

CANADA'S CHINESE IMMIGRATION ACT

An Obstruction to Sino-Canadian Trade

by C. A. PAO

A PARTY of Canada's leading business men and bankers—the latter representing the three largest banking institutions of the Dominion,—are due to arrive in Shanghai on November 16, by the Empress of Japan. The Party has been organized by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce for the purpose of seeing the actual situation in China for themselves with the idea of promoting mutual trade through friendly meetings and discussions with trade and government organizations in China. Undoubtedly the Canadians have at last realized what it would mean to Canada if she succeeds—as the United States and Great Britain have been doing,—in securing the vast market of China for the consumption of Canadian products. This is borne out by what is stated in a little yellow pamphlet issued by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce explaining the object of the present trip, which states in part:—

“Commercial Canada has neglected her western flank by not yet having officially visited her two great western neighbours, China and Japan.

“The present and growing importance of these countries as world markets and world producers will give rise to a serious situation in the development of Canadian interests, if Canadian leaders continue without the knowledge, stimulation and personal contact which can only be secured from a visit by the principals of our chief industries and by representatives of our economic life.”

What the Canadian Chamber of Commerce mentioned in the pamphlet in question is the actual truth, pure and simple. Trade between Canada and China has been on a constant growth since the beginning of the Chinese Republic, as is evidenced by the following table:—

Table Showing Trade Relations Between China and Canada Since 1912

Fiscal Year	China's export to Canada	Canada's export to China	Total Trade
1912	597,947	414,807	1,012,754
1913	752,768	741,960	1,494,728
1914	913,262	473,178	1,386,440
1915	1,042,383	296,403	1,338,786
1916	918,610	536,482	1,455,092
1917	1,128,342	418,399	1,546,741
1918	1,336,890	2,060,202	3,397,152
1919	1,954,466	3,009,570	4,964,036
1920	1,205,229	6,711,760	7,916,989
1921	1,897,349	4,911,023	6,808,372

The principle of reciprocity is stressed by Mr. Pao in this article on the subject of Chinese immigration to Canada. The writer hopes that the Canadian Trade Mission which is coming here to investigate market conditions, will not lose sight of the obvious and elementary fact that mutual goodwill is the most vital factor in international trade relations and that such unfavourable treatment and discrimination as the Chinese merchants now suffer in Canada are serious obstacles in the way of better commercial relations between the two countries.

1922	1,413,597	1,904,125	3,317,652
1923	1,460,626	5,176,816	6,597,512
1924	2,720,372	13,007,266	14,727,638
1925	2,529,880	7,846,920	10,376,870
1926	2,547,995	24,479,396	27,027,391
1927	5,041,592	13,520,054	18,561,646
1928	2,572,453	13,426,602	16,009,055
1929	3,005,296	24,246,292	27,251,588
1930	2,972,526	16,548,959	19,521,485

From the foregoing one could readily see that, with the possible exception of the years between 1912 and 1916, all the trade returns of succeeding years up to the current year of 1930 has been in favour of Canada. The excess of Canada's export to China piled up so rapidly that in 1930 the difference assumed such alarming proportions that the amount of Canada's export to China came up to eight times as much as the total amount of China's export to Canada. This shows clearly that China has been an importing country of Canadian products since 1916 and the advantage of the trade between the two countries has always been with Canada. The more trade grows the more Chinese money will flow into Canada.

The leaders of Canada have seen the potential market for Canadian products in China and it is for the purpose of further promoting the existing Canadian trade with this country that the present Industrial Commission is sent to the Far East.

However, to obtain satisfactory expansion of foreign trade, it is of paramount importance in the first place to secure the goodwill and friendship of the people of the country in which the trade expansion is to be made. In the past the treatment of Chinese nationals residing in Canada by the Dominion Government has been anything but satisfactory. While Canadians have been enjoying all privileges in China as that enjoyed by the nationals of other countries in this country, Chinese in Canada have been subjected to great discriminations and they have been denied the right to enjoy the same privileges as that granted to the nationals of other

countries. They have been subjected to humiliating treatment at the hands of immigration authorities, the smallest portion of which no national of any other country would endure.

Canada, it will be recalled, was once the home of Red Indians. White men began to settle in the country in the eighteenth century. In an effort to develop her rich resources in the west and as white

labour was then practically unavailable, large numbers of Chinese labourers were imported from the United States, as well as directly from China, to help in the construction of the great trans-continental railway through the British Columbia Rockies. These and other Chinese brought into the country have contributed greatly towards the development of the land. They built many roads in the interior of Canada and have cleaned large areas of farm lands for white settlers, and, in many cases, pioneered in agricultural undertakings. The valuable service thus rendered by the Chinese community in that country has been openly admitted by the Governor-General of Canada, Viscount Willindon.

However, against this service, the Canadian Government has caused many restrictions to be made on Chinese immigrants which culminated in the enactment of the so-called Chinese Immigration Act of 1923. The enforcement of the law practically means the complete exclusion of all persons of Chinese race or descent from Canada as is evidenced by the strict provisions of the said document. It cannot but be regarded as a serious violation on the part of the Canadian Government of international courtesy and quite incompatible with the growth of friendly relations between the two countries.

To give a better understanding of the real nature of the Act, it is not deemed incompetent to quote a few articles of the said Document.

Section 5 of the Act governing the entry and landing of Chinese immigrants in Canada reads in part:—

“5 The entry to or landing in Canada of persons of Chinese origin or descent irrespective of allegiance or citizenship, is confined to the following classes, that is to say:—