

BRITISH COLUMBIA.

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British Columbia Business Review.

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In the language of the colostial, the situation may be described as "allos sameo" last week. Business in the produce lines is brisk and the approach of the holidays is having its effect on certain other lines, but otherwise there is little or no change. There is nothing to give either alarm or very great hope as to the coming winter or spring. The business situation has, if anything, improved during the last two or three weeks. Hopes are not however, immediate, but refer to next summer, which anticipates a big salmon catch, very active mining development, and a very considerable degree of railway construction in all parts of the province. On the other hand, building operations, in the cities at least, will not be nearly so extensive; sealing holds out no particularly bright prospects, the lumber industry shows as yet no signs of recovering and agricultural operations are not yet sufficiently extensive to constitute a factor either one way or another. Therefore, at present, business must depend on present conditions for the next six months and no great movement is probable during that time, as the capabilities of the market in nearly every line are reached for the present.

In Victoria the Albion Iron Works Co., which has always done a large and prosperous business, contemplate tearing down, their present shops, which are old and built from time to time to accommodate increasing business, and building greater ones and in more compact and imposing form. It is said that the directors are in favor of such a move.

To show the capabilities of the fruit canning and preserving business in this country, the O'Kelt & Morris fruit preserving Co., Victoria, have shipped to England 300 boxes of jam from their factory. They say, if they could get the right varieties of fruit and plenty of it, they could sell all they could possibly make of it. Their goods have been received with much favor in the Old Country.

As predicted by THE COMMERCIAL there has been a cut in the prices of meat in the coast cities, and competition is keen. There is a war between the wholesale butchers of the coast and the cattle dealers of the interior, the latter having opened shops on the coast to sell their meat rather than sell their stocks at the prices offered by the wholesale men. Retail prices have fallen considerably as a consequence, and the heart of the consumer is glad. How long it will last it is hard to say, but not likely all winter. At present live stock are very plentiful and the prospects of shipments from the territories this season are not bright.

As it is in meat so it is in coal. The combine among the firms representing the two principal producing companies in the Island resulted in shipments being made from New Whatcom, when the combine dropped their prices to \$6 a ton from \$7.50. To what extent the war will be carried is not known, but in the meantime British Columbians are getting cheaper coal than usual.

At the recent general meeting of the Kamloops Coal Co., Ltd., John S. Lawrence was elected managing director, and Malcolm J. McIver secretary and treasurer. It is said to be the intention of the company to work their mines during the winter. The first shipment of coal by this company, which has reached Kamloops, arrived on Thursday, consigned to the Canadian Pacific railway. A special trial will be made on a locomotive, to prove its quality for steam purposes.

The great Northern railway and the Vancouver-Westminster Tramway have entered into

traffic arrangements, whereby tickets will be sold and baggage checked to all points on each of these lines. This is an important traffic connection for British Columbia, means an increase in the amount of direct trade done. It is said the tramway will be double tracked and the line shortened at once.

The prospect of a dry dock at Vancouver has been revived, the old company having again come to the front, this time with a proposition to build a dry dock and arsenal at a cost of \$1,600,000, provided the city will give a bonus of \$200,000, and exemption from taxation. The matter was discussed at a public meeting Saturday night, at which a resolution favoring the enterprise was passed. The dry dock is to be 600 feet long. At present the prospects of its being carried are not bright, with so many enterprises demanding subsidies. It is questionable, however, if it is not one of the most important schemes that has yet come before the people, provided always that the bona fides are all right. Vancouver evidently is committed to a policy of aiding railways to a large extent, while such an industry as a jute factory and cooperage concern is even refused exemption from taxation, and a paint factory passes its tons for almost similar reasons. Speculation, however, has still too strong a hold on the people of the coast to give legitimate industry that attention it deserves, and which it must receive before real progress ensues. It is understood that S. M. Robins, president of the New Vancouver Coal company, is interesting himself in the project of a dry dock for Nanaimo, if so, the probabilities of its being accomplished are very good. Nanaimo is a large shipping point, having the largest individual tonnage of any place in the province.

On Dec. 20th the Pitt Meadow lands recently dyked by the dyking Co., will be placed on the market in small sections from 18 to 40 acres each. This is a fine meadow land, of rich alluvial soil, and should sell at a top figure to settlers actually in need of such land for farming purposes. The tract is 1,150 acres in all and is the first installment of some 25,000 or 30,000 acres that will finally be reclaimed. As it will be sold by auction, the prices realized will be a very good criterion of what farmers are willing to pay for the best lands in the province for farming purposes.

The steamer Zimbese is to be put to a new use. She was chartered for the Upton Pacific line to run from Portland to Hong Kong and Yokohama, but that concern failed. She was taken back to China where she has been engaged on the coast trade. Capt. Ross, of the Hay-tain republic, will sail by the Empress of China on Monday, Dec. 12th, to take charge of her for a company of Portland and Seattle business men who will run her on the Hawaiian Islands and Puget Sound route, calling at Vancouver and Victoria as well as Portland, Tacoma and Seattle.

The question of an amendment to the mining laws has been greatly agitated in the province during the past summer, and there are now prospects of Col. Baker, Minister of Mines, taking up the whole matter for consideration. Col. Baker, since his appointment, has shown commendable energy as well as a great degree of tact in dealing with such questions, and besides intimating his intention of making some important amendments to the Mineral Act next session has asked the miners to send him suggestions, so that he may get as many and practical views as possible. No mining law that is likely to be introduced will be satisfactory to every person, as there are in mining as in every other industry conflicting interests, but it is possible to introduce a measure that will give pretty general satisfaction and justice to all parties.

B. C. Market Quotations.

FISH.—Salmon is quite scarce, and prices are Halibut 7 to 8c; salmon, 10c to 12c; codfish 6c to 7c; flounders 4c to 5c; sturgeon 4c to 5c; sole 10c.

JUTE BAGS.—Jute bags, 10oz., 22 x 36, are quoted at \$85 per 1,000; 12oz. bags, \$75.

LIVE STOCK, DRESSED MEAT, Etc.—Stock for the butcher are plentiful and competition in the retail trade is lively. Live steers are quoted at 4c; cows 3½c; dressed beef, 7½c; lamb, \$4.50 a piece; dressed, \$5; sheep, 5½c; mutton, 12c; hogs, 8c; pork, 11c; calves, 7c; veal 11c.

COAL.—J. W. Harrison writes as follows in reference to the San Francisco Coal market:—"The receipts for the past week consist of 14,892 tons from the coast mines and 21,603 from foreign sources. These heavy arrivals from foreign ports have had no perceptible effect upon values, many of the cargoes received being actually needed to meet present requirements. The quantity of Scotch and West Hartley coal here in stock is exceptionally light. The coast coals are also in very meagre supply. The quantity of coal on hand suitable for steam uses is liberal, so that no marked improvement can be looked for in the quotations for these grades." There is a noticeable improvement in the coal mining output and demand.

SUGARS.—The B. C. Sugar Refinery quote sugar as follows in their weekly price list: Powdered icing and bar, 6½c; Paris lumps, 6½c; granulated, 5½c; extra C, 4½c; fancy yellows, 4½c; yellows, 4½c; golden C., 4½c. Above prices are for barrels or bags; half-barrels and 100 pound kegs, ½c more. No order taken for less than 100 barrels or its equivalent.

Wholesalers quotations for B. C. sugar refinery stock are:—Dry granulated, 5½ to 5½c; extra C, 5½c; fancy yellow, 5c; yellow, 4½c; golden C, 4½c.

SYRUPS.—The B. C. sugar refinery quote syrup as follows:—Finest golden, in 30 gal. bis, 2½c; ditto, in 10 gal. kegs, 3c; ditto, in 5 gal. kegs, \$2.25 each; ditto, in 1 gal. tins, \$4.50 per case of 10; ditto, in ½ gal. tins, \$6 per case of 20.

These prices are subject to 2½ per cent discount for cash in fourteen days, and cover delivery in Vancouver, Victoria, Nanaimo, or New Westminster.

Jobbers quote syrup at 4c per lb.; Redpath's, syrups, 2lb tins, 15c; 8lb tins, 50c; kegs, 3½c per lb.

FLOUR, FEED, GRAIN, ETC.—Prices of flour have declined. Baker & Leeson in their market report dated Dec. 1st say: "Oats—About 3,000 to 5,000 bushels per month will be wanted in this market. Present prices equal to 17c to shipper, f.o.b. cars at Manitoba points. Wheat.—There is a steady demand for wheat used for chicken feed. Nothing grading lower than regular is wanted and prices are governed by the Manitoba quotations. Quotations are: Flour, Manitoba patents, \$5.50; strong bakers, \$5.30; ladies' choice, \$5.70; prairie hly, \$5.30; Delta, Victoria Mills, \$4.75; Lion, \$4.75; Oregon, \$5.50; Spokane, \$5.65; Enderby mills—Premier \$5.45; three star \$5.50; two star \$5.35; Graham flour \$5.60; oatmeal eastern \$3.40; California granulated in gunnies, \$4.35; National mills, Victoria, \$4.25; rolled oats eastern \$3 to \$3.25; California \$3.75; National mills \$3.65; cornmeal \$3.10; split peas \$3.50; pearl barley \$4.50. Rice.—The Victoria rice mills quote wholesale: Japan rice per ton, \$17.50; China rice do \$70; rice flour, do, \$70; chit rice, do, \$25; rice meal; do, \$17.50; chopped feed, \$31 per ton; bran \$24; shorts \$25; Man. oats, \$28 to \$32; B. C. oats; \$26; wheat \$27 to \$32; oil cake, \$40; hay, \$16. Wheat is quoted in car lots for feed No. 2 regular at \$22 to \$23 per ton; oats \$24. chop barley \$25. California chop, \$32 to \$33. The Western Milling Co. quote bran in car lots \$19.50 per ton; shorts \$20.50; mixed chop, \$25; rye, \$38; patent flour, \$4.60; strong bakers \$5.30. Graham flour, \$4.40; B. C. wheat is quoted at \$29 to \$30 per ton, and oats at \$25; beans are 4c per lb. Hay is quoted at \$12 ton on the river bank or \$12.50 placed on the cows.

POULTRY, GAME, ETC.—A large supply of poultry from Ontario and Manitoba for the holidays are expected, for which there will be the usual brisk demand. Prices ruling now are: Turkeys, dressed, 17 to 20c per lb;