

TECHNICAL NOTES

FOREST PRODUCTS LABORATORY

U. S. FOREST SERVICE

Furniture Industry

No. F. 1.

FOREIGN TRADE IN FURNITURE

Several phases of the war and peace time activities of the Forest Products Laboratory at Madison, Wisconsin, have a bearing on the problems of shipping furniture overseas. These cover the conditioning or preparation of the wood to suit the climate to which the furniture will be sent, the use of waterproof glues, kiln drying, boxing and crating for overseas shipments, and possible treatments to prevent depredations of wood destroying insects. While information is at hand on general principles, the application of these principles to the needs of the furniture industry has never been studied, and cannot be undertaken without the cooperation of manufacturers.

In general, it can be stated that furniture manufactured in the north central states will check and open up when sent to desert regions, and that its wood will swell, the glue joints open up, and the veneering come off when it is sent to tropical humid regions. Exact knowledge of the climatic conditions surrounding the use of the furniture at its destination, and a reproduction of these conditions in the factory through the control of humidity in work rooms, should offer the successful solution of this problem. This would be coupled with consideration of drying the lumber to the proper moisture content, and shipment in moisture-proof packages to insure delivery in good condition.

It is felt that the Laboratory can be of considerable assistance to the furniture industry along these lines, should the manufacturers care to take advantage of the facilities available.