BEST PLAN TO CONDUCT A CORRECT NURSERY BUSINESS.

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In the first place I consider it very hazardous for any one to engage in the nursery business who has not had experience working for a period of time in some good nursery. Instructions at a Horticultural school and reading the best literature on this subject ought to be beneficial. What I have to say is practice, and not theory; as I have been in contact with nearly all phases of this question, and sometimes experience has been a severe teacher, but a good one. The man who starts without a plan is apt to drift against the rocks and cause disappointment and failure, and his cargo become a partial or a total loss. A plan of work must be made and maintained. "Honesty is the best policy." That the oldest and best nurseries in the United States have practiced this adage is my belief.

The location of a nursery should be near a city of one or more railroads. The soils should be clay and sandy uplands and lowland, as nature speaks very plainly upon this matter in growing nicely rooted, healthy, upright nursery stock naturally adapted to each of these soils and locations.

The best plan is to raise all the goods all you can to meet the demands of your customer, as it is policy, economy and principle. But it is impossible to produce all you sell, if you do a large business. There is no extensive nursery in the United States that does. We take it for granted that there are just as honest men as we are; and if they propagate and cultivate in the same way and with as much care as we do, why not use their surplus goods when we are short, and they reciprocate? A favor to all concerned.

But do not exchange with questionable nurserymen, as you must not impose on your customer in the smallest particular. In the planting and cultivation of your nursery stock, stake, mark and book every block, and use only the most trustworthy men in this work.
Have your head man superintend and look after all work in the nursery and his word law in your absence. This man must be capable in every way, or you are sure to run against breakers and suffer severe losses. But personally superintend your work in detail, as far as possible.

Occasionally we see men assume the name nurserymen upon the plan, “get orders honestly if you can, but get orders.” They guarantee everything you ask, and more. They make people see the golden egg, but they say they like to work new territory quite often, and as a consequence they are unable to call upon their customers and make good these promises. They buy all their goods of responsible and irresponsible men and label them to meet the wants of their customers. They die, but not the death of the righteous. The people make it too hot or too cold for them. Their name is legion and their method is flattery and deception, and the people are anxious to have honest men take their places.

We must remember there are great chances in our business for wolves to come around in sheep’s clothing. The only way to destroy these is to use honest methods and meet them on the same battle field.

A good grower of nursery stock is not necessarily a good salesman. It is one thing to produce good goods and another thing to sell them. There was a time when the merchant went to the city to purchase his stock. But now the city, or its representatives, comes to the merchant in all lines of trade with samples of his goods. If he did not, some other city would get the trade; and so in the nursery business. Nearly all small concerns are dropping out of the race, because they are not adapted, or cannot afford to go themselves or hire a good representative to sell their goods. Catalogue trade was at one time worthy of mention, but now, with a few exceptions, catalogues are consigned to the waste basket. What does this signify? Simply this. That if the nurserymen of Wisconsin wish to do the business of our state they must personally see its people each year with samples of their goods.

Sell the goods for a good, fair price. Be sure and sell them as good stock as there is, true to name. Tell the people the truth
and instruct them at sale. Work for their interest and by so
doing you are working for yours. Replace any faulty stock that
is sent them, by oversight, or otherwise. Promise to see them
each year and do so as long as you are in the nursery business.
If you do not succeed under this plan, the nurseryman is at fault
or the salesman he employs.

If you do not use some or all of the plan mentioned, the men
outside of Wisconsin will continue to furnish the bulk of the
stock planted in our state, and Wisconsin nurserymen will con-
tinue to blow their trumpets in denouncing the so-called tree
agent, — which is simply free advertising for him.

In conclusion, treat your customers as you would like to be
treated and they will not go back on you, only in exceptional
cases. If you do not amass a fortune under this plan, you will
command your customer’s respect and friendship and you will
have a profitable and pleasant business.

SHALL THE NURSERYMAN BUY STOCK TO FILL HIS
ORDERS FROM EASTERN AND SOUTHERN
NURSERIES?

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From the first impression it would appear that the subject of
buying and selling nursery stock should not be connected
with horticulture, but only a subject to be considered by Nur-
serymen in their conventions. But upon further reflection I
believe there is no subject of more importance, to the farmers of
our state than the purchase of nursery stock which is to become
the foundation of a future orchard, a berry plantation or the
adornment of a beautiful home.

We must admit that a vast amount of fraud has been perpe-
trated upon the planters of this state, not so often by the honest
nurseryman (if there be any) but by the party who is correctly
called a free dealer buys his stock where he can buy cheapest,