

to agree to boycott scoundrels, after the fashion these shoe merchants have adopted. But it would have a wonderfully salutary effect.

HOLIDAY DRY GOODS.

One of the prominent features of the dry goods trade this year would appear to be the early demand for articles generally in particular request about Christmas time. This speaks well for the general prosperity of the country, for, if there is one index that can be relied on more than others of a lack of confidence in the future on the part of the public mind, it is the curtailment of the holiday gift habit. That people this year are starting early and that the quality of articles usually desired is of a superior character are two good indications therefore of a prevalence of the opinion that adversity is still a long way off. For which let us be thankful. "Never trouble till trouble troubles you," is a good maxim, and one the general acceptance of which in commercial, as in other circles, is calculated to help in keeping said trouble at a good distance. Some wholesale houses report that a greater business has been done already this season in fancy linen goods, more especially handkerchiefs, than was transacted during the whole of last season. Yet the real Christmas trade has hardly begun to move yet, judging from former experiences. Many pretty features are to be seen in the warehouses and shops in the line of good linen handkerchiefs for presentation purposes, one of the most popular of which no doubt will be the pretty boxes containing half a dozen or a dozen handkerchiefs, ladies' or men's sizes, beautifully initialed, and some of them embroidered. Such goods as sideboard corners, hem-stitched serviettes, table spreads, etc., are also popular. Prices in practically all lines are very firm; in some, indeed, it is believed that repeat orders will be taken only at an advance.

Deliveries of domestic cotton goods are becoming better. They are going forward to the jobbers in small lots.

Taffetas continue in good demand and sell in the staple qualities as well as in brilliant taffeta, while there is at the same time also a good market for taffeta frou-frou and taffeta muslin. Good transactions are also reported in printed taffeta and peau de soie. Printed goods are favored for next spring and good orders for printed silks in various grounds and effects have already been placed.—N. Y. Dry Goods Economist

In Paris, the Empire or Josephine type is still frequently apparent in the cut and arrangement of winter garments. The waistline crosses them quite high up, in fact, passing just below the bosom. This is rendered the more conspicuous by a belt or ribbon sash surrounding the coat or wrap at that point, and when of ribbon, terminating in loose drooping loops and long ends in the centre of the front or back. On others, the upper portion above that point is embroidered or braided in the form of a short bolero, or again that part is of heavy black or white lace, according to the color of the garment itself.

SOME LESSONS FROM NIJNI-NOVGOROD.

Many of the descriptions one reads of various foreign cities and foreign customs are apt to give rise to wonder either as to what the visitor had been doing with his eyes and ears or as to what his motive could have been for so perverting what he did see or hear. Mr. J. D. Allan, of Toronto, to whose recent visit to Nijni-Novgorod in the interests of his fur business we referred briefly in last number, is evidently one of those who do both see and hear the things that exist in a country other than their own, and who, noting their relation one with the other, endeavor to gain an insight into the significance of the whole. This apparently is quite a different philosophy from that acted upon by the average tourist, who, blind to all but what he wants to see, thinks naught but folly what is contrary to his own customs and habit of thought.

The great Makarievskaya Fair, which is annually held at Nijni-Novgorod, the capital of the Russian district of the

same name, situate some 275 miles east of Moscow, is without a doubt the most remarkable one in the world. It is without a parallel. Popular imagination paints it as a fair-mart merely, whereas the truth is that furs form but a portion, and an insignificant portion, of the business which is there transacted. It was originally established by the Russian Government for the direct purpose of benefiting an important monastery on the Volga, and incidentally to form a trading centre for that immense territory lying east of that waterway. Throughout the region lying east of the river Volga as far as the head-waters of the Persian Gulf and the Caspian Sea there is not a mile of railroad. This country is very productive, or would be so were it not for the sparseness of the population. Even as it is, owing to the enormous size of the territory in question, though mainly it is pastoral, the productions are of wide variety and total up to a great value. A true conception of the traffic which is carried on at the Nijni-Novgorod Fair is almost beyond the power of an American or European who has not been there. To it go all the people of the great region above-mentioned, who wish to dispose of their produce or goods made during the previous twelve-months; and, returning to their homes and factories, they bring from it their requirements for the coming year. That these crowds of buyers and sellers going and coming through a distance of thousands of square miles within the narrow limits of six or eight weeks should require almost unlimited transportation facilities is obvious; yet, as we have said, there are no railroads. To offset this lack, there is an abundance of good water transportation. The Volga alone is navigable for 2,300 miles, and this river has no less than 34 tributaries of good size, one of the chief of which is the river Kama, navigable for 1,100 miles and draining a wide expanse of rich country. The class of barges and steamers employed on these streams would be, to our pre-conceived ideas, surprisingly up-to-date.

It will be seen, therefore, that Nijni-Novgorod, surrounded with a vast expanse of country, productive, not only from an agricultural but from a manufacturing point of view, and traversed by some of the most important navigable rivers in the world, is in a very favorable position for the holding of such a Fair as has made its name famous. One peculiar feature is the fact that while at ordinary times though it is a city with modern appurtenances, its population is, comparatively speaking, quite small, yet during the period of the Fair, it mounts up to something like 450,000, the vast majority of whom are actually engaged in the business for which they came. The extraordinary activity prevailing then is something which can better be imagined than described. The scene is a modern Babel, where people of many races, all languages and religions, and varied costumes may be observed bargaining in a confusion that to the stranger's eye is inextricable. Mahomedans and Christians; Greeks and Russians; Frenchmen and Italians; Germans and Austrians; the rich, cultivated merchant of some civilized country; the half-barbarous peddler from some outlying district of the great Russian Empire; the representatives of lawless Asiatic tribes; all types may be seen in Nijni-Novgorod in Fair time, fiercely engaged in the one occupation of buying or selling. The whole country is under martial law, and in spite of the mixed races and only partially civilized elements which go to make up its population, there is comparatively little crime. It is a strange medley of present-day methods tacked on to mediæval conditions; a state of things which sometimes lead to peculiar and, to Canadian minds, annoying results. For instance, dealers apparently have no conception of the value of time. A catalogue is a thing unknown. Prices of commodities are not even guessed at until some transaction takes place, sometimes after considerable delay, and this then forms a standard price, lower than which no sale can take place.

To give one illustration from this year's Fair. A buyer who wanted a supply of camel-hair, after waiting patiently a long time for the price to be fixed, came at last to the conclusion that he would make an offer without further delay. It was accepted, and the transaction completed, whereupon the whole supply of this commodity was sold in less than two weeks. To give a list of the articles which are sold at the Fair, one would needs go through the whole gamut of