

sellers are dropped. 6) Sales area tests—An advertising campaign for a product is run in a limited area. If sales are good, the advertising is extended to other areas.

Some tests that have been tried are a bit weird. For example, an electric psychogalvanometer is strapped to a man's hand. A needle on a dial registers his inner tension. A series of pictures is shown; presumably, a pastoral scene will cause no quiver of the needle, whereas a photo of a bathing beauty will cause it to spin wildly. Another method is the eye camera test in which proofs of ads are shown to a respondent. A camera photographs his eye movements as he scans the ads while a technician records which parts of the ads the respondent noticed first and which parts he looked at longest.

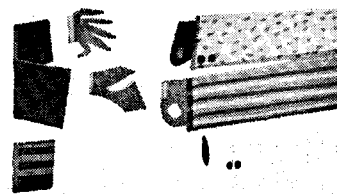
WITH all this testing, advertisers learn many practical things, such as the kind of pictures that stop the most readers, the headlines that induce people to read ad copy, and the effective attention-getting devices. What parts of ads are best read? Will people read lengthy text matter set in small print? What kind of offers bring the largest response? Above all, which sales appeals sell the most merchandise and services?

Advertising is getting more scientific all the time. If you are a stockholder in a company that advertises, you can rest assured that the ad expenditure is not being wasted on somebody's whim—even though some ads sound whimsical. At \$1,000 a word, the men and women who labor in advertising to sell the nation's products must be careful about what words they use.

But what about the old days before such instruments as psychogalvanometers were invented? Were the earliest advertisers completely unscientific? Not at all. I recall one of the lessons my mother and I learned while measuring the results from the small classified ads for tutoring school. We offered a free circular and we also put our telephone number in the ads. We found that only one out of five persons who wrote for the circular ever showed up at the school. However, when people telephoned, mother was able to induce *three* out of five to visit the school. Occasionally she would receive an objectionable call such as the alcoholic chap who telephoned late one night and said he wanted "physical culture." Mother was able to turn these characters off with a sharp rejoinder. Since the circular worked poorly and the telephone worked well, we dropped the mention of the circular. We even omitted our street address. We retained only our telephone number. Result: more students, bigger classes, a little more butter on our bread.

—JOHN CAPLES.

Public Relations



Affirmative Action

IT has often been said that the successful magazine is the lengthened shadow of one man. This certainly was true of Harold Ross's *New Yorker*, Henry Luce's *Time*, *Life*, and *Fortune*, and still is true of De Witt Wallace's *Reader's Digest*. It was also true of American business in the post-Civil War period when the corporation was largely the creature of one man and he alone directed his company, often in a dictatorial fashion. But today, with the stock of corporations so widely held, and with the larger ones working in such complex fields, often in as many as a hundred lands, no individual can make all the decisions that demand such a wide variety of skills and an abundance of diverse knowledge. Corporate decisions of major import are now group decisions and of necessity must be so.

In keeping with these slow processes, it seems to take an interminable time before decisions made at the top are implemented throughout a company. This has been particularly evident in the adjustment of the larger corporation to its new social obligations. Yet despite this ponderous procedure of decision-making, the chief executive of a major company can provide leadership and give impetus to the movement of even the largest empires. Where one finds a corporation moving with urgency in seeking new means of meeting the crises of the inner cities, for example, one is almost certain to find a chief executive riding herd to make sure that the company's policies are being carried out with utmost speed.

One such case highlights the theory. The Equitable Life Assurance Society of the United States is one of the largest insurance companies in the country. Equitable is in a highly regulated business and must be cautious. All life insurance companies have had a poor history of employment of minorities. Some of them not only refused to hire Negroes or other deprived groups, but often they were even reluctant to sell insurance to blacks. The changes that have come about in all the better-run insurance companies are due not alone to public pressures, but to a realization by management that a tremendous part of their investments is in the cities and unless the cities are healthy the insurance companies will not be. As a result,

hiring policies, for example, changed several years ago.

Some have been slow to implement those policies. But not Equitable Life. James F. Oates, Jr., chairman of the board and chief executive officer, has made it his own direct business to see that there is not a letup in the pressure to alter old habits, to hire members of minority groups, to open doors to those previously barred from jobs. Mr. Oates retires from Equitable at the end of this year, and to examine the changes he has wrought, it is worth looking at his record before he came to the company. In 1945, as president of the Chicago YMCA, he decided it was time to end the debates on admission of Negroes to membership. As a result of his pressure, all facilities at the Y were opened to Negroes. There was no falling off in Y membership, and there were no outcries.

In 1946, as president of the Chicago Bar Association, Oates opened another door. Again, there were no Negro members. He brought in Negro lawyers, the first one a judge. In 1948, as head of The Peoples Gas Light and Coke Company, he found that Negroes held only the most menial jobs, and precious few of them. He changed the hiring policies of his company and as a beginning sought out, with the aid of the judge he brought into the Bar Association, twenty well-qualified Negro youngsters. And he did it despite warnings from company executives that white girl employees would leave if black girls used the same washrooms; that it would be the ruination of Peoples Gas if young Negro men were allowed to work in the same offices with white men.

It was with this background that Oates arrived at Equitable in 1957. He found that his new company did not turn away Negroes when they sought jobs, but there was no initiative in hiring minority groups. The result was that there were hardly any Negro, Oriental, American Indian, or Spanish Americans working for Equitable. Oates made it his special province to change that picture.

Oates found that it is not easy to change the thinking of executives. As late as 1960, there were still very few minority group salaried employees at Equitable. Now, nationwide, some 13.5 per cent belong to minority groups. In the New York office, the figure is about

20 per cent and this is certain to rise. Of those being hired now in New York, 60 per cent are Negro and Puerto Rican. Every Equitable office throughout the country is integrated, including the South.

At present more than 200 agents out of a sales force of 7,000 are from a minority group. There are twenty Negro district managers out of some 400. The manager of one of the Philadelphia agencies is a Negro, as are the managers of agencies in Los Angeles and Chicago. And before 1969 is over, there will be more, for the vigorous recruiting campaign is being accelerated.

In addition, Equitable is now in its sixth year of training high school drop-outs, largely Negroes in New York, for jobs. The program is not a complete success, but there have been accomplishments that make the program worth the effort. "On balance," says Oates, "we are more than satisfied that it has been and continues to be a relative success." To Oates, a job "is an essential badge of membership in the larger society and a pay check is a passport to self-respect and self-sufficiency." But jobs alone are not enough. The entire environment of the inner cities must be changed, and that, Oates believes, involves schools, housing, recreational facilities, as it does job opportunities.

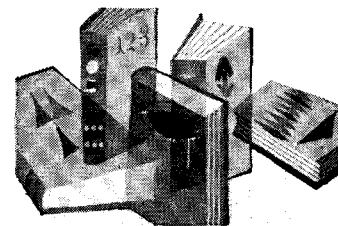
BUT that is not all. Equitable for some time has been one of the leaders among insurance companies in substantial corporate philanthropy, including aid to higher education. In 1954, Equitable's contribution program totaled \$375,000. Last year it was \$775,000, and it will be roughly the same in 1969. In addition, \$200,000 more has been budgeted for urban programs. Equitable's Division of Community Services encourages company employees and agents to become active in civic causes.

The Equitable effort is part of the life insurance industry's pledge to invest \$1 billion in urban core areas throughout the country to improve housing conditions and finance enterprises that will create jobs. And while the Federal Housing Administration guarantees the good use of these funds, the companies could invest them in other areas and get a better return of from 1 per cent to 1.5 per cent more. Oates was one of the leaders who proposed this industry wide program, which will in all likelihood be extended as soon as the original \$1 billion is invested.

And if one more example is needed to show that a busy chief executive can still find time for what are usually called external responsibilities, there is Oates's activity as general chairman of Princeton University's capital campaign, which from 1959 to 1962 raised \$53,000,000.

—L. L. L. GOLDEN.

Books in Communications



The Least Passive Viewer

ONE way of tackling the amorphous subject of television, of getting your hands around the whole slippery, quicksilver mass of the problem, is to dig up all the meaningful figures you can find—the ratings and evaluation data and statistical profiles, such as the number of sets per thousand, the total number of viewing hours per week, the exposure of violence, the incidence of terror—and just get things pinned down.

That may be the way of many a good critic and true. It is not the way of Michael J. Arlen who writes about television biweekly in *The New Yorker* and whose first-class articles over the last few years have now been collected in *Living-Room War* (Viking, \$5.95), a book that will be described here only as one of rare frankness, honesty, and brilliance.

The success of Arlen's marvelously personal approach (he is the least passive viewer) reassures me, for one, that man is really better, after all, than a computer, even on the statistic-laden subject of television. Arlen does not trade in the numerical inputs that make for good statistical read-outs and pages of appendices in workmanlike-journalism school texts. Nor does he sit transfixed before the blue-gray blur of the screen mistaking its flickering images and hectic scene changes for the unedited black and white of reality.

His method is quite different, and quite unlike that of most critics. In a cheerfully frank confession in the introduction, Arlen admits to not having known much about TV when he started.

But he was forewarned enough not to want to write more frequently than once every two weeks, a resolution he has been able to keep, and he was determined to direct his comments to specific shows, an idea he has strayed quite a distance from.

Very deftly Arlen can put his finger on TV's contribution to the popularity of pro football (commentary and those stop-action replays at last make the game intelligible) or demolish a show he doesn't like with a forthright phrase, "It was a rotten show." But he is constantly pushing beyond the programed hour and the listings in *TV Guide*. Consequently, the scope of these articles, which are not essays and certainly not reviews in the ordinary sense, is much broader than the dimensions of the TV screen. They are expressive, really, of our times and troubles as these—some of them—get filtered, partially, through the video tube.

At times Arlen, one imagines in a mood of great impatience, dives right through the TV screen and lands on the other side, right in the middle of the live action. This he does in several long pieces from Saigon and other fresh reporting direct from last year's political conventions in Miami and Chicago. "A Day in the Life" is his vividly observed, felt, and experienced account of an action at Con Thien that yielded four minutes of film (which is a lot for television news) on a Monday night Walter Cronkite show.

The on-the-spot reports are particularly good at showing how-it's-done affecting what-we-see. Detail in domestic

