

THE FLORISTS' REVIEW

HOW TRADE MADE MOTHERS' DAY

In Mothers' day one can watch the beginning and growth, in little more than a decade, of a leader among the trade's big business days. The story of past achievement will inspire to yet greater future development of this ample opportunity to bring the people to flowers and flowers to the people.



AMONG the many ingenious uses to which motion pictures have been put is the recording of the growth of flowers. Separate photographs taken at successive stages of development are combined in one film to show the visible unfolding of the bloom. Somewhat the same kind of record might be made of the growth of Mothers' day since its germination in 1908. The story of that growth is a fascinating tribute to the hard work and skillful advertising which the trade has done all over the country. To take the tiny seed of an idea thrown to the winds in the "vox pop" column of a Philadelphia newspaper, bring it to earth by appreciating its widespread commercial possibilities and cultivate it carefully in newspaper advertising and other publicity until it develops the notable business of the present Mothers' day—that is indeed an achievement. That is what has been done by the trade since The Review brought Mothers' day to its notice.

In 1908.

One day in the early part of May, 1908, a letter came to the office of The Review from Chapin Bros., Lincoln, Neb. It enclosed the proclamation of the mayor of Lincoln recommending that Sunday, May 10, be observed as Mothers' day, that on that day every man and boy should "wear a white flower in honor of his mother" and that flowers be sent to invalids and orphans, both in their homes and in hospitals. The letter of Chapin Bros., which was published in The Review of May 14, 1908, and constituted the introduction of Mothers' day to the trade as a whole, read as follows:

"Again Nebraska is ahead. We enclose a proclamation that cleaned out every florist in Lincoln, cleaner than has been done for years.

"It's a sentiment that appeals to every man and boy, and people bought flowers that never bought before. The

florists' stores were crowded from early Saturday morning until Sunday night.

"We hope to make it a holiday for the United States. Crowd it and push it; it has Memorial day beat a mile, and comes when flowers are cheap and plenty. Get a swing on your pen, but give Lincoln, Neb., the credit. We grow big men and big ideas here."

Hunting a Parent for Mothers' Day.

The breeziness of this letter was but the beginning of a wind which blew other letters into the office of The Review, inquiring about the origin of the day. While Mothers' day certainly did some tall growing in Lincoln, Neb., it was a hybrid in origin and the rest of its parentage was yet to be discovered.

membered the name of the sender. The clue seemed to end in an impasse. However, hope was not lost. Uncle Sam's postal service afforded one opportunity. In those days its efficiency was notable and the ingenuity of its system admirable. A registered letter requires a signature before it can be delivered. If one were addressed to "Secretary of the Mothers' Day Association, Philadelphia," where would the postoffice deliver it, or would it come back to the sender as undeliverable? Here was a chance. The Review seized it. Such a letter was mailed. Days later, a reply came. The postoffice had discovered the founder of Mothers' day, and the letter in response, from Miss Anna Jarvis, at last revealed the holiday's origin.

The story of the letter which Miss Jarvis sent to the correspondents' column of a Philadelphia newspaper, suggesting that the second Sunday in May be observed each year as Mothers' day, has been told several times before. The idea came to her from her desire to commemorate the death of her own mother.

The Seed Sown.

As a result of her letter to the Philadelphia newspaper, the celebration of Mothers' day occurred Sunday, May 10, 1908, in Los Angeles, Dallas, Brooklyn, Providence and other

cities. The mayors of Omaha, Lincoln, Hastings and Fremont, in Nebraska, and Council Bluffs, in Iowa, issued special Mothers' day proclamations. Brand Whitlock, then mayor of Toledo, O., directed special attention to it. But it was not until the year following, when The Review pointed out the possibilities of the day for the whole florists' trade, that Mothers' day began to receive adequate recognition.

In its issue of April 29, 1909, The Review explained to the trade the opportunity that lay before florists. Here was a day to which the strongest of all sentiments was attached. If its observance could be made general, tremendous possibilities awaited the trade. But it was a frail child, with no one

Wear a Flower for Mother's Sake

To honor the best mother who ever lived — your own. That is the purpose of Mothers' Day.

SUNDAY, MAY 8

A white flower for Mother's memory.
A bright flower for Mothers living.

We shall be prepared Saturday, May 7, and Sunday, May 8, with a large assortment of fine, fresh flowers, appropriate for Mothers' Day, offered at our usual moderate prices. All customers served promptly.

Special rates to Sunday Schools, Lodges, etc.

Posey & Blossom, Progressive Florists
Main Street

The Review's Pioneer Suggestion for a Mothers' Day Advertisement, in 1910.

The Review started on a hunt for it. "Mother" naturally suggested "woman" and a member of the staff of The Review spent much time canvassing the chief women's clubs of Chicago in an effort to trace the origin of this new day. They willingly approved it, but could shed no light upon its beginnings. Neither could the Federation of Women's Clubs or the Congress of Mothers. The search seemed fruitless.

Stumbling on a Clue.

But a visit on another matter to the editorial office of a Chicago daily led to the chance discovery that a circular about Mothers' day had been received from Philadelphia. The circular, however, could not be found and no one re-

but a Philadelphia woman to sustain it. Should the trade give it nourishment and life, the reward would be a hundredfold to florists. This The Review pointed out, and the trade warmly responded.

By the requests of florists, mayors in various cities issued proclamations, reviving interest in the day after it had lapsed since the year before. Heads of the G. A. R. and the Sons of Veterans requested members to wear flowers on Mothers' day. Governors proclaimed its observance. Local trade bodies were active everywhere at The Review's suggestion and the results of that first campaign, in 1909, were remarkable.

All Flowers in All Colors.

In its issue of April 21, 1910, to aid further the trade's development of the day, The Review offered a suggestion for a Mothers' day advertisement, in which the individual retailer's name could be substituted for "Posey & Blossom" and any other necessary adaptations made. This advertisement, which is reproduced on the preceding page, was used, in part or in whole, by many florists and, directly and indirectly, influenced most of the newspaper advertising for that day which was "to honor the best Mother who ever lived—your own." An essential feature of this suggested advertisement was the lines:

A white flower for Mother's memory.
A bright flower for Mothers living.

The inclusion of these lines was due to the fact that Miss Jarvis, in her original plan, had suggested the use of white carnations as the most fitting token for Mothers' day. The Review realized that the observance of this day would far outrun any possible supply of white carnations and that, consequently, the development of the day would be greatly retarded, if not made impossible, so long as a single flower of a particular color was regarded as the only proper one for use at that time. So The Review urged florists to suggest that other flowers were equally well fitted to convey the message and that a variety of color would give greater pleasure and brightness to the day and make easier the satisfying of different tastes. Reports each year since then have shown the dominating use of this couplet and its effect upon the character of Mothers' day business. In 1913 the wording was slightly altered and the order changed to throw emphasis on the colored flowers, as follows:

Bright flowers for Mothers living;
White flowers for Mother's memory.

In the following years the couplet was put in the following rhymed form:

For Mothers at home, flowers bright;
For Mother's memory, flowers white.

Such is the history of the trade slogan for Mothers' day.

Mothers' Day Publicity.

In one of the first years of the development of Mothers' day two Maine towns learned of the day from another town near-by. They decided that they would not be outdone. So they celebrated the following Sunday as Mothers' day. But each succeeding year has seen Mothers' day firmly established on the second Sunday in May.

Chapin Bros., Lincoln, Neb., whose letter in 1908 first called attention to the day, wrote of Mothers' day of 1913:

Every flower in the city was sold, and of every color. There was as much call for colored as for white flowers and it was the easiest big

day of the year. Saturday's sales this year were seventy-five per cent of the total Easter Saturday sales.

All we have to do now is to see that the governor and mayor issue their proclamations, and have the ministers announce it in the churches, and publish a little advertisement, and the crowds come.

One point greatly in favor of Mothers' day is that its appeal is so broad and, at the same time, so elemental that social agencies like the church and the school have gladly worked for its extension at florists' suggestion entirely on moral grounds. Much of its advertising has thus been free and spontaneous rather than paid for and deliberate. As already pointed out, fraternal organizations have given it wide publicity. Organized labor has endorsed it, through the editorial columns of the American Federationist, the official or-

view of last week. Notable examples of such advertising appear each year and multiply season after season. The larger cities have done much in this respect, but any town having more than one retailer supplies a field for coöperative effort.

The seed of Mothers' day, sown long ago by The Review, has been well cultivated by the trade. Further progress of this holiday is assured by the extent to which the members of the trade, individually and coöperatively, advertise the day to their customers, find new ways in which to impress it on the public's mind, and methods for developing the day's business. The trade has made a holiday that is of immense benefit to its members and given the public an occasion for the observation of a high sentiment.

POETIC PROPAGANDA.

Combining two arts, W. J. Olds is able to aid one with the other. Examples thereof have been printed before in these columns. Now he comes with a poetic offering for Mothers' day, which he, and other florists if they wish, will use to spread the propaganda of flowers for the second Sunday in May. Here it is:

MOTHERS' DAY.

Let every heart today remember mother,
The sweetest word yet framed by human tongue,
A truer lover yet than any other
Beneath the skies, since this old world was young.
The fondest memories of our hearts enshrine her,
Her breast, our fount of life, our couch of state.
Ah! if today our arms may not entwine her,
We still may wear a flower for mother's sake.
Though far from mother's arms you may have wandered,
Yea! though the skies have curtained her from view,
Let not her wealth of love be thankless squandered;
Her fondest, latest prayer was still for you.
So if today a flower you may not send her,
Token of love, her joy to consummate,
Let memory still this loyalty extend her,
And wear a flower today for mother's sake.
—W. J. Olds.

BALTIMORE'S CAMPAIGN.

Gets Under Way.

The fifth city to inaugurate a local publicity campaign, tying up with the national campaign and following the examples set by Chicago, St. Louis, Milwaukee and Buffalo, is Baltimore, Md. The florists of Baltimore recently formed an organization, named the Associated Florists of Baltimore, under which they are conducting their campaign.

The plan which this organization uses to procure funds is the same as that used in other cities, the percentage plan. The growers pay one-half of one per cent and the retailers pay one per cent on all stock that passes through the wholesale houses. While not every florist in Baltimore is a member of the organization and contributes to the campaign, though all reap its benefits, it is hoped that all the florists will be in it before the campaign gets well under way.

This association had \$4,000 to start with and no doubt this sum will be doubled soon. The enthusiastic members of the organization say that before long the members will insist that the percentage be doubled.

The task of educating the people of Baltimore to "Say It with Flowers" has been entrusted to the Deatel Advertising Service, an organization which

Take a
BOX of FLOWERS
Home Today



Special \$2
Saturday Box
(At most any Florist's.)

There is no sweeter way
of expressing thoughtful at-
tention than to

**"Say it with
Flowers"**

These Special Saturday
Boxes contain a delightful
profusion of the season's love-
liest fresh flowers, rich in
color and tastily packed in
appropriate boxes.

Ask any Florist
Anywhere in Baltimore.

**THE ASSOCIATED
FLORISTS
OF BALTIMORE**

Moving the Spring Surplus.

gan of the American Federation of Labor. Each year an increasing number of state governors and city mayors issue proclamations calling for the celebration of Mothers' day. And, finally, Congress has passed a resolution recommending its observance.

Working Together for the Day.

One natural feature of the growth of Mothers' day, as of the growth of the trade, has been the increased use of coöperative advertising, a medium of publicity briefly described in The Re-

has gone into the campaign with heart and soul. In line with the advertising effort, arrangements have been made with the largest banks, trust companies and theaters to have floral displays in their reception rooms and lobbies. These displays will bear the sign, "Say It with Flowers."

First Lesson.

The public's first lesson, in the form of an advertisement, eleven and a half inches deep and three columns wide, appeared Tuesday, April 20, in the Baltimore Sun. This advertisement, reproduced on this page, made its appeal for the desire of flowers with the coming of spring.

Another product of the coöperative campaign is a weekly offering, at the stores of all members of the Associated Florists of Baltimore, of a box of flowers for \$2. Saturday morning, April 17, an advertisement, reproduced on page 18, was inserted in the Baltimore Sun announcing the special Saturday box of flowers. It is said that this advertisement is to appear each Saturday morning and in a short time will, no doubt, be the means of bringing back many Baltimore people to the habit that was lost when the dollar box went out. To move as much stock as possible through the regular channels and keep the surpluses from the street men at the week-end and in time of glut is the motive of these sales.

ATTENTION, GROWERS!

We Are Now Ready for Action.

There are, in every community, some men with a vision for the future of their business, who can look and work toward perfecting it with not altogether a selfish purpose, who are willing to contribute some time for the good of the trade at large.

I am writing this with a view to getting such men in each community interested in the forming of a local growers' organization to work with the National Flower Growers' Association.

If you already have a growers' organization in your vicinity, of either plant or cut flower growers, the writer would like to get in touch with its officers with reference to having a committee appointed whose duty it would be to come to Cleveland, O., next August to assist in the adoption of a constitution and in perfecting a permanent organization of the National Flower Growers' Association.

We are exceedingly desirous of having a number of locals organized, at least temporarily, before the national convention in August, so that a committee can be named from among the growers of each locality, which will have a part in this work at Cleveland.

The writer will be glad to assist growers in this work if you will kindly address him at 501 Bank of Edwardsville building, Edwardsville, Ill.

May we not depend upon you live wires in the progress of trade matters to comply with this request promptly?
J. F. Ammann, Sec'y.

ILLINOIS GROWERS MEET.

The growers of the central and southern part of Illinois met at the St. Nicholas hotel, Springfield, Ill., Tuesday, April 20, for the purpose of forming a local of the National Flower



In the Spring---
Everyone longs for Flowers.

WHEN in the fields and meadows tiny bulbs begin to poke their way through the drab soil that has sheltered them through the frigid days of winter—when the flowering shrubs are budding—when the big trees and the little trees are putting out their first green leaves—in the Spring, everyone longs for Flowers and the Country.

To bring these beauties of the Great Outdoors to one's own home is a delight that may be enjoyed by every city dweller.

For at any florist's in Baltimore you will find countless varieties of blossoming plant and vine in all their new Spring beauty, ready to revive the heart and strengthen the faith of those who will find time to let the loveliness of Flowers sink deep into their souls.

Bright little orange *Calendulas* may be seen in profusion—then, too, there are colorful *Snapdragons*, pink, yellow and vermilion; and blooming *Roses*, *Sweet Peas* and snowy white *Gardenias*.

"Say it with Flowers"

Flowers and Plants are surprisingly inexpensive at the present time, and any Florist will embrace an opportunity to assist you in making the proper selections.

For information concerning Flowers or Plants call the Florists' Information Bureau, Mt. Vernon 6581

**ASSOCIATED FLORISTS
of BALTIMORE**

Quarter-Page Ad Beginning Baltimore Florists' Co-operative Publicity.

Growers' Association. After a bountiful luncheon was served, J. F. Ammann, of Edwardsville, was introduced by William J. Hembreiker, of Springfield. Mr. Ammann explained the importance of the work in his usual way, and when he was through and those present had expressed their opinions of the importance of organization, the local association was formed.

Frank Washburn, of Bloomington, nominated Edward Gullett, of Lincoln, for temporary chairman, and he was unanimously elected. J. W. Ross, of Cen-

tralia, nominated William Hembreiker for secretary, who was elected. Frank Washburn, Philip Daut, of Decatur, and James Cole, of Peoria, were elected a committee, who, with the chairman and secretary, are to attend the Cleveland convention in August as delegates. There were thirty-five growers present.

Quincy, Ill.—John Tiplady, who is now Illinois state landscape designer, spoke of the correct methods of combating tree diseases before the Quincy Rotarians April 20.