

one-third or one-half a column, compiled at the last moment, will be appreciated. It need not be run in some corner and readers left to find it out for themselves. Make special reference prominently to the trouble you are taking. This applies to any special feature in the paper. Talk about it and other people will talk too. It need not be a flaming announcement, bubbling over with conceit, that disgusts people, but a simple statement showing you recognize the value of your own work and know what you are about is always in order.

TASTE IN TYPOGRAPHY.

Paul Nathan, of the *Louis Press*, in *The Inland Printer*.

THERE is a great difference between the job printing of to-day and that of even a few years ago. The standard of excellence is constantly going higher up the artistic scale. The job compositor of the future must have some knowledge of art—he must be something more than a “typesetter.” He will find that it is just as possible to display an individuality in type arrangement as it is for the artist to do so with pen and brush.

Few printers have any idea of appropriateness, symmetry or balance, or know anything about color; the few who have this knowledge are leaders in the field, for everyone appreciates a piece of good printing, just as everyone appreciates any work of art. There are imitators and copiers everywhere, but how few originators!

It is not so long ago since young men were “indentured” to learn “the art and mystery of typesetting”—to-day this work is done by machinery. There was no particular “art” about it, and there is no good reason why there should be any “mystery.” The real “art” of printing must be in its appropriateness to the subject, in its conformity to art principles, to its proper harmony or contrast of colors. This can never be attained in its fullness by any machine, and must ever depend on the individuality and ideality of the human intellect. The printer who masters these principles forever places himself beyond the competition of machines.

The young man in the printing business who wants to excel finds very little opportunity to advance himself. His only chance at present is to learn from older printers with whom he comes in contact, and by observing every piece of good printing that it may be his good fortune to get hold of. But the result of all this is that he merely learns “parrot fashion.” He has no way of discovering that there are real principles involved—certain rules to be followed—and that it is possible to master these rules and acquire a knowledge that will enable him to know how to treat any and every class of work that falls into his hands.

Undue credit is attributed to so-called “natural taste,” and the public has been hoodooed into the belief that art knowledge is preordained to the few and cannot be acquired by the multitude. This is the veriest kind of humbug. It is just as possible to acquire an art education as it is to learn to write, and no one will dispute that it is possible for all to learn to write. To be sure, some will be more adept than others, but there can be no “corner” on this branch of education any more than there can be in other branches.

I would not be afraid to undertake the task of making an “art printer” out of anyone who is endowed with sufficient knowledge to “master the case” and who is familiar with the technicalities of printing.

DON'T CUT RATES.

A PRINTER'S EXPERIENCE IN A LINE OF BILLHEADS—A POOR ADVERTISEMENT.

WE had advertised these billheads thoroughly in three of the leading papers, every day for a month, the result being that we printed about 100,000 of them during that period. It is safe to say that one-half of those who availed themselves of our low price were our own customers, and we would probably have gotten their orders in the course of time without the inducement of a cut in price of \$1.75 per thousand. The other half who took advantage of our reduced price were people whom we shall probably never see again. They consisted of suburban grocers and meat dealers, and every other conceivable small dealer whose only job of printing consisted of 1,000 billheads a year.

Up to this point one can form an idea of the probable profit to us of our method of cheap advertising. But to go farther: As a rule, people are not careful observers, which is proven by the fact that not more than one out of every four or five customers who called in answer to our advertisement remembered that it was billheads that we were advertising.

They would as often ask to see our dollar envelope, note-head or card, and when we would assure them that we only printed billheads (during this month only) for one dollar, they would invariably leave in disgust, frequently with the edifying remark that we were schemers and frauds, etc.

We were frequently interrupted by persons who seemed to make a business of going the rounds from one office to another, getting bids on a lot of cheap work which we had seldom been given the privilege of figuring on heretofore. These individuals would say something about having seen our advertisement and that if we figured other work in proportion we might get some of theirs. This consumed a great deal of our time without giving us any returns. For, it is needless to say, we never captured one of those jobs.

Our cheap billhead scheme was in direct opposition to other forms of advertising used by us. We never before laid claim to being cheap printers, catering, rather, for the better class of business—our advertisements reading as follows: “Best work for particular people,” or “Elegant effects,” etc.

Naturally, our competitors, the printers, were severely down on us for this bold experiment of ours. We had always been classed among the best printers, and now to have one of that number cut prices, it gave the other fellows' customers a chance to tell them how much higher they were than J. (that's us).

I will admit that such advertising for a good printing concern is wrong.

“Not only is it expensive, but it gives one a cheap reputation. It consumes much time in necessitating one's making frequent apologies. One gains no desirable customers through its medium. It works an injury to the craft in general. And finally, the advertiser is just where he was before he started, minus, possibly, the money that he put into the scheme.

The writer, in making this confession of his blunderous advertising scheme, has had the general welfare of the craft in mind, and trusts that none of the brethren of the craft will lower the dignity of their art, as he acknowledges he has done, by perpetrating the department store bargain sale act.—*Inland Printer*.