

## Selfridge &amp; Co., Ltd.

(Editorial Rooms), London.

NOTE.—This space is occupied every day by an article reflecting the policies, principles, and opinions of this House of Business upon various points of public interest.

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## BIGGER IDEAS

By CALLISTHENES

It is always interesting to compare one Age with another and to watch the growth of civilisation from the first pages of the history books until to-day. Not only is it interesting, but often a study of these things brings with it an ability better to understand this twentieth century in which we live, and also perhaps at times it causes us to wonder if we have made the progress that we think we have made.

When we look at the old Roman Empire and see its small beginnings—read of the dreams of Romulus of the greatness that is to be Rome, trace the growth of that city to the grandeur and dignity that it in time achieved, we begin to wonder what it was that the Romans had which inspired their acts with such grand ideas, and to compare the fruits of their ideas with those we see around us to-day.

There was certainly nothing small in the Roman conception of, shall we say, the Coliseum, the great baths or the beautiful triumphal arches. What have we to-day that can compare with architecture such as this? What was it that the Romans did, which we apparently do not do, which made them think on such a scale, which gave them bigger ideas, which seemed to make them more imaginative? And then we find ourselves asking if we, twenty centuries after these people lived in Rome, are not perhaps doing things in a smaller, more timid manner than they did all those years ago. Questions arise in our brains as to how we can build up our imaginations so that our ideas to-day shall become greater, more splendid, more nearly god-like and less petty than we know them to be in far too many instances.

The thing most needed to-day is more imagination, or, as some prefer to call it, vision, which will picture the great thing, which will recognise that nothing is too great for man to do; especially is this so if it has already once been done, which will cultivate a way of thinking that produces great ideas.

As we look at the beautiful engravings, perhaps not exaggerated, of Piranesi, the Venetian artist who was born in the early half of the 18th century, and who settled in Rome to devote himself to engraving pictures of archæological reconstruction of the ancient monuments, we cannot help but wish that we to-day had such beautiful things to pass on to the future. We know that there is plenty of ability and talent to-day, but we wonder whether it is timidity or perhaps fear of failure that is preventing present ideas from becoming bigger and grander in their material realisation.

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THE NECESSITY OF  
EXTREME  
WATCHFULNESS

By CALLISTHENES

The primary consideration in the art of organisation lies in the careful and wise selection of the right person for the right post. If an undertaking of any description is to be successful, then, to quote an old adage, "a round peg in a square hole" must never be applicable to any employee in a task which he has been set to do. Apart from this most important consideration of being able to select the correct person, there is a further, and equally important, point which must always receive its full share of attention. Once a new appointment has been made to any post, there must be an ever-present ability to discriminate as to whether the person appointed proves on trial to be suitably adaptable to that particular post, and it must be borne in mind by those in authority that it is their obligation to relieve that person of his job should he prove himself unable to adapt himself to his duties.

As a general rule this obligation can be applied to any form of undertaking. For example, should it be found that the leading roles in a theatrical production have been given to certain players, no matter how excellent they may be in other "parts" and regardless of such things as the box-office draw of their names, who do not happen to suit the particular play in question, he is a wise producer who is able to confess to himself that he has been mistaken in his original choice and who can decide to recast the production with more suitable players.

It is, however, principally in business that everlasting watchfulness is so necessary, so that a manager can know if those under him are suitably employed, and, if so, whether they are pulling their proper amount of weight in the organisation. These things he is able to judge in many ways—sometimes by unintelligent replies to questions; sometimes by careless and unhappy acts; and again sometimes by mental errors which indicate conditions of mind which perhaps had not before made themselves evident. Whenever such instances as these come before his notice, the careful manager, who indeed must have a keen understanding of human nature, will caution the individual who is at fault, point out how his error could have been avoided, and give him another chance—perhaps even two more chances—but, if no advantage seems to be taken, in other words if the individual in question does not seem to be able to gain experience from his mistakes, then it is the duty of the organiser to find some person more suitable to fill the post.