

Practical Hints on Advertising.

By CHARLES AUSTIN BATES, New York.

"Establish a reputation for early rising and you may lie abed till noon."

Change the names of the actions, and this old saw will fit many of the practices of life.

In business the reputation for honesty, like the mantle of charity, will cover a multitude of faults. The first chance a business man has to lay the foundation of his reputation is at his *first start* in business. When he writes his first advertisement, be it a quarter single column or a whole page; a modest little dodger or a double-sheet poster; what he says then will be compared with the goods he offers on his shelves and counters.

Most people who go, purse in hand, to inquire into a new business, are more than willing to be pleased. They like to go to a new place, or a renovated old place. There may be interrogation in their eyes and on their lips. They question if the goods they came to examine will tally with the printed formula. They wish to know first if they have been tricked into a fool's errand. If they have, that start in business is a waste of time and money and printers' ink and paper. The business may run, or it may limp along, but no matter how honest it may grow, the start will be remembered.

It is like the saying of a down-east farmer, that his neighbor would "walk a mile for a lie when he had the truth in his pocket." He might have added, "And the truth would serve the occasion much better."

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Fine writing is not necessary for an advertisement. A man doesn't usually try to say fine things across the counter with his wares between himself and his customer. Rather, he says, "Here are the goods, and you have eyes and taste and judgment. There's the price. You may be able to find a better bargain. If you can, let me know where it is."

This, or something like it, is all that is necessary in an advertisement of fabrics, or foods, or medicines, or mowing machines.

Leave a margin for the intelligence of your audience. Suggestive literature is fascinating for the reader and profitable for the writer, whether it be poetry, philosophy or advertising.

Describe your goods as nearly as possible. Have cuts if you can. They make your space attractive. Then, put in a few

plain, terse sentences. Use common words. Many liberal purchasers of the necessities and luxuries of life have never included a big dictionary in either list.

Arrange your statements in grammatical sentences if you can. But, bad grammar will be forgiven if you have no worse fault. It will be remembered that language is largely a matter of locality, but truth endures forever.

Too many conjunctions are not good in advertisements, nor anywhere else. Short sentences are more easily understood. It may be "choppy," but it is easy reading. Serve up your ideas in courses, as it were. Tell your patrons (already secured and the possibles) what you have to say, in good order. Nobody likes a jumble of statements, and to some folks an advertisement that is disagreeable to read will create an antipathy to the advertiser.

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Eccentricity of expression may not be originality. Be original, if you can, but don't let your efforts after originality obscure your meaning. Have your own style. If it is a style that brings customers and sends away your goods, use it, and be glad. You may not find yourself a literary genius, but you may find the same cause for thankfulness that Sancho Panza did.

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There's small profit in advertising everything in your store in one day. That is, it is better to use your space for a few lines of goods each day in the week than to fill it with the whole invoice every day.

The great desert would not be so bad if there was not so much of it. It is monotony that is the great weariness.

You need not necessarily insist that you have special sales every day, unless you do, but you can give some good reason for the extra qualities and prices you offer, and why you are offering special lines on special days. More than this: If you advertise many kinds of goods in one day, your space may be crowded full of small type, and may not be read. When some one or two lines of goods are advertised, people who want these will be on hand to secure them. It is not improbable that they will be reminded of other things they want. At least, they will be when those other things are to be seen, and your work is half done.

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The radical meaning of the advertisement is to bring the vendor and the purchaser into confidence. After that is

done, you may feel that you have more than caught the eyes of the people. The people are your guests, and if your entertainment is all your invitation promised, you will find plain sailing on the sea of business.

No doubt many persons have wondered why Barnum said what he did about people liking to be humbugged. He was a great advertiser, and he always gave his audience their money's worth.

You may entice people into your place. That is legitimate. But you must not deceive. No lasting prosperity can come of business dishonesty.

When you take up your pencil to make your statements about your goods, remember this. If you employ someone to write your ads. for you, be sure there is a fair understanding. Sincerity and fair dealing should be a goodly part of your stock in trade, and they should never be scarce. Above all, don't try to be funny. Some men have a talent for humor. There are only a few of them, however, and the most famous of American wits is likely to die poor.

A Test for Peroxides.

By FRANK R. DUDDERIDGE.

A characteristic and easily applied reaction for the detection of a peroxide of an alkali or alkali-earth metal, which I have not noticed in any of the ordinary text-books, is the addition of silver nitrate solution to a small portion of the powder in a test tube. In the case of an alkali metal brisk effervescence occurs at once, due to evolution of oxygen—easily recognized by a glowing match-stick—and a black precipitate of metallic silver is at once deposited. With the alkali-earth metals the reaction takes place more slowly, a brown precipitate of silver oxide being first produced, soon followed by evolution of oxygen, the precipitate turning to black metallic silver. The reaction in this latter instance is hastened by the application of heat. The effect produced will no doubt be due to formation of silver oxide in each instance, and its decomposition by the peroxide, similar to its well-known reaction with hydrogen peroxide.—*Phar. Journal (Eng.)*

Anyone desiring information in reference to the cultivation of ginseng root, may obtain "Cultural Directions," from Harlan P. Kelsey, Tremont Building, Boston, Mass. Send 10 cents.