

**THE BUSINESS LIFE;
OR STRAIGHT TALKS
ON BUSINESS**

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The Business Life; Or Straight Talks on Business by William Gamble

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WILLIAM GAMBLE

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BY
WILLIAM GAMBLE



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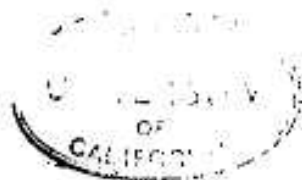
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BEFORE WE BEGIN

THESE 'Talks' were originally published in a little monthly Trade Circular issued by A. W. Penrose & Co., with which firm the Author is associated, and were only intended to form an opening for advertising matter. Since the cessation of the series a very general wish has been expressed by numerous correspondents, with many of whom the Author is unacquainted personally, that the articles should be published in a collected form. The Author has, however, been somewhat diffident about taking such a step; and would not have done so, but that it was so strongly pressed. He felt that, in this more ambitious style, they would be, perhaps, subject to keener criticism at the hands of those who did not appreciate the circumstances under which they were originally written. The articles were hurriedly prepared in the all too few spare moments of a strenuous business life; and often as a relief to the mind after a day of mental strain and worry. They accordingly may bear traces of hasty thought and work, in spite of the revision to which they have been subjected in the present re-issue.

It is not pretended that there is anything essentially new in these 'Talks.' It is the old,

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old philosophy of many succeeding generations of business men. All that can be claimed is that it has been put into a new form, better suited, perhaps, to present day ideas.

If it serves to make young business men think a little more deeply of their duties in life, the Author feels his work will not have been in vain. Whatever shortcomings there may be, let them be excused as words spoken from the heart, in all earnestness, at a time when the future commercial prosperity of this country is a matter of grave disquietude. Other nations are pressing hardly upon us with better business methods, and with, in many respects, a higher type of men to carry them out.

England is still a country of matchless resources, with a people possessed of indomitable industry and marvellous skill in handicrafts; but the rising generation have not maintained the great traditions handed down to them; and, in spite of a magnificent legacy of practical experience, have allowed other nations to outstrip them in the race for commercial supremacy. Most of those who have attempted to analyse the causes of this degeneracy have set it down to the lack of modern machinery; to the effects of Free Trade; to cheaper foreign labour; and to many other causes.

The Author, however, thinks the trouble lies deeper. It is not machinery we want, but men, in the highest sense of the word, who can shake off the slipshod indifference which besets so many to-day; men who are keenly alive to the trend of

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things around them, and who feel that they are in business not as a pastime, nor as an unpleasant necessity, but as a human duty, to fulfil a useful position in the world ; to do something, if possible, which will leave it, if only in their own little circle, better than they found it. We want men eager to improve, eager to prevent their fellow-men making a single false step, eager to help their employers, if they are in employment, and eager to help those under them, if they are employing others. These are the men to whom these ' Talks ' are addressed ; but it is hoped others may be stimulated to shake off their dulness and indifference, and be encouraged to regard their business life more hopefully, more ambitiously, and more strenuously.