

Among Men Who Work with Hand or Brain

This Worker Says He Has Failed; Earns \$125 a Month at Age of 32

By LOUIS GEORGE

My conception of success is to have attained at least within halting distance of the salary your ability and experience would justify if you were given the position commensurate with your powers.

As I feel that I am not occupying such a position I class myself among the failures of life, although I am getting a salary of \$125 a month after 12 years' service with the firm with which I am now employed.

My failure was not due to not having seen my opportunities—as a matter of fact I created an opportunity several years ago, but I ever got out of it was work and nothing more. In view of my failure I am now a "little" increase in pay—this latter "appreciation" only because I demanded it and to keep me from leaving my job in disgust.

I have tried in every way to court success. I have worked hard and long, put in nights and Sundays and even cut out my vacations when necessary and all to what purpose? I am a failure. I have no practical experience, no "whys" of this. It is because I did not get the right start, at the right time, with the right firm. To have done this I think would have spelled success. Am I right? Read my story and see.

I was born in Chicago, the third of a family of eight boys. My earliest recollection of my childhood days was "minding" the baby. Goodness knows my services were sadly needed, for mother had her hands full with the housework and the preparation of enough food to satisfy the ravenous appetites of seven boys. In view of my duties as "nurse" and helping mother about the house I was denied the pleasures and pastimes so dear to any healthy, vigorous boy.

I was 10 years old when my father accepted the position of janitor and engineer in one of the city schools and my older boys had to help him with his work after school hours. Even during vacation time there was no play for me—there was work about the home to be done and all my "spare" time was put in with father at the schoolhouse preparing for the next term. Oh, how I envied other boys playing ball, going fishing and swimming and enjoying life as it is intended they should! But all this was not for me—I had to work.

WORKED IN FATHER'S STORE
When I was 12 years old, father opened a confectionery store near the school and I was given the new task of taking care of the store before and after school hours. For two years I held this "position," but by the end of that time I tired of the constant routine of the store and decided to get real work for myself where I could get real wages. I thought I now would have a little time for my own amusement, for I was tired of all work and no play.

I secured a position in a drug store at \$3 a week and turned this amount into the family till with the exception of 25 cents, which I kept to spend for luxuries and good time. I worked a year the long hours and Sunday work began to show upon me and my parents and the doctor advised me to seek other employment.

I secured a position in a wire factory doing piece work—the average wage for this class of work being \$5 to \$6 a week. I soon became proficient and boosted my income from \$8 to \$18, which was more than the other boys, which was turned out. However, the work was too dirty and did not appeal to me—even at that age I entertained higher ideals and aspirations concerning my future.

At the age of 16 I secured a position in a drygoods store as delivery boy and boy of all work in the store. In addition to the store duties, I attended to the work of my employer's home, mowing the lawn evenings and doing care of his horse and doing other barn work. I received a salary of \$5 a week.

After two years in this position and not seeing any advancement I secured a position in a competing store. The salary offered was but \$4 a week, \$1 a week less than I had been receiving, but I was given a position as assistant in the domestic department, which gave me an opportunity to learn something of the business.

RAISED \$2 IN TWO YEARS
I became friendly with the men in the carpet department, and being of an ambitious nature, I went to the carpet business in connection with my drygoods duties. In a short time I could make and hang window shades and draperies. I was given the men in direct charge. I was with this concern about two years and had but a \$2 raise during that time.

Feeling that I was capable of earning more and was worth more to the firm, I demanded a raise and was refused. Then I succeeded in securing a position with another concern in the domestic department, the position being given me in preference to other applicants on account of my experience in the carpet department, which I had gained on my own initiative under my former employer, it being part of my duty to help with the carpet work when occasion required. I received the minimum salary of \$7 a week, and this for a young man of 20 years certainly did not look promising or encouraging.

Up to this time, he it remembered, I gave to my parents practically all of my earnings, keeping but a trifle for my own use. My companions were all doing better than I financially, making from \$12 to \$15 a week. I had the same opportunities to do likewise, learning a trade in some shop or factory, but I had set an ideal for myself and was determined to succeed in it. Seeing my chances could not deter me, and I recognized that the beginning had but little to do with the final results.

GOT WINDOW TRIMMER'S JOB
I was receiving but \$9 a week when I was 21 years of age, a \$2 increase in the last year and in the same position in which I had started. Then I saw what I considered to be my opportunity—the chance for which I had so long waited.

One of the older employes announced

he was going to quit. He had been a window trimmer in connection with his other duties, and when he told me one morning that he had accepted a place with another firm I resolved that I would succeed him. That same morning I applied for his place and the manager told me he would give me a chance.

"How I worked! And when night came I would go home and far into the morning I would study over the lessons of a correspondence course in window trimming. I made good, as I thought I would, and when a little later a change in the organization created a position as floor walker I applied and was given a tryout, this in addition to my regular duties as window trimmer.

The success I attained as a window trimmer inspired me to increased efforts. I began looking for further opportunities. If they were not before me I would create them—and I did.

The head of the firm had been doing his own "ad" writing, and as he was too much occupied with other tasks to give it needed attention, I thought I saw a big chance for me. I started out to prepare myself as an "ad" writer, first, however, learning card writing for my window displays. I took a course in advertising, and as far as I was able without practical experience qualified myself for the work before I sought the "boss."

"Mr. N—," I said, "I think I can now relieve you of your work of ad writing."

"What's that? What do you know about it?"
When I explained how I had acquired my knowledge he expressed his appreciation with a grunt, but finally acquiesced in my plan for a trial.

Again I made good, and without boasting, but merely to show you what I have made of the opportunity, as I have found them, I can show you in some of the leading trade journals of that time pictures of various bits of my window displays and reproductions of ads I wrote at that time.

But this was not the only way in which I made myself useful to the firm—many of them outside of my department. For instance, I had picked up a little knowledge of electricity and wiring and had installed a complete system of electric lighting for the show window displays and receptacles. I have been with the firm I have wired and installed complete fixtures for 160 incandescent lights, ranging from the basement to the second floor, as well as changing the entire system of wiring in the windows and the store proper.

SAVED MONEY FOR HIM
All this work I did in my spare time. I further saved the firm considerable money by doing most of the carpenter work around the store, such as building new shelves, temporary counters and making minor attractions. I mention these that you may know my loyalty to the firm and endeavored to give it the best there was in me. I was then receiving a salary of \$12 a week.

Things ran along smoothly for a period of four years, all of which time I was acquiring new knowledge, studying evenings and during my spare time and otherwise fitting myself for larger duties. I had applied for a raise several times, but each time my employer put me off with promises.

At last when it came that promises were all I was to get, I applied for a position with another firm and was accepted. Then I went to my old boss and told him.

"Now you don't want to leave here," he said suavely, "and just when we were going to give you a raise, too."

"How much were you going to give me?" I asked him.

"We were just going to make your salary \$15. A raise of \$3 per week—think of it!"

I did so seriously, in fact, that I refused to stay at that price.

We finally compromised on the salary and I agreed to start for \$17 a week, with the understanding that I would receive \$20. In fact, during the twelve months from that date, things continued thus for a year when I married. I bought a lot and borrowed \$2,000 to build a home. Then the crisis came.

I called my employer's attention to our agreement made a year previously and the fact that I was married, telling him that I really needed more money to meet my obligations and that I had counted upon his living up to his agreement. He said that I would find it impossible to make a change at that time under the circumstances, but he offered again and again with promises.

OFFERED A BETTER POSITION
Two years later I secured a position in a neighboring city at \$22.50 a week. I informed my employer of the change I had contemplated making and he refused. He again persuaded me to remain and consented to pay me \$20 a week. As my home was in Chicago and not entirely clean of debt, I thought it to my advantage to accept his offer.

About this time I took another course in advertising to learn new methods of attracting trade, many of which I put into my firm's advertising. At the same time I kept on doing my window trimming and card writing. I now took entire charge of the store during the proprietor's absence, which was quite often, owing to the fact that he himself attended to most of the buying, and would be away from a week to 30 days at a time.

After repeated threats to leave and secure employment elsewhere I finally have raised my income to \$125 a month. I am 32 years old. I own my home and have a little money ahead, but I do not believe that I have attained anywhere near the success I am entitled to, in view of the amount of energy I put forth to get where I am.

I am confident that I am capable of greater and bigger things and feel fully competent to hold down a good position. There are a lot of fellows in the \$3,000 class who are not anywhere nearly so well equipped with the practical knowledge and experience as I am, and they are making good. I know I can do likewise if given the opportunity. But this is impossible without an influential friend to get you "in right." Am I not right?

Most Jobs Hard at the Start; New Man Meets Rough Tests

By DONALD SCOTT

"FULLY 90 per cent of the men that make good with us during the first few weeks of their employment can, as a rule, thereafter hold down their jobs as long as they want to."

"We have a definite test system that applies in general to all new employees during the first few weeks of their employment. That, of course, accounts in part for the figures I just gave you. Usually we test a man pretty hard the first few days—morally, mentally and physically—and his tests always are a little harder than the requirements of the work we want him to do. If he shows a weakness we go after that weakness with a thorough test—mainly to see if the man has the kind of stuff in him that will overcome it."

"We want him to make good. At the same time we don't want to carry along an incompetent man for a number of months, but eventually let him go and waste all the training we might have been giving the right man during all that time, and the right man is the fellow who will buckle down hard in the face of difficulties."

"Thus does a man who is noted for his skill as an employer of the best labor emphasize the fact that invariably the most important days on the new job are the first few. They are the test days, whether or not the employer may have a definite system of testing."

Various employers have various ways of finding out as soon as possible the real worth of a new employee. Some give the new man harder and more trying work than they really want him to do—a sort of initiation process.

For instance, in a factory where a patented iron folding bed is made the hardest job in the place is twisting iron scrolls all day long. Every new man is put at this arduous work. If he sticks and does not complain, he is given the first opening that comes along in better work.

This is the employer tests out his new men, keeps a good supply of iron scrolls on hand all the time and always has a good man to fill any vacancy in the less irksome iron working jobs throughout his plant.

MISTAKE TO "TAKE IT EASY"
The test of the new man in the office and on the sales force is also applied strenuously during the first few days or weeks of his employment.

Many a man when he takes a new position makes the mistake of thinking that he had better not set a precedent of hard work, or his boss will expect him to do more. He is wrong. He is being physically impossible.

"Anyway," thinks the new employee, "the boss will think more of me if I apparently do my work with ease."

But the boss doesn't care a rap how you do it, so long as you do it, and do it right, in a reasonable length of time.

In other words, he judges the new man by the amount of time for which he pays him—what the new man accomplishes in that time. And if the boss should happen to know that the new man is spending more of his working hours in order to make good in most cases would be a recommendation; would show earnestness and effort.

It does pay to work hard at the start in order to overcome the handicap that every new man on a job has to buck—the possibility of friction with other employes, lack of knowledge of the business, and unfamiliarity with many of the details of the job.

One man who had made an exceptionally brilliant record in a position where no less than a score of men had fallen down to defeat within the year before he took the job spared for time when he was offered the position, so that he might gain some information that would help him avoid some of the mistakes the others had made. He learned the name and address of the man who had last held the position and made him a visit and told him frankly that he was going to take a whack at the position and asked for advice.

LEARNING FROM OTHERS' ERRORS
"My best advice," said the man, "is that you have nothing to do with that bunch of fourflushing highwaymen."

It seems, whether the new job carries a contract with a salary stated up in the thousands or daily labor. It does pay to make a flying start into hard work.

SYSTEM ALL WRONG
The owner of the business had called in the efficiency engineer as a last resort. He never would have been willing to do such a thing had he not become desperate in regard to the future of his business.

He felt that times were hard; his own collections were not in a healthy condition; trade seemed to be slow; business in general was dull. He had appeared to be at the end.

But the engineer knew that this point of view was all wrong. General trade conditions were better than fair; collections were good, and trade in the field concerned had never been better.

CRACK SHOT HELPED TO MAKE SALE; SALESMAN AIDED BY GOOD AIM
By GEORGE F. BARTON
HERE is an instance told by the buyer and gun department manager of one of the large retail stores of how he made a sale by unusual salesmanship.

"One day a man looked at the air-guns which were in a rack on the counter."

much of a talker for one thing and he said to himself: "Maybe that's another reason why he did not make good; I'll keep quiet."

Then the former employe told about all the other men who had tried and had failed at the position, just to emphasize his advice that his visitor would do well not to take the place, as well as to advise himself for not having made good on the job. His wife was an interested listener.

Then the new man looked up at the address of the other man who had been tried and found wanting, and boldly approached them all in the same way. In the main they told him the same story, and he studied each type of man. He put two and two together after he had secured a great deal of reliable though biased information about the man for whom he was to work, decided on a course of action, and went to work well fortified with valuable historical knowledge.

For one thing, he had satisfied himself that the opportunity in case he should make good would be well worth the effort. It was a position where the results of a man's work stand out plainly and where mistakes would be costly.

He figured that his new employer would not care if he did not show great success in getting results at the start, so long as he made no costly mistakes. All the other men had gone into the work to make a big splash right away. But he adopted the slow, cautious method. He did not talk to anybody unless it was absolutely necessary, although his mind was constantly alert for pointers, and he kept smiling—not so much because he felt like it, but because he wanted to appear confident.

"FINDING" ONESELF A PERSONAL MATTER
A few years ago we were fond of the expression "finding himself." This finding of oneself is a personal business, in which others can help but indirectly. For herein consists the wisdom of great teachers. They do not entirely despair of a dull student until they have placed before him what we may call many kinds of fodder. Somewhere in this may be the head of clover, the gleaming of which will open his eyes almost as by fairylike enchantment.

When he has been fed on a diet of nothing but Timothy grass he might have left school with the brand of dunce.

But even when teachers are not wise there may be something among the associations he has perhaps blindly longed for that will arouse in a student something sleeping within him that will lead him on to great goal after goal.

An eminent Frenchman has recently retold the experiences of his youth. When a green boy he went up from an obscure province to a great school, and

one of his first tasks was to write an essay in Latin, an essay which, he says, was undoubtedly bad. At any rate that is what the teacher considered. Then the whole class, asked him from what province he came. The answer brought smiles to the faces of all the students, especially as the teacher added that he would advise him to return there. But this was not what the boy intended to do, and at the end of the school year he was the only one in the class to win a prize, one of the few prizes offered by the school.

INDUSTRY A PREREQUISITE
There is a great gain of time if a young man can go to some of the great manuals of living. Sometimes he may get an invaluable set of principles from the addresses of men of experience, but often such are hardly more than so much babbling to him, because he has not learned to recognize the significant statement among others that are but explanatory.

Sir Joshua Reynolds says: "If you have great talents, industry will improve them; if you have but moderate abilities, industry will supply their deficiency. Nothing is denied to well-labored labor; nothing is to be obtained without it. Not to enter into metaphysical discussions on the nature of genius, I will venture to assert that assiduity unabated by difficulty, and a disposition eagerly directed to the object of its pursuit, will produce effects similar to those which some call the result of natural powers."

The great things that men learn they come by, "not by felicity or successful hazard, but by care and assiduity," and often by a chastising of the mind. Understanding is enlarged by variety of knowledge and this is only gained at the price of indefatigable diligence.

MENTAL LABOR GREAT PLEASURE
This is a pleasure of young men has not made the unemitting industry a disagreeable thing, for he believes that great mental labor gives great mental pleasures. There is the delight that after persevering industry a man finds his strength increase in proportion to his task.

The content of our minds is constantly wearing out and constantly needs to be renewed. It is a great thing to be able to have a mind of a sort of divine energy, and such energy increases only with exercise. It is a great pleasure to be in the way of a student and to be watchful and ready to take advantage of it. Only the mind stored with infinite materials knows what mental labor means. And a mind stored with the great precepts of the world is able to make precepts of its own that may startle the world by their seeming originality.

Always Had Done It That Way; Why the Business Got in a Rut
By FRANK ANDREWS FALL
THE efficiency engineer had been called in. As he entered and presented his credentials, he took a quick but fruitful glance about the office.

As a shining example of how not to accomplish results that office was second to none. An air of inefficiency hung desolately about the place. Papers were strewn about in a riot of disorder. A few poor spindles, upon which letters, bills, orders and estimates were impaled, and seemed to be dying a slow death, afforded the only visible evidence of any attempt at classification or preservation.

Spindles! Relics of past centuries, long ago chucked into the discard, at least as a means of filing, by every halfway up to date business man.

The boss of the outfit, who had inherited it from his father, but had not fallen heir to his father's brains enough to run the business, had apparently regarded the original equipment with the greatest respect and veneration. At any rate, he had not changed it much.

The accountant looked from one article of office furniture to another. Not a single modern thing did he see. Not a single effective thing, in other words, for the most valuable article of office economy and efficiency had been perfected within the last 10 or 15 years.

Notes From the World of Science
The combined area of the cornfields of the United States is nearly equal to the area of France or Germany.
Boiling granite water in soda water once in a while will remove grease and keep them fresh and wholesome.
The coal miners of the United States

Precepts of Any Business Helps Man to Make Most of Himself

By C. S. MADDOCKS

Whether we go to business men, scholars or artists, or to the writings of those who have been greatly successful, we shall find but one or two fundamental precepts of perfection. The man who feels the strainings of ambition within him will soonest learn that it is not by essaying some titanic task, some terribly formidable business by which finally to realize his hopes, if he will go to the carefully considered testimonies of those who have been recognized by the world as accomplishing great ends, ends not accomplished by might but through infinite diligence and industry.

It does not matter that these testimonies come from men who worked with pen or brush, while he must work with men or nature, the principles of success for every kind of effort are identical. Only methods vary. Having acquired sound principles any man of energy can work out the means of putting those principles into working order.

It is a misfortune that some men have minds that can not recognize principles. They never get beyond that stage of youth which in studying a page of history is blinded by the details of an event and can not see the fundamental fact or truth behind these details.

It is quite useless to send such men to books of biography or essays—some of which are perfect manuals of principles—because they can not see anything but the details, can see nothing of the fundamental thought.

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