

clerks receive all the way from \$100 to \$250. I know of one chief clerk in New York who holds a unique position in railway circles, & I have been told that he gets \$10,000 a year, but he is the exception, & the only exception I know of. Station agents get from \$25 to \$250. That is about the range throughout the country, New York included. Pay is about 20% higher in New York than in Philadelphia, & about 25% more than in interior towns. The hours of work are the same as in other lines of business.

Promotion for a railway clerk depends more on the man than anything else. In most offices civil service rules obtain. In my own department I never go outside the office to fill a vacancy if I can help it. If I am forced to, I try the other offices of the road, & if they cannot supply the man I want, I look around for one who has had railway experience. Possibly his name may be on my waiting list. Perhaps he may be suggested to me by one of my men & he may be working elsewhere. In that case I write to his employer, telling him what I am willing to pay for his services & asking whether he objects to my offering the place to him. If he does not object, I make my offer. If this fails I sometimes advertise for a man. I did that not long ago & received a bushel of letters. Some were written on paper from the Holland House & Waldorf-Astoria. Two or three reputable clubs furnished applicants, but the man who got the job came from the Mills Hotel, where the living expenses are less than \$3 a week. If I fill a vacancy by promotion or create a new place, I recruit my office staff by hiring a new office boy & make promotions all along the line wherever it is practicable.

Many clerks never advance much above their original positions. They are the kind of men who work in railway offices merely to draw their pay. They would work as readily in any commercial office. They have no love for their business, no ambition, & yet they wonder why new men are promoted over their heads, & lay it to prejudice, injustice & discrimination. I know some clerks who figure this way:

"I've got to be down at the office at 9. I go to lunch at 12. I get back at 1 & leave at 5. Between hours I can probably get out in the hall for half an hour to read the paper & smoke a cigarette."

And yet this is the very man who will sit down in the evening over a smoke & tell you how the railway business ought to be run; give you some ideas of his own that ignorance on the part of the chief clerk or head of the department has prevented from being adopted, & will inform you seriously that he has been kept down by jealousy from drawing twice as much pay as he gets.

There are certain essentials that all clerks must possess if they wish to hold their jobs for any length of time. But many men overrate these necessary things. For instance, a clerk must be accurate in his figures, grammatical in his expressions, neat & plain in his handwriting and respectful to his superiors. He must obey orders & do the work that is set before him. These are as requisite as the wearing of clothes, but no more so. I know some men who have been clerks for 20 years. They have had all these essentials & have them still. Their manners are perfection, their obedience is beautiful, their handwriting copperplate, & their neatness like unto a Holland housewife's; but they are clerks to-day even as they were when they began. Their trouble was that they stopped at the essentials, which are only the beginning of a man's career.

The clerk who advances is one who works for his office, his chief, his road, as well as for himself. He studies the work of the man directly in his own way of promotion. He not only does all that he is called on to do, but

finds tasks that are outside the routine of his desk. He makes suggestions. He has ideas. He doesn't find ideas by dreaming, gossiping or talking with other clerks when he ought to be at his work, but by studying & by close observation. There is not a clerical place that I know of that does not offer an ambitious, studious, observant man an opportunity for impressing himself so strongly on the management that promotion must come to him. Sometimes it may be slow in his own office, but if he is alert & wide-awake, he can find his chance in some other office. There have been cases in railways following strict civil service rules when capable men have been kept back for years until vacancies in higher positions have occurred. But these men could easily have found better pay on other roads had they cared to make the change.

The interests of a railway are so vast & varied that almost any practical suggestion finds a place in some department. A clerk in the cashier's office may have an idea for increasing speed on engines, a man in the motive power department may devise a new plan of soliciting passenger business, a man in my office may work out a plan for simplifying the keeping of freight accounts. There is room for all these ideas, & the man who makes them is the man who rises, & if he does not neglect the essentials of his daily work while figuring out these problems, he cannot be kept down.

Most men imagine, if they give the matter any thought at all, that a railway clerk is hired solely to take care of the line of work he is set to do. If that were the case there would be no such thing as promotion. A man would have to begin as general superintendent, general freight agent, & superintendent of motive power. But this is not the case. All of these higher places are filled by promotion. There is not a general officer of a railway in this country who has not served some sort of apprenticeship in the service.

Railways are run, primarily, to make money. To make money the public must be served fairly & honestly, & as generously as circumstances permit. Railways cannot exist without business, & the two sources of business are passenger & freight traffic. This business must be solicited in a large measure. The clerk who plans successfully to aid this canvass may make himself an important factor in the management of the road. Let me give you an illustration of the kind of work that is useful in the passenger service. Not long ago the Lehigh Valley Railway Company sent to its passenger & ticket agents throughout the country a circular concerning the proper reading of newspapers for business. In substance it was as follows:

"Watch the local columns of the newspapers. When you see items like these:

"Mr. & Mrs. Smith, of San Francisco, are visiting the Jones' on Riverside Drive."

"Mr. Wilson, who has been very ill with pneumonia, is convalescent."

"The marriage of Mr. Miller & Miss Brown on the 25th promises to be one of the social events of the season."

"I want you to clip these articles or to take note of them, & at the first opportunity call upon Mr. & Mrs. Smith & explain to them the merits of this line on the return trip to their home; they will in nearly every instance be glad of the information, & appreciate your courtesy & enterprise, with the result that business will be secured."

"Before calling upon Mr. Wilson you could ascertain, probably without much trouble, just what place & climate would be most suitable for his convalescence, as it would be folly to urge him to take a long-distance trip when he could not afford to go beyond 100 miles. By studying customers in this way business is increased. Those who travel for pleasure or for health are generally glad to be advised &

helped in this way, & it is wise policy to do so.

"In the case of the bride & groom—this is the one period in life, of all others, when cost is not counted, so that you may feel secure in suggesting all the luxuries as well as comforts obtainable if the wedding journey is made over the road."

"These points seem small in themselves, but if once tried you will be astonished at the results obtained."

This will give you an idea of the chance for advancement in a railway office for a quick-witted, industrious man, who has ambitions & ideas that extend beyond the walls of his own particular office. The railway business is essentially one in which ideas count, & practical suggestions turn quickly into money. My advice to clerks is to use their brains as well as their hands, study the road & its interests, avoid office politics, & be loyal to the head of the department. The chief trusts his employees. He has to do so. If he did not he could not do business. This confidence must be reciprocal if good results are to follow. The clerk who is sure to go up must do his own work as well as it can possibly be done, and at the same time be prepared to do the work of the man who is a step higher up. He must get right down to "brass tacks." He must have a purpose in his work. He must not count hours. The day should be too short for him—not too long. Not long ago an applicant for a stenographer's place called on me. After he had told me his name & experience he said:

"What are the hours?"

"I think I don't want you at all," was my answer.

Another thing to be remembered is the cultivation of tact, patience & affability. A clerk should treat every one courteously, from the president down to the office boy. He should also always be polite to visitors. No matter who the caller may be, or how foolish his inquiry, the clerk should answer it fully, satisfactorily & politely. Then again, let me advise all clerks not to imagine that they know it all. I began as an office boy in a railway office in Cleveland 29 years ago. I have served as clerk in passenger & freight departments, in the accounting & treasurer's offices, under the general officers & the superintendent, & I know whereof I write. Don't know it all. You can't do it. I learn things every day, & so does every other railway official who studies his calling conscientiously.

As to habits. The same rules obtain as in all other lines of work. The man who cannot control himself can never control others. A drinking man, a gambler & a man who does not know how to take care of his money & is always in debt is as sure to fail as he is to live.

This brings me up to the chances for entering a railway office as a clerk. It is difficult, unless an applicant is recommended by some one the head of the department knows, or has some peculiar fitness for the work. The best advice I give is to be on hand when a vacancy occurs. Every officer in New York City is loaded up with applications for clerkships. Every office is overrun with applicants who call in person to present their claims for employment. And there are 500 applications for every vacancy. A man of 25, or thereabouts, with no experience in railwaying might walk the streets of New York until he wore his boot soles through looking for a job & not find it. If, on the other hand, he has had experience in some other town & can bring acceptable references he might secure work without trouble. It all depends upon circumstances. Sometimes clerks are taken from brakemen, firemen, conductors & mechanics, if the men have sufficient education & adaptability. Of course the better educated a man has the better off he is. A college man stands a better chance than a common school graduate, everything else considered. The man who