

FOREWORD

We publish this week a special Trade Bulletin with China and Japan as its subject.

In the winter of 1913, I instructed the Commissioner of Commerce, Mr. R. Grigg, to proceed to China and Japan and make such examination, and gather such information as was pertinent in relation to the possibilities of commercial interchange between these countries and Canada. Mr. Grigg spent some weeks in the prosecution of his researches, and the result of his work is partly embodied in the reports published herewith.

A wide circulation is being given to this bulletin among the producers and business men of Canada in the hope that it will interest them in the present and coming possibilities of trade with these two ancient and interesting countries. Upwards of five hundred million people inhabit China and Japan in a vast stretch of island and continent facing our western front door. Between lies a facile ocean now beginning to quiver beneath the swift keels of rapidly increasing mercantile fleets.

The cable, wireless telegraphy, frequent postal service and increasing personal travel are shortening the distance and dispelling the ignorance that have hitherto kept us so wide apart.

Already these nations have a seaborne commerce of one billion dollars and this is constantly increasing. They now import more than \$500,000,000 worth of goods from foreign lands, not more than \$1.00 per head of their population. The immense undeveloped resources of China guarantee a field of wonderful activity in the near future. In coal and iron she possesses very important elements of productivity. Gradually trunk lines of railway are piercing the rich interior and opening up resources hitherto sealed to enterprise for lack of transport. Law and order and financial reconstruction are slowly but surely being established and hindrances to exchange being removed. With better conditions and the immense human labour force of China more directed to improved production in all lines the growth in her purchasing power will soon swell the volume of imports far beyond the present paucity 75 cents per head of her population. It is difficult to forecast what under fairly favourable conditions will be the importing power of China twenty-five or fifty years hence, and surely Canadian business men must work in reference to a future so little remote.

Japan has within a few decades become absolutely transformed so far as productive industry and commerce are concerned and now boasts a foreign trade of \$470,000,000, which is about equally divided between imports and exports and which is constantly increasing.

Progress in China may not be so rapid, but China from her vast extent and wonderful undeveloped resources will be an incomparably richer field for foreign enterprise and investment, and a far greater relative consumer of foreign commodities. On all grounds, therefore, of enlightened business policy, Canada and Canadians cannot afford to neglect this great and promising field which lies so