

No quotations were forthcoming from the United States or Canada. Canadian flour was last quoted on the Hong Kong market at \$4.40 Mex. a sack, but this was towards the end of 1917.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CANADIAN FLOUR.

Enough has been written to show that the Hong Kong market warrants the careful attention of Canadian flour-millers. Canadian flour is well known in this market and enjoys a good reputation for quality. When first introduced there was a certain prejudice against Canadian flour on account of its colour, which was slightly darker than the Oregon and Washington flour to which the trade was accustomed. This prejudice no longer prevails since the Chinese have learnt to recognize the superiority of flour milled from Canadian wheat. Energetic efforts are required to establish leading Canadian brands on the market. Importers urge the sending over of a Canadian mill representative, thoroughly conversant with the flour business, who could visit Shanghai, Hong Kong, Manila and Singapore and go into all points. Flour men from the United States have frequently visited the Far East and several American companies formerly had their own agents at Hong Kong. The United States mills are evidently preparing to make every effort to recapture their trade and Canadian firms should not allow themselves to fall behind.

In 1914 Canada supplied Hong Kong with as much as 423,334 sacks of flour. The following year some 60,000 sacks were shipped, while for 1916 no Canadian flour is given as having been imported into Hong Kong, although it is probable that a certain quantity of Canadian flour was credited to the United States. Last year the import from Canada as shown above was 11,850 sacks. The Oriental trade should appeal to Canadian millers since it enables them to dispose of the inferior grades of flour for which there is little demand at home. Canadian flour is frequently imported into Hong Kong for the purpose of filling the private brands of importers and dealers. These private brands are filled indiscriminately from Canadian, American or Australian flour. In this way it is not always easy to distinguish between the imports of Canadian and United States flour. The private brands are used by the importers as a sort of lever against the producer.

RELATIVE QUALITY.

In all cases there is a decided preference among the Chinese for North American flour. The Canadian brands are considered superior to many of those milled in the United States. Washington wheat is looked upon as especially suitable for the milling of flour for the Oriental trade. On the other hand the high percentage of gluten and the other qualities of flour milled from Canadian hard wheat are recognized by the Chinese, so that the Canadian brands are considered equal and in some cases superior in quality to the brands milled from the softer Washington and Oregon wheat. The Chinese do not like to deal with Japan, while Japanese flour, although made after the most modern practices, is very often dirty. Chinese flour is still dirtier and of poor quality as compared with transpacific flour. Several importers are of the opinion that Australian flour will prove to be a more serious competitor of the Canadian and American mills than will Asiatic flour. Australian flour is of good quality, but as a rule is not milled so scientifically as the North American product. A great deal also depends on the uncertainties of the wheat crop in Australia. The following are the percentages of gluten in the principal flours sold on the market; these percentages being deducted not by chemical analysis but from the dough by the system known as the Chinese wet wash:—