on in life is like climbing a tree: you must hold fast with your legs what you have al-

ready gained, and keep reaching out with your hands for a grip higher up.

Up you go, inch after inch, foot after foot, hand over hand, till you reach the top.

No single pull put you there. It was the long succession of pulls, one after another—the continuous chain of efforts.

You can bank on it that, if you had let up in your steady, painful crawl—if you had stopped half-way up to admire the view, or crow over the distance you had gained, you'd have lost your grip and come down with a run that would have burned the skin off your hands and worn the trousers off your legs!

Profit lies in continuous effort.

A big success is a series of small successes welded together.

Every considerable result is made up of a number of parts.

The Japs didn't get into Port Arthur by a single charge.

You can't break a block of stone with a single blow, but you can break it with a hundred, if you put them all in the same place.

Consolidation—adding one thing to another—massing causes together—this is what produces effects. Solid rocks are made by compacting particles.

That's a statement in geology, but it goes in salesmanship, too.

It's a general rule in life. It's the law that

made the successes of all the big men we envy—and refuse to imitate.

Old Noah Webster put thirty-six years of solid work on end to produce his dictionary. In thirty-six years he wrote only that one book, but it will be remembered.

Cyrus Field crossed the ocean fifty times to lay a single cable.

Turner made thirty thousand drawings before he achieved his "Slave Ship"—and immortality.

Gibbon worked twenty years on his "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire."

Stephenson put in seventeen consecutive years perfecting his locomotive.

Edison has worked eighteen hours a day for twenty years, and all the great American Captains of Industry have paid the price for their success by a tremendous investment of that same quality—perseverance.

Perseverance built the Pyramids, and scaled the Alps. It has tunnelled our mountains, bridged our rivers, belted the world with a chain of railroads, with steamship and telegraph lines, searched out all the remote places of the globe—reaching even the North Pole amid the icy wastes and unfurling there the American flag.

No matter where we look, we read this lesson.

One would think that, with the entire fabric of human society standing for illustration, with everything in human achievement for thousands of years back bearing its testimony to the power

of perseverance, our hives of industry would be jammed with individuals compassing their ends by its practice.

But such a supposition is out of harmony with the principles of human nature.

It is human nature to hate to persevere.

We're willing to start things—but don't ask us to finish them!

We'll begin anything you say—but don't ask us to keep it up—for more than a limited period.

We'll work for three hours, but if a dog-fight starts down the street, just excuse us—we've got to go and see it.

We hate to persevere.

If we are salesmen, some of us are apt to start the month with a rush—and "peter out" in our efforts as the days go by.

And after we have done this for a few months with one company, we are apt to go and do likewise with another.

There are many of these chaps at large. They are continually shifting their jobs. They keep breaking out in a new place, and every time they break out, it costs them and their employers money.

Restless as gold-miners, they roll up their sleeves and spit on their hands, and swing the pick, working with fury—for a short time.

Then they quit to go off after a drink, or a sleep—and never come back. The next you hear of them they've bought a new set of tools and

started digging somewhere else further down the line. At last they wind up by asking friends to stake them with a loan that will enable them to leave the diggings altogether for some distant field. They never stop travelling.

There's nothing in this weathercock business. You've got to point in one direction for a long time, if you want to get anywhere. You've got to splice one day's work on to the next—dovetail all your efforts together—build the whole structure of your work into one continuous whole.

You've got to have momentum, and the only way to work up momentum is to keep a-shoving and a-pushing.

Even your success will be only a place where you are to encamp for the night. After you attain it, you will still move on.

Life and success are a continuous performance.

Keep a-going!

**TWELFTH GINGER TALK OF  
A SALES MANAGER  
TO HIS MEN**



## ARE YOU IN THE PUMP BRIGADE?

**T**ERRITORY gone dry? Well, you might suppose so if you listened to some of the fellows who stand around and croak that "it's no use pumping—no orders to be found anywhere—country going to ruin." That's their Pet Delusion. Floods of business all around them—regular geysers of orders—other fellows pumping up a stream of results close by. The chaps who are working the pump handle have no delusions. They can feel the orders coming faster the harder they pump, and that's enough for them.

## TWELFTH TALK

*Be honest with yourself at least. Never lie to your own soul. Seek out the truth. Look for the actual fact and stare it in the face. See things as they are.*

Did you ever spend any time in a lunatic asylum? I mean as an observant visitor, of course—not as a permanent resident in regular standing.

If you have made such a visit, you've noted that each of the permanent guests of the institution has some particular Pet Delusion of his own which he hugs to himself as fondly as a little girl hugs her beloved rag baby.

Sane enough on every other topic, he can't shake off the dominance of this single wrong idea.

There is the harmless looking gentleman, for instance, who harbors the belief that he is Captain Kidd, just ashore from the Spanish main. He stalks for hours up and down an imaginary bloody deck, ordering hapless prisoners to walk the cruel plank. He halts at intervals to proclaim to all and sundry within hearing: "My name is Captain Kidd, as I sailed, as I sailed!"

If you distract his attention from maritime affairs, he will talk to you reasonably on a hundred different topics, but not on that topic. Do but

mention Captain Kidd—and “off goes his trolley”! His Pet Delusion assumes full sway.

Then there’s the broken-down pauper who staggers under the imaginary responsibility of an enormous fortune.

He never had more than seven dollars in his life, but thinks he’s a great financier vainly seeking a rest from directors’ meetings.

That’s his Pet Delusion.

There’s the former police judge, haunted by the stealthy pursuit of imaginary criminals seeking revenge for the justice he dealt out to them. He sees a dagger up every coat-sleeve and wants to have the attendant who brings him his meals searched for concealed weapons every time he puts his foot inside the door.

Then there’s the elderly spinster with the pitiful misfit face, who believes she is the Queen of Sheba and greets as King Solomon every male visitor entering her presence.

And so the list spins out—harmless lunatics all—each with his or her particular Pet Delusion—each sane enough on every other point, but unable to escape the domination of that one fool idea.

Not all the people who harbor hallucinations reside in lunatic asylums.

We are all “batty” on some point or other.

We all have our Pet Delusions—idiotic ideas the folly of which is perfectly apparent to our pitying acquaintances—fool notions that we sit

down with at breakfast and dinner, and take to bed with us, and rise up with in the morning, and carry around all day long.

People try to rid us of them, but we cling to them with death-like grip. To us they are the Great Realities—the only sure and certain things in life—the basic truths of most vital importance in our existence.

We may love them, we may hate them, but we never doubt their truth.

How many such victims of Pet Delusions there are in our immediate circle!

There is Smith, for instance—our Sales Agent up in Oshkosh.

Smith's Pet Delusion is that he was born unlucky, and he never lets go his frantic clutch on that idea. He thinks Fate has had it in for him since the earliest dawn of time—waited a thousand years for him to be born in order to be ready to jump on him good and hard the minute that event occurred.

He swears that some evil genius follows him around with a monstrous hammer, knocking his structure of success into a cocked hat every time he gets it fairly set up.

Smith is absolutely certain that he has no chance and reasons that there's no use in his trying to make a big go in life—some unseen power is sure to block him. So he doesn't try, but gives up every fight he gets into almost before time is called. He hasn't made his sales quota, for in-

stance, a single time since he came into the business—he is always a little behind.

Bad luck won't let him catch up.

That's his Pet Delusion.

We are "onto" him, of course—every one of us. We know why he doesn't get his quota. We could tell him the things in his own character and ideas and methods that keep him from success.

But would he believe us, if we declared to him that his idea of bad luck pursuing him was a delusion?

Would the ex-judge in the lunatic asylum believe us, if we told him that the avenging criminal he feared had no existence outside his own mind?

I should say not.

Well, neither would Smith believe us. He'll carry his fool notion to the grave—and hang on to it after that, if there's any possibility of it.

Then there's Jones, down in Louisville.

Jones's Pet Delusion is that he's the hardest working man in the sales force, and he really believes it—has a stronger and more continuous sensation of effort than the lunatic in the asylum who labored under the awful weight of the imaginary Rockefeller fortune.

Jones goes home every night with a virtuous feeling of having worked like a terrier from sun-up to sun-down.

We know that Jones is a putterer and a time-killer. We all see through him. We could tell

him how little actual hard work he really did with all his fussing around.

But would he believe us?

Would the pauper lunatic believe us if we told him he had no financial load to carry?

Why, then, expect Jones to give up his Pet Delusion?

Then there's Brown of Kalamazoo.

His Pet Delusion is that he knows all there is to know of any value in commercial life and he says nobody can teach him anything about selling goods, for instance, for he has been at it sixteen years, and is firmly convinced that he has a corner on the world's brain market, so far as knowledge of salesmanship is concerned. No use trying to tell him anything—he has an intellect that enables him to know by instinct and without effort all the things comprehended in the knowledge and experience of the millions of other men engaged in one way or another in selling goods on this terrestrial ball!

It never occurred to Brown that, if he really had one-tenth of the expert selling knowledge he thinks he possesses, his sales totals and his yearly income would be several times as large as they are at present.

He never reasons with himself after this fashion—of course not! Why expect any man to use his reason on the subject of his Pet Delusion?

Robinson's Pet Delusion is that the house has it in for him; that a clique of thugs in the sales

department at the home office sits up nights plotting low-down deals to hand out to him, seizing upon every little shortcoming of his with fiendish glee, and rejoicing when his sales are low, because that gives the house a chance to jump on him.

The sales manager, in his mind, is a common assassin, animated by diabolical purposes, trailing him relentlessly, waiting only for a good chance to knife him and fling his remains to the crows.

Parker's Pet Delusion is that his failure to sell goods is due to his territory. He says that every man in the sales force has a good territory except himself.

And so it goes. Every man has his Pet Delusion—his own particular weak point where his reason jumps its trolley—his own private gap in the fence where his judgment bolts like a frightened horse and runs wild across country, upsetting itself and everything else, and spreading panic and destruction along its trail.

If you are one of these chaps, get a grip on yourself. Shake off your delusions. Drive away the haunting shadows. There are enough real obstacles without conjuring up imaginary ones. There are enough real living, breathing opponents without seeking out windmills to tilt at.

See things as they are. Dig down under semblances and get the facts. Then face them.

Seek the truth, and look it square in the eye.

See your own faults; admit your own weaknesses—and try to overcome them.

Give other people credit both for some degree of brains and moral character. You aren't the only chap in the crowd who loves a square deal. The world is full of men animated by the honest American spirit of Theodore Roosevelt—and ready and anxious to manifest it in their acts toward you.

Be honest with yourself. Don't fool and befog your own mind with wrong ideas. Use your God-given brains and judgment. See things as they are.

Give the go-by to the shadows. Get out into the sunlight.



**THIRTEENTH GINGER TALK  
OF A SALES MANAGER  
TO HIS MEN**



### THE PROSPECT'S SIDE OF THE FENCE.

**Y**OU and your product have no earthly interest for a prospect until you show him some relation between your product and his well-being, or the welfare of his business.

Therefore, don't begin your approach by talking on your side of the fence, about *yourself*, *your company*, *your product*, or *your desire to sell him*. Get over on his side of the fence first. First make him feel that he has a need—then show him that your product will fill it.

## THIRTEENTH TALK

We are interested in others when they are interested in us.

—*Publius Syrus*

When you've secured an interview and flagged your prospect's momentary attention, how do you go about working up his interest in your proposition?

Do you proceed to hand him the regulation string of meaningless general remarks about your product that seven salesmen out of ten carry around as their ordinary working equipment? Or are you one of the three out of ten who know how to make a clean-cut specific opening as skilfully as a champion chess-player?

Do you bore your prospect until he is driven in desperation to rise up and throw you out, or do you understand the subtle art of jogging his jaded mind into a receptive state for the facts you want to impart to him?

Your prospect is human, with nerves and liability to brain fag, even as you and I. If he is a business man in an office or store, or a buyer for a business concern, he is everlastingly tired of the monotony of interviews with salesmen of the invertebrate type, who all come at him with the same kind of loose-jointed general observations about the goods they handle—mere tire-

some statements that their goods are the best goods, that their house is the best house, that the prospect couldn't do as well in buying elsewhere, and so on *ad libitum, ad nauseam!*

The prospect resents having this sort of thing thrust upon him. He feels that he is no patented cast-iron mail receptacle for casual packages of ill-assorted selling talk that any one who happens along may want to throw into him.

How would you like it yourself to be a prospect strapped fast in your chair without possibility of escape, while the old familiar line of general observations about "quality," "price," "terms," "prompt shipments," and "prestige of the house" was rammed into your suffering ears by relays of different salesmen on an average of from five to twenty times a day? You would not put up with it, of course!

Wouldn't it make you a misanthrope?

Wouldn't you long for a change?

Can you wonder, if you are one of those who afflict the prospect with this sort of thing, that he doesn't grow enthusiastic over it? When you call on him, can you wonder that he doesn't jump to embrace you and bite his initials in your order-book?

Remember that you are not trying merely to unburden yourself of a certain amount of conversation in his presence; you are trying to INTEREST him in what you are saying.

The psychology that underlies the process of

exciting a prospect's interest is a very simple thing to understand.

There are in general two kinds of interest that the human mind is capable of feeling. One is what psychologists call an IMMEDIATE interest; the other is known as a DERIVED interest.

IMMEDIATE interest is the interest a man feels in a thing that is DIRECTLY AND SPONTANEOUSLY INTERESTING IN ITSELF—his dinner, for instance, or an exciting play, a fascinating picture, attractive music, a beautiful or charming woman—an out-door game, if he is an athlete—an instructive book or lecture, if he is a serious-minded man. These things are all interesting in themselves; they have an innate fascination that attracts and holds the attention.

There are a vast number of other things that have merely a DERIVED interest for a man. They have no fascination in themselves; they are interesting merely because of their relation to something else—merely because they are a means to an end that in itself is interesting.

I have no IMMEDIATE interest in legal documents called wills, for instance. I would not cheerfully spend time in studying a will as I would in listening to music or a play. But reveal to me that a certain will contains a clause leaving me a fortune, and the most exciting play ever produced will be as dull as a dictionary page in comparative interest for me.

You have shown me that document's relation

to my own intimate well-being—it derives all its interest for me from that relation.

A man's interest in his business, nine times out of ten, is purely a derived interest. He does not toil and worry and strain because he likes to toil and worry and strain, but because he wishes to make money and to achieve an honorable position among his fellows. His business is a means to this end; his interest in it is not immediate but derived. When it ceases to make money for him or ceases to give him an honorable standing in his community, its interest for him dies.

Now to apply this principle to your work as a salesman: you and your company, your product or line, have no immediate fascination for the business man. To begin with the usual mechanical string of hackneyed assertions about it and descriptions of it would bore him unspeakably. Your product has no earthly interest for him until you show him some relation between it and his well-being, or the welfare of his business.

Therefore, don't begin talking on YOUR side of the fence—about yourself, your company, your product, or your desire to sell him. Get over on HIS side of the fence first. First make him feel that he has a need—then show him that your product will fill it. First make him see that he has an opportunity, then show him that your product will enable him to utilize it. Put HIM, HIS NEED, OR HIS OPPORTUNITY in the forefront of your talk, and let your long string

of description of your product and assertions about it follow afterward.

Patent medicine advertisers understand this principle of salesmanship. In the forefront of their advertisements they catch a reader's interest and attention with talk about THE READER HIMSELF—his pains and symptoms, troubles, worries, and weaknesses. They warn him that his symptoms are dangerous; that unless he takes immediate steps to escape, he's bound straight for his shroud and coffin. He hears the microbes gnawing as he reads. His pitying concern for himself grows deeper and deeper, and by the time he has reached the end of the advertisement he is in such a frame of mind that he's not only willing to take Golden Dope, but if no remedy were recommended, he'd go out on a hunt for Golden Dope or some other kind of dope for himself!

If the advertisement had BEGUN by cracking up the medicine, proving at great length that its ingredients were pure, its taste delightful, and its efficacy certain, its manufacturers established since the time of Noah's celebrated voyage in the ark, would the newspaper reader have hot-footed it to the druggist's to buy a trial bottle? The chances are a hundred to one that he would not have had sufficient interest to read the advertisement to the end.

Tell a man that you have a wonderful consumption cure and start to describe it—and he'll yawn

and send you away. But convince him that he has consumption and he'll come to you and pray for a remedy.

Tell a man that you have a valuable piece of mechanism called an adding-machine, and he won't have time to listen to your description. But show him with a pencil and paper what it costs him in a year to pay the four clerks who are adding up columns of figures in his office and tell him that you can enable him to dispense with the services of two of them, and he'll ask you of his own accord to bring your machine around and let him have a look at it.

Tell a farmer that you want to sell him a thoroughbred collie dog, and he'll say that he isn't interested in fancy dogs. But ask him if it doesn't bother him, with his rheumatism, to keep his herd of cows rounded up as he drives them to and from the pasture, and you will be leading him, absorbed with interest, up to the point where the disclosure of your collie's cow-driving ability will make the farmer voluntarily ask you what you will take for the dog.

This principle holds good in all selling.

An insurance agent who begins to describe particular policies before he has his man convinced of his need for insurance will never land his man. He is putting his proposition wrong end foremost.

A loose-leaf ledger salesman who starts to describe his different makes of loose-leaf ledgers before he has made his prospect realize that bound

ledgers are costing him too much labor and money is wasting his time.

To arouse a prospect's interest, then, begin by getting over on HIS side of the fence. He has a deep and never-ceasing interest in himself and in everything that affects himself or his well-being, comfort, safety, profit, or pleasure. Touch him on those springs of action and he'll respond every time.

When you've started his interest, lead off a little along the line that caught him. Play him as you would a fish. Let him take the bait and carry it—that is, give him a chance to ask a question. Lead him into talking about himself, his business, his needs if you can. Develop his interest; make it bud and sprout and branch and grow. Carry him along with you as far as he will go.

If the lead for his interest you tried first was not the right one, try again with another, profiting by what you learned from your first failure.

But see that his interest is hooked securely before you begin to describe your product in detail. Don't, I beseech you, don't unship your jaw as soon as you get into a prospect's presence and reel off a string of mechanical technical talk about your product, as if it were something you had to get out of your system before you could feel easy in your mind!



**FOURTEENTH GINGER TALK  
OF A SALES MANAGER  
TO HIS MEN**



## BRIGHTEN UP THAT ARGUMENT.

**A** SELLING talk needs to be laundered just as often and as thoroughly as a shirt.

Into the tub of sales ginger then with all those old arguments and selling points, which from continued use have grown a little limp as to the manner in which they are delivered. Souse them in the suds; put them through the wringer; add a little of the starch of enthusiasm—and hang them on the line to dry. After that iron them out, and there you are.

## FOURTEENTH TALK

Some men use only their lips and tongues in speaking; others put brain-action also into the operation. It is men of the latter class who make good salesmen.

After you have roused your prospect's interest and are fairly launched into your selling talk, you will find that certain parts of it will not appeal to him, although they have appealed to other prospects in the past. Skip these parts.

Many salesmen are unable to dodge from one part of their selling talk to another, in order to pick out the facts that will strike home. These chaps have to repeat their whole story in routine fashion or not at all. Their information and argument all cohere in one tremendous bunch, like a wad of pulling-candy. They can't yank out one fact from among all the others and hand it to a man. They can't see that he needs just **THAT ONE** fact or argument and no other. They have learned their entire talk in a certain order and must get it off exactly as they learned it. In many cases they have the very words committed to memory, which in itself is all right, but they have learned **MERELY** the words and a certain mechanical sequence of facts without real comprehension of the meaning of the words or the true relation of the facts. An interruption,

or the loss of a few phrases, or an unexpectedly sharp question from the prospect would throw the entire mechanism of their talk out of gear.

Such salesmen are like the boy in school who has to "speak a piece."

The urchin begins at a clipping pace: "The boy stood on the burning deck whence all but him had fled." At this point his memory fails. He can't think of the first word of the next line. He **MUST** think of that word or he can't go on. He begins again: "The boy stood on the burning deck whence all but him had fled." Horrible feeling—he's lost that word! By no possibility could he supply a line of his own to state the next fact about the hero. He doesn't **KNOW** the next fact about the hero. He has learned only a certain sequence of words without real comprehension of their meaning. He has only a vague idea of what really happened to the chap in the poem. His brain is whirling with confused notions of ships on fire—swirling flames—agonized boy. He couldn't tell you in his own words the story of the poem. He couldn't analyze the catastrophe or tell you the different stages of it. He couldn't answer any question about it.

The best he can do is to repeat the words of that poem by rote, just as he learned them. He can make the noises with his voice that those word symbols call for, and that is all he can do. If he forgets one of those word sounds, he is lost.

In his desperation he once more blurts out the

first line: "The boy stood on the burning deck"—comes to a dead stop—then loses his bearings altogether and stumbles crazily through the verses, reciting them backwards, crosswise, and down the middle. It was the deck that stood on the burning boy, the flames that had fled, and so forth. At this point the teacher puts an end to the agony with the words, "There, that will do. Go and sit down."

The urchin speaking a piece is no worse a bungler than many a salesman who has no real mastery of his selling talk.

The efficient salesman has his arguments all classified and pigeon-holed, so to speak, under their proper heads. He is ready for all emergencies, and can produce anything that is needed at a moment's warning. He can shift from one end of his selling talk to the other, omitting much or little, according to his prospect's interest. He never loses sight of the fact that his main purpose is to adapt his talk so that this interest shall be kept at white heat.

An orderly brain, in which data are classified and stored away in compact shape, is a great possession. I got this pigeon-hole simile from a remark of Napoleon's. The great Frenchman had a mind crowded with a tremendous mass of information connected with his administrative work—law facts, finance facts, military facts, and so forth.

When people asked him how he could hold an

almost infinite number of details in his mind without confusion and draw on any of them at will, he said:

"My mind is like a set of a hundred pigeon-holes: one for law, one for finance, one for military administration, etc. I open one, take the contents out and work with them, forgetting what is in all the other pigeon-holes for the time being. Then I close that pigeon-hole and open another. At night I close them all and sleep."

The ideas of a salesman with an untrained mind are like a mob of guests at a hotel, who scramble out pell-mell in crazed hurry and only half-dressed at the cry of "Fire!" The prospect has only to speak the one sharp word "Why?" at an unexpected place—that is the alarm cry that upsets all the salesman's usual routine argument, and starts up the excitement. All the facts and reasons in that salesman's selling talk come piling out on the end of his tongue and tumbling over one another, half-clothed as to decency of speech, and less than half intelligible to his auditor.

Subject your selling talk to discipline. This can be done only by keeping each fact in the background until the time comes to use it effectively—then bringing it forth with promptness and accuracy, appropriately dressed in words best suited to the service it is expected to perform.

In no other way can you be sure of getting and holding the prospect's interest.

I spoke of appropriate dress for your arguments. There is everything in the expression that you give your ideas.

It's a delicate art—this one of putting things, and it makes a tremendous difference in results.

It was a knowledge of this art that transformed an obscure congressman, William Jennings Bryan, into a national character in a single day.

When Bryan made his great speech at the first Democratic convention that nominated him, he brought forward not one idea that had not been hashed over on the floor of that convention-hall a dozen times before by other speakers. But Bryan marshalled those old, familiar ideas in a new order, gave them a striking form of expression, and so electrified the convention that it straightway nominated him for President.

Half a dozen writers wrought the Merchant of Venice tale into stories and plays before William Shakespeare seized on it and worked it up anew in his own original way. The half a dozen other versions of the story are forgotten, but Shakespeare's play is immortal.

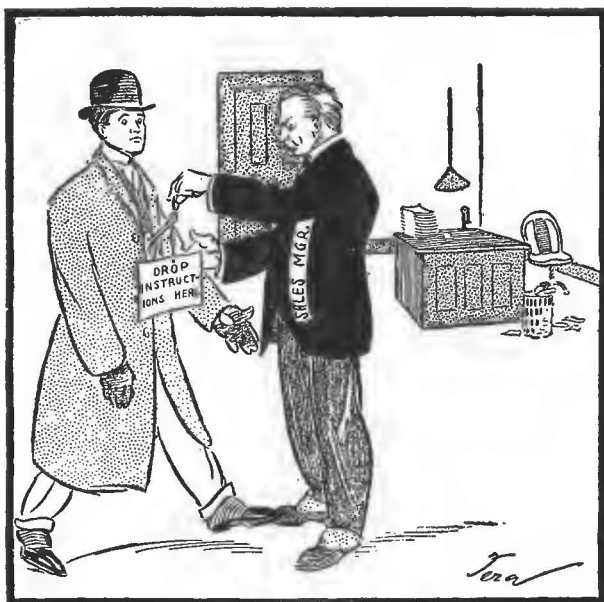
Great poets are men able to put commonplace ideas that all men hold into a setting of brilliant expression such as makes them more dazzling than diamonds.

It's a great art—this one of putting things.

There's one way of framing up any kind of statement that is more effective than any other way.

Remember this when you call on a prospect. Don't be content to chuck out at him whatever frayed remnants of conversation about your product you may have floating around loose in your mind. See to it not merely that you state the right fact, but that you clothe it in the most effective form of expression that is possible to you. That's the only way to get and retain his interest.

**FIFTEENTH GINGER TALK OF  
A SALES MANAGER  
TO HIS MEN**



### THE MAN WITHOUT INITIATIVE.

**T**HERE'S an occasional salesman who is like those aggravating banjos that you find attached to slot-machines. One of these instruments will start up a tune when you push a nickel in the slot and play just so many minutes—then the mechanism has to have its interior tickled with another nickel before it will go on. A salesman of this variety has to have complete instructions pumped into him before he can start anything. And when he does get started more instructions are needed at regular intervals to keep him going.

## FIFTEENTH TALK

The story in this talk of the office boy in knee-breeches who became assistant sales manager is taken from life. That office boy is now general manager of an Ohio organization of 5,000 men, and he is the inspiration of every employee under him.

Gentlemen, you snowed me under!

And the telegrams are still coming.

I'm glad to learn from them that you boys are all with me in my choice of Henry Champlin as assistant sales manager.

If you've congratulated him on being promoted as much as you've congratulated me on having promoted him, he'll have telegrams enough to make a frieze around all four walls of his new office.

Since he's in the public eye at the present time, a little more publicity won't hurt him and may help you and the company, so I'm going to use his promotion as the occasion of a few remarks.

You are all proud of his record, and so are we at the home office. I believe I ought to know how to appraise that record rightly, for I was one of two men present when this business was started, and I have kept the official tabs on the field force ever since.

You are all telegraphing your approval of his

promotion; I wonder how many of you could figure out and state in one word over the 'phone the chief cause of the string of successes that have finally landed him in his present job.

What's that? Hard work, you say? Well, he certainly has that to his credit. Persistence? Yes, that's one cause. Grit? Yes, that's another. He's square? You bet—that counts also. He's a good fellow? Yes, he makes friends, and that helps. But the chief cause—the quality that sticks out in him more than in any other chap in our organization—you haven't named it yet. There are other men in our ranks with the same grit and persistence, the same capacity for working long hours, the same honesty and happy faculty of making friends. You haven't yet named—what's that? I think I heard the word—once again—Ah, that's it! That's the word!

Initiative!

He has initiative!

He can do the right thing at the right time without being told.

He winds himself up, and sets himself a-going, and keeps himself a-going, and stops himself when it is time to stop, and changes direction and goes at something else. He makes an endless chain of this sort of action.

He's forever finishing up one thing and tackling something else. And he does it all alone, without a word from any one, with no need of hints or advice or encouragement or prodding.

He thinks up all his action for himself, and executes all he thinks up. He makes his own plans and carries them all out to the end. Most of the time nobody knows what he's doing until he comes in to report that the thing is done, and then everybody realizes that it was the right thing to do, though nobody else happened to think of it until that moment.

That's what it is to have initiative.

He has had it for a long time. He had it to my certain knowledge nine years ago, as a kid in knee-breeches, when he held a job as office boy in one of our branch offices. I remember the first time I ever saw him. He was out on the sidewalk washing the front window as I came up to inspect the office. I had never seen any one wash windows with quite the same vigorous sweep of arm, and I commented on it to the district manager inside.

"He washed that window as if he enjoyed it," I said.

"He does," said the manager. "'Tisn't his job, either. But the janitor's sick to-day, and as soon as the kid heard of it, he ducked outside and went at the glass with his sponge and cham-ouis-skin. None of us knew of his intention until we looked out and saw him there. That boy can think of more things to do around this place in ten minutes than I could suggest in a week. And he acts on all of his thoughts, too, that's the best of it. He's a "comer." If he were old enough to

wear long trousers, I'd give him a sample-case and put him out in a territory."

The next time I heard of Champlin he WAS out in a territory—the home territory—right in the city where our plant had been situated for fifteen years. And despite the fact that this city had been worked harder than any six square miles of space in the United States, he sold more goods in it in one month than any one of our 1,000 other salesmen sold anywhere else in twenty-seven civilized countries from Alaska to South Africa. He was high man in the hardest territory we had. That's what attracted my attention to him. I had forgotten the boy in knee-breeches of nine years before, but the district manager whose windows he had washed wrote in and reminded me of the incident.

"About a year and a half after the window episode," he said, "the kid bobbed up in front of my desk one day and asked me to dictate some letters to him. I questioned him and learned that he had been studying stenography at night school. And he was on to his job, too. He went at it with dignity—he was wearing long trousers by this time.

"He lasted as a stenographer for about a year. Then the assistant bookkeeper left, and the youngster asked for a chance to tackle his work. I found that he had repeated his night school stunt, and was right on deck with a competent knowledge of posting and billing.

“One day about a year later a prospect came into the office at the noon hour when the manager and office salesman by some chance were both out. The young bookkeeper promptly jumped down from his high stool and sold the visitor one of the highest-priced articles in our line. The first we heard of it was when he handed in the order, with the signature on the dotted line O. K. and ship-shape.

“Questioning brought out the fact that he’d been studying up our catalogue, advertising matter, and other literature at night, and knew all it was possible to learn about our line without attending the salesmen’s school and getting actual experience in the field. I took him off his bookkeeper’s stool for good, sent him to the school, and chucked him out into a territory, and he’s been doing stunts there ever since. This getting to be the month’s high man is the climax.

“He’s out of my sight now—you watch him after this. In my opinion he’s going to keep right on moving up the ladder. Ask him how he did his stunt last month in that worked-out territory.”

I sent for Champlin and put the question to him.

“Well,” he said, “that territory is all right. It’s a good field for our product, but those prospective purchasers had heard our regular line of talk so often in the last five years that they’d grown hardened to it. I picked out a bunch of

the best prospects and tried to make a study of each man's particular case, so as to give him an approach and a set of arguments that would be new to him. I also got up a special set of personal letters and had my sister mail one to each of these prospects every third day, so as to keep him thinking of my proposition when I couldn't be with him myself."

You see, gentlemen, Champlin had followed his usual method of securing results. He'd had the initiative to devise strategy of his own—to get up something new—to do something that had never been done before in that territory.

You know the rest of the story, gentlemen. You know that Champlin was later appointed instructor of the salesman's school. That's where most of you got to know him and learned to like him and his methods. You know that later he was a great success as a district manager, and now you've seen him come in to assist me in the management of the sales department.

The main asset that he will bring to us will be not merely his experience or knowledge of the business or ability. We have other men at the home office with all of these qualifications. But he will bring us a great additional amount of that rare quality, initiative.

There is not one among us who cannot profit by reflection upon his career. He is the kind of man this company wants. You will all do well to pattern after him. There are too many men

in our sales force who are like those aggravating banjos that you find attached to slot-machines. One of these instruments will start up a tune when you push a nickel into the slot and play just so many minutes—then the mechanism has to have its interior tickled with another nickel before it will go on.

A salesman of this variety has to have complete instructions pumped into him before he can start anything, and when he does get started, more instructions are needed at regular intervals to keep him going.

He is mute and inactive, if you don't stand right there all the time and feed the machinery.

Now, we can do some tall thinking to keep the office force in motion, also a certain amount of long-distance thinking for our men on the road; but we can't do all the thinking for any man all the time!

We can't get inside any salesman's brain and pull the levers and springs of business judgment at the particular moment that his "think-box" needs to be started up.

Yet there are some men in this force, as there are in every selling force, who seem to depend on us for this sort of thing—men who write in here from their territories to ask questions which they ought to be able to answer for themselves. They write to ask special favors which they think will boost them in this direction or prop them in that, whereas, if they had any initiative at all,

they would hustle ahead without boosting and propping. They write in to say that they have cleaned up one piece of work and ask what to do next, when they are in a far better position than the home office is to know exactly what the next move should be.

Men of this sort are loiterers in the parks of life. They sit around on benches and wait until some one comes along like a policeman to suggest that they move on. They are like toads that sit calmly blinking on a wet sidewalk and refuse to hop along until you plant your foot down beside them with a thud, and then they hop only a little way. If you want to keep them hopping, you've got to keep stamping along behind them or poking them with a sharp stick. They have none of that all-wool, 22-carat, hardwood-finish quality—initiative, which is nothing less than the ability to do for oneself, think for oneself, start something, keep it moving, and bring it to a climax—that is, make it count!

A man with initiative benefits more people than himself. His capability spurs everybody and everything that he touches. Initiative acts jog things up generally in every direction, as the falling of a stone into the water makes expanding circles start all around it.

The world is full of examples of the expanding power of initiative force. Humanity has advanced from the stone-hatchet-and-breech-clout stage of development to its present state of amounting to

something chiefly because of this quality of initiative in the occasional man.

The men who exercise initiative are builders of the world—all other people are merely tenants and janitors. They are the motors that pull the trains—vast numbers of other people are merely passengers.

When you make a day's run half-way across the continent on the railroad, recollect that you might have been jolting along in a stage-coach for a month or two, if Watts and others had not had the initiative to work out an improved plan of locomotion.

The tunnels through the heart of mountains, which save the time it would take to travel over or around them; the tall buildings that economize space and traffic in congested cities; the arc-lights that make the flambeaux of our sainted ancestors look like "thirty cents"—and the thousands of other facilities of modern life—these all witness the supremacy of initiative brains.

There are a lot of people working in Edison's plant, but one mind is starting most of the things that are doing there. It takes a whole army to complete the wonderful things that Edison's initiative originates and gets fairly started, and the entire civilized world reaps the benefit. Edison launches a new idea, and the results widen out in circles, so to speak, to include the people on the other side of the globe.

The men who treated the minnows in Boston

harbor to British tea performed an initiative act which put other people up to similarly defiant acts, and as a result came the Revolution and the birth of a nation. Here again is an example of expanding circles.

Owing to the initiative of one man who began life as a backwoods sawyer, the integrity of the American Union was preserved and the disruption of a people prevented.

We can't all be Edisons or Lincolns, but every one of us can show a little bit of capacity for leadership, if he tries. We can at least stop leaning on some one else. We can stand alone and start something on our own hook once in a while.

We often hear it said that experience is the best teacher. It takes hard bumps to teach most men anything. It was the loss of a good prospective job that first brought home to me the value of initiative. A number of years before I went into this business I was assistant sales manager in a wholesale house. I was known as a pretty good man at grinding out work after somebody else had put it under my nose and explained to me how to go ahead.

One day the sales manager unexpectedly threw up his job. I thought that here was the chance of my life. I went to the owner of the business and asked to be promoted to the vacant place.

"Well," said the old man, "suppose I make you sales manager to-morrow! What things do you think of that ought to be done in that depart-

ment at once? Have you any schemes or plans up your sleeve—any new wrinkles—any methods for getting better results at less cost?"

I hesitated. My calculations hadn't included a consideration of these questions. I'd had my eye on the job and its salary, not on what I would do to "make good" when I got it. But I had to frame up an answer, so I named over half a dozen things which the former sales manager had started, but had left hanging fire when he quit.

"But all those were Jimson's ideas, weren't they?" asked my boss.

"Yes, but he left these things unfinished," I said. "They ought to be cleaned up at once."

"But what new things do you think of," said the old man, "things that were never done in that department before, but ought to be done?"

I cudgelled my brains in search of an idea, but there was nothing doing at the works. I could only stammer and scratch my head.

"Look here," said my boss, "I'll just dictate to a stenographer a few possible improvements in that department which occur to me off-hand."

He did. The list numbered 36 items, every one brand new and practical. All were reeled off without a moment's hesitation.

"Now," said the old man, "I'm not working in the sales end of the business. I'm somewhat in touch with it, of course, but my mind isn't running much along this line. You should have had many more ideas than I. I want a man in

that place who will think of such good things to do, and so many of 'em, and who will be able to get 'em so well started and carry 'em through so completely that he'll have me living in a state of perpetual astonishment. I don't want a ca-boose to hitch on to the end of this sales department—I want an engine to get up in front and pull the whole blamed train. I'm afraid you haven't the initiative to hold down the job, so I must look for another man."

And I didn't get the job.

That experience taught me the most valuable lesson of my life. I didn't sleep much if any that night, but I came back to the office the next morning a different man. My entire viewpoint in regard to my work had altered—from that day I changed all my methods. Twelve months later I had another chance at the sales manager's job, and this time, as a result of the change in my tactics, I landed it.

We want men in this business with the same quality of initiative that the old man demanded from me and turned me down for lacking.

We want men who can think up new ways of approaching, convincing, and closing difficult prospects—men who can go up against a hard game and win out, as well as gather in the good things in the way of orders that come easily.

We don't want men who come back, after calling on a prospect, to report that his state of mind is unfavorable to our proposition. We want men

who can CHANGE his state of mind. Of course his state of mind is unfavorable—if it weren't, he would have ordered our goods long ago of his own free will. We KNOW it is unfavorable—that's exactly why we send a salesman around to see him—to size him up and devise some way to talk him out of that state of mind into another one.

We could get a staff of messenger boys fully competent to go around and collect the orders that customers had already determined to send in to us. We don't want order-takers—we want salesmen.

If you are salesmen, we believe that you will have the initiative to find the way to make a sale when your prospect bolts the door against you and has a large-sized bulldog tied to the knob. We don't want you to ask us how to go at a prospect in each specific case; that's for the man on the ground to find out—you are in a better position than any one to make the discovery. We'll give you all the instruction and training we can, but we want you to mix a little initiative of your own with it in applying it in the field. We will send you all the assistance we can, but we don't want you to lean on that assistance as a broken cripple leans on a crutch. You have two sound God-given supports of your own—stand erect on them! Don't let yourself acquire the fatal habit of continually shouting "Help! Help!" We will help you all we can, but we want you to

help us in return, and the best way you can help us is to help yourselves.

Pattern after the leaders in your ranks—the clean-cut, courageous hustlers who take all the aid we give them, but never wait for aid; who seize upon every good idea the house sends out, but never stop pumping up ideas from the bottom of their own minds.

Initiative can be cultivated as well as muscular force. Give your ingenuity a systematic course of training by continually thinking up new things to do. Develop your executive faculties by persistently carrying out all the things that come within the reach of your duty. Equip yourself with a note-book and jot down bright ideas that come to you; transform them into action when the right time arrives. Deepen your interest in the selling game, and that interest will spur your inventive power. You will soon see possibilities to which other men are blind. Jump at every chance; make the most of it while you have the opportunity. Study the methods of other successful salesmen; adopt them bodily when you are unable to improve them, think up better methods if you can. Before you know it, you will get the initiatory habit fastened on you, and when you've done that, you've made one of the longest steps towards success that it is possible for you to take.

# **BUSINESS PSYCHOLOGY**



# BUSINESS PSYCHOLOGY

*A SYSTEM OF MENTAL TRAINING  
FOR COMMERCIAL LIFE*

BY

T. SHARPER KNOWLSON

AUTHOR OF "THE ART OF THINKING,"  
"BUSINESS: FOR MASTERS AND MEN," ETC.



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## PREFACE

The application of the known facts of psychology to the problems of business life is a department of education as yet in its infancy. It may not be long before the ground is fully covered and all the facts collected and classified, but the claim that there is a psychology of business has still to be justified to some minds. To me the matter has never presented any difficulty, for an object of research, of science, or of art, which gives the mind systematic and continued exercise, demands of necessity a certain method of mental approach and treatment, and this eventually causes an accumulation of facts respecting the origin and development of ideas and emotions related thereto. There is a psychology of the art-mind and of the science-mind; there is likewise a psychology of the business-mind. The function of each is to say how the artist, the scientist, and man of commerce think successfully in reference to the ends they individually have in view.

In the following pages, which are for the most part an expansion of lectures delivered before the School of Commerce at the University of Wisconsin in 1910, I have endeavored to discover the bases of thought life as they are found in business, offering at the end of each section some

suggestions as to personal culture. Practical experience in office work has been of immense benefit to me, and although it may be responsible in some measure for the non-academic style of the exposition, it will, I trust, give added value to counsels I have ventured to proffer. The editor of the *Century Magazine* has kindly allowed me to reproduce the article entitled "Imagination in Business."

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## INTRODUCTION



## INTRODUCTION

The object of this course of study is twofold: it seeks, first of all, to explain those methods of mind-training by means of which you may become successful in your business or profession; and in the second place, it provides a system of mental drill which, if systematically carried out, will increase your commercial proficiency by fifty per cent., as well as add in a general sense to your intellectual acumen. The author of this course of study stands in the same relationship to you as a tutor in physical culture whose aim is to restore health and develop muscular power by putting you through a strict course of diet and gymnastics. I want to do for your mind what he does for your body, and just as he is able to change a weak body into a strong one by enlisting the enthusiasm and diligence of his pupil, so can I change a man's brain from being an unorganized mass of bad habits into a swift and efficient instrument of success. Of course, neither the tutor in physical culture nor the tutor in mental culture can do impossibilities: the former cannot make every man into a Hackenschmidt or a Gotch, and the latter has no secret method of turning out Rockefellers or J. Pierpont Morgans. But the physical culturist can produce health in

sluggish organs; he can give tone to the system and brace up the nerves; he can impart power to flaccid muscles and increase the red corpuscles in the blood, all of which benefits are so great that it is no exaggeration to say he changes a sickly man into a vigorous athlete. Such a change is not only dramatic and impressive: it is more than that, for health is *power*. The same remarks apply to the tutor in mental training. He can take a man whose weakness is mind-wandering and make him a master of the art of concentration; he can take another and change him from habits of aimless plodding into a man of imagination, teaching him how to use his eyes to see what escapes the vision of others, and how to judge quickly and accurately; he can impart to his pupils the spirit of self-confidence and, in general, organize the whole world of thoughts and emotions. After a course of physical culture there is sometimes great difficulty in recognizing in the athlete, with erect head, straight figure and springy tread, the once weak, round-shouldered, flat-chested individual. It is just the same after a course of mental training: the man who was once a mind-wandering, illogical, unimaginative, pessimistic, ambitionless victim becomes a smart man of business, as keen to detect a flaw in an argument as he is to see a new opportunity—a man who looks ahead and prepares for what is coming—in short, a man with a mind that is organized to a high state of efficiency.

Before going further I should like to draw your attention to another point arising out of the analogy between physical and mental culture. We have to-day many systems of gymnastic exercises, and even a larger number of schools of diet, whose object is to produce health and strength, and it becomes a tedious question as to which system and which school we ought to follow. The trouble of deciding on a school of mental training is not so great, because there are few in the field. Indeed, until quite recently it appears to have been thought that a man gets all he requires in this respect from the mental labor of studying books and talking to his fellows, consequently any applicant for advice on this subject was told to study logic or mathematics. How shallow such advice is may be seen when you put a formal logician at a roll-top desk to do business and commission a mathematician to write advertisements for soap. These men have trained minds, it is true, in their own special departments, but what a business man wants is training for business. Hence any system of *general* mental culture is only a half-measure: its force is distributed over the field instead of being focussed on one point.

There are two facts kept in view throughout this course of study. They are:

- (1) The training of your own mind.
- (2) The art of interpreting commercially the mind of the public.

You will thus see that mental training for a business or profession is quite different from any other kind of training coming under the same general head. The mental culture we so often hear about deals with knowledge, ideas, beauty, and great names; it is, as Matthew Arnold said, "an endeavor to know the best that has been thought and written."

Mental culture for business is different in so far as it lays stress on special means for special ends. It not only requires a man to develop his own mind on approved lines, but to make a particularly careful study of the mind of the public. Otherwise how can he know what the public wants, or how can he confidently offer that public some new thing, unless he understands human nature? This is a point which, although as old as civilization, has never yet received the systematic treatment it merits, but in this course of study a brief attempt has been made to remedy that omission. A distinguished Frenchman, Gustave Le Bon, in his *Psychology of the Crowd* has made a fine effort to set forth the thoughts, feelings, and actions of the collective mind, but his illustrative examples are mainly political and social. What is needed, and what we have endeavored to supply, is the *commercial* element, showing how people in the mass present a certain number of constant demands with a margin for original forms of expression. Thus food, clothes, and recreations are *constants*, but there is al-

ways room for originality in the supply of all three. The untrained intelligence not only confuses its own likes with the likes of the public, thereby putting on the market a product which only a few people need, but it fails in judging what changes in the form of clothes, or food, or recreation, or anything else, are likely to elicit an immediate response. On the other hand, the trained mind escapes these pitfalls; it can put aside all personal tastes and imagine exactly the taste of the great public, or a big section of it, and it can do this, because it has learned the first principles of business philosophy.

Have you ever wondered why it is that men, described as having "no education," sometimes become prosperous, leaving others with better abilities far in the rear? The reason is that the so-called uneducated man knows the public mind, how it works, what are its moving desires, and the best way of satisfying them. His standpoint is not "what do I think people ought to have?"; it is "what do the people want?" Just here is the secret of many a lamentable failure. Some men cannot rid themselves of the personal equation. Their own desires, wishes, hopes, and preferences obscure every other consideration. You can see it in the world of journalism. A man enters an editor's office with the light of enthusiasm in his eyes and confidence in his step. He has an idea for a new paper—a splendid idea. The editor motions him to be seated and smiles

affably, as the other man unfolds his glorious conception. The judgment is short and bitter: "No, it isn't wanted." A protest against this opinion is made by the man with the idea. "Quite true," says the editor, "the suggestion is excellent in itself; it would appeal to *you* and a few of your friends, but the public would never buy such a paper."

Now let us suppose that man had had enough money to bring out his paper himself. He spends \$25,000 in starting it, and at the end of twelve months has lost \$50,000. Then he stops; he can spend no more. Does he blame himself? Not he! He blames the world. He curses its shortsightedness and want of intellect. He seldom looks for the fault in himself. But it *is* in himself. A business "bubble" that costs \$50,000 is a serious matter, and one which it is worth a course of study to avoid. Hence the importance of knowing your own mind and the mind of the public.

But, it may be asked, does this apply to the professions? Certainly it does. I don't know a single doctor, or a lawyer, or accountant who can dispense with the first principles of business—at any rate, if they make the attempt, they have to pay the penalty. A professional man is not allowed to advertise, and yet he *does* advertise, and it is just as necessary for him to know the psychology of other people as it is for the man who keeps the nearest store.

But take the profession of engineering. I will quote the opinion of a man who knows—Mr. James Swinburne, F.R.S., one time President of the British Institution of Electrical Engineers. He believed that, “if you confine your attention to engineers, you will find those who make the biggest incomes and occupy the most important and responsible positions are those who have the most business or practical knowledge. Our leading consulting engineers do not spend a large portion of their lives plotting curves, counting electrons, or even making anything more than arithmetical calculations. They spend their time dealing with large questions on purely commercial lines, and as a rule the bigger the engineer, the more he knows about practice and business.”

Exactly; the professional man to-day, in order to succeed amid the keenest of all keen competition, needs the ability to think and act commercially. One may, indeed, go so far as to say that every man who has to earn a living must have this kind of mental training, be his calling that of a trader or a professional man—or an employee under either. The present volume, as a body of suggestions for practice, should therefore appeal especially to the younger portion of the business community—men who are still well within the formative period and amenable by taste and circumstance to the course of study involved.

The great problem is to find the right place for

the personal equation. A set of rules for clear thinking in art, science, or business may look well on paper and carry the reader's assent by their logical consistency, but genius often sets rules at defiance and conquers by its very irregularity. This is as true in commerce as it is in literature. There are men who seemingly keep the rules and yet fail wholly or in part; others appear to defy them and succeed. But there are limits even to the deeds of commercial genius; no man can permanently prosper who rides roughshod over the commandment prohibiting dishonesty, for the world demands a "square deal." So, too, he who disregards the laws of health may die just as the coveted prize is within his grasp. We may assure ourselves that these cases of commercial genius which apparently contravene the laws of success are nevertheless governed in some way by those laws they seem to ignore. Hence to know the law and to keep it is the only reasonable course of action.

## LESSON I

### WHAT IS YOUR OBJECT IN LIFE?

"To aim is not enough. You must *hit*" (German Proverb).

One of the chief difficulties a young man has to face is to decide what he wants and how he can get what he wants. He learns a good deal from experience, but seldom organizes experience so that it becomes a science.

When the years of discretion are reached and life begins in earnest, a theory of values has already been formed. The studious youth soon discovers from rough contact with life that, although mental and spiritual matters are superior in range and importance to material ones, it is, nevertheless, an inversion of the natural order to feed the mind at the expense of the labor necessary to provide bread for the body. The bachelor in lodgings must away to his work, however monotonous he finds it, else who is to pay his landlady's account? The older man, with the responsibilities of a family devolving upon him, must give the first attention of his mind to the prosaic duty of housing and providing for those dependent upon him. On the other hand, the learning of a language; the ecstasy of studying a

new picture, or a fine poem; the spiritual contemplation of beautiful ideals; the writing of a charming essay; the hearing of a lecture on solar systems—all these pleasures of the mental life, which we flatter ourselves is our real life, must be relegated to a secondary place, because the struggle for existence demands that we should first learn how to earn a living and become good citizens. Experience compels us to adjust ourselves to our environment. That is how we learn the theory of values in life.

Without knowing it, every man who thinks at all creates a working creed by which he guides his actions. Ask him suddenly what that creed is, and he will probably hesitate for a reply. He says he wishes to live a "straight" life and to do good to others; he has little ambitions about which he speaks in an undertone, but his expressions contain no trace of precision in thought or logical application of first principles. He is like thousands of others who never give a moment's thought to life as a *science*. True, there is sometimes a semblance of orderly arrangement. One item in his creed owes its origin to a native instinct; another is due to home training; another arose out of a book he read years ago; still another was developed during an illness—in short, his creed or theory of life is a collection of serious reflections, but he has never taken the trouble to *organize* them into a systematic and related whole. His life is lived on the plan of *laisser-*

*faire*, and a good deal of it is a palpable imitation of other people who move on the same social level.

If you doubt our words, just ask your closest friend—one who will not think the matter trifling, or regard it as a joke—to sit down and write his creed, leaving religion out of the question. Tell him to begin in the orthodox manner: “I believe . . . .”

It is not too much to say that even some men of education would find the exercise not so easy as it appears, and although in extenuation they might plead that a creed was no worse, because it was held *in solution* rather than in crystallized clauses, there still remains the fact that every department of life calls for an organized plan of action, just as much as business in the factory, the warehouse, or the store does.

Now, by a plan of action we do not mean a list of duties to be performed, or a series of beliefs as to the attitude we are to assume towards the facts of existence. These have their place, but it is not the first place. To have right decisions we must first know how they are to be obtained; and to obtain them we must have a rational plan of training the faculties involved. Hence true mental education should be the first aim in life, for any defect in this connection inevitably reveals itself in false ideals, mistaken judgments, a narrowed outlook, or partial failure.

For instance, Goethe said “Every day read a

fine book, see a noble picture, and look at a beautiful person." This is doubtless very excellent advice for those who can live up to it; but for the many it is a counsel of perfection quite impossible of attainment—besides, it leaves much unprovided.

We are indebted to a man of science—the late Prof. Huxley—for the best definition of a trained mind. "That man, I think, has had a liberal education," he says, "who has been so trained in youth that his body is the ready servant of his will, and does with ease and pleasure all the work that as a mechanism it is capable of; whose intellect is a clear, cold, logic engine, with all its parts of equal strength and in smooth working order—ready, like a steam-engine, to be turned to any kind of work, and spin the gossamers as well as forge the anchors of the mind; whose mind is stored with a knowledge of the great and fundamental truths of Nature, and of the laws of her operations; one who, no stunted ascetic, is full of life and fire, but whose passions are trained to come to heel by a vigorous will, the servant of a tender conscience; who has learned to love all beauty, whether of nature or art, to hate all vileness, and to respect others as himself."

Observe the comprehensiveness of this definition. Tabulate its contents:

1. A disciplined body.
2. Keen perceptions.

3. Human interests.
4. Capacity for deep reflection and unbiassed judgment.
5. The power of concentration.
6. Ample sources of information.
7. Moral enthusiasm.
8. Æsthetic tastes.
9. Altruistic endeavors.
10. A dominating will.

We do not say we subscribe to these as a correct delineation of complete education, but the full definition is broader than any others we have seen, and, moreover, is thoroughly scientific. The lonely student, as a rule, is guided by mere rule of thumb. His idea is to train the *brain*—and by the brain he means the organ confined within the limits of the skull. He knows that the senses are all closely associated with the brain, but he leaves their training to chance; he knows that *feeling* is a basic fact in mental phenomena, and yet he has no ordered plan for educating these fundamental sympathies of our nature; he is aware that studies may impair his efficiency as a citizen by creating a distaste for action, but he takes no steps to cope with the evil.

*Mind-training* is not simply *brain-training*; it is the training of the whole man. If we put Huxley's definition into more homely language, it would state that a liberally educated man was one who maintained a healthy physique by rational exercise and developed his perceptions on

a systematic plan; a man who killed his prejudices and educated his powers of analysis and synthesis; who aimed at being master of his mind by possessing a controlling will; who read widely and unified his knowledge, so that it became an organic whole; finally, a man who, in spite of all his inward occupations, did not forget the beauty and interests of the outside world, but reserved a margin for the duties he owed to others.

Now, the scheme of this series of lessons is not the education of the whole man in the sense just explained; it is the education of the mind of business, but we have thought it worth while to introduce the larger scheme, in order that the student may make his own arrangements for such ideal pursuits as may be necessary to his development.

There are three points to be decided before you begin the cultivation of a keen commercial mind. They are (a) a well thought out scheme, (b) time and determination to carry it out, and (c) adjustment to circumstances. You must know exactly what you are aiming at, and this will be conditioned by the extent of your natural gifts, your powers of concentration, and the use you make of your environment. Every scheme must be *individual*; a foreman in a factory will not follow lines identical with those of a bank clerk, though both in a general sense may cover the same ground, since all minds have the same facul-

ties in common. Both will cultivate their perception, but the foreman wishes to do this in a way that will enable him to become a master of technical industries, while the clerk keeps his mind on the subject of finance and all the details that affect the money market. This difference in point of view gives an individuality to the plan of training. Self-knowledge is the secret which, when revealed, shows us how to formulate a scheme of life, and nowhere is that truth more strikingly enforced than in the Sheldon System of Business-building.

It is curious how some men fail to understand the term "self-knowledge." They seem to think it is either self-introspection or an attempt of the self continually to spy on the self, which is almost the same thing as a man trying to detach himself from his shadow! Experience teaches us self-knowledge without any effort on our part. In the class-room boys soon know who has the best memory; in the football field a forward more skilful than the rest evidences the inferiority of the others, and they quickly realize it; in business the astute competitor forges ahead, leaving the others to lament their deficiencies. In this general sense, therefore, life teaches us our limitations with sufficient exactitude, even though a phrenologist may assure us we have the ability to become the President of the United States. But the self-knowledge we refer to here merely means self-measurement in relation (a) to a defined ambi-

tion, (b) to others, and (c) to circumstances. Our individual plan must not be of a character beyond our powers, and where it concerns others, it should reckon with their chances of success as well as our own. Moreover, while circumstances can always be modified, they have a way of deciding some things for us in a manner that cannot be overcome.

But these individual differences apart, the world is open to every man, and opportunities await him everywhere; all he needs is the possession of a trained intelligence in the special sense already explained. Around him both in nature and civilization he is confronted by the working of law. Let him meet this display of precise working by a life so regulated and trained that he can make the best of the world and the best of himself. Instead of a happy-go-lucky system of mental development he should secure the advantage of a methodical plan.

This is the secret of efficiency in business and every other sphere of life.

*Suggestions:*

The Socratic form of question and answer is the best way to arrive at self-knowledge and to begin the work of preparing for a destiny. I cannot indicate a better guide than Hyde's "Self-measurement," which covers a vast area of experience. Selecting all questions which directly and indirectly refer to business progress and education therefor, the student can formulate his

own individual plan. The idea or object of a man's life should be luminous and distinct—as sharply outlined as a silhouette against the skyline. Vagueness in thought produces vagueness in action.

## LESSON II

### MENTAL FORCES

There is always room for a man of force, and he makes room for many.  
—*Emerson*

The use of the word *force* as applied to mind and thought is comparatively recent—that is, where the use is no longer merely metaphorical but literal. The superstitions of the past, it is true, have supplied numerous instances of a belief in the power of mind over matter, or of one mind over other minds—the evil eye is a case in point. As a superstition, however, it obtained little credence with the learned and those of scientific tendencies. Indeed, in those days mental magic was regarded either as the work of the devil or as the proper theme of the charlatan and the impostor.

Even to-day practical psychology suffers most from the associations in which it is found. Mesmerism and hypnotism were part of the vaudeville show long before the professional man deigned to consider them worthy of study, and this tardiness on his part put back the progress of our knowledge nearly half a century. We are only just beginning to realize the truth that certain kinds of thought have dynamic qualities, al-

though Dr. Tuke \* two generations ago produced sufficient evidence to warrant an acceptance of that fact. The cure quack and the mental healer gave a lamentable set-back to the spirit of inquiry, and the business man, immersed in practical problems, ignored the movement until it assumed a form that satisfied his desire to make a profit. The doctrine that the mind has power over the body to prevent and cure disease is one with definite commercial possibilities, and these the healing fraternity began to exploit with an energy that did not fail to carry conviction in the cases of hundreds of sufferers. The inevitable reaction set in, bringing in its train the heated contestants of both sides: those who deny the force of mind and those who believe in it.

Out of the jumble of literature—good, bad and indifferent—that deals with the power of thought we shall in time obtain a truly rational system, one that will bear a strict scientific scrutiny, and one that can stand the test of experience. Already the signs are promising. The medical psychologist in every country is busily engaged conducting experiments, and when these are all gathered together and classified, we may hope to arrive at a definite conclusion respecting the power of thought-action on body, brain and character.

In this lesson I am concerned with mental

\* See "The Influence of Imagination on the Body in Disease and Health," by D. H. Tuke, M.D.

forces so far as they affect the business man himself and, through him, the performance of those duties which constitute his calling. First, it will be necessary to ask: What is a mental force? Next, how may such forces be created?

## I

In approaching the first question we become conscious of the existence of a preliminary question—namely, “What kind of thinking has force in it?” The best way to obtain an answer is to examine critically a certain number of thoughts.

(a) At 9:00 A. M. I am thinking out a geometrical problem.

(b) At 10:30 A. M. you are trying to determine how you can obtain cheaper freight from London to Chicago.

(c) At 10:30 A. M. I am doing my best to repair a typewriter. I have an increasingly strong opinion that the makers of this machine with many alleged patents are not giving the public true service. Still, I may be unskilful in the art of repairing.

(d) At 11:30 you are in consultation with your auditor about the annual balance-sheet.

(e) At 11:30 I am reading a book descriptive of life in Mexico. I decide that Mexico is a country of great possibilities.

(f) At 1:00 P. M. you are lunching with a friend who is telling you secrets about the movement against the trusts.

Here are six occasions on which you and I

have been caught thinking—more or less. Let us analyze these occasions closely.

Is there any mental *force* in thinking out a problem in geometry? It may be an easy one or a stiff deduction—the difficulty makes no difference whatever. Almost immediately we realize we have not defined the meaning of the word *force*. What does it connote? The dictionary defines it from many points of view, but the generic idea is “driving power.” What driving power is there in the solution of a geometrical problem? None whatever. There is a mental benefit in the concentration involved and in the development of a logical sense, but beyond that we cannot think of anything forceful. The solution casts no light on market prices or on the possibility of unusual crops—in short, it has no force, no “driving power”—it leads nowhere in particular.

The next thought is very different: you discovered from the newspaper that a new line of cargo steamers was about to be started between Baltimore and European ports with London as a centre, and you are curious to find out the freight charges, dates of sailing, and all the details of transportation. From the meagre reports of the newspaper announcement you can figure out a few charges, and they look promising by contrast with the rates via New York. You follow the thought still more closely and imagine the effect on your annual profits. Is this, then,

a thought that contains force? Certainly: it has some "driving power" in it. It compels you to take action by writing to Europe and Baltimore for further particulars. Your curiosity is aroused and you will not be satisfied until you know the facts. As a thought, this newspaper item is radically different from the problem in geometry: the latter has no "thrust" in it; the former drives you to action and will persist in driving you until the necessary information is obtained. There is probably as much mental power displayed in the solving of the problem as in the search for cheaper freight from Chicago to London via Baltimore, but it is static power, not dynamic.

Now, it may sound tautologous to say that the kind of thinking which has force is the kind that leads to action, but it will serve as a tentative definition until the analyses are complete. When I have solved a problem in geometry, I have done with it, and there is nothing more to be said or done; but when I, as a business man, read news about lower freight charges, I am impelled to act—the thought is of a kind which drives me on towards something as yet unrealized. I am both the subject and the object of a mental force.

The third thought introduces another variety. My typewriter has broken down and I have much difficulty in repairing it. Possibly I am a poor mechanic—possibly also the machine is not what is claimed for it and the makers are palming off

on the public an inferior article. The mental situation is that of a conflict between two opinions. On the one hand, I hesitate to write a complaining letter to the company, for there is the uncomfortable chance of their sending a mechanic to see what is wrong, who, after tightening a screw and readjusting a wheel—the work of two minutes—will smile at and pity my lack of mechanical ability. On the other hand, there is the chance that the machine is not what is claimed for it and, that being so, I have a desire to expose its weaknesses to those who have made me pay for it. Whether, therefore, I decide to send for a mechanic or to return the typewriter as defective, my thinking is of a kind that eventually leads to action.

The consultation with your auditor is also fraught with consequences. The figures show a decline in gross receipts and net profits; hence it will be necessary to examine the various departments to see where the losses are originating. The thought that your five per cent. dividend will be reduced to four per cent. has some force in it: it drives you to action, not only by consulting your auditor and comparing the accounts of past years with those of the present, but by studying such items as the cost of raw material, of manufacture, and of freight. Departmental efficiency will also receive your attention.

The reading of the book on Mexico may leave me unmoved, or it may cause me to think thoughts

that have their outlet in deeds. Much depends on the constitution of my mind and on the nature of my calling. If I am a student of travel, and nothing else, I shall add to my stock of knowledge on the subject and be content to compare Mexican life with that of the Argentine Republic or of the dwellers in Mesopotamia. If I am a writer on business topics, I shall feel impelled to contribute an article to some commercial journal, pointing out the immense opportunities in the opening up of Mexico; if I am actually engaged in business, I shall probably do more than write an article—I shall either go to the country myself or send a trusted representative to spy out the land.

When you lunch with your friend who is full of political secrets, divulged with many a knowing shake of the head and spoken in a hushed whisper, are your thoughts forceful thoughts? It depends on the man—on what he says, and on you. If he has told you that all trusts are in danger of extinction and you are the head of a trust—if he is a man who is likely to know what is true and what is not, then possibly you have a few thoughts that will develop into deeds. Your interests are seriously threatened and it behooves you to be up and doing.

Our brief analyses of the six thoughts, or the occasions which gave rise to the thoughts, are now complete, and we look for a generalized conclusion. There seems to be only one thought

which to all appearances is destitute of force—namely, the problem in geometry. But even that may have an object in view. If I were, at the time stated, sitting for a civil service examination which would bring me a position for life, the effort to secure a solution would be unusually strong and the final success would help me in a practical manner.

All the other thoughts have force in them, in varying degrees—some rather weak, others strong, and others again very strong, and they lead to actions to which the same descriptive phrases apply. The question now arises: What is it that gives force to a thought? The reply is, *the emotion arising out of an interest.*

If the solution of a problem in geometry is merely for the development of mental muscle, my success is an end in itself. True, I needed an access of interest before I could bring myself to study the problem, but the actual thinking led to no change in creed or political opinion and incited me to no new form of action. The other thoughts were different. They were more emotional in the sense that they aroused self-interest and prompted the thinker in the direction of practical issues. The possibility of obtaining cheaper freight and therefore of increasing the amount of the Company's dividends; the annoyance occasioned by a typewriter defect at a moment when I needed the machine most; the dismay felt when the decrease in gross receipts and net profits compels

an adverse balance-sheet; the exultation that springs up when I read of untouched gold on the Pacific Coast of Mexico; and the anger that possesses you on learning the wire-pulling secrets of corrupt politicians—these are not the usual thoughts which Tennyson describes as “the freezing reason’s colder part”: they spring from the feeling that resides in the heart.

We are now a little nearer the centre of our subject. Thought is the force which drives the world, and it is therefore dynamic thought. Static thought is an end in itself. Do not misunderstand me: I am not advocating the one to the detriment of the other. Static thought as seen in culture has a beauty and attractiveness all its own, and no nation can afford to ignore the duty of building up a type of life independent of cash values. But in these pages we are business men, and no kind of criticism shames us, for we believe in the dignity of commerce just as much as we respect the majesty of art and philosophy. Doubtless the distinction between static and dynamic thought is purely an accommodation of language: there are some thought-forces that do not eventuate in action. For instance, I gaze at the pictures in an art-gallery with many emotions, but I am not conscious of arriving at any particular decision: the idea of the artist appeals to me, and I share his feeling to the full, and yet it is not a feeling that leads me to *do* something, although in the future it will find expression in the forma-

tion of an opinion or in modifying a course of conduct. Still, the difference between static and dynamic thoughts may be regarded as sound, although not so essential as one that is due to the mind of the thinker. On that point I shall have more to say presently.

Look around you and analyze the men you know, especially the men who are leading in business, finance and the professions. How are they to be distinguished from those of their fellows who lag behind? *By the intensity of their thought-forces.* When they think, they think dynamically because of the depth and extent of their emotional interests. They have little time for the thoughts of the poet, the artist, and the philosopher—the kind of mental activity which ends in the enrichment of consciousness—they think emotionally, and consequently their thoughts have the driving power that ends in deeds. The men who lag behind are not necessarily thoughtless: they may prefer, as many do, to live the life of quiet reflection and modest living, or they may be too indifferent to do anything but the daily round and the common task. But both varieties might well read a book on Mexican opportunities and yet remain unmoved; they might read the newspaper item about cheaper freight from London to Chicago without feeling an appeal to the commercial imagination. The Mexican book and the trade opportunity do not arouse thoughts with force behind them. Why? Because their

interests lie in another direction. It is surprising to find so many men in business whose hearts are—elsewhere.

Let me contrast two possible cases: George Buston keeps a store say, in Lincoln, Nebraska, and his brother Sam has one in Toledo, Ohio. Both are honest and highly respected, but while George increases his business rapidly, Sam moves slowly. Analysis shows that George is a “one thing only” man: he lives, and thinks, and dreams for that store. Every thought he has about it is a thought with force in it—once his judgment has decided its value. Sam, on the other hand, has other objects in view besides his store. No one could accuse him of a lack of industry—at any rate during working hours, but when the store is closed, he turns his attention to church work and his favorite study of history. There is no reason in the world why we should not commend him for this, but, if he fails to take competition seriously and is content to do now as he has done in the past, despite the fact that a new store has been opened only two blocks away, then he is likely to feel the effect of that law which says “the weakest goes to the wall.”

I hold no brief for the man who says life is for making money and nothing else, but all the same I cannot close my eyes to the fact that this is a competitive age and the prizes are won by those who serve the needs of the public with increasing satisfaction. And such service usually de-

mands a man's entire energies—to the extent, at least, that they stand for his main interest. He who looks upon his calling merely as the source of his bread and butter, while sport is his chief attraction, can hardly expect to get anything more than bread and butter out of it. "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

As to why George Buston is different from his brother Sam, I can only say that both are as nature made them. There are critics who might say that George would be all the better, if he had a little of Sam's taste for history; other critics would like to see Sam possessed of a more serious concern for the growth of his store. The contrast, however, brings me to the last point: that *it is the innate quality of the mind which gives force to the thought*. Emotions may be positive or negative—they may assert or deny—but the emotion I refer to is of the positive kind: it is a builder and not a destroyer. Some men possess it by virtue of a fortunate temperament; others are destitute of it—wholly or in part—and follow their negative disposition to the detriment of self or of others. Critically examine the men in your city and you will soon be able to classify them according to their positive or negative qualities; the positive men will be found in the foremost positions, while the negative men bring up the rear. The innate quality of the former has an attraction for all thoughts, ideas, schemes, projects, or suggestions that lead to action and prog-

ress; the innate quality of the latter just as naturally takes the negative view.

It follows from this that in any system of mental education we must begin with the man himself and study his temperament. A hundred men may read the same books, meet the same people, live in the same commercial environment, and study the same market conditions, yet only a small percentage will turn these things to the best account possible. The reason is that these men compose a group in tune with positive things: when they think, they think with the feeling that produces force. But what are we to do with the other men? Train them—by showing the advantages of cultivating positive qualities.

It is here that the system of development originated by Mr. A. F. Sheldon in his "Business-building" is of such value. It is happily free from the old mistakes which tell us to imitate others, if we would advance to fortune. Instead, we are guided along the lines of natural self-expression, and the most recent psychology is pressed into the service of the student. There is an old saying, "Overcome evil with good." That is the true method in education. Multiply the number and power of the positive forces, and all the injurious tendencies of a man's mind are crowded out. In the past we have tried to destroy failure and inefficiency: we have been like surgeons with an operating knife, ready to "cut it out." This is the wrong policy. The destroy-

ing agencies are the negative qualities—especially of the emotional type, and the surest way to end their blighting career is to make life impossible for them by cultivating the opposite tendencies.

To recapitulate: We started out with the inquiry, “What is mental force?” We discovered that thoughts which had driving power behind them were those possessed of the emotion arising out of an interest, and that the depth of the emotion depended on the nature of one’s temperament. A man in business thinks to some purpose only in so far as he has a definite and clear-cut ambition, and the amount of his ambition is largely determined by his natural endowments. Hence the correction of native tendencies is the first duty of mental education for business. He who would advance must put himself in line with advancing principles and set up an inward attraction for progress.

The next question was: How may mental forces be created? The answer is: expel the negative influences by cultivating the positives. The greatest reason why many men do not prosper as they ought to do is because they are indifferent. This is the negative attitude which may be overcome by an access of earnestness. A few men are not so much indifferent as fearful, and it is their duty to replace fear with courage and a stout heart. But the one positive power which may be said to summarize the whole is *ambition*—a defi-

nite object to aim at and to live for: once this is fixed in the heart, most of the other virtues immediately fall into line. An eye will have to be kept on scrupulous honesty and the sense of justice—virtues which a ruthless ambition might easily dispense with.

### *Methods of Training*

I. Self-analysis comes first: you must know what you are—your weaknesses and your strength. I know a man who is an artist to the finger-tips, and yet he is one of the best of business men. He indulges his artistic proclivities in leisure moments, but years ago he recognized the fact that circumstances did not admit of his devoting his whole time to art, so he gave his mind to commerce—most successfully, too. Nowadays, he is as keen in business as he is in art and music. This is rational conduct. In view of imperative needs he readjusted the relationship between temperament and vocation. Nature made him an artist—destiny made him a man of business.

Self-knowledge has been urged upon us from time immemorial, and stern necessity preaches the same doctrine to-day. You should know, for instance, whether you are over-positive or over-negative, or whether the balance is nicely adjusted. If you belong to the first type, you will accept new ideas almost greedily: a man who

shows you a real estate proposition in which there are "millions of profit" will get your attention, desire, and action almost in one breath. You think so dynamically that you resign your position at once and plunge into the new scheme. A few days after you meet another man with another plan for making millions out of irrigation, and once more you think so forcefully that you change from the real estate proposition to the irrigation company. That is the worst side of the super-positive temperament: like man himself, as described by the theologian, "he never continueth in one stay."

On the other hand, the over-negative man is the sourest of all individuals. He was born at a time when "the noes have it." The first word he lingered over when he could talk was "No." There were always better reasons for not doing things than for doing them. Whenever he is persuaded to act in a positive manner, he feels it necessary to apologize for his foolhardiness, and he would infinitely prefer to talk about the reasons why a venture must fail rather than succeed.

Apart from these decided types of mind are those which take on the qualities of both. Herein is the ideal, provided the qualities are present in adequate fulness and proper balance. Success in business depends much on knowing when to say "yes" and when to say "no." But an overplus of negatives is far more of a hindrance than is an overplus of positives. The man who

is hampered with too easy a belief in new projects generally learns his lesson in time and reaps the advantage of a progressive instinct: the man who is cursed with an overplus of negatives seldom rises superior to their derogatory influences. It is advisable, therefore, to give the positive element sufficient latitude before you turn your attention to the development of caution.

II. The formulation of an interest, or of a definite ambition, should come next. Sometimes this is not easy because of the indefiniteness of our general plans, but the daily effort to shape the future is certain to have a good result eventually. It keeps the mind alive to passing opportunities and tends to organize efforts into a unity. Its effect upon thought is obvious: instead of a stream of listless and aimless nothings, you get a group of decisive thoughts, the perspective of which leads to a true centre of vision—namely, your goal.

III. Discipline is the third element in training. You set a watch on your thoughts, and if you discover yourself full of dreary negatives or foolish positives, you determinedly adjust the balance. Or, if you find you are living a colorless mental life, with thoughts that cannot be properly described as thoughts in any sense, you begin to revise your habits and banish your indifference.

It would perhaps be too formal to practise a daily self-scrutiny, but if at the end of a week

you find you have done no thinking with force behind it, then the time has come for a change in the programme. There is a trial balance in book-keeping, and there should be one in business psychology. Take stock of your thoughts—analyze them, classify them, value them. The criterion of value is the emotive power they possess.

“What are you doing?” is a question answered by another: “What have you been thinking?” Not thinking in the sense of abstract reflection, but thinking with some feeling in it. This alone is the mental activity that brings business.

#### IV. Summary:

First, correct any possible vagaries of temperament; second, define your ambition; third, discipline your thoughts. Such are the three steps in training. The first puts you into the right mental attitude; the second supplies the emotive power that turns thoughts into actions; and the third is the supervision that secures smooth and efficient working. The reader should make full use of the analytical catechism hereunder given for purposes of self-examination and drill:

- (1) Am I naturally an optimist or a pessimist?
- (2) Do I take on the qualities of both—summed up in the phrase “an optimist—with reservations”?
- (3) Have I an instinctive tendency to stand by old ideas and look askance at the new, or *vice versa*?
- (4) Are my interests mainly in my business

or calling, or do I entertain other objects in which centre my deepest desires?

(5) What is my ambition?

(6) How are the foregoing five questions and answers related to force in thinking business thoughts?

(7) How often do I collect my thoughts, sort them out, and label them? How often am I satisfied with the result?

*Desire* in some form or other is at the basis of all mental forces, and the problem is to handle that desire in such a way as to enlarge business while serving the public. In Buddhism the devotee is taught to extinguish desire, consequently his thoughts are all centred on Nirvana—the heaven of millions in the East. Naturally he does little business. The Parsee has no such doctrine to bind him, and he becomes wealthy. Are you a Buddhist or a Parsee?

## LESSON III

### THE PSYCHOLOGY OF ACHIEVEMENT

In all vital action the manifest effort and purpose of Nature is that we should be unconscious of it.

—*Carlyle*

It has often been remarked that successful men can never tell us satisfactorily how they succeeded. Some critics have taken advantage of the fact to say sarcastic things about success in general—this getting of wealth which so blinds the intellect that it obscures the causes of its material advantages. Others with a desperate attempt to be shrewd have averred that no sane man would give away his secrets gratis.

But may not these men who have made money be quite sincere in answering the questions addressed to them by writers and editors? The answers, it is true, are not always illuminating, but their general unsatisfactoriness is a feature that calls for study rather than adverse criticism; for the answers of men of advanced education, professors even, are open to the same objection as those emanating from successful traders. Below I give a selection of these answers from men of standing in very different lines of life. I am indebted for these to Mr. N. C. Fowler's *The Boy: How to help him succeed*. The

question put was: "To what one thing or to what two or more things do you attribute your success?"

Name.	Cause of Success.
Pres. C. W. Eliot:	Good inheritance. Good health. Sticking to one job, began young.
Henry Clews, LL.D.:	Eternal vigilance, application and concentration of energies upon the matter in hand.
G. W. Cable:	I attribute such success as I have achieved mainly to three things: first, the advantage of a particular talent which I could utilize without the need of a large outlay of time and money for training and equipment; second, a spirit of diligence and of conscientious workmanship; and third, learning my lessons when in school thoroughly, lovingly, and for their own sake.
Rev. C. H. Parkhurst, D.D.:	Good parentage and hard work.

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|--------------------------------|---|
| Pres. B. I. Wheeler,<br>LL.D.: | Believing that most people are mostly well-intentioned.   |
| John W. Gates:                 | Attending strictly to my own business and working sixteen hours per day when the emergency demanded it.   |
| William L. Douglas:            | (a) Being a thorough, practical shoemaker with an ambition to become a manufacturer. (b) Perseverance and determination to succeed under adverse circumstances. (c) Sticking to one thing, not allowing myself to be attracted into other businesses, no matter how alluring the prospect of success. (d) Maintaining always my credit. (e) Making honest goods, selling by one method, and persistently letting the people know I have good goods to sell at a fair price by advertising day in, day out, through good |

times and through panic times. (f) By organizing my business, as it grew, into distinct departments, placing capable men in charge, interfering in no way whatever with the conduct of the various departments, holding each department manager responsible, judging men by results only.

Luther Burbank:

Strict temperance. Some disappointments in life which made me think of the welfare of others as well as of myself. Honest, sincere, and strict attention to business and to the interests of others as well as my own. Throwing overboard old superstitions and listening to the suggestions of nature.

J. Walter Thompson: Hustle.

Col. A. A. Pope:

Self-sacrifice and perseverance.

John A. McCall:

Determination.

This list is fairly representative of varied callings—university presidents, financiers, and financial experts, one novelist, one divine, a great specialist in horticulture, a shoe-manufacturer, an advertising agent. In analyzing their replies to the question one should take into account the attention, small or great, they devoted to thinking out the best reasons and stating them in the best way. An answer dictated on the spur of the moment has not, of course, the same value as one which is the result of reflection. It is fair to presume that in this instance the answers were not hurried and unconsidered, for the *questionnaire* was of such a nature as to call for sustained thinking.

The most surprising confessions are the briefest. Would Dr. Parkhurst have us believe that good parentage and hard work alone are sufficient to explain his position in the religious life of America? Are there not many thousands who, although they possess both qualifications, fail to make any sort of impression on the public mind, albeit they are highly respectable citizens? Is hustle accountable for the business eminence of Mr. J. Walter Thompson? The same question could be modified to suit Mr. Pope's "self-sacrifice and perseverance" and Mr. McCall's "determination." It is obvious that these gentlemen have succeeded in life without knowing how they did it. I do not deny that the virtues they enumerate are real forces, but they could never pro-

duce success unaided by other forces. President Wheeler's statement about well-intentioned people is almost frivolous: there are men who have followed this principle industriously, and found themselves at last in the bankruptcy court.

By way of contrast let us look at the reasons offered by a novelist and a shoe-manufacturer. Mr. Cable's statement is reasonably adequate. He confesses to a particular talent exercised with scrupulous care and idealism, and to a love of the kind of work that yields him an income.

It is, however, Mr. Douglas's confession which merits the palm of psychological accuracy. Briefly put, his success is due to (a) a controlling idea or purpose; (b) concentration; (c) advertising, and (d) executive ability. In later paragraphs I shall try to show how nearly this approaches to the laws governing prosperity. For the moment I purpose to inquire why men of mark so often miss the point in tracing the operation of these laws. The answer I submit is that they obey them so unconsciously as to be unaware of their existence.

Granting President Eliot the advantages of heredity and good health, is "sticking to one job" a good enough account of his marvellous *rôle* as the sometime president of a great university? Had he no controlling purpose, no concentration, no judicious publicity, and no executive ability? These questions are sufficient of themselves to show the inadequacy of his statement: he ob-

served a sequence of laws the existence of which was to him more subconscious than conscious.

Again, Mr. Burbank's "reasons" are altogether wrong in their order. Temperance, however strict, does not come first in *his* case. It is the intellectual daring of the man—the idea that new varieties of flowers, nuts, and fruits are not only possible, but practical and permanent. Next I should place "strict attention to business," and last "the welfare of others," not because his service is essentially last—it is *first*—but because *personal fitness for service* is ever a primary.

A new question now arises: if these distinguished leaders in education, finance, and industry have attained their ideal in spite of wrong conceptions and false estimates, does not that fact prove the worthlessness of the alleged laws of success? Not at all. It only proves that the men concerned do not know those laws—with this difference, that if they had not kept them, they would have fallen behind and suffered the penalties of disobedience. On the other hand, there are men who understand the laws thoroughly, but never succeed, because they do not obey them: they never get an idea that controls them for more than a week—if so long, and an ardent determination on Monday to stick to one thing forever has already cooled off by Friday morning. And yet they know all the time that one of the conditions of success is continuity. I venture, therefore, the opinion that, although successful

men seem to have but a partial acquaintance with the real facts, according to their own confession, they nevertheless have rendered a true obedience to natural law in the business world, otherwise they could not have attained a position of eminence. This leads me to say further that the only solution of the difficulty lies in such help as the modern doctrine of the subconscious mind can give us.

The ease with which ideas and mental forces pass from the lower into the upper consciousness is a condition that largely determines the nature and extent of destiny. Naturally it is a process of which we know little or nothing, just as we are ignorant of the origin of many ideas that somehow "come." Nearly every man of mark has followed an inward leading—sometimes in the full realization of it, sometimes not; but the important item is not the realization—it is the following. Where do these dreams of commercial expansion have their source? What agency is it that gives one man a mental driving power and denies it to another of equal or greater abilities? These are as yet unsolved problems. To a great extent the future of a man's life is in his own hands, and he may repair a niggardliness in natural gifts by a study and observance of success laws; but the advantage of native endowment is too obvious to be set aside as worthy of no consideration. By this term I do not mean simply good memory, aptitude for languages, a love of

bargaining, or powers of that description. I mean these things plus the means of ready transition between that mysterious region we call the subconscious and our waking consciousness. This may strike the reader as an obscure reason to introduce at this juncture, but as yet the origins of any sort of genius are obscure, and the most suggestive solutions come from those who have made a special study of the subconscious. This inability, on the part of successful men, to explain themselves could then be fully understood: of certain obvious virtues they had been necessarily conscious—of other agencies they were not conscious at all. Here and there we find a man who, in business especially, was compelled by a logical mind to reason out his life's plans and purposes to the remotest detail, but as a rule the explanation of success is not satisfactory—not because the individual would mislead us, but because he is only partly aware of the facts.

It would now be interesting to inquire whether an analysis of biography—that is, explanations of men's success given by others—is marked by the same inadequacy. Take a volume like "Fortunes Made in Business," and what do we find? We find a solution—good, bad, or indifferent—of every victory. There is no hazy verbiage, no isolated virtue—like "hustle"—no trivialities. The biographer, standing apart, sees more than his subject ever saw, and reading, as he does, from actions rather than words, he becomes aware of

inward workings of which the subject may have been only dimly conscious.

When Pres. Eliot's biography appears, as in the time to come it will, the writer of it will have much more to say than "good parentage, good health, and sticking to my job." Granting for the moment that modesty plays its part in these personal confessions, restricting the pen to simple virtues, one must admit that even with full freedom the pen would not tell the whole truth.

Mr. C. M. Schwab, one time manager of the Steel Trust, said: "People are asking me how I rose from working for \$2.50 (10/-) a week to a position with a salary of \$800,000 (£160,000) a year, and upon my word I don't know." But his biographer, in the person of the writer of the article, seems to know: "Schwab at an early age had set his mind on becoming an engineer." This at any rate was the primary motive, and, added to native ability plus a fine array of business virtues, makes his success not difficult to explain.

A study of the lives of men who have had great difficulties to contend with—out of which they emerged with honors and success—should be fraught with useful suggestion, and having made this investigation in the hope of discovering principles that will be of service to the reader, I will briefly tabulate the results:

The first result of such a study is to realize that nearly all successful men have had a *controlling idea or purpose*. Behind this idea was an

emotive power, a mental force, perpetually driving them onwards towards the accomplishment of their aim. We see it in the case of Mr. Schwab just noticed. His mind was *set* on becoming an engineer. We see it in the case of Lord Armstrong, of big gun fame, who confessed, "I was always an engineer." But his parents made a lawyer of him and he settled down to deeds and precedents. Later on his work brought him into contact with machinery and the "idea" got its chance again. He was soon mechanical adviser as well as legal adviser; and finding the former more profitable and congenial, he satisfied his natural promptings by becoming an engineer, ultimately revolutionizing warfare by the innovations he made in gun manufacture.

Were we to analyze a hundred cases, we should find them to be replicas more or less of these two. The "idea" does not always spring from a natural proclivity: it may take its rise in a chance happening.

Thomas Cook, of tourist fame, did not grow up from youth with a keen desire to cheapen travel. His first excursion train was an event connected with the work of spreading temperance principles, but it suggested an idea which developed as he thought about it, until at last it became a fixed policy.

Again, John Smith may have no special purpose in life except a determination to get on, until he meets his friend Dawson. Dawson is a mine

proprietor and wants a reliable steward. He can trust Smith, and away Smith goes to the uplands of Brazil. Mining becomes his "idea." He is a good steward, but he is learning the other departments of the business all the time. In a few years he is a shareholder, and later becomes an owner himself. Thus the controlling purpose may have its origin in the *mind* of the individual, a tendency due to innate facility; it may spring from *circumstances, chance, or friendship*. The great question is not where it comes from, but whether it is *there* in the centre of the soul.

The second result of our study is to find that the successful man has *power in several combinations*. He has mind power, character power, power of faith, and power of will. The first we usually construe as *ability*. Some men have this as a natural heritage; with others, scarcely less distinguished, it is the outcome of education and experience. Ability has many manifestations. Mr. Carnegie may know nothing about the monads of Leibnitz or the philosophy of Bergson, and he may care less; but he knows a good deal about business. He has shown himself to be a man of vast ability in his own line, just as the university professor may dazzle the students in the classroom and excite the admiration of an appreciative public. Ability, therefore, means mental efficiency in one's work, and the successful man is never a dullard in this respect. He is, moreover, a man of character in the broad sense of the term. He

is not easily daunted. He can overcome difficulties. There is an element of reliability about him. He cannot afford to be "tricky": his reputation counts for too much. He wants to have a good name for square dealing, and he regards the confidence of the public as more precious than rubies. By the power of faith I mean confidence in himself and his work—a belief that he will at last come into his own.

A few men seem to have advanced both with rapidity and ease; the majority have had to fight—sometimes with their back to the wall, well-nigh exhausted. John Brinsmead, of piano fame, was a country boy whose first work was farming, but whose "idea" was "to make things." He satisfied himself for a time as an apprentice to a cabinet-maker, but he longed to make better things and resolved to become a pianoforte manufacturer. To this end he walked from his village all the way to London, the centre of the industry. Then began a struggle for capital, opportunity, and success. But he had the faith power which brought him through triumphant. Minus this gift he would inevitably have succumbed to his difficulties. It is the same with most men who attempt great tasks: unless they have faith, they fail. They have a feeling—not always bright perhaps—that they can do what they essay to do. Associated with this feeling is will-power, determination to do what faith believes can be done.

The volume on "Fortunes Made in Business,"

containing the cases I have studied, is full of instances illustrating force of will. For example, when John Rylands, the cotton prince, lost \$200,000 (£40,000) in a fire which destroyed his stock and premises, he felt the shock so deeply that for several days he thought of retiring from the mercantile part of his business. His friends, however, advised him to go on, and at last he resolved to do so. However, for a man of smaller moral calibre, the blow would have been too great. Without decision, and the power to make it continuous, success becomes impossible.

A third result of our study reveals the presence of a *desire to supply public wants*, in the case of an employer, and to render good service, in the case of an employee. This is seen in the case of Joseph Chamberlain as the inventor and manufacturer of a new screw. The old kind of screw had a blunt end: he put a point on it and made his fortune. It was his habit to ask himself questions as to public needs, and he was ever on the lookout for new opportunities and new markets. He had the firm's literature translated into foreign languages and quoted prices in foreign moneys, believing his goods would be as acceptable abroad as they were at home.

Sir Thomas Sutherland of the P. & O., when at Hong-Kong many years ago, saw there were no cargo coasting steamers, and he brought a fleet into being—greatly to the profit of the firm and to his own advancement. It will be found that

every distinctive achievement in business has its base in some service to the community, and the greater the service the larger the returns.

This brings me to the final result of a brief study of successful careers: These men had *comprehensive views*. They did not regard themselves, their business, or the world with narrow vision. They were expansive—they looked around and they looked ahead. Any other course is sure to lead to partial failure at least, for restricted notions are incompatible with service: they hold back imagination and screen activities within a small area.

To recapitulate: A successful man, when analyzed by others, as distinct from his own self-analysis, is marked by the possession of the following: (1) a controlling idea or purpose; (2) power of mind, character, faith, and will; (3) a desire to supply public wants; and (4) comprehensive views. Every case may not display them in this order, and some cases may be a little out of perspective through a lack of the idea of public service; but I venture to think the life story of any commercial magnate will be found to contain all four qualities, and for the most part their significance will be in the order given.

### *Method of Study*

(1) By self-analysis test your own programme in the light of the foregoing findings. Most men

have *some* ambition, although in too many cases it is planless and undefined. Get your "idea" or "purpose" and let it control you—not as an outside force, but an inward compulsion that is part of yourself.

This suggestion for a map of life has already been touched upon, but here it appeals to us in a special business sense: the kind of work you are to do, the county or city where you will reside, the firm you will work for, and what will happen after that.

Undue haste is to be deprecated. If you have not the idea now, it will have to be brought out by experience. How can you recognize it? What enables you to decide confidently? That is what no book can teach you. It is better so. How else can you learn self-reliance? But there is no mistake as to the necessity of having a defined ambition.

(2) Not much need be said about the cultivation of ability, of character, of faith, and of will, but do not let their obvious nature tempt you to regard them lightly. To say that any odd moment will do for practical development is bad policy. Remember that the ability referred to is *business* ability, not mathematical profundity or psychological depth. The great question for you is, "How can I serve the public and make a profit for myself?" So keep more to *facts*. A new railway concerns you more than a new comet, although astronomy is very interesting. *Your* val-

ues are *commercial*, not *scholastic*, and the worth of science is not in its information, but in the money possibilities of its information. If this realism is hard to swallow, gulp it down and the next dose will be easier. Everybody in business believes in this realism, but it is considered impolite in some quarters to acknowledge it.

As for character, the Nemesis of wrong-doing is all about you. The man who defrauded his clients and is now in jail is an object-lesson, just as the rectitude of a great merchant is a similar lesson on the other side. Faith and will are dealt with elsewhere and need no further attention here.

(3) Business is the supplying of public wants, consequently those wants require special investigation as well as the best means of supply. Efficiency is the selection between a public need and its most satisfactory solution. Get "Fortunes Made in Business," or any equivalent production, and follow the careers of great merchants. You will find they catered to the *obvious* needs of the population, and afterwards, in some instances, discovered needs to people who were only vaguely conscious of them. Where there was no desire for certain goods they created the desire by creating the goods.

## LESSON IV

### CONCENTRATION

Perhaps the most valuable result of all education is the ability to make yourself do the thing you have to do when it has to be done, whether you like it or not; it is the first lesson which ought to be learned, and, however early a man's training begins, it is probably the last he learns thoroughly.

—*Huxley*

When a group of people are talking on mental subjects, one of the commonest confessions is, "I cannot concentrate my mind on anything for long together. If I take up Gibbon, I get through a page or two, then begin to think of something else of which his words have reminded me. If I sit down to write a few thoughts on a subject that interests me, my mind runs off into side issues. I suppose I am made like that, but I would give a good deal to be able to bring my whole powers to bear on one subject at one time."

Now, the best way to put the matter into understandable form is to ask, "What do we mean by concentration?" and "What methods should be adopted to develop this power?"

(1) It is a popular mistake to suppose that concentration is the focussing of the mind on one thought, or even more than one. Take an illustration: Darwin wished to investigate the origin

of the climbing powers of certain plants. To do this he had to observe all the details of a great variety, for specimens may be found throughout the whole of the plant kingdom. Day after day he would investigate facts which escaped the ordinary eye, the point of view changing almost every minute as he brought out each fact in the light of his great theory. This was most emphatically concentration of the highest order, but how different it is from the idea many people seem to have! They imagine a sort of grim and heroic fight against intruding thoughts, and a keen determination to think only of one thing. Darwin thought a hundred different thoughts about the climbing powers of plants, but his mind was on the one subject all the time. There were gradations in the *power* of climbing, in the *means* of climbing, as by the twining of the stem, by leaf-stalks, and by tendrils; and all these distinct facts claimed separate attention.

Concentration does not imply a monotonous stare at a single idea: it is a continual working to and fro of such analytical gifts as we possess—a departing from and a returning to the original starting-point of thought. In the words of Prof. Wm. James, we start with one thought and immediately travel on to the nearest thought related to it; concentration is the power of swiftly returning to the original thought. “There is no such thing as voluntary attention sustained for more than a few seconds at a time. What is called

sustained voluntary attention is a repetition of successive efforts which bring back the topic to mind.' '\*

This is as true in business as it is in science. Let us take two men occupied with the same problem—namely, meeting severe competition. One is the proprietor of a large iron-foundry and his troubles gather round three facts: the supplies of ore, the cost of manufacture and transportation, and the getting of orders. He is having a quiet hour at home, pencil and paper before him. For a minute he will think of an ore deposit that has been offered him, then of a big contract that may mature, yielding a handsome profit. Next he returns to the ore deposit which the said profit may enable him to buy—for it is dirt-cheap—but everything depends on orders. How is Delaney doing in carrying through the negotiations in Chile? (He makes a calculation of the time that must elapse before Delaney returns.) The men have been troublesome of late. Will they strike? He does not like the spirit of the foreman. Still the men are better paid and more comfortable than others. Costs will remain as they are. Railroad rates and shipping next receive attention, and finally he comes to the conclusion that he has not spent enough in securing a market for his goods: another man must be put on to look after contracts.

Now, that proprietor has concentrated for an

\* "Principles of Psychology," Vol. I, p. 420.

hour. He did not keep his mind centred on one thing like a Hindoo Yogi reciting the blessed word *om*. His mind moved freely within the prescribed limits selected, going and returning, until a definite policy was reached that should modify future action.

The other man thinks on the "That reminds me" principle. He is a hop, skip, and jump thinker. His mind runs away with him. See how he tackles his problem! He commences with a determination to reduce his working charges. It is so simple and requires no hard brain exercise. There's the salary list.

"Dickinson, Thompson, Jones, Draycott—no, you can't economize in the office!" (He thinks of the workshop.) "Higgins, the foreman—well, he's a good man enough, but . . . weird thing, that—Mrs. Higgins, a foreman's wife, eloping with a clergyman . . . the strangest thing that ever happened in Buttonville! If I were he . . . but then you never can tell! The laundry-woman with whom the clergyman lodged still believes his reverence was kidnapped. By the way, what a big account that laundry sent in last week! Such charges are awful. They ought . . . ah! *charges*. Well, I can't reduce the foreman's wage. There's the carpenter, the machine-men—h'm—I *might* get one of those new machines and save two men's wages. How much will it . . . That new automobile of Stewart's is classy, if you like. Wonder how he got

the money to buy it. Perhaps *she* bought it. They say she has a lot, but keeps it quiet. Still, it's good to be Stewart and have a new machine . . . ah! where was I? Oh, it would cost \$10,000 to put it in the workshop ready for going. Now, I shall have to get one soon, or not at all. There's Teddy Smith who might . . . good old Teddy was in fine form last night. Wish his son did not hang about him so much . . . I might be a thief . . . and Teddy's Havana cigars—how much do they cost, I wonder! Cost! Ah, well, I must have that new machine to reduce working expenses and increase the output. (Yawns.) Time for a drink."

In the first case the mind wandered about a prescribed area, but it had intention in every step, observing, classifying, comparing, and judging—always with a definite end in view. In the second case the mind wandered outside the limits of business into the world of elopements, automobiles, and convivial gatherings. The first is concentration, the second is diffusion. But mental and physical training are responsible for much of this waste of energy, and a nervous break-down will sometimes make consecutive thought extremely difficult. There is also that flimsy something which in a few men passes as character: they are sketchy, casual, superficial, and unsatisfactory. On this foundation nothing secure can be built, for one of the first conditions of concentration is that business must be taken seriously. Occa-

sionally, however, we meet men who want to get on, but who suffer from the mind-wandering habit: they start out on the main line of thought, but anybody or anything on the side of the track can switch them off on to a side issue. They deplore this habit and want to cultivate the power of bestowing attention at will.

What ought they to do? The answer is short and simple: *get interested*. When your heart is in your work, only a tired body, a weary brain, or a real worry will make concentration impossible. I do not deny the presence of certain helpful conditions, and perhaps it would be wise to deal with these at once. Tranquillity of mind and body is necessary. A sharp neuralgia or a bit of bad news, or both, will render your task so difficult as to be impracticable. "Driving" your brain when it is tired after a day's hard work is not good practice. Any kind of overstrain is a mistake, and overstrain means persistence in the pursuit of a tired line of thought. Rest can often be secured by change. The figures which refuse to balance after three hours' analysis may balance easily in five minutes, when you bring to them a clear mind refreshed by sleep or by an hour spent socially with your friends.

The *habit* of concentration needs time for its formation. To take pains one week and to be careless the next is bad training. Continuity of effort is desirable. Begin with brief periods at first and increase the time slowly. Half an hour

may be long enough to start with—later you may find three hours no burden.

But interest is the real emotive power. If you, as a business man, realize the stern necessities of modern competition, if you have a vigorous ambition to prevail where other men lose, if you are in dead earnest, then there will be no trouble about concentration. The depth and power of your enthusiasm will carry you through. It will be no difficulty to work out problems in commercial arithmetic, to sift the chaff from the wheat in trade news, and to weigh the pros and cons of a big expenditure. Your difficulty will not be to concentrate, but to find time for an observance of the laws of mental and physical health. The man who complains of mind-wandering may be suffering from a nervous disorder, but often enough he is simply destitute of interest: he pursues his calling without an emotion. It does not grip him. His eyes never brighten as he thinks about it, and his pulse never quickens its beats. He may be industrious in a dull sort of way, punctual in keeping hours, correct in the discharge of his duties, and possibly honest to the core, but his motive power is *necessity*. He works because he *must*. The other kind of man works because it is his treasure. Consequently every mental faculty is in a state of complete subjugation to the main interest.

But there is another kind of concentration I must notice: let us call it *vocational*. You meet

with people from time to time called "wobblers." Last year they were salesmen; this year they are going to be druggists; next year they will be in a factory, and something different the year after. Then again there are the men who follow two or three different businesses at the same time. They keep a store perhaps, manage a gas company, act as secretary for a trade association, and do other things in addition. Where the returns from one source are small, it is only natural that further sources of income should be sought, and in such cases a man may be quite equal to the demands made upon him. But when the returns from one source are ample and the duties onerous, only a man of exceptional parts can venture into new regions and dabble with interests that bring more money. Experience proves unquestionably that concentration in one sphere of labor pays best. A distribution of energy calls for a finer discretion than the average man possesses, and even so the tax upon his health is generally greater than he can bear. The apostolic method "This one thing I do" is a wise rule for the modern man.

### *Methods of Training*

(1) In a guide-book to mental power I find the following: "By a supreme effort of will, drive every thought and fancy out of the mind. Hold the mind blank as long as possible." This is inadvisable, perhaps impossible, and certainly

dangerous. It reminds one of the invalid old man who was asked how he spent his time. "Oh," he replied, "sometimes I just sets and thinks. Then again I just sets." Now the man who just "sets" is evidently a gifted mortal, but he is not to our fancy. Besides, this cultivation of the blank habit as a preliminary to concentration has no mental value, and people who practise it will experience a peculiar kind of exhaustion which does the brain no good.

(2) When in a state of mental calm, select some subject in which you are interested. Let us suppose it is poster advertisements. Get one which is new and resolve to look at it and think of nothing else until you have discerned the artist's intention and weighed the pros and cons of his achievement. The danger spot is where you will be tempted to compare his work with that of other artists. Keep comparisons at a distance. If you fail, don't despair! Return to the picture before you and concentrate as before. To aid your efforts, use pen and ink, freely jotting down your thoughts as they come, afterwards rearranging them in sequential order. Repeat this exercise with other subjects for which you have a decided liking.

(3) Select a subject for which you have a slight distaste, or one in which it is difficult to arouse interest. Resolve to devote a full hour to the work of examining it in all its bearings. Let us suppose the history of the Alaskan boundary is

a theme towards which you have no leanings. Read a book on this or an allied topic and keep your mind close to the reading until the allotted time has elapsed. You may then be sufficiently interested to proceed. Vary the exercise from time to time, but always take half as many of the distasteful kind as you do of the preceding.

(4) Narrate the observations made on a cycle ride or a long walk. The method to be pursued in writing is to go over every step of the road mentally (if possible, beginning at the end and working backwards), reseeing everything and making a written record. This must be done at one sitting and without interruption. The writing should occupy at least thirty minutes. No attempt must be made to write a descriptive essay, as the exercise is purely one on concentration.

(5) Write out answers to the following questions:

(a) How would an increased power of mental concentration favorably affect your own particular business?

(b) Do you find any difficulty in concentrating when you have a deep interest in the subject?

## LESSON V

### THE COMMERCIAL VALUE OF KEEN OBSERVATION

In regard to observation, which seems to be the easiest of mental operations, we are taught by experience to rank it among the rarest.

—*E. P. Whipple in "Success"*

It has been said there are five gateways to knowledge, and of these vision is the most important. The statement may or may not be true, but a good case can be made out in support of it. One has only to take the experiences of a single day and tabulate them according to their origin, in seeing or hearing, in order to realize how much the eye serves for the acquisition of information and resultant perceptions. But the relative value of the organs of sense is not a question we can deal with here: it belongs to pure psychology. All that is necessary at the present moment is to appreciate the importance of observation as a factor in mental development, and leaving in the hands of the psychologist its relation to other factors, we pursue our special study with a true sense of its mental perspective.

Observation means something more than seeing things—the seeing is but half the real process. The eye may be the veriest glutton for “sights” and yet leave the mind starved and un-

reflective. Newman speaks reprovingly of the man who travels round the world without getting a new idea—almost like the individual who traversed the United States and returned to tell his people he did not like the American way of eating boiled eggs! And this after seeing the magic of Niagara in the sunlight, and in the darkness when the stars looked down on its roaring tumult—after crossing almost measureless prairies and rushing through canyons in the Rocky Mountains into the gardens of California! He had seen many things with the eye, a hundred wonders of nature and civilization, but they had never ripened into perceptions, nor in any way become part and parcel of himself!

Now, the observation we speak about is observing *with inference*, as the psychologists put it—seeing with the *mental* eye by means of the physical eye. To see fifty things in a day and catalogue them is an item of little consequence, except as a surface training of faculty; to see six things and obtain six new ideas is a real intellectual work. In business the difference between an advance and a mere standstill, or even a retrogression, often depends upon a single perception—arising, it may be, out of a number of small happenings that come easily within the range of every man's vision, but the true inwardness of which was discovered by only one man—and he reaps the reward.

But before writing at length on the commercial

value of a tutored eye, it will be interesting to show the values that are scientific and literary, likewise the value belonging to the artist. No reflection is needed to show how much a painter, for example, depends on accuracy of observation: his physical eye must take in the exact forms of phenomena—his mental eye must see them in new groupings, while retaining their original shape or modified by their new relation to other phenomena. It is precisely the same with the novelist, for his success in characterization turns upon the fidelity with which he reproduces actual traits of bodily and mental expression. The people who professedly live in his pages are either portraits of real men and women, or new creations to whose personalities he has given *vraisemblance*—else they are mere puppets who cannot live in the reader's imagination, partly because the writer failed in observation and partly because he has not mastered the art of writing.

The scientist has always been our greatest teacher of observation.\* He has shown us how easy it is to be deceived by appearances; how individual observers, looking steadily at the same phenomenon, may disagree as to what really happened in the changes that took place, and how

\* Observation, accurate and sympathetic, true-eyed and true-hearted, is the mother alike of literature and science, and just in so far as we, too, are observers, shall we be able to appreciate the art work of science and the art work of literature.—Lloyd Morgan, "Psychology for Teachers," p. 209.

necessary it is to correct the vagaries of the eye by the severe test of experiment. Without these precautions there can be no trustworthy knowledge of nature. Indeed, a trained observer in science is a man whose vision and judgment are in a condition of the nicest possible adjustment, the natural belief of the eye being met by the cautious skepticism of the mind.

Now, observation in business has a similar story to unfold, both as regards the origin of profit-making ideas and the need of training and adjustment. As in the case of the artist, the novelist, and the scientist, success depends upon things seen and accurately interpreted. Evidence of this is forthcoming from the following opinions kindly communicated to the author at his request by the gentlemen referred to:

Question: How much of your success do you owe to keen observation?

Name.	Answer.
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Sir Hiram Maxim:	Fifty per cent.
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A. W. Gamage:	Seventy-five per cent.
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T. A. Edison:	A very considerable amount.
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Stewart Dawson:	Nearly all of it.
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Sir Hiram Maxim is so well known that his reply does not call for explanation, and the same remark applies to Mr. Edison. In both instances their inventions have brought them before the public in a manner which is hardly possible to

the merchant or trader. Mr. Gamage and Mr. Dawson are Britishers who from small beginnings have developed businesses of colossal proportions, the one as head of a large store, and the other as the proprietor of one of the largest jewelry establishments in the world. An average of the testimony of these four men cannot be stated in figures, but seventy per cent. would not be an exaggeration, and the fact is worth pondering. It is a much higher percentage than we ourselves should have imagined to be correct, and it compels some interesting queries. How far would the opinion of these men be indorsed by other men? I have tested it by personal inquiry and find it is accepted as true. I have also put the matter before the readers of a weekly journal with the same result. I have observed men in the making and can come to no other conclusion. Observation takes a man out of the ruts into which it is a normal tendency for many to travel.

The proprietor of a factory discovers a good and economic method of making doors or manufacturing locks, and, even though he has a progressive mentality, he unconsciously drifts into believing his method has some finality in it. The keen realization that there may be a better way would keep his mind open and his eyes alert. This, indeed, is the secret of the American readiness to scrap new machinery for the newest, and the newest for the last thing that came from the workshop only yesterday. To conservative minds

it savors of reckless extravagance, but, after all, it is the compelling power of invention, and invention is the result of observation with inference.

That men of professional and commercial distinction should give so high a place to trained faculty suggests to others the desirability of not leaving that training to chance. Against this it may be urged that these men did not themselves pursue such a course of study. The reply is a direct contradiction. They *did*. They trained in their actual daily duties. Of course every man may determine to follow their example, but not every man in a subordinate position has an opportunity of doing so. His vision is confined to a round of work, leaving little leisure for wider and deeper observations. Besides, there is no reason why mental education should be exclusively reserved for any one set of circumstances—even for those that are most pertinent and practical.

### *Mal-observation*

A true observer not only sees, and not only thinks about what he sees, but he tries to think correctly. The stages here represented are sensation, perception, reflection, and conclusion, in the form of judgment.

To show how sketchy our ordinary habits of observation are, it is only necessary to take a dozen average men and ask them to draw from

memory a picture of their own watches, being careful to show the shape, the figures, and the hands. At least half of them will put in the figure VI, though invariably it is obliterated by the second-hand. The manner in which a detail can escape the untrained eye is almost incredible. Not that the detail is itself of first-rate importance—it may be purely secondary or of no consequence whatever—but that the eye can see so familiar an object as a watch and yet be unable, even unconsciously, to take in one of its chief features.

Prof. Claparède, of the University of Geneva, once gave his students a test in this matter of unconscious observation by asking them to describe a certain window in one of the college buildings which they passed every time they came into his class-room. Forty-four out of fifty-four denied the window existed! \* No doubt this was a particularly bad case, but such tests may be made to mean more than they can legitimately carry. The students might have asked the professor how many buttons he had on his waistcoat, or whether there was a band of blue in the cloth of his smoking-jacket—and he might have been unable to answer. The point is this: no man can afford to use his time in amassing an encyclopædia of observations that amount to nothing when the pile is complete. The students who never noticed the window may be smart fellows notwithstanding, and the professor is no less ca-

\* *Expériences sur le Témoignage*, p. 358.

pable because he is a button short in his waistcoat calculation, and is ignorant of the delicate blue in his smoking-jacket. On the other hand, these failures do indicate the need of training, not with the object of making us notice absolutely everything—the exact pattern of every man's neckwear, for instance—*that* would be painful; but with the object of preventing losses due to visual laziness or mental indifference. I do not refer to the scientific training of the tea-taster or the wine expert, whose palates are brought to a high state of efficiency by practice and experience. I refer to the average man of business who depends on his own abilities for advancement. He must not only see things, but see them truly.

Science is full of opposite illustrations of this fact. Wundt in his *Psychologie* shows how easy it is to observe falsely, even when great care is used. He instances a case where Pierre Huber, a reliable man, took an ant from its nest and returned it after an absence of four months. It was immediately "recognized" by its friends, from which observation Huber inferred ants have memory. Lord Avebury confirmed the fact, but not the interpretation. He took ant larvæ from the nest and returned them when fully developed. The result was the same as before—they got a friendly reception, but there was no "recognition." It was the action of the blind instinct.

We find like conditions in business. Not every change detected as a chance is necessarily as good

as it looks. It may have been observed by only one man, but before it can be seized there must be a trial, an experimenting, a testing of what the eye sees by that which the mind knows. More than one man has "seen" real imitation rubber, but it vanished when the stern fact of a few hundred miles' wear stared him in the face.

### *Training in Observation*

As the mind is a unity, there is no such thing as the isolated training of a single faculty. In following up the exercises of this section a student is using every power of the mind: *feeling* in his constant desire to excel, *thought* in his persistent reflection, and *will* in the directive control of his mental forces. Nevertheless, it is possible to train a single sense where the training of a single faculty may not be so obvious, and the first aim should be to acquire the ability to see many things at a glance, so that by means of exercises consciously carried out the eye will afterwards unconsciously transmit to the mind an ever-increasing number of sensations.

Take an illustration from language: when we speak to one another, we are not thinking of the rules of grammar. We have left the rules behind us long ago, and, instinctively and by habit, we use the singulars and plurals in the proper way. Now, this section deals with the grammar of observa-

tion—the rules that must be followed in order to insure efficiency—but after a period of practice you will not consciously think of these rules. You will have made them part of your intellectual outfit, just as English grammar is, and you will notice things unconsciously where before you had to do so deliberately. That is the *raison d'être* of the system of training.

The literature of this part of the subject is not as full as it might be. Indeed, for adults it can hardly be said to exist. Harriet Martineau's "How to Observe" is a guide to the traveller as moralist and reformer. Colonel Jackson's "What to Observe" is much on the same lines, and both are out of print. The rest is a series, mainly for school children, except one or two manuals specially prepared for artists. Consequently we are left to our own devices and shall divide the educative process into two parts: (1) *General*, and (2) *Particular*.

The first deals with the training of observation on broad lines with no definite end in view, and the second confines its attention strictly to business.

### *General Training*

(a) The classic example of excellence in observation plus reflection is Shakespeare, and I will quote from an interesting chapter by Prof. Halleck on "How Shakespeare trained his

Senses" in his "Psychology and Psychic Culture":

"Although Shakespeare received fine sense training from the field, the forest, and the sky, his genius must have made him instinctively know that this was incomplete. There is to-day the tendency to train the senses almost exclusively on natural objects. The flower, leaf, bird, insect, and sky ought always to be included in the list of text-books for sensory training, but Shakespeare's example ought to emphasize to us the fact that these are not all. Human beings of almost every occupation were observed with keen interest by Shakespeare in his boyhood. Had he not supplemented the training due to natural objects by watching his own kind as carefully as he noted the 'strange fowl' alighting on 'neighbouring ponds,' we should not to-day have his dramas. The rascal Autolycus and the alewife Mistress Quickly demanded as keen observation as the violets or the temple-haunting martlet. In no respect does Shakespeare tower above the rest of humanity more than in his careful observation of all classes of men in every mood."

Now, although it is true to say that a man of business needs special training for special ends, it must be admitted that general training has a reflex influence upon mental activities of a specific commercial character—eye-training of any kind will assist in developing observational powers for making profits. Besides, the broad cultural value is an item not to be forgotten.

Below is given a suggestive outline of a four weeks' course of study, to be varied at the reader's convenience as regards the order prescribed, or to be expanded by the inclusion of other series which may be to his advantage:

*First Week: Natural Objects—*

Study clouds and the face of the sky. Read Ruskin on clouds, and see how far you can follow him by actual observation. Do not be content with *impressions* or *perceptions*. Seek to have clear *judgments*. When you see a sky color that is hard to define, cast about you until you find the right word. Use a note-book freely.

*Second Week: Human Faces—*

You may commence with a number of questions, or you may dispense with them. Some may find it more interesting to form a theory, e. g., that facial expression is one of the most misleading of human phenomena. Other people would rather form their theories after scrutinizing scores of faces.

What is a hard face? And tragic eyes—what are they? Is there really a criminal face? Does character thus reveal itself or hide behind a mask?

Such questions, in any case, will arise in the inquiring mind, and perhaps it is as well to draw up a list, ere we go forth to study our fellows.

*Third Week: Pictures—*

In the galleries, in the picture-shops, in drawing-rooms—everywhere! The point of view may vary: you may seek pleasure and enlightenment, or you may study as indications of the occupants' character the pictures in the houses you enter,

but the main thing is to see them, to think of them, to understand them, and to theorize about them.

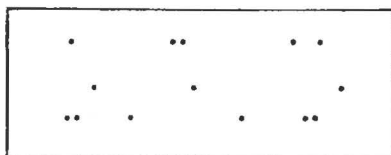
*Fourth Week: Streets—*

Has a particular street a character that can be distinguished from that of another street? Is there any difference between streets with many public houses or saloons in them and those with few? What is the difference, and how does it show itself? Can there be a "Soul of London" or of Chicago? Is our talk about streets and cities a mere fanciful nothing, the reality of which amounts to bricks and mortar rated at so much in the dollar or the pound?

Draw up your list of questions, and then begin to study streets: mean streets, dirty streets, streets of model flats for working-men, wide streets, narrow streets, the alley and the "dead end"—squares, crescents, and "gardens." All these are like clothes, and like clothes they contain a philosophy. What is it?

This plan for the period of a month is intended only as a suggestion. Observation cannot be taught as one would teach geometry or botany, and each student will have to map out a course for himself; but if he will do it intelligently and follow the plan conscientiously, we are certain that the tutorial results will be as surprising as they are refining.

Do not despise those aids which appear to be mechanical. Thus, in the following figure



you might not be able to tell at a glance how many dots there are; you will have to count. But there are children in advanced schools whose powers of observation are so trained that they can "count without counting," and a glance is sufficient to tell them how many dots there are in a figure like the one provided. It is no small advantage to have quickened perception to enable us to take in details rapidly.

### *Particular Training*

In its fundamental state the business mind is concerned with one thing: How can I make a profit by rendering a service to the buyer? Every man has his own variation of the question. The grocer is on the lookout for new customers, the advertising agent for new patrons and new spaces for display, the chemist for some compound that will cure diseases. We are all on the *qui vive* for a profit. Success and failure, to a certain degree, turn on the ability to notice the chances

which others fail to notice, hence trained faculty is of the highest importance. I cannot use a better illustration than that of Baden Powell's "Aids to Scouting." A scout is a man whose eyes are trained to see signs of the enemy by no means existent for untutored vision, and to interpret these signs with the best possible story of the movements they represent. His training is a fine study in inductive logic, and "Aids to Scouting" is an excellent text-book of that science. The author says that on one occasion during the Matabele War a British force was encamped near a high hill and believed the enemy did not know of its proximity. He started out at night with other scouts to examine the enemy's position six or eight miles away, as a surprise night attack was intended. Stealthily and silently they proceeded, when suddenly high up on the hill he noticed a quick flash, a flicker, then darkness again. This incident conveyed much. It told him the enemy knew of the presence of the British and were on the watch against surprises. As he says, "On the strength of this one flash of a match our whole plan of action was altered."

Take a further illustration from an entirely different source. Lord Avebury tells us that there are savages who can recognize individuals by their footprints. A Mr. Laing, while traveling near Moreton Bay in Australia, pointed to a footprint and asked whose it was. The guide glanced at it without stopping his horse and at

once answered: "White fellow call him Tiger." This turned out to be correct! \*

Now these instances of highly trained faculty are suggestive of what can be done by concentration. In the case of the savage, or of the Arab who knows the footprints of his own camel, it is only natural that the absence of civilized habits should result in the acquisition of a sense perception quite extraordinary in degree; but the scout, to whom the position of a horseshoe lying on the road is full of meaning, is not far behind, and the medical specialist with a stethoscope has probably finer hearing than any of James Fenimore Cooper's redskins.

The argument, therefore, is this: the man of business, in his own sphere, may develop by practice a sense perception as keen as any other, so that no opportunity slips by unnoticed, although he may fail to score, because he misread the true meaning. Let us see how it works: In the daily paper to-day there is a story about an actress who "noticed" a small painting just peeping out from behind a mass of second-hand wares in a Fifth Avenue shop. She stopped to examine it, and having been trained in art appreciation, she saw it was a real "find." Offering \$2.00 for it, the dealer accepted the price and she got a picture that was a genuine Rubens worth \$10,000. Chance? Not at all—it is a good illustration of the general eye-training which takes in objects

\* Prehistoric Times, p. 579.

that otherwise escape notice, and of special training which enables one to see a value where other people—the dealer here—could not.

To revert to the notion of scouting: The business man should make a study of the signs which denote the activity of his competitors, the imminence of coming changes, and the prospects of the future. John Jones notices a firm of solicitors at a property sale and sees how eagerly they go about making a purchase of a big lot downtown. He may idly wonder why they are so keen for this purchase, or he may be wide awake with curiosity; but the difference between the two mental conditions is the difference between a struggle ahead and no struggle at all, for the law men represent his chief competitors and a purchase of the property means a fierce fight for supremacy.

Now, this suggests the importance of *news*, and every progressive man should have his own press agency in the sense that he collects and codifies trade news for himself by personal observation and reading. The journalist is always aiming at being ahead of time—this morning's news is dead, and his eyes have a forward look. So should it be in business. To be in time is as important in the market as anywhere else, and to be ahead of time brings the same financial reward.

Not long ago, after the conclusion of the Boer War, a Boer was buying clothes in a New York store for his family of boys. The salesman was one of the best the store possessed for selling a

big bill, because he always sent away his customers satisfied and well supplied with goods. He had succeeded, as usual, in filling a large order, including hats for all the boys except one little chap who wore a "sailor." It had on it an inscription which was so plain and suggestive that one can only marvel it did not immediately attract the smart salesman's eye. His attention was called to it by another salesman. The words ran, "His Majesty's Ship Powerful." The situation dawned on him at once, and stepping up to one of the elder boys he smilingly remarked, "That's a nice line on your little brother's hat-band." The elder brother read the words, and like a flash snatched the hat from the little boy's head and exclaimed rather excitedly:

"Please show me to your boy's hat department."

Can it be that he, too, had failed to observe the anomaly? The Britisher who reads this incident may be sorry his Majesty's ship lost a good advertisement, but he can hardly be surprised that a son of a vanquished Boer should object to parading the streets of New York wearing a badge of the conqueror like a phylactery! The hat might, it is true, have been "made in Germany"—a reflection offering some relief to indignant feelings, but in this story of an act of observation the merit must be ascribed to the man who figures least in the narrative—who saw the anomaly that escaped the eyes of the

other two, and by calling attention to it was the means of securing an additional sale.\*

(a) Cultivate the habit of looking everywhere for trade news, but look particularly in your trade journals—not the hurried look which you give the morning paper, but the studied reading of every item. Among the “Personal Notes” you find that Mr. Samuel E. Baytiff has gone to England. Does that convey anything to you? Perhaps not at first until you remember having lunched with him a week ago and he said nothing about the trip abroad. You go into the matter more deeply, make discreet inquiries, and find at last that a big business scheme affecting your interests is afoot and you must be up and doing.

“News” may come in quite a different manner. You meet it at the club, or you hear it at a social function. Time given to sociability is not necessarily wasted time—indeed, it may be time exceedingly well-spent, both as a mental recreation and as affording an opportunity of gleaning valuable information. Like everything else, the evil lies in excess.

\* Salesmanship, Vol. I, p. 31.

## LESSON VI

### IMAGINATION IN BUSINESS

Imagination is always the ruling and the divine power, and the rest of man is only the instrument which it sounds or the tablet on which it writes.

—*Ruskin*

When Prof. Tyndall delivered his memorable address on the uses of imagination to science he had to plead on behalf of a mental power that was regarded as quite unsuitable for exact research. "There are tories even in science," he said, "who regard imagination as a faculty to be feared and avoided." Since those days, however, the progress of systematized knowledge has justified the claim of the celebrated physicist, and the gift of creative thought, once the sole and distinctive possession of literary genius,

"—to madness near allied,"

has now established itself as a responsible agent in furthering the discoveries of physics, chemistry, astronomy, and biology.

Of course the first guesses at the riddle of existence were permeated with imaginative effort, and if "Newton's passage from a falling apple to a falling moon was, at the outset, a leap of the imagination," the same must be postulated

of the Eleatics, and of the Eastern philosophers who lived before them. The theory of Herodotus in reference to the rising of the Nile was perhaps the earliest attempt at science, and yet it contained all the intellectual qualities of the very latest hypothesis.

But heresies die hard, and although it is allowed that imagination has certain *uses*—mark the word—outside the realm of art, men still believe that its primary function, if not its true and only mission, is found in poetry, painting, and prose literature.

As for imagination in business—that is, in factories and workshops, in docks and offices, in buying and selling merchandise—well, the idea is absurd. The world of commerce, we are informed, is essentially practical; it is governed by facts and common sense; imagination is just the one thing to which it is opposed. So indignant are the partisans of these beliefs that it is only after a comfortable dinner you can persuade them to talk at all.

I have sometimes put the matter to the test by asking my literary friends the bluntest of questions in the bluntest possible manner: “When Swinburne was imagining *Atalanta in Calydon* and Lipton imagining the means of adapting particular blends of tea to the quality of local water supplies, was the poet using a faculty quite different from that of the provision dealer?” I confess the replies to this question were more

strenuous in language than they were clear in meaning, but they all agreed that Swinburne's mental activity was imagination *par excellence*, while Lipton's was mere *reasoning* about the profitable distribution of a commercial product. With this verdict I find myself in total disagreement; it confuses ideal values with real values, and it is bad psychology. How differently did the ancients regard these matters, for, as Bacon says, founders of states, generals, and lawgivers were with much state honored as demi-gods, such as Hercules, Theseus, Minos, Romulus; but inventors and discoverers of new arts to benefit man's life were ever consecrated as gods themselves, as Ceres, Mercury, and Apollo!

## II

That a fine poem, full of real singing and replete with chiselled phrases, is of greater national significance than the inventiveness embodied in an improved collar-button may be readily admitted: idealism will always take precedence of mere utility. But it is impossible to argue that therefore the poem is a result of imagination *per se*, while the despised though immensely useful little collar-button is the product of intelligence working on a lower plane. Both are the offspring of mind working in the same way, but directed to different ends: the one aims at achievement on the lines of the ideal, the other is content with

mere usefulness on the lines of the real. My argumentative friends believed they had cornered me when they instituted a bold comparison between a celebrated poet and a soap-maker. "Do you mean to say," they exclaimed, "that the language of an advertisement in the *Daily Tribune* demands the same faculty to produce it as the language of Shelley? Here is a shout from the soap-maker:

### WILKINSON'S PEERLESS CLEANSER

Now, contrast it with lines like these:

Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,  
Stains the white radiance of eternity.

Do you tell us that the soap-maker and the poet used the same kind of imagination?"

It was expected that I should blush for very shame, and slink from the presence of my critics like a guilty cur, but I saw no reason to do either. I replied that there is only one imagination, just as there is only one memory. I may try to recall a saying of Plato, or Goethe, or Browning, or I may make an effort to remember the price I paid last year for breakfast bacon, or whether it rained on Easter Monday, but in each case I use the one faculty of memory. So with the imagination. There is not a set of brain-cells for imagination in poetry and another set for business. Besides, the *mot* in literature has its perfect correspond-

ence in commerce. Flaubert never looked more carefully for the one word to express his meaning than the business man does to set forth the precise nature, use, and attractiveness of his commodities. When Stevenson in *The Silverado Squatters* describes a pail of water being carried uphill, the water *lipping* over the sides, and a *quivering* sunbeam in the centre, we can see with what care the italicized words were selected. But may not the soap-maker have exercised a similar care? For aught we know, his phrase about the "peerless cleanser" may have cost hours of sustained reflection. He had to consider the need of brief and easily understood terms to describe the article adequately, and to attract the public eye as well as to create a desire to buy. I claim that between the mental activity involved in seeking such a phrase, and that of seeking the *mot* in literature, there is no difference whatever. Modern advertising is in fact a triumph of the imagination. For years the world of commerce was content to announce its existence in the baldest manner. It gave its name and address, informed the public what it existed for, but beyond this all was vague and unattractive. There was no glow, no art, no understanding of human nature. Nowadays we follow a different method. Advertising has its text-book of psychology and its own art studios—which is only another way of saying that it has pressed imagination into its service.

## III

Carry the argument a step further. Sir Walter Scott, in the prime of his powers, was overtaken by financial disaster and found himself morally, though not legally, responsible for £120,000. How could he raise so large an amount? The question is more easily asked than answered. He had to imagine a way out of his difficulties by seeking suggestions, selecting the best, testing them, and finally arranging a practical scheme. Was there then a real psychological difference between the imagining of this plan for raising money and the imagining of the siege of Torquilstone in *Ivanhoe*? Did the brain-cells of the literary imagination go on a strike and refuse to be used for the low-grade work of thinking in terms of cash? The question surely contains its own answer.

But what do the psychologists themselves say? It must be admitted that as men of science they are not prejudiced in favor of theories of mental inspiration; and poets especially are sometimes rather roughly handled when they claim functions denied to the ordinary man. The results of "fine frenzy" show up very badly in Dr. Crichton Browne's "Dreamy Mental States" where "imagination" is treated from the medical point of view, and some of the poet's dearest fancies are written down as insanities. It will be said that an alienist is not a reliable critic—that he suffers from the prejudice of the specialist. Perhaps so,

but take an authority like Th. Ribot, and what do you find? That imagination is in no sense whatever a prerogative of the idealist, despite the form in which he expresses himself. In comparing the artistic with the commercial imagination, Ribot says: "There is an identity of nature between the constructive imagination of the mechanic and that of the artist: the difference is only in the end, the means, and the conditions. . . . Taken as a whole, its psychological mechanism is the same as that of any other creative work. In the first instance the idea arises from inspiration, from reflection, or by chance. Then comes a period of fermenting, during which the inventor sketches his construction in images, represents to himself the material to be worked upon, the grouping of stockholders, the making up of a capital, the mechanism of buying and selling, etc. All this differs from the genesis of an æsthetic or mechanical work only in the end, or in the nature of the images. In the second phase it is necessary to proceed to execution—a castle in the air must be made a solid structure. Then appear a thousand obstructions in the details that must be overcome. As everywhere else, minor inventions become grafted on the principal invention; the author lets us see the poverty or richness of his mind in resources. Finally, the work is triumphant, fails, or is only half successful." \*

These are the opinions of the one man in Eu-

\* The Creative Imagination.

rope who more than any other has devoted a trained mind to the elucidation of creative processes. One may therefore readily admit that, although the poet will, as an idealist, always be supreme, while the inventors of soap advertisements and little collar-buttons will sink into oblivion, the purveyors of practicalities must not on that account be denied a share in the use of the one faculty which gives man his greatest distinction.

#### IV

The modern merchant is too busy making money—or trying to make money—to care much about psychology; mental workings have no intrinsic interest for him, and were he told that his imagination and the poet's were at bottom one and the same thing, the chances are that, instead of being pleased, he might begin to ask whether it was not a new form of insult, for this man at the roll-top desk is sensitive, as all men are—somewhere. One thing he specially dislikes, and that is to be accused of having the transcendental temperament which is equivalent to being a fool “whose eyes are in the ends of the earth.” He is quite wrong, of course.

British commerce as we know it to-day had its origin in the day-dreaming of practical men who bound themselves together in trading guilds for the purpose of capturing the best business the

world could offer. When bold discoverers returned from voyages to unknown regions, these adventurous traders were ready with schemes to found new markets; they formed companies and financed them; they selected reliable men to sail the seas and sell their goods even where the face of the white man had not been seen before. Take the Society of Merchant Adventurers. Who, in the face of a title like that, can deny imagination in business? These were men who lived in the days when chivalry was passing away; the tournament was out of date, and the knight was no longer a practicable ideal. But the spirit of adventure needed an outlet, and commerce supplied the opening; they pursued foreign trade in the spirit of romance. And a business man who is a fighter is ever a man to be feared. We read that "Sir John Philpot, a London grocer, being much hampered by Scottish pirates, did not wait for the government to act, but fitted out a fleet at his own expense and was so successful that he became the scourge of the Scots, the fright of the French, the delight of the Commons, the darling of the merchants, and the hatred of some envious Lords."

The expansion of American commerce has the same story to tell. Indeed, the spirit of adventure has left the old country and settled in the new. On this continent more than anywhere else the commercial imagination is at work; men are ever seeing the unseen and realizing it objectively. In

the far west they gazed upon barren wastes and imagined irrigation, bringing in its train a fruitful soil, abundance of useful products, and a prosperous people, so that now the wilderness rejoices in plenty, and fruits and flowers adorn a once unproductive region. Some men "saw" manufactures, others steel, others railroads—that is, before these beneficent facts of industry became real, they were ideal—creatures of imagination.

But let me supply another and more striking instance: The trade of New York City is growing, growing, growing. It grew last century, and it grows now. Where is it going to end? That is the question which the shipping trade especially is asking itself, and its anxiety is embodied in the presence of an expert who sits in an office with maps and charts before him. His business is to prepare for the future—to arrange for dock accommodation during the years that are to come, and to carry out the schemes necessary to accomplish this end. He is not on piece work. He is paid to think. He has an official title, but I prefer to call him Acting Professor of Imagination to the Shipping Interests of New York.

We may take it for granted, after all that has been said, that no man of business ever succeeds unless he knows how to use the faculty which was once claimed by the poet as particularly his own. The question of working methods—i. e., the manner in which imagination is made a useful servant, and how it may be trained—has still to be

discussed, and I propose now to enter upon that task, somewhat unfamiliar, it is true, because as yet business psychology is an infant science.

First, there is the general attitude towards an unrealized future as contrasted with a particular attitude at once definite and forceful. It may be truthfully said of the vast crowd of men that they neglect the mental duty of mapping out a regulated course of action covering the next ten or fifteen years of their life, and this neglect is in turn due to the lack of an imaginative ideal. A year's prospect is good enough for them, and sometimes it is so marred by the crossing of other features (standing for a superabundance of pleasures or social recreations) that even the schemes for a twelvemonth's vista lose point and significance.

Since imagination has so much to do with the things that have no actual existence, except in so far as they live in mental pictures, its work in fashioning an unrealized future is a matter of considerable importance. It would be interesting to take half a dozen young business men and inquire into their mental attitude towards the years that are ahead. Selected haphazard from among those who are hurrying to catch the morning train, we could present the six with a *questionnaire* paper containing the following:

1. Does your view of your future carry you forward to a definite end realizable in twenty-five years? Or is it limited to a briefer period?

2. If you do not measure your aims by *time*, but by a specific achievement, is the day of maturity near or remote?

3. How far does an imagined future, with financial conquest, affect your present activity in the matter of its direction?

4. What loss of energy have you sustained by imagining troubles that never arrived?

The six would probably write answers to the last question first, and, no doubt, all the answers would be practically the same; for the percentage of men who do their best and then cease to worry is small indeed. Imagination is a helpful and brilliant faculty, but it has its decided drawbacks. In lively form it can conjure up the spectres of failure, robbery, fire, and a host of other depressing fears—in fact, the man who is always worrying is the man who has more or less lost control of his imagination and memory: they are driving him before them as they will, giving him no rest until actual events, good or bad, lay the spectres low.

But there is a vast difference among the selected six as to the length of vista along which the eye of imagination is making the future visible. One of them has determined to be the controller of a new Real Estate Company. He is twenty now; he will be forty ere his plans have matured, so that he lives with a twenty-year imagination. At the end of ten years he is so much nearer the goal that a closer inspection of his chances

indicates the possibility of achieving his object in five years, and he works on with redoubled efforts to clutch the coveted prize, perhaps ruining his health in the process and thereby showing a need of balance, such as a right course of training would give him. Another of the six is a different kind of man altogether. He is the manager of a grocery store, and his imagination is busy trying to solve the problem of saving and getting money to buy the store for himself. A third man is the chief clerk of a firm of attorneys, his object in life being the carrying out of his duties with speed and accuracy, but with no particular demand on what is virtually a feeble faculty of imagination. The fourth man is a money-getter, a type found in Throgmorton street, Wall street, and any European bourse. His attitude towards the future is indefinite except in so far as it postulates the necessity of making more money: his day-dreams are of dollars and bank balances, varied by reflections on the low state of human nature which caused him to lose heavily in recent deals. The fifth man is a packer in a warehouse whose ambition is to be a foreman—imagination never takes him beyond that stage, for his practical sense tells him it is the limit of his abilities. The sixth man is the acting head of a shipping firm: his eyes are on distant ports; he is meditating the invasion of a monopoly, arranging the finances, marshalling the fleet, drawing up the regulations—for the time

being he lives in a world unrealized, one in a state of becoming.

Now, it is evident that in various ways the mind of every man with ambition is constantly picturing a possible future, and the range of quality in these pictures decide his place in the ranks of progressive men. If, like the lawyer's clerk, he is content to do his duty with satisfaction to his employers, a day may come when he will have to rely for a living on his slender resources, or else depend on the good will of his principal. If, endowed with only mediocre abilities, he can attain no higher position than that of foreman, as in the case of the aspiring packer, he will have to fend for himself in times of sickness, lack of work, or old age—and that may mean destitution. But if, as in the other cases, imagination has a longer flight and a wider sweep of interests, the chances are infinitely better for the individual in the struggle for existence and power; he has a keener desire, because his vision is brighter and more alluring, and this in turn engineers a stronger will.

Every young man starting out in business should give serious attention to this matter of imagining the future. Not that there is any need to hurry about it. The pictures of inexperience at eighteen will give place to those that arise out of more matured knowledge; changes will succeed changes until the clear vision arrives. Even this panoramic process is not without its charm. But

to *drift*—that is the great misfortune! If we could take the brain pictures of a good many men and examine them on the table at our leisure, we should find too heavy a percentage of them referred to interests that were immediate and local; the pictures of an idealized future would be both few and indistinct. Mind-training for business, therefore, has to find a place for imagination as a mental duty, and it justifies this course by showing how successful men have always been “dreamers”—thinking the things that came true.

Let us now inquire into the precise manner in which imagination works—how the distant vision affects the present reality. Some people tell us, with a wealth of vague detail, that there is a subtle power in thought which transmits an idea from the plane of the ideal to the plane of the real. Here is an illustration: I am engaged, I will suppose, in the mail-order business. To increase that business all I have to do is to imagine it increased—to “see” last week’s orders increased by fifty, then by one hundred, and so forth, until—well, these people are shy about giving limits, but if the law is true for fifty, it ought to be true for one million—if I can imagine so many. Of course the “law” is not true; it is quack psychology, a mere travesty of a fact that has been known for generations—namely, that if you *imagine* more business, you *desire* more, and if you *desire* more, you *work* for more, and if you *work* for more, you *get* more. I do not say

this is a full explanation of the manner in which an unrealized idea affects one's present policy, but it does explain all the mystery there is behind the verbiage of much "new-thought" teaching, especially the so-called law of success and of opulence.

The real truth is contained in that passage of Scripture where the disciples were told to ask for what they wanted in faith, the exact words being: "Believe that ye receive them and ye shall have them." The philosophy underlying this passage is this: we are to act in the present, as if the future were an accomplished fact. That scheme of yours which cannot mature for some years—do not wait until the years have passed and then expect to behold the *fait accompli*. Begin now and prepare for it. Business growth is not magical: it is progressive. You create the mental picture and proceed to give it objective reality. This is curiously illustrated in that new development of psychotherapy—healing by auto-suggestion. Its basis is really a modern application of Dr. Tuke's "Influence of the Imagination on Disease" published in the eighteen-fifties. The medical psychologists of France, notably those of Nancy and the Salpêtrière, have devoted special attention to nervous complaints, and Dr. Levy in his *L'Éducation Rationnelle de la Volonté* has mentioned numerous instances of cures by auto-suggestion. Let us suppose you are a victim of insomnia. He would tell you to appeal to your

imagination and conjure up a picture of dreamless sleep. Having done that, he would ask you *to act as if you were sleepy*—lie down, get into an easy position, yawn, and tell yourself you are really very drowsy. In other words, you are to act as if the present were the future: sleep is the thing imagined, and you make it a reality by acting as if it were already upon you. Now, the surprising part of the matter is this: sleep often comes when so invited, pain will disappear, and even functional disorders are charmed away. How is it done? Prof. Levy says it is because every thought tends to become an action. One would like to add that there must be something in the nature of thought and in its action on the body that as yet we do not understand. But the point which concerns us here is not the cure, but its *modus operandi*. An ideal is made real by assuming that the unrealized is already real. This looks very much like lying—and in a sense it is. When a man has had no sleep for three nights and, following Dr. Levy's prescription, lies down and says, "I am very sleepy," he is apt to feel that he is only lying to himself; but if he believes in the power of mind, he knows that, by accepting what is not true, the truth will happen.

Now, in business the process is not identical, but it is similar. You can dream you own a big office building, or a large dry-goods store, but if you do nothing to give actuality to those dreams you accomplish nothing. In physiology to think

disease is often to have disease, and to imagine a cure is to have a cure. The thought itself is potent enough for both results. It is not the same in business: the thought supplies the picture of wealth and advancement, the mind conceives a passion to make the picture a reality, and will-power does the rest. But if the mental picture be absent, then the other powers are dormant, and this shows the immense importance of a vivid imagination—one that is not fanciful, changing, and easily demoralized, but sane, persistent, and always in a glow. Some men in business abuse this faculty to their own hurt. They advertise a commodity for sale and get only a small number of replies, but they tell their friends it took two postmen to carry the mail-bags and almost strained the elevator! Such men are not men of imagination; they are only liars. Of course every hopeful and aggressive mind places the best construction on partial failure, and to declare victory is better than to cry defeat; but the business that is built on lies has no sure foundation—the lies like scum rise to the surface eventually. Such was the case of a young publisher who started out with a few hundred dollars and announced a first edition of 30,000 copies of his first book! The book failed and he failed with it. His creditors found 300 unsold copies out of an edition of 1,000.

To recapitulate: we have seen that a definite use of the imagination is a duty which the would-

be successful man owes himself; that without it he sinks into a state of inertia, neglecting his opportunities, or confining his attention to the local and temporary; and that the attitude of mind which causes a man to see himself successful, when as yet he is not, is truly psychological, receiving also the indorsement of practical experience. We now turn our attention to methods of training.

### *Methods of Training*

1. The notion of training the imagination is, in some quarters, still received with incredulity, and such critics are evidently forgetful of those sections in the text-books of psychology where this very subject is treated pedagogically. I refer to the works of men like James, Sully, Thorndike, Angell, and Halleck. True, these sections refer for the most part to the training of youthful minds, but if the growing intelligence can be catered to by a series of exercises, there is no reason why a second series should not be drawn up for those of riper intellect—otherwise we are reduced to the position of claiming that the adult imagination is, forsooth, a perfect instrument for commerce, for art, and for everything else! The only other course open is to affirm *this* man has imagination and *that* man has not—a statement which may be allowed to pass as correct now and again, but which is futile when the mass of men are grouped together.

2. The exercises proposed come under the two-fold heading of (a) Literary and (b) Practical. The first render a purely psychological service in developing the creative faculty; the second contribute the more valuable exercise of experiments in the actual field of trade and commerce. No student can faithfully follow out these directions without obtaining immense benefit.

### *Literary Methods*

1. To solve the *dénouement* of a novel or a detective story is both fascinating and educative. Edgar Wallace's "Four Just Men" is a suitable book, as it was written for this very purpose. If you cannot get a copy easily, ask a friend to give you a problem plot in writing, taken from a novelist of repute, and then begin to anticipate the solution. Detective mysteries are perhaps the best, and sometimes you can put yourself in possession of the main facts by reading the first part of the story. Close the book and try to see how the writer solved a puzzling situation.

2. Take a poem—say Browning's "My Last Duchess"—and write out the unrecorded actions—actions which are only indicated, not stated. Here again is an exercise at once agreeable and instructive, and Browning's monologues offer a fine field for this type of imaginative inquiry.

*Practical Methods*

1. A student is not necessarily in the best position to employ a practical method of training, in the sense that he carries out in the conduct of affairs a series of experiments in imagination; but if we understand the word *practical* to refer to the kind of material he deals with, it will be evident that he can give the faculty in question every useful exercise in the utilities of business life. For instance, in

2. *Locating the site of a factory*, he will have to employ his imagination as much as any other mental power. In answering so simple a question as "Is there room in this city for another factory?" he must pass from an analysis of present conditions to those which are likely to prevail in the future: it is only by imagining a state of trade that will exist ten years hence, but does not exist now, that he can handle successfully the initial query. Then in seeking a favorable location he finds it necessary—after deciding such important items as nearness to transportation, the accessibility of workers, disposal of waste products, and a score of like matters—to look ahead and judge of what may be done with the adjoining vacant plots by their respective owners. Will they sell the land to possible competitors? Is the new railroad likely to cause land values to rise? If so, ought he not to buy the adjoining plots as an investment as well as a protection

against competition? Every student of this course who is engaged in manufacture should give an exercise of this kind his best attention: it provides activity for analysis, but most of all for synthesis.

3. *Current business problems* offer an inviting opportunity to imaginative zest. Take American shipping: What is the best way of building it up as rapidly and as securely as possible? To some extent it is a matter for dry reason based on hard facts, but it is more than anything else a picturing of the future improved by a tonnage that at present is not on the national register. How can such a tonnage be added? If subsidies are taboo, why should not trading guilds be formed by capitalists to build fleets of fast cargo boats for ocean traffic? Would the competition with existing carriers be successful? What percentage could be paid to investors in the stock? How would a favorable issue affect internal trade? These and other questions open out the discussion to its widest extent—a discussion which, though based on actual facts, is chiefly concerned with unrealized ideas, and is, therefore, a true exercise in commercial imagination. Other subjects are (a) aviation as a business proposition, (b) universal cooking by electricity, (c) the stock exchange as an anachronism, (d) banking laws of the future, and (e) real estate as affected by the negro. The advantage of serious attention to these and similar problems is not only

that they assist in mental development, but that they are educative in the truest business sense.

4. *Needed inventions*, of which lists are easily procurable, present further opportunities for solution by imagination. True, the difficulties are usually great, and a certain amount of scientific knowledge is often required, but, this granted, it must not be forgotten that the rewards are also great. Moreover, solutions sometimes come more easily to the mind that is new to a problem than to the one which, by cunning it for months or years, has got into a groove and cannot get out. Whether a solution is arrived at or not, the benefit to the student cannot easily be measured: he has the advantage of a peculiarly close study in observation and concentration, and crowning both is the synthetic power, uniting, disjoining, recombining, until something at least tentative is accomplished.

5. *Personal Interests*. Any student of this course who is also in business, either for himself or as a salaried employee, is naturally interested in the training of faculty as a means of making more money; and, as our aim is practical, it remains for us to show how imagination can be used to this material end.

(a) It is used in advertising, in window-dressing, in designing attractive publications, and in every form of appeal to the public taste. How? Like this—to take the simplest illustration: Two men were selling dolls in the streets of London.

One did fairly well, the other badly. Mr. Heinemann, a publisher, asked the latter to hold up two dolls at a time and shout "the Heavenly Twins" (at that moment Sarah Grand's book was all the rage). He did so, and was soon doing a roaring trade. In this case the shout was an appeal to the imagination—not brilliant, but effective enough to advance the sales rapidly. It is the same with every form of public address in matters of trade: the bare fact is not enough—there must be added something which touches the imagination. An Iowa chemist discovered a good headache cure, but it was not sufficient merely to announce the discovery: he had to impress it on the minds of those who passed his window. So he got a head of cabbage and on it placed a label: "This head has never ached," and on a skull he placed a label: "This head has often ached." Beneath he set forth the virtues of his own discovery, and as a result he was soon doing all the business there was in headache powders.

Thus the man with anything to sell should be ever on the lookout for the newest ideas which when realized will adorn the bare fact, i. e., the goods he has to dispose of. If they are boots that do not take water, let him do what others have done—namely, prove it by occasional immersion, so that when people see the water running off the leather, as if it were afraid to stay, they may imagine the protection such boots would afford in bad weather.

(b) In such efforts the synthetic faculty is dealing with details: it is the microscope applied to business. Equally important is the larger view—the view of distant and greater possibilities. That is the use of the telescope. Questions like the following are to be answered, not hastily, but after much inquiry and deliberation:

1. What new conditions are likely to arise in my business during the next ten, fifteen, or twenty years?

2. Will such conditions be universal or only local?

3. In either event what steps are necessary to meet them?

4. How far am I in a position to take those steps?

Complete answers to these questions would prepare a trader for most eventualities. Not only would he have the inestimable advantage of knowing present conditions, but future prospects would in some measure be clear to him—moreover, he could be preparing himself for whatever might happen, whether fortunate or unfortunate. Experience with past students assures us of the practical value of this imaginative effort.

(c) *The salaried man* is in a different category. He has first to decide whether he is going into business for himself, or whether he intends to remain in a salaried position. Even this decision depends on how far and how accurately he

can divine his chances, supposing he elects to venture on his own account; but in the main he thinks of promotion and how it can be brought about. To imagine himself in the position of manager is to be spurred on to learn managerial duties; to desire a position with another firm at a higher salary suggests the need of greater proficiency and the means of attaining it. One day he is surprised to find that a man of his own age and experience, employed by another firm, has made a startling advance—and he says, “Why did not I think of *that?*” It consisted in a scheme for saving the firm a thousand a year in its packing expenses. Now, this is *one* field for the salaried man’s imagination: there are a score of others besides economy. Here, for instance, are some general questions he may answer:

1. In what way can I advance the interests of my employer by reducing working expenses or by increasing orders?

2. How can I fit myself for more advanced positions in the office or the factory?

3. What trade movements are likely to affect the rates of salary paid to employees?

4. Are the prospects for the future good or otherwise?

5. If bad, what ought I to do to control them?

*Answers to be sent in to the tutor in charge:*

1. No. 2 of the “Literary Methods.”

2. No. 3 of "Current Business Problems," selecting one form from a, b, c, d, or e.

3. (b) of the "Personal Interests" section (in the case of men in business for themselves), or (c) in the case of men in receipt of salaries.

## LESSON VII

### THE CASH VALUE OF SYMPATHY

Moral altruism is feeling *for* others; business altruism is feeling *with* others. —Anon.

The dictionary defines sympathy as “a feeling that enables a person to enter into and, in part, share another’s feelings.” I wish to keep strictly to that definition, mainly because it is the realization of other people’s feelings that has a cash value, but partly because there are other forms of sympathy with which the subject of this chapter may easily be confused. With some of these it is necessary to deal—the sympathy seen in the various forms of philanthropy, for instance—but the sympathy with *ideas* is so closely related to that with *feelings* that it is important some attention should be bestowed on a brief analysis.

Let us begin by trying to remember our first thoughts after reading a great novel, a scientific theory, or a political policy. Perhaps Socialism would afford a good test. What did you think of Marx’s *Capital*, or some other exposition of that creed? You would probably be conscious of one of three attitudes towards the theories therein advanced: (a) attraction; (b) antagonism; or

(c) indifference. You may have felt no interest in the subject at all—an unlikely contingency; or you may have believed that here was the solution of all economic problems; or, lastly, you may have started up in bitter antagonism against a system which, as you put it, “was the exploitation of the strong by the weak.” Are we not right? Was it not one of these three?

Now, what is the origin of these attitudes of mind towards ideas not our own? Why do we feel these instinctive attractions to some theories, and antagonisms towards others? Because of the power of *prejudice*—that is to say, before these theories reach us they are *pre-judged*. You may have been trained to believe in competition as the very salt of life, or you may have been trained to regard it as a curse. Such ideas instilled into the intelligence during the formative period of life are difficult to eradicate, and contrary ideas are at once met with antagonism. This is the prejudice of *training*.

But our minds have an individuality of their own; we are conscious of a certain definite tendency towards particular groups of ideas, and frequently this tendency is so strong that it overcomes the influence of early training and we strike out in the direction we feel to be right. This is a prejudice of *temperament*. Again, in the valuation of ideas we may become conscious of a strong disposition in favor of those which bear the American stamp as opposed to the ar-

ticle made in a foreign country. This is the prejudice of *nationality*.

You will see, therefore, there are many kinds of prejudice, and the problem of evolving true intellectual sympathy becomes more difficult than at first is apparent. Some people, indeed, tell us our prejudices are too interesting to be abolished, and they quote Charles Lamb's essay on "Imperfect Sympathies" as an evidence of their contention that individuality is made up of strongly marked personal preferences, whereas a disposition to analyze every idea with philosophic calm takes all the color and glow out of personality, thereby reducing the self to a passionless machine for measuring ideas. The point is not important here, but as a study in psychology and life it is worth noting for future reflection. On looking back at our definition of sympathy, the reader will observe the use of *imagination*. No unimaginative man can be sympathetic, except in cases where his experience has been identical with that of another who is, let us suppose, narrating the details of an illness, or the loss of money in a business transaction; but even then there is no direct imaginative effort: the connection between the experience of the two men is automatic by means of memory.

To value ideas we must use the faculty of imagination and thus make them our own for the time being. We are to put aside the opinions and convictions already formed and give ourselves up

entirely to those which lie before us awaiting judgment. Here we sometimes meet with the prejudice of temperament in a violent form. "Socialism?" (or it may be a religious topic), we hear a man say, "Why, I have not even patience to discuss such nonsense!" This is a true sign of the uncritical mind—the mind which cannot take the first steps in the art of intellectual sympathy. There are men of the greatest mental power on the side of the individualist, but they did not arrive at their conclusions in haste: they patiently examined each proposition and mentally followed the results of its application to economic facts. They are sparing in the use of adjectives like "absurd," "nonsensical," and "Utopian," because they know a false notion is more easily slain by logic than by abuse.

Mental projection! That is the first lesson to learn. Suspend your own dogmas for the moment, and get inside those of other people. Don't think of the man, the instrument of expression, any more than you think of the personality of Euclid when working a deduction in geometry. Keep your attention wholly on the theme.

"Every subject has two sides," it is often remarked. "Many sides" would be our version of this saying, and you can see them only by imaginative sympathy.

On a previous page we stated there were three possible attitudes of mind towards ideas not our own: attraction, antagonism, and indifference.

There is, as a matter of fact, a fourth attitude—one which arises out of the first two: it is *criticism*. A real critic is one who can suspend his prejudices (to get rid of them entirely is impossible) and project himself into the ideas of another man without being wholly an antagonist or wholly a disciple. An American professor, in drawing up a practical lesson on the exposition of a theme, hit upon the plan, both simple and effective, of using three sheets of paper, writing on the top of the first sheet "What it is *not*," on the second "What it *is*," and on the third "What it is *like*." "As ideas occur to the student, from observation or reading, he can then jot them down on the appropriate sheet. In this way the substance of an essay will grow almost without conscious effort on the part of the writer, and shape itself into a very fair orderliness. For instance, let us suppose that, realizing that criticism is one of the most important and characteristic *genres* of literature at the present day, I undertake to expound my idea of what criticism is, and that I have prepared my three sheets of paper for notes. I happen, we will suppose, to hear some one say of a shrew or a gossip, that she is a very *critical* person—forever finding fault. Is that, then, what I mean by criticism—"finding fault"? Certainly not. I therefore jot down on my first sheet of paper: Criticism is not mere fault-finding. Again, we will suppose, I think of going to a certain play, and, asking a

friend whether it is worth while or not, I am advised to consult So-and-So, who is excessively fond of the theatre. So-and-So is evidently held to be a good critic, because he is fond of what he criticises. The idea is suggestive, and I enter on my second sheet the note that criticism is sympathetic, modifying the statement, on second thought, by entering again on my first sheet the memorandum that of course criticism is not mere finding favor any more than it is merely finding fault. On my third sheet observation might lead me to note that criticism is, like justice, unprejudiced. Such memoranda, made mentally or recorded, are in most cases the necessary steps towards rendering to ourselves a clear account of our ideas." \*

Yes, the true critic looks at the artist's intention, puts himself in his place, feels his feelings, and thinks his thought. The personal appearance of an artist, a poet, a *littérateur* has nothing to do with criticism, and the circumstances of private life have no connection with the truth or falsity of their ideas.

Sainte-Beuve is largely responsible for the intimate and personal method of criticism which has obtained so much vogue. In this lesson, however, we seek higher ground; we wish to secure that mental detachment which will enable us to deal with ideas in an unprejudiced manner, no matter

\* Introduction to Theme-writing, J. B. Fletcher and G. R. Carpenter.

whence they come or by whom they are promulgated. As an ideal it is not easy of attainment—indeed, some writers claim it is impossible. They assert that our inborn prejudices are so strong, the pull of our intellectual training and environment so pronounced, that it is hopeless to expect a really impartial estimate of opinions we feel we cannot accept. On the other hand, if we are drawn towards such opinions in a flood of enthusiasm, we are just as likely to overstate the elements of truth they may contain. These contentions are not altogether without force, but they need not distress us. Any man who cannot examine the doctrines of modern socialism without considering the *personnel* of the movement is still in his mental swaddling-clothes. So keep the personal element out, and value the ideas *as ideas*. Depend upon it, if you cannot overcome their power without animadverting on their origin in a particular brain, there is a rightness about them which is worthy of further thought. One can readily admit there *is* a connection between the *man* and the *idea*, but it is secondary, not primary.

“Why,” it is sometimes asked, “do men of intellect differ so widely in their opinions and convictions?” An intensely practical question. For instance, spiritualism was pooh-poohed by Tyn-dall and Huxley, but Wallace and Crookes believed the phenomena were real. Carlyle had no sympathy with Huxley’s views on the origin of

man, but at the same time he alleged Cardinal Newman had "the intellect of a rabbit." That great thinkers disagree on important issues needs no evidence: the real question is *why*? Where does intellectual sympathy come in? Unfortunately it has too few opportunities of asserting itself, for, although a man may have great brain capacity, it does not follow he has great moral courage. Even Huxley, usually honest to the core, had weak moments when his native prejudices had full play.

An accepted theory of life allows little room for the in-coming of new knowledge; that is the prejudice of the theorist. We are all sinners sometimes and can never hope to be entirely free from the influences which act upon us when criticizing notions alien to those we hold; and yet there is no reason why we should not use our utmost endeavors to be just in every critical estimate we offer. And we can be just only by the exercise of imaginative sympathy. Herein lies the success of a great judge. He does not simply apply the law as he understands it: he must first get at the facts, and he can do this only by the aid of constructive imagination. It is strange, on the surface, but not strange on second thought, that his intellectual sympathies should lead him to sum up against a criminal, when guilt is not palpably evident; and yet it was by those very sympathies he was enabled to look at the crime through the eyes of the condemned man, and, in

conjunction with the testimony of others, arrive at a conclusion as to his guilt.

In military campaigns the successful general is the man who joins an expert knowledge of warfare with a capacity for imagining correctly what the opposing general will do; and in business the man who forges ahead is the man who knows his work and can imagine the programmes of his strongest competitors; he is the man who can so sympathize with the feelings of the public that he knows how it will take to a new article or a new scheme; he "senses" their likes and dislikes. In a word, his power of sympathy has a solid cash value, partly because it saves him from costly mistakes, but more because it enables him to adapt his policy to the laws of human nature.

This power to interpret the mind of the public comes first from an understanding of our own minds and desires. As a general principle it may be said that an article which appeals very strongly to you will appeal strongly to other people; likewise a proposition which, when presented to you, meets no answering response will fail to awaken the desire of other people. Human nature has certain fundamental identities the world over: a gramophone will arouse the interest of a civilized being and tickle the fancy of the lowest savage, but social and national elements exercise a modifying influence, and the particular type of human nature found in a South American repub-

lie is marked by real differences from that found in China or Japan. Consequently a business man of but average sense knows at once that goods may find a ready market in the Argentine Republic which would be unsalable in the Orient: the "likes" of the Spanish-speaking peoples are not the same as those of the dwellers in the far East.

It is when we come to handle goods among the people we know best, the members of our own nationality, that we feel the need of a keener insight into human feelings. The goods may be concrete articles, town-lots, a patent, a new kind of hat, an educational scheme—it does not matter in the least what it is—the great question is: "Will the public buy?" There are, of course, men in business who never have to ask the question in that way. The purveyors of necessities, such as food and clothing, know that the people are compelled to buy their products in some form or other; the only occasion on which they may pause to consider the desires of their customers is when some change is about to be made, or some new article put upon the market. But a large number of business men are continually beset with wonder, not to say anxiety, as to the outcome of a projected scheme. The key to success lies in the power of rightly interpreting what the world will think and feel about it.

As previously stated, the general habit is to judge the feelings of the world outside us from

what we know of our own feelings. The man who made the first safety razor and used it for a lengthened period to test its wearing qualities would reason that, if he found it an excellent thing for his own purposes, other men would also believe it to be excellent. Similarly a dealer in real estate would expect the prospective buyer of a lot to take the same view of a well-situated fifty-acre estate as he did when he bought it. In these two cases, it will be noticed, the sympathy with other people's thoughts and feelings is a simple act of imagination plus judgment; there are no special difficulties to be overcome, and the argument is between man and man on the same level of experience. But take the case of a man who is writing a book for boys. He has been a boy himself and knows the youthful mind with all its mischief and fun. He is now probably a bearded man, and yet he is successful as a writer only in so far as he goes back to his own boyhood days, meantime suspending the sobriety and wisdom of his maturer years.

This introduces another and more definite form of imaginative sympathy, for, although all men have been boys, not all men can write a story that will interest boys, because they have lost the power to reproduce the emotions and desires of youth. The lapse of time and the stern realities of manhood have blunted the fine edge of memory—besides which, story-writing requires facility in the art of expression.

But the same problem comes before the inventor of children's toys. He cannot argue that what pleases *his* mature mind will please the juvenile minds. Indeed, he sinks for the time being the gravity of age and becomes a child again, a child with the advantage of suggestions from the older mind which ever and anon intrudes itself into the thoughts of the assumed child mind. The "climbing ape" toy, which has brought thousands of dollars to its inventor, is a practical illustration of the cash value of sympathy, and this is by no means an isolated instance.

The logic which says "what pleased me will please the public" is only partially sound. It applies to a certain set of circumstances where the conditions are practically identical, as in the case of the safety razor: what is efficient for one man will, in nine cases out of ten, be efficient for another. It is the process of reasoning by analogy, but when the analogy fails, the conclusion is bound to be at fault. For instance, I might say, "This article has sold marvellously well in America. We have had orders from every State in the Union. I therefore believe it will sell largely in Europe." This may be accurate reasoning or it may be false: everything depends on the analogy between the conditions—personal, social, and commercial—of the two continents. A good deal of information under those heads may be obtained in the ordinary way, but in the last resort the decision turns upon a knowledge of the psychol-

ogy of nations, and that is a matter for imaginative sympathy.

Therein is the speculative element of many business ventures. There are some about which no man can be dogmatic and say, "This will be successful," and "That will be a failure"; experiment alone can decide the issue, but as the world grows older and its commercial experience widens, there is built up a record of such observation and experiment. Our first knowledge of what human nature is, what it thinks and feels, comes from a scrutiny of our own hearts; our secondary knowledge is the fruitage of experience. It frequently happens that a business man has to cater to a class of people on whose plane of being he has never lived himself. They may be higher or lower than he, but in either case he can reach them only by imagination and experiment combined. Their likes and dislikes are not known to him as intimately as those of the men and women who are of his own station in life: he is compelled to reach them in another way. How often do we hear it said as an explanation of failure, "He did not know the business," or "He had had no experience in dealing with such people"!

There is no maxim of trade that can be placed on a pinnacle higher than others, and Sheldon's fourfold requirement in his system of business-building is pre-eminently sound: he says we must know ourselves, know human nature, know our

goods, and use that knowledge to create confidence and satisfaction. To know the customer is a great aid to success, and we can know him only by "becoming him." The more certainly we can get his point of view and know to a nicety how he will feel about our goods, the more easily shall we persuade him to buy. Not only so, but we shall be spared the possible loss of launching a speculative scheme conceived in the hope of a favorable result, but with little more than hope to justify it. Business is nowadays a science, and there is every reason why the study of the customer should form a part of that science, for to spend money blindly, trusting to luck for a happy issue, is as unscientific as anything could be—in fact, invites disaster!

The cause of the largest number of bankruptcy cases is, admittedly, *incompetence*, and nowhere is incompetence more manifest than in bad judgment. It will be readily seen that the judgment of a Board of Directors as to the feasibility of a new departure depends on the accuracy of their imaginative insight into conditions.

A hasty argument from analogy may ruin the finances of a good business, just as surely as a correct survey will increase its dividends or cause the project to be abandoned. But before a decision is made, the following points respecting a new article or a new scheme require investigation:

(1) On what, precisely, does its success depend?

(2) In what sense will it serve the interests of the public?

(3) Has the public ever expressed its opinion on analogous propositions?

(4) In what respects is your article in advance of all its predecessors?

(5) Why should other people think as well of the thing as you do?

(6) What are the chances that they will think differently?

(7) How is it adapted to the needs of the people whom you have in view?

I do not say the answering of these questions will solve the whole problem: I only affirm that the questions will, if properly handled, let daylight into parts of a proposition that are often left in darkness.

### *Methods of Training*

(1) The air is frequently full of rumors as to what is going to happen in the world of business, and, as these rumors are seldom missed by the reporter, the daily paper is one of your sources of good material for thought. You find a passage like the following:

A correspondent from Detroit informs us that Baker & Co. are about to add a travelling library to their many activities as purveyors to the needs of the public. No details are given, but we understand there is to be a wide area covered by automobile deliveries. The manager has studied the best lending-

library methods all the world over and is reported to have improved upon the best he has seen, etc., etc.

Now, you may not be interested in Baker & Co. or in travelling libraries, but for the sake of mental training work up an interest in both. For the time being view this new proposition as if it were your own. Figure out the cost of starting the library with 10,000 books, the cost of equipping the autos, the salaries to be paid, and the expenses. Then try to estimate the demand for books. How will the public regard the new offer? From what you know of human nature will they tend to be satisfied with present arrangements, or are they likely to break loose and welcome a progressive idea? When you have riddled the subject with questions, arrange the answers in the order of growing importance. Let the matter rest for a week and then go over the ground again—slowly and with all the imaginative power you can summon. You may decide against the new venture or you may not, but you have had a fine exercise in sympathy, and if you watch the experiment from its inception, checking its expansion until it overbalanced itself and fell, you will be able to test the power of your mind to gauge future conditions. This is only one instance, and there are many every day.

(2) You can learn from the failures of the past. Commercial history is too much confined to the national development of trade, and even then too

little attention is devoted to the failures and too much to the successes. As for the individual, we can trace his story only in a general way; and once more failures are neglected in order to enlarge upon successes.

A well-written account of a big failure like the South Sea Bubble exercises a cautionary influence that can be felt, and if we could find a volume of recorded mistakes in imaginative sympathy, it would be worth a good deal to the serious student. There was a time when, after elaborate preparations, a noted café in New York opened its doors with great expectancy that the wealthy members of the community would patronize its tables. A *chef* was brought over from Paris in order to insure *menus* of the highest class, and the rule was given out that no one would be admitted who was not in evening dress. The scheme failed. One critic was of opinion that the rule about evening dress was to blame; another said the café was on the wrong side of the street, and that there is a right side from a psychological standpoint. The former is more likely to be the correct diagnosis, and is accepted by most people who have delved into the matter. If the enacting of such a rule was the reason why the café closed its doors, inasmuch as city men in sufficient numbers had not time to go up town and change, then we have an excellent illustration of a failure to estimate the action of the public.

Instances of less degree are not un plentiful.

The man who opens a little store and hangs on until he is bankrupt is another illustration, and so is the milliner who did not rightly gauge the trade situation when, more in hope than in reason, she decks out a window with goods that are never bought.

(3) Questions addressed to people about to embark on new propositions about which they are glad to talk to interested parties will, when answered, provide ample food for reflection. The man who is going to show the inhabitants of B. how to sell pianos and pianolas in his new store in High street, the man who has bought a patent for turning over the sheets of piano music by touching a pedal, and who is going to make a fortune in twelve months—these are enthusiasts, and you can learn much from them—especially from the gaps in their thinking.

Then there is the more serious man who has labored for a year or two on the problem of a branch business in Denver. If you are not in his line, he will probably be willing to talk over the pros and cons of the enterprise, and you can learn how far he has calculated the action of every factor in the case.

(4) Lastly, there is the problem you can set yourself to work out. For instance, how would a golf club be received in your district, presuming you have not one already? What is the probable number of members? Where would they come from? Are the surroundings attractive? Such

questions sound obvious enough, but it is the reply that is important. Further, the discovery of the question itself is a task, otherwise when facing failure, we should not hear the remark: "I never thought of that."

## LESSON VIII

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF ORIGINALITY

The merit of originality is not nobility: it is sincerity.  
—*Carlyle*

The original man in the modern world of business may be described in sporting phrase as “an easy winner.” He steps out of the crowd, and by a single thought expressed in action attains the fame and the wealth which other men attain only after years of strenuous labor. Where he is not envied and criticized adversely, he is worshipped as a favorite of fortune or of the god of luck. But there is no mistake about the ease and mastery of his deeds, whatever doubt there may exist as to the origin of his gift. He is the model for thousands of silent aspirants who emulate his commercial conquests, and who frequently badger themselves with the question, “Why did *I* not think of that?”

The need of originality in business is too well-known to call for lengthy comment. The real question is, “Can originality be taught?”—a question which almost always raises a smile of skepticism on the face of every one. “Genius,” they say, “never learns. It is either there in the mind or it is not.” I am not anxious to break

a lance with the defenders of the loneliness of genius, commercial or otherwise; I prefer to leave that much discussed and somewhat abused word out of our purview and keep to the one more easily understood, i. e., originality. It may be objected that originality is likewise much discussed and much abused, but it has the merit of being more certain in its etymology and usage. Taking Carlyle's definition as quoted at the beginning of the lesson, we affirm that all originality is the application of the individual mind to the facts, events, theories, and problems of life; it is, in vulgar parlance, "coming to our own conclusions."

The reverse type of mind is that of the copyist who comes to the conclusions which other people form for him, and which he finds in the advertisements and practices of his competitors—in newspapers, in books, and in conversation. He is not a *sincere* man in Carlyle's sense—that is, he is not himself, but an imitator—an echo, not a voice. The general notion that originality is something new is the right one, but the new, after all, is never absolutely new: it is new only in a relative sense. Very often in the world of literature a striking book is simply a reversion to an older type, and in business one finds the same result: the much welcomed innovation is really an adaptation of an old article to new needs. Absolute originality is practically impossible, although the newness of some new things approaches a condi-

tion that borders closely on the absolute—in the every-day use of that term. Take the telephone as a case in point. The first man to make successful experiments in long-distance hearing was vastly more original than, say, George Stephenson, who realized the earlier idea of James Watt and produced a steam-engine; for before his time nothing like the present telephone apparatus had been seen, heard of, or imagined. And yet Bell and his predecessors, like Marconi and those who went before him, had to take as the basis of their operations certain facts already in existence. They did not originate space, nor electricity, nor Hertzian waves, nor copper wire. Their originality lay in putting pre-existing materials to *new uses*. You may try to be so original as to imagine a new color, but you are not likely to be successful. A new arrangement, or a new blend of the colors, we know, is no doubt possible, but an absolutely new color is outside our mental range. Thus there are three elements in originality:

- (a) The pre-existing material.
- (b) The individual mind at work.
- (c) The new result.

I will deal with these *seriatim*:

(a) The first will not detain us long, for the evidence of the need of such material is too obvious. Shakespeare, perhaps the greatest of original poets, borrowed freely from his predecessors, and there is no man of business in high position anywhere who has failed to build his for-

tune on the discoveries of those who have preceded him in the same line. We build upon the foundations laid by others, or, to change the figure, we say in the language of Emerson that every house is a quotation from a quarry and every man is a quotation from his ancestors.

But pre-existing material is not only a necessity: we are further bound down to the limitations it imposes upon us. As between the originality possible to a dry-goods merchant and a dealer in eggs and bacon there is a considerable difference. The egg-and-bacon man can do practically nothing new in the way he offers his goods to the public. He cannot alter the shape of the egg, and the modes of growing and curing bacon are not infinite in number. True, he can go to the root of things and accomplish new work in the improvement of poultry-breeding, thereby increasing the supply of eggs, and he may make better arrangements for marketing them in large centres of population, but he can do little with the egg itself. In the same way he may make an advance in the quantity of bacon and secure a needed drop in the price paid by the public for it, but his originality has its limits, and beyond bacon *per se* he cannot go.

On the other hand, the opportunities of the dry-goods merchant are well-nigh infinite. The range of his wares is so wide and their possible variations in detail so extensive, that one can assign no limit to the originality of which they are

susceptible. No doubt the originality will in many cases take the form of mere surface novelty, such as a new design for a coat or a new pattern for a tie, but such departures from older designs do not exhaust the chances that are open to the merchant, although the resources of the artistic imagination thus realized are truly the avenue to immense profits. He is open to the purchase of relatively new materials, and the spacious rooms of his store will hold a thousand and one things which in art pottery, cutlery, jewelry, silks and satins have not yet been seen or imagined. The form of display in his windows is a never-ending tribute to the originality which is possible to him as a man of business.

And who shall prescribe limits to the business developments which are your main interest in life? The elements which are fixed and determined for all time are common to every man engaged in the same occupation, but those which are shaping, and those that are not yet dreamed of, are waiting for the ingenuity of your brains. To despair of ever being able to discover the new thing is a mental habit as old as the hills. Centuries before Julius Cæsar landed on the shores of Britain and a thousand years before Columbus sighted America, a Hebrew philosopher bewailed the fact that "there is no new thing under the sun." We have found a few since then. Dr. C. Pearson believes we shall never have another epic like Homer's, or a great poem like Dante's *Divina*

*Commedia*. Mr. A. J. Balfour affirmed that the real age of fiction has passed, because the subject matter is exhausted. The pessimists will always be with us—in business as in literature, and we need to brace ourselves against their depressing influence.

(b) In regard to the second point, it will be noticed that I speak of the *individual* mind at work. I lay emphasis on the italicized word, because true originality is essentially the outcome of individual effort. When asked to write an article on the poet Burns, or socialism, or railway rates, most men make it their first duty to study *what other men have said*. That is why they are copyists. Gibbon, on sitting down to read a new book, first arranged his own thoughts on the subject (however little he knew about it) and then began to compare them with those of the author. That is the method which men should pursue in business problems. To do as others have done is the policy of the man who seeks a mere living; to do better than others have done is the way to fortune, and “doing better” can come only by personal study. Follow no precedent and take your eyes off the other man whose example may vitiate your own natural ingenuity. You thus give full play to the talents you have.

Carlyle defined the original man as the sincere man, i. e., the man who is himself—who does not try to be somebody else. He who commences a financial business and tries to be a J. Pierpont

Morgan, or a steel business and aims at a Carnegie ideal, may be credited with some ambition; but he is a copyist after all, and he cannot but know that there are a good many like him. The *personnel* of every business is for the most part made up of bundles of imitators who create an unnecessarily artificial competition among themselves by seeking precisely the same end in the same way. That is why the original man has so distinctive a value; he relieves the pressure of the crowd and reaps a rich reward for his services.

In literature there is what may be called a *trick* originality, and it seems to be adopted by men who could afford to rely on their own brains for the ideas they would offer the public. The trick lies in the *open challenge* or the *simple* inversion of accepted truths.

"Challenge these accepted truths," the trick seems to say, "and the world will listen to you. Deny its hoary inferences on virtue, religion, politics, art, and everything else. You will be astonished at the result. The world is startled out of its sleepy acquiescence in what it thought was the exact truth; the other side of the shield is laid bare, and the showman author of this disconcerting business is hailed as a literary light of the first order." Is this an exaggeration? I hope not. It is the method pursued by Rousseau in his first theme—namely, that the arts and sciences had been detrimental to morals. Go through the

books of *some* of our younger writers on politics, the drama, art, and religion, and you will find that plain *challenge* is the trick that does it.

Would you like to see how it is done? Very well—here is Bernard Shaw on Shakespeare:

“As you know, I have striven hard to open English eyes to the emptiness of Shakespeare’s philosophy, to the superficiality and second-hand-ness of his morality, to his weakness and vulgar prejudices, his ignorance, his disqualifications of all sorts for the philosophic eminence claimed for him. . . . The preface to my ‘Three Plays for Puritans’ contains a section headed ‘Better than Shakespeare’ which is, I think, the only utterance of mine on the subject to be found in a book. . . . There is at present in the press a new preface to an old novel of mine called ‘The Irrational Knot.’ In that preface I define the first order of literature as consisting of those works in which the author, instead of accepting the current morality and ready-made religion without question as to their validity, writes from an original moral standpoint of his own, thereby making his book an original contribution as to morals, religion, and sociology, as well as to *belles-lettres*.’’ \*

Yes, instead of accepting or analyzing what you find, *challenge* it. True, a man needs ability and knowledge even to write an effective challenge of accepted ideas, but there can be no secret about

\* See “Tolstoy on Shakespeare,” p. 114.

the *method* itself. Choose the unpopular side of great questions and preach it with all your might: that is one of the tricks of pseudo-originality.

Another is the process of *simple inversion*. By this method you turn a statement around and show how it is truer when read backwards than forwards. Buxton, in his *Notes on Thought*, says, "The reverse side of a proposition is often of more value than the proposition itself. How much fame did Wordsworth get by simply turning on its back the obvious truth that the man is father to the boy, and giving as the converse that the boy is father to the man?" \* \*

It would seem, then, that in one critic's estimation even Wordsworth was not above employing the method of inversion! But did he? Was it not a real insight into the truth of things rather than the mechanical effort of reversing the words of a sentence to see what new notion he could get out of it? No one who knows Wordsworth will pause for an answer, but let us experiment for ourselves with a few statements: Shakespeare has said, "The weakest goes to the wall." The proper attitude to take is to challenge the statement, and affirm that the weakest prevail everywhere. So we begin: "A profounder thinker than Shakespeare said, 'The race is not to the swift and the battle to the strong,' and if it be imagined that men smitten with disease, weakness, lunacy,

\* The reference is, of course, to the poem "My heart leaps up," and the "Ode to Immortality."

and every blight of modern civilization are going to the wall, a journey through any metropolis will exhibit the fallacy of the idea. Instead of rooting out disease, we endow it and keep it alive in hospitals and laboratories, in order that future generations may study it; a strong man needing sympathy is passed by, while a loathsome wretch is taken to a home, wept over by pious people, and pampered as an erring child of God. 'If Chatterton had been blind, or drunk, or idiotic, or incurably diseased, how many benevolent hearts would have yearned after him,' says a modern writer, 'and yet he never roused a momentary pity in any philanthropic heart.' No, too often the weakest are bolstered up, and the strongest go to the wall."

Who will deny there is a crumb of truth in such a view? And who will deny that it is still emphatically true that "the weakest goes to the wall"—everywhere and always?

Take another sentence—this time from economics: "Communism is brotherly love in action." Rule: deny and justify. Hence to say that "communism is brotherly love" is to state an absurdity; to claim that it is even love is humorous; to call it "brotherly love" is surely to rouse the very gods of Olympus to merriment! "Communism is the whine that comes from the weak, saying 'give us of your money, for ours has all been spent. Let us share your possessions, for although we have nothing to offer in return, you are welcome

to our society, our appetites, and the deep love of our grateful hearts.' And the lazy communists, being more numerous than the diligent and strong, eventually conquer. In fact, communism in any shape or form is the exploitation of the strong by the weak." Again, we are ready to admit the crumb of truth, but we are just as ready to affirm the need of an unselfish course of action in the distribution of the rewards of labor.

Another rather apt illustration may be seen in the London *Daily News* for June 13th, 1908. Mr. G. K. Chesterton, writing on tyranny, says: "I have come to be convinced of late of a certain theory of tyranny. It may be right or wrong, but I think it is at least worthy of thought in connection with a highly interesting matter. Broadly speaking, the common theory of tyranny has been this: that men have groaned under some system for centuries and have at last rebelled against it; but I think that men have actually done quite otherwise: they have rebelled against the system under which they have not groaned." Could you find a better instance of mechanical inversion? Further examples might be multiplied at length, but these will suffice, and although the method can be found in classic authors of all kinds, it is safe to assume that its presence there is accidental, whereas its use by other writers is purely mechanical. It must be conceded, however, that the many-sidedness of truth provides some justification for the employment of inversion *as a*

*method of seeking ideas:* the plaintiff has not the whole truth, and much may be said for the defendant.

But what about originality in business? Is there room for dodges to avoid close thinking and hard work? Not at all. In commerce the thinker leads, and the organizer comes next. True, one may find a good deal of imitation here, as everywhere: a fine invention is sooner or later infringed on, a big success is followed by a tribe of little ones, and so it will be to the end of the chapter. However, being original in business, where you deal with concrete facts, is a very different thing from striking out a new line in the realm of ideas. There may be less glory in devising a hitherto unthought-of method of packing eggs, or freezing New Zealand mutton, but the grim test of experiment is always present to determine the real from the counterfeit. You can't produce a good balance-sheet from a mock originality; it needs more than fine phrases to pay dividends and satisfy shareholders. "Is there money in it?" *That* is the criterion of a new idea in trade operations. And yet it is true that just as great success comes from an original way of supplying human needs as from appealing to our ideal emotions. The kings of commerce are not only plodders and models of industry: they are thinkers in the highest sense.

They have brought an individual mind to bear upon commercial complexities and devised a new

and advantageous result. I will take a recent illustration from the pages of a business magazine: "A machinery house in the Northwest discovered that its selling cost was entirely out of proportion to other expenses. The excess was due to the distance which separated its markets for dredgers, excavators, stamps, hoists, and other heavy machinery from the places where the machines were installed. Its buying interests centred in Chicago, New York, and a dozen other cities, yet the bulk of its installations of machinery were in the new countries—the Southwest and far West, Canada, and Mexico. To bring the prospective buyer and the machines together—a necessary preliminary to every order—long railroad journeys had to be made. Transportation and other expenses were eating a big hole in the profits. Searching for a remedy, the advertising manager borrowed an idea from the moving-picture shows. If a stereopticon and a travelling film can reproduce the rush of a railroad train, a cavalry charge, or the shimmer of an Alpine waterfall, it ought to be able to convey what the company's machines look like at their daily tasks." The scheme was tried and proved to be an unqualified success.

The crux of the whole matter of discovery lies in the new use of a comparatively old invention, but how long was it before the manager found that idea? How many scores of ideas were tested before he suddenly thought of this one? We do

not know. Probably the manager himself could not tell us, but the mental stages are clearly revealed. On the one hand we have huge machines in a centre, A; in many other far-away centres—called B, C, D, etc.—we have men who need such machines. It is impossible to send out specimens—they are too large; so possible buyers are asked to take long journeys at the company's expense to view the machines at work. The results are not satisfactory and the problem is to bring the machines and the buyers together in a cheaper and better way. Photographs are inadequate: they are too static. What is needed is a picture of the machines at work. To us who know the story the idea of applying the cinematograph is as simple as possible, but it is marvellous how long the brain can hover round an idea without recognizing it. That manager may have spent much time on his problem before he solved it so simply and so obviously. Still, it was an individual mind at work, and any kind of new result is brought about in that way.

(c) The new result may appear in a hundred different manifestations—for instance, a new kind of nut for machinery; a new method of reducing expenses; a new design for manufacturers; a new sort of paper-fastener; a new implement for the laundry, guaranteed not to tear good linen; a new pipe and cigar-cutter; a new fountain-pen that will *not* leak—we might fill pages with these possibilities. Viewed psychologically, the

fact that we describe as "new" is a result of the individual mind at work on the old material. There is nothing so absolutely new that no trace of the old appears either in substance or association; hence this originality is relative, albeit it has elements of surprise in it and can be traced to its source in the work of the individual mind. If we take a new and beautiful poem, we shall in all probability find that there is not a single word in it with which we are not familiar, and in that sense it can never be original, for the poet has used no material that did not exist before; but when we see his new ideas and new metaphors and feel the influence of his spirit in the beauty of his song, we realize that he is truly original—he has uttered a new thought with all the music of poetry in it.

In business a man's originality may be just as pronounced, although he uses no new material. Even as Charles Lamb used the English language and stamped it with his own personality, so may a man in trade use all the materials others use, and yet give them a distinctive style—the impress of his sincere self, unhampered by imitations of the men who preceded him. This is specially true of the man who brings a new business into being. Thomas Cook, the tourist agent, quite accidentally hit upon his train excursion idea. He was a temperance orator and desired the Leicester people to be present at a Loughborough festival. He thought a new thought in his endeavor to bring

about the desired end. There was no convenient train, so he asked himself, "Why not run a special one?" He arranged it at once and the big tourist agency that we now know commenced its career in earnest. We perhaps smile at this "originality" now, but it was one at the time and it still continues to be the greatest of its kind, notwithstanding the changing conditions of modern travel.

He who invented the policy of "Money back if not satisfied" carved out a most welcome originality, the only marvel being that some one had never anticipated him. It is so obviously to the advantage of the seller to insure the customer's satisfaction and confidence, that one is surprised that the centuries of trade slipped by with no sign of such a desirable relationship. Indeed, one might say every new result in business is attended by this element of surprise that no one had thought of it before, and this fact would seem to suggest that there are numerous originalities and novelties just beneath the surface of things and awaiting discovery by some man with more thought and initiative than his fellows. Take a case in point: Ladies' hats in theatres sometimes make a view of the stage impossible, and a request to remove the obstruction is not always easy to prefer or easy—apparently—to comply with. The theatre-manager comes to the rescue—he does in picture-theatres, at any rate—and on the screen we read:

"Will ladies kindly remove their hats, so that

persons behind them may see the pictures on the screen?"

For a long time there was no improvement on this kind of notice—plain, polite, and unemotional. Then one day a man began to think. He thought of a little film where the hat tragedy could be depicted and made into a comedy. So on the screen we saw a picture of three girls with enormous hats. What was behind them it was impossible to say. Suddenly, we learn, they were requested to remove their hats, and the wry faces they make are very laughable. However, they "unpin," and, as the hats are lowered, we see four jolly boys behind them, elated with the fact that they can now "see." The next scene is a mingled mass of letters of the alphabet, all on the move, and gradually shaping themselves into the old request to ladies about their hats; but as the "s" in the word "ladies" wanders to its place, it takes hold of the "k" in "kindly" and hugs it affectionately by way of emphasis, finally seeking its own destination at the end of the word to which it belongs. Everybody is amused and the lady "who hates to take off her hat" does so with good humor. Now, the man who thought out this scheme understood human nature, and was at the same time both an artist and a humorist. He knew that a cold request like the old one awoke only a sense of irritation, however polite the phraseology, and he took the sting away by pictorially representing the disadvantage of a big

hat to the person sitting behind—this was the logical element—and by introducing the element of fun he removed the sense of irritation. An ordinary man might have argued in this way: “I have displayed a request on the screen; I have spoken to ladies myself; my assistants have done the same; what more can be done? If hats are still worn, I can’t help it. I have done my best to regulate matters.” The other man also asks, “What more can be done?” but not in the hopeless sense. He believes more *can* be done. *And he does it.* Originality in business is one-fourth brains and three-fourths optimism—a quality, by the way, susceptible of cultivation.

That new results have not ceased to be, and that they never will, may be regarded as an axiom. Manifestly they cannot be described in these pages, for as yet they do not exist except as potentialities. They are embryonically reposing in the brain of that youth who has a fancy that the boss’s ways of effecting the repair of automobiles or something else are not the best; or in the mind of the mature man who knows that methods of street lighting have not yet reached the perfection of which they are capable. The pessimist may stumble perchance on a new result, but as a rule it belongs to the optimist—and sometimes he has to suffer the jeers of a skeptical public before his discovery is accepted. Often the same public will receive a similar benefactor with an extravagant chorus of praise.

*Mental Training for Originality*

Having determined the use of the word "originality" in this connection, it will no longer appear irrational to claim that the mind may be trained to secure an original output. Every man is original who is *himself*, the only difference between him and the genius being that their respective originalities have not the same merit or value. I may be myself through and through, and yet not be notable, for unless my personality and gifts are capable of growth and expansion, I cannot hope to equal the results of the man whose powers are of a higher order. But a commercial value is not measured in the same way as a literary value. Darwin's theories have an *ideal* value—namely, that of explaining phenomena; Aristotle's *Poetics* is the first systematic literary criticism; Newton's laws are an original discovery in motion, and yet these ideal values in relation to commercial or real values have features in common.

Take the maker of paradoxes and the advertiser of patent pills, and compare their methods. A paradox is a truth standing on its head to attract attention. So is a pill advertisement with its letters so:

Savage's Gentle Pills—one dollar a box.

The object of the upside-down method is to get attention. Every other line in the paper is right

side up, but the wily advertiser, hoping to attract more notice than the other men selling the same goods, arranges to have his pill display in paradoxical form.

How can you become an original man in your business? or, if not original, then a man of such freshness and novelty that you light upon developments productive of a handsome profit?

(1) The first condition is that you know your kind of business, as it is at present constituted, from A to Z. There must be no question of production, sales, or administration with which you are not familiar.

(2) Next, you need to have a knowledge of associated businesses—the businesses which supply you with some of your raw material, or on which in some way you depend for certain supplies necessary to your own business, just as an iron-master depends on a colliery proprietor.

Knowledge of this extensive character is a requisite for originality, because without it there can be no intelligent estimates of possible developments. Then, you must know the likes and dislikes of that portion of human nature to whom you appeal. Nothing can atone for a lack of knowledge regarding your customers' preferences—of how they look at things and what novelties will attract their attention. Thus you see how necessary the element of knowledge is to the would-be original man—knowledge of things and knowledge of men. Even then we have not said

all that can be said under this heading, for changes in political and social life are always exerting an influence on commerce, and a watchful eye on such changes is an important part of business equipment.

(3) The third factor is to look ahead. The average man has his nose close to his ledgers and his order-books, or else he gives all his spare attention to prices. He is not to be laughed at for this devotion: rather would we commend him. A good many traders and manufacturers are not half so industrious. But the truly original man must have *time to think*. So he pays good salaries to chiefs of departments, or to a manager, in order to have a few hours occasionally for this duty of looking ahead. What does looking ahead mean? It means a projection of one's knowledge of the present into the future, and an effort to imagine what changes time will bring. How often does one meet with the phrase, "He saw what was coming" as descriptive of some genius who left his competitors far behind! To see what is coming is one result of looking ahead, but originality does not stop there: it enables a man to make things come which otherwise would not come—if we may use so colloquial an expression. Wireless telegraphy would never have come of itself, if Hertz and Preece and Marconi had not looked ahead, imagined, and experimented.

The original man is pre-eminently a thinker, and an inventor is a good example of the type.

Before me I have an article headed "Inventions that Await the Touch of Genius" one is the production of a new substance out of which to make paper, another the invention of a process for treating complex ores, and still another is flexible glass. Ah, you say, these are matters calling for much time, many experiments, and great expense! Very true, but the same mental outlook, and the same conditions in a less degree, are just as necessary to secure originality in your business. Originality is not a "fluke," a bit of luck. Sometimes it may *appear* as if it were, but this is only on the surface. The story of a brilliant business idea is something like this:

"I experimented three years; spent \$5,000, and was on the point of giving up when—I found what I wanted."

Or like this:

"I watched and waited for every opportunity I had to save my capital, for to ask others to help me meant giving the idea away. The opportunity came and I seized it. I was a made man."

### *A Suggested Method*

(4) There is in the nature of things no set method of arriving at anything new, but if the psychology of invention in the fine arts or the practical arts teaches anything at all, it teaches the wisdom of definite search for the new idea—until it arrives. It often arrives unexpectedly

and at a moment when one is engaged in matters that are quite alien to it. To investigate this process fully would require a long digression, involving as it does the discussion of the place which the subconscious mind occupies in the realm of thought production. C. G. Leland had a profound belief in the ability of his subconscious mind to supply him with new ideas, if he desired them ardently just before dropping off to sleep. Next morning the new ideas knocked at the door of his consciousness and sought admittance. There is a good deal of evidence in the field that upholds Leland's results, although they may not prove his theory. The practice of "sleeping over it" indulged in by hard-headed men when confronted by a deep problem, and the solution of complexities in mathematics during sleep, indicate that there are in the slumber condition mental ingenuities that are absent in the waking state.

But the normal man likes to get his new ideas by persistent effort during working hours, and I therefore suggest that he make the acquaintance of what may be called his creative moods. Certain outward circumstances are frequently found to be necessary to productive thought. The philosopher Kant, when thinking out his propositions, formed the habit of looking out of his window at a church-tower, and that tower became a real factor in his mental reflections—so real, indeed, that, when in the course of time the trees grew up and obscured it, he felt unable to think

properly and petitioned the council to have them cut down. The council sympathetically obliged him.

It is fairly certain that the practical man of business discovers there are times, places, and circumstances which bring about the production of more and better ideas than are possible under other conditions. Perhaps the secluded fore-shore of a seaside resort, or a walk through the country, or even a night session in one's own house will supply those outward facts that determine the inward creative mood.

The psychological side is best developed on the Socratic basis. Put your business into the witness-box and cross-examine it—not once, but again and again. Take a section of it and be as remorseless as you can, but be just as hopeful when you use the catechism on the matter of new developments. Believe that, if you ask long enough, the hesitating witness will blurt out the truth and make you a happy man. Of one thing you may be reasonably certain: the determination not to be a copyist is the first step towards originality. It was a humorous French cynic who said, “Whom shall I imitate in order to be original?” He knew, and you know, how keen a shaft this is, when modern business is surveyed. The big man gets a new idea and the little ones tread on his heels in their eagerness to be like him. They are on the wrong tack: every man should be like himself. He ought at least in common

decency to give his own individuality a chance, and he can do this without assuming superiority over others. To shut out the world, to obtain those outward conditions which favor thought production, and to cross-examine persistently with an eye to the future—these are at least some of the highways to originality. Thereby are suggested new theories which on reflection give way to the newer and the newest, until at last the one idea sought for comes into full view.

Some specimen lists of questions on the Socratic basis are given here. They are intended as suggestive only, and make no pretense to completeness:

(a) Are my profits as large as they ought to be? If not, how can they be made larger?

(b) Have I reached the limits of economy in buying, in producing, in packing, in selling, etc.?

(c) What steps or what course of action would raise me above my competitors?

(d) How can I serve the public better?

(e) Are there any new ways in which I can give a better degree of satisfaction?

To draw up a list of closely analytical questions is like opening up a series of avenues leading to the centre of success. It is worth while to write out complete answers. The answers of six months ago will sometimes appear "simple," but there is no better test of mental growth, unless it be achievement itself.

But the tug of war lies in dealing with the fu-

ture, and your questions about these are more easily asked than answered. Thus:

(1) In my business what charges are probable in the next year or two as regards the following?

- (a) The position of my factory.
- (b) The prices of my goods.
- (c) The salary demands of my staff.
- (d) The prices of raw material.
- (e) The cost of manufacture.
- (f) The effect of foreign competition.
- (g) The prosperity of the country.

(2) Possible departures from present practice :

- (a) In what new way could I profitably offer my goods to the public?
- (b) Could I with advantage advertise in a novel manner? If so, how?
- (c) What departure would be specially welcomed by purchasers of my goods?
- (d) In what direction does the movement towards development proceed among my competitors?
- (e) Are inventions just on the market likely to affect me?

- (f) Could I with advantage add a new but related line to my present one?
- (g) What new uses are possible for the goods I sell?

The apparent simplicity of these questions is very delusive. Not one of them could be answered properly by any business man, unless he spent many hours in investigation. Indeed, they are not questions at all: they are statements as to policy, and the interrogative form is rather secondary than primary.

Success in following the method outlined depends, as does everything else, on the individual mind. The love of precedents is so inborn in some people that they try to find a new idea in an old way. Better start out with an unfettered self, your only limitation being that of the material you have to work with and the proved results of those who have preceded you.

## LESSON IX

### MEMORY-TRAINING

The leading inquiry in the art of education is how to strengthen the memory. —*Bain*

The object of this chapter is too severely practical to leave any room for an analysis of memory as a mental power. Such an analysis would offer many attractions, for memory is one of the most wonderful of all our gifts as well as the most dramatic in its manifestations in disease and health. But this pleasure must be declined, and instead I propose to be frankly utilitarian by asking on what a good memory depends.

I need hardly preface the answer by emphasizing the value of a reliable memory to business men. Rationality depends on our power to connect one event with another and thus create experience. A mind that is minus memory is thus no mind at all. In like manner memory is absolutely necessary in the every-day life of buying and selling, not only because intelligence depends on the power to remember, but because even isolated acts of forgetfulness are sometimes well-nigh fatal. A signal-man may have no difficulty in performing his duties for 312 working days of the year, but a slip of memory on the 313th

may bring ruin to himself and a hundred others. "I forgot" is a phrase which sometimes links psychology with destiny.

A good memory depends on natural ability to recall past sensations and perceptions, as well as on health and systematic training. It will be conceded that the power to remember by conscious or unconscious effort is not the same in degree in every person. It is like the gift for mathematics, languages, or science: it varies with the individual. Sometimes it happens that a youth of twenty finds himself possessed of a good memory mainly on account of the manner in which he was educated: the methods employed were truly psychological instead of being, as they too often are, quite the reverse. Usually, however, the strong memory is there as a gift of Nature—not so much as a brain organ, separate and distinct, but as a result arising out of the true and ready working of the laws of association, directed by the will. As a gift it may be cultivated like any other, but to start life with powers a good deal above the average is a great boon. A naturally weak memory may be vastly improved—indeed, there seems to be no limit to this improvement, as we shall see later; but the training takes time—more than the busy man is usually prepared to give.

Health is another important factor. The numerous cases of lapsed memory reported in the papers are nearly always traceable to mental and

physical strain, a plain indication of the fact that, unless the blood and the nerves are in good condition, the power to recall will be affected adversely. It is curious to observe how, when we are tired, we begin to use the accommodation phrases for names and places we cannot remember at the moment: "Mr. Thingum-bob," "Mrs. What's-her-name," or "You know the city I mean." Students at examinations are aware of the sudden lapses due to the strain of preparation and the policy of ceasing the grind two or three days before the test commences is designed to avoid the vagaries in which an overtaxed brain will sometimes indulge under pressure. The man of business, therefore, has good reasons for keeping fit: it is not merely to make work a pleasure and to reap the advantages of physical endurance, but to maintain his memory and other mental powers in a state of efficiency.

Training, however, is the chief item in the programme, and to this I wish to give special attention. There is a system that is applicable to everybody, and there is one part of the system that is certain to call for individual study. Few business men would fail to receive benefit from a scientific training in memory; fewer still would fail to derive advantage from a method designed to overcome a particular weakness of remembrance, such as forgetting faces or figures. In other words, there are not many men whose memories are so strong that they never feel the need

of some kind of tuition, and nearly every man has a defect personal to himself, such as inability to identify any object seen only once, although he may remember names almost infallibly.

Attention is the first psychological study. Why is it that an ordinary clerk can tell you, without consulting a reference-book, the price of Canadian Pacifics or Milwaukees five years ago, even quoting the variations between? Because these items have had his attention—exact and concentrated. This is not the whole reason, but it is the first reason. His duties have required him to investigate the ups and downs of these and hundreds of other stocks, and he obtained a clear idea of how they stood at the beginning, and what has been the nature of their development. Had he “glanced” at the figures and comprehended them just for the moment, with no more interest in them than to answer a client’s question, the chances are that, the interest being momentary, the memory would be momentary also. When he required those figures again, he would have only a vague notion of them, unless his power to recall were unusually strong in that direction. The Stock Exchange clerk, as a rule, owes his knowledge of prices and dividends to three things: interest, attention, and repetition, and these three things apply to memory in any line of business. The reader may be a trader, a lawyer, or an employee in a store—it matters little—and if he desires a good memory, he must have an interest

in his work. There is no need to expatiate on this point: it is too obvious, but you may have the deepest interest, you may want to remember the details of your business with all your heart, and yet fail, unless you exercise the right kind of attention. Take the case of a medical student who is very anxious to pass his examinations. The demands on memory are great, and if you have ever seen a tabular statement of the varieties in heart-beats, you will know what I mean. His desire to pass the final test generates a strong interest in his work, but interest, he finds, is not everything. True, it compels him to be diligent, and yet he may be diligent in the wrong way. He may skim through a mass of pages in his haste to absorb knowledge, thereby failing to grasp each fact in its relation to the facts which go before and come after. Then he learns the need of concentrated attention. He proceeds cautiously, one step at a time, mastering each situation before proceeding to the next. Lastly, he realizes the need of repetition. He goes to and fro and up and down his subject; he repeats facts according to groups until by the laws of association and contiguity they are part and parcel of his very consciousness.

Attention and repetition are usually wanting in defective business memories. The commercial traveller who is suddenly asked for an unexpected quotation and begins to fumble in his waistcoat-pocket for a quotation-list does not recommend

himself to the customer and cannot feel proud of his lack of readiness. Quotations are things he ought to be able to remember, and the fact that he does not argues a lack of attention, however eager he may be to sell his goods. Complete mastery comes by attention plus repetition.

### *Methods of Training*

(1) Interest. Remember the difference between the spirit of the man who says "I have to" and the man who says "I want to." The one regards the doing of work and remembering its details from the viewpoint of *necessity*; the other is moved by personal *desire*. *You* must belong to the latter class. There is some gain, no doubt, in remembering because you *must*; but there is more in remembering because you keenly *desire* to do so. Here, as before, the dynamic power is emotive; your mind is operated in this respect by a controlling *feeling*.

Ribot says: "A rich and well-stored memory is not a collection of impressions, but an assemblage of dynamic associations, very stable and very readily called forth." It is safe to say that, if in business matters you are in dead earnest, forgetfulness will not give you a great deal of trouble.

(2) Attention. Avoiding the disputes of psychologists about the nature of attention, the man of practical affairs can take it to mean that kind

of knowledge or understanding which accrues from a careful examination of the object. A rapid inspection of the clauses of an agreement for a foreign concession will result in only a general remembrance of their import; a scrupulous attention is more likely to lead to a remembrance of its phrases—a very important difference, if instant action is required and the agreement is not handy for reference.

In dealing with any item in business—be it one of a group so different as the adoption of a general policy, the study of economy in buying wrapping-paper, or the rendering of a ledger account—the test question is, “Do I understand?” It may seem an absurdly elementary question, but to answer it requires concentrated attention, and nothing tends more than that to fix the facts securely in the memory.

Among the reasons given to explain the success of forceful men is “attention to business.” It is a fairly comprehensive phrase and preferable to the “early rising” and “plodding” virtues which used to figure so largely in the moral literature of a past generation. It connotes observation and analysis and suggests there is little that escapes the eye and nothing can pass the sentry-box of the mind without a challenge. Such a man has few memory troubles, not because he has the gift of remembrance to a marked degree—he may be only average in this respect—but because he sees things clearly by virtue of close attention.

(3) Repetition. He becomes familiar with them by constantly going over the ground they cover, just as the student acquires a knowledge of the irregular verbs in French. Modern business is split up into departments and sections, and while it is hardly possible for one man to know them all, every man should know his own with great precision—an end he can accomplish only by revising them from A to Z—not once, but constantly.

This is the general basis of memory-training. There are many systems, and perhaps the Pelman Foster one is the best, because it works on exact psychological lines. But in taking up the work of educating the memory there are one or two points that the individual should observe before he begins to improve his power to recall.

(1) First, never abuse your memory. To be always saying “I have a wretched memory” is a perpetual crime against the laws of mind, for, if you believe your memory is bad, it *will* be bad despite everything. You are using the law of suggestion to kill a highly respectable faculty. By affirming “I can’t remember” you make it next to impossible to remember! Treat the faculty with respect and confidence, and it will begin to respond; scourge it with perpetual censure, and it shrinks into the uncertainty with which you characterize it.

(2) Trust your memory, but do not overload it. There is naturally a line of demarcation between

giving the memory too much work and too little, but some expositors are so pronounced against note-books and memory aids that we might think it a crime to assist ourselves by recording an engagement, or taking steps to insure the permanency of some important figures. If it is a duty to remember everything, why not dispense with ledger-clerks and the whole office outfit? Manifestly there is a limit to the burdens we may put upon an obliging faculty. On the other hand, the slavish dependence of some on pencil and paper for appointments, trains, figures, and orders is much to be regretted: it indicates mental sloth. The trust which we repose in the reliability of memory is rewarded according to its depth and persistency.

(3) Discover your particular weaknesses. Mr. Gladstone had no memory for faces. He once confused a man to whom he spoke one afternoon with another man—to the first man's disgust. The Premier offered an apology. They met again on the evening of the same day, by a curious coincidence, and Mr. Gladstone actually repeated his blunder! Had he been a trader, such a day of mistakes might in the long run have cost him a lot of money by mortally offending a good customer. Face-memory is a great asset in all commercial dealings. The man behind the counter who can call to mind instantly a lady customer's face and name and remember what she usually buys is valuable to his employer, a blessing to

the purchaser, and a dangerous competitor to his fellows.

Sometimes the weakness is in recalling names: "I know your face, but cannot remember your name." The originating cause is partly constitutional and partly due to lack of attention—in fact, that is really the *sole* cause, for the constitutional cause is a natural lack of attention due to small interest. Let the interest be strong, as in the artful discovery of a young lady's name, and a young man with a no-name memory will remember with the utmost ease. He uses attention and—repetition.

In this connection one sees the importance of sense-training, so frequently advocated in this book. Names in print are usually more easily remembered than spoken names. The latter are merely sounds, and where the ability to "catch" them and hold them is weak, assiduous practice is the only cure.

"What do I most easily forget?" is a question every business man should ask and answer, and when the answer is unmistakable, steps should be taken to provide a remedy on lines already laid down.

## LESSON X

### WILL-POWER

Everything in this world depends upon will.

—*Disraeli*

In the long run efficiency in business life turns on skill in action, and action depends on thought as directed by will. Business is not a contemplation wholly, neither is it wholly a thing of deeds divorced from careful reflection. It is a fine blending of subjective and objective elements, but neither of these is complete without the other. An efficient man is of necessity a thinker, but if he were to do nothing more than *think*, he would be a failure: he must *act*, and action is the will in vital expression. Hence no treatment of business psychology would be satisfactory, if it lacked a section devoted to the training of will-power. There will be no opportunity to discuss will in relation to the other powers of the mind, or even to analyze the diseases of the will. I propose to examine the problem from the viewpoint of the practical man and to use the results of psychological investigation as a guide to the solution of his difficulties.

(1) There is a popular misunderstanding about the nature of will-power: it is supposed to be a

massive and violent something that occasionally surges up from the depths of consciousness. Just as if, to change the figure, a man's will were a reservoir, and, as circumstances needed it, the sluices were opened and there followed a gigantic rush of water that carried everything before it! As often as not this kind of thing is not will-power. It is bad temper. Will is not a power that is kept "on tap," as it were—one day you never draw a drop, the next you do nothing else. Will-power is, in its right exercise, a continuous expression of one's intentions. Some of these intentions are naturally unimportant, and the exercise of will is unconscious; others are of mediate importance, and the determination to act is a little more evident on account of the need of thought as to what course to take; others, again, are of the utmost importance, and the needful courage to act is almost entirely dependent on an access of will-power. But there is really no condition of mind where for any length of time the will is absolutely inoperative. Even to day-dream and give up the reins to imagination is a decision of the will, and to cease day-dreaming by beginning work again is another act of will.

Akin to the idea that will-power is occasional and not continuous is the equally false idea that it is violent and not tranquil. I do not say a decisive determination is always made in a calm mood—sometimes the "I will" is accompanied with deep emotion and dramatic gesture; but I

do say that the strongest will-power is usually quiet like Tennyson's flood:

Too full for sound or foam.

The resolve that vents itself in passionate utterance loses a good deal of its force when the feeling has evaporated; it is then that "better counsels prevail."

Emotion has a profound effect on thought, and decisions arrived at in the height of such a moment are frequently defective in logic and consistency, although it must be admitted we are quite as much moved by sympathy as by dry reason. But will, if we may judge from experience, prefers a calm analysis of the situation—a resolve that has a longer life and a greater power to break down opposition. Excitement may engineer a whole crowd of volitions, but the danger lies in their lack of intelligence and the ease with which their underlying intention may be abandoned.

These abstract pleadings have abundant importance on the plane of the real. Annoyed by a number of petty strikes among his workmen, an employer determines to crush all opposition by a lock-out. He may succeed or he may not. Most likely not, if he has in his anger overlooked certain factors which the men may proceed to employ. He would be far more likely to stand his ground, if he coldly scrutinized every aspect of

the trouble and then made his plans for the future in the same calm spirit.

Take the youth whose ambition causes him to aspire to a pinnacle of success altogether beyond his gifts and possibilities. He may gain something from the possession of an advanced ideal, but, as time passes and its realization comes no nearer, there is an unnaturally heavy drain on his mental resources; despondency sets in and cramps his efforts until life is a burden and not an inspiration.

But will-power is not confined to action: it has much to do with inertia. If you are tempted in a heated moment to go to law, and your attorneys have already begun work, when you discover a flaw in the evidence, it requires courage to withdraw. That is to say, the will *not* to do a thing must often be as strong as that needed for its performance—nay, it is sometimes finer far to conquer by acquiescence than by pugnacity. Finer or not, the demand on will is great, and it is never met by a spirit of warfare. Only the calm mood can give it birth.

(2) What the will is itself we do not appear to know, except that it is an expression of the ego—the self. Consequently will-power depends on personality to a large extent; a weak-willed man is one whose ego is not possessed of a deep intensity. The “I” is not identified with life as closely as it ought to be; events easily outmanœuvre any intention the will may have enter-

tained. By contrast the strong-willed man displays the most intimate association with events—so intimate, indeed, that the ego seeks to dominate them, because the ideal is conquest and supremacy.

But will-power possesses no magic by which alone it accomplishes anything. It is impossible to divorce the action of one mental power from another, and every expression of will is also an expression of thought and feeling; consequently will-power is simply mental potency that is waiting for an opportunity to be used. The powerhouse of an electric railway may possess an abundant supply of energy, but without some product of thought—the over-head wire and surface car, for instance—this energy is quiescent. It needs intelligence and previous efforts of will to justify its existence and prove its utility. So it is with human will-power. It is a reservoir of reserve ready for immediate service. Of itself it can do nothing, rationally; it needs the presence of an idea to give it aim and reasonable purpose.

Thus the talk about “an invincible will” needs guarding. It is not mere *volume* that we seek after, but *power of control*. It is not the *size*, so to speak, of a man’s determination that makes him master of a railway or a big store; it is quiet intensity illuminated by reason. The “irresistible will” of some people is an ungoverned flood. They let loose the gates of resolve, and out comes their will-power in a torrent—of language and deed.

Then comes the hour of thought, and, as they survey the empty reservoir on the one hand, and the destruction on the other hand, they realize that spasmodic exhibitions of what they believed to be their greatest and most glorious faculty are not so faithful as they supposed, while the majesty of self has disappeared in the flood of emotion. This is the weakness of an overplus of passion.

Over against it is the weakness arising out of an under-supply of thinking. We call it obstinacy. A man says, "I will not pay for these goods, because they are the wrong goods," but discovers afterwards they are right. Nevertheless, because he has *said* he would not pay, he will stick to his word. This is not will-power; men on the market call it pig-headedness. The stupid person himself may believe he has an unbreakable will; I should prefer to say he has an impenetrable intelligence.

### *Methods of Training*

(1) If, on some occasion when you can enjoy privacy for an hour, you enumerate and tabulate in the order of their importance the strongest desires of your nature, you will take the first step towards solving the problem of will-power; for, as we have seen, that problem arises out of a conflict of desires, some of which are out of perspective.

Religions—especially enlightened religions—

have always exerted a strong influence on the regulation of desire; the Buddhist would destroy it; the Christian would control it. Ethical creeds have the same object in view. The business man who happens to have no religious convictions or moral codes, except the simplest, may find himself at a slight disadvantage, unless he chooses to form a working policy of his own. I will for convenience' sake draw up a plan of human desires as they exist in men we meet every day. The length of the line in the following scheme indicates the quality, extensively and intensively, of the desire opposite which it is placed:

Arnold Bechwith. Age fifty. Lawyer. Been in business twenty years. Doing well, but wishes to do better.

Desire to make money—————

Desire to shine socially—————

Desire to travel—————

Desire to be a great lawyer—————

Desire to purify politics—————

Desire for rectitude—————

Now, here is a man who will spend more on his house, his servants, and his automobile than he should, because his desire to shine socially is the keenest one he has. It is even stronger than the money desire—indeed, that desire is only as strong as it is, because the money is needed for the satisfaction of his social ambitions. Akin to these is the desire to travel; it is a form of pleasure closely associated in his case with a love of

display. To be a great lawyer is not outside his wishes; it is certainly there, but is not to be compared with the other projects dear to his heart. Altruism is only a passing humor, as is shown in his occasional impatience with jobbery.

Now, this man has certain dangers before him in spite of a desire for rectitude. They have always been before him, it is true, but circumstances have never provided an opportunity for a strenuous test of his will. That test, when it comes, will find him with two desires stronger than rectitude—namely, social ambition and the hunger for dollars. He may be fortunate enough to have a sudden access of the sense of justice—a feeling that, after all, the scheme for rapid money-making has too many pitfalls in it and must be reluctantly abandoned. Or, perchance he falls in with it and is finally before the court on a charge of misdemeanor. But it is easy to see how the right action can proceed only from a right regulation of desire. To commence training the will before you put your ambitions in order is mere rule of thumb psychology—minus an atom of science. So, in the quiet hour, make an analysis of self. Become acquainted with your desires until you can map out their exact measurements—honestly, not as you wish them to be, but as you know they are. When that is done, commence the work of arranging a truer perspective. In business there is one principle which effectively answers the end: it is the desire

to serve. Get *that*, and it will as if by magic reduce all other desires to their right position. You may have schemes put before you which promise thousands of dollars and immunity from all trouble, but you will easily dismiss them, even though you were born with a "get-rich-quick" compartment in your brain. You know you cannot serve the public by taking even a "legal" advantage of its ignorance, or by "lawfully" trading on its gullibility.

(2) Will-power, in its highest condition, has no conflict; it is a *habit*. That is why Novalis said, "Character is a completely fashioned will." If a man of business were to have a conflict each morning between his desire to stay in bed and his desire to get up, we should set him down as an extraordinarily weak man—or else as one who was physically diseased. Such impotence as that described would mark him down as a second-rater from any point of view—unless, like Buffon, he were constitutionally deranged. So in regard to honesty: the man who is in perpetual conflict as to whether or not he shall embezzle his employer's money is either a criminal by nature, or has never mastered the very elements of right conduct. The average man is not a thief in this sense, because his will is permanently placed on the side of honesty; he has no struggle *not* to steal, he has a deeply rooted habit that compels him to respect the property of other people. It is *easy* to be honest—*difficult* to be dishonest.

“Quite true,” the reader may say, “but the case is different when sudden disaster entails untold labor, suffering, and perhaps degradation. Is will-power a question of habit *then?*” Most certainly. The habit of looking at dark events hopefully can be cultivated like any other habit. I know people who believe everything happens for the best, even when misfortunes overtake them. They are not pious people necessarily, but people who embody that belief in their philosophy of life based on experience. They really believe that misfortunes are blessings in disguise, and I think most of us have been through dark days which later on we saw were luminous with light. Now, to such people adversity comes as a discipline, not as an enemy or as the cruel handiwork of the god of fate. Though not insensible to its hurt, they smile through their tears and never give way to fits of repining and despair. They have formed the habit of resistance to unpleasant happenings mainly on account of the way in which they think about these things. To think of them as enemies is to fight them by excited threats of destruction—threats which, if put into execution against people alleged to be behind the unpleasant happenings, would serve only as evaporators of valuable energy that could be used in constructive work.

Will-power, in its action, depends more than we usually suppose on the nature of our opinions and convictions about resistance. Uncon-

sciously we draw up a list of deeds which ought to be resisted and a list of those that can be allowed to go unnoticed. Very often the first list is a big one and the second microscopically small. There is much trouble ahead for a man with such a disproportionate creed. He will spend half his time in fighting—time that could be better spent in creative employment. But the point is this: to acquire the habit of will-power we must obtain right ideas, for to act intelligently implies that the power used in action is adequately informed by *thought*.

(3) Some men find they need an access of emotion to make their will-power irresistible. There is *quiet* determination as well as *passionate* determination. The first says, "I will not, in any circumstances, sell these goods at a cent less than the quoted price." The second says the same, but if it did not flush its face with feeling and bang the table with its fist, the chances are it would never hold to its decision. A crafty buyer would insinuate a bargain and down would come the price.

Now the question arises: "Ought will-power to be quiet or passionate?" The answer is that it ought to be temperamental. The quiet man will decide quietly and the passionate man passionately. The only danger to the latter lies in the possibility of *thinking* passionately and thus arriving at a wrong decision. But will-manifestations are individual, just as our manner of talk-

ing is, and if we find an emotional determination is more endurable than the other kind, we ought to employ it.

Accused of weakness of will, some men have defended themselves by saying, "An intelligent man does not fear to change his mind." Quite true, unless changeability itself becomes a mental characteristic. I have examined numerous cases of this type and find they originated in a primary want of thought. For instance, there was a man whom I will call Vincent Little, a publisher, who resolved to produce a splendid edition of *Paradise Lost* at a huge outlay. He spent a good sum in initial preparations, then abandoned the project. In three different schemes, later on, he repeated this performance, and he changed his mind, because he had not given sufficient care at first to "making it up." If he had, he would never have embarked on any one of the four schemes. He was wise in cutting his losses—he would have been wiser, if he had not incurred them, and this would not have been the case, had he analyzed the propositions before starting to realize them. Changeability is seldom a sign of deep reflection, and it suggests suppleness rather than strength of will-power.

(4) The curriculum therefore is:

(a) Clear thinking.

(b) Fidelity to decision.

(c) The formation of a habit of will.

(a) You cannot dispense with thought, so an-

alyze the proposition, whatever it may be, and see it from every point of view. When you *know* it, you are not very likely to go wrong; if you do not know it, you will certainly have to modify your plans or turn back altogether. Remember that list of resistances—the things you feel you must fight—scrutinize the list and prune it down. You need all the energy you can spare for constructive work.

(b) Once a decision is made, be faithful to it—this for two reasons: it is the only way to grow will-power, and it is the one way to create self-respect and engender confidence.

The sense of “I can” is not developed by a policy of “wobbling”! You can say “I can” only when from a survey of the past you feel certain of victory, because you have previously conquered by adhering to determination.

(c) The ideal is not a perpetual conflict with enemies, be they men or things, but a mastery so complete that it is as easy as the breath we draw. You are to form the habit of will-power—to acquire the ability to say “yes” and “no” with the utmost ease whenever an affirmative or a negative is needed. Practice is the only road to success, but it should be carried out with the spirit of faith. Start out with the “I can,” continue with it, and at length it will drop out of consciousness, for you will be able to say “I do what I will.”

## LESSON XI

### HYGIENE: MENTAL AND MORAL

Let no complaisance, no gentleness of temper, no weak desire of pleasing on your part, no wheedling, coaxing, nor flattery on other people's, make you recede one jot from any point that reason and prudence have bid you pursue.

—*Chesterfield*

The line of demarcation between a mental and a moral act is not so clear as our own use of these terms would lead us to suppose. Take the case of a man who has been working at an invention for some years and cannot see the one thing he has been looking for to make the mechanism complete. He is in despair and almost ready to confess his failure. His friends say he lacks will-power, for he is within an ace of the discovery that has thus far eluded him. This judgment may or may not be true, but is the alleged deficiency in his nature purely mental or purely moral, or does it partake of both? Of both, undoubtedly. That is why many men of only average ability but of strong character (for character is "a completely fashioned will") have left men of commercial genius behind them in the race for wealth and power. Sheer intellect is only half the equipment of success. The other half—perhaps more than

half—is moral—not moral in any confined sense, or in the sense of church dogmas, but moral in the broadest interpretation, i. e., energy and determination. If the would-be inventor yields to discouragement, he will either be a victim to ignorance of mental hygiene, or he will lack moral vim—will-power. As likely as not his failure will be due to ignorance. Had he any real knowledge of practical psychology, he would know that the brain has a “stale” limit, just as the biceps muscle has, and beyond this it is useless to go.

The course of action to be taken is an entire mental change for a week or more. Let him read fiction as he spends a lazy holiday at the sea-side, or indulges in a game of golf with jolly companions. As likely as not the long-sought idea will “come” to him suddenly when he is not thinking about such matters, and he will rush home to take up the task with renewed energy at the point where he had dropped it in despair.

This is no imaginary case, but one that is happening every day, and it suggests the advisability of keeping physically fit as well as the need of finding a suitable form of mental change. A business man cannot afford to eat what he likes, or drink what he likes, or work twelve hours a day, week in and week out. A strong man is tempted to adopt this programme, because he persuades himself he can stand it. So he can, for a while, but we sometimes meet the once strong man wobbling—not walking—on a California sea-front,

or up to the neck in a mud bath, trying to get his dissipated strength back again. Occasionally he recovers, in part, but he confesses he is not the same man as before, and that is because the vigor of the mind is largely dependent on the health of the body.

A scheme of mental training for business, therefore, includes physical culture, not for muscle-building, but for health—particularly that of the nervous system. The strenuous competition of modern days demands an endurance which cannot in most cases be met without preparation—the kind of preparation found in an “exerciser,” in cold baths, in walking, in golfing, and last, but not least, in change and rest. These are indeed the merest commonplaces of the medical man, but they are too frequently ignored on that account, and restless ambition is none the worse for a few prosaic reminders about the value of respect for simple rules of health. That value is not only one which enables a man to keep office hours regularly and endure an occasional pressure of business: it saves him from yielding to temptation during a season of continued strain.

I have in mind the case of a merchant of strong native moral sense who, when passing through a very bad trade year, allowed his physical strength to go down to zero, with the result that he had less power to fight his anxieties and no resistance to offer when he thought of using some funds in his possession belonging to a girl for whom he

was trustee. Trade revived and he was beginning to pay the money back, when circumstances caused an exposure and he was haled before the judge and cast into prison—a good man whom unsought events made into a sinner. I have studied several similar cases with considerable care, and my conclusion is that in all of them good training, physical and mental, would have saved the delinquents from the embezzler's cell.

The specific mental *régime* needed is more easily felt than described in detail. Fear of some kind is the business man's deadly enemy—particularly the fear of financial disaster. We are all human and we can sympathize with him. A public failure is in itself one of the worst things that could happen to anybody. It is, rightly or wrongly, regarded as a confession of weakness, and its effects on future prospects are likely to be a severe handicap. But, after all, there are worse things than a failure, or at least than one with no crime in it, and, while nobody would regard even such a failure with lightheartedness, yet the disposition to believe that all is not lost and that "the best is yet to be" is the right feeling to cultivate. To be distraught is, in a world like this, worse than to be hopeful in the face of wreckage and loss. Far better is it to be like the man I once heard of: "He is a cork—you can't sink him!"

The value of optimism is one of the trite things paraded by the moralist, just as a health maxim

is a commonplace of the doctor, but we need the first as we need the second. Undue sensitiveness has a hard time of it in the modern world, and the ultra-sensitive man requires an extra dose out of the optimistic bottle. He has a social position to maintain, and, if business is slack, he would rather encroach on his capital than move into a smaller house.

Yes, we can sympathize with him. It goes against the grain to make those public and humiliating descents and be compelled to explain to our friends, lying right and left, and apologizing for this, that, and the other.

But how much better is it to have an independent mind which is too proud to be affected by the opinions of other people, and which can make a descent in the social scale without turning a hair or fraying a nerve! It may be thought that no kind of mental training can accomplish a spirit of stoicism such as this, but that is a mistake. It may be more difficult for some than others, inasmuch as the not-to-be-beaten disposition is only half a faculty in many men; but training can do wonders with the willing mind. With the indifferent and unwilling it can do nothing.

The first need is that of overcoming fear by substituting courage. Draw up an honest list of the things you are afraid of, and you will find in most cases they are contingencies which, while calling for foresight, do not in themselves justify any of the inward torments that accompany re-

flection on them. I will draw up a "scratch" list of those belonging to man in general:

1. Loss of health.
2. Loss of money.
3. Family bereavement.
4. Accidents and injuries.
5. Bankruptcy.
6. Death.

These are the great general fears of civilized humanity, most of which can be obviated by some form of insurance.

Then there are particular fears. Is that \$1,000 investment going wrong? Does my partner abroad attend to his duties? Will the Board of Trade pass my account? How will Judge O'Hanahan regard my case as plaintiff? Can I stave off my threatening creditors until the next remittance arrives from London? These questions are easily stated, and on their face carry no suggestion of carking care, but, as realized in actual fact, they often bring suicide in their train. True, so lamentable a *finale* is in most cases a confession of mental weakness: the man was not made of the stuff which takes disaster philosophically as well as seriously. Now, it is a reasonable contention that worry, while impossible of banishment, is often relieved by systematically diverting the attention from an ever-circling inspection of its cause. Litigation may be taken as an instance: it is easy to say no man should go to law, unless he is sure he has been deeply

wronged, but at any rate the sense of needed justice should be the first motive. The next should be the calculated chances of a successful issue, for litigation is one of the biggest gambles in the whole world. When these two matters have been settled, and the case is down for trial in a month's time, the plaintiff's mind is frequently the arena of an agonizing suspense. The worry of the result is always with him, and, should the verdict go to the defendant, it is easy to imagine the effect on the anxious plaintiff.

Now, let us grant that the trial is one from which he could not escape with honor to himself or without serious financial loss, for we ought to remember that the life some people teach—call it the worriless life—is merely pious flapdoodle. Every man has to face a stern crisis once—sometimes more than once—and prolonged suspense is one of the fine arts of the devil to destroy sanity, so finished is it in its ability to drive men to distraction! How can we meet the real mental anxiety of waiting for an unknown result? By entering into some new method of occupying one's time, or, if a new method be difficult, by making the old method more engrossing. To attempt a universal prescription would be inadvisable, but the data of a few known cases may be suggestive:

Case A. Harold Brown—a fictitious name for obvious reasons—was being blackmailed by a discharged employee utterly without scruple and de-

terminated to act. The threatened revelation referred to an incident in Brown's "salad days," twenty-five years ago, and if made public now would destroy or, at any rate, prejudicially affect his standing in the church of which he is an office-holder—and a respected one at that—as well as materially lessen his business reputation and his ambition to take part in the government of his country. The blackmailer gave him seven days in which to pay \$2,500, and Brown slept little during the nights of the first three. On the fourth he resolved to face the music and secure the conviction of the blackmailer; on the fifth he suddenly decided to take stock of his goods, although the usual time was ten days later. He personally superintended the work, forgot his troubles, became very tired, ate a good supper, slept like a top, and arose fresh for the duties of the next day. He went to the police department and secured its help. Traps were laid when the man came for the money on the seventh day; he fell into them, was jailed, tried, and sentenced. And all that the public knew was that Harold Brown's assailant had got a stiff term of imprisonment. A week before Harold Brown, prosperous man of business and respected deacon of his church, had felt that his days were numbered and that he had better shoot himself at once. A week later he smiled to think that he should ever have taken so dismal an outlook.

In this condensed narrative of a real incident

illustrating how sins come home to roost one sees how differently some men would have solved the problem. A weak man pays the price in order to have no bother, forgetting that the money handed over is tantamount to admitting the charge preferred against him, or else he temporizes and tries to negotiate an understanding, which is perhaps a worse proceeding. Occasionally an otherwise strong man will be tempted to end the suspense by sending the required dollars, for, if he can get the blackmailer out of the way, he argues that it will be better than going into court and having the case reported in the papers. The only right method is to give the criminal no quarter, and, as the law in this respect is definitely on the side of the traduced party, there is every encouragement to deal promptly with demands for money under threats. Mr. Brown fortunately assumed this position, but there remained the days of suspense, of capture, of arraignment, of trial, of sentence, and of press publication. How did he meet these? By the policy of excluding worry through added work. The problem in a time of anxiety is to know what to do with the attention, for under the influence of fear it is always busy with troubles ahead, circling round and round them until consciousness itself becomes a torment. The solution lies in giving it something to do that will absorb its powers and thus relieve the strain of too much concentration on one thing. Fixed ideas and madmen are allied, and worry

and fixed ideas are dangerously close companions, as will appear from

Case B. Silas M. Retgen had indorsed a \$1,500 note for Todd, a friend. The signing was stated to be "merely a matter of form, you know; just to satisfy So-and-So; the note was to be destroyed in a month's time." Instead, it became due and Retgen was called upon to pay. He was beside himself with indignation, and in a heated interview with Todd drew a pistol and shot his friend in the leg. He was seized and taken before the magistrate, was fined \$1,500 for assault, necessitating the sale of the small house he had just bought and paid for.

"A fool all through," you remark. He was. But there are men whose natural generosity is so large that they will do foolish things in order to satisfy a friend, and this is a case where the victim suffered from a temperament that needed special training and correction. His generosity was too emotional and impulsive; it required more caution—in a word, more brains. Having made a fatal mistake, he again suffered from a false impulse by shooting at his friend, involving the payment of a fine in addition to the amount of the note.

Now, the laws of mental and moral hygiene prescribe a particular course of training for men like Retgen. On the mental side they would ask him to study a book of law cases where evidence has to be carefully followed, the effect of which

study would be to side-track conclusions and decisions that were the outcome of mere impulse. The faculty of judgment would assume a slower motion and would be less likely to fly off at a tangent. On the moral side Retgen would be asked to study the art of sympathy and learn that, while a feeling for others in difficulty is highly ethical, there is such a thing as enlightened self-interest; that the duty he owes to his fellows must be conditioned by the responsibilities he owes to himself and those dependent upon him. As it is, his action compels him to begin life over again with no capital, and, instead of wasting energy in useless whining, he had better learn his lesson once for all, facing the future cheerfully and confidently. Is not that better than bewailing hard luck and going steadily downhill?

Such cases could be multiplied many times over, for they exist in manifold varieties. There is, for instance, that fear of criticism which is the bane of life to scores of people. They do not live their own lives, but, as Mrs. Poyser says in *Adam Bede*, they live the life other people expect them to live: they exist in other people's thoughts about them. They are often retiring in disposition, and a shy, reserved nature is ill-fitted for the sometimes truculent strife of the marketplace, where sensitive feelings are given no quarter. But courage and the high-mindedness that rises above the taunts of the vulgarian are feelings that can be developed, and when this has

been accomplished, the withering sarcasm and the rude jest die on the lips of him who utters them.

### *Methods of Training*

(1) It is no part of my duty to state what a writer of the New Testament meant precisely, when he said: "All things work together for good," but if the reader can accept these words literally for himself, he will make an investment in the security called Faith that will stand him in good stead and return dividends with regularity and increasing content. It is not a matter for scientific proof so much as for the test of experience. The only condition which is exacted is that we must act with rectitude and judgment. There is an unknown "x" in every life—the "divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will"—and whatever of destiny is in our own hands, the power that rules by law gives compensation for every disaster, just as certainly as it puts the fly in the ointment of success.

The first discipline, therefore, is to have faith in the order of things, and faith as defined by Mozley is reason working on a higher plane. You may not call it faith, but that matters little. The man who believes in what he terms his "star" may never regard himself as a man of faith, but he is nothing else.

Nature has had and is still having an evolution, and this is true of the individual. Life is

moving forward and its happenings are organically associated in the effort towards progress. Grasp this truth not once, but repeatedly, and adversity, instead of being a towering mountain, obstructing progress, becomes but a temporary pause in the advance movement.

(2) Physical health is a comparatively simple matter, but mental health requires some extended notice. For instance, how can we be bright and alert at the office when we know that at home a member of the family is seriously ill and that a telephone message, one of many, may summon us to the bedside? How can we face with equanimity the loss of all our savings? When somebody in whom we trusted deceives us villainously, can we go about as if nothing had happened? The voice of universal experience says these things are impossible. Suffering is inevitable, and we are human enough to feel it. Were we to concentrate our attention on business at the office, while one of our children was lying at death's door, we should be doing violence to the laws of natural affection and giving a serious affront to the sympathy of our friends. If we lost \$20,000 and never suffered a moment's dismay, or allowed a base deceiver to escape without giving way to our indignation, we should be on the high road to stoicism—a doctrine which sought to abolish all pleasure and all pain.

So long as there are experiences which give great happiness, there will be others that bring

deep misery. But how long ought that misery to last, and how far should it be allowed to deteriorate our vitality? This is the problem of our emotional life. A family bereavement is one thing to a believer in immortality—another thing to a pronounced materialist—that is to say, the sting of death is not so severe in the former case as in the latter, because a life after death suggests knowledge beyond the grave, whereas absolute extinction carries with it no hope. I do not argue these points—they are outside my province, but the difference between the two outlooks is an effect and the cause is faith.

Can we not produce a creed, an operating belief, which in business will save us from the ill effects of adversity? I think we can. The first duty is to control the mind itself. A period of unrestrained grief, however natural, makes a serious inroad on reserve strength and greatly interferes with the discharge of those duties which we have to meet every day. One need not be a stoic and deny the influence of pleasure and pain, but one may nevertheless be brave enough to take bereavements and reverses in the spirit of *men*.

There is no dignity or self-control in the spectacle of a spirit that is paralyzed by events, when the thinking powers are replaced by vacancy and the will by irresolution. The phrase "prostrate with grief" is thought to be a striking testimony to the reality of love. Truly, it is a testimony, but it is not necessarily complimentary.

It does not argue strength so much as weakness. The man who suffers deeply but holds his head high, who is conscious of a lacerated heart and yet can command attention for business propositions, is certainly a nobler figure. Self-control, therefore, is the prime necessity in seasons of adversity.

The second duty is this: accept the inevitable, but make use of it. Turn a disadvantage, if possible, into an advantage. Find a place where trouble can be fitted into the scheme and made an integral part of the whole. This is more easily said than done, but to get the right viewpoint is something worth while. We are here dealing with the subtleties of emotion, and success depends on an infinitesimally small turn given to the feelings. Submission is a much bepraised virtue, just as the fighting spirit is inordinately extolled. There is a happy medium, and the business man, passing through the deep waters of suffering and loss, will do best for himself and for others, if he resolves cheerfully to accept the situation—not in the spirit of inaction, but of resolution. There is less danger of sinking out of sight, if he will hold his head up and strike out vigorously for the shore.

## LESSON XII

### PROBLEMS OF BUSINESS ETHICS

Most people think nowadays the only hopeful way of serving your neighbour is to make a profit out of him, whereas in my opinion the hopefullest way of serving him is to let him make a profit out of me.

—*Ruskin*

At first sight ethics may appear to be outside the range of this book, confined as it is to matters of *thought*, but a moment's reflection is sufficient to show that, since *action* is determined by thought, it is therefore necessary to think rightly in order to act rightly. Besides, our code of ethics is a standard of judgment on conduct, and judgment is a reasoned mental operation, consequently the morals of trade originate in mind as it is affected by experience.

The subject of what is right and wrong in business dealings is full of subtleties—some of them hoary with age and accepted as gospel truth for that very reason, despite their evident sophistry; others are based on trade history—e. g., that a thing has been done in the past is good reason for doing it now, even though the ethical quality of the deed is not of the highest; others again depend on the alleged merit of secrecy—the buyer is satisfied and therefore it does not matter, if

he has been deceived; lastly, there is the persistent doctrine that honesty is always the best policy. Some of these moral maxims and vagaries I shall deal with on a later page.

The great question which the modern man of scruple asks himself is identical with that of the Hebrew psalmist: "Why do the wicked prosper?" For the purposes of discussion I will divide the question into two: "Is it a fact that the wicked *do* prosper? If so, why?" By "wicked" I mean the man who will steal, deceive, and act without mercy. By "prosperity" I mean making money. No one who has looked into life closely will deny that such men often accumulate large fortunes, while many of them secure more than a modest competency. Unfortunately, civil laws are not always worded in a way that will protect the man of principle. Indeed, the wicked man often pursues his wickedness quite legally.

For generations civilized communities have been trying to legislate for the borrower, but up to the present the money-lender appears to have had it all his own way, or nearly so. Some years ago an English lady borrowed five hundred dollars from a money-lender at a rate of interest which worked out at forty-five per cent. She fell into arrears of payment and he fined her five dollars a week for several weeks. Fearing exposure, she sold some securities and paid off the loan, the final rate being about sixty per cent. No doubt this lender pursued the same tactics

with other customers, and he may be taken as a good specimen of the wicked man in prosperity. He has no scruples whatever; he takes every advantage of other people's disadvantages, and exacts blackmail from unhappy borrowers by imposing fines which are illegal, but which he believes will be paid as the price of secrecy—in short, he is a dastardly thief.

Now, thieving in one of its many forms is the sole explanation of the prosperity of the wicked. The bandit who holds up a western train at a lonely spot in the hills, the "sweater" who steals the rightful wages of his employees, the trader who adulterates his goods and sells an impure article as a pure article—these, and a hundred others, are thieves who steal more or less directly from the public. The bandit is of course a brutal thief, but methinks he is a trifle more honest and less of a hypocrite than the trader who by selling adulterated goods steals with a pious lie on his lips. But both the bandit and the false trader may be prosperous—for a time, at least; the former may "get religion" and take to farming on his "earnings," and the latter, if a milk-seller, may even have enough money to overcome the disgrace of a prosecution for too liberal a use of the pump!

Careful and astute thieving will bring a certain degree of wealth: that is a fact which we cannot deny, although some people have a curious hesitation in admitting it. I have known men to

make one hundred thousand dollars in two weeks by a form of suggestion to purchase which was quite within the law, and yet it was polite theft all through. Hence the honest man constrained to work hard for small profits, grits his teeth when he beholds the sudden fortune of others—fortune which came by methods he despises.

Just here is the danger-point. Men are apt to reason in this way: "It's no use doing right, if you want to make money. Bamboozle the public—that's the only way. They like it, because they are mostly fools. Get a decoction made up that professes to remove wrinkles, and all the women in creation will send you their dollars. Even a few silly men will do the same. Not square? Of course not, but what is the use of being square? You can toil honestly for an employer until your hair is gray—then, one morning, you are asked to see the cashier. You are fifty, gray-headed, and seeking a job which you never find. I know the honest life. It doesn't pay. The other does, and, even if you never remove a wrinkle, you make the ladies think you do, and that's just as good. Besides, what harm have you done to anybody?"

It does not require much analysis to see that this argument is a modification of the highwayman's policy—it is theft pure and simple. Polite it may be—garbed in the habit of an ordinary business transaction it undoubtedly is; but essentially it is stealing money from the public by

false pretenses. It exploits a human weakness, promising for a given price exemption from the ravages of age and climate, when all the time there is no certain knowledge, or even probable knowledge, that the specific will fulfil its claims.

At the same time there is one factor that cannot be dismissed so summarily: it is the too frequent failure of the "honest" life. Sometimes one cannot wonder that men with large ambition and small scruples find that years of industrious service yield very uncertain rewards. The gray head receives little consideration nowadays—its owner must give way to youth and energy! Hence there is a temptation to work out schemes that are dubious in character, although they promise rapid and excellent returns.

But, after all, the temptation is not well-founded; only the mentally short-sighted or the morally obtuse are ever seriously troubled with it. It is not the honest life that is a failure, but the honest life that relies solely on its honesty for success. To succeed in business a man must develop his natural ability and nurse an ambition. He must know himself, his goods, his customers, and apply that knowledge. Good character alone will never place a man on the pinnacle of success. Some people think it ought to do so, but we have to accept facts as we find them. There are men of evil life who are abundantly prosperous, because they have great business abilities and use those abilities in the best way (they

would of course be more prosperous, if they were upright in conduct), and there are men of good life who are almost failures, because they either lack ability or have never developed the ability with which Nature endowed them. They would reduce the amount of failure, if they realized that success works by law—not by character alone.

Perhaps I can illustrate the fact in another way: A diabolical sinner and a perfect saint essay to cross a river by walking on the water with bare feet. They are unsuccessful. Natural law is against them. It says that human bodies are too heavy to be supported on the surface of water by the tread of the feet, and the saint sinks as readily as the sinner. In other words, Nature takes no account of moral character; it has no prejudices for or against; it simply fulfils its law without respect of persons. The “live” wire will kill the man who has never committed a dishonest deed just as easily as it will the man who never did anything else than practise dishonesty.

It is the same in regard to the laws of business. We frequently regret that a high standard of private character is not better rewarded financially than it seems to be, but in so doing we are confusing two things: the world of virtue and the world of profit. The making of a profit demands that you render the customer a certain service. He does not say you cannot make a profit, unless you are virtuous, or sober, or refrain from gambling. You may be a wife-beater

and yet be able to make ten per cent. on your turnover. Not that wife-beating is a crime without its effect on business, for the customer has no wish to patronize a blackguard and will probably transfer his custom elsewhere when the fact leaks out. But this moral element is not the primary fact; ability comes first, even though it may not always maintain the lead. In order to make a profit, you must know how, and if you know how and act accordingly, profit comes, because you obey the law. This explains why men of great ability but of double life morally often advance to fortune, while others of less ability but of indubitable morals linger behind in the race. To argue that therefore good morals are a hindrance to money-making is to miss the point altogether. Character in the long run is pre-eminent, but, since profits are results dependent on business acumen, it follows that the greatest profits go to the mind which shows the highest commercial ability. The owner of such a mind may have a doubtful personal reputation, but if he is clever in supplying the wants of the public and is keen on a bargain, the public does not ask for a certificate of character before putting its money on the counter.

A lady, on being reproved by another lady for buying a hat at a store the proprietor of which had figured in a shady prosecution, said, "Yes, I'm afraid he's no good, but the hat was *such* a bargain, you know—a perfect dream!" Pre-

cisely. Business is—business. Men and women in store transactions do not set up a confessional, or put each other through a course of catechism before buying and selling. Let the goods be right and the price right—nothing more is wanted.

But we must not imagine that “character doesn’t matter.” The shady proprietor referred to loses a measurable amount of credit and influence by his misdeeds; wholesale houses watch him more closely, and people with keen consciences trade elsewhere, if they can. Besides, weakness in one department of character has a habit of travelling further afield, and a man who allows his house property to be used for illegal purposes may eventually find it easy to play ducks and drakes with other people’s money.

When business ability has a basis in strong character, its advantages are superlative; when it is associated with obvious weaknesses, the way to deterioration is seductive enough, as the cases in court reveal. The banker who commenced as a poor boy, and, by a mixture of brains, hard work, long hours, and positive cheating, became wealthy, finds out at last that his disposition to polite robbery is more than a match for his judgment. So he oversteps the mark, the detective gives him a call, and the court thinks it best he should have ten years’ reflection in prison. Then the honest man rejoices and says that *at last* justice has been done. Why “at last”? Justice was being meted out all the time. The banker

had brains and he used them to build up a big business—sometimes legitimately, sometimes not. But would you say his clever ideas ought not to be taken by the community, because his life was not all it ought to be? You would not *say* so, but you would think it *ought* to be the case.

We have a deep-rooted belief that a good life ought to be rewarded with big profits and an evil life to have no profits whatever. But the law is impartial. It says that a marvellous invention shall receive a marvellous reward, because it is the outcome of a marvellous brain. The brain may belong to a reprobate, but that is not in the reckoning, when business values are discussed. If the invention is judged to be worth one million dollars to the purchasing syndicate greedy to buy at once, the determining factor is the profit in sight, not the reprehensible life of the inventor. Suppose, for a moment, a different kind of man approaches the syndicate with another invention.

“We do not think there is a market for it,” says the syndicate.

“But you bought a previous patent for one million dollars from a man whose life and deeds are odious,” argues the inventor.

“Yes, the patent was worth it, too. We have nothing to do with his life and deeds.”

“But I am highly respectable. Why not buy my patent?”

“Pleased to meet so good a man, but to us there is no money in your invention.”

Thus, at considerable length, I have tried to answer the questions with which we commenced this discussion: "Do the wicked prosper? If so, why?" The first answer is that they can and do make money by "taking" it, and that theft is a hydra-headed method of accumulating wealth. The second answer is that there are natural laws of success, many of which even a man of undesirable character can obey to his financial advantage. The third answer is that, so far as men deteriorate from high standards, whatever their ability, in so far do they endanger the permanence and quality of their success, for quality must not be left out of the reckoning. Better a small competency with honor than a surfeit of wealth with unsavory associations!

It remains now to deal with some of the more detailed questions of right and wrong in business matters. I do not set myself up as a casuist intent upon deciding cases as a Jesuit doctor would in moral theology. I desire only to show the necessity for clear thinking in its relation to action, and to advance a principle which to my mind does away with "case law" and "custom" in business transactions.

The question of "graft" is always in evidence, and as between men who practise it, the giver and the receiver, and those who do not, the advantage is unfairly on the side of the former.

In England the Secret Commissions Act is not yet a success, although its effect has by no means

been nugatory. There have been some severe prosecutions followed by startling penalties, but, unless the poulterer pays the lady's cook a commission, the game somehow is never "right," and the cook suggests a new dealer—to her own advantage. The contract which wins is not necessarily the best, for in spite of everything there are "understandings" which nobody can trace and payments about which everybody is silent.

In America matters are no better. Mr. G. W. Alger in *Morals in Modern Business* says that large and prosperous houses adopt methods which can hardly be distinguished from those of the burglar. To enter a man's house and steal is not very different from entering a business office and bribing a buyer to purchase goods.

These are facts, but they need not be unduly depressing. They are no doubt highly provocative to the honest dealer who sees trade being filched out of his hands by "smart" practices. And yet to think it wisdom to go and do likewise is bad psychology—it is nothing less than a serious resolve to join the thieves.

Furthermore, "smart" practices are going out of fashion. They do not pay in the long run. There is growing up a feeling of *caste* in business. The high-class house gets the respect and confidence of the public and of the banking community; the men of the "get-rich-quick" brotherhood are valued according to their deeds. "Make a customer rather than a sale" is a motto

the soundness of which is equalled by its increasing popularity.

The principle which reduces all ethical problems to a single issue is that of *service* as fully explained in the Sheldon system of business-building. In the final analysis the science of business is the science of service. A true sale—and we are all sellers of something—must produce a profit for the seller and afford satisfaction to the buyer. If you truly desire to serve the public, you need not worry your mind about business ethics. You will be too much occupied in getting the best values and offering them at the fairest prices. This is real service, and service means success. Christ embodied all the Jewish laws in one law. Said he, “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.” Love is the fulfilling of the law. So in business the desire to serve is the power which banishes all our little quibbles about right and wrong. We move on a higher plane. We are saved the anxieties of conforming to standards and customs in this, that, and the other. The customer is our friend, and we treat him in such a way that we are never afraid to meet him again. We seek to gain his confidence, for that is the basis of trade.

The wicked have prospered in the past, they prosper now, and they always will, but abiding prosperity, dignified in its massive proportions, is always and everywhere the fruit of service.