

WHY DON'T YOU RUN YOUR OWN BUSINESS ?

BELOW is given a lengthy article from the *Chicago Journal of Commerce*, on the abuses of advertising agencies, which is worth its length in gold to both the large and small advertiser.

Advertising agencies have had their day. They have flourished like the green bay tree, and have made money. But as is quoted below, "bigotry, deceit, petty jealousies and fraud may prosper for a time, but the end is inevitable failure and disgrace."

The way these agencies do business is this: As soon as they see a firm doing a little advertising they find out the exact amount to be spent. The agent then makes up a list of papers and submits it. The advertiser is surprised, and his heart at once gladdens at getting into so many papers at such a small figure, and the agent's contract is signed, then a placard neatly framed is hung in a conspicuous place in the advertiser's office, with the legend:

ALL PROPOSITIONS FOR ADVERTISING
SHOULD BE MADE TO

W. E. FLEECEYOU & CO.,
ADVERTISING AGENTS,

WHO HAVE CHARGE OF WHATEVER BUSINESS WE HAVE
TO DO WITH NEWSPAPERS.

The advertiser retires to his private office, congratulating himself on the time and money he has saved, and at once prepares for a big run of business. Then the agent begins his work. In the list of papers he had submitted there are probably not more than three of value to the advertiser or anybody else. These three are among the best known in the country, and are the bait with which the advertiser is caught. The rest of the list is composed of papers that the advertiser has never seen or heard of. He thinks of course they are as valuable and well-known as the three mentioned. The copy for the advertisement is then made out and printed, and sent, together with a letter, to each paper on the list. The letter is an offer, (generally seventy-five per cent. lower than regular advertising rates) to run the advertisement, and finishes something like this: "If you accept our offer we will forward cheque by return mail less our twenty-five per cent. commission." Oh ye gods, what a chance this is for the half-starved publishers who make up this list! Of course the offer is accepted, the "ad" is inserted, and the paper—save the mark—appears. The quality of the paper used is of the cheapest, the ink is nothing better than coal tar, and the type is worn down to the second nick in nine cases out of ten, and it is almost impossible to decipher the advertisement. But the advertiser does not know this. He has the utmost confidence in the agency, and thinks all is right. However, the months

slip by, "the business that he looked for never came," his money and his confidence in advertising are gone; he plants his foot down firmly and says "advertising doesn't pay."

Just another word. You would never think of handing your book-keeping or your correspondence over to an agency. And yet you do it with the most important part of your business. The old saying: "He that by the plow would thrive, himself must either hold or drive," might be very properly applied here.

This is what the *Journal of Commerce* says:

It is absolutely necessary in this age of competition for business men to advertise. They must disseminate the knowledge among the people of the intrinsic value of their products or merchandise.

Every day there are thousands of dollars virtually thrown away because of the lack of knowledge of how or when to advertise, and too frequently on account of the confidence reposed in men who make a specialty of dealing with the publishers of papers throughout the country.

There is another class of advertising agents who are prone to impose upon the publisher and abuse the confidence of their patrons. Their cupidity and selfishness is too apparent to in any manner consider equity and justice. Instances have been known where publications of reputed worth and *bona fide* circulation have been ignored, for the simple reason that space could not be obtained upon such advantageous terms as desired.

Oftentimes the agent referred to, or his representative, allows personal prejudice and strong political or religious preferences to interfere with the transactions of their legitimate business, and not infrequently the advertiser who selects a list of papers whose circulation and standard of excellence are apparent, is given to understand either directly or by innuendo that such and such a paper against which the agent may have a real or fancied grievance, is not worthy of his consideration, and for that reason is stricken from the list of papers to be favored with his business. The advertiser who is a thorough man of business is looking only for results which he knows a judicious and liberal use of printer's ink always insures, and his wishes should not be thwarted by the narrow-gauge policy of ignorant and prejudiced bigots, who form the class to which reference is made.

The advertising agent who endeavors to increase his income by trickery and alleged smart business methods, with the publisher on the one hand, and his patron on the other, must sooner or later reap the result of such questionable means, and if he loses the confidence of one, and the business of the other, he has no one to blame but his own shortsighted self. An instance may be cited which will give the inter-