

Successful Shoe Dealers' Convention

The Shoe Trade Convention held in the Coliseum during the last week was more than usually interesting one. As a general rule conventions are designed to be of interest only to "professional" followers of the particular trade they are named for. This was not true of the Shoe Trade Convention, and moreover, they succeeded in creating such general interest around town that many people went to see the booths, hear the orchestra and witness various demonstrations. Tickets to the Coliseum were distributed free by various retail shoe dealers in the city and they succeeded in getting a great many people to go who would not otherwise have done so.

A good feature of the Convention was a well gotten up booth containing footwear "made in Canada" and embracing the products of practically all the Canadian manufacturers.

There were so many booths that a mention of each would be impossible, but one of the most attractive was that of Holt Renfrew & Company. They showed the leathers from which their famous moccasins are made in all stages of tanning and manufacture. An Indian woman made little moccasins as souvenirs for visitors.

The United Shoe Machinery Company had a very large exhibit showing the manufacturing of

Goodyear Welts. All the work was done just as if in their own factory.

The Dominion Rubber System also had a very fine demonstration booth. The pieces making up high rubber boots were cut, coated with rubber and put together before large numbers of spectators.

Mr. Joseph Daoust, the well known tanner and shoe manufacturer gave the Convention members an interesting talk on shoe prices. In his dual capacity of tanner and shoe manufacturer his words will be accepted as authoritative.

Mr. Daoust's analysis of the essential factors bearing on the price of manufactured shoes, by which he divided these into six main items, two of which have come down somewhat in price, while two others remain stationary and the remaining two, namely, labor and administration expenses are bound to go up, made it very easy to get a fair idea of the position of the trade. His suggestion seemed reasonable, that since the public have got an idea that a reduction in prices is on the way and since they are evidently looking for such a reduction, the retailers should get together with the manufacturers and try to come to some arrangement whereby a reduction of somewhere about ten per cent may be accomplished, with a little concession for both sides.

Americans may Trade with Russia

The recent United States action lifting the embargo on trade with Soviet Russia, although it will not result immediately in any decided change in trade relations with that country and the United States, stands out as the most absorbing foreign development of the last fortnight, according to the current issue of the Guaranty Trust Company's foreign trade review, "American Goods and Foreign Markets." "Commercially, the State Department's action probably means little at this time," the bulletin says: "politically it can be taken as a far-sighted policy which may react on and ultimately weaken the Bolshevik influence in Russia. Soviet authorities have continually held that their failure to bring relief to the Russian people has been due to the Allied blockade against trade. With the embargo lifted, one of Bolshevism's chief excuses will be shattered and the Bolsheviks will lose one of their most formidable means of foreign propaganda.

"Present chaotic conditions in Russia will present serious difficulties to whatever trade may result from this country's action. Russia is in dire need of locomotives and railroad materials, but these, as well as many other commodities, are likely to be considered capable of being used for war purposes and their exportation thereby restricted. Trade will necessarily be conducted on a barter basis, as Russia's currency is practically worthless and her only gold is that confiscated from the Imperial regime. Her exportable surplus of commodities is so small, however, that it could not be exchanged for any appreciable amount of goods from this country. The United States Post Office Department has not re-established the mail service with Russia and at present there is no authority in Russia to which business men could appeal for counsel or for the protection normally available to foreign traders.

"Agricultural conditions in Russia are best in the central Volga territory and in the Governments situated south of Moscow, where nearly all the former estates are being tilled by peasants and the remaining areas have been taken over by the Agricultural Council. In the northeastern governments a much larger portion of the land

will be planted than last year, and the harvest is likely to be tripled. In the northern and north-western governments the former estates have not been brought under cultivation. Starvation forced the population to double the territory planted with vegetables. In the territories not devastated by war the area planted in 1919 was normal, but in devastated regions only a small part of the land could be planted.

"The production of paper in Soviet Russia amounted to 144,665 poods in February and March, 1920, or 25 per cent below the estimate. The five Russian paper factories in operation manufactured 49,000 poods of paper in March and 40,000 poods in April. The paper factory in Krassnoje Selo near Petrograd has temporarily closed for lack of fuel."

The Advancement of Agricultural Teaching

A man may never be too old to learn, but the youth is conceded to be more teachable than the person of mature age. By providing suitable instruction and training for the young men and women of the farm, more lasting benefit will be conferred than by seeking to make good the deficiencies of the older generation. The 1918-19 report of the Agricultural Instruction Act Commissioner reviews the work carried on during the year by the provincial departments of Agriculture and Education with the funds placed at the disposal of the provinces for agricultural instruction by the Federal Government. This bulletin is obtainable from the Publications Branch, Dept. of Agriculture, Ottawa. The report indicates that about one half of the total annual grant of \$1,100,000 is applied to the instruction of adolescents.

For the advancement in the direction of agricultural teaching in the rural schools, the grant is largely accountable. Along with it have been developed, nature study, school and home gardening, boys' and girls' clubs in poultry, pig and calf rearing, canning, bread-making and similar activities, culminating in the annual school fair. Practical projects of this kind may easily be made the medium for training the intelligence, because they are seized upon with eagerness by most boys and girls.

In certain high schools, agricultural and household science courses are being developed, and in more than one province, special vocational schools of agriculture have been established and receive assistance from the grant. In developments such as these lies the hope for the improvement of modern agriculture through the rank and file of the rural population, to whom the centralized college of agriculture is not available. The present day need is that it should be made easy for country boys and girls to secure an educational training of such a character as will fit them for country life and rural pursuits. Colleges of Agriculture and Veterinary Colleges have not, however, been overlooked; they also are given liberal assistance. Following the close of the war, the attendance at these institutions shows a marked and gratifying increase, and their influence in promoting the advancement of Canada's leading basic industry, Agriculture, will continue to make itself felt.

Newfoundland Company takes out Group Insurance

Of peculiar interest to large employers at the present time is the recent action of the Reid Newfoundland Company in covering its employees by means of a group insurance policy.

This corporation has been one of the principal instruments in building up the ancient Colony to its present strong industrial position. Capital and labor are drawing closer together. A better understanding is being reached, and group insurance has had a lot to do with this better understanding.

In making the announcement to its employees in a circular letter, the Reid Company declare that "the interests of the employer and employee are so closely allied and interwoven that whatever helps one helps the other, and desiring to promote and increase the harmonious relationship between the company and its employees we have adopted as a reward for faithful service the

group insurance system and have covered the lives of our regular staff with the Sun Life Assurance Company of Canada."

The general public will be interested to learn that this large policy amounting to over a million and a quarter dollars is the first to be placed in any part of the British Colonies outside of Canada. Great interest has been aroused in the Island by the Company's announcement and several notices of appreciation have appeared in the local press. It is a striking tribute to the strength of Canadian life companies that one of our own corporations should have been selected to cover the risk.

The Reid Newfoundland Company have specially provided that employees of the Company who enlisted for service during the late war will be given full credit for the time of their service with the Empire.