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## EXTENT OF BRAZILIAN TARIFF PREFERENCE FOR AMERICAN PRODUCTS.

A cablegram of January 23 from the American Ambassador at Rio de Janeiro announces that a decree has been issued extending preferential tariff rates to the same American products as last year. The list of articles of American origin admitted at reduced rates was published in *COMMERCE REPORTS* of January 25, 1919.

## ORDERS CONCERNING BRITISH EXPORT RESTRICTIONS.

Consul General Skinner has cabled from London, under date of January 24, that import licenses from the Government of Iceland are no longer necessary in support of applications for licenses for the exportation of goods from the United Kingdom to Iceland.

It has now been decided that the following goods may be exported without license to all destinations except Switzerland: Buttons of all kinds, dental burs, articles of jewelry containing platinum, perfumery and essential oils, table salt, and toothbrushes.

## REMOVAL OF FRENCH EMBARGOES.

[Cablegram from Consul General Thackara, Paris, Jan. 23, 1919.]

A ministerial notice to exporters, published January 12, removes the prohibition against the exportation of the following articles when the destination is an allied or neutral country other than Switzerland:

Carbon brushes for dynamos, bicycles and parts thereof, floss silk, cocoon silk, and silk noils, combed or uncombed; felt hats in any stage of manufacture, hair, copper, compasses, linen articles, preserved goose liver, mushrooms and truffles; cylinders, discs, and rolls for gramophones and phonographs; silk waste, spirits and liqueurs, cotton haberdashery, silk thread of all kinds for sewing, embroidery, etc.; flower seeds, aluminum articles; india rubber articles except capes, tires or outer tubes, drain tubes, and gloves for surgery; celluloid articles; art works and ornaments of copper, bronze, or imitations thereof; prepared skins not made into garments, photographic paper or plates, artificial stones cut or uncut, copper gauze for paper making, basket and cane work, and saffron.

For the following articles the prohibition against exportation has been removed as regards all allied and neutral countries: Brushes of all kinds, fancy leather goods, shrubs and other nursery products.



## ADVERTISING METHODS IN CHINA.

[By Trade Commissioner John A. Fowler.]

The population in China is variously estimated at from 325,000,000 to 400,000,000, and competent observers have estimated the literacy of the Chinese people to be around 10 per cent. At first glance one is inclined to conclude that there is a large percentage of these 400,000,000 who can not be reached through the printed message, but experience has shown that eventually the messages sent forth in the form of advertising have reached the masses in cases where there was a potential demand and the appeal was strongly put.

China has been, and still is, an unexploited field in many lines of merchandising; and trade has followed the lines of least resistance. The most spectacular advertising campaigns have been made to the masses, and the success of the campaigns for introducing kerosene, cigarettes, and the patent medicine "Jin Tan" are striking illustrations of the efficacy of advertising of this class. In the first case, the selling campaign was connected with a real need; in the second it was an appeal to a habit; and in the third to the longing of the physically unfit for health.

On the other hand, these successes must not lead to the conclusion that there is no sale in China for higher-priced articles. The popular opinion in America seems to be that China is a country of slow, patient, and industrious, but always poor people. There is a large class of buyers in China who can afford to buy anything they consider necessary to their comfort, as well as many of the luxuries of life.

In China advertising is not organized as it is in the United States, nor as it is in Japan. The difficulties that the American advertiser will meet in initiating an advertising campaign are many and annoying to the American type of business man who demands results; nevertheless, a start has been made toward organizing on broad and sound lines. The advertising value of the newspaper, poster, calendar, or any other medium depends entirely upon the class of commodity advertised and the class of buyers it is desired to reach, so the rotation in which the following list of mediums appear must not be taken as an indication of their relative values in an advertising campaign.

### The Chinese Press.

There are thousands of newspapers in China, born of temporary needs, political and otherwise, and the early mortality among these papers is large. There are a few that survive the early maladies and have reached a position of comparative financial independence. Their managers have established connections with advertisers, both local and national, which reflect credit on their publications. An agency in Shanghai has a list of about 200 newspapers published throughout China with whom it has established satisfactory business connections. These newspapers have given statements of circulation, of the class of people they cater to, tentative rates (fixed rates can not be given in these days of soaring paper prices), and supply proof of publication. To-day the name of one of these publications may be the Jin Po and to-morrow it may be called the Jui, or Shun, or some other Po, but it continues under the same management as far as busi-

ness dealings with the foreign advertiser are concerned, and its general business policy remains the same. It is reasonably safe to do business with these publications, according to the factors of safety recognized in China, but the widely known advertiser from America will have difficulty in establishing credit with the managers of these publications (when he finds out who they are), as the only means the Chinese manager has of learning who is reliable among the foreign firms is by experience, and some of his experiences with foreigners have been most unsatisfactory. The only means of reaching these newspapers, outside of a slow process of building up a reputation with them, is to employ a reputable agency as go-between. [A list of these may be obtained from the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce or its district or cooperative offices by referring to file No. 94944.]

The Chinese newspaper has essentially a class circulation as compared with the popular newspaper in the United States. Circulation figures must be taken with a fair understanding of the oriental propensity for self-appreciation. The average circulation of all the more reliable newspapers in China will not exceed 3,000, but this circulation will be in the first instance to a class with a particularly high purchasing capacity. After the first reader finishes with his paper it is read by his friends, who often read it aloud to relatives who can not read. In China there is an almost superstitious reverence for the printed or written word, and newspapers are often read to shreds. When it is finished as a newspaper it enters on its career as wrapping paper, and the more familiar characters are read by the partly literate.

### Boardings (Billboards) Used to Good Advantage.

In the principal cities and especially in the treaty ports individuals and companies of English, French, Chinese, and Japanese nationality have erected boardings which are rented to advertisers in much the same way that the billboards are in the United States, but there is no way of arranging for a national billboard campaign, as they have not come together in an organization. There are also concessions for advertising at the railway stations. The concessions on the railway lines running from Mukden, in Manchuria, to Peking and from Peking north to Kalgan are leased to an English advertising agency in Tientsin, and those on all the other Government railways are let to a French company in Shanghai. Boards are erected at each important station and comprise a valuable addition to the advertising plant in China. The British-American Tobacco Co. has erected hundreds of boards throughout China at crossroads, along canals, and at other points where traffic is heavy, but these are for their own use and are not available to the general advertising public. The Japanese company selling Jin Tan, a patent medicine, has made the most effective use of privately owned billboards, and through this medium, and by hanging its advertisements in front of stores where the medicine is sold and the use of show cards inside, it has made General Jin Tan the best-known advertised character in China.

The practice of sniping or putting posters on dead walls and unauthorized places is general throughout China, and some of the most successful advertisers have made this practice the hub of their campaigns. Practically every national advertiser uses it to some extent,



as it is cheap and effective, especially in connection with folder distribution and house-to-house canvassing. The principal defect is the liability of having the posters destroyed by the village rowdies, but this is often obviated by an arrangement with the local police or the leader of the rowdies. A cheap paper, partly glazed on one side, was obtainable before the war from Europe, but the higher prices ruling to-day do not seem to have lessened the use of this form of advertising to any apparent extent.

#### Chinese Weekly and Monthly Publications.

There are many weekly and monthly Chinese publications, some of which are most effective in reaching certain classes. A woman's magazine published in Shanghai has a considerable circulation among Chinese women and corresponds to such magazines in America. The same company has five other weekly and monthly publications which go to a class of subscribers of a high purchasing capacity. A study of these periodicals and of the many other publications that circulate among other classes of Chinese will well reward the advertiser who is planning a campaign in China. The missionaries also must not be omitted in considering advertising possibilities, as they have a more than ordinary knowledge of the use and value of western manufactures.

#### The Use of the Mails.

Department stores and medicine companies have made good use of the mails in presenting their wares to the Chinese. An arrangement can be made with the Post Office Department for the delivery of a circular or other light advertising matter with each letter. This is generally done by covering small districts, but it has been done in a large way at a surprisingly small cost to the advertiser and with good results. There are several very large and well-classified mailing lists owned by foreign firms, but only one of these is available to the general advertiser. This has approximately 200,000 names classified by districts or by occupation, and there is one particularly fine list that covers a considerable part of the dealers in drugs in China. One feature of the post-office regulations that is probably peculiar to China is the custom of delivering the mail matter to the house whether the addressee has moved or not. This is not so serious as it would seem, as the Chinese seldom abandon the place of their birth, and if they do, some one of similar social standing moves in.

#### Calendars as a Means of Advertising.

The use of calendars is one of the most-favored forms of advertising in China, as the calendar is a most important thing in the life of every Chinese. He regulates his life by the sun, moon, and stars, and never enters upon an important negotiation or journey without a careful consideration of omens and signs. Most advertisers issue a calendar, and some who never advertise in any other way put out the most elaborate designs. They are highly treasured by the recipients and a regular trade in them is maintained. When the calendars are issued there is a general rush for them by merchants, clerks, and coolies, who turn them over to the dealers for a consideration; but as a rule there is only a halfhearted attempt on the part of business houses to get these calendars into proper hands, as the best an adver-

tiser can wish for is that his advertisement will be bought and paid for. In the Chinese cities you will see displays of dealers in calendars on walls and in alleys where the dealers do a good business at profitable prices. One calendar issued by an insurance company in Shanghai and costing a little over \$1 Mexican sold for \$2.50 Mexican in the shops, and was in good demand at that. As in all advertising to the Chinese, the greatest care should be taken in design and wording, though this branch of advertising effort has received the least attention from the western concerns.

#### House to House Distribution.

Folders, booklets, samples, and other advertising matter are often distributed not only in the cities but in the country towns. Rather than house-to-house, this is more appropriately called shop-to-shop distribution. It is expensive unless done in a large way and in close connection with a sales campaign. An advertising agency has worked out a plan for such distribution in Tientsin, whereby the shop signs for the advertising matter is placed in a book with his company stamp or chop. While this system is slower than the usual one, it is more impressive with the Chinese and provides absolute proof of distribution.

#### Window Display and Stock Arrangement.

The British-American Tobacco Co. has pioneered many of the problems of advertising in China, and one of the most remarkable of its means of reaching the public is the way it has trained the dealers to arrange their stock neatly and to make attractive window displays. One traveling through China can easily distinguish the British-American cigarette shops from others by this one feature. Before the war the German manufacturers of a dentifrice did some good work along the line of window display. Naturally this development has been under the direct supervision of foreigners, and, if it is to assume any proportions, involves a large staff as only concerns like the tobacco, medicine, and oil companies have available.

#### The Foreign Press.

The subject of foreign press has been reserved for the last because it is desired to leave a vivid impression of its importance. The value of the foreign press as an advertising medium for the rank and file of the Chinese public depends largely upon the enormous influence the missionaries exercise in the land. Each one is the center from which western civilization radiates. If the Chinese does not respect the missionary's religion he does respect his clean and self-sacrificing life and the missionary, generally, is among the most highly placed men in his district. He is usually the personal friend of the Taotai (the high district official) and his position as an educator or physician places him high in the social scale. Outside of treaty ports, the missionaries constitute the most considerable number of subscribers to the foreign press. The local English-reading Chinese call and ask to see the papers giving news that never reaches them through the native press.

Practically all of the higher officials in Peking, and in the Province, have translations made from the foreign press and the rapidly growing number of English-speaking Chinese throughout the land occasionally look over these papers and are often more interested in the advertisements of western manufactures than in the news columns.