

TOY FAIR PICTURES

The pictures in this section, many of which were taken at the Toy Fair, show not only a variety of new items, but also serve the purpose of suggesting ideas for installing good interior and exterior displays.



Above: This attractive display of dolls made by Fleischaker & Baum, was generally agreed by buyers who visited the Fair to be a most unusual and attention arresting installation. Similar displays may be installed by dealers as a means for promoting doll sales and brightening up the department for the summer season.



Left: Modern toys in modern packages are attracting considerable attention to the Kilgore line this year. The Kilgore Mfg. Co. have packaged their items in a manner guaranteed to give them sales appeal in counter and shelf displays. The picture shows how a number of their items may be displayed in a rather small space.

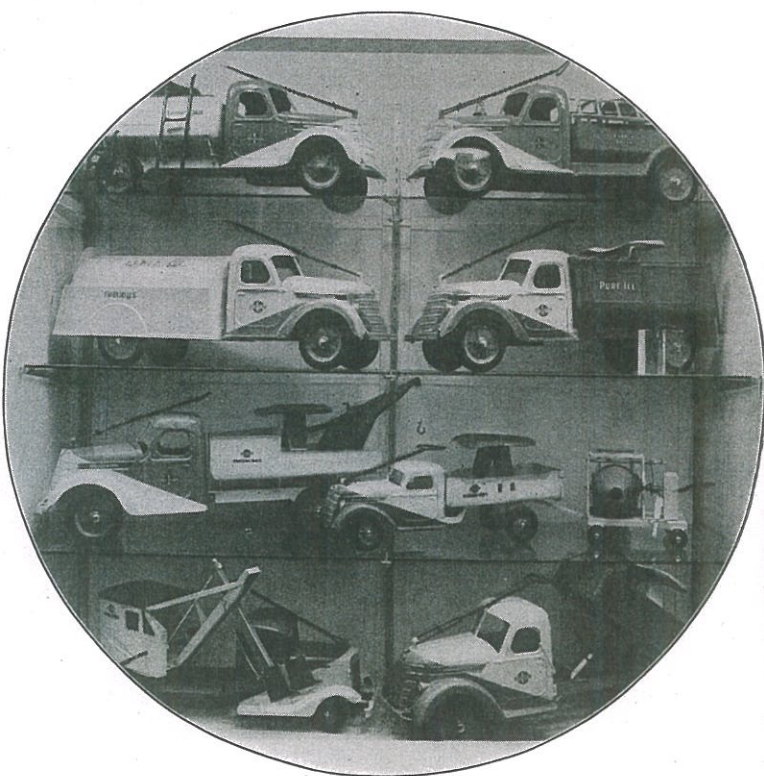
Right: A portion of the spacious showroom of Riemann, Seabrey, Inc., as it appeared during the Toy Fair. Especial attention is called to the manner in which the merchandise is displayed. Wide aisles separate the display fixtures making it possible for visitors to inspect the many attractive lines without crowding.





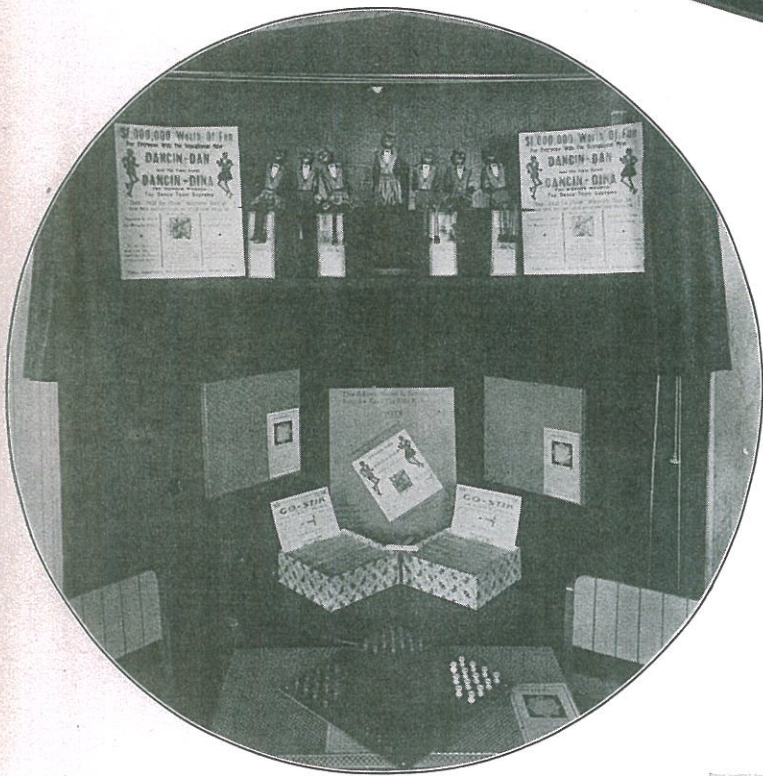
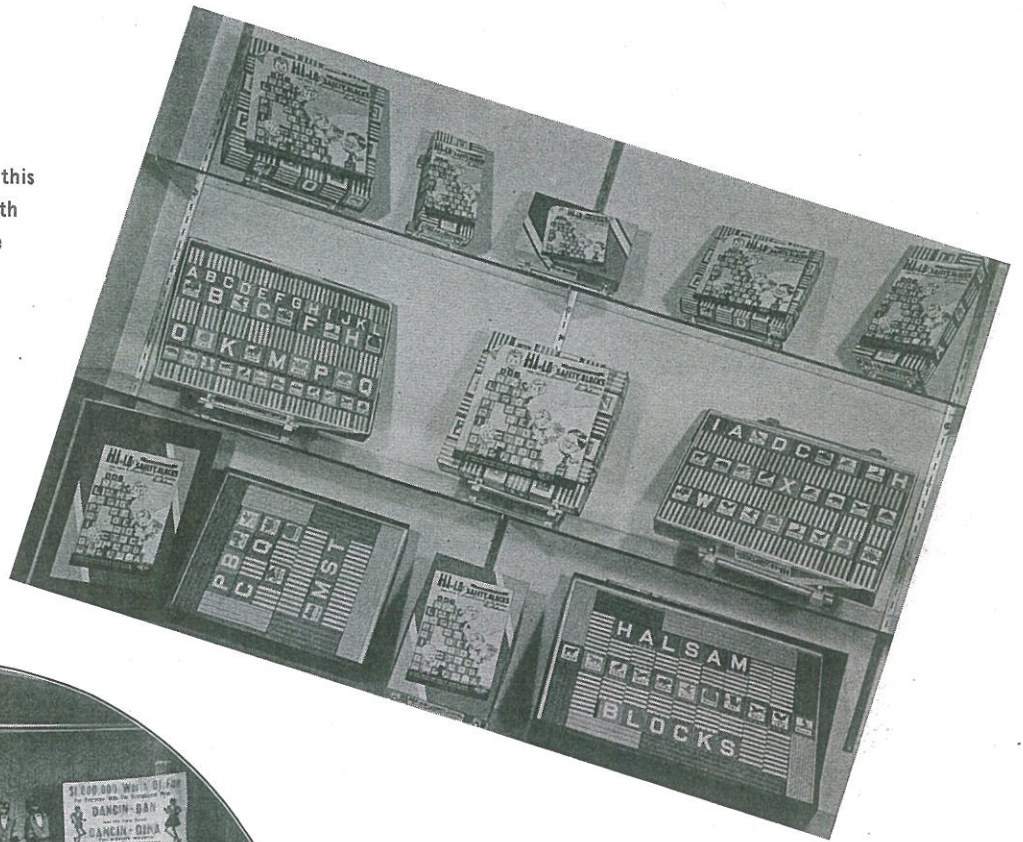
Presenting the new and elaborate Alexander Doll Co. showroom which was opened recently in the Fifth Avenue Building, New York City. One of the unique features is the manner in which the dolls are kept in quaint houses the fronts of which may be kept open or shut.

A well arranged display showing some of the new steel toy trucks to ride that were introduced by the Buddy "L" Co. at the Fair. Attention is called to how the use of movable glass shelves makes possible the showing of numerous items in a small space. Such effective displays are easily installed.



The O. W. Siebert Co. exhibited to visitors at the Toy Fair a line of velocipedes and doll carriages that evoked favorable comment from all whose pleasure it was to see them. The velocipedes of sturdy construction were outstanding for their new streamline designs; and the doll carriages speak for themselves. Note how the items are displayed on stepped shelves.

The Halsam Products Co. installed this attention arresting display in their Fifth Avenue Building Showroom during the Toy Fair. The installation shows the new Hi-Lo Safety blocks in a manner designed to draw attention to and produce sales for the items.



The Associated Syndicate presented at the Toy Fair Dancin-Dan and Dancin-Dina, the wonder wooden dance team supreme, as well as the Go-Stik and the new game of Checkerola. Note the effective way of showing the dancing dolls by use of a small platform and curtain to form a stage.

The Cameo Doll Company's Contribution to the Toy Fair consisted of such well known and popular numbers in their line as Scootles, Pete, the Jeep, Kewpie and Popeye. New items which made their debut and won approval from buyers were Little Annie Rooney and Baby Adele who are pictured here with the Cameo family.





Snow White cleaning sets are among the new and popular items introduced by the Gotham Pressed Steel Corp. at the Fair. Note the manner in which they are shown.



Three new paint sets introduced by the Pulp Products Co., Inc., at the Fair are shown attractively arranged in a manner which dealers may reproduce.



The Seiberling Latex Products Co. were at the Fair with rubber figures of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, as well as rubber balls featuring the characters.



This display of Holgate Brothers Co., containing pre-school and educational playthings, illustrates how a number of items may be attractively shown in a small space.

A TOY DIET FOR CHILDREN

IT IS A RECOGNIZED fact that a proper food diet is essential for children to assure the growth and development of strong, healthy bodies. It is also a fact that a proper and well regulated toy diet is important to the growth and development of healthy children. Parents who take care to see that their children eat the right food at the right time will do well to see that their children have the right toys for the right occasions.

There are very few, if any, children who consider food as more than something to eat, or toys as anything more than something with which to be amused. Unlike their parents, they cannot comprehend that both have much value. Through a well regulated toy diet, it is possible for parents to direct their children's play activities into the proper channels for mental and physical development.

Parents should make sure that the toys with which their children play are neither too simple nor too complex. Toys that are too simple for the children cause them to lose interest in the playthings and become bored. An even greater fault, and one common among doting parents who consider their children advanced beyond their years, is to give them playthings which are too complicated. In cases such as these, the children will try unsuccessfully to use the toys and, failing to do so, will develop an inferiority complex which it sometimes takes many years to overcome. The first requisite in a well regulated toy diet, therefore, is to give the children playthings suitable for their ages, and dealers can aid parents in the selection of such suitable items by referring to "The Right Toy for The Right Age," published by PLAYTHINGS.

IMPORTANT PROPERTIES

Just as it is necessary for children to eat different foods to build blood, muscle, fat and bone, so must the toy diet be apportioned in order to develop proper muscular co-ordination, initiative and imagination, establish creative ability and mental alertness. To get the full value from playing with toys, children must not only have toys that are suitable for them, but should use them at the proper time; and this holds true particularly in the Summer months.

The Summer season represents a time when the children, free from school, are able to spend more time at play than at any other time of the year. Their education being arrested by a vacation from school, the children need toys that will keep them mentally alert. They will need toys which they can use in the sun; and it is equally important that they have toys that will keep them out of the sun. Because the children's need for toys is so great during the Summer months, and because there are certain times when certain types of toys will be necessary, the following toy diet is suggested for recommendation by dealers to parents who desire their children to get the



fullest measure of enjoyment and benefits from their play. The toys are listed according to ages; i.e., toys for the little tots first, etc.

For play in the morning: Pre-School toys, house-keeping toys, stuffed toys, dolls, wheel toys and play-ground apparatus.

These playthings are suggested because the little tot, whose mother may be busy with household affairs, must be kept busy and should have toys which will develop him mentally; the children who like to imitate their elders should have housekeeping toys to help mother; the young dramatists will find hours of pleasure with stuffed toys and dolls; and the older children will find the morning just the right time to enjoy such healthy body-building play as is possible with the use of wheel toys and play-ground apparatus.

For play after lunch: Puzzles, games, drawing materials, blackboards, grocery stores, construction sets, craft materials.

The little tot who is accustomed to taking his afternoon nap right after lunch can for the time being be forgotten, but parents are frequently faced with the task of keeping older children from playing in the broiling noonday sun. Merely to tell children that they cannot play out in the sun, and fail to provide any other means of diversion, invariably leads to useless arguments and tends to develop cross, ornery, irritable children. The better way is to provide the children with something to do, so that their desire to take up their strenuous morning play pursuits will be overcome. The playthings listed above will promote quiet play, will hold the children's interest until such time as it is safe for them to play in the sun again, and will aid in the development of creative, imaginative and initiative abilities.

For play at the beach: Sand toys, water toys, boats, balls, games.

The little tots, who spend most of their time at the beach playing in the sand, need pails and shovels, sieves and moulds to keep them occupied and happy. That cramps will develop from going bathing too soon after eating, is an accepted fact. Older children who go to the beach cannot be expected to sit and look at the water for an hour before going in and must, therefore, be pro-

(Please turn to page 70)

SOUND MERCHANDISING BUILDS SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS

OSCAR OPSAHL DESCRIBES METHODS USED IN ESTABLISHING A SUCCESSFUL TOY STORE DESPITE BIG ODDS

IT TAKES NOT ONE good idea, but a steady stream of good ideas to make a success of a toy business, especially during times of economic stress. That fact, however, did not deter Mrs. Anna E. Smith, of Minneapolis, from going into an exclusive toy business during the depth of the business depression.

And that she not only had the necessary courage, but the sound business judgment necessary to back it up, is indicated by the fact that her Children's Shop not only weathered the economic storm, but has shown a steadily increasing volume of sales ever since. Two years ago, in fact, the place which had served well at first, had grown too cramped, and she found it necessary to move to larger quarters, and to employ an additional clerk, in order to handle the business efficiently. It is now located at 820 Marquette Avenue, in the heart of the downtown shopping district.

When a representative of PLAYTHINGS, probing for information which might be of value to readers of this magazine, asked Mrs. Smith how she had built up this enviable business, however, she merely shook her head. She had been too busy to think that out!

Yet, as she talked, Mrs. Smith revealed several reasons why the Children's Shop had grown into a position of leadership in toy merchandising.

First, there is the pride both the proprietress and her daughter, who works with her, take in their knowledge of children and the toys which will please them.

"A man usually doesn't know what sort of toy his child will get the most pleasure out of," says Mrs. Smith. "Quite often a customer asks for something which we know is entirely unsuited to the child in question. We always ask the age of the child, and try to learn something about its likes and dislikes before we sell a toy. Then, if the toy the parent had first thought of buying does not seem suitable, we suggest something else. When parents see the reaction of their children, they realize we know our business, and they become 'repeat' customers. Quite often, too, they recommend our store to their friends."

SOLVING A PROBLEM

Second, Mrs. Smith has a "system" for handling the undecided customer. When such people enter the store, clerks have instructions to stay away from them and give them plenty of time to look at the toys—and play with them, if they are so inclined. Many grown persons like to play with toys as much as their children do, Mrs. Smith has found, and says that: "Very seldom does such a person leave our store without a toy of some kind."

Mrs. Smith has learned that breakage through such handling is negligible, and encouraging customers in their self-amusement is an inexpensive means of advertising.

Third, Mrs. Smith is always alert for new merchandising ideas. Though she will not admit that even New York City has any more up-to-date toy shops than hers, she will concede that on her trips to the eastern metropolis, she studies with keen interest the business methods of toy shop keepers there. And when she finds someone else using an idea which she thinks would work profitably for her, she is not above taking advantage of it.

One such idea which she has used often, and no doubt will continue to use, could probably also be used with equal success by other readers of this magazine:

By making up a set of several small toys, and wrapping them together, Mrs. Smith has learned that she often sells the half dozen items in one sale, whereas, if they were displayed singly, probably only one would be sold.

An example of such a combination is a pail of sand, in which are placed a tiny shovel, a mechanical duck, a rubber ball, marbles, etc. The set is wrapped in cellophane, and put on display.

The same idea has been used with many similar items, and with a wheel-barrow or tiny wagon taking the place of the pail of sand.

Norman A. Hill Joins C. T. A.

NORMAN A. HILL, a national figure in the bicycle world, recently became affiliated with the Cycle Trades of America. Mr. Hill was one of the outstanding amateurs and professional racing men, and was the winner of the All Around Bicycle Championship of America in 1933, 1935 and 1936. During the early Spring of 1936 he suffered an injury in the Six-Day Bicycle Race at Buffalo which forced him to retire from competition. Norman Hill, who will do special work for the Cycle Trades, for the present will devote his time to the New York metropolitan district.



A Unique Decorative Idea for the Entrance to Toyland

SUMMER SALES SUGGESTIONS

THE SUMMER MONTHS, ordinarily, are looked upon as the season of the year when sales activity is at its lowest. Possibly one reason for this may be found in the parallel that the merchandising activities of the dealers are also at their lowest. If the same amount of effort were expended to sell toys during the holiday season as is used to promote their sale during the Summer months, the result would be disastrous. On the other hand, if toys were given as much attention during the Summer season as they receive at Christmas time, it is conceivable that the toy business would be doubled and the problem of diminishing selling peaks would be solved.

Considering that the Summer season represents a time when the children, enjoying a vacation from school, are free to spend many hours in play hitherto denied them; that the weather is such as to establish a need for new toys; and that adults are free to enjoy games and playthings in the cool of the evening or while on vacation; it is cause for wonder that the Summer months are not accorded the importance which they deserve. Actually, the Summer season is the time of the year when toys are most needed; and it is high time that dealers, in the



interest of better year 'round sales, gave it the attention in their merchandising plans that it justly deserves. The fact that toys are needed is no assurance of business; the only assurance is that which dealers create for themselves through wideawake and intelligent merchandising methods.

For the benefit of those of our readers who desire to build up their Summer sales, suggestions are listed below:

Advertise and display sand and water toys frequently during the months of July and August. Call the attention of customers to the fact that children must have games and playthings while at the beach.

Feature hobby and craft materials for young campers, as well as flashlights, compasses, knives and whistles.

Organize a store club and arrange bi-monthly bicycle and picnic trips for members.

Conduct sail boat and model boat races, with suitable awards for the winners. Solicit newspaper publicity, carrying accounts of the race, as well as pictures and names of the winners.

Urge the celebration of the Fourth of July in a safe and sane way, by advertising and promoting the sale of safe playthings, such as Big-Bang cannon, noisemakers, cap pistols, soldiers and tanks.

Give prominence to travel toys by installing a counter filled with toys designed to promote quiet play pursuits.

Dramatize displays by showing boats in a make-believe lake, and dolls attired in bathing suits playing in the sand with beach toys.

Give prominence to the game section and suggest games suitable for the entire family, as well as games for adults as an interesting diversion from bridge.

Install toys on a main floor table, with the suggestion that customers take home a toy, thus saving the department cost of delivery.



Make up group toy combinations of sand and water toys, and offer a different special at an attractive price each week.

Keep the department active. Do not permit salespeople to congregate in groups, but keep them busy rearranging displays, playing games and acting as demonstrators.

Advertise toys by featuring them in announcements enclosed with monthly statements mailed to customers.

Watch the social columns of the local paper for notices of families going on vacation; 'phone parents and suggest the types of toys that children will need. Follow up the 'phone call with a personal letter.

As a means for increasing traffic and unit sales, hold a sales promotion featuring sand boxes and wading pools.

Call the attention of all customers in the store to playsuits, stressing their value in protecting the children's clothing.

Remember that every day is someone's birthday, and let it be known that party accessories and games to be played at parties are carried in stock.

Plan to hold a clearance sale and dispose of all seasonal stock during the last week of August.

Read this and the next issue of PLAYTHINGS for articles describing in detail how to capitalize upon the suggestions listed above, as well as for other ideas which will aid in stimulating sales.

ELECTRICAL TOYS

from the

INSPECTOR'S POINT OF VIEW

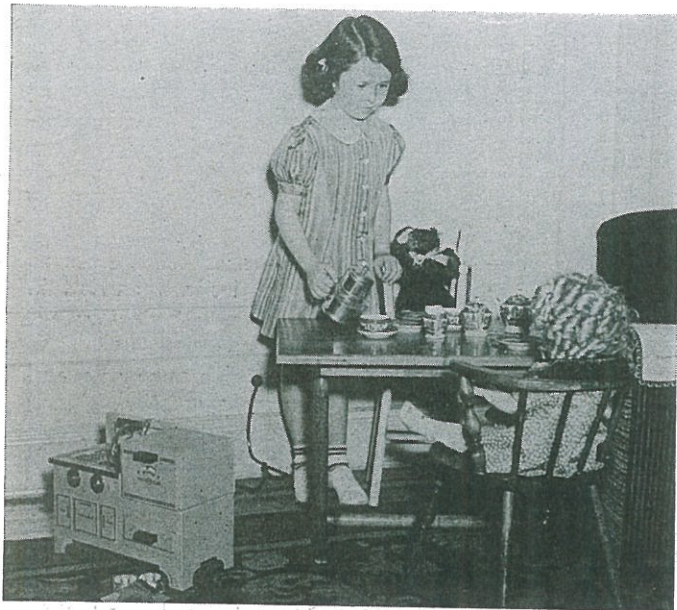
By J. W. WHITTINGTON

Public Relations Committee
International Association of Electrical Inspectors

THE SHOWERS of orders that come to toy manufacturers early in the year, bring flowers of happiness to the kids of America throughout all the months that follow. The Electrical Inspectors of the country want all the flowers to be for happiness. That is why they are carrying on a safety campaign to encourage the use of properly made attachment cords on all toys which are intended for connection to the light circuit.

At the Toy Fair this year there were more electrical toys on display than ever before. Electrical inspectors, whose job it is to safeguard the public from fire and shock hazards, feel that this expansion in the use of electrical toys puts an additional responsibility on them, a responsibility to educate the public in the proper selection and care of such toys. The inspectors feel that the toy manufacturers should share this responsibility by producing products which are as safe as practicable. Electrical toys can be entirely safe if made and used properly.

Observations which inspectors make in the field substantiate their belief that more education is necessary on the part of the public in selecting and using electrical appliances of all kinds, including toys. At Christmas time, when the use of toys probably reaches its peak, there have been, for the last few years, a number of fires and acci-



Children Deserve Electrical Toys That Are Safe

dents—most of which could be avoided through information.

The part of a toy, or of any electrical appliance, that is most subject to injury and abuse, and therefore involves the most hazard, is the attachment cord. There are two grades of flexible cords which are used on toys. One grade complies in all respects with the safety requirements of Underwriters' Laboratories and carries the Laboratories' label wrapped around the cord, and the second grade, known as sub-standard cord, is made with less insulation and protection for the wires, and is not of a quality, based on safety considerations, which the Laboratories will label. While both types of cords were in evidence at the Fair, it was encouraging to find that officers and salesmen of the exhibiting companies were familiar with the fact that these two types of cords exist, and that they were entirely aware of the fact when they were exhibiting and selling toys equipped with sub-standard cords.

THE CURSE OF COMPETITION

In talking with toy manufacturers, we found unreserved sympathy with the efforts we are making to substitute approved cords for those of sub-standard construction. Practically all these manufacturers expressed the hope that we will be entirely successful in our endeavors but they explained that competitive situations sometimes forced the use of sub-standard cord to save small amounts of money necessary to get orders. Some of these manufacturers stated that some buyers will not pay 15 cents per dozen more for toys to obtain cords which are adequately safe, and in order to compete, manufacturers must be in a position to provide the cheapest possible constructions for these buyers. They state that they do not wish to sell toys with substandard cords but it is forced upon them in this way.

It may be that toy manufacturers are too ready to supply the cheaper models. Some manufacturers have concluded that they will not supply toys with other than labeled cords, regardless of competition, as a legal safeguard, or simply because they believe that it is good business. A manufacturer is in a far sounder legal position when he handles products which are acknowledged as adequately safe by compliance with standards of a nationally recognized body, than if he sells products which fail to comply with such safety standards.

Before accepting orders for the unapproved models, electrical inspectors urge manufacturers to make an earnest effort to sell toys with labeled cords only, and thus assist us to accomplish an objective that will be good for the toy business.

Remember Birthdays

IN THE CONSTANT endeavor to sell seasonal items, dealers should not lose sight of the fact that every day is some child's birthday. A good plan is to have a Birthday Section in the department, where customers may procure party table decorations, games to be played at the party and birthday gifts.