



WINDOW DRESSING.

IT IS granted that nothing is so successful in window dressing as the original. The object of the window dresser is to draw attention to the wares displayed, consequently the more attractive the display is made the more efficacious it is for advertising purposes. A window display must be original to be successful. A display may be very creditable and tasteful, yet be devoid of the quality of usefulness as an advertising means. As an artistic arrangement of goods, and as a piece of perfect harmony in coloring, it may be very commendable, but still may not fulfill the purposes for which it was designed.

The great danger to be avoided by the man who performs a daily round of store decoration and window dressing is the getting into a groove. Unhappily, says the Chicago Dry Goods Reporter, there is such a tendency with even the best. The danger can be obviated by any man who uses the thousand and one ideas that circumstances will suggest.

Some class of goods permit a greater scope for originality than others. Handkerchiefs and linens, for instance, possess the faculty of being readily formed into any design. Dress goods and silks are also capable of being originally treated. In fancy goods and toys, originality is shown in the manner of placing the goods. They lack a great many advantages possessed by goods which can be draped or twisted into a shape to suit a design.

To the amateur window dresser no goods contain so few features to help artistic treatment as clothing. Yet displays of such goods can be made not alone interesting, but decidedly attractive. Some among Chicago window dressers succeed in this respect. In this they are helped materially by the electric lights, which they arrange in place to follow the outline of a design.

A very attractive show of clothing was recently made by the trimmer in a State street clothing house. It was a series of graduating arches, the largest of which was nearest the window light. On the face of each arch coats and vests were artistically placed, the spaces being filled up with cheese-cloth in various colors. On the concave edges of each arch, colored electric lights were thickly placed. At night the effect of this display was a source of considerable attraction, and, no doubt, added to the receipts of the house.

The treatment of ribbons denotes the presence or absence of the harmonious sense in the window trimmer. A stock of ribbons contains such a variety of coloring that there is always present a possibility of committing a multitude of errors in using them for displays. Every fool can use ribbons in making a display, but only the real artist in the window-dressing profession can do so without offending against the laws of correct taste.

There is one unassuming man in a small store in this city who is possessed of a refined taste that is natural and admirable. This week, in the store referred to, a show of ribbons is made which contains artistic qualities that would shame some of those who deem themselves masters in the art of window-dressing. In this display but two shades in the various tones are employed.

Such is the delightful harmony displayed in the arrangement that people are forcibly attracted to stop and study. The simplicity of the show is its most admirable feature—only two horizontal rods being employed in draping. The ribbons exhibited are in all the charming variations of green and heliotrope shades which hold a prominent place in current fashions and which are thus aptly emphasized.

WHERE SOME MAKE FAILURES.

How often does it happen that we come upon a window where the decorator has selected a central point in the rear of the window and has from that point radiated out to the glass, a display of dress goods which as a whole design is a splendid representation of a gigantic candle extinguisher, but a complete failure if true window dressing means that only which is governed by the law, all details shall minister in the highest degree possible to the rapid selling of the goods displayed. If, says the Dry Goods Economist, that is the intention of window dressing, then the accentuation of every individual charm of each individual piece displayed must become the ruling object and intention of the true decorator, or, in other words, the emphasizing of the beauty of the fabric, the beauties of color and design, and the full and perfect adaptability of the article to the uses for which it was made must be the ruling desire of the true window dresser. Fancy a salesman at the dress goods counter saying: "Wait, madam, until I show you what a fantastic figure I can make up with this piece of stuff." Such a man would instantly be discharged as a lunatic, and yet to judge from the many eccentric displays made he might be hired by the next door man as a professional decorator.

Let us follow a lady and her friend who are out to buy a new spring dress. They come to X's window and they join the crowd and admire the great design of the great extinguisher. They exhaust all their feminine phrases. "How lovely! Why you would think you was looking away down a long tunnel." "It is just too cute for anything," etc. They fully noted the design, the extinguisher—but the fabrics, no! The details of the grand design were lost in the design itself. The extinguisher as an extinguisher was grand; they, however, were looking for dress goods, so they pass on.

Next door to X, Mr. B. has a store. He has not a professional window dresser. His department men dress the windows and do the best they can. They drape a piece of goods as near as possible to how it may be worn, their object being to make it as seductively charming as possible, and so, very naturally, our two lady friends stop and admire the goods displayed, and by that admiration they are induced to enter and look at Mr. B.'s stock. Mr. X. has an attractive window and a crowd on the sidewalk. Mr. B. has a modest window in which goods display their own individual beauties, and he has the crowd not on the sidewalk, but at his counters.

The object of art applied to window dressing is not to hide the materials used to produce the whole design of the window, but that each piece which enters the composition shall be there to display in the best possible manner all that it possesses of desirableness. There may be times when eccentric displays are almost necessities, as at the Christmas holidays, but there never is a time when the genius of business should be forgotten, that genius or spirit of business life is "sell;" there is no other purpose in a store. Sell, sell, sell!

The best dressed window is a failure if the glass is not clean and bright.