

BRITISH COLUMBIA

OFFICE OF THE COMMERCIAL

BUSINESS AT VANCOUVER.

Monday, April 22.

Wholesalers and retailers still complain of hard times in British Columbia. A feeling expressed by the various wholesalers this week is to the effect that Vancouver trade is very dull and money is tight; while the Kootenay country for various reasons is entirely hopeless as far as coast actions are concerned. In Rossland business is depressed and merchants are nervous over the labor crisis. In the Shuswap country trade is seriously affected by the difficulties miners have in handling their silver-lead ores, while the Boundary country is suffering from lack of transportation facilities. Klondike trade, however, is opening up nicely and wholesalers are hopeful on this score.

The retail grocery trade is suffering very much in Vancouver from the fact that there are seventy-five groceries doing business in the city where the population is estimated from twenty-five to thirty-five thousand. Matters have come to such a serious pass in this connection that the time is thought ripe for some such startling experiment as is being considered at present. A series of meetings have been held with a view of completing the plans if possible for the amalgamation of all the grocery concerns in the city into a joint stock company under one management. The idea is to enormously decrease expense, doing away entirely with the present credit system, and establishing a mercantile rating plan, and, of course, to purchase goods cheaper from the wholesalers. Every man would be given stock in the new concern according to the value of stock in his store above his debts. The number of stores would be cut from 75 to 30, and these 30 will be distributed through the city according to the density of the population. All grocers refusing to come into the combine would be considered a menace and treated accordingly. From present indications it would appear that the scheme might be satisfactorily worked out, as over 50 per cent of the grocers have expressed their approval. If the proposition is carried into effect many of the straw who have been carried by the wholesalers to the detriment of legitimate trade will, of course, be frozen out.

British Columbia Market
PRICES AT VANCOUVER.

(By wire to The Commercial.)

Vancouver, April 27.

The changes this week have been unimportant. Peas have declined to 65c and silver skin onions have advanced 5c per lb. New potatoes are on the market, quoted at 24c; cherries at \$1.75 (\$2.25 per box), and strawberries at \$4.75 per case of two dozen boxes.

FLOUR—Delivered B. C. points—Manitoba patent, per barrel, \$4.80; strong bakers, \$4.50; Oregon, \$4.50 per barrel; Eastern, B. C. points, \$4.50.

FEED—National mills chaps, \$24 per ton; bran, \$20; shorts, \$15; oil cake meal, \$35 ton; f.o.b. Vancouver, including duty paid on imported stuff.

HAY—Shuswap, double pressed, \$22 per ton; Fraser River valley, \$18 per ton.

MEAL—Rolled oats, 90th sack, \$3.00; two 45lb sacks, \$3.10; four 22 1/2lb sacks, \$3.30; ten 7lb sacks, \$2.50; oatmeal in 10lb sacks, per 100lb, \$3.25; in 50lb sacks, \$3.00 per 100lb.

HIDES AND WOOL—Sound heavy skins, 7 1/2c per lb.; medium, 6 1/2c; light cows, 5 1/2c; sheep pelts, November killed, 30c each; deer skins, green, 8c lb.; deer skins, dry, 20c lb.; wool, 60lb sack, \$10.

LIVE STOCK—Steers, \$8.50 per 100lb; sheep, \$6 per 100lb; hogs, \$5.50 per 100lb.

POLITRY—Not quoted.

DRESSED MEATS—Beef, 9 1/2c; mutton, 11c; pork, 8c; veal, 10 1/2c.

CURED MEATS—Hams 15 1/2c; breakfast bacon, 10 1/2c; backs, 15c; long clear, 13c; ribs, 15c; smoked sides, 14c.

LARD—Tins, 13 1/2c per lb; pails, 12 1/2c; tubs, 12 1/2c.

BUTTER—Local creamery, fresh, 30c; Manitoba creamery, 25c; California, 25c.

EGGS—Fresh local, 20c; Northwest eggs, 18c.

CHEESE—Manitoba, 11 1/2c; Swiss, 12 1/2c; Vegetables—Ashcroft potatoes, \$25; Fraser River valley potatoes, \$20 (\$22 per ton); cauliflower, \$1 per dozen; cabbages, \$1.75 per doz.; peas, 15c; silver skin onions, 4 1/2c; local do, 3 1/2c; B. C. sweet potatoes, 2c; tomatoes, \$2 box; cabbage, 2c; asparagus, 7 1/2c; new potatoes, 2 1/2c per lb.

FISH—Flounders, 2c; smelts, 5c; sea bass, 4c; whiting, 5c; soles, 5c; haddock, 6c; salmon, 10c; cod, 6c per lb; crabs, 60c per dozen; smoked salmon, 10c; smoked halibut, 10c; smoked herring, 9c; shrimps, 20c.

GREEN FRUITS—California navel oranges, \$2.75; lemons, \$2.75; bananas, \$2.75; grape fruit, \$3.00 case; Okanagan apples, \$2.25; cherries, \$1.75 (\$2.25 per box); strawberries, \$4.75 per case of 2 doz. boxes.

NUTS—Almonds, 15c; almonds, 12 1/2c; peanuts, 14c; Brazil, 18c; walnuts, 14c per lb; coconuts, 90c (\$1 per dozen).

SUGARS—Powdered, icing and bar, 6 1/2c; Paris lump, 6c; granulated, 5c; extra C, 4 1/2c; fancy yellows, 4 1/2c; yellow, 4 1/2c per lb.

SYRUPS—30 gal. barrels, 2 1/2c lb; 10 gal. kegs, 2 1/2c; 5 gal. tins, \$1.75 each; 1 gal. tin, \$1.50 case of 10; 1/2 gal. tins, \$1.25 case of 20.

TEAS—Congo, fair, 11 1/2c; good, 12c; choice, 20c; Ceylon and India, fair, 20c.

RICE—Chinese rice, \$74 ton; Japan rice, \$84 (\$95 ton); tapioca, 6c; sago, 6c.

CANNED GOODS—Corn, \$1.00; peas, \$1.00; tomatoes, \$1.20; beans, \$1.25.

HARDWARE—Bar iron—base, \$2.75; floor shoe nails, discount, 40 per cent; horse shoes, kegs, \$5.00.

WIRE—Base price, \$2.75, cut \$3.25. Rope, Manila, 13 1/2c. Balled oil, 95c. White lead, \$3.25.

PUTTY, \$3.50. Barbed wire, \$4.75 per 100 lb. Glass, first break, \$4.75.

PRICES IN THE KOOTENAY.
Special to The Commercial.

Nelson, April 27.
Business is quiet. Eggs are 1c lower. Fresh Ontario butter is offering at 1 1/2c and former supplies of creamery. Oats have advanced \$2 per ton. Flour is down 20c. Hay is \$5 per ton lower.

Butter—Fresh Ontario creamery, 24 to 25c; dairy, choice, 22c.

Eggs—16c.
Cheese—12c.

Oats—Per ton, \$30.
Milfeed—Bran, \$20, shorts, \$22 per ton.

Flour—Manitoba Patent, \$5.20.
Hay—Per ton, \$18.

Potatoes—Per ton, \$24.

British Columbia Salmon Fisheries Situation.

Special Correspondence.

As it was last season the settlement of the wages question between the canneries and the fishermen will be the difficult one of the season this year. Already several meetings have been held in Steveston, and although informal, they have demonstrated that the fishermen intend to press their demands to at least a reasonable degree. Fifteen cents a fish has been suggested for some time as a probable standard of rate, but some modification may be made by the fishermen themselves. Some time ago, according to statements then made, the fishermen appointed an executive with power to meet the executive of the Canneries' Association. The latter body has not yet been appointed for this season, but from statements from individual canners, it is assured that the fishermen will be met in a very broad and reasonable way, and it is probable that all of the money losing difficulties of last season will be arranged early this year. One of the most prominent canners of the association, Dr. Bell-Irving, struck the keynote of the whole situation the other day, when he said in an interview that the canneries wished the fishermen first of all to appreciate the fact that they considered that their interests and those of the fishermen were identical, he went on to say that whether there would be differences regarding minor matters at the beginning of the season, he hoped that a satisfactory arrangement would be come to, whereby the rush of the season's work would proceed without any trouble. He reminded the fishermen that the canneries on this side of the line are operating under some disadvantage to the canneries on Puget Sound. There the system of traps is practically unlimited, where in British Columbia waters all the fish have to be taken by hand. In this way expense is naturally added. Then, too, Dr. Bell-Irving said the government of the State of Washington is more liberally inclined toward the industry than the authorities of British Columbia and the Dominion, but that of course, is a question which may right itself in time.

On the other hand there is perhaps a minority opinion among the canneries men, which looks towards the same difficulty and a possibility of the occurrence of the strike of last year. This they think, however, may be avoided by a consideration of reasonable terms at the proposed conference. But then it is a fact nevertheless that practically none of the white fishermen of the Fraser river have been supplied with money during the winter season by the canneries men. While many of the latter have retained a sufficient number of Japanese to see them safely through the season, old trouble arise. We agree, however, with the opinion expressed only a few days ago by one of the most experienced operators on the Fraser River, that the less the canneries have to do with the Japanese the better.

British Columbia Notes.

Paul Riedel & Bro., grocers and bakers, Grand Forks, have assigned.

W. A. McLeod is opening a clothing and men's furnishings store at Fernie.

The Vancouver Oil & Gas company, owning 5,000 acres of oil lands in Whitman county, Washington, will commence sinking a 10-inch well immediately.

Thos. Hardy and Jane Russell, doing business as the Russell Hardware Company, at Greenwood, have dissolved partnership. The business will be conducted by J. A. Russell.

Bank clearings at Vancouver for the week ending April 18th, were \$807,862, balance \$177,361. A comparison cannot be made with the corresponding week of last year, as on that occasion two holidays intervened.

The Wholesale Grocers' association at their last meeting held in Victoria elected officers for the ensuing year as follows: S. J. Pitts, president; H. T. Lockyer, vice-president; F. L. Elworthy, secretary-treasurer; F. N. Black, honorary secretary, Vancouver. The credit system was discussed and it was decided that 2 per cent. would be allowed on accounts paid by the 10th of the month following purchase, the net will be accepted within thirty days, and after that time interest will be charged.

The following companies have been incorporated: Flower Manufacturing Co., Limited, capital \$20,000. Lynn Creek Copper Gold Company, Limited, capital \$30,000; North Thompson River Exploration & Development Co., of British Columbia, capital \$50,000; Robertson-Godson, Limited, capital \$100,000; Ship Drummeralg Com. Inc., Limited, capital \$30,000; Similkameen Company, Limited, capital \$25,000. The Rossland Proprietary & Mining Co. has been licensed an extra-provincial company with a capital of \$10,000.

British Columbia Mining.

The Great Western Mines, Limited, has removed their head office from Revelstoke to Ferguson.

For the week ending 10th inst., the Miner-Graves syndicate shipped 147 cars of ore, the shipping weight of which amounted to 4,110 tons.

The new hoist at the Mother Lode mine is now running smoothly, and the ore sorting plant is also working satisfactorily. Shipments to the smelter at Greenwood have of late averaged 300 tons a day. The main shaft, which is now down 320 feet, is to be deepened to 500 feet.

Miscellaneous Mining.

On the Toronto exchange Monday White Bear sold at 3 1/2c, Golden Star was firm at 7 1/2c and 7 1/2c. Some sales of Republic were made at 22 1/2c.

The directors of the Princess Maud Gold Mining company have levied the thirty-second assessment of one mill per share. It is announced that a fine body of ore has been found in the third level. Fourteen assays taken since March 14 have given a general average of \$22.94 to the ton, of which \$7 was in gold and \$15.94 in silver.

It is reported that the American Mining company, a part of the United States steel corporation, has a \$500,000 option on ore lands in Canada, which is expected to be closed this week. This is regarded as entering the wedge towards the introduction of foreign ores free of duty. There are no important opened mines in Canada that could compete in the United States, except those of the Clergue Syndicate at Sault Ste. Marie, but their ores will be largely consumed in their own works for the manufacture of steel for export to Europe.

Tenders.

The city of Winnipeg is advertising for tenders, to be in by June 23, for the purchase of \$955,708.22 of debentures.

Tenders will be received up to Monday, April 29th, by W. D. Rutten, Manitou, for the erection of a Methodist parsonage in Manitou, Man., also for the purchase of the present parsonage property.

Applications will be received by John McCarthy, Regina, until the 10th day of May next for the purchase of \$3,400 debentures, bearing 5 1/2 per

cent., repayable in 20 yearly instalments, on the security of Gratton school district, Regina, N. W. T.

Tenders will be received by Jno. Williams, Box 351, Melita, Man., up to May 1st, for the erection of a frame school house on stone foundation in the Peninsula school district.

Tenders are wanted for the purchase and removal of wooden buildings situated on the east side of Main street, Winnipeg, and known as Nos. 611, 611 1/2, 613, 615. Apply to room 20, 540 Main street.

Tenders will be received up to the 29th inst., by the chief engineer of the C. P. R. at Winnipeg for clearing, grading, bridging, tracklaying and surfacing on the Arrowhead and Kootenay Railway from Lardreau to Trout Lake, B. C.

Tenders will be received by the commissioner of public works, Regina, up to the 15th May, for the construction of a scow for the new ferry to be operated on the North Saskatchewan river immediately west of Rosthern.

Implement Trade Notes.

Twine prices are being quoted as follows at Chicago: Sisal and standard 8 1/2c per pound. Manila, 600-foot, 10 1/2c, and pure manilla 11 1/2c. Carlot prices are 1/2c less.

The McCormick Company will replace with a new four story brick building the warehouse near Minneapolis, which it had destroyed by fire last year. The cost of the new building will be \$100,000.

Reports from the iron and steel markets of the United States are to the effect that agricultural implement manufacturers have bought very heavily of those materials during the past two weeks. The purchases for Chicago account alone have been about one-quarter of a million tons.

Blender twine orders have been coming in to Manitoba dealers pretty freely since the buying season opened. In fact it has been learned that some dealers placed their orders before the close of last year in order to get the advantage of prices which prevailed at that time. Since the late rise in twine prices orders have fallen off and many of the retailers who are not now booked will probably wait until near harvest before ordering.

R. H. Potter, who is one of the travellers for Johnston & Stewart, implement dealers, Winnipeg, has returned from an extended trip through the west. Mr. Potter reports very satisfactory results from his trip, business having been very good in all seasonable lines of implements. The country along the Calgary and Edmonton branch of the C. P. R. he found particularly prosperous. Many new settlers have located there this spring, mostly people with money. These have all had to have new outfits.

Engine and thresher men report an excellent outlook for the coming season's trade. They have already booked a good many orders and are adding to the list every day. Prices for these lines hold at about the same figure as a year ago, being if anything, a little lower. Machines are being made on much the same patterns and there are no new features to note. As one local manager put it, "We have our machines so perfect now that they cannot be improved upon."

Implement men here find business a little slacker now. Spring orders are practically all out and there is not much use pushing for new business until farmers are through seeding. They have no complaints to make regarding either the quality or quantity of the business which has fallen to them so far this year. Orders have been much more numerous than the early part of the year seemed to promise and there was considerable difficulty experienced in getting supplies forward from factories.

The Lake of the Woods Milling Company are this week filling orders for Africa, China, Australia and England for Manitoba flour.

Our Vancouver correspondent says: During the past week several representatives of the Puget Sound lumber firms have been in Vancouver endeavoring to buy cedar timber limits. These representatives say that the cedar limits on Puget Sound have practically been exhausted, and they are here now looking for an immediate supply. It is stated that the finer work of finishing lumber is having a remarkable good trade in the Sound milling business.