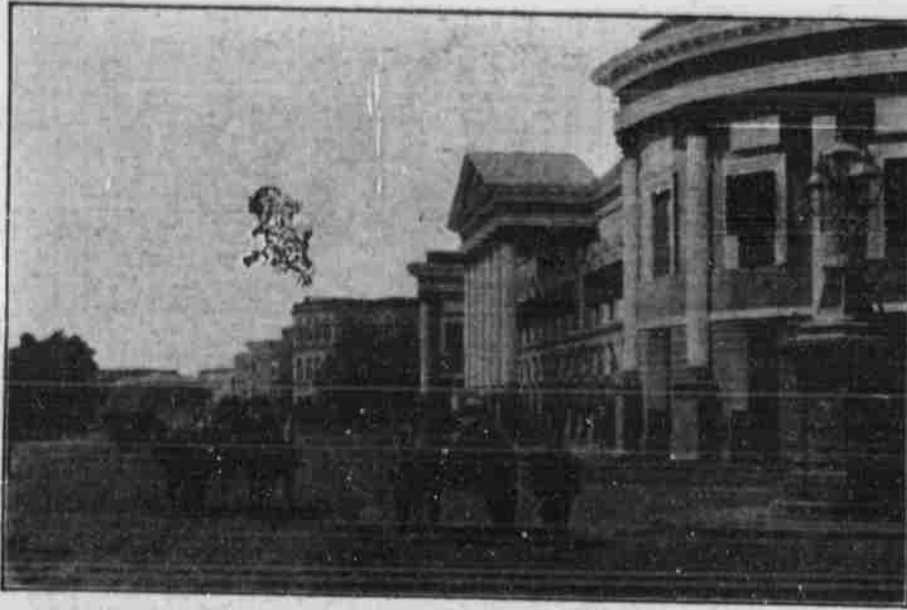
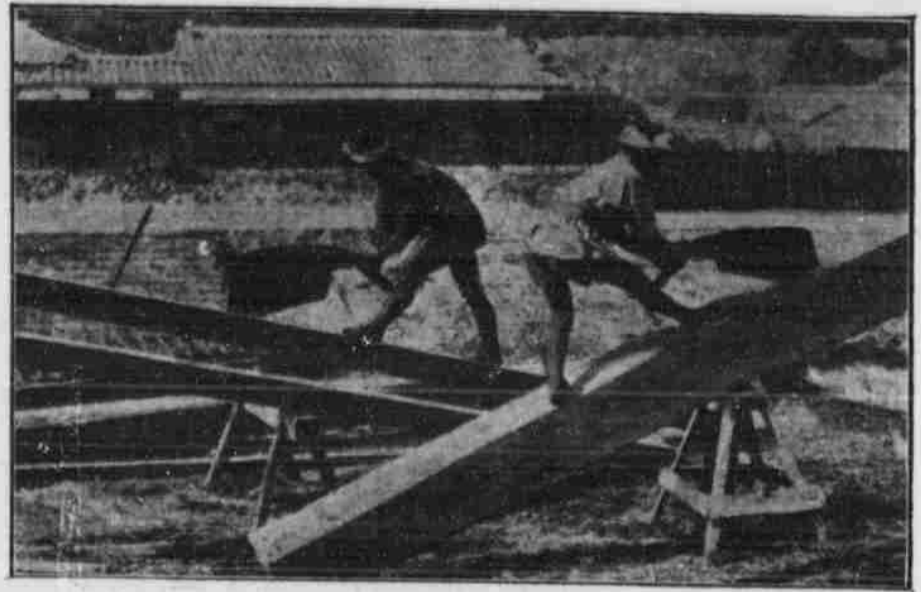


# Chances for American Goods Across the Pacific



RANGOON, THE BURMESE PORT FOR AMERICAN GOODS.



MAKING BOARDS IN JAPAN.

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**W**ASHINGTON, Dec. 13.—(Special Correspondence of The Bee.)—In this my last letter on the American invasion I write of our trade possibilities in Asia. That continent has already a foreign business of \$2,000,000,000 a year and it is just on the edge of its commercial development. It has three-fifths of all the world's people, the most of whom are dressing in cottons and living on a few cents a day. With the introduction of modern machinery and the development of its mineral resources its trade will be increased twentyfold. It will hum like a beehive and there will be rolling mills, textile mills and all sorts of machine shops from Siberia to Ceylon. Wages will rise and purchases increase and the trade will be worth tens of billions annually.

But suppose we put on our seven-league boots for a tramp over Asia. We shall take a country at a step nosing out the possibilities of American trade. We start in the Russian possessions, which have twice as much land as the United States proper with a population just now of about 150,000,000.

At the north is Siberia, the wild west of the world. It is one-third larger than the whole of our country. Parts of it are underlaid with coal and iron and its gold mines compare with those of Alaska. It has never been prospected and no one knows how great are its mineral resources.

Siberia has some of the best wheat lands upon earth. I traveled from Vladivostok inland over the Trans-Siberian road through a country that is a very granary. The soil is as black as your hat and it yields like the valley of the Nile. All along that road, the longest trunk line upon earth, there are great tracts of cultivable land and here and there, not far from the road, are coal and iron. That country will support a vast population and it is being rapidly filled as the Russians can push immigration. It is now humming with commercial activity. The lands are being taken up, towns are growing and there is a great demand for the kind of goods we have to sell.

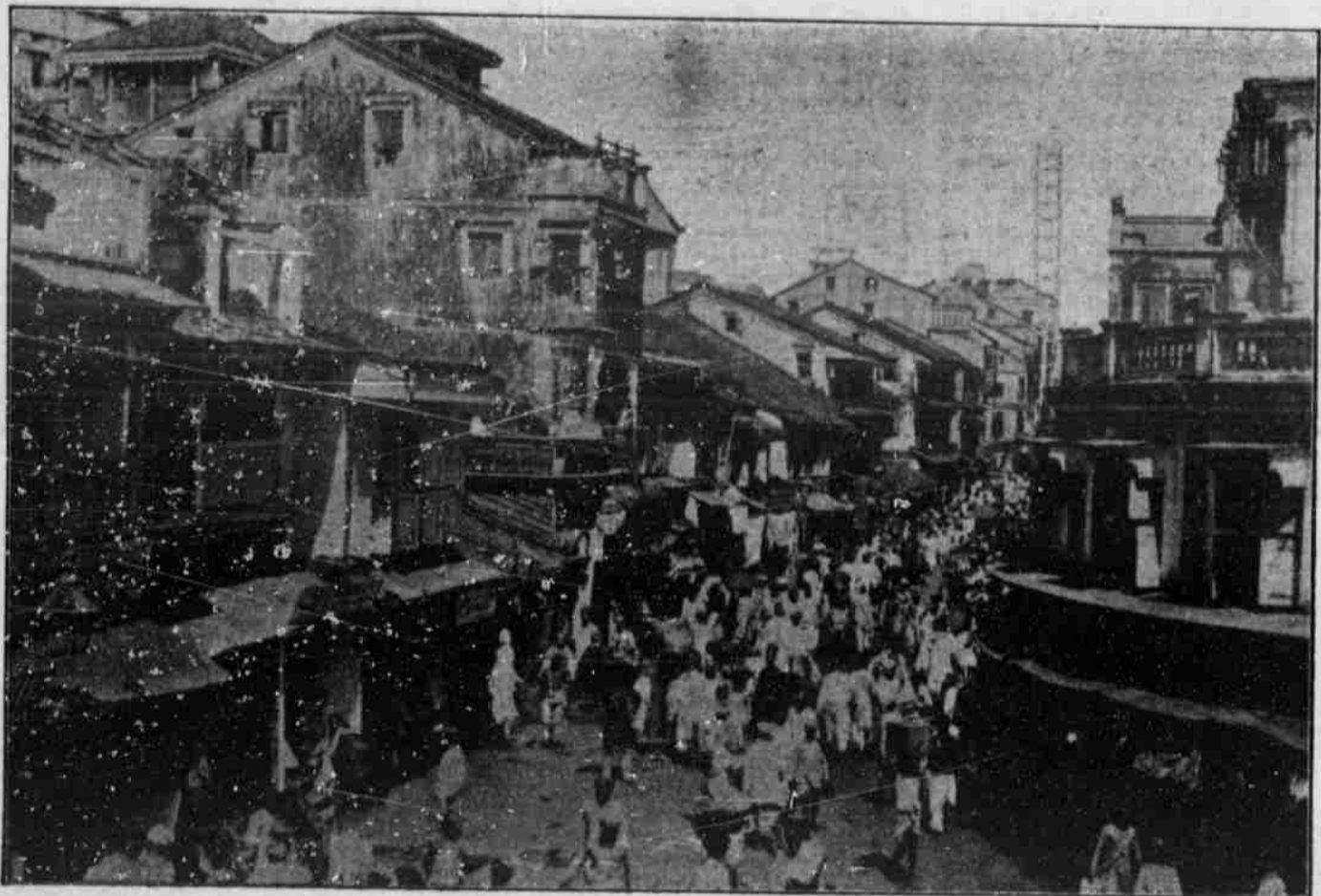
I have written how one Cape Cod boy made a million dollars selling American goods in Siberia when everything had to be carried over the snow or on the rivers. The American drummer of today can work the same territory, spending his nights in the sleeping cars and eating his meals on the trains, paying some of the lowest railroad fares of the world. The people there are making money and they are anxious to buy. The new factories will need American machinery, the rivers should have American bridges and there are already American boats on Lake Baikal and other waterways. The traffic over the Trans-Siberian is so great that it requires a new track and there is room for heavy orders for steel rails.

The Russian provinces in western Asia are now buying most of their goods from Europe and coal oil from the Caspian sea. Nevertheless there is a chance for American hardware, notions and cottons.

A step over the mountains and the great wall brings us into another trade field of enormous proportions. The Greater China has an area of 4,000,000 square miles and its people number 400,000,000; that is, their country is bigger than ours, and there are five Chinese to every American. They are more industrious than we are and will work from daylight until dark. Just now their wages are about the lowest on earth, but they spend well in proportion to what they make, and, as China develops, they will be among the best customers on earth.

The Chinese are now in the same position Japan was about a generation ago, when the foreign trade there amounted to a dollar a head. Since then the Japanese have increased their purchases sevenfold and the same will be true of the Chinese. The foreign commerce now amounts to more than \$300,000,000 a year and with this growth it will then be more than \$2,000,000,000 a year, or more than the present trade of all Asia.

China offers a big field for American food-stuffs. The land is often looked upon as one of rice and rats, it being supposed that rice is one of the cheapest foods upon earth.



A STREET IN BOMBAY.

This is not so. There are millions in China who cannot afford rice. The northern Chinese live largely on millet and other grains not so expensive to grow. They would eat Indian corn and when the Panama canal is completed there will probably be a great fleet carrying out corn to Asia. China has large wheat fields, but it cannot supply the demand for flour and of late it has begun to import from the United States. We are now annually exporting about 60,000,000 pounds of flour to China. The flour is packed in cloth sacks of fifty pounds each and taken across the Pacific at a cost of \$1 per ton. Flour mills like ours have been put up at Shanghai and at several ports along the Yangtze Kiang, and they are grinding Chinese wheat by the roller patent process. The machinery of these mills came from Milwaukee and Americans were sent over to show the Chinese how to use them.

We already send canned goods to China and our fruits and relishes are making their way among the rich. The better class Chinese spend much on their stomachs. Dinners of twenty courses are not uncommon and I have eaten soup at a Chinese banquet which cost, I was told, \$2 a plate. There are Chinese in all the larger cities whose living expenses are \$10.00 and upward a year and there is a demand for all sorts of luxuries.

One of our chief exports to China is cotton goods. The poorer classes dress in cottons and there are about 35,000,000 people there who need a new cotton suit every year. As it is now we have the bulk of the northern trade and especially that of Manchuria and Mongolia. Our cottons are heavier than the English or German cottons and they are in demand on account of the cold climate. Further south lighter goods are worn and there the English have the preference. There is no reason why we should not capture that market as well. Indeed it would pay the owners of our cotton mills to send agents to China to study the wants of the people.

Within the past few years the Chinese have been spinning and weaving all sorts of cloth. There are now more than four great cotton mills in the country, which make about 60,000,000 pounds of cotton annually. Some of these mills are at Shanghai. They are equipped with machinery as good as our own. They have foreign managers, but the workmen

are all natives, who are paid but a few cents a day.

There will be a big demand for railroad materials and mining machinery in the development of China. That empire has the greatest coal fields of the globe. Shansi, a state as big as Illinois, on the edge of Mongolia, is underlaid with coal. It was anthracite beds greater than those of Pennsylvania and thousands of square miles of bituminous veins. There is iron close to the coal, and a manufacturing industry will spring up there. This country has been ceded to the Peking syndicate and it is to be worked in connection with the English and Italians. There is coal in all the other provinces and in many iron as well. There will be a demand for coal-mining machinery, diamond drills and also for timber.

The railroad era in China has just begun, only a few hundred miles of track having been built. Roads are now projected throughout the busiest parts of the empire. One of the best concessions is owned by an American syndicate and has been surveyed by American engineers. This is a line which will eventually connect Hankow and Canton. Each of these cities has more than 1,000,000 inhabitants, and the country between them has 100,000,000. The distance is about as great as from New York to Chicago, and it is estimated that the road can be built for \$30,000,000.

An extension of this line owned by the Belgians is projected from Hankow to Peking! This is partially built. There are a number of other roads planned or in course of construction, so that the demand for steel rails and all sorts of railway materials will be great. Millions of ties are needed, and an enormous number of bridges, as much of the country is cut up by canals. The ties and bridge timber could be furnished by the Philippine Islands.

The Japanese are now among our best customers. They had practically no foreign trade a generation ago, but they now buy and sell to the extent of \$500,000,000 a year. Their purchases of foreign goods amount to \$200,000,000, and one-seventh of them come from the United States. British India sells Japan as much as we do and Great Britain more. Germany and China rank about even, but both are far behind the United States.

During a visit to Tokio some years ago I talked with the premier, Count Ito, about the chances for American enterprises there. He said that the trade with the United States would increase and suggested that Americans should establish factories in Japan to supply the Chinese market. He said that property would be safer there than in China and that the labor could be handled much better. As an evidence of the growth of manufacturing he said that twenty years ago the Japanese spinning was all done on old-fashioned wheels and by hand. It is now performed with the best of modern machinery.

Japan has now sixty cotton mills, in which 70,000 hands are employed. There are more than 50,000 women at work in the factories. A large number of machine shops have been established and all sorts of work is done in iron and steel.

The Japanese make their own war materials. They have their own navy yards and railroad shops. They buy our pneumatic tools and electrical materials. They are grinding American wheat in their flour mills, which are equipped with American machinery. They are also using typewriters, bicycles and other small machines of our make.

The Japanese are growing rich. They have banks everywhere with heavy deposits. One of their statisticians estimates the present wealth of the country at about \$3,000,000,000, which is an enormous sum for an Asiatic land of that size.

Our connections with Japan and China are steadily improving. When I first crossed the Pacific, about fourteen years ago, there were only two steamship lines. There are now about five times that many, and two of the lines belong to the Japanese. You can get ships from San Francisco, Portland, Tacoma and Vancouver for Yokohama, Shanghai and Hong Kong, and there are also steamers from San Diego, Cal., sailing at irregular intervals to the same ports. Two of the biggest ships of the world are just about ready to make their first voyages across the Pacific. These are the Minnesota and Dakota, built by the Great Northern railroad to accommodate its transpacific trade. They have each a displacement of 38,000 tons, and can carry 250,000 barrels of flour. The Dakota is 14,000 tons bigger than the Great Eastern and

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