

though of this I cannot be sure, as I am not happy enough to possess a copy.

I must not conclude these notes without making mention of Edgar Wilson's long series of covers for the now defunct "Rambler." Though these were pictures on the front page independent of the title, they were in keeping with the idea of the

## The Ideas of an Artist.

BY G. HOWELL-BAKER.

IT is a short step from the poster on the placards to the covers of the magazine on the stationer's bookshelf, and what is more to be expected than a magazine that



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R. P. GOSSEP.

paper, and many of them were delicious little pictures.

One remark I should make to collectors, and that is not to overlook the most ephemeral and worthless magazines and papers, for often the excellence of a cover bears no relation to what is underneath it.

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is placarded for sale to also find its cover a poster in miniature. I am not going to say so because I know that this is coming out in THE POSTER, but I consider some of the best covers I have so far seen are those of this magazine.

The first reason for this is because its colour schemes are effective, and at the same time delight and far from hurt the eye. I



E. M. TURNER.

have rarely noticed greys in them. Greys are very well to pronounce an individual colour either in brilliancy or composition of colours. But, however they may be placed to catch the public eye, there is nothing like a galaxy of colours in all their untrammelled brilliancy. Look at the gaudy parasols in the streets; they strike the eye like a Nasmyth hammer. This is the object and errand of a good cover.

The second reason is that its wording on the cover is short. Look at the wording on the posters of our largest advertisers, one never sees more than a few words, just the thing advertised and a succinct formula or catch-phrase. Bovril, Colman's, etc., etc., never overdo it in this respect, and several of our theatrical posters are good and acceptable under this category. They are more readily grasped, and work with the centralising quality of a poster pictorial and illustrative. It's a thing in a nutshell. **THE POSTER** has its name, its volume number, date, and the fact that it is

an illustrated monthly chronicle, and that is all you want. If you want to know anything else, buy it and look inside; the same is to be said of the article advertised, taste it and try it. A lot of printed matter is like a garrulous woman, one never pays strict attention, and in regard to the over-printed cover, rarely, if ever, does one read all that is printed—and its errand is lost.

Put that, and that only, which is absolutely imperative to induce the busy man of to-day to see it at a glance, and then he is sure to ask himself what is inside; don't overdo it, as his eye will soon wander and his mind will go with it—the chance of selling your book has likewise gone.

I hold with virgin colouring and heavy line—the guiding spirit to be in as few lines as possible compatible with intelligibility and design.

There is design in colour as well as





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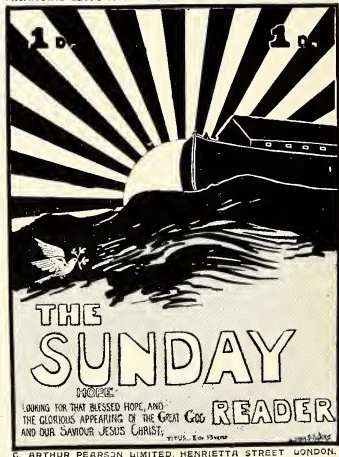
balance of colour, and some drawings I have seen are apparently on the principle that to go against all the canons of accepted and acknowledged artistic sense is to produce a striking thing. The very fact of its falsity in principle needs no words of mine to condemn it. The good book cover is a poster of the work on the book *in brevis*. A thing that is good to look upon can never be ugly, however we may focus our sight, for true art cannot produce else than its likeness of itself, which is the best of a poetical and sensitive eye—it cannot bring forth another nature than itself—it can never offend those better senses that are awakened when looking at a thing that is to become a joy for ever.

Another point I wish to touch upon, and which I consider of some importance to the subject, and that is the lettering; good

lettering is of the picture a part, and should go hand-in-hand with the whole scheme of technique, colour and composition. Straight-laced printers' lettering is never suitable to a good design and holds no striking qualities—the freedom of true art abhors it like nature a vacuum. Some of the best lettering for book covers and posters are the American types, and there is an encomium of praise to be awarded to them for many of their covers of to-day.

We can learn from others, our cousins across the sea, France, Germany, Holland, etc., but never let it be said that they taught us an art. As sure as our flag waves supreme everywhere and makes every right-hearted Briton feel better for the thought, so let us transcend in art and furnish the world with a subject for their praise, and a worthy joy for all.

FINANCIAL EDITORS AND COMPANY PROMOTERS, See p. 321



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G. HOWELL-BAKER.