

Advertising.

Practical Hints on Advertising.

By CHARLES AUSTIN BATES, New York

I think that perhaps most of the opprobrium that is cast on advertising can be traced right back to P. T. Barnum. Barnum said that American people liked to be humbugged. He probably said it in a semi-facetious, satirical way—just as he might have said that they liked to be humbugged because they read various tales and novels and because they go to the theatre. The theatrical man or the showman has to humbug people. If he doesn't humbug the people the people are humbugged: that is to say if the maker of a melodrama fails to make his spectators believe in the reality of the story it is a "bad show" and people have not had their money's worth. When I go to the theatre I want to be humbugged. I want to believe that the things that happen on the stage are real things. I want to laugh with the comedian and cry with the abused heroine. I want to be genuinely glad when, in the last act, the villain gets his just deserts and everybody else is made happy. While I am in a theatre the play is real to me, and everything else is of little consequence. If the play is a good one and the actors are capable, the spectators are entirely lost to other things. They are humbugged into believing that the drama they see is a real thing. They really believe they are "having the heart's blood" of other real people.

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A man who goes to see "Othello" and knows all the time that nothing serious is happening on the stage, and that, when the curtain goes down, Desdemona will get up and go for a small bird and a large bottle, doesn't get the worth of his money. The great actors are the ones who make your blood run cold with real terror when they are killing somebody, and, after the act is done, make you feel that the murdered is absolutely, actually, physically dead. In short, the great actor humbugs you—makes you believe what isn't so.

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A good showman does something of the same sort, and so Mr. Barnum honestly humbugged people and they liked it. If he had not humbugged them, he would have been cheating them.

They went to him for the purpose of buying humbug and he delivered the goods.

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When a customer goes to buy clothing or soothing syrup or a threshing machine, he wants just exactly these things. He doesn't want an imitation threshing machine. He wants it to thresh wheat with, and if it doesn't do it he is humbugged. The man who sells bogus diamonds at ten cents apiece, isn't a humbug. If he sold them for real diamonds at \$100 apiece, he would be a real humbug and would get into a real jail. He would make money on one sale, and would have free board and lodging for some time, but the transaction could hardly be considered profitable. The retribution may not be quite so quick to the advertiser who humbugs people, but it is equally sure. The man who lies in his advertisements is like the ostrich who puts his head under cover and thinks he is hidden. The lying advertiser and the foolish ostrich both leave a considerable portion of their anatomy uncovered and are likely to be made painfully aware of the fact.

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Any good store will stand good advertising, no matter whether the store sells dry goods, or liquors, or cigars or drugs. No store can succeed without advertising of some kind. Do not misunderstand me. Advertising isn't necessarily printed in the paper. It isn't necessarily the distribution of circulars or the painting of signs or the posting of bills. The advertising may be done in the store itself, and this is the best of all advertising. If this kind of advertising isn't done, all the other advertising is discounted. Advertising may be gained by the proprietor's large circle of acquaintances. When two men are introduced, the chances are that each will find out the business of the other before they part. If they do not, the friend who introduced them will be asked what business each is in. That is one of the first things a man wants to know about another. It seems easier to take a man's measure when you know what business he is in. You can classify him better.

I want to say again that no business can succeed without advertising of some sort, and the better the advertising the greater the success.

There are two things essential to success in advertising: the first is common sense and the second is nerve. Perhaps in most cases nerve is a part of common sense, so that I might say there is only one thing necessary. Nerve in advertising implies the possession of sufficient wisdom to see the advisability of spending one dollar for the purpose of making two.

Give Them What They Want.

There is a peculiarity noticeable at times among almost all classes of business men, and that is their seeming unwillingness to allow a customer to exercise his own judgment. A man enters a store, say, with a very definite idea of what he wants. The man of whom he is buying at once tries to convince him that he is wrong. The salesman says, in effect: "Sir, you are a blockhead; you don't know what you want. It is for me to say what suits you best." The customer naturally feels somewhat nettled at this attitude of the salesman, and either does not buy, or if he does, it is not with satisfaction. He leaves the store, feeling that he has not been able to get what he wanted, and it is not likely that he will ever return. Every customer should be allowed to have what he wants, as nearly as it is possible for you to give it to him. He has the money, you have the goods; and if his ideas seem capricious and whimsical, it is your business to try and please him if you can, just the same.—*Ex.*

GENTIANOSE.—An interesting paper on this sugar appears in the current number of the *Journal de Pharmacie et de Chimie* by Bourquelot and Nordin. The sugar itself, extracted from gentian roots, has been known since 1881, but the authors have now been at great pains to prepare it in a state of purity. They give as its chief properties, the following: When pure it forms crystalline lamellæ, quite white and without any water of crystallisation. It dissolves easily in water to a colorless solution. It melts at 207°-209°. It is dextrorotatory +31°.5. It does not reduce Fehling's solution, but is easily inverted by boiling with acids, forming sugars which do reduce copper oxide.

A well-known doctor declares that a most prevalent cause of hysteria in women is high-heeled boots. On the objectionable boots being abandoned the hysteria ceases.