

Advertising.

Practical Hints on Advertising.

Copyrighted, 1896, by Charles Austin Bates, New York

When an advertiser drifts away from the newspapers, and from circulars and booklets entirely devoted to his own business, he is likely to make an unprofitable investment. If a man wants to be absolutely certain that he is on the right track, he had better stick to the best daily papers. If there is no daily paper that he can use, take the best weekly paper. I don't believe, however, that a daily paper of less than five hundred circulation, or any weekly paper of less than one thousand circulation, is likely to be productive of returns in proportion to the cost. There are exceptions, of course.

* * * *

An advertisement is a printed salesman.

A good advertisement says practically the same thing to a prospective purchaser as the salesman says in the store.

That is the kind of advertising that I believe will produce better results at less cost than any other kind in the world.

It is common-sense advertising.

There are no flourishes about it.

There is nothing very smart about it, but it "gets there"—it arrives.

The trouble with scheme advertising is that you shoot it out in the dark at nothing in particular, and hit it every time.

I don't pretend to be infallible. I make mistakes sometimes. When I express an opinion about advertising, it is merely my honest opinion, based upon a long and varied experience in actual advertising. I am not entirely a theorist. I have had experience with advertising in all its phases. I have managed voting contests and other schemes, and I have never known more than three or four that I believe to have been profitable. As a matter of fact, I can remember only one, and that was profitable, partly because it did not cost much of anything.

* * * *

I have been told that my judgment on advertising novelties was "warped," inasmuch as I very seldom see one which I think possesses any advertising value.

If any of my readers know of an instance in which there was any positive evidence that the circulation of an advertising novelty brought profitable returns, I would be very glad to know it.

The effort in making an advertising novelty is always to produce something "cute," and the trouble with a great many of them is that they are a trifle "too cute."

* * * *

Twenty-six business men of a large city in an eastern state were interviewed some time ago on the subject of advertising. With one exception, they were all very much in favor of newspaper advertising as against all other kinds. One man went

so far as to say that "all forms of advertising, except the trade paper and the newspaper, are fakes, and worthless"—which is drawing it pretty strong.

There is no doubt in the world that trade paper and newspaper advertising is the best that a retailer can do, but the judicious use of circulars and booklets is also almost certain to be profitable. When it comes to programmes, souvenirs, directories, advertisements on maps and on clocks, in hotel registers, and the thousand and one other advertising dodges which come under the head of "schemes," the advertiser had better save his money. I have had experience on both sides of "scheme" advertising. I have published programmes and schemes of various sorts, and it was quite profitable work—for me. I do not believe that any advertiser ever got enough returns from the advertisements in a scheme to pay for its cost.

* * * *

It is astonishing how many really good business men can be talked into taking space in a chart or programme, or some other thing that has no possible excuse for existence except the publisher's desire to make some money. A thing which, if possible, is even more astonishing, is the way in which these advertisers will pay the bills for such things without in any way knowing that the contract has been fulfilled by the publisher. The advertising "fakir" will promise any amount of circulation that he thinks would influence the advertiser. It is just as easy for him to say fifty thousand as one thousand, and the "schemer" who really prints as many copies as he promises is an exceedingly rare bird. As far as my personal observation has gone, I have never known more than half a dozen times in which the number promised was printed. Mere numbers amount to nothing any way. Ten thousand circulation in a good paper is better than fifty thousand circulation in some valueless "scheme." If all the money that is paid for these outside schemes were put into the papers, we would not hear of one business man in a thousand who would say that advertising did not pay.

* * * *

One of the worst kind of "schemes" that is presented to the retailer is the programme for a church fair, or religious entertainment of some kind. These things are always a clear case of blackmail. They cannot be called charity, because a pretence is made of giving something in return for the money spent. It would be very much more honest if the managers of such affairs would simply go around with a subscription paper and ask for the money as a gift. Merchants go into these programmes because they feel that if they do not they will antagonize the members of the church or society, and that they will lose trade. If they would give the money without taking the advertisement for it the society would be better off, because their printing bills would not be so

big, and the merchant would be just as well off, because the advertising is not worth the paper it is printed on.

* * * *

Postal cards are almost sure to get attention, and if the story told on them is not too long it will be read and digested. It is possible that by and by these postal cards will be used so much that part of their value will be taken away, but that time has not come yet. It is my belief that many retailers could do no better advertising than to publish and mail a postal card once a week at least. Five hundred postal cards, printed and addressed, would not cost over seven dollars. They would reach five hundred families, which is a greater number than the average grocer or druggist or shoe man deals with. Such circulation is positive. You know exactly where it goes, and if you make special offers you know exactly what comes of it.

A Malt Tonic.

A malt tonic, under the name of "Hofbrau," has been placed on the market by Messrs. Reinhardt & Co., of Toronto. It is claimed for it that it has strong nutritive properties, and is particularly adapted for delicate females and convalescents. A trial order will lead to further purchases. See advertisement, and write for prices mentioning this journal.

Special Notice.

The Canadian Specialty Company, of 38 Front street east, Toronto, are handling again Messrs. Billings, Clapp & Co.'s (Boston) Ideal Lemonade and Root Beer Tablets this season, and have added several new agencies to their druggists' sundry business. They call special attention to their advertisement, on another page, of Santee matches, "Spiral rib" nipples, Universal astringent pencils, litmus pencils, French's celery and caffeine bromide, and finest line of chewing gums in the market. They also report a fresh arrival of Chapireau's cacheteurs and cachets, which are meeting with an ever increasing sale. Write to them for quotations.

The "Hold Fast."

This is the name of a syringe advertised in our columns this month. It is made of pure rubber in black, maroon, or white. One special feature of the article is the anchor, which is on the principle of a sucker, and will adhere to any vessel, and cannot become detached when in use. No air can by any possibility be injected, and the syringe will inject almost to the last drop.

The syringe is one which should give perfect satisfaction, and with confidence be recommended.

See advertisement on second page of cover. The manufacturers, Messrs. W. H. Bailey & Son, 38 Oxford St., London, Eng.