

THE PRESENT STATUS OF THE AUTOMOTIVE VEHICLE

TRADE IN NORTH MANCHURIA.

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The current year has proven an unusually unfortunate one for dealers in automotive vehicles. Not more than a total of 150 passenger cars were imported, and of these about fifty percent remain unsold. Of the 150 truck chassis imported 80 are still in stock. The situation is further aggravated by the fact that the strong demand for motor cars and trucks during the preceding years, which culminated in 1928-29, encouraged dealers in 1929 to import large stocks in anticipation of continued demand. These expectations, however, failed to materialize. The sino-soviet conflict, which primarily affected those parts of the district which had done the bulk of the buying, coincided with the automobile

selling season, and also the settlement of this conflict did not bring the expected improvement. The world wide business depression which resulted in serious weakening of the export movement from North Manchuria, the depreciation of the local currency and the general decline in the buying power of the local population as a result placed automobile dealers in a precarious position.

The above refers in equal measure to sales of automotive equipment, tires, accessories, etcetera. The majority of local dealers in these commodities are in consequence losing money at the present time. The large unsold stocks on hand, either paid for by the importers or held by banks, demand heavy interest on capital invested, and collections for sold cars are slow.

There are given below lists of the approximate numbers of different automotive vehicles at present in operation in North Manchuria:

Motor Cars - American.

Buick	55	Cadillac	48
Chandler	10	Chevrolet	490
Chrysler	25	Dodge	68
Erskine	7	Essex	155
Ford	495	Franklin	4
Graham-Paige	8	Hudson	16
La Salle	2	Loconobile	1
Nash	35	Oakland	14
Overland	380	Peckard	17
Plymouth	8	Pontiac	20
Rugby	48	Studebaker	20
Willys-Knight	13	Sundries	10

A total of 1939 cars.

Motor Cars - European

Benz	8	Fiat	50
Berleit	8	Reynaud	6
Peugeot	5	Citroen	18
Opel	5	Phorotes	1
Roehr	1	Morris	10
Stier	3	Sundries	10

A total of 120 cars

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Motor trucks - American

Chevrolet	418	Commerce	1
Diamond	2	Dodge	52
Ford	505	Federal	13
GMC	52	International	630
Reo	15	Republic	5
Rugby	5	Selden	6
Stewart	40	Studebaker	1
Willys-Knight	1	Whippet-Overland	4

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

A total of 1,746 trucks

Motor trucks - European

Fiat	10	Mercedes	2
Opel	2	Skoda	1

A total of 10 trucks

Motor cycles - American

Harley-Davidson	40	Indian	7
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NOT FOR PUBLICATION

A total of 47 motor cycles

Motor Cycles - European

Wanderer	6
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There are thus in operation at the present time in North Manchuria 2,059 automobiles, 1,761 trucks and 53 motor cycles of all makes. The majority of the trucks are converted into motor buses which handle passenger traffic between points in the interior of Heilungkiang and Kirin Provinces. Approximately one half of the automobiles are operated for taxi service at Harbin, while the balance are in use in the provinces. Practically all of the motor cycles are owned by the Police Department of the Special Area.

In view of the fact that the majority of automobiles are old and have seen extremely hard work, there is always a good business in spare parts, and tires also receive harder usage than they do in similar work in the United States.

It is confidently felt locally that as soon as business conditions improve, the automotive trade will be among the first to revive. North Manchuria at the present time only stands on the threshold of a future important market for automotive vehicles, and the inhabitants of the country are only now awakening to a

proper appreciation of the advantages offered by automobiles and trucks for passenger traffic and for the cartage of freight to railroad stations. When a proper road building program is finally put into effect here North Manchuria will indeed become a desirable market for American motor vehicles. It is, therefore, felt, that exporters in the United States should give their local agents every support in these critical times, and make it possible for them to exist until conditions become normal again. In this connection it should be borne in mind that credit companies such as operate in the United States for the financing of individual purchases do not operate here, and the entire brunt of hard times falls upon the dealer who must extend credit and be responsible personally to the banks.

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EDWARD B. THOMAS

Approved

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E. B. Thomas
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