

Dear Ken:

Yours came just as I had mine half typed. So now I have to start all over again. Yours was short and to the point. "Brevity is the soul of wit". How's my Ivory Tower coming along? Sliding door is OK---something different and distinguished. And the window measures 2-9 X 5. Say, what are you up to anyway? If I don't put yours designs into execution right away, don't feel your efforts are wasted. I've been sort of worried. Thought you might have had a nervous breakdown from overwork, designing that room, trying to out-Wright Mr. Wright. What have you done with that little 5-4 X 6-8 space right by the door? I might put my desk and chair there, and typewriter. In that case, I thought I'd build a shelf flush against the top of the desk, and other shelves, right into the wall, arranging them, not in the usual conventional way, but in such a way as to give the wall a rhythm and design.

What I really had to say was about the new camera and foto finishing store we have just opened, at 223 California St. Location seems good. It's right near the financial center and many insurance men, lawyers and office people are working nearby. And all of the big Japanese imp. & exp. houses are located in the vicinity. Then there is a tiny postoffice in the rear of the store, and the people daily go in and out, passing through our part of the store. And if we move the finishing plant to the basement we can save on the rent, though there are certain initial difficulties, such as ventilation and the fact that the drain pipes are located half way between the basement floor and the main floor. Owning a store in connection with the finishing work enables more direct approach to the customers, in addition to eliminating commission. We are hoping for lots of foto finishing work. But we have our fingers crossed. This year I think about nine new camera stores opened in the town. One store stocked up with Univex movie outfit, a cheap type, in anticipation of the fair customers I imagine, but now he is shedding crocodile tears because he can't get rid of them. We have put in Eastman, Zeiss, Bell & Howell, etc (No, we don't have Praxidos--go jump in the lake). I didn't realize how much stock even a small store like ours could take in. Sad to say, can't do very much on a small capital. Didn't you operate a retail store once? It's no easy job is it, opening a store. Maybe you can give us some wise counsel. They made us write a letter to the holding company stating that we would employ a white salesman. It seems they also inquire into your character reference and credit standing. Finding a right store, with the right rent and right location is no easy matter. Nisei fellows often talk bemoan the lack of capital among the Japanese, but I rather think the trouble is more the lack of business opportunities and ideas. I guess what they really mean is capital in their own family, doing away with the necessity of borrowing. That alters the situation. Otherwise it's still the same as it was--you start with a job, save and accumulate your capital, and open a store or business. The point is that sooner the young fellows realize it and start saving and working hard the better. Did I tell you about a Nisei fellow who's saved up 9,000 dollars, so he says, and he's not yet 30. Says he earns 2 to 3 times as much as the city fellows.

Well, sir, I had a brain storm one night. I picked a name for the store---The "Circle of Confusion". I thought that was a masterpiece. I could see a long line of customers, intrigued by the name, once seeing it, always remembering it. I slept on that. The next morning I felt more sober; the name didn't sound so attractive. The businessmen are pretty conservative.

I've been helping in a little way; can't do much yet. They charge about \$40 for a mailing list of about 2000; the mail advertising firm will do it for you. So I decided to save that much, and went through the telephone book picking out all the names within about three blocks radius of the store. Found about three thousand listed.

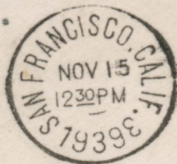
We also planned some changes in the envelope for foto finishing. The usual kind used here serves the finisher more than it does the customer, with its ads. and data for the finisher. I felt it was quite a problem for the customer to find a proper and convenient way of keeping his pictures and negatives after he gets them from the finisher, so why not make the envelope such that he can use ~~them~~ it for filing away his prints and negatives? What think you. Album is all right but I think many find it too troublesome, can't write anything in it, the prints are kept nicely but the negatives get misplaced and hard to find when you are looking for a particular one, and in a few years albums get voluminous, and a suitable paste is difficult to find. On the other hand the filing away of each negative and print, individually numbered and with the necessary data would be too much bother for average cameramen. So I eliminated the advertisements on the envelope, made it more attractive, and on the front put data for date, file number, title, where taken, etc. It isn't ideal, but one may find it convenient, time saving, and negatives can be found without much trouble; Anyway, I hope the customer will find the envelope useful, and notice its difference from the usual type. As for the ads, I intend to have printed inserts and put them in the envelopes now and then.

Well, wish us luck.

Yours truly,

IM

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