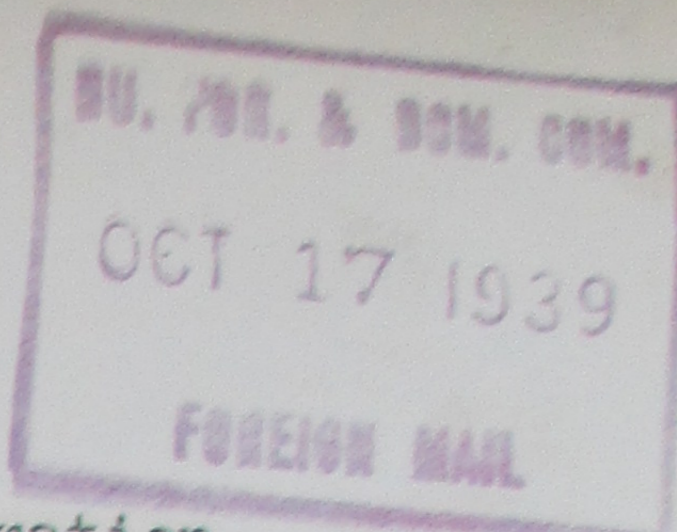


Shanghai, China, September 9, 1939.

Subject: CHINA'S TRADE IN BRISTLES

Submitted by: Julean Arnold, Commercial Attache.

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Of special interest to American brush manufacturers is information concerning the bristle trade of China. During my recent visit to Chungking I was interested in the bristle bleaching plant set up under the auspices of the Ministry of Economics and the National Resources Commission. It compares very favorably with the American plant at Shanghai in the nature of the product as prepared for export. It is a Government institution and draws its raw supplies from the best source of supply in China, namely Szechwan Province. The factory is apparently becoming an increasingly important factor in the bristle trade of this country.

It appears that China furnishes the world with approximately 75% of its bristles. Thus, during the past two decades, China has replaced Russia in importance in the world's bristle market. America is the largest importer of Chinese bristles, taking over 50% of the total exports. Furthermore, considerable quantities of bristles imported from China by Japan are re-exported to the United States. We also purchase some of our Chinese bristles through England. Thus, it is probably safe to say that America takes from 70% to 75% of the bristle exports of China. Before the Sino-Japanese hostilities, our imports of bristles from China had reached the total of approximately 5 million pounds per year. China's total exports of bristles during 1938 dropped considerably from the amount for the previous year on account of the war.

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America's future trade in bristles will naturally be affected by the development of the synthetic bristle "EXTON" now being manufactured in the United States and which, I understand, is used primarily for tooth brushes, hair brushes and other brushes requiring stiff and short bristles. It appears that paint brushes and other long-bristled brushes are still dependent upon the natural product.

Under date of June 2, 1938, Mr. Wu Chao-chang, a student at the French institution in Tientsin called Hautes Etudes, completed a study entitled "Trade in Bristles". The Faculty of Commerce of that French industrial and commercial college has put out a number of economic studies and the publication "Trade in Bristles" is one of these. It represents a printed reproduction of a typewritten manuscript of 108 pages.

As bristles come under the category of subjects handled by the Textile Division of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, it is suggested 1/ that the above-mentioned publication, of which I have only one copy available, be sent to the Textile Division for its information and use. The Bureau will note, however, that several years ago we sent a somewhat similar compilation on this subject as prepared by the Foreign Trade Association of China at Shanghai. In fact, Mr. Wu reproduces large sections of the printed matter of the previous study without any apparent evidence of giving credit to the earlier compilation, but he does add considerably later statistical data and certain other material which makes this a useful supplementary compilation in connection with the earlier pamphlet entitled "Bristles", a number of copies of which have already been sent to the Bureau.

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