

THE following paragraphs relating to "Exhibitions," are reprinted in a slightly modified form from the *INDUSTRIAL NEWS AND INVENTOR'S GUIDE*, a publication whose writers are evidently abreast of the times:—

These are the days of exhibitions. The country fair and cattle show have expanded into State and International Exhibitions. It has become recognized as an axiom, that exhibitions are advertisements, and advertisements are new business. The first World's Fair at London was a vast enlightenment for the manufacturing nations. It showed what each could do, and made the starting-point for a prodigious race for the world's trade. The Centennial was the greatest advertisement this nation ever received. In like manner, the Paris Exposition was an immense advertisement for France, Germany, Austria, Russia, and the smaller nations of Europe. It was known that England could manufacture; the Exposition proved that they also were manufacturing states, each after its own manner. It likewise accentuated the advertisement we received at the Centennial.

It is said these exhibitions do not pay; but the fact remains that they do create new business. For this reason they are likely to be often repeated, and in some places to become permanent institutions, designed to exhibit, as it were, the daily progress of invention, improvement, and discovery.

It is a rule in business, that if you have anything to sell it must be advertised. It must be shown in the shop window or the newspaper or the buyer will never know of its existence, and certainly will not buy it. Certain things, like food or clothing, people seek whether advertised or not; but these things are always in such abundance and variety that the buyer usually buys what he sees in preference to what he wants and does not see. Exhibitions are simply advertisements, and it may be well to look at them from the buyer's point of view to see how they may best help the inventor, manufacturer, and dealer. To describe the whole art of conducting exhibitions would fill a book, and it must here suffice to examine a few points and show how to exhibit goods, machinery, and new inventions, in order to secure the greatest advantages of the advertisement.

An exhibition is a "show," and we can turn with profit to the showman for "points" in this business. A good theatrical manager recognizes that his public wants a really good show, comfortable surroundings, and moderate prices. So we find in a good theatre a well warmed and lighted room, good seats, carpets, hangings and fixtures of the best, a good

performance, and with the scale of prices adjusted to the cost of the work. Precisely in the same manner, an exhibition to be a success must be held in an attractive and comfortable building, with wide, smooth walks, plenty of seats, good ventilation and light, a low price of admission, and a really good display of pictures, machines, fruits, or other things on exhibition. At the Paris Exposition the French pictures hung in huge rooms meagrely decorated, and with only here and there a seat. The German art gallery was provided with plenty of seats and free catalogues for all. The English art rooms were like drawing rooms—abundant resting places, elegant decorations, and a profusion of flowers. The French rooms were well patronized, but the German rooms were crowded, and the English overflowing at all times. The reason was not in the display, but the manner of the display. The Paris Exposition was better than the Centennial because it was more compact; it required less fatigue to see it all; there was a profusion of seats, especially out of doors, and there was a studied effort to please, attract, and charm the visitors.

In the theatre, people meet to enjoy an intellectual entertainment, and it is essential that they be at ease or they cannot enjoy the performance. This you can prove for yourself by standing up through an opera. To examine a new piece of machinery is also an intellectual pleasure, and it is quite as important that the spectator be at ease as in witnessing a play. Jaded limbs, wearied eyes, awkward and uncomfortable positions, the heat and dust of a crowd, noise and confusion, are fatal to the exhibition. You may have the most novel and interesting invention known, but if your audience is weary, harassed, and physically or mentally ill at ease, your time and effort in showing the machine are practically thrown away. This is recognized in a general way, but to the extent desirable. The exhibitor who will take a lesson from the theatre, and provide every convenience for his visitors, will get the best return for his trouble. If it were possible, a new invention that must be seen and explained to be understood should be placed in a good light, in a quiet room, and before a small audience seated in a semicircle round it. For some inventions it would pay to show them at stated times in a small hall, where they could be illustrated by pictures and models of all the parts in detail, the machine itself and its work, and fully explained by a competent lecturer. The marvellous spread of the phonograph and its almost universal inspection by the people of this country was due almost wholly to the skill of a practical theatrical

manager who exhibited the machine in small halls throughout the country. Had it been placed on a table in some machinery department of an exhibition, and shown in the usual way to the few people who had the strength and courage to crowd up to the stand, its inventor would never have won the fame and money the machine brought him.

Suppose the Exhibitor has some single article or tool, a new style of scissors,* for instance, and he wishes to get the greatest possible return for the advertisement. The usual way is to display the scissors arranged in geometrical patterns on a back ground, with the warning, "Please not touch;" or even in a glass case, so that the people cannot touch whether they please or not. All this shows the exhibitor is profoundly ignorant of human nature. As a general rule, scissors do not arrange themselves in geometrical patterns, and such an arrangement is a distraction and an impertinence. Does the exhibitor wish to show his scissors or his skill in arranging them in fancy patterns? The patterns distract the attention from the chief point, which is scissors, and therefore they are an impertinence. In the Tower of London the guides point out to the visitor that the guns are arranged as flowers, feathers, and other fantastic designs; while, after all, these patterns are nothing, and only serve to take his attention from the real thing—guns.

The dismal legend "Do not touch" has been the ruin of many an exhibition. The only way we have of recognizing the outside world is through the senses, and touch is one of them. To forbid the use of this sense, except in the case of fragile goods, is simply to reduce the benefit of the advertisement. The coming scissors-maker, bent on showing his new and valuable style of scissors, will arrange seats before a large table, and on the table he will place dozens of his best scissors, with an invitation to all to see, handle, and try them on. He will provide cloth or other material, on which the scissors may be tried, to show how beautifully they fit the hand, how easily they work. Behind the table he will place an attractive young woman to show the scissors, to explain their advantages. This young person will have an abounding patience, a lively tongue; will be modest but bright, and have a profound belief in the value of these particular scissors. The people, at ease physically, pleased with the winning manner of the attendant, and charmed with what they can touch and see with freedom, will desire to own and keep such very superior

* Where the word "scissors" occurs our readers may read "skates."