

China and the Revolution

Effect on Foreign Trade—Record Stride in Commercial Progress Predicted—A Stupendous Buyer.

ONE of the almost certain features of the effect of the revolution will be China's increased foreign trade—probably 100 per cent, says Sun Yat Sen.

The year 1913 should mark a stride in commercial progress in China such as the world has never before seen: 1912 will probably be a year of unrest and uncertainty. The formation of a permanent Government and the election of a Cabinet, the dispatch of competent officials to outlying places, and the putting down of outlawry in the provinces will be a big programme for this year—if it is accomplished. But 1913 and the following years will probably unfold a remarkably rapid advance in exports and imports. China has held back from all things foreign centuries enough, but during the past two decades the seed has been sown for such a harvest of trade and commercial prosperity as shall keep the factories of the West hard at work to cope with the demands—that is, if the merchants of the West are quick to seize their chances as they come.

Even recent changes in dress wrought by the revolution have shown the enormous demand there is for re-dressing the Chinese: with the passing of the queue they decided against the little Manchu hat, an article made almost exclusively in China. Immediately there came a big cry for the foreign hat: at once a trade was created, into the country there came all kinds and conditions and shapes of foreign headgear, felts, cloth caps and all sorts; they sold in hundreds of thousands, and had to be supplied by some one. China, at all events, could not make them; to her it was something quite new; they had to come from outside. Japan was watching. She collar-ed the trade, and in two months she had practically re-battered China. But this is merely an instance; many more might be given to show the rapidity with which commercial changes can come. In over seven thousand miles of travel in China, mostly far away inland where the effect of the treaty port is least felt,

the writer some time ago made a study of the commercial aspect of things, and how far the modern spirit had penetrated the interior, with a view specially to ascertain how the British merchant stands in the business life of the native. In China, even in far interior places, one finds life, business prosperity—a strange commingling of Western ideas with Eastern. Four hundred millions of people have to all intents and purposes become civilised. They are anxious to swing into line, and want the equipment. Their needs are making China the greatest market in the world. They

She must be a stupendous buyer before she can hope to become a serious competitor.

But the point need not, I think, be pursued further. The country has merely to regain her normal condition, and we shall see trade increasing by leaps and bounds. I say merely to regain its normal condition for this reason: whilst the prevailing uncertainty continues no permanent increase of trade can be expected, but let there be some stable form of government and we shall see China re-occupy and begin trade again in a wonderful manner. No people have such recuperative power. No people have such power of adaptation. And in the era of trade development upon whose threshold we are now standing we may confidently look to probably an unclouded season of foreign commercial enterprise in all parts of China. In the increased demand for woollen goods, for engineering equipment of all kinds, especially mining gear, for railroad supplies, for the thousands of household requirements of daily use, motor-boats and all the varied paraphernalia required to place an antiquated nation upon the footing of modern civilisation there will

unknown fruit, but they generally pause to study the result of that test, and nearly always manage to arrive at a correct conclusion.

Such facts suggest a sagacity which seems to indicate the existence of a "sixth sense." The ordinary senses of our fellow-creatures may receive warnings from indications which we have not yet learned, or else have forgotten to heed. The superintendent of the meteorological observatory at San Salvador noticed with surprise that both the bonas and the agricultural Indians of the neighbouring mountains seemed to recognise the omens of an earthquake which he himself would have been unable to predict without the aid of his barometer.

"There will be a temblorito (a little shock) before long," the Indians would remark, in the matter of fact way with which a person might comment on the probability of a rain shower. "What makes you think so?" he would ask the prophets. "Is there anything unusual about the weather or the looks of the sky?" "Don't know," was the invariable reply, "but I have felt that way before every earthquake."

The weather, at such times, might appear clear and calm; perhaps even cooler than usual; but soon after sunset the predicted temblorito would rattle along the streets, and shake the loose rocks from the cliffs of a neighbouring quarry.

In the reign of the Emperor Justinian the coasts of western Asia were visited by a series of destructive earthquakes, and a few days before the first shock the citizens of Antioch are said to have received a warning of its coming in the sudden departure of a large flock of rooks that had long made their nests in the city walls. The credibility of that seeming miracle has often been questioned; but is it not possible that experience may have taught the birds to connect certain conditions of the atmosphere with the idea of an impending quake?

Carpenter mentions the case of a wren that built her nest in the slate quarries of Penrhyn in a situation liable to great disturbance from the occasional explosions. She soon learned, however, to take warning by the sound of the bell, which was rung to give notice to the workmen whenever a blast was about to be fired, and would quit her nest and fly to a little distance, where she would remain until the shock of the explosion had passed off.

Storms, too, are thus evidently anticipated by various species of animals and birds, and it is by no means inconceivable that even their supposed ability to forecast the approach of mild or severe winters may be in some measure a fact.



NAVAL BOMBARDMENT IN CHINA.

A populous village burned to the ground during the first engagement with the Revolutionary Army.

want everything—railways, machinery, tools, guns, ships and much else. That there is an unprecedentedly large trade to be done must at once be granted. During the last decade, without thinking for the moment of the revolution, China's foreign trade has doubled; in the next decade, if peace prevails, it must now be trebled, and although one cannot close his eyes to the fact that under ordinary conditions of progress China must ultimately become a serious rival to Western countries as an industrial nation, that day is not yet at hand.

be a demand such as will make even Japan's era of commercial progress pale into insignificance. Thus the question is summed up by Mr Edwin J. Dingle in his book on "China's Revolution."

Instinct in Animals.

Herbivorous animals evince an almost unerring instinct in avoiding poisonous plants, even those which, to the human palate, would fail to betray their noxious properties. Monkeys may nibble at an

Employer: "Are you a married man?" Applicant: "No, sir; I've been bald since childhood."

Odol does more than cleanse and beautify the teeth; it preserves them from decay.

