

I don't approve of the universal likening of a selling campaign to a battle with its scouts and skirmishes and action, its musketry and its heavy artillery. War at best is little short of Hell. Selling campaigns are not successfully built on that basis, unless those of the Baxter Street shop, which knocks a man down, and drags him in, if he won't buy any other way. The up-to-date selling campaign is a masterpiece skillfully blending equal portions of diplomacy, courtesy and common sense.

You expect your catalogue to get business whether posting a travelling sales force, educating an army of retailers, crystallizing the ideas of a body of college students or selling straight to the user. You expect this silent little messenger, unaided by the magnetism of the human voice—unable to put on a cheery smile, to get business. Its cold type must be infused with a message so intimate, so true, and its every page so suggestive of uses and applications, that the prospect is made to see each article his own. It is expected to be broad enough to fit the peculiarities of a thousand different kinds of men, and narrow enough to mean a business proposition to each of those men. There is one way to make a catalogue do all this. That is to make it a condensation of your eighteen-carat selling points, with occasional gaps for the customer to use his imagination. Make it more than a mere price book.

Tell your story in an optimistic way, but stick to the truth. If it is dangerous for a salesman to exaggerate how much more dangerous is exaggeration when printed and ready for comparison at any time?

A salesman can study his customer, bring into play the magnetism of a personality, be forcible or tactful as the moment may decide, withdraw to advantage, or prolong the interview, as his judgment may indicate.

Not so with a catalogue. It must extend your personal greetings, associate itself with your customer's needs, impress itself on his mind and create in him a feeling of indebtedness, all in the space of a few moments. The real secret of success, however, is the strong evidence of reserve power. This in most cases is the real reason that keeps it out of the waste basket.

Then again, a catalogue is going to indicate to your customer your extravagance or frugality. The happy medium—a prosperous-looking book neither cheap nor overdone—is the one worth while.

We don't write catalogues to give some printer a chance to display his high art ideas, striking cover designs or unique display effects. These are merely incidentals—all after considerations.

Clothes make a whole lot of difference in a man until he opens his mouth.

Just so with catalogues.

A great many catalogues are like the fellow with the good tailor, they are masterpieces when it comes to the printing, but the copy is the limit. It's prepared in a perfunctory, do-it-because-the-other-fellow-does-it, sort of a way, or some high-browed young man just out of college is put on the job.

The average beginner decides that this is a great literary stunt, an opportunity to display rhetorical beauties and grammatical fitness.

What is the result?

A lot of good paper is spoiled, waste baskets are glutted, and a good many people don't get the chance to realize the possibilities of a correct catalogue.

There is just one thing which is worse than the exaggerated over-descriptive and lying catalogue. It is the loosely written pretty book, good publicity only for the printer who made it. You know that all catalogues start as dummies. The sad part of it is that some of them never get to be anything else.

There is getting to be so many kinds and methods of

publicity that it is confusing. Thus a good many people overlook the relative importance of the catalogue in the general scheme of publicity. I want to say right here that the catalogue is the foundation of the whole scheme. On it are builded all the other phases of advertising.

There are two things we need more than anything else. First: to realize that advertising is a profession, requiring the most careful study just like law or medicine. Second: boldness, diligence, and originality on the part of those who are giving their time to this study. The very fact that so many men are going into the field as advertising specialists and publicity engineers, indicates that special knowledge along these lines is fast becoming recognized as the one main thing to compel success. The fact that so many advertising clubs are springing up in all parts of the country, further indicates the thirst for special knowledge of this character. It's getting so that each man realizes that his own case must be studied on its merits, and that because some other fellow has made a success by some particular publicity method, is no sign that he is going to reap success by following suit.

How the "Big Contract" was Won

The contract for furnishing the exterior granite work for the new Wisconsin State Capitol is the largest of its kind in the history of the cut stone industry in this country, and its award came as the result of a long battle in which the arts of salesmanship and perseverance had full play.

About a year ago, when it was first announced that bids would be opened for the granite work for the new capitol, stone dealers throughout the country began to sit up and scheme. At the daily conference of the heads of departments of the company, one of the chiefs spoke up: "We must have that contract, and Hardwick white granite is the material in which we want it. Joe had better go out to Madison and look over the ground."

The next day "Joe" went. His full name is J. B. Reinhalter, and he is the western representative of the company.

His first telegram when he reached Madison was: "The commission favors Georgia marble. Shall I fight?" The response came from the general manager's office in Vermont: "Stay there till you win!"

Six months went by, and Reinhalter was still on the ground, meeting the commissioners daily, and submitting samples and analyses and testimonials, and practising all the arts of an experienced salesman. Finally he wired to the home office: "Commission leaves to-morrow for an investigation of the eastern quarries. What shall I do?" "Go with them! Stick to it till you win."

One month later the salesman wired for help, and the general manager went to Madison. Another month dragged by. The commission had opened the bids and then adjourned from time to time. One day it was decided to hold no more meetings for two weeks, and the representatives of the other stone firms who were fighting for the contract promptly left for home.

That evening the late Senator Vilas, one of the commission, came across two determined looking men sitting in the hotel lobby at Madison, waiting. He recognized them as the granite general manager and salesman.

"Why, I thought you fellows would have left town three hours ago!" he said.

The manager looked up. "Senator," he said, "when the company goes into a fight, it fights to a finish; and we're here until that contract is awarded."

Two weeks later the company won, and the new Wisconsin State Capitol is now being erected of glittering white granite.—System.