

STRIKES AGAIN.

The air is again filled with strikes and rumors of strikes. One, in our own country, took place in Winnipeg, where street railway employees quitted work to enforce recognition of their union, and the payment of higher wages. From its inception, the strike was attended with disorder and scenes of bloodshed, and many of the company's cars have been demolished or injured, though the employees state that this sort of work has not been encouraged by themselves. Both sides in the controversy seemed to be equally determined. Happily a settlement was reached on Monday, the company conceding a cent an hour additional pay to the men, but refusing recognition of the union.

The other case is in both the anthracite and bituminous coal regions of the United States, where some 400,000 men have refused to work, primarily because they do not see fit to admit that anything other than the "open shop" principle is an infringement of some of the most important clauses of the American constitution. As yet it does not appear by any means impossible that the trouble will be settled, but there is, of course, always a danger, when it reaches such a culmination as it has already, that some spark may give rise to a conflagration almost impossible to quench. Stocks of coal in the anthracite region are said to be very large, so that ordinarily there should not be any serious development facing the ordinary householder, though already some dealers, we understand, both in Canada and the United States, have taken upon themselves for some reason to raise their prices. In the soft coal realm, conditions are different. Stocks are apt to deteriorate when exposed to the weather, and they have not been accumulated to any great extent therefore. A protracted strike would consequently bring about great hardship for manufacturers. However, many of the mines have already resumed, and there does not seem to be such a determined feeling among the men as in the case of the anthracite workers.

—Probably we need to take to heart the hints made by Mr. E. N. Lewis in Parliament recently, respecting the status of the Canadian lake marine. It is true that in latter years many fine steamships, the product of Canadian yards, have been built for service on the Great Lakes. But these do not represent the whole story. Side by side with them in the words of Mr. Lewis, "are many old crafts worn out in service abroad, and brought here to hazard the lives of our seamen in." Some of these are merely old hulks fit for nothing but to be broken up for firewood; these are painted over, re-named, and made to look new when in reality they are all rotten beneath the paint. The wonder is that even so many survive the perils of the inland deep; and as it is, many lives are lost every year through their agency. It is true that we have inspection laws which compare favorably in strictness with those of some other countries. But even of more importance than the existence of good laws on the statute books is that they shall be rigidly enforced, and this is certainly not always the case with those affecting navigation. The speaker pointed out that Canada's merchant marine, instead of increasing, was decreasing. In building a ship 90 per cent. of the cost was spent on labor. Canada was in a better position than any other country in the world to increase its shipping. In Canada we protected everything but our shipping, but the United States protected its ships on the lakes.

—A lengthy article on the Canadian Tariff, in the "Dry Goods Economist," of New York, appears to lean to the opinion that Canada is in no mood for reciprocity with the United States. This article is based on a paper by Mr. Edward Porritt, in the "North American Review" for April. The article concludes thus: "Altogether, if Mr. Porritt's observations are accurate, and there seems no reason to question them, the outlook for closer trade relations between this country and Canada is more unfavorable than at any previous period. The conditions ought to prove an object-lesson to those who claim that our tariff policy should be formulated without regard to the desires or opinions of any other nation. They are of special interest at the present time." It is beyond question that the Canadian people have "soured on reciprocity," to use a current phrase, and Mr. Porritt, who has been all over Canada with the Tariff Commission, and has had excellent facilities for learning the opinions of the people, is quite right in describing it as a dead issue.

PRICES OF RUBBER.

Rubber manufacturers have now announced their discounts, definite information as to which had been awaited by jobbers and retailers with considerable interest. From the standpoint of the latter there is some improvement, though they still complain of inadequate profit in view of the necessity they are often under of holding over stocks of rubber shoes, etc., on account of weather conditions. However the tendency is, as it has been in recent years, to even up prices, so that there is now greater uniformity, and this in itself is a satisfactory feature.

On ordinary lines of rubber shoes and rubber boots the regular trade discount is to be 20 per cent., with 5 per cent. extra on definite orders placed before June 1st. Additional cash discounts will be allowed as follows:— March deliveries will be payable on April 10th less 2 per cent., or on April 30th less 1 per cent.; April deliveries May 10th less 2 per cent., or May 30th less 1 per cent.; May deliveries, June 10th less 2 per cent., or June 30th less 1 per cent.; June deliveries, July 10th less 2 per cent., or July 30th less 1 per cent. Preference in delivery will be given orders received by May 1st. For fall dating, orders for delivery from July to October are payable on November 10th less 2 per cent., or on November 30th less 1 per cent.; November deliveries, payable December 10th less 2 per cent., December 30th less 1 per cent.; December deliveries, January 10th less 2 per cent., or January 30th less 1 per cent. For spring dating, deliveries in February and March will be payable April 10th less 2 per cent., or April 30th less 1 per cent., or net 60 days from the 1st day of the month following shipment. In the case of tennis and lacrosse rubber shoes the trade discount will be 20 per cent., with cash discount on March and April deliveries, payable May 10th less 2 per cent. or May 30th less 1 per cent.; May 1st to September 14th inclusive payable on the 10th of the following month at 2 per cent. discount or on the 30th at 1 per cent. discount, or net 60 days from first of the month following shipment. There are other discounts, bonuses and rebates under certain circumstances. The month of March witnessed a material improvement in rubber conditions throughout a large section of the country, particularly in Ontario. There was more real wintry weather than in any other portion of the season and sorting orders were much more frequent. Retailers in many cases feared they would be obliged to carry over the bulk of their stocks. As a result of the brisker demand payments have been better than they at first promised.

The semi-famine in crude rubber continues unabated. The fact that perhaps rather less was required for footwear manufacturing purposes makes but little real difference, as the other commercial uses for this article are increasing

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