

# DEPARTMENT OF ADVERTISING SUGGESTION AND CRITICISM

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NOTE: Herein are discussed the principles and practice of advertising. Subscribers are invited to send Mr. Kirkwood specimens of their newspaper and other advertising, for the purpose of review in this department. Address care of Department of Advertising, BOOKSELLER AND STATIONER.

## ADVERTISING FOR THE STATIONER.

What can the retail stationer advertise?

- Blank Books.
- Office Files.
- Typewriter Supplies.
- Inks.
- Postal Scales.
- Diaries.
- Mucilage.
- Paper Clips.
- Fountain Pens.
- Correspondence Stationery.
- School Supplies.
- Tissue Papers.
- Playing Cards and Games.
- Artists' Materials.
- Music.
- Photographic Supplies.

and what not? A long list. Yet by no means an exhaustive one. I venture to say that there is not a stationer in Canada who will assert that his sales in any one of the lines named above have reached their limit. There are scores of people whom he knows who would appreciate the possession of a good fountain pen; others in both town and country who require but faint persuasion to toss aside their old and soiled playing cards and to get fresh packs. There are merchants, lawyers and other professional people who can be made better stationery customers if their trade is solicited with but a very little more directness. And those that are continually being sent by mail to the big catalogue houses for note paper, leather goods, and other stationery supplies, can be diverted to the local dealer if he goes after them. Where there's a will there's a way.

The way to get business is to ask for it. To rely on people's loyalty to home institutions is to lean on a broken reed. Mail-order houses and large advertisers are getting from the remote hamlets and from homes in the Northwest, from villages and towns in every part of Canada, a volume of business that would produce despair were the figures known. These people who send afar for their stationery needs are led to give these orders through the advertisements in the newspapers, magazines and catalogues that they receive.

If the local stationer is to share in or to have in its entirety this business he, too, must advertise; must impress firmly and forcibly the fact that these wants of his community can be supplied at home and through him. He must tell the people who can become and are his customers about his business, his ability to meet their needs, his preparedness for all reasonable demands; and he must make his statement as convincing and attractive as that of any competitor. He must not wait for people's inquiries; these must be compelled.

Some stationers may protest their inability to write good advertisements. Let it be granted that they cannot. They can employ others, however, who have the gift, possibly some local aspirant will be delighted to perform this service in exchange for a book-reading privilege or for supplies of some sort. The publisher of the local paper can doubtless render the desired service at no cost, being only too glad that use is to be made of his paper.

The preparation of good "copy" is not likely, however, to be a big or forbidding difficulty. The harder thing to do is to persuade oneself to begin advertising, to make oneself believe in the economy, the business-producing power, the necessity, of advertising.

There is a law from which there is no escape. Curtly put it is that one must spend to get. The history of all growth shows that outlay precedes income. A merchant lives on the application of this principle or law, but has trouble sometimes in perceiving its bearing on the more subtle expenditure of will and planning. Advertising exemplifies the operation of this law, but to view it as an "open sesame" to greater business apart from other efforts is a fatal mistake. Yet there are those to be found who look for magic results to follow upon the insertion of an advertisement in their local newspaper. "Joining the church" has value only as it is a declaration of a purpose. So is it with advertising; it is a necessary act in achieving full business growth.

Another form of advertising, one certain to be productive of excellent results and quick returns, is the personal letter. Accordingly every stationer should prepare mailing lists, made up of the names of society's "Four Hundred," of bankers and bank clerks, barristers, book-buyers, club women, artists, musicians, sportsmen, school teachers, school trustees, clergymen, students, county officials, members of whist clubs, etc. etc. These lists can be built up steadily year by year. The card index system will be found most satisfactory. By this means the stationer can keep his lists simply, and free from dead wood. Addresses can be quickly changed when necessary, and new names added without trouble. Having the lists he can mail intelligently, quickly and at small expense personal letters, special circulars, samples of stationery and so on. In this connection it is well to point out that the wholesale houses in many instances can and will very gladly supply literature and samples for retailers' use, and properly encouraged can be induced to do a great deal more in this direction.

An illustration or two in line with the foregoing suggestion is in order. The engraved calling card is "good form," and it is steadily replacing the hand-written and type-printed card. The stationer can get from a firm of engravers sample cards to mail to the "Four Hundred" list; this with a neatly written or printed letter suggesting engraved cards either for own use or as a gift to some relative or friend; giving prices of plate and 50 or 100 cards. It is a foregone conclusion that the returns on such a venture would repay handsomely the necessary outlay. Then, too, the stationer has succeeded in putting very thoroughly into the minds of his community a fact of permanent value to himself.