

THE BOARD OF TRADE.

Annual Report Remarks on the Improvement of Trade During the Year.

New Officers Elected—Entrance Fee of Members Reduced to Twenty Dollars.

The Board of Trade yesterday held their annual meeting at which the principal business done was the reading of the reports and election of new members.

The secretary read the following report:

To the Members of the British Columbia Board of Trade:—In presenting the seventeenth annual report, we have to congratulate members of the board upon the improvement which has taken place in the trade and commerce of the province during the past twelve months.

The value of the output of minerals, other than coal, increased from about \$300,000 in 1884, to approximately \$5,000,000 in the year 1895, as follows:

Trail Creek District—22,972 tons; yielding \$5,850,000 gold, 2,572,850 lbs. copper. Slocan District—9,309 tons shipping ore, 30,000 tons concentrates; yielding 1,837,100 ozs. silver, 17,145,000 lbs. lead.

Ainsworth District—48,844 tons; yielding 605,550 ozs. silver, 28,996,800 lbs. lead.

Nelson District—3,707 tons; yielding 176,500 ozs. silver, 494,870 lbs. copper.

West Kootenay—placer gold, \$10,520.

Cariboo, Cassiar, Yale, Lillooet, and East Kootenay—placers, \$491,026.

Fairview and Camp McKinney—placers, \$125,000.

The output has continued to increase during the past six months, especially in the Trail district, where many claims are already giving results which promise to make that sub-division one of the important gold producers of the world.

The average value of the ore is about \$40 per ton, principally gold, with a percentage of silver and copper, but far higher grades are found in the lowest levels, and in the case of the Le Roi some of the richest ore yet taken from that mine was found 500 feet below the surface.

Another characteristic of the Trail district is that nearly all the ore veins so far developed have been found to widen with depth.

As it is intended to supplement this report with particulars of the shipments of iron from each of the mines, it is unnecessary to refer to more than the principal ones:

The Le Roi was located in July, 1890, and development commenced in January, 1891, of the same year. The first shipment of ore a carload, was made in the fall of the following year; the smelter returns being \$30.40 per ton.

Shipments of any magnitude, however, did not commence until January, 1894, in which year 6,000 tons were made to United States smelters. In 1895, the shipments were nearly double that quantity, and the present output is 100 tons per day, average value \$40 per ton. The company owning this mine has paid the sum of \$175,000 in dividends.

Regular shipments of ore from the War Eagle mine commenced in January, 1895, the shipments to the 30th ultimo being 12,661 tons. The company has paid the sum of \$157,000 in dividends in the same period.

To the richness of the mineral resources of the mines is largely due the wonderful development which has taken place in the Trail district during the past eighteen months. All the country for miles around Rossland is staked out in mineral claims, and whilst the great majority of them will undoubtedly be abandoned by their original holders, yet many of those now under development are returning more encouraging results than was obtained in opening up the two mines first referred to.

A narrow-gauge railway 13 miles long now connects Rossland and the principal mines of the district, and the principal vein of the Columbia river, where a smelter has been erected capable of treating 250 tons of ore per day.

The Canadian Pacific railway proposes to extend its line from a point opposite Robson, on the Columbia river, to Trail, and also the branch to the mines situated near Rossland. The Red Mountain railway will probably be open for traffic in October next, and will give all-rail connection with the United States transcontinental railroads. These important works indicate the permanency of the trade of the district.

Ordinary labor is paid \$2.50 per day; skilled labor from \$3 to \$3.50, but the supply is already more than sufficient.

At the Hall Mines on Toad mountain it is estimated that there are upwards of 120,000 tons of ore in sight. An aerial ropeway delivers it at a distance of 2250 feet, where a smelter, owned by the company operating this group, concentrates it into a matte, one ton of which contains the product of eleven tons of ore. The average value of the "matte" is \$240, as follows:

Silver, 270 ounces; copper 45 per cent; gold, \$5 per ton.

A large number of free milling gold claims have recently been located near Nelson.

The smelter at Pilot Bay has stimulated silver mining in the Ainsworth sub-division since it commenced operating in March 1895; it has, however, been supplied with ore principally from the Blue Bell mine, owned by the Smelter Company.

The Slocan sub-division is another mining centre, the discoveries in which were made in 1891. The mineralized area is about 20 miles in length and 12 miles in breadth, and notwithstanding the ruling low price of silver it contains over thirty mines that are shipping ore. The gross earnings of sixteen of these mines for the first six months of this year are estimated at one and a half million dollars, about one-third of which is available for dividends.

The shipments from the Slocan Star mine amount to about 600 tons per month, which yield approximately 100 ounces of silver per ton and 600 cent. lead. The owners of this mine have just completed a concentrator and the cost of \$100,000 was recently paid in a dividend.

The principal mines of this subdivision are served by two railways, the Canadian Pacific and the Kaslo & Slocan, a short line terminating at Kaslo, on the Kootenay lake.

The enormous coal fields in the Crow's Nest Pass are attracting great attention in consequence of the large demand for coal for smelting purposes. The Kootenay district. The coal is stated to be an excellent one for coking and to bear transportation without breaking. From assays made by the Dominion Government, the assayer, and other competent assayers, the coal seems to be peculiarly suited for metallurgical purposes. The Dominion Government has been particularly anxious to open up these coalfields and put them in communication with the Kootenay smelters.

It is believed by many of the oldest and best informed miners that mineral wealth equal to that of any other part of the province lies in Cariboo, the rivers of that district having yielded in past years nearly fifty millions dollars in gold. The auriferous deposits are very rich and extend over a large area. Works are now in progress for hydraulic mining on a large scale, but it will be at least another year before the mines are fairly opened up.

The impetus that would be given to developing the mineral wealth of Cariboo by the construction of the proposed British Pacific railway can hardly be over-estimated. At present this rich country is practically a waste, and the placer placer placed on account of the great cost of getting in machinery and supplies.

Mainland coast and the islands contiguous are highly mineralized and contain varieties of excellent building stone and marble, soft black slate, graphite, lime, liquid asphaltum, and the best coal found on the Pacific seaboard.

DEVELOPMENTS ON VANCOUVER ISLAND. The Vancouver Island coal output for 1895 was 939,574 tons, a slight falling off compared with the previous year, owing to the low freights which have prevailed, and the consequent reduced values of English and American coals. Notwithstanding this, the Vancouver Island coal output compares favorably with those of the previous year.

The growth of this industry has been very rapid, and the present keen competition and consequent high remuneration paid to good hunters leaves the margin of profit to owners of schooners much reduced.

Full particulars of the catch will be found in the appendices to this report. This season's catch off the coast of British Columbia has been more favorable than that of last year, and the catch in Japanese waters is again called to the attention of the International Commission has gone to the Behring sea to study the habits of the salmon, and the International Commission with a view to arriving at a mutual understanding and agreement, if possible, whereby the seals may be preserved.

There was a steady improvement in the lumber industry, the output being also quantity cut being 112,884,640 feet, or about 40 per cent. more than in the previous year. The demand was more widely distributed than for some years past, but prices were low. The foreign demand has continued to improve during the past six months at advanced prices, meeting with a combine of nearly all the exporting mills on the Pacific Coast has been effected and the price of lumber is arranged.

Attention is again called to the importance of grading all lumber for export. Such specific grading would protect our millmen and the work of purchasers when placing orders.

The sawmill being erected at Takusha, Haida Gwaii, is the best equipped in the province, and will be especially valuable in cutting cypress. The cypress is one of our most valuable woods and commands a high price in the market.

Particulars of the foreign shipments of lumber will be found in the appendices.

Satisfactory crops of all kinds of agricultural products were raised in British Columbia in 1895, and the output was larger than previously. It is estimated that the crops of hay, oats, barley, and wheat were respectively 4,929,440, 4,929,440, 4,929,440, and 4,929,440 bushels.

Particulars of the foreign shipments of agricultural products will be found in the appendices.

Hay, 4,929,440 bushels, \$1,758,000. Oats, 4,929,440 bushels, \$1,758,000. Wheat, 4,929,440 bushels, \$1,758,000. Barley, 4,929,440 bushels, \$1,758,000.

Roots and vegetables were generally good and large crops are reported from all sections of the province during the twelve months ending June 30th, 1895. Potatoes were imported, upon which duty was paid \$7,098.10.

For the prospector of fruit was checked, home grown apples, pears, plums and prunes supplying the local markets, and the price of fruit, which was shipped to the eastern provinces, was \$10,851.04.

Canned home-grown fruits continue in good demand. The trade with the United States markets on the Pacific Coast, which were overstocked with agricultural produce, and cut such a large portion of the following imports in the fiscal year ending June 30th, 1895:

Eggs, 102,251 doz., \$5,115.58. Bacon and hams, 571,761 lbs., \$1,435.25. Lard, 135,130 lbs., 2,714.01. Canned goods, 35,720 lbs., 10,628.20. Horses, 720, \$10,851.04.

Receipts from Eastern provinces are not included in the above particulars.

The demand for the products of the local dairies, largely for the purpose of supplying farmers to give more attention to dairying, which is an industry capable of great development in this province.

There were several canneries in operation, and the total pack was 666,300 cases, valued at \$2,831,876, which is 72,024 cases more than the pack of the previous year. The whole has been disposed of at fairly remunerative prices.

The Fraser river continues to be the chief source of supply, and in consequence of favorable natural conditions, the success of the hatcheries, and regulations for the breeding of fresh salmon and protection of the spawning ground, there are no signs of decrease of merchantable fish.

This Board having urged that more hatcheries be established on the Fraser, Skeena, and Naas rivers, and Rivers Inlet, an assurance has been received that these recommendations will be carried out. A hatchery will be established on the Skeena this year, and others built next year at some of the points named.

This board also asked that cotton lines 3 1/2 inch and under, used in the manufacture of fishing nets, be admitted free of duty. An order is accordingly issued directing that all such lines up to 5-16 inch be placed on the free list.

Professor Prince, in his recent visit to this province for the purpose of enquiring into the fishing resources of British Columbia, and the salmon canners, and others interested in their observations connected with the fish in our province. Such conferences, together with the personal observations of one so well qualified as Professor Prince, are highly beneficial to the fishing industry, and already much of the friction which existed between the canners and the Department of Fisheries has disappeared.

The export of fresh salmon, frozen and packed in ice, amounted to a million and quarter pounds. This new branch of the packing industry is now well established, and is retarded by high freight rates, as particulars of the salmon pack by country, and distribution of the same, will be found in the appendices to this report.

A trial shipment of live lobsters, Eastern oysters and black bass has just reached this province for experimental purposes.

The sturgeon, which are plentiful in British Columbia, afford a fishery which is capable of development on a large scale.

Professor Prince has also visited this province here are finer than those in Russia, and he saw no reason why this province could not compete with Russia in the several products such as in sturgeon, salmon, and halibut, which practically compensated less than two years ago, amounted to two million pounds sterling.

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is \$10,000 on the year's operations. A new and very important industry is therefore threatened with extinction. The matter was brought to the notice of the Dominion government in a despatch last, and it is understood that the steamer Quadra is to be commissioned to this service as well as to the prevention of smuggling on the west coast of Canada.

SEALING. The catch of 64 schooners engaged in sealing in 1895 was 70,730 skins, against a catch of 94,474 skins by 53 schooners in the previous year.

The very rough weather experienced off the coast of British Columbia and Japan, and vicinity of Copper Island, seriously affected operations in those waters, and the schooners appear to have been less successful than in former years in meeting with the large herds of seals prior to May 1, the commencement of the close season for the waters mentioned.

The Behring sea catch was 9,498 skins more than in the year 1894, the seals being fairly plentiful and the weather favorable.

The price realized for the catch in 1895 compares favorably with those of the previous year.

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That more miners will soon be engaged in the first four months of this year, 10,000 tons of ore were exported to the United States for treatment.

Two concentrators are reducing the silver-lead ores in the Slocan district.

The smelter mills, such as flour, mill, shoe, flour, rice, and oat mills, spool mills, chemical works, paint works, and several other industries are capable of supplying various local requirements.

The manufacture of pig iron and the smaller sizes of bar iron could be engaged in under very favorable conditions in British Columbia, but this has been referred to under the head of minerals.

Owing to the rapidly increasing demand for wood pulp in the United States and Great Britain, its manufacture is assuming large proportions in Eastern Canada, where the industry is likely to become of very great importance. This fact is of especial interest to British Columbia, in view of the vast forest areas and the great variety of trees suitable for pulp, and the International Council is recommended to investigate the conditions favorable to establishing the industry in this province.

It is understood, too, that the attention of capitalists in England has been directed to the growth of flax for milling purposes, and if reports made in this respect are a possibility flax mills will be erected here with a view to supplying twine for the fisheries.

The importance of utilizing fish guano and seaweed for fertilizing purposes has had the attention of the Dominion government, and the Department of Agriculture has decided to make some experiments to test its feasibility by inexpensive methods, and if reports made in this respect are a possibility flax mills will be erected here with a view to supplying twine for the fisheries.

Public works. The principal public works carried on during the period under review have been the provincial government buildings and the improvement of the harbor, the post office and custom house at Victoria. The new provincial work of the parliament buildings is now nearly completed, and the interior fittings are being satisfactorily completed.

The postal and customs buildings have not progressed as rapidly as might have been expected. It is hoped, however, that the completion of these buildings, which are so much needed, will be accomplished in the near future.

The court house and government offices were erected at Nanaimo at a cost of \$150,000, and the local government aided by a grant of \$10,000 the building of a school in that city.

At Ashcroft a bridge across the Thompson river was built, and at Victoria a substantial bridge was also built at Lytton.

There are 800 miles of railway track laid in British Columbia—that is, about one mile of railway for each 478 square miles of territory. These figures show conclusively the necessity for the local and Dominion governments adopting a liberal and progressive railway policy in order to open up the vast resources of the province.

The Canadian Pacific railway and its branches is of great service to those portions of the province which are tributary to the territory to the Dominion government, and by far the largest portion of British Columbia, is practically inaccessible. The immense areas of grazing lands, much agricultural land, and enormous quantities of timber are at present lying dormant for want of railway communication.

The resources will be largely opened up by the building of the proposed British Pacific railway, to commence from the north end of the Esquimalt & Nanaimo railway, and extend northward to the north end of Seymour Narrows, where connection would be made with the Mainland. The project would be largely opened up by the building of the proposed British Pacific railway, to commence from the north end of the Esquimalt & Nanaimo railway, and extend northward to the north end of Seymour Narrows, where connection would be made with the Mainland.

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and maps may be obtained free of charge on application.

EDUCATIONAL. British Columbia affords excellent educational opportunities, the schools being free and undenominational. In 1895 there were 172 common, 28 graded, and 4 high schools, under the supervision of trustees elected by the ratepayers; at a cost to the provincial government of \$268,000.

New school districts can be created by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-council as soon as there are fifteen children between 6 and 16 years of age within the limits prescribed. For outlining agricultural districts and mining camps this arrangement is very advantageous.

STEAMSHIP SERVICE. The Canadian Pacific Steamship Company's service with China and Japan has been continued, and the sailings have been regular, with full freights and passenger lists on each occasion.

The Northern Pacific Steamship Company have found it necessary to put on additional steamers, sailing ships also have been employed during some months of the past year.

The Oregon Railway and Navigation Company's steamship service has been maintained.

The direct steamships running between Canada and Australia find full freights from this end, and it is probable that another steamship will be put on this line very soon.

All these steamships call at Victoria on both the outward and inward voyages; the Canadian Pacific ships, however, did not come alongside the wharf until June 22, last, when the Empress of Japan was docked for the first time.

TRUCK COUNTRY. The application of this board for an improved mail service to the Yukon was approved by the Dominion government granting an appropriation of three months during this season, instead of only one heretofore.

This board also reported the advantages British Columbia merchants would derive from the return of the mails from Victoria instead of being carried by land to Seattle and from there returned; that the return mails for the North would be despatched direct from this port. Last month arrangements were made to facilitate the transmission of correspondence between Alaska and Victoria on the lines here indicated.

A special committee of this board reported upon the trading prospects of the Yukon, which are yearly becoming of greater importance. The committee state that most of the supplies are now taken in via the St. Michael's route, and the lower Yukon river, a long route only open for a short time in each year, they recommend a shorter route via Lynn, Alaska, which is accessible by sea-going vessels. By following the White Pass, a portage of about thirty miles, the navigable waters of the Yukon are reached, and the route is shorter and more direct. It was urged that the local and Dominion governments should assist financially in building a road over the pass, and bonus be given to any person or company who would operate steamers on the upper waters of the Yukon river; the reason assigned being that the opening of the proposed route would enable miners who desire to winter elsewhere to remain in the Yukon country later in the year than is now possible; besides making British Columbia merchants independent of the United States transportation companies which also control the trade of the Yukon.

The assistance asked for was not granted, but the Dominion government is having a survey made of another route via the Kootenay and Selkirk lakes, with the view of building a wagon road or light railway between the points mentioned.

ALASKA BOUNDARY LINE. It is satisfactory to know that the attention of the Dominion government has, by the wide publicity given to the contention of the people of this province with respect to the Alaska boundary line, been specially directed to the claims which the Imperial Government has advanced, and that the matter has had