

## Section on Commercial Interests

Papers Presented at the Sixty-First Annual Convention

### "THE ART OF MAKING A SALE."\*

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Gentlemen, I realize it means a great deal for you to be here, at the cost of considerable time and money, that you may come and mingle for a week with your fellow businessmen, and "absorb ideas from one another," as one gentleman has said. I often think when I see men in a convention of this kind that, after all, it is the ideas that we take home that are the all important factors. As I look into your faces, I realize that there is not a man here who is not sitting beside a man that knows just a little more about some particular phase of his business than he himself knows. You cannot be here without taking some ideas home and applying them in your business.

The subject assigned to me this evening is a broad one, "The Art of Making a Sale." We are all engaged in business for the purpose of making sales. And yet, as you well realize, if you have given the thing any thought, the art of making a sale is possibly the subject that is given the least attention in your business. While this is naturally true while you are gathered here in your annual convention, I maintain that it is thoroughly true in your business. I know it is true in the business of the average business man today, strange as it may seem. His business depends on his making sales, and yet it is not given a great deal of thought, as a rule, in his business.

We sometimes become confused in our terms. For instance, I have experimented a great deal, and have asked men to give me a definition of the term "business." It is pretty hard for the average man to do that—to give a concrete definition of the term "business"—"commerce." If I should ask you to do that to-night, the general consensus of opinion would be that "my particular business is just a sort of routine grind." The merchant says, "It means going to work at 7 o'clock in the morning, opening the door, and serving the public all day long." The banker says, "It means going to my bank and serving the public and handling money all day long." Yet, when we think of the term "commerce," how few of us think of ourselves as important elements? We think of the great steamship and railroad systems—the great movement of traffic in the country. We eliminate ourselves. So to-night, in discussing the broad subject of the art of making a sale, I want to eliminate everything else from it, and talk to you for just a little while about the personal element—yourself, and those associated with you, in the act of making sales in your business.

I am going to be brief to-night, because I know you are uncomfortable here in

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this room, and I am not going to say as many things in the way of general introduction as I might say under other circumstances. I want to try to help you in your own particular line of business. Yet I do not know that I am going to say very much about the drug business. You have that three hundred and sixty-five days in the year. I want to talk to you about the great fundamental principles that lie underneath and about your business. We realize that the business world to-day rests upon the primary wants of humanity. Our whole commercial system rests upon the primary wants of the people. The gathering of sustenance, of food and raiment, is after all, the great problem of modern commerce. Your problem is to learn how to supply that demand, and see that the world gets what it wants.

I am going to talk to you about the art and science of salesmanship. I have heard you gentlemen speak about the Scientific Department of your Association. I have heard some exceedingly interesting papers read here this afternoon on various scientific subjects; and to-night I am speaking to an audience of men not afraid to turn to science. Sometimes I talk to audiences that do not thoroughly appreciate the term "science," because they have not had it drilled into them as you gentlemen have in your particular line of business. I wonder how many of you that have thought of the scientific department of your business realize that the term "scientific department" should cover the selling end of your business, just as it does any other part or phase of your business. A great many say it is impossible to apply it in the selling end of their business. But it is, however, possible to apply it to salesmanship.

Sometime ago I was talking to a retail hardware merchant, and he said, "There is something wrong about my business, and I want you to go through it and see what it is." I spent three hours doing that, and, in examining his stock, I asked him many questions. I said to him at the end, "You have no science in your business; that is all that is the matter with you." He says, "I can't understand your term. I have heard so much about it. It is impossible for me to see how you can apply that term in the hardware business." He said he had a boy in the high school who had been studying science for two years, and he didn't know enough to fly a kite. I said, "He is perhaps trying to fly it with incomplete and piecemeal knowledge." Then I gave him Herbert Spencer's definition of science: "Science is nothing more nor less than thoroughly organized and classified knowledge." To-night, I am sure you gentlemen cannot think of a thing more valuable in your business than thoroughly organized knowledge of your business.

Another illustration: There are several colleges in this city, and some man is designated as Professor of Mathematics in these colleges. That means that he has studied the organized knowledge and science of the subject of mathematics, until he is able to go to the blackboard with a piece of chalk and demonstrate a very complicated problem, so that you can readily grasp and understand it. He is a mathematician, we say, because he understands the great science of mathematics.

To give another illustration: You gentlemen in your business come in contact sometimes with a young man who wants to become a doctor. The law says to him, "You must first attend a medical school and make a study of the organized

science and practice of medicine. You must go into the dissecting-room and take the human system and tear it to pieces, and carefully study it, and analyze every bone and muscle and tendon and artery, and every tissue in the system." After he has gone through this course of study, and passes his examinations, he is granted a certificate, and is given authority to practice medicine. You call in that man when you are sick, and he looks at your tongue, feels your pulse, and asks you a few questions. He has studied the organized knowledge of that subject, the science of it, just as you gentlemen have studied the science of pharmacy. But how far have you studied the science of salesmanship, of business, the thing on which your business depends? It is just as important to have knowledge on the selling end of your business as it is on the chemicals that you supply. The only trouble is, that you have not had your attention drawn to the requirement of knowledge of that kind.

I was going down the street one day and met a real estate salesman, and I said to him, "How did you happen to sell that house and lot on the corner down there?" His reply was, "I hardly know what you mean. A man came into the office and said he wanted to buy a house, and I told him about the size of this house and its location, and said to him, 'That is the house you want,' and he went over there and looked it over, and the price and everything suited him, and he came back and paid for the property, and the deed was made out to him. It was all very simple." I said to him: "But I want you to tell me how to reach the heart-strings of the people that I come in contact with, so that I can create in them the desire for the property that I have for sale. If you cannot do that, you do not thoroughly understand the great science and art of selling real estate."

I was sitting in the office of the president of a large insurance company once, and a man came in and said, "I have made up my mind to take that policy of \$5,000 we have been talking about." I said to him, "How did you do that? It looks like an easy way to make money." He reached into a desk and pulled out a blank and said, "There is the best policy of insurance that is written in the world, and all any one has to do is to find a man that wants insurance, and he takes that policy." I said, "But I am afraid I would starve to death finding people that want insurance. I want to know how to touch the heart-strings of people, to create the desire to take out insurance. If you can't tell me how to do that, you don't understand the great art and science of selling life insurance."

Again, I go into a clothing store across the street and say to the clerk, "Show me how to sell a suit. Show me how it is you lay hold of people and create a desire for the goods you have to sell." And sometimes I wonder if in your own particular business, where you have seen your clerk make a mistake, you have ever called him to the back end of your store, and explained to him what he should have done to appeal to the customer.

There is an art and science in the sale of goods. We fail, sometimes, to go to the bottom of these things. But we have reached that point in our business development—and it is obvious more and more every day—where it is up to the retail merchant to study the organized knowledge of his business, or he is going to have a harder time to exist than he has ever had. A great many merchants to-day are having a hard time to exist. Up to the first of July, over five thousand had gone out of business. And I notice the reports of the rating agencies say

that the great reason for this was incompetency in business. Incompetency! I want to say to you gentlemen that that is a horrible indictment against the methods, the policy of to-day, in the retail world. Incompetency is nothing more nor less than a lack of organized knowledge of the particular business. There is a science and a great art in your business.

I find a great many people who do not appreciate this fact, but who are trying to exist in their business by the "tricks of the trade." Sometime ago, in the city of Detroit, I was talking on this same subject before a great convention. Several hundred men, gathered from all over the country, were assembled there, and I saw a great streamer placed across the lobby of the Cadillac Hotel. The pennant said that I was going to show some of the tricks of selling. I went to the secretary and asked him to take it down. I said, "I am not going to talk about 'tricks,' and I don't want a single man to think that I am going to talk about 'the tricks of the trade.'" I hope there is not a man in all this great convention that is existing in his business because of low-down tricks. I would rather see him exist because of the application of great principles in his business. But sometimes, in some lines of business, I find men resorting to tricks.

A little while ago I was in a shoe store and was talking with the merchant. He carried a stock of \$90,000. I saw that man perform a trick, and make a sale. A woman came into the store, leading a little boy. The boy wanted a pair of hunting-boots. Now, you know there is no such thing as hunting-boots coming from the factories of the country, made for little boys. The little fellow had seen his father wearing hunting-boots, and he wanted a pair, a pair of high-topped boots, water-proof, with viscolized soles, and all that. The merchant knew there was no such thing. The tired mother said she had been to every store in the city, and couldn't find any hunting-boots for the boy. He said to the little boy, "Why, certainly, I can find you a pair, little man." Then he went back to the rear of the store to get a boot that he knew was not there. He brought out the nearest thing to it that the manufacturers made, which was a man's size No. 7 boot. He told the little boy to try them on and he did, but, of course, they were very much too large for him. Then he went back to the rear of the store to get a smaller boot, and put a pair of big felt insoles into it, and brought it back, and still it was too large. The third time he went back to the rear of the store, and put into that boot another heavy felt insole, and had the little boy try that. He stamped his foot and said, "There, Mister, that is all right! That fits me." Then he slipped three soles in the other boot, and let that little boy put those men's boots on, and go stalking up the street with them. After the lady had gone, and he had turned and dropped \$7 into the till, he turned to me and said, "You have got to get the money some way." That poor man believed that he had to get the money "by hook or crook." But I tell you that that man performed a trick when he made that sale, and he made it because he was a moral coward. He didn't know enough about the art and science of his business to sell that little fellow the kind of boot he ought to wear. I was in the store three weeks afterwards, and I asked him if the lady had come back, and he said, "Yes, she came back." He knew when that boy went home with those great, big, heavy boots, that she would come again when she found she

had been wronged; and she brought the boots back, and he lost a customer. He thought he was doing business by that "trick."

Now, some of you are saying: "What is the difference between the science and the trick?" The trick always deceives your customer's mind. By science, you lead and persuade the mind.

I might illustrate this by two common little examples, things that you see every day. Possibly it is done in your own work, I don't know—and maybe you don't know. Possibly you have stepped into a store, and said to the clerk, an unsophisticated young fellow, that has probably not been there very long, "I want 10 cents worth of chocolate creams." The clerk fills the sack and puts it on the scale. Then he stands there and takes out one cream after another and puts them back in the case, and you see that going on until you become convinced that that clerk is a miserable thief, and is taking your chocolates. You will never buy another thing at that store. Then you remember, on your way home, that your wife told you to bring a dollar's worth of sugar home. So you go into old "Uncle Billy" Skinner's and say, "I want a dollar's worth of sugar." Uncle Billy goes behind the counter, and puts a lot of sugar in a bag and puts it on the scales, and he hasn't got enough; then he begins to dip up sugar and put it in the bag, and goes after more sugar, and yet more sugar, until after a while, you begin to wonder if he is going to compel you to carry that whole barrel of sugar home for a dollar. You take it home, and you put it on your scales, and you discover it is a pound short in weight. But no human power could make you say that "Uncle Billy" was a robber, because he had touched a chord that responded just exactly the way he wanted it to respond, while the clerk had touched that same chord, but he had touched it at the other end. One touched it in a positive way and the other in a negative way.

When you have analyzed and come to a thorough understanding of these two little examples, you will have solved the great art and science of salesmanship. It is a simple problem. It is not a vague and mysterious thing. There are only three very common elements in it. But let me impress one thought here:

You gentlemen are here to consider the making of sales. Do not think that there is no connection between the goods you have on your counters and shelves to sell and this idea. The art of making a sale is a great mental problem. I step into a store and say to a salesman, "How many sales have you made to-day?" Nine times out of ten he will pull out his cash register and begin to count his tickets; or perhaps reach for his sales book and say, "Here are the sales I have made to-day." Or maybe he will begin to count the money in the till. I say, "Oh, no, I want to know something about the sales you have made. These things are not the sales. You don't make sales in the cash-drawer, or in the sales-book, or the cash-register, or anything of that kind. They are only the record of your sales."

You make your sales in the minds of your customers. Get that thought and take it home with you, and drive it home to your clerk that when he is making a sale he is dealing with a mental problem. You have never made a sale but that your customer's mind has passed through a certain series or stages of evolutions. I might name quite a number of these stages. For instance, you cannot possibly make a sale without leading a man from what we call the first stage,

that of introduction, to the stage of attention, the stage of interest, the stage of desire, the stage of resolve. You cannot possibly make a sale where your customer's mind does not go through these stages. Sometimes it is done very rapidly, and sometimes it may take a week, or years, to lead a man from one stage to another. Just make a study of the things that go to make up a sale, and see if you cannot detect in your customer's face the workings of his mind.

I want to say to you that there are just three prime elements in the accomplishment of that feat, and they are: First, yourself; second, the thing you have for sale, and third, the other person. That is all there is to it—a very simple problem. Yet no man has studied that problem thoroughly enough to go to the bottom of it. As I look in your faces I know I have before me the most important part of these elements—yourselves; your own individual personality. And yet I say, without the slightest hesitancy, that although this is the principal phase of your business, it is the part you have given the least thought to.

It has been my privilege, during the last fifteen years, to come in contact with practically every leading educational institution in this country, and I have studied their young men. I have made a practical study of the young men in the universities of the country, and I have asked them what they were being taught, regarding their own individuality—their magnetism, their own personality; and, without one single exception, they have replied that they were not being taught these things in these institutions. I have asked that question everywhere, and have gotten the same answer. I have asked what their parents and guardians were doing regarding the development of their personality, their own individual personal magnetism, and out of a splendid list of a thousand names just three have told me that they had received such instruction. And so I do not hesitate to say that the most important element of all in business, that of individual personality, is the subject that is being given the least thought in our education of to-day.

If I were to advise a young man going out into business to-day, I could not do better than to give the advice given to a class of graduates in a law school by an old, white-haired judge who had taught them. The old man, feeble and infirm, said to them, "Young men, as you go out now into your chosen profession, I want to suggest that when you have found a place that suits you, you should tack your shingle on your office, and look at it from up the street and down the street, and across the street, and find out how it looks to other people." In other words, the first thing for the young man to do, in embarking on his chosen profession, is to learn how he looks in the eyes of the community; how he looks in the eyes of the people upon whom he must depend for his livelihood. And I believe it will be a good thing, when you gentlemen go home, for you to go behind your counters and ask yourselves honestly, "How do I look in the eyes of my community?" Then address yourselves to your clerks and salespeople, and get them to ask, "How do we look to the people about us?" Personality! It is a power, and you know how it radiates. The personality I refer to is not so much the personality we see as that we feel. As I look into your faces to-night, the thing that impresses me the most is not your size or splendid proportions, but that something that comes from inside of your head. I am not going

to talk about the subject of the power of mind over matter—nothing of the kind. But, after all, it is the things that you are thinking that impress people first of all.

If I had the time, I would experiment a little to-night. I would ask some of you business men, and three or four of you who could smile, to come and sit here and smile at this audience while I am talking. You could see the effect and how it would lift you up. Then I would ask them to hold that smile while they thought of the meanest thing they could possibly think of. Not one of them could do it. If you think you can do it, just try it before your mirror, in the privacy of your own room. You will find that just the moment you permit your mind to change from the pleasant thought that induced that smile, and begin to think of low, mean things, that smile will fade. I don't mean a grin. I mean a smile that comes from the very soul of a man; the thing that everybody likes; the thing that you are going to give your customer, when you try to lead and persuade and control that man; the thing you should inspire in your clerks.

As soon as you go home from this convention, try this thing of smiling when you meet your customers, your home people, and just try to see how good you can make them feel, and see how easy it is to sell them, and to bring back trade.

I stopped into a lawyer's office in Detroit, once, and he was out, and I sat down to wait for him. Over his desk was that old motto that reads, "Smile; damn you, Smile!" I wondered why he had that sign up there, and when he came in I asked him, and he said, "Simply to make people smile." He said, "A man comes into the office, and he feels that he is being persecuted. He sits down at the desk and he sees that sign, and he begins to smile, and I know he is being lifted up; then I can help him."

But I must hurry along.

There is another invaluable quality in personality especially, that the salesman loses sight of, and that is memory. Somebody will say, "Can people see my memory?" No, but they can feel it. Several years ago I was in Chicago, and I needed some shirts, some tailor-made shirts, and coming down Dearborn street I saw a little sign that read, "Cobb makes shirts." I said, "If Cobb makes shirts, we ought to get together, because I need shirts." I went in and gave the order, and a little man came from behind the counter, a dapper little gentleman, and he put out his hand and said, "My name is Cobb; I am glad to meet you." Two years later I was in Chicago again, and it occurred to me that I needed some more shirts, and I naturally went back to Cobb. Cobb came in, and reached out his hand, with a big smile on his face, and said, "Why, Mr. Vardaman, how do you do? I am glad to see you." I held his hand and said, "I want you to tell me how you did that." He said it was a part of his business. Yet, it was a magnetic part of his business. I liked that—liked to be remembered; and so do you, and so does everybody. How he reached out there and picked my face out of all the thousands he had seen pass his store in that time, and stuck my name to it, was a marvelous thing to me.

You say you cannot do that. Yes, you have your own memory just as great and powerful as Cobb's was; the only trouble is, that you haven't developed it along that line. You know where all the thousands of articles in your store are; you have that memory, because you have developed that side of it. You can develop your memory just as readily as you can develop the muscles of your

arm; and if you do it, the people about you will pay for it. When people come into your store, and you are able to call them—men, women and children—by their names, and call to mind some little incident that occurred three or four years ago; that is going to draw them to you. It is invaluable, this quality of personal magnetism. There is not a man in this audience to-night, under the age of thirty-five, who cannot broaden his shoulders half an inch, or increase his height half an inch, by applying some of the scientific principles we have been talking about here to-night.

And you men of maturer years, I want to ask you what you have been doing with your clerks, or your salesmen, by way of training them to see things in their business—teaching them to use their eyes. We sometimes think that our eyes are placed in our heads to view the beauties of nature; but I want to tell you that the man who can use his eyes in the right way can bring beads of perspiration onto the brow of the attorney who tries to confuse him on the witness stand. When you have learned how to use your eyes, you can make a sale all right.

An old lawyer said to me once, "I have been practicing at the bar for forty-two years. I would give almost my right arm if I knew how to shake hands with people. Whenever I wish to shake hands with the jury and thank them for their services, I feel my weakness." The politicians know how to do that, as we all know.

But I might continue here for an hour on the subject of your personality. I simply want to say that if you and your salesman will take up some line of that sort and develop it to the fullest degree, the world about you will pay you handsomely in "the coin of the realm."

Now, the second great element in the art of selling is to know what you have to sell. I am only going to touch on that to-night. We all know that the salesman should be an expert adviser in his business, and he cannot be an expert adviser unless he knows the thing he is advising the customer about.

Out in Denver a few days ago I stepped into a store—a drug store—I don't know whether the proprietor is here or not—and I saw a clerk trying to sell a customer a pair of military brushes. The clerk pulled out the drawer and picked up two or three brushes and the customer picked up one particular brush, and was looking at it; he was in a hurry, and he wanted some brushes quickly. He remarked that he had come from home without his brushes, and he had to buy some; and he said to the clerk: "Is this a genuine ebony brush, or is it just a pine board painted black?" The clerk said, "I really don't know, but I imagine it is ebony, from the price." That man went out without buying. These things are happening every day. How long would it have taken that clerk to learn whether that brush was ebony or a pine board painted black? That proprietor could have taken that boy into the back of the store, and, in thirty minutes, have taught him all about his brushes.

I have a shaving brush that I gave 25 cents for. A few days ago I stepped into a store with the idea of buying a "rubber-set" brush, and I asked the clerk what a rubber-set brush was, and he said it was just some way of sticking the bristles in. I asked him what was the difference between a 25-cent brush that



he showed me and a rubber-set brush. His reply was, "I don't know that there is much difference." I said, "I will take the 25-cent brush."

Now, here is a watch (exhibiting same) that I bought several years ago, and paid \$40 for, because the man who sold it to me knew watches. I have always been proud of that watch. And here is the point!—sometimes people say, "Yes, it is a pretty smooth game to sell your customer." But when you know the goods, you can lead your customer to appreciate them before he buys. And I want to say to you that I have carried this watch all these years, because I think so much of it. He put one of those jeweler's magnifying glasses over one of my eyes, and he told me to shut the other eye and look into that watch, while he called my attention to its small spring, and he said, "That one spring in there is worth \$7,500,000 a ton. Then he said, "Those little red objects that you see are ruby jewels." That sounded rich, and I looked with interest. He showed me the whole interior of the watch. Everything else was obscured from me, except what he wanted me to see in it. And all the while he was pouring into my ears just what he wanted me to hear. I was dead to the world, for the time being. I bought the watch. I was afraid he was going to take it away from me. That sale came from the knowledge of how to sell goods.

One time I stepped into a store where a man was trying to sell oranges. He said, "I have bought this pile of oranges, I have tried to sell them, and I can't do it." He was advertising big California oranges at 29 cents a dozen. I said to the man, "Do you really want to sell these oranges?" He said, "I certainly do," and he told me how many cases he had. I said, "This is a big California orange, and nearly everybody knows that, and you are advertising that." They were really large, fine oranges. I asked him what kind of oranges people liked, and he said they liked big oranges. I said, "Do they like juicy oranges? Do they like sweet oranges? Can't you just advertise juicy, sweet oranges? Just say that in your advertisement, and see if the people don't begin to flock in here." He told me afterwards he hadn't lost a single case of oranges; he had sold them all out, by knowing his goods. A man cannot be an expert adviser and not know his goods.

The third great prime element in making sales is to know the people about you. Take the people in your town, and you will discover that the most successful business men, as a rule, are those who know most about sizing up people—who know most about human nature; just the commonplace things about the people we are having to deal with every day. When we have learned what is in the lives of people, it is easy to appeal to them.

But we sometimes have a very erroneous idea of this thing we call human nature; very often the nature of people about us is largely what we make it. That is hard to believe, but there is a great deal of truth in it. Say, for instance, that I come into your town, and decide to buy and made my home there. I go down the street and meet you, and say to you, "I am considering buying this house over here, and I would like to know about the man next door." You say, "To be real honest with you, that man is not the sort of man I would like to be next-door neighbor to." I thank you, and go on farther down the street and meet another citizen, and he says, "I have known that man for twenty-five years,

and I think as much of him as any man in this town." What is the difference? It is largely in what the different individuals have attributed to that man.

I wish I had more time to elaborate upon twenty-five or thirty characteristics of human nature to-night. But I have not the time, and you have not the time to listen to me. I will cut it down to three or four fundamental elements of human nature that the salesman should serve.

The first is, that you cannot drive a man. I mean that you can't argue a man into a thing, but you can lead him. These are universal characteristics, because we find them among people everywhere.

Another is this: People are lazy; and if you are wise, you will cater to that laziness. What I mean is, that people naturally have a desire to go against as little resistance as possible. They move along the lines of least resistance. Yesterday, in coming through Chicago, I went up State street, and stood where I could study the architecture of the great entrance to the Marshall Field store.

That is a wonderful piece of architecture; it is noted the world over. And in studying that, and allowing my eyes to follow the great pillars down from top to bottom, I wondered if the architect had not made a mistake when he placed these pillars there, and forgot to put the threshold in. I felt like going to the manager of that great store and saying to him that the architect had made a mistake in failing to put the threshold there. But had I done so, he would have replied that it had been left out by express direction; that they had told the architect to make it just as easy as possible for people to enter the store—in fact, so easy that they would just fall in. They recognize this principle of human nature.

One time I was in Rochester, Minnesota, and wanted a little 10-cent bottle of perfume, and I went into a drug store to get it. The clerk stood in the back of the store. I walked in 10 or 15 feet and stopped, but he didn't notice me; he was reading the base-ball news or a scandal or something. I stood there for possibly thirty seconds, and then started for the door. He then asked, "Is there something you want?" I said, "No, thank you," and went on out. Down the street a few doors I went into another drug store, where a bright, snappy fellow came up. He knew I wanted something, and he asked, "What can I do for you?" I was about a minute buying that bottle of perfume and paying for it. If I was there to-night I would go in and buy another bottle of perfume, just to see the enthusiasm of that salesman. He made it easy to buy that bottle of perfume, while the other fellow made it so hard I couldn't do business with him. Make it as easy as possible for people to do business with you. People will pay you for it. It is no small part of making a sale.

Another thing for you to remember is, that people are proud and selfish. Every mortal likes "taffy," if you will give it to him the right way. I know a lady who has charge of the family affairs and purchases, because the husband is too busy to give his attention to them. She has some boys, and the salesman where she buys their clothes knows her pride in them. She walks into the store with one of these boys and says to her favorite clerk, "I guess George will have to have a new suit." So he leads George back, selects a coat and slips it on him, leads him over by the mirror, adjusts it so that he can see both front and back, then casually walks over to the mother, turns around and says, "I want to tell you, Mrs.

Blank, there is a son for any mother to be proud of." She is pleased, and she pays the price, just to hear the clerk say these things.

I know an old German merchant in a little town in Iowa who has built up a wonderful business by knowing how to play on some of these characteristics of human nature. He has a stick of candy for every child that comes into the store, and he makes it a point to personally see that each child gets a stick of candy; and it matters not how untidy or unkempt a baby may be, he never permits a mother to come into the store that he does not take up that baby and fondle it, and tell the mother, "How much it looks like papa!" They come to him for fifteen or twenty miles just to hear these little compliments. People like it. Give it to them, and see how easy it is to make sales.

The last point I want to make on this subject of human nature is, that normal men and women are subject to that great thing we call "suggestion." I am not talking about hypnotism, but I want to touch on the fundamental principle of hypnotism. Over here in New York City is a doctor who has given up the practice of medicine, because he has developed that quality to such a marked degree that he can use it for surgical operations where the patient has weak heart action and cannot take an anæsthetic. He tells him that it won't hurt him to undergo the operation, and he tells it to him so emphatically that the man can undergo the operation without serious pain.

I sometimes tell a joke on my wife that illustrates this idea of suggestion. We were coming down the street one cold afternoon, and she was breaking-in a pair of new shoes, with heavy, stiff soles, and her feet got cold. I wanted a particular magazine, and I suggested that we go into a drug store on the corner, and she could warm her feet by the register while I was picking out of the rack the magazine I wanted. She agreed, and we went in, she stood over the register until I finally got through. Then I asked her if she was ready to go, and she said, "Yes," and we started. About that time a clerk came up and said, "I am awfully sorry, lady, but that old furnace of ours has been out of order, and we have not been able to have any heat in it." There was something in the power of suggestion that warmed her feet.

Another time, away out in western Missouri, on a cold, blustery day, twenty-four people besides myself were in a little hot, stuffy station, waiting for a train. Somebody asked when the train was due, and the agent said in about thirty minutes. I thought I would try a little suggestion on the crowd, and accordingly I suddenly reached for my watch, looked at it, snapped it shut, grabbed my grip and hurried out of the station. Every man in that station did the same thing. They thought somebody had said the train was coming around the bend. I pulled up my overcoat collar and went to walking up and down the platform, and they went back feeling sold.

Now, I said I was going to talk to you, in the main, in terms that we could all understand, that I was not going to talk on the art and science of salesmanship in technical terms. But I want to say that, fundamentally, suggestion is possible simply because every normal individual has two mental functions grinding away in his mind all the time. Great and wise scientists tell us that is not true; but, nevertheless, there are certain actions or phases of the mind we are unable to account for on any other hypothesis, except that we have two mental

functions. We call one of these our objective mind, and the other part we call the subjective mind—because it is subject to our objective mind, and that of others, too. I have never found a better illustration of these two qualities than was given me one time in early life by my old father. One rainy day on the farm we were in the barn, and I noticed a stray cat come in, a poor, scrawny, miserable, bobtailed cat; and I asked my father why a bob-tailed cat was always poor. He said there was a good reason for it; that if I would watch a cat creep up on a mouse, I would see that the mouse watched the cat's tail as it lashed back and forth, and the closer the cat got to the mouse, the more furiously the tail lashed; and the mouse watched the cat's tail so closely that it failed to notice the nearer approach of the cat's mouth and claws, until it was too late for him to escape. Of course, he said, a bob-tailed cat was "handicapped." He had no way of taking advantage of the subjective mind of the mouse. And so the salesman must know how to get behind the subjective mind of the customer.

But how are we going to apply these great fundamental principles we have been talking about here. Suppose you are a grocer, and it is along late in the spring, about the time that apples are ready to spoil and become covered with little black specks; and Mrs. Jones comes into the store, and sees a basket of these apples, and says, "Mr. Smith, are these apples the best you have?" What are you going to say? You know they are the best you have, and the best in the market at the time. There are a great many things you might say. But you have a mental problem to solve: it is a mental problem you have to deal with, pure and simple. People have to accept what you tell them, just so long as they haven't a logical reason for disbelieving. Mark that; it is worth a great deal. All right; what are you going to say to her? You may say, "Yes, these are the best I have." She may reply to that, "If they are, they are certainly mighty poor apples." You may say, "Yes, they are the best in the market at this time of the year." She might think it was a mighty poor time to buy apples. But reach down into the basket and pick up one of these apples, split it open, and show her how nice and juicy and white it is, and say to her, "They are the finest apples in the world for cooking." She has never cooked them, and she is compelled, by that great law of nature, to believe that thing. It is her subjective mind. Here is what happens in that mind. It goes back from your store over to her home, into the dining-room there, and sees the big cut-glass bowl there full of juicy apples. She will buy that basket of apples and take it home, and come back and tell you you told the truth. How long would it take you to argue that woman's objective mind into buying apples about to spoil? But you can lead her past that, through her subjective mind, and she will buy them.

Here is another illustration: A customer went into a gentleman's furnishing store to buy a night-shirt. The clerk was new and didn't understand the stock, but he placed a box on the counter and pulled out a shirt with a big red border around the front. The customer smiled and said, "I don't want anything like that; I just want a neat, plain garment." So the clerk turned to the proprietor and said, "What have we in the way of plain night-shirts?" The proprietor replied, "Nothing, they are all coming that way now." The customer was about to leave, when the clerk said, "wait a minute"; and he reached into the box and pulled out a night-shirt identically like the other, but this one he turned over on

the counter. He knew human nature. He knew that a man likes a big, full, roomy, generous garment, and he showed him how long it was, and how broad it was across the shoulders. Now, you will remember, that I said a while ago, if you know how to use your eyes, and make others use their eyes you can accomplish a great deal. He had that man with his eyes down close to that shirt, following a neatly pointed pencil to see the fine stitching of the garment. Finally the customer said, "I believe that is about the garment I am looking for," and he asked the price of it. The clerk said \$1.50. Now, that shirt had that same red border, but the clerk had led him past that. How long would it have taken him to argue that man into the feeling that he wanted to buy a night-shirt with a big red border across the front? He couldn't drive him, but he could lead him past it.

I saw two Italian boys once crying: "Pineapples for sale at seven cents each, or three for a quarter." I thought it was a pity they didn't know how to count money. I sat and watched them make ten sales, and saw seven business men go up and buy pine-apples at three for a quarter, instead of paying seven cents apiece for them, and realized that the boys did know the value of money.

I saw a patent-medicine man one time—one of these fellows you are passing legislation against right along—use this principle on a farmer. He drove up to the farmer's house, and the farmer listened to his story: but he replied, "No, we don't want any more medicine; the whole cupboard is full, out in the kitchen now." Apparently the salesman didn't hear that. He just reached over and tapped this farmer on the knee, and said, "I want you to use one bottle of this, but don't quit using it after two or three days just because it makes you feel so much better!" The old man went down in his pocket for the dollar.

I laughed at a friend of mine some time ago. A druggist was advertising a certain famous medicine—the kind of medicine that, if you are sick, makes you feel so much better; and this man, a great, big, strong, robust fellow, was appealed to by that advertisement, and, with some embarrassment, he went into the drug store and said, "I see you advertise a medicine that makes a sick man feel better, and I wondered if it would make me feel better." That is part of the suggestion.

But sometimes we lose sight of another important factor in suggestion. Sometimes a young man will go into a store, and say, "I reckon you don't want to hire any more clerks in here, do you?" You don't hire him. But this is not half as laughable as to see a great big business man using that kind of negative suggestion in his business right along. I stepped into a big clothing store one day, and saw a man trying to buy a shirt. He said he wanted to buy a fine dress shirt. The proprietor showed him a shirt, and said the price was \$4, and the customer was admiring it. Then the proprietor said to him, "Neighbor, there is one of the greatest pieces of junk I ever sold in my life." That customer immediately saw the old rag man coming down the alley, crying "Rags; old iron!"—that is "junk." He came out of there in a hurry. A few weeks later I saw a notice in the paper that that man's business was in the hands of a receiver. He didn't understand the art of making a sale.

I stepped into a furniture store one time, to buy a folding go-cart for the baby, and the clerk showed me a nice little cart, and persuaded me it was the cart I

wanted. But he wanted to say something more, and he wheeled it across the floor and said, "There is a little cart that has given us the *least trouble* of any we have ever handled." Trouble! I didn't want trouble, I wanted something to wheel the baby in. I expect he wonders to this day why I got out of there. I went down the street to another furniture store, and asked to see a go-cart—and I have always thought that cart was exactly like the one I saw in the first store. The clerk wheeled it up and down, and showed me its strong points, and finally gave it a shove across the floor, and said, "There is a great cart. That cart has given us the greatest satisfaction of any cart we have ever handled in this store." Satisfaction! That is it—satisfaction. I bought that cart, and I have it yet.

Over in Ohio, a gentleman in a jobbing business of some sort told me about this power of suggestion. He said that on every box they shipped out was a tag stating that the article in it was fully guaranteed, and telling the customer if he didn't find it absolutely all right in every respect they would take it back. He said they had 85 percent of such articles brought back—a kick of some kind. A little, scrawny, insignificant man, he said, came in one day, and was nosing around among the boxes, and he said, "What have you got that tag on there for?" He replied, "To make our customers feel better." The little man said, "Take it off." They took them off, and found out that less than 5 percent of the packages they sent out brought back a complaint.

I want to leave this thought with you, that in the art of making a sale you can cause people to see the things you want them to see. I don't want to you to understand that you should have any salesman to tell anything but the truth. You cannot build up a permanent business in that way. But the man who properly understands his own nature, the nature of the people about him and the nature of the goods he has to sell, and knows how to apply that great fundamental thing called "suggestion," can make people see the things he wants them to see.

A shoe merchant told me once, "You have given me a thought, and I am going to try it. I have been in business eighteen years, and I have been guaranteeing my goods, and customers have been coming back and complaining about the goods I sell them. I believe I can see why. All these years I have instructed my salesmen that they should impress upon the customer's mind that our shoes were absolutely guaranteed." I said, "Change that, and say something positive about the shoe—that it is "a splendid wearing shoe," or "a neat looking shoe," or, "You will find that an exceedingly comfortable shoe." A year or so later I saw that man again, and he said, "I want to tell you that little change in policy has worked wonders in my business. I very seldom receive a complaint, because people are not looking for things to complain of. They are looking for positive qualities." Apply that in your business.

As I leave this subject with you to-night, I want to lift you up, as I said before, clear out of your business, and make you appreciate the fact that you are dealing with fundamental principles. Do not think that the principles I have been talking about are not applicable to your business, so long as you are dealing with humanity.

A young man in Detroit killed an old woman, snatched her diamond ear rings from her and her rings from her fingers, slipped back across the river and

baffled the police and detectives. After a few weeks, this young man became bold, and said he knew something about that "murder mystery." He was arrested and placed in a cell; whereupon he sent for a public stenographer and dictated the minute details of the horrible crime. He had no money to employ counsel, and one of the great criminal attorneys of that city was appointed to defend him. When he was called upon to plead, in spite of his confession, his attorney arose and said to the court, "Our plea is not guilty." The case was tried before a jury, the young man all through the trial contending that he had killed the woman; the jury was charged, and in two hours there was a rap on the door and the jury was led in, and to the despair and disgust of the court and all the law-abiding citizens of that city, their verdict was, "We find the defendant not guilty." Why? Simply because that great attorney knew some laws that were greater than the laws of the State of Michigan. He knew some of the fundamental laws of human nature. He knew how to say to these men, "Percy didn't commit this crime." These men went out and returned, I believe, a conscientious verdict, because this man knew the power of that great element in human nature—suggestion. I cite this instance to show the extent to which study can develop this insight into human nature.

One time in Chicago a great evangelist was preaching to thousands. One morning a number of representatives of the Associated Press called on him, and interviewed him on his marvelous power over men. They expected him to button his coat up and say, "Gentlemen, that power is simply a manifestation of the great Divine power." But Gypsy Smith said nothing of the kind. He said, "The secret of my power over men is in knowing how to appeal to them. I have studied men. When I see a man in trouble in the audience, I know how to touch him, I know how to appeal to him." So I say to you, if you study the people about you,—as that great lawyer did, and as that great evangelist did,—you will experience a great revival in your business.

But I want to impress upon your minds that your whole problem in any sale is a mental problem. The three great fundamental elements in it are yourself, the goods you have for sale, the people about you; and don't forget that the one great single element is the *man* element.