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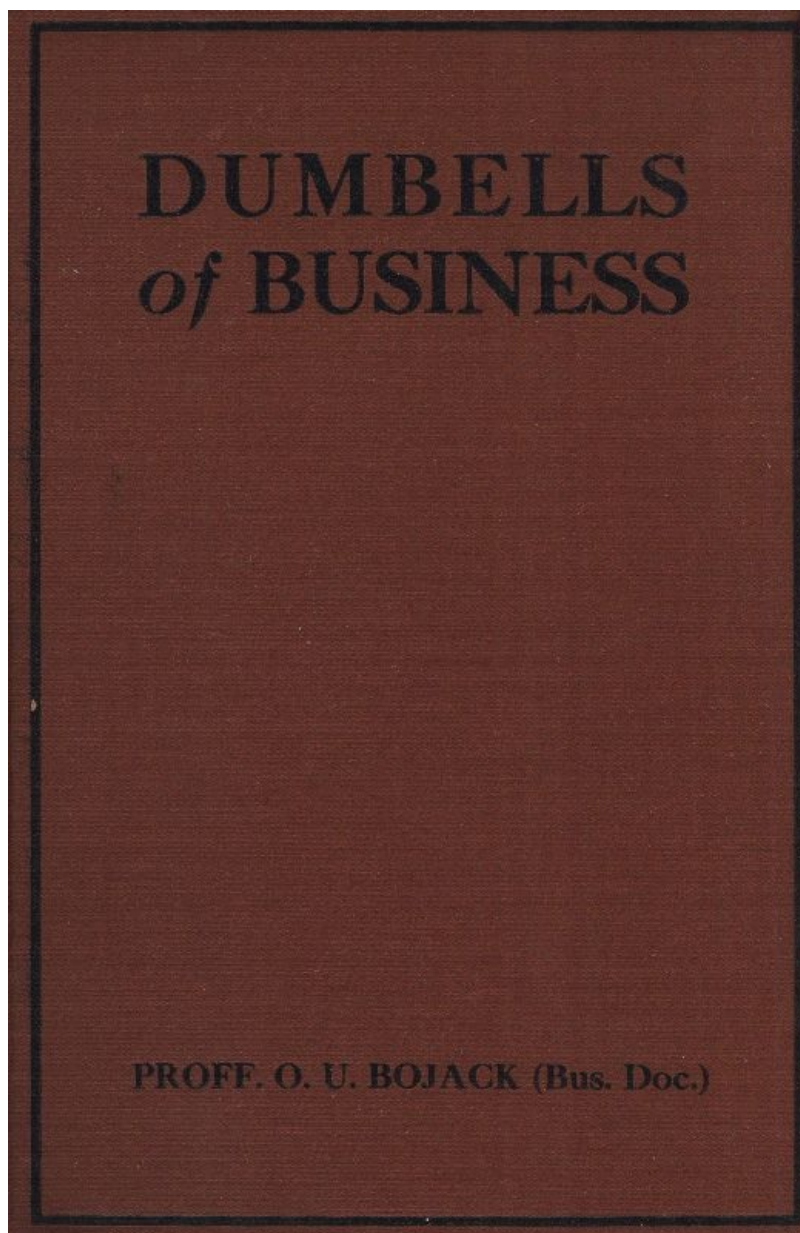
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DUMBELLS OF BUSINESS



Earning Bus Fare

DUMBELLS OF BUSINESS

by
PROFF O.U. BOJACK (Bus.Doc.)

AUTHOR OF "LITTLE NIFTY LESSONS IN
SALESMANSHIP," "LITTLE NIFTY LESSONS
IN BUYING," "LITTLE NIFTY LESSONS IN
LOVE & MARRIAGE," ETC.

Fighting Editor
"BOJACK'S NOISY EXPORTER"

Pruned of Profanity by LOUIS C. M. REED



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Boston, Massachusetts

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The Alpine Press, Boston, Mass., U. S. A.

THESE playful biffs on the beak of Business appeared originally in a little House Magazine called "Auto Suggestions."

Many of them have been completely revised for the purpose of this volume, over the rasping nasal protest of Proff Bojack who believes in letting Well Enough alone until it crawls up and bites you in the leg, as mentioned somewhere in the text—then roll over on the other side.

The characters are drawn from the daily life of the average American business organization where men are somehow sweating through to Success against the cordovan inertia of the Dumbells of Business.

—THE PRUNER



Proff O. U. Bojack (Bus. Doc.)

DEDICATED WITH A WARMTH OF FELLOW
FEELING TO ALL BEDEVILED
BRETHERN OF THE BUSINESS WORLD

The Author

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HOT SKETCH NO. 1

THE PLANT CURED OF MOSSBACKITIS

OUT among the gnarled oaks of Squirrel Cove there buzzed a busy manufacturing plant. [1]

It had been established since Time wore a bib, and, as far back as History could recall, had been handed down from Whiskers to Whiskers without a break.

The same old Superintendent with his chew of Fine Cut tucked away in a back-cavity, was always on hand each generation to bury the father and drill the son into the mysteries of Production and Distribution. Old Faithful used to love to take off his beaver cap and stroke the top of his glazed Summit while he told some eager visitor all about the industrial heirloom and his long and watchful connection with it.

In the course of centuries the Concern had of course worked up some business around the County, but at no time did there ever occur what you would call a Sensational Increase in trade. In fact, careful scrutiny revealed nothing in the whole town that could be associated with a sensation of any kind. [2]

The annual output of the particular Hive of Industry under discussion went wholly to Old Customers who had been buying regularly since Washington hurdled the Delaware. If any attempt was ever made to get New Business it was altogether an unconscious act, and no record of the perpetrator remains.

At the time of which we are now yodeling, the current Owner and Proprietor was closing in on his sixty-fifth Milestone, and, like his father and grandfather before him, he believed in letting Well Enough alone until it crawled up and bit him in the leg. Then he would roll over on the other side.

It is only natural that such a highly strung temperament as this should be accompanied by more or less radically advanced views on Business in general. This was indeed the case, yes. And he was a horrible spendthrift when it came to Advertising. In the course of say two lunar years his total lineage amounted to about as much as a Fourth Avenue delicatessen. He never counted the cost of any plant installation under one figure. [3]

If anybody had suggested travelling the Trade, the proposition would have met with the same enthusiastic endorsement that a Shell Game would get at a Dunkard picnic.

All salesmen were looked upon as a species of unclassified bandit that victimized Firms and Customers alike, and revelled at nights with Champagne, Chickens and Chant.

Now it so happened that our Captain of Industry had a daughter. In looks she was strictly neutral, and in intelligence just sort of medio-semi. Her heart was laced to a young Scrod she had met when she was East at School learning to parry and thrust with knife and fork.

She had never seen anything like this rollicking Young Buck from one end of her shaved-neck County to the other, and so she went limp the first time he threw a ray in her direction. He was a thoroughbred at that, and could get in and out of a Taxi without furring up his Top Hat, and pay a dinner check without stopping his story and then forgetting afterward what he was talking about. [4]

It required no profound psychoanalysis to tell from Daughter's manner that there was only one kernel in the crib so far as she was concerned. As for the tall-collared gentry of Squirrel Cove, the entries were closed and they knew it to a man and gave her the whole runway.

Now ever since Daughter was a baby blowing bubbles out of the corners of her mouth, Papa had lived in Mortal Dread of a day when she might buckle up with a man who would be only after his Thirty Dollars which he had slowly and painfully piled up through pluck, perseverance and pre-natal pull. And so when he saw her temperature rising and her appetite falling, he dug out her secret and then started on a quiet hunt to find out whether the daring Disturber was Grade A, or tinnif.

As he had feared, the Rat proved to be a Baltimore Luncher pulling down Fifteen Dollars per week and washing his own clothes in the bath tub.

This discovery caused a Family Upheaval which for pep, polish and all-round proficiency had all Mexican Mixups looking like a harmless after-school scamper at Hop Scotch. [5]

Every evening at sundown when Father would come home from the din and roar of his quarter-acre Plant, the neighbors would gather at their windows for the latest war news. Sometimes the Carranzaists would be on top; at other times the Villaists and Zapaists would have it.

Daughter protested hotly during these Bloody Encounters that her king was Poor but Honest, but father had him sized up as a Single Cylinder.

One night when the walls were being freshly inlaid with flying furniture and bric-a-brac, Daughter ducked out of the peaceful abode and down to the Railway Station and caught the Milk Train for New York. The following Wednesday at 4 P. M., Kendallville Time, she took Philip Darlington Wakefield for Better or Worse and wired Father for his blessing and \$100 to come back home on.

At first Father was all for raising his hand to High Heaven and pronouncing the Irish Cottage Curse with all the spine-chilling heroics about darkening the Threshold, but Mother looked quietly over her goggles and told him to cut the cheap melodramatic stuff and behave like a white man, and tell the Young Folks to buy a couple of postcards of the Woolworth Building and come back home. [6]

Under this stinging philippic Father melted into the big armchair and became human, and a couple of days later the Bride and Groom blew into Squirrel Cove and turned all Main Street into little groups of excited goatees.

Philip Darlington gave Father the first Hoyo he had ever smoked and took the old gazunk completely off his underpinning by showing a knowledge of Industry and Finance that only a Fifteen Dollar New York clerk can possess. On the strength of it he landed a job in Father's mighty Works and wasn't there a week before every yunk in the place was plotting for his destruction.

The reason, tersely and succinctly expressed, was that Phil proved to have Ideas and nobody around the Works cared to deliberately expose himself to the danger of infection. But Phil went right ahead and shifted men and things here, there and everywhere, and put in Time Clocks and Cost Systems and all kinds of efficiency effects. [7]

He took the dusty correspondence off the long wire and had it filed in steel filing cabinets, and reduced the length of the Daily Conference from three cigars to one cigar. He relieved the Shipping Clerk of the Sales end of the Business, and established a separate Purchasing Department, thereby lifting this important work from the shoulders of the Night Watchman.

Phil also got out the first and only Catalogue the concern had ever had in all their 4,000 years of aggressive Trade Building, and had the whole force threatening to strike when he announced that he was going out for New Business.

After a twenty-one round Go with Father-in-Law over the revolutionary question of Advertising, Phil got in touch with a Big Agency and listened to them reel off the usual now-you-want-to-start-off-with-a-page-in-the-Saturday-Evening-Post advice, after which he proceeded to map out his own campaign as is Customary with the Laity about to advertise.

Phil also had to back Father-in-Law up against the silo and sew up both his eyes and put a pair of vacuum-cup lips on him before he could get the Old Man to see the necessity of sending a force of bright-eyed Salesmen out on the Road to sell the Stuff. Phil said there was no use manufacturing a good article and then keeping it a secret. [8]

Every day there was something unusual doing around the Works, and of course it was all very thrilling, but when the bills began to roll in, Father-in-Law threw thirty different kinds of foaming

spasm, followed by Sinking Spells that threatened to lay him 'neath the Mossy Mound. But Phil was always there with the pulmotor and the Soothing Word to pull him through.

One day when everybody around the Office was getting all ready for the Last Sad Rites on account of all this frenzied expense, business suddenly began to pour in like beer out of a busted vat. Consternation thereupon Reigned Supreme and acted like a drunken sailor.

The little Plant squeaked and groaned and heaved and puffed until it fairly burst its little panties trying to keep up with Orders. All Squirrel Cove, from the Mayor down to the Poundmaster, was given a job at something or other, and Phil was heralded all the way from Angusville to Jowett Junction as the greatest Organizing Genius the County had ever known. [9]

When the Fiscal Year ended and Father-in-Law took a happy peep at the Balance Sheet and saw that he had holed-out more coin than all his Ancestors put together, he called Phil to his parental side and shifted the following Beautiful Tribute from his proud bosom:

"My boy," he said, "I feel like a tan-eyed gnat for having charted you up as a parasite when I first saw you looming up on the Links. I thought you were marrying my daughter just to romp off with her father's little Yen Bag. I would have thought the same of any man who didn't have a few crullers of his own. I didn't realize that there might be a chance of my getting a dumsight more out of you than you could ever get out of me. Henceforth you are a fifty percent owner of this Dugout, and what's more, here is a little present for you in recognition of your sterling worth."

Phil stood the cotton umbrella in a corner and soled off to break the gladsome tidings to his wife and found her tossing tennis balls with some Tea Toad in a green Sport Coat. Later Phil spied the two walking together through the Big Grove and she was listing to starboard. [10]

"H'm," he h'm'd, "I've got the Old Man, but it's cost me the gal."

He turned sadly away, mumbling something about what he thought of a Life that kept a fellow always manoeuvring for position.

Over the hills came the floating fragrance of frying fishballs, while in the tall whiffletree above him a chipmunk chipped softly to its mate.

Lesson for Today: When you set out to cure Industrial Mossbackitis, the dangers are great.

HOT SKETCH NO. 2

THE LURID LOT OF THE LEAKER

A YOUNG man had a job with an old organization. [11]

The job was not that of General Manager. [12]

Nor was it Department Manager. [13]

It was not a managership of any kind, character, quality or description—all claims to the contrary notwithstanding.

It was just a job.

It was the kind of job that any young man with an eye on ideas and a finger on the future, might have with any old Organization steeped in stability and pickled in policy.

In other less alliterative language, we might smooth down our shirt-front and say that the young man had A Chance.

If we cared to toss off all restraint and emphasize the statement with grape-juice profanity, we might say that the young man had a Very, Very good chance.

But he didn't know how to take care of his chance. [14]

He took chances with his Chance.

And one day it got away from him.

When the Boss handed him his passports, he asked for an explanation, and the Boss passed him one, medium well done.

It ran as per follows, WITNESSETH:

"Young Man," heaved the Boss, scratching his right ear pleasingly with his left thumb, "the reason we are decorating you with the Order of the Canned is because we have found that YOU LEAK. And any concern that does not plug the leak the moment they locate it, will soon be sitting around garter-high in the mire of misunderstanding.

"Were it not for the red-nosed fact that here and there in this Organization is a man foolish enough to be loyal to the institution that enables him to close down his troubles when he closes

down his desk, the whole Office would by now be torn with internal strife like a rat-tailed Roadster, and we would be headed for the rocks of riot and rebellion.

"Your up-stairs piping is so defective that everything you take in at the ears runs out of your mouth. You hear one man spill some remark about another, and you scamper off with your little red eyes to tell the other. [15]

"Then when the other comes back with a rib-rocker on the first man, you scamper back again and break the news to Number One.

"The other day you eared-in on a conversation I was having with my partner about one of our men, and in exactly eleven minutes by our beloved Office Clock the whole Force had tabulated the tidings.

"Before I had a chance to talk to the man myself, he came at me with the logical deduction that he had a right to be informed at first hands on a matter concerning himself that seemed to be as well known around the Works as the hour for Knocking off Work.

"And WITNESSETH: Sometimes when Party of the First Part has been discussing important matters in conference with himself or others, you have hopped around like a coolie with the dhobe itch, trying to sniff out some clue on which to ground a bit of gab.

"I have never walked through the office that I did not spot you back of a door holding a whisper-fest with somebody, and, if my memory isn't fooling me, we have never yet talked here in the office about lifting or lopping prices, or changing selling plans, or shuffling Salesmen, or shaking up the territory, that it has not leaked out to the Road Robbins long before we wanted it to. [16]

"We now know for a cinchety that you are the guilty goop because you fell for a plant that we had cleverly framed up with the kindly assistance of myself.

"AND, since we propose to run this roost harmoniously—radiating a wee wisp of sunshine and fellowship wherever we can, and making Business a pleasure instead of a punch-up—there does not seem to be any place around these puritanical precincts for a leaky radiator.

"You are bright and clever, and you don't injure your spine trying to get out of the path of an idea, and, by all the rules but one, you should shoot right to the top of any business.

"The one rule that you have not yet sponged up is that Success is more than brains and bustle. Success is the art of closing up the Exhaust occasionally. [17]

"I can find no doubt in any hole or corner of my mind that you have many times scratched your busy little head and wondered why you have remained in the same job all these centuries while other men not so clever as your oblique self have sailed right past you into the harbor of Heavy Responsibility With Correspondingly Light Pay. The reason is as stated in yon foregoing.

"Be it known to you further that no Business can succeed without Loyalty and Co-operation. Modern Business demands of every man that he be loyal, or be off.

"Pin-headedness, tale-peddling and office politics are barnacles on the barque of Business, and the Firm that does not scrape them off is doomed to decay.

"Any man with a brow an inch over all, should know that the lot of the Leaker means to be ultimately despised by the very men he has made confidants of.

"Every time you have started one of those he-said-that-you-said-that-I-said stories of yours, you have rawed up all the decent men of this Office. [18]

"Today you stand about as popular around here as a hair in the butter; but you don't know it, because, like all back-fence babblers, you are foggy up on the perceptive plane, and you think that the man who listens must like yourself be loose.

"Some day you will learn, young man, that a tight tongue makes a sagacious sky-piece—that to speak well is to cheat hell—that the chain of Successful Business is linked with loyalty—and the Leaker lands in Limbo long before the last lap's run.

"Thanking you for your kind attention, and asking you to now kindly consider yourself sunk without warning, I beg to remain etc, etc."

Having spake after the manner of the hereinbefore mentioned, Comrade Boss removed his eyes from the transgressor, and wheeled around in his chair.

And, taking his pen between his index finger and the back of his hand, began to sign yesterday's mail.

So.

THESE was a Large Employer with fantail whiskers who got good and sore at his Help.

[20]
[21]

They didn't have the interests of the business At Heart, he said. All they cared about was to fist-in their salaries and see that the Office Clock was accurate.

Any time any of them did any dweedling little thing in the shape of exceptional work, they expected credit for it, he murmured.

If the Sales Manager pulled up his sales, he would pull down his vest and bid for congratulations.

If the Credit Man lost only 1/40th of 1 per cent on the year's accounts, he would dodge around in front of the throne expecting to be caught and laureled.

If a stenographer got her dictation at four o'clock, and then jumped into the saddle and won the race before Big Whistle, she would expect her Dictator to say she was Some little hustlerine.

[22]

Even the Office Squirrel looked for commendation every time he discharged the responsibilities of his Office without fumble or fizzle.

What this Employer wanted, he contended, was employees who would work for the good of the Business and not be always thinking about their own good. He said he hadn't a man around the place who could sink Self with the rock of Gibraltar tied around its neck. The reward for doing a good thing, he preached, was in having done it.

Now it so happened that Our Hero was a Town Pillar, and although he did not at any time lean toward the philanthrop stuff hard enough to push it over, still he felt that he'd like to do a few Good Things for the Community before he hopped the Styx.

In his mental unfoldment he had forged clear past the point where One feels that One has done One's full duty when One takes care of One's own wife and One's children.

He felt that every man owed a responsibility to the Community in which he lived, moved and had his Three Squares.

[23]

So he decided to erect a public drinking fountain with a lion spitting fresh water from between its teeth.

He went and got some good news prints of himself, then called in the reporters and announced his decision. The announcement was followed by a shower of publicity in the local Press that would have cost Father John a hundred dollars.

One newspaper that gave him only a Stick and didn't print his picture, was forthwith put upon the Drab List and the Standing Ad of his Business was withdrawn for life.

When the fountain was all set up, Our Hero declined to pay the bill until the name of the donor was carved in large letters in some conspicuous place, according to the Conditions of Agreement. So the Town Council met and decided to carve it on the southern view of the lion.

The minister of the Church which comrade Hero attended heard of his munificent gift to the Town. His Reverence got in some fast legwork and ran down the modest philanthropist just as the aforesaid latter was ducking into his office.

[24]

The following Sunday morning when the congregation assembled for a quiet snooze, the Minister got up in the turret and announced the recent donation of a beautiful stained-glass window.

In due time the window was puttied in, showing a patriarch with a staff and a cloven hat. But when Old Sol turned on his spotlight, did it reveal the graceful and modest inscription, "Donated by A Friend?" It did—NOT. It revealed the full and complete name of the generous benefactor in letters about the size of a small barn. The price he paid for the complete job was left off, however.

Sometime afterwards the Town got the community development bug. Our Hero stood up on a vinegar barrel at a mass meeting and told the assembled whiskers that there was no reason on the face of God's Green Earth why they shouldn't be as big as New York, and that if every man would Put his Shoulder to the Wheel they could make Chicago look like a way-station.

[25]

When the cheers died down, Our Hero was made Chairman of the Might and Main Committee. He took off his Prince Al and got on the job.

For six months he worked like a Zulu wharf-boy, and through his Untiring Efforts the town copped several new industries, and was lifted from the 34th to the 24th city of the State in point of population and municipal purity.

New York did not exactly get jealous and call for a re-canvass of the Census, but there was no question about the enhanced Well Being of the community as a result of Our Hero's unselfish public spirit.

When the next mayoralty election came around, one of the lesser members of the Might and Main Committee, who had attended but one meeting and slept throughout, put himself up as a Candidate and offered the Committee's record of achievement as the reason why all Patriotic Citizens should toss their votes in his tub.

Doc Hero tried to cut in and tell the excited Populace who it was that did the Real Work of the Might and Main Committee but he could not break through the line. The candidate was elected by an "overwhelming majority," to coin a phrase. [26]

Whereupon Uncle Hero sat him down and quilled a Public Letter to Ye Editor in which he Regretted Deeply that his work was not Appreciated and that he got no Credit for all he had done for the Town.

Lesson for Today: When a man gets beyond the desire for personal praise he has got beyond the grave.

HOT SKETCH NO. 4

 [27]

THE BIRD WHO BERATED BUSINESS ASSN'S

ON A hell-hot Saturday afternoon in August a certain American manufacturer sat in his executive oven mopping like a German chef. [28] [29]

The Cashier came in and spread before him the weekly Worry Sheet, and then chugged off for the week-end in his little threshing machine.

All the other Help had of course already gone, for it was about ten minutes before closing time.

The only man left around the Works was the afore-specified manufacturer. He couldn't get off because he was the Boss.

Suddenly, without warning, prologue, or advance copy for the Press, he launched a vicious right-arm jab at two million flies that were mobilizing on his occiput, and then lammed out the following trenchant blank verse:

"Blankety blank my hide if I ain't getting hankety-pankety sick of this blank country and its laws. Here I am, week in and week out, sweating like a Somali dock-hand to make both ends meet, and instead of being charted up as a useful, constructive factor in the country's development, I'm hooted from the house-tops, shot at from ambush, chased up trees, and hounded like a pole-cat. [30]

"The goods I make are clean, legitimate, honorable goods, and a public necessity. By their manufacture and sale, thousands of people have it soft on both the productive and distributive ends of the line. If it were not for this business, this two-spot town would be fanning for air inside twenty-four hours, and hundreds of happy homes would be hurdling to Hades.

"Not a week goes by that I'm not digging up for some Church, School, Library, Fair, Famine, Hospital or some form of wallet-puller. I pay more town, county, state and federal taxes than the whole loafing lot of Timber Tops at Washington put together.

"And yet every move I make, or don't make, I'm yanked up before some inch-browed Investigating Committee to explain why I didn't do what I did, or did do what I didn't.

"First they fan me for maintaining prices and then for cutting prices. They lower freight rates so I can compete in a certain market, and then just when I've gone to the expense of advertising and traveling it, the State and Interstate Commissions get into a dog-fight and they shoot the freight rates up again. [31]

"They charge me an Income Tax on what I make, and an Income Tax on what I lose. They compel me to fill out long, winding webbed-up Forms that they don't understand themselves, and that would be sufficient to dam any Office Boy in the land for business incompetence.

"Out of the taxes that I and my impotent kind are soaked with, they send a lot of clerks over the globe to write high-school tracts on the Old Stuff about our Great Trade Chances Abroad, and then spring a Seaman's Law joker that tosses American Shipping into the Discard and puts our goods at the mercy of ships of Nations that are out to stick tacks in the tire of American Trade.

"For twenty years sane men have been struggling to pull the Tariff out of the toils of Party Pilferers and give Industry a chance to tell where it's at, and yet to this muggy day it is made the mule on which Boneheads in black fedoras ride in and out of Congress. [32]

"I maintain that the backbone, brains and belly of this Nation is BUSINESS, and yet when it comes to enacting legislation, Business hasn't the voice of a pink-eyed chigger. It is forced to operate under laws made by men that couldn't hold a bill clerk's job in a Brooklyn kiosk, and I for one am getting good and dam sick of the whole frowsy, fiddling farce."

With this perorational explosion, Comrade Manufacturer slapped down the corrugated cover of his Roll Top, jammed his hat on a bent ear, and soled off home to take it out on The Folks.

Monday morning came around, according to cosmic custom. The much admired face of the office clock smiled out the hour of ten, and the last story of the week-end's mush had been passed along Bookkeeper's Row.

A neatly harnessed young man with a well-groomed superstructure appeared at the General Office Door. [33]

"What is the nature of your business?" inquired the Office Rat in a ripsaw crescendo.

"Tell him I am a Field Secretary of the National Business Men's Phalanx, lately organized to express the collective business sentiment of the Nation to the law-builders at Washington," replied the Field Secretary. "And tell him," he added, handing out his official pasteboard, "that I am here to explain to him why he should become a member."

The boy bowlegged off to an adjoining office and returned with the pleasing tidings that the Boss was Too Busy.

"Go back and tell him that it is to *his* interest that I be allowed to come alongside now," said Field Secretary.

The boy reluctantly went away again, and in a moment later came back and told the F. S. to take a seat. Whereupon the F. S. took it, and then for one long, lonely newspaper-reading, thumb-twirling, watch-glancing hour he held it down without a whimper.

Finally he called the boy again and told him that he'd like to see the Boss during the present era if possible. The boy waddled off once more to the secret chamber of the Great and Grouchy One. When he returned he brought back this cheery message: [34]

"Tell the gentleman I don't believe I care to go into the matter. I am Very Busy today, and besides, I am not in favor of these Associations that cost a lot of money and produce no results."

"Very well," replied the Field Secretary sweetly, "I'll consider myself null and void."

"But just kindly inform your intelligent Boss for me," he continued, "that the reason these Associations cost a lot of money is because of the time they lose in hanging around waiting to get possum heads like himself to see their own Game. And the reason they 'produce no results' is because stupid men can't see that they've got to get together to produce results."

"And tell him further," went on Field Sec., edging toward the door and raising his voice just high enough so that it could be heard about seven miles, "that while I shall expect to lose my good hundred-dollar job for it, I can not restrain myself the pleasure of telling him and his visionless ilk that they deserve just exactly the kind of legislation they are getting, and that as far as I myself am concerned, they can all go and take a great big jump into the seventeenth sub-basement of hell. Good-NIGHT!" [35]

And with this impressive Valedictory the Field Secretary departed, slamming the door so hard that it jarred the ledger out of balance and woke up every clerk in the place.

Lesson for Today: There are none so blind as the trusting husband and the bright-eyed business man.

HOT SKETCH NO. 5

THE ADVERTISING GENIUS OF SQUIRRELVILLE

THERE was a Hotel Clerk in a one-ply town who yearned to become an Ad Man. [36]

He could have yearned to become President of the United States if he had wanted to, but there wasn't so much money in the president business. [37]

His name was Fred, but they called him Chesterton for short.

During his incarceration as Glad Hander at the McGlook House, Chesterton had lived to see one of the Town Terriers go down to New York and hoof up great clods of turf in the arena of Successful Advertising.

This fired his Ambition, and when later he learned that the reporter on the Squirrelville Banner had just landed a good job as Advertising Manager for a nearby manufactory which had begun to stretch, he just up and heard the voice of Destiny calling him through a railway megaphone.

Thus it was, one Gladsome spring morning, that Chesterton backed away from the little pine hotel-desk for good, and plunged eye-deep into the intricacies of the Advertising Art. [38]

Chesterton's first clever move was to procure copies of The Banner and analyze all the local Advertisements, but after close scrutiny he concluded that they all leaned heavily to The Rotten.

Which they did. [39]

Which they did beyond the slightest shadow of a little round doubt.

The Liveryman's Advertisement, for instance, didn't "Tell The Story," reflected Chesterton who had already begun to show an easy familiarity with Publicity Terms. And he observed also that the reminder which stood all the year around in the daily 3 in. dbl. col. Display of the Elite Stationary & Supply Store to the effect that Prospective Patrons should do their Christmas shoplifting early, did not appear to be timely copy for July.

Let not the thought here sneak into your mind, Gentile Reader, that our embryonic George Creel confined his observations solely to advertisements committed by local craftsmen. On the contrary he went to the Eureka News Shop and procured copies of all the national magazines and periodicals that carried advertising to enliven the reading matter, and every Ad in them came under the sweep of his cold unemotional eye. [41]

"One common fault I find in all of them," mused Chesterton. "They all lack The Punch."

Which criticism should be sufficient to prove to The Reader that Chestie old toppo was now a full-feathered Ad Writer. In the bright lexicon of Publicity there is no word that mouthes so smoothly. When in doubt, talk about The Punch!

To make a long story about seven pages shorter, we will now brush the dandruff off our coat-collar and say that Chesterton accidentally ran across the Three Ball Column of one of the magazines where the Frayed Boys of the Advertising World are accustomed to hanging up their best belongings.

The first one that caught his eye was this: [42]

"PULLEM PETE—The powerful penster who pulls peppy potent phrases for particular patrons—try him—6c for a sample slasher, or 50 individual humdinging follow-ups for 40c."

Following this sizzling specimen of alliterative skill, Chesterton ran across this one:

"AD MAN ARONSON penned one pep and paprika sales letter that pulled \$80,000,000 worth of business. He can do the same for you. Specimen letter, 11 cents and postage. Lock box 4-11-44, Spinach Corners, Conn."

By this time Chesterton was all het up for he saw where all these Sales Letter Builders were making their big mistake and he felt the feathers of his guardian angel's wing tickling his spine all the way up.

Intuitively he knew that his footsteps had been guided at last to the big bronze door of Opportunity, and that all he had to do was to knock on her and she would be opened up Unto him. He was politician-sure that he had the password. And the password was PRICE!

And so Chestie sat him down at his little school-desk in the attic, which he had fixed up neatly as his office with a newsprint of St. Elmo as his patron saint, and after three non-union days' labor he carved out this modest little synopsis of his advertisorial equipment: [43]

I AM CHESTERTON OF SQUIRRELVILLE—I write serial follow-ups that tear the teeth out of indifference, pull the wool off the sky-piece of scepticism, rouse interest to a frenzy and send the prospect screaming down the aisle to pay tithe to the titillating tin box. A sample letter will cost you \$100.00. Three letters for \$200.00. Cash with order regardless of rating. Business already booked makes delivery of copy impossible to guarantee under seven months after order is placed.

Looking the copy over once more, Chesterton decided that there was only one thing the matter with it. The price was too much to the Clothing Sale. So he raised it another \$100.00 and then fired the copy off to a couple of good advertising media.

Then he lit up a piece of tampa twine and walked out in the backyard and put chicken-wire around all the trees so the goats would not bark them when the stampede commenced.

One week later the Postman was rolling up Chesterton's mail in barrels. One year later, all Squirrelville was working in various departments of the Chesterton Advertising Agency. [44]

Lesson for Today: If you're going to "do," then do; otherwise, don't.

BILL was a Salesman with a series of chins, who chewed the ends of his cigars and was by nature Very Sociable.

The bell sprints would all stampede for his Leathers when he arrived at a/an hotel, and the Clerk always had some little confidential pleasantry to whisper into his large jovial ear when handing him his Room Key.

Bill abhorred all forms of convention, had no use for vests, and never called any man "Mr." past the introduction, no matter how high the social or financial pinnacle from which the party breathed his ozone. In the course of a twenty-minute conversation a Mr. John Wanamaker would become plain "Wanamaker," then "John" and finally "Jack," whether Jack liked it or not.

Truthfully speaking, it cannot be said that Bill's particular brew of bon-hominy made as big a hit with the average Buyer as it did, for example, with the drayman who juggled the trunks up to the Hotel. As a matter of bald clean-shaven fact, most of the Larger Buyers in Bill's territory threw up a redoubt of icy Reserve every time he wheezed in to see them; and, to anyone of Bill's Genial and Sunny Nature, such an aggressive exhibition of unsociabliousness is sure to prove a thorn in the flank. [48]

Thus it was that Bill in time made no dark secret of his Real Opinion of any man who thought he had to starch all up like a Bank President just because a pull with the Powers had made him a Buyer instead of a Bill Clerk.

He didn't see, he contended, why a Salesman representing a Concern that covered forty acres Under Roof and made all their own castings, was not just as good as the man he was trying to sell.

So far as Bill was concerned, he was getting foddered up to the gills, he said, trying to be friendly with certain deaf and dumb Yappoos that sit twirling paper-knives and eyeing a Salesman with the critical eye of an alienist just because he is doing his damdest to cheer them up and make them act Natural.

The wise Buyer, argued Bill, is the man who treats Salesmen like pals, because he can get more out of them that way; and moreover, Salesmen are always in position to do the Buyer a Good Turn in the Trade, as well as up at the Factory when the Complaints come in. [49]

Now it was the custom of Bill's firm to use some of their Salesmen in the home office when the men came in off the road between seasons. It was a good custom because it not only enabled the Salesmen to earn a portion of their salaries during the dull months, but also got them into the habit of breakfasting before Noon.

Bill became particularly adept at this Indoor Exercise especially in the Purchasing Department where he helped at odd jobs, besides helping himself to cigars that were daily presented to the Purchasing Agent in the sacred cause of bribery.

It was soon discovered that Bill had a keen and steady eye when it came to judging materials and prices, and the Purchasing Agent got sort of in the habit of mistrusting his own flickering wick and turning over a good deal of his work to Bill, especially when he was Very Busy, such as selecting from a mail-order catalogue some kind of a suitable cap to wear on his forthcoming fishing trip. [50]

One day, as Luck would have it, Comrade Purchasing Agent suddenly up and kicked off his mortal cocoon, leaving behind him a wife and a gallon of gasoline for his motorcycle. Bill was chosen to fill the vacant chair, and putting it Very Mildly yet informingly, the news did not exactly crush him to death. On the contrary, he went out in the Coat Room and shook hands with himself until he had two lead arms and one limp theologian's grip left in his Gripper.

Bill's first week as Buyer saw him billy-sundaying every salesmanic trail-hitter that struck the Works. But somehow the Open Arm stuff seemed to convey to visiting Salesmen the impression that Bill as Buyer for the Works intended to lay in a million dollars' worth of their Stuff. When he told them that he wasn't in the market, they couldn't seem to assimilate the tidings and just continued to hang on until the whistle blew and the regular daily imitation of the Rush from Pompeii commenced.

Bill's second week as Buyer saw him giving Explicit Instructions to the Office Spaniel to bring to him the card of every visiting Salesman before letting the gunk in. In this way quite a few zeppelins were put out of commission before they reached the First Line Trench, and Bill got several minutes each day in which to Attend to Business. [51]

But Bill's heart was still too full of the mush-and-milk of Human Kindness to long hold down the lid on his Buoyant and Bubbling nature, and so he continued to spend most of his conscious hours watching the skilful Air Navigators loop-the-loop from dizzy heights. Besides, there was in Bill himself a lingering love for the sport which he found it hard to curb, and which caused him to forget his position as Buyer every once in a while and ascend as high as any of The Boys—though always to regret it when he came to earth again.

Bill's third week as Buyer found him with his Office moved back a mile and a half from the front door and all approaches barb-wired and mined. Out in the Reception Office hung a sign, "Salesmen seen Thursdays ONLY, between 10:30 and 11:30," and while the lettering was not large enough to be seen across the river, it was plainly visible to everything this side. [52]

Such Salesmen as were fortunate enough to receive an invitation to visit Bill's imperial headquarters were escorted by two gendarmes with secret Road Maps that enabled them to find the way; and these Luckies were then permitted to stand unheeded in the doorway from 20 to 30 minutes twirling their little dollar derbys and snapping the rubber-band on their leather covered catalogues until such time as the Honorable Bill had finished dictating his daily batch of Third Reader essays.

The idea in keeping these few privileged Samsons of The Sale hovering around the entrance to the refrigerator was to give them time to apply the Air Compressor after observing certain ominous signs which Bill had hung around the walls and which read: "Be brief," "Tell it, and Tell it Quick," "Come to the point. If there isn't any STAY OUT!"

If the visitors were not thoroughly cowed by these sinister signals, they could proceed further and read an additional warning painted on the back of the Visitor's Chair which read: "This is no Park Bench." The letters were about the size of the name on the side of a Neutral Merchantman. [53]

Whenever Bill said to a waiting Salesman, "Come in," you could see his breath like on a crisp winter morn. After that, he wouldn't say another word until the Salesman had finished a five-minute Oration. Then Bill would say, "Not interested. Good day."

Under this policy of Frightfulness, Bill naturally became the target for a shower of shrapnel every time The Boys got together in the Smoker. What one would forget to call Bill, another would think of, thus thoroughly canvassing the Field of Invective at every session.

One fine day an Old Customer to whom Bill had once sold goods when he himself was a livery-bumping County Hopper, blew into the Office as the Representative of an Advertising Novelty House. It seems that Business had gone bunc with the Old Customer and he had been obliged to knit up with a Road Job to keep the wolf off the door-mat. He was sure he could land his old friend Bill as a new customer for his almanacs or some other neat and fetching advertising novelty, and thus make a Killing with his Firm. He sent word back to the barracks where Bill was entrenched saying that he was waiting in the offing and wanted to see him. Bill frowned when he saw the card but told the sentry to show him in anyway. [54]

A few moments later the poor misguided Yob, who had read his Human Nature all awry, appeared at the door of the Cold Storage Plant, and, catching sight of Bill who sat stalling as usual and didn't see the Approach, rushed into the room with an extended bronze paw the size of a Smithfield ham and yelled: "Hello Bill old socks!"

The shock was too much. To have been "Billed" by this brazen intruder would have been bad enough, but to be "Socked" at the same time was the belt-below-the-belt that laid Bill low. With one hand clapped to his heart and the other to his head, he staggered to his feet and then fell heavily to the ice-bound floor—a victim of heart failure superinduced by acute inflammation of the Ego. [55]

Lesson for Today: To get a calm view of the bull, you've got to be on the opposite side of the fence.

HOT SKETCH NO. 7

THE PAMPERED DEALER

A CERTAIN condescending old zambuck thought he was doing his Town a large comprehensive favor by being in the hardware business. [58]

Whenever a Customer entered his store, carrying the door-webs through on his hat, the grouchy one would look over his glasses to see who it was, and then go on reading his newspaper until he got good and ready, thereby justly rebuking the intruder. [59]

Salesmen who called to sell him their flawless Goods used to grow old and hoary sitting around the dumpto waiting for him to say officially that he didn't care to look at the stuff.

Then they would salaam low and in a galley-grind's voice thank him for the interview, and back out of the place on their shirt-fronts, and go sell a lot of Small Bills at high prices over the County at the expense of Dear House, and then come back and beg the Civic Benefactor to accept the bouquet at 50 percent profit to himself by placing an order covering only the bare quantity they had sold for him. [60]

With a show of reluctance and drab boredom seldom seen outside the Banking Business, the old Nawab would finally put his influential signature to the Order, but only on condition that the manufacturers consented to run an Advertisement at their own cost in the local paper featuring his progressive and popular Establishment. Of course if they cared at the same time to slide in a few 5-point words about their own goods, why he would have no special objection.

If it so happened occasionally that he so far lost his balance as to buy one dollar and sixty cents' worth more stuff than had already been sold for him by the visiting Salesman, he would sit himself down on his comfortable chair-pad of old newspapers and write off a starchy hand-tooled letter to the House—on stationery that had been printed for him free of charge by some Easy

Eugene of the manufacturing world—and insist emphatically upon having a Special Man from the factory payroll to help him dispose of the surplus as well as wait upon customers, assist in taking Inventory, and be generally useful about the premises.

[61]

It is not recorded that any of the manufacturers who were privileged to sell their goods to this highly respected and pampered posh went so far as to pay his store rent for him or defray the expenses of his family wash.

But through their tripe-eyed vision of Sales Promotion they ultimately succeeded in swelling his super-structure to the point where he was able to snuggle down into the comforting hallucination that he could throw any one of them into the bogs of bankruptcy at any time by simply holding back his thirty-cent orders.

Now it came to pass that a certain young Lochinvar of high voltage had been tiptoeing about for a favorable Town in which to weigh-in a blooded Hardware Store, and he happened to hear of this martyr to the noble cause of service.

In fact every Salesman that Young Loch met told him the same story about the old crabbino, but some of them heralded the tidings with less profanity than did others.

Young Loch did not have to get a powerful field-glass to see the Opportunity that lay before him and stretched out its arms. He could see it with his eyes tied behind his back.

[62]

So forthwith he sallied to the Particular Town to which we have up and alluded, and in due season he opened him up an establishment that had old Puffed Bean's place looking like a Hongkong junk hole. The swellest cry in Hardware Shelving was installed, and you could close your big searching eyes and walk all over the place without tangling up with nail kegs, rope, barbed wire and other embellishments peculiar to the small-town hardware dispensary.

When the erstwhile Dictator first got news of the coming invasion, the crust began to crack slightly around the edges of his aloofness. He commenced saying Good Morning to his Customers and introduced other revolutionary changes in the business.

Also he began a quiet but systematic campaign of subterranean rapping against Young Loch, having scratched up the buried fact that Loch's grandfather had once swiveled the books when he was County Treasurer.

But Loch was so busy connecting up with desirable Agencies that he paid about as much attention to the Opposition as if it had been located in Portuguese West Africa.

[63]

One by one those manufacturers who had been supplying their exceptional wares in driblets to old Punko, decided to give Young Loch exclusive control for the following sound and sufficient reasons, to-wit and as follows: first, because he was willing to place a decent-sized order on Regular Terms with no overhanging strain in way of Special Conditions; and second, because of the reason just stated.

Loch also ran 6-inch dbl. cols. at regular rates in the influential Local Sheet advertising the Lines he carried and received many free cols. in the restricted Reading Pages where he was heralded as a young man of Exceptional Promise, and his project as a Valuable Addition to the Large And Growing Commerce of Our Town.

Young Loch did not ask the manufacturers to contribute anything toward this smashing publicity campaign, except Electros of their thrice-inspected Goods, which they promptly forgot to send, according to custom.

[64]

When old Maharaja Magoop saw his Customers dropping off like crumbs when the table-cloth is snapped, he began to get very irritabilious and petulant, and told the Town Folks in a wavering falsetto what he thought of the civic spirit of a community that would desert a Lifelong Taxpayer for some young Upstart who had never helped the Town in any way.

Several people, who could not conveniently pay their accounts at the time because they had told the Ice Man to bring ice every day, were inclined to agree with him right up to the doggone roof; but even these few anti-penults were obliged to patronize Young Loch's place to a certain extent because The Latter now had the exclusive agency for certain leading Implement Lines formerly held down by The Former, and which required Repair Parts that must fit perfectly, but usually didn't.

At last it was brought home to the once Mighty Monarch that any Dealer who controlled a well-advertised and popular Line of Goods enjoyed a Valuable Asset and was supposed to move a muscle once in a while in the direction of selling the stuff, and not expect the manufacturer of it to do all the chores.

[65]

Into his concrete cone was also drilled the tardy knowledge that a Customer is entitled to some slight measure of Service, and in the sanctified name of Profit should not be regarded in the light of a blaspheming intruder if he fails to wiggle in on an abject stomach and apologize for leaving some of his money in the joint.

In short, old Rigid Neck came to see ultimately that he was in the Discard good and fine. With ever-increasing grouchiness he gradually jelled down in the old sagged Cane Seat where the merry little spiders could spin their silvery webs in peace above his cosmos.

The last heard of him, he had rented out his Store window to an itinerant printer who installed therein a nice little Foot Press and was doing very neat calling-cards for 50c per 100.

As for Young Loch he kept up the Good Work full many a year and came to be most highly respected by his Fellow Citizens, including the President of the Enterprise Real Estate & Investment Company whose budding daughter Loch plucked off the rosebush of Love before his red-eared rivals got within a mile of the garden. [66]

Loch was also beloved by Salesmen everywhere, for he never asked them for an Inside Five, a breakage allowance, or donation of Goods for a Church Fair Raffle.

And he always got through with The Boys in time for them to get away on the Four Forty-Five and see a good Show in the Big Town that night.

The Lesson for Today: He who serves most is the King
Pin.

HOT SKETCH NO. 8

THE EFFICIENCY EXPERT

THERE was a Piece of Cheese. [67]

He wore a stand-up collar, broken-lot size, and had a/an Adam's Apple that used to romp up and down the highway every time he swallowed. [68]

Also he was the busiest bee in the swarm. [69]

After supper each night he had to rush down to the Depot to see that the Railway Boys escorted the 7:12 in and out of the Town all right, and then he'd rush back to the Cigar Store to hear the phonograph play, and lay down a few sound rules on International Relations until the President of the First National Bank came in to buy his after-dinner cigar and it was time to lock up.

After that, he would tear madly over to the Kelly House and there drop a few pearls of wisdom before the Night Clerk while that dignitary was out at the curb cleaning the big tin cuspidors that had served in their day to emphasize many a heated argument between rival groups of local parliamentarians. [70]

Ed Galloway was the name of our genius-in-the-cocoon and wherever Ed was to be found, you knew that something of importance was pending. He seemed to have a gift for being on the spot. If you saw him streaking up Mill Street, you might wonder where he was going, and he might wonder where he was going, but before he got a block away, a barn or something would be sure to catch fire just as he was passing it, or a horse get his hoof caught in the trace, or somebody would be driving a stake just a wee bit off center, and straightaway Ed Galloway would find an avenue for his services or advice. He was present everywhere but Church.

Of course there were certain narrow, quibbling spirits, just as there are in every hamletto, who objected to Ed always chiseling in on everything, but there were not lacking those who, like Jeff Webster, Sole Owner and Proprietor of Webster's Bus Line, believed that Ed Galloway had pretty near the right hashish on things, nine times out of ten.

Away off somewhere in Thibet or in Sumatra there may have been some petty local question that Ed was not wisdomed-up on, but everything that took on the character of a national or international issue, he could discuss from basement to belfry. He was as much at home in the busy arena of Politics and Business as he was in the wide realm of Science and Philosophy. [71]

There was one thing that Ed had in common with all great political leaders, whether they were fully aware of it or not. It was a positive, ultimatum-like tone in which he rendered his decisions in all cases, regardless of their importance to you, to him and/or to the world at large.

If, for instance, Ed happened to pass a cup of water from the Court House pump to the stranger within the gates, he would say: "That water, Sir, is the purest, freshest water in this here whole State." He'd say it with a sweep of the arm that seemed to include not only the State but the whole Universe, neither of which territories had he ever canvassed.

And invariably the stranger, after drinking the ordinary every-day water from the ordinary every-day Court House pump, would smack his lips and agree with Ed and have another go at it. [72]

Now everybody in every town of every State of every Nation says the same thing about the water of his particular pump, and there is nothing of news-value either in this observation on our part, or in the statement re pure water on the part of said kanoops the world over.

But whenever Ed Galloway up and said that water was pure, or the Tariff was doomed, or that Stocks would go to a New Low, or that we were going to have rain, you had a sense that here was a man who undoubtedly had a corner on all outstanding knowledge of the subject.

Ed's words always carried a certain vanadium finality that clinched the case and demoralized

rebuttal, but there was always left in the heart of the Vanquished a sort of half-formed desire to call Ed a liar on general principles, although with no hopes of course of proving it; for Ed was always there with The Figures, which he dug up out of the vasty deep of his Imagination to support his side of the case, while his opponent usually was equipped with nothing but a village vocab of short jerky monosyllables and a chew of tobacco.

[73]

One day Ed met the owner of the Plow Factory in the barber's chair getting his chinchillas chipped and told him right off the keyboard that his plant was doing but 8-3/4 percent of the total plow business of the county.

The old wowser gasped like a gaffed sturgeon at this impertinent news and attempted to swing back more or less crushingly, but the lather got in his mixer, and so all he could do was to lie there and let Ed go ahead and throw the short-horn.

Ed proceeded to tell him exactly how many farms there were in the County, State and Nation, the acreage under cultivation, the average number of plows per farm, and so on.

And then Ed wheeled suddenly about, and pointing his finger accusingly at his be-lathered and outstretched victim, exclaimed: "How many of these four thousand three hundred and thirty-two plows did YOU sell in Crooked Creek County last year!"

The old man did not say so, but he as much as admitted that he was a dub at the facts of his own business, and later on when he was putting on his overcoat, and Jake the star wielder of the rasp was helping to pull his undercoat down where it didn't belong, he turned around pseudo-casually to Ed and told him to drop around to the factory some afternoon and have a chat.

[74]

Now it so happened that the Young Man who had charge of the Sales and Advertising end of the Plow Factory was a very faithful and steady Young Man. His conduct was at all times "exemplary," to coin a word.

Every morning as the Court House clock struck eight, he could be seen dismounting from his tin bicycle at exactly the same spot in front of the office door. He had never been late but one morning in his episcopalean life, and that was after a thick night at the Welfare Social when he went in too strong for the strawberry-whisp.

He was one of those Young Men you can always Rely Upon. You know the kind—always the same. He did the same thing this year that he did last year: (a) and at the same time: (b) and in the same place: (c) and in the same way.

[75]

The same Copy that stood in the Ads last year, stood in the Ads this year—and occasionally got tired and sat down in the valuable space.

All his letters to The Trade opened and closed the same way like a door—"Replying to yours" and "Hoping to have."

He also wrote Weekly Letters to the Men on the Road and talked in the earnest, measured phrases of a requiem, about Punch and Pep and Live Wire. There was almost enough live wire in these salesmanic scintillations to singe the hair off an apple. After you got past the waxed opener beginning with the inevitable "Well Boys," the stuff went like a warm home-brew.

There was another thing about this Young Man worthy of eulogy. He was one of those Model Employees who always pitch the ball so the Boss can hit it. Whenever the Old Man would ask him a question he would burst a blood-vessel straining to answer it so that it would stack four-square with what the O. M. thought about the matter.

[76]

To sum up, this young Sales and Advertising Manager of the hitherto tabulated Plow Factory, was, confidentially speaking, habitually scared to a pea-green that he would offend the Boss and lose his good hundred-dollar job.

That is why he never told Dear Boss about a/an Idea he had perfected for increasing Sales, and never dared slip it into operation on his own account either.

But that night when Ed Galloway met him coming from the Revival and began to ask him all kinds of questions about the factory and the plow business in general, so as to shape himself up strong for his coming interview with the Big Flash, the Young Man unsuspectingly opened up and told Ed all the things he could do for the Works if he were only given half a chance.

The next day Ed, primed like a new pump, blew out to the Factory. When he asked to see the Boss, all the little time-clock punchers in the place began to twitter and twutter. They knew Ed of old and logically concluded he was booking himself for a thorny turn-down. But he wasn't.

[77]

The Boss told Ed to come right in and take a chair. Ed took it and brought it as close to the Boss's desk as he could without rubbing it against the Old Man's chest. Then he sat down on it and said he only had a couple of minutes to spare but would like to lay down briefly a plan he had worked out for building Sales.

And with that business-like prelude, Ed proceeded to put into concrete and fearless expression the very Idea that the Model Young Man had confided to him the night before.

The Old Man scowled pleasingly,—a token of endorsement, which, had it been directed to any regular inmate of the place, from the Manager down to the Office Roach, would have emboldened the Trusty to ask for a salary lift. But Ed Galloway preferred to ignore the democratic outburst and continued right on, just as if the Boss had told him to get out.

He adjusted his adams-apple, threw an effective knit-brow, and said that what We must first do was to find out Our strength in the Trade. [78]

“The way to go about it,” he said, “is to first send out a return post-card to every farmer in Crooked Creek County asking him how he likes his Arrow Plow. Farmers are irish-loyal to any farm tool they like—see? They won’t exactly genuflect to it, but they’ll yell and wave and that sort of thing—see? And they love nothing better than to write letters to Firms.

“All right, then: if they are already using an Arrow Plow, they’ll say so all over the return post-card and up the margins. And if they’re using some other make of plow—see?—they’ll be just as proud to tell what plow it is. Get it?”

“Now then,” continued Ed, grabbing a pencil and commencing to figure on the Old Man’s shirt front, “the returns will be 90 percent easy—and from these returns we can get the Arrow’s actual strength as well as the strength of the Competition in the terry-tory, thus enabling us to focus first on the weak spots and then throw our whole force against our competitors’ strong-hold. Get me?” [79]

Now there is no sane reason why this little tale should be dragged out to the length of a Turn Verein entertainment, and so we are not going on to tell you how the Boss got all het up over this and other plans that Ed Galloway got from the Model Young Lobster and then presented to The Boss, nor how Doc Boss finally gave Ed *carte blanche* and things like that, and told him to go ahead and put the various campaigns through.

Nor are we going to mention the coincidental visit to the Plow Factory of an Advertising man from one of the big national agencies—a dashing, dynamic, daredevil, who would dare anything on somebody else’s money—and who mapped out for Ed Galloway an original and corking national campaign which Ed promptly submitted to The Boss as the child of his own brilliant brain, and which the Agency Man didn’t care a dam about so long as he scythed in his good old fifteen percent agency commission, and which went through with a whoop and proved to be one big snorting, pawing, red-nostriled, fiery success. [80]

Nor are we going into a lot of yawny detail all about how the Factory rose from its musty Rip and became one of the greatest farm machinery organizations in the country and put up a mammoth electric sign so that passengers on the Limited could see “THE HOME OF THE ARROW PLOW,” and almost got news of its erection on the Associated Wire (dam the censors!) and how the Company stood up \$500,000 against Andy Carnegie’s \$500 for a Library for the Town, and got new engraved letterheads showing a birds-eye of the whole town as the factory with the name of Edward Galloway as General Sales & Advertising Director.

All we are going to mention is that in time Ed put off the straight-stand collar, and put on some flesh over the adams-apple, and quit getting his neck shaved clear around, and began making abstract speeches, (written by somebody else because he was so busy) on “EFFICIENCY” before Ad-Men’s Clubs and Civic Bodies, until at last he stood Big Favorite wherever talk is talked. [81]

Today Edward Ewart Galloway, Efficiency Engineer, sits in his own luxurious suite of solid mahog in New York, surrounded on every side by Brains to which he adds Guts and clears 85 percent net on the combination.

Every little while he gets an emergency call from some big industrial patient who pays him a steel magnate’s salary to come out to their plant and sit around smoking dollar cigars and twisting his moustache and looking wonderfully wise until such time as he can quietly find out what their own Sales Manager’s plans are for the coming season, and then in a Confidential Report to the Board, recommend them as his own good, original, incomparable stuff.

And the moral of it all is this: If you would rise in the Boss’s estimation and in salary, tell him occasionally that he doesn’t know what he’s talking about. It’s the only compliment he’ll stand for.

HOT SKETCH NO. 9

THE ROAD RAT WHO GAVE UP HOME COMFORTS

THE Whiffles did not exactly dwell on any Estate sweeping the green hills. They lived, moved and had their boiled cabbage in one of those sedentary little dumps that get their air through the keyhole in winter and smell like a Subway Local on a wet day. [84] [85]

The Whiffles had a son by the name of Ezekiel. On top of it he wore a readymade tie with a corset-stay on the back to keep it from looking human.

Ezekiel's father had jute whiskers that blossomed from the chin out. He used to sit in the kitchen in his stocking-feet making nothing out of a piece of old wire. This hasn't anything to do with the story, so we are tabulating it before the action begins.

It was Ezekiel's daily custom to drop in at the Kelly House to find out if the Four Twenty was on time and thereby live more abundantly.

On this particular day, while Ezekiel was discussing the momentous issue with the diligently idle crowd of local Chair Polishers, he got acquainted with a Travelling Salesman from Whopps Corners, Ind., who always registered from New York City and wore a golden-pheasant vest. [86]

Ezekiel had been reading about the Opportunities that were standing around on the corners of every big city getting bowlegged waiting for competent men to come and get them. So he asked the New York Salesman from Whopps Corners how about it.

The Salesman was modest and retiring, in keeping with the traditions of his profession, and it was therefore under considerable reluctance that he admitted to Ezekiel, with rather long easy puffs of the hessian, that as for himself he was only fetching down about a thousand dollars a month salary, plus a reasonable monthly unearned increment from his Expense Account. In spite of his shyness he seemed to give off the general impression that the Selling Game was one rosy-cheeked cinch.

Ezekiel thereupon decided that of all the fine arts, Salesmanship appeared to offer opportunities of the most scopeful circumference for becoming a millionaire in one reel.

So he went home and changed his socks in a devil-may-care fashion, and started for Chicago that same night, determined to land a job with some big House that travelled snappy men and did not grieve about Expense Accounts. [87]

He was shrewd enough before leaving home to re-inforce his proposition with several strong To-Whom-It-May-Concerns from men of high standing in the community. One was from the Mayor of Squirrel Cove and another was executed by the Proprietor of the Crescent Hand Laundry who up and spoke in no uncertain tone respecting the high esteem in which our fellow townsman, Ezekiel Whiffle, was held by one and all.

Here let it be set down truthfully, with malice toward none, that Ezekiel Whiffle was no speckled yobbish when it came to doing the thing he packed off to do. He had a life-long record of accomplishment as clean as a willow whistle from the day he set out as a youth to shingle the silo, down to the last leg of the last stove he set up at the Hardware Store before his departure.

Thus it did not take Ezekiel one thousand years to land a job in Chicago, although the parking facilities for men less energetic were very tempting in the City of Basement Restaurants. [88]

Within one week of his first lap round the Loop, Ezekiel had secured a comfortable berth as County Hurdler for a large Manufacturing Concern that was struggling to make both ends meet on 142 percent net profit after paying State and Federal squeeze.

Ezekiel's very earnestness impressed the Boss, even if his Letters of Recommendation did not cause any wild demonstration around the Works. His lack of experience gave him a fresh point of view. He was quite free from the customary we-never-did-it-that-way advice to men who had been running their own business successfully for twenty years.

When the matter of salary was mentioned, Ezekiel had to remove his ear-muffs to be sure he heard the figure correctly. But he decided to go to it anyway and prove that he was worth more than the sixty dollars a month.

During the following fortnight Ezekiel overalled it in the various departments of the big Works getting grease on his face and gathering a rustic headful of practical information which resolved itself finally into a beautifully webbed mass that made the last estate of the poor goop worse than the first. [89]

Zeekie was assigned by the Sales Manager to Luke's Rock, Iowa, for the initial sales bombardment. The Sales Manager, with his well-set little New England head, had of course never been there himself, just as he had never been any place else, but he talked as though he had been making the dorp for years, and assured Ezekiel that there were wonderful possibilities at Luke's Rock and said he would be grievously disappointed if Zeke did not pull out of there with fourteen carloads scored up in his Order Book.

"We are expecting big things of you," he said.

"That's more than I am expecting of you," replied Zeke. But he replied it strictly to himself.

Then the S. M. gave Zeke one of those Boston handshakes and a modest bunch of Expense Money and told him to track. [90]

Let us now be seated while we study Human Nature a little, and see if it is not a fact that when you hand a good Job and a bunch of Expense Money to a beadle who has never had either, you are liable to put a crimp in his psychology and enlarge his ego until he can't find anything to fit it.

Take for illusample: When Ezekiel went from the Office to the Railway Station to catch his train, he felt so goshdanged good that he could have punched a hole through a limousine window for sheer ebullience of spirit.

But when he found that his train was late, he went up to the ticket window and told Mr. Vanderbilt just what he thought of the whole ratty System. And he told it so that everybody around the room could hear it and marvel at his courage and knowledge of railroading. He spoke as in behalf of an injured constituency.

When he boarded his train and got the hang of things, he commanded the porter to raise a window here and lower a shade there, and he ignored the cuspidor entirely every time he took a chew. [91]

When he arrived at his metropolitan destination he gave the owner of the yellow Bus a beautiful bawl for not helping him with his little belly-leather suit-case, and on the way up to the hotel he complained to his fellow passengers about the rickety old boat, and wondered why there were no taxicabs in the dump.

When he was assigned to his room at the Luke's Rock Hotel he kicked like a trapped rabbit because it was a walk-up. And when he saw the room he threw up both good old farm-knotted hands and said it wouldn't do a-tall. They gave him another room and he went over and felt the bed and said the mattress was about as soft and responsive as the Town Scales.

When he came down for breakfast next morning and the Proprietor with his little strive-to-please face asked him how he had slept, he growled back "Rotten!" and lumbered into the dining room.

When the food came on, he complained that the butter was rancid, the rolls were doughy, the coffee was like turpentine, the eggs were boiled 3-3/4 minutes instead of 3-5/8 minutes as ordered, and the service was fierce. [92]

A silent, contended-looking man sat opposite Ezekiel. He thanked the waitress with the thin Face and receding Future every time she brought him anything, and he seemed to relish the little meal as much as anybody could with a 72-centimetre dub sitting opposite.

Finally Ezekiel addressed the silent man. "This Road Life is certainly fierce, ain't it?", he said, pushing back his plate and yanking his napkin from under his red chin.

"It is," replied the Man. "But it wouldn't be, if four-flushers like you would keep off it." Zeek stared, with jaws ajar.

"You are just an ordinary single-cylinder rum," went on the stranger, "that never knew anything better than a corn-husk mattress and large beans soaked in hot water, until you got a job on the Road. Some day you may learn that the man who has travelled most, kicks least, and that the quickest way to tell a cheap staller is to see how he adapts himself to Road conditions."

And with this caustic valedictory, the speaker got up from the table and left the room. Ezekiel, flushed and fast foundering, intended to get up too, and tell the fellow what he thought of him, but decided to keep his seat when he saw about nine feet of man arise from the table. [93]

Now Ezekiel Whiffle might have sieved through something of benefit from this experience had he been given time for reflection. But he had to turn his thought to selling those 14 carloads that his Sales Manager had told him were crouching for a chance to spring into his brand new Order Book.

Besides, he was in no position to get a close-up on himself while he still had a Roll and represented the largest factory of its kind in the country.

Thus when he went to see the Trade his ego again got in the way and he couldn't see that in this grand, free game of Commerce, it is the Buyer who has the right of Free Speech while the Seller must temporize and simulate. At least the Seller must temp and sim up to the time the Order is signed. [94]



Hypnotizing the Buyer

He can then go around the corner, if he wants to, and put his thumb to his nose or call the Buyer anything he can think up that doesn't carry too far along the etheric waves. But to indulge any such feeling before one is off and premises is to invite probable loss of Sale and possible kick in neck.

But Zeekie, the poor smelt, got it all twisted and thought it was war-time and that Buyers were going to come up and kiss him when he arrived and ask him how all the folks were, and carry his suit-case for him, just because he had something to sell.

When they didn't do it, but on the contrary, went right on reading and signing letters and transacting routine office business all the time he was talking to them, as Buyers in normal seasons enjoy doing, Zeekie felt that his dignity was being shot at from ambush, and so he began telling his Prospects different things that they could do if they didn't want to buy his celebrated goods.

While no physical harm befell Ezekiel during these clashes, no orders befell him either, and after working the whole surrounding county and netting nothing but a large ostrich egg, he sat down at the wabby hotel writing-desk on Saturday night and sent the Sales Manager a Report about those fourteen carloads that made that astute little Baked Bean shoot to the scantlings when he read it on Monday morning.

[95]

It took the Bostonian about one full minute after he struck terra cotta again to realize that Ezekiel was down with a violent case of Sales-manic Inflation that could be cured only by the knife. So he promptly cut off Zeke's job and wired him to take the Fifteen Dollars he still had of Dear Firm's expense money and paddle back to the Old Home Hamlet with it.

Now we come on with the anti-climax, the fall of the action, and the close, thus preserving the dramatic unities and giving our readers that sense of relief which a concluding announcement of ours always brings.

When the Hotel Proprietor received the fateful telegram Monday noon and delivered it personally to Ezekiel Whiffle at the breakfast table, the large bucolic appetite which Ezekiel had been vigorously feeding, suddenly and unceremoniously departed, leaving a whole shredded wheat biscuit midway between his incisors and the outside of his face. In fact he entirely forgot it was there until he came to, several minutes or aeons afterward, and tried to pass a glass of water along the parched pathway of his oesophagus.

[96]

On the thirty-seventh reading of the Farewell Proclamation, Ezekiel pulled himself together sufficiently to get up from the table and go out and announce to the Proprietor he was leaving for Chicago on the 3:37. The painstaking little Prop observed for the first time a human note in Zeke's way of putting things.

He suggested that there was a fast train an hour later that carried all Pullmans and got in four hours sooner, if Zeke cared to drive over to the B. Q. & X. junction a mile away. Zeke thanked

him (1st thank recorded) and said he had just as soon take the Day Coach Train as he was only going to be on it a day and a night.

Zeke went upstairs to pack his things and had a feeling that his room somehow was much larger and more comfortable than he had thought it was, and he sort of hated to give it up.

When the yellow bus came alongside for the 3:37 and the driver attempted to toss Zeke's suitcase up on the roof, Zeke took it away from him and said he guessed he'd walk to the station and get the fresh air. The driver asked if he might take the suit-case anyway; but Zeke feared a nickle tip might be expected and he pulled it back and started off for the Station. [97]

The Bus rumbled past Zeke on the way and Zeke thought they had painted it or something. Fifteen minutes later when he was still a half mile from the Station with but 10 minutes to spare, and had just shifted his baggage from hand to hand for the eleventh time, and was sweating like a Madras coolie, he got to thinking what a nice accomodation a Bus was anyway for a little jerkwater like Luke's Rock, and wished he had hopped it at the Hotel.

The 3:37 was one hour and fifty-nine minutes late but Zeke didn't have anything to attend to at destination that he couldn't do just as well sitting here; so he continued his reflections about Life in general and didn't grouse even to himself.

After riding a hundred and fifty years on the Day Coach, Zeke finally reached Chicago with a stiff neck and swollen underpinning but meek as a mujik. As he was hobbling out of the busy Railway Station a Red Cap passed him toting two big suit-cases. They had a million labels pasted all over them and as Zeke humped along behind, he began to inspect the curiosity. [98]

He was reading "Bombay," "Constantinople," "Cairo" and a lot of other names that he had never heard before, and was wondering what State they were in, when he heard a voice just behind him call to the Red Cap: "Here, Boy, put them on this taxi."

Ezekiel looked up and beheld the Big Silent Man—the man who had imparted the much needed but disregarded advice on the occasion of Zeke's first meal at somebody else's expense.

"Blackstone Hotel," said the Big Man as he handed the Red Cap a quarter and stepped into the Taxi.

That night in a wee inside room on the fourth floor of the Lake Smell Dollar Up sat Ezekiel Whiffle trying to read the Help Wanted columns by the dim light that spluttered from a broken gas fixture over the narrow spring-tooth bed. [99]

He was a sadder but a wiser Ambassador of Commerce.

HOT SKETCH NO. 10

THE MAN WHO ORGANIZED MANUFACTURERS

A TIRED Business Man sat at his busy desk cleaning his nails with his paper-knife and lamenting in his tired-businessman's heart the lack of organization among manufacturers. [102]

The name of this particular t. b. Man was Willyums and he was well-to-do and had a separate pair of suspenders for each pair of trousers. [103]

"Just look at the situation," sighed our fervent plugger for united action. "Here we manufacturers are, all knifing one another like a squirming bunch of inch-browed dagoes, when we ought to be solidly organized and working as a single unit against the iniquitous principle of labor organization."

At this point in Willyums' little round soliloquy the Office Beetle crawled in and handed him his morning's mail.

Willyums picked up the letter and read it carefully. It was from a friendly Compett who complained bitterly about the Government's unfair discrimination, and he asked Willyums to offer a suggestion how to head off all such pernicious activity. [104]

This gave Willyums a great wide opportunity to ventilate his views on the crying necessity for cooperative action among manufacturers.

He dictated a letter that was all muscle and fibre. In it he urged the importance of all manufacturers organizing for their mutual protection. He stated that only through unselfishness on the part of Each, could the good of All be served; and original things like that.

Willyums then drafted another snorter to send out to such other manufacturers as he was on speaking terms with, and he pleaded with them to put their shoulders to the wheel and make every sacrifice for the furtherance of the Cause.

He said that any man who would not give up his time whole-heartedly to the work was a stumbling-block in the march of Progress, and he coined other metaphors and epigrammatic phrases that made his letter sizzle and spit like a war-whooper at the Big Grove.

When the "copy" was typewritten and delivered back to Willyums to read and enjoy, he scanned it hurriedly a few dozen times and then handed it to his Advertising-Manager and told that groove-dweller to cut out all the personal pronouns so the Trade wouldn't think it came from J. Ham Lewis and then gallop the letter off to all the names on the list.

[105]

The responses that fluttered back were very encouraging. Everybody seemed strong for organizing at once, and several letters indicated subdued excitement.

A number of leading manufacturers soon got together and perfected a temporary organization and selected a name for the new Association that read like a serial story.

Business matters of a pressing nature prevented Willyums from attending the first meeting, but he wrote a strong letter of endorsement and it was read at the morning session and was much enjoyed by All Those Present as well as himself.

At this Conference it was decided to hold a big meeting of the whole Trade and get things going like a busy shipyard, and the place and date were fixed well in advance so that nobody could stall out.

[106]

Willyums wrote the Secretary back another shoulder-to-the-wheel letter and said he would be there positivoli. But when the time slid up for him to set sail, he and his wife had a Breathitt County difference of opinion which threatened to end in Woodlawn Cemetery. It started about her always leaving the icebox door open, and finished up with a pungent polemic on his sensitiveness and all-round worthlessness as a marital leaning post.

Willyums naturally wanted to stick in the ring till the finish, so he was obliged to wire The Boys that he couldn't be at the meeting and to go ahead without him.

The Meeting proved to be a Great Success and a date was fixed for the First Annual Convention which was to be held at Wagon Springs, Va., and all members were notified to be on hand and to bring their wives and colorless daughters along to enjoy the Entertainment Features and drink of the health-giving waters generously provided by the Hotel Management, with the slight assistance of Nature, at five cents per glass or one cent per paper cup.

[107]

Willyums invited Comrade Wife to accompany him and helped her to get her hat-box through the door and shut the cover of her yawning trunk and pack into his own little tin-trimmed steamer all the things she had forgotten to put in her travelling bungalow.

When Willyums arrived at Wagon Springs the Hotel people gave him the customary welcome of The Hotel Successful which consists in telling the train-tuckered visitor that they have no record of any reservation for him and that he will have to sleep on the Town Pump or up in the pigeons' quarters.

Willyums smoothed out the bulge in his shirt-bosom and told the Emperor back of the desk that he was there to attend The Convention, and as soon as he said this, he lost the two good sleeping-chances referred to up-page.

This made him as sore as a blistered heel and he went straight to the Twelfth Assistant Manager and told him (the 12th Ass't Manager) that if it had not been for him (Willyums), there would be no Convention at all, and that he (12th Ass't Manager) would not be running full-up in his (Mgr's) old Hotel, and that if he (M) did not at once provide him (W) with suitable accomodations, there was going to be a small but efficient funeral around there.

[108]

Willyums got the accomodations all right, including a washstand and neat little ash tray to put his ashes in; but it was so late when he and Mrs. Willyums hit the hessian that they did not open up until 10 o'clock next morning, and then he had to go and dig up the lost luggage so that Madame could drape her matronly Fig. in a new child's dress.

As a consequence Willyums did not get to the opening session of the Convention but he pumped palms with a number of delegates and said he would see them surely at the afternoon session.

The afternoon session was scheduled for 2 o'clock, and so the delegates got there promptly at 3. Willyums was somewhere about the 3rd hole when the meeting was called to order because Mrs. Willyums was just a cub at golf and insisted on doing the 18 no matter what happened. They sweated back to the hotel along about sundown, barely on speaking terms because he had told her that the woman did not live who would not cheat at golf.

[109]

The next morning Willyums announced solemnly to his unselfish helpmeet that he was going to attend the remaining sessions of the Convention or bust. Whereupon Mrs. Willyums let loose a torrent of real tears and told him what a shrimp he was to bring her along and then keep her cooped up in a little ingrowing room when they might both be riding in the mountains and getting some fresh air.

Willyums was a highly sensitized man and could not endure lachrymal leaks, and it did not take him long to give in. In fact he caved in, and accompanied his considerate little wife on horseback, and they had a very nice time and both agreed that the afternoon would positively be his to spend at the closing session of the Convention.

When they returned to the Hotel Willyums learned that the Convention had disposed of all pending matters at the preceding session and had decided to adjourn *sine die* and give the last

afternoon over to Unalloyed Pleasure.

Willyums met several delegates coming out of the Convention Hall and they told him they did not know what they should have done without his generous cooperation, and thanked him for the Great Assistance he had been to them all since the very beginning.

[110]

Lesson for Today: A Trade Organization never grew strong on Absent Treatment.

HOT SKETCH NO. 11

THE PERPETUAL PLANNER

[111]

FLOPPINGHAM WATERDELL sat in his office, feet erect, smoking his morning sisal.

[112]

And nursing along his habitual grouch against Dear Firm.

[113]

Six months before, Floppingham Waterdell had been stricken with the honor of Branch Manager.

It was the biggest job he had ever managed to throw in all his long speckled career, but for some foolish reason Dear Firm thought they had hold of a Whale when they fished him out of the deep blue sea of Job Searchers.

“The utter planlessness of their work,” sighed Floppingham, re-crossing his unexercised legs and taking another long, legumenous puff at the root of all evil.

“They send me here to take charge of an office that has heretofore been conducted absolutely without system, and then they expect me to go out and do business without telling me where they want me to go, or how they expect me to go about it. They scuttle my plans and they don’t offer any themselves. All they say is, ‘Go get the business.’”

[114]

“All work should be planned beforehand,” continued Floppingham, reflectively. “No business man should attempt to do business until he knows his territory thoroughly and the character of his Prospects—even down to their peculiarities and hobbies, thus eliminating lost motion in the Approach, and simplifying the road of ingress.”

From the foregoing iridescent little exerpt from Floppingham Waterdell’s daily conferences with himself over the deficiencies of his Firm, the reader has come to the conclusion, or not, as the case may be, that Floppingham was himself a rhinoceros of no small heft when it came to Business Efficiency.

And indeed Flop was.

Every file in the office, every colored thumbtack on the map, every drawer of his desk, every card-index, chart, letter and cuspidor sang of The Office Efficient.

And all accomplished within six short, shrimpy months!

[115]

For examp: When Floppingham took charge of the dump, you couldn’t find a letter in the files without looking for it. Three months later you didn’t have to go to the files at all when you wanted to look at a letter. You would go to a Card Index where you found all the meaty paragraphs of the letter arranged on a card alphabetically, chronologically and hypodermically, including the writer’s telephone number and all such other thrilling news as appears at the apex of the average letterhead.

As a check against error, you then would get out the original letter from the regular files and compare the card with the letter, or the letter with the card, or vice versa, and the trick was done! Positively no plush curtains or false bottoms to deceive you!

It took one girl only four months to get this system in shape so she could take off the skid-chains.

Before Floppingham assumed charge, nobody around the office even knew how many steps a thirsty bookkeeper had to take to make the water-tank at the opposite side of the room and get back to the revolving perch. Nor did anybody know the amount of time that was consumed per step in such a wild orgy.

[116]

But Floppingham, through his original system of Step Reduction, figured out that if the bookkeeper would lengthen his stride to the Thirst Muffler, he would thereby reduce the number of steps; or, in other well selected words, reduce the time consumed in wasting Dear Firm’s time drinking water.

Thus if ten steps were saved through Step Standardization, and each step consumed one second, that would mean a net saving of ten seconds per trip to the Trough. Granted that six trips per day were made during the winter months, and six hundred during the Dog Season, the result would be a grand total of umpty-ump hours per year per clerk, or a net saving of fifty-ift dollars per year to the Business.

And just to show you to what a fine point the reasoning of the Efficiency Engineer can be spun out without snapping, we will add that Floppingham always took into consideration the length of an applicant's legs when hiring a clerk. [117]

These were but a couple of Floppingham's efficiency installations. He had a million of them. They ranged all the way from Sales Planning to counting the number of puffs to a hemp panatella. He wore out the seat of his trouserial furniture figuring them out.

One day Dear Firm sent him a letter swathed in purple satire, suggesting that Efficiency was a means, not an end, and that if he felt that his Branch could do a little Business once in a while without greatly impairing its uselessness, they would send him a bright young man with a plaid vest to help him make sales.

Whereupon Floppingham Waterdell adjusted his glasses, took up his efficient pen that had pulled him through many a stall, and wrote out plans and specifications covering the kind and quality of man he desired.

It is possible that the talent and virtues and experience of the Human Race, taken as a whole, might have perhaps been able to squeeze up to Floppingham's requirements as set forth by Flop under numerous heads and sub-heads designated as (a) (b) (c) and so forth—the kind, you know, that many Government employes and other bluffologists revel in. [118]

When Dear Firm received from Floppingham this last brilliant contribution to the records of Commercial Pish, they winked one eye clear to the roots and then dictated the following Appreciation:

"We don't know just when it happened, nor just how it happened, but the Business World today is infested with a new stripe of grafter—the Efficiency Eel, to which School you seem to have a Rhodes Scholarship.

"Efficiency Eels are Word Wizards and Figure Fixers of a very clever order, and we poor uneducated kanoops of the workaday-and-night world have been caught by the swing of their phrases and the flare of their 'facts.'

"Not a yap of them ever did a day's work since he left college, and couldn't get out and sell a bill of postage stamps at 50 and 5. Instead of planning for business, they make a business of planning. They are always getting ready, but they never start. They are piffling pollywogs on the plane of the Practical, but past grand masters in the philosophy of Bunk. [119]

"The reason they keep planning and organizing and systemizing all the time is because they know they are nix glox on Performance. And plans without performance are like teeth without jaws.

"Show us the gunk that is always laying the blame for his own failure to lack of efficiency and system in his employer's business, and we'll show you a gunk who is stalling for fair.

"For six months, come Yom Kippur, you have been 'planning' to bag a little business, and if we kept you there for six years, or six hundred years, you would still be planning. You are a planner and not a worker. You can MAKE plans all right, but you could not EXECUTE one of them if it laid its head on the block and handed you the axe.

"It isn't your fault, Mr. Stall, that we have been slow to get your curves. We are just like hundreds of other firms—just plain, ordinary yappoos who would rather hire an outside man at \$20,000 a year to do nothing but plan, than give half the salary to an inside man and have him perform. But now that we are ON, would you mind considering yourself submarined and greatly oblige etc." [120]

Lesson for Today: One bill of goods sold is worth more than a dozen planned.

HOT SKETCH NO. 12 [121]

THE TWIN-SIX PHILANTHROPIST

A POVERTY-PANNED mill owner who had only been able to finger in a bare ten million after twenty gruelling years of grimy grind at Board Meetings and Stock-holders' Seances, sat wearily at his flat-topped Mahogany and heaved a long abdominal sigh at the hellward tendency of the children of today. [122] [123]

"It's all due to the Pernicious Activity of these agitators," he said, wiping away a great big humanitarian tear. "All that I am today I owe to the hardships I suffered when a child."

Here he turned on a few more big salty boys and then continued; "Poverty is a blessing and an educator, and yet these here agitators come along and want to take out of my mill the lucky children that are having a chance through my bounty to become worthy citizens of this great, glorious Republic of ours."

He was just on the verge of adding a few trembling mushmellows about the stars and stripes [124]

waving in the free, pure air of America when his emotion got a hackenschmidt stranglehold on his large oily thorax, and he couldn't splutter it across.

When he had recovered his composure and wiped the sweat-beads from his nice thick neck, he got to thinking some more of all he had done for the town by giving employment to its skinny-legged children, and putting more money in circulation, and all that sort of fly-smacked mediaeval economics, and he choked up again at the thought of how little his beneficence had been appreciated.

In his great paternal heart he knew that his motive in doing all this unselfish thing for the thin-wristed tots of the town was as pure as the lotos flower, and that there was no low-lying thought of the good old coin he was pulling down on the investment.

In fact he was so sure of it that when he chanced one day to notice a wee ripple on the sweet still sea of Graft in the shape of a parboiled attempt to increase the children's wages from One Penny to Two Pennies, he was about as indifferent as a gunless man in a tiger's lair. [125]

Many other little things went to show the philanthropic purpose of King Paunch's acts. He had, for instance, a noonday feed served to the child workers which enabled them to romp joyfully back to the looms twenty minutes sooner each day, and a little later he again got busy with his short pencil and long head and figured out how he could cut off a certain yard space for a playground without cutting off the profits.

He stood wide-legged and willing at all times to prove to anybody that the children were better off in his mill working ten hours a day than they would be in their homes, and that when it came to Loving Care and Attention the laughing loom had any Day Nursery in the land walloped to a wobble.

There was no opportunity, he contended, for the youngsters to acquire vicious habits, except a lint-cough, and by keeping them standing all day catching threads to the rhythm of the loom-buzz, they would not run up against wicked temptation to Walk the Streets.

Every time he would get through telling about his charitable works, he would feel for his halo to see that it was on straight. [126]

In certain moments of mental liberality he would concede that his mill did not include quite all the conveniences and comforts of Heaven, but generally speaking, it was about the most constructive hangout, from a physical, mental and moral standpoint, that you could find south of the Pearline Gates.

There was a touch of pathos in the sight of this willing martyr to the cause of Progress and Purity getting all sweatted up arguing his side of the case against those fanatics who were obsessed with the crazy notion that the place for little children was in school.

Searching through history he found that all the other great and good benefactors of the Race had always run up against the cross or the hemlock in time, and so whenever he was not perorating with fist-pounding positives, he was lying back sad-eyed and resigned, trying to acquire a forgive-them-for-they-know-not-what-they-do look, and breathing forgiveness heavily through every pore.

In time—and now we are coming to the weep part of our throbbing tale—Colonel Razorback's friends began to notice that he was throttling down physically to the point where the only thing that could save him from losing his appetite between meals was to send him to Carlsbad. [127]

Constant worriment over the passage of some Law in the selfish interest of Public Good by which he might have to give up his 500 precious child charges to the ruthless and demoralizing influence of home and school, reacted upon his liver and it began to reach out and kick him in the spine when he wasn't looking.

There was not the least sign anywhere around the organic or functional premises to indicate that his condition was aggravated by the thought that he might have to employ grown-ups at slightly stretched wages, and we have therefore no right to diagnose any man's case afar off.

We shall only say in passing, and without any intimate relevancy to our story whatever, that Colonel Hogshead was pained to the very quick-sand to have to leave his young daughter and his little cowlick-headed son to the tender mercies of a private tutor, a governess, three freckled servants, and their mother, but he managed to bear up under it, and sail away to Carlsbad. [128]

Thus, after issuing Strict Instructions that his own precious tendrils should breathe no second-hand air, nor go out in the heat of the day, nor study too hard, nor exercise when they were the least bit tired, nor get less than 10 hours sleep, nor eat anything not raised under glass, he tore himself away, and, in due time, was lying peaceful and fat in his deck-chair, rugged in snugly and comfy, sleeping the sleep of the Righteous, and dreaming contentedly of all that he was today—all that the blessed privilege of early poverty had made him.

Lesson for Today: Poverty and toil are blessings which we protect our own from enjoying.

HOT SKETCH NO. 13

THE YOB WHO LET BUSINESS SLIDE

[129]

S LOBBINGS knew that motor cars had four wheels and were owned by people who could not afford them.

[130]

[131]

Slobbings' wife was equally well up on the subject. She was once acquainted with some folks who had one of those graceful maroon tonneaus with the little back door like a Hicksville hotel bus, and she used to watch them take up the floor and dive down into the basement to fix the machinery every few miles when something went wrong.

Slobbings knew only too well that the day was coming when his wife would be asking him why it was that they were always hoofing it while their neighbors were jerking past in neat little Fords.

He himself was razor-keen to sit back of a steering wheel of his own and toot a big hebrew horn at jumping pedestrians, but he decided to lay low and let her spring the inevitable question first so that when they bought a car he could forever after blame her for everything that happened this side of Mars.

[132]

The issue came up as expected when the Spring flowers began to hatch, and the smell of new mown gasolene was in the air.

Thus it came to pass that Slobbings and his wife sallied forth one sunny afternoon to feed the motor microbe.

They passed right by the Ford agency but couldn't see it because they hadn't a telescope. Nothing less than a Twin Eight for them! They spent about three hours of lumpy stalling around the Automobile Shopping District pretending they knew what The Man was talking about, and concentrating on the relative merits of wind shields and ignoring little unimportant details like magnetos, carburetors, engines, etc. But after getting familiar with prices, they began to filter down into the Flivver class along about evening-fall and were ready to stop feeling upholstery and get down to cases.

Their decision finally perched upon a snappy, unimpeachable, luxurious top-quality performer which was priced at three figures, the tallest one of the three being under nine, although not more than two or three flights under.

[133]

They owned the car all of one day when the matrimonial bliss in which they had been soaring was brought down, and both occupants barely escaped with their lives.

It happened this way: Slobbings had been under the droll hallucination that he could drive the thing, and so he waved off the young man from the Agency who had volunteered to show him how to stay on a fairly wide road, and started to cut loose with the levers himself, with his Helpmeet at his right.

When the excitement subsided he took his wife into the house and stood her in a corner and made her solemnly swear that in future whenever one was driving, the other was never to cut in with criticism, contumely or contemptuous comment at critical junctures, but was to either sit tight or get out and pedal.

The next morning while Slobbings was at his office trying to get his mind on work, his wife sneaked over and got the demonstrator to throw away his chew and put on his coat and give her a lesson in driving the little pelican.

That night when she and Slobbings started out, it was she who insisted upon taking the wheel, and this gave Slobbings the pleasure of sitting on the thin edge of Uncertainty and grabbing the Emergency Brake every time another car could be discerned with the naked eye coming toward them.

[134]

Whenever she tooted the horn to signal their nervous approach, he would hand her the not-so-loud-dearie caution, hissing said caution between such teeth as he had not already ground off during previous hair-breadth escapes.

If he happened to be the one driving, and stuck out his wing to let the Traffic know he was going to turn a corner in due season provided he did not stall his engine, his wife would tell him that it was not customary nor necessary to injure one's spine hanging so far over the side of the car. In devious other ways she vented her unstrung condition and frequently referred warmly to his all-round hopelessness as a level-headed driver.

There was a demoniacal something that came and sat between them every time they got into that car. The Dove of Peace never flew within five thousand miles of the tail light at any stage of the tragedy.

[135]

Each got the idea that the other felt there was nothing left around the car to be learned, and this naturally led to fierce engagements in which hand grenades were used freely on both sides.

Every time he told her that she shifted her gears like a steam riveter, she would spring back and tell him between her teeth that he couldn't drive a nail, and then she'd follow through with a mighty beanhammer about his family not being very bright anyway, and no wonder he couldn't

get anything past the porphery.

She accused him of throwing out his chest when he ought to be throwing out his clutch, and he retaliated by charging her with imagining she was Barney Oldfield because she could cut around a moving van without losing more than one mud guard.

In their refreshing evening drives together, the one who would first discover that the Emergency Brake was still on, would get right out on the hood and crow and flap like a Hoosier cock in a congested corn-crib, making the other naturally as pleased as a pup with its tail in the door. [136]

History does not recall that Slobbings and his merry mate ever came to a corner that he didn't want to turn one way and she another, nor that both ever desired the Top up or down at the same time.

One day about six months after the Home Breaker had been purchased, Slobbings met with a serious business throw-back. No one was to blame but himself. Motoring had interfered with his Business and he had cut his Office from his visiting list.

Among other things there was an over-ripe note at the bank and he was obliged to produce the necessary piastres within twelve hours. So without slipping a syllable to his wife he up and sold the car, receiving therefor an amount so far below original cost that it made him dizzy to look down at it.

A few days later he broke the news to the Gentle One, and, after the lachrymal flood-gates had been opened and closed again in the usual way, she braced up and said it was all right and they would have to Be Brave. [137]

A hell-hot evening in the following August found Slobbings and his wife taking a nice trolley ride out into the country for a sniff of fresh ozone.

They were sitting side by side, looking over the fields of waving wollypus, and he had his arm around her.

Both were silent. They were thinking of the same thing.

"Well anyway," she said at last, "we *did* have good times with the little car while it lasted, didn't we dear?"

"Yes, love," he replied softly, "those were the happy days."

Lesson for Today: We don't know what we've got until we haven't got it any longer.

HOT SKETCH NO. 14

THE WOULD-BE SALES PROMOTER

[138]
[139]

ONE day a successful Manufacturer who had become strongly addicted to Efficiency Literature after making his pile, sat down and reasoned with himself thus: [140]

"Something is wrong with my business. The Sales Increase for last year was only 120 percent. It should have been 850 percent. The fault lies with my Sales Manager." [141]

"True, he is a good slob, but he is not good enough. My Salesmen all like him and plug hard on his account, to say nothing of their own; but they don't plug hard enough."

"What I need is a Sales Chief who is not stocked up with the dry-bones of Salesmanship—someone who comes from the outside and brings a fresh, crisp point of view—someone who knows nothing at all about the Selling Game. That's the stunt these days! My present man is in a rut. Raus!"

The morning following this sparkling synthesis, Comrade President called in the pre-damned S. M. and tied a campbell soup can to his Promising Career and sent him clattering up Main Street. [142]

Then he grabbed a note-pad, scribbled off a terse Classified Ad, pressed a button on the waistline of his desk, and told the Office Poodle to get it into the morning papers and quit spitting on the radiator.

On a high stool in the Bookkeeping Department of a certain Plumbers Supply House sat an upright and painstaking young gentleman who wrote an excellent hand, never erred in his posting, and fainted when anybody turned the ledger pages from the bottom instead of the top.

But of late years he had contracted a serious case of correspondence-schoolitis and within him was stirring strong the ambition to Become An Executive And Earn Fifty Thousand A Year.

He was firmly convinced that the only difference between the man shoveling coal and the man

shoveling coin was a difference in Earning Power, as told graphically in the pictures; and so whenever the Boss wasn't looking, he would pull out his book and study up on how to increase his Earning Power.

[143]

On this particular morning this particular young gentleman had been casually perusing the newspaper for a few hours prior to the Boss's arrival, and he had almost finished the twenty-eighth page when his eye leached upon the advertisement of our friend the Efficiency President about whom we were chatting pleasantly before we went off on this spur.

"I feel the fingers of Fate upon my spine," said the young gentleman osteopathically, as he clipped the Ad from the paper and slipped it into the upper berth of his double-breasted white waistcoat.

When the noon hour struck, it took him just two and one-quarter minutes to slide down the scaffolding of the high stool, grab his little cardboard derby, and jump a passing trolley in quest of the job.

But when he arrived at the factory, his Nerve suddenly up and left for parts unknown. With trembling ears, and muscles of the map twitching like a mare's flank shivering off flies, he opened the office door. He didn't burst it open wildly like a cartman with a delivery receipt for you to sign, or any important personage like that. He opened it just wide enough to squeeze through and scrape the buttons all off his coat.

[144]

The man in charge knew of course what this flickering taper had oozed in for. It was a cinch he wasn't some Kentucky customer calling to raise hell about the last shipment. Only a man looking for a job could behave like a seidlitz powder and not arouse suspicion. So he ushered him in to see the President.

Mister President, pushing back his whiskers for oratorical clearance, delivered himself thus:

"Young Man," he said, "have you any reason, either apparent or hidden about the premises, for thinking that you know any more about Salesmanship than a squirrel knows about Santa Claus?"

"No sir," blurted the Dose of Salts, meaning to say "yes" and bluff it out.

"Good!" broke in Uncle President. "You've got the very qualification I'm looking for.

"And what name do you wag to?" queried Monsieur Le President, well pleased with his exceptional perceptive faculty.

[145]

"Elliott Buc—" But Pres. cut him short. "Never mind the details," he said.

"And now Elliott," he continued, throwing back an emphatic lapel and hooking his presidential thumb into his vest pocket, "I am going to make you my Sales Manager. You look and act as unlike a Sales Manager as anything I've ever seen this side of Lapland and that's why I think you'll do. I'm working on a new system. So get up off the floor there, and say 'thank you'—and GO TO IT!"

Elliott's full and complete name may be itemized as follows: Elliott Buckingham Tudor-Smith. But around the office they promptly re-capped it under the appropriate and musical monicker of "Ellie."

They also noted that from the instant Ellie landed the coveted job, his knees and his neck began to stiffen like a steel bar, and there was something in his manner that seemed to say: "The President should be congratulated upon his good judgment."

The whole overburdened Office Staff were stop-work observers of everything that went on in the office from a giggly conversation among the girls down to delivering a bottle of crystal spring water for the ice-cooler, and of course they all saw and remembered how Ellie went into the President's office on all fours to apply for the job.

[146]

Hence when they now saw him swank past them full of superior swish and driving his heels to the floor like a Grenadier Guard, they naturally began to develop that warmth of fellowship toward him that one feels for the cramps.

Had Elliott not been by profession a Bookkeeper, he would have made a good Haberdasher. When it came to practical Salesmanship he had about as much experience as a sponge diver. Hence he possessed many essential qualifications of the modern blank-cartridge Sales Director, as psychically discerned by the President at the outset.

While Elliott might be described as a traveled person, he was not what you would exactly call a globe-trotter in the strict sense of said term. He had on several occasions joined the Sunday Excursion to Churubusco, Indiana, with the white duck panties and the blue serge Double Breasted. Also he had been twice to Chicago; once during his honeymoon, and once when he went there to get his teeth filled, and in so doing made the local horseshoer sore on him for life.

[147]

We mention this irrelevancy merely to show that when it came to skipping here and there over the cornbelt, and getting back to the Home Town safe and sound and unrobbed, Elliott could hold his own with the best of them.

Elliott possessed still another essential to successful latter-day sales management. He was one rhinoceros on System. In less than three months after he had set sail upon the hazardous sea of Sales Promotion, he had everything on the premises mapped and charted and indexed and cross-indexed and sub-indexed and super-indexed forty-seven different ways.

Any ordinary question put to him about the Business or the Weather would be followed by the pulling out of numerous little drawers and card-indexes and files and charts and things until the Questioner had forgotten what it was he asked about, or had gone on to other matters or to sleep. [148]

Elliott's highest qualification for his job, however, lay in his early-discovered ability to write a very superior quality of nagging letter to the Salesmen under him. When it came to the Quibble & Nag stuff, Elliott had every corn-fed Sales Manager in the land rolled up like a carpet.

Having himself never sold a Bill of Goods in his tiny conventional life, and being barely able to tell the Goods from a large knobby sack of apples without first walking all around them and squinting at them from different angles, he was insured at all times against writing the Sales Force upon anything that might be of any importance whatever to the Business.

For instance, when the Firm's crack salesman shot of the Western Territory was aching like an ingrowing toenail for some constructive suggestion from Headquarters concerning a Big Deal he was trying to put across, he would receive a three-page Satire from Ellie criticizing him for scoring up 168 miles in his Expense Book when the R. R. Guide showed plainly and Unmistakably that the actual distance from point to point was only 167 miles. [149]

And when some other Sales Wizard would send in a C/L Order from some dotty dorp off in the scrub of Oblivion where The House had never before sold a Lincoln Penny's worth of their fully-guaranteed Stuff, Ellie would promptly press Button No. 2 (gawd, how Eddie loved to press those buttons!) and then dictate to the anaemic stenographer a couple of pages of acid contumely, telling how surprised The Writer was that an Order from a territory of such potential greatness should not have called for ten carloads instead of one carload.

Ellie of course never hiked out on The Road himself and therefore never knew whether a given Territory was potentially great or potentially punk, nor whether one carload was a slashing big Order or a paltry pee-wee, but he always had to write cheery stuff like yon foregoing because this is the particular phobia of the desk-reared Sales Manager. [150]

Ellie never believed in complimenting a Road Rat and running the risk of impairing the gunk's proper perspective of his work and maybe cause him to slap in an extra bus-fare on the strength of it.

In short, Ellie's skilful management naturally succeeded in putting The Boys in such excellent spirits that every time they got a letter from him they felt like shooting up a Home for Incurables.

But in due and good time it came to pass that all those Salesmen on Elliott's staff that were not buying clapboard homes on installment, slapped in their resignations and politely told Ellie and His System to go to hellenstaythere.

This, however, did not cause so much as a tropical ripple on the sea of Serenity upon which Elliott Buckingham Tudor-Smith was gliding so smoothly. As fast as one Salesman would up and kick off his breechin', Ellie would hire another, and each time he got a better man than the man who quit. After a while he had as fine a bunch of Ribbon Clerks as ever lined up against a soda fountain on a reckless Saturday afternoon. [151]

But all things come to him who stoops over when the boot of Wrath draws nigh. At the end of the Fiscal Year, which is the time of reckoning and erasing and general all 'round fixing of fake entries, Comrade President called Elliott into his private office, leaned back in his executive Swivel, and relieved himself of the following ballad:

"Young man," he said, feeling for his tonsils to see that they were on straight, "I have just looked over the Sales Record for the year during which you have been benching in the Sales Department, and I find that Sales have fallen so shockingly low that they ought to be in a Rescue Home.

"When I gave you that job I was following out a plan that has proven successful in many cases as shown by magazine articles. I thought you would make a good Sales Manager because you knew nothing about Selling, just as the best organizers of Business Men's Associations are Kendallville Professors who know nothing about Business, and the best writers of Efficiency Stuff are men who file their correspondence on a hook, and the most dazzling Shop Management Talksters those who heave a wheelbarrow over a fence and never see the gate. [152]

"I now see that I was not only Dead Wrong but absolutely bughouse. I might as well expect to get a good hair-cut by a piano-tuner or boxing-lessons from a Tea Tenor, as to get a good Sales Manager out of any man who gets off a train head-first and doesn't know a Sample Case from a schmeerkase.

"In twelve long, lanky months you haven't yet got the lie of the 2nd hole on the Selling Course,

and I have a sneaky suspicion that you wouldn't get around the first Nine in ninety years.

"You couldn't get a Salesman's point of view if he stuck you in the leg with it, and for the same reason you couldn't see the Dealer's slant on things, nor the House's policy if you trained a super-telescope on them.



Proff O. U. Bojack (Bus. Doc.)

"Besides all that, you have been so busy trying to think out some new high-sounding title for your job, and writing brainless Briefs on Salesmanship for the tired Trade Press, and attending so many noontime foolishers called Business Luncheons, that you haven't yet had time to learn whether our Line of Goods is made to wear or to eat.

[153]

"Here and there in this worryful World of Business you will occasionally find some old moss-chest who still holds that Salesmanship means SELLING GOODS, and not Charts, Maps, Conferences and After Dinner Oratory. I now see, after a brief but total eclipse of Horse Sense due to too much reading and too little thinking, that I am one of those Old Timers myself.

"I don't blame *you*," he went on, unmindful of a pair of quaking pants before him, "for getting the Bilged Bean right at the crank-up, for you have never shinned the rough spots of Salesmanship yourself, and you haven't got the imagination of a moving van.

"The fault is all mine," he concluded, "but that's a matter that doesn't cut any cantaloupe now. So get back to the High Stool and ply your penmanship! I've decided to hire a Regular. Voetsak!"

[154]

HOT SKETCH NO. 15

[155]

THE YOUNG SATELLITES OF STALLVILLE

CLARENCE and Bud lived in the same dotty dorp and went to the same little red-necked school.

[156]

[157]

Clarence was a studious piece of Rocquefort and scored 100 in everything.

Bud's monthly report looked like the stock quotations in a demoralized market.

Whenever anything was pulled in the shape of Rough House, Bud was usually the Chairman of the Board of Directors.

Clarence, on yon other hand, always conducted himself in an Exemplary Manner and wore leggins.

There was a big manufacturing plant in the town and when the boys finished school they naturally went to work there. Everybody did. The whole force was born and raised within sound

of the whistle.

The Export Manager had never been clear across the County Line. That's why he was the Export Manager.

Clarence was given an important clerkship in the office.

Bud likewise received Four Dollars a week.

[158]

Bud pinched enough postage stamps to make it Four Twenty Five.

Time went on.

And on.

Clarence built up a record for piety, punctuality, faithful fidoism and fussy attention to details that made every aspiring clerk in the place eat the carrot of envy every time they thought of him and his little kuppenheimer.

Bud was the only one who couldn't see even a dim outline of Clarence's sterling virtues.

His psychology was as different from Clarence's "as day is from night," to put it originally yet cleverly.

Bud was a wrecker of rules and a punisher of precedent.

He couldn't see where certain non-essential things cut any large and influential ice in the great game of Business.

And he voiced his views with such hobnailed frankness that Clarence daily expected to see Bud popped from the Payroll.

He cautioned Bud repeatedly in a patronizing high tenor to censor his stuff or be prepared for the Hiking Certificate.

[159]

Time went on some more.

Bud still stuck.

The predictions of Clarence and all the other starchy little stallers proved to be punk and peanutty.

Comrade Boss seemed to take considerable shine to Bud, but none of the tall-collared gentry could get it at all.

Bud didn't smoke his cigarettes around in the alley. And he played billiards on the Sabbath. And his business letters lacked dignity they said, although the stuff got over.

The reason the Boss liked Bud can be explained very simply, without the aid of music, motion pictures or other contraptions calculated to emphasize and impress.

The reason was this: Bud had IDEAS.

Now an idea is something that only Individuals are susceptible to. Persons never contract them.

Bud was an Individual. The rest of the Office Staff was an office staff.

If an idea had ever wandered in among them, it would have been unable to establish its identity. Nobody would have known the stranger at all.

[160]

Bud didn't see why things should be done a certain way just because old man Noah did them that way.

Nor why a business letter should throb with about as much human interest as a Report on Weights and Measures, just because it was called a business letter.

Bud was also dead set against office stalling.

He never threw the bluff that he was all fevered up with work when he wasn't doing anything but tinker with a hangnail.

And when he worked on a job, he worked to produce, not to prolong.

Further, Bud declined to have it in for the Boss simply because he was the Boss. And at every session of the Rappers' League he was as open about it as a woman with a secret.

All these things Burra Boss quietly eyed-in from time to time, as Bosses have the lowdown habit of doing.

And so one bright Spring Morning about eleven minutes past ten he called Bud into the Throne Room.

"Young man," quoth he, "you have been for several years sitting in with a bunch of office beadles without becoming one of them.

[161]

"It is no simple cinch for a young man to hold himself aloof from the piffle and puff of Office

Politics and to evolve ideas in an intellectual graveyard. I take this occasion to congratulate you, my boy."

"Thank you sir," quoth Bud, wondering if he was in for something more negotiable than a congratulation.

"And furthermore," quoth on the Boss, "I have decided to promote you to the sales-managership of this hustling hive at twice the salary we have been smothering you with heretofore."

Bud attempted to quoth back, but there wasn't a quoth left in his quothary.

Too full for coherent utterance, he merely made various motions indicating large appreciation, such as bowing, tapping his shirt bosom, winding his watch, and so on.

And then he backed modestly out of the room.

Into the Salesmanager's sanctum Bud carried the same dashing disregard for precedent and prehistoric policies that had landed him the hundred-and-fifty dollar job. [162]

Inside two more years he had established such a ripping record that the Boss made him General Manager of the Works and raised him to Two Hundred.

The Boss also let Bud in on a percentage of the profits equaling one-sixteenth of one percent beginning with the tenth year after it went into effect.

As for Clarence, he is still sitting neat and erect somewhere in one of the outer offices checking things at a small desk.

In between glances at comrade clock, he wonders how the Boss could have possibly made such a busy blunder as to pop Bud to the top and overlook real genius.

"Mercy!" he ejaculates, and turns once more to his checking.

Lesson for Today: A stiff neck never supported a thinking head.

HOT SKETCH NO. 16

[163]

THE BENEDICT WHO WISDOMED-UP

MARK McMARK was one of those good-lord-look-at-this-desk Business Bees that fish their noonday grub out of a Pie Incubator and rush up and pay what they think is approximately correct, and then snap back to their offices like a rubber band. [164] [165]

When it came to Fortune Farming, Mark McMark was cutting a good clean furrow and he was as happy as the day is wide. In spite of this, he decided to get married.

He did not first make up his mind to rivet-up, and then roll up his sleeves and go out on a hunt for the girl.

On the contrary Mark had a keen contempt of large circumference for that type of male kanoop that sits around his bachelor dugout until the microbe of Melancholy begins to take up its winter quarters in his corrugated heart, and then decides he wants a Home and goes out and sizes up every girl he meets like a bumpkin in to buy a bullock.

Mark believed that Love chases not her own. He said that for every masculine mammal there was a feminine complement browsing somewhere along Life's ranch, and that all you had to do was to stick around and the Right One would loom up over the hills before sunset. [166]

There was no doubt in Mark's mind that the Right One had credentialed in his case. He said he could tell it in any one of a dozen ways, no matter who held the cards. He was so german-sure about it that he began to get sort of section-boss with all his bachelor friends and told them that they were only Half Men and he spread considerable First Lesson Philosophy wherever he went.

All the married men in the office used to sit tightly non-committal when Mark raved. Their silence was about as quiet as a Miners Protest Meeting but it got right by Mark every time. He just kept on baiting everybody and maintained that no Business Man ever worked at maximum efficiency until he was buckled and had a man's responsibility and some incentive to spur him on to Greater Achievement.

In time Mark and the Right One were lawfully wished on each other and duly preached and Lohengrined, and they began to Keep House in an Apartment, which translated means that they began to stall less and learn more. [167]

Mark didn't have time to tell Her any longer about the Big Things he was going to do. It took all his time to explain the Little Things that he didn't do. He got better acquainted with Her every time he forgot to leave an order at the Grocer's, or carved the lamb from left to right instead of from right to left.

Mark also learned that he had oddly shaped ears, mispronounced many words, walked like a Yiddish cloak and suit maker, and slept with his face ajar. The breakfast table became a sort of observatory for physiological and temperamental defects, and the pastime developed to such an engrossing point, that Mark began to forget about the office and sort of hung around the house like a haze, fearing to lift, lest he miss a good opening for a caustic comeback.

Whenever the satire ran low on acid, an ominous lull would follow, during which nothing could be heard but the sullen click of knives and forks, and the ebb and flow of coffee along Mark's aesophagus. Then suddenly the silence would crack wide open when she would ask him what was the matter with the potatoes that he didn't eat them, and he would retort, "Good Lord, give me time—I can't eat everything at once, can I?" [168]

At the office everybody began to notice Mark's speedometer wasn't recording very reliably. They also thought he was shifting into Neutral a good deal for such a positive pussonality. He would sometimes sit for 20 or 21 minutes scratching his roof and looking at nothing concrete. Then just when he would be verging on the Mattewan Stare he would recover himself sufficiently to bawl everybody out.

Things went on in this peaceful, happy fashion at home and abroad until one day when Mark suddenly decided to have a Thorough Understanding with his Helpmeet. He pulled down his vest and the cover of his desk, slapped his granite derby on one Ear Hook, and pounded heavily homeward for the Finals.

Ten minutes later he opened the door of the little round-shouldered Apartment and called hoarsely to his Mate. There was no answer. Then he called again not quite so Arizona, but Silence again responded. Mark heard the water dripping in the kitchen sink. The little alarm clock on a chair in Her bedroom ticked like a steam riveter. One of Mark's twenty-five cent pure silk hose lay on the rocker where She always sat. There was a needle and thread still in the sock. Everything in the place seemed kind of stiff and churchy—like a Scotch parlor on the Sabbath. [169]

Mark hung around the middle of the floor for a few moments and then flopped on the sofa to think things over. It was boisterously quiet. The chairs all stood around looking at him like a lot of pall bearers waiting for the sign to catch hold. A curtain moved slightly in the breeze, and the rod of it tapped on the window sill. It was a quiet little tap—kind of uncanny, like a spirit rap.

"I'm beat," said Mark, after a long pause, packed with ache. "If she would only breeze through that door right now, I'd chase pebbles up the beach all day long for her, or swim out and fetch sticks." [170]

A thought struck him. He got up, put on his o'rourke, and, closing the door ever so lightly behind him, slipped over to the florist's. A moment later he returned with a great armful of lilacs. He looked as if he had pinched them—there were so many. Every vase in the house he filled with them, and then stuck the balance in empty milk bottles, pitchers, tin cans, and back of the pictures.

"There!" he said, surveying the job, "that will fix things up between us, and please her when she returns."

Then Mark went back to his office and worked like a stoker.

That night when he returned home, the Right One met him at the door.

"I wish you had not put those old lilacs all over the place," she opened up testily, "Just look at that floor!"

Lesson for Today: What's the use!

HOT SKETCH NO. 17 [171]

TWO BUSINESS BAGGERS OF PUNKTON

IN THE small burdock town of Punkton two rival manufacturing plants wiggled for supremacy. [172]

The destinies of one were ably steered by a veneered razorback named Grabit. [173]

At the helm of the other stood one, Fairman by name.

Grabit was a Pillar and had a pew right down front, a little to windward.

He used to sit ample and contented every Sunday morning listening to the little chinless preacher extol his Sterling Virtues to the blank-faced congregation.

Fairman wasn't cutting any bold slashing figure as a Pillar and he was the only man in town who wasn't wasting away worrying about it.

The rest of the burg spent many anxious hours speculating upon the probable location of Fairman's residential quarters in the Hereafter.

Grabit thought of his employes in terms of machinery and was a devoted husband and father, [174]

according to custom.

Fairman called his men his "helpers" and had the absurd notion that they were human.

In Grabit's mind there was not so much as a peewee doubt that he (i. e., Mr. Grabit) was a very superior order of genius and that every man under him was somewhere along about the mollusk stage of unfoldment.

He felt that through Divine favor he was enabled to grant to his men the blessed concession of working 10 hours per diem for 8 hours payem. And he tucked his napkin under his chin and was very grateful.

Fairman was so melon-brained that he imagined his manufactured products to be the result of the pooling of all the brains and activities of all the men in his plant from the General Manager down to the beetle that pinched the perfectos from the top desk-drawer.

Grabit stroked his enameled brain-case and reasoned that by paying his men more wages they would only have that much more to squander down at the Big Horn.

He figured that men of such muggy mentality didn't care to spend any time in their dull homes, and so he couldn't see any approximately sane reason for shortening working hours. [175]

Fairman had the comical delusion that by expanding wages and contracting the workday he could cut off a lot of worry from the minds of his laborers and their weary wives, and that this in turn would mean increased bodily vigor, clarity of thought, efficiency of action and other things that would sound well if we could think of them at this moment.

With the recklessness of Irresponsibility, Fairman went so far as to put his spooly ideas into effect. He paid a minimum wage so high that when Grabit heard about it he let out a roar that shook the apples all off the trees in an orchard scene that his daughter, Eleanor, had painted when she was at the Academy.

He swore that Fairman was demoralizing the Labor Market and nervously pulled scotch hairs out of his dilating nostrils.

Time tangoed on.

Visitors to the plant of Fairman began to comment on the clear merry eyes of the workers. The men went about their tasks with speed and accuracy. [176]

And whistled betimes.

And sang, maybe.

The factory's output increased fifty percent without straining a ligament. The puddler seemed as interested as the President in everything that was doing around the Works.

If you had stood on the corner when the morning whistles blew, and watched the dinner-pailers heading up Main Street, you could have picked the workers of Fairman from the toilers of Grabit with your eyes 22° off centre.

The Grabiters all had that "I wasn't-hired-to-do-that" air, and grouched about the Boss in low dismal tones all the way from liver-and-coffee to forge and furnace, and back again. Every shoulder balanced its chip; and grouch, gruff and grump settled over the Works so thick you couldn't rip it with a rapier.

Every morning when Grabit opened his mail he was regaled with much pleasing news from Kicking Kusstomers about defective Goods, shortage and all those things that wallow in the wake of a system of inspection that has sagged to a dull routine through indifference and the lack of pussonel interest. [177]

Grabit didn't sneak behind any door and whisper to himself what he really thought of the unreasonable dubs that made these complaints. On the contrary, he called his melancholy stenographer and dictated a masterful piece of satire and roofraising rhetoric that was calculated to double them up like a jack-knife.

Now all this kind of thing was planked sirloin for the Salesmen of Fairman. They shared in the profits of their Concern and didn't have to knock down Bus Fares any more in their expense books, and so they were full of joy and jump.

They got after the disgruntled Customers of Grabit like bees after blossoms and did not exactly have to shoot up the place to scare any of them away from their old connections.

Grabit's Salesmen were drawing down their good old \$100 a month salary, and turning in vouchers for street-car fares, and so when they ran up against the Order Baggers of Fairman they were able to put up about as strong a rebuttal as a girls' debating society. [178]

Each succeeding season saw a new addition to the Fairman works, until forty acres had been brought under roof and the town had been made a regular stop for the Fast Express. Grabit noted every progressive step with increasing pains in the pit of the stomach, but not to be outdone, he revolutionized things himself by installing a new factory whistle.

Statements of the local banks showed steady increases in the deposits of Fairman's workers.

Neat little brick homes with phonographs in the parlors sprouted all over the town and made business good for the butcher, the baker, and the electric light and power company.

Men with long hair and short hair and no hair to speak of, came from far and near and from Vedersburg, Indiana, to find out how Fairman did it, and to get nose-close to the system in actual operation.

Certain yard-stick philanthropists questioned the Ultimate Good of it all, and there were many sincere and hard-working Business Men clearing all the way from \$1,000 to \$5,000 a year in their own business, who called Fairman "an industrial accident" and believed down back of their little cramped undershirts that such a thing as an accidentally successful man could actually be. [179]

Recapitulation: Fairman became one slashing, sensational success no matter how you looked at the question—whether altruistically, practically, or through a knot-hole.

As for Grabit, he sits today at his dusty little desk, fingering his penny Ledger and absentmindedly feeling around in his whiskers betimes for a wild hair or two. Listlessly he turns the ledger pages and counts the tombstones, and in gloomy speculation asks himself why all those old Customers went over to the Competish,

Why his Salesmen were slipshod
And his goods built on luck
Why his best men deserted
And the worst stuck—and struck.

An echo answers "Why."

The Office Cat, scrawny and sarcastic, jumps on the window ledge. She gives Grabit one withering look, puts her thumb-equivalent to her nose, and disappears into the night. [180]

Grabit is alone.

Isn't it harrowing though?

HOT SKETCH NO. 18 [181]

THE PICAYUNE PLANET

ONCE there was a ball-shaped mass of matter whirling through space called "The Earth." [182]

Compared to other masses of matter chasing through the charted Universe, it was about as big and important as a louse on the leg of an elephant. [183]

The Earth was covered with millions of wiggling, jiggling, jumping little gnat-like creatures called "Men." These "Men" told one another that they were the highest form of created life.

And believed it.

And thought they had a sense of humor.

They made themselves a god in their own image and likeness and kept altering and remodeling him from epoch to epoch, to suit their own selfish purposes. Their aim was to standardize him so that everybody, whether white or black or yellow or drab, could utilize him profitably in his business.

For thousands of years these little shrimpy Two Spots spent their time building up and tearing down. As soon as one set of them would start anything that promised to pull them out of the inch-browed class and enable them to stand on their hind legs and look upward, another set would come along and push them back on all fours again. [184]

All of them were for Progress but none of them knew what Progress meant. They all stood for Morality, but as they had one Code of Morals for one set and another Code for another set and kept changing and shuffling these Codes all the time none of them knew at any stage of the game whether he was moral or immoral. He had to read the Season's Revised Rules before he could tell.

In time certain foxy gazunks arose among them called "rulers." These rulers wore a lot of bric-a-brac on their chests and catcher's masks on top of their heads called "crowns," and collected millions of Low Brows around them and told the L. B.'s that God had selected them to rule because they were wiser than anybody else. The poor kanoops opened their heavy jaws and bulged out their eyes in glassy awe, and believed it. [185]

Each Ruler had his bright, beaming eye on the other's loafing-stool called the "throne," and manoeuvred merrily to pinch it. But he was not always sure that his knee-bending subjects would follow him and so he devised a dandy little scheme.

He tore a piece off his royal shirt, painted some hieroglyphics on it, and went out on the

balcony and told the assembled yappoos that it was their "flag" and that they should always fight for it and defend it, no matter whether it was used to grab territory with, or to liberate people who preferred not to be liberated.

At this, they all threw up their sweaty caps and hoorayed until they were thick-throated and bughouse.

But here and there in the bunch was a party who had managed to wiggle out of the trough-stage in spite of Civilization, and these came forward and examined the "flag" and told the crowd it was nothing but the tail of a shirt waved for pilfering purposes. Whereupon these inquisitive agnostics were promptly busted on the butcher's hook with proper religious ceremonies. [186]

Other Rulers hung out their long lawyer-like necks to pipe the proceedings and found that the flag was the best all-around little device that had yet been framed for keeping the blobs ignorant of the cold-unemotional fact that their rulers were Con Men of keen calibre and their claim to Divine Right of Rule just common, ordinary, everyday Class C Shorthorn.

One day one of these rulers happened to turn his head to the right to sneeze, and while he wasn't looking another ruler slipped over the back of his throne, beckoned to his vassals to follow, and sneaked up on his hands and knees to pull the throne-stool from under the party with the hay fever. Another Ruler, observing the empty seat of his neighbor Divine Ruler, started cross-lots to grab it.

But the first Ruler was a crafty little cuss and when he saw this rearguard action, he and his followers turned around and a mighty, murderous mix-up ensued.

With a Green Eye on Gain, the other Rulers then buckled on their war boots and galloped into the muck to help the respective pugs and at the same time help themselves to anything lying around uncrated. [187]

When they all got thoroughly started, Hell closed its doors and went out of business on account of the competition.

Each Ruler realizing that he himself couldn't fight for fried fish, began to shake his little mad-made god before the eyes of the Deluded, and through poetry, prose and prayer got them to believe that it was deity's own special wish that he should slaughter his neighbor. This worked like a kaffir charm and all hands went to the slaughter with a smile that reached from ear to ear and clear around to the back of the neck.

Every time a certain Divine Righter landed a good old jaw-breaker on the enemy he would say that it was god's coaching that did it, and every time he got one in the abdominal area that doubled him up like a folding-bed, he would shake his finger at the victor and splutter out, "You wait! God will punish you yet!" They all had the very same god working for them and beseeched him to come down and wallow with them. [188]

When the rough-house had progressed long enough to lay them all out squirming and moaning and praying like a lot of winded dervishes, the great God of Eternity—the God that forged the Universe of Universes and set countless worlds a'whirring in one grand harmony of Love and Service—leaned over the balcony of Heaven, and with the back of His mighty hand swept them all off the dinky, ball-shaped mass of matter like ants from a table top.

HOT SKETCH NO. 19 [189]

THE PASSING OF THE BUCK PASSERS

THERE was a man of Pep and Potential who owned a large and constantly stretching Business. [190]

Originally it was the size of a pants button and consisted of one ratty Rolltop, two rubber-stamps and a nominal assortment of liabilities. [191]

National Advertising had dredged the Business out of the dump of Dinkyism and tossed it upon the apex of Affluence.

The sudden and unexpected growth had sunk the Boss ear-deep in detail drudgery, and so he decided to surround himself with men who could balance some of the burden that rested upon his convex shoulders and caused forehead-furrows like a first-line trench.

Thereupon he hired for his Sales Manager a calm and collected caterpillar who had been doing high-class dental work at a leading Way Station and acting as professional pallbearer on off-days. Caterpill came Highly Recommended by a frowsy friend connected with an Advertising Agency that was hoeing in 15 per cent on all business placed. [192]

The Boss next decided to graft onto the main trunk an expert Advertising Manager, and so he selected from the 70,000 agitated applicants a complacent party that knew as much about Advertising as a first-class dragoman.

Then said Doc Boss to himself, said he: Now that I have the Sales and Advertising ends of the works hemmed up, I must get me somebody with brains and ballast to do my buying; also a hot

hound to superintend the plant and a sprightly spaniel to see that the stuff gets shipped during the same historical epoch in which orders are received.

So he sniffed about the town and soon had these pearly positions filled with a couple of polliwogs related to his wife's uncle and his cousin's chums, and they brought their letters of Hearty endorsement from the Pastor and the red-horned Congressman of the District.

Having surrounded himself with the afore enumerated eminent executives, Comrade Boss leaned back in his revolving Reposer and said: "At last I am going to cop a wee round of rest and recreation. No more work, worry, and wiscissitude for me." [193]

The last syllable had slid gracefully away on the serene, sweet morning air when the new Superintendent greased in to find out if there would be any objection to his putting a new hinge on the factory door.

On his way out, the Supe bumped into the Sales Manager on his way in to ask Governor Boss if he should go ahead and O. K. an Expense Account upon whose fair bosom rested a Bus Fare charge at Holbrook Hollow where the hotel leans leisurely up against the railroad station.

Mayor-general Boss smiled sweetly, said "No" (dam you) and turned away to wrestle with a few speckled doubts that began to creep up into his Thinkery and nibble at his Composure.

Before he had bottled his irritabliousness, in flowed the serene Advertising Manager wanting to know whether he should change the copy in the Ads every decade or so, or let it stand until it fell down from sheer exhaustion.

When this genius of initiative had ebbed away, the Boss's telephone she rang and he grabbed at the instrument like a straw grabs at a drowning man, thinking that some diversion in way of a date might be in prospect. [194]

But he found it was the new Buyer wanting to know which of two quotations he should accept—the higher or the lower. Professor Boss replied that it was a knotty case to decide off-palm, but from a superficial cast-over there might be no grievous mistake in accepting the lower quotation; and the Buyer naturally said he thought the same way but didn't feel justified in taking the responsibility of deciding all alone by hisself.

When Uncle Boss had hung up the receiver he found the bright-eyed Shipping Clerk standing at his tired side waiting to be wisdomed-up on whether he should ship 34,999 lbs. at the L. C. L. rate or pay for the extra lb. and get the C. L. rate.

Major Boss thought a long time but not about what the Shipping Clerkerino had whispered. He was just trying to make a choice between murder and suicide. He decided to do neither, but to just hold onto his Patience as a matter of self-discipline and try to get in his rest between Foolish Quesions. [195]

For the first six months he seemed to be making considerable prog., often getting several moments to himself, during which aforesaid moments he fumbled with his cufflinkers and pulled his eyebrows to see if he could get one out at every pull.

But when the calendar year had begun to run down at the heel, the demands from the Department Heads became so insistent and insupperable that one day Cap Boss jumped up on his desk, gave one blood icing yell, swung his arms wildly in the crisp autumn ozone, and dove head-on into the cuspidor.

When he had been fished out and revived, he seemed strangely calm and collected. In a voice that had a weird, far-away-over-the-hills sound, but carrying in its depths an unmistakable quality of determination, he called in all his hefty, high-class helpers, told them to be seated, and spake as hereinafter recorded, to wit and to-wot:

"When I engaged you muskrats I had a feeling that this Business was slightly pied. I thought you could do the Necessary, and use such commonsense as you perhaps happened to have, in order to push the Enterprise to the pinnacle of Power. [196]

"I now find that not a rum of you has the initiative of a set of false whiskers nor the judgment of a jelly-bean. As Buck Passers you've got everything this side of Congress pummeled to a pulp, and when it comes to stalling, you are all Class A-Super and no mistake.

"You will therefore please take a long jump into the jungles of Oblivion, and, as a little souvenir of my regard, I propose to present each man on his way out with a swift kick in the Kupps."

When the last kanoop had cleared, Commodore Boss got a new outfit consisting of non-related men of EXPERIENCE and while the thought of the high salaries he had to pay them made him swallow like a cock eating corn-meal, he got over it when he found he could get off every afternoon for 18 holes and fish for a fortnight without fretting a fret.

A ONE-LEGGED manufactory had a little round office boy.

[198]
[199]

He used to go down to the Post Office every morning on his roller skates and fetch up the mail in a leather sack.

We forget the exact dimensions of the sack, but the story can go on without them until such time as we may be able to call them up.

This office boy was a good office boy and did not carve his initials in his father's wooden leg, nor hang around the streets watching a safe moving in.

The manufactory in which he hopped about and drew his Dollar and a Quarter a week, was not so big as Standard Oil, but it had a side-track and a time-clock and involved the activities of seventy-five men, two of which were old women—the Sales & Advertising Manager and the Proprietor.

Time scuffled on, and the War came, and with it came some new business.

At first the Proprietor and the Sales Manager were a little sore around the heart at this intrusion upon their days of peace and quiet, spent largely in cutting up old envelopes for scratch paper.

[200]

But gradually they got used to the upset and flurry, and when the monthly Balance Sheet began to smile and then to grin, it poked their Ambition in the ribs and the first thing they knew they were actually craning their shaved necks for business in the Domestic as well as in the Export arena.

Men think they push their own business to greatness, but they don't. Nine out of ten have greatness thrust upon them by national advertising, but you never hear of them chasing the Agency that did it up the boulevard trying to catch and laurel it for pulling them out of the puddle of commercial provincialism.

Here let us state in calm, well modulated tones that we are not forgetting about the office boy, around whose life this little narrative is written, or wrotten. We are letting him alone until he grows into manhood.

The office boy is now grown and so is the business.

[201]

The boy is Alfred William Clerkmind, and he is the President of the whole outfit.

The old proprietor has long since been mounded and marked, and the Sales & Advertising Manager, of whom we spoke of, or rather, about whom we spoke about, is still reading Printers Ink and learning how they put it over.

Alfred William Clerkmind has been so busy growing up with the business that he has never had time to travel any farther from home than the one-lunged Country Club for nine holes on a Sunday morning.

His reading has been confined to his Trade Magazine, his home town daily, and his competitors' catalogues.

The people he has met socially are the same earspreaders he used to know as boys and girls in the days when he was juggling up the mail in the leather sack, size 24" x 36".

The men he has met in a business way, all have come down to the bowlegged burg to sell him something, and so he has always had eager listeners whenever he talked from the chest out; so he has been denied the golden privilege of having men tell him to his cone-shaped face just what they thought of him and his Ideas.

[202]

In other phraseology, Alfred William Clerkmind, executive, is Alfred William Clerkmind, office boy, with different scenery. His arms and legs are longer, his body thicker, his head fatter than when he licked stamps, but his psychology and general outlook are the same.

He tells his New York Salesman that one can live for four dollars a week at the best boarding house in Skunkton with Neapolitan ice cream every Sunday, and therefore any man should be able to do the same in New York—or do better, because there's a bigger choice in Noo Yoark.

Every time it comes to changing copy in the ads, they have to throw him and blindfold him to keep him from re-writing it himself and running in a lot of snappy, pungent stuff of the come-one-come-all, we-strive-to-please variety.

Alfred William doesn't understand why a salesman should ride in a Pullman any more than why the Trade shouldn't wiggle up on its abdomen and beg for the Goods.

And since he has not the time to travel, nor read, nor meet people who do, he has no way of getting at the facts of business.

[203]

He feels that he must personally ooze into every part of the works at all times. And, as a consequence, none of the department heads cares to assume the responsibility of sealing an envelope without getting Alfie's "O. K."

Sometimes Alfie tries to be a good fellow, and thereupon he slaps somebody a wooden slap on the back. But there's something in his playfulness that makes the recip. feel like turning around

and spreading his resentment all over Alfie's respectable features.

When anybody is relating a humorous narrative, Alfie sets a certain time and place to laugh regardless of the development of the story, and then there's no telling how long the rafters are going to hold out. Then just as suddenly he gets back into his coffin and pulls down the lid.

At such times Alfie's voice has about as much merriment in it as a sack of dried apples, but whenever he decides to burst forth, all the little office gnats have got to laugh too, for fear they will lose their Fifty Dollar jobs if they don't. [204]

Emerson says that every institution is the lengthened shadow of the kanoop that started it, and we are not mentioning this just to show how clubby we are with Ralph's sayings, but to clear up any outstanding doubt that the institution of which Alfred William Clerkmind is the head and front, and coat, pants and collar-button, reflects in every detail the spirit of the big, broad, ruddycheeked Captain of Industry that steers it.

An idea might walk into that Works and hang around for six months, and not a man in the whole outfit would invite it to come in and sit down.

The most important business of the week that any of the inmates has on his mind is how to get the shirt back from the Chinaman's in time for the Saturday night dance at the Commercial Athletic Club.

We started this story with the intention of showing how Alfred William Clerkmind finally made a trip to Kankakee and broadened out. But he can't seem to make up his mind which train he will take, and in the meantime the space allotted to us for this story has run out. [205]

So we can only say in closing that no business can expect to wax international when the Chief Executive is carrying around with him the same cow-licked sky-piece that he used when he was bowlegging up the street with the morning's mail in a sack.

Lesson for Today: As one grows older, the head should change inside as well as outside.

HOT SKETCH NO. 21

THE WAR WINNING PATRIOTEER

[206]
[207]

HE WAS paunchy and broad-beamed and looked like one of Artist Young's skippers of industry. [208]

The top of his dome was mercerized but there was a sturdy little hedge of auburn stubble running west of a line drawn parallel with the top of his right listener. [209]

This served as a dam to catch the honest perspiration from running down on his Henry Clay collar.

It also gave him something semi-tangible to comb in the mornings.

His full-orbed jowls were decorated with auburn fenders, parted in the middle and severely orthodox in their general behavior.

Naturally, with this trimming, he was long on civic righteousness, religious rallies and other pillar activities.

He was one of those opulent American industrial successes that point with their thumbs, believe that woman's place is the home, and go in and out of an elevator square across, regardless of wedged-in humanity. [210]

Perhaps the most dominant of his virtues was his high-pressure patriotism. When it came to patriotic oratory he had Patrick Henry looking like a gaping neutral.

It was only logical, therefore, that he should have become a most fearless and forensic advocate of Preparedness as soon as the word was coined. And he did become that same, as hereinbefore itemized.

In 1916, when California decided to elect President Wilson, this popular pusher for Preparedness was wild with indignation, and tore out his luxurious side whiskers by the fistful, and jumped up and down on his little malleable derby.

Everyone with whom he came in contact was assured by him that the country was heading for helldom on high.

It also gave him a bit of relief to vent his vituperation on Comrade President for not rushing into War on the day that Kaiser Bill began to shoot up the high seas like a bar braggart on a busy Saturday night.

Almost any hour you passed his office you could hear him over the transom telling somebody about the folly of Watchful Waiting, conciliatory notes and other presidential piffle. [211]

He said that nothing could be nobler than for young Americans to offer up their lives in defense of flag and country.

And just to show how doggone deep his Nationalism went, he trotted out and bought a great big American flag for cash and nailed it up back of his desk.

When Uncle Sam finally decided to throw the little felt kelly into the international ring, he turned back the lapel of his coat and threw out his patriotic chest as if he had scored some big personal victory against the determined resistance of a hundred million Americans.

One day, shortly after the events of which we speak, our War Hero was found sitting at his Mahogany, with knitted brows and knotted physiog, steeped in painful, ponderous thought.

Nobody knew just what had struck him until he called his stenographer and dictated a very private but trenchant letter to the Congressman of his District and another to his favorite Senator with the wooden Prince Al, adjuring them to fight against the clause in the War Tax Bill that threatened to assail his profits. [212]

Having landed a munitions contract in the early days of the war that netted him a cold, clammy four million in profits, and having drawn a beautiful mental picture of just how he was going to invest that million so as to bring a modest return of 100 percent, he was naturally given over to the ravages of righteous indig when he learned that the Government proposed to put its large horny fist into his profit bag and extract a fairly girthful percentage of those profits for use in helping clothe and feed the young Americans whom he so highly honored for their Patriotism.

Also he went up in the air 'way beyond anti-aircraft range when he found that the draft bill contemplated calling into active service young men between the ages of 20 and 30.

He loudly proclaimed it a ridiculous and preposterous piece of flumdbubble to call upon such young men when every sane man knew that the Flower of American virility was between the ages of 31 and 41.

His son was 24 and he was 54. [213]

When the first Liberty Bond issue was floated he got sort of backed into an uncomfortable corner and spent several tortuous nights and difficult days wondering how he was going to hurdle this issue without barking his patriotic shins.

At last, after looking up Uncle Sam in Bradstreets, and convincing himself that Uncle S. would not go bust right away, he made up his mind to plunge, irrespective of his own future comfort.

So he went down to his bank and bought a nice One Hundred Dollar Bond which he offered to sell to any of his employes who might not have a chance to get to the polls before they closed.

The next day he took steps to have his son exempted from the draft on the grounds that he was the sole support of his motor car—but of course assured the Board of the young patriot's eagerness to trek for the trenches.

He also stopped long enough in his work of figuring out a 100% increase in the selling price of his wares to get an assortment of little allied flags and stick them on the hood of his Packard.

In addition, he bought a Red Cross button and put it in the aperature of his coat lapel. [214]

Further, he allowed one of his clerks to spend several hours on the Firm's time to collect a fund for the Red Cross from the other employes, and he himself led off the list with a Dollar which nobody had the nerve to collect from him after he wrote down his influential name.

In fact, patriotism and practical helpfulness to the Nation ran rampant through his whole family.

His wife started to knit an army sweater at the outbreak of the War, and as we go to press she is still knitting it. She has got as far as casting off the neck.

His daughter also started in energetically to make Red Cross bandages, and every week or so she went down to Headquarters for an hour to get in out of the cold while waiting for some friend for tea.

When final victory perched upon the banner of the Allied Cause and The Boys came dragging home to a jobless civic life, this patriotic pillar of Preparedness whose unselfish service to his country in time of national need had so greatly lightened the nation's burden, threw the whole tonnage of his influence against The Soldiers' Bonus Bill and other Paternalistic Notions, declaring them pernicious and Economically Unsound. [215]

He also wrote a book entitled "How We Won The War" and dedicated it to his son and daughter.

Lesson for Today: Sherman was right.

TYPICAL AMERICAN AND CRITICAL AMERICAN

THERE was once a comfortable piece of suet who considered himself a Typical American and
oozed oleaginous sentiments of Lofty Patriotism through a three-dimensional Mid Western
brogue every time he saw a good opening. [218]
[219]

He loved America so much that he used to spend six months out of every year Abroad with his
big cigars and his fat wife. He liked to get up on a barrel in every port he backed into, and tell the
natives a few things about Our great liberty-loving America where every man was free to spit on
the sidewalk if he wanted to.

He took a Keen Delight in roasting everything that was non-American and making himself
miserable every time he turned a foreign corner. He used to grease down three 18-inch collars
every day pointing out to his billow-chinned Helpmeet how senseless These Here Foreigners
were for doing things this way instead of doing them that way. Any time he overlooked anything
for condemnation, the Little One (Ton) would heave-to and remind him of it in a whistling
nasaletto that made you instinctively hang onto your hat. [220]

From two to four hours were put in each day of the calender month grouching about the cold
rooms, cold hotels, cold shops, cold theatres, cold everything. It made them both hot to think of
the cold. During these protest meetings, Typical American would tread the floor heavily and work
his cigar angrysomely from one side of his gasser to the other and then back again, and take a
solemn oath before his Maker that if he ever got back home without cracking he would turn on
the steam-heat until the walls began to run like sap.

Another thing that always added to the merriment of their foreign philandering was the
Customs. Every time an inspector requested Typ. Am. or his Better Half Ton to open up a piece of
luggage, Typ would bring down upon the inquisitive little inspectorial head a torrent of biting
injective that would have made it crawl under the culvert in shame had it been able to get next to
the linguistic delivery. [221]

For the inconveniences and jarring out-of-dateness of Foreign Travel were but a mild rash
when it came to the question of power to annoy. It was the systematic pillaging of Typ and Mrs.
Typ that proved to be the big aching carbuncle.

Every time Typ went to pay a taxi fare, they tried to flam him out of two or three cents and he
used to have to use up about seven dollars' worth of American energy arguing the hold-up with
the robber at the wheel and trying to prove to him in excited expletives that the legal Scale of
Rates showed 20 cents for two miles instead of 22 cents.

When Typ would register at a hotel he always had to get into the ring for ten rounds with the
Swiss Cheese in the long prince albert before he could get anything like the rate and the room he
wanted. What he didn't tell the Concierge down stairs about his old hotel he would tell the
porters up stairs when they were juggling in the baggage.

Meanwhile Mrs. Typ would be examining the curtains and things, and giving the pirates a
piece of her mind for charging Four Dollars a day for one double room and bath when they
should have had the whole floor for that price. [222]

Typ got chronic indigestion from scrapping over the price of his dejeuner, and Mrs. Typ swore
regularly every morning that she'd see the buccaneers in the sixteenth sub-basement of Gehenna
before she'd pay 18 cents for two measley boiled eggs—then she'd go ahead and order them.

Their daily sight-seeing and shopping excursions in all foreign countries were continually
marred by the petty pilferings and short-change manoeuvring of foreign highbinders, and many
a night as they sat fingering their finances in the hotel lobby and adding up how much they had
squandered during the day, they would discover where they had been bilked of anywhere from
seventy-five cents to one dollarr and a quarterrrrr besides finding among their small change a
worthless Portuguese coin that some low-down dragoman had handed them instead of a piastre.

When Typ and Mrs. Typ returned to America at the end of the year fagged to a frazzle and
pining for just one peep at the Land of the Free and the home of the Oil Trust, their joy knew no
anchor. They could hardly wait for their ship to bring them in sight of the Lady of Liberty and
they pedaled the deck like jailed jaguars and Typ smoked cigar after cigar and spit over the deck-
rail in wild abandon. [223]

At last they arrived at New York and were so anxious to set feet on terry firmy that their
eagerness carried them down the gang-plank before the Veterinary had come Aboard, and so
they ran up against a Minion of the Law who gave them a call that reverberated for miles along
the Palisades and made the Goddess of Liberty almost spill her torch. Whereupon they both got
crimson back of their large ears and apologized profusely and stepped all over each other getting
back into line where they crouched for seven hours without moving a muscle of the map.

Before the day was wholly gone, they were permitted to go into the Customs House, and the
Inspector told them to open all baggage, and they said Yessir and got busy with the keys, and for
the next hour-and-a-half were bowing and bending over 18 boxes and bags, and pulling things
apart and trying their very doggondest to prove that they were on the level. [224]

When they had at last begun to feel that they had proved their innocence, the Inspector, with

his arm dug shoulder-deep in the last of the trunks, fished up a pill-box and all bets were off again until he had opened it and shaken the pills out and run his finger-nail around the crevices and turned it upside down and inside out, and put it to his ear and smelled it and trained an X-Ray machine on it, and then declared everything was all right and they could depart in peace.

Thanking the Inspector for his interest, and with a sigh of relief that was full of humility and unshed tears, they got a couple of porters to wheel their stuff out to a Taxi, and in the fullness of a swift joy that came upon them when they got outside and sniffed the free American winter air, they gave the two portering gentlemen a crisp dollar bill for the service.

Whereupon the gentlemen looked at the bill like it was some kind of curiosity, then looked at each other and groaned, and then gave the givers a look that scared them to a pope's purple and made them finger further with the purse-string until the gentlemen had grunted their approval and departed. [225]

When they arrived at their hotel they found they had only a couple of hundred dollars to pay the taxi fare with, but they managed to get by with it without inciting any murderous thought in the breast of the driver, and went in and registered.

When they informed the Room Clerk that they had not made any reservations he said he was sorry but everything was taken except one room without bath adjoining the boiler-house which was being held for a certain gentleman who had wired for it several months ago. Then King Klerk tapped his fingers on the desk and looked boredly out beyond their square heads and repeated that he was sorry.

At this, Mr. and Mrs. Typ got down on their knees and said the Litany, and the room clerk thawed and told them they could have the room for \$20 a day if they barked quick. They barked. They also thanked him from the bottom of their grateful American hearts and told him whenever he came to their town to look them up. [226]

When they had squeezed into their little ingrowing room they found that it had only one window, and that was an opening in the ceiling about the size of a silver dollar, but fifty times the value. They also found the porters hanging around for a tip and forgot that it was the custom at home to fee the beetles a quarter every time they did something instead of giving the whole bunch a couple of shillings at the end of a week's work. They apologized for this oversight and then settled down for a little rest.

The temperature of the room was between 300 and 400 degrees Fahrenheit and Mr. Typ began to sweat like a brewery horse and got up to pull off his coat, but found the room was too cramped to do it and so he took off his necktie instead.

About the time that their eyes were beginning to hang out on their cheek-bones with the heat, and their ears were ringing like a Broadway New Year's eve celebration, they managed to throw off the approaching comatose and back out of the room and down to the restaurant for lunch. [227]

The head waiter said all the tables were full but if they didn't mind sitting outside for a couple of weeks he would see what he could do. They said "Oh-that's-all-right" and thanked him very kindly and gave him a Dollar Bill and sat down outside the door and tried to look as if they didn't mind it at all. They didn't want to give the Head Waiter the slightest suspicion that they were inconvenienced and run the risk of his getting sore at them and shutting them off altogether from the privilege of eating in the restaurant which he didn't own.

During the same epoch they managed to get a little table facing the wall and a pillar, and were soon rummaging through the Feed Folder for some dish that they could afford to buy without becoming insolvent. They finally took refuge in the haven of all who don't know what they want, and after they had eaten the last scrap of the roast beef they quietly paid the eleven-dollar check and went out to find the bank.

The next day they took a train for their home, and were so accustomed to foreign compartment cars that they decided to get a compartment. But when they found out the price, they concluded to buy a motor car instead and compromised on a berth in the main dormitory. There were no lowers to be had, and so they thanked the Pullman Conductor and took an upper. [228]

The car seemed a trifle like a dry-kiln in temperature and they asked the porter if he would mind introducing a little outside atmosphere. He looked at the thermometer and said it was only 190 degrees in the car and that the rules of the company forbade him from opening any more air-holes unless it got up to 3,000 degrees. They thanked the porter for the trouble they had caused him and asked him how all the folks were and bade him good-night and crawled up the ladder and disappeared back of the curtains, and were soon wrapped in the arms of Morph.

A week after they had arrived home, and had told everybody how glad they were to get back to God's Country, the Cost of living began to show unusual agility in the high jump. The trial heats had caused people to gasp, but when the finals came on, everybody became highly excited and ran to and fro wondering what was coming next in way of sensation. [229]

Mr. and Mrs. Typical American, with their originality of brain convolutions, decided that the only reasonable thing to do was to teach the people how to starve. And so they organized a Gradual Starvation Class and secured many other Typical Americans as pupils and thanked God that through his bounty, the people did not have to do the job suddenly, but could dwindle away slowly and almost painlessly.

They were getting on Very Well until a certain few Americans—not in any sense typical—came out in the open here and there, and said: “Not by a damsight! With grainaries groaning with unused grain, with eggs piled Babel-high in gigantic warehouses, with cotton enough in one State to clothe the whole Nation in summer, and wool enough on the backs of one-tenth of the sheep of the country to clothe the whole Nation in winter, with banks bursting with gold and freight cars enough to move the wares of the planet when not cornered in the holy cause of Pillage—not by a damsight will America starve herself to make a few Rich richer!”

[230]

And so it came to pass that these voices crying in the wilderness jarred loose in time the sluggish national contentment of Mr. and Mrs. Typ and other Americans everywhere, and made them think.

But just when they began to think, it was time for them to go Abroad again.

HOT SKETCH NO. 23

[231]

WHEN MENTAL LEECH MEETS MENTAL LEECH

THERE was a temperamental manufacturer who used to come down to the office after a thick night in the Loop and unleash a long low growl about the lack of Initiative among his men.

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[233]

“There isn’t a kanoop among them,” he said, “that has the originality of a tadpole.”

On a certain day, not unlike any other day in this particular establishment, the Sales Manager poked his nose gradually into the Boss’s office, and, sniffing the Boss within, squeezed cautiously into the room, scraping the nap all off his courage as he did so.

“Will you please be so kind as to tell me,” whispered the Sales Manager, “if this little ginger-up letter to the Road Rats meets your approval?”

The Boss grabbed the letter, shot a lightning glance at it upside-down, and rammed it back into the Sales Manager’s hands.

“Rotten!” he said, “Lacks originality—pep! No punch in it!”

[234]

“Thank you,” replied the Sales Manager mildly. “I’ll see if I can not embody some of the points of your constructive criticism.” And he oozed out of the room again.

In came the Advertising Manager, walking on his ankles so as to not make any riotous disturbance.

“I was just thinking—” he began.

“Impossible!” sneered His Gentle Bosslets, putting his heels up on his glass-topped desk and lighting his eighty-seventh cigarette since breakfast.

“I was just thinking,” continued the Adv. Mgr. affecting to ignore the suggestion but failing miserably from the knees down, “I was just thinking that maybe it might not be a bad plan, perhaps, to paint New York next month, please.”

“NEVER!” roared the Boss. “Never in a thousand years. The painted bulletin is no good—never was. Poster’s the thing! I’d rather post New York for one month than paint it for forty years at half the price.”

“Very good, then—shall I go in for that?”

[235]

“Not on your life. I’ve just decided on a newspaper campaign.”

“Thank you,” said the Adv. Mgr., backing out of the room and falling over a few chairs and things on the fairway.

When the intruder had vanished, Commander Boss got up, ran his long temperamental digits through his top-fringe and pounded out into the manufacturing department where he proceeded to raise from fourteen to sixteen separate and distinct kinds of scarlet hell for the general lack of initiative and commonsense around his plant.

Things went on in this happy homelike fashion until one fine warm Spring day when Brigadier Boss up and booted the whole bunch of bungling department heads into the great Out of Doors and set about to effect a re-organization.

“What I want is men who do THEIR OWN thinking,” he said, and he began telephoning and writing and wiring and advertising all over the country for A-1 Initiatives.

In due time he got them and called them all into his office and passed the cigars and explained how he wanted each man to run his own Department just as if it was his own business, exercising merely ordinary judgment and commonsense.

[236]

Then he went on to tell them how the old herd had always passed the old buck to him, never doing anything unless they were told, fearing even to set down the total of a column of figures without first consulting him, and he wound up with a few Well Chosen remarks about Co-

operation and Co-ordination and the old reliable shoulder-to-the-wheel stuff.

Everybody was happy and talky and full of pep and chest-out chatter, for be it remembered that each new Department Head was an Individual and not a Person, and could hold his own with the best bullers of bulldom.

And so they all adjourned to their respective stalls and started in their new work with enthusiasm, energy and enterprise, and any other snapful word that you could think of beginning with "e."

Things went great and glorious for about a month when the Boss discovered that the new Superintendent had put in a lot of machinery in the manufacturing department that he did not approve of, and he proceeded to give the Supe a double-nutted Call Down that carried to Columbus, Ohio. [237]

The Supe came back not unstrengthfully whereupon the Boss's eyes flashed like a Zeppelin night-searcher, and the Supe remembering that he had seventeen children and a motorcycle to support, cooled down almost to a solid, and let the Boss rave on like a knight of Montana overcharged by a cabman.

Shortly after this explosion in the factory the Boss happened into the Sales Manager's throbbing little office, and in the course of a high-spirited but not dangerous discussion on things in general he discovered that the S. M. had re-districted the whole territory and changed agencies right and left and down the middle.

Whereupon Major General Boss let out a roar that shook the business mottoes from the walls and sent the stenographer scurrying to the south gate. Everything he could think of off-hand he called the Sales Manager, and then proceeded to look up a few choice ones in the Dock Hands' Ready Vocabulary. [238]

At this, the Sales Manager doubled his fists and closed his eyes to an ominous squint, and was all ready to spring—when he happened to think of the monthly installment on his Victrola, and so he dropped into his chair and sat numb and dumb, and then some.

On his way out, the Boss chanced to see the Advertising Manager pouring over a dummy on his desk.

"What's that bum thing?" growled Doc Boss, pointing his long presidential finger toward the busy little desk.

"Why that's the layout for a broadside that I'm mailing to the Dealer Trade on our new No. 7's," replied the Advertising Manager, smiling.

"No good—no good in the world!" came back Uncle Boss. "Nobody on earth would stop to read that thing. Too big—too unwieldy—copy too scattered—weak copy, too—might just as well mail out a sheet of white paper! A clumsy folder like that, gets in with the second-class matter and goes the route of the wastebasket. Nothing to it!" [239]

"What you want," continued the Boss, rising in temperature, "is a snappy little envelope insert like this—" And he grabbed up a small piece of paper and folded it angrily and shook it before the surprised eyes of the new Adv. Mgr.

Whereupon, without waiting for further reasoning or retort, Captain Boss withdrew, leaving the puzzled Adv. Mgr. to ponder over the punk suggestion. "Perhaps he's right after all," he reflected.

A few days later Colonel Boss wandered into the Advertising Manager's office again.

"What's this dinky little thing?" he inquired, picking up a dummy that the Adv. Mgr. had on his desk.

"Why that's just a little insert I'm getting ready to send out to the Dealer Trade on our new No. 7's."

"Holy Smoke!" ejaculated Commodore Boss, "how do you expect us to get by with our No. 7's on that measley little thing. What you want is a smashing broadside—something big enough for a fellow to see without impairing his eyesight—something that will command attention—something that will—" [240]

"Hold on!" broke in the Adv. Mgr., rising from his warm chair and looking kind of doggone determined. "Last week I had a broadside underway and you came in here and ordered it off, and said you wanted an insert. You now come in and rap the insert and say you want a broadside."

"Oh, hell," cut in Premier Boss, "don't pay any attention to what I say."

"I'm not going to," flashed back the now thoroughly aroused Adv. Mgr., "but YOU are going to pay attention to what I say, and you're going to remember it the longest day you live."

"When I came here," he continued, sticking his fist right up close to the Boss's olfactory knob, "you told me that your old organization was a bunch of dummies and said you wanted initiative. You SAID it, but you did not MEAN it. *You* don't want initiative and independent thinking. You want weakness and sycophancy.

"You could not stand a strong mind in your establishment six months. There would be a constant clash for mental supremacy. THE OLD MEN THAT YOU CANNED ALL HAD WILL POWER OF THEIR OWN ONCE. But you sapped their wills to feed your own rotten gourmand Will. And when they had no more mental pap to give you, you despised them. You despised them for lack of the very thing you robbed them of.

[241]

"You are a Mental Leech—the most dangerous class of citizen in the world. And when it so happens that your stripe is an employer, your sin is doubly damnable because the mental resistance of the average employe is weakened against your onslaught through the fear he has of losing his job.

"I'll concede that you have never before been CONSCIOUS of what you were doing," roared the Adv. Mgr, "but from this moment you *shall* be conscious of it, and of your responsibility if you dare ever again to use it—you big blustering mental bully you!"

"You're fired," interrupted the Boss in a flannel voice and plainly whipped.

"I decline to quit!" thundered the Advertising Manager.

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"All right then, STAY!" said the Boss with a sudden calmness. "We can get along together. *We are onto each other.*"

HOT SKETCH NO. 24

[243]

THE EXPORT GROUP GRAFTER

ON A crisp and crackling December morn, a Jones Farm sausage with a big cigar and deep-dish collar of four-flusher fur, swished into the office of Messrs Eazley Skinned & Co., Manufacturers.

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[245]

He took out a race-track amplifier and announced that he was about to make a trip all the way to Europe in the interest of a group of Non Competitive manufacturers and would be pleased to let one other Representative Firm in on this satin-faced opportunity.

Now the office of Messrs Eazley Skinned & Co., was a placid, tooth-picking sort of a place. The business had been passed down the aisle from sire to son so many times that it had begun to wear slick in spots like the plush seat of the collection box. The whole place breathed of Longtime Service but very little business. Whenever the door opened every bucolic head in the room turned toward it like a Grammar School class.

The sudden announcement, therefore, that somebody was about to proceed on a hazardous journey to a far-off place like Europe created no little stir in this hive of hustle. We do not mean by this that it unleashed as much excitement as an Order would have done, or a Wall Street Bomb. But it was sufficient to start every pair of eyes forward from their bushings including those shrewd gray see-ers of Mr. Eazley Skinned himself.

[246]

The breezy visitor was immediately ushered into the private office of Mr. E. Skinned who put on his coat and reached for the trusty box of 5-scenters, calling meanwhile to the other shirt-sleeved Executives who came filing in. Soon every chair was tilted back comfortably and the fumes of the hemp panetella rent the air, so to speak. The show was about to commence.

"Gentlemen," began the Weenie with the Collar, "the trip I am about to make will cover *all* of Europe." He paused to let it sink in. Ernie Shackleton could not have done more.

"And the group of manufacturers I shall represent will have my Undivided Attention. I shall represent *only* the interests of the firms who are fortunate enough to sign up with me, and no other firm in America will be able to induce me to give them one single bit of trade information, no matter how many tears they shed."

[247]

At this juncture nobody in the meeting thought to ask His Fur Collar how many firms he intended to represent. So he didn't volunteer the information that he was out for a neat total anywhere from 40 and 4,000.

Then spoke up the President in an inquiring crescendo. "Just what cities, or whatever you call them over there, do you intend to visit?" he asked.

"Every metropolis in Europe," flashed back the intrepid explorer as he began spreading a map of South Africa out over the desk, tracing with a pencil the various points he would touch on his daring expedition provided the domestic touch proved good enough to enable him to do so.

"I will sail from New York here (pointing to Cape Town) on the Acquatoon on January 1st and my passage alone will cost me \$350.00 for a 7-day trip or \$50.00 a day before I even get to London. There it will cost me anywheres from \$25.00 to \$30.00 a day at the *Sav-voy* without counting Roast Lamb from the push-cart at Simpson's which I understand is listing somewhat and from there I will cross the Channel to Paris and the channel trip alone will cost me \$75.00 easily, and the tipping in Paris is fierce since the War."

[248]

Here the coherent and logical trade commissioner was again not interrupted by anybody

asking him if he had ever been in any of these places before, or had ever sold goods anywhere else on the face of the earth. So he very sensibly kept still on these points and continued to talk about the fierce expenses at every town he proposed to back into.

If any of his discriminating hearers at any time during the informing Foreign Trade discourse were interested enough in their own financial welfare to go through the enervating ordeal of dropping their chairs forward a few inches to take a look at his old bluff-map, he was not aware of it. Nor did any of them appear to wish to interrupt his forceful and lucid presentation of his program by asking him How About Orders or any other irrelevant thing like that. [249]

They all merely puffed the old cabbagio, chins up and eyes on ceiling, and swung their legs as they watched the smoke rings float away from the bunk. Mr. Eazley Skinned broke in at one stage to tell about the big tips that Mrs. Eastbrook and her husband Jim Eastbrook said it cost them that time when they went to Euripp.

Things were coming along great and grand for the Bright Lad with the Grab Bag; so of his own accord he continued to elaborate his story. He told how he would distribute their catalogues and Price Lists wherever he went, and make regular monthly reports, and he explained how all orders that would flock in from the New York Export Houses would naturally be the result of his efforts and how the factory was to simply credit him with the commission on each shipment since he wouldn't have time to always check up, being so busy selling goods all the time and so forth.

The Boss of the works here ventured to inquire how much that commission was going to be, and the Wise Gink modestly said 5% because he was leading up to something else. The Boss said 5% was fair enough and all whiskers around the room nodded affirmatively. [250]

"Now then," said the Dominating Personality as he came pounding down the final stretch, "in order to help defray a part of my expenses each manufacturer will be asked to pay \$500.00, and in order to avoid the delays and expense of remitting, this amount will be paid by each one in advance."

At this every tilted chair around the room suddenly and concertedly hit on all four cylinders and a few hep coughs and sideglances were exchanged, but there was no show of disapproval—merely surprise.

Observing this, the Globe Trotter jumped right into the breach fur collar and all, and began telling them all once more about the fierce expenses and explaining how he himself was going to stand 50% of the cost of the trip while the firms he represented would only be stuck with 50% all bunched together.

It was cheap, dirt cheap, for all they would get, and he was not charging in his time either—simply the actual cash outlay that he would have to suffer without an anaesthetic in travelling such costly territory. And the tips! Great Gamaliel, those tips! [251]

To hear that boy unfold the thrilling drama of Europe's Tipping Evil was like listening to a tale of Armenian Massacre. You just couldn't help but thank God that you were right at home, safe from all tipping harm. Whenever he thought he saw one of his hearers struggling to get that Five Hundred Dollar Retainer past the adams-apple, he would come on again with another shower of Expenditures. He spent thousands of dollars for tips inside thirty minutes.

It is a custom of the Spanish arena to let the biggest and bravest bull out last. Likewise our heroic Trade Toreador saved up his best sword thrusts and wild waving of the red-lined cape until the last act.

And he was some bird at that! When he concluded, there wasn't a whisker around the room that wasn't trembling with suppressed excitement. Dream pictures of million-dollar single orders floated before the glassy eyes of every hypnotised galoot in the conference. [252]

Mechanically they got up one by one and filed out of the room to hold a secret caucus before announcing their momentous decision. When the last nice, large, fat head had disappeared through the doorway, our hero got out his Memo Book and entered another \$500.00 to his credit. He had them wirestitched and he knew it.

Inside 5 minutes they all filed slowly in again, took their places around the room, tilted back their restful time-passers once more, and drew long complacent puffs at the binder twine perfecto.

The President then arose, dropped some ashes on his vest, rubbed them slowly into it with his left hand, stroked his patriarchal pampus-grass with his right, and announced that they had decided to go in as one of the Elect.

Everything settled, he then announced to his confreres, in strict accordance with popular custom, that it might not be a bad idea to call the Export Manager in and get his opinion.

So in popped the little Rascal with his Atlas and all, loaded to the ear-peaks with catch questions for the garrulous Grafter. One of the clerks had slipped out long ago to the little typewriter-desk at which the Export Manager sat, to tell him what was going on in the Directors' Room and so he was loaded for sea-lions. [253]

But when he heard that the whole thing was already settled, he closed up like a spring trap which made the Firm think he knew even less than he did about anything. At that he was wise for

he had nothing to gain and would only have got the brilliant new Foreign Representative sore at him at the getaway instead of later on which is the customary time for Foreign Travellers to plot for the destruction of Hon. Directors of Exports. So all he did was to take orders as to the quantity of Domestic catalogues and Price Lists that the Intruder wanted sent to him at London.

* * *

Eight months have elapsed. Or make it eighteen. No news will come from the front anyway. For the catalogues that were sent to London were thrown in the Dump long, long ago, and the great Trade Getter has never sent in one single, solitary, stingy order. Long thrilling Reports that had about them the peculiar metallic ring of the Generality-Report, just as though each of the ten manufacturing suckers had received an exact copy, were received every month for a few months.

[254]

Then about the fifth month they began to shrink in size and promise. About the seventh month, Dear Firm got merely a post card. It was a picture of the Moulin Rouge, and merely wished them a Merry Xmas. After that they received regularly each month nothing more than a sharp twinge in the big toe.

One aromatic Spring morning as they were all sitting together in tooth-picking complacency talking about things in general, a bright young man with a tweed suit and a Strand W. waistcoat flared into the General Office and announced that he was about to go Abroad in the interest of a group of American Manufacturers and—

Author's Note:—The finish of this story will be written in a country churchyard.

Transcriber's Notes:

Obvious punctuation errors repaired.

Dedication page, the word "BREthern" was retained as printed due to the great amount of comic dialect used in the text. With the exception of proper names as noted and the one instance of "occasionally" printing was retained. This includes things like "stationary" for writing paper, "accomodation," etc.

To avoid redundancy for the reader, repeated story titles have been removed. Originally, each was titled across two pages as:

HOT SKETCH NO. 24

THE EXPORT GROUP GRAFTER

THE EXPORT GROUP GRAFTER

Page 66, "today" changed to "Today" (*The Lesson for Today: He who serves*)

Page 85, "Whiffles" changed to "Whiffles" twice (THE Whiffles did not) (The Whiffles had a)

Page 109, "Wilyums" changed to "Willyums" (Whereupon Mrs. Willyums)

Page 153, "occasionally" changed to "occasionally" (will occasionally find)

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK DUMBELLS OF BUSINESS ***

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