

WHEN PERSONALITY IS WORTH MORE THAN EXPERIENCE

THE head of a big contracting firm in New York has been looking two years now for a \$25,000-a-year man. The curious features of his search are that the man he wants shall have as little technical knowledge of the business as possible and no ability as a salesman. The requisites are that he shall dress well, appear well, be between thirty and forty, and get around a great deal among people of means.

"Such a man, when I find the right one, will bring me in hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of business a year," says this contractor. "He can do more for me than a dozen fairly competent salesmen who know this business thoroughly. He will be worth every cent I pay him and much more. In an hour I can teach him all that he will need to know. The use he'll be? Why, simply to talk up the firm among the big people he meets and associates with, getting them interested in it because of him and keeping them familiar with what it is doing. The more he manages to give the impression that he has a stake in the concern and is in its inside management the better.

"The smartest salesmen can't always get close to the big people. Such a man as I am looking for can often do it easily; do it in enough cases to count big. With no effort at all, just because of his acquaintance, he'll bring them into my office at the very moment they're wanting something. I'll find that man sooner or later, but it's a long search."

The contractor's case is no uncommon one. There are springing up steadily, because their usefulness is being recognized and keenly appreciated, a new order of men in large business enterprises. They are spoken of as big money employes, because where others draw hundreds they draw thousands, and seemingly for little real work.

Men who have spent years learning the intricate workings of a business and are highly competent, together with energetic, able salesmen, rank far below these "unknowns" who sell no goods at all and have had no experience in the "line." Those who are not behind the scenes half despise and altogether envy those of the big money, until one day unex-

Why It Is That Business Men Sometimes Pay the Highest Salaries to Those Lacking Technical Knowledge.

pected business and a celebrity appear in the offices. Their awe increases when the celebrity turns to the "unknown" and calls him, familiarly, "Bill."

Even then the average employe of the business world does not give the big money man his full due. He is apt to forget that it is the person who gets the really good customer and attaches him permanently that is entitled to the chief rewards, and that such successes are not generally to be won through plodding regular avenues. One thing is certain, these men would not keep on getting phenomenally large pay unless they were worth it.

A New Yorker who rarely gets down to the office of an important firm of Wall Street bankers and brokers sends in so much business that his pay averages five or six hundred dollars a week. He has a guarantee of four hundred. Uptown he is believed to direct the concern, giving orders to trained subordinates and partners who are really junior to him. This man, in spite of his large reputation, is a simple salesman whose personality manages to draw customers. In the office, in any position at all, he would be helpless, for he knows nothing more of the "Street" than the average man away from it. Yet not another employe or a partner of the house can get so much valuable business for it.

There is a well-known, strangely shaped building in New York, on an odd strip of land. It has always been supposed that a certain very able and distinguished man designed it and originated its unique idea. The facts are quite the contrary. What the man did was merely to find a site and the capital to construct. The rewards and the reputation all come to him. The youth who thought it out had his talents recognized substantially, considering all things. He was raised to a salary of \$35 a week.

Business was slack in these architectural offices. The big money employe of

the concern, a fellow of charming personality and many friends, who could talk a little architecture but really knew nothing about it, who, had his life depended upon it, couldn't have drawn a design or a contract, was strolling idly through the draughting room. He happened to see a young man of the staff, then getting \$18 a week, drawing away at something that looked unusual.

Now this draughtsman, the big money man knew, had a fine, artistic and practical knowledge of building. He at once leaned over the boy.

"What's that you're sketching, Gustave?"

The youth looked up and flushed. Then he explained that, there being nothing of importance to be done at the moment, he was occupying himself with a little work for practice. He was imagining an irregular, unusual, very small plot of ground, and designing a very tall commercial building to stand on it.

The Big Money Man cocked his eye at the design. He saw possibilities in the rough sketch. With a pleasant word or two to the boy on his ingenuity, he strolled on. But an hour later there was an important, informal conference with the head of the concern, and the next month the Big Money Man was more than ever evident in the big clubs up town and down. He was quietly canvassing his rich friends, men who owned land and men who had money to invest. In due time one of the biggest jobs that office had ever landed came in. Only the Big Money Man, or one of his ilk, could have discovered it.

The other day a New York architect who is not any too successful, who has never been able to get a rich clientele, was saying hard things about a man whose name is on the door of a big and prosperous firm that does business with the Good and the Great all over the country.

"Brown!" he said with infinite dis-

gust. "H-m! H-m! He couldn't design a doghouse. Oh! yes, I know he's got a style about him and a way of talking and that lots of people think he's the real thing of the firm. His practicing architecture is funny! What he really is, is a salesman, and nothing more than that. He goes with a lot of fashionable people, is always at their dinners and 'afternoons,' visits at their country places, flirts with their wives and daughters, and talks literature and art to them. I can design good buildings, if I do say it myself, and I know how to construct them. But it's a good year with me when I make five thousand clear. That chap draws three times what I do and is never around the offices at all."

What the critic did not know was the important point. Quietly and resourcefully the man who knew nothing of architecture was bringing to his firm client after client, men and women who were rich and powerful. He did not close contracts, he did not do a stroke of design, but he captured jobs that otherwise the office could never have landed. The ordinary salesman could never have landed them. Not a few, in fact, never existed until, over cigars in some cosy corner of house or club, the Big Money Employe originated them casually and set people of affairs thinking.

A good many businesses now have just such men. There is not a big realty concern in any of the large cities but either has a man of this sort on its staff, or wants one. Naturally, such Big Money Men, men who can really make good and not flash out after much bluff, are as scarce as hens' teeth. For the Big Money Employe of to-day, for all he seems to be doing little or nothing most of the time and leading a life of pleasure instead of grinding like other men, is actually a hard and tireless worker. Day and night he is watching the main chance, to create big trade where none exists, or to steer it out of the hands of rivals as clever as himself into his own.

The success of these men depends upon their personality. They must give out to the world, without actually saying so, but by intimation, that they know the business they are connected with thoroughly but that they find it necessary to leave the details to others, only taking up the larger problems themselves. That in reality they are ciphers, once the customer is brought in to the head of the firm, is carefully concealed. It is to every one's interest not to have it realized.

Really, the Big Money Employe should get full credit. His is the most difficult task of all. The average salesman who will faithfully make a certain number of visits a day and regularly get a little business is easy enough to get in any line. He does not command much money, for one man will do nearly as well as another. The Big Money Man is of another kidney.

The kind of salesman, the modern, really effective, result-bringing type, has another advantage, one that belongs to his personality. He gets business from people because he is close to them and can help them in their affairs. A Big Money Man of the right sort, one who is a "stayer" and gathers more and more business through the years, spends much of his time in voluntary services for his friends. His wide acquaintance makes him of great value in a thousand different ways. Here he discovers a wonderful young lawyer for the man of affairs, there he is able to let a capitalist in on a peculiarly attractive investment.

A real estate deal that hardly any one knows about is thrown to another friend, to a younger son who is just entering business a profitable line of trade that otherwise would go elsewhere is brought. The Big Money Man is always on the lookout for these things. If he is wise he gives much more than he takes, and is therefore remembered gratefully.

All this is outside the field and the limits of the ordinary salesman. Having each facilities, making use of and developing them in what gives the Big Money Employe his power and makes him worth almost any amount of pay.