

enables the American tanners to compete with other countries in their own markets. This is surely a question that tanners in the United Kingdom would do well to study. Needless to say, only the latest improvements in the general process of tanning are employed in the United States. Though there is necessarily a large amount of manual labor in the process, the latest thing in machinery is used wherever possible to save labor and time. Each tannery, as a rule, keeps to its particular speciality. One makes nothing but sole leather, another certain qualities of fine leather, and so on. In one they treat about 900 horse hides and 700 calf hides a day, and employ about 550 hands. They make nothing but the finer qualities of leather, and import most of their hides and material.

A visit to some of the boot and shoe factories in the United States will at once convince one that American manufacturers mean business, and are doing their best to overcome the difficulties of transport, etc., under which they labor, by producing an article cheaply and, at the same time, of a sufficiently good quality to please their customers.

All the latest designs of machinery are found in the workshops. With the exception of cutting out the materials used in making the upper part of the boots, practically none of the work is done by hand. Large and small sewing machines are, of course, largely used and

are driven by power. Scalloping, skiving, folding, button sewing and self-feeding eyeletting machines are in universal use, also the usual sole-cutting and rounding machines, wire tackers, pegging and heel attaching, trimming and burnishing machines. It is impossible to give a list of all the machinery in use. The mere fact that from 300 to 500 hands are able to turn out from 1,500 to 3,000 pairs of boots and shoes per day is sufficient to show that practically all the work is done by machinery.

It is the use of so much of this improved machinery that enables the American manufacturer to turn out such large quantities, and to do it so cheaply.

Hand-made boots are almost unknown, as so many of the difficulties to be contended with formerly have been overcome. In consequence of this the public get a cheaper article in comparison with the quality than formerly, and the manufacturer obtains a correspondingly higher profit.

The machines are run at a rapid rate and the work is divided up in such a way that the workpeople are kept doing the same work continually. Payment by the piece is generally adopted, and the hours from 10 a.m. to 5.30 p.m., with half-an-hour interval in the middle of the day for dinner.

The organization as a rule leaves nothing to be desired. The factories in Chicago are generally in buildings of five or six storeys, fitted with electric light

and elevators throughout. The leather is cut at the top of the building and passes down from floor to floor as the work progresses until it reaches the ground floor as a finished article. It is here packed and sent away. So systematically is the work done in many of the factories that a boot will pass down from the top to the bottom of the house without once crossing from one side of a floor to another until it goes to be packed.

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