



MR. PRESTON IN JAPAN

A CORRESPONDENT in China sends us a number of clippings from "The Japan Weekly Chronicle" dealing with the doings and sayings of Mr. W. T. R. Preston, Canadian Agent. One states that Mr. Preston is "really outrageous in his statements and insinuations against foreign merchants." Evidently Mr. Preston has stirred up the Britishers living in Japan. In another, it is plainly said that "it would be well, perhaps, if his Government recalls him, before he does any further harm to his reputation." In still another, it is stated that "Mr. Preston is again busily at work endeavouring to foment a feeling of animosity amongst Japanese against the resident foreigner," and explains that the Kobe Foreign Board of Trade had forwarded a memorial to Ottawa in protest.

It appears that Mr. Preston is pursuing his ancient tactics of talking too much, protesting too much, and generally making himself disagreeable. In so far as he found it necessary to deny certain statements about Canadian rates of wages and important government matters, Mr. Preston was probably justified in some of his "talk." Nevertheless, his attitude in general has been as inadvisable as might be expected from his personal history. He was never credited, even by his intimate friends, with discretion of a high order. His famous telegram, "Hug the machine," is sufficient evidence of that.

Our correspondent, a Canadian who has lived in Asia for years, speaks of Mr. Preston as a "meddlesome cuss" and regrets his appointment. He also points out that Mr. Preston's predecessor was a man about seventy years of age, very deaf, and so weak that since he was moved to Shanghai he has spent all his time in hospital. Our correspondent adds that these circumstances are unfortunate for Canada, and that Canadian interests are suffering. On the other hand, the Australian representatives are young men, well versed in the affairs of the East, and "not ward-healers who have outlived their usefulness."

Whatever may be the merits of these cases, Canada should be very careful of the class of men sent abroad to represent her interests. Ex-politicians cannot possibly make satisfactory trade agents. Only trained business men, with some experience in public affairs, should receive these appointments.

CANADA AND OPPORTUNITIES ABROAD

JUDGING by the remarks of the Canadian trade commissioners in Great Britain and other places, Canadian exporters are not living up to their opportunities. The Department of Trade and Commerce at Ottawa, through its excellent "Weekly Report," is doing much to explain these opportunities and to show the line along which the exporter may develop. The limited capital in most Canadian enterprises, the limited knowledge of the methods necessary to successful exporting, and the limited experience Canadians have had in this work can be overcome but slowly. They will be overcome in time, no doubt.

In the Report for January 4th, Mr. Larke has a letter, written from Sydney, showing how Australasia has developed her foreign meat export. In 1882, New Zealand sent out about one hundred thousand dollars' worth of this product; to-day the trade amounts to seventeen million dollars. In Australia proper the industry grew more slowly, but in 1906 the exports of beef, mutton, pork, poultry and rabbits amounted in value to over twelve million dollars. Here is a valuable lesson for Canada.

In the same issue, Mr. Ray writes from Birmingham that Canadian wood and wooden goods are not being sold in Great Britain to the extent of our opportunity. Canada supplies only seven per cent. of the manufactured wood requirements and not more than ten per

cent. of the timber demands. Only in paper have Canadian exports shown a reasonable and satisfactory increase.

Mr. Harrison Watson writing from London complains that Canadian exporters are discourteous and do not even answer letters addressed to them. He refers particularly to apple exporters. Canadian flour exporters have also been slow to furnish samples required for the Egyptian trade.

From British Guiana comes some good news, given in the Report for January 11th, that Canadian trade is improving. However, of the eight million dollars' worth of imports, only 7.73 per cent. came from Canada. The United States sold four times as much and the United Kingdom seven times as much as we did. This is not a great showing considering that Canada bought 56 per cent. of British Guiana's exports, mainly sugar.

No one may peruse these excellent weekly reports without a growing conviction that we are still amateurs in the export business. We have learned fairly well how to market goods at home and in Great Britain, but how to sell our goods in other countries is an unlearned lesson. Perhaps the Canadian Manufacturers' Association could assist by setting up a "School for Exporters" in which our younger manufacturers would be taught the elements of the business.

CANADIANS ON EASTERN MISSIONS

ONE of the greatest wrongs in which Great Britain has been concerned is the opium traffic in the East. It is difficult for those who believe in the general justice of Britain's dealings in the Orient to understand her action preceding the Chinese War. The suppression or diminution of this traffic is the object of all enlightened Chinese officials, who realise what a detriment this drug has been to the people of the great empire. The modern interest in such movements extends to all countries, and the Dominion of Canada has sent Mr. Mackenzie King to attend the conference at Shanghai next month on the suppression of the opium traffic. Mr. King is to visit India also and while in that country will have an opportunity of discussing the question of Hindu immigration with the Indian Government. Mr. Mackenzie King is one of our younger Members of Parliament but already his good judgment and capacity for administration have won respect from both parties. Mr. King is essentially a conciliator and performs the difficult Stevensonian task of keeping friends, "without capitulation" and playing the part of umpire with pronounced success. His visits to India and China cannot fail to benefit his own country, for the immigration of Orientals to the Canadian West is likely to involve us in Asiatic problems.

Another young Canadian now visiting the East in behalf of Methodist Missions, Rev. T. E. E. Shore, has found his Oriental travels not without dramatic incident. Mr. Shore was in China at the time of the late Emperor's demise, was in Constantinople not long after the "Young Turks" made the Sultan's government assume a democratic front and was in India about the time of Calcutta's threatened outbreak. Altogether Mr. Shore has reason for considering his Canadian home a fairly peaceable spot and will be in no danger of preferring Mahomedanism to Methodism. Toronto and Montreal are fairly comfortable cities, after all, and our political upheavals are not likely to paint the provinces red. Both State and Church will be all the better prepared to face modern conditions if their young officials have added foreign experience to training in the home universities.

A GRAND CITIZEN

MR. J. LORN McDOUGALL is dead and the national loss is distinct. Appointed under a Liberal regime, he served as auditor-general for many years of both Liberal and Conservative rule.