

British Columbia Business Review.

(Owing to the railway blockade west, the following budget for our British Columbia department, intended for THE COMMERCIAL of March 27, did not come to hand in time for that issue. A double supply is accordingly given this week.)

VANCOUVER, March 20.

The trade of the province may be said to be at the lowest ebb of the year, prior to the influences of spring affecting it. All the money-making operations are largely suspended, and merchants are waiting anxiously for business to revive. The prospects are in favor of a very busy season when it does open. The building of the Barard Inlet and Fraser Valley Railway to connect with the Northern Pacific is looked forward to in Vancouver. In Victoria hopes are centred in the construction of the Victoria and Sydney railway, and the undertaking of the Canada Western. Hundreds of people are looking forward to opening of navigation in the Kootenay country, to get in there and await mining developments. The sale of the Silver King mine at Nelson is reported, but, while there is good grounds for believing that the sale has been to some extent consummated, it may be months before all the preliminaries are completed. In fact, the sale, at \$1,800,000, may be said to be conditional. The building of the Nelson and Fort Shepherd, of the Kaslo and Stocan railway, and of the Canada Pacific railway from Revelstake to Arrow Lake, and from Nakusp into Shesha will be factors of great importance in relation to the progress of the Kootenay country. Various other schemes are under consideration, but the above appear at the present time to be most probable of accomplishment this year. There is on the whole (very indication) of great activity in Kootenay, and now that ore is actually being shipped out of the Shesha, and a smelter in process of completion, we may reasonably anticipate that the era of mining development has begun for this province. Then in the Okanagan country, the work in the vicinity of the Boundary, the placing of steamers on the Okanagan Lake by the Canadian Pacific Railway, and the chartering of the Osoegos and Okanagan Railway may be looked forward to as indications of progress in that district. Perhaps there never were so many large and important enterprises in process of probable incubation as at the present time in the province, and while it has been sharing the universal depression, and in respect of real estate overdone it is for the time being, the eyes of the financial world are being turned towards it as a field of investment, and the statement is made advisedly and with a knowledge of the facts. Some very large investments have been made recently, and very much larger ones are under consideration. Among these may be mentioned the selling of the townsite of Mission city, and 3,500 acres of adjoining farm lands by J. N. Herne, M.P.P., and the Messrs. McPherson and Timberlake, of Vancouver, for \$650,000, to a syndicate of New York capitalists. It is understood that the syndicate in question has acquired the lands for railway purposes, but that the particular scheme in hand has not been disclosed, and a great deal is left to imagination. But it may be safely concluded that it is not for nothing. It may also with safety be announced that British capital to a large extent is being interested in properties reaching into the millions. THE COMMERCIAL has always accepted a conservative view in matters of this kind in British Columbia, but there is little reason to doubt that very important developments will be brought about during the year. At the present time, however, business is anything but good.

Mining Returns.

Last week the Minister of Mines presented his report for 1892 to the Legislature. From it, it appears that the gold exports for 1892 were \$399,525. These have been steadily decreasing since 1887 and the past year was no exception. Cariboo and East Kootenay returns show a falling off in the quantity mined, at tributable to well worked placer claims having

become barren. There is an increasing activity in the prosecution of the mining industry, but little to report as to the result of development of different ledges and hydraulic workings. In West Kootenay great activity in mining continues, many claims have shipped ore, the result of which is not stated. It is anticipated the output of gold for 1893 will be increased by the operations of hydraulic companies in Yale, Lillooet and Cariboo.

Platinum exports were about \$3,560. Operations on the Tulameen river claims, Yale, are expected to be resumed soon on an extensive scale.

Statistics are as follows: Total gold and silver exports since 1858, \$33,631,500; total number of men employed, 1892, 1,340; average yearly earnings per man, \$298; gold output in Cariboo, \$201,000; ditto Cassiar, \$28,950; claims recorded, West Kootenay, 1,704; transfers, do., 946; claims recorded, East Kootenay, 131.

The coal output for 1892 was \$26,335, as against 1,029,067 tons for 1891, as follows:—Nanaimo 433,386, Wellington 290,370, East Wellington 33,650, Union 68,923. Coal on hand January 1, 1892, was 33,243 tons. Exports in 1892 were 640,579 tons, as follows:—Nanaimo 307,623, Wellington 238,400, East Wellington 28,000, Union 66,556. Total home consumption, 196,224; on hand January 1, 1893, 22,755 tons. The report says:—

"The apparent falling off in trade should not be regarded as retrogressive but as it really was, the result of prudent and far seeing policy on the part of the managers of the coal industry in the province, and at the same time an evidence of their stability and financial strength in commercial emergency. Foreign trade has revived, and the output of coal is regaining its former volume and activity. The prospects of the coal trade of the province are bright and healthy, both as to increased production and trade."

There were 46 colliery accidents reported, forty being slight and severe, six fatal. In the Nanaimo colliery there were employed 1,150 whites, 43 boys, 165 Chinese—total hands, 1,367; miners' earnings per day, \$3 to \$5. In the Wellington colliery there were 632 whites, 33 boys, 100 Chinese—miners' earnings, \$3 to \$4.50 per day. In the East Wellington colliery there were 118 white, 16 boys and 18 Chinese—miners' wages, \$3 to \$5. In the Union colliery there were 250 whites, 70 Japanese, 200 Chinese—miners' earnings, \$3 to \$4.50 per day. At the North Thompson colliery (Kamloops Coal Co.) there were eight whites employed at \$2.50 to \$3.25 per day.

Brief Business Notes.

Gilley Bros., contractors, Westminster, are succeeded by Gilley & Rogers.

Dobson & Son, Vancouver, wool dealers, succeeded by W. H. Sim & Co.

W. J. Weems, fruit and cigars, Nanaimo, left town; sheriff in possession.

Angus McAuley's tailoring business, Northfield has been sold.

Calderwood & Co., men's furnishings, etc., Vancouver, sold out to E. G. Goldberg.

Arthur & McCrimmon, Victoria, steam laundry, have dissolved. McCrimmon continues.

R. Beanchamp, fruit and fish, Victoria, sheriff in possession.

Nelson & Uawin, hotel, Kamloops, dissolved. Nelson continues.

M. L. Davis & Co., grocers, Vancouver, dissolved. F. Filion continues.

Jos. Phoenix, grocer, Victoria, burned out.

Calbreath, Grant & Co., general store, Telegraph Creek, have compromised at 40c on the dollar.

Mr. Hamilton Byers has resigned the management of the Galena Trading Company's business, Pilot Bay, and is putting up a store at Kaslo, where he will open up a complete stock of hardware.

Application has been made to wind up the Commonwealth Co., Westminster.

A. J. Bill, Chilliwack, harness, has sold out to Robinson & McRae.

W. H. Jenkinson, jeweller, and Walter Russell, tobaccos, both of Victoria, have been burned out.

The plant of the B.C. Tanning Co., Nanaimo, is advertised for sale by auction.

Galbraith, Grant & Cook, general store, Telegraph Creek, dissolved. Grant retires.

Thyuno, Henshaw & Turner, manufacturers' agents, Vancouver, dissolved. A. G. Thyuno continues.

The estate of the late C. D. Chapman, jeweller, Vancouver, sold out to Geo. E. Forey.

R. J. Armstrong, grocer, Westminster, has sold out to A. McInnes.

Canning, Walker & Co., fruits, flowers, etc., Vancouver, have dissolved. Walker continues.

Insley & Perks, Vancouver, have sold out the Leland House to Wm. Hamilton.

British bark Natuna has been towed to Vancouver from Portland, where she will load lumber for Port Pirie.

The American barque Harry Morse, 1,313 tons, has been towed to Vancouver. She is under charter to load lumber at Moodyville for Shanghai.

The American bark Seminole sailed from Moodyville on Friday for Mexico. She has on board 1,040,913 feet of lumber, valued at \$9,000.

The Moodyville Mill Company are now preparing an exhibit of lumber for the World's Fair.

J. M. Pearson, from Manitoba, contemplates starting a creamery in the Fraser valley.

The British ship Gryfe, 1,089 tons, Capt. Roberts, 112 days out from Cardiff, with a general cargo consigned to the naval storekeeper at Esquimalt, has been chartered to load lumber at the Hastings mill.

Callwell & Lewis, merchant tailors, Nanaimo, have dissolved partnership; the former will continue the business.

A Portland firm has recently bonded a large iron claim on Uoulet Harbor, Barclay Sound, and contemplate the erection of furnaces for smelting.

The Anglo-Columbia Company, with headquarters in London, England, has established a branch at Vancouver, with G. D. Mackay as managing director.

Calvert Simpson, late manager of the Hastings Mill store has been appointed manager of Thos. Dunn & Co's ship chandlery store, Vancouver.

Last week the Westminster & Vancouver Tramway Co. carried through to Vancouver the first express in bond from eastern Canada over the Great Northern Railway.

Campbell & Doherty, Westminster, the New York tailors, are dissolving partnership.

Two more nations will soon have their Consulate flags flying in Vancouver. It is expected that Switzerland and Mexico and probably Italy will appoint Consuls for this port.

An English syndicate is now establishing a prune plantation on Whitty Island. A thousand acres will be utilized, the soil being all good and fertile.

The steamer Coquitlam, which went north two weeks ago on a halibut fishing cruise for the Port & Wier Co., returned to Vancouver last week with 30,000 lbs of fish, the greater portion of which was caught in one day. She has returned north again.

The new machinery for the British Columbia Milling & Feed Co., Westminster, to be used in the manufacture of oatmeal, rolled oats, split peas, graham flour, pearl barley has arrived. It will be set up immediately, and got into running order as soon as possible.