

TRADE AND COMMERCE.

COMMERCIAL JOURNAL OFFICE,
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VICTORIA.

FINANCIAL.

There is no change worth noting in the financial situation. The demand for money is still steady, and rates are firm. The volume of business of all the banks is reported to be on the increase.

DRY GOODS.

In this line, trade is about the same as last week. The business, generally, is fair, but collections are not nearly so good as they might be. Nearly all local dealers have laid in their spring stocks, and orders coming in from travellers are mostly of a sorting nature.

GROCERIES AND PROVISIONS.

Trade for the past week has been fairly active. Most houses report a fair number of orders. In dried fruits, the feeling is that they will go a little higher. A consignment of meat arrived last week, and somewhat revived the dull state of the market. Hams have already been cleared out, but other meats are plentiful and are holding firm. The sugar market is unchanged. The supply of fresh ranch eggs is plentiful, and are quoted at 22@23c. The market is completely bare of Eastern butter, but large quantities of the California article are being brought in by every steamer. Prices are firm. Light stocks of canned fruits are being held in the east; and the stock on the Pacific coast is also running short. Prices are strong.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES.

Everything in the line of fruits is quiet, and will remain so until the arrival of the next San Francisco steamer. The few boxes of strawberries which were on the market last week, although of an inferior quality, were eagerly picked up. Fresh cherries will be here in about a week. Potatoes are supposed to be pretty well cleaned up from the farming districts, and stocks held by dealers are heavy. Island potatoes are quoted at \$20@25 per ton, and rather weak. A car of Bonaparte potatoes came in last week, and are held at \$30 per ton.

FLOUR AND FEED.

The wheat supply is said to be short, which accounts for the steady increase in prices. Dealers are holding large stocks in anticipation of better prices. Delta brand flour advanced 25c per barrel last week, and is holding at \$5, with an upward tendency. Hungarian, \$6.50. The Alice Blanchard arrived Monday from Portland with large consignments of flour and feed. American brands are advancing, being quoted: Snowflake, \$6; Portland roller, \$6; C & C, \$5.50. Oats are reported to have made a sharp advance last week, and are now held at from \$10@15 per ton. Wheat is quoted, \$34@40 per ton; cracked corn, \$4; bran, \$24@25; shorts, \$28@30; rolled oats, \$5.25 per sack; Saanich oatmeal has advanced to \$1.50 per sack, California, \$1.50 per sack.

LUMBER.

The demand for lumber tonnage is reported to have dropped off slightly, but rates are still and well maintained, as wheat rates are high and decidedly firm;

nearly every vessel heading this way has been fixed for the next three months. Sufficient tonnage is on the way to keep British Columbia mills constantly employed for some time to come. Local dealers report a good, steady demand. The Rock Bay mills are now running night and day. The market is still low, but holding firm.

VANCOUVER.

The general state of trade seems to be satisfactory. Merchants are confident of a good season's business. Spring trade has fully opened up in all lines. Building operations have commenced, but it is not expected that the rush of business will be great before May. Property along the line of the tramway between Vancouver and New Westminster is in great demand. Money for commercial purposes is fairly plentiful, but rather close for real estate transactions. Short loans are quoted at 12 per cent; ordinary loans, 9 to 10; gilt edge security, 7 to 8. The demand for money seems greater than was anticipated.

The grocery trade is generally good. Sugars are still firm with an upward tendency. Granulated is quoted, 7½c; yellows, 8½c; syrups, 1½c per lb. American sugars are no longer in the market. Business is brisk with the B. C. Refinery. In the course of a couple of weeks the management expect to ship their goods to Sound ports and Portland. In the course of an interview with a gentleman interested in the sugar refining industry, a representative of THE COMMERCIAL JOURNAL learned that "the drawback of 9 per cent on all manufactured sugar exported—the duty having been paid the Government on the raw material—enables the B. C. Refinery to offset the United States duty of one-half cent per pound. The combination of American refiners, which keeps up the price of sugar, enables the B. C. Refinery to enter the Sound and Portland field."

There was little change in the general produce market last week. Flour is still firm at the advance of 25c noted last week. Hungarian is quoted, \$6.75; strong bakers', \$6.25; Oregon, strong at \$5.75. The market is well stocked with flour, most dealers having placed their orders with the mills before the recent advance. Oats are firm at \$20 per ton, and the supply is reported very short. Chop feed, \$37.50@40 per ton; bran, \$24; shorts, \$20; hay, \$17; rolled oats, \$3.75 per sack; granulated oatmeal, \$3.75 per sack; standard oatmeal, \$3.50 per sack; oil cake meal, \$10 per ton. Ashcroft potatoes are in fair demand, and quoted at \$30 per ton; Fraser River, \$23. Farmers have been opening up their pits and bringing in small lots to markets, which has caused a slight weakness in the market; but it is fully expected that it will strengthen in the course of a couple of weeks. The stock at Ashcroft is reported pretty well cleaned up. Turnips are quoted \$15@20 per ton, parsnips, \$15@20. California roll butter is quoted 27@28c per lb and declining. No dairy or eastern creamery on the market. Fresh eggs are in great demand at 25c per dozen. The market is reported bare. Eastern importations will arrive about the end of the month. The stock of meat was pretty well cleaned up, but the arrival of two

carloads from the east late in the week relieved the cramped state of the market. Prices since the last advance are holding strong. Hams are quoted 14½c; short rolls, 11½c; breakfast bacon, 13½c; back bacon, 12½c; pork, bbls, \$22.50; smoked long clear side, 12c per lb; dry salt long clear side, 11½c; pure lard, 50-lb tubs, 12c; pails, 12½c; 3, 5 and 10-lb tins, 13c; lard compound, tins, 11c. Cheese is sold at 13c per lb, and shows an upward tendency. Stocks of canned goods are getting low, both with local dealers and in the east. Quite an increase in sales was reported last month. Prices are steady with a tendency to advance. There was a considerable increase last month in the boot and shoe trade. Leather is in good demand. The supply of hides is falling off, and those brought in are of an inferior quality. No. 1 hides are quoted at 8c per lb; No. 2, 5c; No. 3, 4c. There is a plentiful supply of deerskin, but the market is dull. The best No. 1 dry are offered at 15c per lb. From present indications, the lumber mills are going to be busy this season. Prices are still weak, but there is a fair demand for foreign cargoes. Tonnage continues scarce and freights unchanged. The demand from the Northwest is reported active, and a large increase of business over previous years is anticipated.

NEW WESTMINSTER.

The trade of the past week has been satisfactory to city merchants, and the Columbian reports that no complaints are made in any line of business. Money is fairly easy, and accounts have been met with commendable promptness. There has been a conspicuous absence of country buyers in town during the week, which is attributed to the fine weather for farm work and seeding. Farming operations are fully a month later than usual this year, and the ranchers generally are taking advantage of every moment of fine weather to get in their crops. Receipts of hay and grain have been light during the week, but equal to the demand. Potatoes are plentiful and cheaper than they were a month ago, which is a turn in the market not counted on last fall. Prices of hay, oats and wheat remain firm at last week's quotations. Butter for table use is still imported from the south, but the local product will soon take its place. Eggs are in good demand, and the price keeps up wonderfully well.

OTHER MARKETS.

A Winnipeg report of the 16th says: Wheat farmers' deliveries during last week did not exceed 40,000 bushels. Seeding is in full blast in many parts of the province, and deliveries will be next to nothing until after the seeding is finished. Most of the buyers have been taken off the markets at country shipping stations and the elevators closed. Most of the wheat delivered last week was in completion of old contracts.

In Toronto, wheat was not so active, there being much less offered. Demands were fair and prices were steady.

Seattle, April 18.—The features of the jobbing market, this week, were the arrival on Friday, of a good supply of Eastern creamery butter, which found ready sale,