

## TRADE WITH RUSSIA.

### ADDRESS BY DR. KLATCHKO.

Dr. Klatchko (Russian Commercial Commissioner) addressed members of the Perth Chamber of Commerce last evening upon commercial reciprocity between Russia and Australia. The chair was occupied by Mr. W. Leslie (President of the Chamber of Commerce).

The chairman, in introducing Dr. Klatchko, explained the objects of his visit, which had in view the facilitation of the interchange of commercial commodities between Russia and Australia. He stated that the mission of Dr. Klatchko had nothing whatever to do with the Anglo-Russian Chamber of Commerce, which had been founded in London.

Dr. Klatchko, who had a good reception, referred at the outset to the revolution in Russia. He said he had met people who thought that Russia was finished, but that was not so, and the war would be prosecuted to a successful conclusion. (Applause.) He explained that the old regime had contained a large proportion of Germans in the official positions, and everything was being done by them towards concluding an early peace with that country. He was glad to say the Germans had been kicked out of Russia. (Applause.) It was not sufficient to beat the German armies in the field, but Germany must also be beaten in the commercial arena after the war. (Hear, hear.) He said he was very glad to have visited Australia. When he read Foster Fraser's book he was led to believe that there was nothing but pleasure in Australia. Similarly, an Australian reading the same author's book

similarly, an Australian reading the same author's book on Russia would be misled. Foster Fraser went across Russia by express train in nine days. He (Dr. Klatchko) was 31 days in the train from Petrograd to Vladivostock during the Russo-Japanese war. He did not expect to see white men in Australia, and when he landed at Melbourne he asked Dr. O'Hara where the black men were. (Laughter.) The exports from England to Russia between 1911 and 1914 were about £29,000,000 a year, while those from Russia to England amounted to £40,000,000. In 1911 the exports from Australia to Russia amounted to £208,000, and from Russia to Australia £104,000. Australia sent Russia two articles—wool and tallow. Prior to the war Germany was importing from Russia £63,000,000 worth of goods a year, and exporting to Russia £49,000,000 worth. But Germany sent a lot of articles she imported from Russia to Australia. He saw some toys in Melbourne which he knew were made in Russia, but on the articles was stamped "Made in Germany." By that method Russia had lost a lot of money. In order to encourage trade between Russia and Australia there would be two direct lines of steamers—one from Vladivostock and the other from Odessa. Dr. Klatchko went on to indicate the lines of profitable exchange between the two countries. Among the commodities Australia could send to Russia he mentioned rabbit skins for gloves, hats, etc., hardwood for railway sleepers, fruit, hides, tallow, and pearl shell. Russia was very rich in minerals, but they were not mined on the lines of the Australian mineral industry. He suggested that Australia could send to Russia men to organise the mineral and cattle-raising industries. He mentioned that Russia was buying a large quantity of boots and shoes from Australia, which were previously obtained from America. Among the articles Russia could send to Australia were soft woods, furs, minerals, furniture, carpets, toys, and fancy goods. The medium of information and exchange would be through permanent exhibitions in various parts of Russia.

exchange would be through permanent exhibitions in various parts of Russia and Australia, and not through agencies. In order to facilitate trading relations arrangements were being made whereby the Russian language would be taught in Australia. He declared that the Russian language was not hard to learn, and mentioned that he was surprised at the progress that had been made by students in Melbourne after a fortnight's tuition. In Perth a room had been set apart at the Technical School on three evenings a week.

The Chairman said he considered the establishment of a direct line of steamers between Russia and Australia would be the surest means of encouraging trading relations between the two countries.

Mr. Pfister, who will be supervisor and examiner of the class for the teaching of the Russian language in Perth, said he was glad to see that a step forward was being taken in the intellectual career of the State. If there was one thing in which Western Australia was weak it was in the knowledge of foreign languages. After having taught in many countries, he had nowhere found people who learnt quicker or who were more eager to learn foreign languages—particularly French—than in Western Australia. Speaking from experience, he asserted that the Russian language was not so difficult to learn as many people thought. He hoped the classes would be well attended, and that the offer of free tuition to one pupil from each secondary school would be taken advantage of. He contradicted a statement "that the Russian people had nothing in common except their ignorance," and showed that of late years great progress in educational matters had been made in Russia.

Mr. A. M. Oliphant proposed a motion recording commendation of the proposal to establish a Russo-Australian Bureau of Commerce and Information in Western Australia.

Mr. Morgana, in seconding, congratulated Dr. Klauchko on the ability with which he had presented his views to the meeting. He expressed the opinion that the war was the salvation of both the British and the

the salvation of both the British and the Russian empires. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. A. E. King proposed a vote of thanks to Dr. Klatchko, and it was carried with acclamation.

Dr. Klatchko briefly replied.

The Chairman referred with pleasure to the presence of Colonel Courtney (State Commandant), who acknowledged the compliment.

\* The question of the appointment of a delegate to represent Western Australia on the Russo-Australian Bureau of Commerce and Information will be considered by the Chamber of Commerce.

---

---