

The history of the tree agency business seems to be on this wise. Nurserymen found that in order to sell their productions they must bring them to the personal notice of those who would naturally become purchasers. It was not sufficient to advertise in the newspapers that they had fruit and ornamental trees for sale. Many men had but very imperfect knowledge of the value of good fruit; it was necessary that they should be persuaded that it was to their interest to purchase these trees, and in no way could that be done so well as by a personal interview. Hence nurserymen adopted the expedient of hiring men to go out and canvass the country, to tell expected customers about the fruit trees they had for sale, and persuade them to purchase and plant them. In this way they succeeded in disposing of their stock of trees, enlarging their business, and gradually creating an increased taste for good fruit, and for ornamental trees and plants, but with this result, we believe, that the great bulk of their sales were effected through the travelling agents.

As the nurseryman's business increased and more extensive plantations were made, he found that his time and attention were necessarily absorbed by his cultivations, and he was prepared for the next step in the history of this business. As the agents acquired skill and experience in selling, they naturally began to consider whether they could not turn that skill to some good account for their own benefit. The idea of taking the selling into their own hands, and paying the nurserymen for whom they sold a wholesale price, was a very obvious one, and while the skilful salesman increased his gains, the nurseryman was relieved of the detail of the agency business; and arrangements were made whereby the agent continued to represent the nursery from which the trees came, but paid himself by the profit he might make above the stipulated wholesale price.

The further history of the tree agency business is but the natural outcome of the change we have just indicated. Agents acquired a certain reputation for furnishing satisfactory trees; the purchasers had dealt only with the agents, and though the credit for the quality of the trees was strictly due to the nurserymen, yet the relation between the grower and buyer was of that distant nature that it failed to bind them together, and the agents very readily began to inquire if they could not find some place where they could buy cheaper. Relying upon the reputation gained for them by the trees they had delivered,