

## 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 president, Mr. D. R. Ker, presided, and besides the members Mr. S. J. Pitts, a former resident of Victoria, was present by invitation.

The secretary read the following report:

To the Members of the British Columbia Board of Trade.

GENTLEMEN:—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 causes which have led to this revival, together with some other matters of interest, are now briefly referred to.

**MINING MATTERS.**  
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—2,972 tons; yielding \$5,850,000; gold, 2,572,850 lbs. copper 10,000 tons concentrates; yielding 1,837,100 ozs. silver, 17,145,000 lbs. lead.

Ainsworth District—48,444 tons; yielding 605,500 ozs. silver, 28,906,800 lbs. lead.

Nelson District—3,707 tons; yielding 176,500 ozs. silver, 484,870 lbs. copper.

West Kootenay—placer gold, \$10,520.

Cariboo, Cassiar, Yale, Lillooet, and East Kootenay—placers, \$491,025.

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 ore 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. For the first time the same year. The first shipment of ore, a carload, was made in the fall of the following year, the smelter returns being \$36,400 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. The output of the mine was 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 ore, the wonderful development which has taken place in the months. All the country for miles around Rossland is staked out in mineral claims, and whilst the great majority of them will undoubtedly be worked, there are others to their sanguine 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 railroad 13 miles long now connects Rossland and the principal mines with the town of Trail, on 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 Vernon, in order to serve the mines situated near Rossland. The Red Mountain railroad will probably be open for traffic in October next, and will give all-rail connection with two United States transcontinental railroads. These important works indicate the permanency of the mines in Trail district.

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

At the Hall Mines on Tood 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 4½ miles, 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, and the average value of the "matte" is \$240, as follows:

Silver 270 ounces; copper 45 per cent; gold, \$3 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 700 cent. lead. The owners of this mine have just completed a concentrator, and the shipment 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 in 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 Kootenay assayer, and other competent assayers, the coal seems to be peculiarly suited for metallurgical purposes. The Dominion Government has opened 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 projected British Pacific railway can hardly be over-estimated. At present this rich country is practically closed to mining, other than placer, on account of the great cost of getting in machinery and supplies.

The 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 939,554 tons, a slight falling off compared with the previous year, owing to the low freights which have prevailed. The consequent reduced values of English and Australian coals. Notwithstanding this competition, the Vancouver Island collieries placed 651,235 tons on the California market against about one million tons from all other sources. The best coke is being produced from Vancouver Island coal in quantities to meet present demands, but 100 additional ovens are being built.

Extensive development work is being done on mineral claims in Alberni district, a large area of which is being worked, carrying gold, copper, and silver. The indications from surface rock are very encouraging, whilst the accessibility of the claims, and the cheapness of transport charges on the coast smelters, an unlimited supply of coke at hand, abundance of wood and mill site, and climate throughout the year are advantages which will not be lost sight of by capitalists in mining investments.

The Alberni district is very rich in auriferous deposits, and is being actively receiving the attention they fully deserve. The pioneer hydraulic company has commenced work on the Alberni, and it is expected that returns will be available for publication in the appendices.

Development work is being done in Alberni, immense bodies of ore have been found, the surface showings being very similar to the Trail, ore already referred to. Development work is in progress.

The deposits of iron ore, both hematite and magnetite, are very extensive in this district, and at other points on Vancouver Island. Many of these deposits are on good harbors, which together with other natural advantages, not the least important of which is the necessity of a population, are being developed as cheaply as in any other part of the world.

The duty on pig iron imported from the Dominion is \$2 per ton of all pig iron manufactured in Canada from Canadian ore, and the duty on such iron from other sources is \$4 per ton.

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The documents here issued, which are better known to attract the capital necessary for the establishment of large blast furnaces in this province.

Next in importance is Texada island, which also contains large bodies of magnetite iron ore, limestone, copper, gold and silver.

Development work is in progress, and it is not within the scope of this report to refer to several other islands and portions of the province which deserve mention under this head; sufficient has already been stated to indicate the vast mineral resources of British Columbia. Taking into consideration the population, the white to about six square miles of territory, and limited capital, the development of the province is satisfactory, but it is insignificant to what may be expected during the next few years.

For the prospector the field is practically unlimited, and any person of the age of eighteen years can obtain a free mineral certificate on payment of \$5. Claims may be located to 1,500 feet in length by 1,500 feet in breadth. It is only necessary to work them to the value of \$100 in each year for five successive years, and to record particularly the government office, when a crown grant will be issued. A miner may enter upon any crown lands, the purpose of the claim or claims being worked by him. The mining laws have been framed so as to facilitate as far as possible the development of the province, and experienced mining men from the United States speak in terms of highest commendation of their liberal scope and justice.

**FISHERIES OF THE PROVINCE.**  
The fisheries of British Columbia are probably the richest in the world. All the provinces of the Dominion have invested in them, the exports under this head during the fiscal year ending June 30th, 1895, amounted to \$2,294,500.

There were in 1895, 12 canneries in operation, and the total pack was 566,380 cases, valued at \$2,831,375, which is 72,204 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 fishery are established on the Fraser, Skeena, and Naas rivers, and Rivers Inlet, an assurance has been received from the government that the hatcheries will be established on the Skeena this year, and others will be built next year at some of the points named.

This board also asked that cotton lines 3½ inch and under, used in the manufacture of fishing nets, be admitted free of duty. An order in this sense has been directed that all such lines up to 5-16 inch be placed on the free list.

Professor Prince, of the Dominion Fisheries Commission, visited this coast in August last year for the purpose of enquiring into the fishing resources of British Columbia, and the salmon canners and others interested were enabled to place before him the result of 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 a quarter pounds. This new branch of the industry, which is so complained, is at present retarded by high freight rates. Particulars of the salmon pack by canneries 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 states that the sturgeon found here are finer than those in Russia, and he saw no reason why this province could not compete with Russia in the several products of such a fish.

The exports of halibut, which practically commenced less than two years ago, are now estimated to be worth \$1,000,000 in 1895, and Inspector John McNab estimates that at least as much more was caught in the waters of British Columbia by United States fishermen. Our canners are consequently hard upon the catch in United States markets fairly well supplied with fish in every respect equal to their own, and prices have been lowered accordingly. They have been further lowered, having to pay United States duty, half a cent per pound—that

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 January 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 vicinity of Copper Island and Japan, 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 prices realized for the year 1895 compare 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 also more abundant.

The International Commission has gone to the Behring sea to study the habits of the seal, and to determine the best method with a view to arriving at a mutual understanding and agreement, if possible, whereby the seals may be preserved.

**MINING.**  
There was a steady improvement in the lumber industry during the past year, the quantity cut being 112,844,640 feet, or about 40 per cent. more than in the previous year. The demand was more widespread than for some years past, but prices were low. The foreign demand has continued to improve during the past six months at advanced prices.

A combine of nearly all the exporting mills on the Pacific Coast has been effected, and is now in operation.

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

The sawmill being erected at Takusha, Haida Gwaii, is well equipped in the province, and will be occupied mainly in cutting cypress. The cypress is one of our most valuable woods and commands a price of \$4 per cord.

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

**AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS.**  
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 about 1,000,000 bushels, and the twelve months ending June 30th, 1895, the imports from foreign countries were as follows:

**Quantity. Duty.**  
Hay, 1,758 tons, \$5,517 06  
Oats, 215,243 bushels, 21,524 41  
Wheat, 147,285 " 22,103 37  
Wheat flour, 22,400 barrels, 22,103 37  
Bran & mill feed, 66,223 bushels, 13,325 60

Roots and vegetables were generally good and large crops are reported from all parts of the province during the twelve months ending June 30th, 1895, the value of the potatoes was \$1,038,100.

The production of fruit was checked, home grown apples, pears, plums and prunes supplying the local markets, and the export of fruit, which was shipped to the eastern provinces, was limited.

Canned home-grown fruits continue in good demand.

The demand for the products of the local dairies is increasing, and dairymen are giving more attention to dairying, which is an industry capable of great development in this province.

There were in 1895, 12 canneries in operation, and the total pack was 566,380 cases, valued at \$2,831,375, which is 72,204 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 fishery are established on the Fraser, Skeena, and Naas rivers, and Rivers Inlet, an assurance has been received from the government that the hatcheries will be established on the Skeena this year, and others will be built next year at some of the points named.

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