

CHAPTER II.

FROM ORDER-TAKER TO DRUMMER.

STEELE & Steele's poorest representative had been on the road three months, and had, he realized, spent most of that time learning the first principles of salesmanship. Nor, judging from results, had he learned them very well.

His territory was remote from Barnsville, and he had consequently not been home since becoming engaged with the hardware specialty company. Home, however, was not his greatest concern.

Every week he had been put through an ordeal in the sales manager's office and there was as yet no substantial improvement in his work. He manifested a keen desire to succeed, though, and this disposition pleaded for him with the man at the desk. He was kept on in spite of bad business; took up his sample-case each Monday morning full of samples and laid it down each Saturday forenoon not full of orders.

But if his advancement in business was slow he had made rapid strides in other directions, and this fact partially accounted for his perseverance on the road. Just after receiving his first letter from Bertha, urging him to make good before quitting, he had been sought out by his elder brother John.

"I didn't know you were in this corner of the earth, Jack," he said; "I thought you were working out of Chicago through Illinois."