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## ADVERTISING BY STATISTICS

Figures and statistics nearly always carry conviction. The modern man wants to comprehend, not merely to see. Nevertheless, advertising by statistics need not be dry and barren; it must contain an element of warmth and feeling, above all when it appeals to a buying public which is already in existence. It is just as effective upon simple natures as upon the educated, because it overcomes the most obstinate obstacle, mistrust, by means of the most obstinate argument, the proof. Statistics are no longer a mere dry science to be set aside with a smile as pedantic and dead. (Exact science is also beginning to regard certain laws of nature as statistical facts, that is, as results of an arithmetical calculation.)

The effect of statistical propaganda depends upon making the object advertised interesting in itself, apart from its actual usefulness. This may be achieved by describing processes of manufacture, by drawing objective comparisons and deductions so that knowledge of the object advertised seems as it were a cultural achievement, a part of everyday knowledge. The association which is so important in a technical propaganda sense is thus achieved in a more permanent and reliable fashion than by the usual method of ramming home a slogan.

Statistic advertising is much more versatile, transferable, and variable than any other. The same idea may be presented in various forms and is equally good as a personal advertising letter, as inset in a newspaper, as a prospectus, a propaganda feuilleton or a poster. To be sure this method makes considerable demands on the advertising man. He must be adaptable and have his head full of ideas.

As an example of a happy solution of a problem we might call attention to a series of posters done by the woman artist P. Wojtek of Salzburg for the Society of Friends of Wüstenrot. These posters in their original colours go to show that the most difficult and complicated statistic material can be effectively displayed by purely graphic means if the composition be clear, the matter carefully chosen and the type well thought out.

Trans. by E. T. Scheffauer.

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