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CHINA. No. 1 (1897).

REPORTS

FROM

HER MAJESTY'S CONSULAR OFFICERS IN CHINA

ON THE

TRADE IN TEXTILE GOODS.

PART I.

*Printed and sold to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.
April 1897.*

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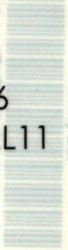
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*Reports from Her Majesty's Consular Officers
in China on the Trade in Textile Goods.*

PART I.

Circular addressed to Her Majesty's Consuls in China.

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 7, 1896.

THE Nottingham Chamber of Commerce have addressed to the Marquess of Salisbury the letter of which a copy is inclosed, requesting that Reports may be obtained as to the textile goods supplied or required in different parts of China, more particularly with regard to lace and hosiery.

I am directed by the Marquess of Salisbury to instruct you to do what you can to procure the information required, and to furnish his Lordship with a Report on the subject.

If you find it necessary to send home any samples, they should be forwarded direct to the Chamber of Commerce at Nottingham.

I am, &c.

(Signed) FRANCIS BERTIE.

Inclosure.

Nottingham Chamber of Commerce to the Marquess of Salisbury.

My Lord, *Nottingham, January 7, 1896.*
THE Council of this Chamber have had under consideration the question of improving and increasing the trade of this town and district with China, and at a meeting of the Council held last night I was directed to ask that Her Majesty's Consuls and Vice-Consuls in China might be instructed by you to obtain for this Chamber particulars of the textile goods supplied or required in their respective districts, more particularly as to lace and hosiery, the information to be accompanied so far as possible by samples and prices.

I have &c.

(Signed) R. H. BEAUMONT.

Secretary.

N.B.—Replies from Chingkiang, Kiukiang, Newchang, Pakhoi, Swatow, Tien-tsin, Wenchow, and Wuhu have not yet reached the Foreign Office. They will be published when received.

Replies to preceding Circular.

AMOY.

No. 1.

Consul Gardner to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 28.)

My Lord,
In accordance with your Circular of the 7th February last, I have the honour to inclose a short Report on lace and hosiery, for the information of the Nottingham Chamber of Commerce.
According to your instructions, all samples have been forwarded direct to the Chamber of Commerce, Nottingham.
I have, &c.
(Signed) CHR. T. GARDNER.

Inlosure in No. 1.

Report on Lace and Hosiery in Amoy.

Lace.

The manufacture of lace at Amoy is entirely a private concern, and originated as follows.
About four years ago a local lady resident, Mrs. Broadbent, wishing to find some beneficial employment for certain of the better class of native women and girls, established a class for instruction in lace making.
The idea was very favourable to those whom it was desired to benefit, and there was no difficulty in procuring pupils.
At the present time the number of efficient workers is forty-two, but this number could easily be increased.
The lace made by each worker is sold for her benefit, and the women are thus furnished with a lucrative means of employment.
A sample book of the lace manufactured is herewith inclosed.*
The lace is made of linen thread, obtained from Ireland, and is greatly superior to machine-made Torchon lace, made of cotton, while it is about the same price as the latter.

* Sent direct to Nottingham.

The sale of the lace is at present confined to China and Japan, at Newchwang, Chefoo, Hankow, Tôkiô, Yokohama, Kobe, &c., but samples have been sent to Australia, Mauritius, and England.

As this is purely a private enterprise, of course the actual amount sold is very small, being only of the value of 1,500 dollars (170%) last year.

At the same time, it must be observed that as the consumption of lace is confined almost entirely to the foreign residents in China, and there is no demand for it at all among the bulk of the native population, it would scarcely seem as if the trade in lace were capable of substantial development in this country.

At any rate, as regards this Consular district, which is a poor one, it may be said there is no opening for such trade.

Hosiery.

There has been an increasing tendency of late among those Chinese who have had any intercourse with foreigners to wear socks (not stockings) of foreign make, and those who can afford to do so appreciate the foreign article as being much superior to the native one.

These socks are made of cotton, for woollen goods, of whatever make or description, must be regarded as a luxury here, and too expensive to be within the reach of the people.

The socks of foreign make worn here come almost entirely from Japan, and are cheap but very inferior in quality, as will be seen from samples inclosed.*

The same may be said of hosiery, as can be said of all other articles of Japanese manufacture imported into this district.

The first instalment is invariably of good quality, and affords satisfaction to the native purchasers, but all subsequent supplies deteriorate gradually in quality, and no attempt appears to be made by the manufacturers in Japan to maintain any standard of quality.

This, of course, the native buyers are quick to observe, and it is well understood among them that English made articles, though much more expensive, are of infinitely superior quality, and well repay the extra expense to those who can afford to purchase them, but their price places them out of the reach of the majority.

(Signed) CHR. T. GARDNER.

* Sent to Nottingham.

CANTON.

No. 2.

Acting Consul Fraser to Foreign Office.—(Received May 26.)

Sir,
In reply to your Circular despatch of the 7th February, I have the honour to inclose a Report on the trade in textiles, especially lace and hosiery, at Canton.

I am forwarding a parcel of samples, together with a copy of the above Report, direct to the Nottingham Chamber of Commerce.

I have, &c.

(Signed) E. H. FRASER.

Inclosure in No. 2.

Report on Textiles, especially Lace, Hosiery, and Ribbons, in Canton.

[Note.—In this Report 1 Chinese foot equals $14\frac{1}{4}$ inches; 1 tael equals 3s. 1d.; 1 Mexican dollar equals 2s. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. The figures of imports and exports are of quantities passing through the foreign Customs only; the native Customs figures are unobtainable.]

General.—Canton imports the usual varieties of cotton and woollen goods, and exports silk piece-goods and grass-cloth.

Indian Yarn Cloth.—From Indian yarn, No. 208, the Chinese weave a cloth, of which a sample has been forwarded to Nottingham, in pieces 148 feet by $15\frac{1}{2}$ inches. One bale makes 60 pieces, and it is sold retail at 2 dol. 10 c. a-piece, say, 1.13d. per yard. This cloth is often dyed, chiefly with indigo, the prevalent colour of Chinese clothing.

Noil Cloth.—From silk waste is also woven noil cloth, a textile of which I have forwarded a packet of samples. The pieces measure about 123 feet by $16\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and the price varies according to colour from 12s. 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ d. to 17s. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per piece, and from 3.97d. to 5.78d. per yard.

Both Indian yarn cloth and noil cloth are woven on handlooms by boys.

Hosiery.—Canton imports cotton socks from Germany and Japan. Of the former, which cost twice the price of Japanese, the best quality is marked "made in Saxony." The natives wear no colour but white. Samples have been forwarded with retail prices.

The figures of import for 1894-95 are :—

FOREIGN (German).

					Dozen pairs.	Value.
						£
1894	..	..	..	..	8,488	1,198
1895	..	..	..	..	10,125	1,080

JAPANESE.

					Dozen pairs.	Value.
						£
1894	..	..	..	..	33,032	1,643
1895	..	..	..	..	23,966	1,036

These trifling quantities do not of course represent the hosiery of the people. The lowest classes, coolies, boat-people, agricultural labourers, practically wear no hose, while the vast majority of the better classes continue to use the native sock of foreign cotton cloth sewn into shape by native tailors. A sample has been forwarded.

Exports.—Canton exports these native socks, and also a knitted variety, of which I have sent a sample. The quantities for 1894 and 1895 are 13,668 lbs. and 13,889 lbs. respectively.

Lace.—Foreign lace was imported during 1894 to the value of 576*l.*, and during 1895 of 154*l.* It is both scalloped and plain, and the width varies from 2½ to 1¼ inches. A sample has been forwarded. The retail price is about 4½*d.* per yard, and it is coloured black, pink, pale blue, yellow, &c. This lace is used on women's dresses, as are the foreign and native ribbons of many patterns and breadths (native 2 inch to ¼ inch, foreign 2¾ inch to 1½ inch), which are on sale in the shops. I have forwarded twenty-three samples.

Handkerchiefs.—There is a trifling import of cotton, cambric, and Japanese handkerchiefs.

Singlets.—I have sent samples of Japanese and foreign singlets; the retail prices of which are about 6½*d.* to 1*s.* 1¼*d.* a-piece, as also

of the netted singlets made in Chinese prisons, and worn in summer to keep the clothes from touching the body, and so getting stained by perspiration. They cost 4s. 1½d., and a variety of fine pieces of bamboo netted together costs 1s. 6d.

Japanese Textiles.—Of Japanese textiles shirtings, T-cloths, towels, towelling, cotton crape, cotton cloth, and silk, cotton and woollen umbrellas, the use of which daily increases. I have forwarded a bundle of samples of cloth which, in pieces 33 Chinese feet by 13, is sold here at (Mexican dollars) 1 dollar to 1 dol. 20 say 2d. a-yard.

The Canton market is supplied from Hong Kong, and none of the European firms here deal in the above-named goods.

(Signed) E. H. FRASER,
Acting Consul

Canton, April 18, 1896.

No. 3.

Acting Consul Fraser to Foreign Office.—(Received June 22.)

Sir,
I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a Report on textile fabrics in Macao, prepared by Mr. Werner, Her Britannic Majesty's Vice-Consul, in obedience to the instructions contained in a Circular from the Foreign Office, dated the 7th February last. The samples referred to have been sent direct to the Notingham Chamber of Commerce.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. H. FRASER.

Inclosure in No. 3.

Report on Textile Fabrics used in Macao.

The textile fabrics used in Macao are mostly imported from London, via Hong Kong, and originate principally in Manchester, Glasgow, France, and Germany. The Mahomedan and Chinese merchants, in whose hands the trade in these goods is, often buy job lots of lace and hosiery at an average price of so much a-yard and sell here at the market price, which varies from 1d. to over 5s. a-yard for lace, according to the quality. The samples of lace sent are those most in demand amongst the Portuguese and Mocanese residents, who, being as a rule comparatively poor,

generally buy the cheaper kinds. Ribbons made entirely of silk sell at 2s. 2d. a-yard, but if mixed with a little cotton, though of as good a make and the same in appearance, the price is only 5d. to 6d. a-yard. Brighter colours are preferred than those which would be worn in England.

The trade in textile fabrics has declined considerably during the last two years. Cotton goods are being rapidly displaced by woollen ones, which are evidently more suited to the climate. The merchants here are practically in the hands of the London agents, who sent out goods of foreign origin with those made in England on the supposition that in a cosmopolitan community the demand must be for articles manufactured in different countries — a supposition entirely unwarranted, the merchants I have consulted being unanimous in stating that there is no prejudice against English goods, but that those sell which are cheap and of good quality and take the fancy of the buyer, who here, as in other places, likes to conform to the prevailing fashion. One merchant states that when in England recently, buying his stock of goods for the East, the manager of one of the largest warehouses in London preferred to sell him German goods, saying that they were much cheaper and of better designs. He afterwards found that he could buy the same goods for 1d. or 2d. a-yard less from the German agents. During twenty-five years' experience in China and Japan he has noticed a great increase in the amount of foreign manufactured goods sent out from London by British firms, and believes that the cause is the relative cheapness of foreign labour.

The samples marked (A) and (B) represent the kinds of goods chiefly sold in the south of China. The Manchester fabrics (A) are bought mostly by Europeans at from 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. to 3 $\frac{7}{8}$ d. a-yard, and are considered by the merchant who supplied me with the samples to be unrivalled for design, texture, and low price in this class of goods. The samples marked (B) are either of German or Indian manufacture, and are sold principally to natives at 10 to 15 cents (2 $\frac{1}{4}$ d. to 3 $\frac{3}{8}$ d.) a-yard.

(Signed)

E. T. C. WERNER,
Acting Vice-Consul.

The trade at Chefoo in foreign textile goods comprises cottons and woollens, there being no business done in foreign silks. It is entirely in the hands of native merchants, and is conducted through Shanghai. The merchant buys what he requires in the market at the latter place, and reships the goods to Chefoo, which he is allowed to do without further payment of duty either export or import. The following Table shows the quantities of such goods imported into Chefoo last year, together with their values as estimated by the Custom-house. This, of course, means their value when laid down in Chefoo, after the payment of duty (at Shanghai) and freight.

Report on Textile Goods at Chefoo, North China

Inclosure in No. 4.

(Signed)
J. L. BULLOCK.

I have, &c.

My Lord,
In obedience to the Circular of the 7th February last, I have the honour to forward herewith a Report on textile goods in this district of China.
The samples intended to accompany the Report I am sending, as instructed, direct to Nottingham.

Chefoo, July 23, 1896.

*Consul Bullock to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received
September 4.)*

No. 4.

CHEFOO.

FOREIGN Cottons and Woollens imported into Chefoo
in 1895.

Articles.	Classifier.	Quantity.	Value.
			£
Cotton goods—			
Shirtings, grey, plain	Pieces ..	257,978	87,487
" white, "	" ..	47,107	17,631
" dyed, "	" ..	6,556	3,315
" " figured	" ..	18,209	8,304
T-cloths	" ..	207,888	63,559
" Indian	" ..	16,335	4,358
" Japanese	" ..	2,620	735
Drills, English	" ..	21,742	10,982
" Indian	" ..	3,120	1,591
" Dutch	" ..	2,100	1,004
" American	" ..	59,515	32,535
" Japanese	" ..	1,845	922
Jeans, English	" ..	7,103	2,780
" American	" ..	2,250	1,037
Sheetings, English	" ..	31,385	16,490
" Indian	" ..	8,815	4,554
" Dutch	" ..	140	70
" American	" ..	154,540	88,502
" Japanese	" ..	1,000	517
Chintzes and furnitures	" ..	42,559	11,422
Printed twills	" ..	7,760	2,640
Turkey red cottons	" ..	28,012	11,047
Cotton lastings, plain and figured	" ..	34,578	19,518
" Italians	" ..	24,964	12,649
Velvets and velveteens	" ..	2,208	6,005
Lawns and muslins	" ..	2,777	259
Handkerchiefs	Dozen ..	9,456	781
Towels	" ..	38,025	1,713
" Japanese	" ..	1,238	89
Cotton, Spanish stripes	Pieces ..	3,504	1,730
" flannel	" ..	3,892	1,573
Japanese cotton cloth	" ..	3,000	711
" " crape	" ..	1,986	263
Cotton goods, unclassified	" ..	6,022	2,143
Woollen goods—			
Camlets, English	Pieces ..	927	1,584
Lastings, plain and figured	" ..	2,895	4,563
Long ells	" ..	1,079	968
Spanish stripes	" ..	729	1,018
Cloth, broad, medium, &c.	" ..	129	390
" Russian	" ..	180	523
Lustres and Orleans, plain and figured	" ..	642	374
Blankets	Pairs ..	171	57
Union or Poncho cloth	Pieces ..	323	987
Flannel	" ..	150	372
Italian cloth	" ..	3,242	3,377

The Nottingham Chamber of Commerce, I apprehend, will not care to be troubled with samples of these well-known articles of trade. The number of such samples would be endless, as in many classes of goods, such as grey shirtings, white shirtings, &c., there are as many as half-a-dozen to a dozen kinds imported into Chefoo. If any particular information concerning them be

required, it can easily be gathered in any Manchester ware-house.

But I have collected samples of all the native cottons which I could find in the market here, and I have the honour to forward the same, with notes attached to them, of the cost and dimensions of the pieces from which they were taken. The prices given by me are those at which such goods are sold in the Chefoo market, and therefore include the dealer's profit. I cannot say how much per cent. this profit would be; but one may take for granted that it would be a very moderate amount. If any of the samples appear strongly to resemble European goods, while most kinds seem very different, it must be remembered that a Chinese Company at Shanghai has been weaving by machinery for some years past, so that the cloth in question may be probably some of its production.

There are no native woollen goods to be found in Chefoo; and, as will be seen from the Table given above, the consumption of foreign woollens is not large. The mass of the people prefer their garments of wadded cotton. There are, I regret to say, few parts of China where the prospect of introducing foreign novelties is smaller than at Chefoo. This may be ascribed in part to the conservatism and in part to the general poverty of the inhabitants of the surrounding districts.

The Chamber of Commerce asks that in this Report special regard may be paid to lace and hosiery. As far as I am aware, there is absolutely no demand for lace here. Indeed, I should say, that anything of the kind is entirely unknown. A missionary lady has lately taught a few Chinese women to make silk lace from the wild silk of this part of China; but the small quantity of lace so produced is sold to Europeans only; Chinese do not care to buy it.

The case is much the same with regard to hosiery. The Chinese do not wear woven stockings. They use a short, loose sock made of cotton cloth, cut out and sewn. Of these I inclose specimens. As a rule they are made by the women of the family, so that the cost is merely that of the material.

In some parts of China thin singlets, nominal merino or gauze, are occasionally purchased and used by Chinese who have seen something of Europeans; but I cannot find that any are imported into Chefoo.

(Signed)

T. L. BULLOCK, *Consul.*

Chefoo, July 23, 1896.

CHUNGKING.

No. 5.

Acting Consul Tratman to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received July 20.)

My Lord,

Chungking, May 28, 1896.

IN reply to your Lordship's Circular of the 7th February last, which reached me on the 4th May, I have the honour to inclose, for the information of the Nottingham Chamber of Commerce, a Report on the textile goods imported into this district.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. N. TRATMAN.

Inclosure in No. 5.

Report on Textile Goods imported into the District of Chungking.

WITH reference to the question of textile goods in general, as imported into this district, I cannot do better than refer the Nottingham Chamber of Commerce to the "Returns of Trade and Trade Reports for the year 1895," as published by the Imperial Maritime Customs of China, a volume in which will be found full particulars of all textiles brought into this port (and other Treaty ports).

It is to be noted that all foreign imports for Chungking come from Shanghai, a distributing centre, where, under the "Yang-tsze Regulations," all import duties on goods for Treaty ports on the Yang-tsze are paid. Samples of textiles imported here, as shown in the Customs Returns, would therefore be similar to samples of goods under the same headings forwarded from Shanghai, and no useful purpose would be served by sending duplicates. Of the three British firms represented here, two (Messrs. Jardine, Matheson, and Messrs. Butterfield and Livire) are simply agencies, under native managers, of houses in Shanghai, whilst the third (the Chungking Transport Company, under an English manager) has an agent in Shanghai. All draw their supplies from that port, so that if it were desired to enter into business communication with them, it would preferably be to Shanghai that applicants should address themselves.

The Customs Returns are sold in London by Messrs. P. S. King and Son, 12 and 14, King Street, Westminster, S.W., and I may be allowed to add that information concerning commercial matters is also to be found in the "Report on the Trade of Chungking for

1895" (and similarly for previous years), compiled for the Foreign Office by Her Majesty's Consul, and sold in London by Messrs. Frye and Spottiswoode.

With special reference to lace, as this article does not appear under a separate heading in the Chungking Returns, it may be well to give a few details. The fashion of trimming native female costume with lace, which is so prevalent in Shanghai, has not yet shown itself to any great extent in these far-off regions, but signs are not wanting that a change in this respect may be looked for. Hitherto, the import has been so insignificant that it has been thrown into the "Sundries Unenumerated," and statistics are not forthcoming, but this year a separate heading has been opened for it, and up to date the import has amounted to some 4,500 taels (declared value at Shanghai), say, 700. This, however, will probably about represent the import for the whole year, as the article is only brought in in the spring for summer wear. No official note of origin is obtainable here, but I am informed by the native merchants that all the lace imported into Chungking is made in Japan. I inclose the following samples:—

1. A card of black silk lace, as imported.

2-6. Short lengths of silk lace, different colours and widths purchased in the shops.

7-9. Specimens of labels enveloping lace cards.

Almost all the lace imported is made of silk, a small quantity coming in being of cotton. About three-fourths of the total import is black in colour. The average price of silk lace as sold in retail shops is 60 "cash" a Chinese foot, which works out to about 1½d. an English foot, some reduction being made on large quantities. Cotton lace fetches half this price. As to the labels, I should judge from their appearance that they are more or less exact reproductions of the wrappers of English manufacturers, the name of the firm being omitted. This is a common practice in Japan.

As regards hosiery, it is only necessary to say that the native in these regions has not yet arrived at that stage of civilization when he feels the want of comfortable socks and underwear. At present he is content to put a white cotton bag on his foot when he puts anything, and as to underwear, he does not use any. It is probable, however, that when Japanese merchants are settled here, and they are expected shortly, an attempt will be made to educate the native into adopting the hosiery which Japan turns out in such large quantities and sells at so low a rate.

(Signed)

J. N. TRAJMAN,

Her Britannic Majesty's Acting Consul,
Chungking, May 28, 1896.

FOOCHOW.

No. 6.

Consul Allan to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 7.)

My Lord,

Foochow, April 21, 1896.

IN compliance with the instructions contained in the Foreign Office Circular of the 7th February, 1896, I have the honour to submit a few remarks on the trade in lace and hosiery in this district for the information of the Chamber of Commerce at Nottingham.

The Chinese, so far as I have seen, appear to have no appreciation for lace, either in the shape of curtains or of trimmings for dresses. I have never seen a Chinese, male or female, wearing lace in any shape. Lace is not mentioned in the Tariff, and not one Chinaman in ten knows the Chinese name for it. Cheap lace curtains are occasionally seen in Chinese houses, but the trade in them is infinitesimal, and is not likely to increase.

The demand for European hosiery is confined to socks, stockings, undervests, and drawers. The Customs Returns at Foochow for the year 1895 show the following import:—

	Dozen.	Value.
Socks and stockings	1,733	£ 137
Underclothing	53	16

but I have good reason to believe that more than double this amount comes into the port as personal luggage, and therefore does not appear on the Customs Returns.

The largest native dealer in goods of this sort at Foochow informs me that he sells annually about 1,000 dollars (say 105*l.*) worth of this description of goods. The cheapest and commonest articles alone command a sale. Babies' socks can be sold at $\frac{3}{4}$ *d.* a-pair and upwards. Men's socks fetch from 2*d.* to over 1*s.* a-pair. Unbleached or white thread socks are the kind most in use. The Chinese will not wear parti-coloured or gaudy socks of any kind. Nor are woollen socks worn. Women's long stockings are less wanted than men's socks. It is only women who have been employed as nurses in foreign houses that have acquired a taste for them.

Cheap cotton undervests or singlets command a certain sale at from 1s. 1d. to 5s. 6d. a-piece. Drawers are less in demand. The habit of wearing underclothing has been acquired principally by Chinese who are in European employ, who have got possession of their masters' cast-off garments, and have found them comfortable, or by Chinese who have been abroad. Such things as vests or drawers are hardly ever seen away from the Treaty ports. I am informed that most of the thread socks used by men in Foochow come from Barcelona. The bulk of babies' socks, under-vests, and drawers are made in Japan, where they are much worn, and whence they can be imported into China at a very low cost. Socks made of native cotton cloth are the wear of the well-to-do classes all over China. They cost about 6d. a-pair, are easily made, washed, and mended, and though they would be uncomfortable in European boots, they suit soft Chinese shoes very well. Coolies, agricultural labourers, and boatmen look on socks as luxuries. Each man probably owns but one pair of them, and reserves that pair for high days and holidays. Taking all these things into consideration, we cannot look on this part of China as a good market for the hosiery trade. I am sending two specimens of Chinese socks direct to the Nottingham Chamber of Commerce.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CLEMENT F. R. ALLAN.

HANKOW.

No. 7.

Consul Carles to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received September 4.)

My Lord,
I have the honour to inclose a Report which I have drawn up in accordance with the instructions contained in the Circular from the Foreign Office of the 7th February last on textile goods at this port.

I am forwarding to the Chamber of Commerce at Nottingham

samples of various articles referred to in the Report.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. R. CARLES.

Hankow, July 25, 1896.

Inclosure in No. 7.

Report on Textile Goods at Hankow.

THE import trade in cotton and woollen goods has shown a steady falling off at Hankow. This is the case not only in goods such as are now manufactured in China with foreign appliances, but in other classes of goods which might have been expected to gain in favour, and which are not exposed to native competition.

A comparison of the Customs Returns of 1895 with those of 1885 shows an improvement in cottons only in shirtings (figured, brocaded, and spotted), American drills, chintzes, and furnitures, Turkey red cottons, lastings (plain and figured), handkerchiefs, towels, cotton flannel, Japanese cotton crape, cotton crimps and ginghams, and llama braid. None of the above form important items, with the exception of American drills.

In woollen goods the only article which shows an improvement is figured lastings.

In the published Report on the trade of this port for 1895 I have written somewhat fully on the manufactories established here for cotton goods. I am indebted to a gentleman of great local experience for the following further details regarding these.

Of the yarns and cloths turned out about half are sent to Shanghai. The remainder is sold to native merchants of Hankow and Szechuan. The counts spun are 14s. and 16s., and the cloth made is 36-inch wide shirtings, for which there is a good demand. The demand, however, drags a little when the rivers are very low, and the goods cannot be conveyed by boat to the inland market.

The climate here is quite equal to that at home for manufacturing except during the three hottest months, but the late improvements in humidifiers and ventilators prevent the difference even then from exceeding 8 per cent.

My informant adds that it is very important that the bales of cloth and yarn which are shipped for the interior of China should not be above 100 lbs. each in weight. In his opinion it would be well to pack only that weight even if four or six packages were made up in one large bale for shipment on leaving England. The merchants from up country always prefer the small bale as much more suitable than the bale of 200 or 400 lbs.

On my consulting him as to what goods might be recommended as suitable, he writes:—

“I feel it to be somewhat difficult to say what would be most suitable to place upon the market to be sure of success, but I should think a market could be found for cotton goods of both medium and fine makes. What, it seems to me, is required most in Hankow is a representative of some good house to become a resident here, and to forward to his firm the samples of various kinds of goods required, and that they at home should try to send the goods out to meet the wishes of the people here. Although it may not be our usual style, and make-up and count, if it was what

the people wanted it would do much towards keeping our goods to the front."

This opinion is entirely in accordance with my own. It seems to me essential that competent representatives of manufacturing firms should study the local trade on the spot. Agents who are not in the trade are much discouraged by the manner in which their suggestions are received at home. Slight innovations which appear to the resident agent desirable are objected to on the ground that they would entail alterations in the machinery. If the machinery is never altered, merchants may take it for granted that they will lose their market, but it is not to be expected that expensive alterations will be made with a view to catch the taste of the day, except upon the recommendation of competent advisers.

Of the goods, lace and hosiery, regarding which the Nottingham Chamber of Commerce more particularly desires information, there appears to be little importation except of lace, the value of which in 1895, including re-exports, was 11,948 taels (under 2,000,000). This is of English manufacture, and is used for the fringes of chairs, &c.

A large quantity of hand-made lace is made in the Roman Catholic orphanages here, but this is entirely for European consumption, and has, I believe, no sale among the natives.

In the dress of the Chinese there are some articles of trifling cost which are universally worn, to which attention may be drawn, e.g., the braid, cotton, or silk, which is let into the queue to increase its length; the garter fastened round the foot of the trouser to keep it and the sock in place; the bunch of braid on the top of the cap. Such things are hawked about the streets or sold in shops, and the gross consumption must be enormous. So far as I know they are all of native manufacture, though recently I have seen men who "dressed" wearing a garter evidently of half-foreign make. It is perhaps simpler to send specimens of these than to describe them more fully.

The better class of women often wear an edging to their dresses, of which the width is in almost all cases the same, and the pattern to the uninitiated eye varies but little.

And here I would specially invite attention to the little opportunity which our system of trade affords to Chinese ladies of seeing what kinds of hosiery is produced in England. They are quite as willing as ladies in England, and they have a great liking for pretty things, soft to the touch, and light to wear.

I was much struck in Corea at lawn being universally worn by officials for the fabric next to the skin. How it came to be introduced is unknown to me, but its adoption while foreigners were still rigorously excluded from the country, by a people whose habits gave little reason to suspect that such an article would find favour, is an evidence of how well it sometimes pays to bring foreign products to the notice of natives, whether in the seller's mind they are likely to find a market or not.

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Hitherto commercial travellers can hardly be said to be known in China, but I think that the time is not far distant when shopwomen will do well to call on the wives of officials with samples of women's things, and to learn for their employers what makes or what fashions are most likely to take with native customers.

Though there appears to be no market here for such articles, in other parts of China there is a considerable demand for thin vests, socks, and woollen comforters. The first two of these are, I think, generally imported from Japan, and at prices which it would be difficult to undersell; but the large woollen wrapper in common use by firemen and Cantonese women to protect their throats might certainly give way to something more attractive in appearance.

(Signed) W. R. CARLES, *Consul.*

Hankow, July 25, 1896.

ICHANG.

No. 8.

*Consul Holland to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received
October 3.)*

My Lord,

Ichang, July 18, 1896.

WITH reference to your Circular of the 7th February last, I have to express my great regret at the delay in furnishing the Report therein called for, owing to the absence for some time from this port of the only merchant from whom I am able to obtain reliable information. I have now the honour to forward my Report, trusting that the delay will not have caused inconvenience.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. HOLLAND.

Inclosure in No. 8.

*Report on Textile Goods, more particularly Lace and Hosiery,
supplied or required in the Consular District of Ichang.*

ALL textile goods required for the Ichang market are supplied direct from Shanghae, no foreign firm here having any dealings in them whatever. The goods chiefly imported are grey and white shirtings, chintzes, cotton lastings and Italians and Turkey reds. Although it is true that the import of grey shirtings has actually increased during the last three years, other goods, notably white shirtings, have fallen off since the import of Bombay and Chinese

Yarns received such an impetus as began two years ago. The natives prefer to get the yarn and weave the cloth themselves, for the simple reason that the labour of doing this costs practically nothing. In every well-to-do cottage and farm-house may be seen a quaint form of loom, such as we may have used when they were first invented, at which the old woman of the family works steadily, producing enough for the rougher requirements of the family.

A significant novelty in the market is Chinese drill, manufactured by the Chinese steam-mills at Wuchang. These drills, which figured in 1893 with a modest import total of 15 pieces, rose to 210 pieces in 1894, and to 1,379 pieces in 1895. Though somewhat coarse in texture they are strongly made, and in all probability will rapidly increase in favour among the coolie and boating population. There is also a purely native cloth made at Sha Shih, the new port to be shortly opened about 85 miles down river from Ichang. This is made of the local cotton by hand-loom made in pieces varying in price from 1½*d.* to 2½*d.* a-yard. It is of a uniform width of about 14½ inches. All Chinese piece-goods of the cheaper kind are made in these narrow widths, as explained in my Trade Report for 1895, because they combine convenience for the cutting out of Chinese garments with the utmost possible economy. I am sending samples of this Sha Shih cotton stuff to the Nottingham Chamber of Commerce.

With regard to lace and hosiery, the former is much used by well-to-do Chinese ladies, though the fashion is quite a new one, dating not more than two or three years back. As with piece-goods, the local demand, which is small, is entirely met from Shanghae. The favourite style of lace is black, of about 1 to 2 inches in width, and it must be borne in mind that the question of colour is very important in China. White and blue being the national mourning colours, and severe simplicity of dress being *de rigueur* for mourning, lace of those colours would practically have no sale in China. After black, which is a long way first in favour, violet, and perhaps some shades of grey, would be saleable. I need hardly add that the lace used is all cotton lace, silk being beyond the means of all except the few very rich natives, and it is doubtful if even they would buy silk.

As regards hosiery, the women of this district being almost universally small-footed, there is of course no market for stockings. But the practise among the men of wearing foreign socks is so immensely on the increase that the import of these socks into China must be enormous. I am told that when once a native has worn foreign socks he will not go back to the native article, which is clumsy and uncomfortable. The native sock costs from 120 to 250 cash, say, from 3*d.* to 6¾*d.*, a-pair, whilst for foreign socks, which are mostly of English make, the price ranges from 8¼*d.* to 1s. 7½*d.* a-pair. Curiously enough, there is no objection to the mourning colour in socks, white being the almost universal colour.

* About 2½ Chinese feet = 1 yard.

I may add that there is a growing tendency among the natives, both male and female, to wear foreign singlets, and this trade bids fair to develop almost as largely as that in socks.

(Signed) W. HOLLAND, *Consul*.

Ichang, July 25, 1896.

NINGPO.

No. 9.

Consul Playfair to Foreign Office.—(Received May 26.)

Sir,

Ningpo, April 15, 1896.

IN response to the Foreign Office Circular of the 7th February, I have the honour to make the following Report, for the information of the Nottingham Chamber of Commerce, on the textile fabrics imported into Ningpo from Europe and America.

There is little variation from year to year in the kind of articles imported, the nature, amount, and value of which may be seen at a glance from the appended Table, which has been compiled from the Returns of Trade for 1894, as published by the Imperial Maritime Customs. In cottons, by far the greatest demand is for the various kinds of shirtings and for T-cloths. For drills and sheetings there is also a fair demand, but a preference is shown for the American product. In jeans, on the other hand, the English manufacture is preferred. In woollens, English camlets, plain lastings, Spanish stripes, and Italian cloth are the only varieties imported to any noticeable extent.

The erection of a cotton mill at Ningpo, which is expected to begin working next month, the establishment of five similar factories at Shanghae, and the competition of Japan, which promises to be severe, cannot fail to have a serious effect on the future market for cottons from foreign countries, and I anticipate a large falling-off in the import of shirtings and T-cloths.

There is no trade whatever in the articles specially mentioned by the Nottingham Chamber of Commerce, viz., laces and hosiery. The taste for the former seems never to have been acquired by the natives, and in the latter line they appear to prefer to wear stockings of their own manufacture fabricated from cloth when they wear such foot-gear at all. The use of other varieties of hosiery, such as gloves, is so limited among the Chinese as to be inappreciable.

It may be pointed out, to conclude, that Ningpo is now scarcely a port of direct import for any foreign textile manufactures; everything that comes to the port is brought indirectly from Shanghae. It is, however, a large centre of distribution.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. M. H. PLAYFAIR.

Inlosure in No. 9.

IMPORT of Textile Fabrics into Ningpo.

Classifier	Quantity of	1894.	
		Quantity.	Value.
Articles.	Quantity.	338,851	111,821
		43,998	13,859
		28,748	10,349
		3,191	1,177
		79,135	24,671
		3,275	1,179
		585	211
		12,603	4,915
		7,465	2,463
		200	69
		9,305	3,350
		13,350	5,207
		9,865	2,220
		1,884	452
		180	41
		4,035	968
		1,100	256
		1,408	511
		4,628	2,499
		4,402	1,717
2,069	1,717		
192	2,172		
3,689	268		
10,518	360		
6,992	631		
1,518	323		
1,780	204		
1,828	748		
1,377	768		
1,377	344		
2,195	3,095		
1,170	1,492		
418	339		
1,680	2,029		
538	2,421		
100	45		
30	18		
109	33		
30	30		
3,950	3,417		

(Signed) G. M. H. PLAYFAIR, Consul, Ningpo Consulate, April 15, 1896.

Cottons.

Shirtings—
Grey, plain
White, plain
Dyed
T-cloths
Dills—
English
Dutch
American
Jeans—
English
American
Sheetings—
English
American
Chintzes
Printed T-cloths
twills
Turkey red shirtings
cambrics
Dyed twills
Cotton lastings
" (Italians)
Velvets
Velveteens
Mushins, plain and printed
Handkerchiefs
Towels
Taffetas
Cotton Metz cords
" elastic cloth
Cottonades and cottons, unclassified
Woolleens.

Woolleens.

Camlets, English
Lastings, plain
Long elles
Spanish stripes
Cloth, broad, medium, and habit
Lustres and Orleans
Union lastings
Blankets
Fannel
Italian cloth

Pieces
Dozens
Pairs
Pieces

SEOUL.

No. 10.

Consul-General Hillier to Foreign Office.—(Received June 22.)

Sir,

Seoul, May 2, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Circular of the 7th February last, instructing me to furnish a Report, for the information of the Nottingham Chamber of Commerce, on the textile goods, more particularly lace and hosiery, supplied or required in Corea.

The Coreans make no use of lace or any substance resembling lace, whether on clothing or on furniture. As regards hosiery, Coreans of all ages and of both sexes wear the year through one kind of sock and one only. This is made of white cotton cloth wadded with cotton wool. The cloth and wool are bought in the market and made up at home, a completed pair of socks costing, on an average, for a woman 14 cents, and for a man 20 cents, or from $3\frac{3}{4}d.$ to $4\frac{1}{2}d.$

A market might possibly be found for woven underwear of a cheap kind, but the demand that at present exists is so insignificant as to be practically unworthy of attention, and unless the price is considerably lower than the charges at present ruling for common underwear in England, there is little probability of any development in this branch of the trade in Corea.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER C. HILLIER.

SHANGHAE.

No. 11.

Acting Consul-General Jamieson to Foreign Office.—(Received September 16.)

Sir,

Shanghai, August 14, 1896.

IN accordance with the instructions conveyed in your Circular of the 7th February last, I have the honour to forward herewith a Report on the textile goods, more particularly with regard to lace and hosiery, supplied and required at Shanghai.

A parcel of samples of hosiery has been forwarded direct to the Nottingham Chamber of Commerce.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JAMIESON.

*Report on Textile Goods at Shanghai, particularly with regard to
Hosiery and Lace.*

Inclosure in No. 11.

In regard to the trade in textiles generally, I can only refer to the Nottingham Chamber to the Trade Reports from this Consulate-General for the past three or four years, where all the information obtainable in respect to the quantity and quality of goods most in demand in China, prices, &c., has already been made public. Without knowing more definitely on what special points the Chamber requires information, I do not think I can profitably add anything to what has already been said.

As regards the two articles specially mentioned, viz., lace and hosiery, I beg to submit the following remarks:—

Lace.—There is little or no demand for this article among Chinese, either as curtains or as trimmings of dress. In either form it is quite a novelty in a Chinese household, and though here and there a few purchasers may be found among those that imitate Chinese demand for Nottingham lace. The foreign communities of China, of course, are consumers of this, as of other articles of luxury, to a certain extent. I notice that in the Customs Returns for 1895 lace is entered as an import into Shanghai to the extent of 8,0007, but I should suppose that four-fifths of this is to meet the Chamber demand. This, however, is not, I presume, what the foreign demand. A Chinese demand, pure and simple, is not to be looked for until there is a much greater diffusion of wealth, and the Chinese householder has greatly changed his mode of living.

As regards the other article to which special reference is made, viz., hosiery, there is more to be said. The Chinese are beginning to cultivate a taste for woven socks, and this trade may come to considerable dimensions. The ordinary Chinese stocking is not woven at all, but is fashioned and sewn together out of coarse cotton cloth, and this is still the only foot-gear of nine hundred and ninety-nine in every thousand.

But in Shanghai I find there is a considerable demand for cheap cotton socks of foreign manufacture. I have caused inquiries to be made at a number of retail shops in this city, and find cheap cotton socks for sale to Chinese in most of them. I

wared direct to the Chamber of Commerce at Nottingham. The place of origin and the retail price are marked on each sample. The cheapest kinds, it will be observed, come from Japan, the retail price being 15 to 25 Mexican dollar cents a pair, say from 4s. to 6s. 6d. a dozen. This, on a rough estimation, is, I should suppose, 30 or 40 per cent. above manufacturers' prices in Japan.

I am informed that, according to the Customs Returns, 6,991

dozens of these socks were imported from Japan in 1895, and the value set on them is only 1,949 Hk. taels, or 325*l.* I may add that, on the same authority, there were imported from Japan in 1895 3,546 dozens of cotton singlets, valued at 4,187 Hk. taels, or (say) 700*l.*

Samples are forwarded of socks made in Germany, which sell for from 25 to 35 cents, or 6½*d.* to 8*d.* a pair, as also some of a slightly better quality made in England, averaging 35 cents a pair, or about 8*s.* a dozen.

(Signed) G. JAMIESON, *Consul.*

TAMSUI.

No. 12.

Acting Consul Layard to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received September 4.)

My Lord,

Tamsui, July 27, 1896.

IN reply to Foreign Office Circular dated the 7th February last, inclosing copy of a letter from the Nottingham Chamber of Commerce to your Lordship, in which that body requests that it may be furnished with Reports as to the textile goods supplied or required in different parts of China, I have the honour to report as follows:—

With regard to piece goods, the demand is now of two kinds: 1st, for material for Japanese clothing; and 2nd, for Chinese clothing.

With respect to the first, the same piece goods are in request as are supplied to the warmer ports of Japan proper, whilst, with regard to the second, the Chinese locally are clad no differently to what they are in Amoy or Shanghae with allowance made for climate.

Among foreign imports ordinary grey and white shirtings are largely in request for dyeing purposes. After being coloured to order they are converted into coats and trousers or similar articles of clothing.

Merino singlets were some years ago much worn by Chinese as underclothing, but have been quite superseded by Japanese cotton cloths, which are imported to Hong Kong and Shanghae by Chinese tailors, who transform them into under-jackets and ship them ready made to this island.

For lace there is no demand whatever, and could be but little; the class of Chinese who could, if required, afford it having all left the island.

