The
Tales
of
a
Traveler

S. S. Skidelsky

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TO MY FRIENDS, THE FLORISTS EVERYWHERE,
IN GRATEFUL RECOGNITION OF KINDNESS,
HOSPITALITY AND ENCOURAGEMENT
EXTENDED ME, I DEDICATE THIS LITTLE
VOLUME—THE SIMPLE STORY OF MY LIFE ON
THE ROAD FOR UPWARD OF A GENERATION

S. S. SKIDELSKY

PHILADELPHIA
MAY 1, 1917

THE TALES OF A TRAVELER

Reminiscences and Reflections
from Twenty-eight Years on
the Road

By S. S. SKIDELSKY

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The Tales of a Traveler

Open at a time when the florist business was just beginning to be recognized as a factor in the industrial development of the land. The story commences with the year 1888, and those florists who were cognizant of the general status of affairs at that time will best appreciate the wonderful changes which have occurred in the nearly thirty years which have passed away since then.

Mr. Skidelsky's narrative is a record of men and times, a running story of biography, skillfully unrolled. He has traveled the country very thoroughly; met with men of all kinds and nationalities, and has been so keenly observant through all of the years that to us older men particularly his writings and character descriptions ring wonderfully true and bring back many recollections.

The younger men should take a keen interest in *The Tales*, for we doubt whether at any time in the future there will be available so clear and unvarnished a statement of the period 1888 to 1916 as this one from the pen of Mr. Skidelsky.

The author well describes conditions existing in commercial floriculture in the United States during the years under review. The wages and traveling costs of that time are noted, and the hard work of the beginner on the road is told with candor. The young "ambassador of com-

merce" of the present day is not at all likely to have to start under as many difficulties, particularly those of finance, and he cannot help but be encouraged through reading these records.

As a result of his long experience, his perseverance and his ability Mr. Skidelsky is today one of the best known men in the florist trade, and thus his narrative, which gathers within itself much of the very essence of floricultural history in the United States, may be looked upon as standard.

Enormous advances in the cut flower and plant industry, and in the sale of florists' and all other supplies, have been made, and practically all of these transitions are faithfully noted by our chronicler and in the order in which they came about.

THE PUBLISHERS.

PART I

Early Struggles

AT the suggestion of a few of my florist friends, I am undertaking to write a series of reminiscences of road life during the past thirty years. As I look back over that period of time, it occurs to me that many things have transpired in horticulture, as well as in other lines of human activity, and that they may prove interesting reading, especially to the younger generation of florists whose existence I never dreamed of when I first took up the work of soliciting orders for immortelles, cape-flowers, wheat-sheaves, doves, etc.

First "Job"

It was in the late '80's—about 1888—that I secured a "job" with an insignificant florists' supply house in Philadelphia, long since out of existence, at the munificent sum of ten dollars per. I say I secured a job, advisedly; for in those days, unlike the present time, jobs were by no means waiting for the man. As a matter of fact, there were dozens of men waiting for every job, and the wages paid would startle a newly arrived immigrant. That job proved the beginning of my career, and of my association with horticulture. I was determined there and then to put forth my best efforts, to work hard and untiringly in order to prove to my employer that my assurances to him of giving him the very best in me were fully justified. The cupidity of human nature was well demonstrated by my first boss (may his ashes rest in peace!). Despite the good work I was doing, and my untiring efforts at all times in behalf of his interests, he could never "see his way" to increase my salary by the sum of one or two dollars in order to enable me to provide a little more comfortably for my small family.

My first work was in the city of Philadelphia. Determined to succeed, I visited every flower shop, never hesitating to intrude myself upon men well up at that time in the business. I had but one aim in view, and that was to succeed. And right here I cannot refrain from saying a few words to my younger friends on the road about the importance of studying human nature before attempting to solicit an order. There is nothing that will impress a buyer less favorably than the intrusion of a young man with his samples at a time when business is at a rush. I gained that knowledge after being two weeks out, and I have profited by it ever since. One must know, too, the calibre of the man approached. There are many men of many minds; some will give you a hearing at once, and others again will give you a stare which tells you more eloquently than words to get out. Know your man, my young friend, and your battle is half won.

Earliest Experiences on the Road

About the beginning of December, 1888, it occurred to my employer to venture me out on the road. That was a new departure in my life. To go on the road—how inviting and attractive the idea seemed to me! I boarded the train one fine morning at Broad Street Station, my first destination being Columbia, Pa. There, to my delight, I found two florists, Mr. Ahern, a very estimable old gentleman who is still continuing the business, and a Mr. Purple, who has long since discontinued. My experience with the first customer proved very encouraging indeed, and I shall always remember with feelings of gratitude Mr. Ahern's

kindly manner and words in receiving me. As a matter of course, I had the best and the cheapest line in existence at that time—have you ever met a young salesman who didn't? My immortelles had the most perfect color, my doves were all but alive. Mr. Ahern smiled amiably, evidently taking into consideration my youth and exuberance, and gave me an order. I have taken many orders since, and some about a hundred times the size of that first one; but I cannot recall any order that ever gave me as much pleasure, encouragement, and enthusiasm as Mr. Ahern's did. My gratitude goes out to Mr. Ahern to this very day, for events in themselves insignificant have often helped to shape the career of many a man.

My experience with Mr. Purple was not quite so encouraging, although in his case, too, I did not leave empty-handed.

From Columbia to Lancaster is but a few miles, and there I went next. At Lancaster I succeeded in getting a few more orders, in themselves of no great account, but in the aggregate quite sufficient to encourage both my employer and his employee. I was on the road to success; I felt that hard work and perseverance would do the trick. On that trip I made Harrisburg, Lebanon, Reading, Allentown, and Easton, and returned to Philadelphia proud of my achievements. I had done my share in every town, introducing a new and unknown concern at the same time.

The Rise in Salary that Looked Big

For the next ten days we were busy as the proverbial bees—that is, my employer, our errand-boy, our basket-maker (an old and very cranky German) and myself; for the Christmas orders had to be sent out on time. Some things had to be made, and many another article purchased from other supply houses. We got through with our work in due time, and from the smile that expanded my employer's face, I could easily infer that he was quite pleased with his "hired man." In fact, on Christmas morning he handed me a five dollar bill by way of a gift, and in addition increased my salary, to take effect from the first of the year, by one dollar a week.

"Peddling" Baskets

In January, 1889, following the example of one of the largest florists' supply houses in this country, situated right here in Philadelphia, my employer conceived the idea of manufacturing a line of splint-baskets, trimmed with straw (the older generation of florists may recall that line of goods), for the Easter candy trade in Philadelphia. It was the custom at that time, as it is to some extent today, for candy shops to make a display of baskets in the windows, filled with eggs, young chicks, rabbits, etc. It devolved upon me, to my utter dismay and disgust, to trudge all day long through the streets among the candy shops, with a line of baskets of all sizes and shapes strung on a rope, and hung over my shoulders. I remember one day meeting a couple of my particular friends who thought me capable of better things. I became quite confused, and felt a sense of humiliation not justified, perhaps, but certainly wholly natural. I was determined, however, to make a success even in this case; and for three long months I worked among the candy shops of Philadelphia as well as among the florists, returning every evening to my employer with orders, and to my humble home weary and disgusted.

Thoughts of Making a Change

It was about this time that I determined to make a change. I had been with that concern about eight months. Having had some experience as a salesman, I thought I was quite ready to be taken up by a larger house. I made my application, but met with no success. The house in question gave me to understand

that they had all the salesmen they needed, and that considerable traveling was being done by one member of the firm. There was no other alternative left but to stick to the first job until something, somewhere, might turn up.

Trip to Baltimore

In April, 1889, my employer, who was in the habit of working Baltimore every month, bethought himself to try me and see what I could accomplish. He gave me to understand that if I did well in Baltimore I should go to Washington, Petersburg, Richmond and Norfolk. My delight knew no bounds, for as compared with playing pack-horse to a string of baskets, carrying a sample case into new and unexplored fields was an alluring adventure.

I landed in Baltimore one rainy morning, but rain and sunshine were of no consideration. I was too full of my undertaking to be restrained by the weather. I saw the Baltimore trade, seeing the store men during the day, and working the small places on the outskirts late into the evening. Orders came my way. I felt encouraged, and more determined to keep the good work up.

On to the National Capital

Three days in Baltimore sufficed. From there I went to Washington—to the National Capital. I well remember the impression when I first beheld the brass star at the old Pennsylvania depot, marking the spot where Garfield fell, after being shot down by the assassin. Washington, like many another city, during the past generation has advanced rapidly in every particular. The streets are finer and more attractive than at that time; the new hotels are luxurious. I shall touch more on the subject of hotels as I proceed.

In those days there were but few flower stores in Washington. There were Small & Sons, Hale, Freeman, and a few others. The most successful florists of today in Washington were at that time just about starting. There are Gude Bros., for example. When I first called on the Gude Bros., the genial Adolph was just about completing his first or second house, and it was a modest little plant at that. Will Gude was his able assistant. When I first beheld them, I felt intuitively that these young men were destined to make their mark in the world of horticulture. That my intuition was correct is well attested by the modern plant they have established at Anacostia, and their magnificent store, one of the finest in Washington.

About that time I also met Fred Kramer. Young Fred (and by the way, he is still as young as ever) impressed me as being very kind-hearted, considerate, and an enthusiast. If, for example, an article of merchandise pleased him, he immediately saw possibilities of using a quantity—a large quantity, in fact. As it turned out invariably with him, he was never disappointed in his undertakings. Fred has splendid qualities, chief of which is sincere friendship for anybody who wins his confidence.

F. R. Freeman was of a somewhat reserved nature, at first not easily approached, but upon closer acquaintance, as was proved in my case, a whole-souled, genial man.

Experience in Richmond and Norfolk

My experience in Richmond was of but short duration. With all due deference to the progressive spirit of that Southern city, and its many other attractive features, in my case it proved somewhat of a hoodooed town; in other words, I could never accomplish any results in Richmond. It is not unlikely that older houses that had preceded me managed to hold on to their trade, despite my efforts to divert it in some measure my own way.

In Norfolk my success was varied. As I succeeded during my first trip in making a few good sized sales, my employer determined to have me work Norfolk, along with Baltimore and Washington, every month. Of the florists I saw in Norfolk at that time, not one is in existence today. There were Taggart and Wilbur, true type of Southern gentlemen, ever polite, considerate and amiable. Mr. Taggart was a man of few words, at first impressing you as being somewhat suspicious of the wiles and methods of an enthusiastic salesman, but by degrees relenting and reposing full confidence in the man who came up to his promises.

A Lecture on the Evils of Drink

It was the custom at that time to be sociable, in the sense of inviting a customer who favored one with an order to a social drink. I thought it was my duty to extend the invitation to Mr. Taggart, and thereby strengthen the favorable impression which it seemed to me I had made upon him. But horror of horrors! Mr. Taggart proved to be not only a teetotaler, but a strong Prohibitionist as well. The stare he gave me, and the lecture he felt in duty bound to deliver me there and then upon the evil of drink and all the evils real and imaginary consequent upon drink, were enough to make a teetotaler of me for the next few weeks at least. I do not mean to imply that I am a drinking man; there is nothing more abhorrent than a traveling salesman approaching his customer with a whisky breath. Young men who have not as yet formed their habits should by all means abstain from these evils, for if anything will hamper success for a traveling man on the road, drink will accomplish it. Of course that has nothing to do with the man of self-control taking an occasional drink.

And there was Mrs. Nye, a woman with some pretense to true Southern culture, who prided herself among other things on entertaining Grand Duke Alexis, of Russia, with his suite, on his visit to this country in '76. At that time she still lived in her Southern home, in North or South Carolina—I don't remember which—on a place that proved a veritable paradise for nimrods, foreign as well as domestic. She showed me with a sense of pardonable pride the autograph which the handsome prince inscribed in her album. Upon telling her that I was, myself, a countryman of the famous Russian, she deemed it her duty to give me an order, asking me to call again.

Then there was Mrs. Reynolds, since succeeded by Mr. Blick. Mrs. Reynolds was a woman of ordinary common sense, hard-working, business-like, and good-hearted. I was always sure of her patronage, though now and then she was inclined to find fault with one thing or another.

Mr. Dickman, originally a New Haven man, had settled in the South a few years prior to my travels. He was more or less of a nondescript character, and a man of impulse. As it suited his fancy, a traveling man was received favorably or otherwise. His career in Norfolk was of the shortest duration of all those parties mentioned.

Florist Emerson at Lynchburg

In Lynchburg, Va., I met a florist by the name of Emerson, and his amiable wife, both of whom proved unique. Mrs. Emerson proceeded to tell me her family history, mentioning incidents of the Civil War that were very interesting. Mr. Emerson was an actor by profession, and he played in "An American Cousin" at the time Abraham Lincoln was shot by Booth. Among others, he was arrested and locked up for a few days in Washington. Later he was released, and betook himself to his native town, where I met him. For some reason he himself could not give, he picked up the program of the play in Lincoln's box, stained with the martyr's blood. That program was later reproduced in the *Century Magazine*, in the biography of Lincoln, which Nicholas and Hay wrote, about a quarter of a century ago, and which first appeared in instalments.

Trip Through Western Pennsylvania

In May, 1889, I took a trip through Western Pennsylvania, as far as Pittsburgh. There I met for the first time such people as P. S. Randolph, A. W. Smith, Fred Burki, the Elliot Co., Mrs. E. Williams, the Ludwigs, and others—florists who have made a great success and are still in active service. Pittsburgh impressed me at the time, and I have never had occasion to change my impression, as a live, progressive and hustling city. Although somewhat out of season, and notwithstanding the fact that I was at that time a stranger among strangers, I found business quite encouraging.

The Johnstown Flood—Fortunate Escape

From Pittsburgh, I began to work my way homeward, since my employer intended to revisit his native city of Cologne, in Germany. My first stop after leaving Pittsburgh was Johnstown, Pa., and had I by chance arrived there a week later, I might not at this moment be here to tell the tale. For it was just one week later, the 30th of May, to be accurate—that one of the greatest disasters that ever befell any city in any land, overwhelmed Johnstown. The town was simply swept out of existence, and even such substantial buildings as the Commercial Hotel, where I stayed at the time, were swept down by the flood, many a traveling man meeting his doom in the angry waters. At Johnstown, I well remember, I chanced upon a temperance meeting in the public square one evening. As I recall the incident now, the exhortation of the speaker seems almost prophetic. He denounced alcohol in all its forms, and advocated in its place pure water; they were soon to have enough, and more than enough, of that!

In Johnstown I made one customer, a man named Lupke; and the box of goods sent to him was swept away in the whirlpool. The man saved his life. Another florist, a Mr. Ackers, was less fortunate. A week prior to the disaster, he promised me some business in the Fall, but he never lived to keep his promise. He was among the thousands that were drowned.

Johnstown As It Is Today

Johnstown today is altogether a different city from the Johnstown twenty-eight years ago. The narrow unattractive streets, the low and crooked buildings, are no longer to be seen. In their stead there are wide streets, beautiful homes, magnificent business blocks, modern hotels, cafés, theaters, and so on. In every respect, Johnstown bears the stamp of progress and prosperity. The florists of Johnstown today are likewise different from those of a generation ago. T. Malbranc has a modern greenhouse plant and produces excellent stock. Mrs. Malbranc presides over the store, and attends to that end in a manner that does her credit. Schmidt the Florist, on the hill, has an extensive greenhouse establishment, where the stock produced never lacks in quality. His young son-in-law, Mr. Walker, is the presiding genius in the downtown store, a store that would do credit to a much larger city. William Schrader is a successful grower, as well as a successful business man. His place is always a model of neatness and scrupulous care. Like the others he has a store in town, and does a good business. Herman Neissner, the dean of the florists in Johnstown, whose place existed long before the flood, pays especial attention to decorative work, although he, too, has a greenhouse establishment a short distance from Schrader's place, where cut flowers and bulbous stock are being grown successfully.

In June, 1889, my employer left for Europe, leaving me in full control of the establishment. I attended to orders, collections, banking, and the rest of it. My interest was, perhaps, too well centered in that establishment to suit at times the convenience and comfort of my own little family. In other words, in this case it

proved not only business before pleasure, but also another man's business before duty to my own. Upon his return from his trip during the month of August, he found all things satisfactory, and from his manner I gathered that my chances were pretty good for an advancement of another weekly dollar.

Extensive Trip Through the West

One fine day in September my employer held a consultation with me on the subject of an extensive trip through the middle West. He was one of those men, to be met with in every-day life, who had a sort of hesitancy, amounting almost to fear, about any new undertaking. Such men, though they may have good ideas, and plan things, always hesitate about carrying out their plans and ideas, and wish someone else to share the responsibility. He wanted to know, in the first place, if I had confidence in my success. In the second place, he tried to impress upon me in his own peculiar manner the need of economy and hard work. I could well give him my assurance as to the latter, but could not possibly undertake to insure him against my failure to produce results. He finally decided, after some reflection, to make the venture. I was to start by way of Maryland, and wind up goodness only knows where. The route wasn't very definite, and he left it largely to me to come out on the right side of the ledger.

My knowledge of the geography of the country at that time was rather limited, but I determined to consult every folder of every railroad in existence; and after making up a list of towns, crossing out some and inserting others, I mapped out my route. I left Philadelphia on the 10th of September, and on the 15th, on a Sunday (my first Sunday away from my family) I stopped at Hagerstown, Md. My success the first week was in noways marked, though on the whole I managed to pay my salary and expenses.

Hotel Inconveniences in the Old Days

Traveling expense at that time was not to be compared with traveling expense today. The modern hotel, with its electric lights, shower-baths, magnificent furniture, and other luxurious things, was unknown in those days. At \$2 per day, on the American plan, accommodations were fine enough to suit the most fastidious traveler. If one lacked running hot and cold water, and electricity in his room, one was more than recompensed by the wholesome and plentiful food that always waited the weary traveler at any hostelry. The older traveling men will well recall the delicious buckwheat cakes, lamb chops, eggs, and other good things that delighted their palates on a cold frosty morning. Today, alas, \$2 per day for a mere room in a first-class hotel is practically the lowest rate one can obtain. The eating end of it has become a matter of cafés, where every traveling man well learns "the high cost of living." Even in the matter of tips, the price has doubled. Where a negro waiter would almost prostrate himself in thanks for a dime, the haughty café waiter will treat you with contempt if you lay down less than a quarter. It is often a matter of wonder to me that the traveling men can put up with such treatment and unnecessary expense.

Through Hagerstown, Pittsburgh, Wheeling, Zanesville and Columbus

At Hagerstown, Md., I made the acquaintance of William Bester and Henry Bester & Sons. And not only have I retained their trade to this very day, but I have won their friendship as well. The Besters are successful growers and fine men.

From Hagerstown, I proceeded toward Cumberland and Pittsburgh; in the latter city I had already made a few friends the previous Spring. The Fall season now being in full sway, my order book began to assume a respectable aspect. I

well remember Mrs. P. S. Randolph, an exceptionally fine business woman, who unfortunately was burned to death a year later. Mr. Randolph proved one of the best friends I made in Pittsburgh, and a hearty welcome always awaits me at his place of business or home.

Fred Burki, though I had nothing to offer him at that time, he being a grower exclusively, won my respect and admiration nevertheless.

A. W. Smith, a true philosopher and a man well-read and well-posted on all things *horticultural* as well as cultural, still affords me delightful hours whenever I chance to meet him.

I might go on and mention other names, all equally notable.

In Pittsburgh I became acquainted with a traveling man named Jerome Stacey, in whose company I traveled for four successive weeks. From him, as an experienced traveler, I received material help in making up my route to carry me to the end of my trip.

From Pittsburgh I went to Wheeling, thence to Zanesville. My experience in those two cities was by no means discouraging. O'd friend Laupp of Wheeling, in his open-hearted manner, gave me immediate encouragement, so much so that I called again and again. John Dickmann settled in Wheeling years later. He is today the most successful and progressive grower in that part of the country.

At Zanesville I formed the acquaintance of John D. Imlay, and that acquaintance has continued ever since. Mr. Imlay is still a young man in the early fifties, with progressive ideas and business methods which have formed the foundation of his success.

At Columbus, O., I met such men as G. Drobisch and John R. Hel'enthal, both of whom are no longer among the living. Both men represented the German type of manhood—a type that will surmount difficulties and attain the end aimed at. Both were splendid horticulturists. Underwood Bros., two fine specimens of manhood, honest almost to a fault, are among my best friends that I have made on the road. These men are successful in business, and deserve to be.

Albert Knopp, at that time head of the Franklin Park Floral Co., and who has since transferred his interests to Mr. Yacht, a very worthy successor, and has departed for California, was one of the few men who impressed you at once with their sincerity of purpose. When I first met him, he tacitly gave me to understand that my success or failure in his establishment would entirely depend upon myself. In other words, he expected no promises which I could not fulfil, but he did expect me to fulfil all that I made. In this respect, it may not be amiss to say a few words to the young men who are about to start out with sample cases among the trade. My experience has taught me that it is far better to underestimate an article you handle than to overestimate it. In the one instance, your customer will be agreeably surprised when the article you sold him is better than he expected. In the other case he will be quite disappointed if what you promised him fails to come up to your description. To put it succinctly, do not promise more than you can fulfil; do not misrepresent your goods, do not knock your competitor at any time and much less when you yourself are not sure that you can do better than he can.

At Knopp's establishment, I first met Max Rudolph, who two years later married and established himself in Cincinnati. Our acquaintance grew into friendship, and the last time I saw Max was on Sunday, Feb. 2 of this year, when I spent the entire day at his house. Poor Max—that last day together he read to me the obituary notice of Edward Welsh of Hartford, Conn., who died on the 10th of January, nine days after I had seen him. Max remarked to me at the time that human life is very uncertain. "Now you are here, and now you are gone," he said. Verily his words were prophetic, for two weeks later he himself was gone.

S. F. Stephens, a man of the highest business and personal integrity, is an-

other of my oldest friends who for upwards of twenty-seven years has extended me a welcoming hand. His immense trade in the cemetery section of Columbus has kept him confined to his place of business, seldom affording him opportunity to visit neighboring towns and florists. Of late he associated with himself his very able son, a graduate chemist. Although but twenty-four years of age, the young man has already proved a great help to his father. His success is a foregone conclusion.

Encountering Two "Sharppers" in Cincinnati

My first trip to Cincinnati will always remain a memorable event to me. It was in October, 1889, when I landed in that city. First of all, I looked around for a cheap hostelry in the Ohio metropolis. For I well remembered the injunction of my employer to practice economy and hard work. I certainly practised both. In a strange city, among strangers, it was by no means easy work to "get in." I called upon a few stores in the main street, with no results. Among those I called on was Mrs. Kresken, a fine motherly German woman, who was quite successful in her way, and whose business still continues at the old stand under the able management of her daughter, Miss Adeline Kresken. I tried my best to induce Mrs. Kresken to give me an order; I begged for it; I almost implored her to give me a trial. But unfortunately for me, she had already placed all her orders, and received the goods from older houses with whom she had been dealing for years. She wished me success and asked me to call again. I left her place, and proceeded farther in my quest for business. The first store I entered had a very respectable appearance, and looked quite prosperous. I almost uttered a prayer as I approached the proprietor, a man about fifty, six feet tall, well groomed, one who impressed you as a man who well understood his business. I handed him my card, taking at the same time the opportunity to tell him about the merit of my goods. His look was not quite reassuring at the moment, though he did not dismiss me there and then. After a moment's reflection, he told me to stop later in the afternoon, and while he did not promise me any orders, he would look at my samples. I thanked him for his courtesy, and left, promising to return.

Two blocks further, I landed in another prosperous looking store, and here I met with instantaneous success. The proprietor, after glancing at my photographs, grasses, and artificial flowers, proceeded to give me a large sized order, never as much as questioning my prices. "It's too good to be true," I thought to myself, but I dismissed the idea as something unworthy of a moment's consideration.

I returned to the other man, as I had promised, a little later in the day; and to my great delight he was ready to give me a hearing. I braced myself for the occasion, endeavoring to use the best methods at my command in order to impress him favorably with both my merchandise and prices. I succeeded. He gave me a large order, telling me that it was a trial, that if my goods proved entirely satisfactory I might expect much larger orders in the future. Else I would have no chance.

My delight knew no bounds, as I returned to my hotel, and transcribed my orders for transmission to Philadelphia. Later in the evening I took a stroll toward Mrs. Kresken's store.

"Well?" she queried, in her good-natured motherly tone. "Have you done any business today?"

"I certainly did," I replied, gleefully, "and quite a lot of it, too!"

"I am glad to hear it," she said. "And whom did you sell to, may I ask?"

I told her the names of the parties.

"Ach, mein lieber Gott!" she exclaimed. "Neither of them is good. You must take care—they'll beat you out of your money!"

A thunderbolt from a clear sky could not have struck me more forcibly than

Mrs. Kresken's words. Down went my enthusiasm. I felt that not only had my energies been wasted, but that a huge joke had been played upon me. Here I had come, all the way from Philadelphia, to the Ohio metropolis, and had done my very best, only to be taken in by two dead beats. Fortunately I was cautioned in time.

I proceeded to inform my employer to cancel both orders, upon information given me by reliable parties. They never received their goods.

Facing Failure in Louisville

I was still traveling in company with my newly found friend Mr. Stacey. In Cincinnati he received instructions from his home office to go down to Louisville, Kentucky.

Louisville, Ky., although but a short distance from Cincinnati, at the time sounded to me like "way down South." I hesitated about changing my itinerary, having already made up my mind to explore the Middle West thoroughly. Mr. Stacey, however, convinced me that Louisville is by no means far out of the way, that it was a splendid town, with plenty of opportunities for a man in my line, and that I could easily reach Indianapolis from Louisville, the distance between the two cities being a hundred and ten miles. I saw the reasonableness of his argument, and to Louisville we went that very night.

My experience in Cincinnati was in nowise conducive to bolstering up my self-confidence and spirit, two essentials that go to make up the success of traveling salesmen. Half-heartedly, after partaking of a scanty breakfast at a cheap hostelry—the cheapest I could find in Louisville, for I was still "practising economy"—I strolled down the street in quest of florists and business. At every place I was told that I was too late, that all the other supply houses, whose representatives had been coming there for years, had already visited Louisville and gathered in all the orders. It was most discouraging. What was I to do? To leave a city like Louisville empty-handed—no, that wouldn't do at all. Has not somebody said somewhere, "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again"? That was a wise saying, and I must try to see if I cannot succeed, despite the failure staring me in the face.

Ride in a Mule Car and Promising Orders

Late in the afternoon, I boarded a mule car, on my way to the cemeteries, not to bury myself alive, exactly, though I felt pretty much of a dead one in spirit, but to try to dig up some business. A few blocks distant from Cave Hill Cemetery I discovered a florist, Mr. Joseph Coenen (who is now in California cultivating Oranges). And to him I looked hopefully for some semblance of an order. To be sure, he too had purchased his supplies, but nevertheless he could use a few metallic wreaths and other things, providing I was reasonable enough in my prices. Prices! In a moment of despair, prices are no object. I assured Mr. Coenen that he need not hesitate on that ground, that I represented the finest house on earth, and that my concern was in a position to sell the best goods at the lowest figures. We soon came to terms, and I had a twenty or twenty-five dollar order in my books. So far, so good. So why despair? Let me try again.

There are four or five florists in the immediate vicinity of Cave Hill Cemetery, and to them I made my way. At the first place I entered my hopes were blasted immediately. The man had no orders to give me; and if he had any to give at all, he would prefer giving them to the house he had been dealing with, and not to a stranger. Arguments were of no avail.

At the second place, the reception accorded me was more courteous, though the material results were no better. At the third place—but here I must stop for a moment and speak in most kindly words of the man who gave me both moral and material encouragement at a time when I needed both so much. It was Jacob

Schulz, the dean of the Louisville florists, a man as broad-minded as he is big-hearted, with an ever-ready and cheering smile. He received me very courteously, and after questioning me about things in Philadelphia, and my impressions of Louisville, he invited me into the office, and looked at my samples. Needless to say, I was very grateful for the order that followed; and that order has impressed itself upon my mind so keenly that I almost remember its volume. It was a good one, and from a good man. Years afterwards some of the metallic designs purchased from me at that time were still hanging around in his shed, covered with dust and cobweb. At the present time Mr. Schulz, though advanced in years, is still active in the business. He is one of the keenest observers, and despite his age he is as alert and progressive as ever. His modern store on Fourth ave. is under the excellent management of his son George, who is a worthy son of an estimable father.

In Lexington

With my two orders in Louisville, I proceeded to Lexington, Ky. It was at that time that I first met Mrs. Honaker and her two sons, David and Ollie. They had just about started at the time, rather humbly, but have since expanded, having at the present time one of the finest stores in the South, as well as one of the best equipped greenhouse establishments. J. A. Keller, since deceased, had his greenhouses on East Sixth st. He was doing a fairly prosperous business though small in scope. The place has been rebuilt since; several modern houses have been recently erected in place of the antiquated greenhouses. A modern store on the principal street of the city is being conducted now by J. A. Keller, Jr. Ferdinand Keller is the man at the head of the greenhouses.

The Michler Bros., two very enterprising young men, whom I met at a later day, are likewise successful in both their nursery and florist business.

Lexington, unlike many other Southern cities of its size, shows a remarkable growth and commercial development since my first visit in the Autumn of 1889. Among other things, Lexington is famous for its swift horses and beautiful women; and any traveling man who, like myself, has visited Lexington time and again, can well attest to the deservedness of its fame.

Indianapolis Next Stop

Kentucky or, to be more precise, the two cities in Kentucky I have mentioned, comprised at the time my entire Southern route. I ventured no further into Dixie Land, preferring instead the Middle West, of which I had heard so much and which seemed so alluring to me. So to Indianapolis I went. Here, too, my success was questionable. I somehow felt that business was not awaiting me; and when one takes it for granted that failure is in store for him, failure is invariably attendant upon his efforts. My experience has taught me this truth long since.

I visited the Bertermann Bros. The younger elements of the family—I mean Irwin and Walter—were at that time perhaps in knee breeches attending public school. John Bertermann was attending the greenhouse end of the business. It was William Bertermann whom I met at that time, and whom I learned to regard as one of the ablest and most progressive men of his time—a man ever alert for new ideas, original in his methods, and a tireless worker; and in every respect one who could not fail to make an impression from the start. Ed. Bertermann, who still is active in the store, was his able assistant at that time. Mr. Bertermann was a man of but few words; but those few, though courteous, made it plain that there was no business there for me.

I met with better success at Anthony Wiegand's place. Mr. Wiegand, one of the oldest and most successful florists in Indiana, who died a few years ago, was endowed with an extraordinary capacity for kindness and sympathy. The word

"no" had never any place in his vocabulary. Mr. Wiegand gave me some business, for which naturally I was grateful. At the present time his two worthy sons, George and Homer, are conducting a very lucrative business. They have rebuilt and remodeled their greenhouses on North Illinois st.

John Rieman, generally conceded to be one of the best growers in Indiana, is still conducting his business at the old stand. As a matter of course his place has kept pace with the times, having been remodeled and expanded within comparatively recent years. Mr. Rieman, at our first meeting as ever since, was courteous, though I cannot recall at this time whether or not he favored me with business at that time.

Terre Haute, Evansville and Other Indiana Towns

Terre Haute, Evansville, and other Indiana towns, were my next places of visitation, and my success everywhere was but nominal. My expenses were light, and so was my salary; and in consequence my employer never sustained any actual loss. Everywhere I went, I expanded on the merit of our goods, the liberality of our concern. I did missionary work to the best of my ability, which proved the stepping-stone to my later successful trips. St. Louis and Chicago overwhelmed me with their greatness—so much so that I did not consider it wise to venture out into these two modern Babylons, as I considered these cities at the time. How often we form ideas of men and places that never correspond with actuality! As a matter of fact, I found Chicago and St. Louis a few years later among the best places in my itinerary, having made as many friends as in any other towns which I have visited fifty or seventy-five times in the last twenty-eight years.

Turning homeward, I visited Western Pennsylvania towns, by this time finding business rather more encouraging. On the whole, my maiden trip was quite satisfactory. In December I was home again, glad to return to my family. My employer seemed to have been pleased with the results, and I had no sooner shaken off the dust from my first trip than he was planning a second one. I did not start out, however, until the middle of January.

Back Home Attending to the Candy Trade

My second trip took me to Baltimore, Washington, Norfolk, and some Western Pennsylvania towns; but in February I received word to return home, for it was time to attend to the candy trade. That abominable part of my business did not appeal to me at all. Yet I thought it prudent in view of circumstances to submit to the inevitable. Once again I took the part of a pack-horse, and as in the year previous suffered a sense of humiliation. My employer evidently was determined to make the best of me. I stuck it out that season, vowing, however, never to do such work again.

Exploring the New England States

Early in May, 1890, it occurred to me that New England States might prove profitable fields to explore. I suggested the idea to my employer, who after his usual hesitancy acquiesced, providing of course I could make it pay. I could not well assure him of the success of the undertaking, but I expressed the opinion that "nothing venture, nothing win" is a very wise saying. Having had a year and a half's experience on the road, I felt that I was somewhat of a veteran in the business, and that if perseverance and hard work counted for anything, there was no reason why I should not make it pay. I furthermore assured him that my expenses would be kept down to the closest possible margin—in a word, that I would do my very best for his interests. He bade me good-bye, wishing me, or rather himself, all manner of good luck.

After making a few towns on my way to Boston, with fairly good results, I landed in the Hub one morning in the early part of May. I may mention in passing that I was the first man representing a florists' supply house in Philadelphia at that time to undertake a business trip to Boston. For some reason unaccountable to me to this very day, even the largest florists' supply house in Philadelphia seemed to be under the impression that the New Yorkers practically monopolized that territory, and that therefore there were practically no chances left to any Philadelphia concern. I say it without boasting, but to me belongs the credit of exploding that notion.

Memorial Day is one of the busiest days in Boston, and for a few weeks before that event the florists make all sorts of preparations for the rush of business. At that time immortelle designs, milkweed balls, cape flowers, artificial flowers, and other such things were used in great quantities, as they are used, though to a somewhat lesser extent, today. I gathered up my courage, and ventured out. To my great surprise, and greater delight, I got a good-sized order from no less a personage than the late William E. Doyle, who was then the foremost florist in Boston. Mr. Doyle was considered in a class by himself; dignified, cultured, he impressed one with his superiority. He was a man of few words, and always did his business pointedly and quickly. Nor did he bargain or haggle over prices. What he wanted was quality.

From Doyle's place, then on Tremont st., to Newman's was but a short distance. Encouraged by my first success, I entered Mr. Newman's place almost assured of an order before even I presented my card. And sure enough I got my order. From that time on, it was a continuous round of success. I took orders from every florist I called upon. On the second or third day I called on Mr. William J. Stewart, who at that time was engaged in the wholesale florist business. He not only favored me with an order on his own account, but showed his kindness and broad-mindedness by giving me numerous addresses of parties, some no doubt his own customers, to whom I might sell. My gratitude to Mr. Stewart has never diminished.

My success in Boston and vicinity was instantaneous. It gave me renewed faith in my powers as a salesman. It furthermore forced home to me the fact that the man who has the goods that are wanted can accomplish the sales.

I cannot say I was quite sure that my small concern could supply all the articles I sold. I felt somewhat uneasy about it. I urged my employer to be sure to procure the articles wanted at a profit or no profit, that our future success in Boston depended upon the first impression, and that the first impression must at all costs be a favorable one. To his credit be it said that he took my advice.

First Attendance at S. A. F. Convention

In August, 1890, the first S. A. F. convention that I ever attended was held in the old Horticultural Hall in Boston. Having already had an entrée into the metropolis of Massachusetts, I suggested to my employer that we make a trade exhibit at the convention. He accepted my idea without a murmur, and what was more unusual with him never mentioned the cost end of it and the need for economy. That convention was one of the most memorable ones in my experience. Some concede that in point of attendance, and entertaining and instructive features, it was superior to the one held there in 1914. That most interesting trip to the Honeywell estate and to Lexington will always remain in the memory of those who made it. Besides our exhibit, which both my employer and I attended, there was another made by one of the largest houses in Philadelphia. This was my second trip to Boston, and I had the advantage of a prior acquaintance, with the result that our competitor was very much surprised to see the friendliness evinced toward me. That convention was the beginning of a change in my fortunes. The

very man who could offer me no employment when I applied for it about a year before made me an offer at an opportune moment, and a flattering one at that. He told me that my chances with their house would be enhanced many fold, that there I would represent a "real" concern instead of representing a "small potato." Here for the first time I was being sought by a position instead of seeking one. It gave a big boost to my self-confidence. Nevertheless, I did not wish to act hastily in the matter. I replied that I would let him know later, intending first to speak to my employer. That evening I broached the subject. To my surprise, my employer answered, though I perceived rather faint-heartedly, that every man must better himself, that if I had a better offer he could not well meet it. That settled the question. I accepted the position with our competitor, and handed in my resignation to take effect upon our return to Philadelphia.

A Resignation and Its Results

If ever a man showed his true colors, the head of this "small potato" concern did then. I had no sooner announced the fact of my change than he turned all colors, quivering, shaking, as though suddenly stricken by a chill. He did not think I acted rightly in the matter. I reminded him of his own words, that every man must look out for himself, that I was in duty bound to look out for myself and my family, that I had given him all the chances he could reasonably expect, and that after all it might best serve our mutual interests to part. He couldn't see it that way. He begged me, implored me to stay with him, offering me a five dollar raise and two per cent. on my sales—an increase that almost doubled the salary I was getting. I pitied the man, realizing his helplessness, his weakness, and his lack of determination. But my decision had been made; I could not well use our competitor as a means to an end. It would not be right. No, I decided—it was too late. My employer begged and implored again, never leaving me out of his sight. I was in a dilemma, not knowing what was the best for all interests concerned. It is true I owed a duty to the man who had offered to improve my position; on the other hand my old employer seemed helpless and pathetic, and I had no heart to desert him in the opening of a busy season. Was he now to lose the trade that I had made at his expense? And would that be right and justifiable? And suppose the shock would impair his health—would that be a blot on my conscience for evermore? On the other hand, had he shown any consideration for me and my family? Had he not humiliated me by making me peddle baskets from store to store? Had he not thought to "call my bluff" when I told him about the offer of our competitor, by telling me to better myself if I could? Surely this is a selfish world. After all, it is "each for himself and the devil take the hindmost." Why should I give him any more consideration than he gave to me?

And so I went on, torn by the conflicting arguments. At last I made my decision. I was to remain with my original employer. It was a hard task to face my new "benefactor," but I undertook it. As might have been expected, he took an entirely different view of the situation, contending that I had used him as a club to an end. Perhaps he was right—I shall not argue the matter now.

Two years later, at the S. A. F. Convention in Washington, a similar occurrence took place. The Philadelphia competitive concern renewed its efforts to get me. They made me better inducements than formerly, considering that after a lapse of two years my experience had much enhanced my value. By this time, too, I became rather tired of my original employer—of his business methods, his niggardliness, and ultra-conservatism. If I was to continue at all in this business, I must have a chance of expansion. Our competitors were offering me such a chance. Why miss it? I accepted the position, now fully determined to make the change. My employer again implored me not to forsake him. He offered me a partnership in the business, "to connect my name with his on all his stationery and bill-

heads" (oh, what an alluring farce to the uninitiated!) But I had made up my mind, and I would listen to no further argument.

Alluring Prospects with a New Concern

Upon my return to Philadelphia, I reported for duty to my new employer. Here indeed it was hustle and bustle. The place was alive; everybody was busy. I could not help noting the marked difference between the two places. I was glad of the change. I was to remain in the house for a few weeks, and then go out on the road, as far as the Coast. Expenses and the need for economy were never mentioned. On the contrary, my new employer seemed to abhor the very idea of any representative of his stopping at a cheap hotel, or being burdened with a pack of luggage that any negro boy might carry as well.

A Short-Lived "Dream"

Was I through with my dilemma? Oh, no. I had been with the new concern only a few days when one morning my new employer informed me that mutual friends, influential business men of the city, had been stirring up his conscience a bit, insisting that he had committed a grave offense against the other man by taking away his salesman right in face of the busy season. They had worried him with warnings of the retribution which would overtake him if my old employer was ruined. So he told me that I had better go back to my first employer—"Your place here is always waiting for you," he said. "If you find that even as partner you haven't bettered yourself, come back of your own free-will—then at least I won't have it on my conscience."

Back to the Old Place

So I went back, becoming part proprietor, with my name on stationery and letter-heads. I lingered two years longer with my employer; and the longer I stayed the more irksome my situation became to me. I was young and ambitious, and eager to branch out. He could not see it in that light.

Panic of 1893

About 1893, the country was stricken with a panic, as everyone well remembers. My employer was panic-stricken on his own account, so much so that he was practically ready to close up his business. The first thing he did was to discharge two of his best basket and sheaf makers, retaining two young girls, at \$3 per week each. Joe Neidinger, of the well-known concern (today) of Joseph Neidinger & Co., at that time a boy of twelve or thirteen, was in our employ in the capacity of errand-boy. Upon him also devolved the duty of trimming splint baskets and making sheaves. And although Joe did his full duty, giving ample promise at the time of what was in store for him, our facilities nevertheless can better be imagined than described. If a hurry-up order came, we could not well turn out the goods. Some staple articles were barred out altogether. I became both disgusted and discouraged with the situation, and regretted the fact that a "partnership" allured me to the extent of sacrificing a really better, though not so high-sounding, position. Things were going from bad to worse. Men were tramping through the streets, looking for positions. There were no positions in sight. My pride restrained me from applying to our competitor. Something, however, had to be done, and that before long. But things shaped themselves of their own accord. A few months later, my partner informed me that he was determined to close up the business. He was a single man; hence family obligations had no terrors for him.

The blow was severe, but I bore it bravely. I was still in my twenties, strong and energetic, and with my experience on the road I surely would succeed in doing something. I broke the news to my wife as gently as I could, but in place of feeling discouraged she seemed rather glad of the change. I clearly recall her words of encouragement—

"You have your youth, your health, and your strength; and any man possessing these qualifications need not fear starvation." She was right.

With a Rival Concern

No sooner had I left my partner, and this time never to return, than I had a call from another rival concern, with an offer of a good position. I accepted immediately, and from the Fall of 1894 up to 1897 I traveled for that concern, as usual working hard, making new friends among the trade who later proved a great asset to me. I induced my new employer to take Joe Neidinger. That was not the time to take new employees, but what I had told him about Joe Neidinger would have sufficed to make room for the boy, whether he was needed or not.

The history of Joe Neidinger's career speaks for itself, and I need not expand on it.

PART II

On the Track of An Independent Business

In December, 1896, while still traveling for the florist supply house, I happened to arrive in St. Louis Union Station about four o'clock in the morning. I cannot recall now whether I could not get any sleeping accommodations, or whether because of my habit of economy I deliberately failed to engage them. Be that as it may, I found myself on that momentous morning at the large, well-lighted, warm Union Station. I say momentous, because during that morning I formulated a plan of action that was the beginning of my future independence. It was the result of a sudden flash of thought, which I seized upon and there and then worked out in full detail. Often events of great consequence in the history of nations and of individuals have come about as a result of a similar "flash." It occurred to me that if I was worth twenty dollars a week to the supply house, plus two per cent. on my sales, plus traveling expenses, why could I not pay my own expenses, and instead of carrying a line of supplies only, just as well take up a number of other lines such as seed, fertilizers, pots, Carnation cuttings, Rose plants, palms, bulbs, and so on—and thus not only make sure of my salary and expense but my independence of "bossism" as well. A capital idea!

Starting on My Own Account

On the first of January, 1897, I was ready for the radical change. I was ready to carry my "capital idea" into action. First of all, I approached my employer. I explained to him that it might best pay both of us if instead of employing me on salary and commission he would let me carry his line on a commission basis only, I paying my own expenses. I furthermore told him that in addition to his line it was my intention to take up other things, such as I have mentioned above. He, too, thought that I had the right idea.

Discouragement

But here my difficulties began. Practically a stranger to the wholesale seed and horticultural houses, my applications met for a time with no response. Discouragement stared me in the face. Then the thought of having perhaps acted prematurely upon my plan, and thereby sacrificed my weekly salary, which after all was a certainty, naturally had a depressing effect upon my spirit and energies. But the idea was a good one in spite of all, and there was no reason why I should not carry it out. I stuck to it. I applied to Henry F. Michell Company for its line. Mr. Henry F. Michell, as all who know him will agree, is a man of keen perception and remarkable business qualifications. His own business successfully attests my statement. He saw my idea at a glance, and agreed to let me have his lines. To his credit be it said, his terms were liberal and his treatment from the time I undertook his line until I embarked in business for myself invariably was fair and square.

Palms were greatly in demand, and I thought that if I had a suitable line I could readily sell them. But where was I to obtain such a line? I applied to two prominent local growers, of whom I shall have occasion to speak later, but my application for their lines was rejected. They could dispose of all the palms themselves without having to pay any commission. Daunted, but not fully discouraged, I applied to Siebrecht & Wadley, at that time a prominent wholesale horticultural

concern, and was rewarded with an answer bidding me come to New York and talk over terms. I got that line.

The Carnation business seemed alluring to me. I knew even during my supply days that Carnations were grown extensively, and that rooted cuttings were being sold in quantities. If I had Carnation cuttings, I could surely sell them. I wrote a number of letters to different growers, many of whom, if not all, had at that time never suspected my existence, with the result that I never got any answer. Again I was determined to get a Carnation line if there was any possibility of doing it. Chance favored me. I soon met Albert M. Herr, of Lancaster, who at that time was one of the most prominent Carnation growers in the country; and after explaining to him my plan and assuring him of good accounts only, I got his line. It is interesting to me to look back on that first beginning of what has turned out to be one of the most active and remunerative parts of my business.

And now I needed flower pots. It seemed to me that I could sell pots by the stacks, though in this particular I was quite disappointed. At that time there was a war going on between flower pot manufacturers in different sections of the country, and for a short time at least I had the chance to obtain a line and sell pots at cut rate prices, prices that did not perhaps pay for the clay, let alone the manufacture and overhead expense. This was, however, the manufacturers' business and no concern of mine.

Jardinières came next in line, and after that other things seemed to follow each other in rapid succession. I had things to sell which I never saw in my life, and which I could not explain to customers. One instance I well recall. A party in the upper part of New York State wanted to know what I thought of the merit of Martha Washington Pelargonium as compared with some other variety. As a matter of course, that question was beyond me. Not only could I not tell him the comparative merits, but I wouldn't have recognized a Pelargonium if I met it. Yet it would not do to confess my ignorance. I had to play the part of know-it-all. I had to tell him "frankly" that the only way really to ascertain the comparative values of the two was to grow them both, and that I could supply stacks of either if he said so.

Selling Things From a "Toothpick to an Auto"

I became a veritable walking department store, as some of my competitor friends chose to call me. It became generally known (through the courtesy of those same friends) that I was selling things all the way from a toothpick to an automobile and a greenhouse. And here I may remark that I did help to sell a greenhouse establishment, but of this later. I have never succeeded, though, in selling an automobile; and there was good reason for it—I never had any automobiles for sale.

One prominent house never failed to play a joke at my expense by telling florists that I was peddling Asparagus seed out of my pocket. The humorous part of it is that that very same house soon made every one of its salesmen do likewise, adding to Asparagus seed other items, such as Pansies, Primulas, Cinerarias, and so on. That same concern thought wise and proper, as a matter of business policy, to put all sorts of stumbling blocks in the way of my progress. If, for example, a new Carnation was put on the market, the introducer was given implicit instructions that unless I was barred out from handling it they would not catalogue it nor offer it to the trade. Such narrow-mindedness has my heart-felt sympathy to this very day.

On the Road Again

So, having gathered together several lines, I started out on the road, I must confess not with a very light heart, for after all, my future was still a closed book

to me. It was a curious coincidence that the first town I reached was Columbia, Pa., the very town I mentioned in a former place when I first started out with florists' supplies. To my former benefactor, Mr. William Ahern, who had encouraged me eight years before, I went for my first order. I was not disappointed this time either. Mr. Ahern received me in his customary kindly manner, and after telling him about my extensive lines in a way that perhaps confused him at first, I finally succeeded in booking an order for a few pots, some florists' supplies, a few packages of seed, and a can of lemon oil. I distinctly remember that order, for it was the first one of the kind I took; and details pertaining to first events in one's life impress themselves indelibly on one's memory.

That first order was a source of great encouragement to me. I felt that I was on the right track. And since all I required was persistency, I determined to be persistent. I wound up that day at York, Pa.

In the evening I figured up my sales and found that not only had I paid expenses (which by the way were in noways commensurate with those of today), but I found that I was about six dollars on the right side of the ledger.

Victor and Flora Hill Carnations

I continued traveling, making an extensive trip through Pennsylvania, New York and Ohio, everywhere doing what I considered a fair business. The Victor Carnation (a sport of Daybreak), and Flora Hill, which had been put on the market the year previous, were much in demand among the growers. I saw my chance, and despite my efforts to remain "neutral," I evinced a special partiality for these two varieties. I was assured by the growers, whose stock I handled, that these were two good commercial varieties, the bread-and-butter kind; and I found it no difficult matter to book orders right and left. As I recall the event today, it appears to me that parrot-like I adopted the very vocabulary descriptive of Carnations. Yet I did not fail to realize that other lines must have my consideration. If I did well with Carnation growers, I must do equally as well for the H. F. Michell Co., for the pot man, palm grower, and the rest. I began to push all lines alike, but to my utter dismay I found it impossible to do justice to all. If a grower, for example, gave me a fair-sized order for Carnation cuttings, he thought that he did enough for me. If he had any bulbs or other things to order, it was policy to reserve his orders for some other man. The fact that I could not talk knowingly about the lines I handled, in other words, that I lacked practical experience to give them pointers of value, may have served to hamper my success along all the lines. I decided to study up things, to be better posted, to meet men from whose very conversation I could learn things that would come in good stead for me.

Albert M. Herr of Lancaster is perhaps the first man to whom I am indebted for instruction on Carnations. The merits and demerits of a commercial variety he clearly pointed out to me on several occasions. I made notes of these points, and profited by them much in my business contact with growers.

Carnations in those days, as the older florists well remember, were not of the same high standard as the Carnation of today. Nor had the public expected or dreamed of the 4in. Carnation which John Thorp predicted about a quarter of a century ago, and which prediction has been amply fulfilled.

Lizzie McGowan, Daybreak, William Scott were in those days the money-makers for the small as well as for the large grower. Flora Hill came in later, and by degrees began to replace the ragged Lizzie.

Concentrating on a Smaller Line

I soon learned that the more I knew of my lines the better I was received. My first trip further taught me that the less articles I represented and talked

about, the more I could concentrate my attention on particular lines and the more remunerative would be the results in the end. To be more explicit, I could not possibly interest a florist by offering him jardinières, chiffon, floral art albums, supplies, Carnations, Lemon oil, seeds, bulbs, all practically in one breath, and expect to book a large order for all. Paradoxical though it may sound, the less things I mentioned the better were my results in the end. I must concentrate my lines; and the first things to go were supplies, ribbons, and jardinières, things that do not interest the average grower, whose product goes to the wholesale market.

Casting About for a Good Palm Concern

On my return home after my maiden trip for myself, I began to reorganize my "department store," eliminating spaces that did not pay, and enlarging on those that did. I was still in need of a good palm concern, and applied once again to the two firms who had formerly declined my application. Thanks to Mr. Henry F. Michell, whose influence aided me in the matter, I succeeded this time in getting the lines from William K. Harris and Robert Craig. With such two lines I felt that my success was practically assured. For who could resist purchasing stock from two such reputable firms, whose names were practically household words in every florist's establishment throughout the country?

William K. Harris and Robert Craig

I wish to deviate here and say a few words about the late William K. Harris. Mr. Harris, or "Deacon" Harris, as many of his closest friends were wont to call him, was in many respects a remarkable personality. When I first met William K. Harris, I saw that here was a man of no ordinary calibre. Simple in manner, direct in expression, reserved but cordial, he was a man who abhorred boastfulness, and who was most readily approachable by the shortest route—namely, that of the truth. Once he was approached by that route, he was to be counted upon for genuine friendship. It is with pardonable pride that I state that our friendship was both genuine and mutual from the time I met him until the time of his demise. And among the very few friends that called upon him when he was on his sickbed, I was of the privileged ones.

On that first visit, when I stated to him the object of my call, he told me that he would make an exception in my case and permit me to handle his line on a commission basis, with the proviso, however, that I confine myself strictly to the goods he had to offer, that I sell to none but reliable parties, that I make no promises that he could not fulfill. I agreed to these conditions, and accomplished my object. His line being somewhat limited in scope, I needed likewise that of Robert Craig. Knowing the friendship that existed between him and Mr. Harris, and realizing that a word from the latter would go a good way toward securing me the line from Mr. Craig, I asked Mr. Harris there and then to aid me in the matter. He promised to do so, and that promise was fulfilled that very week. Reinforced not only with two substantial lines, but likewise with the reputation of these two concerns behind the lines, I felt that my road to success was open.

Trip to St. Louis and Chicago

During the month of April, 1897, I made my second trip for myself, which extended as far as St. Louis and Chicago. In those days there were no wholesale plant growers in the vicinity of Chicago. My success, therefore, was facilitated. I had no hesitancy in approaching the best of the trade; and such men as Ernest Wienhoeber, C. A. Samuelson, Kidwell Brothers, A. McAdams, the George Wittbold Company, and many others (I mention these names, because they were among

the most conservative men in the trade, and therefore the most difficult of approach) gave me orders for William K. Harris and Robert Craig. My gain was twofold; I did the business I aimed at and made acquaintance with men who in all likelihood would perhaps never have given me a chance in the supply line. I began to acquire new customers, men whom I had never met before. And whereas in former years I had confined myself to the stores exclusively, now I found it necessary to make the outskirts of the cities to visit greenhouses. Naturally this took more of my time; but time did not count so long as it paid. I was perfectly satisfied with my results, and the future looked bright and promising.

The Department Store on Handling Florists' Stock

Twenty years ago the horticultural business was exclusively in the hands of florists. Department stores had not as yet entered the field. It was John Wanamaker, of Philadelphia, who first conceived the idea of adding a line of foliage plants to his numerous other lines. The older florists may remember that a prominent concern in Philadelphia refused to sell to him, and by doing so enhanced its standing among the florists, the impression going abroad that the concern safeguarded the florists from the invader, or invasion into a line belonging exclusively to them. Nothing daunted, however, John Wanamaker's buyer turned to William K. Harris and purchased a lot of plants. I never knew of this incident until I reached Cincinnati. In that city I learned it for the first time in this manner: Approaching a prominent florist one fine morning with a line of *Areca lutescens*, which I was told he could use, I informed him that I represented a house whose stock I knew would please him.

"And whose house is that?" he inquired.

"William K. Harris, of Philadelphia," I replied promptly, taking it for granted that the very name would insure an immediate order.

To my great surprise, he blurted out:

"You may as well save your time and breath. I wouldn't buy from William K. Harris if I could not get a plant anywhere else in the world!"

"What's the trouble?" I asked.

"Any concern that sells a department store need expect no trade from florists. Why," he added after a moment, "the florists of Philadelphia itself have boycotted him!"

This incident gave me a new point of view, however, and for a while I was somewhat guarded and abstained from mentioning the name of Wm. K. Harris wherever I deemed it wise not to do so. Here again I must refer to the character of the man whom I admired so much. He could foresee things which were to happen in the near future, and like all great men in advance of their times was bound to be misunderstood and condemned for a while by his contemporaries. The fact that one large concern refused to sell to a department store he well knew would not deter the department stores from entering the field of horticulture if they found it to their advantage to do so. When John Wanamaker came to Mr. Harris's place to purchase rubber plants, *Pandanus Veitchii*, *Arecas*, and so on, he could see no reason why John Wanamaker's money should be powerless to purchase his plants. As he later told me himself, the florist business, like any other, is a matter of dollars and cents, and not sentiment; and you cannot draw the line against a department store any more than a department store can draw the line against the florist handling jardinières or other paraphernalia handled by department stores.

"The time will come, and very soon, too," he said, "when every grower will be only too glad to market his output wherever marketable. The fact that I am the first one to sell to a department store may help some for the time being; but they

will all come around to my way of thinking before long. As to the florists who seem to have it in for me because of John Wanamaker, I am not in the least disturbed by them. They have the privilege to buy wherever they please."

Needless to add, William K. Harris's words were realized.

My second trip ended in July, 1897. I had managed to save a few dollars, enough at least to keep myself and family in comfortable circumstances until the Fall season commenced. Not wishing to waste my time during the enforced leisure at home, I took up a line of iron plant stands from a Western house, and managed to sell quite a few in Philadelphia.

Specializing on the Carnation

In the Fall of 1897, I made my third trip. At this time I had no more "tooth-picks and automobiles" to offer, but managed to get along quite nicely with the few lines I had. In fact, I found it greatly to my advantage to reduce my lines, and to make the best of those I had. The Carnation business held out special charms for me. Unquestionably the flower itself, its æsthetic rather than its business side, appealed to my fancy. While pushing the other lines, I made of the Carnation a specialty. The introduction of new varieties on my own account never occurred to me then. I was well satisfied with the varieties offered by reputable houses, and endorsed by growers who saw them in different stages of growth. I may add here that I was always scrupulously careful not to lend myself to the dissemination of any variety the merit of which was questionable.

Carnation Marquisee

It was about this time that the late E. Marquise of Syracuse was about to introduce his new pink Carnation Marquisee, a gem of its time. The Carnation convention was held in February, 1898, in the city of Philadelphia. Mr. Marquise's success was most gratifying to him. The judges at the convention (I cannot now recall their names) awarded him the silver medal. At the banquet, I remember ex-Mayor Smith of Philadelphia, who happened to be toastmaster, presented the medal to Mr. Marquise, and made an appropriate speech in his own inimitable style, concluding with these words:

"Mr. Marquise, permit me to congratulate you; for you have made your mark—see? (Marquisee)."

I took up that Carnation and helped in its dissemination with all the energy and hard work I could muster. In connection with this Carnation, I made something of a mark myself. By actual count, I sold about thirty thousand. My commission on the sales netted me a nice little sum, more money than I had ever had at any one time.

But aside from the monetary consideration, my success with Marquisee bore other fruit. It stimulated my energies and proved to me beyond any shadow of doubt that hard work, coupled with enthusiasm and a thorough belief in the merit of the article itself, could not possibly fail to accomplish results. I saw great possibilities in the horticultural line; I saw a great future, well realizing that the florists' business was still in *embryo*. I became an enthusiast, feeling that I was somewhat of a factor in helping to fulfill those latent possibilities.

Carnation Queen Louise

Queen Louise, introduced by J. L. Dillon, was the next variety on my list. Queen Louise was a small bloom, a variety that would have no possible chance today; but in its time it was most meritorious in every respect. The late Mr. Dillon spoke to me about it a year prior to its introduction, and when he finally

concluded to put it on the market, he equipped me with photographs taken from time to time, calculated to show its manner of growth and productiveness during various periods of the Winter season. His idea was a novel one, and it would be well for growers introducing new varieties to follow that idea today.

My success with *Carnation Queen Louise* was as encouraging as with my first *Carnation* venture. I marketed quite a quantity, and I may add that no grower was ever disappointed with the variety. Thus I continued from season to season, plunging more and more into things horticultural and floricultural, and I am quite sure that had I the means at the time I should in all likelihood have built a *Carnation* range myself.

The Nelson Seedling

Along about February, 1899, I happened to be in Indianapolis, and among others I paid a visit to E. A. Nelson. I had never met nor heard of Mr. Nelson prior to that time. Entering his shed, I walked along looking into one greenhouse and another, but could not see anyone around the place. One of the greenhouses attracted my especial attention, and I wanted to enter it. To my surprise it was locked. I could see through the glass an excellent crop of pink *Carnations*, a variety which it seemed to me I had never seen before. A few minutes later, Mr. Nelson appeared. I introduced myself and stated the object of my call. He received me kindly, and volunteered to show me through his place. Unlocking the door, he let me into the *Carnation* house.

"What sort of variety is this, anyway?" I said. "It does not look like *Scott*—in my estimation it looks much finer than *Scott*."

"Why, this is a seedling of my own, which I have had for the last three years," he replied.

"What do you intend to do with it?"

"I have not fully decided yet. One grower offered me three hundred dollars for the stock, but I would not dream of letting it go at such a price."

"Neither would I," I concurred. "You have a mighty fine thing in this *Carnation* and you ought to make money."

Mr. Nelson thought so, too, but found it hard to put it on the market. It required money; besides, it entailed a lot of work for which he had not the facilities.

"Can you propagate it?" I asked.

"Yes, indeed! It propagates like a weed."

I saw my chance, and right on the spot I made him a proposition.

"Mr. Nelson," said I, "I think, in fact I am sure, that I am the man to put it on the market for you. I have an extensive acquaintance among growers: I have handled successfully two varieties, such as *Marquisee* and *Queen Louise*, and I can see no reason why you and I should not get together on this deal. Of course I am a stranger to you. But I can easily assure you as to my honesty and reliability. Ask Anthony Wiegand, or E. G. Hill, or dozens of growers whom I can mention if you wish. Besides, there will be no outlay of money on your part. I will undertake to pay all advertising and travelling expenses; you will grow the stock and attend to the shipment of all orders; and at the end of the season we will apportion our profits, I getting a certain percentage of the gross receipts."

My idea appealed to him, and I was to see him the following morning to settle upon definite terms. On the day following I called again, and our bargain was clinched. The *Carnation* was to appear the year following. It gave me a year's time to talk about it, to introduce it, to lay out my plan of campaign. I felt that here was my chance, which could not possibly get away from me. First of all, I wrote up a descriptive circular, and had printed a great number of copies. I spread this broadcast over the length and breadth of this great

land of ours. The Nelson Carnation must become well-known to every grower having any ambition at all to grow the best. I induced several dealers in the East and in the West to catalog it, to put it in the hands of their salesmen; in a word, there was nothing left undone in so far as my end of the work was concerned. As a consequence, long before a Carnation cutting was put in the bench, I had thousands upon thousands sold. I was making money so fast and furiously that I was simply overwhelmed with the enormity of my "great fortune"—wasn't I literally making money while I slept? If Henry F. Michell, J. C. Vaughan, or Henry A. Dreer, sold E. A. Nelson cuttings, didn't that mean so much money in my pocket?

Yes, just think how tempting and alluring it is to count your fortune before it actually materializes! The very thought of its possibility is irresistible. We allow ourselves all sorts of luxuries spending it in our imagination, and perhaps that gives us almost as much pleasure as spending it in reality!

Every order booked I forwarded at once to Mr. Nelson, accompanying each order with roseate and most optimistic letters. I never neglected to remind him of the great fortune in store for us both. The enthusiasm I acquired became contagious; for Mr. Nelson himself became quite enthusiastic over his prospects, so much so, in fact, that on the fortune to come a year hence he contracted to build a range of Rose houses which he was anxious to finish that very Fall.

But this undertaking was the unsuspected rock that wrecked our glowing hopes. In the Spring of 1890 the Carnation show was to take place in Indianapolis. Aside from the quantity already sold I expected that many more thousands would be booked right at the show when the growers assembled there would go out to Mr. Nelson's place and see the variety for themselves. But alas, things took a different turn, much to our discomfiture and financial loss. The first intimation I had of Mr. Nelson's failure with the variety was in December, 1899, when Mr. Albert M. Herr wrote me a pointed though friendly letter, intimating that there was something wrong with the "E. A. Nelson," that in the first place he had received but a small part of his order, and in the second the cuttings received were of a very inferior quality, being infected with fungus, weak and altogether worthless. A similar letter soon reached me from another source. I was then in Pittsfield, Mass., intending to make my New England trip in time to go West and reach Indianapolis during the week of the Carnation show convention. I felt too uneasy, however, to delay investigating conditions with the Carnation. I spoke about my troubles to John White, the old-time florist of Pittsfield. He suggested to me that my place in the circumstances was in Indianapolis, not in Pittsfield. I acted upon his suggestion, and boarded a train direct for Indianapolis.

Nelson Carnation Fails to Root

I arrived there the evening of the following day, too late to see Mr. Nelson. It was a worried and sleepless night for me. I had forebodings that things were going wrong, that not only had my anticipated fortune melted away, but my chances for doing business for the future were being impaired. I had backed this thing so warmly; and I was afraid that growers who had bought on my recommendation would doubt my judgment and my representations in the future.

The following morning, bright and early, I went out to see Mr. Nelson. My appearance seemed to strike him with something like fear; he stammered something or other, evidently greatly confused. I tried to relieve the situation by diverting the subject to other things, but I finally came to the point.

"What was the trouble?" I asked.

He broke down, and cried like a child.

"The blamed thing wouldn't root," he said. "I can't account for it. I gave

it all kinds of treatment, bottom heat, and no heat, but the results are disastrous."

I saw our finish there and then. There I beheld thousands of cuttings in the benches; every one of them sold at seventy-five dollars per thousand, ready to go on the dumps. In other words, so many dollars were cast into the rubbish heap. It was unfortunate; it was nothing short of a calamity. But what were we to do?

It was still December. We had promised no deliveries until January. There was still a chance to redeem ourselves and our fortune as well. There were plenty of stock plants in sight, with thousands of cuttings to be stripped. Who could tell but that the next lots might behave better? So why despair?

I suggested to Mr. Nelson to cast his gloom aside and to take up the good work of rooting the cuttings. He agreed with me, though I perceived an expression of doubt on his face. I bade Mr. Nelson good-bye, and took my departure for Indianapolis, to return four weeks later when the Carnation show would be in session.

At the Carnation Show

The four weeks passed. The Carnation show was a successful affair. In this respect Indianapolis may pride itself upon its good work. The florists of that enterprising city always work in unison; and whatever they undertake, whether it be a Carnation show in the Spring or a Chrysanthemum show in the Fall, their work is always carried out without a hitch. It would be indeed hard to point out a body of men more progressive and enterprising than the State Society of the Indiana florists in general, and the florists of Indianapolis in particular.

So when the show was opened at Tomilson Hall, everything in sight promised well. The blooms were staged in time, the judges were ready to do their work, visiting florists were scattered about the hall, viewing the magnificent display and making notes about the varieties that caught their fancy. I noticed that E. A. Nelson variety attracted especial attention. The vase of a hundred blooms was indeed a magnificent sight. What a pity that this grand flower should behave so provokingly at a time when the fortunes of two men depended so much upon it!

I well knew that quite a number of growers, practically all the visiting florists, would evince a desire to go out to Mr. Nelson's place and see the variety at its own habitat. And so it happened. That same afternoon about fifty florists went out to Mr. Nelson's place. Some of these men had already placed their orders, others intended to do so. I shall never forget the embarrassment of Mr. Nelson when he was confronted by this large body of his brother florists. Failure and shame invariably go hand in hand. In the same measure that we feel proud of our success we are ashamed of our failures, whether we be responsible for them ourselves or whether they come upon us through a combination of unfortunate circumstances.

The Speculation That Failed

Mr. Nelson that afternoon was borne down by the weight of his failure, and the visit of the florists was very painful to him. Yet he had to face the situation in spite of himself. He took them through the house, and showed them the propagating benches. A glance at the stock sufficed to convince almost everyone of them that the variety was doomed. To the credit of the visitors let it be said, sympathy rather than disgust and condemnation was expressed in every one's face. They saw a fellow member in trouble, and their impulse was to help him. Suggestions flew thick and fast; some thought a little more bottom heat would do the trick, others that no heat at all would save the variety. Others again suggested one kind of sand in preference to another kind. One prominent Chicago grower volunteered to purchase five thousand unrooted cuttings, and root them himself.

E. G. Hill (and of him I will have a little more to say later) offered his services to help out Mr. Nelson by rooting the cuttings in Richmond. Quite a number of smaller growers were willing to risk the unrooted cuttings. We felt more encouraged. Unfortunately the variety refused to respond to the most expert treatment and proved a failure in the end. Those who succeeded with part of the stock found it to be a very meritorious variety, and what was most surprising to us, its behavior during the next few seasons was splendid. It rooted well, and produced excellent blooms throughout the Winter months.

My experience with the Nelson variety had for the time being knocked my enthusiasm into the proverbial cocked hat. The failure of the Carnation was later easily explained. In his eagerness to finish the new range of greenhouses, Mr. Nelson killed the goose that laid the golden egg. By neglecting to lift the plants from the field in the proper time (he left them out in the field late into October), he impaired their vitality, and the cuttings would not root.

Acquaintance with the Sage of Indiana

My acquaintance with E. G. Hill dates back to 1898 when I first met him at a Chicago show. I had often heard of Mr. Hill before (and who in the trade has not?) and it was my pleasure now to meet the Sage of Indiana face to face. Mr. Hill possesses many charming qualities, chief of which is that of making a stranger perfectly at ease and avoiding any semblance of superiority which might embarrass him. He has the faculty of putting himself on a level with his visitor, a faculty that might to good advantage be studied and emulated by many a man who has achieved much less in life than has Mr. Hill. And by achievement I do not mean only in the matter of worldly goods. To be sure, Mr. Hill has not failed in that respect either. Mr. Hill in the first place is a man who thoroughly knows his business. In the world of horticulture he will ever be known as one of its chief exponents. His contributions toward the improvement of the flower are well known to all. Some of the best Chrysanthemums, standards of today, are the results of his painstaking efforts and intelligent selection. The best Carnations of a generation ago, such as Flora Hill, Armazindi, Jubilee, Triumph, and others, are to be credited to Mr. Hill. The Richmond Rose is still a standard of today among red Roses, and his recent introductions of Sunburst and Ophelia need not be dwelt upon at length here. It is true the last two varieties are foreign Roses; but it was E. G. Hill who brought them to this side, tested their merit, and gave them to the Rose lovers of this country. It often takes a keen eye to see a good thing. Mr. Hill is endowed with that particular faculty. He knows a good thing when he sees it.

Sarah A. Hill, the Woman Horticulturist

About a year after this first meeting I had the pleasure of being introduced to Mr. E. G. Hill's family. A highly interesting family it is. Mrs. Hill, a kindly intelligent woman, who upon many occasions has bade me welcome and given me the hospitality of her home, his two interesting daughters, both happily married, Flora to Fred H. Lemon and Mary to Earl Mann, Joe Hill who is proving himself a fitting inheritor of the mantle of his father, and Miss Sarah Hill, his sister, constitute his household. Miss Sarah Hill is perhaps the best known woman horticulturist in the country. Her knowledge of floriculture is remarkable. It is generally known that Miss Sarah Hill has been to her brother as able an assistant as any man could possibly wish for. Her handwriting, in the days before typewriting came into general use, was familiar to almost every florist in the country; nor was it the handwriting alone, but a certain characteristic quality in the substance of the letters that made letters from the E. G. Hill Company just a little different from

ordinary business communications. Her annual descriptive catalogs have been commented upon not only in this country but in Europe as well, for the lucidity and precision of her way of describing every flower and variety.

My business connection with the E. G. Hill Company has been both profitable and pleasant for the past eighteen years.

During my younger days, in Russia, I often entertained the aspiration of becoming a journalist; in fact, my imagination carried me much further than that. I had visions of myself startling the world with great poetry, novels, and plays. Alas for the dreams of youth! Upon my landing in this country, I was correspondent for a while for a few Russian papers. For a time I entertained the same idea here. But Fate decreed otherwise. I married and had a family. As Bacon has said, "He who hath a wife and children hath given hostages to fortune." It is a matter of debate whether a man is spurred on to greater efforts by the responsibility that rests upon him when he is accountable for other lives besides his own, or whether that responsibility hampers him and impedes his race for success. In any event, certain it is that a married man must lay aside his dreams and deal with practical issues. Whether he is the better or the worse for that is the question.

Translating for the Newspapers

In my particular case it meant that my dreams of authorship had to make way for some more practical activity. I found it, as I have already set forth, first in florists' supplies, and thence by a natural step in horticulture. But something of the old impulse remained with me. I conceived the idea of translating some of the Russian works, and in the evenings, when my day's work was over, I would give myself up to translations.

Some of the writer's Russian translations appeared in the *Philadelphia Times*, now extinct, in *The Evening News*, and in the *Sunday School Times*. Before that I had translated, in conjunction with Mr. Nathan Haskell Dole, a well-known man of letters now in Boston, a novel called "The Vital Question," which in the '60's created quite a furore in Russian society. We got a publisher for it, and the little sum it brought in was a very opportune help to me. That was in the early days before my association with the florists' business. When I say that just about then I had had printed in one of the newspapers an article, "How to live on \$8 a week," which was based upon sober experience, it will be well understood how opportune that help was.

Entering the Field of Trade Journalism

My journalistic tendencies naturally led me to turn toward trade journalism. The little sum I could realize every week would be a welcome addition to my legitimate income. So one day while in Chicago I called upon Mr. G. L. Grant, at that time editor of the *American Florist*, and suggested to him the idea of supplying him with trade notes from various towns on my route. Mr. Grant agreed to accept my notes, and pay for them, providing I would confine myself to matter of interest to the trade, outlining the work I was to do. In addition, he offered me the chance to solicit subscriptions to the journal, and advertisements. I commenced my work, and for a few years thereafter I supplied him with weekly notes from many centers on my route, signing my articles "Homo." The work, at first dull and arduous, became quite a pleasant task in the end. I would do this work in the trains, now and then at the railroad station while waiting for a train, and more often on Sunday morning at the hotel. Much as I endeavored to hide my identity, "Homo" and I soon became one to the florists. I was often welcomed, not as a representative of horticultural houses, but as a correspondent for the *American Florist*. It was amusing how some little grower would take me through

his house, and show me some insignificant seedling, expecting me to give at least a column of glowing description to it. Again some would call my especial attention to a Tomato plant, considering it meritorious enough to deserve a large photograph on the first page, with a two-column description in the body of the journal.

One incident in particular comes back to me. It happened in a small town in the interior of Ohio. The florist on whom I called, a man of about forty-five, short and stocky of build, not especially prepossessing in appearance, with an accent that might have been a cross between Irish and Swedish, upon being told who I was immediately proceeded to address me by the name of "Mr. Homo."

"And you are just the man I wanted to see," he said.

From the tone of his voice I gathered that my visit afforded him some pleasure, and that he intended to avail himself of my services in some manner.

"Now let me show you something," he went on.

"I am always glad to see things," I replied.

And thereupon he ushered me into a little rickety greenhouse, the rafters of which were badly in need of replacement, and proceeded to show me a geranium which in his opinion was bound to make a mark and put all other Geraniums out of existence. I confess I never was and am not today, a Geranium specialist. Nevertheless, little as I knew about Geraniums, I could readily see that the man was too enthusiastic about his product, and that the "special merit" that placed it above all other Geraniums was not in the least in evidence in that variety. If I remember rightly, it was cerise color, rather dull, single, of no vigorous growth, and altogether anything but attractive.

"And what is the special merit about it?" I inquired.

"Why, can't you see?" he answered in a tone of surprise. "Look at the color! Look at the habit! It's a wonder, I tell you—it's a wonder! Blooms all the time. If that Geranium was in the hands of some big fellow he could make a fortune of it in no time. Of course, I am a small man, not known."

"Well and good," I said. "But what can I do about it to help you?"

"You can do a lot," he said. "Give it a good write-up in the paper, and let the trade know what a good Geranium means. You are handling Geraniums, I understand; what would be your commission?"

I never thought of that. Disregarding my lack of response, he proceeded to offer me liberal returns. He would pay me fifteen per cent. commission on all sales I made, and for my "write-up," especially if it were a good one, he would reward me with two or three dollars.

"Glad you came, glad you came!" he concluded, cheerily.

The pleasure, however, was one-sided, for such undertakings never appealed to me. I broached my goods, by way of changing the subject, and was rewarded by selling him a few packages of seeds amounting to less than a dollar.

At another time, I came across a man who was in possession of a "gem" in the form of a Carnation seedling.

"You are just in time, Mr. Correspondent," he greeted me.

"An order, sure," I thought to myself. "I am always glad to be on time," I added, aloud.

"Now come on and I'll show you an eye-opener!" he said.

Taking up the lantern, for it was growing dark, he preceded me to the Carnation house, and there amidst the plants he pointed out one or two. Holding his lantern close to one of the blooms, he wanted to know immediately my unqualified opinion about the merits of his discovery.

"What is it—a sport?" I inquired.

"A sport, nothing!" was the answer. "It's a seedling."

"How many plants have you got of these?" I asked.

"Two," he replied. "I put out about a dozen in the field, but the boys neglected them. Besides they were put out too late in the season, and all I saved was two. But look at them! Now what do you think?"

I could not possibly enter into his spirit and enthusiasm.

"And what is the cross, may I ask?"

"Cross? I can't tell you exactly," he said. "But talk about your hybridizers and all that rot—I just took a fine camel's hair brush, combed down the pollen of one Carnation, and slapped it on to another one and here's the result."

I could hardly suppress a smile.

"Do you intend to put it on the market?" I asked.

"Well, I can't tell yet. But say, you ought to give it a good write-up! Something that would make them sit up and take notice."

I promised to do something, and the following week among my notes appeared the following:

"Mr. X——— of Spondulick has a Carnation seedling which, in his opinion, is a gem. He has only two plants, the remainder of a dozen. Mr. X——— may put it on the market, if the two should happen to survive and multiply."

My write-up didn't cause any special sensation among the trade, and I never heard of any grower's sitting up and taking notice; nor did Mr. X——— of Spondulick ever take any notice of me after that.

Corresponding for The Florists' Exchange

A few years later, I decided to extend my journalistic work in another direction. THE FLORISTS' EXCHANGE, of New York, appealed to me as a journal most likely to accept my services as itinerary correspondent. I wrote to the late Alexander Wallace, whom I had met a few times before, and whom I learned to admire for his many remarkable qualities. Mr. Wallace was indeed a great man, modest and unassuming to a fault. He was regarded by all who knew him as a potent factor in the process of horticultural development. He always aimed for the higher standards in horticulture, floriculture, and their allied branches. In horticultural journalism he carried his ideal ever onward, disregarding expediences and circumstances. To be sure he made some enemies, but what great man does not? I formed an especial attachment for Mr. Wallace, and felt a keen delight in spending an occasional hour in conversation with him. When I applied for the position as correspondent, I never doubted that the response I would receive would be a favorable one. And so it happened. Mr. Wallace wrote me a friendly letter, giving me the benefit of his best experience, making several practical suggestions, and wishing me success in my work. For upwards of a year I continued to correspond for THE EXCHANGE, under the pseudonym of "Itinerant."

I was now correspondent for two trade journals. The income I derived from my pen fully sufficed to keep me in clothes and tobacco. While I corresponded regularly for the two journals, I was scrupulously careful that my notes did not conflict with each other. For all practical purposes, "Homo" and "Itinerant," like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, were two distinct individuals.

Termination of Journalistic Career

My journalistic career, however, had to come to a close, and it happened in this manner:

A very much infuriated florist from some place that I need not mention, wrote a very indignant letter to the *American Florist*, complaining about my partiality to a rival of his in the same town. It happened that the rival he spoke of was rather a prominent man and a good customer of mine. As usual I made a few notes about his place and doings, but failed to mention a word about the other

man. I cannot recall the exact words that were addressed to the editor of the *American Florist*, but in substance it meant that if they intended to retain the indignant writer of the letter as subscriber, and if they wanted to deal out justice to all, they should instruct their correspondent to be fair to all and give every one of the florists an equal write-up. I suspected all along before this incident happened that while I was making friends on the one hand I was making enemies on the other. It was utterly impossible to deal equally with all since some florists by virtue of the superior stock they grew, their modern equipment, and so on, deserved more notice than the man who could produce a Tomato plant or a Geranium of no merit at all. I thought it best, under the circumstances, to cut my journalistic career short. After all, it was a side issue, and I could not let it act as a deterrent in my regular business.

Contrasting Events of a Generation Ago

As I look back over the years and contrast events of a generation ago with those of today, the tremendous changes that have taken place stand out startlingly. Let us look at the business methods, for example, of the florist of a generation ago, and contrast them with those of the florist of today. Twenty-five years ago the modern, well-equipped, well-regulated flower store that one now sees on every side even in smaller towns, was practically unknown. The florist did his business at the greenhouse, and it was no uncommon sight to behold a well-dressed lady step into the shed to purchase flowers. The florists in those days, the majority of them, anyway, thought very little of clean collars, and much less of neckties, during working hours. Some went even so far, in the easy democracy of their attitude, as not to deem it necessary to remove their pipes from their mouths when dealing with their feminine patrons.

The long-stemmed flowers were not thought of in those days; anything in the shape of a flower was salable. (I am speaking particularly of conditions in the smaller towns.) If a lady, for example, asked for some flowers, it meant a bouquet of miscellaneous truck, such as Tuberoses in season, Calendulas, and Zinnias; and even Geranium and Verbena blooms were pressed into service. Wire played an important part, and when the whole mass was wired up and gathered together, the bouquet paper would come out and the thing was ready.

The cut flower boxes of today were then unknown. Anything in the shape of a box answered the purpose. It now and then happened that a lady would receive a box of flowers or a bouquet with an inscription on the box: "Men's fine balbriggan undershirts." I have often seen a florist holding a bunch of flowers in one hand while with the other he picked up a dusty newspaper to wrap with.

Years ago, the greenhouses as a rule were anything but neat and tidy. The walks were always wet and dirty; and if a lady volunteered to go through them she had to be very careful if she wanted to avoid falling or soiling her clothes.

Stores Then and Now

Even in the large cities the flower stores were but mere apologies for stores, as we know the term today. The J. M. Gasser Co., on Euclid ave., in Cleveland, had a little store about one-third the size of the present establishment, with nothing of the equipment that belongs today even to the most modest store in a small town. John Breitmeyer & Sons, of Detroit, occupied a small store on the corner of Gratiot ave. and Randolph st., to be sure, the best in its day, but very small in comparison with modern stores in much smaller towns than Detroit. I mention these two firms in particular, for I have known both for upwards of a quarter of a century, and I have watched their growth and development.

Today the store of John Breitmeyer & Sons is in a class of its own, not only

in point of size and equipment, but in the magnitude of the business transacted and the modern methods adopted in its management. The J. M. Gasser Co. has likewise grown into an establishment that is in every respect strictly first-class.

Now let us look at the methods of today. No florist establishment of any size can dispense with a downtown store, whether the owner himself, his wife, or an assistant is in charge of it. A neat appearance is the first requisite. The window must be kept attractively trimmed, the ice-box must be both commodious and attractive, the counters orderly, the articles displayed about the store arranged with an eye to artistic effect. Instead of the men's undershirt box, the florist must have a folded box of his own, appropriately inscribed. He must have a selection of fine chiffons and ribbons. The wire designs, moss, tinfoil and toothpicks must be kept out of sight altogether, and anything that would mar the appearance of the place must be eliminated. The quality of the stock, if one aspires to the best trade, must be of the best and the freshest. Long stemmed Killarneys, Am. Beauty Roses, and Carnations, the finest of orchids procurable, the very best bulbous stock, rather than Tuberoses and cheap annuals, must fill his vases. The public's taste has been cultivated during the past quarter of a century, and the florist of today, if he is alive at all, fully understands it.

In the method of producing stock, and the very equipment of the establishment, a like change has taken place. The antiquated little greenhouse with its low roof and in many cases brick flues has been demolished, and in its place modern greenhouses built of cement and iron, with the best boilers procurable, tall chimneys, and so on, have been erected. Like in many another industry, and in a measure more so than in some, the old had to yield to the new with the florist.

To the credit of the florists be it said, I have yet to hear any old time florists talk mournfully about the "good old times." If the old times are brought into discussion at all, the word good is generally transferred to the present order.

Changes in Methods of Distribution

I must not omit here to mention the radical change that has taken place in the method of wholesale distribution. Those who have been in the harness a quarter of a century and more well remember how the wholesale grower of that day had to market his flowers. It was no unusual thing for him to get up at four o'clock in the morning, and prepare his team while his wife was preparing his breakfast. At half-past four, or five, he was on his way downtown to peddle his flowers from store to store. It was an arduous and unremunerative task at its best. The time consumed in the process, the wear and tear on the team, the neglect of work at the greenhouse—all this meant financial loss to the wholesale grower of that day. Aside from this, the cost of production could not always be adequately considered, under certain circumstances. Let me make this a little clearer. If for example a tricky storekeeper meant to take advantage of the weary grower, he would tell him that he could not use any flowers that day, but that he would take the chance if they were given to him as a special bargain. If the market was dull, and the grower could not always ascertain whether it was dull or not, he would readily acquiesce rather than bring his goods back home again with him. In the end, it meant hard work and low profits, and in some cases no profits.

Today the wholesale grower is sought after—no peddling from store to store for him! He ships his flowers to the commission men, and the latter attend to the distribution. It is the commission man's business to watch out for his patrons' interests. And unless the market is very dull indeed he will always manage to market the product and make good returns to the grower. The waste of time and loss of sleep of former days are eliminated from the life of the modern

grower. And who will say that this new order of things isn't better than the old!

What I have just said of cut flowers is equally true of plants. Before the advent of the trade papers, and the numbers of traveling men that we have today, there was a great deal of waste in products. On the one hand, frequently the man with excellent stock had no market for it. On the other hand, very often a ready market was unable to get hold of the needed stock. The methods of today have remedied these evils. If John Smith, of Podunk, has more Geraniums than he can use, there is Tim Brown of Squedunk, two hundred miles away, who is ready and anxious to use them. Instead of being consigned to the dump, they are packed up in a case, and expressed to Mr. Brown. How did it come about? By the simplest of methods, to be sure: Mr. Smith has plants to sell, and makes that fact known in the trade paper. Mr. Brown needs the plants and consults the trade paper. Hence the business relation between Smith & Brown, and waste is eliminated.

A Sale on Commission

The alert traveler of today has in no small measure contributed his mite towards the achievement of this condition of interchange. Whether directly or indirectly interested in a florist's goods, the alert man will never fail to make note of things and bring them to the attention of another florist whenever an opportunity presents itself. This reminds me of a case of my own, and indeed I often wonder now whether it was not this incident, trifling in itself, that diverted my entire business life into the channels where it now flows. About twenty-two years ago, while I was still selling florists' supplies, I called upon Mr. C. F. Baker, in Utica, N. Y. After I was through with my business—Mr. Baker was always one of my favorable customers—he remarked to me casually:

"By the way, Skidelsky, I have a fine lot of assorted ferns. Should any of your customers on the road wish to have some, let me know; and if I sell some through your efforts, I'll pay you a commission."

To reciprocate the favor of his order, I promised to bear it in mind. On the following day I chanced to be at Pittsfield, Mass., and called upon John White, the old time florist of that city. Mr. White, who happened to be out of ferns, asked me if I knew of anyone who had some to offer. Here was my chance. To be sure I knew of a good place. C. F. Baker of Utica had them, in quality and quantity.

Mr. White asked me to write to Mr. Baker, and in a few days he had his ferns. A week or so later I received my little check for the commission. I have since had many such an interchange of products for dollars, and vice versa.

Advertising a Quarter of a Century Ago and Today

A quarter of a century ago advertising would have meant a waste of good dollars to the average florist. Today in one form or another he must come before the public and make known his product, else he is a back number and need expect no results. In some cities the florists have found it profitable to advertise co-operatively for special occasions—Memorial Day, Mother's Day, and other holidays where flowers play a large part. Only recently I had the privilege of being present at the Detroit florists' meeting. (And when I mention Detroit florists, I must add that they represent a progressive, wide-awake, cultured body of men.) The subject under discussion, and one that demanded immediate action, was co-operative advertising for Mother's Day. It was in no sense an academic discussion, either. Everyone realized that it meant a great deal for each individual concerned. The subscriptions toward defraying the expense of advertising came forward quick and fast; and within half an hour enough money was subscribed

to cover liberal space in six newspapers, with enough left for the nucleus of a similar undertaking on another occasion.

Marked Development in Southern Florists' Establishments

Nowhere has the change among the florists been more marked in these last twenty-five years than in the Southern section of the country. Twenty-five years ago it would have been hard to find extensive greenhouses or well-equipped flower stores in any part south of the Mason and Dixon line. In a measure perhaps, it was due to the fact that a quarter of a century ago the South had not as yet fully recovered from the disastrous effects of the Civil War, and was still in the midst of its reconstructive period. At any rate, my several trips through Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, and Louisiana never proved remunerative enough to induce me to continue in that direction. I do not mean to imply that the Southern people were devoid of æsthetic taste and made no response to the appeal of flowers. It was the general business conditions rather than a lack of refinement and cultivation of taste that were responsible for the lack of enterprise in the floral direction.

How things have changed since! When I resumed my journeys about fifteen years later, to that interesting part of the country where the sun shines almost all of the time, where birds sing and plants luxuriate in the pleasant warmth, my surprise was great. The downtown districts in almost every city that I had known of old seemed to have become transformed as by the wand of a magician. The old-fashioned Southern structures had given way to modern business establishments. The hustle and bustle on the streets reminded me of the Northern cities. The hotels had become modernized, and even the food seemed to taste better than that of the former hotels. Apace with the general progress was that of the florists. My surprise may be better imagined than described when I beheld the mammoth greenhouse establishment of the Joy Floral Co. at Nashville, Tenn., and their excellent store on Church st., right in the heart of the business district. The Joys, three generations of them, represent a remarkable family. Mr. Joy the grandfather, a venerable old gentleman in the late seventies, is still alert and active, though long since retired from business. Thomas Joy the son, the genius of the present flourishing business, is a man of keen business perceptions, one who not only recognizes a good thing when he sees it, but is quick to see the advantage of making it his own. Under his able management his business has prospered beyond his own expectations. Mr. Joy believes in growing the best stock that could possibly be grown, and with that end in view he never deems it wise to economize in any manner that would have a deterring effect upon his products. The best Carnations and Roses introduced always find room in his greenhouses. Unlike the ultra-conservative grower, who is always inclined to have some other fellow pay for the experience—a "try it on the dog" attitude—Mr. Joy is ready to take the risk and make the experiment himself. If he happens to hit upon a good thing, he is that much ahead of the other fellow. If he misses, he takes the result as a matter of course, and tries again. Men of such calibre truly represent the progressive elements in our ranks. Thomas Joy, the grandson, has the store in his care, and has proven himself an able administrator.

More About the South

The Geny Brothers have likewise modernized and enlarged their facilities of former years. Their new range of houses, in West Nashville, is not only large in scope but in production as well. They grow with success Carnations, Roses, ferns and bulb stock of all sorts; and their retail store in town bears every stamp of able management and progressive spirit.

At Knoxville, Tenn., a similar change has taken place. The antiquated little range of houses with which C. L. Baum started out a number of years ago has long since been demolished. Instead an extensive range of glass, modern in every respect, has been erected. I have known C. L. Baum for a number of years, and aside from his many other qualifications he possesses that of perpetual youth. Mr. Baum never seems to change, the years weighing but lightly upon his head. And his youthful spirit keeps pace with his youthful appearance. (Perhaps the first is responsible for the second.) Since enlarging and modernizing his place Mr. Baum has grown very successfully Carnations, Roses, and orchids. He likewise grows quantities of Lilies and all sorts of bulbous stock. His loyalty to the interests of the S. A. F. and O. H. has won the recognition of the society and he is now one of its directors. Not only does he consider it his duty to attend every annual convention himself, but he likewise strives to induce other members of the society to accompany him on those pilgrimages. The organization of the Florists' Club of Knoxville is largely due to his efforts.

Mr. Baum's loyalty and devotion is not limited only to his human friends, but they are carried to the lower animals as well. In his younger days he purchased a young and faithful horse. In consideration of the many services of this animal, or as he himself expressed it, in consideration of the fact that the horse helped him make his living in his less affluent days, he considers it his duty to pension the horse, to feed him on Clover and oats for the rest of his life.

In his greenhouses he has the able assistance of his younger son, a young man of about nineteen, giving much promise as a horticulturist. His magnificent store in town is under the very efficient management of his older son Karl, whose constant alertness to introduce new ideas contributes to the growing success of the concern.

Mr. McNutt has succeeded C. W. Crouch; I made his acquaintance at a much later date. From all appearances Mr. McNutt will prove a very worthy successor to Mr. Crouch, whose success is a matter of general knowledge in that section of the country. Mr. McNutt will continue the business along the same lines as his predecessor, improving upon it as conditions may require.

In Atlanta, Ga., generally conceded to be the New York of the South, great changes have taken place during the same period of time. The C. A. Dahl Co. has expanded in a manner that is simply surprising. Its greenhouse range is a model of modern equipment, and the company's very beautiful store holds its own with any of the finest in the country. Mr. Thompson, the general manager, deserves much credit for the success of this company.

The Wachendorf Brothers, an old established firm, have likewise expanded, and are doing a good business. They have made numerous improvements, and are keeping abreast of the times.

I might go on indefinitely, speaking of many other southern cities, and the valued friendships I have formed in my travels through them; but what I have said before will suffice to illustrate in general southern progress.

Founding of the S. A. F. and O. H.

One of the most potent factors in the growth and development of the florist industry in this country was the founding of the Society of American Florists and Ornamental Horticulturists, and the hearty co-operation of all its members to make it a live and flourishing organization. Its influence upon the trade cannot be overestimated. There is after all nothing like an interchange of views and opinions upon matters concerning the interests of the members of an organization. When people are brought closer together, and acquaintanceships are formed, acquaintanceships that often ripen into permanent friendships, good results in-

variably follow. I can recall instance after instance where some of my friends in the trade at first spurned the idea of belonging to the society, and later became enthusiastic members, as the full value of doing so was borne in upon them. In former years it was more customary than it is today to read papers on subjects directly concerning the interests of the members present. If E. G. Hill or Robert Craig were on the program to read a paper on Roses, Chrysanthemums, or plants of any sort, it was certain there would be an audience of eager listeners, ready to profit by the remarks and apply them to their own needs as the circumstances required.

The closer acquaintanceships and friendships formed were not only among members at distances from each other, but strange as it may seem, among men of the same city as well. I will cite one case which I recall at this moment. J. F. Sullivan and the late Mr. Taplin of Detroit never met in their own city. But they were introduced to each other at the convention in Chicago. They were close friends until the time of Mr. Taplin's death.

Robert Craig, in the early days of the society's existence, took a special interest in its affairs, as indeed he has done ever since. My acquaintance with Mr. Craig dates back to the memorable time when I applied for his line of palms. His easy and amiable manner won me completely at first sight. I had heard of Mr. Craig before. His reputation long preceded my personal acquaintance with him. At the time I met him, he was still in the full vigor of manhood, clear cut in his remarks, and to the point, impressing one that here was a man who did not waste any words but whose every word carried weight. Mr. Craig, though rather careless in dress, is a man whose face once seen is never forgotten. He has the noble cast of head and features that we associate with the old Roman emperors, and that leads one to expect at once a mental capacity that is out of the commonplace. Mr. Craig's appearance indeed does not belie his mind; he is not only an able horticulturist, but a scholar as well. Mr. Craig has all his life been a student of philosophy and a great reader; and while he can tell you what is the best kind of fertilizer for a certain kind of plant, or what temperature is required for another kind, he can talk very intelligently, too, on all sorts of questions outside the field of his own special business. But that doesn't by any means intend to say that Mr. Craig has any artificial ideas about "dignity." When it comes to a frolic of any sort, he can be counted upon to be the life of the party. Mr. Craig has a good-sized repertoire of charming old songs, and it is a never-failing pleasure when he can be induced to give them. Not that he takes very much inducing, either; he is whole-souled and spontaneous, and always ready to contribute to the entertainment of his colleagues in horticulture.

The annual conventions of the S. A. F. and O. H. are indeed a source of great pleasure to its members everywhere, and are looked forward to with much enthusiasm. Entertainment features are being carried on on a more and more elaborate scale every year, though in this respect it might be well for the society to abstain from over-indulgence. I have often heard remarks that such elaborate entertainments are burdensome to a good many cities. Since no city wants to be outdone by another, quite a number seem rather reluctant to extend the invitation. If I may make a suggestion while on the subject, it would be well for the society to map out its own program, including all the entertainment features in store, and bear the cost itself. The Carnation Society has already recognized the wisdom of such procedure; its annual banquets, given during its conventions, are paid for by each individual member wishing to attend the feast. Another feature might be mentioned in connection with this, and that is the feasibility of curtailing the sporting features of these occasions. Not that I deplore sport as such, but it seems to me that too much prominence is given this part, to the detriment of the chief object of the conventions. After all, it is a trade organization, and as

such it must never lose sight of its real purpose. When sessions are in progress, a full attendance should be in order. Subjects of general interest should be presented and fully discussed. The trade exhibitors, who undertake a great deal of trouble and expense in making their exhibits, should be considered and given the opportunity to do business during the few days that the convention lasts. There should be no outside attractions sanctioned by the officials that prove detrimental to their interests. I have heard many an exhibitor vow time and again that this is his last; fortunately as a year passes his rancor dies down, and he appears again. Without the trade exhibits, I question if the conventions would be nearly so successful.

Our society should follow the example of the nurserymen's association, the fruit growers' association, the canners' association, and many other strictly trade associations, having for their object the promulgation of trade interests for the benefit of all their members. I am heartily in favor of setting a day aside for entertainment and sport; but I question the wisdom of taking up one afternoon with bowling, a second with clay-pigeon shooting, and a third with baseball and automobile rides through the town. As in the case of the individual, with the society it should be business before pleasure, if the best results are to ensue.

The S. A. F. and O. H. is responsible for the organization of the numerous florists' clubs throughout the country. The latter indeed seem to be offspring of the mother society. The good that these clubs have already accomplished is a sure indication of the great benefits that will come to each member if he remains loyal to his organization and does all within his power to promote the interests of the whole. I have attended meetings of many of these clubs, upon many occasions, and I know whereof I speak when I say that "in union there is strength." Is there any better place to discuss the subject of supply and demand, the subject of prices, the merits of plants and cut flowers, than a florists' club? If John Smith is accustomed to sell his four-inch Geraniums at ten cents per plant, or three plants for a quarter, and carry on this low scale of prices all along the line, in the end wondering how it happened that he did not save sufficient money to pay last year's coal bill or bulb bill, a progressive member of the florists' club, who pursues a different method, can give Mr. Smith the benefit of his experience by which he not only meets all bills but has a tidy little surplus in the bank. If Mr. Brown has a badly affected lot of Lilies, short and belated, he is apt to find out at the florists' club from a brother member the cause of his troubles, and the remedy. The florists' clubs are great organizations indeed. The smaller towns in various sections of the country are falling into line with the larger ones in this respect. Many florists' clubs and State florists' associations are springing up from time to time.

Playing the Carnation Game Again

My sad experience with the Nelson Carnation, though discouraging for awhile, did not deter me from playing the Carnation game again. It was about 1900 that I first met Fred Dorner and his two sons, Fred, Jr., and Theodore. I had long heard of Mr. Dorner as the father of the American Carnation. He introduced numerous varieties, long since gone and forgotten, which in their day were grown extensively by every Carnation grower throughout the country. Indeed the names Dorner and Carnation were synonymous. There were other Carnation hybridizers, such as Simmons, of Geneva, N. Y., William Swayne, of Kennett Square, Pa., John Breitmeyer, of Detroit, Mich., and a few others; but Mr. Dorner was a specialist of the Carnation, and not only was he a specialist, but a lover of the Divine Flower as well.

When I met and introduced myself to Mr. Dorner, his kindly benevolent manner sufficed to reassure me as to the result of the object of my call. I wanted

his line, for not only would this enable me to do a successful business, but his reputation counted for much. To introduce a Carnation put on the market by Mr. Dorner meant to have the guarantee of a man whose honesty and strict business integrity were known to every florist that ever had any business relations with Mr. Dorner. He was a man of the simplest manner, unostentatious and quiet; but his lack of effulgence in speech did not indicate a lack of sympathetic interest. Mr. Dorner had heard also of me, and so my application was favorably received, and our business relations commenced. Mr. Dorner's line proved a source of income to me. Any variety that had his stamp of approval I offered unhesitatingly to the trade; and with but rare exceptions his Carnations became the standard of their day.

In the earlier days new varieties were not bought by the thousands as they are today, nor was there any readiness to purchase novelties which might and might not prove paying propositions. It was a common occurrence to hear a grower say:

"Lizzie McGowan is good enough for me! So why spend my money on something new?"

Here Dorner's name stood me in good stead.

"And do you think," I would retort, "that Mr. Dorner would lend himself to putting a variety on the market that is worthless? Hasn't he given you things before that have helped to build your trade and your fortune? Don't you think he deserves some consideration when he says that this or that variety is an improvement on your Lizzie McGowan and your other standards?"

An order would usually follow. It used to be said once upon a time that a salesman was highly efficient if he succeeded in selling to a man something that that man didn't want. It is easy enough to sell to anybody who wants a thing, was the idea; but it takes a salesman to sell to a man who doesn't. The fallacy of such a theory has been proved long since by every progressive business house, no matter what the line. Temporary success, after all, rests upon sand; while a permanent success must be built upon bed-rock. The salesman who strives after orders regardless of means stands in his own light. His customer looks upon him as his enemy, as one bent upon exploiting him. On the other hand, the salesman who takes a personal interest in his client, selling him things which he knows he can use, and dissuading him from buying things that might prove a loss to him, is the man who may count on friends and on lasting success. Often, however, the customer himself may be ignorant of his own needs; and the salesman who is keen enough to open the customer's eyes to his own interests, making him see the true wisdom of purchases to which at first he was disinclined, is the man whose order book totals highest in the long run. It requires enthusiasm, in other words a thorough knowledge of and faith in your article, to make your customer view it with your own eyes.

White Carnation Lady Bountiful

While not wishing to pose as a keen or especially capable salesman, I can say that my enthusiasm and faith in Dorner's varieties have helped me many a time in my selling of Carnations. I remember once calling upon a grower in central Missouri. I was then introducing Lady Bountiful.

"What!" exclaimed the florist, upon my suggestion that he try a few hundred of this variety, "not on your tintype!"

"What's the trouble?" I demanded.

"Trouble enough! Let some other feller try them new varieties; I'm done with 'em!"

But I had great faith in Lady Bountiful; and as the man appeared to be a

successful Carnation grower, I could see no reason why he should fail with Lady Bountiful. Here my enthusiasm and my faith came in good stead. I summoned all my powers of persuasion, determined to convince the man that he stood in his own light, that I meant well, and that he need not hesitate for a moment to give me his order. I can almost recall the argument at this minute.

"Lady Bountiful," I said, "is the best white Carnation, the most prolific variety that Dorner or any other introducer has ever put on the market. While I want your order, I would not have it if there was a profit ten times the amount involved, if I had the least doubt about the merit of the variety. In fact, I would not lend myself to any scheme calculated to deceive the grower; neither would Mr. Dorner. My object in calling upon you is not to sell you a few things and bid you good-bye forever, but to gain your confidence as well, so as to be able to call upon you again and again and to sell you more things in the future. Now let me assure you, Mr. X———, that what I am telling you is the absolute truth. And furthermore," I concluded, "if the variety should prove worthless to you, taking into consideration that you know how to handle Carnations, I will refund you your money without any question."

I could see I had made an impression. The man relented, and gave me an order for five hundred cuttings. His success was as I had predicted. Lady Bountiful was a bountiful variety to him. He grew it for years afterward, long after Mr. Dorner had discarded it himself; and the confidence which I had thus inspired in him has never waned. I sold him in later years numerous other varieties, some perhaps that did not suit his soil, and were not altogether satisfactory; and though he may have questioned my judgment at times, I am quite sure that he never questioned the honesty of my intention.

The History of Fiancée Carnation

Other varieties followed each other in quick succession. I handled them all, selling quantities of each; and with but rare exceptions Dorner's varieties were profitable wherever grown. One of the exceptions I refer to was the famous Fiancée, a product of Dorner, but introduced by the Chicago Carnation Company of Joliet, Ill. The history of this sensational Carnation is undoubtedly remembered by every grower. Mr. Dorner himself would never have introduced it as a commercial variety. The tempting sum offered him he accepted with reluctance. I clearly remember the deal. A vase of this most magnificent flower was brought to Chicago. Its appearance created a sensation among the Carnation growers, the like of which had never been known before. The late Jimmie Hartshorn was as gleeful as a ten-year-old in acquiring a new toy when he took possession of the Fiancée. It was something indeed to startle the world. To be sure, the Carnation growers were startled. Mr. Hartshorn was to put a half a million cuttings on the market, at least that many. For a year prior to its début, flowers were sent to every exhibition. The Carnation growers, even the older men of the trade, became interested, some quite enthusiastic. I saw my opportunity, and I must confess here that like Mr. Hartshorn himself I was ensnared by the beauty of the variety and blinded to its shortcomings. I pushed it for all the traffic would bear. A month later I had the sale of ten thousand to my credit. Another month, and my sales had doubled, then trebled, and quadrupled. In fact, the variety sold itself, without any special effort on my part. It was the customary thing to receive letters as follows:

"You have my order for 500 Fiancée, for January delivery. Please make it a thousand, and see that I get good stock and in due time."

Those who ordered a thousand doubled and trebled their orders. Thus time passed on.

During the Summer months I paid a few visits to Joliet to see for myself how the stock was coming on. I found Mr. Hartshorn in high spirits. Everything was coming along splendidly, no need worrying about it. Why, Fiancée was a wonder, a wonder indeed! Poor man, he never suspected for a moment what troubles his "wonder" had in store for him.

Another Carnation Failure

January came. There was a scramble for the cuttings from all growers everywhere, each one expecting his stock ordered a year before. But alas, there were no cuttings in sight. Letters became more frequent and more urgent; some buyers insisted upon getting their stock immediately without threats; others accompanied their demands with threats to withdraw all their future trade from me. Here was a dilemma that I had to face. A second Nelson, only somewhat more complicated.

I wrote to Mr. Hartshorn, at one time imploringly, at another almost threateningly, enclosing my customers' letters to prove to him how dire was the situation in which I was placed. But all my communications were met with silence. I wired. At last a letter came. With trembling hands I opened the envelope, and found the following:

"Don't tell us of your troubles. We have plenty of our own."

My heart sank. But rising to the occasion, I decided at once to make a trip to Joliet. I arrived early in the morning, and immediately made my way to the establishment of the Chicago Carnation Company. Jim Hartshorn was not as yet in the office. I could see a pile of letters strewn about his desk, which I surmised had considerable to do with the ill-fated Fiancée. I went through the green-houses and learned that the "blame thing" was a mighty poor rooter, and that Fiancée in general was not what it was cracked up to be; that they split "like the devil," and had many other attributes unworthy of a "wonder."

Mr. Hartshorn came in. I took him to task; but poor man, he looked so forlorn and dejected. He began to unfold to me a tale of woe that could not but awaken my sympathy for him. But something had to be done. I had a few especially urgent customers on the list, who wanted their stock, as it were, "dead or alive." I told him about it; and if he could give me enough cuttings to satisfy those insistent ones, I would be grateful to him for the rest of my natural days. Furthermore, I was ready to give him a check for all the stock he could give me, right on the spot. Jimmie accepted my proposition. Yes, he had a batch of cuttings that looked quite promising, a batch of about ten or twelve thousand, ready to be taken up now. And although he promised this stock to another house that kept after him without any let-up, he would let me have them. I was glad I had made the trip.

After glancing through a few of his letters he cast them aside as something unworthy of notice and asked me to accompany him to his club. There we sat for the remainder of the day, alternating drinks with sandwiches, and telling each other tales of woe in our experience with Carnation cuttings.

Jim Hartshorn told of many experiences with Carnation cuttings and of the failure of Fiancée in particular. Among other things Mr. Hartshorn told me that the letters he received daily, taking him to task for the non-fulfilment of his promises, would suffice to break down a Sandow in physique or a Bismarck in iron will power.

"Why," he concluded, "the people are crazy! Can't they understand that Fiancée is a disappointment to me? Why don't they shut up and let up, instead of hounding me to death? Let us have another drink and drown our troubles."

A few other drinks were swallowed before we parted, never to meet again.

For in the Summer of that year Jimmie Hartshorn, the genial Jimmie, so much beloved and so well thought of by all his friends, died from the effect of an operation. Some of his closest friends claim that Fiancée was in a great measure a contributing cause of his illness and untimely demise.

There was a humorous side to the situation. There are very few situations in life, happily, that have not their humorous side. For months thereafter I was constantly receiving letters from my florist friends to the effect that a rival concern that had ordered Fiancée through another agent had received cuttings long ago, and that they were sorry they had not entrusted their orders with the other agent, a lesson well worth remembering. But meanwhile the other "agent" had similar letters regarding his unreliability, that orders entrusted to Skidelsky were delivered, that they were sorry, etc., etc. Furthermore, the grower who received his cuttings congratulated himself on his good fortune, while his seemingly less fortunate brother florist bewailed his ill-luck in not getting his. The following year the tables were turned; the man in possession of Fiancée wished he had never had them, while the other fellow jubilated that he had escaped.

I continued to handle Dorner's Carnations, and am doing so to this very day. My relations with Fred, Jr., and Theodore prior to and since their father's demise, have been of the friendliest nature. They follow in their father's footsteps in sturdy upright business principles, and it is a pleasure at all times to have dealings with them.

The demand for new and better varieties of Carnations became widespread. The most conservative growers, men who thought that the Lizzie McGowan and Scott were good enough for their purpose, began to realize that their patrons wanted flowers of a better grade. The demand had to be met.

Richard Witterstaetter Introduces Evelina, Estelle and Adonis

Richard Witterstaetter of Cincinnati was already known to a wide circle of growers as a careful and painstaking hybridizer. About 1896 he introduced Evelina, a white and most productive variety, one that promised well at the outset. Unfortunately, however, it did not fulfil its promise. A few years later, he introduced Estelle, a scarlet variety, which regardless of its minor faults, behaved splendidly in many sections.

Then came Adonis, one of the most beautiful scarlet varieties up to that date. When E. G. Hill and Robert Craig purchased the stock from Mr. Witterstaetter, the growers, so to speak, "sat up and took notice." It was the consensus of opinion that Adonis would replace the scarlet varieties that were growing at that time. But in this case, too, far from replacing such varieties as Estelle, Crane, and others, Adonis proved a failure. Some contended that the stock, after it left its original place, was overfed and overpropagated. At any rate, the life of Adonis was of short duration.

Cardinal Carnation

About 1904, the late William Murphy of Cincinnati, and the late J. Hartshorn, representing the Chicago Carnation Company, purchased the stock of Cardinal, a scarlet variety, from Richard Witterstaetter. The Cardinal was indeed one of the finest Carnations of that time; and in point of color there is nothing today to equal it. On Mr. Witterstaetter's place it was simply ideal. But Mr. Witterstaetter had a number of other seedlings on hand, and realizing the tremendous responsibility involved in the dissemination of a Carnation he thought it wise to sell the stock. The late Mr. Murphy, who had already embarked in the wholesale commission flower business, found it necessary to dispose of his share in order

to give his own business the undivided attention it required. He offered his share to Mr. Hill and myself, and we purchased it.

Thus three partners, namely, the Chicago Carnation Company, E. G. Hill, and I, undertook the introduction of Cardinal. The sale, though not very extensive, proved nevertheless quite satisfactory and the variety itself was by no means disappointing in many quarters.

Other Introductions by Mr. Witterstaetter

A few years later, Aristocrat was introduced by Mr. Witterstaetter; and this variety Mr. Hartshorn bought outright. He did not live, however, to see its introduction. He died four months prior to its dissemination.

The introduction of Afterglow, by Mr. Witterstaetter himself, was perhaps the most successful of his undertakings. Afterglow did well in many places, and especially so in the New England States.

One of the things I could never understand is the fact that a Carnation behaving remarkably well in its own habitat should act so differently with other growers. Were this a general rule, the thing could be easily understood. While Mr. Fisher's and Mr. Dorner's varieties, with but rare exceptions, did well not only in this country but in many parts of Europe as well, most of Mr. Witterstaetter's varieties seemed to act in an opposite way. With the exception of Estelle and Afterglow, all the other varieties he introduced did not fulfil their promise.

A more honorable, painstaking, careful hybridizer it would be hard to point out. In fact, Mr. Witterstaetter perhaps is too critical for his own benefit. He has several varieties on his place today that would unquestionably prove a great acquisition if he were to put them on the market. Many growers and experts have urged him to do so. But Mr. Witterstaetter refuses. He wants to be absolutely sure, and he carries caution to the uttermost limits. But there is no question in my mind that his new seedlings are well worthy of trial by every grower. I have seen a good many varieties in my day, and I think I may safely say that I have learned to know a good thing when I see it.

The popularity of Richard Witterstaetter himself—"Dick," as he is called by his many friends—is not altogether because of his conscientious efforts as a hybridizer. He is a prince of hosts; he is always ready to put himself out to do someone else a good turn; he has a ready sympathy for the other fellow's joys and sorrows.

He has acted as a judge at the Carnation Society's conventions and has won the admiration of all; for his judgment is always straightforward and impartial. The S. A. F. and O. H. has no more loyal member than Mr. Witterstaetter. Surely he deserves the affection felt for him by his fellow-florists!

William Murphy and the White Carnation Output

The late William Murphy is another man that was held in great esteem by his colleagues of Cincinnati, as well as by all others who came into contact with him. I had known Mr. Murphy for twenty-six years, and from the time I met him until the day of his death, my regard for him never diminished. It is no easy matter for a wholesale commission man to satisfy both the consignor and the retail florist; but Mr. Murphy possessed the happy faculty of reconciling both elements, both finding him always strictly honorable in his dealings. He was a man not easily discouraged, and not to be bull-dozed. He always stood his ground. An incident worth relating is the following:

A few years ago Mr. Murphy actually cornered the white Carnation output in Cincinnati for one day, when there happened to be an oversupply, and made

the retailers pay a reasonable figure, in order to prove to the other commission men that one must not yield to unreasonable demands. He knew that the demand for the Carnations was normal, and perhaps above normal; for there was plenty of funeral work on that day. He also understood the trend of the retail florists, and that is to buy as cheap as they can, especially when there is an abundance of flowers. So when the retail men began to pile in and inquire what white Carnations were worth, he told them two cents was the price.

"Two cents!" they expostulated. "You want too much money. I can get them at So-and-so's for half."

"Do it," replied Mr. Murphy, calmly. "That is your privilege."

Realizing the need of teaching a lesson not only to the retail men but to the other commission men as well, he sent out one of his men to purchase all the white Carnations in sight, from every commission man in the town. Thus fortified, Mr. Murphy was master of the situation that day.

As good luck would have it, he received a telegram from the South, ordering several thousand white Carnations. When the retailers began to pile in, Mr. Murphy's price rose half a cent more. There were expostulations and objections on all sides.

"Why, you asked only two cents this morning!"

"That's right. But now they are worth more. You know flowers fluctuate. Look at the order being packed for the South. Two and a half cents is the price—and that's all there is to it."

The upshot of the thing was that by three o'clock in the afternoon, Mr. Murphy was cleaned out of every white Carnation in the house; and the other commission men unquestionably profited by the lesson.

The death of Mr. Murphy was a source of genuine sorrow to his numerous friends throughout the country. He is succeeded by his son, Ray Murphy, who bids fair to continue the success that his father began.

Introduction of the Lawson Carnation

The introduction of the Lawson Carnation marks a new epoch in the history of Carnations in this country. Outside of the merits of the Carnation itself, and I need not enlarge upon this subject, because it is so well known, the sensational method with which it was introduced was an unmistakable innovation. Peter Fisher, regarded as the latter day Carnation wizard of this country, supplied Galvin & Co., the retail florists of Boston, with his output. Mr. Fisher had produced seedlings before, but those were of local fame, and little known outside of New England territory. The Lawson Carnation sprang into pre-eminence, not only in this country, but throughout the civilized world wherever Carnations are cultivated. And this is how it came about:

Mr. Galvin handled his new seedling. Its color, size, and keeping qualities appealed to him. It was not as yet named. A Carnation of this sort was worthy of a name befitting its excellence. There was Thomas W. Lawson, a man of wide reputation, wealthy, æsthetic in his taste, and a personal friend of Mr. Galvin himself. A capital idea! This seedling should be christened "Mrs. Thomas W. Lawson." It further occurred to Mr. Galvin that in addition to handling the blooms in the retail business, he might as well have the control of the output of rooted cuttings. This idea was still in the mind of Mr. Galvin when the Chicago Carnation Company became aware of the Boston sensation. J. D. Thompson, who was at that time general manager of the Chicago Carnation Company, called a council of the directors; and it was decided to purchase the stock from Mr. Fisher and transfer it to Illinois soil. Down to Boston Mr. Thompson came.

J. D. Thompson soon found Mr. Peter Fisher. A proposition, the nature of which

I cannot exactly tell, was made to Mr. Fisher, and after some consideration Mr. Fisher was about ready to accept it. One fine afternoon, when Mr. Fisher and Mr. Thompson were going to close the deal, a messenger appeared at the hotel with an urgent request that before doing anything in the matter Mr. Fisher see Galvin and Lawson. J. D. Thompson was reluctant to part with Mr. Fisher before the deal was closed, but there was no alternative. That very evening the transaction was consummated, not between Mr. Fisher and the Chicago Carnation Company, but between Mr. Fisher and Galvin. Disappointed and discouraged, Mr. Thompson returned to his home in Illinois without the Mrs. Thomas W. Lawson.

Thirty Thousand Dollars for a Carnation

The plan conceived was a novel one. This seedling was to be put on the market with great fanfare of trumpets. First of all the Associated Press must take it up, as a great and important piece of news, worthy of heralding. Columns upon columns of Lawson matter appeared in the daily papers throughout the country. Was it ever heard or even dreamed of that a financier like Mr. Lawson should pay thirty thousand dollars for a Carnation? It was startling, sensational in the extreme. Not only had the general public been taken in with such a news item, but the florists themselves were sitting up and taking notice. A Carnation that could bring in thirty thousand dollars was worthy to be exhibited. Orders came thick and fast to Mr. Galvin for blooms. Mr. Galvin was in nowise slow to respond to such calls, and any florist wishing blooms could readily have them at five or six dollars per dozen. But price or no price, the progressive florists had to have them in their window, in order to satisfy their curious customers who read all about the thirty thousand dollar Lawson Carnation in the newspapers.

Thus the success of the "Lawson" was instantaneous. When the cuttings were put on the market it was not so much a question of how many could be sold as it was a question of how many could be produced. Every grower, large or small, wanted it. In Boston, Galvin's window was a center of attraction. People kept gazing at the blooms, wondering how in the name of good sense any man could pay thirty thousand dollars for a Carnation. The curiosity aroused was general. Even newsboys and working girls and working men talked about the sensational "Lawson." A rival of Mr. Galvin's, I recall, conceived the idea of playing a trick. Why let Mr. Galvin have all the glory and all the benefit? Couldn't he just as well fool the public, without doing any especial harm? There was the "Francis Joost," a beautiful pink Carnation that could well deceive the uninitiated. So one fine day there appeared a beautiful vase of Francis Joost in the florist's window, with a conspicuous card, "Mrs. Lawton, the great Carnation of today."

His trick, however, did not last long, for Mr. Galvin took the matter to court; and as the deception was so obvious, the court imposed a fine of a hundred dollars, with a warning to abstain from such tricks in the future.

The Lawson indeed proved to be a great Carnation, free, sturdy, with splendid lasting qualities; it was grown everywhere here and in Europe with great success. While Carnations have appeared since that are ahead of it, for a number of years the Lawson was the standard among growers. So well known was it before it was introduced to the general trade, that people would often come into florists' shops and ask for the Lawson Carnation. One day a young man from New York entered Niemeyer's store, in Erie, and asked if he had a Lawson Carnation to sell.

"The Lawson?" interrogated Niemeyer. "Why, we haven't got the Lawson."

"Oh, you're not in it at all," rejoined the young man.

"What color is the Lawson?" asked Mr. Niemeyer.

"It comes in all colors," was the reply.

It may have seemed humorous at the time, but the fact of the matter is that the young man predicted, though unconsciously, what actually has come to pass; for the Lawson has sported into a white, red, variegated, and two or three shades of lighter pinks. The well-known Winsor itself is to this day believed to be a sport of Lawson.

Success of the Lawson Carnation

The introduction of the Lawson, as I said before, marked a new epoch in the history of the American Carnation. The old William Scott was no longer the standard among the growers. It had served its time, and served well. It was now the Lawson that every grower turned his attention to. But other good varieties were in sight. The advent of Enchantress was hailed with especial pleasure, for its delicate color and size of bloom marked it distinctly from any variety that had ever appeared.

Peter Fisher's Enchantress, Beacon and Benora

About a year or two prior to the introduction of Enchantress, J. D. Thompson had severed his connection with the Chicago Carnation Company and had embarked in business for himself under the name of The J. D. Thompson Carnation Company. It was Mr. Thompson's good luck to purchase the entire stock of Enchantress from Peter Fisher, and a mighty profitable deal it proved to him, and to put it on the market.

Peter Fisher, as I have already said of him, has become the latter day Carnation wizard. His introduction of these two splendid varieties has made him famous among Carnation growers everywhere. In fact the names of Dorner and Fisher conjured up in the minds of the Carnation growers, as they do to this very day, meritorious varieties well worth trying. Peter Fisher, as everybody knows him, is a man who boasts but little of his achievements. He lets his own work speak for itself. Nor is he a man who has ever evinced any signs of enthusiasm in his manner. He is cold in his attitude, rather reserved, though in many ways outspoken, yet at the same time a man whose honesty of purpose and absolute integrity in business transactions are not to be questioned for a moment. During one of the Carnation shows in Boston, a number of growers went out to his place at Ellis to view Beacon, at that time not yet on the market. Mr. Fisher took us through the place, and to the surprise of everybody, rather than expand upon its merits, he began to point out the faults of the variety. It was an orange red, inclined to fade in the hot weather; its color was by no means ideal; but, he concluded, it was a producer, a variety that would yield the blooms and bring money to the grower. Beacon has long since verified all of Mr. Fisher's claims about it. Beacon has held out longer than any red Carnation, maintaining its reputation to this very day.

Several years after the advent of Beacon, Mr. Fisher introduced the Benora, a splendid variegated variety, well known to every grower. Among the growers who went out to view it, there was a prominent man who was now and then inclined to resort to a "bracer" by way of a drink. Since Mr. Fisher never volunteered to "set 'em up"—Mr. Fisher is a teetotaler—the grower aforementioned asked him if he knew of a place in the neighborhood where cocktails or highballs were to be had.

"If you are thirsty, Mr. X———," rejoined Mr. Fisher, "we can readily accommodate you. Here is the dipper and there is the pump. Drink all you can hold—and it will do you more good than a cocktail."

The pump, if I remember rightly, was not tapped at that moment.

Carnation Boston Market

On one occasion I happened to be in Utica, N. Y., at a florists' meeting. A small Carnation show was in progress at the club room. Among the Carnations shown was the Boston Market, which Mr. Fisher at the request of the club had sent in. There were a number of the growers favorably impressed with the variety, and ready to place orders. A general order amounting to about twenty-five hundred was made up, and since I was there it was decided to let me have the order. As my acquaintance with Mr. Fisher was very slight at the time, I mailed him that order rather hesitatingly. (Boston Market antedates Beacon, which later really commenced my business relations with Mr. Fisher.) I wrote him at the same time to be sure to send the goods, and that if he saw fit to allow me a commission on the sale, well and good, else to send it anyway, and I would forego my commission. Since I undertook to fill the order, I felt that I was bound to do so. In the course of a week or so, I received a curt letter from Mr. Fisher, to the effect that the order had been sent, and that he was quite surprised to receive it through me, since he never authorized me to take orders for him. Not a word was mentioned about the commission.

When I met him a few months later, I referred to the subject (not to the commission end of it, though.)

"You did not receive my first letter, did you?" he asked.

"I received your letter, yes," I answered.

"I know," he said, "but not the first one. Because the first one I tore up!"

I imagined at the time that the first letter, which he tore up, must have been, to put it mildly, rather pointed.

When Beacon came on the market I was sure there would be great demand for it, and I was determined to be on the ground floor with the variety. So one day I took a train from Boston for Ellis, Mass. Mr. Fisher already knew who I was, so any formal introductions were unnecessary. I stated the object of my call. Yes, he could see no reason why he couldn't sell me any Beacon if I paid him the scheduled prices, governed by quantity, of course. I knew I could use twenty thousand, and so without hesitation I gave him my order for that quantity.

I took my departure. On the following morning I received a letter at my Boston Hotel, which ran as follows:

"I have booked your order for twenty thousand Beacon, for January delivery, terms cash in advance."

Since my faith in Mr. Fisher himself, no less than his variety, was unshaken, the "cash in advance" terms proved no deterrent to the transaction. In due course of time Mr. Fisher had his checks in advance, and my customers had their excellent rooted cuttings.

I have dealt with Mr. Fisher time and again since, our business transactions amounting to thousands of dollars. But never has Mr. Fisher asked me for cash in advance since that time. My confidence in him became reciprocal; our business relations have been pleasant, and my visits to Ellis are always one of the agreeable features in my trips through New England, personally as well as from the business standpoint. Mr. Fisher is today one of my most esteemed friends among the trade.

More About Enchantress

But let us return to Enchantress. No sooner had Mr. Thompson announced the consummation of his deal with Mr. Fisher than orders began to come to him thick and fast from every section of the country. I undertook the task of helping disseminate it, as many other dealers did; and it was a profitable task indeed.

No order I took among my customers was complete unless it contained Enchantress cuttings. True, the monetary consideration played a large part; but outside of that, I felt enthusiastic about the Enchantress myself. Consciously or unconsciously, I had arrived at the conclusion that here was a factor that would go a good way toward the uplift of floriculture in our country. I felt that I was one of the men exerting themselves toward that uplift. Business has other compensations than the profits that one counts in money; there is a genuine satisfaction in doing part of the constructive work in the growth of an industry. The Enchantress variety, with but very rare exceptions, has proved a profitable investment to every grower everywhere. The few exceptions at the time were among the smaller growers who never grew any varieties profitably. In the long run, such failures did not count.

White Sports

Like the Lawson, the Enchantress soon began to show its sporting proclivities. A few years after its introduction, there appeared several white sports in various sections of the country. F. R. Pierson, of Tarrytown, N. Y., had one of a creamy shade. Mr. Benson, of Denver, Col., had one of a pure white. So did Thomas Browne, of Greenfield, Mich., and the late A. C. Canfield, of Springfield, Ill. White Enchantress, like the original variety, was greatly in demand the first year, and for a few years thereafter; so much so that the demand was far in excess of the supply.

Rose Pink Enchantress

About 1904 another sport of the Enchantress appeared. It was a beautiful shade of pink; and it was I who had the privilege of christening it Rose Pink Enchantress, a name by which it became known to the trade. The Rose Pink Enchantress first made its appearance upon B. Schroeter's place in Detroit, Mich. Mr. Schroeter spoke to me about it a year or two prior to its introduction. He was not quite sure whether or not he would put it on the market at all, but if he decided to disseminate it he would give me a chance at it. One day in December, 1904, I received a letter in Philadelphia from Mr. Schroeter to the effect that he had decided to put Rose Pink Enchantress on the market, that his stock was rather limited, and that if I intended to handle it to advise him immediately, as another house was after it.

Certainly I wasn't going to let any such opportunity slip through my fingers. Acting on my first impulse, I wrote an advertisement for the trade papers, setting forth to the best of my ability the various good points about the variety, as well as the advantages of growing an Enchantress of a much deeper color than the original. Then a thought flashed through my mind which made me change my first intention. A sport of Enchantress in a limited quantity should sell readily without especial advertising. In fact, I calculated, it would be really a question whether Mr. Schroeter could supply enough cuttings to meet the demand. So instead of advertising it broadcast, I decided to write a few letters to growers who I knew would be interested, in view of the great success they had made with the original Enchantress. I enlisted the services of my daughter in making copies of the letter that I concocted. She had aspirations at the time toward a college education; and I told her half jestingly that Rose Pink Enchantress was going to send her to college. It did.

I sent a number of these letters out, and the answers came promptly. To be sure, they wanted it. One grower, Thomas Joy of Nashville, wrote me to put him down for one thousand, and that should I come across any good sports of Enchantress to be sure to bear him in mind.

"What a pity," I thought later, "that Mr. Schroeter has not worked up a stock tenfold what he has to offer! We could have sold every cutting."

About the beginning of March, orders came in so thick and fast that we were at our wits' end to fill them. Numerous checks and post-office money orders had to be returned. To the credit of Mr. Schroeter be it said, he grew the stock most carefully; for not only did he have no complaints, but he had many complimentary letters, a thing so encouraging to every Carnation disseminator.

B. Schroeter, the Grand Old Man of Detroit

Mr. B. Schroeter, whom I have known since my first visit to Detroit during the Fall of 1889, may be called the "grand old man" of Detroit. He is today seventy-six years of age, but years do not seem to count with him. His activity in his own business and his keen interest in things in general seem to have lightened the burden of old age, in his case. Six years ago, upon his seventieth birthday, the Detroit florists in a body tendered him a banquet, and presented him with a suitable token of their esteem and admiration. This incident goes to prove in what esteem Mr. Schroeter is held by his brother florists in Detroit. I have yet to meet a man who would speak of Mr. Schroeter in any but the highest terms; and it is no surprise that it should be so. My own experience with him has been of the friendliest nature; and it is always a source of great pleasure to me to call upon "the grand old man" and talk to him on all sorts of topics. For Mr. Schroeter is a well-posted man, and a voracious reader of the German classics, such as Goethe and Schiller, some of whose masterpieces he almost knows by heart. It is also an inspiration to a younger man to hear him plan things for the future. Here is a man of seventy-six living as if he had his whole life before him. You never hear him refer to the past as "the good old days." On the contrary, his general attitude is that of Robert Browning—

"Grow old along with me—
The best is yet to be."

Rose Pink Enchantress proved a profitable undertaking, not only the year of its dissemination but the second year as well.

My enthusiasm for the Carnation end of my business kept on growing in proportion with my faith in the future of floriculture in general. Among my friends I became known as a Carnation specialist, and although I never grew a Carnation in my life, many a grower often extended me a hearty welcome because he thought I could give him pointers that might be of value to him. I remember one case when a dispute arose between two rival disseminators as to the merits of two respective seedlings, both red. Along with the few prominent growers who were invited by one of these disputants to be his guests over Sunday, and see his seedling for themselves, I was asked to come. My reputation extended even beyond our own borders, for I often had letters of inquiry and orders from Canada and England. Some of the most conservative growers in our own country would often consult me before investing in a variety. I was proud of this fact, because it proved to me that my sincerity of intention was not questioned and that I inspired these men with faith in my judgment. Unfortunately my judgment was not always correct; but is there a man in any line of endeavor who is absolutely infallible? If I have erred at times in my judgments, I have never wilfully or with malice aforethought misrepresented any article. It is one of the most valued compliments I have ever received, that a certain grower remarked to my son: "There's one thing sure—if your father recommends a Carnation, I feel pretty safe in assuming it's a good thing. And if by any chance it isn't, I know he's been fooled about it himself."

I think most of my friends in the trade are equally sure that if a thing doesn't

turn out all I predict for it, it is as much of a disappointment and surprise to me as it is to them. This confidence which I think they have in my honesty of purpose is one of the great compensations which I feel my business career has had for me.

White Carnation Seedling Fred Burki

I was in quest of other good things, spurred on anew by the success of Rose Pink Enchantress. John Murchie, of Sharon, Pa., had a white Carnation seedling, which he named Fred Burki. That seedling looked good and promising. Growers in the immediate vicinity thought a great deal of it, more so in fact than did Mr. Murchie himself, and were ready to place large orders. Mr. Murchie thought I was the man to put it on the market, and so did I.

At the Detroit Carnation Show it was given a certificate of merit. It was a clear road now toward launching another winner. I got ready for the occasion, and in due time I introduced it. Unfortunately, the Fred Burki, unlike the man after whom it was named, proved anything but popular. It seemed to be one of those varieties that while behaving admirably at the introducer's place manifest all sorts of unsuspected caprices when taken away from its first habitat. Fred Burki Carnation did not last very long, and like many another variety of its kind in the past it died a natural death, and was soon forgotten.

William Murphy's Carnation Delhi

Another variety which I undertook to introduce, conjointly with its hybridizer, the late William Murphy, of Cincinnati, was the red Carnation Delhi. I had often seen it during my visits to Cincinnati, and while it never impressed me as a great improvement on existing varieties, I nonetheless saw some merit in it. Its productiveness was one of its chief meritorious characteristics. It came into full crop for Christmas, and continued blooming throughout the season and late into the Spring and Summer, never losing its color. I thought, as did many growers in Cincinnati (among whom was the late Max Rudolph, in whose judgment I placed reliance), that there was room for Delhi. As the case proved in the end, quite a number of growers were delighted with its habit. In the South especially, it did well, and there are some who still consider it the best all around red Carnation for their purposes.

The Carnation Enthusiast, C. W. Ward

C. W. Ward, of Queens, L. I., is another Carnation enthusiast. He wrote a book, "The American Carnation and How to Grow It," tracing the evolution of the "Divine Flower" from its humble origin to its present stage of perfection. He did much in a practical way for the improvement of the Carnation. He introduced several varieties years ago, such as Maceo, Gomez, Harry Fenn, and a white one whose name I do not recall at this moment, and in later years Mrs. C. W. Ward, Alma Ward, and Matchless. These varieties were grown successfully in various parts of the country, and Mr. Ward became known as a successful Carnation hybridizer. When the Carnation convention met at Washington in 1908, he had a particularly attractive white seedling. If I remember rightly, it was Alma Struss, although I am not sure. Its size, substance, and perfect form attracted the attention of every grower present.

The Carnation convention of Washington was not so successful in certain ways as it might have been, though in others it proved to be a memorable one to every grower that attended. William Gude thought it would be interesting for the delegates to meet the strenuous Theodore Roosevelt, then still in the White House. The suggestion of course was hailed without a voice of dissent. So on

the second day we departed in a body for the historic White House. A magnificent vase of Mr. Ward's new white seedling was already there. We were ushered into one of the large reception rooms, and arranged ourselves in a semicircle. It was the intention of Mr. Ward to present these flowers to Mr. Roosevelt, and to tell him something of the history of the American Carnation.

Mr. Roosevelt soon appeared. If anybody had any intention of addressing him, he soon learned that it was "no go." Mr. Roosevelt did all the talking. I cannot recall what he said, for my attention was riveted upon the man himself. I remember, however, that he turned to Master Herr, aged seven, who accompanied his father, with the words: "I am pleased to see so young a delegate among you!"

Then came our turn to shake hands. We passed along in line, each receiving a hearty handshake. I remember having formulated in my mind a suitable little speech, but when my turn came the speech vanished into thin air.

William Craig, who preceded me, put a Carnation into Mr. Roosevelt's buttonhole, remarking: "Mr. President, they didn't treat you right! They should have thought of putting a Carnation in your buttonhole. Permit me to do it."

Mr. Roosevelt smiled, and thanked him for the courtesy, saying: "Yes, that was unpardonable, indeed!"

When Peter Fisher approached him, I noticed that he lingered for a few moments, talking in his usual earnest manner to the President. I was interested in what he might have told him, and later asked Mr. Fisher what the conversation was about.

"Nothing much," said Mr. Fisher, "except that I told him how much I admired his backbone, whether or not I agreed with all his policies—that when I get home I'll try to cultivate some of that backbone myself."

A year prior to the Carnation convention, namely, in 1907, the Rose Society met in Washington. On that occasion, too, the members of the society met "the strenuous one" in a body. A magnificent vase of the Richmond Roses was presented to him and Mr. Robert Craig, the "silver-tongued orator," was chosen to make the presentation speech. Mr. Craig, as might have been expected, was equal to the occasion. He told Mr. Roosevelt briefly the history of the American Rose, and the progress it had made within the last few years.

"Up to within a few years ago," he said, in substance, "we depended upon England, Ireland, France, and other countries for our Roses. But the time has come when the American Rose grower will not only supply the needs of his own country, but will send his Roses abroad. Here, Mr. President (pointing to the vase) is the Richmond Rose, a magnificent specimen produced by a man of Richmond, Ind."

Mr. Craig got no further.

"Is there anybody here from Richmond, Ind.?" interrupted the President.

Mr. E. G. Hill stepped forward.

"Do you know Mr. Folk, of Richmond?" asked Mr. Roosevelt.

"I know him very well indeed," replied Mr. Hill. "He is a friend of mine, and almost a next-door neighbor."

Mr. Roosevelt then dropped the subject, and spoke to the delegates of things American in general. And Mr. Craig was given no opportunity to finish his speech.

It's a bad thing for anybody else to want the floor when Mr. Roosevelt is around!

PART III.

HOLDING TO THE STRAIGHT LINE—FRIENDSHIPS AND EVENTS

My travels continued season after season and year after year. And rather than growing tired of my hard work, I came to take more and more pleasure in it. I made many friends everywhere. There is hardly a town that I visit where there are not some men in the trade whom I look forward to seeing with a great deal of pleasure—men who have come to mean more to me than mere business acquaintances. I can speak very warmly of the generous-heartedness of the florists, many of whom have opened their homes to me in friendship and hospitality. This very element of friendship has been a great stimulant to me in carrying on my hard work—work which, to use the expression of a friend of mine, “would break down an ox.”

Answering Business Letters by Pen

One of my competitors used to remark that I “had an easy task of it,” no financial responsibility, and no overhead expenses. I was carrying on a business, he said, with my office “practically under my hat.” My hat, large though it was—and I generally wear a $7\frac{1}{4}$ —was not large enough to carry my office. But I had my office in my pockets, practically in every pocket of my clothes. There were letters galore, which had to be answered. These letters would reach me at whatever point I happened to be, by way of Philadelphia. My wife attended to this end. After a hard day's work with the trade, it was a matter of every night occurrence to take up the work of conducting my “office.” Out of the pockets would come the letters. I answered them by pen. All required immediate attention. Some were reassuring in their spirit; others anything but reassuring. Here was a case of a man receiving a batch of cuttings in frozen condition. Of course, I was to blame for it. The idea of sending him frozen cuttings for his good money! Others again found fault with Fuchsias that were packed in a manner unbecoming to an experienced packer; the plants thrown about the box in every way, and the stock practically ruined. Still others would take me to task about stock that should have been received two weeks before, and which had not as yet arrived, would say that unless such stock were forwarded at once I should cancel the order, and “we'll call it quits.” It seems to be a quality of human nature to jump at conclusions, and to readily affix blame, regardless of circumstances or conditions responsible for the adverse turn of affairs.

One man, I recall (a man who, by the way, is one of my staunchest friends today,) took me to task for disappointing him about four hundred Carnation cuttings which he was to receive about the middle of January, and which reached him by the 10th of February. I cannot exactly recall the words of his letter, but the gist of it was, that it served him right; he might have known that I was not the man to entrust an order of Carnation cuttings to, that had he ordered them direct from the grower he was sure he would have received them by return of mail. In this particular case, I made an exception from my general rule, which was to appease a customer. I wrote him a much stronger letter than I thought I was capable of, giving him a piece of my mind and assuring him that I could well get along without his trade, and that in the future he should send all his orders to whomever he saw fit.

And while on this point, it may not be amiss to say a few words about some men in the trade, luckily in the minority, who deem it a wise business policy to

find fault, to exact allowances, and often to demand duplicate shipments. Such men are classed as "chronic kickers," and on account of them business becomes an irksome task, to say nothing of its being unprofitable. If a few cuttings in a lot should happen to be below the standard of excellence, the whole shipment, according to their letters, is worthless. They will instruct you to make a shipment by freight, and when the shipment reaches them in frozen condition they hold you accountable for it. The fact that it might be the fault of the railroad company, and that they might look for redress in that direction, never occurs to them. The shipper must bear the brunt of it all.

If a shipment reaches them a few weeks later than the time specified, their wrath knows no bounds. They will write you most scathing letters, charging you with neglect of your duty, with a lack of interest in your own business, and what not.

Cases of "Chronic Kickers"

I called on a man a few years ago, with whom I was on very friendly terms. It happened to be a cold Winter day; a snow blizzard was raging. I entered his place about twelve noon, glad to find some protection from the elements, and to thaw out. To my great surprise, the man came at me in this manner:

"I haven't got much time to talk business. I'm going to lunch. And besides, I don't want anything."

I could scarcely believe my ears. I knew that there was something up, and I wanted to know what was the cause of the trouble. After collecting myself, I replied as gently as I could that I had not come to interfere with his lunch, nor was it my policy to urge a man about business when he had none to give; that I hoped he had no objection to my hugging his stove, until I limbered up a bit.

"And anyway," I concluded, "you seem to have it in for me, for some reason; and it is only fair you should tell me what it is all about."

"Never mind," he said, "we'll not talk about it."

But I persisted, and would not let him go to his lunch until he told me wherein I had been at fault. He finally told me that I had disappointed him about *Begonia Cincinnati*; that he expected the plants in June, and received them in August, and that they were not at all satisfactory at that; that he was through with me forevermore.

"Mr. X———," I said, "in so far as your future business is concerned, you have the privilege of placing it where you please. I shall not urge you about it. But let me reason out the matter with you, and put you in the right light. Do you suppose for a moment that it pays me to travel, to incur traveling expenses, to do hard work, with a view to disappointing my customers? Don't you think that I'm the loser when things do not turn out as I expected? Do you think that I am to blame if the season was unfavorable for *Begonias*, or if the grower on whom I depended so much, and with whom I placed an order a year in advance, for some reason neglected his plants, and thereby impaired the value of his stock? Don't you think that it would have paid me far better if you had received your plants on time and were now in a happier frame of mind than you seem to be? And how would you like it if a customer of your own, one whom you have tried to serve well season after season, had suddenly withdrawn his trade because through no fault of your own you happened to disappoint him about a porch box, a vase in the cemetery, or a bunch of American Beauty Roses which you expected from Chicago, and which failed to reach you in time to deliver to your customer? Don't you think, yourself, that such treatment would be unfair to you?"

But Mr. X——— was adamant, and no reasoning could conquer his resentment. I have ceased calling upon him.

Another instance was of recent occurrence. In February, 1916, I called on a man in a town in the Middle West about seven in the evening. (The man, by the way, died a few weeks after.) I happened to be friendly also with this man, having known him since his boyhood days, when he worked for another florist in that city. To my great amazement, he met me in a manner quite unlike that of any previous meeting. He wanted to know the nature of my business, telling me right there and then that he had no time to waste nor any orders to give. I felt that he had a grudge, but I would not be dismissed in this manner. I insisted upon knowing what was the trouble. His "never mind" did not satisfy me at all. He finally told me that a hundred four-inch Boston ferns which I had sent him a few months before, and for which he paid, were far from satisfactory; that he had expected better plants for the money, and was quite disappointed about the inferior quality of the plants.

"Then, why didn't you write me?" I asked him. "I would have instructed you to return the plants, and would cheerfully have paid the express charges."

"They are paid for now," he replied, "and there's no use talking about it."

But I was not satisfied at all. I felt the humiliation of the position he was placing me in, and I insisted upon extricating myself from it at no matter what cost. That night, on my return to the hotel, I made out a check for ten dollars, and mailed it to him, accompanying it with the following letter:

"Dear Sir: Enclosed please find my check for ten dollars, in payment for the hundred Boston ferns which you purchased of me, and which proved unsatisfactory to you. If you think that you are entitled also to the express charges on that lot, please advise me, and I will mail you an additional check to cover same by return of mail. I have traveled for the past twenty-eight years, carrying on my business on a fair and square basis. It is my intention to continue doing so for the rest of my business life. I want no man to be under the impression that I took unfair advantage of him.

Very respectfully yours,

S. S. SKIDELSKY."

He acknowledged my letter promptly, thanking me profusely for the check, apologizing for his manner of treating me, and promising me all sorts of business in the future.

There are, of course, cases where a man is perfectly justified in making claims. I do not mean to convey the idea that the man finding fault with stock is always in the wrong. Not at all. But things could be easily adjusted to the satisfaction of all parties concerned, without resorting to scathing letters and antagonistic methods in general. Misunderstandings often arise without valid cause. A dispassionate letter of explanation, I am sure, would be met by any house in the right spirit, and a fair adjustment would follow.

Laboring "Seven Days a Week"

I used to write late into the night, often to the "wee, sma' hours." If my eyes felt heavy and dim, there was a cup of strong coffee and a cigar to be had at any hour of the night around the corner in a lunch-room. I often resorted to these stimulants, and would then go on with my work, until my very hand gave out. I remember one morning I dropped on my bed exhausted, intending to rest for a few minutes, in order to continue my work; but instead, I fell fast asleep, and rose at six-thirty with my clothes on, ready to take up another day's toil.

I never indulged in theater-going or pleasure of any sort. If a customer invited me to spend a Sunday with him, I always found an excuse, in those earlier days, to decline. There was always work that brooked no delay. One time, I remember, Mr. Herman Hart of Cleveland invited Mr. Harry Bunyard and

myself to spend an evening with him. (Mr. Herman Hart has always been one of my best friends.) Having declined his invitation on many another occasion, I could not possibly do so this time. I accepted the invitation, and while we were enjoying ourselves at his hospitable board, I felt that I was neglecting my duty, that an accumulation of letters awaited me which it would take every minute at my command to dispose of, before the next batch arrived. I sacrificed that evening, rather than took pleasure in it, under the circumstances.

On Sundays came the wind-up of the accumulated work that had gotten ahead of me during the week. And it was no unusual thing for me to put in the entire Sunday from eight in the morning until midnight in my "office." Verily, I "had an easy task of it," with "no financial responsibility, and no overhead expenses"!

Selling a Greenhouse Establishment

In an earlier place, I mentioned that I helped once to sell a greenhouse. It was the first and only greenhouse I ever had any hand in selling. The late E. Hippard of Youngstown, Ohio, had approached me time and again with a request that I help him sell his place. While I thought little of it at the time—that is, of the chance there was of my disposing of his place—a chance presented itself in course of time. Mr. John Walker was then with the Robert Craig Company in capacity of foreman. While having an excellent position, Mr. Walker, nevertheless, entertained the idea of starting a place for himself. It did not matter in which locality or section of the country, so long as the place could be purchased at a reasonable price, and the town had future prospects. One evening, while talking to Mr. Walker about the line of palms I handled for the Robert Craig Company, our conversation turned on other subjects. I told Mr. Walker about the growth and remarkable development of the Middle West, and particularly of the State of Ohio, saying that Ohio, or especially the Shenango Valley in Ohio, would be my favorite if I thought of making a change of residence, never suspecting that I was talking to a man who contemplated such a change. He became interested in what I was telling him, and asked me, if I should happen to come across a greenhouse plant suitable for his purpose, to bear him in mind. E. Hippard's place was still fresh in my memory, and I mentioned it to Mr. Walker. He wanted to know details, and asked me to communicate with Mr. Hippard. A few days later I received a letter from Mr. Hippard, giving full details of his place, and telling me that were it not for the other interests he had in town (the manufacture of ventilating machines, steam-traps, and other greenhouse devices), he would never have thought of selling the greenhouses. I showed Mr. Hippard's letter to Mr. Walker, and he expressed his willingness to see the place for himself.

In June, 1900, we arranged a meeting at Youngstown, and the deal was consummated. In August of that same year, Mr. Walker settled his affairs in Philadelphia, and betook himself and his family to Youngstown, Ohio.

Youngstown at that time was a town of about forty thousand. Today it has more than doubled itself. And John Walker grew up with the town. Mr. Walker is a mixer, and his popularity among all elements in Youngstown is second to that of no man. The most exclusive society folk, as well as the plainest of people, find in Mr. Walker a man worthy of respect and confidence. Mr. Walker has prospered. A few years ago he purchased a farm and built a new range of houses, with a view to growing cut flowers. This new place he sold a few years later to Mr. Cade, retaining the old range which he originally purchased from Mr. Hippard, and where ferns and miscellaneous bedding stock in great quantities are successfully grown for his wholesale and retail trade.

It was at Mr. Hippard's suggestion that I ventured into a new line—the handling of ventilating machines—although I must confess that I never succeeded in

that direction. A man handling ventilating machines must possess some technical knowledge; must know something about the construction of the machine, its workings, etc. He must be ready to suggest points advantageous to the grower contemplating a change in or introduction of ventilating apparatus. The same holds true about steam-traps and boilers. Unless a man is well posted and knows fully what he is talking about, mere skill in salesmanship will avail him nothing. I made an attempt in this direction, trying to study up things, to read all I could upon the subject, including pamphlets issued by Mr. Hippard and his competitors, and the trade advertisements of all of them; but the actual technical knowledge was lacking.

J. D. Carmody of Evansville "Which is Near Posey County"

The advertisements of one of our competitors attracted my especial attention. It was that of J. D. Carmody of Evansville, Ind., "which is near Posey County." His advertisements were remarkably unique, and models of their kind; so much so, indeed, that the little magazine "Printers' Ink," a journal devoted exclusively to advertising matter, quoted some of them as gems in an advertising line. My older friends in the business doubtless recall his inimitable style of diction and spelling. "Mr. Editor," he would begin, "I take me pen in me hand to let you know that I have the best bilers on erth, that if me friends will buy one of me bilers, they will use one ton of coal, and if they buy two of me bilers, they will use two tons of coal, and if they buy three of me bilers, they will have coal to sell."

His "picture" would invariably accompany his ads. One picture in particular remains in my memory. It was that of a young boy dressed in a pair of knee breeches, held up by one home-made suspender, and with a conspicuous patch on the seat. Underneath was the inscription: "This is me picture. A back view of a stern reality." His advertisements were concluded with: "Me name is J. D. Carmody, and I live in Evansville, Ind., which is near Posey County." Another advertisement pictured him riding astride a bullock. This one bore the label: "A Posey County stud—on my way home from the Carnation Association."

At the banquet given by the Indianapolis florists during the convention where the ill-fated "Nelson" was exhibited, it devolved upon Mr. Carmody to be toastmaster of the evening. His wit was the life of the occasion. Every speaker on the program was introduced in some unique manner. Mr. Carmody took occasion to tell his numerous friends at the festal board of his own experiences in the nether regions. In his most solemn manner, with never a smile to indicate that he had any intention of being funny, he told us how his Satanic Majesty met and conversed with him.

"Who are you?" asked his Satanic Majesty.

"Don't you know me?" replied Mr. Carmody. "I'm J. D. Carmody, from Evansville, Ind., which is near Posey County."

"Oh, to be sure. I've heard about you! You're the man who ventilated our place, with your hothouse contraptions. Why, I'm sure all the imps and little devils will be glad to see you and welcome you."

His reference to a few other gentlemen whom his Satanic Majesty welcomed as favored guests created quite an uproar in his audience.

At another flower show, where Mr. Fairbanks, Vice-President of the United States, made a few remarks, Mr. Carmody was chosen to respond. And how well he responded! He told his audience that he was proud to trace his ancestry away back to an honorable line of gardeners. Why, the first progenitor himself, Mr. Adam, was a gardener, acquiring his experience in the Garden of Eden.

On that same evening, a circle of friends gathered at a café to partake of the hospitality provided by the generous florists of Indianapolis. Mr. Carmody was the informal toastmaster of the occasion, and he called upon everybody present

to respond to an improvised toast. When the turn came to me, I knew I was up against it, for Mr. Carmody imposed no less a penalty upon me than to tell them the story—or to put it in his own words:

"We will call upon Brother Skidelsky and let him tell us how he skedaddled from Russia."

To J. A. Peterson of Cincinnati he referred in the following manner: "In looking around the room for old Peter, I fail to see his benevolent face. In the absence of him, we will call on Peterson (Peter's son)."

John Evans, the well-known ventilating man of Richmond, Ind., was called upon to rise and explain "why his machine aint as good as mine."

That was a memorable evening, and will always be remembered by me as one of the pleasantest in my recollection.

One of my best friends in the trade, a man whom I always greatly respected, and whose memory I shall ever cherish, was Edwin Lonsdale of Philadelphia. The name of Mr. Lonsdale is coupled in the mind of the average grower of the older generation with some of the best Crotons, Begonias, and other plants that we have in commerce today. Mr. Lonsdale was first of all a horticulturist, a man who spared neither time, effort, nor expense to bring forth the best that he thought would benefit the world of horticulture. Many a man in his place might have turned the popularity he enjoyed and the knowledge he possessed to his own pecuniary advantage. But Edwin Lonsdale was a man cast in a different mold. To him money held forth little allurements. His disinterestedness, or lack of financial acumen constituted one of his major faults. If he succeeded in introducing a novelty (and a generation ago he introduced several Carnation seedlings, of which "Helen Keller" is the best remembered) the very fact that the novelty introduced was of benefit to the trade was to him ample compensation for his labors.

Years before I was in the business myself, he was associated with John Burton, his brother-in-law, a very successful and prominent grower of Philadelphia. When they separated, Mr. Lonsdale continued the business on his own account, plunging into novelties, some of which paid and some of which did not. But money, as I said, had little charm for Mr. Lonsdale. He was experimenting, delving, as it were, into the realms of the unknown in plants, with all the zeal and impersonality of the true scientist.

I met Mr. Lonsdale about 1897, and my few business connections with him were of the kind to endear him to me until the day of his death. It was in the Summer of 1897 that Mr. Lonsdale was overtaken by a calamity of the most horrible nature. Two of his daughters, young girls of culture and fine attainments, were drowned in the angry surf of Atlantic City. Mr. Lonsdale at the time had the heartfelt sympathy, not only of his friends in the trade, but of the public at large as well. That kind of tragedy tears at the heart-strings of all mankind.

Notwithstanding the calamity that had fallen upon him, Mr. Lonsdale bore up heroically. His amiable disposition and optimistic nature, qualities to be envied by every man, enabled him to live on and look forward to the future. At the same time, however, his enthusiasm for his business seemed to wane. Later on, he accepted a position with the Girard College, of Philadelphia, as the chief landscape gardener. Many an out-of-town florist had the pleasure of being entertained by Mr. Lonsdale on the magnificent grounds that under his able management always presented a sight worthy of the gods.

Some years later, another misfortune overtook him. The only child left him, a young girl of about twenty, succumbed to the ravages of typhoid fever. Poor Mr. Lonsdale! His ever-smiling face never betrayed his inner pain.

The history of his departure for California, as manager for one of the Burpee Seed farms, is still fresh in the memory of all his friends. The last banquet tendered to him, at Dooner's Hotel in Philadelphia, was an occasion long to be re-

membered by those who were present. The "Duke of York," as some were wont to call him, was in his best mood. Many of his out-of-town friends were there to grace the occasion. At the close of the banquet I could not help perceiving the sad undercurrent that belied the gayety of the party. To me it seemed that everyone of Mr. Lonsdale's friends fully realized that this was the last time we would ever see Mr. Lonsdale among us.

On the day following, he paid a visit to the late William K. Harris, one of his closest friends, to bid him good-bye. Mr. Harris was then confined to his sickbed, with an illness that was to prove fatal to him. It was the final parting of two old friends. Mr. Lonsdale never returned to Philadelphia alive.

In the Summer of 1915, his remains were brought home to Philadelphia from his far Western home, to find their last resting-place in one of the cemeteries of the Quaker City which he loved so well.

George Fancourt, the Humorist

Another of my old friends, whom I held in high esteem, was George Fancourt, of Wilkes-Barre, Pa. Mr. Fancourt was a personality much out of the commonplace. Aside from being a grower of great ability, he also possessed the rare gift of being a splendid conversationalist, and a thorough Shakespearian scholar. The Bard of Avon never had a warmer admirer than Mr. Fancourt. He would quote him by the yard, and not only quote him, but recite his lines with a vim, ardor, and understanding that would do credit to a professional. Mr. Fancourt was an Englishman, and, despite the general notion that Englishmen are lacking in sense of humor, he was a humorist of an unusually high order. To him it was a matter of ordinary occurrence to speak of every-day things in life in a humorous vein, and with a charm that was simply bewitching.

On one occasion (it happened to be a cold wintry night) Mr. Fancourt invited me into a neighboring café to partake of a social drink. As we stood in front of the bar I noticed that he squinted at a chromo on the wall before us. I do not recall the subject in detail, but suffice it to say, it was nothing but an ordinary chromo such as brewers provide in abundance to adorn the walls of their patrons. There were two or three other men standing at the bar, and to all of us Mr. Fancourt appealed for criticism as to the merit of the "magnificent masterpiece."

"Why," he ejaculated in droll tone, never cracking a smile, "look at that masterpiece! Look at the wonderful colors and tints, the conception of the artist, his marvelous technique, his mentality, his intuition, his power! Look at that portrayal of a barrel, and the man standing beside it. What a countenance of deep intelligence! Look at the eyes, the eyebrows, the mustache—what a wonderful, intellectual mustache it is! Doesn't he look to you like a great artist, great scientist, great scholar? I tell you what, gentlemen, it is a masterpiece; and the wonder is that the Metropolitan Art Museum of New York didn't gobble it up."

His seriousness of manner, and his vocabulary of the artist, were humorous in the extreme. Another drink was set up, and then another and another. I finally persuaded Mr. Fancourt to accompany me to my hotel. There we sat till a late hour in the night, talking (or rather I should say, he was doing the talking and I the listening) about his favorite Bard of Avon.

It was always a source of genuine pleasure to me to call upon Mr. Fancourt, and many an evening I spent in his company, either at his own house, partaking of his warm hospitality, or in my hotel. The last time I saw Mr. Fancourt I never dreamed that I would see him no more. He died about ten or twelve years ago, and his death was the source of deep grief to his numerous friends in his own vicinity, Philadelphia, and New York.

Salesmen

In my earlier days on the road, I had often wondered at the ingenuity and the skill of some salesmen in accomplishing results which, according to their own tales, were nothing short of marvelous. Often we would gather around a stove in a country hotel lobby, and swap experiences. I can recall now how some smart Aleck would draw a word picture showing his capacity for inveigling reluctant customers into giving him big orders. Others, not to be outdone, would tell stories indicating even greater prowess. I used to feel mighty small in comparison with these great captains of salesmanship; and while I never took those stories at their full value, they nevertheless spurred me on to think of means and devices whereby I might improve my own skill in obtaining better results.

Classification of Salesmen

There were all sorts and conditions of men on the road then, as there are now. Some men are reserved in their manner, non-communicative, strictly attentive to their own business, and resentful of any intrusion upon it. You will see them consult railroad time tables, write advance postal cards to their trade, do their work in a neat, methodical manner, and retire for the night when they are through. Sharply in contrast with these are other salesmen who want you to know that they are leaders in their line, that no buyer would ever dare to refuse them a hearing, that they have humbled the biggest of them and gained their point. They will talk about shows and dances and the pretty girls they have met here, there, and everywhere. Their attire is always at the height of fashion—and a little beyond it. They display a little too much fondness for loud-checked suits, and vividly colored neckties in which nestle diamond stickpins, and finger-decorations from which other diamonds flash almost aggressively. Still others, far from being attired flashily, are careless and shabby in their appearance; their collars look frayed and soiled, their suits badly in need of pressing, and their faces as if a good application of soap and water might improve them. Another class, whose members are neatly but not gaudily dressed, whose faces and general demeanor indicate quiet self-respect, good health, and a fair degree of prosperity, neither boast nor complain about business, but meet their fellow-travelers with a dignified friendliness, and often spend pleasant evenings with them.

Of the four classes mentioned, the first and the fourth are generally illustrative of the principle of "the survival of the fittest." The self-applauded "captains of salesmanship," the "leaders in their line," seldom survive beyond their first or second trip. Acquiring expensive tastes, and developing false notions about the style which is compatible with the importance of their positions, as they see it, their traveling expenses mount higher and higher, while their business results tend less and less to justify their expenditures. They have on hand a collection of questionable stories which they tell indiscriminately, failing to realize that while they might appeal to some buyers, they will antagonize a good many others who are revolted by that sort of thing. These men deem it a wise business policy to tell the buyer what he ought to have, often being bold enough, and ill-advised enough, to tell him that he does not see the advantages in his own business.

"Why, Mr. Smith has just given me an order for two thousand of this, and five thousand of that; and Mr. Smith certainly knows what he is doing! You ought to put in a stock of it. Why be a back number?"

Needless to say, such arguments fall flat with their own weight. If Mr. Smith knows his business better than the man addressed, well and good. The other man resents the implication that Mr. Smith is a far-seeing business man whereas he is not. If the salesman enters a greenhouse and finds a batch of Lilies not up to the mark, he must make capital of it straightway. If the Lilies happen to be those

of his competitor, why, it is the competitor's fault. To be sure, his stock is of a very much inferior grade; many complaints are made about it in other quarters. On the other hand, if these Lilies happen to be those of the house he represents, it is the grower's fault. He didn't know how to treat them; he gave them too much water, or not enough; too much bottom heat, or not enough. To make an impression, he must knock his competitors without mercy. His is the only house really worth while. He must also display a profundity of knowledge about all things horticultural and floricultural. If the Carnations are off crop, he certainly knows the reason and will gladly give the benefit of his knowledge to the grower. More dry blood, or sheep manure, or wood ashes, will remedy the evil. If a house of Roses looks poor, he has the remedy neatly tucked away in some recess of his brain. More ventilation, and less feeding, or *vice versa*; there's the remedy! If the soil in the bench is wet, there is too much water; if it is dry, it is too dry, of course. If the ventilators are up, there is too much air; if the ventilators are down, there is not enough air. And so *ad infinitum*.

Such men make themselves extremely obnoxious to the trade, and are a detriment to the house they represent.

Advice to Young Salesmen

And while on the subject of competitors and competition, if I may be permitted to speak out of the knowledge I have gained through twenty-eight years of varied experience, I would like to advise my younger friends on the road to bear two things in mind:

First: Attend to your own business exclusively. Whatever you have to offer to the trade, present it in a business-like, unaggressive manner, leaving it largely to the judgment of the buyer himself. But since there are no ironclad rules in salesmanship, any more than in any other vocations, it would be hard to lay down a principle that would apply to all cases alike. As I have mentioned before, it happens now and then that a buyer does not for the moment see the advantage of the article offered, and is hesitant about making a purchase. Here is where the knowledge of human nature will come in good stead. If you are convinced about the merits of the article yourself—in other words, if you are enthusiastic about it—you will soon find a way of presenting it to your buyer, and accomplish results. In the end, he may be thankful to you for your suggestions, and rely upon your good judgment in the future. But, I must reiterate, know your man, be convinced about the merits of your article, and be sure that for the time being you have the interests of your buyer at heart even as much as your own.

Second: Leave your competitors severely alone. If you cannot say anything favorable about a competitor, keep your opinions to yourself. Business men in general, and the florists, it seems to me, in particular, like fair play. They will stand no knocks administered to your competitors behind their backs. And many indeed will resent them. It would be well to remember that in many cases a boost to your competitor will help your own cause materially. If a florist appeals to you for judgment about a batch of poor Sweet Peas or bulbs which he purchased from your competitor, do not take advantage of the situation. Tell the florist that such things are beyond the control of any house; that the business policy of any house, big or small, is to satisfy a customer; that you can see no reason why your competitor would deliberately furnish inferior stock. Remember that the tables might turn some day in your own case and that you yourself cannot always guarantee results. In my early days on the road, I had many knockers, some ridiculing my enterprise, and others predicting my complete failure. I never paid the slightest attention to my "friends," going about my own business and abstaining from repaying their compliments in like coin. The late William K.

Harris once told me never to mind a knock, that every knock was practically a boost. When I told him of one particular case, he spoke to me in this manner:

"Skidelsky," he said, "don't mind these things; ignore them. The fact that they are talking about you should convince you that you are somebody. Else they would never take the trouble to mention your name. Go about your business in a straightforward manner, and you'll come out on top."

I pass on the good advice to my young friends on the road.

Now let us return to the third class of salesman—the shabby, unprepossessing ones. It is a serious mistake for a man to neglect his appearance. The first impression, as every salesman on the road well realizes, counts much. When the man that offers the goods is healthy and well set up and prosperous in appearance, the buyer unconsciously tends to feel that the goods themselves are excellent in quality. When the salesman, however, is shabby and drab and dingy, the natural tendency is for the buyer to associate the man and his goods and be prejudiced against the latter. The little extra expenditure of time and money that are involved in keeping oneself well groomed are more than repaid in actual business results.

There are but few men on the road now whom I met in 1888, when I started out. Some have long since retired; others have joined the great majority in "The undiscovered country, from whose bourne no traveler returns." This reminds me that I am getting somewhat older myself; and the question often arises in my mind how long I shall continue on my yearly rounds. But I dismiss these thoughts as unworthy of serious consideration. Why cross the bridge before you come to it? So long as my health permits, I shall continue to visit my friends. I say friends advisedly, for I consider every one of my numerous customers—men who encouraged me in my younger days when I was poor and inexperienced, and men who have spurred me on in my endeavors as the years rolled along—as personal friends. I do not like to think of the day when I will no longer pay my periodical visits to these good friends of mine.

There was Bert Eddy, for example, the soul of good fellowship, jolly, witty; the man who, it was claimed, could sit astride a rail and induce a farmer to give him an order for a carload of vegetable seed. He could equally as well entertain an audience of florists on one of the Atlantic City piers, during the convention of 1894, in his rôle of Falstaff, in a Shakespearian presentation. He was the type of salesman who could adapt himself to any condition and make the best of any situation.

There was one man—let us call him John Smith—who divided his time between his business affairs and bucket-shops. A Scotchman by birth, he acquired habits not characteristic of his countrymen. He was a speculator, spending every dollar that he made on oats, sugar, and other products offered the unwary by the clever bucket-shop manipulators, happily long since extinct. It is not known that John ever got any benefits out of his investments. It is known, though, that at the time he died, in a little room in some cheap lodging place in Providence, R. I., the florists of the town paid his funeral expenses. John was a peculiar character, in many ways. He knew how to play the game of piety when that happened to suit his purpose, and be one of the boys if it were more to his advantage that way. On one occasion he called on a man who was well known for his religious tendencies and advocacy of temperance. Although addicted to the Scotch highball, John pretended in this case that he was a White Ribboner, denouncing the evils of drink with all the vehemence of a truly inspired soul, thus ingratiating himself with the man whose order he was after. He played his game well, though I question if he succeeded in fooling his customers all of the time.

And there were others of the type, long gone though not forgotten by their numerous friends.

Harry Balsley of Red Pot Fame

Of those still in the harness, the dean of all, perhaps, is the whole-souled Harry Balsley of the red pot fame. Who has not heard of Harry Balsley? For upward of forty years on the road, he has made a host of friends wherever green-houses are in existence and pots are used. From coast to coast, and from the Gulf to the Great Lakes, the name of Harry Balsley has become almost a household word with every grower. At one time, a Chrysanthemum was named after this popular man, which was grown quite successfully for years after its introduction. Harry Balsley has the happy faculty of telling a story and telling it well. What is additionally in his favor is his ability to gauge the fitness of the moment for telling it. His age, though he is by no means what one would call an old man, does not in the least impede the progress of his work, for Harry Balsley can still put in a hard day's work and accomplish results as he did a quarter of a century and more ago. It is always a source of great pleasure to me to meet him on the road and to spend an hour of delightful chatting with him. His vast experience and his knowledge of men and things in general are enough to equip him for the lecture platform. But Harry prefers his honorable though more humble vocation of selling pots. May his shadow never grow less.

Joseph Roelker, Another Old-Timer

Another old-timer, though I seldom met him and had few conversations with him, is Joseph Roelker of New York City. Joseph Roelker, though in appearance still a young man, has traveled for almost two generations. Mr. Roelker has always kept more or less aloof from other traveling men, and though they have not become very well acquainted with him, he has always commanded their respect.

The Optimist, Phil Foley

The name of Phil Foley needs no introduction, for Phil has an extensive acquaintance and is beloved by all his friends. His popularity is only equaled by his "avoidupois." Phil is a heavyweight, tipping the scale at three hundred and fifty or thereabouts. His heart is as big as his body, and his wit is fully commensurate with both. I met Mr. Foley only in recent years, and although our business interests are diverse and we are in nowise of pecuniary advantage to each other, my friendship for him has been strengthened from time to time and my admiration for his good humor, wit, and optimistic outlook in life has grown with each meeting. Mr. Foley's influence is decidedly of a wholesome nature. He never pesters you with tales of business troubles and worries. On the contrary, he will tell you that the world looks mighty bright and cheerful to him, and that every man has a place in it.

Recently, Mr. Foley and I traveled together from Detroit to Cleveland. When the conductor came around for the tickets, I presented mine, and when Mr. Foley's turn came to surrender his paste-board, he informed the official that one ticket would suffice for both, since he was but a baby.

"A baby!" exclaimed the conductor, surveying the three hundred and fifty pounds of man in front of him. "Why you ought to pay a double fare, considering you take up a whole seat yourself!"

As evening came on, we went into the wash-room of the train, preparatory to going into the diner for our supper. The room was crowded with traveling men, who were swapping stories at a lively rate. Mr. Foley was in his element. He stepped into the midst of them, and in a few moments he held the stage, telling one good one after another with lightning rapidity. Supper was forgotten. I finally had to pull him by force toward the diner. When we reached there, we found that supper was not quite ready.

"What!" he exclaimed, "waste all this good time waiting for supper, when it might be spent telling stories? Not much!"

And back he went, despite my efforts, to the wash-room.

We finally got our supper, and landed in Cleveland around midnight.

Arnold Ringier and Walter Mott

Two other old-timers who have served the florists faithfully and well are Arnold Ringier of the W. W. Barnard Company of Chicago, and Walter Mott, at one time representative of the Henry A. Dreer Company and now with the Hammond Company of Beacon, N. Y.

Mr. Ringier is the soul of wit, and his witticisms never fall flat. He is a good mixer, well versed in his lines; and it is no wonder he has made so many friends in his years of travel. He has now retired from traveling, giving his time and attention to the inside workings of the concern.

Mr. Walter Mott, like myself, is still in the harness, covering a large area of territory east, west and south. Although no longer directly connected with the horticultural business, Mr. Mott still maintains his interest in horticulture. His notes from the road in one of the trade papers are being read with interest by his numerous friends.

William Hagerman, "One of the Boys"

The late William Hagerman, although, strictly speaking, not a traveling salesman, but a man carrying on his own business, was nevertheless "one of the boys" on the road. He mingled freely with the traveling fraternity, swapping experiences, and was always "hail fellow well met." As a dealer in bulbs, he was pre-eminently successful. It was said at one time that he intended to monopolize the bulb business. Years prior to his undertaking the sale of bulbs, he conducted a wholesale grocery store in Philadelphia. His brother-in-law, a valley grower in Germany, requested him to offer his product to the growers of Philadelphia. Mr. Hagerman undertook the task, and carried it out successfully. A second and a third time German valley was disposed of in this manner. Then Mr. Hagerman bethought himself that the field outside of Philadelphia looked promising, and that in addition to Valley pips he could offer Lily bulbs, Dutch and French stock, and other things in the bulb line. In turn, he could export Tuberoses and Caladiums from this side of the ocean. He heard that there was a demand for Apples and typewriters and bicycles abroad. Why not export such products as well? He had no sooner thought of the idea than he formulated his plans. It was a success from the start. Mr. Hagerman took to the road, and continued almost until the day of his death. He covered a large territory, and the amount of business transacted on every trip ran into high figures.

Mr. Hagerman was regarded as a salesman of great ability. There was no situation complicated enough to embarrass him. He would always find ways and means of appeasing his most irate customers. If a grower, for example, found fault with his Lilies, Mr. Hagerman was ready to face the situation and make the most of its particular circumstances, satisfying his customer, and winding up with a larger order than that of the season previous. It was remarkable that he could carry on so successful a business in a line about which he had so little knowledge. He would offer things and speak about them with assurance, as if he were perfectly at home in the field, and yet he never perhaps had seen the article he offered.

A prominent grower in New England told me of an incident that will well illustrate the character of Mr. Hagerman. This grower received a quantity of *Lilium giganteum*, which arrived in sprouted condition. It was a serious matter, which had to be adjusted there and then. He wrote to Mr. Hagerman, urging

him to come and see the condition of the stock for himself. Receiving no reply, he wrote again, more urgently than before. Mr. Hagerman finally appeared. What was the trouble? The grower opened a few cases, and showed Mr. Hagerman their contents. The bulbs were badly sprouted.

Mr. Hagerman grasped his Van Dyke beard thoughtfully, reflected a moment, and said:

"Mr. X———, don't you see that these Lilies are so vigorous—so vigorous that they started to grow in the cases! Now you just plant them, and they'll take care of themselves."

The grower looked at him in amazement, then answered:

"Mr. Hagerman, you have missed your vocation. You should have been a lawyer instead of a bulb man."

Another incident is just as amusing.

A competitor of Mr. Hagerman, to whom he paid a visit once, happened to have a few *Lilium auratum* bulbs on his desk.

"What are these?" queried Mr. Hagerman.

"Don't you know them?" replied the other. "Why this is a vegetable plant, imported from France. The French people know how to make a delicious salad of it. The way to do it is this: You parboil them, chop them up, put a little vinegar and oil, and salt and pepper to suit your taste. It makes a dish fit for a king!"

"And what do you call this vegetable?" asked Mr. Hagerman.

"*Lilium auratum*," replied the jester.

"The idea of it!" exclaimed Mr. Hagerman. "I've been selling *Lilium auratum* for the past ten years, and never saw them."

The sad ending of this prosperous man, as well as of his successor, need not be dwelt upon here.

The humorous incidents that might be related about the traveling men I have met are many, and would fill a book by themselves. A few, however, are amusing enough to demand mention here.

There was an old salesman (one of the pioneers) who was noted for the exuberance of his business zeal, as well as for his marked peculiarities. As an economist, he had no rival in his line. It was said that he could "dine on a cheese sandwich, and sleep under an umbrella." His capacity for hard work was unlimited. It was a matter of daily habit with him to start out at six in the morning, and work until ten or eleven at night.

On one occasion he arrived in a town at eight-thirty in the evening. Upon consulting the time tables, he found that he could leave the town at eleven that night. He had only one customer to see. Why not see him at once? The customer happened to live on the outskirts of the city, and car-lines in those days were in most towns conspicuous by their absence. He started on foot, and reached his customer's place about nine-thirty. The place was already closed. But that made no difference to him. He rang the bell. An upper window opened, and the customer looked out.

"Who's there?" he shouted.

"Good evening, Mr. X———," replied the salesman: "it's me. I just got to town, and as I intend to leave at eleven, I thought I'd see you. Say, we have a few cases of bulbs on hand—a surplus, on which I can make you an especially attractive price. How many could you use?"

Mr. X———'s amusement tempered his resentment at being routed out of bed, and knowing the peculiarities of the man, he dismissed him with a good-natured—

"Nothing tonight. Call some other time."

Another salesman, just as energetic, though not quite so economical, had peculiarities of his own. He was a kind-hearted chap, and a good mixer; though careless in dress, small and unprepossessing, he somehow succeeded in working up quite a patronage and in making a good many friends in the trade. On one occasion, he was sent out by his concern to the Wisconsin woods, to superintend the packing and shipping of Lycopodium, or green roping, so much used for Christmas decorative work. It was customary then, as it is now, for salesmen to itemize their daily expense accounts, and at the end of the week send in the total. One item aroused the suspicion of his employer. Upon his return, his employer asked him good-naturedly if he discovered a place in the Wisconsin woods where they were charging seventy-five cents for a dinner.

"I thought," added the employer, "that a quarter was the highest price up there."

"Yes," replied the salesman, "a quarter was all I paid for it. But it was worth fifty cents to eat it!"

W. W. Coles of Kokomo

Among my friends in Indiana I am glad to include Mr. W. W. Coles of Kokomo. Mr. Coles was originally a Philadelphia man, although I never had the pleasure of meeting him there. In fact, he had left Philadelphia a few years prior to my becoming connected with horticulture. I had, however, heard of him before. His remarkable success with the "Kaiserin" Rose made him known far and wide. His exhibitions at Chicago, and at shows in other towns, won for him a reputation as a grower of no mean ability. His departure for the western town is but a typical story of the man who pulls up his stakes and pitches his tent in new fields. Although his business in Philadelphia enabled him to get along without any difficulties, his ambition carried him beyond contentment with eking out a mere living. He had heard of Horace Greeley's advice, "Go West, young man!" and toward the West he turned his thoughts. Mr. E. G. Hill was undoubtedly the man to advise him; and he advised him right. Kokomo was a small town, with an exceptionally promising future. They had just discovered and developed some gas wells; and where fuel is cheap prosperity is bound to find its way. So Kokomo was the town he determined upon.

When I first met Mr. Coles, in Kokomo, he had already fully established himself. The dimensions of his greenhouse plant were larger than any I had been accustomed to see in towns of that size. His stock, which was marketed in Chicago, invariably sold well; for, as I said, Mr. Coles is a good grower and produces quality.

He prospered from the start, investing his surplus in land and houses, and enlarging his plant as the demand for his products warranted. Unlike many a man on the road to prosperity, Mr. Coles has not become entirely engrossed in his business, realizing that a man in order to be a good citizen must give part of his time and attention for the benefit of the community. He is active in public affairs, and has become quite a figure in the town where for the past twenty-three years he has made his home. Aside from this, he takes a keen interest in the affairs of the Indiana State Society of Florists, having served as its president for a term or two. The S. A. F. and O. H. has no member more loyal nor more devoted to its interests than Mr. W. W. Coles. He seldom misses a convention, and to hear him speak about the society, the good work it has accomplished, and the work he would like to see it accomplish, is to hear a man speak on a topic directly concerning his personal interest. At one time Mr. Coles served as director on the board of the S. A. F. and O. H.

In my visits to Indiana I invariably make it a point to stop at Kokomo, and spend a pleasant evening with Mr. Coles and his delightful family.

Chicago a Quarter of a Century Ago and Today

It is very interesting to call up in review the Chicago of twenty-five years ago, for contrast with the Chicago of today. Twenty-five years ago, Chicago played but an insignificant part in the world of horticulture. Boston was the source whence Roses came for the Chicago market. I had often seen packages at Gallagher's or Rajsik's (two men no longer in existence), that had come from Boston. I can recall how I often wondered why Chicago could not take care of its own Rose supply. There were already enough stores at that time to warrant some enterprise in that direction. And while I was thinking about these things, I little dreamed what was in store for Chicago. The mammoth greenhouses that now cover acres upon acres of ground in various sections in the vicinity of Chicago would have been a revelation to any man of that time possessed of the most flighty imagination. Who would ever have thought of the enormous greenhouses in Morton Grove—those belonging to the Poehlmann Brothers Company? Enormous is the only word by which one could properly estimate the size of the place. It is the largest establishment of its kind in the world. There Roses are grown, not by the thousands, but by the hundreds of thousands. Carnations are grown in similar numbers; Lily of the Valley in great quantities, orchids, bulbous stock of all sorts. It would take an able statistician indeed to estimate the quantity produced on that wonderful place. Not content with cut flowers alone, the Poehlmann Brothers saw an opening for foliage and blooming plants, and great quantities of these are likewise being grown with marked success.

To August Poehlmann, perhaps, more than to any member of the family, the credit is due for launching this great enterprise. Mr. Poehlmann once told me the whole story of the beginning and development of his business; and while I do not wish to go into many details, though it is a story that would read almost like a fairy tale, it is enough to say that this extraordinarily energetic man, still in his early forties, demonstrated beyond the shadow of a doubt what grit and determination and the ability to see an opportunity when it presents itself can accomplish. I need not say much about the general equipment of this establishment, for I am quite sure that most of my readers have visited the place, and have seen things for themselves. To those who have not, I would suggest that they do so at an early opportunity, for a visit to the place of Poehlmann Brothers is a horticultural education of considerable value.

Peter Reinberg is another instance of what ingenuity and determination can accomplish. I do not know the history of Mr. Reinberg's early business career, though I have been told that it had a modest beginning. Mr. Reinberg at first, according to reports, centered his attention upon the products of a truck farm, bringing his vegetables into town and disposing of them to the best advantage wherever he could find a market. The idea soon came to him that Chicago presented a splendid field for cut flowers, and that cut flowers ought to be more profitable than vegetables to the man who grew them. Here is an instance where a man wedded action with thought; and a greenhouse plant of immense proportions soon sprang up upon the site of his former truck farm. This was enlarged from time to time, until Mr. Reinberg's place came to rank among the largest in the world.

Bassett & Washburn, who have but recently demolished their immense establishment and rebuilt it upon a new site, present additional examples of the spirit of Chicago enterprise. Their new place, although I have not yet visited it, is said to be one of the largest and best equipped establishments of the kind. Since Bassett & Washburn never do things by halves, it goes without saying that their new establishment is producing most excellent stock. The history of the business development of this firm is interesting. Mr. Bassett, a prosperous printer, became interested in floriculture a number of years ago when his own gardener on his

private place used to grow some excellent Roses. He saw the possibilities in commercial flower-growing, and a place was soon erected, near Western Springs, Ill. Mr. Washburn, his son-in-law, became interested in this concern, which has since prospered under his efficient management.

The history of the Wietor Brothers is no less interesting. Nick Wietor, a bookkeeper by profession, and a far-seeing young man by natural endowment, conceived the idea a number of years ago to exchange the confining position of bookkeeper for that of the open air occupation of horticulturist. Nick told me once how Anthony, at one time the leading florist of Chicago, but long since dead and forgotten, had snubbed him upon a certain occasion when he applied to him for a price on stock which he had to offer. Instead of giving him a civil answer, Anthony gruffly referred him to his foreman, remarking that he had no time to bother with such trifles. Not accustomed to such treatment, Mr. Wietor returned empty handed, and informed his brother that Anthony seemed to be too big a man to approach and that he would make no more attempts to see that important personage.

But a few years later, the tables were turned. In his down-and-out days, Anthony approached Wietor for the loan of a few dollars, which were readily given him, with no intention on the lender's part ever to recall the loan.

This seesaw of prosperity and adversity is not uncommon in human experience; and it is well for those on the up end of the board to bear in mind the truth of the Biblical saying that "the last shall be first," and for purposes of expediency, if not actually because of a sense of human justice and equality, to treat the man on the down end with consideration and respect.

The Wietor Brothers are among the largest cut flower growers in Chicago; Nick Wietor conducts the wholesale end of it, while his brother is at the head of the greenhouses. Their progress has kept time with the general prosperity of the western metropolis. Outside of their greenhouse establishment, they have a great many investments in other enterprises, evidently believing it a wise policy not to put all their eggs in one basket.

Frank Oechslin's business career, his ventures and success, are well known to almost every florist in the land. After experimenting for a while in the East, Mr. Oechslin turned toward Chicago, and there made his home. For a time he was working for Kidwell Brothers, the well-known wholesale and retail florists of Chicago. Then he saw an opportunity to go for himself, and grasped it without delay. Chicago was badly in need of blooming plants. While a few were grown here and there a great many more could be disposed of if there were any in the market. There was a small place on West Madison street, which could be rented at a nominal price; and though far from being an ideal place for the purpose, Frank Oechslin took it, determined to make the best of it until an ideal place could be had. He started in with small ferns, Primulas, Cinerarias, Cyclamen, and other blooming plants; and these he grew as well as any Eastern grower could possibly grow them. (The East at that time was looked to for the best in the line of plants.)

The market was ready for him, and not only ready but eager. Mr. Oechslin had no difficulty in disposing of all he grew. He could have disposed of ten times the quantity, if he had it. He was making money, and was well launched on the way to prosperity. But to leave well enough alone was not in Oechslin's make-up. Better facilities and a more extensive plant meant business expansion. Mr. Oechslin was eager to expand, not only on his own account, and from the standpoint of dollars and cents, but to improve the general conditions of the trade and to meet the ever-growing demand of his customers. An excellent piece of ground, several acres in extent, was to be had on West Quincy street and Forty-eighth avenue. He

bought the ground, and erected a modern place. His prosperity from then on took wings unto itself. The excellent stock he was producing spread his fame over a wide area, and orders came pouring in on him not only from his Chicago customers, but from a large circle of florists in many Western, Northwestern, and Southern towns as well. As a plant grower, Mr. Oechsli is unquestionably one of the most successful in the country.

The well-known firm of the George Wittbold Company, which for upward of half a century has carried on a prosperous business, and has grown up with the city itself, needs no introduction by me. Since the death of the founder of the institution, the late Mr. George Wittbold, the business has been in the able hands of his sons, Louis Wittbold and his brother Fred. Some of the members of the family have withdrawn their interests and embarked upon a separate business of their own. One of the brothers, Otto Wittbold, has his nursery at Edgebrook, Ill., where the greenhouses of the George Wittbold Company are also located.

In addition to palms, ferns and blooming plants of all kinds, the George Wittbold Company also grows Roses, Chrysanthemums and bulbous stock very successfully. The elegantly equipped store on Buckingham Place consumes all their product, although palms are being sold in quantity at wholesale.

When I think of the great number of notable and prosperous florists in Chicago, I realize the utter impossibility of doing individual justice to all of them. I can but speak generally, and say that these energetic men have contributed their full share to the development of their truly wonderful city, the great metropolis of the West. What is especially laudable is the fact that each man seems to take a kind of personal pride in his beloved city, a city that communicates to the stranger at once something of its buoyancy and "go-aheadiveness" of spirit.

On the Outskirts of Chicago

Along with the development of horticulture in Chicago, there was a general movement in the direction of its development throughout the State. Such towns, as Peoria, Lincoln, Bloomington, Springfield and many others, fell into line, and for a time greenhouses sprang up like mushrooms in the woods. I will cite a few instances.

A. Washburn & Sons of Bloomington, Ill., saw their opportunity in that thriving town, and turned their farm into a floricultural establishment. The late Mr. A. Washburn, a New Yorker by birth, planned well, and lived to see the results of his planning. Their greenhouses and store are all that could be desired, and the two sons now in charge of the place are conducting a most profitable business.

Gullett & Sons of Lincoln, Ill., are not only successful growers, but also men of modern business ideas and progressive spirit. They have but recently enlarged their already extensive establishment, having put up an entirely new place for Roses which they ship to many parts of the country.

L. C. Loveridge, of Peoria, Ill., a successful all-around grower, a man who has learned his business in numerous establishments on this as well as the other side of the water, has put the floral business of Peoria on a strictly up-to-date basis. Aside from the stock of excellent quality which he invariably produces, he has modernized the method of doing business in that prosperous town. His store and his greenhouses testify to his business initiative.

Miss Belle Miller of Springfield, Ill., the woman horticulturist of Illinois, is another example of enterprise. Starting as an amateur, she gradually enlarged her scope, until she became a professional grower, and one of the most successful ones in the State. Besides having a lucrative retail business, she grows large quantities of stock of all sorts for the St. Louis wholesale market. Her place is a model of neatness, and her office where she conducts her business shows the

woman's touch in the charm and attractiveness that do not characterize most business offices.

Fred J. Ammann of Edwardsville, Ill., a very progressive young man (for despite his forty-five years he is still young) belongs to two States, dividing his interests between Illinois and Missouri. An active member of the St. Louis Florists' Club, he is also most active in the affairs of the State Society of Illinois, being secretary of that society. Mr. Ammann has a modern range of glass located upon one of the most beautiful sites of Edwardsville, which under his good management is yielding splendid results. His stock is always of excellent quality, for, like any other progressive grower, he does not believe in postponing a thing until tomorrow if he can do it today. In other words, instead of letting a possible good thing go until some other fellow has proved its merits, he prefers to try it himself, and thus be in the market a year in advance of the conservative man.

Perhaps in no other State in the Union has horticulture received the impetus which has been given it in the State of Illinois. It was in Illinois that a State society of florists was first organized. This society does splendid work in more senses than one. Aside from bringing into its fold as many members as it can from every part of the State, and thus interesting them in the splendid work it is carrying on, it has induced the State legislature to appropriate a considerable amount of money for experimental purposes. The State University at Urbana, Ill., has a splendid department where, under the excellent management of Professor Herman Dorner, experimental work in all branches of horticulture and floriculture is being carried on with marked success. Their annual reports, I have been told, are eagerly awaited by no less an institution than Cornell University itself. The annual meetings of the State Society of Illinois, generally held in February, are events of great importance, not only to the florists of that State itself, but to florists of neighboring States as well. These conventions are held in the various towns of Illinois. The last one took place at Rock Island.

Other States might do well to follow the example of Illinois. The value of experimental work, work in which every florist is directly interested, can hardly be overestimated. The problems which arise, and the dilemmas with which every grower is confronted, are often of a nature which puzzles the most practical of them. Whatever may be said against a college education, and of the futility of book knowledge, certain it is that the greatest problems, industrial and otherwise, have been oftenest solved by men possessed of the knowledge of theories, and principles underlying these problems. If the grower has no definite knowledge about the nature of his soil, or the kind and amount of fertilizer required to supply its deficient elements, a little knowledge of chemistry might aid him materially. But since every florist cannot possibly alter conditions to suit his own needs, the best and only thing he could do would be to depend upon the experimental station which would soon clear up his difficulties.

On Establishing Experimental Stations, Etc.

The signs of the times point to the establishment of experimental stations in every State in the Union, for such institutions would be of incalculable benefit to the trade. I will go further and say that the time is coming when the florist will realize the necessity for giving his son the advantages of a college education, in order that the profession—and a profession it is—may be raised above the haphazard standard, if I may thus put it. The future success of our business, I can clearly foresee, will largely hinge upon a thorough knowledge on the part of the man conducting it of the details and theories, if you please, which seem to be so much ignored, or else often sneered at, by the practical florists of today. I do

not mean to speak disparagingly of the great results accomplished by practical men. Far from it. But the results accomplished, be it remembered, are not because of a lack of college training, but in spite of it.

Horticulture had begun to make its strides. In some quarters, a cry was raised to halt. For a time we heard so much about too much building and the danger of over-production. Such cries of alarm might have been expected. No movement has ever been started on its way without opposition. The progressive elements in our trade never heeded that warning, realizing that far from reaching the limit, our business was still in its embryo, and that its possibilities were practically unlimited. Why, is not our country growing? Are not our towns and cities almost doubling themselves in population? Thus far, they reason, our product has found its way among the rich; but how about the rest of the people, the great mass that outnumbers the rich in the ratio of fifty to one? Why should not our product appeal to them as well? And why should we not put it within their reach? It is up to us, said these progressive ones, to educate the people, to spread the gospel of beauty among them.

The Birth of Flower Shows

How to educate the mass was a question easily solved. The flower show would do the work. Let us make our flower shows popular and attractive; let the people see for themselves what we are trying to do for them. Let us convince the great mass that our art is not intended for the rich only, that we mean to bring it within their reach; in short, that we intend to beautify the humblest home as well as the stateliest of mansions.

The idea was a capital one, and flower shows became the recognized order of things among the florists. That the work thus undertaken and carried on was productive of good results was no longer questioned even by the most bitter opponents of the innovation after its first few trials. The rank and file responded to the call, and it was an inspiration to the writer in the earlier days of his travels to see men and women of the humbler ranks crowd eagerly into the halls to view "God's fairest creations."

International Flower Shows

From the local flower show to the international ones was but a short step. The first attempt of this kind, as everyone in the trade will well remember, was made in St. Louis, Mo., during the Louisiana exposition. A few earnest men gathered at the old Sherman House in Chicago, and launched the enterprise. A hurried call was issued to a good many growers, setting forth the advantages of a flower show in connection with the great Louisiana exposition. An enterprise of the sort required money. A subscription was made among the few promoters of it, but more was needed. In a circular letter sent out broadcast, it was urged that the recipient subscribe any amount he saw fit for a guarantee fund. Quite a number saw the advantages that would accrue to the trade, and readily responded. The majority, however, paid no attention to the call, although they soon realized the fallacy of their lack of interest. That enterprise proved to be a great success. Thousands upon thousands of people cheerfully paid their admission to view the flower show. A handsome sum was realized, and every subscriber to the guarantee fund received his money back plus a handsome dividend. If I remember rightly, but one-fifth of the amount subscribed was called for. The money returned was double the amount paid in.

First National Flower Show at Chicago and Others

The first Louisiana exposition blazed the trail for other flower shows of a national scope. The first of this kind was held at the Coliseum in Chicago, and, to the credit of the local management be it said, everything possible was done to ensure its success. The retailers, no less than the growers themselves, did their part. And how well they did it! There were table decorations, mantel decorations, and decorations for all sorts of occasions, to attract people from every walk in life. The landscape gardener did his best, too, to give to the denizens of the city as well as to the country gentlemen an object lesson in landscape gardening. One firm, I remember, had two cottages side by side, labeled "Before and After." The one "before" represented a miserable shanty, standing in the midst of a rubbish heap of rusty tin cans, broken bottles, litters of paper, ashes, and so on. The one labeled "after" was a humble cottage, surrounded by a neatly trimmed lawn, with a few shrubs planted here and there to add to the general attractiveness of the place. It was evident that the intention of the landscape artist was to reach the common people, to show them what could be accomplished with little effort and at no very great cost. The results from both monetary and educational standpoints surpassed the most sanguine expectations of the most enthusiastic promoters.

Other shows followed. The second one in Boston, the third one in New York, and the fourth one held recently in Philadelphia, all proved eminently successful.

Much criticism has been heard about the last named, held in Philadelphia, many contending that the exhibition hall was inadequate for the purpose, that it was too far out of the way, and that the Blue Laws of the Quaker City which barred out the public from attending the "greatest sermon that was ever preached in the city," to use Mr. Gude's words, were a great drawback to the success of the enterprise. It must be remembered, however, that in point of attendance there was no city that surpassed Philadelphia. The fact that the first Sunday of the show thousands of people lined the streets in the immediate vicinity of the hall, evidencing their disappointment at not being able to get in, was encouraging enough in itself, for it indicated that flower shows, as an educational institution, made a strong appeal to the people. The city of Philadelphia, I may here remark, has passed upon its loan bill, and this among other improvements provides for a convention hall, the like of which no city can equal today, let alone surpass. Let us hope that the next National Flower Show to be held in Philadelphia will carry with it a more favorable impression than the last one—that by that time the Blue Laws of 1794 will be revoked.

Horticulture continued on its march of progress. State after State fell into line; and while I should like to speak about every State in the Union, I must, for reasons of space limitation, confine myself to those sections through which I traveled most often. The Eastern States were already in advance. As I remarked before, the city of Boston supplied the great city of Chicago with Roses. It was now that the Middle West had its turn. The States of Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and Michigan became especially active. Truck farms were turned into greenhouse establishments. Celery growers in the Black Belt of Michigan who grew a few plants as a side line turned their attention to plant and cut flower growing, and the Celery patches became the side lines. Later the Celery man found it to his advantage to give his entire attention to flowers, and let the real farmer take care of the Celery end of it.

Expansion of Michigan Growers

A case in point is that of Van Bochove Brothers, in Kalamazoo, Mich. In 1889, when I first met them, the Van Bochove Brothers were primarily Celery growers. They had two little houses wherein they grew Geraniums and other

bedding plants for the supply of the local trade. A few years later they thought it might pay them to try a few Roses. American Beauty Roses were tried, and whether it was due to the soil or to their good luck in finding the right man to take care of the stock, their American Beauty Roses were grown most successfully, and sold readily in the Chicago market. Another house was put up, and more American Beauty Roses were grown; then another and still another were added. In addition to American Beauty Roses, they introduced the Bride and Bridesmaid. There was no hitch of any kind, except in shortage of stock; for they could readily dispose of more than they grew. It was now a question of expansion, and undivided attention to either one or the other of the branches of their business. The Celery field had to go. In course of time a considerable portion of their ground within the city limits was covered with glass. Their success as cut flower growers was now fully assured. The city of Kalamazoo began to expand; city lots went soaring in value, and so did the taxes upon them. As keen business men, the Van Bochove Brothers decided that it would be much to their advantage to dispose of the lots and build a new place upon a new site, outside of the city limits. Today they have one of the largest places in Michigan, and are considered among the best growers in the State.

Other Michigan cities, such as Grand Rapids, Saginaw, Bay City, Jackson, Lansing, Flint, and so on, were fully awake to their opportunities, and expansion became the order of the day. Twenty-five years ago there were but few extensive greenhouse establishments in the State. In the early '90's the reconstructive period may be said to have begun. It seemed as though the people suddenly awoke to the charm of plants and flowers, and the demand had to be met. Such firms as Henry Smith, Alfred Hannah & Sons, and Eli Cross of Grand Rapids; the Roethke Floral Company, Charles Frueh & Sons, Grohman Brothers, and J. B. Goetz's Sons of Saginaw; Boehringer Brothers of Bay City; C. Brown & Company of Jackson; and many others too numerous to mention, commenced to make improvements on a scale that promised well for the future of horticulture in their State.

The city of Detroit, conceded by all to be one of the most beautiful, attractive, and progressive cities in the country, shows its remarkable advance in horticulture no less than it does in the automobile industry. The flower beds in the city square, in front of the city hall, and in the various little parks scattered throughout the town, are features of charm to the visiting strangers. Detroit in this respect may be likened to some of the attractive cities in Germany. The white-wing brigade, or the street cleaners, were first organized in Detroit. And even New York City, a town that is supposed always to lead and never follow, took its cue in this particular from Detroit. But it is not about the charms of the city that I wish to speak.

Florists' Telegraph Delivery Association

As a matter of course, the advance in horticulture that characterized the State of Michigan had its due measure of expression in Detroit. I have elsewhere referred to the Detroit florists as a progressive, alert and cultured body of men. Hence to speak about every individual separately would be superfluous. I have made many friends in Detroit, among the florists. In fact, it is one of the cities that I take an especial delight in visiting. The spirit of fraternity that exists among the florists of Detroit, it seems to me, is particularly strong and productive of good results. Whatever question of importance arises is usually brought up and discussed at the florists' club meeting. Often such questions prove of interest not only to the Detroit florists, but to the trade throughout the country. The Florists' Telegraph Delivery Association has its secretary in Detroit. Albert Pochelon is the man who put that organization on a basis that is unshakable. The

idea may not be originally his own. But it takes a man with a deal of enthusiasm and faith in an undertaking to carry out an idea, no matter how good it is, to a successful finish. Mr. Pochelon believed in the value of the Florists' Telegraph Delivery Association, and believing with him meant action. The idea of a patron in Detroit being able to send a box of flowers to a friend in Paris, or London, or Madrid, within two or three hours, or to distant points in our own country in even less time, was a novel as well as a practical one. With the energy characteristic of him in his own business affairs, Mr. Pochelon undertook to interest men in various parts of the country, urging them to become members, and showing them in his own inimitable way the immense advantages that would accrue to our business if they would realize its possibilities. To use his own words, "The Florists' Telegraph Delivery Association means business coming and going." The man who receives an order for flowers and sends it to his correspondent abroad is also likely to receive an order from his correspondent in return. Aside from the advantages of the discount going with such orders, it also means a great advance upon former methods in facilitating the sending of flowers at distances on short notice. The boom to the flower trade was evident. But, like any other innovation, it had its opposing factions. Some men were narrow-minded enough to consider themselves in a class of their own. Albert Pochelon is not the man, however, to be daunted. He continued circularizing and talking about his idea wherever and whenever the opportunity presented itself. It used to be said of him that the Florists' Telegraph Delivery Association meant more to him than his own business, which by the way is a very flourishing one. During the National Flower Show at New York, we were favored with a few visitors from England. Among them was the late W. Wells, the noted Carnation grower of England. Upon being introduced to Mr. Wells, Mr. Pochelon saw his opportunity to approach him with his pet idea.

"What!" exclaimed Mr. Wells, "this must be another of your American fakes."

Whether Mr. Wells had been at some time taken in by a fakir or not, I do not know, nor has it any bearing on the story. The fact is that Mr. Pochelon was not in the least disturbed by this answer, but proceeded to convince Mr. Wells of the tremendous advantages of bringing the trade of England and America into closer touch by means of the telegraph. A few weeks later, on his visit to Detroit, a reception was given to the well-known Englishman, and here again Mr. Pochelon broached the idea. Mr. Wells was won over, and became one of the most ardent supporters of the association.

Detroit Florists

I have already mentioned in former pages the well-known firm of John Breitmeyer's Sons, and Mr. B. Schroeter, both presiding over veritable floral palaces, within a block of each other.

But there are other men who have contributed largely to the progress of the city in general and horticulture in particular, well worthy of mention.

C. H. Plumb on Burns avenue has built up a large business from a small beginning. He started about twenty years ago with two little greenhouses, and kept pace with the city as it grew. Mr. Plumb grows largely for the wholesale market, both plants and bulbous stock; and during the past few years he has built up quite a retail trade in his own neighborhood.

Frank Holznagle's place on Woodward avenue occupies a plot of ground that, it is said, is worth a fortune. Mr. Holznagle never boasts of his wealth, but pursues his business, giving it all the attention and hard work that make for success. He is considered among the best growers in the State.

E. Fetters, originally of the Smith & Fetters Company of Cleveland, came to Detroit a few years ago, and made it his home. Mr. Fetters is an artist in his line, as well as a successful business man. He conducts two stores.

The genial J. F. Sullivan, beloved by every traveling man, has contributed his share toward the advance of horticulture in Detroit. Mr. Sullivan is, above all else, an optimist; and optimism, it is claimed, goes hand in hand with prosperity.

Beard Brothers have been recently succeeded by Sidney Beard, the son of the late Frank Beard. Although still a young man in the early twenties, Sidney—if one is to judge him by the extent of his enterprise, and the results achieved—has all the experience of a veteran. There is no question but that the young man is on the road to success.

Nor has J. K. Stock any ground for complaint about his business ventures. Starting in a section of the city that did not promise much so far as retail trade was concerned, he confined himself at first to the growing of ferns and bedding plants for the wholesale trade. But Detroit has grown, and so has the section where his greenhouses are located. About three years ago, he remodeled his place, and erected a modern flower store on Warren avenue. His retail trade has grown by leaps and bounds.

The late Gus H. Taepke, a pioneer florist of Detroit (for he was one of the oldest in that city) contributed his share toward the growth of floriculture in Detroit. His place on Elmwood avenue is covered by a large range of glass, where a miscellaneous stock is always grown successfully. A number of years prior to his death, finding that his business equipment had become inadequate to meet the growing demand, he built a range of glass on Gratiot avenue, on the outskirts of the city. There he grew Roses and Carnations for his ever-increasing retail trade. His son, Walter Taepke, who succeeded his father upon his death, conducts a prosperous retail business, his store being located in the heart of the retail section. Between his store and his greenhouses, young Walter has ample responsibilities, but is fully equal to the task.

Robert Flowerday, a florist of the old school, though not an old man, has of late divided his time between his business and the parks of Detroit. The responsible position of superintending the parks finds him equal to it on all occasions. His young son is of great help to him in looking after the business.

W. B. Brown kept full pace with the growth of Detroit itself. Starting about twelve years ago, with no visible means, but with plenty of grit and determination as assets, he plugged along until he attained his end. Today Brown is among the successful florists in the city of Detroit.

Growers and Retailers in Detroit Suburbs

Detroit seemed to be much in need of Roses. While a few Roses were grown in the immediate vicinity, there was not enough stock produced to supply two big stores, let alone the stores that sprang up in every part of the city. The man to supply this demand, or to meet it at least in part, appeared on the scene, though his appearance is of but recent date. A. J. Staehlin of Redford, Mich., a suburb of Detroit, has demonstrated his ability to accomplish results in whatever he undertakes. A few years ago, it occurred to him that movable houses, something unheard-of before, would pay. His idea was that he could plant his Carnations in the field, give them the full benefit of a Summer's growth in the open, and when the time came to plant them inside, instead of lifting and taking them into the greenhouses, he could just as well move over the greenhouses to them. In this way he could accomplish two purposes: First, he would save himself the labor of planting in the Fall; and second, the Carnation plants that were under the glass during the Summer would remain there until late in the Fall and he could continue picking the flowers until the frost set in. It was a case of

carrying the mountain to Mohammed. This innovation in greenhouse construction was a success from the start. Mr. Staehlin's Carnations are among the best brought to the Detroit market, and his Sweet Peas, which he grew for a few years, enhanced his reputation as a grower of splendid ability. About three years ago he grew a house of Tomatoes, and this enterprise, it is said, brought him excellent returns.

But Mr. Staehlin saw the possibilities in Rose growing; and seeing the possibilities, he was prompt to act. In addition to his already extensive place, he erected a range of four houses, each four hundred feet long, built of iron and cement, exclusively for Rose growing purposes. As with Carnations, his success with Roses is fully assured, and the Detroit market is thereby somewhat though not fully relieved.

Thomas Browne of Greenfield, Mich., within two miles of Mr. Staehlin, has but recently erected two additional houses, each six hundred by seventy feet. This is but an addition to the already immense place which Mr. Browne has built up from time to time. The reader may easily conceive the immense quantities of stock which Mr. Browne produces in his mammoth establishment. Besides Carnations and Sweet Peas, in which he specializes, he plants seventy-five thousand Chrysanthemums; and in the Spring he markets about a hundred and fifty thousand Geraniums.

Both Mr. Browne and Mr. Staehlin have made rapid strides in floriculture.

The thriving city of Mt. Clemens offers many attractions to the visitors. In the first place, it is but twenty miles from Detroit, and is reached by trolley service that runs on half hour schedule. To me Mt. Clemens always appears as a hustling, thriving suburb of the great city of Detroit itself. It seems to partake of the spirit of the metropolis, and shows remarkable progress along all lines. The city of Mt. Clemens is perhaps best known for its hotels and bathhouses, which attract numerous visitors at all times from all sections of the United States. It always gives me great pleasure to visit this town. For here, too, I have made friends.

Until lately, there have been no retail florist stores in Mt. Clemens. About two years ago, Mr. John Carey opened one, as an adjunct to his wholesale trade; and from all accounts he is doing well.

The flowers grown in Mt. Clemens go to the Michigan Cut Flower Exchange in Detroit. In fact, two of the Mt. Clemens florists, namely, Robert Klagge and Fred Breitmeyer of the Breitmeyer Floral Company, are interested in that remarkably successful institution, which under the able management of Robert M. Rahaley has made such wonderful progress within the past few years.

Robert Klagge, at one time known as the Violet king of that section, has in recent years centered his attention upon Lily of the Valley, and is now the largest Lily of the Valley grower in Michigan. But besides Valley, he grows an immense quantity of French and Holland bulbous stock, and is quite successful with his Roses and Carnations.

Fred Breitmeyer of the Breitmeyer Floral Company, is centering his entire attention upon Roses, believing in specialization as the indispensable factor in unqualified success. Among other Roses, he finds Jonathon Mack one of the best for Summer culture. It is said that Mr. Fred Breitmeyer has discovered a gem in the way of a sport among his Ophelia Roses. It is a clear pink Ophelia. The growers will await with interest the result of Mr. Breitmeyer's discovery.

August von Boeslager, as his name indicates, comes from a noble family in Germany. In his native land, it is said, he mingled with the "upper ten." But in this country he became imbued with the democratic spirit, and put his abilities and energy to good use. He became a florist, and a very successful florist indeed. His greenhouse range on North Gratiot street, in Mt. Clemens, is one of the

beauty spots in that town. The cobble-stone wall fronting his picturesque chateau and greenhouses, his very attractive conservatory leading to the range, proclaim him an artist as well as a florist. He grows excellent stock, and is always abreast of the times.

Mr. John Carey never misses on Roses. His crop is always on time, and he seems fully able to guard against all ills to which Roses are subject—mildew, blackspot, and all the rest of them. But besides Roses, he grows quantities of bulbous stock and Carnations, most of which go to the Michigan Cut Flower Exchange in Detroit.

Toledo Florists Keeping Step with Progress

Toledo, Ohio, is within hailing distance of Detroit, being but sixty miles away from it. Some jestingly refer to Toledo as a suburb of Detroit. I question, however, if any city in the country can boast of such suburbs. For Toledo has grown in recent years in a way to ensure it place in the ranks of the largest cities in the country. As I compare the Toledo of twenty-eight years ago with Toledo today, the advances the city has made appear as remarkable indeed. Twenty-eight years ago there were but few greenhouse ranges in that town, the largest of them—that belonging to the late George Heidl, being small in scope and antiquated in construction. Today modern ranges are to be found in various sections of the city; and the progressive spirit of the florists of Toledo is parallel with that of their brother florists in any other city.

Thomas Magee of the Davis & Magee Company, at one time a Philadelphian, brought with him to his Western home the advanced ideas of the East and has built up an excellent business in the residential part of the town. About three years ago, he found his place inadequate to the growth of his business. To meet his increasing needs, he demolished his greenhouses, and in their place he erected a modern range with a store in front that is considered one of the finest in the State.

E. Suder, of Cherry street, has also found it necessary to meet the demands of the times, and two years ago his place was completely rebuilt. A magnificent conservatory, such as one is accustomed to see on private estates, has been added; and the general equipment has been modernized and largely improved.

Harry Heidl, who succeeded his late uncle, George Heidl, has practically rebuilt the entire range. Mr. Heidl grows for the wholesale market, and has made a success.

Schramm Brothers are two young men still in their twenties, who assumed the responsibilities of the old established business by force of circumstances. They are the third generation of the Schramms with whom I have come in contact since I began my visits to Toledo. Mr. Schramm, their grandfather, who had long since retired, died but recently. His two sons, who succeeded him several years ago, died within a year of each other, a few years after they had taken over their father's business. The present Schramms put their shoulders to the wheel, and notwithstanding their youth, they do not seem to regard their responsibilities as especially burdensome. The fine retail business which their parents and grandparents established and built up has been extended, and the young men give every promise of not slacking up the pace that has been set for them.

John Barrows, on Detroit street, an all-around good grower, has fully kept pace with the spirit of the times. Mr. Barrows grows a miscellaneous stock of plants and cut flowers and a large quantity of bulbs. He has an excellent retail trade in his own as well as in other sections of the city.

It is a pity that I cannot take up in detail the story of the progress made by every individual florist throughout the State of Ohio, and elsewhere; but, as is obvious, space will not permit. A good many of my friends in Cleveland, for

example, have most interesting histories that would well illustrate the success that is to be achieved by dint of hard work and perseverance. So, too, in Akron, Dayton, Lima, Mansfield, and many other towns there are florists who have achieved a well deserved reputation in the trade. But I must pass on.

The Credit System, Its Uses and Abuses

A few years ago, I had the privilege of addressing the Philadelphia Florists' Club on a topic that aroused at the time some interest and discussion in trade circles. The late Alexander Wallace, editor of *THE FLORISTS' EXCHANGE*, was especially enthusiastic in his advocacy of the principles that I brought up.

The subject involved was that of our credit system, its uses and abuses. It seems to me now, as it did then, that we have made but little progress in this direction. Our credit system is still in a great measure antiquated, and badly in need of modernizing. It is surprising, when one considers it, that the retail florist who has done so much to improve upon the methods of old, and has modernized the general system of doing business, should neglect the very foundation upon which a successful business is built. While giving his attention to details of store arrangement, quality of flowers, discussion of prices, and even co-operative advertising, it never occurs to him to take up the question of credit, a question that should above all else present itself to his mind as of primary importance. The custom prevails among the retail florists, as every one of my friends will concede, to extend credit to their patrons, often indiscriminately and without imposing any limitation of time upon the best of them. If Mrs. Brown gives a pink tea and wants a table decoration that will be just so, and in the nick of time, the florist expends his best efforts to satisfy her. He often takes rebukes if the box of flowers which she ordered to be delivered at nine should reach her at ten. He does his utmost to give her the very best flowers, for Mrs. Brown is a very particular lady, and will have nothing else but the best. He meets her whims and caprices and injunctions and orders without a murmur. To be sure, Mrs. Brown is a society lady, one whose trade is well worth having.

And now let us see how Mrs. Brown conducts her end of their business relation. After having run up an account that totals into a considerable sum, it never occurs to her that Mr. Florist might well use the money. The fact that he must pay his grower, or commission man, and that they in their turn must pay for labor and coal and other overhead expenses, never presents itself to her. The gaiety season being over, Mrs. Brown quietly departs for either her Summer home or for Europe, leaving her florist bill unattended to. It would be the height of folly, of course, on the part of Mr. Florist to call her attention to such trifling matter as her flower bill. The very idea of it! Why, Mrs. Brown is a leader of society; and Mr. Brown is a prominent man in town, a successful manufacturer, a member of the leading clubs, and what not. To present a bill to such people would mean nothing short of offending them. And so Mr. Florist bears the burden of his financial troubles; and of necessity must put off the grower or the commission man, who in his turn must bear his part of the burden.

Now and then it happens that a florist loses his patience, and then, lo and behold! his patron is lost to him, for his competitor saw the chance, and swooped upon it like a vulture after spying its prey. The consequence is that the lax credit system is thus perpetuated, and the loss to all is apparent.

I recall an incident that may well illustrate the situation. A number of years ago, a florist (whose name I need not mention here) lost patience with one of his liberal patrons, who ran up a considerable bill during nearly two years. The florist asked him several times if he could not oblige him with a little money, for he had his coal bill to pay, and other pressing obligations to meet. His requests were entirely ignored. The patron happened to be a lawyer of prominence. One

Saturday afternoon the long-suffering florist sent his son, at that time a boy of about fifteen, to the lawyer's office, with instructions to ask him for at least part payment on the bill, as he needed it badly. The boy returned empty handed, and told his father that in the future he should do his own collections; that not only had he failed to get any money, but that he had been grossly insulted into the bargain. The lawyer had told him to inform his father that he would pay the bill whenever he was good and ready, and that he considered it the height of audacity for the florist to pester him in this manner.

This was the last straw, and it broke the camel's back. On the following day, though it was Sunday, the florist rang the bell at the magnificent residence of his patron. The maid wanted to know the nature of his business.

"I want to see Mr. X———, and I want to see him at once!" he said.

Disregarding her expression of surprise, he ushered himself into the entry, and then to the parlor. A few minutes later, his patron appeared.

"What do I want?" said the florist, echoing the lawyer's question, "I want my money, and I want it right now, too! And if you don't hand it over to me on the spot, I will wipe the floor with you, and don't you forget it!"

Suited his action to his words, he seized the lawyer by the collar of his coat, and was about to administer the threatened punishment. The lawyer grasped the situation at once, and to avoid scandal he handed the florist the money there and then. As the latter departed, he told his erstwhile patron to remember that even a florist has his rights that must be enforced. And as to his future trade, he could transfer it to whomsoever he pleased.

The instances already cited were of course extreme: I do not advocate the method of collection involved as the best for results. But some means must be devised, to be sure less strenuous in their nature, to remedy an evil of long standing. There is no reason why the retail florist should not collect his accounts in due time. Nor is there any reason why his patrons, no matter what their standing in the community, should take offence because the florist wants the money that is coming to him. It seems to me that concerted action upon the part of the retail florists in this respect would be productive of excellent results. If the retail florists would impress upon the minds of their customers how necessary it is for them to collect their accounts in order to meet the pressing demands of the growers and be able to carry on their business (how hard it is to conduct business without the necessary funds every business man knows), I am quite sure that their patrons would realize the reasonableness of the florists and would pay promptly.

I shall not attempt to suggest ways and means, but I am quite sure that if the retail florists would act in unison they could easily devise them themselves.

What I have said about the retail florist and his methods of credit applies with equal force to the grower and wholesale man. As a body the florists, both retail and wholesale, are honest; and their integrity is not to be questioned for a moment. There are indeed less failures among the florists than among any other body of business men. But their laxity in credit system, both "coming and going," is a weakness and a hindrance that requires serious consideration and a radical remedy. The greenhouse man who makes it a practice to delay payments of his obligations beyond a reasonable length of time fails to realize not only the duty he owes to the man who gave him the stock, but to himself as well. Let me make that point a little clearer. If he finds credit easy, and the terms of the man anxious to sell him too liberal—of the "take-your-own-time-about-it" sort—he will buy more than his actual requirements justify. In this manner he assumes a burden not at all unavoidable. Besides, he takes up space in his greenhouse that he might better utilize with stock of his own production.

But even the most liberal house needs its money some time. And when the

limits of a reasonable time are reached, a polite request for money, at first a "please remit" on the statement, and later perhaps a draft, seem in order. The florist continues to take his time about it, ignoring all requests and drafts, and in course of time exhausts the patience of the liberal house. A pointed letter follows, and the result is an estrangement in business relations, antagonism on both sides, and financial loss to the grower himself, who should have bought less in the first place, with more thought of the preservation of his credit.

I am not speaking of the man who deliberately plans to purchase stock that he has not any intention to pay for. Such men, fortunately, constitute only a small minority in the trade, and the sooner they are entirely eliminated, the better for the men carrying on a legitimate business. I shall not speak of these "dead-beats" at all. It is the florist who brings into his business grit and enthusiasm, who plans and conducts his enterprise upon honorable principles, that should give to the credit end of his business the careful consideration that he brings to bear upon other phases of it. It is remarkable how little this very important element in our business is thought of even by some of the most progressive men in the trade. The A. B. C. of business principles is in a good many cases either ignored or altogether misunderstood. Often an unknown florist will send in a good-sized order, with instructions to forward immediately, no mention about reference or terms of payment or his business standing being made. He simply takes it for granted that the house ought to know all about him. (I have in mind the man well worthy of credit.) Several years ago, a prominent florist in one of the New England States gave me an order for a few hundred Cyclamen plants. He was particular about their quality, and wanted to know my source of supply. I mentioned a Cyclamen specialist. To my complete surprise, he was at the point of canceling the order on the spot.

"Why," I asked in amazement, "what fault do you find with that man's stock? He is a specialist, and his Cyclamen, I am sure, will please you."

"I have nothing against his stock," was the reply. "But I do not like the man. Last year I sent him an order for five hundred plants and he asked me for money in advance. Any man getting money in advance from me will have to get up pretty early in the morning! My credit is good everywhere, and I don't have to pay in advance."

"Unquestionably so," I replied; "and had the man known you, he would have been glad to sell you his entire output without hesitation. Suppose," I continued, "some unknown florist from a distant point had sent you an order for plants, omitting to tell you about his business standing. Would you have sent them?"

"I certainly would," he replied.

"Then you are very lax in your credit methods, and laxity means loss in the end."

I explained the reasonableness on the part of any man who asked of an unknown correspondent either reference or cash in advance with an order.

"Besides," I concluded, "in this case you are giving the order to me, and not to the Cyclamen grower. And since you have nothing against me, and I in turn have nothing against your credit, why not let the order stand?"

The order stood.

Another instance, somewhat different in its nature from the foregoing, is worth mentioning. We will let the letter of the correspondent speak for itself:

"S. S. Skidelsky, Betz Building.

"I have gat yu lader i tank yu av ar so muc fort. i found ut yoo ask me for references. i dont have too gev no references too nobade. if i koodnt doo b ines wit out references i wudnt have noo b ines. I geve you de order on C. O. D. iv det dont doo yuo, you kan kep your Ferns and den i gone gev yoo? in men yoo good references.

"I never met a business man like you are."

Which translated reads:

"I have your letter. I thank you ever so much for it. I find you ask me for references. I do not have to give references to anybody. If I could not do business without references, I would not have any business. I gave you the order C. O. D. If that does not do you, you can keep your Ferns and——"

"I never met a business man like you are."

This remarkable piece of business literature came to me in response to a polite letter from me stating that before attending to his mail order I would like to have reference about his business standing, or else cash in advance. The man was undoubtedly honest, and meant well, as the very tone of his indignant letter indicated. The fact that he took such exception to references, regarding the request for them as a serious offence and a reflection upon his honor, simply proves that the man has no conception of business principles. In this case, too, I may have cited an extreme instance; but the illustrations given are sufficient to prove my contention that our credit system, both wholesale and retail, needs modernizing.

John Thorpe and William Scott

Among the eminent figures in the horticultural world a few years ago were John Thorpe of Queens, L. I., and William Scott, of Buffalo. My acquaintance with Mr. Thorpe was slight. I never met him during the years of his prosperity—at the time when he was president of the S. A. F. and O. H., and for years thereafter, when his business success was at its height. I had heard a great deal, however, about Mr. Thorpe, of his profound botanical learning, as well as his numerous peculiarities that seemed rather to enhance than detract from popular appreciation of him. It is said that the great Henry Ward Beecher, the eminent Brooklyn divine, was one of Mr. Thorpe's friends and admirers. Mr. Thorpe's prediction that our Carnation would reach the four-inch dimension has long since been fulfilled.

After severing his connections with Hallock, in Queens, Mr. Thorpe drifted westward. In 1893, during the World's Fair in Chicago, he was placed in charge of the horticultural department. Later on, he managed flower shows in Kansas City, Mo. What his successes or failures were does not concern us at this time. The deplorable fact is that the light of this star was soon dimmed; and as years rolled on adversity fastened its grip more and more firmly upon him, until finally he ended his days in poverty and obscurity. A sad ending of a career that promised so well at its outset. His staunchest admirers have told me time and again that he himself was in a great measure accountable for his downfall.

The name of William Scott will ever remain a pleasant memory to those who, like myself, knew him intimately. Mr. Scott was pre-eminently a man of culture. And by this I mean that his knowledge was not confined to the limits of his own profession, although there, too, he stood at the head. He was a voracious reader of the best world literature, including philosophy, history, zoology, and *belles lettres*. Such scientists as Darwin and Huxley often engaged his attention late into the night, and that in spite of a hard day's work which would incline many a man in his place to take to his bed and pass into dreamland.

In fiction he confined himself to the classics; and among the English writers Dickens was his great favorite. So great was his fondness for him that he quoted passages from him on all occasions, illustrating his remarks by reference to many of Dickens's characters. Even his den did not escape Dickens's influence, for the walls were lined with cartoons of Pickwick, Micawber, Sairy Gamp, and the rest.

William Scott was a man not easily approachable; short in his answers, pointed in his remarks, at times impatient and brusque in his manner, he gave the impres-

sion of being a man to be let alone. But that impression had no real foundation in fact. Many a traveling man learned from him, to his subsequent benefit, the value of taking a man at his word. In the case of traveling men, his "yes" and "no" meant just what they said; for he would not be annoyed by a persistent knight of the grip under any circumstances, and would therefore put on a curtness of manner as armor against his attacks. Those who knew him intimately (and I had the privilege of being among them) found in Mr. Scott a man of spirit, wit, brilliant conversational powers, and amiability. His wit, indeed, was one of the chief characteristics of the man. On many occasions he kept his friends roaring when in his inimitable way he would relate an incident that might have happened a day or two before in his business. At this moment I recall one or two.

A lady of frugal habits asked him one day his price on Chrysanthemums.

"We have them at all prices, Mrs. Jones," he said. "We have some at fifty cents, fairly good ones at a dollar, some real good ones at a dollar and a half, two, and three. Now which will you have?"

"Why, Mr. Scott, give me a dozen at fifty cents," replied the lady. "I want them for Mr. Jones's grave; and Mr. Jones would certainly object to my paying more."

Another good story is of a Hollander who succeeded in booking an order from Mr. Scott amounting to several hundred dollars. As was the custom in those days, a transaction of this sort was usually cemented by means of the social drink I have previously referred to. Failing to receive the invitation from the Holland gentleman, Mr. Scott offered to do the honors himself, inviting the salesman to a café across the street from his place.

"What'll you have?" asked Mr. Scott.

"Anything, anything," replied the Hollander.

"Would you like a little Holland gin, the real stuff, you know?"

Of course he would. Contrary to the American rules of reciprocating the courtesy, the Hollander smacked his lips and said nothing. Ten minutes later, Mr. Scott suggested a second drink, which was accepted by the Hollander with the same alacrity that had met the first.

On their way back to the greenhouse, the Hollander stopped a moment, as if plunged into deep thought. Finally he uttered:

"Mr. Scott, I thank you very much for your kindness." And thrusting his hand into his pocket, he fished out a nickel, which he offered to Mr. Scott, saying,

"Here, buy yourself a good cigar!"

No doubt the gentleman from Holland, if he still continues traveling in this country, has changed his methods of dealing with his customers on the social end of it, and has perhaps learned that the purchasing power of a nickel is utterly inadequate when it comes to a good cigar.

My intimate acquaintance with Mr. Scott dates back to the time of the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo. Prior to that time, I merely called upon him in my capacity as traveling salesman. His brusque answers discouraged for a time my attempts to get closer to the man of whom I had heard so much, and whom I later learned to admire. It was during the Exposition that I had the first opportunity of meeting him, not in the relation of salesman to buyer, but simply as man to man. It was on the Fair grounds. He was in full charge of the horticultural department. I approached Mr. Scott, remarking that I had nothing to offer him, and that I merely wanted to talk to him on things outside of business matters. He happened at the moment to be in a happy frame of mind, and my approach met with instantaneous success. We talked that evening upon general subjects, my native country, Russia, interesting him greatly. He wanted to know what the Russians were doing in horticulture, and a good many things about the general business conditions. We spoke on literature. Tolstoi and Tourguénieff especially

interested him, for he had read all that appeared from their pens up to then. In his opinion, Tolstoi was a man far in advance of his time; and he believed that his theories bordered on the millennium. In his turn, he told me about his favorites in English literature. Dickens, his best-beloved, was especially dwelt upon. He wanted to know if I had ever read Dickens; and when I told him that all of Dickens's works were translated into Russian, and that I had read some of them, such as "David Copperfield," "Pickwick Papers," "Dombey and Son," his delight was akin to that of a boy presented with a new plaything. That evening we became friends, and our friendship lasted until the day when William Scott was no more.

What Mr. Scott did for the benefit of his brother florists is within the memory of all of us. His practical notes on floriculture had for many years been a great aid to florists everywhere. And many a novice has started in business with a knowledge obtained from Mr. Scott's hints periodically given through the trade papers. So much was he engrossed in this work that to a great extent he neglected his own affairs. Business matters that required his attention would be set aside, so that he might complete a paper on some subject or other pertaining to horticulture. His trade notes were read with great delight by every florist. A lucidity of style and a humorous vein distinguished his letters from those of most correspondents.

During one of the Carnation shows held in Buffalo, a prominent Pennsylvania man saw fit to find fault with the exhibition in general and the varieties shown in particular. He went so far as to find fault with the very names given the varieties, and the names of some of the exhibitors themselves. A letter appeared in one of the trade papers, written by this man, and airing his views in no uncertain terms. This letter was brought to the attention of Mr. Scott, who came back at its author "hammer and tongs." Among other things, he referred to this man as "the hibernating bear just out of his lair, who couldn't recognize a good thing if he stumbled against it."

A few years prior to his death, Mr. Scott became confined to the house with a complicated disease that foreboded his end.

Memorial to William Scott

In May, 1908, Mr. Scott found his last resting-place in a beautiful spot in Forest Lawn Cemetery. A handsome monument marks his grave. Upon it is inscribed:

WILLIAM SCOTT
1844-1908

ERECTED BY THE FLORISTS OF AMERICA IN GRATEFUL
RECOGNITION OF HIS EMINENT SERVICES TO FLORICULTURE

The florists of America, to their credit be it said, did not fail to respond to the call for contributions toward this memorial. A much larger sum, I am sure, could have been collected; but the S. A. F. and O. H., which held its convention that year at Niagara Falls, deemed it wise to limit the memorial fund to the amount already subscribed up to that time.

It was a pitiful sight to behold this robust man, a veritable physical and intellectual giant, fading away during the last days of his illness, though still in full possession of his mental powers. To me it seems that he died as he had lived, his sense of humor never for a moment deserting him.

The influence of Mr. Scott upon the florists throughout the country cannot be gainsaid. It was still more marked upon the men directly connected with him in his business, and upon his own sons. Among those who were in the employ of Mr. Scott for a number of years, and who owe much to his influence I may mention two men: Louis Neubeck, who now conducts a successful business of his own

on Main and High streets, Buffalo, and Mike Bloy of Detroit, Mich. Both men still refer to their former employer with the deepest admiration.

Mike Bloy, now a very successful grower of Detroit, received his first instructions at the hands of William Scott in Buffalo. Mr. Scott had the faculty of discerning the abilities and possibilities in men. He saw in young Mike the successful florist of the future. And he gave him all the chance to develop. After being in Scott's employ for a number of years, he drifted out West, working for a while in Denver, Col. Later, he came to Cleveland, and assumed the management of the J. M. Gasser Company's large greenhouse range at Rocky River, a suburb of Cleveland. Subsequently, he saw his chance in Detroit, and took it. The Rackham Greenhouses, on Van Dyke street in Detroit, were for sale, and Mr. Bloy purchased them. At that time, although it is comparatively of recent date, that section of the city was not promising much in the way of retail trade. For a while Mr. Bloy confined himself to the wholesale market. During the past few years, however, the tremendous growth of Detroit has affected all sections; and Mr. Bloy's trade grew apace. At the present time, he enjoys a most prosperous retail business in the thriving Michigan metropolis.

Louis Neubeck stepped out of Scott's establishment a finished all-around grower. His knowledge of the growing end of the business, no less than his business acumen, soon brought him to the front ranks among the successful florists of Buffalo. At any season of the year, it is a pleasure to go through his greenhouses, and feast your eyes upon plants worthy of an exhibition hall.

Mr. Scott's own sons conduct the business now under the name of the William Scott Company. They are Alex, William, and Robert; the last named attends to the financial end of the business, while the other two take charge of the growing end. The success of their father is perpetuated by his worthy sons.

Another son, David J. Scott, is located in Corfu, N. Y., and grows largely for the wholesale market, shipping to Buffalo, Rochester, Chicago, St. Louis, and other points. He grows a miscellaneous stock of cut flowers, and is very successful in his business.

The Palmers of Buffalo

Buffalo had other distinguished men whose reputation extended far beyond the limits of the city and the State of their abode. The late W. J. Palmer was a man of distinctive personality. I never had the pleasure of knowing Mr. Palmer personally, but what I heard about him during my frequent visits to Buffalo, long after his demise, leads me to believe that there was a man who planned well and left a marked influence upon the future growth and development of floriculture in his city.

His worthy successor, W. J. Palmer, Jr., a man whose greatest fault is his exceeding modesty, took up the good work of his father, and carried it on in a way that outstrips even his father's most sanguine hopes. He has two stores in Buffalo, and they are among the finest in the country. The business transacted mounts into high figures. His greenhouses at Lancaster, N. Y., have been completely rebuilt, and are under the most efficient management of Barney Meyer, a man who entered the employ of Palmer, Sr., as an errand boy, and graduated into one of the few very successful growers and managers in the country.

Mr. Palmer is among the few men to recognize the value of a college education as a means to lift the profession of horticulturist to the high standard of efficiency it deserves. His son Max, a boy of about twenty-two, is a graduate of Cornell University, where he took the horticultural course. He has now the opportunity to apply his theoretical knowledge to practical work. And to see young Max attired in a pair of overalls roaming among the Carnation and Rose plants, making notes, testing one thing, experimenting with another, is to be forced to the

conclusion that here is the florist of the future, who will do things knowingly, intelligently, and effectively. Max is quite enthusiastic about his work, and unlike many a young man of his financial and social position, he has no time nor use for idleness. Early in the morning he is on his job at Lancaster. Of late he has taken up the work of cross-hybridization, and it is not unlikely that Lancaster will be heard from some day, in the way of meritorious novelties.

S. A. Anderson

S. A. Anderson is another notable of Buffalo. Starting in a florist store many years ago in the capacity of errand boy, young Anderson (and he is still a young man) realized the opportunity and possibility of embarking in business on his own account. With the indomitable courage characteristic of the man, he persevered against odds, and came out on top. His store on Main street is a veritable beehive of business activity. Several years ago he acquired the greenhouses on Elmwood avenue, at one time belonging to Joseph Rebstock; and there he grows ferns, Cyclamen, Begonia Lorraine and Cincinnati, and other plants, for his own use as well as for the wholesale market. A branch store in connection with his greenhouses has been recently established; and this, too, has proved a successful venture.

Postmaster William F. Kasting

And there was Postmaster William Kasting. Who has not heard about Postmaster Kasting, a man of will power and ambition, who invariably "got there" when he made up his mind to do so? Years ago, William F. Kasting acquired his experience at various floral establishments in different parts of the country. Then he drifted to Buffalo. Daniel B. Long, at one time one of the leading florists in Buffalo, conceived the idea of launching a wholesale florists' commission business. Young Kasting applied for the position as clerk, and got it. I do not know at what salary he was taken on, but it does not matter here. Kasting, as I said before, was ambitious. He thought he could conduct a business of his own, and Buffalo was the place for the enterprise.

One day he disclosed his plans to Mr. Long himself. The latter thought the matter over, and concluded it would be advisable to transfer his interest to Kasting rather than have a competitor in him.

He prospered from the start. His business soon expanded, and he became well known throughout many sections of the country. But Mr. Kasting's ambition did not stop at that. Politics seemed inviting. There were opportunities in that direction, as well as honors. He had the self-confidence and the determination needed. His attempts to get into one office or another at first met with no success, though in no instance was he ever defeated by big majorities. It was, as they express it in political circles, "always a close vote." But he persevered, and his efforts at last were crowned with success. He was appointed to the postmastership of Buffalo, and he retained the position to the day of his death. [Mr. Kasting died suddenly on June 15, 1916, at St. Louis.]

"Nuisance" of Flower Bargain Counter Sales

A great deal of discussion has been going on from time to time at various florists' clubs all over the country, regarding the "nuisance" of flower bargain counter sales. The subject indeed is one that engages the attention of every florist throughout the land, both retail man and grower. Is it advisable to offer cut flowers to the people at cut prices? Like any other question of great interest to people directly concerned in it, opinions pro and con are expressed on all sides. On the one hand, it is contended that cut flowers represent a luxury; and the value of a luxury is enhanced by its price. In other words, it is said that if you cheapen an article, it loses its value and attractiveness to the public, and that in order to maintain the interest of the public in the article offered, its price must be kept

up. It is further contended by supporters of this side that it would be far better to throw the surplus into the rubbish heap than glut the market and discourage the "best" people from purchasing flowers.

I have often had the privilege of listening to such arguments at florists' clubs. It is no unusual thing to hear the retail man deliver himself of arguments such as these:

"Why, it is preposterous to stock our windows with bargain sales! It looks cheap, and discourages our best people from entering our store. I would sooner sell one dozen Carnations for 75c. than four dozen for \$1. There is more money in it, and less work. It will be the end of our business if we persist in cheapening our product. Flowers are a luxury, and we must cater to the elements appreciating such luxuries, and able to pay for them. I for one don't give a snap for the bargain buyer in flowers."

On the other hand, the grower has his side of the story, and he tells it in no uncertain terms.

"We are in the business," he says, "to make a living, to pay expenses, and to have a fair return on our investment. Our product is in the market, and we look for the best returns possible. It is but natural that we should expect all we can get for our stock. And when we do get fair returns, as during holiday times, for example, you people are the first to raise a howl. But conditions arise where the supply by far exceeds the demand. We are sending in our Carnations and Roses by the stacks, but there is no demand for them. The market is overstocked. Carnations sometimes drop as low as five dollars a thousand. Roses go in the same proportion. Now what do you retailers do about it? Do you ever think of relieving the market, of buying more than you actually need, and taking a chance? Does it ever occur to you that five dollars a thousand for Carnations does not pay for the labor of picking and packing them? You buy just what you need, at a bargain price; you take your flowers to your store, and sell them to the public at 75c. and \$1 per dozen. The remainder of it can go to the dumps, in so far as you are concerned.

"Now let us look at the situation clearly. We are in the business not for the benefit of the retail florist exclusively. We want some of the benefit ourselves. Nor do we give a snap for your 'best elements,' and the fact that it might cheapen the price of flowers and impair their charm in the eyes of society folk. We are in the business not for sentiment, but for all we can get out of it. Since you cannot take the chance to give us a lifting hand, we must help ourselves, and find the best market we can for our surplus. A half loaf is better than no bread. We must pay our coal bills and our help, and whatever we realize on our stock helps toward meeting those obligations. Besides, I can see no reason why the common people should not have as much chance of buying flowers as your 'best elements.' When the market is overstocked, and flowers are cheap, there is at least the advantage that the common people become educated and learn to appreciate flowers. The fakir on the streets who offers a bunch of Roses to the working girl at a low price is doing good work. That working girl will in time become accustomed to the beauty of flowers, and will buy them from a florist at times when the fakir will have none to offer. At any rate, it pays us better to sell flowers at bargain counter rates than to throw them on the dumps.

"Aside from this, we are taking all the chances. When a new Rose or Carnation appears on the market, you want us to grow it. We invest our money, and often get no returns. A Rose or Carnation that may best appeal to you may not pay for the space given it. And yet we persist in trying, year after year, in order to satisfy the demands of the discriminating public."

There is, of course, something to be said on both sides. The retailer is logical from his point of view; and the grower's arguments are quite rational, too. It

would be presumptuous on my part to make any attempt to solve the problem now. It must be remembered that flowers, although classed as a luxury, are at the same time a commodity; and commodities, according to all laws of economics, are governed by supply and demand. Nor must it be forgotten that sentiment and business must be kept entirely apart. There is no more reason for sentimentality in a grower than there would be for sentimentality in the hardware manufacturer. The retailer is absolutely right in his contention that the price of flowers should be maintained. For there is nothing more discouraging than cut price rates in any commodity. On the other hand, be it also remembered that the grower would be only too delighted if his product should bring him good returns at all times, but that when there is a glut he suffers more financial loss than the retailer. On the whole it is well, perhaps, that such questions are brought up and discussed in clubrooms between the two factions. Open discussion and good sound arguments often lead to the solution of complicated situations. There is no doubt in my mind that the florists will in the end find a way to consolidate their interests for the benefit of the trade as a whole.

Another question that often arises is that of department stores and five and ten cent stores dabbling in plants. I have already referred, though slightly, to this question in a previous chapter. Discouraging though it may seem at first glance, the fact that department stores and five and ten cent stores deal in plants should not really discourage the florists. In the long run, the public at large—I mean the flower-buying public—will look to the florists for its supply. The man or woman who will buy a plant from a five and ten cent store, or a department store, would probably never think of entering a flower shop, anyway. If these people acquire the taste for plants in this manner, the chances are that the florists will enjoy their patronage in the end. Let us look upon the intrusion of the department store as a means to an end desirable to the trade as a whole.

Discussions of these and other topics were especially interesting to me in the earlier days of my travel. They afforded me food for reflection, and enabled me to bring them to the attention of florists located in the smaller towns. Opinions naturally differed, but I must admit the fair-mindedness and honesty of opinion expressed by the majority of my friends with whom I happened to discuss the subjects. Thus a retail man would often side with the views of the grower; and some grower, in his turn, would admit the reasonableness of the retailer's contentions. It proved to me that I was coming in contact with a body of honest and earnest men not at all blinded by considerations of self-interest.

I recall an instance. It happened in a New England town a few years ago. I called upon a man who, after giving me some business, brought up casually the question of cut prices in flowers.

"John Brown," he remarked to me, "is determined to put me out of the business."

"How so?" I asked in surprise.

"Why, the way he cuts prices on Carnations and Geraniums is simply an outrage. There is no more money left in the business, and I'm getting disgusted with it."

"Are you sure that he does it with malice aforethought; in other words, that he means to do you harm?"

"Quite sure about it."

"Then why don't you go him one better?" I said.

"But how can I do it, and pay my bills?"

"A better way out of it," I suggested, "is to see Mr. Brown and talk matters over with him. You have always been friends, or at least on speaking terms. So I can see no reason why you shouldn't get together and discuss the subject for the benefit of both of you."

My suggestion seemed reasonable, and in course of a week or two I heard that things had been adjusted to their mutual satisfaction.

It was simply this: Mr. Brown happened to have an unusually large lot of split Carnations, and a number of Geraniums that showed no blooms. It was a question between throwing them in the rubbish heap and offering them to the public at bargain prices. He chose the latter method, and realized enough to justify the experiment. His best stock he held at regular prices. My customer evidently had heard but one side of the story about the cut prices, but never knew that on his best stock Mr. Brown realized more perhaps than did he himself. The fact of the matter is that often a customer will come in, and ask the price of one thing or another; and upon being given the regular prices he will inform the florist that he is too high, that his competitor in town sells his Carnations or Geraniums at so much less, never mentioning the kind of stock offered at the cut price.

The florist, before investigating things for himself, jumps immediately at conclusions, and is either disgusted with the condition of affairs, giving it up as a bad job, or goes his competitor one better, and actually begins to slice prices on first-class stock. In either case, the business suffers in the end.

It is things of this sort that are often obviated in the larger cities by means of discussion among the members at the florists' meetings. Florists' clubs are of incalculable value to their members, and I can foresee the time when topics of this sort will be brought up before the conventions of the S. A. F. and O. H., and will receive due consideration, not from men of any one location, but from florists of all sections of the country. In their general nature, these questions affect all men of the trade alike.

During my early travels through the New England States, I met many men who, like myself, were much younger than they are today, and who, like myself, are still at it. With many my relations have become somewhat more than those that ordinarily exist between buyer and seller. Among these I may mention with pleasure the names of A. N. Pierson and S. J. Reuter.

A. N. Pierson of Cromwell, Conn.

I met Mr. Pierson about twenty years ago, when I first applied for his line. Mr. Pierson, although not generally well known throughout the country, was already a prominent figure in New England territory. His place, though about half the size of its present dimensions, was a large one nevertheless, and ranked among the very largest at that time in the land. It was on a Summer afternoon that I paid my first visit to Cromwell. Although I had heard about Mr. Pierson's place long before, I had never expected to see such a mammoth establishment, with such a diversified stock. A glance through the greenhouses soon convinced me that the head of the establishment was a man who knew his business from A to Z. I was looking for Mr. Pierson, expecting to behold a man overbearing in manner, unapproachable, formal, and reserved; though why I so expected I cannot exactly say. I may perhaps have been influenced by the magnitude of the place. To my surprise, however, Mr. Pierson's personality was utterly unlike my anticipation. I beheld a man extremely democratic in his manner. I stated the object of my visit, and was invited to accompany him on a stroll through the place. Our business relations, which began twenty years ago, have been most pleasant. At all times Mr. Pierson believed in "the square deal." Like the late William K. Harris, he impressed upon me at the start never to promise any more than he could fulfill, but to rest assured that he would fulfill all that he could promise. At no time during our business experience in these many years has he disappointed me in this regard.

I am proud to say that my confidence in Mr. Pierson has been reciprocated. A number of years after I met him, I had occasion to place a large order with a European house, one that I knew dealt with Mr. Pierson. Among others that I mentioned as reference I gave his name. I received the stock I ordered, and have dealt with that house ever since. Upon my last visit to Europe, the head of the concern informed me that Mr. Pierson had written him to the effect that while he did not count my money, he knew that I was absolutely good for anything I wanted, that I would not purchase anything I did not want, and that he (Mr. Pierson himself) would unhesitatingly sell me without putting any limitation on my credit. I was naturally proud to learn through an indirect source Mr. Pierson's opinion about my business integrity.

S. J. Reuter of Westerly, R. I.

My relations with the late S. J. Reuter of Westerly, R. I., date back to 1890, shortly after the first florists' convention in Boston. Mr. Reuter had already the reputation of being one of the largest growers in New England, and was well known in that section of the country. Although on my first visit I had no knowledge of horticulture, nor any interest in it, Mr. Reuter, busy man though he was, gave me a hearing and favored me with a small order for florists' supplies. I well recall my first impression of the man. It was that primarily of a personality, a man in full vigor of health and spirits, alive to the trend of the times, and even, it appeared to me, one who took time by the forelock. His extensive place at that time, in so small a town as Westerly, took me somewhat by surprise, and made me wonder how he could possibly dispose of his output in such a limited locality. I didn't know, of course, that Watch Hill, the famous resort adjacent to Westerly, where so many celebrities from many parts of the country congregated during the Summer season, depended upon his product. Besides, he shipped his flowers to other parts of the State, and even to Boston. In that period of my career, I always associated a range of greenhouses with the needs of its immediate vicinity; I never dreamed that cut flowers and plants might be shipped to nearby places and even distant points.

Mr. Reuter had already a big business and was conducting it on an extensive scale. My business relations with the firm from the time I met him to the present day have been profitable and pleasant. Years after our first meeting, when I became interested in horticulture, our business transactions became larger. It was my privilege for a number of years to sell to Mr. Reuter, among other things, every meritorious Carnation that appeared in the market. In turn, I disposed of a great deal of the stock of Mr. Reuter's production. Particular about the quality of his own stock, he would always exact that whatever he purchased be devoid of all faults and blemishes, such as plants or rooted cuttings are often affected with.

It would be well for growers in general to place the same insistence upon quality of stock purchased and sent out. What a lot of trouble and annoyance it would save for both purchaser and seller! Those who, like myself, have been in the game for many years, can well realize the unpleasant features about the business when things do not run as they should. Carnation cuttings affected with fungus, or Roses covered with mildew, should no more be marketed than putrid beef or rotten potatoes. It seems to me that growers should give this end of their business their utmost care and consideration, and that men disregarding this first principle of business honesty should be tabooed as unreliable. Only such extreme measures will accomplish the results desired.

Like many another progressive grower, Mr. Reuter has largely extended his place, adding from time to time, as his business expanded. Our friendship, which began over a quarter of a century ago, continued till his death. And many a time I have spent an afternoon or evening with Mr. Reuter, in conversation upon

business and other topics. Of late years, Mr. Reuter had not given the business his active attention. His health had been somewhat impaired, necessitating at one time his departure for abroad, where he spent about a year in his native land, Germany. But he has a worthy successor in the person of his son, Louis Reuter; a young man of splendid education and business training, he bids fair to continue the success of the industry started by his father. [Mr. Reuter died Nov. 24, 1916.]

A Hartford Florist, John Coombs

Other parts of New England proved equally attractive and profitable to me. My first visit to Hartford, Conn., dates about as far back as that to Westerly. Among the many friends I made there, John Coombs was one of the first. There was never a time in my recollection when Mr. Coombs did not favor me with an order, either for florists' supplies or horticultural products. Contrary to the general notion that New Englanders are self-centered and short in their manner of dealing with "drummers," Mr. Coombs never was anything but friendly. Not only did he give me his own trade, but he seemed to take a personal interest in my success, and often asked me if I called on his competitors, and if not, why not. Contrary also to the custom of many never to recommend a competitor, he would always have a good word to say about all of them. Among those he wanted me to visit was the late A. Whiting, whose place of business, now conducted by Carl Peterson, is located in West Hartford.

A. Whiting of West Hartford

My first call upon Mr. Whiting was anything but encouraging. I found a man late in his seventies, or perhaps in his early eighties, seated upon a chair in an antiquated office, with a number of trade and daily papers, around him. He was engrossed in reading. My pleasant "Good morning, sir" remained unanswered. My stereotyped expression about the particular weather of that day was likewise ignored. When I came to the real point—that of business—he glared at me in a way that said more eloquently than words that he had no business for me, and that I had better not waste my time and breath.

Thus "encouraged," I took my departure, vowing never to return. Mr. Coombs, however, thought otherwise. He knew Mr. Whiting better than I did, and on my next visit to Hartford he urged me again to renew my efforts in Mr. Whiting's direction. Reluctantly, and more to please Mr. Coombs than myself, I undertook the unpleasant task.

The result was again disastrous. Mr. Whiting would have none of me. There were other young men whom he knew better, who had wives and children to support, and in whose welfare he was more interested than in mine. In the face of this information, there was nothing to do but take my departure. When I went out of the door that second time, I was sure nothing under Heaven could induce me to enter it again.

But again Mr. Coombs viewed the matter in a different light. He could see no reason why Mr. Whiting and I should not get together. As to Mr. Whiting's peculiarities—why, that was a mere trifle! Unworthy of any young drummer's consideration! The young, Mr. Coombs thought, should make allowance for the old, and persist until their point is gained.

It is one thing to make up your mind never to do a thing, and quite another to adhere to your decision. Notwithstanding my vows never to see Mr. Whiting, I saw him again and again, and we became great friends in the end.

It happened in this manner:

The late William K. Harris told me how in 1886, during the second S. A. F. convention, held in Philadelphia, Mr. Whiting brought with him at his own expense a man who had the courage and audacity and requisite botanical knowl-

edge to debate with Peter Henderson on some horticultural subject. And Peter Henderson was regarded as the greatest botanist of his time among the florists. Coupled with his great knowledge of horticulture was his business success, for Mr. Henderson was known far and wide as one of the most prosperous men in the trade. When Mr. Henderson, therefore, undertook to bring up a subject before a florists' convention, all he said was taken for granted, with not a dissenting voice. The florists, it seemed, were almost afraid to raise their voices when Mr. Henderson spoke.

In the city of Hartford, there was a man who at one time was prosperous, a State Senator, a man of culture, and more or less familiar with horticultural subjects. In addition, he was a man of considerable oratorical power, and one who could hold his own with any man in a debate. It was this man that Mr. Whiting brought with him to the Philadelphia convention; and to his great delight his protégé amply justified his expectations. The man "made a hit," and Mr. Whiting was more delighted about it than was the man himself.

A story like this, it flashed through my mind, would enable me to obtain some hearing from Mr. Whiting upon my next visit to Hartford. I tucked it away in my memory, determined to make stock of it. Upon my next visit, therefore, I went to see Mr. Whiting, and after the usual preliminaries, I came out with my story, telling him that I had heard it from Mr. Harris, and that it was a great performance on his part. I could see at once that his countenance lighted up, and that his eyes assumed a benevolent expression that had been absent in all our previous encounters. He asked me to sit down (which was also contrary to precedent), and to tell him things about Philadelphia and other points I had visited in my travels. In his turn, he told me about his visit along in the '50's to the States of Colorado, Nebraska, Missouri, and Illinois. Chicago, he said, impressed him even at that time as a thriving, hustling town that had a great future before it. He repeated the story I had heard from Mr. Harris, adding details which must have escaped Mr. Harris's memory. He laughed again and again as he recalled some point or other of especial poignancy.

Without asking for an order, I got one. He called in his foreman (his successor, Mr. Carl Peterson), and asked him to go over certain stocks, and get up an order for me. I found that he was very much interested in Carnations, and induced him to give me an order for a novelty which I was handling at that time. Mr. Whiting was practically helpless, and although his mind was keen and he was interested in things, he could not move about. He read a great deal, perusing among other things the trade papers. In that way he kept in touch with all the prominent growers, following up all the novelties that were offered.

Mr. Whiting told me of many prominent people he had met and done business with. Among these were Samuel Clemens, more popularly known as Mark Twain, Mrs. Stowe of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" fame, and many other celebrities.

The amusing tales that might be told illustrative of Mr. Whiting's eccentricity are many. One very humorous one is that of a lady who came in one day to buy flowers. She was a prominent lady in the town, and acquainted no doubt with Mr. Whiting's peculiarities. (At least, it is to be hoped she was.) Mr. Whiting was busily engaged in counting flowers when she entered.

"Good morning, Mr. Whiting," she said.

There was no reply.

"Good morning, Mr. Whiting," she repeated.

Still the same silence. The lady, assuming he had not heard her, went closer, and in slightly louder tone repeated her greeting.

Mr. Whiting looked up. He stared at her for one awful moment, then pointed to the door.

"You get out!" he said. Whether she "got" or not is unrecorded.

At another time a woman came in, and greeted Mr. Whiting several times, but received no reply. Giving up her attempts, she came to the point of her visit.

"How are your Violets this morning, Mr. Whiting?" she asked.

Mr. Whiting raised his eyes, and looked at her.

"You ask him!" he said, pointing to his foreman, not with his finger, but his foot!

My last business transaction with Mr. Whiting was at the time when he gave me an order for two hundred and fifty "Fiancée." He gave me the order a year prior to the dissemination of the variety, stipulating that should God gather him unto Himself in the meantime, I should consider the order canceled.

Mr. Whiting received his "Fiancée" in May, instead of January, as promised; and a week later he joined the Great Majority. I question if Mr. Whiting ever saw the "Fiancée"—in fact, I know he didn't, for Mr. Peterson told me so.

E. Welch and A. Dallas, Connecticut Florists

The late Mr. E. Welch of Hartford, Conn., was another old friend, and his death a few months ago was a personal loss to me. In the early days of my career, when a kind word and an encouraging greeting meant so much to me, he was one to extend them. I shall always remember with gratitude his tokens of friendship to me. My business relations with him up to the time of his death will remain among the pleasantest memories of my business career.

And what I said about Mr. Welch holds equally true of Mr. A. Dallas, of Waterbury, Conn., except, I am glad to say, that he is still in the land of the living. Busy or not busy, Mr. Dallas always has a friendly word and a welcome for me. I have watched his business development during the past twenty-eight years, and it is no exaggeration when I say that he stands in the front rank among the successful growers of the country. Unlike many "old-timers" of a generation ago, Mr. Dallas is progressive in his ideas, and adopts innovations with a spirit of initiative that would do credit to a younger man. His present greenhouse range is an enlarged edition of his former establishment, and the stock grown is of a quality worthy of the place itself.

Worcester and Framingham Florist Acquaintances

As I said before, my travels through the New England States brought me in contact with many men, some no longer living, others still active in business. There are many young men in active business today who at the time of my first visit to New England were attending school. Many of them are now at the head. There are H. F. A. Lange's Sons, Albert and Carl, at Worcester, Mass. At the time of my first visit to Worcester, Albert and Carl were quite young, and took little interest in the growing business which their father had launched so successfully.

I vividly remember the late H. F. A. Lange, who died a number of years ago. Mr. Lange, if I remember rightly, was born and brought up in Hamburg, Germany, and came to Worcester a number of years prior to my connection with the florist business. When I first met him, he reminded me of the type of men I often met in Russia, calm, reserved, dignified, with faces denoting the nobility of their origin. It seemed to me that Mr. Lange must have dispensed with the prefix "von" to his name upon arrival in this democratic country. "Von Lange" would have suited him admirably. His Van Dyke beard lent a special distinction to his appearance. He was of medium height, stocky, with shoulders well back and head up; he looked one straight in the eyes, with a steadiness that bespoke firmness of

character and self-reliance. No drummer, no matter how hardened, and much less a young drummer, just out in quest of new business, could possibly swerve Mr. Lange if he said no. He meant just what he said, and there was no appeal from his decree. He was also one of those men who, while giving his close attention to his business, never became engrossed in it to the extent of excluding all other interests in life. He was a sportsman in the fullest sense of the word, taking a keen interest in gentlemen's games of all sorts. He was especially fond of his rifle and at conventions of the S. A. F. and O. H. he was always among the best target shots, bringing down clay pigeons one after another without a hitch.

My efforts to sell to him at first met with no success. But I persisted, not so much for the sake of the possible business, as because I admired the man. Men of real merit, whether we gain favor with them or not, command our respect in spite of ourselves. Ungratified self-interest is not potent to overcome our spontaneous admiration for sterling quality when we meet it. But after a time Mr. Lange relented a little in my favor, and gave me part of his business.

Since the death of Mr. Lange, Albert and Carl have continued the good work, and have continued it well, too. Their business is regarded as one of the largest and most prosperous in the New England States. Albert, the head of the concern, divides his attention between the greenhouses and store, while Carl pays exclusive attention to the store. Following the example of their father, they deem it wise not to enslave themselves entirely to their business. The fishing-rod and the gun give them many an hour of pleasure during the dull business months of the Summer, among the lakes and forests of the State of Maine.

Another old-timer in Worcester, and a man whom I have always regarded as one of my best friends, is H. F. Littlefield. Years back, Mr. Littlefield was a knight of the grip himself, representing growers and other allied concerns in the New England States. Tiring of the road, Mr. Littlefield pitched his business tent in his native city, Worcester, and, as might have been expected from a man of his energy and business ability, he made a success of his venture. He has built up a large business. His greenhouse range and his store in the heart of the city show even to the casual observer that the man at the head of them is wide-awake. Remembering, from his own experience on the road, how a buyer may encourage or dampen the spirits of a traveling man, he has always a kind word for every man in the fraternity that pays him a visit. Nor do I know of any instance where a traveling man would have to leave his place entirely empty-handed. Such men are true exponents of the Golden Rule.

In Framingham, Mass., my old friend Nicholson is still active and alert, taking a deep interest in all things floricultural; and despite his age, he attends almost every convention, where he is fond of meeting his old friends from every section. A few years ago he transferred his greenhouses to his son William, who has enlarged the place, adding an immense greenhouse. William is a successful grower, as well as an enterprising business man. His father can rest secure in the knowledge that the business he built up will continue to grow.

S. J. Goddard, another friend of mine in Framingham, belongs to a later generation of florists. At one time he was in the employ of Mr. Nicholson, but a number of years ago he saw a chance for himself, and started in business on his own account. Mr. Goddard has truly made a success. At first confining himself to the wholesale market in Boston, he gradually drifted into the retail line, until at present he has a fine retail business in Framingham. Mr. Goddard ranks among the best growers in New England.

My acquaintance with Mr. Midgley of the Worcester Conservatories dates back to the time of the introduction of the "Enchantress" Carnation. Mr. Midgley, prior to his connection with the Worcester Conservatories, was an amateur

grower, and a great admirer of everything floral. While occupying a responsible position with one of the largest industrial corporations in Worcester, he found time for and took pleasure in the affairs of the horticultural society of his city, being its secretary for a number of years, and retaining the position to this day. Mr. Midgley, as an amateur, was a success. His love for flowers led him at the time I speak of to merge his interest with a company that had built a range of greenhouses and that had become known as the Worcester Conservatories. A few years later, he bought out the interests of the other members, and conducted the business on his own account, although still under the name of the Worcester Conservatories. At present he grows for the wholesale market, shipping his output to Boston and other New England points.

Other New Englanders

G. H. Sinclair, whom I have known for the past twenty years, is an "Old Englander." After landing in this country, about twenty-two years ago, he entered the employ of the late L. E. Marquisee, of Syracuse, N. Y. A few years later, he drifted towards New England, and secured a position with the late Mr. Howland. Here he demonstrated his ability in a manner that convinced Mr. Howland of the fallacy of following the hide-bound custom of conservatism; he introduced numerous innovations in the matter of growing high-grade stock. He was the first one to show that Chrysanthemums grown to the single stem would be appreciated by the public, and would be eagerly bought at a higher price. A yellow Chrysanthemum, the result of his own hybridization (Miss Josephine by name, if I remember rightly), was grown very successfully for a number of years locally.

Upon the death of Mr. Howland, Mr. Sinclair purchased his place, where he is carrying on his business today very successfully. About five years ago, he purchased a fifty-acre farm, and built a range of greenhouses, which his son, an able young man giving much promise, conducts admirably. His magnificent home, built upon a cliff, is one of the show places in that section.

Gallivan Brothers, whom I met at a much later period, are progressive young men, as well as successful growers. Their place at Smith's Ferry is under the able management of Mr. Schwartz, at one time connected with Pitcher & Manda, and later with A. N. Pierson, of Cromwell, Conn.

C. Warburton, of Fall River, Mass., is another of my old-time friends, whom I have known for nearly a generation. In 1902, Mr. Warburton introduced the Cressbrook Carnation, a variety that was grown very successfully in many sections, and principally around New England.

Mr. Warburton has enlarged his place, and is today among the most successful growers in New England.

New England's Progress in Introducing Roses and Carnations

It is generally conceded that in no section of the country has the florist business flourished more than in New England. In fact, many are of the opinion that in this respect New England still stands at the head. The best Roses, it is claimed, are grown there. The best Carnations come from that section. Be that as it may—for I am neither prepared to verify nor to deny these statements—the fact of the matter is that the New England grower is more quick to take a chance on a new variety, and thereby encourage enterprise in that direction, than his Western brother florist. My own business experience during these many years will bear out my assertion. Time and again a new variety of Carnation, for example, in which I had the utmost faith myself, would meet with little success in so far as its introduction was concerned in the western part of the country, while in New England,

on the other hand, the growers would seem to vie with each other as regards the quantity they purchased. The idea of "let the other fellow try it" was foreign to them. If anything was worth trying at all, it was worth trying by the thousand, instead of the hundred, and trying the first year at its full price, rather than during the second at the half price. That spirit of "go-aheaditiveness" which characterized their Puritan ancestors evidently descended to them.

I do not mean to say that every florist in New England is a descendant of Puritan forefathers. There are indeed florists of all nationalities represented in that group. There are Irishmen, Danes, Scotch, a few Germans, and Russian Jews. But the spirit of the founders pervades the atmosphere, and the comparative newcomers become infused with it.

Nor do I mean to convey the idea that every florist in New England possesses pioneer spirit in the matter of new varieties, and that every Westerner is a hide-bound conservative. This would be entirely erroneous. I could give many instances of Westerners who are always ready to welcome new varieties, and of New Englanders whose cautiousness is adamant. I am speaking of the general trend of the attitude in the two respective sections.

This readiness to try out new varieties, let me say here, has a significance far deeper than a mere dollar-and-cents one. The wheels of progress, in our line as well as in others, are slow-moving. We cannot note the steps as they follow each other one by one, but every once in a while we suddenly awake to the fact that we have gone a good distance from the point that we last consciously observed. Thus, the evolution of the tiny old-fashioned "Pink" into the beautiful Carnation of today was not brought about in a moment. Little by little it expanded in size and increased in substance, becoming more beautiful, until the Carnation as this generation knows it resulted. Nor, in all probability, has the Carnation reached the limits of its potentialities.

And what is true of the Carnation is true also of the Rose, and of plants in general. The man, therefore, who is ready to give his encouragement to efforts in the direction of plant and flower improvement, is taking a real and active part in the great onward march of the world.

As recently as February, 1916, I had the pleasure of being present at a florists' meeting in Chicago where Mr. E. G. Hill read a paper on "The Roses in Commerce Today." In the course of the discussion that followed the reading of his very able paper, he said that the florist should realize his opportunities, and should work in the direction of flower improvement with the same skill and tenacity that characterize the enterprising silk manufacturer or designer in Europe. There are thousands upon thousands of dollars spent every year by them in their efforts to introduce a new design that would appeal to the feminine public. Why should the florist not follow in the same direction, and encourage the best that could possibly be grown in his own line? The public would be sure to appreciate such efforts, and would readily respond to the idea of new introductions.

Mr. Hill unquestionably knows whereof he speaks. Not only does his own experience confirm him in such ideas, but his extensive travels in this country and abroad, and his meeting with all sorts and conditions of men, have helped him to arrive at such rational conclusions.

I have no doubt that the progressive florist has already arrived at the same conclusion himself.

But to continue about my New England territory.

The city of Providence, R. I., among other towns in New England, was always attractive to me. I always liked its wide, clean streets, its business activity, its residential sections, and its old historic atmosphere. So also have I found the men I came into business contact with much to my liking.

T. O'Connor and Farquhar and John A. Macrae, Providence

Among those who are no longer of the living, I like to recall two men, T. O'Connor and Farquhar Macrae.

Mr. T. O'Connor, who died but recently, at the age of seventy-odd, reminded me in certain ways of the type of man, rarely met with nowadays, of which Lincoln is said to have been representative. Kindly though blunt in his manner, at times reserved and at others witty and talkative, rough-hewn in appearance, with a face indicative of strength and honesty of purpose, he stood out as a figure not unlike that of the martyred President.

For some reason inexplicable to me, Mr. O'Connor during my early calls did not extend me the welcome I had expected. Not only did my efforts to do business with him prove a failure, but his very manner of receiving me was brusque, and anything but courteous. Unlike the case of Mr. Whiting, where I was spurred on by Mr. Coombs, I was determined to test my strength and capability of winning over a man despite his evident opposition. I approached him in various ways, and from various angles, now talking about my own business, again about things of general interest to the florists, and at other times about my traveling experiences in the West; but all proved of no avail.

And the more I failed, the harder I persisted. The opportunity came in course of time. Mr. O'Connor happened to be in need of a certain variety of plants, which he found it impossible to procure from the growers with whom he was in communication about it. He wanted to know if I knew of a reliable place where such plants could be had.

"Remember," he added, "I want good plants, for I will have no trash at any price."

To be sure I knew the place; and I was equally sure that the plants would suit Mr. O'Connor, and so would the price. Almost reluctantly, it seemed to me, he gave me the order. Remembering that first impressions count for much, and in this particular case much more than in the average, I put forth my best efforts, making it a point to take a special trip and see the plants for myself. The upshot was that Mr. O'Connor received his plants and was not in the least disappointed by virtue of having entrusted the order to me.

I had won my point; and what pleased me much more than the order itself was the fact that I had won the confidence of a man so conservative, and who at the outset was almost antagonistic to me.

I learned a few years later that Mr. O'Connor for some reason had a certain amount of prejudice against my race. Whether or not a descendant of Abraham had ever entrapped or taken advantage of him, I do not know. If that was the case, then certainly I had to bear the brunt for a while of the possible misdeeds of some Hebrew of whose existence I was not even aware. Be that as it may, as we became better acquainted, Mr. O'Connor's confidence in me grew in proportion to the fair treatment I accorded him in our dealings. I took especial care with all the orders he gave me. If a certain article was below the standard in quality, I would advise him to that effect, often suggesting that in the circumstances it might be better for him not to touch it.

Some of the best Carnations that Mr. O'Connor grew on his place during the past fifteen years were purchased through me. Nor would I find any difficulty in booking an order for a variety if I put my stamp of approval upon it. I do not mean to say that every variety I ever sold him turned out satisfactorily. There were some, indeed, that he was obliged to discard the season following. But in no case did he ever attribute his failures to "the wiles and trickeries of a Jew." He would charge me with error of judgment and not with deliberate ill intent. I was told at one time that he referred to me as "a white Jew," which was but another name for an honest man, in his way of expressing it.

Mr. O'Connor has left a large estate, consisting of apartment houses, greenhouses, and other investments. He was one of the pioneer florists of Providence, and by dint of hard work amassed a fortune. His two sons are conducting the business now. William, with whom I am well acquainted, and who takes care of the greenhouse end of it, is a young man who gives every promise of following in the footsteps of his notable father. The best in any line in connection with his business is, to put it in his own words, "none too good." As an employer of labor, he has the idea of the progressive modern man. Realizing that a well satisfied man will work for the best interests of his employer, he is ever ready to recognize merit, and to reward it. The men who were in the employ of his father for a number of years have been retained, and show to the son the same devotion that they did to the father.

The O'Connor store is one of the largest in New England, and is ably conducted by another son.

The late Farquhar Macrae was a man of a different type from Mr. O'Connor. He was a quiet Scotchman, with little time for jesting, and possessed of an intense earnestness. The business which he had started a number of years before I met him developed into one of the largest in that section of the country. He was a great grower. There was no plant that he could not successfully handle. So unerring was his knowledge of the needs of plants that he seemed almost to be in secret communication with them. I often wondered if he might perhaps not be more or less silent with men because he was accustomed to converse with flowers, among which his whole life was spent, and in which all his interest centered. For a time Mr. Macrae specialized in Chrysanthemums, and everything that was ever introduced found a place in his greenhouses, at least temporarily. If he found a thing to be worthless, he discarded it; but that did not deter him from trying other varieties. He believed that the only way to strike a good thing is to take your chances; and if he succeeded in retaining one or two, out of a dozen, it meant effort and money well spent. Later on he took up the growing of Roses, and with these, too, he was eminently successful. Bulbous stock came next, and his business began to expand in proportion to the general development of the trade.

Mr. Macrae died fifteen years ago, leaving his business to his two sons, Walter and Al. It would be hard to point out two young men more capable, more alert and energetic, than these two. Seeing their opportunity for growing Lilies on a large scale, they made the venture a few years ago, and by degrees increased their capacity and output until today we see them among the largest Lily growers in this country. Nor have they neglected their other stock, such as Roses, Carnations, and Chrysanthemums.

John A. Macrae, whose place is but a short distance from that of his nephews, Farquhar Macrae's sons, is another old friend of mine. I have spent many a pleasant hour at his home, in company with him and his wife, who died about a year ago. Mrs. Macrae was a woman of unusual type. She had a splendid mind, and much force of character. They say that it is impossible for women to be impersonal in their outlook, but Mrs. Macrae was a triumphant refutation of any such idea. She had something of the tendencies of the philosopher, and her conversation held all the charm of a profound understanding of human affairs. Her untimely death was a great loss, not only to her husband, but to her many friends and acquaintances.

Like his brother, Mr. John Macrae is a very successful grower, and his output at all times finds a ready market with discriminating buyers.

Another Good Friend, M. J. Leach of Pawtucket

And there was my good old friend, M. J. Leach of Pawtucket. I speak of him in the past tense because he, too, has departed. M. J. Leach died as he lived, with a happy smile and an expression of good cheer on his lips, as if to say, "I have run my race, and now let me get out!" Mr. Leach, whom I met about 1890, was always a friend to me. I vividly recall my first meeting with him. Despite the general notion of "laugh and the world laughs with you; weep and you weep alone," Mr. Leach seemed to have the laugh all to himself on that occasion. Things were not prosperous with me, and it was with a heavy heart, and discouragement written on my face, that I entered his store. I was a stranger to him, and a new drummer must perforce put on a smiling face whether so inclined or not. Else his battle is completely lost. In this particular case it was Mr. Leach who cheered me up by his attitude. First of all, he wanted to know if I was sick. Receiving a reply to the contrary, he demanded heartily,

"Then what the deuce is the matter with you? Isn't the sun shining, and isn't the bird singing?" (pointing to a canary in one corner.)

His good humor was contagious. I cheered up. I knew that an order was in store for me, and I was not disappointed. In the years that followed, my calls on M. J. Leach meant a great deal of pleasure to me. I often partook of his hospitality. Taking it for granted that the forbidden food, pork, was a diet obnoxious to every Jew, he would always delight in saying to me:

"Now, Skidelsky, we have a feast for you, especially prepared for your benefit. We have a fine roast of pork, and I know that you like pork. We can also accommodate you with a slice of fried bacon. Come along."

At one time—it was in the Summer—we were at dinner. The sky clouded up, a strong wind came from the east, then thunder and lightning commenced. Mr. Leach remarked that there was no reason why the elements should be in revolt, since we were observing all the Mosaic laws at that meal; in other words, since there was no pork on the table. He told a favorite story of Colonel Ingersoll's:

"A Jew entered a restaurant, and after scanning the bill of fare his eyes alighted upon an item that appealed to his palate. He called for ham and eggs. No sooner had the dish been placed on the table than a terrific thunder resounded in the air. The Jew jumped from his seat, exclaiming: 'What a racket, what a racket, over a little piece of ham!'"

Like all men, Mr. Leach had his likes and dislikes. The latter were especially directed against dogs, automobiles, and feminism. He could never bear the idea of a woman's taking interest in public affairs, asserting that God Almighty created her to bring up children and take care of a home. I never argued the point with him, preferring to keep my own opinions about it to myself. As to dogs, he simply could not bear the sight of the creatures, the truest friends of man. In his younger days he may have had an encounter with some brute of a dog in the western States where he lived for awhile; and perhaps it was the remembrance of that encounter that made him put a ban on all dogs. The automobile, however, got the best of Mr. Leach. In later life he was won over to its favor so completely that he owned a magnificent Packard himself.

My friendship of many years' standing for M. J. Leach continues with his sons, Herbert, Edward, and Raymond. These young men have not only inherited the business of their father, but his good qualities as well, both personally and in business. Mr. Herbert Leach conducts the stores in Pawtucket, while Edward and Raymond are at the head of the large greenhouse range a few miles outside the city.

George E. Buxton of Nashua, N. H.

George E. Buxton, of Nashua, N. H., was one of my first patrons. I became acquainted with him during the first S. A. F. convention in Boston, and paid him a visit shortly afterward. His greenhouses at that time were located on Vine street, in the opposite direction from where his place is today. About 1892, he transferred his place to its present location, and enlarged it from time to time. Mr. Buxton is a grower of great ability, and ranks among the best in New England. A few years ago he became known to the trade throughout the country by his introduction of the "Silver Pink Snapdragon," which has become a great favorite among growers in every section. Our business relations for the past quarter of a century or more have been pleasant, and I look upon Mr. Buxton as one of my most esteemed friends among the florists.

Attractions of the City of Boston

The city of Boston has always a very great attraction for me. My entrance into its portals seems to inspire me with a sense of coming in contact with culture, notwithstanding the assertion of Mr. E. G. Hill a few years ago that that particular feature of Boston has long since been transferred to Indianapolis.

I like its crooked streets, although I have lost myself many a time in their mazes; I like its Faneuil Hall, its Bunker Hill, its King's Chapel, its Park Street Church, and even its excellent underground railway system, although the last named lacks the historical significance of the others. It more than makes up for the lack, though, by the convenience it affords its thousands of patrons in giving them quick transportation.

I like its historic cemeteries, planted in the heart of the city. They carry me back to the days when the men that rest there were alive and active in behalf of the young and budding country.

I like its Commons, and I like the spirit that opposes strenuously the idea of transforming this magnificent space, that affords the people so much air, rest and recreation, into a busy mart. The Commons are what the name implies; this piece of ground is supposed to be sacred to the use of the people of Boston. There on a Sunday one will hear various "isms" expounded by earnest supporters who consider it their special duty to bring enlightenment to the benighted public. Here a man exhorts his audience to lead a true Christian life; there another promises elixir for all human ills in the form of Socialism; farther on a third is urging Theosophy as the only means of seeing the true light.

And who hasn't heard about Boston's pork and beans and brown bread, that delight the epicure? I confess that I never tasted the pork and beans, but according to all the enthusiastic reports I am quite convinced that this dish is veritable ambrosia.

And last, but by no means the least, I like the Boston florists. I like their progressive spirit, their ambition to excel, their liberality, their geniality. While in Boston I always make it a point to leave a call with the hotel clerk for six in the morning. At that early hour the two flower markets commence their activities. Hundreds of florists from the surrounding towns and villages bring in their flowers, and the retail florists, not only in Boston, but from many surrounding towns as well, come there to purchase their daily supplies. They are perfect bee-hives, especially during the busy season, when the retail business is in its full swing. What is highly commendable is that the florists whose stalls adjoin each other fraternize and are on the friendliest terms with each other. Competition here does not carry with it the petty jealousies and questionable practices with which competition is usually charged. On the contrary, here they seem to work on the principle that what is good for the individual should be good for a number of individuals as well. Hence

when the market is demoralized, its demoralization is not to be traced to any one or two individuals who cut prices, but to the fact of a general stagnation in business, or to the law of supply and demand.

Here I meet a number of men. Indeed, it was at these markets that I first met a number of growers whose patronage has meant a great deal to me, and whose friendship, outside of business considerations, I value highly.

Florists in Outlying Districts of Boston

Mr. A. Patten, of Tewksbury, Mass., a man well known beyond the borders of his own State, is one of them. And there are Mr. Stickler of Lexington, Mr. A. Christensen of Stoneham, Mr. Winkler of Wakefield, Mr. T. Walke of Salem, Mr. Allan Peirce of Waltham, Mr. William Nicholson of Framingham, and many others.

Mr. Allan Peirce is the second of his family that I have known. His father, Mr. E. Y. Peirce, was a unique character in many respects. Although starting late in life in the florist business, he took up his new vocation with all the energy characteristic of much younger men. To him things in dribblets meant nothing. When he undertook to grow Chrysanthemums he grew them by the thousands, and later when he became interested in Lilies, he grew them on a scale that made him known as one of the largest Lily growers in New England.

But aside from his business success, and the patronage with which he favored me, he had other qualifications which endeared him to me. His unostentatious manner, his blunt and at times almost brusque way of expressing things, his pride in the fact that he was once upon a time a farmer, and still preferred to be called "Farmer Peirce," his pride also in the fact that he dated his ancestry to the Revolutionary heroes, to the men who picked up their pitchforks in defense of the young country—all this made him a most interesting person to come in contact with. I would often spend hours with him, listening to his interesting recital of events, both long past and present.

He was not a man easily persuaded to do things which he could not clearly see were to his advantage. He had decided opinions of his own, fully knowing what was advantageous to him and what was not. An incident characteristic of him was this:

A number of years ago a very persistent salesman, one of those smart Alecks who boast that they can sell a man in spite of himself, wanted his Lily order. It was early in January. Mr. Peirce never thought about Lilies at the time, nor did he have that particular house in mind as a source of supply. The salesman put forth his best arguments, offering to put Mr. Peirce on the "ground floor" as to prices; but Mr. Peirce was obdurate.

"Mr. Peirce," finally ejaculated the man, "let me put you down for the order anyway; and should you decide to change it, or even cancel it later, you can do so. I want to show to the house that I called and did some business with you. A feather in my cap, you know."

"You can put down all you please, for all I care; and you can make it two feathers while you're at it, if you want," answered Mr. Peirce in his droll manner.

The salesman departed. Two months later, Mr. Peirce received a letter from the house, suggesting that if he intended to change any part of his order it would be advisable to do it then. Mr. Peirce replied on a postal briefly and to the point that he knew of no order he had placed with the house. He received a second letter, more urgent and somewhat threatening in tone, the gist of which was that it was too late to cancel an order, but that they would allow him to change it if he wished to do so.

Mr. Peirce replied. He wrote his letter in red ink. Its substance was as follows:

"Sirs:

Yours to hand and noted. You have no order from me, and that is all there is to it.

Yours respectfully,

E. Y. PEIRCE & SONS,

Per the Old Man,

Pres. of the Anti-Bulldozing Society."

There was no further correspondence on the subject.

At the Carnation conventions, Mr. Peirce was always one of the conspicuous figures. His remarks, when he arose to address the meeting, were always terse, lucid, and to the point; no waste of words at any time.

William Scott of Buffalo and Mr. Peirce were great friends. At one time Mr. Scott showed me a letter from Mr. Peirce, urging him to come to Waltham and spend a month with him. But Mr. Scott's illness had already come upon him, and the visit was never paid.

Mr. Peirce's good humor never deserted him, even during the days of his final illness. He was a man who saw only the brighter side of life; at least he never indicated in his manner that his mind ever dwelt upon the darker shades.

Since his father's death, Allan Peirce has made numerous changes about the place, discarding Lilies entirely. Instead he grows Roses, and grows them most successfully.

Like the Hub itself, its greatest and most famous suburb, Cambridge, is always of great interest to me. There I like to stroll through the grounds of Harvard University, often, if time permits, peeping into the halls of learning where so many famous men received their training. The Harvard Museum is mighty interesting, and the collection of glass flowers, the most famous in the world, is of especial interest to a man dealing in bulbs, seeds, and plants. The home of Longfellow is interesting to all Americans; and indeed, foreigners visiting that part of the country make a special pilgrimage to it. The typical New England streets and residences, many of the Colonial period, have a charm that is all their own.

I have several friends in Cambridge. My periodical visits to them mean always to me much pleasure, in addition to the pecuniary interest. Fred C. Becker, of "Nephrolepis Bostoniensis" fame, is still at the old stand, and is as progressive as ever. To Mr. Becker is due the credit of having brought out the Boston fern, a fern that is known the world over and one which has marked a new departure in fern production.

And there is A. M. Davenport, the eminent wholesale plant grower of Massachusetts. It would be hard for me to speak of Mr. Davenport and his product without arousing the reader's suspicion that I was exaggerating. But Mr. Davenport needs no glowing descriptions about his plants; they have spoken for themselves these many years.

My friend MacKenzie is there, too. Mr. MacKenzie is an artist as well as a grower, though the fact may not be generally known. He plays the violin with the skill of the professional, and the collection of violins in his den shows that his interest in art is no less than his interest in things floricultural. Perhaps music and flowers bear close relation. Mr. MacKenzie is a delightful man to come in contact with.

I never had the pleasure of meeting the late W. W. Edgar, of Waverly, personally. But I had heard of him very often. A few years after his demise, I had the opportunity to see for myself what florists had often told me. Mr. Edgar's

place was indeed a revelation to me. There I saw magnificent specimens of *Ardiasias*, *Begonias*, *Cyclamen*, and many other commercial plants. Henry Bartsch, the exceedingly efficient manager of the place, has accomplished remarkable things in the way of growing since the entire responsibility of management fell upon his shoulders.

The fame of Thomas W. Roland, of Nahant, Mass., is as widespread as interest in horticulture itself. His collection of *Acacias*, said to be the finest in the United States, and the other plants he grows for commercial purposes, have established his reputation everywhere. Mr. Roland evinced the right spirit when he exhibited his famous *Acacias* both in Boston and Philadelphia. I was present at both national flower shows, and heard it said that it was worth taking a trip from ocean to ocean for the sake of seeing Mr. Roland's *Acacias* alone. He undoubtedly deserves a great deal of credit for having added so much to the success of the shows.

Lawrence Cotter, the Rose Grower

Among the excellent growers of New England, and particularly of Boston, the name of Lawrence Cotter is a prominent one. For a number of years, he was a conspicuous figure in Boston, belonging to the "old guard," of whom a few are still in existence. As a Rose grower, Mr. Cotter was second to no man. His product about twenty-five years ago found its way to Philadelphia, and as far west as Chicago. He was at one time connected with the late W. E. Doyle, of whom I spoke in a previous chapter. Years later, he grew Roses on his own account, which were among the best sent to the New England market and others.

Some years ago he transferred his interests to the State of Pennsylvania, taking up his residence for a time at Danville, Pa. When the Lakeview Rose Gardens found themselves in need of a manager, one capable of taking the responsibility of managing their enormous place at Jamestown, N. Y., Mr. Cotter was the man chosen for the position. It didn't take long to show the results of efficient management. About a year ago, Mr. Cotter's health began to fail, and although he cannot give the place the close attention that he was accustomed to bestow upon it, the Lakeview Greenhouses are not suffering. There is a good reason for it. Mr. Cotter's son, young Charles Cotter, has taken much of the burden from his father's shoulders; and not only in the actual growing line, but in the general business policy which he pursues, he proves himself a young man of unusual abilities. [Mr. Cotter died at Jamestown, March 24, 1917.]

Joseph Heacock

Among the conspicuous men in the trade, men who have accomplished things not only in their own interests but for the world of horticulture at large, the names of Joseph Heacock and Robert George of the Storrs & Harrison Company, stand out.

Mr. Joseph Heacock did much toward the uplift of the standard in horticulture. I have known him for the past twenty years intimately, and my business relations with the Joseph Heacock Company, of which he is president, have been very pleasant. When I first met Mr. Heacock, his greenhouse range was not as extensive as it is today. Palms, and particularly *Areca lutescens*, were his specialties. In the beginning of his business career, and for a number of years thereafter, he confined himself principally to the local market and to the trade in nearby vicinities. But Mr. Heacock saw the chance for expansion. He increased his place and began to grow *Kentias* on a larger scale; and soon his product found its way to various parts of the country. His reputation was established. Later still

he found that he could grow American Beauty and Roses in general successfully. This venture, too, soon added to his reputation as a grower of great ability. Finding that his range at Wyncote, Pa., was not nearly adequate to meet the demand for his product, he bought a farm within twenty-five miles of Philadelphia, and built a Rose range, the largest and best in this part of the State. His success in this instance was nothing short of phenomenal. His Roses are among the very best shipped into the wholesale market, and even so capricious a variety as Hadley was a revelation to many growers who saw it at the last Philadelphia National Flower Show. It was the center of attraction among Roses, eliciting many exclamations of surprise, not only from the general public, who crowded around the blooms, but from the growers as well. Many went out to his place to see the variety, and to study its behavior at close range, and returned fully convinced that whatever the faults of the Hadley Rose, Mr. Heacock was more than a match for it. Such blooms even its introducer himself never suspected were possible.

But it is of Mr. Heacock the man, rather than the grower and successful business man, that I wish to say a few words. Always honest and upright in his relations with his fellowmen, believing in the "square deal" and all that the term may imply, Mr. Heacock takes much interest in affairs that have bearing upon the general welfare of the community. He served in the State legislature as senator from his district; and in his capacity of State legislator he pursued his honest business policy throughout his term of service. Lobbyism was obnoxious to him at all times; and whatever savored of self-interest in politics found no supporter in him. As treasurer of the Florists' Hail Insurance Association he did good work for the benefit of the society. A few years ago he served as president of the Philadelphia Florists' Club, and during his term of service the club accomplished much in the way of expansion, and general maintenance of its members' interest in its affairs.

Robert George, of the Storrs & Harrison Co.

Mr. Robert George, whom I met about eighteen years ago, is a man who won my admiration from the start. I shall not attempt to speak of the success of the Storrs & Harrison Company, a success largely due to the tireless efforts of this remarkable man. I say remarkable advisedly. Mr. George has attained to notable success from humble beginnings. Starting with this old established firm in the capacity of one in the lower ranks of their employees, he has, by dint of hard work, intelligent application, and progressive ideas, worked up to a position of great responsibility, being now one of the members of the concern.

Unlike many a man of his attainments, Mr. George is as democratic and unostentatious in his relations with his fellow men as he ever was. The humblest of their employees (and the Storrs & Harrison Company employ an army of men at all times) always find Mr. George a man easy of access, and sympathetic. He will speak to a man not with the superior air of one who knows it all, brusque and commanding in manner, but as man to man, appealing to the other man's judgment and awakening his interest in the matter under discussion.

My business relations with the Storrs & Harrison Company have been among the most pleasant in my experience; and it is with much pleasure that I pay them my periodical visits as often as three times a year.

Among the younger men looming up on the horizon of horticulture, men giving much promise of future achievements, I may mention the names of Ed George, the son of Robert George, Adolph Baur, of the Baur & Steinkamp Company of Indianapolis, Ind., and Wm. Vesey of Fort Wayne, Ind.

Edward George, the Son

Ed George, like his notable father, is a tireless and intelligent worker, being much devoted to the interests of the Storrs & Harrison Company, and assuming a great deal of the responsibility of the greenhouse end of the concern. In addition to his qualifications in this respect, Ed George possesses other good qualities, well worthy of emulation. He is an optimist in the first place, believing that no good can come from looking at business life through smoked glasses. In the busiest season of the year, at the time when railroad cars have to be loaded and shipped, when work of all sorts must be attended to without delay, and the inevitable confusion that arises is enough to rattle any man, Ed George always maintains his even temper and accomplishes excellent results.

Adolph Baur, Secretary of A. C. S.

Adolph Baur is still a young man; but in the line of floriculture he has accomplished more than many another man twice his age. I have known him for a number of years, since the time he worked for Henry Niemeyer at Erie, Pa. Although but a youth then, he had already the ambition to do things. He had initiative. He hybridized a number of Carnation seedlings while on Niemeyer's place in capacity of grower. The results of those early trials were a number of seedlings, some of which I recall at this moment. There were American Flag, a variegated variety, Pluto, Goliath, Rob Roy and others, none of which, however, were long lived, although Mr. Niemeyer himself entertained the fondest of hopes about them.

Prior to his connection with Mr. Niemeyer, Adolph Baur worked for the E. G. Hill Company, at Richmond, Ind., receiving there his first lessons and training in floriculture. After severing his connections with Henry Niemeyer, he went to Pittsburgh, where he worked for awhile with Charles Siebert, long since dead. Later, he drifted to Indianapolis, and there he established himself, at first in partnership with Smith and later with Steinkamp. The latter partnership is in existence today.

Mr. Baur has introduced a number of meritorious seedlings, some of which, such as Shasta and Pocahontas, are still grown successfully in many quarters. A number of other seedlings are in sight, and it may be expected that some of them will make their mark.

As secretary of the American Carnation Society, Adolph Baur is regarded as one of the most efficient that the society has ever had.

The Veseys of Fort Wayne, Ind.

Young Vesey, who is still in his twenties, is not only a horticulturist who has already achieved excellent results, but he is a public-spirited young man as well. As a member of the Indiana State Florists' Association, he always takes a keen interest and an active part in its affairs. His father, the Honorable Judge Vesey, although much interested in horticulture, does not give much of his time to it. His legal profession requires most of his time and attention. The late Mrs. Vesey, his mother, was known everywhere as one of the most active, energetic, and successful women florists. There was no exhibition complete unless Mrs. Vesey contributed toward its success by displaying her Roses, Chrysanthemums, and Carnations; and many a blue ribbon she took away as a trophy. Her untimely death a few years ago was a great loss to her many friends.

Upon her son devolved the duty of taking hold of the establishment, and carrying it on along the lines laid down by his able mother. Young Vesey was equal to the task. He continued to grow stock of a high grade, and to dispose of it successfully in the wholesale markets.

About three years ago, a disaster descended upon the establishment. During the memorable floods that at that time devastated the States of Indiana and Ohio, Mr. Vesey rose one morning to find his place flooded and the stock completely ruined. But the son of Mrs. Vesey was not one to be easily daunted. When the flood subsided, he put an army of men to clear the ground, and soon a new range—a great improvement over the former one—rose upon the ruins.

At the last Carnation convention in St. Louis, Will Vesey invited the society to hold its meeting next season in Indianapolis. The invitation was accepted, and he was unanimously elected vice-president of the society.

In the rising generation of florists, Will Vesey bids fair to stand in the front rank.

The introduction and popularization of the Sweet Pea (I refer to the varieties that are of the Winter-blooming sorts) has marked a departure in floriculture. I shall not attempt to speak of the numerous Winter-blooming meritorious varieties in detail; I shall leave that part to Sweet Pea specialists who may at some time write a complete history of this splendid addition to intensive floriculture. The Sweet Pea has come to stay, not only because of its own merit as a cut flower, and the popular favor it has won among all classes, but also because it has of late largely replaced the dainty Lily of the Valley, owing to the scarcity of the latter resultant upon the present European conditions. It has indeed many advantages over the Lily of the Valley, in the matter of its variety of shades and colors. During my recent travels, I have heard it often expressed that the Sweet Pea, far from becoming common, will become more and more popular with the discriminating public, and will play a large part in the future as a flower suitable for bridal bouquets and all other work wherein the Lily of the Valley was formerly deemed indispensable. I shall not attempt to argue this point, or to disparage the usefulness of Lilies of the Valley, but I must concede that the Sweet Pea ranks with the Rose and the Carnation today, and the possibilities of its improvement are practically unlimited.

Famous Sweet Pea Growers

Among the men who have made the development of the Sweet Pea their life work not only from the standpoint of the matter-of-fact merchant, but from that of the æsthete and the scientist, the names of W. Atlee Burpee and Anton Zvolanek will always be remembered.

The late W. Atlee Burpee was indeed an enthusiast about Sweet Peas. Any meritorious variety that gave promise at all was sure of a trial by him. It is said he spent fortunes, and much time and labor, on varieties that often proved absolutely worthless. But Mr. Burpee was not the man to be easily discouraged. He tried again and again, and the results of his efforts are matters of common knowledge. His immense farm in California, and that in Doylestown, Pa., where Sweet Peas are being experimented upon, are known to every florist in the land. His untimely death, while still a man in his prime, is a great loss to the horticultural interests throughout the world.

The history of Anton Zvolanek's success is especially interesting. A number of years ago, while conducting his greenhouses at Bound Brook, N. J., he turned his attention to Sweet Peas, and experimented on a few varieties, such as Florence Denzer, Christmas Pink, and Mrs. Alexander Wallace, strictly Christmas blooming varieties. Having worked up a little stock of each, he offered them to the trade. The demand was stupendous from the start. Mr. Zvolanek grew more Sweet Peas, but the demand for his product kept on increasing out of all proportion to his facilities for meeting it. Leaving his Bound Brook place in the hands of his son, he departed for California, where he began to grow Sweet Peas on a large scale. The three varieties above mentioned were soon relegated to a back seat.

Mr. Zvolanek introduced a number of strictly meritorious varieties, some of which were almost sensational, since it had never been suspected that a Sweet Pea could be brought up to such high standard of size and beauty.

What Mr. Zvolanek has already achieved, and what he aims to achieve, and no doubt will, cannot be too highly estimated in the history of floriculture.

Some St. Louis Acquaintances

The great city of St. Louis, the metropolis of Missouri, as I remarked once before, gave me the impression of a modern Babylon, inspiring me in the early days of my travel with a timidity at the thought of storming it for business. I clearly recall my first entrance within its gates. It was a few years before the great Union depot was built. I inquired about a hotel, to be sure not of the highest class in town, and soon found myself comfortably quartered in a cheap hostelry, which suited my inexpensive tastes and slim purse. First of all, it was a question of ridding myself of my timidity. I was in St. Louis, and it was up to me to become acquainted and see what I could accomplish. The late Mr. Jordan, whom I had seen in Boston about a year previous at the S. A. F. and O. H. convention (he was then president of the society), was the man to see first.

And so I called on him. I found him courteous, as befitted the gentleman that he essentially was. His dignity and reserved manner, nevertheless, increased my timidity. I felt instinctively that there was no business for me there. And certainly my lack of assurance wasn't calculated to help me get any. The man who is timid, and whose bearing and manner therefore indicate his own precognition of non-success, hasn't half the chance of the man whose air of calm certainty (I am not speaking of blatant aggressiveness) spells determination to succeed.

My next visit was to J. J. Beneke, now my good friend. It proved successful, and in more ways than one. Not only did Mr. Beneke favor me himself with a little order, but he gave me all the information I needed about other parties, with whom I have since dealt, and whom I regard as personal friends. I should like nothing better than to go on and speak in detail of my friend F. C. Weber, the dean of the retail men in St. Louis; of William Schray's Sons and their late estimable father, who was among the pioneer florists of the city; of Frank J. Filmore, the man with a genius for clever punning; of C. Sanders, who is ever ready to extend a welcome to a visiting stranger; of Charles Beyer and his brother, whose sense of fair play has made them upon more than one occasion actively resent knocks at competitors; of A. Jablonsky, the eminent Carnationist of that section; of John Steidle, the generous host and prince of good fellows; of Otto Koenig, the man whose political achievements have brought him renown, as his business has brought him success; of Fred Meinhardt, the man whose loyalty to the S. A. F. and O. H. is equaled only by his devotion to the interests of his many patrons; of W. Kruse, who believes in giving his customers the square deal, even as he expects it himself from his supply houses; of Bourdet, the excellent plant grower, whose French origin does not prevent him from living on terms of intimate friendship with his Teutonic fellow-citizens; of George Waldbart, whose exceeding diligence well deserves the success with which it has been crowned; of Theodore Miller, the man of altruistic ideas that have singled him out as a man with no selfish motives in his makeup; of Miss M. S. Newman, the lady florist who once upon a time conducted a successful business in Boston, and who for the last quarter of a century has been equally successful in her Western city; of Young's Sons, the old established firm known far beyond the borders of its own State; of Fred Ude, William Winter, W. J. Pilcher, Rowe, Serny, and the Cannon Floral Com-

pany, the Kirkwood growers who have done so much toward the general uplift of floriculture in their State; of C. A. Kuehn, William C. Smith, Henry Berning, the Windler Floral Company, and George Angermueller, the progressive commission men, first to inaugurate and carry out successfully sweeping and much needed reforms for the benefit of the trade as a whole.

I should like to speak at length of each one of these men, and many others of the progressive city, whom I admire both as men and as florists. I should like to go on and tell of their efforts and successes, and of what they have contributed toward the development of horticulture. But I am overwhelmed by the magnitude of the task, in the face of editorial warnings regarding space restriction.

I do want to say a few words, though, about the late F. W. Bruenig, whose untimely death in February, 1916, just a few weeks after I last saw him, has deeply impressed itself upon my mind. Mr. Bruenig was a man endowed with many excellent qualities. As a grower he had no superior. But besides his growing abilities and business success, he was above all else an honest man, and an honest man, according to the poet, is the noblest work of God.

Around Cleveland

The city of Cleveland, the sixth city in the land, is to be commended for her progress along horticultural lines as much as for her remarkable strides along all other paths of industrial activity. A quarter of a century ago Cleveland had no claim to especial recognition; that progressive, or as some put it, aggressive spirit characteristic of the "sixth city" of today, seemed absent then. Men moved about their business in a spirit of "let well enough alone," never suspecting the wonderful changes—changes that have transformed a mere town into a great city. To me, who first landed in Cleveland in October, 1889—and I use the word landed advisedly, for I arrived there on a rickety old tub of a lake boat, more dead than alive—the changes are remarkable. Not only has the appearance of the city changed, not only have its cobblestone streets and second-rate hotels given way to modern pavings and first-class hostleries, but the very spirit of the people themselves has changed as if by magic from an ultra-conservative to a progressive one.

The men whom I met twenty-seven years ago are still in the harness, and some of them as young as ever. Adam Graham, a youth of seventy-odd years, ex-president of the S. A. F. and O. H., president and director of banks, and in large measure a contributor to the tremendous improvements, expansion and achievements of his city, is still on deck—and may he be with us for many, many years. Whether in public or in his own immediate circle, Mr. Graham is invariably the life of the party. His wit and good humor are contagious. As a toastmaster, and an excellent all-round speaker, his reputation has extended beyond the limits of the Buckeye State.

Adam Graham, Jr., and Charles Graham, his sons, who are now conducting the business, are proving themselves worthy successors of an illustrious father.

Herman Hart, whose hospitality is widely known, does not look a day older than forty, though his clock has already struck sixty-two. Like all true philosophers, he takes life as a matter of course, never being ruffled by things on the one hand, or too much overjoyed on the other. An excellent panacea for nerves, and a guarantee of longevity!

About five years ago, Mr. Hart transferred his business to his two sons, and the young men give every promise of perpetuating the success which their father has achieved by dint of hard work and untiring efforts during his pioneer days in a pioneer flower market.

Charles Schmidt, who at one time was connected with the late Edwin Lonsdale, in the capacity of pupil and all-round greenhouse man, has proved himself all that Mr. Lonsdale predicted for him. He is first of all a successful grower, and what

is equally to his credit he is a level-headed business man, one who well understands the value of greenhouse space, and who can make every inch pay for itself.

Mr. Bartel, at the head of the J. M. Gasser, Rocky River greenhouses, and Mr. Brown, at the head of their two Cleveland stores, both retail and wholesale, form a combination that spells success. In a former chapter I have already referred to the J. M. Gasser establishment and the manner in which they expanded during the past quarter of a century.

The F. R. Williams Co., composed of F. R. Williams and three of the Bates Brothers, namely George, Herb, and Guy, has simply grown up with the city. Twenty-five years ago, the members comprising this enterprising firm attended the public schools, and never perhaps dreamt of a "Cleveland Cut Flower Co." with an immense range of glass at Newton Falls, about twenty-five miles out of Cleveland, where Roses, Carnations, and Chrysanthemums are grown on a large scale.

John Kirchner, who succeeded his father on the latter's death, some fifteen years ago, has enlarged his business on a scale that would unquestionably have astonished his sire, had John told him at the time of the possibilities of such expansion. Mr. Kirchner is progressive in his ideas, and no innovation calculated to bring about some improvement either in his greenhouses or in his store, is ever cast aside.

The Naumann Co. is composed of three enterprising young men, whose success as wholesale plant growers for the Cleveland market speaks in their favor.

Frank Friedley, a graduate of the E. G. Hill Co. of Richmond, Ind., later with the Chicago Carnation Co., Miss Belle Miller, of Springfield, Ill., and a post-graduate of the J. M. Gasser Co. of Cleveland, has launched a greenhouse establishment of his own, succeeding the James Eadie Co., a well known old-established firm. Mr. Friedley is a grower of no mean ability, and with a market ready at all times to take up high-grade stock, Friedley's success is practically assured.

C. Merkel & Sons, of Mentor, Ohio, twenty-five miles from Cleveland, are among the largest and most successful growers in the State. It has been said, and rightly so, that John Merkel, the head of the concern, can hold his own in the matter of producing high-grade stock, with any expert in the land and in Europe as well. Years ago, when a mere boy, he entered the employ of the J. M. Gasser Co. Young John, unlike most boys of his age, saw his chance. From the start, he made up his mind to learn all there was to be known about the greenhouses and the growing of stock. The late J. M. Gasser used to remark that nothing ever escaped the boy's attention. He seemed to know things, as if by intuition. After serving a few years at the Gasser establishment, he departed for New York, and at the age of twenty-one became foreman in a prominent Brooklyn greenhouse range. Having acquired more experience in the East, John bethought himself to launch an enterprise on his own account. It was hard work—a hard and trying experience. Money was not plentiful, nor did his prospects look especially encouraging at the start. But John Merkel looked far into the future. He saw the possibilities of growing for retail trade. He built a few houses, and from time to time kept on adding, now a lean-to, and then a house. His stock met with instantaneous demand, and his success was assured. Azaleas, Begonias, Cyclamen, Hydrangeas, pot Roses by the thousands, are grown successfully, not only for the Cleveland market, but for Toledo, Detroit, and other cities as well. Some of their stock is eagerly bought in St. Louis.

In the Summer of 1916, they built a range of four additional houses, where twenty thousand Roses for cut flower purposes have been planted.

The firm is composed of C. Merkel, the father, and three sons. William Merkel divides his attention between the greenhouses and salesmanship. And as a salesman, William is no less a success than as a grower.

I should like also to speak in detail of the great Western cities of Omaha, Denver, Kansas City, St. Paul, Minneapolis, Milwaukee, Cincinnati, and Cleveland, and the numerous friends I have made there; of the thriving Eastern cities of Rochester, Syracuse, Utica and Albany; and of the many cities in my own State, such as Erie, Warren, Oil City, Meadville, Wilkes-Barre, Scranton, Williamsport, Easton, Allentown, and many others; and of the friendships I have formed there, too.

But that matter of space limitation is inexorable, and I have to pass on, regretful that I cannot do as I so gladly would.

Some day, when old age overtakes me, and I can no longer travel, I hope to write a complete history of horticulture in America, giving every man who has contributed toward the progress made full credit for his work.

PART IV

Still at the Helm

In February, 1908, an incident occurred which brought about a change in my business affairs. On my way from Milwaukee to Chicago, in company with Edward Fancourt, of the Pennock-Meehan Company, I became suddenly ill on the train. Mr. Fancourt was frightened, and ran hastily for the conductor. It happened to be a through train for Chicago. The conductor came up hurriedly, and seeing my condition, he went quickly through the train, calling for a doctor. Fortunately there happened to be one on board. After giving me temporary relief, he handed me a prescription, with instruction to take the medicine immediately upon my arrival in Chicago, and to retire for the night.

Mr. Fancourt and I had both worked Chicago the previous week, and meant only to make connections there for St. Louis. Upon arriving in Chicago that evening, we took a taxi and were driven to the Great Northern Hotel. I engaged a room, intending to dispense for the time being with my St. Louis trip and go as soon as possible to Philadelphia. Mr. Fancourt brought me the medicine prescribed, and urgent though his business in St. Louis was, he kindly volunteered to stop over at Chicago in order to be of aid to me. I would not hear of it, though I was deeply appreciative of the kindness which prompted the offer.

Mr. Fancourt departed, and I was left alone. About one o'clock in the morning, my troubles recommenced. I rolled out of bed in an agonized condition, and began to roll over the floor, unable to catch my breath. I thought that the end was at hand, and what passed through my mind at that moment would beggar description. By superhuman effort I dragged myself into the bathroom, and up to the hot water faucet. I felt that unless I took some immediate steps to alleviate my intense suffering, I couldn't last more than a few minutes. As if by instinct, I filled a glass with boiling hot water, and took a few draughts. I was relieved at once. That night I could not close my eyes. I thought of my whole past, of my business experience which at that time covered a period of two decades, and of the hard work I had done during that time; and I decided to change my plans—to retire, so to speak, from the road entirely, to have a younger man take my place, and to reorganize my affairs so as to carry on my business on my own account, instead of representing other houses.

On the following morning, I felt completely restored, and instead of going to Philadelphia, as I had intended the previous evening, I departed for St. Louis, where I met Mr. Fancourt, who seemed agreeably surprised to see me again among the living. I finished my trip, and a few weeks later I returned to Philadelphia.

The plan which I had formulated on that memorable night in Chicago was soon to be realized. I had heard about R. J. Irwin, and later met him on the road. On one occasion at Columbus, Ohio, we happened to stop at the same hotel, and there I had the opportunity to talk over things with him. It seemed to me that we were well suited for each other, and we came to terms. He was rather dissatisfied with the concern he represented at the time, and was open for a change to improve his own condition.

In August, 1908, we organized our small business under the name of Skidelsky & Irwin Company, and launched our enterprise under auspicious circumstances. We were both well known to the trade, so there was no reason why we couldn't succeed. Mr. Irwin was to take to the road, while I was to attend to the office and financial end of it.

It is all very well to lay plans, and standing off at a distance from a situation, arrange how it ought to be managed. But there are certain points of human nature that are likely to be overlooked in such abstract ordering of things. For me to decide that I had been traveling for a number of years and ought to take a rest was one thing; for the spirit of "get up and go" that had been fostered in my blood through years of habit to give way tamely to the new arrangement was another. I grew restive under the confining life I was leading, and to which I was so completely unaccustomed. I longed for my old friends, and the pleasant visits I was in the habit of paying them. I felt that my health was actually being seriously impaired by the change. In March, 1909, I was in such a state of nervous breakdown that I had to recall Mr. Irwin from the road to take my place at the office, while I departed for Battle Creek Sanatorium, to recuperate.

In May, 1909, a calamity overtook me, in the death of my wife, who had been so steady a help and inspiration to me in the days of my early adversity, as well as in the years when things eased up a bit, constantly giving me courage to continue with my work. My first impulse was to close up my business, and to retire for awhile, I knew not where. The future seemed to hold out no promise for me. Everything looked dark and desolate.

One morning in June, I decided to take a short trip through the State, to meet some of my friends once again. It wasn't business that I was after, either; I was in desperate need of a change. That little trip revived my spirits, and seemed to open the gate to a more hopeful future. I decided to recommence my travels, to go back to the life which in spite of its drawbacks was so attractive to me.

Upon my return home I disclosed my plans to Mr. Irwin. He could see the reasonableness of my idea, and yet it was a question how to arrange our business with justice to both of us. We soon found a way out. We were to travel alternately, each taking a certain part of the country. I was to work in the West; Mr. Irwin, in his travel period, was to attend to the New England territory.

Thus we continued until the Fall of 1911. Our business grew steadily, and we were on a fair way to success. Circumstances arose, however, that necessitated a change. We separated. Mr. Irwin started on his own account in New York, where he still continues, and from all accounts is quite prosperous.

I reorganized my business, and induced my son, who had just commenced practicing law, to take part in it. From then until now, he has been for the most part the "inside man," and I have continued on the road. The idea often occurs to me to retire from the road, and let my son take my place. But I realize that I am only theorizing. A habit of so long standing cannot be broken without entailing in its destruction some grave consequences, the nature of which I experienced once before. So long as my health permits me, therefore, I shall continue in the harness. I no longer look upon my travels as "hard work"; to me they are a pleasure. Nor would I ever think of retiring. I have often spoken to some of my friends among the trade about the fallacy of giving up active business life. I will go further and say that were anybody to pension me for life with an income of twenty-five thousand a year, on condition that I retire from business, and rest for the balance of my days, I would dismiss the offer as unworthy of consideration.

A few years ago I read a very interesting article in the *Saturday Evening Post*, entitled "Is Resting Rusting?" The conclusion at which the writer arrived was that resting means rusting. He gave a number of instances of wealthy men who had retired from active business, and who at the expiration of a year or so were only too eager to return to it. Thus a certain wealthy paint manufacturer, who had amassed a great fortune, decided one day that he had had enough of business, that he would retire to California, and enjoy the rest of his days in ease and comfort. He built a magnificent chateau, and laid out beautiful gardens, with

artificial lakes, golf links, tennis courts, and everything that fancy could desire. A year later he appealed to the real estate agent through whom he had purchased the place to sell it for him, no matter at what loss. What was the trouble—didn't he like it? Oh, yes, he liked it well enough—the place itself, that is—but the life was killing him. He was eager to return to the paint factory and his old surroundings, and do up some paint packages.

Another instance given was that of a retired grocery man, who having received about a million dollars from his partners for his share in the business, begged them piteously a few months later to take him back into it. He could not stand the idle life which he was compelled to lead. Upon their refusal, he made it a point to come every day, get behind the counter, and help in putting up all sorts of grocery packages.

The actuary of an insurance company, the author also told us, will consider a man of sixty in active business a much better risk than a man of the same age out of business. Men whose activity and interest are maintained in life, according to all statistics, live longer. Their minds are keen; their very appearance indicates strength and energy.

Among my own trade I could point to a number of old men, many in the seventies, who should be an inspiration to many a much younger man. They make their plans and speak of their future activity as if they were in their early forties. I regard such men as true benefactors of mankind. Pessimism and all that goes with it are not in their makeup.

Taking a leaf from their book, I have put myself in the attitude of mind wherein I give no thought at all to the possible "finish." I have traveled for twenty-eight years, I am still traveling, and life and health permitting, I shall travel another twenty-eight. During those first twenty-eight years, as I have already said a number of times, I have formed a great many friendships that are very precious to me; during the next twenty-eight, or the fraction of them that will permit my activity, I hope to strengthen them and to form new ones. Perhaps some of the little shavers of today will do business with the "old man" in days to come!

Looking back over my business life as a unit, I can say that I have enjoyed it. It has had its ups and downs, like everything else in life, to be sure. There have been moments of discouragement, and of a sense of failure. But there have been compensations. And I am not speaking only of money, either, though I have been enabled to support my family and to educate my children as I wanted to. It is to something less tangible that I refer—less tangible, but by no means less real. I believe that I have won the confidence of the trade, and that I have made my friends sure of the honesty of my intention in all my dealings with them. This it is that is my greatest compensation, and this it is that I hope to perpetuate during the remaining years of my life.

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