

The Secret to Power in Business

by Glenn Clark

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VII. Think Straight

Arthur Brisbane, the great columnist who daily reached twelve million readers, stated in his column: "Big Business is looking for men who can sit in a chair behind an empty desk and look out of the window four hours a day and think straight. In spite of the fact that they are willing to pay such men \$50,000 a year, they cannot find men to fill the chairs."

One of the most difficult of all things is to see a thing clearly and see it whole. In Genesis 13:14-15 we read the promise that Jehovah gave unto Abraham and the conditions upon which it was given. Abraham met the conditions and Jehovah kept His promise. "Lift up now thine eyes and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward; for all the land which thou seest, to thee I give it and to thy seed forever."

My closest neighbor had a brother who was the least successful of any in the family. He went from one small clerking job to another. Finally he found himself in a routine, small-salary position in Sears Roebuck, Chicago. After while he ceased fretting about the details of his little job, and began to let his mind take in the working of the huge establishment as a whole. Then one day he asked the manager if he could see him. When the interview was granted he said, "I notice that the employees here are overworked at certain seasons and just stand around and loaf at other periods. It occurred to me that if you had a clearing house committee who could stagger the orders along we could all keep busy and half the workers could do the work in half the time in half as much space. I notice, for instance, that your bookkeeping and accounting department works feverishly the first week of each month when all the statements are sent out, and then they loaf for the remainder of the month. Now if the bills were staggered along and part of the alphabet went out the second week of each month, part the third, only half the workers could do the work twice as efficiently."

The result of that interview was to promote this man to be an associate manager at a salary of \$50,000 a year, and every year he was given \$50,000 bonus besides.

DeWitt Wallace made his living doing the tedious work of condensing court reports so lawyers could understand them at a glance. After a day's work at this sort of thing it bored him to have to weed through long magazine articles, the "meat" of which could have been given in third of the space. To meet the need of others who felt the same way he started a little magazine called the "Readers Digest," which he and his wife carried on alone for years. Little did he realize at the time how great his need was in this busy age, and how widespread his magazine was ultimately to become.

Roger Babson was so afflicted with tuberculosis that for a while his life was in jeopardy. For years he had to spend most of his time in his bed. During these long quiet times he had much time to commune with God and much time to see things whole and see them straight. Here it was he saw the need of protection for all mankind—protection from sin and from disease and from want. Indeed, only a part of the picture was protection from financial loss. Out of seeing this need whole and how to meet it came first of all his service for investors, next the production of paper towels, and other things to safeguard one's health and so on and on.