

Good Advertising

For Wide Awake Retailers

By F. James Gibson.

Our "Good Advertising" department is to help our subscribers to do better advertising. The gentleman whom we have selected as its conductor is well known as one of the foremost advertising specialists of the day. Any of our readers who desire the benefit of Mr. Gibson's criticisms on advertisements or advertising methods, or his advice on any advertising subject, can have it or both entirely free of charge by writing to him in care of this journal.

If correspondents so desire, fictitious names or initials may be used for publication. But all requests should be accompanied by the subscriber's name.

FORCIBLE FACTS FOR FEBRUARY.

FEBRUARY sees two waves of merchandise—the incoming and the outgoing. One puts in the possession of your patrons the Winter stocks at small prices—the other swings in your store Spring stocks fresh with fashion's latest fancies.

The most important February event in merchandising is the great midwinter sale. It includes every article in stock, and seems to convey the impression that if bargains were ever plentiful they are during this sale.

Do not forget to carry out this thought in your selling, as well as in your advertising. "Bargains" should be the slogan of your advertising men. Your clerks and your prices and values should echo and reecho the cry until the fitful fever of midwinter retailing is aroused into the tensest activity.

There is no road to a man's or woman's heart—we should say pocket-book—but if you secure one you generally secure the other, like the electric motor and quickly traveled road of good goods and small prices. Therefore, let your Winter goods travel this road, and let the propelling force be good advertising.

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If in your town there is a daily, use it liberally every day. Do not bother with any other form of advertising unless you can find some "snap" in ready-made posters. In such a case, post your town liberally.

Perhaps your town only boasts of a weekly. Use it with such force and bigness as to surprise and overawe your competitors. Use reading notices liberally. They cost you nothing beyond the preparation, and the enterprising newspaper publisher is always glad to print them.

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A word or two about window displays. Be effective. Do not labor too hard in attempting the artistic. A window full of ribbons, with a solitary full-sheet show card in the centre, with the words, "Choice, 10c. per yard," is far more trade attracting and trade convincing than the effort that shows a dozen or more styles with a dozen or more price tickets.

The highest art is simplicity. The more complex the subject, the less the effectiveness. Take a dress goods subject, for instance: Is not a window showing folds of henriettas and other black fabrics forming a background to three or four folds of the same cloths, the whole surmounted with a neat black and white show card, more satisfactory to the eye and more impressive to the mind than a conglomerate arrangement of blacks and colors?

Even such an ordinary subject as dishpans can be made into a striking window display by following out the same idea.

One of New York's largest department stores makes a February

specialty of suits for men and women at \$7.77. This figure is as successful as it is odd. Perhaps you can use this idea.

One window given to dress goods at a uniform price, another given to men's clothing at a uniform price, another to ladies' garments at a uniform price, another to underwear at a uniform price, and so on, would make a pleasing change from the almost universal style of having each window show many varieties at many prices.

Linens, blankets, housekeeping dry goods of all sorts, as well as the other lines, come under the sway of the great midwinter sale. Price cards in profusion should be in every department, and every clerk should be on his metal to make the sale a success.

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The stocktaking sale usually takes place late in January or early in February. The muslin, underwear, clothing, suits and cloaks, with other lines, have had their innings in the January sales, but the "waifs and strays," brought to light through stocktaking, are to go out during the midwinter sale.

It is now a universally recognized fact that forced sales are better than the carrying over of goods from one season to another.

Advertising the great midwinter sale should be forcibly pregnant with thought—terse and attractive. Every sentence should convey an idea.

Let the writer study Kipling, and see how that master of English marshals facts in the clearest compress. Were Kipling an advertising writer he would be the best in the profession, for he has invention, animation, audacity, logic, a desire for truth, and he goes to the point like lightning. But, as he is not an advertising writer, you must content yourself with his stories.

The Schilling tea ads. of San Francisco and the Murphy varnish ads. in the magazines are the work of J. E. Powers, the greatest living advertising writer. See them. Study them.

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Indirection in advertising writing is a good thing to cultivate. Here's a sample of it that strikes me as being right up to the mark. I clipped it from Munsey's for January:

DEAR MADAM:

Two or three customers can compel any dealer to keep Macbeth's lamp chimneys. Does he want your chimneys to break?

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Address Pittsburgh, Pa.

Write MACBETH.

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The circular or "dodger" sent in for criticism by Mr. F. W. Christman, of Hespeler, Ont., and herewith reproduced, is cer-