

- Light industry on firm basis — widening variety of consumer goods.

RED CHINA'S ECONOMIC PROGRESS

Stretching from the tropical south through the north Temperature Zone, with fertile land favourable for the growth of a variety of industrial crops, China is rich in natural resources for the development of both heavy and light industries.

Until 1947, virtually all industrial equipment and a considerable portion of raw materials had to be imported, with the result that production techniques remained backward. Today, the light-industry sector (not including the textile industry, which is an independent branch in China) is overcoming the shortage of raw materials by making full use of farm produce and constantly tapping new sources of industrial materials.

Canned-foods industry is one that has developed rapidly, with many canneries operating throughout the country. This has resulted in demands for a corresponding

increase in the supply of raw materials. The planned economy of the country ensures this supply.

Each year the State Commercial Departments sign purchase contracts with the people's communes, supplying them with fertilizer, insecticide, and fodder. The communes in turn provide the industry with crops and livestock.

The paper-making industry, 15 years ago, produced only about 30 different types of paper, because of the lack of raw materials and industrial equipment, and the dumping of foreign paper.

To meet the demands of schools, publishing and other enterprises, the industry is now making use of the country's inexhaustible sources of reeds, bamboo, esparto grass, rice and wheat stalks, and bagasse (crushed sugar-cane paper and special paper for refuse). High-quality writing-

paper and special paper for industrial and agricultural use is now being produced.

Newly-developed metallurgical, petroleum, chemical, coal, and mining industries have provided abundant materials in greater variety and high quality for the growing light industry.

Geographical location is another factor in the development of light industry. Formerly concentrated in cities and provinces along the coasts, many factories were far from both raw-materials centers and markets. Under a 'simultaneous development' policy, however, many new factories have been built in the interior.

Inner Mongolia, which had virtually no industry before, is now China's largest leather, meat-packing, and dairy-processing center. Its light-industrial factories also produce a widening range of consumer goods, including shoes, rubber, plastic goods, ceramic articles, enamelware, glass-ware, cigarettes, and sugar.

Output of enamelware in other provinces in the interior constitutes a considerable

proportion of the nation's total production.

Availability of machine tools and plant is essential for the growth of a country's light industry. With the advance of science and technology, and the building up of a powerful heavy industry, China is now able to make most of the key equipment needed for its various light industries.

Training of technical personnel is carefully planned. There are light-industrial research institutes, schools, and colleges that specialize in various fields. Every effort is made to ensure that this sector is basically self-sufficient in resources and technology, which contributes to both meeting the people's needs and accumulating capital for the country's economy.

For instance, there is an ever-increasing demand for bicycles. Large, modern plants and factories now manufacture a range of bicycles from standard to roadsters and racers.

Although China's clock-making industry can be traced back to the 17th century, production methods had

not improved greatly up to 1949. Today, mass-production techniques turn out a variety of clocks able to keep pace with growing demand.

China's traditional products, especially those famous through the centuries, are being given equal attention. Producers of famous wines, pottery, and porcelain are given every encouragement.

In recent years, light-industrial departments have carried out the policies of 'quality first' and 'variety must meet specific needs'. To meet rural and urban needs, officials of the light-industrial departments, in co-operation with commercial agencies, visit consumers and salesmen to solicit opinions on consumer products.

Factory directors and managers are encouraged to

serve as shop assistants so as to learn at first hand the needs of the people. Exhibitions too are held throughout the country in order to introduce new products and to note customers' reactions.

Needs of the peasants account for 80 per cent of the population of over 700m. Rubber shoes, low-priced fountain-pens, heavy-duty bicycles, films, plastic water-pipes, and plastic fish-nets are among the most popular goods specially designed and made for farms and fisheries.

Behind the achievements in the light-industry sector, is the general policy to make agriculture the foundation, and industry the leading factor, in the development of the national economy. — *Yen Chi. Far East Trade, January, 1968.*

SPORT

The temperament which inclines men to sports is essentially a boyish temperament. The addiction to sports, therefore, in a peculiar degree marks an arrested development of the man's moral nature. — *Thorstein Veblen*