PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE
OF
SHOW-CARD WRITING

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN EXTENSION TEXTS

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Frontispiece

A student's show-card writing outfit.

INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION SERIES

PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE OF SHOW-CARD WRITING

PREPARED IN THE
EXTENSION DIVISION OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

BY

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FIRST EDITION
FIFTH IMPRESSION

McGRAW-HILL BOOK COMPANY, INC.
NEW YORK: 370 SEVENTH AVENUE
LONDON: 6 & 8 BOUVERIE ST., E. C. 4
1922

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

PREFACE

This book presents in an organized, orderly, and progressive sequence the fundamental principles of show-card writing, together with the most recent developments in the practice of the art. The text is not a collection of ornamental alphabets, nor is it a series of recipes and tricks of the trade. It is a radical departure in this respect from the usual book on this subject. The aim has been to present the fundamentals of the construction of standard show-card styles of lettering, the principles of layout, arrangement, color theory and practice, and show-card advertising principles, together with descriptions of new methods, mediums, and opportunities which have been developed with such rapidity in the last few years. Mere temporary points of view have been avoided and future fundamental tendencies and developments anticipated so that the subject matter will not become inapplicable or obsolete even though the rapidity with which the show-card field is expanding places limitations upon this endeavor. Narrowness of style in the illustrations has been avoided also, by using the work of leading card writers for demonstrating the various points brought out in the discourse.

The author is keenly aware of his indebtedness to those card writers whose work is found in the following pages, to Professor B. G. Elliott for his coöperation and valuable suggestions; to Miss Cecelia McGuan for her helpful criticisms and proofreading of the manuscript; to Ross George for the material on "movie" titles; and to the following firms whose generosity simplified the task of illustrating this volume: Bausch-Lomb Optical Company; Botanical Decorating Company; Chicago Mat Board Company; Devoe and Reynolds Company; Esterbrook Pen Company; Favor, Ruhl & Company; F. K. Ferenz; N. Glantz; Golding Manufacturing Company; Guaranty Trust and Savings Bank of Los Angeles; C. Howard Hunt Pen Company; Kansas City Slide Company; The Lackner Company; National Card, Mat, and Board Company; Newman Manufacturing Company; Owl Drug Company; Paasche Air Brush Company; C. F. Pease Company;

The "Poster" Magazine; The Prang Company; Schack Artificial Flower Company; Wallbrunn, Kling, and Company; F. Weber Company; George E. Watson Company; and the Western Grocer Company. Grateful acknowledgment is made for the generous coöperation thus received.

LAWRENCE E. BLAIR.

MADISON, WIS.,
June, 1922.

SUGGESTIONS FOR USING THIS BOOK AS A TEXTBOOK

The plan of this book permits its use by students for home-study or by teachers for classroom instruction, as well as for a handbook for general reading or reference. The arrangement of the text material is based on three years' experience in teaching this subject to adult classes and correspondence students in the University Extension Division of the University of Wisconsin, the order of succession for the topics in the various chapters being that which has been found from experience to be both desirable and effective.

In the use of this book as a text for individual or class study, the practice of the fundamental strokes should be emphasized and this should be augmented with drills and exercises until proficiency in the handling of brushes and pens has been well developed. If time permits, variations of the standard styles of alphabets should be originated.

The construction of the four principal forms of show-card lettering, namely, single-stroke, Roman, Gothic, and slanted styles should be studied early in the course. The progressive arrangement of these fundamental alphabets in the text automatically provides the classroom teacher with a program which may be made the basis for developing ability in the construction of letters and letter elements. A varied and unrelated series of alphabets for the student to copy laboriously and memorize is not displayed, because a familiarity with the principal styles from which all display alphabets are derived, together with a thorough understanding of a few simple methods for modifying letter forms, is all that is required to enable any student to give full expression of his own individuality.

The history of lettering has been briefly touched upon because a clear conception of the historical development of the various styles of lettering is really necessary if the instructor wishes to establish in the student's mind a clear understanding of what is good and bad usage. The chapter on placing and arrangement sets forth the underlying principles of composition because the

average card writer, at present, does not understand the structure of layouts from an æsthetic viewpoint. Under such handicap, he does not realize that there are definite known laws governing the effective arrangement of the masses on the card.

The chapter on the theory of color and the formation of color schemes is an attempt to place at the disposal of the card writer, who uses color daily in the shop, the essentials of what is taught to the poster artist in recognized art schools. Show-card writing has reached the point where this knowledge should be available, and the card-writing student should not be left in ignorance of color composition and usage in which the student of poster advertising is now thoroughly drilled. The chapter on color seeks to establish an appreciation of the value and importance of color properly used in show-card advertising.

An effort is made in Chap. VI to apply the principles of advertising to the arrangement and wording of show cards, for in the past there has been too much dependence upon catch phrases and facetious slogans and too little attention to the potency of the show card for promoting sales.

The subsequent chapters deal with the commercial application of the principles set forth in the earlier part of the book and new developments such as the use of tempera colors for pictorial work, the making of lantern slides, the lettering of "movie" titles, the management of show-card departments in retail stores, and the development of new fields such as display service for stores, theaters, and banks. The plan of the book permits any arrangement of the subjects following letter formation which experience may lead the instructor to desire, although the succession followed here has been that which the author has found most satisfactory in his own experience.

LIST OF MATERIALS

The following materials which are illustrated in the frontispiece constitute a suitable equipment for studying a course in Show-card Writing.

1 soft pencil.
1 24 in. T-square.
1 60° transparent triangle, 8 in. long.
1 brass crayon holder, 6 in.
1 12 in. ruler.
5 Speedball pens, square points, Style A, Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.
5 Speedball pens, round points, Style B, Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.
6 round writing pens (sizes 1½, 2½, 3½—two of each size).
3 Red Sable brushes (1 large, 1 medium, 1 small size).
12 sticks of charcoal.
1 eraser.
1 artgum.
12 thumb tacks.
1 20 x 24 in. drawing board.
1 bottle waterproof black india ink.
6 bottles show-card colors (black, white, red, yellow, blue, and green).
20 sheets drawing paper, 12 x 18 in.

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SHOW-CARD WRITING

INTRODUCTION

SHOW-CARD WRITING AS AN OCCUPATION

1. Development as a Trade.—Show-card writing is a comparatively recent development as an occupation. It was only a few years ago that retail merchants began to appreciate the commercial value of attractive displays on the counters and in the windows of their stores. Up to that time the counters and windows were considered largely as convenient places for storing things out of the way. Each window was generally made up of several panes of glass, and the floor of the window was but little more than a shelf. When plate glass windows became popular with dry goods dealers, the floors of the windows were made wider and lower to accommodate wax figures used in the display of wearing apparel. The display of merchandise has advanced in this way by regular progressive steps until display advertising has become a very important factor in every type of retail business. The window displays have developed into large lobby displays, while display cards have become common throughout the entire store.

When merchants began to use display cards, sign painters were the only men equipped to fill their orders. It soon became apparent that the lettering of these display cards would prove a profitable trade in itself, and many sign painters, instead of treating the lettering of display cards as a side issue, specialized in this line of work. With this development, show-card writing became a distinctive trade with characteristics and requirements decidedly its own.

At first, the influence of sign painting upon the newer trade of show-card writing was quite marked. The lettering was done on muslin tacked over a light frame. Brushes, oil, and japan were used at first and are still being used by the older craftsmen. Practically all of the lettering was decorated with considerable scroll work and brush ornamentation, the style of let-

tering being much the same as used in the painting of signs.

Show-card writing is now a highly specialized occupation and its connection with the sign painting trade has all but disappeared. While some very good designs were made in the early stages of its development as a separate trade, present designs are swiftly approaching the level of commercial art, Fig. 1. The

FIG. 1.—A well-designed sale announcement for a department store. A gray mat board was used for the card, the panel painted in two shades of red, the figure in natural colors, and the lettering in yellow and light blue.

(Design by William Haine, Twiet's Studio, Indianapolis.)

field has broadened from mere price ticket and display card lettering to advertising matter of all kinds, such as moving picture announcements, billboard posters, street car cards, booklet covers, hand-lettered advertisements, and publicity material of every sort in which hand lettering may be used.

This rise in the standard and expansion of the show-card field

has brought about a change in the quality and requirements of the lettering of these cards. Muslin has been largely replaced by card stock which may be had in scores of different finishes. Oil and japan colors are now seldom used except on cards which are to be placed open to the weather, being replaced largely by water and tempera colors. Special pens and tools have been invented to meet the requirements of speed and the newer styles of lettering.

The sign shop with its side line of show-card writing has given

FIG. 2.—A window display for June.

way to shops and studios doing an exclusive show-card business. In many cases the work has branched out still further, the larger firms handling special window decorating orders. Some of these firms make a business of arranging the whole display, Fig. 2, for a certain fee, while others confine their efforts to hand-painted backgrounds, fixtures, and cards. A general lettering business is solicited by still other firms which handle covers for booklets, programs, menu cards, and even pictorial designs for billboards and street car cards. It is becoming more common for men who have received their training in a recognized art school to establish high-grade show-card and lettering studios.

The increase in the amount of advertising by means of cards has made it necessary and profitable for business institutions to have their own staff of card designers. In the smaller retail stores the cards are sometimes lettered by the window trimmer or one of the salesmen who spends part of his time doing this work. Department stores, theatrical concerns, and movie studios employ staffs of their own, while some sign and paint shops conduct their show-card business as a special department in their organization.

1A. Training Required.—A few years ago, preparation as a show-card writer was made only through an apprenticeship for a certain length of time at low pay in some sign shop. Correspondence, trade, and vocational schools now offer the necessary instruction. While art schools do not give particular attention to show cards, the courses which they give in lettering, poster design, and commercial art especially fit the student for the new high standards set for display publicity. The high prices paid by large theatrical and business concerns, and the genuine beauty of the work demanded in return, Fig. 3, make the need for a higher quality of instruction and a better understanding of the principles of advertising art more and more imperative to the beginner in the modern display advertising field.

Whatever the form or quality of the student's preparation, his first task will be to learn the fundamental strokes which compose lettering in general. In learning these, particular care and diligent practice are essential. In fact, methodical exactness is necessary in every phase of card writing, and it should be developed from the beginning. This exactness and thorough practice in learning the fundamental strokes later become the basis for creditable work when occasion requires rapid lettering. It is very easy to neglect to practice and very easy to become discouraged during this early stage. The student should overcome any tendency to give in to either of these drawbacks. There should really be nothing discouraging about learning to letter since it is like learning to write. The knack of lettering, like that of operating a typewriter or playing a musical instrument, may at first seem difficult and the exercises monotonous, but after the eyes and fingers are accustomed to the simple combinations of movements, it becomes largely a matter of habit. As

soon as the first fundamentals are mastered, the student will find lettering a simple, agreeable, and profitable means of making a living.

The modern card writer is more than a mechanical maker of letters and cards. To produce cards which will be commercially valuable, he must know the fundamentals of advertising appeal and the essential requirements in producing attractive cards wherein color contrasts and combinations play a silent but

FIG. 3.—A typical example of the better class of show cards for theaters. The lettering was done in black and gray on a white card. (*Design by William Haine, Twiet's Studio, Indianapolis.*)

active part in securing attention and encouraging sales. While natural talent is valuable in this respect, it is a great mistake to feel that these principles cannot be mastered except by the gifted few. This is far from being true. These principles and their application are really simple and exceedingly interesting, and they can be deliberately learned. Under the old system of apprenticeship in the sign shop, this study was neglected or omitted entirely, but in the future, instruction in these matters will no doubt become quite common and universal.

The length of time required for the completion of a course of study depends upon the student. Two months is sufficient to complete an elementary course in a school where the student

gives his full time to the work. After five or six lessons in most any course the student is usually in a position to do creditable work,—sufficiently good to produce a money return. On piece work his return will be small until he can letter rapidly and increase his output. Correspondence students are not usually able to give full time to study so that it takes them longer to complete a course. The length of time required depends upon how much previous practice they have had and how much time they can give to their lessons. In any case the period of training is quite short when compared with other trades.

The physical qualifications are few. Good eyesight is an asset, but defective or weak eyes are not absolute handicaps. The loss of any of the limbs is no real handicap to an ambitious student. Neither is sex a barrier; women are proving as successful as men. Persons physically weak or below normal health may select working places and hours to suit their tastes and convenience. The demand for cards is universal, and the student may locate in any climate and find his business prospects good. Age is no barrier unless the hand has become stiff and cramped. Almost any physical handicap can be overcome by diligent practice.

1B. Different Types of Employment.—After the student has completed his course, he finds three principal classes of openings for the practice of his chosen vocation. He may apply for work in a show-card studio or sign shop; enter the card writing department of some business institution; or launch out immediately to build up a business of his own.

Sign Shop.—If he chooses the first of these openings, he will no doubt be given a position as helper. As soon as he has accustomed himself to his employer's business he will become a full-fledged card writer. If the business is large enough and he shows special aptitude for a certain phase of work, he may perhaps develop into a specialist in that particular line and handle but one kind of orders. His pay as a helper will be low, but it will be a living wage at least. As a card writer, his pay will perhaps run from $8.00 to $20.00 a day. If he develops into a specialist or becomes manager of the shop or studio, his pay may be still higher, depending on the size of the firm, its volume of business, and its financial policy. The demand for work is steady, and there is seldom any slack season.

Department Store.—Should the student enter the show-card department of a large retail store his start will be quite similar to that in a shop or studio. The character of the work and the salary will be practically the same. His future will branch out, however, in a different direction unless he chooses to remain in the card writing department. Window decorating is closely allied to card writing in retail stores. In small stores, the trimmer may also letter the display cards. In large stores, special window decorators are employed who are often drawn from the show-card staff. Window publicity is carried on more or less in connection with newspaper advertising, and from window dressing the trimmer may enter the advertising department. Up to this stage his salary may run from $25.00 to $75.00 a week. In the advertising department he may at first make layouts of the advertisements from copy furnished him or he may become a copy writer. His salary will correspond to that of the higher rank of window trimmers. If he finally works up to the position of advertising manager, which he may be able to do after a few years' experience, his salary will be from $3,000 to $8,000 a year, depending upon the store.

The One-man Shop.—There are many inducements for the beginner to launch out in business for himself after completing his course of study. By the time he has completed his course he will have no doubt already solicited a few odd jobs and be fairly familiar with what customers most desire. The demand is practically constant, as advertising is even more necessary in dull times than in seasons of prosperity. Every town offers an opening for at least one card writer. In every town and city there are many dealers who could be encouraged to make greater use of show cards than they do if they were properly solicited.

Another inducement to consider is that the original outlay for an equipment need not exceed $10.00. As business develops, a cabinet with drawers, a better work table, and an air brush equipment may be added. Even these need not be very expensive.

In addition to lettering cards, the man with a shop or studio of his own can branch out in other lines and employ assistants to help him to take care of these specialties, Fig. 4. There will be opportunities to prepare lantern slides for theater and business concerns. Moving picture studios may hire him to do work for

them, although they sometimes employ a special staff of their own. The painting of window backgrounds on wall board is quite a common specialty also. This work may be gradually developed into a decorating service in which for a certain fee, store windows, convention halls, and street decoration will be undertaken. The painting of signs, banners, posters, and billboards is a very natural adjunct to the show-card business. Then, too, independent shops may handle a general lettering service, lettering newspaper advertisements, theater programs, menu cards, booklets, and pamphlets; in fact, anything wherein hand lettering is practical.

FIG. 4.—A modern show-card and poster studio.

10. Future of the Trade.—So great has been the progress in the show-card writing field that it is difficult to imagine to what its future may lead. Not only are card writers far more skilful than in the past, but business men are appreciating higher grades of work and paying larger sums of money to get it. Not infrequently well-known artists have been called in to assist in the preparation of display material. Clippings pasted on cards for illustrations are giving way, especially in theater lobby cards, to hand painted decorative drawings such as are usually done by poster artists. There seems to be no limit to the variety of cards which may be attempted nor to the pains which may be taken in executing them. Advertising by means of hand lettered cards holds forth for the student of card designing as promising a future as does any branch of the

advertising field. The only limitations are those which the student cares to impose upon himself. If he is studious, industrious, and painstaking his future is whatever he may wish to make it.

CHAPTER I

CONSTRUCTION OF ELEMENTARY LETTERS

"I will study and prepare myself and some day my chance will come."
Abraham Lincoln.

2. Origin and Development of Lettering.—Lettering is one of the oldest of the Fine Arts. The first symbols for spoken words were not letters as we know letters but stiff, crude pictures painted or carved on wood or stone. Fig. 5 represents primi-

FIG. 5.—The origin of lettering. Primitive man chiseling crude pictures on stone.

tive man chiseling pictures on stone. These pictures were in reality short stories of battles or everyday incidents in the lives of these prehistoric peoples. Gradually certain pictures were used to represent certain definite things and became symbols for words and names. These symbols developed in time into letters. For this reason the names of many of the letters in our modern alphabet may be traced back to the original names of the objects they first represented. The making of pictures, on the

other hand, developed into the arts of drawing and painting, while carving on wood and stone developed into sculpture. Therefore, when the art of picture writing is reviewed, it may be said that painting, sculpture, and literature were daughters of the mother art of lettering.

Two kinds of alphabets developed; one, in which the characters maintained their symbolic nature, and the other, in which the characters stood for certain sounds. The Chinese alphabet, with a different character for each word, is an example of the former,

FIG. 6.—An Egyptian chiseling hieroglyphics, the picture writing of the ancient Egyptian priests, on a stone column.

while our own alphabet, representing as it does a certain number of sounds used in conversation, is an example of the latter.

The Egyptian symbols, Fig. 6, were known as hieroglyphics. These symbols were of three kinds. The first kind consisted of pictures representing the objects themselves. The second kind represented ideas. For example, an ostrich feather represented the idea of truth. The third kind represented sounds, a hawk standing for the sound of the letter "a."

The Persians and Assyrians used wedge-shaped chisels in their lettering which gave the name *cuneiform* writing to the characters they used. The Hebrew, Phoenician, and Greek alphabets

were more or less influenced by the characters used in the writings of the Persians, Assyrians, and Egyptians.

Fifteen centuries B.C. reed pens with the ends shaved thin and flat were used on such materials as sheep's hide, bark, and papyrus, a writing material obtained from reeds. Just as the wedge-shaped chisels influenced the character of the Persian and Assyrian writing, so the reed pen, which made a stroke similar to that of our modern broad flat steel pens, caused the original classic Roman letters to be written with thick and thin strokes throughout the alphabet. Practically all modern alphabets have developed, in one way and another, from the Classic Roman.

About the eighth century after Christ quill pens succeeded reed pens. Knives were used to whittle the quills into shape, giving pocket knives the name of "pen knives." Printing by type came into use about the time Columbus discovered America, while steel pens are comparatively recent tools. Hand lettering fell into disuse after the invention of printing although universally in use previous to that date. The modern lettering tools are much superior to the pens used in earlier times, but in spite of this fact the beauty of the old hand lettering of centuries past has never been excelled.

Modern advertising, with its great demand for newspaper, magazine, and show-card "copy," has once more brought hand lettering into wide use. Card writing, although a few years ago but a branch of the sign painting trade, is today recognized as a form of commercial art, requiring a working knowledge of advertising principles, layout composition, and the effective use of color, in addition to an ability to construct good letters. Greater demand on the part of the public for better cards and greater skill on the part of the card writers have placed commercial lettering on a much higher level than it was a few years ago. Cheap styles of lettering, like tinselled post-cards, have been replaced by workmanship of artistic qualities, the equal of any found in the field of commercial art.

2A. Definitions.—Letter forms and their component parts are known by certain names which will be used throughout this text. These names with their meanings are given below.

Letter Forms

Capital letters (Fig. 7) (trade nickname "caps").—Letters

made full height and generally used only as initials except in such styles as the Roman.

Lower case letters (Fig. 7).—Smaller letters having various heights and used throughout the word or for the balance of the word when the initial is a capital. The name comes from the typesetting trade, the smaller letters being kept in the lower frame of boxes.

Guide Lines (Fig. 8)

"Cap" line.—Line bounding height of capitals.

Base line.—Line at base of capitals and body part of lower case letters.

Waist line.—Line bounding height of body part of lower case letters, at about 3/5 to 2/3 height of "cap."

Drop line.—Line to which long descending strokes are dropped.

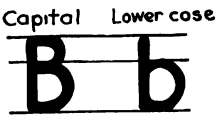

FIG. 7.—Letter forms.

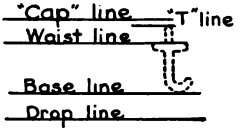

FIG. 8.—The five different guide lines used in lettering.

"T" line.—Line between "cap" and waist lines at height of lower case **t**.

Letter Elements

Stroke.—(a) That portion of a letter formed with one movement of the pen or brush.

(b) A thick line in a letter containing both thick and thin strokes.

Stem (Fig. 9).—The up or down stroke, usually vertical.

Hairline (Fig. 9).—A thin line in a letter containing both thick and thin strokes.

Ascender (Fig. 9).—The lower case stroke extending above the waist line to the "cap" line. The lower case letters having ascenders are **b, d, f, h, k, l,** and **t.**

Descender (Fig. 9).—The lower case stroke descending below the base line to the drop line. The lower case letters having descenders are **g, j, p, q,** and **y.**

Crossbar (Fig. 9).—Horizontal line across the body of the letter.

Serif (spur or plug) (Fig. 9).—Short overhanging portion at the ends of a stroke. Serifs were originally chisel marks cut by a mason. They give accent and finish to the end of a stroke.

Face (Fig. 9).—The surface of a letter stroke itself.

Lobe (Fig. 9).—The round bellied section of a letter.

Kern (Fig. 9).—The curved extremity to ascenders or descenders. Examples: **f, j,** and **y.**

Swash (Fig. 9).—The curved tail stroke in such letters as **R** and **Q.**

Cyma (Fig. 9).—(a) A wavy line used to fill in an empty space.

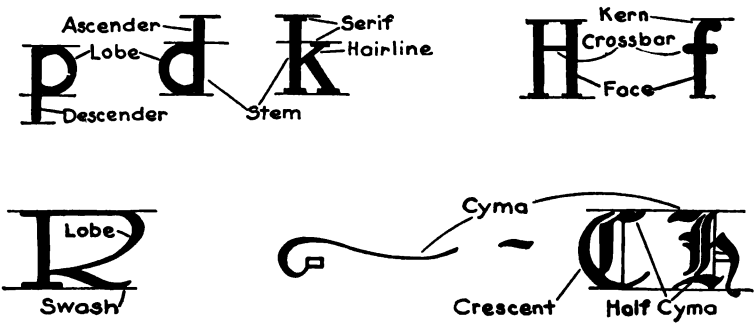

FIG. 9.—The elementary parts of letters.

(b) A wavy line forming one of the common strokes in Gothic styles.

Half-cyma (Fig. 9).—An arc, thick and square at one end and thinning to a point at the other.

Crescent stroke (Fig. 9).—An arc, thick in the middle portion and thin at the extremities.

3. Elementary Alphabet.—The elementary alphabet forms the basis for practically all alphabets. It is shown, Fig. 10, in both capitals and lower case letters. The direction in which each stroke was drawn is indicated by an arrow, the strokes being numbered in the order in which they are most commonly made. The student should form the habit from the first of drawing the strokes of each letter in a certain definite order. Drawing them repeatedly in the same order makes the process automatic in a very short time. Furthermore, the letters are more likely to be

FIG. 10.—The elementary alphabet.

uniform. Systematic, methodical workmanship should be the constant aim. The strokes do not have to be made in the same order as shown in Fig. 10, but it is doubtful if any other order will be found more suitable or more convenient.

The principal strokes and movements by which letters are constructed are few and simple since they consist of straight and curved lines. These elementary strokes are shown in Fig. 11. As letters are nothing more than combinations of these simple movements, it naturally follows that if one becomes adept at forming these strokes, the construction of letters from them will be a very simple undertaking.

It is well to arrange the letters of the alphabet into groups,

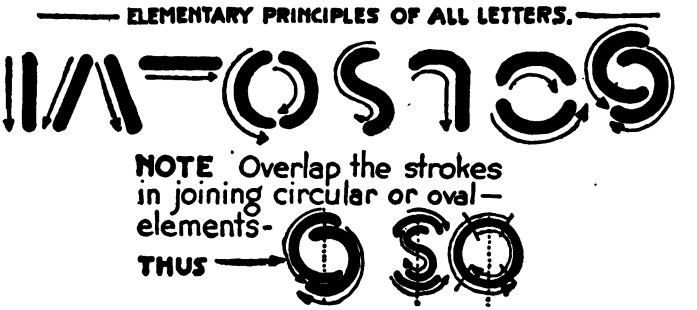

FIG. 11.—The fundamental lettering strokes.

according to the kind of strokes which form their construction. When this is done, the capitals and the lower case letters will be grouped as in Fig. 12. The first line of capital letters consists of rounded letters, the entire outlines of **O** and **Q** being rounded, **C** and **G** open on the right-hand side, and **D** a closed letter.

The next line of capital letters is composed of straight strokes. The first six letters, **I, L, H, T, F,** and **E,** are composed of strokes which are either vertical or horizontal. In the remaining three letters, **V, W,** and **X,** the strokes are all slanted.

The third line is composed of capital letters which contain combinations of different kinds of strokes. The first six letters, **M, N, Z, Y, K,** and **A,** contain combinations of vertical, slanted, and horizontal straight strokes. The next five letters, **J, U, P, R,** and **B,** contain curved and straight strokes combined. The

last two letters, $, and &, are composed entirely of curved strokes.

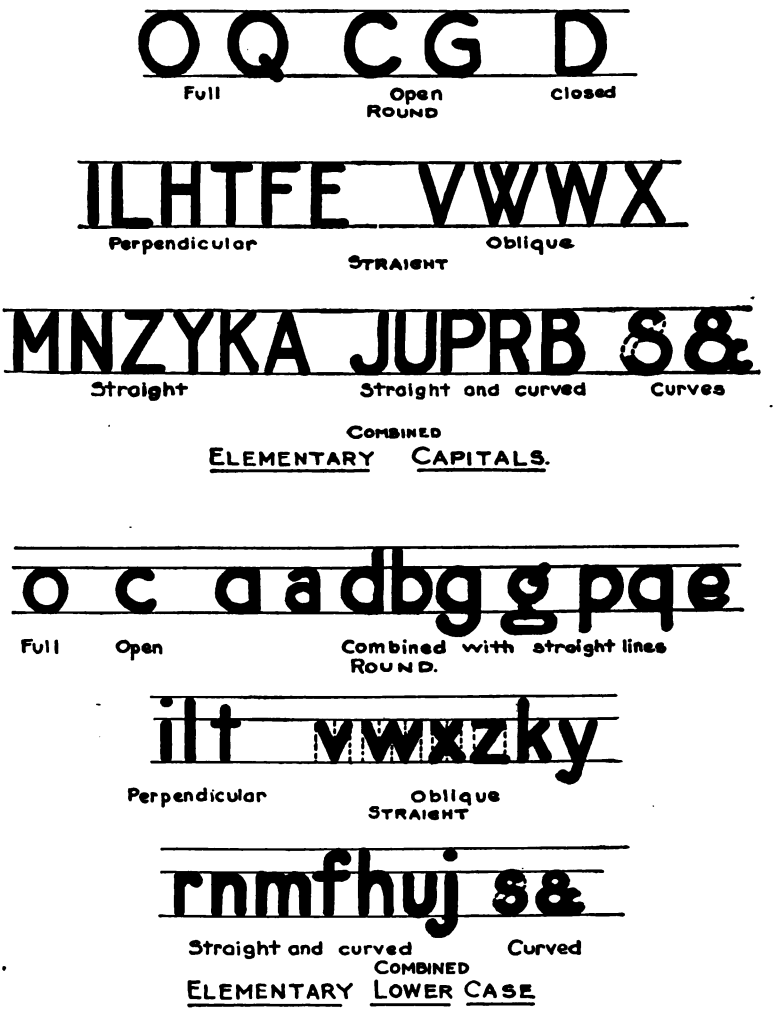

FIG. 12.—Classification of the letters in the alphabet.

When lower case letters are compared with capital letters, the first noticeable difference is the greater number of rounded forms. These rounded forms are generally combined with straight strokes, as in the fourth line, Fig. 12. The only letter entirely

rounded in its outline is **o**, and the only letter with an open rounded shape is **c**.

The fifth line is made up of letters formed by straight strokes, the first three letters, **i**, **l**, and **t**, being limited to horizontal and vertical strokes. There is a decrease in the number of letters containing oblique strokes, there being six in the lower case and nine in the capitals. The last line shows a group of letters

FIG. 13.—Ruling pen used for drawing border lines and underlining words.

combining straight and curved strokes. The **s** and the ampersand **(&)** do not vary from capitals in any way excepting size.

4. Pens.—All show-card lettering is done with pens or brushes. So many new types of pens have been invented, especially for lettering purposes, that pens have largely displaced brushes in lettering, at least on the small cards.

FIG. 14.—Soennecken or round writing pens.

Ruling Pens.—Several different kinds of pens are used in card writing. For thin lines a ball point pen is often used as it writes smoothly and rapidly. For border lines some card writers use a draftsman's ruling pen, Fig. 13. The Gisburne border ruling pen is much lower priced than the draftsman's pen although it is not so long-lived. This pen will be more completely described in Chap. VIII.

When the ruling pen shown in Fig. 13 is used, it is held in a vertical position and drawn along a triangle or a T-square. This

pen has a screw at the side for adjusting the blades so as to make clean, even lines of various weights and is filled by touching the blades with the quill in the cork of the ink bottle. Care should be taken to keep the ink from getting on the outside of the nibs as it is likely to run under the triangle or T-square. If it does get on the outside of the nibs, it may be removed by stroking the pen on a cloth or penwiper. This pen should not be filled higher than 1/8 or 3/16 in.; otherwise the ink may be so heavy as to run down, causing a blot. By keeping the nibs moderately supplied with ink at all times and refilling the pen before it becomes entirely empty, the lines made will be clean-cut and uniform. Quite long lines can be drawn without refilling the pen, and, if the adjusting screw is not turned, all the lines will be exactly

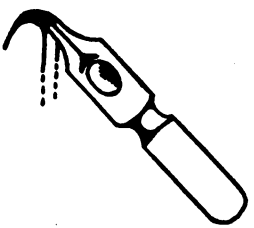

FIG. 15.—Position of Soennecken pen in use.

the same weight. This type of pen is strong and durable and will last for years.

Soennecken Pens.—Soennecken, or *round writing pens,* Fig. 14, are much like ordinary stub pens and are used in making "Old English" and round writing alphabets. These pens are generally held at an angle of 45 degrees, Fig. 15, causing the ends of the strokes to be beveled. The thick and thin strokes of the Roman and the wavy lines of the "Old English" styles of letters are made automatically when the pen is held in this position. Thin crossbars are made by holding the pen in the ordinary writing position and drawing it from left to right edgewise. Letters formed with the pen in the ordinary writing position will give square ends to the vertical strokes and a rather quaint appearance to Roman letters.

Marking Pens.—Marking pens, Fig. 16, are also used for alphabets made up of thick and thin lines. The smallest size makes

a line about the same weight as the largest round writing pen. These pens may be obtained in sizes running up to 7/8 in. wide. The *shading pen,* Fig. 17, is the same as the marking pen except that one side allows more ink to flow than the other, giving two tones to the strokes. Both the marking pen and the shading pen are filled by touching a quill or a dropper between the nibs in the same way that a ruling pen is filled. These pens may be dipped into an ink bottle, but this is not very satisfactory as the

FIG. 16.—A small size marking pen.

ink on the outside of the nibs will have to be wiped off on a cloth before they are used. They may be cleaned by drawing a sheet of paper through the nibs. This, however, tends to spread the nibs apart, and a much better method of cleaning is to hold the pen under a water faucet or rinse it in a tumbler of water. If it is to be used immediately after it has been cleaned in water, it should be wiped dry with a piece of cheese cloth or with a soft cloth which is as free as possible from lint. If water is left on the pen, the first few pen strokes will be somewhat pale.

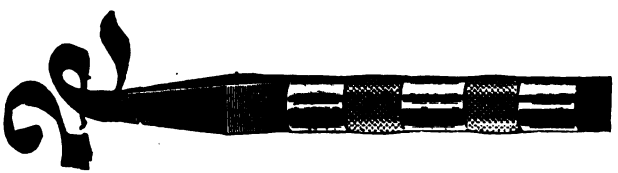

FIG. 17.—Shading pen.

The *Verti-pen,* Fig. 18, is a metal fountain marking pen with which various weights of lines can be made without changing the pen for one of another size. The handle contains an ink reservoir which is filled by pressing down the small lever on the upper surface of the handle, dipping the pen into a bottle of ink, and letting the lever come up again slowly. The handle joins the pen part at a slant of 30 degrees, so that when the nibs of the pen are in a vertical position, the handle slopes from the card at about the same angle as that of a pencil or pen held in the ordinary writing position. The pen is also set at an angle

of 30 degrees horizontally with the handle, making it easier to draw the strokes than if the pen were at right angles across the lower end of the handle. In the ordinary writing position the pen makes a stroke equal to the full width of the nibs, the same as any marking pen. The nibs are not straight all along the edge, however, but are beveled at the corners, one bevel covering a short distance along the nibs, the other being comparatively small and at the opposite corner. Changing the position of the pen so

FIG. 18.—Verti fountain lettering pen.

that one of these bevels comes in contact with the paper changes the weight of the stroke accordingly. There are three weights of strokes possible, the full width of the nibs making a stroke like that of a wide marking pen, the long bevel making a stroke

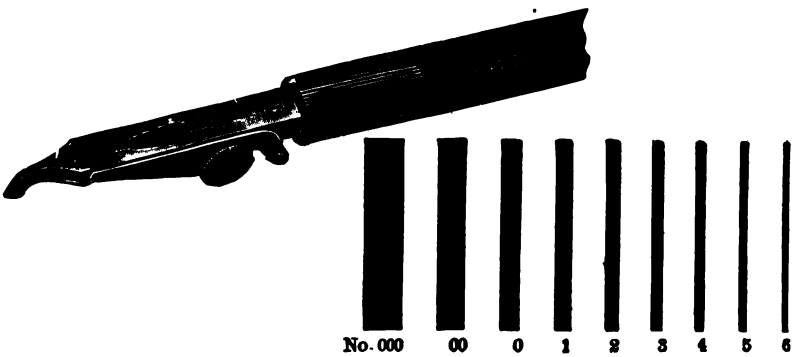

FIG. 19.—Payzant pen and the weights of lines drawn with various sizes of this style of pen.

like that of a marking pen of medium size, and the corner bevel making a narrow, single weight of line like a round-shoe Speedball pen or a Payzant pen of medium size. The pen is cleaned by pressing out the ink left in the reservoir, dipping the pen in water, and pressing and releasing the filling lever several times.

The pen may then be left standing in enough water to cover the nibs until it is ready to be used again.

Payzant Pens.—Payzant pens, Fig. 19, are of a different type altogether from the ordinary types of pens. They are heavily built and have a reservoir fitted with a hinged bottom so that they may be easily cleaned. The nibs have flat, round ends and come

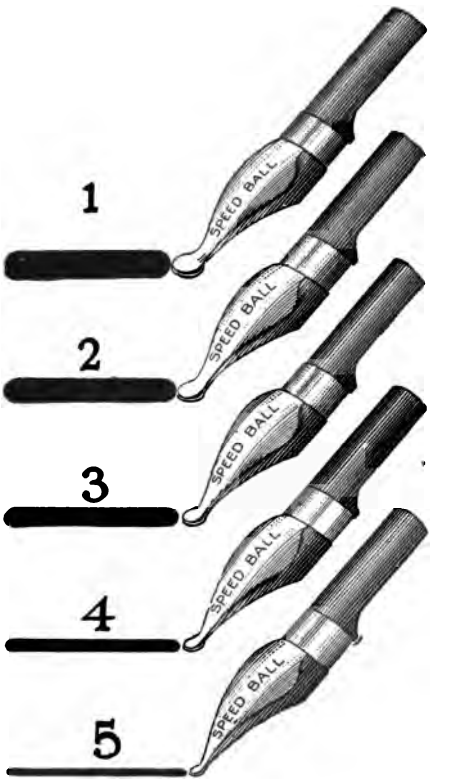

FIG. 20a.—Speedball pens with round points.

in various sizes, the smallest size making a line as fine as an ordinary coarse pen, the largest size a line as thick as a pencil. The exact sizes are shown in the picture. These pens write smoothly and rapidly, the strokes being of uniform thickness and round at the ends. They are durable and long-lived and naturally cost much more than ordinary pens. A Payzant pen should never be dipped into the ink but should be filled by a quill or a dropper.

One filling is sufficient for a large amount of lettering or border lines. A small screw at the side of the bowl permits adjustment of the nibs to improve the flow of ink from the pen when it is either too scanty or too great. Should the pen become clogged while it is being used, the reservoir should be opened slightly and the edge of a piece of paper drawn between the nibs. After the

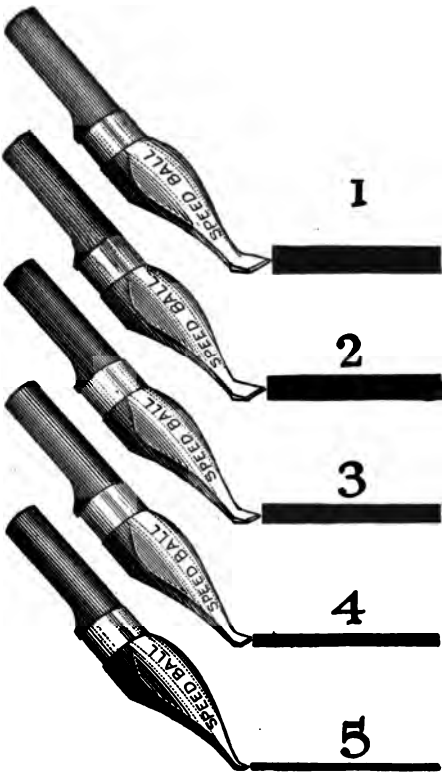

FIG. 20b.—Speedball pens with square points.

pen has been used, the reservoir should be opened and the pen cleaned by wiping out the bowl with a cloth or by rinsing it under a water faucet, then drawing a piece of paper between the nibs. If spurs or square ends are desired on the letter strokes, they can be added with any ordinary pen.

Speedball or Spoonbill Pens.—Speedball or Spoonbill pens, Figs. 20a and 20b, with round points make the same kind of a

line as the Payzant pens but are made in smaller sizes. They are also made with square points. These pens resemble ordinary pens but have a round or square shoe on the end. They are fitted with a shield that acts as an ink reservoir. The price is very low, being only a few cents each.

Pens of this type are known under a variety of names. Each manufacturer calls his pen by a different name, as for example, Prang Spoonbill pens, Esterbrook Speed pens, and Gordon and George Speedball pens.

The Esterbrook Lettering and Drawing Speed pens, Fig. 21, and Prang Spoonbill pens resemble an ordinary steel pen but are different in construction. Instead of the usual points the nibs consist of two hemispherical or disc-like flat surfaces with a fine

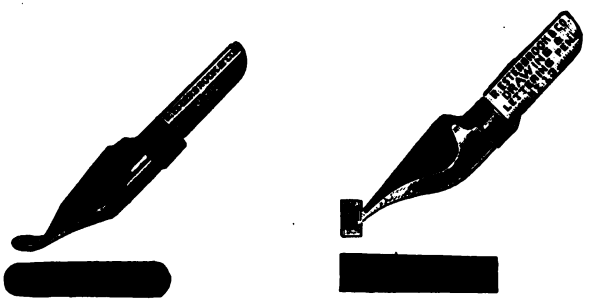

FIG. 21.—Esterbrook Lettering and Drawing Speed pens, showing both round and rectangular styles of nibs.

split between them. Together these disc-like pieces form a circle so that whenever the pen is held in a writing position it produces a solid circle of ink or color on the paper, and if it be drawn along the paper, produces a solid uniform line with rounded ends. Pens Nos. 6 and 7, Fig. 21, have rectangular nibs. The ends of the strokes made with these styles are square instead of round. The ink reservoir holds sufficient ink for a stroke of considerable length, which makes it unnecessary to dip the pen into the ink bottle frequently.

The Gordon and George Speedball pens, Figs. 20a and 20b, have a double reservoir fountain and tip-retainer over the extreme point of the shoe, preventing any excess flow of ink or color. The Speedball pen operates easily, and letters can be made rapidly with it. It produces a stroke of uniform width throughout when drawn in any direction. To draw letters made up of

thick and thin strokes, as in Roman letters, the style A or square nibbed style is simply turned over on its back. The thick and thin strokes can then be easily formed.

Any india ink or opaque water color diluted to flowing consistency is suitable for any of these pens. It is not necessary to pencil in the letters first. However, unless one is accustomed to working in such a direct manner, it is better to sketch in the borders and letters lightly before inking them in. The inking-in

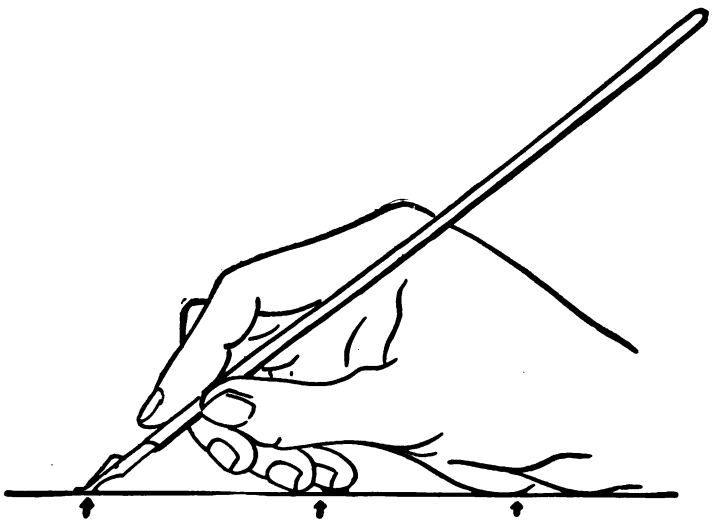

FIG. 22.—Side view of correct writing position for lettering pens of the flat shoe type. Note the points where the hand and pen touch the paper.

process can then be carried on with a greater degree of confidence.

These pens are all used in ordinary penholders and are dipped into the ink bottle like an ordinary pen. The Spoonbill pen, however, works best when it contains only a moderate amount of ink. The under-side of the shoe should be rested on the ink bottle to drain off the surplus ink. This is not so necessary with the Speedball pens as the double reservoir regulates the ink supply, a particular feature of that pen.

The Spoonbill, Speed, or Speedball pens should be held so that the shoe rests evenly on the paper, with the holder in practically the same position that one holds an ordinary writing pen, as

shown in Figs. 22 and 23. The correct angle may be acquired by first making a few dots. The ink flows best when all lines are drawn downward or from the left to the right with a full, slow arm movement, where the entire arm slides over the desk and the

FIG. 23.—View from above of the correct writing position for pens of the flat shoe type.

fingers and wrist are kept rigid. For small lettering, a finger movement with a slight arm action is often used.

Smooth paper or bristol board provides the best lettering surface. The paper should be placed squarely on the table, slightly to the right of the writer. Turning the paper sidewise as in

FIG. 24.—An ink retainer made from a rubber band.

hand writing makes it difficult to see if the strokes are being kept vertical and in alignment.

The pen movement should rest at the beginning and the end of each stroke to insure well rounded tips on the letter strokes. To obtain a uniform thickness of line, the pen should be pressed down firmly on the paper. The penholder should be held firmly, but it should not be gripped too tightly.

The forms of the letter styles for which these pens are best adapted should be thoroughly studied, each letter well analyzed, and the direction of each stroke noted. It is a good policy to

FIG. 25.—Double-end penholder with ink retainers.

practice drawing the strokes in different directions, endeavoring to become thoroughly acquainted with the pen.

Handling Pens.—A pen, when new, has a slight film of oil on the surface and does not take ink easily. Rubbing it with

FIG. 26.—Round ferrule Red Sable brushes.

damp chalk or darting it through a match flame will remove this film. The stiffness may be reduced by holding it in the flame for two or three seconds and then plunging it into water. This shortens the life of the pen but makes it more suitable for lettering purposes. A pen is usually wiped on a cloth or

chamois although it will last longer and write better if it is rinsed in water instead.

When a Soennecken or round writing pen is used, not much ink should be kept on the pen as thin strokes cannot be successfully made unless the pen is nearly dry. Fastening a rubber band around the nibs, as in Fig. 24, is one of the simplest ways of regulating the ink supply. The band permits just enough ink

FIG. 27.—Flat ferrule Red Sable brushes.

to flow to make lettering easy. Some card writers wind a rubber band around the penholder or slip a short piece of rubber tubing over it to make it more comfortable to hold in the fingers.

There are penholders made which will hold pens at both ends of the holder, Fig. 25. These holders are provided with simple ink retainers which regulate the ink supply in much the same way as a rubber band around the nibs.

5. Brushes.—*Red Sable Brushes.*—Red Sable brushes are the best for show-card writing. The best grade is imported from Russia, and comes in two styles, round, Fig. 26, and flat, Fig. 27,

FIG. 28.—Script or "rigger" brushes.

FIG. 29.—French camel's-hair japanner's lettering pencils in quills.

each having square ends. As many as eighteen different sizes of the round brushes are made. Ten of these in almost their exact sizes are shown in Fig. 26. The flat style, Fig. 27, comes in about half a dozen sizes, ranging from ¼ to 1 in. in width. Two or three round Red Sable brushes of different sizes and a flat ¼ in. brush are sufficient for the first brush equipment.

Script or "Rigger" Brushes.—Script brushes, Fig. 28, are

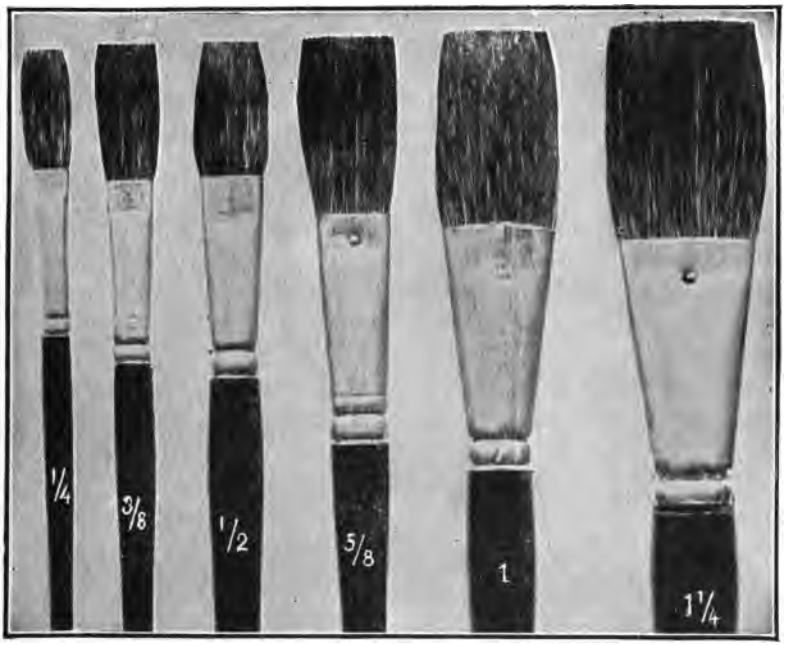

FIG. 30.—Mixed camel's- and ox-hair brushes for oil and japan on oilcloth, muslin, or paper.

long, narrow, Red Sable brushes used for script lettering, outlining, or any work requiring neat, graceful strokes. They are made in half a dozen sizes and often go by the name of "riggers" since artists use this style of brush in painting fine lines such as found in pictures of ship rigging.

Camel's-hair Brushes.—Camel's-hair brushes, Fig. 29, are used for lettering with either japan or oil colors. The best grades are handmade by peasants in France. They are not so satisfactory for water colors as Red Sable brushes as they lose their elasticity in water, but they are much cheaper. The hair in the

brushes is from ¾ to 1½ in. long and is set in quills. These quills can be slipped over wooden handles which may be purchased separately. Some styles are not set in quills but in metal ferrules fastened to wooden handles the same as any ordinary brush.

Other Styles of Brushes.—Camel's- and ox-hair are sometimes blended in the same brush, Fig. 30, the ox-hair adding to the

FIG. 31.—Flat, chisel, ox-hair sign writer for banners and posters.

spring in the hair. The camel's-hair, being cheaper, makes the brush less expensive than one containing ox-hair only. Black sable brushes are higher in price than camel's-hair brushes and are limited to use with japan and oil colors. Ox-hair brushes may be used for any kind of color. Ox-hair and black sable styles are used on paper, muslin, or oilcloth in making banners and posters, and for this reason they are often called muslin brushes. A flat, chisel, ox-hair sign writer is shown in Fig. 31.

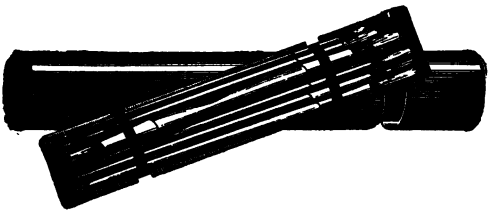

FIG. 32.—Case for holding brushes when they are not in use.

Care of Brushes.—Brushes that have been used for water color should never be used for oil or japan, neither should brushes that have been used for oil be used for water color. Water color brushes should be thoroughly washed out in water immediately after use before the color has any chance to dry in the hair. If the color has already started to dry, it is best to soak the brush awhile in water before washing it, in order to avoid breaking the fine hairs. Brushes used in oil or japan should be cleaned thoroughly in turpentine so as to remove

every particle of color. After all the color is removed, vaseline may be worked into the bristles to keep the brushes in perfect condition. After brushes are cleaned they should be laid flat in a tray or case, Fig. 32, or put in a jar with the bristles up. They should never be stood on end as this bends the bristles out of shape and ruins them.

6. Colors.—Nowadays show-card writers as a rule do not mix their own colors, as mixing colors requires time and skill and the

FIG. 33.—Glass jar of prepared color.

results are apt to be uncertain. Prepared colors are purchased in glass jars, Fig. 33, and may be used full strength or slightly diluted with water as necessary. They are made in as many as two dozen colors, but black, white, red, yellow, and blue are all that are really necessary for the beginner. When other colors are desired, mixtures may be made from these, or additional colors purchased.

7. Inks.—Colored inks are not often used, as show-card colors are cheaper. Inks are also more or less transparent and unless

applied in two or three coats the points where the strokes meet or overlap appear darker. India ink is generally used for black lines, especially when a pen is used. It is opaque and, therefore, one coat is sufficient to show an even, black tone.

8. Cardboard.—Six- to ten-ply bristol board is used for white cards. This is usually purchased in sheets 22 by 28 in. or some similar size Mat, poster, railroad, and mounting boards are used for colored cards. These may be had in various colors, in

FIG. 34.—A convenient type of student's drawing table.

flat, mottled, or pattern effects. The sheets measure as large as 30 by 40 in. Cardboard may be purchased from printers, picture stores, or show-card supply houses. The student should familiarize himself with the different kinds of cardboard and the sizes in which they are made.

9. Student's Materials.—There are many different types of drawing tables, but the one shown in Fig. 34 is well adapted for home study purposes. This table has a small shelf on which to place the color or ink. The top is of ample size to hold the drawing board and may be raised and lowered to whatever angle

seems most satisfactory. When not in use, the table may be folded and set aside.

The drawing board, Fig. 35, is made of several pieces of well-seasoned, straight-grained pine glued together. Grooved cleats fastened at the ends keep the board from warping, the grooves permitting the board to expand and contract without spoiling its shape. The board should measure about 20 by 24 in. This is large enough to fit average needs and not so large as to be cumbersome. When the board is in use, the long side of it is placed next to the body. When it is stored away, it should not be put in a damp place, behind a radiator, or near a stove, as this may cause it to warp in spite of the end cleats.

The T-square (frontispiece) consists of a head and blade set at right angles to each other and is used for drawing horizontal

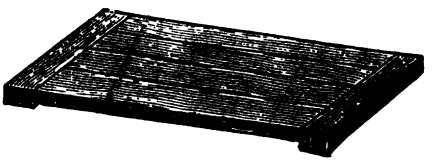

FIG. 35.—Drawing board with end cleats.

guide lines and border lines. Almost all T-squares have a solid head, but some are provided with a movable head which permits setting the T-square so that the blade will make a different angle than a right angle. Slanted lines may then be drawn instead of horizontal ones. The head of the T-square is placed against the left-hand edge of the board and held there with the left hand while the lines are drawn along the upper edge of the blade with the right hand. A left-handed person may place the head against the right-hand edge of the drawing board and draw the lines with the left hand. The upper edge of the blade should be kept smooth and free from nicks, or the blade will become unfit for ruling good lines.

Vertical and slanted guide lines may be drawn with the triangle, Fig. 36. One edge of the triangle slants at an angle of 30 degrees and is useful for drawing guide lines for slanted letters of this angle. The other edges may be used when vertical lines are drawn, the longer edge being preferable.

To use the triangle the short edge is set against the upper edge

of the T-square and then slid along. The blade of the T-square is horizontal when the head is held close against the end of the board. In that position lines drawn along the edges of the triangle will be either vertical or at an angle of 30 degrees. All guide lines whether vertical or horizontal should be drawn away from the body rather than towards it. It is better to hold both

FIG. 86.—Triangle used for drawing guide lines.

the triangle and the blade of the T-square with the left hand than to try to manipulate the triangle with the right hand and still hold the head of the T-square with the left.

The triangle should not be used in drawing the actual letter strokes. They should always be drawn freehand. However, if guide lines are drawn at short intervals they aid the eye in

FIG. 37.—Thumb tack lifter and thumb tacks.

keeping the strokes parallel, although an experienced card writer is usually able to do this with no mechanical aids whatever.

Manilla paper is suitable for practice paper but bristol board is better for neat, finished work. Thumb tacks are used to hold the paper or cardboard flat on the drawing board. As the tacks are somewhat difficult to remove with the fingers, a thumb tack lifter, Fig. 37, should be used. To avoid marring the cardboard with unsightly holes, the tacks may be set a short distance out

from the edge, the pressure from the wide, flat heads of the tacks being sufficient to hold the card in place.

The pencil or stick of charcoal should be kept well sharpened by rubbing it on a pencil pointer, Fig. 38. When the pencil or charcoal becomes too short to use conveniently, it should be inserted into a porte crayon or crayon holder, Fig. 39, making it unnecessary to select a longer pencil or a new stick of charcoal.

10. Learning to Letter.—It should always be borne in mind that there is only one way by which proficiency in card writing

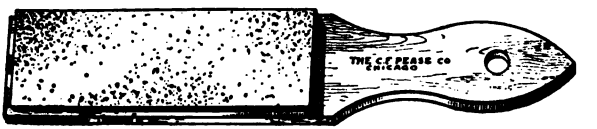

FIG. 38.—Sandpaper pad for pointing pencils and charcoal sticks.

can be attained; that is, by conscientious practice. The fingers must be trained to handle the brushes and pens with facility and ease.

One should learn to letter without a copy to work from. Even the most inexperienced person can copy letters well by taking a great deal of time and pains, but to become successful in lettering, the different forms of letters must be firmly fixed in mind so that they may be neatly and accurately drawn.

FIG. 39.—Porte crayon or crayon holder.

In the beginning, the elementary strokes, Fig. 11, page 17, should be practiced as often as possible both with a pen and with a brush. The letters in the alphabet, Fig. 10, page 16, should be practiced also, taking one letter at a time and practicing it until it can be made neatly and easily without looking at the copy. The direction of each stroke and the order in which it is made are shown in the figure. After the different letters of the alphabet have been mastered, the letters may then be grouped into words.

In combining letters into words and sentences one rule needs to be kept in mind—the letters must be kept close together. Beginners invariably make the mistake of cramping the shape of

the letters and spacing them too far apart, as shown in Fig. 40. Sufficient space, however, should be allowed between the words to make them stand out clearly and distinctly from each other.

When letters are grouped into words the difficulty of spacing the letters correctly presents itself. The difference in the shape of adjoining letters in a word makes it necessary to vary the spacing between the letters if the lettering is to be kept at its best. The letters **L A V** may be taken as an example of difficult spacing. The space between **A** and **V** will be uniform from the top to the bottom, but the space between **L** and **A** will be much wider at the top than at the bottom, even though the letters are set the same distance apart along the base. To space these three letters properly, the letter **V** should be set a little further to the right so that it will not appear to be too close to **A.**

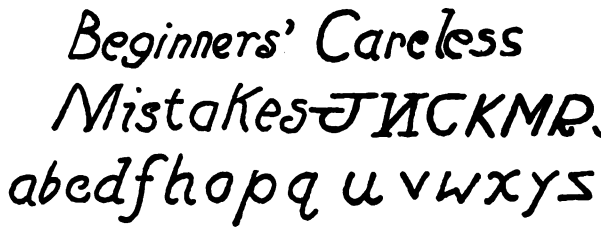

FIG. 40.—Errors to avoid in lettering.

There is no set rule governing the distance between letters so as to make the spacing appear even. The eye alone must judge of this. The only satisfactory rule that may be given is to space the letters so that the words at a short distance will appear as an even gray tone. If the letters are improperly spaced, the words will appear spotty rather than even in tone. This rule should be applied to all lettering until proficiency in the spacing of letters in words is acquired.

There are several errors, common to most students of lettering, which should be avoided. The apex of the capital letter **A** is too often drawn over to the right, giving the letter a tilted appearance. Letters consisting of straight lines are generally drawn correctly, but curved letters seem more difficult. **C** and **G** are often slanted and the top curve flattened. This is also true of **S.** The upper lobe of **S** is made too large and too one-sided, giving it a slanted appearance. The upper lobe of **B** is also made too large. These errors and others are indicated in Fig. 40.

Daily practice is essential while learning to letter. Nothing can take its place since the muscles must become accustomed to making the strokes without any strain or mental effort. The hand should be trained to make the letters without thought, the mind giving its attention to spacing and general effectiveness.

Punctuation and spelling should be watched carefully. When the mind is on the making of the letters, words are often mis-

FIG. 41.—Exercises in making brush and pen strokes.

spelled. When the card is read, such errors are quickly noted and bad impressions result.

The figures for price tags and price marks should be displayed well and the dollar sign made small. The figures are the important features on such a card, and a large dollar sign is a waste of space.

The sheet of cardboard should not be revolved. Beginners sometimes do this so that certain letters and figures may be formed more easily. Some card writers find it convenient to slant the card while making Italic letters. With this exception,

the cardboard should be kept squarely in front and never revolved nor slanted from a horizontal or a vertical position.

All lettering should be laid out first with a soft pencil or stick of charcoal. Guide lines always should be carefully ruled in. The letters, however, need be only lightly and roughly sketched. They do not need to be pencilled in detail. It is only necessary to know roughly the location of the letters and the space the words are to occupy. The details can be worked in or rearranged during the process of inking in the colors with the brush or pen. The pencil or charcoal should be kept sharp on a strip of sandpaper or a pencil pointer. Pencil lines may be removed with artgum after the card is finished without injuring the letter.

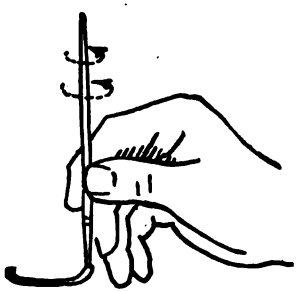

FIG. 42.—Curved line made by twirling the brush during the stroke.

In case charcoal lines are used, they may be dusted off with a rag.

A set of exercises involving all of the elementary strokes is given in Fig. 41, the arrows indicating the direction in which to draw each stroke. In the alphabet shown in Fig. 10, page 16, the direction of each stroke is not only shown but the order in which to make it is also indicated. If this figure is followed and the strokes are drawn each time in the same order, the drawing of the letters will become more nearly automatic and they will be more likely to be uniform in appearance.

Before the strokes shown in Fig. 41 are practiced parallel upper and lower guide lines should be ruled on paper with a pencil or a sharply pointed charcoal, or a lettering tablet used. Manilla paper is satisfactory for practice work and is somewhat cheaper than heavy white drawing paper of the better grade.

If a brush is used, it should not be gripped too firmly. It may be held either like a pen or like a chisel, as the style of the letter

requires. When curved strokes are formed, Fig. 42, the ferrule may be slightly twirled or rolled in the fingers instead of trying to twist the entire hand while the lobe of the letter is being formed. Some card writers prefer to letter with the extreme tip of the brush while others prefer to hold the brush down on the paper somewhat and draw it along. Card writers who use the latter method believe that it tends to keep the stroke smoother and more uniform in width. The brush should be lifted up sharply off the paper at the end of the stroke to give the stroke a square tip. It should not be handled gingerly but should be used with a strong swinging free movement from the very beginning, even though the results at first look decidedly amateurish. It should be kept well filled with color or much the same effect will result. Care should be taken, however, to avoid overloading the brush.

Success in lettering depends almost entirely upon the amount of practicing done. New and shorter ways of doing things keep suggesting themselves to those who spend considerable time in practicing exercises and letters. First attempts almost always appear discouraging, but if these are kept and compared with work done later on the improvement will be easily noticed.

CHAPTER II

HISTORY OF MODERN STYLES OF LETTERING

"It is necessary that you acquire a knowledge and understanding of . . . historic styles so as not to use incongruous forms in any one design."
Joseph Almars.

11. Value of Historical Viewpoint.—There is such a multiplicity of alphabets and type forms today that it is beyond the average show-card writer to memorize them all. He should, however, become acquainted with the history and characteristics of certain standard alphabets. It is not necessary to make an exhaustive study of all alphabet forms, but since show-card alphabets are simply the older alphabets made over for use with show-card pens and brushes some study of these first types is necessary. An acquaintance with these and a mastery of the elementary alphabet, Fig. 10, page 16, are sufficient to meet ordinary needs. The same elementary strokes are used in practically all styles, and the problem of spacing is much the same in any style.

The characteristics of the different alphabets have been influenced by national temperaments and the periods of history during which they were developed. These influences were so widely different that the resulting alphabets are so dissimilar as to make it impossible in some cases to use two of them harmoniously together. For example, the Classic Roman, Fig. 43, and the Gothic, Fig. 46, page 52, are unlike in spirit and appearance. They originated differently, in different countries, at different periods of history, and have, as far as appearance goes, little in common with one another.

12. Characteristics of the Classic Roman.—The Classic Roman was the earliest style from which the various modern alphabets were developed. It was first made entirely of capitals, the lower case Roman letters not coming into common use until after the invention of printing by type. These capital letters were at first cut in stone, or written on parchment with a reed pen held at an angle so that the upstrokes and the crossbars

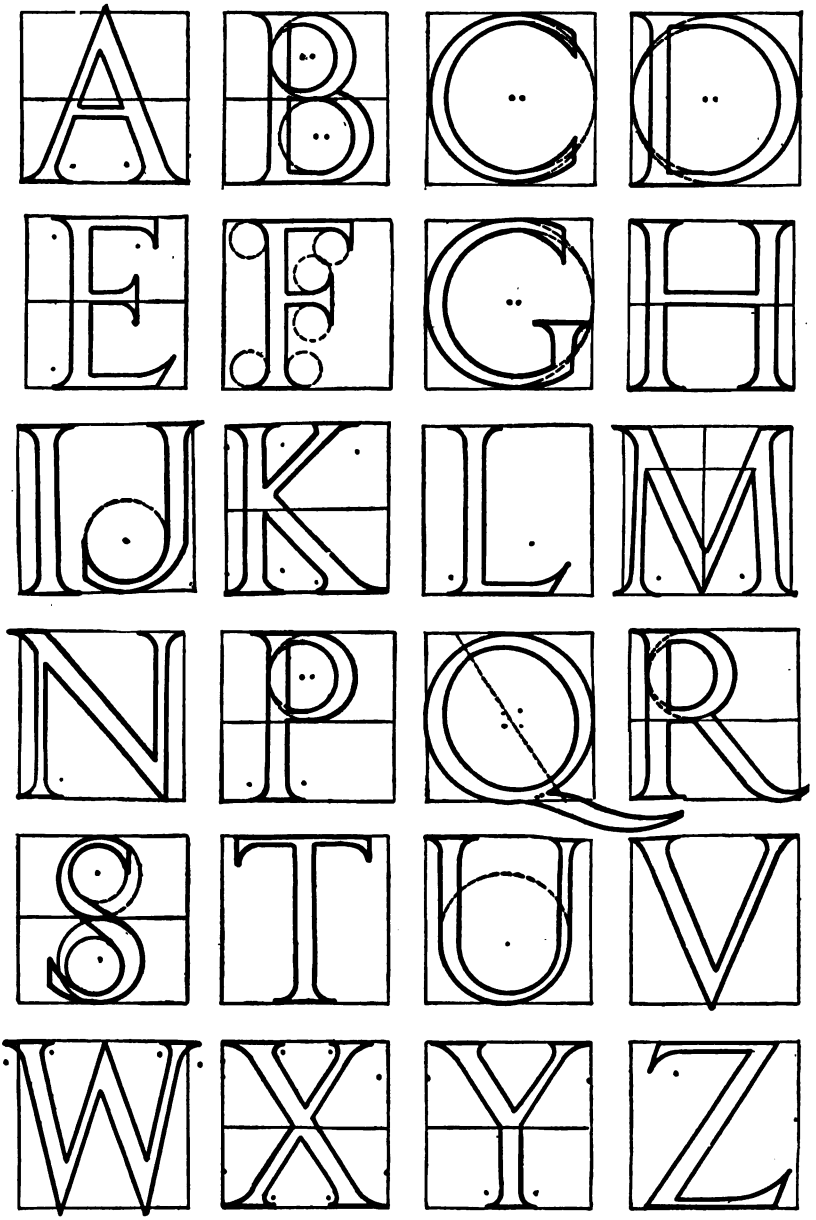

FIG. 43.—Classic Roman alphabet.

were thin and the downstrokes broad. The modern forms of the Roman alphabet differ very little from this original form. The letters are so well designed that very few modifications can be made without making the alphabet noticeably different in character.

The French, after adopting the Roman, treated the form rather freely. The English treated it with more reserve. Each nation in turn put something of its own personality into the Roman form as the style came into greater use.

In studying the Classic Roman style, Fig. 43, one notices first that the letters tend to be square in their proportions and round and full in character. This shape is generally considered the easiest to read.

Another characteristic which distinguishes the Roman style of lettering from all other styles is that it is composed of thick and thin strokes. As nearly all of the vertical strokes are downstrokes, these strokes are nearly all drawn thick. In cases where the vertical strokes are followed by downstrokes, as in **M** and **N**, the vertical strokes are drawn thin. All slanted downstrokes are thick including the one in **Z**. This letter would appear heavy and awkward if the slanted stroke were thin and the horizontal strokes thick. Slanted upstrokes are always thin. Thick strokes are not joined to one another but to thin strokes, as in **K**, **M**, and the letters containing crossbars.

The circular construction of the lobes is indicated in Fig. 43, in the letters **B**, **C**, **D**, and **G**. This figure shows the construction of each letter when accurately built up. In show-card writing, letters are not laboriously "built up" but are written freely and rapidly. The painstaking accuracy of "built up" letters is not attempted.

The location of the crossbars should be noted. If they were drawn at the middle of the height, they would have the appearance of being below the center. In **A**, which is a pointed letter, if the crossbar were drawn at the middle of the height it would appear to be above the center. For that reason the crossbar is lowered instead of raised. The following letters should be noted: **A**, **B**, **E**, **F**, **H**, **K**, **P**, **R**, **X**, and **Y**. **P** and **R** are often drawn with larger lobes than shown. In the more modern forms, **S** is usually drawn wider. The crossbar in **E** is sometimes lowered in present day work, but this should not be done

without good reasons for doing so. The construction of the serifs used in this figure is shown in **F**.

13. Construction of the Classic Roman.—Since the Classic Roman letters approach a square in their general proportions, a square may be used in constructing the letters. This square should be divided into nine equal spaces each way from top to bottom and from side to side. Each space will be equal to the thickness of a wide stroke. Fig. 43 shows how the letters fit the squares, although the squares are not shown divided into the smaller spaces. Center lines are shown in some of them. If they had been divided each way into nine smaller spaces, the center lines would have cut through the middle of the fifth space.

A, V, and W.—**A** is made the full nine spaces wide at its base. The point or apex is at the center. This should be kept in mind as the beginner usually slants the letter, causing the apex to come too far to the right, cramping the right half of the letter. The point of the letter may extend half a space above the "cap line" as shown. If this is not done, the letter appears shorter than it really is. On the other hand, this projection is so slight as to be unnoticeable in most show-card lettering, and may be ignored. In window and outdoor signs, however, this projection is seldom neglected. Sometimes the top is cut off by a curve instead of tapering to a straight point. The radius of the curve is equal to the width of one space or one-ninth of one of the sides of the square enclosing the letter. The center of the curve is set to the left of the apex of the letter and not to the right. The right edge of the broad stroke continues unbroken to its full height.

The thin strokes in such letters as **A, V,** and **W** are shown here about half as thick as the thick strokes. Sometimes they are made much thinner, but for show-card purposes one-half to one-third the thickness of the broad stroke is about the right thickness for thin strokes and crossbars. The crossbar is made four spaces above the base line or a little less than half the height of the letter.

The letters **V** and **W** are somewhat like **A** in shape, and as in **A** the points may project over the guide line. The projection is, however, at the base line instead of at the cap line.

B.—The letter **B** is narrower than the square, being about

seven spaces instead of nine spaces wide. The crossbar comes just below the fourth space, or just above the middle of the height of the letter. The center of the larger outside curve of the upper lobe is located halfway between the crossbar and the cap line, while the inside curve has a diameter the thickness of a stroke less than the outside diameter. The center of the inside curve is shifted to the left a trifle so that if the inside curve were drawn as a full circle its left rim would coincide with the left rim of the outside circle on the outside of the stem of the letter. This is clearly shown in Fig. 43. The lower lobe is quite similar to the upper lobe except that the centers of the curves are both half a space further to the right, which makes the lower lobe somewhat larger.

C, G, and D.—The curves for these letters are based on circles whose centers are half a space apart, the circles in **D** being the reverse of those in **C**. These letters are thinnest at the top and bottom. The open ends of **C** are exactly in line with each other, making **C** like a circle with part cut away by a vertical line one space to the left from the extreme edge of the circle. These open ends in both **C** and **G** are thickened at the tips. The vertical stroke of **G** is made in the second space from the right. It is one space thick, and its top level is one and a half spaces below the middle of the letter.

E and F.—**E** and **F** are narrow letters, being only four and a half spaces wide. The crossbar in each is a space shorter than the top horizontal stroke but is at the same height as in **B**. The space on the bottom horizontal stroke in **E** projects a space further than the end of the top stroke, making each horizontal stroke different in length from the others. The curves used in forming the spurs or serifs are shown in Fig. 43. A radius equal to one space or the thickness of a broad stroke is used.

H.—The letter **H** is known as a base letter, being the nearest to a square of any of the Roman letters. The letters **B, E, F, I, J, L, P,** and **S** are less than a square wide, **M** and **W** usually exceed squares, while **C, D, G, O,** and **Q** are based on full circles.

J.—The curve in **J** is made with a diameter of four spaces wide on the inside.

K.—In the more modern forms of this letter the swash is joined to the letter a little higher up, so that the broad stroke of the swash meets the thin slanted stroke rather than the vertical

stem of the letter. The meeting point is just above the center of the letter.

L.—This letter is but six and a half spaces wide. The horizontal stroke is made similar to the base of the letter **E**. The curved part is drawn with a radius equal to two spaces.

M and N.—The stem strokes of **M** slant outward half a stroke at the bottom. In **N** the stems set in one space from the sides of the square enclosing the letter. The spur at the top of the slanted stroke projects half a stroke beyond the square at the left. In some forms, the point at the bottom of the slanted stroke projects a trifle beyond the base line.

P and R.—**P** is but five spaces wide across the lobe, which is formed in much the same manner as in the letter **B**. **R** is **P** with a swash stroke added.

O and Q.—The widest part of the stroke in **O** is not at the middle of the sides of the square but at the upper and lower left corners. The slant of the axis of the oval is shown by the dotted line. In more modern types the axis is often vertical. The swash in **Q** begins one space to the right of the center and is nine spaces long. The upper edge of the swash is half a space above the base line, and the lower edge is a full space and a half below.

S and Z.—The letter **S** is formed by two circles one on top of the other. In the wider and more modern forms the upper lobe is made smaller, owing to an optical illusion which makes the upper lobe appear top-heavy if drawn the same size as the lower lobe. This difference in the size of the lobes becomes much more noticeable if a newspaper is turned upside down and the letter studied in an inverted position. The end of the top stroke stops short of the extreme limits of the circle by half a space, while the bottom stroke of the letter extends that much beyond the circle. This makes the lower part of the letter a full space wider and gives the appearance of strength to the lower lobe which has to support the upper part of the letter. For the same reason the letter **Z** is seven spaces wide at the bottom and only six and a half spaces wide at the top.

T.—**T** is a narrow letter being only seven spaces wide. The crossbar is half a space thick. The curves of the spurs are made with a radius equal in length to one space.

U.—The curve at the bottom of the letter **U** is formed by a

circle with a diameter seven spaces wide, thus making the letter the same width as **T**, not including the spurs.

X and Y.—The strokes which cross each other in the letters

FIG. 44.—Lower case Roman letters.

X and **Y** cross at the middle of the letter height, as measured at the left of the letters. The intersection is higher on the right side because of the difference in the thickness of the strokes. The vertical stroke in **Y** is drawn in the middle space of the square.

14. Lower Case Roman.—Charlemagne in the eighth century ordered all church books, which were practically the only books in common use at the time, to be rewritten in small rounding letters, a form of lettering which had been gradually developing for some time. Lettering with small letters, however, did not become universal until later. With the invention of printing came the general use of the lower case Roman, Fig. 44. The Italian craftsmen were not satisfied with the black and heavy lower case Gothic so they made smaller letters to go with the Roman. These letters became popular and still remain practically unchanged from their original form, after several centuries of use.

The first noticeable difference between the characters of capitals and small or lower case letters is the increase in the number of curved elements. A comparison of lower case **a, b, e, f, m, n,** and **t** with their respective capitals will make this quite apparent. The rule regarding the thickness of the downstrokes and the thinness of the upstrokes and crossbars applies to lower case letters as it does to capitals.

The serifs are smaller in the lower case letters. The underside of the bottom serif is straight and horizontal, but on the tips of the ascenders the serifs are sometimes made slanted or curved, as well as horizontal. The various styles of serifs should not be mixed in the same alphabet. Regardless of what style is used, it should always be uniform throughout the same alphabet. A curved or slanted serif should not be placed on the ascender of one letter when horizontal serifs are being used on all the other ascenders in that particular alphabet. To do so would make the alphabet very confusing in its appearance. Beginners should note this point carefully.

A detailed analysis of the lower case letters is not necessary here, as a close study will reveal the most important points. The curves are too small to be drawn easily with a compass. The waist line is about three-fifths as high as the full height of the letter. The rounded lobes in the lower part of the body of the letter are based on circles in most cases, the thickness of the side strokes making the inside portions oval in shape. Sometimes these lobes are drawn as ovals, thus condensing the shape somewhat. When the capitals are drawn so as to be seven spaces high instead of nine, the waist line should be about five spaces

are closed by narrow vertical strokes. The letters are dignified in appearance but are limited to the lettering found in churches and memorials, and on Christmas cards and lettering of a dignified nature.

16. Gothic.—A blacker and more spiky form of the Uncial developed farther north in what is now Germany and neighboring countries, and is known as Gothic. When the blackness predominates over the open space, that is, when the strokes are broad and heavy and the letters condensed in width, the Gothic is known as Blackletter. Gothic is usually called "Old English," Fig. 46, but strictly speaking this is not historically correct.

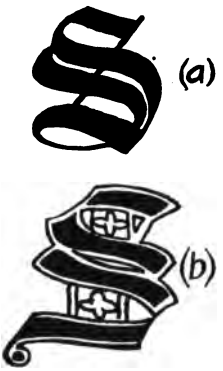

FIG. 47.—A comparison of the modern with the original forms of "Old English," S.

Before printing from type became common, penmen, largely monks, spent their time copying manuscripts. The more skilled they became at this work, the more highly they ornamented their lettering, Fig. 47. This, of course, took considerable time and space, so that eventually the need for economy in time and materials demanded lower case forms.

Gothic style has always contained lower case letters. It was never the intention to use Gothic capitals throughout an entire word, nor should they ever be used except for the initial letter. This is one of the differences between Gothic and Classic Roman and should always be kept in mind since it is a very common mistake among beginners to letter a whole word in Gothic capitals. When the Roman style is used, however, all the letters may be capitals.

In Fig. 48 three examples are shown of lower case letters. Fig. 48a represents an early and rounded form; Fig. 48b a Gothic lower case; and Fig. 48c a modern variation of Gothic Blackletter.

Gothic letters have the same spirit as Gothic architecture, a style of architecture running to vertical lines, tall spires, and pointed arches. They both originated at the same period in history and differ greatly from the Roman and the Greek forms. The Gothic style was an attempt to break away from the Roman

FIG. 48.—Development of lower case forms of lettering.

style, which was as true of lettering as it was of architecture. Gothic lettering is still used in the localities where it originated; for example, Germany. Elsewhere its use has become limited, being confined mostly to lettering of a formal and dignified nature.

The Gothic style of lettering substituted curved, shaded strokes for heavy straight strokes wherever it was possible to do so. It should be noted also that certain letters, such as **H, M, N, W,** and **Y,** are patterned to a marked degree after the Roman lower case forms for these letters.

The Gothic capitals, Fig. 46, like the Roman, approach a square in their proportions. Some early styles are quite angular in the character of the strokes, while later styles are more

open and rounded. Cymas, half cymas, and crescents are used in nearly every letter. **A** is sometimes made with the thick stem vertical. **H** and **Y** sometimes resemble the Roman capitals instead of lower case, as in this figure. Diamond shaped tips, like those on the lower ends of the stems, are often used on the top ends in place of the points which are shown in the letters **h** and **l**. Lower case **g** and **y** are often made with wavy descenders. Lower case **d** should never be drawn with a vertical ascender. The descenders in lower case **h** may be shortened to the base line and made similar to **n**. In both capital and lower case the pen is held at an angle so that the downstrokes are wide.

17. "Old English."—During the seventeenth century the Gothic style became popular with English printers, which accounts for the term "Old English" being applied to this style of lettering. The modern "Old English" has a variety of forms, but they are all based on the original Gothic form. In some variations of this style the letters are made long, slender, and graceful, while in other forms the letters are made wide and full with heavy strokes. The original "Old English" was highly ornamented and difficult to read. In Fig. 47 a comparison is made between an elaborate "Old English" **S** and its modern successor. The **S** in Fig. 46 differs still more in the number and character of the hairline strokes. The modern forms of "Old English" are quite simplified, and this is particularly true of the forms used in show-card writing which must be adapted to round writing pens, marking pens, and brushes.

Gothic or "Old English" is quite suited to cards where dignity and refinement are desired, but the style is not appropriate for extremely wide use and becomes tiresome when overdone. These and similar styles have been misused by card writers until quite recently. Formerly, whenever a particularly attractive card was ordered, the card writer lettered it in "Old English." Present day card writers are more versatile and are familiar enough with the general principles of art and design to be able to make attractive cards in any of the popular styles of lettering.

18. Gothic (so-called).—When single stroke letters are used and the serifs omitted, giving the letter a simple and plain outline, the style is known by printers and draftsmen as "Gothic." The lettering in Figs. 49 and 50 is done in "Gothic."

FIG. 49.—"Gothic" capital letters and their construction.

FIG. 50.—"Gothic" lower case letters and their construction.

This name is not strictly correct as the historical Gothic is quite different. The term "Egyptian" is also applied to single stroke Roman letters although this name is of no particular his-

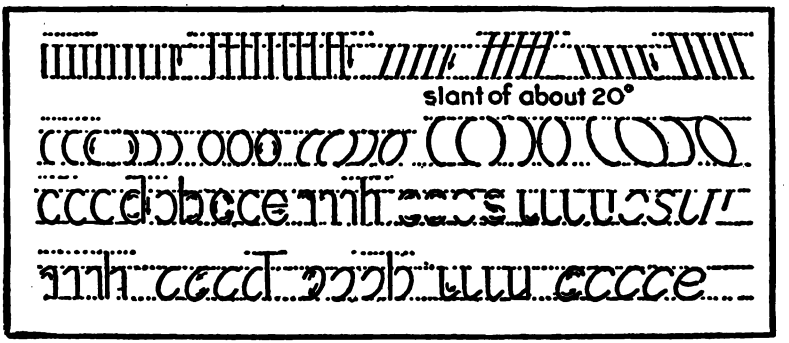

FIG. 51.—Practice strokes for "Gothic" letters.

torical significance. A set of practice strokes for so-called Gothic letters is given in Fig. 51.

19. Early English Roman.—Early English forms of the Roman were somewhat clumsy at first. England was too far

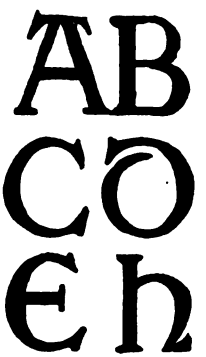

FIG. 52.—Early English forms of Roman letters.

from Rome to feel the full strength of Roman influence, so the letters were partly imitations of Classic Roman and partly inventions of English craftsmen who were uncultured and unaccustomed to such tasks. Selected letters from an early and quaint though somewhat clumsy form of the Roman style are shown in Fig. 52. The number and character of serifs should

ABEFKMRS

GERMAN

ABEFKMRS

ITALIAN

FIG. 53.—A comparison of two Renaissance styles of lettering.

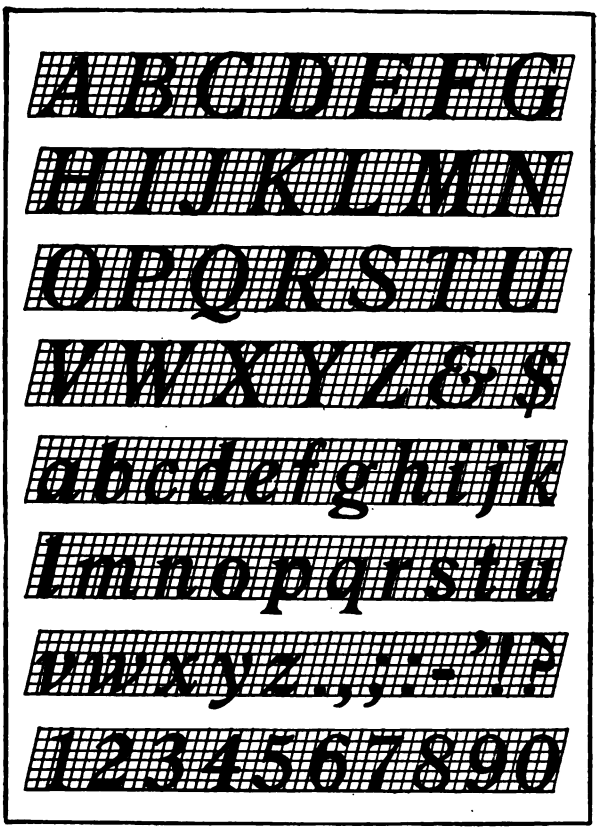

FIG. 54.—Italic alphabet.

be noticed, also the similarity of the letters to the lower case forms in **D**, **E**, and **H**.

20. Renaissance.—Following the invention of printing from type, there was a return from the ornamented Gothic to the simpler forms of the Roman. These forms are known as Renaissance styles, having been developed during that period in history. Several letters from two Renaissance styles are shown in Fig. 53. The German Renaissance is the more delicate and uses longer serifs. The Italian style is the more sturdy. Comparison should be made in both styles of the width of **A**, the

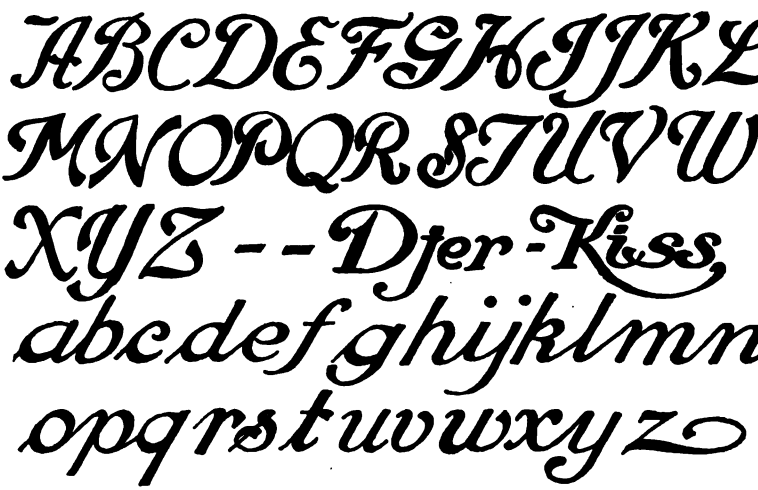

FIG. 55.—Script alphabet.

lobes in **B**, the crossbars and widths of **E** and **F**, the slanted strokes in **K**, the serifs, noting **M** in particular, the swash in **R**, and the general character of **S**.

21. Italic and Script.—The Italic, Fig. 54, is simply the Roman somewhat slanted. The Italian workmen found this style easier and speedier than the upright form. It gradually took on certain graceful touches, characteristic of the Italian spirit, until it differed enough from the slanted Roman alphabet to become a style of its own. Later, this form still further approached the nature of handwriting and became known as Script. Italic has grace, dignity, and beauty characteristic of Italian workmanship, while Script is often little more than an imitation of handwriting.

There is little difference between the Italic shown, Fig. 54, and a slanted Roman. In the lower case **a** takes a new form, resembling the hand written **a.** The five descenders found in this alphabet all differ from the lower case Roman form shown in Fig. 44, page 49. The lower case ovals in the letters **b, d, g, p,** and **q** may be drawn egg-shaped, making the top rather pointed but leaving the lower curve well rounded.

Script, Fig. 55, resembles handwriting and encourages the use of flourishes and graceful curves. These two slanted styles, Italic and Script, are usually made at an angle of 50 to 88 degrees and take on a certain dignity as they approach the vertical. The flourishes and the tendency to resemble Italics should be noted. The use of Script in the lettering of a trade-mark for a brand of toilet articles is shown in the figure.

CHAPTER III

MODERN SHOW-CARD ALPHABETS

"From a common basic principle have been evolved four different styles . . . upon which are variously constructed all the letter styles . . . in common use."
Wm. Hugh Gordon.

22. Show-card Styles of Lettering.—The styles of lettering used in writing show cards must meet certain requirements. They must be simple so that they may be easily read and quickly made. It is a common mistake with most beginners to make letters and cards too fancy. If less attention is given to fanciness and more to the layout of the lettering, the card will be easier to read and far more effective in its results. The letters must also be of such a character as to fit the requirements of the tools used. The fact should not be lost sight of that certain styles of lettering are fitted best for certain styles of pens and brushes.

If the beginner desires to learn to make simple cards in the least possible time, he should confine his efforts to some certain popular style and to one type of tools. This will limit the range of his skill but will concentrate his efforts so that he will be able to get an early start in selling his work. It is much better, however, to learn several good styles of lettering and to become well acquainted with the various types of brushes and pens. When this is done, any kind of work may be undertaken and successfully handled.

23. Single-stroke and Accented Stroke Styles.—The letters used in show-card writing may be divided into two styles, basing the classification upon the construction of the strokes. One style is known as the single-stroke style, Fig. 56, since each stroke is made with one sweep of the brush or pen. This does not mean that the entire letter is made in a single movement of the hand but that the width of the stroke equals the width of the brush. The other style of lettering, the accented style, requires two or more sweeps of the brush or pen, Fig. 61, page 69; one sweep

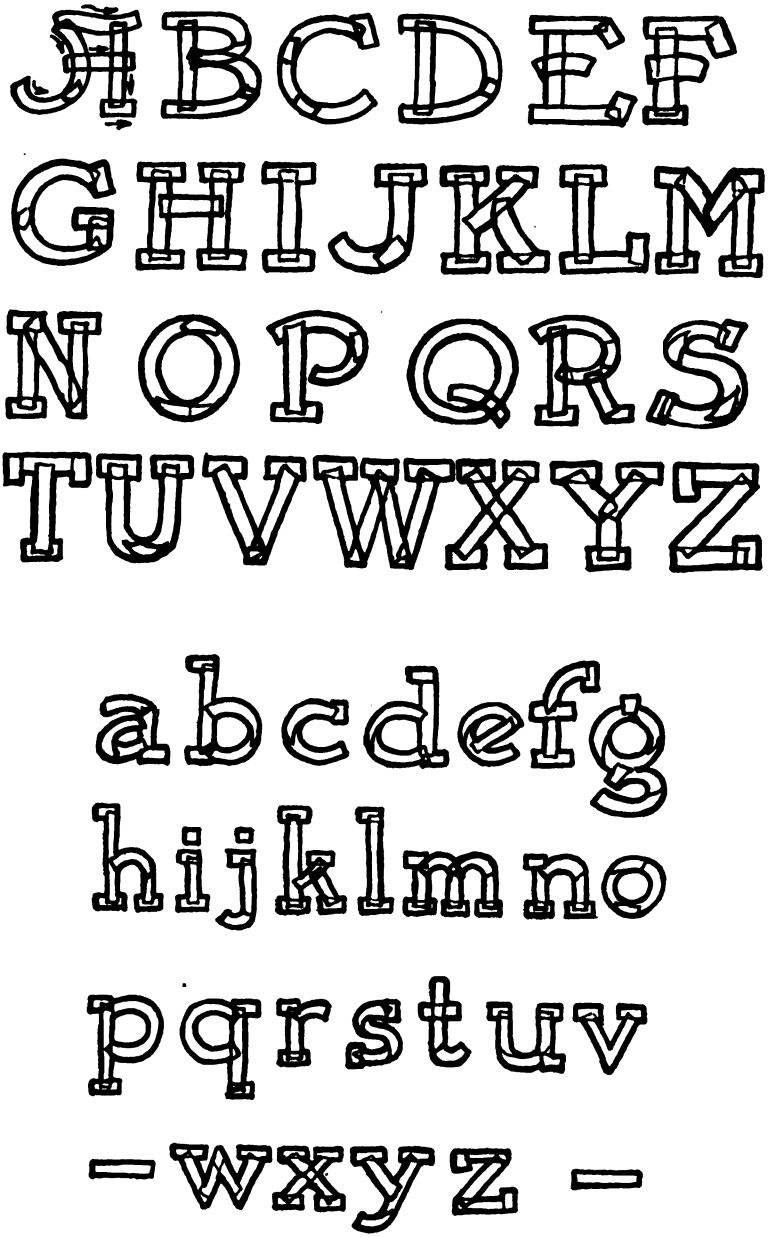

FIG. 56.—Single-stroke brush alphabet with serifs.

forms the outer edge of the stroke, and the other forms the inner edge. If any area still remains uncolored on the face of the stroke, another stroke is necessary. The capital **B**, Fig. 56, should be compared with the capital **B**, Fig. 61. Capital **B**, Fig. 56, is a single-stroke letter, all the strokes being of the same width as the brush used. One downward sweep of the brush forms the stem. A curved stroke, made from left to right at the

FIG. 57.—Correct position of brush for single-stroke lettering.

top of the stem, forms the top of the lobe. Another curved stroke running from left to right forms the waist line stroke and completes the upper lobe. The curves are made to overlap at the ends. This is also true of the straight lines. The lower lobe is made in the same way. Five strokes of the brush complete the letter. The correct position for the brush is shown in Fig. 57.

In capital **B**, Fig. 61, the stem is made with two strokes, so that its width is twice that of the pen used. The upper serif and the outer outline of the upper lobe are formed with one long curved sweep of the pen. A short curved stroke, following the dotted line in the direction the arrow is pointing, completes the

FIG. 58.—Single-stroke brush alphabet.

upper lobe. The lower lobe is made in the same manner. This letter requires six strokes, instead of five, as in the case of the single-stroke style. Since single-stroke letters usually require fewer strokes they are used a great deal. The single-stroke style is difficult to learn as the brush must be twirled slightly in the fingers when making curved strokes. This style is generally made with a brush, and since it is a brush letter not so much painstaking accuracy is given to the work. Its value lies in the speed with which a large amount of plain work can be done.

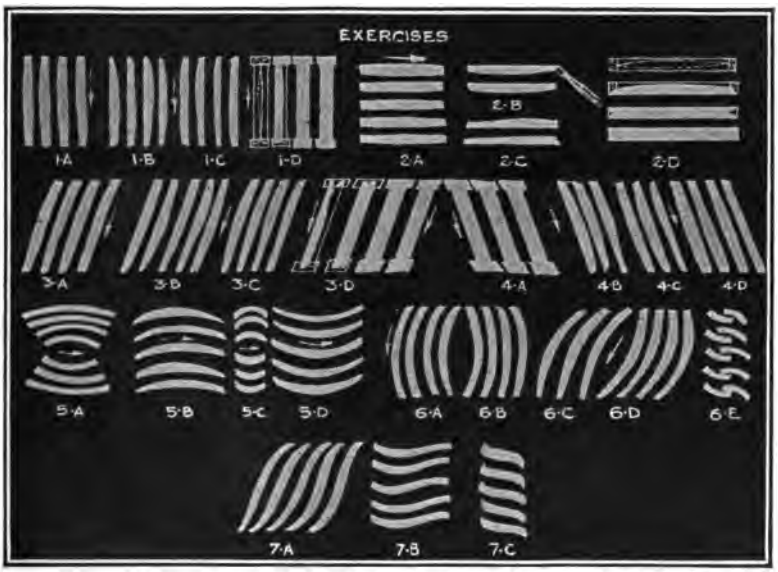

FIG. 59.—Exercises for practice in making various letter strokes.

Single-stroke letters may be made with or without serifs. They may be made also with a marking pen but not so easily as with a brush. Fig. 56 shows each short stroke outlined and also how the strokes overlap. When the ends of curved strokes overlap, as in **G**, the brush need be twirled but slightly, as the overlapping of the strokes will give the curve its fullness. The brush alphabet, Fig. 58, is a one-stroke alphabet with serifs omitted.

24. Four Classes of Lettering Styles.—Letters may be classified according to their principal styles. This classification divides all styles of lettering into four groups: single-stroke letters,

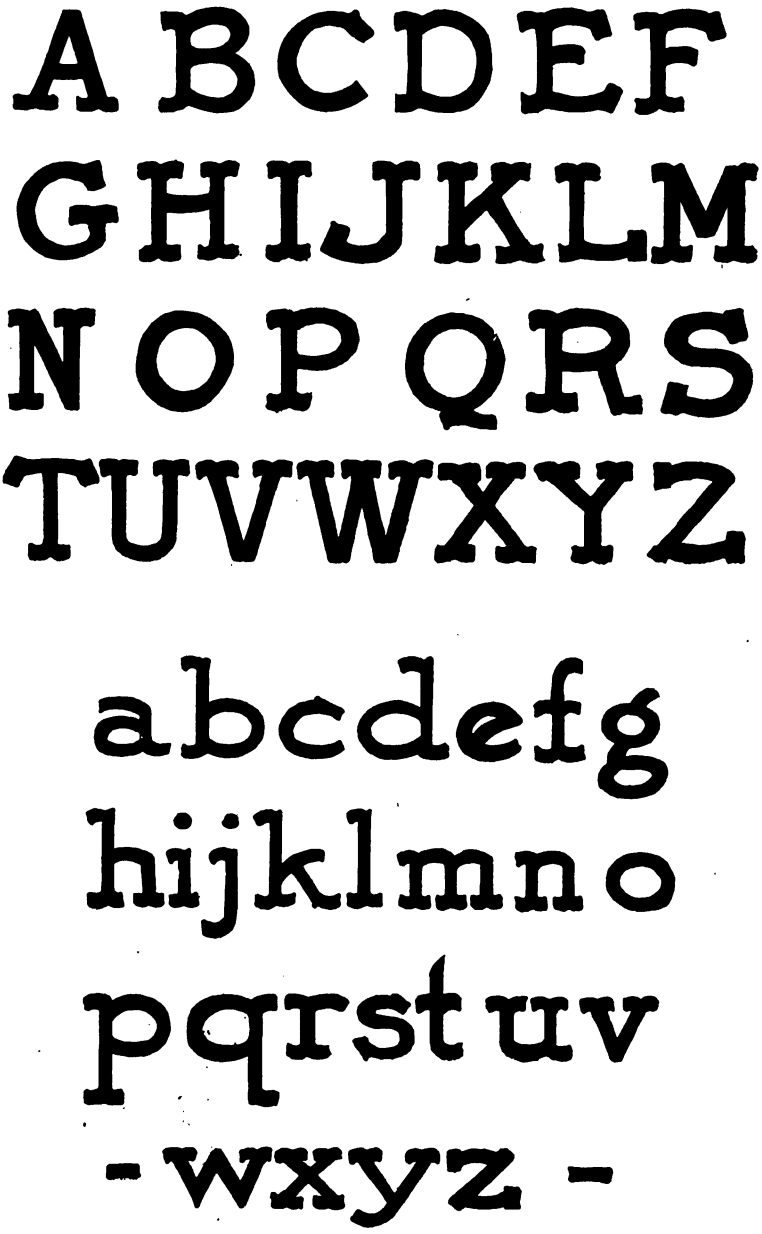

FIG. 60.—Tuscan alphabet.

Fig. 58; Roman letters, Figs. 61 and 62; Gothic or "Old English" letters, Fig. 65, page 74; and slanted letters, Fig. 54. In the first group the so-called "Gothic" letters are placed. These are plain, simple, single-stroke letters with or without serifs. The Roman letters come in the second group and differ from the first group in that they are composed of thick and thin strokes. In the third group the true historical Gothic letters and the styles derived from them are placed. These styles are known by various names, such as Gothic, "Old English," Church, Text, and other names. They are not extensively used in show-card writing as they are more difficult to read than the other and more popular styles. The fourth group includes all slanted styles such as Italic and Script letters. By keeping these four groups in mind there

FIG. 63.—Announcement lettered in Roman pen letters.

should be no trouble in remembering all the various styles in which show-card letters are made. All styles are simply modifications of these four groups. Exercises for drawing the strokes used in these four classes of lettering styles are given in Fig. 59. If these exercises are practiced daily, it will be easier to make the various styles of lettering.

25. Tuscan Style.—The Tuscan, Fig. 60, is a single-stroke style which uses curved serifs and curved horizontal lines. It is used most for display lines composed of capitals. It is not so popular now as formerly, but its use is still quite common. The letters are in reality the same as any single-stroke style with the exception of the serifs which are curved in both directions from the stems, giving the alphabet its individuality. If the serifs were changed to some other style, the whole nature of the alphabet would be changed. This is true of almost all styles. It follows, then, that if one is familiar with the form of each letter in the elementary style of lettering and is also familiar with three

or four different kinds of serifs, three or four different styles of alphabets may be made. Care should be taken not to mix two styles of serifs in one alphabet, or a jumbled and confused appearance will result.

26. Roman Style.—The construction of Roman capitals and lower case letters is shown in Figs. 61 and 62. The capitals when finished are also shown and a series of numerals with the lower case letters. These letters are constructed with a pen, the accented strokes requiring two movements or strokes to give them their full width. When these letters are made with a brush, the same method is used and the strokes drawn in the same order as indicated. Border lines, made with ruling pens, are drawn around these figures. A dignified announcement card lettered in Roman with an appropriate border is shown in Fig. 63.

The Roman style does not differ greatly from the single-stroke style except in one important particular,—the letters are composed of thick and thin strokes. The Roman style is made usually with serifs. Fig. 64 shows a rapid form of the Roman style in which the accented strokes are made with one movement of the brush, resulting in considerable saving of time. The serifs on the lower case letters are slanted on the upper side and join the side of the stems on the under-side. They may be drawn rounding into the stem on the under-side instead of being straight as shown here. The serifs in the capitals are drawn horizontal with the under-sides tapering into the stems from both sides. Cymas are used for crossbars in the letters **A, E, F,** and **H,** and curved lines are often substituted for the usual straight lines, as in **B, D, E, F, P,** and **T.** The serifs are usually drawn last when the ink is low on the pen or the color low in the brush. This results in a sharper spur. Considerable practice is necessary to learn the knack of drawing serifs quickly and accurately.

27. Gothic or Old English Style.—The Gothic or "Old English" style, Fig. 65, has been simplified so that it may be made rapidly with either a pen or a brush. The pen is held at the same angle as when making the Italic. Only one form of Gothic lettering is given here as the style is not easily read. Single-stroke, Roman, and other styles are more often used.

28. Italic Style.—The Italic shown in Fig. 66 is a single-stroke letter made with a marking pen or a Soennecken pen. It may also be drawn with a brush. A curve, as in **C,** is not

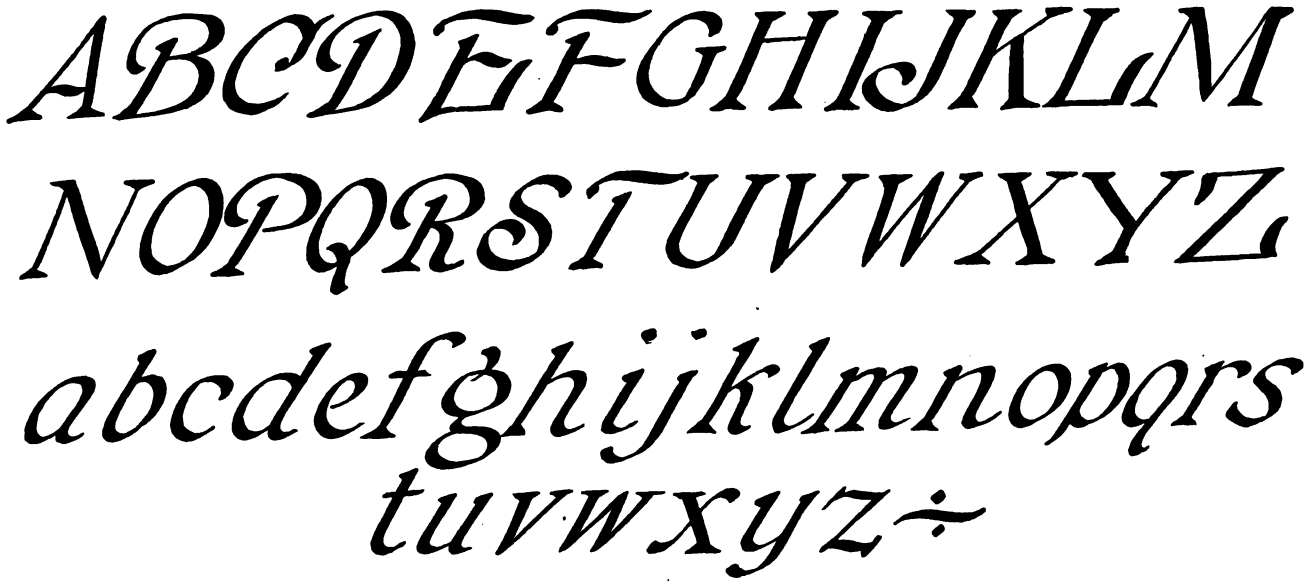

FIG. 66.—Italic alphabet for either brush or pen.

made with one long circular sweep of the pen as this would require pushing the pen over part of the curve. The curve is made by making two crescent shaped strokes with their tips touching. The pen should be kept at the same angle, thereby forming the thick and thin portions of the stroke without changing the position of the hand. The angle at which to hold the pen is shown in Fig. 67.

FIG. 67.—Correct position of round writing pen for accented slant lettering.

A single-stroke brush style of the Italic is shown in Fig. 68. The strokes are not accented but are of uniform weight throughout the letter. This form is very plain and simple and is really only a slanted form of the elementary style of lettering with a few changes which make it more easily drawn with a brush. The order and direction of each stroke are indicated and should be carefully noted.

29. Script Style.—Script, Fig. 69, is made in the same manner as Italic, but it is a freer and more rounded style. Both of these slanted forms of lettering can be made faster usually than the vertical styles as they more closely resemble hand

FIG. 68.—Single-stroke brush Italic alphabet.

FIG. 69.—Single-stroke Script alphabet.

writing. All styles of show-card lettering are more or less written off instead of being drawn laboriously as in sign paint-

FIG. 70.—A fancy form of Script lettering.

ing or commercial art. Slanted styles are often used in the body of a card and vertical letters in the headlines. The con-

FIG. 71.—Correct position of rigger brush for Script lettering.

trast thus obtained sets the card off, improves its appearance, and tends to make the reading easier.

A more elaborate form of Script is shown in Fig. 70. This

may be used for headlines, trademarks, and where plain Italic style would be less appropriate. The position of the brush in drawing letters of this style is shown in Fig. 71. In this figure a rigger brush is being used to outline the letters which are

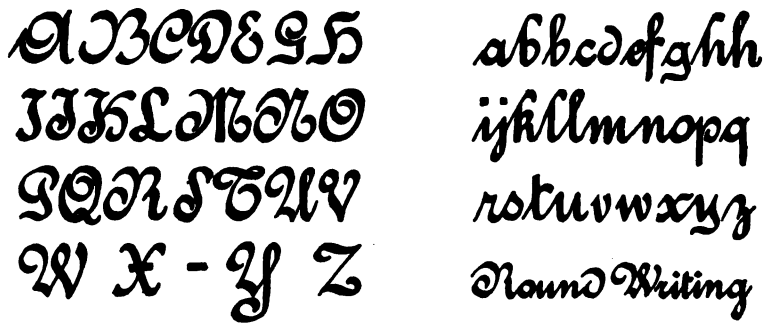

FIG. 72.—Soennecken or round writing pen letters.

to be filled in later. A wider brush may be used for filling in between the outline strokes.

The round writing style, Fig. 72, has the freedom of Script, can be drawn very rapidly, and is used for lettering diplomas,

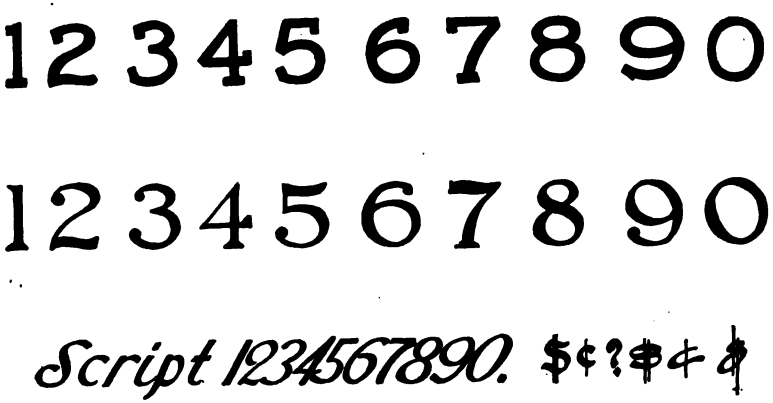

FIG. 73.—Three popular styles of numerals.

certificates, and official papers. Soennecken or round writing pens are used when the letters are to be small and a marking pen when the letters are to be large.

30. Numerals.—Three styles of numerals which may be drawn with pens are shown in Fig. 73. The square serif single-

stroke numerals are adapted for square pens of the Spoonbill or Speedball type. The accented and Script styles may be made with either a round writing pen or a Speedball pen turned upside down. Several other styles made with a Spoonbill pen are shown in Fig. 74. Numerals may be extended or condensed as well as drawn in the widths shown in these figures. Four brush styles are shown in Figs. 75 and 76. The first two are plain and spurred styles of single-stroke numerals, indicating the order and direction of each brush stroke. The second pair

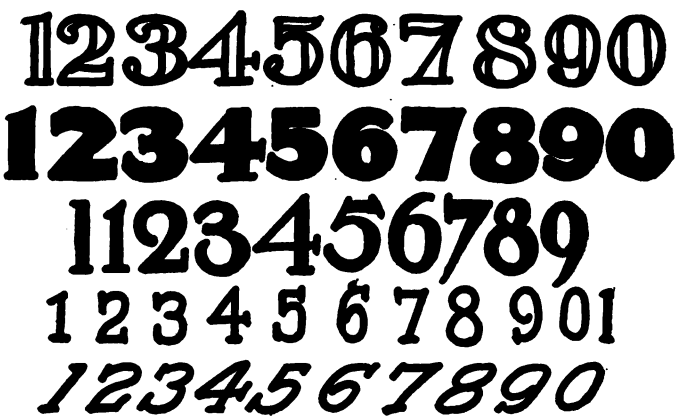

FIG. 74.—Pen numerals.

of numerals is drawn with accented strokes in both vertical and slanted forms. The strokes for these numerals are numbered and their direction indicated by arrows. Price tickets containing both numerals and letters are shown in Fig. 77.

31. Direction and Order of Strokes.—In making any letter all vertical lines are drawn from the top downward, and horizontal lines from left to right. This applies to curved lines as well as to straight lines. The strokes should be made in a regular order. The stem should be made first, then the main strokes of the remainder of the letter, then the crossbars. The serifs are drawn last usually, unless they are made a part of the stroke instead of being drawn separately.

32. Modifications.—There are two ways in which letters may be modified. One way is to alter the shape of the letter as a

whole or the shape of any of its elements. The other way is to alter the finish of the letter. The first modification, that of alterations in the letter form, is accomplished in different

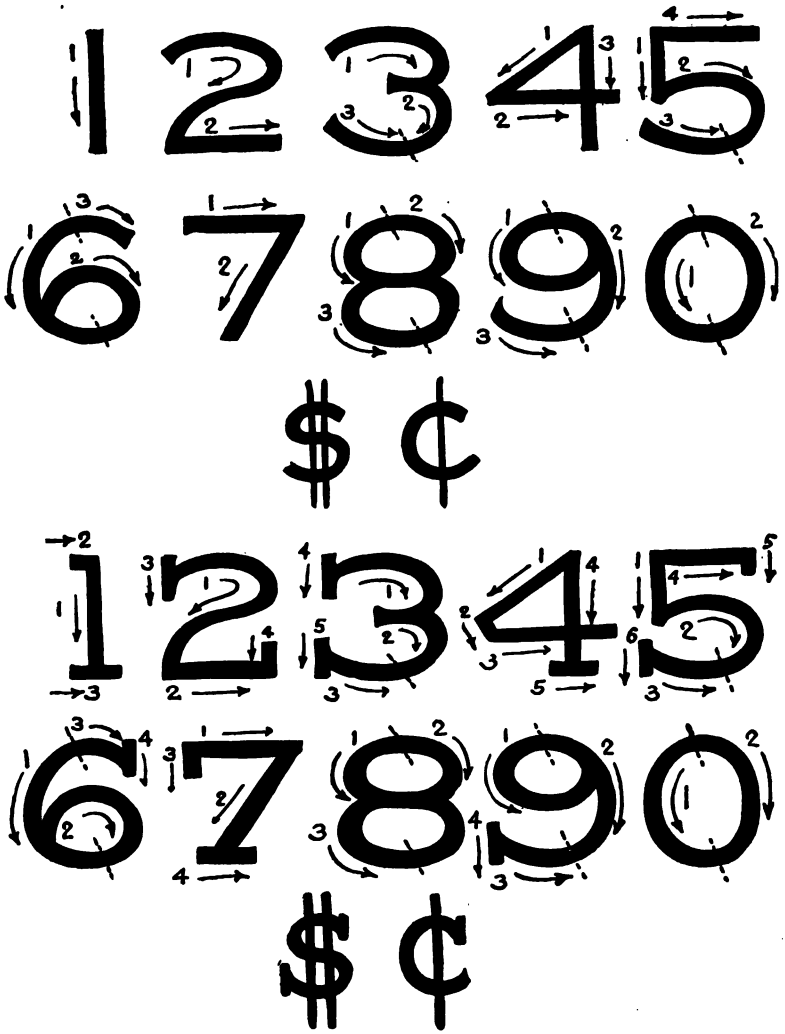

FIG. 75.—Construction of single-stroke numerals, with and without spurs.

ways, such as, extending or condensing the width of the letter, lengthening the descenders, raising the ascenders, or by changing the form or shape of the letter so as to change its appear-

ance completely. The second modification, that of alterations in the letter finish, is made by means of changes in the serifs or in the decorating and embellishing of the letters themselves.

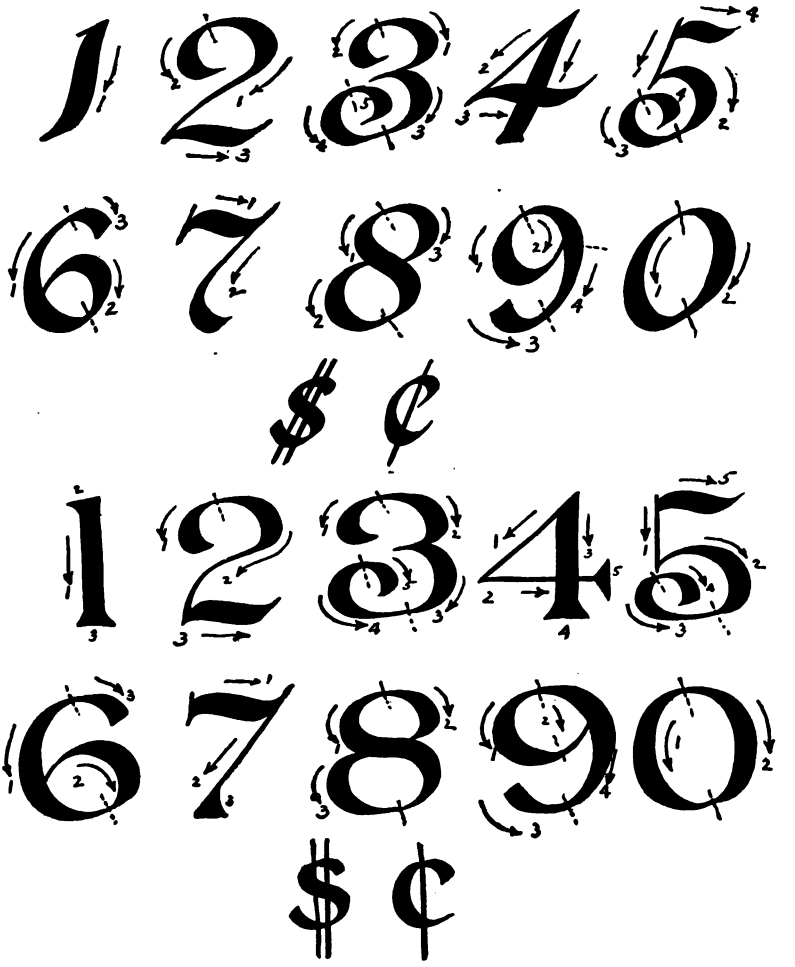

FIG. 76.—Construction of accented stroke numerals, both slanted and vertical.

Modifying Letter Forms.—The elementary alphabet is the basis for practically all other alphabets. Any other alphabet is the result of modifying this original alphabet in some way or other. One of the most common modified forms of the elementary alphabet and one often learned by beginners is that

in which the rounded shapes of the letters are changed into square shapes. This form is called block lettering, Fig. 78. It gets its name from the fact that the letters are blocked off so as to fill a set of small squares. For instance, if blocked letters one and a quarter inches in height are to be made, six guide lines, each a quarter of an inch apart, should be ruled. This makes five spaces, each a quarter of an inch high. Vertical lines should next be ruled in a quarter of an inch apart. The space in which the letters are to be drawn will then be made up of small squares. Each stroke should be as

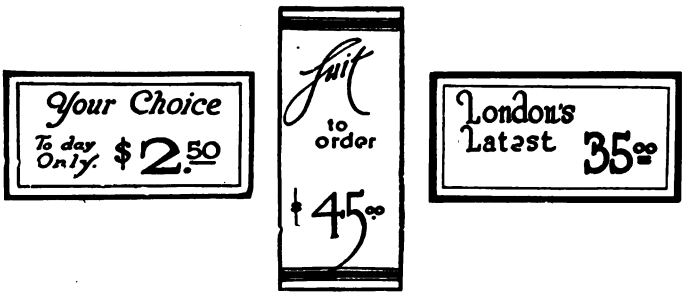

FIG. 77.—Price tickets.

wide as one of these spaces. The letters will all be five spaces high and in most cases four spaces wide. Those which originally were curved in shape should be drawn with the corners beveled. This style of letter is probably the simplest form known. The entire process is quite mechanical as no particular skill is necessary. A spurred form of block lettering is shown in Fig. 79. This is often used by painters in making outdoor signs.

Another variation is that of changing the width of the letters. This is quite common in show-card styles of lettering. The letters may be condensed or extended, Fig. 80, an advantage of hand lettering over printers' type. This variation improves the spacing of the letters in the word and also fits the words to the length of the line they are to occupy. Plain one-stroke letters are often drawn rather condensed on show cards, the width of the entire letter sometimes being less than three strokes. In this condensed style the curved strokes are more difficult to make than when they are full and extended in shape.

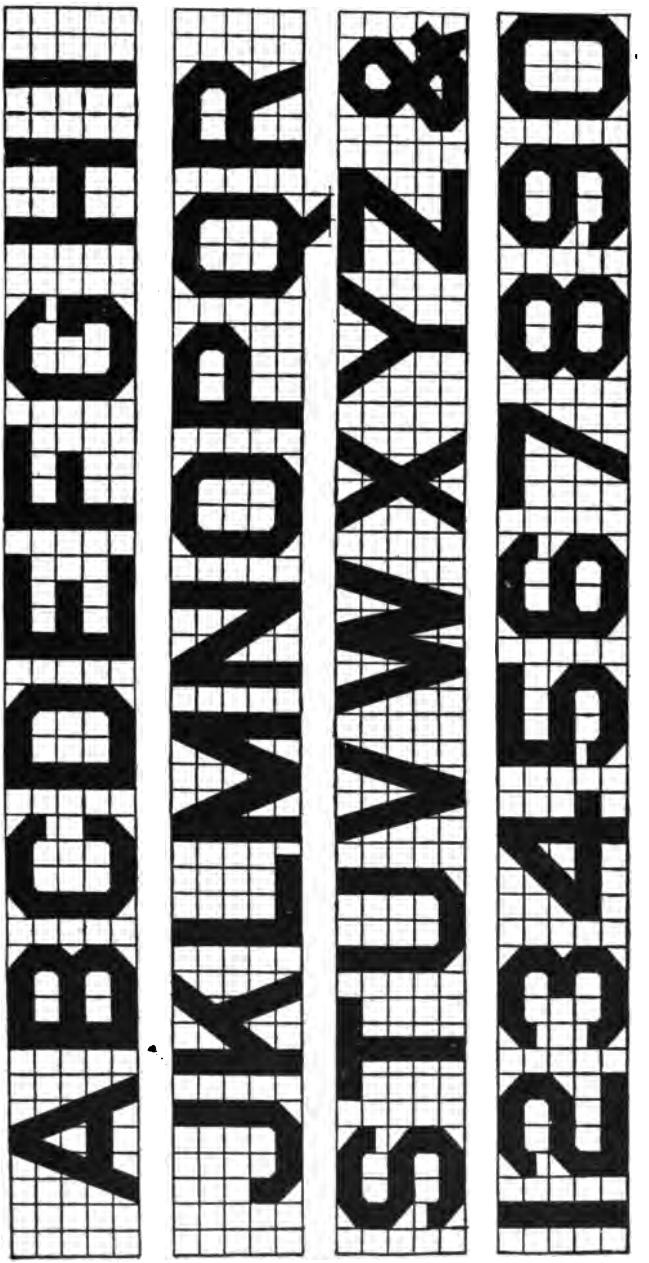

FIG. 78.—Plain block letters.

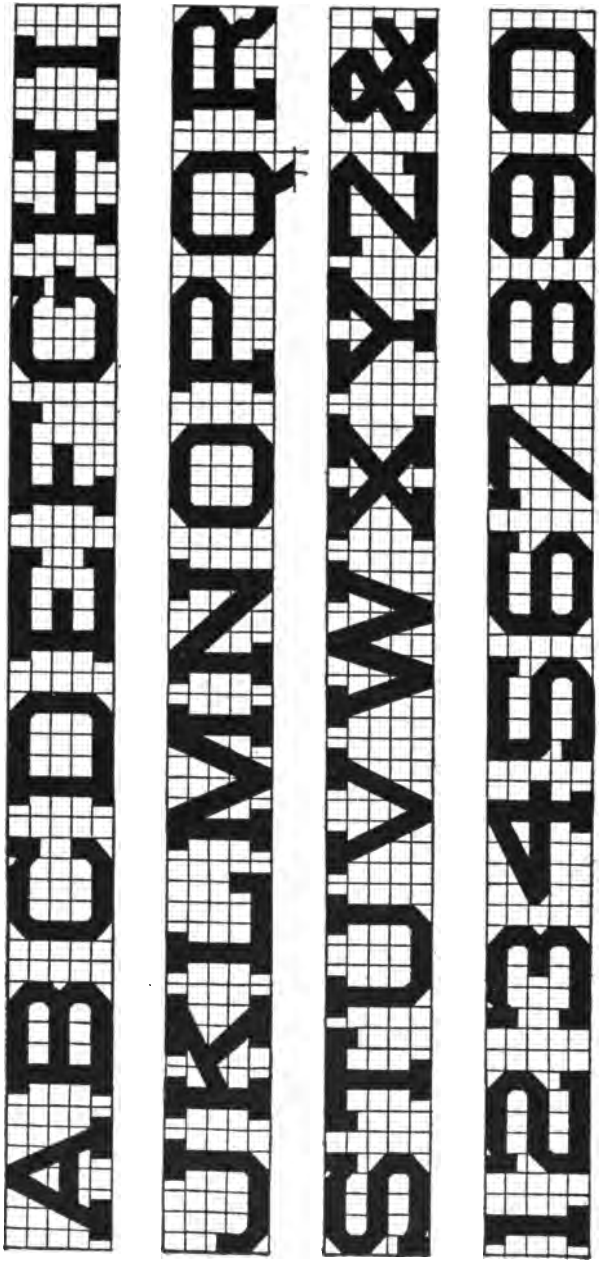

Fig. 79.—Full block letters.

There are other modifications in the forms of letters which may be used if harmonious. The ascenders and descenders

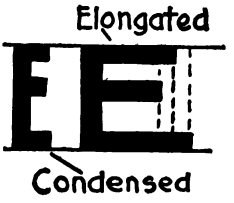

FIG. 80. — Condensed and extended forms of letters.

may be lengthened, Fig. 81. This is usually done by drawing an extra guide line above the "cap" line and another beneath

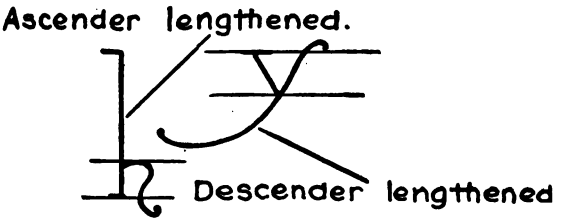

FIG. 81.—Stem variations.

the drop line. For instance, if the waist line is two-thirds of the letter height, the line may be added an extra space

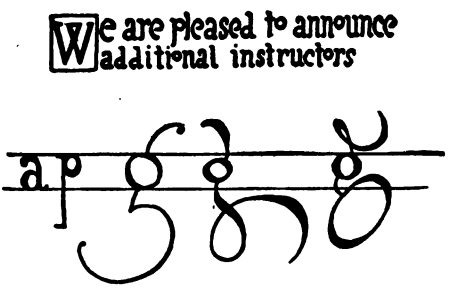

FIG. 82.—Lobe variations.

above the cap line so as to make the ascenders twice as high as the body part of the lower case letters. A similar extension may be made to the descenders. For variety, an alphabet

might be made with the descenders lengthened and the ascenders left their usual height, or vice versa.

The lobes of the letters may also be modified in many ways. The two-line announcement in Fig. 82 is made up of con-

FIG. 83.—High and low crossbars.

densed pen-drawn letters with the lobes of **a, d, o,** and **p** changed to small circles. These simple changes make a decided change in the appearance of the lettering. In this figure is included a number of variations in the lobe of the letter **g.**

FIG. 84.—Cyma crossbar.

This particular letter offers many opportunities for clever changes in its size and shape.

In letters which contain crossbars, the position of the bars may be made higher or lower than customary, Fig. 83. Sometimes the

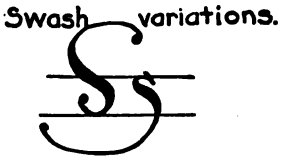

FIG. 85.—Swash variations.

crossbar is changed to a cyma, Fig. 84, and in certain styles of letters the crossbar is slanted in lower case **e.** Modifications of the swash strokes, Fig. 85, may be treated quite freely, especially when these strokes are near either extremity of a word.

In changing the finish of a letter the first principle to be kept in mind is that a change in the finish requires every

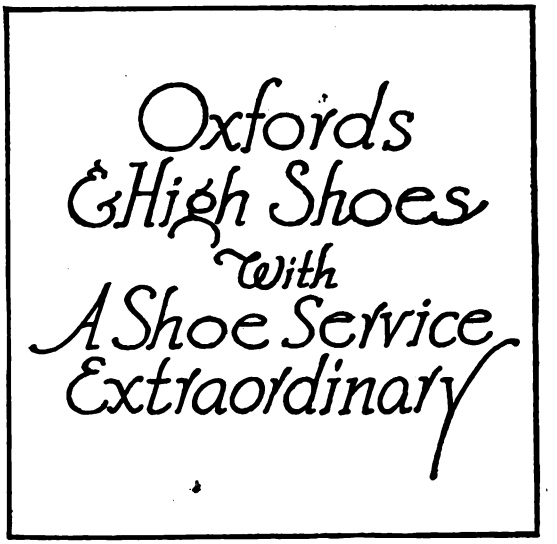

FIG. 86.—Light-face letters.

FIG. 87.—Bold-face or poster letters.

other similar letter to be changed likewise if harmony is to be preserved. This applies only to variations in the finish and not to variations in the forms or shapes of letters. In modifying letter forms, such as was done in making small lobes in Fig. 82, it is not essential that all rounded letters be changed. But when the finish of a letter is modified, this modification must be carried out through the entire alphabet. For example, the strokes may be made thick and thin as in the Roman letters, Fig. 61, or kept to a uniform thickness as in the single-stroke letters, Fig. 83. Whichever is done, the change must be made through-

FIG. 88.—Plain accented letters without serifs.

out the alphabet. Roman letters should not be mixed in with single-stroke letters. The same rule applies in carrying out one style of serifs throughout an alphabet.

There are other modifications to the stroke than those found in the Roman and single-stroke styles of letters. When the face of the letter is light, the style is called light-face. An example of light-face lettering is to be found in the shoe advertisement in Fig. 86. When the face is heavy, it is known as bold-face. An entire card done in bold-face or poster letters is shown in the clothing card, Fig. 87.

Another and perhaps the simplest and most common way of changing the finish of a letter is that of changing the style of serif. The serifs should all be of the same style throughout the alphabet. This point should not be overlooked. In beginner's

work one sometimes finds two or even three different kinds of serifs in the same alphabet. If a slanting serif is selected for the tips of the ascenders, letters with horizontal serifs should not be used. The serifs at the base of the letters are usually kept horizontal, however, regardless of the way the serifs on the ascenders are made.

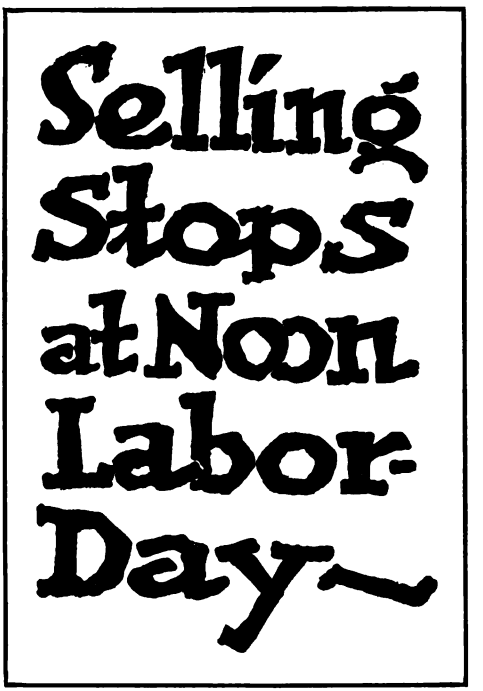

FIG. 89.—An unusual announcement card in which serifs with square ends are used.

Serifs may be made in a number of different styles, long, short, wavy, turned inward, outward, with square, rounded, or pointed ends, the inside angle where they join the stems rounded or left sharp, or the letters may be made, as in the "Room for Rent" sign, Fig. 88, with the serifs omitted altogether. In the lettered Labor Day announcement, shown in Fig. 89, the serifs are made heavy and with square tips. A pointed style of serif is shown in the Roman brush or pen alphabet, Fig. 61. The Tuscan letters, Fig. 60, are examples of curved serifs. In the

Spoonbill engrossing alphabet, Fig. 90, the letters are shown with serifs turned both inward and outward. Round, blunt serifs are used in the Roman letters of Fig. 61. The full block

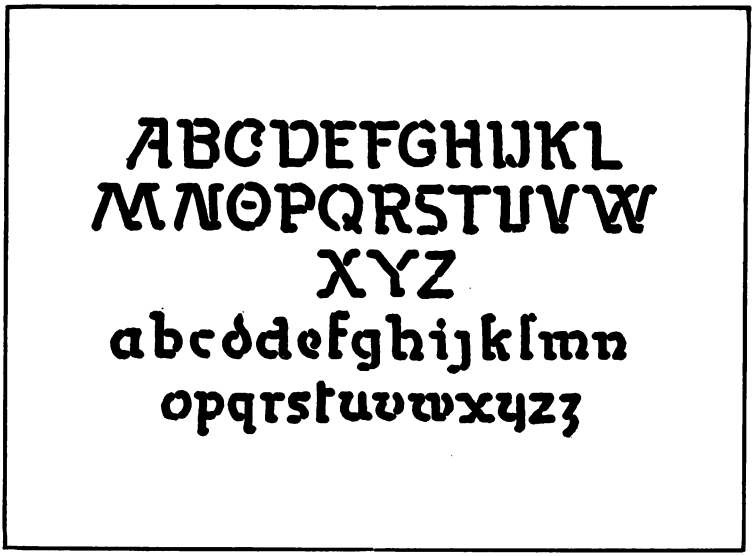

FIG. 90.—Pen alphabet with serifs turned both inward and outward.

letters, Fig. 79, are examples of letters with the angle left sharp at the intersection of the stem and serif.

Shading and Other Decorating.—Card writing inherited cer-

FIG. 91.—Drop shading.

tain characteristics from sign painting, one of which is shading, Fig. 91. It is, however, a branch of commercial art and should be judged by the standards of commercial art rather than those common to the painting of signs. It is a fundamental law, maintained in applied art, that imitations are always bad taste. Interior decorators, for example, consider linoleum floor covering

as bad taste when the patterns imitate hardwood floors, although they consider patterns plainly of linoleum character quite proper. Architects likewise consider concrete houses in good taste as long

FIG. 92.—A convention booth with lettering embellished by outline relief in the large sign overhead.

as they imitate no other material than concrete. Judged by these same standards it is not good taste to imitate shadows underneath lettering, since show-card paints do not cast shadows

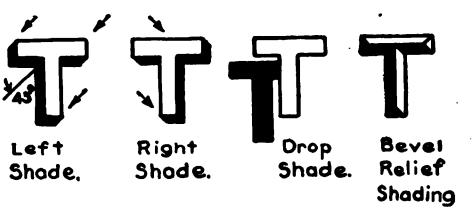

FIG. 93.—Four different methods of shading.

like letters cut from stone. The practice of shading is not so widely followed as it was formerly. Outlines around the letters, Fig. 92, are quite proper, and are not only easier for the be-

ginner to make, but they achieve the same result as shading,—that of adding emphasis to the letter or word. Four different methods of shading are illustrated in Fig. 93, the left, right, drop, and bevel relief. Although only a few letters are illustrated, the principles are shown clearly and simply so that the shading for an entire alphabet may be drawn easily whenever there is occasion to make use of shaded letters.

FIG. 94.—A card in which the letter faces are decorated with vertical lines.

There are a number of suitable methods of decorating letters which are just as effective as shading. One method is to make the face of the letter a different tone from that of the outline. The outline may be set off from the stroke of the letter as in the words "Brown Beauty Beans" in the booth decorations in Fig. 92, or be actually set on the edge of the letter face as in the words "Jack Sprat" in the same picture. Other effective decorations, especially suited to bold-face lettering, are those of striping or decorating the letter face, Fig. 94, or of drawing wavy or saw-toothed edges to the letters with the strokes disconnected to resemble stenciling, Fig. 95.

Originating Modifications.—Modifications should not be made until one is able to letter well. The shortest cut to proficiency is by learning lettering step by step and not by making fancy letters before one is able to make good one-stroke letters.

Since an alphabet may be rearranged into groups of letters of similar construction, as in Fig. 12, page 18, it is easy to see that in most cases modifications will apply to entire groups at a time. These groups include straight line letters, curved line letters, and letters made from combinations of straight and curved lines. After the letters in the alphabet have been grouped thus, modifications are more easily made. A modification should be repeated

FIG. 95.—Heavy poster letters with serrated or saw-toothed outlines and a stencilled effect.

wherever the element modified reappears in the alphabet. For example, if a slight curve is given to the tip of the descender of a lower case **p** in place of a serif, the descender in **q** is treated likewise. On the other hand, it would not do to make a full round lobe in a letter like lower case **b** and a flattened oval lobe in lower case **d.**

After one is familiar with the alphabet it will not be so necessary to divide the letters into groups in order to devise modifications. Experience will determine where the changes will be proper and appropriate. It should also be kept in mind that modifications are more effective when there are but two or three in the alphabet. If too many modifications are made, the letters are confusing in appearance and are not so easily read.

Freak Letters.—Amateurs often make the mistake of originating freakish letters, Fig. 96. Such lettering involves a large amount of work and a certain amount of skill. The result, how-

ever, is so ungainly and so lacking in good taste as to be hardly worth the effort spent upon it. The amateur would do better

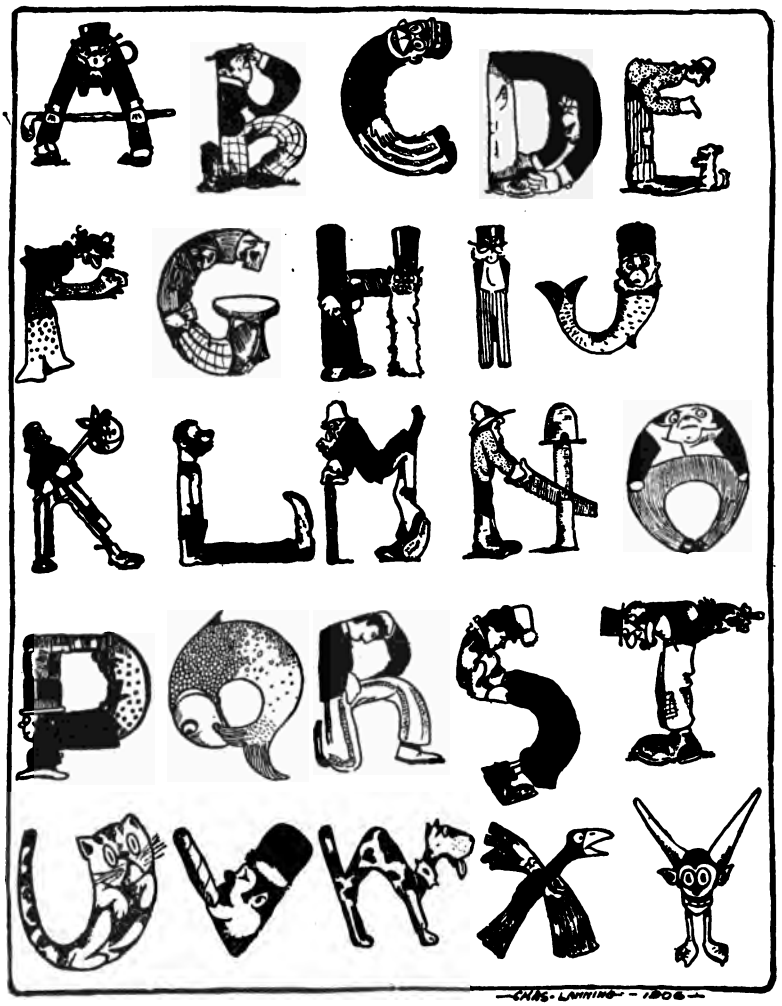

FIG. 96.—A clever but impractical example of freak lettering.

if he would use standard forms entirely and learn how to use them to good effect. The poster style in Fig. 97 is a style of freak lettering which has some merit and would be entirely proper to use on certain work. It is not difficult to make and is very

effective. The best method of studying lettering is to learn the elementary letters well, then the other styles, and depend upon

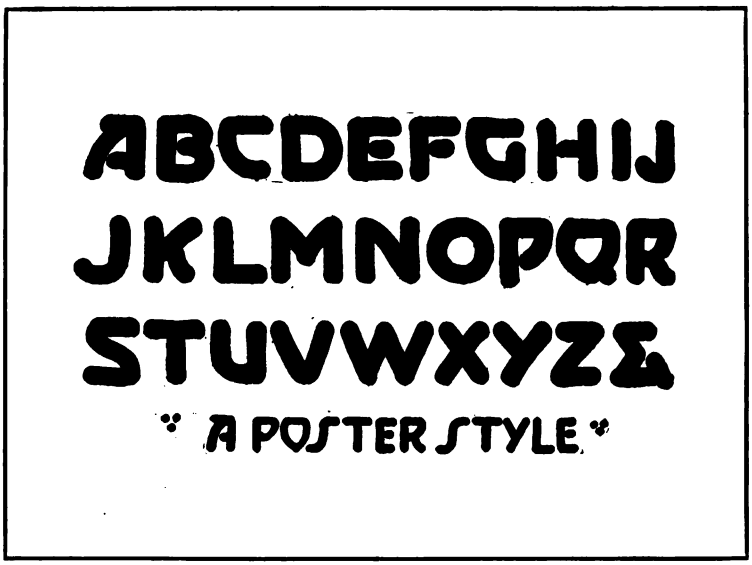

FIG. 97.—A practical style of freak lettering.

variety in the layout or appropriate modifications for striking effects.

33. Practice Strokes.—The necessity for practice in making

FIG. 98.—Practice strokes suitable for any style of lettering.

letter strokes cannot be too greatly emphasized. Practice is as necessary for one learning to letter as it is for one learning to become a musician. A set of practice strokes is given in Fig. 98. It is quite common custom among commercial lettering men

to devote the first few minutes of the work in the morning to practice strokes. If experienced men attach such importance to these exercises, it is apparent that the beginner should give them ample attention. By ample attention is meant conscious effort. It is not enough merely to draw these exercises over and over. The mind should be alert and concentrated upon the drawing of each stroke. One who thinks as he works and works with his whole heart learns lettering in the least amount of time.

CHAPTER IV

PRINCIPLES OF PLACING AND ARRANGEMENT

"Pay more attention to effective arrangement. Therein lies one big reason why the average show-card man never gets further than the time clock and Saturday envelope."

Wm. Hugh Gordon.

34. Purpose of Cards.—The ultimate purpose of a card is to sell goods. First, it should attract the purchaser's attention; and, second, it should induce him to buy. The card should be fashioned in such a way as to accomplish these purposes. For example, an automobile supply company wishes a card to go with a window display of wrenches and a jewelry concern wishes a card to go with a show-case display of baby rings. In this case there is a difference in location, goods offered, and in the probable purchasers. To meet such requirements the style and layout should be planned carefully, and the science of arrangement or composition studied and applied. This will require considerable attention at first, but later on the more experienced card designer will find that he is able to make an effective layout without any great effort.

35. Importance of Composition.—Composition is a study of the science of arranging the lines, paragraphs, and pictures so that they have a pleasing relation to one another. In card writing good composition emphasizes and brings out the sales argument. Placing and arrangement of lettering are of more importance than precise and exact construction. An inscription poorly arranged loses all its power, while an inscription arranged in a high-grade manner commands attention in spite of flaws in the construction of the letters.

A rough pencil plan of a composition, showing the size of the margin, the location and size of the lines, paragraph, or pictures placed on the card, is known as a layout. Laying out effective composition involves the application of the useful principles of art. A general idea exists that the principles of art are not practical, but this is not true. The term "artistic" is

FIG. 99.—A crowded and poorly arranged booth display.

FIG. 100.—A neat and well arranged booth display.

too often applied to fanciness. This is a mistake, as fanciness is quite often bad taste. The term "artistic" applied rightly, means good taste, or containing quality. Good taste in turn means fitness or suitability. An artistic card is one, therefore, which is suited to the place and purpose for which it was intended.

The problem of good placing and arrangement applies not only to the matter lettered upon the cards but to the arrangement of the display in which the cards are used. Two illustrations are shown, Figs. 99 and 100, in which the contrast between a poorly arranged and badly jumbled display of cards and a neatly arranged and well planned display is shown. In Fig. 99 the display is so confused that the eye goes from card to card, resting nowhere except when it is momentarily held by the large capital letters. Some of the cards face the observer and some are at an angle. The pictures and cards are crowded in together so that several overlap. In Fig. 100 the cards are arranged so that they face the observer, none of them overlap, and they are easily read. The pictures and diagrams are arranged in a very effective and pleasing manner. All of these cards have a chance to tell their story while the cards in Fig. 99 are apt to be unnoticed and unread. From the standpoint of results, it is quite evident that much of the time and money spent on the poorly arranged exhibit would be lost while the results from the other would be sufficient to fulfil completely the expectations of those who planned it. The same is as true in the display of merchandise as it is in the examples shown here.

Card writers are realizing the importance of the placing and arrangement of the lettering upon the cards as well as that of the display itself. More thought is being put into the mechanical arrangement so that the layout, lettering, and color scheme will be attractive and effective. More thought is being given to the wording of the card so that the best possible selling points will be brought out in the most convincing manner. Cards so designed sell easily, command good prices, and harmonize well with the window display. Since cards form a very vital element in most window displays those which actually promote sales are well worth good prices.

36. Laws of Composition.—It should be recognized that composition is a power and like all other powers is dependent on

certain practical laws. The laws governing composition are few in number, there being but five of them: Balance, harmony, unity, rhythm, and simplicity.

37. Symmetrical Balance.—Two panels of lettering, each taking up the same space and having the same style of lettering, placed alongside of each other so that one is on one half of the card and the other on the other half, Fig. 101, are said to be balanced. If there were but one panel of lettering and this were placed in the center of the card, it would also be said to be

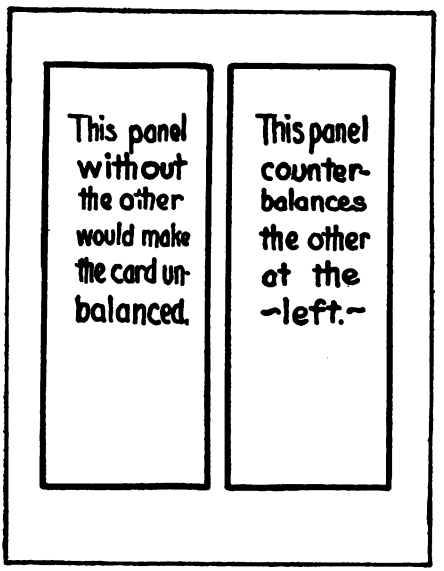

FIG. 101.—Balance of equal masses.

balanced, Fig. 102. In each case, whether one or two panels were used, there would be an equal mass of lettering on each side of a vertical center line. This is known as symmetrical balance.

38. Camouflaged Balance.—When a single panel of lettering is used, it is often centered so as to have equal amounts on both sides of the vertical center line, but when two panels are used, the panels are usually unequal in size. To balance two such unequal masses requires good judgment and careful planning. Balance cannot be easily measured by any rule of thumb. The principle upon which a seesaw operates is the principle which must be

used, Fig. 103. On a seesaw if a large body is placed on one end and a small body on the other end, to secure balance the small body must be moved out along the board the same proportional difference in distance from the center as the amount the large body differs proportionally in weight to that of the small body. Similarly, to balance a large panel of lettering with a small panel the small panel must be moved away from the center far enough

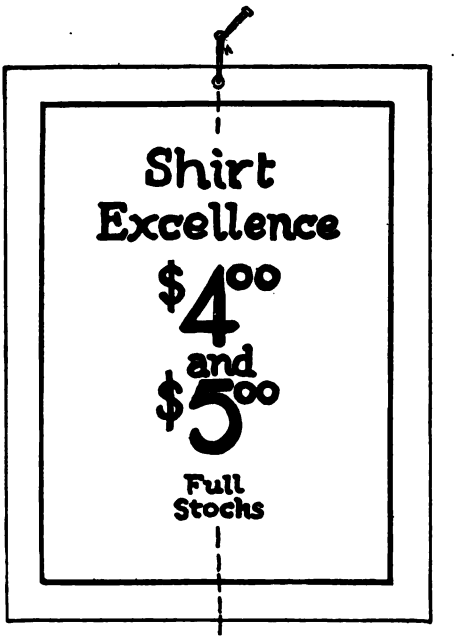

FIG. 102.—A panel of lettering balanced as though hung from a pin at the center of the top.

so that the difference in distance will balance the difference in size, Fig. 104. This form of balance may be called camouflaged, occult, hidden, or invisible balance because the designer must decide upon the proper balance. It is sometimes difficult to proportion balance since there are other things besides size to be considered. The designer must often rely upon his instincts and feelings in forming his conclusion.

39. What to Balance.—Three other factors besides size are considered in securing balance, namely, tone, shape, and color.

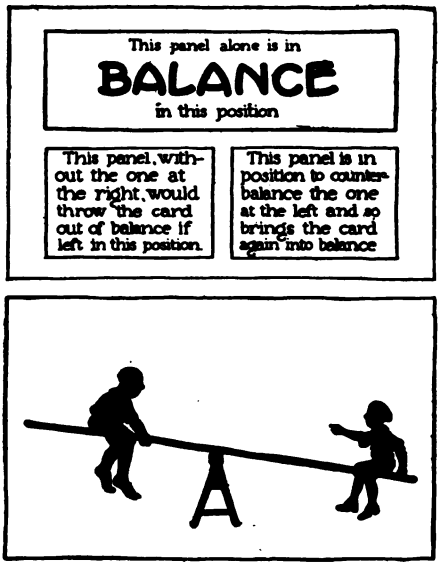

FIG. 103.—The seesaw principle of balance.

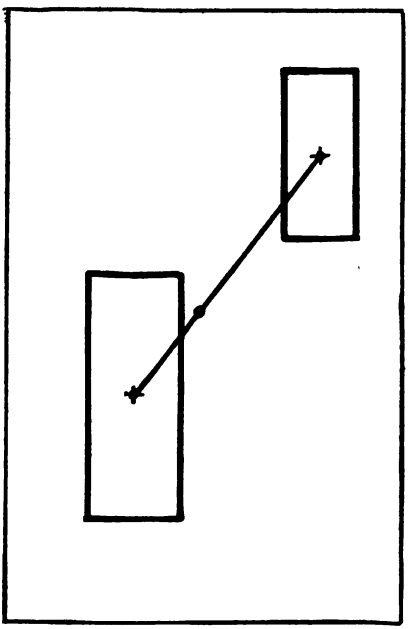

FIG. 104.—Balance of two unequal areas.

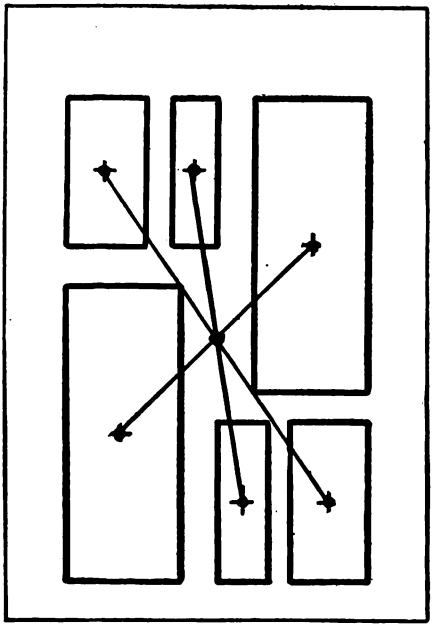

FIG. 105.—Balance of several unequal areas.

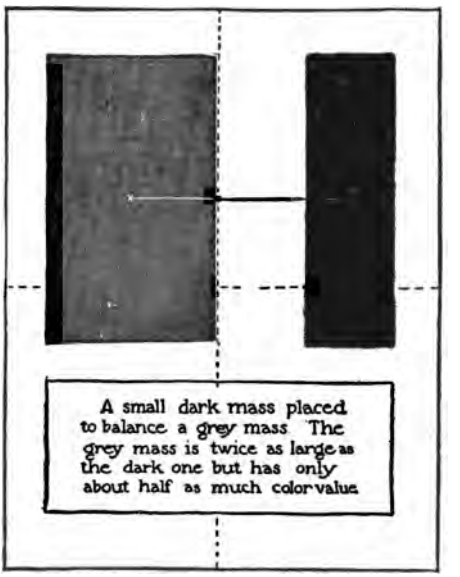

FIG. 106.—Balance of masses of different tones.

The masses of lettering, and there may be more than two, Fig. 105, may be different in tone. If one is lettered in heavy strokes and another in light, thin strokes, one mass will seem quite black and the other gray in comparison, Fig. 106. If the masses are different in shape, the unusual shape of one will attract more attention than the unobtrusive shape of the other, Fig. 107. The masses may also be colored differently. The balancing of

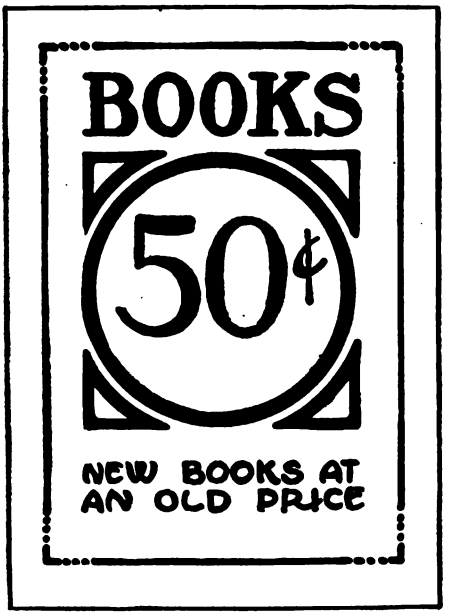

FIG. 107.—Emphasis by means of contrasting shapes, contrast being softened and harmony improved by giving the central mass a rectangular outline.

colors is discussed in Chap. V. Since all three of the factors, size, tone, and shape, are sometimes found in the same problem, the same procedure must be followed in all cases. The power of attraction that each mass contains must be determined first, whether that attraction be due to its size, shape, tone, or to all three. When the power of attraction in each mass has been determined, balance is secured by arranging the lettering so that the distance one mass stands away from the others will make up for the difference in attraction, Fig. 104. The principle of the seesaw is the guide in each case.

40. Actual and Optical Centers.—The actual center is a point located midway between the two side edges of the card and halfway down the sheet. Besides the actual center there is another center, located above the actual center and slightly to the left, which must be considered in lettering inscriptions. This is the point towards which we instinctively glance when we read a page from left to right and from top to bottom and

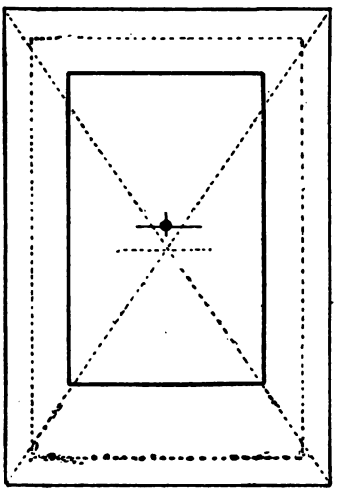

FIG. 108.—A layout for a single vertical panel of lettering, showing a comparison of the actual center with the optical center and of equal margins with margins of better proportions.

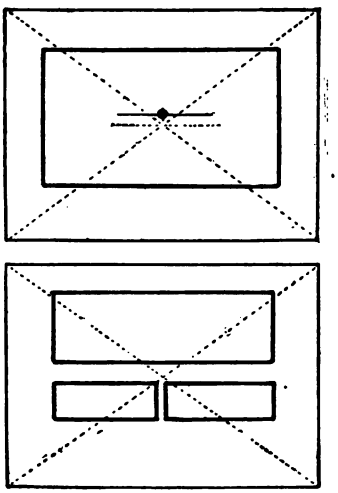

FIG. 109.—Comparison of the actual center with the optical center on horizontal layouts.

is called the optical center. Initial letters and illustrations are generally placed near this point. It has been estimated to be about 1/20th the height of the page above the center, Figs. 108 and 109. Because of this optical center, panels of lettering are usually placed so that the lower margin is a little larger than the top margin, Figs. 108 and 109.

41. Rules for Proportioning.—There is an ancient Greek law that may be used in proportioning these margins, but it requires too much work to be practicable in show-card writing. This law uses proportions which have a relation of 5:7:11. That is, if the area of the lower margin has eleven square inches,

the top margin, being next in size, should contain seven square inches, and the side margins five square inches.

Professor Starch, formerly of the University of Wisconsin, has worked out another formula for proportioning the division of a page. An upper division line is drawn across the page so that the space above the line is to the space below that line as 3:5 approximately. A lower division line is drawn so that the space below that line is to the space above that line as 3:5. This divides the page into three well proportioned areas,

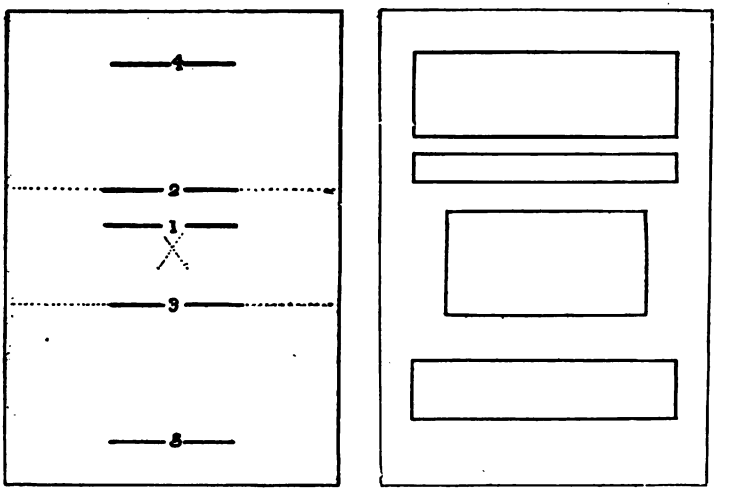

FIG. 110a. FIG. 110b.

Cards with divisions in the proportion of 3:5. The numbers refer to the rank in importance of the different parts of the card.

Fig. 110a, in which about an equal amount of lettering may be placed. Fig. 110b shows how this proportion may be used. Proportions should not be arranged by hard and fast mechanical rules. The rules should be studied, however, and skill acquired so that with a little care and thought areas of lettering can be arranged so that they will contain proper proportions.

42. Harmony.—The term harmony can be understood better perhaps if it is defined as "having something in common." Panels are harmonious when they have some sort of common relationship to one another in size, shape, tone, or color. Fig. 111 shows harmony in shape.

If more than one style of lettering is used, the styles them-

selves should have something of a relationship to each other, Fig. 112. In laying the work out, slanted and horizontal lines of lettering should not be mixed together, nor irregular shapes given to the masses of lettering on a rectangular card, Fig. 113. The card and the panels of lettering should have something in common in their shapes, Fig. 111. Harmony must always be preserved if the most pleasing effects are to be attained. At times, however, contrast is desired to catch the eye and to em-

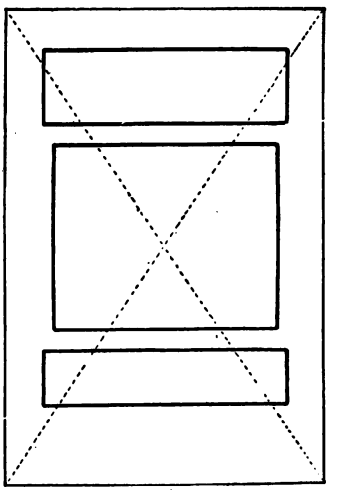

FIG. 111.—Layout of three harmonious and well-arranged panels.

phasize some particular spot, Fig. 114. Striking contrasts, though effective for their purpose, lack the dignity and refinement of harmonious pieces of work.

The style of the lettering should harmonize with the purpose of the card and its location, whether it is on a counter nearby or in a window where its purpose is to catch the attention of those at some distance outside. The card should also harmonize with the goods offered. Sturdy, substantial styles of lettering are suitable for advertising sturdy, substantial goods, while articles of a delicate nature require delicate, refined styles of lettering. The borders and ornamentation should agree with the lettering. A card containing a discordant feeling loses in effectiveness. A simple, dignified border for use in a card re-

quiring dignity and refinement is shown in the studio announcement, Fig. 63, page 71.

43. Unity.—Unity means oneness, and its application to show cards means that sort of arrangement which binds the various parts of the composition together in style and character. It means planning the general layout and grouping its elements so as to make it appear as one related mass. Unity may be gained by writing the lines in one compact mass, obtaining con-

FIG. 112.—Harmony between display line and body in style of lettering. Emphasis secured by contrasting weight of strokes.

trast by using capitals in the first and last lines, Fig. 112. Sometimes a border line is effective in tying the elements together. Separating the inscription into groups of lines breaks it up into various shaped panels. These panels should be units of one complete idea or plan. All details must be grouped together thoughtfully, giving attention, first, to the larger and more important units, such as the headlines. Second, consideration should be given to the less important units and to the smaller details. The entire card may be arranged so that the most important part of the inscription will be located at the most important place on the card and the less important parts in the less important locations, Fig. 114. This is especially important in the placing of headlines or important sales arguments.

To preserve unity too many unrelated statements should not be used on the same card. The less unity in the message and the more scattered its layout, the less power the card has to attract the eye. The eye focuses on but one thing at a time so that the show card must attract it from other things. Purchasers do not look for show cards. The cards must be such that they force themselves on the customer's attention. This cannot be

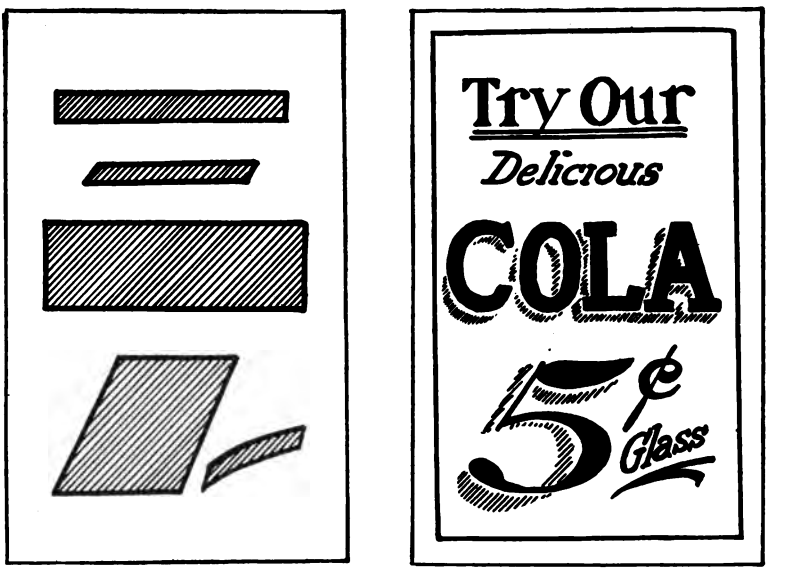

FIG. 113.—Unrelated shapes lacking in harmony. Disconnected arrangement lacking in unity.

done if their layouts are weak, spotty, and lacking in unity.

44. Rhythm.—In a series of five horizontal panels of lettering if the largest one is placed near the center of the card, the next smaller ones, one above and one below it, and the two smallest ones, one at the top and one at the bottom, rhythm is created in the arrangement of the masses. Another example of rhythm is found in an arrangement where the type is largest in the top paragraph and grows smaller toward the bottom of the card. A variation of such rhythm is to use a heavy display line in capitals at the top of the card, a mass of medium-sized letters below, and an inscription of minor importance and size at the bottom, Fig. 111. Rhythm of tone may be produced by mak-

ing the strokes heavy in one part of the card and light in another.

Repetition is another form of rhythm. A certain word may

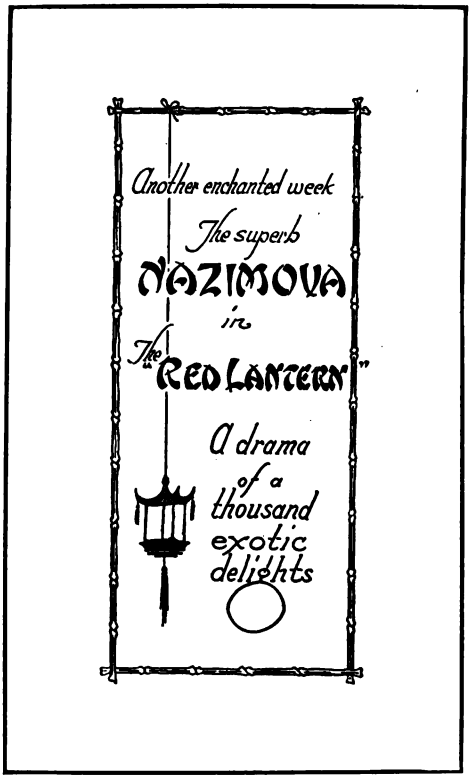

FIG. 114.—Theater card using contrast in the style of lettering to emphasize the name of the play.

be repeated at intervals throughout the inscription and be lettered in the same style and weight of letters wherever it occurs. If it contrasts with the rest of the lettering and occurs at regular and well chosen intervals, it may be considered as an example of rhythm.

If paragraphs or units are lettered in contrasting styles, making one light and another dark, rhythm in tone will be created. If a card contains four paragraphs and the first and

third are in heavy letters, and the second and last in light letters, there will be a feeling that the card is unfinished. If a card contains but three paragraphs and the heading or first paragraph and the closing paragraph are lettered in heavy substantial letters, Fig. 112, the feeling that something is to be added will be avoided. Care should be taken to plan the top and bottom masses well.

45. Simplicity.—When the composition has but one general aim, when the arrangement is free from over-ornamentation and kept simple, the inscription has its greatest chance to attract the eye. Complex arrangements are confusing and weak. Borders and decorations should be subdued, rather than accented, since they are but details of the background against which the lettering stands out. A simple background is important as it does not distract the eye from the wording. The most striking and effective cards are those in which the following simple rule has been adhered to; do but one thing, in one place, at one time. It is a mistake to attempt to show off fancy lettering and promote the sale of some article of merchandise at the same time. Simple lettering effectively arranged and a minimum amount of wording dealing directly with the merchandise are in keeping with this rule.

At one time it was quite common to decorate display windows with streamers, pennants, and placards all calling attention to the article on sale. This festooning and decorating have given way to displays which are more simple and effective. Instead of having a cluttered mass of material in the window, the display is limited to a few articles and cards so that the spectator's attention is concentrated on a few strong points instead of being confused by a dazzling and somewhat confusing conglomeration of advertising material.

46. Emphasis.—In nearly every card there is some one thing to be emphasized. This emphasis may be secured by taking advantage of the various laws of composition and using them to bring out, by contrast, some particular part of the inscription. The size of the lettering in this particular part, Fig. 112, may contrast enough with the rest of the lettering to emphasize it or it may be emphasized by setting it apart from the rest of the lettering. The part to be emphasized may be made to stand out

in another way by placing it at or near the optical center, Fig. 114. Emphasis may also be given the desired part by having it occupy that place where the rhythm of the page reaches its greatest strength, or it may be contrasted with the tone of lettering used in the other parts of the card as the word "tailored" in the Palm Beach suit card, Fig. 115.

FIG. 115.—Emphasis gained by contrasting tones.

Innumerable ways, including special border designs, may be devised for emphasizing words, lines, or panels of lettering. A curved line being the opposite of a straight line, a circle offers the greatest contrast to a rectangular space or to horizontal lines. It follows, then, that a circle about lines of lettering will emphasize the lines, Fig. 107. By resorting to such methods as these even better emphasis can be secured than by the use of shading, at the same time avoiding the cheapened appearance which shading gives to a show card.

47. Controlling the Eye.—If a card harmonizes with the display in a window, the card and the display will work together in attracting the attention of the passersby. Their attention should not be confined, however, to the display line, but should be held until they finish reading the card. There must be a connecting link, therefore, between the display line and the rest of the inscription.

FIG. 116.—Well planned card, the units being so arranged as to lead the eye from one unit to another. The illustration was traced by using a carbon copy of a tracing.

The eye is always attracted to some particular point first. This point may be an initial, a price mark, or, if the card is lettered in one harmonious style, it may be the optical center. The eye always travels along the line of least resistance, going next to whatever ranks second in the power of attraction. The price mark need not necessarily be used to catch the eye, but the lettering may be so arranged that the eye is unconsciously led to take particular notice of it, Fig. 116. This may be accomplished by making the numerals heavy, drawing them in a style that contrasts with the lettering, or setting them away from the rest of the inscription. Whichever method is followed, the most im-

portant part of the advertisement should be placed where it will be the center of interest. Cards should be so designed that the path the eye travels can almost be traced to the center of interest.

48. Line and Mass.—The elements composing the layout on a card may be said to consist of two things, line and mass. The term "line" used in the artistic sense of the word may refer to letter strokes when their nature is prominent enough to give a certain character to the entire card. A card done in a tall and narrow "Old English" type will have the appearance of being made up of a multitude of vertical lines. If the lines are harmonious, the work may be said to contain good line.

This same term may also be applied to groups or panels of words when they are so arranged, either vertically or horizontally, as to have a linear rather than a bulky effect. A card with a number of long, slender, vertical panels, arranged in columns, may be spoken of as having line in the arrangement of its paragraphs. Unusual shapes may give a feeling of line also because of the peculiar and striking nature of the outline.

The term mass is given to a body of lettering which may be considered as a unit in planning a card. Fig. 113 shows an arrangement in which there are two long, narrow, horizontal panels at the top. These panels have horizontal line since the main lines and the axes of the panels are laid horizontally. The two lower panels are arranged differently. Both are slanted, and one has a curved shape. The larger panel, owing to its slanted character, may be spoken of as a mass having oblique line. The small, curved mass is comparatively slender, and its line is so much more evident than its mass that the term line may be substituted for mass. Since lines and masses are both subject to the same laws, there is a lack of harmony between the shape of the large oblique mass and the upper horizontal masses. Furthermore, there is also a lack of harmony in this layout between the line of the oblique mass and the line of the upper panels as well as the curved line close to the oblique mass at the bottom. This particular card fails, therefore, by lacking in harmony of both line and mass.

49. Effects of Line.—The direction which lines of lettering take determines the impression which they create. A confused arrangement of lines creates a feeling of unrest and discord, just as an untidy room creates a feeling of repugnance. Well

matched lines create a feeling of pleasure. Lines which accent vertical qualities, as in the monument shown in Fig. 117, create the impression of dignity and loftiness. A condensed "Old English" style of lettering is also a good example. It is interesting to note that actors playing parts representing cold, lofty, dignified characters often resort to many tricks to accent the vertical lines in both the costumes and the scenery. Horizontal lines give quiet, peaceful effects and a feeling of repose. One may

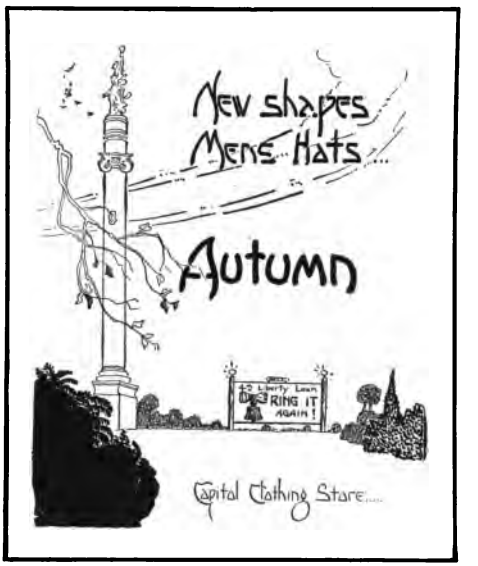

FIG. 117.—Lettering emphasized by using wide spacing to set off the lines of lettering. The vertical lines of the column give the card dignity.

study with considerable profit the horizontal lines in paintings of flat country scenes in Holland or architectural designs of low, broad, homelike bungalows and note the feeling of repose. Curved lines are graceful and informal, but when overdone they create a feeling of over-ornamentation and cheapness. This is a fault in many show cards, especially where flourishes are used. There should be harmony of line also between the lettering and the card upon which it is placed. For this reason an excess of accented vertical lines should not be used on a card whose main proportion is horizontal.

Cards should not be cut in irregular or oblique shapes. There is a harmony of purpose between a show card and a printed page, and there should also be harmony in their shapes. Magazines are not printed in slanting or irregular lines, nor cut in fancy shapes. The purpose of all lettering is that it be read; and fitness and suitability to the intended purpose are the first principles of composition.

Reading of such books as F. A. Parson's "Principles of Advertising Arrangement," Wm. H. Gordon's "Lettering for Commercial Purposes," and Thos. Woods Stevens' "Lettering" will be found interesting and helpful. This reading should be supplemented with practice work in designing effective layouts and rearranging the lettering on cards until what seems the best possible layout has been achieved. It is a good plan to sketch the layouts of magazine advertisements in a notebook and use them for study and reference. This reading and supplementary practice should develop in the beginner considerable skill in arranging layouts and do much to give personality to his work so that his cards may be recognized by their appearance and add to his prestige as a card writer.

CHAPTER V

COLOR

"Color is a science, not a fancy."
Frank Alvah Parsons.

"I cannot fully convince myself of the thought that there can be perfect advertising without color."
A. de Montluzin.

50. Importance of Color.—The use of color in show-card writing should be regarded as a science, subject to certain laws and principles. A milliner or a costume designer selects the colors to be used on a hat or a gown according to the effect those colors will produce, the choice of color depending on the purpose of the hat or gown. A hat or a gown to be worn at the seashore will be different in color from a hat or a gown to be worn at the theater. Show-card writers should likewise select colors in their relation to the advertising of merchandise.

Harold Parlin, writing in Printers' Ink Monthly, has this to say in regard to using color in business:

"It makes no difference what line of business you are in, . . . color has more to do with your success or failure than you have any idea. You cannot follow your product into the hands of one user without learning that color has much to do with the regard of that user for the goods. It may be an automobile, a sheet of music, a tube of tooth paste, an office device, a package of gum or cigarettes. Color. . . . often decides whether the advertisement or the label will be read or not. Color rightly employed increases sales. Choose it wisely."

The principles of color arrangement, although few in number, require considerable practice and study before they are mastered. However, when once the ability to select and use colors with facility is attained it will lift the ambitious card writer above the rank of the ordinary card writer. Well chosen color arrangements have been responsible in no small degree for elevating the lettering of cards from a trade into a branch of commercial art.

51. Color Spectrum.—White light is in reality a compound

of several colors. A white ray of light from the sun may be divided into the seven colors of the rainbow, violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange, and red, by allowing the light to pass through a prism. These colors form what is called the color spectrum.

52. Primary Colors.—The primary colors are red, yellow, and blue, and from these three colors all other colors can be made. None of these three colors contains any other color than itself in its make-up, so that the number cannot be reduced to any less than three. Theoretically, these colors when mixed together should form white, and, with a special laboratory equipment, this is possible to a certain degree. A show-card color, however, contains a pigment for its base and is not transparent. Therefore, in mixing show-card paints of the three primary colors, the result is a muddy neutral gray instead of white.

53. How the Eye Sees Color.—A color painted on a show card absorbs some of the color rays that compose white light and reflects the others back to the eye. These reflected rays produce the sensation of that color within the eye. For instance, if blue is painted on a card and a ray of white light falls on the card, the red and yellow rays will be absorbed and the blue rays reflected to the eye, producing the sensation of blue color.

54. Color Wheel.—*Primary Colors.*—To study color formation properly, a color wheel, Fig. 118, should be constructed of colored paper discs. If desired, colors may be used instead of colored paper. To make this color wheel, a circle should be drawn on a piece of cardboard using a radius of 2½ in., a ¾ in. circle drawn in the center of this large circle, and a disc of neutral gray paper pasted in the small circle. Twelve similar circles should then be drawn at equal distances from each other about the large circle, using a 30 by 60 degrees triangle to locate their positions. On the small circle at the top, a disc of pure yellow should be pasted; one-third of the distance around the large circumference and to the right, a disc of pure red, Fig. 118; and at the left and at the same distance around, a disc of pure blue. The three primary colors will then be arranged equidistant about the color wheel with neutral gray in the center. Heavy solid lines may be drawn from these primary colors to the disc of neutral gray so that these colors may be distinguished easily from those added later.

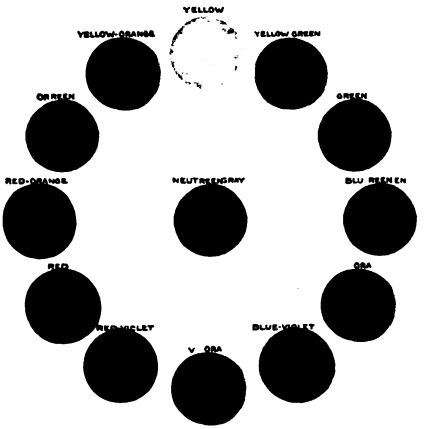

FIG. 118.—Color wheel.

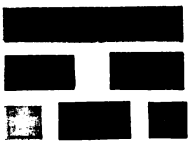

FIG. 119.—A tertiary color contains part of all three primary colors.

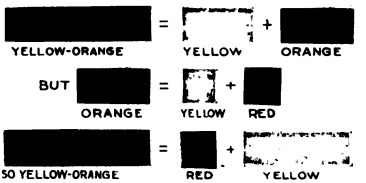

FIG. 120.—Yellow-orange contains three parts of yellow to one part of red.

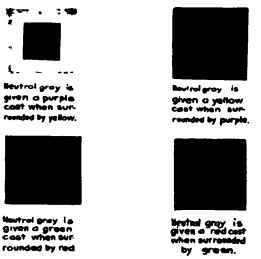

FIG. 122.—Influence of adjoining colors on neutral gray.

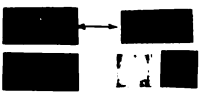

FIG. 121.—Complementary colors when added together contain parts of all three primary colors.

FIG. 123.—Red seems darker on a yellow card and lighter on a black or dark-colored card.

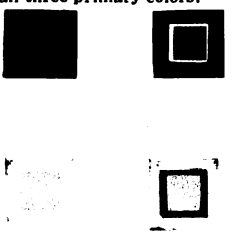

FIG. 124.—Dark colors on a dark background should be set off by a light outline, and light colors on a light background by a dark outline.

FIG. 125.—A dull color appears deadened when it surrounds a light tint of the same color.

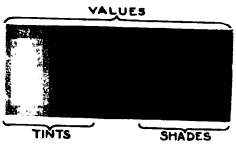

FIG. 126.—A color in five different values.

FIG. 127.—Monochrome color scheme with the colors varying in value.

FIG. 128.—Monochrome color scheme with the colors varying in intensity.

FIG. 129.—Two complementary colors in their full strength intensify each other.

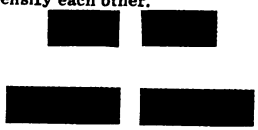

FIG. 130.—Graying complementary colors reduces the tendency they have to emphasize each other.

FIG. 131.—Analogous color scheme with the colors used in their full intensity.

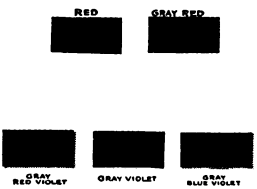

FIG. 132.—Analogous color schemes involving grays.

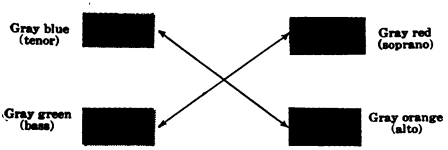

FIG. 133.—Perfected color scheme and its analogy to a quartet of voices.

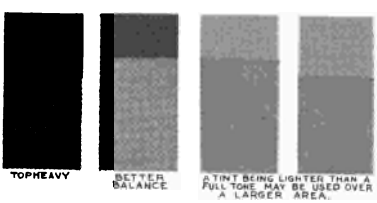

FIG. 134.—Examples of the relative weight of colors.

FIG. 135A.—Staring at a patch of red placed upon a white card induces a greenish cast at the edge of the patch.

FIG. 135B.—Removing the patch, a faint image of the patch remains, the color changing to the complementary off the patch.

Secondary or Binary Colors.—In the circle, halfway between the red and yellow discs, a disc of pure orange should be placed. Orange is a secondary color and is placed midway between the red and the yellow because it is made by mixing equal amounts of these two colors together. Halfway between the yellow and the blue a disc of pure green should be pasted; then a disc of pure purple midway between the red and the blue. Green is a half and half mixture of yellow and blue, while red and blue mixed together produce purple. These new colors, orange, green, and purple, cannot be called primary colors as they are mixtures made by combining two colors. They are, therefore, called secondary or binary colors since they are produced by combining two primary colors together in equal amounts. A thin line may be drawn from these secondary colors to the neutral gray in the center so that they may be more easily located. This line should be thinner than the line connecting the primary colors with the central disc of gray, to avoid confusion.

Tertiary or Gray Colors.—There are but three tertiary colors, citrine, russet, and olive. If green and violet are combined, Fig. 119, olive is obtained which is a tertiary or gray color since it contains each of the three primary colors in its composition, the green containing the two primaries, yellow and blue, and the violet containing the two primaries, blue and red. All colors containing the three primaries in their composition are known as grays. Grays which are formed by combining two secondary colors, such as green and violet, are tertiary colors. The other two tertiary colors are formed by mixing orange with purple, which forms russet, and green with orange which forms citrine.

55. Hue.—In the color wheel there is still left an unoccupied circle between each color disc. These circles may be filled in by placing a disc of red-orange between the red and the orange, a disc of yellow-orange between the orange and the yellow, a disc of yellow-green between the yellow and the green, and a disc of blue-green between the green and the blue. In the same way, a blue-purple disc may be placed between the blue and the purple and a disc of purple-red between the purple and the red. Each of these colors contains one primary color mixed with some other color. Any color made by tinting a primary color with another color is known as a hue. These six hues, together with the three secondaries and the three pri-

maries, compose the color wheel, Fig. 118. The hues may be joined to the center by dotted lines.

Each of the hues shown is made from equal parts of a secondary color and a primary color mixed together. Since a secondary color contains two primaries, each of the hues shown on the color wheel may be considered as made up of three parts of one primary to one part of another primary. This is illustrated in Fig. 120 where yellow and orange are combined to make yellow-orange. As orange is a secondary color derived from a combination of red and yellow in equal portions, there will be in the yellow-orange hue three parts of yellow to one part of red.

56. Complementary Colors.—If a straight line is drawn from one color through the center of the color wheel to the color on the opposite side of the wheel, the colors at each end of the line will be found to be totally unlike. Such colors are called complementary colors, being colors opposite each other on the color wheel and opposite in their very nature. Furthermore, there is no similarity in the colors from which they are made. For example, the complementary of red is green which is made from yellow and blue. All of the three primary colors are to be found in these two complementary colors, but neither the red nor the green contains all three in itself, Fig. 121. What one color lacks, the other contains.

57. Advancing and Receding Colors.—Some colors seem to be less obtrusive than others and give the effect of distance. Others seem to come up close and are sometimes spoken of as "slapping one in the face." Experiments have shown that rooms finished in blue or white seem much larger than rooms finished in red. Red is an advancing color and makes the walls appear closer, while blue and white are receding colors and make the walls appear farther away.

Yellow gives the same effect of distance as white, but not in so pronounced a degree. When a spot of yellow is placed on a white card, the advancing effect is considerably retarded by the influence of the white. The yellow seems more distant than when it stands alone. Other receding colors are blue, green, and violet which give, more or less, the effect of distance. Pure colors are more advancing than gray colors. Light colors carry better on dark mounts, while dark colors are more advancing

when used on white cards, Fig. 122. A receding color like yellow, when surrounded by a dark tone, may become quite advancing in character. Yellow letters on a black or dark background are quite often used in show-card advertising.

The effects produced by advancing and receding colors should be kept in mind when colors are selected for either cards or lettering. Many times windows and counters are poor in their location and advancing colors must be used if the attention of the passersby is to be caught at all. Outdoor cards read by travelers passing rapidly by necessarily require colors which are of an advancing and carrying quality. On the contrary, the quiet, restful atmosphere of many a fashionable tea room or ice cream parlor has been disturbed by the use of colors which are too advancing on the cards placed about the room.

58. Influence of Adjoining Colors.—Unlike colors, when placed next to each other, tinge one another with their complementaries. Red and green both become more intense when placed in adjoining positions. The complementary of red is green which intensifies the adjoining green color. Since red is the complementary of green, the red also becomes intensified. For this reason a woman with a light complexion appears less pale when she dresses in green. Since complementary colors intensify each other when placed near one another they should be handled carefully. To avoid jarring effects the colors should be grayed and not used in their full purity.

If neutral gray is surrounded by a clear color, the gray color becomes tinged with the complementary of the other color, such as gray surrounded by green which gives the gray a red cast, Fig. 122. Three other similar examples are shown in the same figure. The tinge given to the gray is most noticeable at the edge of the gray color and becomes more noticeable the longer one stares at the two colors.

A color may seem to be darker or lighter, Fig. 123, according to the influence of the adjoining color, the result depending on whether the adjoining color is dark or light. Light colors seem more striking on dark backgrounds, and dark colors appear to better advantage on light or white cards. If a dark colored letter is painted on a dark card, a white or light colored outline should be drawn around it to make it stand out, Fig. 124. For the same reason, light colored letters painted on light colored cards

should be outlined with dark colors. Without these outlines around the letters, the coloring would be weak.

If a bright colored letter is drawn on a card similar in color but duller in tone, Fig. 125, the dull background will appear somewhat more deadened in tone. Bright colors appear to best advantage when the card upon which they are placed is of a complementary color.

59. Analogous Colors.—Colors that are found next to one another on the color wheel and that are to a certain degree similar to each other are called neighboring or analogous colors, for example, yellow and green. Both contain yellow in their composition and are placed in neighboring positions on the color wheel. Orange and green also contain yellow, but they are not classed as analogous colors as they do not occupy positions near to one another on the color wheel. Furthermore, orange contains red, the complementary of green, which has the effect of emphasizing the difference between orange and green.

60. Warm and Cold Colors.—A color which approaches red in tone is known as a warm color. A color which approaches blue in tone is known as a cold color. Such colors produce impressions of stimulating warmth or of cool repose according to their composition. Red, orange, and yellow are warm colors, while blue, violet, and green are cool colors. In case colors are grayed and subdued, those in which yellow or red predominate are classed as warm grays, while those which lean towards blue or violet are classed as cold grays.

61. Value.—Value is a term which refers to the amount of light or darkness given to a color. When values are spoken of, reference is made to the various tones running from light to dark, Fig. 126.

Tints and Shades.—When the value is lighter than the normal tone of color, that is, when it approaches white, it is spoken of as a tint, Fig. 126. Tints are made by adding white to a color, or by thinning it. Adding white to a color renders the color somewhat opaque, while thinning it with water preserves whatever transparent quality the color may have. A shade is a value darker than the normal tone of the color, Fig. 126, and is made by adding black or a dark color to its tone.

62. Color Schemes.—When two or more colors are used in a piece of work, these colors compose what is called a color scheme.

If a word is lettered in yellow on a green card, the color scheme will be yellow and green.

Careful selection of color schemes for show cards is a more or less recent practice. Formerly, good color combinations were more or less accidental or dependent upon the instincts of a card writer who had natural ability in selecting colors. The attractiveness of such cards was considered vague and unexplainable. It is now realized that such results, whether accidental or studied, were dependent on the application of certain laws regarding the relation one color has to another on a show card.

There are four kinds of harmonies from which color schemes may be devised: Monochrome, complementary, analogous, and perfected.

Monochrome Color Schemes.—A color scheme made from one color produces what is known as monochrome or dominant harmony. There are two ways of making a color scheme with but one color. One way is to use different values of the same color, Fig. 127, making some of the tones lighter or darker than the others. Light and dark tan colors form a monochrome color scheme that is quite often used. The other way is to use different intensities of a color, one tone being more grayed than the other, Fig. 128. Monochrome color schemes are well adapted for beginners as there is little likelihood for discord to creep in. They are always simple and restful, although they are less interesting than the more complicated types of color schemes since they contain less variety.

Complementary Color Schemes.—Complementary color schemes are those made with complementary colors. When complementary colors are used in their full strength, the effect is harsh since each color emphasizes the other, Fig. 129. Tinting, shading, or better still, graying the colors improves the effect, Fig. 130. Complementary color schemes are less harmonious than other forms because the colors have nothing in common. Colors match best when they have something in common or something upon which to base a connection of one to the other. Having something in common produces harmony, and colors which are not harmonious should be avoided.

Analogous Color Schemes.—Colors which are found next to one another or between two primary colors on the color wheel may be used to form what is called analogous color schemes.

In Fig. 131 a yellow and yellow-orange form an analogous color scheme. They are harmonious because they are near one another on the color wheel, and both having yellow in their composition, they have something in common upon which to base the resulting harmony. Like complementary colors, analogous colors produce more pleasing results when they are grayed, Fig. 132.

Perfected Color Schemes.—If two analogous colors are placed with two other analogous colors, each pair complementary to the other, four different colors result which taken as a whole not only produce harmony but variety as well, Fig. 133. If a pair of neighboring or analogous colors and the complementary color opposite this pair on the other side of the color wheel are chosen, the result will be a scheme of three colors instead of four. Both of these types produce interesting effects. They are known as perfected harmonies since the colors which make up the harmony have something in common and yet contain greater variety than is found in monochrome, complementary, or analogous color schemes. If the composition of these colors is analyzed, one will find that a perfected harmony contains all three primary colors, since the color scheme is completed by introducing complementary colors. It will also be found that if the colors are mixed together they will produce gray, which accounts for the restful effects of such a scheme. The use of several different colors is responsible for the pleasing variety in the tones.

A perfected color scheme is naturally more complicated and more difficult to handle than any other kind of color scheme. It should not be used until one has become accustomed to making such combinations, as much depends on well developed taste and color judgment.

Perfected color harmony, Fig. 133, may be compared to a quartette of voices. The two pairs of complementary colors may be likened to the male and female voices. One pair of analogous colors may be compared to the alto and soprano voices and the other pair to the bass and tenor. The comparison may be carried still further by noting that while no voice in the quartette nor any color in the color scheme is like any of the others, all bear a relation to each other. It is also true that in a quartette of voices all are not given the same prominence; nor should this be true of the colors in a color scheme. In the quartette, the

soprano voice may carry the melody and the others accompany and support it, thus producing a more unified effect. For the same reason, one color in the perfected harmony should predominate, and the others should be subordinated to it and given less prominence, one color leading and the others following. This variety is secured by using colors in tints or shades or by graying them until they become less intense. The area covered by the color may be varied also. A bright color should be used over only a small area, while a dull color may be used over a comparatively large area without becoming too dominant.

63. Color Balance.—The balancing of colors may be studied in the same manner as the balancing of masses of lettering. In addition to considering the size, shape, and tone, a new factor is introduced, the power of attraction, which may also be compared to a weight. Pure colors are more powerful than colors neutralized or grayed, Fig. 134, and for this reason smaller amounts should be used. A tint is not so heavy as a color of full strength, and may be given more space without injuring the color balance. Dark colors seem heavier than light colors and should be cut down in area until the proper effect is secured. Contrasting colors attract more attention than similar colors; therefore, in a color scheme containing several colors, the contrasting colors should not be used in too large an amount or they will over-balance the other colors. Balance does not mean that the colors should be of equal attraction. Such an arrangement would be lifeless and like a seesaw with equal weights on each end of the board, or it might be compared to a quartette in which no one voice has a leading part. The colors should be manipulated so that variety is secured and balance produced by contrasting, tinting, graying, or darkening them. Proper control of balance produces interesting and desirable effects.

Accent of color may be inserted in a design by using a colored initial, by coloring a word differently from the rest of the lettering, or by using colored ornamentation. If accents of color are too prominent, however, the card will appear spotty and its appearance will be cheapened. In actual practice initials are too often made in colors which are complementary to the colors in the rest of the lettering. If analogous colors are used, giving the initial a darker tone, for instance, the effect is more artistic and less likely to be overdone.

Warm colors may be balanced against cold colors, and colors that seem to recede may be balanced by colors more advancing in character. Complementary colors may be balanced against each other, but the effects are likely to be harsh and crude unless the colors are grayed. When colors are being balanced, consideration must be given to the size, shape, and tone used just as when one is dealing with black letters only. Fig. 134 shows a number of examples illustrating the balancing of colors.

64. Color Triads.—A triad is a color harmony composed of three different colors, and may be compared to the three tones in a chord of music, the colors being unlike enough to give the selection completeness and variety. Analysis will show that the colors in a triad may be selected in a manner similar to the tones in a chord on a musical instrument. If any color is selected on the color wheel, Fig. 118, as the first member of the triad, the second member may be determined by reading along the color wheel, in the direction in which the hands of a clock move, until the fifth color, or the required second member, is reached. The eighth color on the wheel is the third member and completes the triad. These three colors form what may be called a color chord or triad, and any similar three-color harmony may be measured off on the color wheel. In music, however, the first, third, and fifth tones are taken to form the chord or triad since an octave in music consists of eight tones while the color wheel contains twelve colors.

A color triad is in reality a form of perfected harmony as it has in it both completeness and harmony and is subject to the same rules as apply in a perfected harmony. While some satisfactory color schemes may be produced with all the colors in their normal strength, more satisfactory results are obtained when one color dominates and the others follow. In a musical chord the tones do not all seem to be of equal strength even though all three are sounded together. This is usually true of a color triad, the first member being grayed until it approaches quite closely to neutral gray, the second member grayed about half as much, and the last color used in its full strength. Pure colors would not produce so pleasing a result. The color triad illustrates the principle that the most interesting color schemes are those whose colors are not too close together on the color wheel. Color schemes

containing three or four colors are the most difficult to handle successfully.

65. Color Fatigue.—Any color will tire the eye in time, but some colors produce fatigue sooner than others. Pure red, yellow, or orange will irritate the eye more quickly than cool colors, such as violet, blue, or green.

If a patch of red is placed on a white card and stared at for a short time, a greenish tinge will become more and more noticeable on the card near the edges of the patch, Fig. 135 a and b. This is due to the amount of color rays reflected and the amount absorbed in the two colors, white and red. White light falling on a white card is almost entirely reflected back to the eye. As white contains all the colors of the spectrum, all the colors are reflected back to the eye. On the red patch, the yellow and blue rays are absorbed, and only the red rays are reflected back to the eye. Therefore, constantly staring at the red tires the eye and weakens the effect of the red. The yellow and blue rays retain their strength, causing the white color of the card, especially near the patch, to lose some of its white quality by the weakening of the red sensation, leaving the yellow and blue comparatively strong. Yellow and blue combined produce green; hence, the tinge about the red patch is of a greenish cast. If the red patch is left on the white card for a long time and then removed, a faint image of the patch will still remain, but it will be green in color. The eye becomes so fatigued from registering red that it may take several moments for it to register the red rays found in white light with the ease with which it registers the yellow and blue rays. This experiment may be tried with any color, and the color induced will be its complementary, since the complementary color contains what the other color lacks.

CHAPTER VI

PRINCIPLES OF SHOW-CARD ADVERTISING

"The weaknesses of advertising are due largely to the neglect of the primary principles of the art."
S. Roland Hall.

66. Importance of Study.—The principles of show-card advertising should be studied carefully, for many reasons, instead of being given slight consideration. The advancement of present day show-card standards over those of a few years ago requires a better acquaintance with advertising principles. The work of many clever card writers and the printed display material sent out by manufacturers offer considerable competition. The influence of the high-grade cards displayed in city department stores has spread to the smaller cities thus raising the general standard. It follows, then, that a competent show-card writer must not only have ability in lettering but he must have a certain familiarity with the fundamental principles of retail selling and publicity. Well-planned cards increase sales. Poorly-planned cards are a waste of time and money. It is imperative, therefore, that the modern card writer make a critical study of his handiwork and that of his rivals, break away from the mere announcement type, and produce cards which will add to his reputation and at the same time increase his employer's sales.

67. Planning the Advertising.—Advertising should not be a haphazard undertaking but should follow certain definite steps. The first step should be the looking over of the stock and the selecting of several articles for advertising with certain definite reasons in mind for choosing those particular articles. Next, the best selling points for one of the chosen articles should be determined and a proposed wording of the card written out. Then on the card itself, or on scratch paper, the layout of this wording should be roughly sketched. If the first layout is not satisfactory, it may be rearranged until it has been made into what seems to be the best possible form, when the card will be

ready for inking in. This systematic procedure for each of the articles to be advertised will produce the best layouts, the quality of the layout depending upon the time and pains taken in planning the card.

There is a variety of talking points with which the wording may concern itself. New interest may be aroused in staple

FIG. 136.—An example of window advertising which duplicates billboard publicity.

articles or the card may act as a follow-up of the advertising found in widely read periodicals, billboards, or street cars. The practice of tying up the advertising on all publicity, whether it be in the window, in the newspaper, or on the billboard, is considered by many good practice in advertising. Illustrations of window advertising of this nature are shown in Fig. 136. This advertisement is a duplication of the advertising used by this

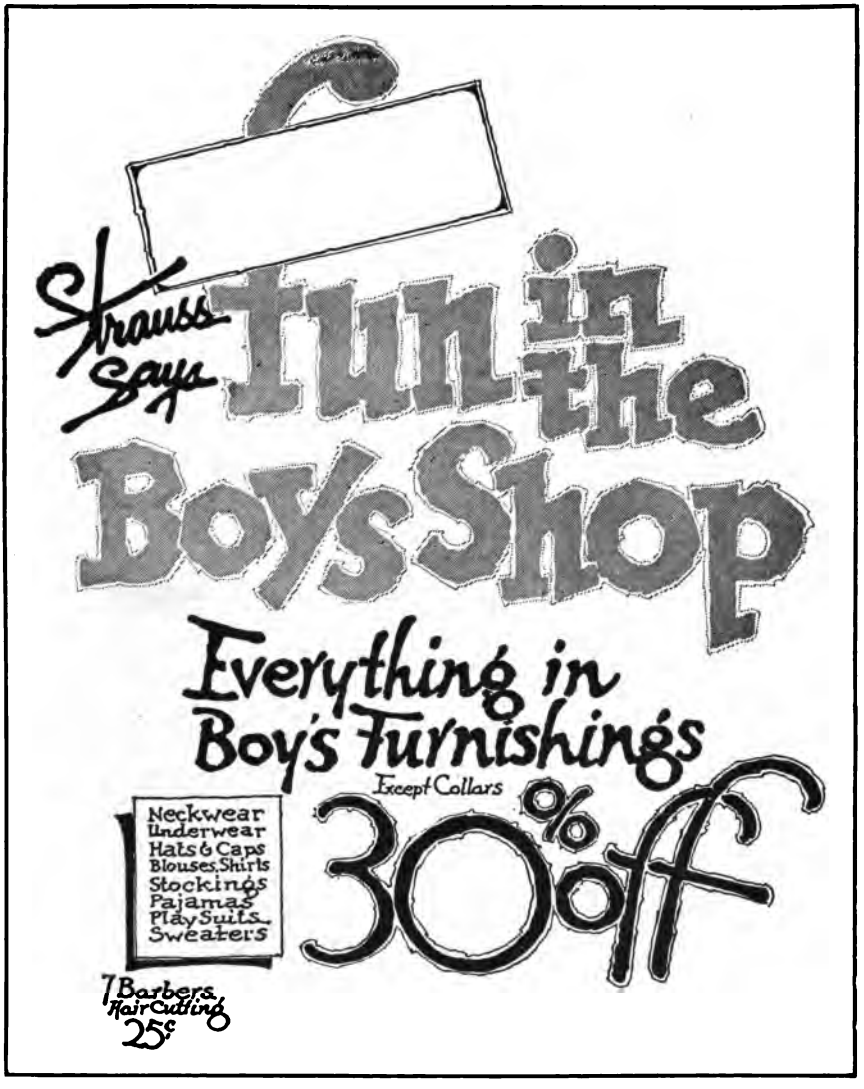

FIG. 137.—A clothing store card, calling attention to a new convenience for customers (barber shop) in the boys' furnishing department.

firm on its billboards, thus attracting more attention both to the billboards and to the window advertising. The example shown in this figure is patterned after this firm's outdoor advertising. The illustration shows a "history book" which was used in certain parts of the country. At the right of the sign is an ink bottle with a service sign lettered on it in orange and white and supplemented by a black and white invitation to look for this sign. The nature of the design is such as to make it easily remembered and instantly recognizable.

An unusual method for tying up the show card with the other advertising is to use hand lettered advertisements in the paper and letter the display cards so that they practically duplicate the newspaper advertising. The hand lettered advertisements by Edward Hermann, reproduced in this chapter, were used in both window and newspaper advertising. Anyone reading the advertisement in the evening paper would see practically the same thing in the store window, doubly strengthening the impression first received. The firm using these cards makes it a policy to make note, in its advertising, of anniversaries, conventions, and other matters of interest, also using the phrase "Strauss says" over all the headlines.

New conveniences for the benefit of customers may be announced as in Fig. 137 which not only advertises the boys' clothing department but in the lower left-hand corner calls attention to the barber shop for boys.

The number of talking points which are practicable in the wording of show cards may be further extended to include announcements of new goods received, services and conveniences which have always been a feature of the store, remodelling of certain departments, and changes in bookkeeping and charge account methods. Announcement may be made of new goods received, or attention may be called to the brands of merchandise for which the store has the exclusive agency. Anniversaries, celebrations, or seasons of special significance such as camping, gardening, house cleaning may also be considered in planning cards. Attention may be called in an impressive and distinctive manner to the changes in the seasons of the year and their effect upon the customer's purchases. An example of a seasonal display is shown in Fig. 138, the wording of the card in the display "Formal Showing of Hats and Apparel for Southern Wear"

serving to call the attention of the wealthier customers to their needs when they go south for the winter. The card is simple and direct, but it is too small to show well in the picture. It is decorated by just a suggestion of palms, clouds, and the blue sea. The display is simple and suggestive also, the flowers, the peacock, the golf clubs, and other details reminding one of a winter in the south. When to all of these talking points has been added the announcement of special sales or price reductions, the list of subject matter for cards is complete enough to furnish

FIG. 138.—A window display appealing to the interests of customers who winter in the South.

an abundance of material for any retailer who makes use of show-card publicity.

68. Wording the Card.—The card should contain actual information about the goods offered and should not be worded with some generality like, "A complete line of serviceable footwear." A short, crisp description of the style and material of the shoes is infinitely better. Retail advertising is often spoken of as "store news" and if the cards contain information which appeals to and interests the customer, there will be a greater probability of their being read.

It is well sometimes to suit the wording to certain particular classes of customers. Appeals to certain classes of people should be conservative and refined, while to others they may be so simple

as to be almost crude. For the economical type of customer, emphasis upon price and durability will prove the most interesting. When planning what to say the card writer should be guided by the tastes of the community and not by his own, for he is not selling to himself but to the community.

There are certain requirements to which the wording should conform. It should be brief, not going to such length as a magazine might go in indicating the merits of certain merchandise. At the same time it should be complete, finishing whatever it starts out to proclaim. It should also be clear, as what is familiar to the retailer is often difficult for the customer to

FIG. 139.—A card whose wording is in the form of a hint or suggestion.

understand. It should be suggestive rather than argumentative, as in the wedding gift card, Fig. 139. In this case, the style of lettering is also in keeping with the idea of gifts for such an occasion. Notwithstanding the fact that the wording should preferably be suggestive, show cards are often in the form of commands. The inscription "One thousand suggestions for wedding presents" is suggestive, while "Do your Christmas shopping early" and "Give him a man's gift from a man's store" are in the form of commands. Both forms are acceptable and effective though for various reasons one style at times may be more desirable than the other.

Something descriptive and suggestive should be said about the article which the card is to advertise. Such vague statements as "Best in town" are of no real selling value as no one pays much attention to them. The wording should be short and to the point, avoiding all unnecessary words. Such phrases as "Read this" or "Your chance" are in most cases as superfluous as beginning an ordinary conversation with "Dear Sir." The

words should run along smoothly, avoiding phrases which are so short as to sound jerky. Positive rather than negative appeals should be used. It is better to say "Do" than "Do not." In Fig. 140 "Give him a man's gift from a man's store" was used rather than "Don't buy a man's gift from a woman's store."

FIG. 140.—A card whose wording is in the form of a direct command.

Benefits should be suggested rather than disagreeable experiences. An excellent method of interesting the customer is to suggest something from his own experience and connect that in some way with the goods offered. Many a flashlight has been sold by display cards reading, "Where was your flashlight when the lights

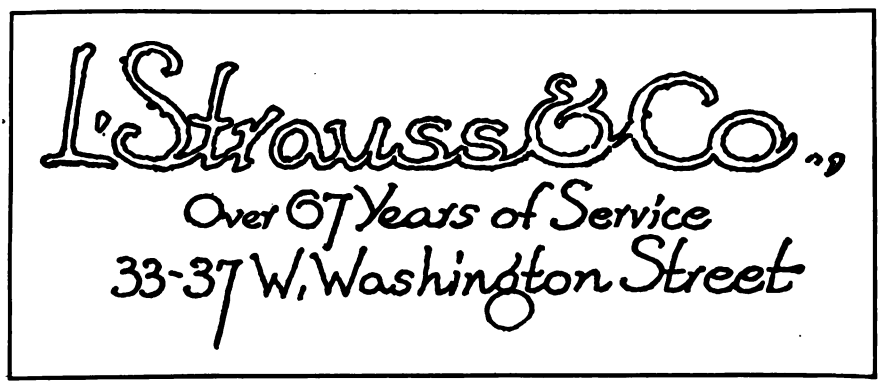

FIG. 141.—A name plate aiming to create confidence and faith in the store.

went out last night?" Humorous or freakish cards are out-of-date. Cards are read for the information which they give, and jokes and cartoons seldom do much to serve this purpose. They attract attention more often to themselves than to the articles on sale. When the text of the card is being lettered, the spelling and grammar should be watched carefully. Spelling is often

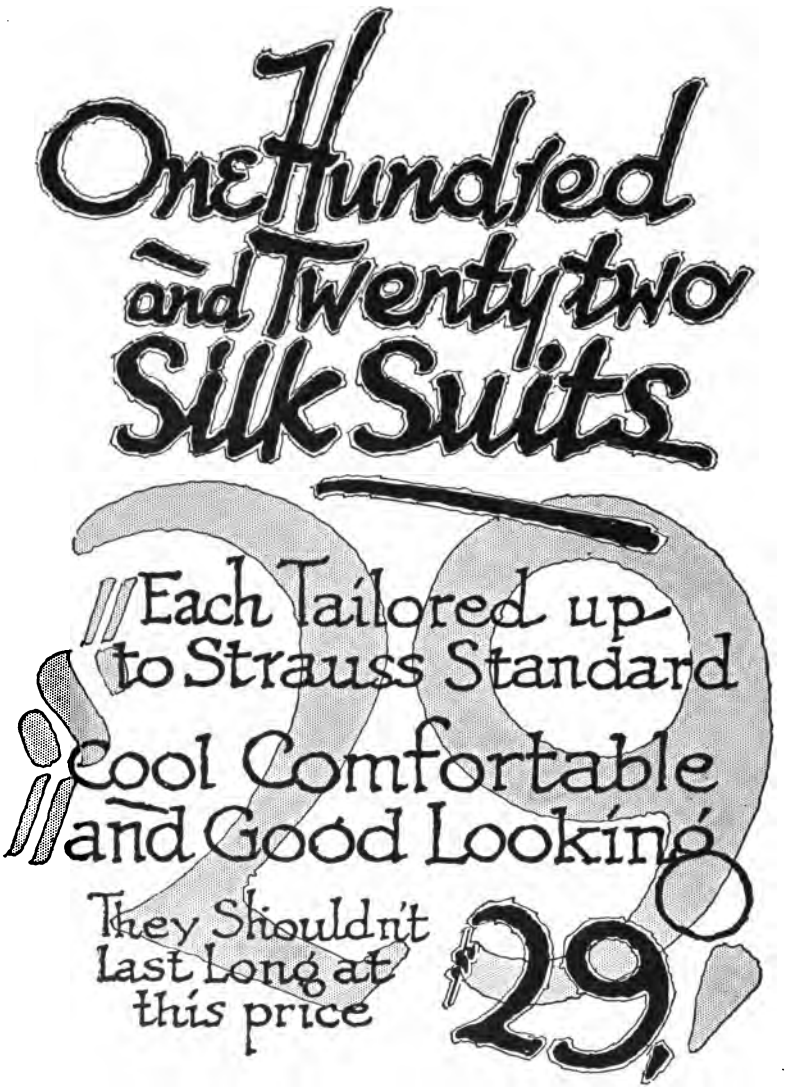

FIG. 142.—A card aiming to give evidence of full value and calling attention also to the limited number of suits on sale.

overlooked when the writer's mind is fixed on the lettering itself.

69. Aim of the Wording.—The wording should carry conviction, promoting faith in both the store and the goods it has for sale. Faith in a store was promoted in the inscription shown in Fig. 141 by calling attention to the fact that the store had been in business for 67 years. The prestige gained from such a long time in business was well worth mentioning in the publicity of the store. Straightforward language, conservative and unexaggerated claims, and evidence of giving full value are the things which breed confidence in retail advertising. Certain classes of customers might doubt the quality of the $29.00 suits offered in the advertisement, Fig. 142, had the reassuring statement, "Each Tailored up to Strauss Standard," been omitted.

The wording should also be persuasive. A purchase is encouraged when the inscription draws up a pleasant picture in the customer's imagination as in the words, "Cool, Comfortable, and Good Looking," Fig. 142. The wording may be made persuasive also by indicating the ease with which a purchase may be paid for or delivered, or special services rendered by the store to its customers such as free telephone use, waiting rooms, free check rooms, nurseries, and other conveniences which shoppers would be likely to appreciate. It is possible, too, that a customer might be persuaded to buy some article by suggesting the reasons why he might regret it if he did not. The illustration and the wording of Fig. 143 suggest to the youth of high school age that "good clothes will turn the trick." A time limit to a sale, or a limited amount of material in stock also emphasize the need for immediate purchase, or the suggestion, "They shouldn't last long at this price," Fig. 142. Some cards close with a command, or clincher, as it is called. While a clincher has some merit a well-planned card needs no such device since the wording will be as effective without it.

70. Gaining Attention of Reader.—Attention may be gained by two means: by the wording itself and by its mechanical arrangement on the card. While the card writer must give the necessary time and thought as to how he is going to secure the attention of passersby, the methods employed must not be too apparent, but should make their appeal without the reader's being conscious of any device or method being used.

As far as the wording of any show card is concerned no two

people respond exactly alike to any appeal devised to get their attention, but still there is enough similarity to consider the reactions of groups of people. People living in rural communi-

FIG. 143.—An illustrated card with a "human interest" appeal.

ties respond more quickly to attempts at securing their attention and take the time to read longer inscriptions than do city people. There is also a great difference in the response of the sexes. Women are more interested in shopping than men, and, as they do nine-tenths of it, they make purchases more leisurely. Women

often enter a store for the sole purpose of looking about to see what is offered, without having any specific purchase in mind at the time. Men, on the other hand, usually dislike to shop. They buy articles in more or less of a hurry and take small notice of anything advertised on show cards. In the case of some hobby, however, they often run to the other extreme. A man who is interested in fishing will canvass every sporting goods store in town to buy a particular type of fish-hook, while he may resent spending more than ten minutes in selecting a hat.

In Chap. IV the principles of placing and arranging were discussed from an artistic viewpoint. These principles have a commercial value as well which card writers should recognize, as they are one of the means by which the reader's attention may be gained.

S. W. Holliday of the Poster Advertising Company gives the following as the six essentials of the wording and mechanical arrangement of advertising posters—which applies equally as well to show cards.

"A poster should be (1) simple and bold in design; (2) brief in text; (3) understood at sight; (4) pleasing and strong in color; (5) balanced in composition; and (6) designed to attract attention in some particular."

71. Three Types of Readers.—There are three types of readers. One type approaches a window with a certain article in mind to see whether it is being offered for sale. The second type simply looks about to satisfy his curiosity as to what is being offered. The third type has no definite article in mind and is not even curious but simply rushes by and pays no attention to what is offered unless attracted to the display unconsciously, either by the wording of the card or by its striking and effective arrangement. In planning cards one should not overlook these three types of readers but should remember the requirements which they impose upon cards if the desired attention is to be gained.

72. Listing Selling Points.—Articles to be advertised by show cards should be analyzed in order that their selling points may be determined. After an analysis has revealed the main selling points, they may be written in a list. This list should

not be the result of only one person's investigation or judgment but inquiries should be made of other people to ascertain the selling points they prefer. Manufacturers usually suggest selling

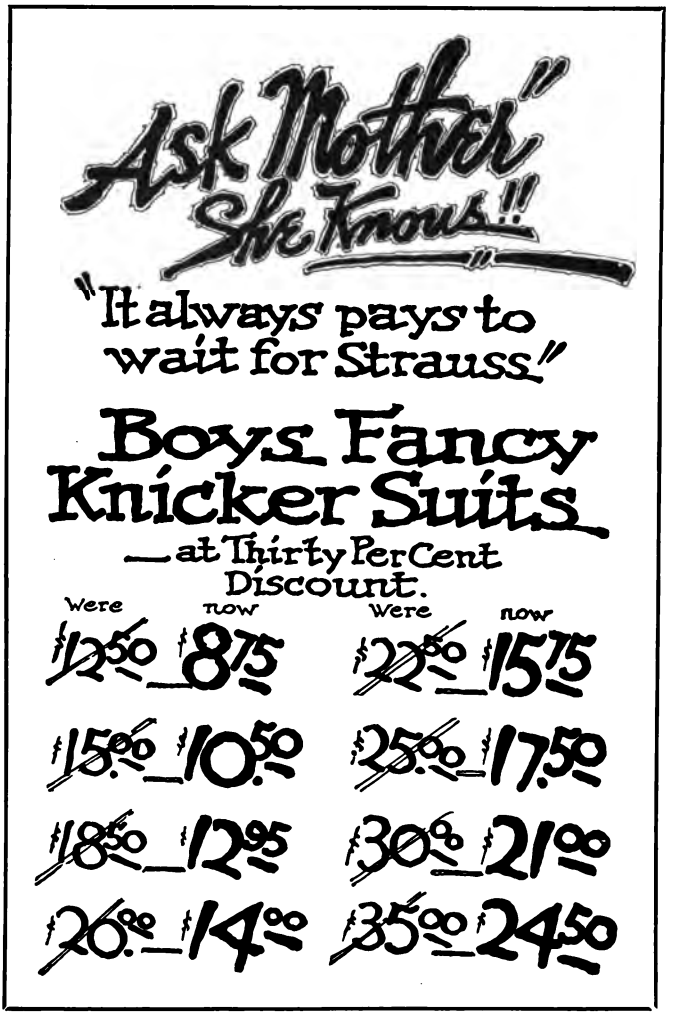

FIG. 144.—A sale announcement listing the price reductions.

points, and the clerks in the store may give the opinions of their customers as well as their own. Friends and relatives may also be approached and a practical list arranged from these various sources of information.

No one card should attempt to contain all the selling points of an article, as such a list would kill the interest of most readers and create so much confusion that it would be difficult to put emphasis on the best points offered. Four selling points are about the maximum any one card should contain.

A long price list is almost as objectionable as a long list of selling points. Both should be avoided. Fig. 144 shows a reduction in the price of eight different grades of goods. Had this price list been any longer it is doubtful if many would have read the entire list. A long list is permissible if the purpose of the card is to create the impression that a large sale is going on, in which case that impression alone is all that is necessary.

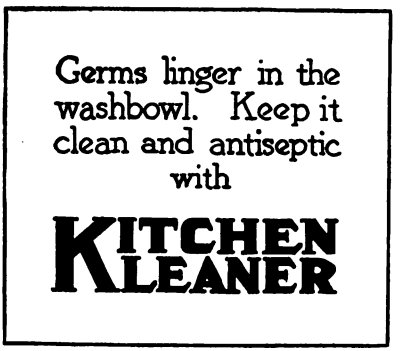

FIG. 145.—An appeal to interest in health and cleanliness.

Actual reading of an entire list of reductions is not really expected of each passerby, although people of extremely economical inclinations might read every item in the list.

The selling points should be arranged with care, the best point being placed first upon the card. The next to the best point, instead of being placed second, should be placed last so as to make the closing as strong as possible. The weakest point should follow the first, the weakness of this second point being offset by the strength of the first. The remaining points, if more are used, may be arranged in whatever order seems to be the best.

73. Basis of Appeals.—There are a number of classes of appeals by which the customer's interest may be gained. The card may be worded so as to appeal to one of the five senses. The mention of the tone of a piano makes an appeal to the sense

of hearing; the flavor of an article of food to the sense of taste; good-looking clothes to the sense of sight; comfort to feeling; and delightful odors to smelling. A story is told of a contractor for a public building who sprinkled perfume about the interior of the building, just previous to its inspection by the building committee, so that the agreeable odor might create a feeling of satisfaction with the workmanship without the committee's being conscious of the trick.

Instead of basing an appeal on one of the five senses, the wording may be made to appeal to the customer's individual interests. His tastes may be made the basis of getting his attention

FIG. 146.—A card calling attention to a new novel.

by emphasizing such qualities as cleanliness, Fig. 145. The full, open, lower case letters with slender strokes suggest cleanliness, while the heavy, sturdy, display type is a fitting reminder of sturdy, substantial scrubbing brushes. The customer's taste for reading may be the basis of an appeal to his attention, as in Fig. 146 which omits the title of the book, thus inducing the passerby to notice the book itself. Appeals may be based on the habits of certain classes of people and their style of living. Economy appeals to people of frugal habits. A card advertising a 30 per cent discount, as in Fig. 147, would catch the attention of such people quite readily. On the other hand, to persons of spendthrift habits, this sort of an appeal would be valueless.

There are a number of interests which are more or less common to all types of people. "All the world loves a lover" and the June wedding scene used in the window display in Fig. 2 would appeal to all passersby. Although only one card is displayed in the window and on it the words "The Bride," practically

everyone looking at such a window would instinctively take it for granted that the store had attractive trousseaux and wedding gifts for sale.

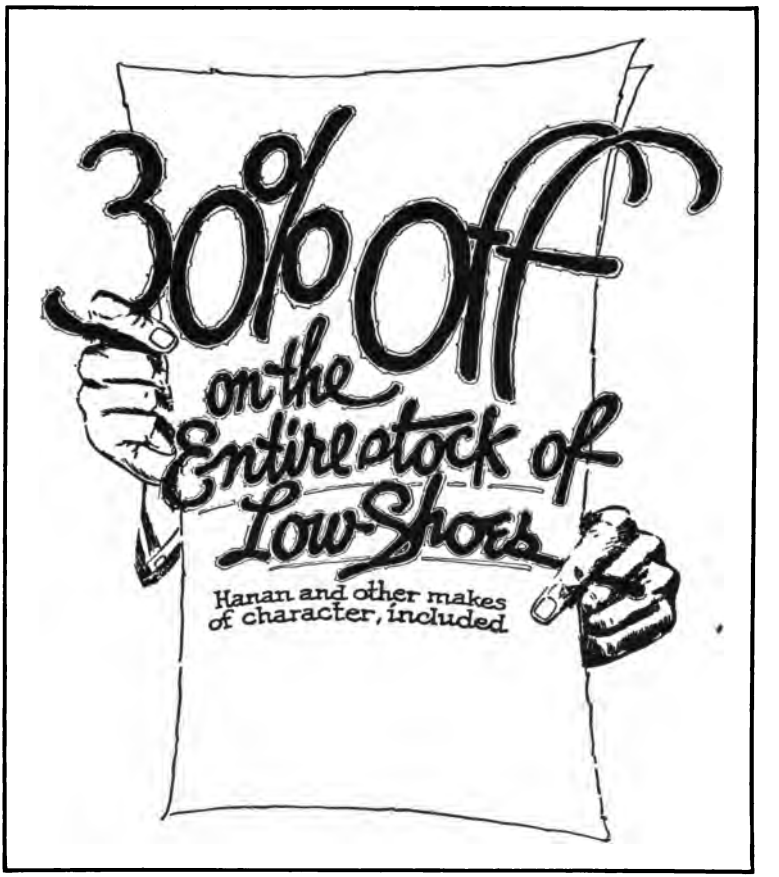

FIG. 147.—An appeal to economy.

Parental interest is stimulated by suggestions relative to the happiness and welfare of children. "Ask mother, she knows," Fig. 144, is a direct appeal to this interest. Lemonade vendors on circus day appreciate the pulling power of intimations that children are unhappy without a glass of lemonade. The instinct of imitation is another basis for many sales. Popularity, the spirit of "Everybody's doing it now," has sold many an auto-

mobile, ukelele, or ouija board. The desire to make things, the constructive instinct, has a distinct value also. "Build it yourself" and "Roll your own" are slogans based on this desire. Guarantees and safety devices may be said to appeal to the instinct of self-preservation. The joy and benefits of ownership, the common desire to possess something, must not be omitted from the catalog of instincts. The spirit of pride, whether it be in personal appearance or in the beautifying of one's premises, has been responsible for many sales. To these interests may still be added personal hobbies, love of individuality, or special designs, making any number of appeals by which one's interest may be aroused by the wording on a show card, and a sale encouraged.

74. Headlines.—Headlines are sometimes called display lines since they are more prominently displayed than the body of the inscription. They may be divided by one method into three classes: headlines containing the name of the article only, as in Fig. 142, in which the heading simply reads, "One hundred and twenty-two silk suits"; headlines making a bald statement of some selling point or matter of interest to the customer, as "Fun in the boy's shop," Fig. 137; and headlines in which the article is named and a selling point stated also, as in Fig. 147, where the kind of shoes offered is mentioned and the large discount stated.

Headlines may be divided by another method into three other classes: those making an ordinary statement, Fig. 147; those written in the form of a question as, "Where was your flashlight when the lights went out last night?"; and those worded in the form of commands as, "Give him a man's gift from a man's store," Fig. 140.

Headlines should be of such a nature as to make it easy to read on into the body of the card. One should lead into the other, no break occurring in the thought between the two. The freakish and the unusual headline does not do this so well as the better known types of headlines, as it attracts too much attention to itself.

75. Correcting Errors.—Errors are often made by misspelling and omitting words, which usually happens on rush orders when little time can be afforded for redrawing the card. Redrawing may be avoided in such cases by painting out the whole

line of lettering with the color in which the line was made and then doing the lettering over again in white. The line when painted out may be given some attractive shape which will add rather than detract from the appearance of the card, Fig. 148. Sometimes a misspelled word can be painted out with white and the word lettered over again, condensing the letters so that the correct spelling will occupy the same amount of space as the original lettering.

Another method is to glue a thin piece of cardboard over the misspelled word and do the lettering over again on the patch. This patching is usually not noticeable at a short distance if it is carefully done. The edges of the patch may be beveled with a safety razor blade so as to make them less noticeable.

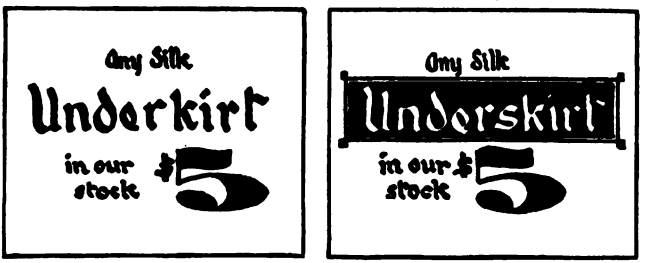

FIG. 148.—A misspelled word corrected by repainting.

If none of these methods is used and the lettering is scratched out with a sharp knife or safety razor blade it should be done slowly and with as little harm as possible to the surface of the card. When ink or color cakes on the card, it may be scratched off easily. After the color is removed, the surface of the card may be rubbed with an eraser and then smoothed with the thumb nail or a knife handle. A little soapstone powder helps in bringing back a surface upon which the color or ink will not blot. Sticks of soapstone may be procured from tinners who use it to mark on metal. By scraping the end of the stick with a knife enough powder will result to rub over the rough spot where the correction is to be made.

An erasing device which may be used in place of a knife or safety razor and which erases the ink very quickly without defacing the card is shown in Fig. 149. This device consists of a barrel about the thickness of a lead pencil and about half

as long. By turning the cap, the glass-like fiber brush can be adjusted to the proper working length. For best results the fibers should not extend through the nozzle more than an eighth of an inch. The eraser should be held in a perpendicular position, thus preventing the edges of the brush from wearing to a point. The brush can be replaced for a few cents and inserted in the barrel whenever the old brush wears out. It is usually

FIG. 149.—An erasing device which may be used for removing ink or color.

possible to letter directly over the spot erased unless the cardboard is spongy and soft.

When one is erasing with an ordinary rubber eraser it is difficult to confine the erasing to just the part where the error was made. To protect the surrounding letters or to erase just one line, an erasing shield, Fig. 150, should be used. By moving the adjustable blade over any opening in the shield an aperture

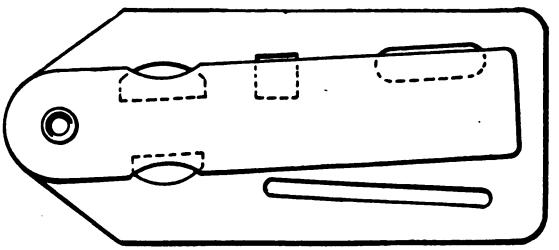

FIG. 150.—Metal adjustable erasing shield.

of the desired shape and size is obtained so that a stroke closely surrounded by others may be removed neatly without defacing the adjacent lines.

76. General Suggestions.—In actual commercial practice speed is very essential, but this element should be ignored when one is first learning to letter. Speed will come later, after familiarity with the letters has been acquired by slow and thoughtful practice. The student who studies slowly, later becomes the craftsman who works swiftly and accurately. Hurried work is seldom the best work, whether it is lesson work or lettering for commercial use.

One should be constantly on the lookout for well designed layouts, particularly in the better class of magazine advertisements. A notebook in which to keep sketches of these layouts will be a great help, as one cannot always rely upon the memory.

In large stores the card writing and window trimming departments are often under the supervision of the advertising manager. Positions in these departments become stepping-stones to positions in the advertising department. It is advisable, then, for one who wishes to get ahead, not only to make a diligent study of the principles of advertising as they apply to card writing but to carry his study further by studying retail selling and advertising. Such a plan should make advancement rapid and repay one for the effort.

CHAPTER VII

CARD WRITING PRACTICE

"The professional show-card writer is as important a part of modern business methods and equipment as the clerk who hands the goods over the counter."

Geo. H. Stipp.

77. Commercial Viewpoint.—The card designer working under commercial conditions must adapt his viewpoint to the commercial rather than to the academic and theoretical angle. The speed and ease with which cards can be completed and the effect these cards will have upon his reputation are the things with which he will be more concerned. The application of card writing principles to show cards is what interests the professional card writer. The earnings of a card writer depend a great deal upon the quantity of work he is able to turn out, increase in quantity meaning an increase in income. If the cards are of a superior quality, a higher charge is justifiable. If the work is done speedily, more can be handled.

The merchant purchasing the card has his viewpoint also. He is concerned with the appearance of the card, its appropriateness for the purpose he has in mind, and its ability to promote sales.

It is interesting to note how completely at sea the average merchant or any other customer is when trying to explain the kind of a card that is desired. For instance, a merchant wants something new and novel to go with a Fall Exhibition which he is planning to have in the windows of his store, the cards to reflect the character of the displays. He asks for autumn colors but still does not wish any of the ordinary and well-known schemes for obtaining these seasonal effects. He has no definite idea of what he wants at all but he knows immediately, when shown some cards, whether or not they are what he wants. A card writer often finds himself trying to meet just such a situation. Usually if he succeeds in pleasing his customer, it adds greatly to his reputation as a card writer. It is in an emergency

of this sort that a notebook of ideas is valuable as it may be drawn upon for help.

FIG. 151.—A style of type which gives the impression of cheapness.

78. First Impressions.—In considering the wording and appearance of a card, the card writer should concern himself with the first impression the card will give to the reader. If the

FIG. 152.—The same wording as that in Fig. 151, lettered more attractively.

lettering is not harmonious with the merchandise on sale, the reader may get the wrong idea in regard to the quality of the goods. The border, the style of lettering, and the cardboard

should all be considered as they are factors which contribute to the general effect. For instance, if a certain lot of perfume were offered as a special attraction in the drug department of a large store and a white card were lettered in black, as in Fig. 151, the impression of cheapness and inferiority would be felt at the first glance. If a linen finished mat of cream or buff color were used instead of the plain white card and lettered in green, using a style of type as shown in Fig. 152, the impression

FIG. 153.—A card using but one talking point. (*Design by A. Ohlman. Courtesy of Poster Magazine, Chicago.*)

would be that of novelty. This card would be very appropriate for advertising Oriental perfumes as the lettering has a suggestion of Japanese style.

79. Unity of Thought in Inscription.—The show-card writer should not try to say too much on a show card. He should, when possible, put no more than a single idea in the appeal as too many ideas rob the card of its effectiveness. One idea properly put forth as a rule makes the most successful type of card.

An example of unity of thought is shown in Fig. 153, the aim being to arouse interest in books. This one idea was all that was considered on the card. Had the card been cluttered up

with numerous talking points on the thousand and one benefits of books it would have sacrificed its simplicity and unity and been less effective.

In line with unity of thought in a card is the repetition of an idea, selling point, or name throughout several cards so as to give unity to an entire series of cards. "In union there is

FIG. 154.—An interesting example of individuality. (*Design by Wood Maclane. Courtesy of Poster Magazine, Chicago.*)

strength"; therefore, repetition of some one idea throughout several cards emphasizes and deepens the impression of that idea.

80. Individuality.—Sooner or later the show-card writer forms the habit of using one or more styles of lettering with certain variations which he has developed for himself. His lettering becomes as individual as his hand writing, and he needs no better advertisement than this individuality.

An interesting example of individuality is Wood Maclane's announcement card shown in Fig. 154. This illustration shows a girl in a loose-flowing tunic dancing to the music of pipes played by a satyr. Roses hang from the girl's shoulders and form a crown for the satyr. The background is a woodsy brown which sets off the figures in the design. The details are drawn

FIG. 155.—A collection of cards by different designers indicating variety in individual treatment with no change in the wording.
(Courtesy of Signs of the Times, Cincinnati.)

simply, a peculiarly individual treatment being given to every part of the design. The girl's hair is outlined in a few simple wavy lines, and the flowers are exceedingly simple, though unusual and novel. Cards of this style are becoming more popular, especially in theatrical advertising.

A collection of six cards showing individuality is illustrated in Fig. 155, each card being drawn by a different designer. Two are made without the introduction of the human figure and

two introduce silhouettes, while only two of the six show the human form in a more or less realistic fashion. The trade mark is the only detail repeated in all six designs, the treatment of the lettering and drawing being different in each card.

Expression of individuality can be accomplished successfully only after one is thoroughly familiar with the usual styles of

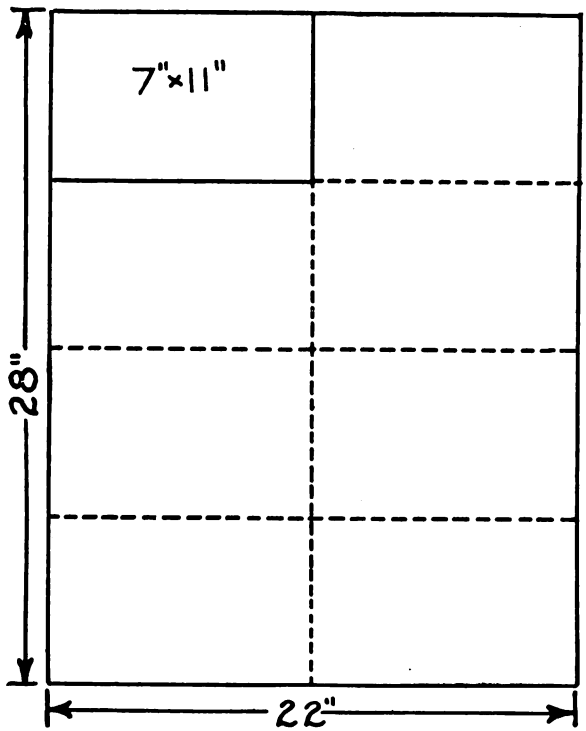

FIG. 156.—A full-sized sheet cut into eighths.

lettering. For this reason the student should not attempt to letter in too many different styles. A mastery of some form of the Roman will be sufficient to meet most of his everyday needs. Gradually he will adopt variations of his own. The factors which make for good work, such as spacing, proportion, balance, and good construction of letters, are much the same in all styles of lettering so no trouble should be experienced in applying the principles to any style. The policy of using but one or two styles

concentrates the student's efforts, enabling him to give earlier attention to individuality.

81. Laying Out the Card.—In order to study the method of making show cards it may be assumed for example that a certain merchant wants four cards, all alike, to be placed on the showcases in the necktie department of his clothing store. These neckties are to sell at $2.50 each and are the coming fall styles.

FIG. 157.—A cardboard trimmer in operation.

In considering the order the card writer decides that the cards need not be large since they will be displayed near the neckties on the counter. Like a number of retail stores this store does not use colored cards so the lettering will be black and the card white. A tall narrow card is preferable since it will harmonize best with the shape of the ties, and will stand out on the counter more prominently than a low rectangular card.

A one-twelfth sheet of bristol board will be the most convenient standard size of cardboard to use. This size is made by cutting

the full sheet, a sheet 22 by 28 in. in size, in two across the 22-in. edge and in six pieces across the 28-in. edge, each piece being about 4½ by 11 in. By cutting the large sheets into a certain

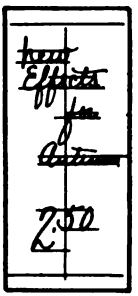

FIG. 158.—Rough draft of a proposed card.

number of parts,—quarters, sixths, eighths, and so on—there is no waste, Fig. 156.

A trimmer may be used for cutting the sheets of bristol board, Fig. 157. It may be fitted with gauges for measuring the width

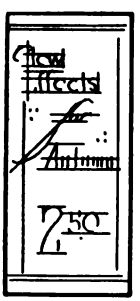

FIG. 159.—Pencil lay-out for a proposed card.

of the sheet automatically, although the table section is equipped with a ruler and ruled with lines so that the sheet can be measured without any gauge if desired. A much smoother and straighter edge can be cut with this trimmer than with a pair of shears or a knife and in much less time. Cardboard supply houses are usually equipped with cutters of this sort so that cards

may be purchased already cut in any desired size. In the large studios, however, cards are trimmed to size as they are used, as it is difficult to estimate in advance how many cards of a certain size will be needed.

After the cards are cut in twelfth sheets from the full-sized sheets of bristol board, the lettering is roughly laid out on a piece of scratch paper. This layout is then pencilled in on the card itself, Fig. 158. A modified Roman style of type is selected since masculine tastes do not run to the fancier styles of letters. Slight variations are introduced to give the card the spirit of newness and novelty so that it will suggest the newness and novelty of the coming fall styles of ties. The lettering is roughly

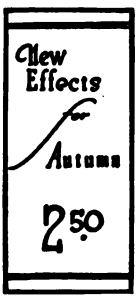

FIG. 160.—Show card with the lettering inked in.

pencilled in with a sharp, pointed stick of charcoal, as in Fig. 159, double border lines being drawn near the top and the bottom of the card. Small squares may be drawn in the large white spaces to embellish the card and to relieve its plainness. Inking in completes the card, Fig. 160, and when the ink is dry, the charcoal may be dusted off with a cloth. See also Fig. 161.

82. Making Duplicate Cards.—There are several ways in which duplicate cards may be made. A sheet of tracing paper may be laid over a completed card and a tracing made in pencil. The tracing can then be placed over a clean card and a sheet of black carbon paper inserted underneath the tracing. The tracing may be gone over quickly and roughly with a hard, sharp pencil, a rough carbon copy of the original card, which can be inked in immediately, showing on the new card. Black carbon

paper should be used, as lines made by the use of purple carbon paper do not erase so well.

Another method of laying out duplicates is to tack the original card alongside a new card and project guide lines across the new card with a T-square, laying off the height of the lines of lettering from one card to the other, Fig. 161. After these horizontal lines are drawn, the original card may be tacked above the new card and the length and position of each word located by projecting lines downward by means of the T-square. The lettering may then be put in on the layout, when the new card will duplicate the original.

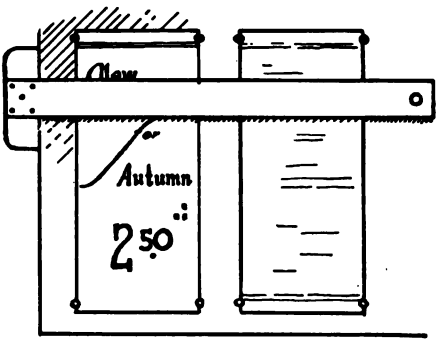

FIG. 161.—Laying out duplicate cards by projecting lines with a T-square.

A more convenient type of straight-edge than the ordinary T-square is the parallel rule attachment, Fig. 162, which may be fitted to large sized drawing tables. The rule is kept perfectly horizontal at all times by means of the pulleys shown on the under-side of the board. It does not have to be held in position by the hand as does the ordinary T-square.

Still another method used when duplicate cards are drawn is that of cutting two narrow paper guide strips, laying off all the horizontal dimensions of the words and lines on one and all the vertical dimensions on the other, and tacking one strip above and the other along the edge of the new card, Fig. 163. Using a T-square, the height of the letters may be projected across the card from the strip containing the vertical dimensions. If two or three cards are tacked down on the board in a row, the T-square will reach across all of them and make it possible to

lay off the height of the letters over all of the cards at one time. Using the triangle and T-square, the length of the words and lines may be projected downward from the strip containing the horizontal dimensions. After the horizontal and vertical

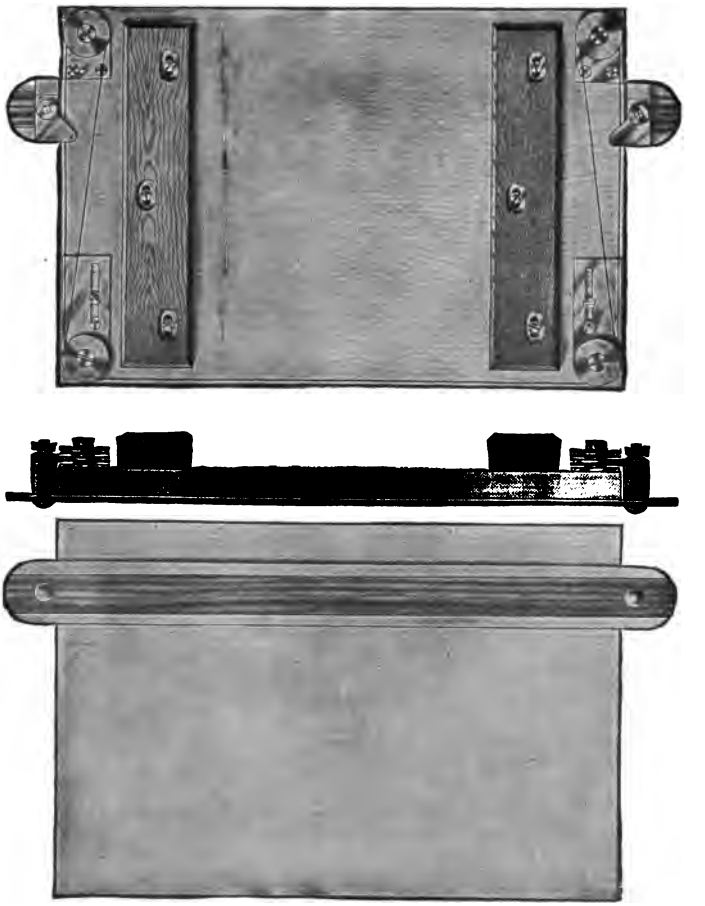

FIG. 162.—Parallel rule attachment with straight-edge.

dimensions are laid off, the lettering may be pencilled in as usual and then inked in.

83. Practical Show-card Designs.—In designing a card the style of lettering should be one adapted to the tools used. Brush styles of letters are too bulky to be drawn with pens, and pen styles are not simple enough to be drawn with brushes without

considerable difficulty. The necktie card, Fig. 164, is one that was originally drawn with a flat shoe type of pen. The letters

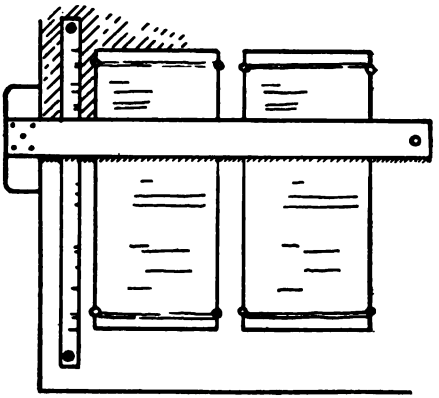

FIG. 163.—Laying out duplicate cards by means of a measuring strip and a T-square.

themselves are just such letters as would be most easily made with that style of pen. The border design is also one which

FIG 164.—A necktie show card drawn with a flat shoe type of pen.

could be drawn quickly with this type of pen along a ruler or straight-edge, and harmonizes very well with the lettering.

The layout of Fig. 164 is also worthy of study, the heading being set off by considerable white space and by the two lines of lettering being spaced a little further apart than usual. The wording of the heading induces the reader to note the scarfs, leading him to examine the goods. The second panel of lettering is directly underneath and in line with the heading. Guide lines from the heading were drawn downwards with the triangle and T-square when the layout was made. The wording is brief

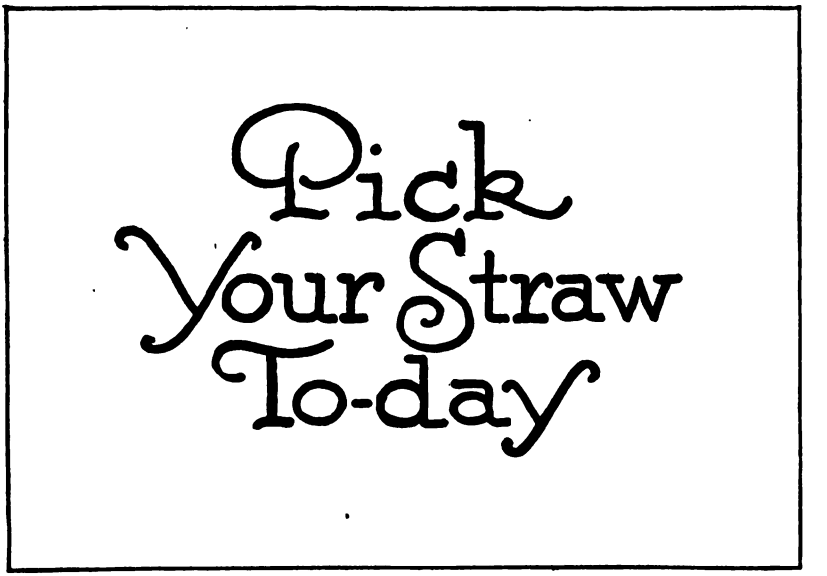

FIG. 165.—A pen-lettered card in open, vertical, single-stroke letters.

and the lines are set closely and compactly. The price mark is printed large. Price marks are usually lettered in fairly heavy numerals to contrast with the lettering. Some designers object to heavy letters or figures near the base of the card, but in this case the numerals are so full and open that this objection is overcome. In all cases, however, the dollar mark should be rather small. The usual practice is to treat it in some unusual and distinctive manner as in this card where it has been simplified by leaving out one of the vertical strokes.

The card advertising straw hats, Fig. 165, is also a pen lettered card, full and open in its style. The theatrical announcement, Fig. 166, like most cards for theaters, is designed with a rather

unique style of lettering. All three of these cards make good use of white space in the margins, thus setting off the lettering.

The collection of cards shown in Fig. 167 was made for a retail drug store. Each card makes use of illustrations, only one of which is a clipping mounted on the card. All of the cards, except

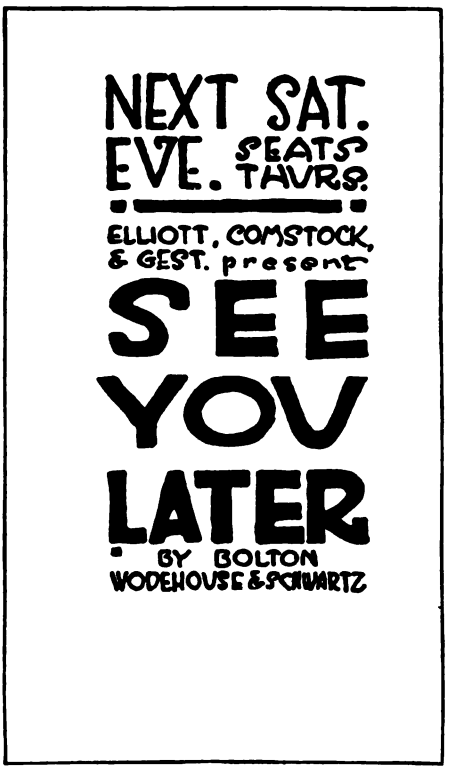

FIG. 166.—A theater announcement in a unique style of lettering.

one, are cut in unusual shapes at the top. Such shapes are effective if they are not too fantastic. The Djer-Kiss advertisement is the only one in this group whose outline is not simple and plain. There is a growing tendency, especially among druggists, to show simple, decorative pictures of the article on sale on the show cards. After one has learned the trick of painting decorative illustrations like these in flat tones, omitting all unnecessary details and putting a suggestive touch here and there

to indicate highlights, it is not difficult to make drawings of simple articles with good effect. The circular shield with the

FIG. 167.—A collection of cards used in a retail drug store. *(Courtesy of Owl Drug Co.)*

short brush strokes radiating about its edge forms a good background to use with either painted or mounted illustrations. Cards of the quality of those shown in Fig. 167 naturally bring

good prices. They are comparatively simple to make, but one should experiment and practice making such designs for some time before attempting to furnish them to the trade steadily. They are too difficult for beginners, but they illustrate clearly the quality of work done in the leading show-card shops throughout the country.

CHAPTER VIII

SIMPLE DESIGNS IN COLOR AIR BRUSH MANIPULATION

"The use of color is probably the easiest means of attracting the eye."
Harry L. Hiett.

84. Effects Produced by Colors.—Color plays upon the feelings in much the same way as music plays upon the emotions. Some colors are cheerful and stimulating while others are gloomy and depressing. Light colors arouse gay moods while dark colors are less inclined to produce such effects. Bright colors play strongly upon the feelings while gray and subdued colors are not so powerful; consequently, the latter are less tiresome. A pure color is neither so dignified nor so refined as a gray color. A moderately gray color has a certain amount of strength in its appeal and at the same time is refined and restful.

Red is the most exciting of all the colors. It is used more for attracting the attention or for decorative purposes during occasions of celebration than any other color. It is, however, fatiguing and should not be used in its purity for permanent work nor displayed where a more refined color is preferable. Yellow is also a color which creates the effect of brightness and gayety and has great strength when used in combination with a dark, contrasting color or with black. Blue is cool and restful. Green is more refreshing than blue. It is easy to associate the cheerful tones of yellow-green with the freshness of spring and early summer. Purple is a color of aristocratic dignity while orange is rich and warm. All these effects should be kept in mind in selecting colors.

85. Selecting Colors.—When one is planning what colors to use, the impression which the card as a whole will give should be kept in mind. The aim should be to secure unity; that is, to give one dominating impression; to have all the details, the colors, the border, the style of lettering, and the cardboard itself, aim toward one general effect. This effect should harmonize with

the character of the display with which the card is to be placed. While some firms use only black and white cards, most firms are willing to use colors when the effect is good. Theaters and drug stores use colored cards quite liberally. The public never outgrows the appeal of well-arranged color.

Simple effects should always be preferred to elaborate schemes. A confusion of colors produces no definite effect but simply bewilders the eye. Colors are most effective when the number used is small.

Feminine tastes lean toward the more delicate and restrained colors. Emphasis may be given such colors, without destroying their refinement, by using them in light, bright tints on a black or dark background when they will have greater carrying power. Women appreciate well-selected color schemes and are quick to detect poorly matched colors. The card writer should use care, therefore, in designing colored cards which are intended for advertising articles to feminine trade.

86. Two-color Schemes.—Simple color schemes of two colors are widely used in card writing. They may be composed of contrasting colors or of analogous colors and are effective and pleasing when well done.

A list of two-color combinations are given below with suggestions as to their worth:

Red with
- Blue—good
- Yellow—moderate
- Orange-red—moderate
- Blue-green—fair
- Yellow-green—fair

Orange with
- Blue—good, but powerful
- Green—fair
- Blue-green—good
- Purple—good, usually

Some schemes in two contrasting colors which may be used in spite of the contrast between the colors are given in the following list:

Violet and light pink of yellowish tinge
Deep blue and yellow-green
Brownish-yellow and deep green
Dull blue and dull orange
Chocolate and pea green
Deep red and gray
Red and yellowish green
Golden brown and olive green

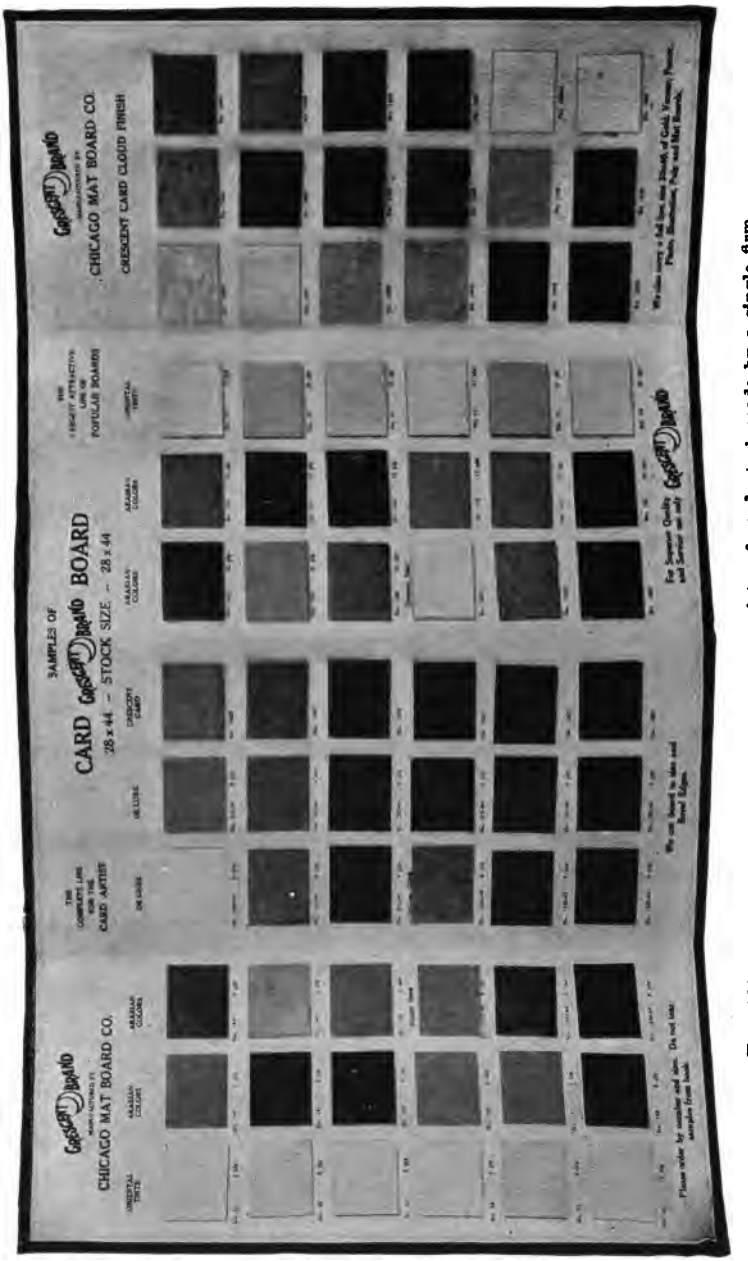

FIG. 168.—A sample sheet illustrating the variety of card stock made by a single firm.

Deep blue and light olive green
Black and buff
Black and light green

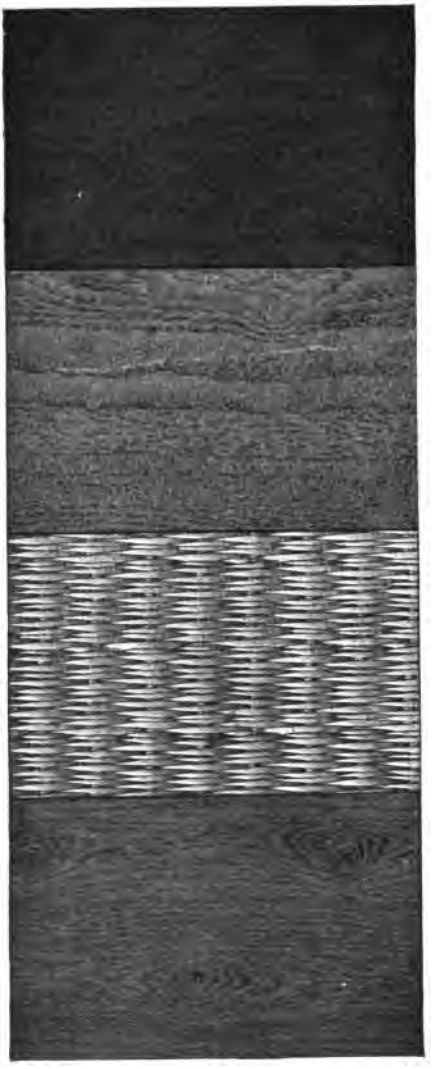

FIG. 169.—Novel finish of card stock in imitation of wood veneer.

A great many colors make suitable two-tone schemes when a light and a dark tone of the same color are used. A scheme of light buff and sepia is a common example. The contrast between the colors in schemes of this sort may be secured by using a pure

tint and a dark tone or by graying a tone in contrast to a brighter, purer tone. Either method will produce two-tone effects, though the result will be different.

87. Effect of Texture.—In aiming for a certain effect, the texture of the card should not be overlooked. Cardboard is made in many different finishes, and each finish has a personality of its own. Cheaper stock may be used when a card is colored than when it is white. A glossy, shiny surface has a less refined appearance than a duller finish. Rough surfaces are known as eggshell, pebble, and linen finishes. Since each finish has a personality of its own, it is necessary to become familiar with the different kinds of cardboard and the sizes in which they are cut. Therefore, one should study the folders of samples which

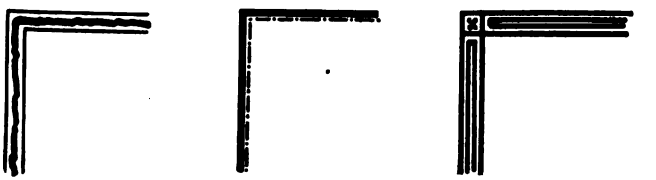

FIG. 170.—Borders suitable for show cards.

dealers in cardboard publish since they indicate the various kinds of stock which they manufacture. An illustration of one of these folders is shown in Fig. 168 which gives an idea of the large range of boards made for card writers. In addition to supplying a large variety of cardboard, the manufacturers usually will fill orders for cards cut to special sizes or fancy shapes with plain, beveled, or gold bronze edges, as desired. Some firms even make a specialty of doing finishing work for customers.

Card finishes imitating wood are shown in Fig. 169. Novel finishes of this sort are quite popular with some card writers, but there is some question, from an artistic viewpoint, as to the propriety of using an imitation of wood veneer as a card background. The finish of this stock is quite realistic and not without some merit, nevertheless.

88. Borders.—Border lines on show cards should not be elaborate as they require too much time in the making and also take the reader's attention from the inscription on the card.

Simple, straight lines are practically as effective as any other kind of border, Fig. 170. The lines in the border should run parallel with the edge of the cardboard, as borders containing lines at right angles to the edge of the card require a much longer time to draw.

Whether a border is used or not, there should be as large a margin on the card as possible. A panel of lettering close to the

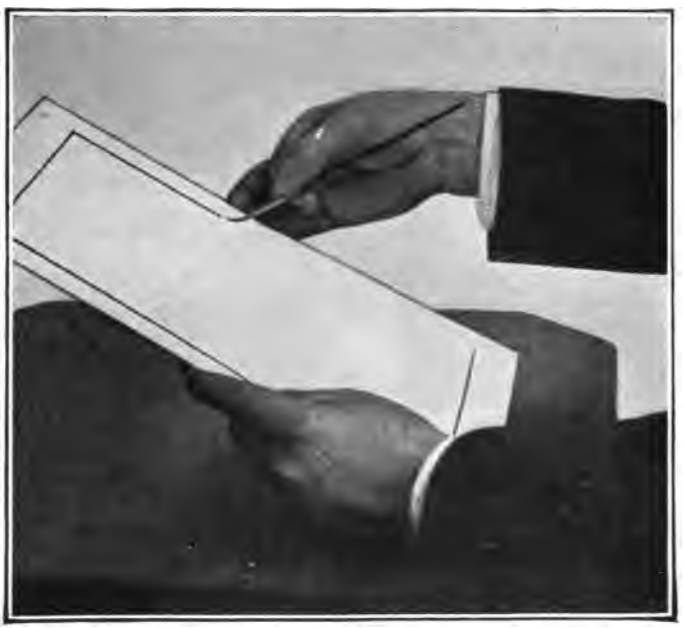

FIG. 171.—Correct position for drawing border lines near the edge of the card.

edge of the card makes the card look cramped. The margin emphasizes the inscription. Plenty of margin means plenty of contrast, as the "silent white space" makes the inscription stand out better and gives the card a neat and artistic appearance.

When borders are drawn with a brush, the brush may be guided by tilting the T-square or a ruler so as to bring the upper edge slightly above the paper. Another method is to hold the little finger and the finger next to it against the edge of the board,

drawing the brush along with these fingers acting as guides, Fig. 171. In this position these guide fingers must be kept steady, so the line will not be shaky. This is not difficult to do if the fingers take the proper position, as shown in the illustration.

A "rigger" brush is the most suitable for brush drawn border lines. Some card writers use what they call a "bridge" for guiding the brush when long straight lines are to be drawn. This bridge is merely a ruler with a block of wood tacked under each end to keep the working edge above the paper. The tips of the middle and ring fingers are rested against the edge of the ruler and the line drawn as usual. The bridge may be used also as a rest in making the brush strokes. Many artists find that they can make more accurate strokes if they work with the hand in a position of slight elevation over the paper. The bridge may

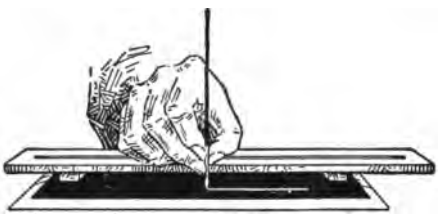

FIG. 172.—The Rudersdorf adjustable brush rule in use.

be used also in working over a wet surface, thus saving a great deal of time.

The Rudersdorf adjustable brush rule, Fig. 172, is an improvement over the home-made bridge. The cleats at the ends are movable and can be adjusted to large or small sheets. It is not necessary to tack the paper down as the cleats will hold it in place and keep it flat. The following directions are given for its use:

"Adjust the cleats of the Brush Rule so that both rest on your paper. Thus the paper is held securely while you draw your line. Have sufficient ink or paint on the brush to complete the entire line if possible. Now hold the brush firmly in a vertical position against the edge of the rule. Raise or lower the position of the fingers on the brush according to the width of line desired, but be sure the thumb rests firmly on the rule so that the line will be perfectly uniform in

its entire length. Draw the brush forward unhesitatingly, using the whole arm, and not allowing the fingers to change their position in relation to the brush or the rule."

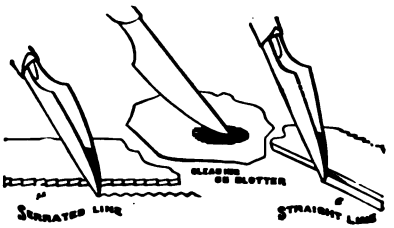

FIG. 173.—Gisburne drawing and ruling pen.

If narrow pen-drawn border lines are to be used, it is best to make them with a ruling pen. For heavy border lines the Payzant pen is better, however, as a ruling pen necessitates the

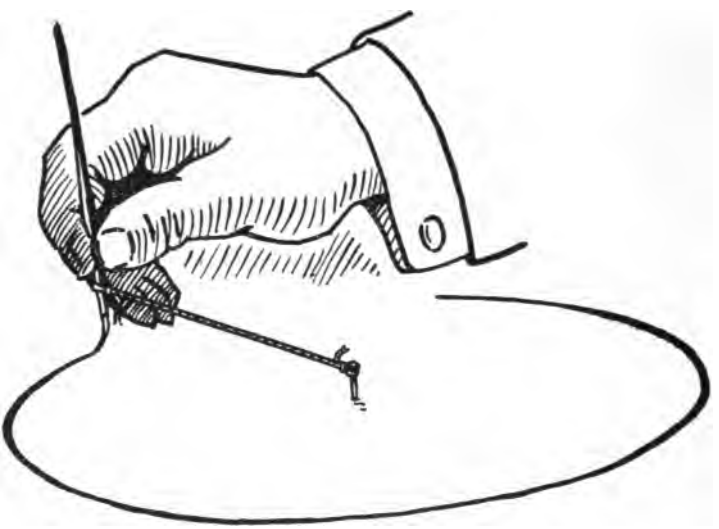

FIG. 174.—Method for drawing a circle with a brush.

drawing of two parallel lines and filling in the space between with a brush.

The Gisburne drawing and ruling pen, Fig. 173, is made especially for drawing border lines. The pen is held with the open

side up, letting both edges of the point touch the paper squarely. The pen may be filled with a quill, a dropper, or with another pen, drawing the ink well down into the point. It may be dipped into the ink bottle, if one prefers, in which case the outside blades should be wiped with a cloth or stroked lightly on a penwiper. Should the ink clog or the pen refuse to write, the smooth edge of a piece of paper should be drawn through the point or the pen tapped gently on the mouth of the ink bottle. The pen is cleaned by touching the open side of the nibs to a blotter until the ink is absorbed, rather than cleaning it on a sponge. The ink should not be allowed to dry on the pen, nor anything be drawn through the point which will clog it or spread the blades. If it is the intention to spread the blades purposely so as to make a broader stroke possible, folded paper should be used, drawing it through the point.

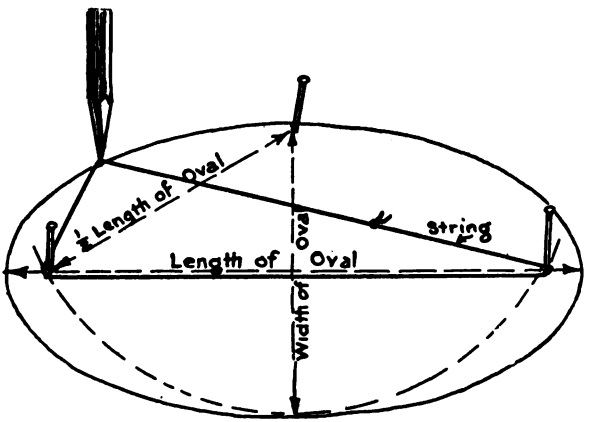

FIG. 175.—Method for laying out an oval.

89. Circles and Ovals.—To make a circle with a brush, a string may be fastened to a pin in the center of the space which the circle is to occupy, Fig. 174, looping the free end of the string about the brush handle and revolving the cardboard, the brush remaining in the same position all the time.

To make an oval, a horizontal line is drawn the length of the desired oval. At the center of this line, another line is laid out

equal to the width of the oval. These two lines should be at right angles to each other, with the centers coinciding. A short piece of cord equal to half the length of the oval is then tied

FIG. 176.—An illustration of the use of an oval on a show card.

around a pencil. The end of the cord is next placed at one end of the line representing the width of the oval, Fig. 175. The

pencil may now be swung in a semi-circle holding it straight up and down so that a curved line is made cutting the line representing the length of the oval. Two pins should be put in the card at these points of intersection and a third pin at one end of the line representing the width. A piece of string should be run about these three pins and pulled fairly tight, the pin on the line representing the width of the oval being drawn out and the point of the pencil put in its place. With the string kept tight, the pencil should be moved along, the resulting line being an oval of the length and width desired. An announcement in which an oval has been used is illustrated in Fig. 176.

90. Enlarging Devices.—Freehand drawings are often used on show cards, large drawings being used on outdoor signs and smaller drawings on counter and window display cards. For

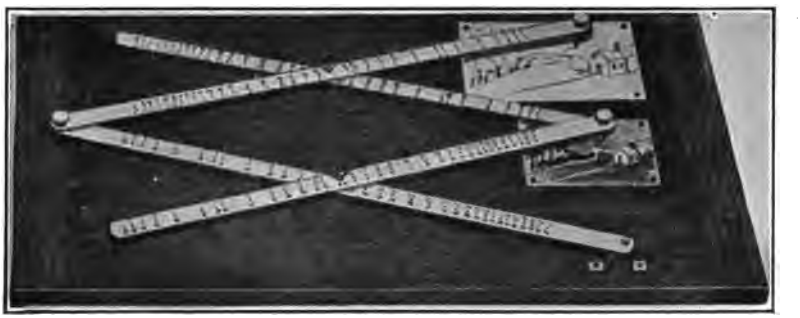

FIG. 177.—A pantograph for enlarging and reducing drawings.

transferring or enlarging such drawings on ordinary cards a pantograph may be used, Fig. 177, which consists of four wooden arms containing numbered holes at certain distances apart, one of the arms being fastened to a stationary block. When an enlargement is to be made, the steel screws are set so that holes of the same numbers are adjusted in all four arms. The middle peg is then traced over the design to be enlarged, the pencil on the free end reproducing it in light lines. Unless one understands the numbering of the holes, some difficulty will be experienced in enlarging designs exactly to the size desired.

For large banners and posters a reflecting lantern or Balopti-

can, as it is called, is practical, Fig. 178. By means of this lantern, an image of the desired picture or design may be projected in a greatly enlarged size on the card or sign. The outline of the enlargement can then be traced with charcoal or a soft pencil and

FIG. 178.—A Baloptican reflecting lantern for enlarging.

the color applied in a broad, flat style such as is found in poster work, ignoring small details and delicate coloring.

Another method of enlarging is to draw lines across the original picture or design which is to be enlarged so as to cover it with small squares. Squares of a larger size are then drawn on the show card upon which the enlarged sketch is to be made. The lines should be drawn lightly with a soft pencil so that they can be easily erased when the enlargement is finished. To illustrate this method more clearly, it may be assumed that a drawing of a saddle horse is to be enlarged to about 9 by 15 in. or more in size for a card advertising riding clothes in a tailor's window display. A post card photograph of a horse may be

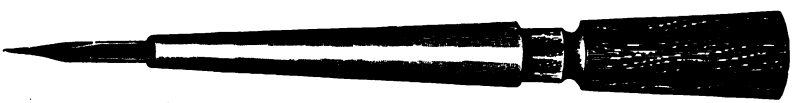

FIG. 179.—Stencil knife with brass removable ferrule and double edge.

used for making the enlargement. The photograph may be ruled with lines at intervals of half an inch each way or even a smaller distance so as to cover it with half-inch squares, or

whatever size is most desirable. Since the enlargement is to be three times as wide and three times as long as the postal, one and one-half inch squares should be ruled on the larger sheet. After

FIG. 180.—Stencil cut-out.

the squares are completed, it is not a difficult process to lay out roughly the freehand sketch, drawing a square at a time. Details should be avoided, and, if it is desired to simplify the drawing as much as possible, the enlargement may be colored in a flat tone, making a silhouette picture of the horse. Drawing a highlight here and there and a few suggestive details where they

FIG. 181.—A show card and the cut-out used in making duplicates.

will count for most will make the illustration very attractive without making a difficult task of the enlargement.

91. Cut-outs and Stencils.—Cut-outs and stencils are often used when the same lettering is repeated on a large number of cards, as is often the case with dealers' names and trade-marks. These cut-outs and stencils are cut from heavy manilla or stencil paper with a sharp knife or safety razor blade. A special stencil knife is shown in Fig. 179. Stencil paper may be purchased in sheets about the size of bristol board or the card writer may

prepare his own paper by coating heavy paper with linseed oil

FIG. 182.—A knife for cutting and beveling cardboard.

and then allowing it to dry for a day. After the paper has dried, the design may be marked on the paper with a hard pencil and then cut out along the pencil lines, Fig. 180. The ties should be

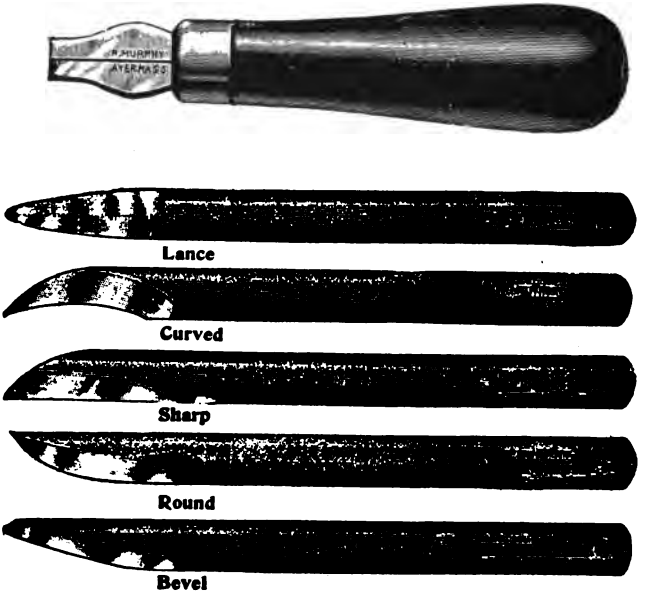

FIG. 183.—A mat knife and five different styles of blades with which it may be fitted.

located where they will mar the appearance of the letter the least. A short, stiff bristle brush is used in stencilling, the color being applied to the tip of the brush which is pounced up and down on the card. The paint should be thick enough so that it will not run underneath the stencil.

Cut-outs, Fig. 181, are used when the space occupied by a word or line is to be repeated on several cards. A pencil outline is made by running the pencil along the inside edge of the cut-out, thus doing away with making guide lines with the T-square.

92. Mat Knife.—A mat knife, Fig. 182, is simply a strong knife fitted with a removable blade and used for cutting beveled edges around the openings or sides of heavy mat board. Mat board is used extensively in making frames for cards already lettered. Such frames are effective, especially when the cards and the mat frames contrast with each other in color and finish.

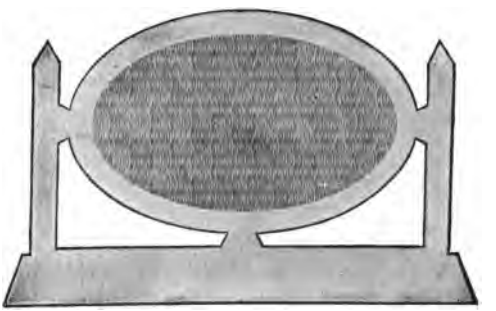

FIG. 184.—An unusual card panel made possible by the use of a mat knife.

Another type of mat knife is shown in Fig. 183. This is a special knife which can be fitted with any of the five different styles of blades shown. For different classes of work different styles of blades are often preferred, although some card writers use but one style for practically all classes of work.

The designs shown in Figs. 184 and 185 suggest the possibilities of the use of a mat knife in cutting cardboard in unusual shapes. Special designs are kept in stock by dealers, but they may be cut also by the card writer himself. These designs may be fitted with removable panels so that the lettering may be changed and the old cut-out frame still used.

93. Air Brushes and Atomizers.—When stencils or cut-outs are used, an air brush or atomizer is often substituted for the stipple brush. The paint is sprayed on the cardboard and the flow of color regulated so as to make the spray coarse or fine. Air brushes are also used for making tinted backgrounds. Many decorative effects can be made with an air brush, but not all of them are in good taste.

The air brush itself, Fig. 186, is a pencil-shaped tube to which is fastened a small bottle or cup containing the color used. Air

Fig. 185.—Two theater cards making use of cut-outs.

is forced through the "brush" by means of a rubber tube leading from a pressure tank. The pressure in the tank may be supplied by a foot pump, Fig. 187, a hand pump, Fig. 188, an electric compressor, Fig. 189, or a liquid carbonic gas outfit. The foot pump which is intended for home use or occasional use of an air brush for short periods will supply a pressure of 40 lb. without undue exertion. The hand pump shown has a double cylinder pump

and will fill an 8 gal. tank to a pressure of 40 to 60 lb. in a few minutes. The electric compressors are operated by elec-

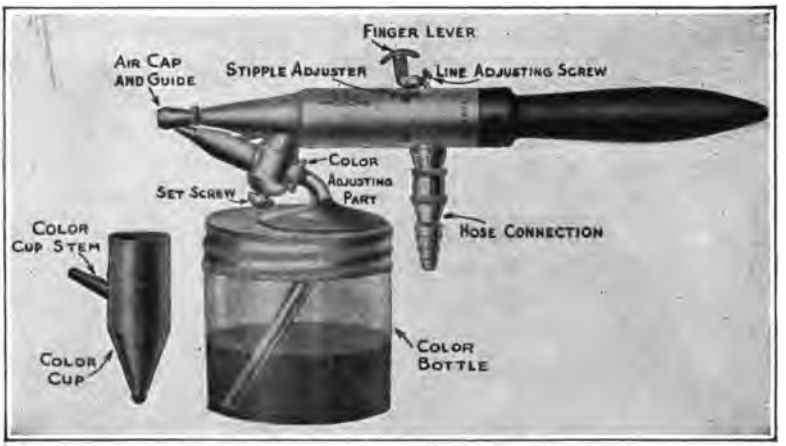

FIG. 186.—Paasche air brush, model D.

tricity from a lighting or power circuit, and can be regulated to stop running when the desired pressure is reached. The liquid

FIG. 187.—Foot pump and air tank.

FIG. 188.—Double cylinder hand pump.

carbonic gas compressors are the same as those used at soda fountains. The drums are recharged with gas by companies which make a business of giving this service.

The brush is operated by the compressed air which blows the color out in the form of a spray. The spray is regulated by an adjustment on the brush and the feed controlled by a throttle on the side of the brush. The air brush requires a pressure of 20 to 40 lb. of air to operate properly. With very light liquids 20 to 30 lb. pressure is all that is required; with heavier liquids a pressure up to 40 lb. is often necessary. If a foot or hand pump is used, it should register a pressure of 30 lb. before the work is started. Regardless of what type of pressure apparatus is to be used, the hose should be cleaned out by pressure before connecting it to the brush itself as new tubes contain a

FIG. 189.—Air brush being used with an electric air compressor.

certain amount of talcum, and tubes that have been used may contain dust and dirt that are likely to clog the brush.

The air hose leading from the tank is pushed on over the nipple of the hose connection, Fig. 186. The color may be put either in a metal cup or in a color bottle. A cup may be used when the quantity of color required is small. When several colors are to be used on the card, separate cups and bottles are convenient and preferable to using the same cup all the time. The color should be clean and free from lint or dirt. Both the metal cup and the color bottle reservoirs are fitted with strainers to prevent the brush from becoming clogged.

The brush is held in the hand in much the same way as one holds a pencil, Fig. 189. The index finger is placed on the finger lever, Fig. 186. Pressing this lever straight downward releases the air, and rocking it backwards releases the color which issues from the air cap in the form of mist. When the lever is pushed

straight downward and not pushed backward, the brush will make a line. This line may be made coarse or fine by turning the line adjusting screw. Turning this screw to the left increases the flow of color and turning it to the right decreases it. The screw should be kept adjusted so that the brush will start with a fine line when the lever is pushed downward, after which, when the lever is pushed backward, a greater flow of color will be admitted accordingly. When the brush is held about an eighth of an inch from the card a sharp line will result, the widest spray resulting when the brush is held about four inches away.

To become expert at working an air brush, daily practice is

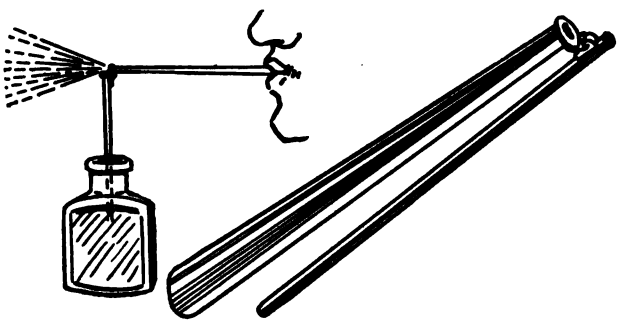

FIG. 190.—Blow pipe atomizer and its operation.

necessary. Such practice should consist of continual operation of the lever until the card writer is able to produce any line or shade desired. Further practice may be given to such work as using the brush with masks or stencils and blowing the spray over the edge of a piece of cardboard slightly elevated from the surface of the card. This last procedure will result in a tint with a fairly sharp edge near the cardboard mask, the tint becoming lighter as it recedes from the mask.

The brush should be cleaned before it is put away rather than left in the cup when the brush is not being used. The easiest way to clean the brush is to blow water, turpentine, benzine, or paint remover through it. Keeping the brush clean is very important as most brush troubles are due to the lack of a thorough cleaning as soon as the work is done.

An atomizer produces an effect similar to that produced by an air brush. It may be of the common type, where the pressure is

made with a rubber bulb, or a blow pipe may be used instead, Fig. 190.

Sometimes, when a stencil sheet is used in connection with an air brush, it is tilted slightly above the paper and the color sprayed over the edge of the stencil, producing a faint, cloudy background above the edge of the stencil. Tinted backgrounds are often used in connection with stencils and are usually made

FIG. 191.—Artistic stencil design made in flat tones with an air brush.

by this method. The poster, Fig. 191, shows to what extent an air brush and stencil can be used in producing a very artistic background. Another example, Fig 192, showing a landscape drawn with an air brush, indicates the possibilities of air brush work when it is skillfully handled.

Ordinary show-card colors should be thinned before they are used in an air brush or atomizer. Special colors are also manufactured, the liquid being of such a nature as not to clog the brush. In connection with the use of these colors, a special rack or holder, Fig. 193, is convenient. The rack shown holds a

dozen bottles of color. Each bottle has a glass filler which may be used to fill the color cup of the air brush, or the bottle itself may be attached to the brush. The glass filler fits snugly in the

FIG. 192.—Landscape poster made with an air brush.

cap of the bottle so that dust will not get into the color nor the color dry out.

94. Work Table.—The work table should be located where there is plenty of good light, next to a window if possible. If

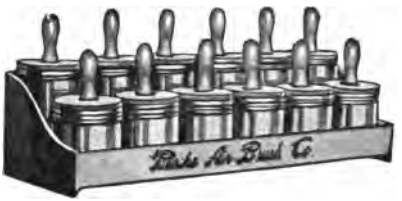

FIG. 193.—Metal rack for holding air brush colors.

the window is on the south side of the building, an awning is necessary, otherwise the glare of the light upon the work will be too hard on the eyes.

Card writers generally prefer a slanting surface for the work table, as a flat surface necessitates stooping over the work, causing the shoulders and neck to become strained. Upright easels,

Fig. 194, are used for high-class work where painted designs and figures are used to embellish heavy cards. These easels are not at all suited, however, to ordinary lettering. The cardboard is placed vertically on the stationary ledge and held in place by the cleat which slides up and down the support. The easel may

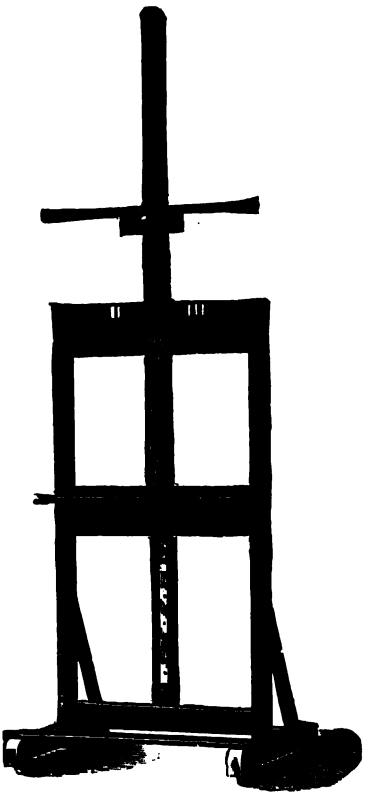

FIG. 194.—Upright easel for high-class work on heavy cardboard.

be tilted slightly forward or backward. Ordinary light easels are not steady enough to be practicable.

For a sitting position, a table like that shown in Fig. 195 is better than an easel. This table may be raised or lowered to any suitable height and tilted to almost any angle. An extension arm supports a drawer in which the brushes, colors, or any other material may be kept. A water glass or jar of brushes may be

placed on top. In addition, there is a ledge at the top of the drawing board on which materials in use may be placed conveniently.

FIG. 195.—Drawing table with a drawer, a tray on a swinging arm, and a shelf at the top of the drawing board.

In case the operator stands at his work while lettering, a table like that in Fig. 196 is suitable. The drawer underneath the drawing board may be used for storing cardboard, and the tray

FIG. 196.—Drawing table with a swing tray and drawer, a cabinet, and a foot rest.

on the extension arm for holding the brushes and colors. A cabinet at the back furnishes storage space for brushes, colors, air brush, orders, and pencils. The foot rest aids in making the working position comfortable.

95. Stock of Prepared Cards.—Stencils are not only used for making trade-marked cards but for decorations which are suggestive of the various seasons of the year. Cards decorated in such a manner may be made up in slack seasons and kept on file to fill calls for cards of this nature.

Cards prepared in advance for special calls may be stored in

FIG. 197.—Cabinet with shallow drawers for storing both blank and finished show cards.

filing cabinets, Fig. 197. These cabinets are fitted with large drawers which may be divided into partitions so that any standard size of card may be accommodated, making it possible to keep both blank and prepared cards where they will not become soiled or warped. On the outside of each drawer there is a space provided for labels, such as "Holidays," "Remnant Sales," "Seasonal Cards," "Mat Board," "Cut-outs," or any other label.

A fall announcement card on which an air brush was used is illustrated in Fig. 198. In Fig. 199 a collection of stencils for

FIG. 198.—Fall announcement card prepared in advance and stored until needed.

FIG. 199.—Stencil designs for seasonal and holiday cards.

use in decorating seasonal and holiday cards is shown. Such stencils are kept in stock by show-card supply houses and indicate the range of designs from which the card writer may select ready-made stencils. A simple but very clever and effective Memorial Day announcement is shown in Fig. 200, indicating how unnecessary it is to make elaborate designs. Simple striking designs of this sort catch the eye more quickly and make a more pleasing impression that do over-elaborate designs.

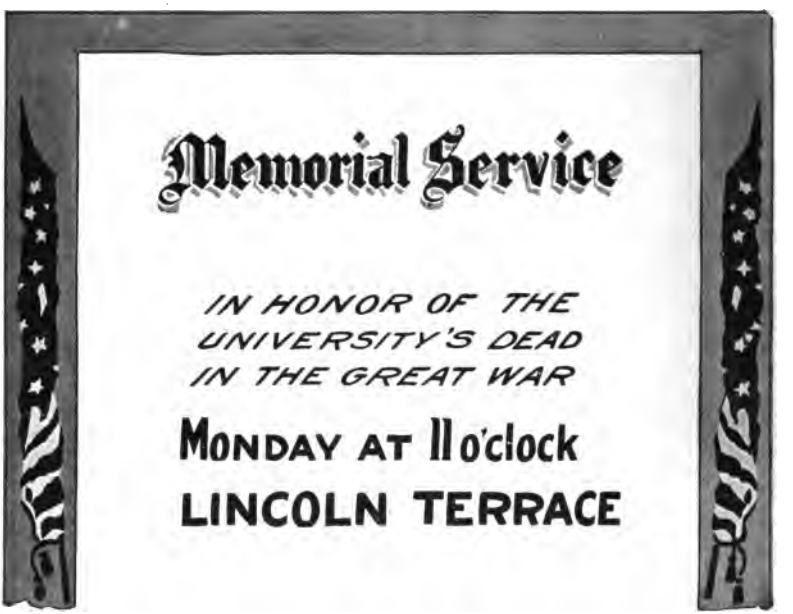

FIG. 200.—A simple but attractive Memorial Day announcement.

96. Cooperating with the Window Dresser.—A card writer may not only be called upon to make seasonal cards but to assist in painting in and preparing backgrounds for the window dresser when seasonal displays are being made up. Much of the material used in window displays is kept in stock by dealers in decorating materials, but even these must be made over and supplemented at times with the help of the show-card man. A Christmas window is shown in Fig. 201 in which much of the work was hand painted, the border being wallboard painted white, the trees green, the tub red, the lattice a dull black, and the Santa Claus heads in natural colors. Metallic flitter was used on the

trees in the border and for the ornaments on the trees underneath the heads; metallic ornaments on the lattice; artificial snow over the white border at the top of the window; and artificial foliage in the background.

The card writer and the window display man have such a direct relation to each other in their work that there are opportunities on various occasions when they may work together upon a special

FIG. 201.—Holiday window setting in which painted backgrounds were used.

display. Even when the card writer has not helped to prepare the background for the display, he should endeavor to make the cards harmonize with the fixtures and merchandise in the window. Some stores go so far as to make all the window cards on display at one time of the same color throughout. Even the size of the card is sometimes prescribed so that there will be unity and harmony in all of the windows. It is evident, then, that the card writer has quite a share in the responsibility of making the window display a success.

CHAPTER IX

DESIGNING CARDS IN SEVERAL COLORS THE USE OF TEMPERA

"Color properly used can influence us, set the stages in our mind, predispose us in favor of the commodity advertised, and aid considerably in punching home the sale."

F. B. Harrington in "Signs of the Times."

97. Difficulty of Complicated Color Schemes.—Complicated color schemes are too difficult for a beginner to use. Many card writers never use any but the simplest of color schemes, partly because a simple color scheme is forceful and effective, and partly because few of them are interested in studying color schemes of more than average difficulty. This should not prevent the beginner from studying color schemes in several colors, however. The progress made in the show-card field in the last few years demands a better understanding of color if one is to keep abreast with the leaders in show-card designing. The beginner should understand thoroughly the use and abuse of color and train himself to handle several colors successfully in a color scheme, should he ever have occasion to use more than two or three colors.

98. Making Colors "Talk."—When several colors are used on a single card, one of the colors should predominate, all varying somewhat in the amount used. They should vary in importance just as different words vary in emphasis in a conversation. When the color scheme is dull and monotonous, the colors resemble words mumbled in conversation. When the colors are clear and interesting, though not loud nor strong in tone, they are like conversation carried on in clear tones but not in a high pitched voice.

Certain effects are produced when certain colors are emphasized. Dainty colors should predominate when toilet articles, fancy dress goods, or garments for babies and small children are displayed, but such colors are not suitable for advertising heavy articles like tools, storage batteries, or repair kits. It is evident,

then, that the colors should be selected with due regard to their appropriateness in relation to the goods advertised as well as to their harmony with one another. Too often colors are selected for their "flash" or "punch" without any regard to what is on sale or what is being said on the card. The color scheme, therefore, should be given sufficient thought and care so that the color, the wording, and the merchandise agree with one another in their essential characteristics.

99. Choosing the Right Colors.—There is a difference between choosing colors that harmonize with each other and choosing colors which are appropriate to advertising the merchandise. This does not mean that inharmonious colors may be justified because of their advertising value. On the contrary, it means that the colors must harmonize with each other as well as produce a pleasing mental impression and reaction on the part of the reader, as far as his attitude towards purchasing the goods on sale is concerned.

Colors produce subtle and unconscious effects upon the mind of any one seeing them. While almost every one has a vague idea of what these effects are, it is usually necessary for the card writer to study these impressions if he wishes to make a practical application of color effects.

In considering color effects, the three primary colors naturally come to mind first. Red is no doubt the most vigorous of all the colors, while yellow may be made vigorous by contrasting it with black or some other dark color. Standing alone, yellow does not have the fiery strength that is found in red. The effect of red is that of excitement and cheer. A good example of the effect of red, still further emphasized by being set off by black, is given in the Christmas design, Fig. 202. If red is overdone, however, it irritates and fatigues. Yellow is a color having brightness and luster and gives the cheering effect of light without the fatigue and irritation that are characteristic of flaming red. Blue induces the impression of quiet and rest, and carries with it an atmosphere of dignity and serious thought.

Brown is also dignified and serious, but it has less animation in its effect than blue. We not only speak of "feeling blue" but we also speak of having a "dark brown" taste. While these expressions exaggerate the quality of these colors, they emphasize the fact that both blue and brown are sober colors. A comparison

FIG. 202.—Christmas design in color.
(*Courtesy of F. K. Ferenz, N. Y.*)

FIG. 203.—New Year's design in color.
(*Courtesy of F. K. Ferenz, N. Y.*)

of cards with blue or brown mats framing a light colored panel, with cards having bright red mats framing similar panels of lettering, would convince any one of the wide difference between these more sober colors and red. A red card in a display window catches the eye more quickly than the display itself, but this is not always desirable.

Purple is a combination of red and blue, the animation of the red being neutralized by the blue. When red and yellow are mixed, producing orange, a combination of brightness with excitement results, although the mixture of these two colors has the effect of somewhat neutralizing rather than intensifying these characteristics. Orange may be characterized as a "friendly" color, its lightness and brightness making it a color with an excellent capacity for catching the eye.

A long list of all the characteristics and mental impressions produced by colors might be made but enough has been said to illustrate the fact that various colors produce various effects on the mind.

To illustrate the advantage of making the right selection of color in advertising, the following cases will serve as examples.

A fashionable tea room which serves hot chocolate and cake in the afternoon wishes to make an announcement of this in the window. The window has a walnut paneled background, giving it a rich, pleasing appearance. To place a pure white half-sheet of bristol board in this window with a red headline "Hot Chocolate" at the top and underneath in dark blue Italic letters the words "3 to 5 Afternoons" would give the impression that the aristocratic tea room had changed hands and was being managed by someone who had made a success of handling soda water concessions at carnivals and fairs. To carry out the true spirit of the place a light fawn-colored panel mounted on an autumn-brown mat one-eighth or one-sixteenth of a sheet in size and lettered with dark sepia letters would be appropriate. If a dash of color seemed necessary against the walnut paneling in the background, a dark blue or mottled gray mat with light colored panel might be used instead.

As a contrasting example, a jeweler has some loud-ringing alarm clocks which he wishes to display in his window. There is a large demand for these clocks as the store is located in an industrial city where hundreds of men find it necessary to rise

promptly to get to the shops on time in the morning. Bright startling colors would seem to be a good choice to use in the window advertising. Instead of using a mat board of soft, dull tones a smooth crisp railroad board of cream or light yellow might be more suitable. The lettering might be done in black with the headline in vertical letters and the rest in Italics. A narrow dark yellow or an orange band might be drawn around the panel of lettering, the card trimmed off to the yellow band and then appliqued to a larger sheet of red railroad board so that there would be a red border of half an inch or more showing all around the card. The whole card should not be larger than an ordinary book cover as a half-sheet card or even a quarter of a sheet would be too large in proportion to the alarm clocks in the display. Some stores regulate the size of display cards, such standards as one-eighth sheet size being selected for counter or table use, and still smaller cards for such wares as jewelry, china, toilet goods, and bric-a-brac.

With these two extreme examples in mind, it is easy to see that the color of the cardboard, and also its texture, weight, size, and proportion have a great deal to do with suggesting the right or wrong atmosphere for the card and the display.

As an experiment to demonstrate the result of graying colors, a yellow card might be lettered with dark, intense purple letters. Then, selecting a duller-toned card of a yellow cast and graying the purple color somewhat, a duplicate card might be lettered and the results compared. The first would show a decided contrast between the two colors, and the second a much less startling and a correspondingly more refined impression. To set off the wording well on any card the color of the background should always be more subdued than the color used for the letters. The size of the card should also be considered, for the larger the card the less intense the color should be. Small cards accommodate purer colors than large cards without so great a sacrifice of quality and refinement.

The tendency at the present time is toward a better appreciation of color by both the public and the card designer. It is quite probable that the intense and startling colors which now seem to be the choice for show cards will give way to softer and more delicate effects. In anticipation of such a tendency, the neutralizing and subduing of colors should be studied so as to keep down

the harsh and glaring result of using pure color just as it comes from the jar.

100. Suggestions to Beginners.—Beginners feel a strong temptation to use several colors on a card, but they will find it wise not to attempt elaborate color schemes until they are familiar with schemes using only one or two colors. Elaborate color schemes are too difficult to be used in the earlier period of one's training in show-card writing.

The first aim should be to become familiar with the fundamental principles of color. In order to do this one should not be content with reading about these fundamentals and with analyzing cards in which colors are used, but should practice making original color schemes, for it is by practice rather than by reading that one becomes adept at using colors.

The first color schemes used should be simple and in colors with which the beginner is familiar. Unusual tints and shades should be left until he is more capable of handling them.

Suggestions for the selection of colors may be found in some of the simple color schemes used in magazine advertisements, posters, and billboards. It is good practice to jot down these suggestions in a notebook and follow them in making cards.

For show-card purposes two colors are usually enough to use, although there is a growing tendency to use more. For good results in two colors, one color may be used in the headline and the other in the body of the card. The cardboard may be white or it may be of some unobtrusive tone suitable for a background. If the background is too prominent, the lettering will not stand out as it should. Rough, mottled, linen, or eggshell finishes on a card will improve its appearance in most cases.

Colors may be used for embellishing the background. One method is to rub the surface of the card with dry colors. These colors are not rubbed on in a solid tone all over the card but in touches here and there, a soft cloth being used. Sometimes several colors are used, producing a pearl-like luster. Such an effect is soft and cloudy and resembles air-brush work. Cards with a similar finish may be purchased ready for use, thus avoiding the necessity of making up finishes.

101. Schemes in Three Colors.—It is a good plan to work out a number of color schemes and keep them in an album for future reference, or jot them down in the form of tables. A table of a

number of suitable three-color schemes is given below. The schemes in pure colors, such as the red, blue, and yellow, should be toned down to keep the arrangement from being too harsh and glaring.

Red, blue, and yellow.
Orange, green, and violet.
Purple, yellow, and gray-green.
Orange, gray-blue, and cream color.
Orange-red, dark blue-green, and dark yellowish green.
Brown, blue, and gold.
Yellow, black, and gold.

Similar lists may be made by any observant person who will take the time to study colored advertisements or the cards in the store windows.

It is well to make a note also of the area over which the color is used. The New Year's design, Fig. 203, contains three colors, red, green, and black, which are given well proportioned areas. The effect of red and green employed together is noticeable, the panel of black setting off the red and the green even more than would have been the case if no black had been used and the card had been left white over the entire background. Sometimes colors do not appear well together because some one color has been given too much space. A card is often improved by changing the area over which certain colors are used, without making any change in the colors used in the scheme.

Identification of color schemes should be practiced until one is able to recognize at sight what kind of color scheme is used,—analogous, complementary, or a color triad. Constant practice is as necessary in color selection as it is in anything else connected with card writing.

102. Trouble with Show-card Colors.—The difficulty in making suitable selections for color schemes is only one of the problems in manipulating colors. Card writers often experience a great deal of annoyance and delay in their work by the puzzling behavior of the color which is being used. Color which works well at first may become thick and gummy, or grit may settle at the bottom before the jar of color is all used. Then again the color may dry too rapidly and thus lack in consistency. On the other hand, some colors improve with age.

When colors have been allowed to stand for some time they

often dry out, especially if they have been exposed to the air or left uncovered. Most colors are unfit for use after they have once hardened. Other colors may be soaked in water and stirred until the liquid is smooth, adding a little mucilage as a binding medium, when the color will be workable again. It must be remembered, however, that not all colors can be restored to usefulness after they have hardened to a cake in the jar.

Color troubles are understood better when one considers what a show-card color really is. Briefly stated, a show-card color is a coloring substance, known as pigment, suspended in oil, water, or some similar liquid, which is called the vehicle. In case the card writer makes his own colors he purchases the dry colors, the best grades being known as C.P. (chemically pure) dry colors. Since these dry colors are generally gritty or lumpy they are ground in a paint mill or on a slab with a spatula, which is a knife with a soft, flexible blade.

There are several liquids in which color pigments may be suspended, each with distinct qualities of its own. Oil or water is used to give body to the color pigment to make it paintable. Color should be more than just paintable since with this quality alone it might not stick to the cardboard nor the particles of pigment adhere to each other. When the color has only paintable qualities, the pigment, after the liquid has evaporated, appears streaky or mottled on the card and will rub off and smear, black color on smooth cardboard being particularly susceptible to this fault. It follows, then, that the color must be suspended in a liquid which will make it stick to the cardboard, make the particles of color hang together, and at the same time allow the pigment to spread over the surface smoothly and evenly. In other words, the paint must be adhesive in order to stick to the ground, cohesive to bind the particles of color together, and elastic to allow it to spread evenly. To meet these requirements gum arabic or mucilage is used as an adhesive; honey and glycerine as cohesives and also to keep the colors soft; and ox-gall or other compound to overcome the oily surface tension of the card and make the spreading of the color easy.

In the case of oil colors, slightly different liquids are used; namely, vehicle, thinner, and drier. As a vehicle to give body to the color, linseed, poppy, or some other oil is used. For thinning a water color, water, naturally, is used, but since water cannot

be used with an oil color, turpentine is substituted. Japan is added as a drier, since oil alone is slow to dry. Sometimes colors for show cards which are to be displayed out-of-doors are prepared in japan only.

Knowing, then, the composition of show-card colors it is easy to tell what is lacking in case of trouble, as when the brush does not keep its shape or have the proper pull, or the color does not flow freely, dry properly, or rubs off.

Colors ground in water without any binder or size do not work so well as colors ground with a binder. The binder may be added after the color is ground, but, if the pigment is already water-soaked, the binder will mix unevenly, with the result that when the water dries out of the paint on the card, the color will be streaky and blotched and be very apt to rub and smear.

If colors dry out or become too gummy to use, they should be mixed with water, stirred, and set aside to soak and settle. After the color settles, the water may be drained off and the color mixed with a thinner. A thinner may be made from a pint and a half of water, a full tumbler of mucilage, and enough glycerine to stand about half an inch deep in the tumbler. If too much mucilage is used, the color may become shiny in spots or mottled in appearance. Sometimes, however, a glossy paint is desirable. This may be made by adding syrup, together with a small amount of carbolic acid, to the color.

Instead of using water to thin water color paints, the mucilage and glycerine thinner may be found preferable. If the card writer grinds his own colors, they should be reduced to a paste form by using a grinding medium consisting of mucilage and about 10 per cent of glycerine, the mucilage acting as a binder and the glycerine keeping the color from drying out.

103. Lettering Inks.—It is impossible to get the best results from any pen without the proper inks or colors. Thin, watery, transparent inks and fluids are not suitable; neither will thick, gummy, sticky water color be productive of good results. The various brands and makes of waterproof India or ordinary drawing inks should be used instead.

When ordinary prepared opaque show-card colors are used for pen work, a small quantity should be put in a separate jar and thinned with a solution consisting of four parts water, one part alcohol, and a few drops of glycerine. This solution should

be kept well stirred and of a consistency that will permit it to flow easily from the pen. For white ink or opaque colors, this mixture will be found better than transparent colored inks. If the liquid evaporates and becomes too thick, it should be thinned with the thinning solution just described. While any kind of drawing ink may be used with a Speedball pen, Speedball ink, which is made especially for this pen, will prove the most successful.

An excellent white ink is made by reducing to a thick paste 6 oz. of dry white lead, 2 oz. of zinc oxide, a tablespoonful of Sanford's Royal Crown mucilage, ½ oz. of water, and a few drops each of alcohol and glycerine. This paste should be placed on a slab of marble or glass and all the grit and lumps ground out with a spatula or long thin-bladed table knife. After it has been thoroughly ground, it should be thinned with water to a consistency which will insure free flow from the pen. The ink should be kept well stirred and properly thinned. The pens should be rinsed out in water occasionally to prevent them from becoming clogged. In case they do become badly clogged, the color may be removed by brushing them out in water with an old toothbrush.

104. Tempera Color.—Tempera color is one of the most ancient forms of color paint. It has been used extensively for wall decorations and paintings by the modern artists, the old masters, and even the ancients. Its use in the workshop of the card writer, however, is quite recent, many card designers preferring to use hand painted decorative pictures instead of clippings, using tempera in many cases. The collection of posters, Fig. 155, page 155, while not painted in tempera, was colored with a special color closely resembling tempera and approaching tempera color effects, showing a soft, rich quality which would be difficult to obtain with ordinary colors.

Tempera differs from both oil and water colors in its composition and has characteristics which give it certain advantages when compared with these other mediums. The term "oil colors" is applied to colors containing oils together with resinous substances, forming a binding medium which not only holds the color particles together but helps to make them stick to the ground upon which they are applied. Further, oil makes the color paintable so that it may be spread easily over the design. On the other hand, water and not oil is used for thinning and dissolving water

colors so that they may be spread over the design. Gum arabic or mucilage is used as a binder. Tempera differs from either oil or water colors in that it uses a binding medium entirely unlike that in either of them. This medium is an emulsion, a mixture of oil and water. As oil and water will not actually mix, the emulsion is really an oily substance broken up into very fine particles and held together in the water by a mucilaginous binder. Milk is a common example of an emulsion, the butter fat being united with the water in the liquid by means of a gluey substance called casein. When an emulsion dries out, the water simply evaporates, air taking its place.

When an oil, a varnish, or a gum dries, it leaves a clear, transparent spot so that what is underneath can be seen. When an emulsion dries, it will admit light but what is underneath cannot be seen so clearly as when oil, varnish, or gum is used. Since tempera uses an emulsion for a binding medium instead of an oil, a varnish, or a gum, it differs to that extent from oil and water colors. Since it admits light without being transparent tempera is, therefore, spoken of as being opaque; in fact, it often goes by the name of "opaque." Opaque colors are used almost altogether in the painting of posters.

Density is another factor which causes a color to be either opaque or transparent. If colors which are put up in tubes are weighed in the hand, a variation in weight is noticed even though the tubes are of the same size. It follows, then, that one paint has more covering capacity than another because it is more dense. The lighter color has, however, the advantage of being better adapted for what is known as glazing; that is, painting a light coat of one color over another to modify the effect. Cheap colors are sometimes so adulterated that although they appear to be of the same tone, they do not have so good a covering capacity as the pure color.

Tempera colors are chalky and will crack and chip if they are not applied to the proper ground or if they are in too pasty a form. It is well to know this and to work accordingly. No one would think of treating oil or japan color in the same way that a water color is treated; neither should one handle tempera as water color is handled. If the difference between tempera and water color is kept in mind, no trouble should be encountered.

Tempera colors should be diluted with water to the consistency

of cream. When a very porous background is likely to absorb too much of the tempera, egg tempera medium will counteract the over-absorption, a solution of one-third water and two-thirds egg tempera medium being used for mixing the colors. The brushes may be washed in a separate glass containing clear water. On an oil-ground canvas or a very glossy surface the whole surface should be rubbed first with egg tempera medium to cut the oil and insure the color's sticking to the ground.

When large, flat tinted areas may appear monotonous, mottled effects are used to give variety to the surface. Such effects, commonly found on posters, are obtained by using a little more water in the color and laying it on in puddles rather than painting it on flat with the brush.

Heavy cardboard or illustration board is the most suitable ground on which to use tempera. If the color is left standing overnight, it should be covered with a little water which can later be drained off. To compensate for the effect the standing water has on the color binder, a little egg tempera medium should be mixed in with the color before it is used. Camel's-hair brushes are generally used with tempera colors although soft bristle brushes are practicable to gain certain effects. The brushes should be washed with soap and water, as water alone will not cleanse them thoroughly.

Tempera color with its brilliant mat surface combines the more pleasing features of water color with the advantages of oil. Tempera dries much more rapidly than oil, but at the same time it dries slowly enough to permit working in the wet. With an increased use of posters in display window work, this medium will no doubt be more generally used, just as water colors supplanted japan and oil colors when show-card writing developed from the sign painting trade into a special field by itself.

CHAPTER X

DETAILS OF COMMERCIAL PRACTICE

"Realize that good lettering in proper arrangement is far more important than decorative stunts. Learn to letter first. Then learn the artistic. The average beginner makes his biggest mistake in attempting the decorative before being able to dot an "I" correctly.
Wm. Hugh Gordon.

105. Sign Cloth.—Sign cloth is used for banners and outdoor signs when the sign needed is too large to be placed on a card. It comes in 36-in. widths and can be procured from dealers in sign writing supplies and from almost all dry goods stores. When an inscription is to be lettered on sign cloth, the cloth should be stretched and tacked on a frame or wall. The layout can then be sketched in with charcoal and lettered by making the outlines of the letters with a red sable rigger, filling the strokes in afterwards with a flat brush. Water colors should not be used for outdoor signs as the color will run. The lettering in Fig. 92, page 93, was done on sign cloth mounted on frames.

106. Chalk Lines.—In making large signs, such as those made on cloth, a chalk line is used for laying off the guide lines. First a cord is rubbed well on a piece of chalk. One end of the cord is then fastened to a thumb tack or wrapped around the index finger of the left hand. The cord is pulled taut with the right hand, held flat against the surface to be lettered, and snapped by plucking it with one of the fingers of the right hand. This makes a straight line which is easily dusted off with a soft rag.

107. Japan and Oil Colors.—Cardboard and cloth signs for outdoor displays are lettered in either japan or oil colors, using turpentine as a thinner. Oil colors dry so slowly that japan drier should be added to hasten the drying. Neither oil nor japan should be mixed in larger amounts than are needed at the time. Japan colors should be covered lightly with turpentine when not in use. Oil colors do not work well on dull-surfaced

cards as the oil spreads. Neither oil nor japan colors are used extensively except for outdoor signs. A few years ago, when the art of show-card writing was in its infancy, a large percentage of the card signs were lettered with oil or japan colors. The older show-card writers still use them, but in most shops it is generally agreed that prepared water colors are more practical and satisfactory for indoor cards at least.

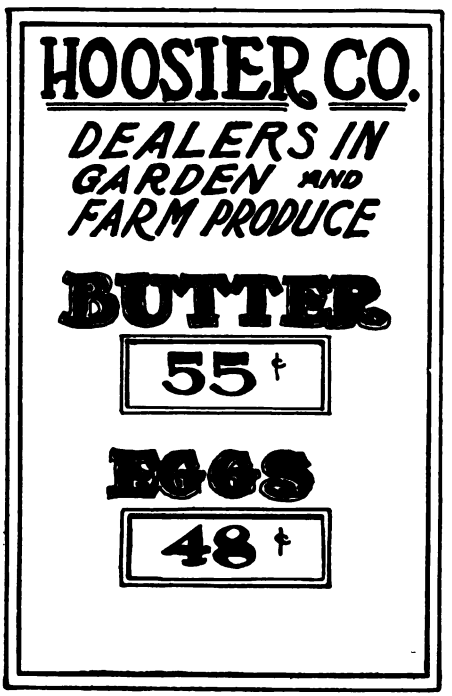

FIG. 204.—Butter and egg price card.

108. Slotted Cards and Price Markers.—Cut-outs are convenient when display cards are made in which part of the wording is changed from time to time. The permanent lettering may be drawn in on a heavy card and an opening cut out in which to place the announcements which are to be changed. Fig. 204 is an example of a card prepared for a grocer for displaying the daily prices of butter and eggs. Slots were cut through the card and the price tickets slipped in from behind so as to show through the opening. Since a card of this nature is displayed per-

manently, it should be designed more carefully than ordinary cards.

Price markers for hats or for articles placed on the counters in open boxes are difficult to display unless they are fastened to the hat or boxes with pins. This is not always desirable. A better

FIG. 205.—Price marker with tongue.

method is to cut tongues on the markers, Fig. 205, so that they may be inserted underneath the hat-bands or inside the boxes.

109. Index Hand.—Card writers are often called upon to draw a hand pointing in a given direction or to some object. The making of this drawing is much simplified if it is first blocked out as shown in Fig. 206. The hand should be about twice as

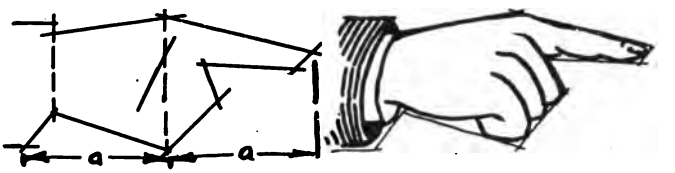

FIG. 206.—Index hand.

long as it is high. After the length and the height are blocked out, a vertical line is drawn in the center. The general shape of the hand is then blocked in and a slanting line drawn across the vertical line locating the knuckles, and another line locating the cuff at the extreme left. The proper slant should be given to the other lines, for if these are drawn too vertically or too horizontally the result will appear stiff and crude. When these simple lines are laid out, they constitute a framework over which it is easy to draw the details of the hand itself. A mirror placed behind the card writer's own left hand will be a help, as the

details may be copied to a large extent from the reflection of the hand in the mirror.

110. Illustrated Cards.—Cards are not only embellished by stencil decorations, borders, and brush ornamentation but they are illustrated with pictures. One clever method of making

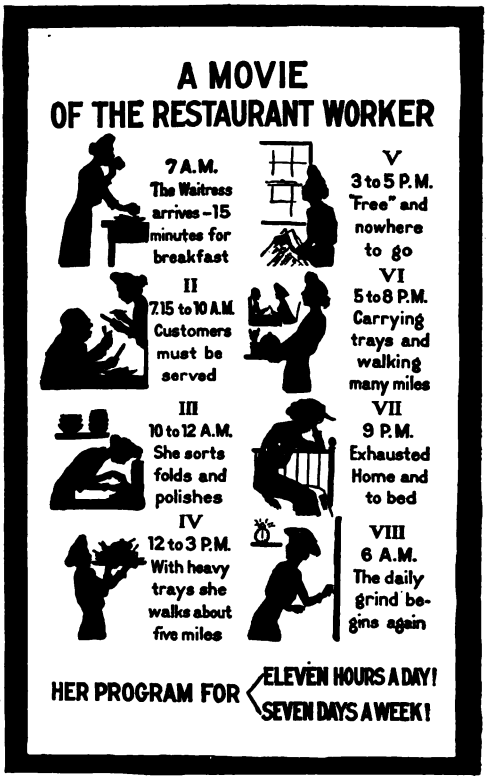

FIG. 207.—A card illustrated by silhouettes.
(*Courtesy of Russell Sage Foundation.*)

simple but satisfactory illustrations is to draw a silhouette of whatever is to be shown. A card illustrated in this fashion for a welfare exhibit is shown in Fig. 207. More often, however, magazine clippings are pasted on the card and set off by a tinted background or some other decoration. A circle or rectangle painted in an unobtrusive flat color for a background with a strong heavy border in a deeper tone is effective and simple to make. Photographs are generally available for illustrating lobby

A lantern slide may consist of but one sheet of plain glass, the glass being uncoated, or coated with a film on one side. Single glass slides are seldom used except for rush calls.

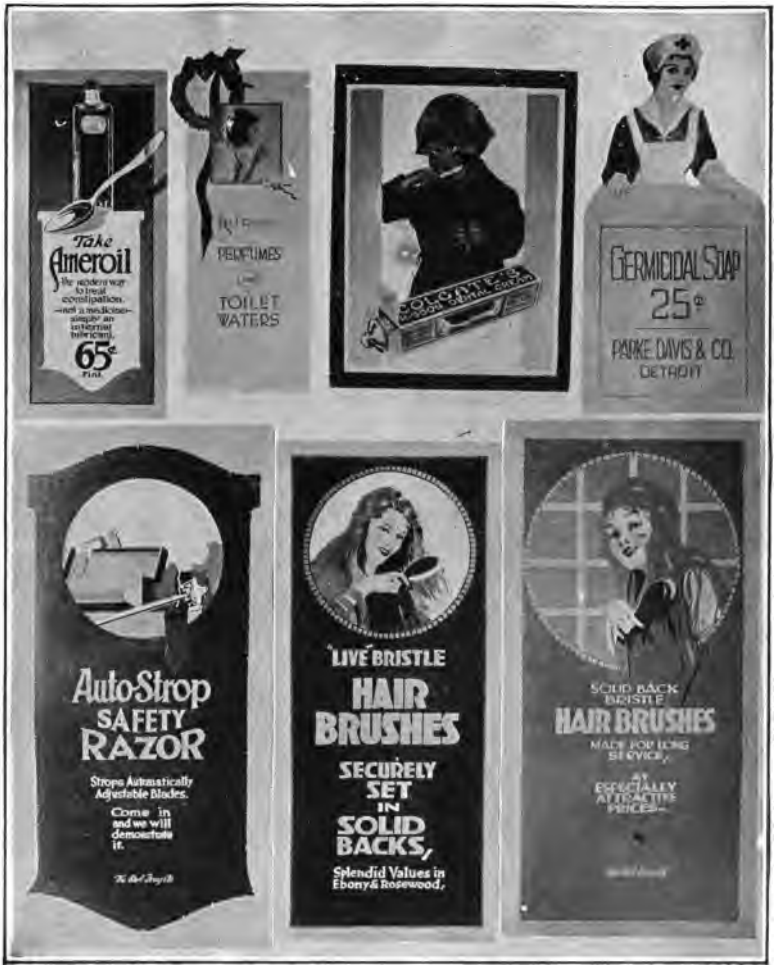

FIG. 209.—Collection of illustrated cards.
(Courtesy of Owl Drug Co.)

The standard lantern slide, Fig. 210, consists of two plates of glass placed face to face with the inner face of one of the plates coated with a film. The glass measures 3¼ by 4 in., although English makes are not quite so long. A black paper mat is

placed between the plates. This mat acts as a frame enclosing a rectangular opening with rounded corners, the opening being 2⅞ in. long and from 2⅛ to 2 11/16 in. high. The two plates of glass with the mat between, the coated side of the glass with the photographic impression on it being next to the mat, are bound together along the edges by a special paper binding, making the slide complete, Fig. 211.

When lettering is done directly on the glass, a special ink, obtained from lantern slide supply houses, is used. This ink is

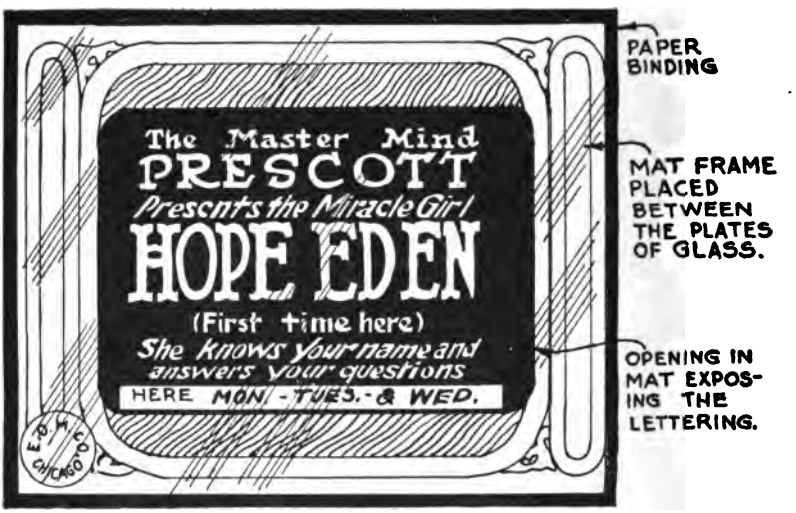

FIG. 210.—Details of a lantern slide.

clear and transparent and will withstand great heat without scorching. Only a small amount should be placed on the pen as it evaporates very quickly and becomes gummy after a few strokes have been made. This ink works well on either coated or uncoated glass, but in case it does give trouble when it is used on plain glass, the glass may be moistened with saliva, which leaves a slight film when it dries. Ordinary colored inks should never be used as they are somewhat opaque and appear dark and colorless when thrown on the screen. India ink works well for black lettering, but it cannot be washed off so easily afterwards, should it be necessary to use the glass again for a different inscription.

The inscription for a slide should be lettered first in pencil on white paper. The glass is next laid over this lettering, the coated

side up. Touching it with the tongue will indicate the coated side, which is a trifle sticky. The glass should be held in place over the paper by means of thumb tacks, care being taken that the stems of the tacks do not come so close as to chip the glass. A crow quill pen or some other very fine pen should be used in lettering the slide. The lettering must be done accurately, as irregularities are magnified on the screen. With a little prac-

FIG. 211.—Advertising slides made by the photographic method.

tice, lettering on glass will become as easy as lettering on cardboard.

The photographic method, which is the usual method followed where time permits and where the best grade of work is desired, consists of photographing an inscription which has been lettered in black on a white card, Fig. 212. In the negative, the tones are reversed from black letters on white cardboard to transparent letters on a black background, the light passing through the

transparent letters making them show as white letters on the screen. The black letters on the original card must be a deep coal black and uniform in tone, as pale black letters will photograph grayish and streaked. The spurs have a tendency to appear brighter than the strokes unless the lettering is uniformly black. To color the letters, a brush filled with Japanese water color or colored slide ink is drawn across the line of lettering to be tinted. These colors do not show over the dark opaque background.

FIG. 212.—The original card, from which a lantern slide is made, is lettered in black.
(*Design by System Service, Seattle.*)

112. "Movie" Title Lettering.—Motion picture studios either employ men to letter titles or have the work done outside. Pens are used since the original cards are only 11 by 14 in. in size. Payzant or similar pens are better suited to this work than brushes as there is usually little, if any, contrast in weight between the thick and the thin strokes. Roman letters of eccentric shapes are generally selected, Fig. 213, great importance being given to spacing and artistic arrangement. Since it is not good practice to use hyphens, they are avoided by extending or con-

Speedball pen was invented. Contrary to the universally used underfeed, it carried all the ink in a simple double reservoir feeder mounted upon its back. This automatically controlled the flow and produced uniform, clean-cut Gothic letters in a single stroke. It worked in either black or white ink. With its introduction began a new era in the making of movie titles and slides. The crude, uneven work of the blunt stick and brush was replaced with graceful lettering artistically arranged in the center of a neat panel, with air brush or pastel effects worked out around the border. Thus the artistic hand lettered title and advance slide soon won their way into a place of equal importance with the rest of the picture, until now the name of the title letterer appears along with the other stars.

"To-day, no motion picture plant is complete without its own title department, under the direction of capable artists thoroughly familiar with the preparation of tone plates for movie reproduction. The lettering of the titles is being greatly expedited by the use of the new Style C Speedball pen which is specially designed for this class of work.

"This pen is made in five sizes, each having the three nibs, making a comb feed which is automatically controlled by a flexible feeder fitted over the back. Heavy black or white inks can be used with perfect results and clear whites obtained in one stroke. The tip of this pen is turned up just enough to make the thin lines sufficiently heavy for reproduction. This also keeps it from cutting, or digging into soft backgrounds or rough pebbled surfaces. Strokes can be gracefully accentuated with the effect and ease of a brush and the speed of ordinary pen lettering.

"In preparing advance announcement slides and titles without illustrations or photos, the copy is lettered in black ink on a white card, 10¼ by 14, using a Style C or a small size of either Style A or B Speedball pen, carefully centering the layout and leaving plenty of border space, Fig. 212. The card is then photographed directly on to the slide which is developed in contrasty developer and bound ready for use. This single operation makes the lettering appear white on black, as in the case of the eccentric alphabet shown in Fig. 213.

"When photographs are furnished, Fig. 214, the background is generally gray or black and the lettering white. The pictures are cut out, mounted on the card, and the copy and decorations worked around them. A good white ink must be used to get clean slides.

"If the backgrounds are worked up in soft air brush and pastel effects, Fig. 215, it may be necessary to spray them with thin shellac, or letter the text on a separate panel and mount it on the background. In working up backgrounds and mounted panels, it is always advisable to put as much of the copy as possible on separate cutouts, as it is very slow working over the rough backgrounds. In preparing some of

FIG. 214.—Two "movie" announcements for films. Photographs were appliqued to the backgrounds of the original cards.
(Designs by System Service, Seattle.)

the special titles, the copy is lettered on a dull black card the same size as the background and a double exposure is made. First the background is placed in the copying frame and photographed. It is then replaced by the card containing the lettering, which is shot on the same film. By this double exposure method many clever stunts are worked out."

113. Novel Embellishments.—It was formerly quite popular to tinsel show-card letters, a practice which is much less followed

FIG. 215.—Film announcement with a water color background. The lettering was done on a black panel, appliqued to the card, and the photograph pasted on afterward.

(Design by System Service, Seattle.)

now. The tinselling was done by coating the letters, or by doing the lettering itself with mucilage, a few letters at a time. Tinsel or Diamond Dust was powdered on, and, after the mucilage was dry, the excess tinselling was shaken or brushed off, usually into a box so that it might not be wasted but used on the next card.

Spatter work is another type of decoration which is often used. It resembles air brush work and is used when an air brush is not available. Ink or color is poured into a saucer and a toothbrush dipped into the liquid, after which the brush is held over a

stencil and the color spattered on by scraping the brush with a knife or toothpick. Another method that is better than using a knife or a toothpick is to rub the brush over a wire screen, as the spray is more uniform and there is less danger of the color's blotting or forming large spots on the card. If there is too much ink on the brush, a froth will be raised which will hinder the color from spattering evenly.

Gum arabic may be used as a substitute for stencils, and the spattering done in several tones. A solution of gum arabic is first made, adding whatever amount of alcohol is needed to make the solution flow freely. A coat of color of the lightest tint desired is then sprayed on the card. The portions which are to

FIG. 216.—Picture of a rose before it was conventionalized.

be left this tint are then painted over with the gum arabic. The next darker tone is then sprayed and painted over, until the deepest tone has been finished, after which the card is immersed in water and the gum arabic stroked away with a camel's-hair brush. The card is then blotted and dried flat. The color must be waterproof, such as India ink, or it will wash away. Backgrounds may be prepared in advance by this method and the lettering put on later.

114. Conventionalizing Floral Cuts.—Pictorial decorations, especially pictures of flowers, may be made to look like the work of freehand artists without any exceptional drawing talent being necessary. This is done by making a tracing of a picture taken from some nursery catalog, Fig. 216, and simplifying the outlines by straightening the curved lines or by drawing them very smoothly, ignoring all details. After the figure has been changed to a poster style, it may be transferred to the show card by plac-

ing black carbon paper under the tracing and going over the drawing with a sharp, hard pencil. Black carbon paper is better than blue or purple as it erases easier and does not show so plainly afterwards.

Another method for transferring the drawing to the card is to trace over the lines with a perforating wheel. The paper is then laid over the cardboard and the perforated lines rubbed or pounced with a bag of charcoal dust, known as a pounce bag, transferring the design to the card underneath. The decoration is completed by painting the design in flat colors, Fig. 217. Any kind of a decorative design may be transferred to a card by either of these methods and then painted in colors.

FIG. 217.—Decorative design made by conventionalizing an ordinary picture.

115. Department Store Routine.—Some show-card writers work in department stores, on a salary basis, giving their full time to one store. Although these salaries are paid from the general funds of the company, a record is kept of the amount of work done for the different departments and a small charge made to those departments for the cards delivered to them.

Cards are usually charged for by the sheet or the fractional sheet, just as in individual shops doing a general card writing business, except that in a department store the charge is usually much below actual cost. The following is a sample schedule:

Full sheet (22 x 28)	20 cents
Half sheet (14 x 22)	12 "
Quarter sheet (11 x 14)	7 "
Eighth sheet (7 x 11)	5 "
Sixteenth sheet (5½ x 7)	3 "
Post card size (3½ x 5½)	2 "

All stores do not make the same charges as given in this schedule, but the proportions for the different charges are practically identical.

Clerks wishing to have cards lettered make out requisitions for them not later than 9:00 a.m. of the day before they are needed. These requisitions have spaces for indicating the day the card is needed, the size of the card, and the wording desired, Fig. 218. In case the goods are advertised in the newspapers

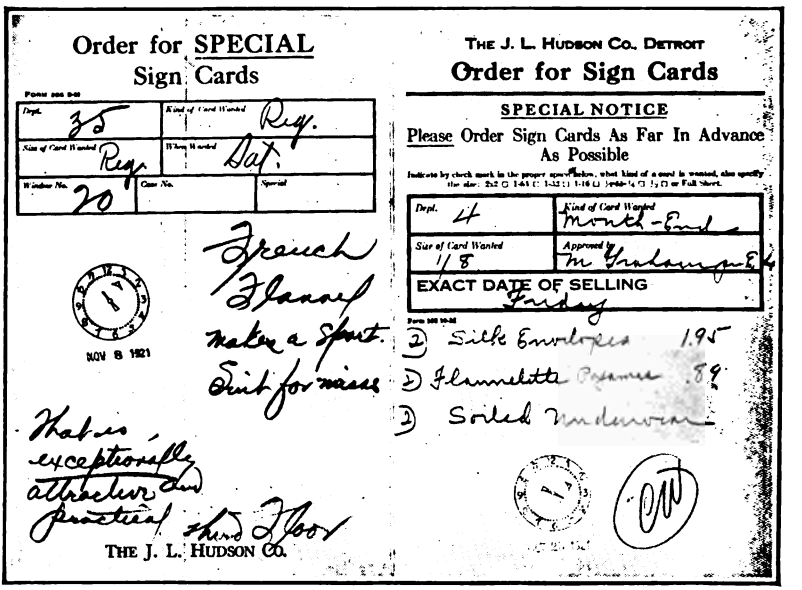

FIG. 218.—Requisition blanks as used in a department store.

also, the requisition is made out the same day that the advertising copy is written. In some cases this may be as much as three or four days before the advertisement appears in the paper. The requisition is next taken to the floorwalker or manager of the department for his O.K., before it is sent to the card writers. Requisitions for cards to be used in window displays are also O.K'd by the window trimmer. It generally happens, however, that cards are not ordered as early as they should be and a large proportion of the orders are rush orders.

The finished cards are filed in a cabinet in the card writing room, this cabinet having pigeon holes, one for each floor. The

name or number of the department to which the card should go is written on the back. The cards are usually called for by the person ordering them or by a messenger. Some card writers file the requisition also and in such a way that those needed first are at the front of the file.

116. Independent Shops.—In shops where public patronage is solicited, orders are handled in the same manner as in department stores, only no O.K. is required, the orders being usually

FIG. 219.—Cards of a high quality used in bank window displays.

made out by the proprietor or some one who has charge of taking the orders. The men employed in large shops are paid in various ways, such as a salary, or a salary and a commission, or on a 60-40 basis, the card writer getting 60 per cent of the price received for the card.

117. Opportunities for New Trade.—Although window displays have been used by retail stores for several years, it is only recently that other business concerns have come to realize that window display advertising is applicable to them also. Banks, real estate firms, schools, clubs, and public welfare organizations are now using and profiting from displays wherein show cards

form an important part. An energetic show-card writer can broaden his field considerably by inducing such firms and organizations to make greater use of cards and displays.

Four placards used successfully by a bank in its windows are shown in Fig. 219. These are excellent cards, and the bank using them had taken pains to see that they were of the best possible workmanship and in keeping with the purpose for which they were to be used. A Christmas card hung on one of the pillars inside the bank is also shown in Fig. 220.

FIG. 220.—A greeting card displayed in a bank lobby.

At the present time theaters are offering a greater opportunity than any other business concern for extending show-card trade beyond the field offered by retail stores. The lobby of the theater takes the place of the retail store window for the display of cards. Everyone wishes to learn as much as possible about a show before making up his mind whether or not he will attend, just as a person glances over the window display of a store to learn as much as possible about any article he sees before going inside to make a purchase.

118. Theater Lobby Cards.—Theater lobby announcements

may be divided into two classes: one class being the announcements concerning the program offered; and the other class concerning itself with such details as the admission fee, the hours when the shows are open, and the days when the program changes.

Theater lobby cards must be given more protection than retail display cards. Cards for retail stores are simply placed in the

FIG. 221.—A theater card permanently displayed on the outside of the building. This card announces the name of the theater, the time during which it is open, and the admission fee.

window or on the counter with no special framing or mounting; sometimes they are placed in small holders; but more often they are set up against some article in the display. Such treatment is not advisable in a theater lobby where the cards are liable to be knocked over, soiled, or affected by the weather. To afford the protection necessary they are mounted in brass framed cases fitted with hinged glass covers. A case used to protect a card on the outside of a building is shown in Fig. 221. A card of

this nature does not need to be changed for a long time; therefore, it is necessary that it be well protected, especially since it is located so that it is exposed to the weather. The lettering is of

FIG. 222.—Matinee card framed and suspended from a rack for display in a theater lobby.

a conservative style requiring more time and care in the making than that on cards for temporary display. A frivolous and unconventional style of lettering grows tiresome on cards bearing the same inscription for any great length of time.

Sometimes the case or frame is not hung on the wall of the lobby but is hung from a rack set out on the lobby floor, Fig. 222. These racks are generally used for displaying cards announcing the hours of the various performances or that a show is then being given. The lettering for such cards is larger, bolder, and less refined than for more permanent announcements.

The announcements regarding what is being featured on the program may be lithographed posters, or they may be cards made by a show-card writer. Theaters are gradually using more hand-lettered posters, although lithographs are cheaper. Both lithographs and hand-lettered posters are made 28 by 42 in. which is known as "one-sheet" poster size. This is the standard unit of measurement for lithograph posters, a large billboard poster being known as "twenty-four sheet" size, or whatever other size it may happen to be. Cards are not always made in sizes which exactly fit the frames used in theater lobbies, so the card writer may have to use what is known as "Double Elephant" size, which measures 27 by 40 in. Another, and more common size is 30 by 40 in. "Grand Eagle" size, however, measures 28 by 42 in. and will fit the frame exactly.

The program announcement may be divided further into two more classes; one announcing the program then running, and the other announcing future attractions. Both are displayed at the same time. The color schemes used should differ in the two groups so that the reader may readily distinguish between them. Although the colors should differ, they should harmonize with each other.

Material which is helpful in planning the advertising of the programs may always be obtained from booking offices and film distributors. In the case of vaudeville and legitimate theaters, the booking office, a couple of weeks or so before the date of the performance, furnishes the theater manager with publicity material containing stories and photographs of interesting details in the lives of the star performers. Moving picture exhibitors are furnished campaign books from the film exchanges, these books containing suggestions, displays, and advertising matter.

Many pretty designs may be copied on posters from exhibitors' campaign books. Other attractive designs may be copied from magazines and such sources and adapted for poster decorations. The pictures used may be selected from three kinds of illustrations;

namely, lithographs, photographs, and pictures drawn by hand. Photographs are used the most since it is not difficult to obtain them. In case they are not available, however, at the time the cards are made up, blank spaces may be left and the photographs put in later. Lithographs of various moving picture stars are kept in stock for local advertising by the exchanges. A supply of these may be ordered whenever they are needed and the portraits cut out and mounted on the cards.

Some card writers contract with several theaters in their own city and others nearby to supply them with lobby cards announcing their programs. Since moving pictures are routed from town to town and usually follow a regular circuit, the announcement cards may be shipped from place to place and used a number of times if sufficient care is taken of them. Each theater is furnished with directions for forwarding the advertising to the next theater and is also advised as to the point from which the display is coming. In case two theaters are running the same program at the same time, an extra set will have to be made up. Each theater manager keeps the card writer informed as far in advance as possible in regard to the films he expects to show. This enables the card writer to design the cards early and to arrange the routing of the material from theater to theater. In this way all of the work for a large number of theaters may be done in one shop, making it possible to quote comparatively low prices for the work. Since one card will do for several theaters, the card writer can afford to spend more time on it than if he were to letter a separate supply for each theater. Furthermore, if out-of-town theaters are included on the circuit, it makes it possible for them to receive a better grade of advertising material than could be obtained locally.

An economical method of preparing theater lobby cards is to substitute dull surfaced oil-cloth for cards, using water color for the lettering. The design can be washed off after the announcement is of no further value and the cloth used several times.

119. What to Charge.—The charge for lettering cards for any purpose is usually based on the sheet or the fractional part of a sheet, as in department store cards. In an independent shop, the charge is much higher, however, being $1 to $2 for a full-sized sheet (22 x 28). Charges for the smaller sizes are made in the same proportion as in the department store scale of

charges. For example, if $1 is charged for a full-sized sheet, an eighth of a sheet will cost about one-fourth as much or 25 cents, and not one-eighth as much. These rates apply to simple cards in but one or two colors. When the inscription exceeds ten or a dozen words, an extra charge is usually made. Prices for fancy cards cannot be estimated accurately in advance, since the time spent on the card is not dependent on either the size of the card or the number of words. Such work is usually charged for by the hour. For work of the best grade, $2 an hour is the usual charge. This covers not only the cost of time and the materials used, but includes a portion of the expenses, such as rent, fuel, lighting, and telephone service. If these expenses are ignored in making charges, the shop will be conducted at a loss. In large well-managed shops, prices are not charged according to the size of the card but on the basis of time and material.

The price charged for large muslin banners is different naturally from that charged for cards, it being based on the time and materials required. Muslin banners are mounted usually on wooden frames, though street banners are hung loose from ropes fastened to rings in the corners of the cloth. The cost of the labor and material must be included in the prices charged, the rate being lower for the large banners than for the small ones. If one were to assume that the muslin and other material cost 40 cents a yard and the labor $1 an hour, a banner 3 by 4 ft. in size would warrant a charge of 50 cents a square foot. The charge for a banner 4 by 4 ft. in size might be 5 cents less per square foot, while for a still larger banner, 3 by 10 ft. in size, a charge of $1 a running foot or $10 in all would no doubt be satisfactory. These charges are merely suggestive, since many factors such as higher wages, special lettering, or decorations have to be considered and the charges made accordingly. If an order calls for several banners instead of one, the customer may be justified in expecting a reduction.

The union scale of wages for sign painters is usually higher than that for show-card writers. In some localities the local unions have been successful in raising the scale to the same rate as that for sign painters, but this is not true of all cities. The wages of a first-class mechanic in the sign painting trade is quoted as being as much as $10 to $20 a day. The same scale of wages is not in effect everywhere, and it would be difficult to

attempt quoting, with any degree of accuracy, the wages in various sections of the country.

120. Using Samples.—The beginner who feels that his work has sufficient merit to warrant his seeking employment should provide himself with several good samples of his own lettering. These samples may include some show pieces, but they should not be too showy or they will seem to exaggerate his ability. Neat specimens of work which he can duplicate at any time for a customer or an employer are the best. A portfolio or large en-

FIG. 223.—Paper portfolio for carrying samples.

velope for carrying the samples should be used, as wrapping paper is inconvenient and often untidy. A light cardboard portfolio like that shown in Fig. 223 will accommodate cards almost a quarter of a sheet in size, and is cheap, serviceable, and very satisfactory. Heavier and more substantial portfolios, Fig. 224, may be had in a variety of sizes from 10 by 14 in. up to a size which will accommodate full sheets of cardboard.

When a card writer solicits prospects for orders, photographs may be substituted for sample cards, these photographs being mounted with cloth hinges at the left margin and bound in a loose-leaf album. Office supply stores keep these albums in stock for travelling salesmen. Photographs are less bulky than sample cards and the album can easily be carried in an overcoat pocket.

New suggestions may be included as well as samples of work done previously for other customers.

121. Fitting for Successful Work.—For the beginner who wishes to succeed in the art of show-card writing, only one word of advice is really necessary and that is, *practice*. The muscles must be trained to letter without effort or compulsion. At first this seems hard, nearly everyone becoming discouraged soon after starting. This should not be the case, for as a matter of fact learning to letter is no more difficult than learning to write.

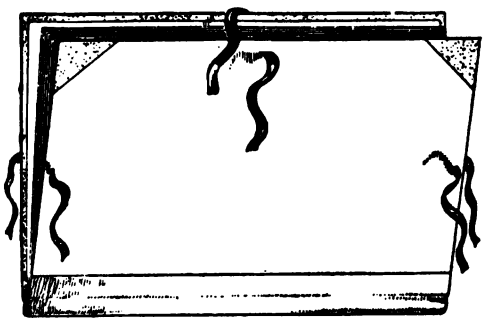

FIG. 224.—Heavy portfolio for carrying large show cards.

Both require practice, and once either of them is learned, it seems simple and easy.

For the student who has mastered the construction of letters and who is already doing work of commercial value only one other thing need be said,—give the cards personality. One style should be studied persistently, giving it little variations here and there which suit the card writer's particular fancy. Learning one style well has the further advantage of permitting the card writer to give greater attention to artistic arrangement. Such a policy as this leads sooner or later to giving the cards a personality, a certain style and appearance which distinguish them from the work of others. When a card writer has reached this stage of progress, his success and income are assured.

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