

are being sufficiently supplied with business and house premises, the average rents of which are low. Hence, although this advice may prove unpalatable to some, the writer is strongly of opinion that "outsiders" will, as a rule, do well for the present to abstain from large investments in unimproved town lots in our British Columbia cities and suburbs, in each of which a large portion of the electorate is strongly convinced—and acts accordingly when voting—of the advisability of reducing to a minimum all chances of gaining such so-called "unearned increment" as might accrue from rises of ground value.

FARM MARKETS.

The only farm market in the province which is yet even a moderate success, is that of New Westminster. Victoria's effort is a failure, and hitherto the attempt to establish a produce market in Vancouver has resulted in little business, though better results are expected shortly when through connection shall have been made by a specially constructed steamboat, plying between Vancouver and Fraser Valley points. The increasing shallowness of the Fraser River above New Westminster is, however, a grave obstacle to the development of the cheap communication that is absolutely necessary to the growth of some of our best farm districts, and no Dominion Government will be popular in this part of British Columbia which does not grapple more vigorously than now with the question of the permanent improvement of the channel of one of Canada's greatest navigable rivers. The C.P.R., too, has a great opportunity, as yet too little taken, of affording cheap yet remunerative transit facilities to several thousand struggling agriculturists. Until, however, our cities are much larger than now, the home market will continue so limited that no large development of British Columbia agriculture can be expected. Thus, taking for example potatoes, about 35 tons a week will supply the normal needs of our two leading cities, Victoria and Vancouver, in which are, unfortunately for our agriculturists, so many rice-eating Mongols. The competition of Chinese, ready to work for wages of 40 to 50 cents a day, also unfortunately reduces to a few specially skilled and energetic cultivators, the number of white market gardeners catering for the table wants of our cities.

It is difficult, indeed, to exaggerate the retardation of the development of this province by a settled and increasing population of steady white workers, which is due to the presence of thousands of single Mongol workers, ready and apparently willing to toil for 50 cents a day, and living, as a result of such effort, in great squalor, notwithstanding all restraining and supervising efforts of medical officers of health and sanitary boards.

THE SEALING SEASON.

The catches of the British Columbia sealing fleet, of which Victoria is the headquarters, are proving better than at first expected, though the aggregate result will prove but moderate. This is stated to be due more to continued rough weather than to depletion of supply, for seals are reported numerous, though keeping further south than usual. Some of the Indians' little schooners have, however, well satisfied their owners. As a whole, though there should be some compensation in respect of better prices, the profits of British Columbia sealing this spring seem likely to be rather modest, whilst the men's wages have also been reduced considerably. The industry has, however, as heretofore, afforded remunerative employment to several hundred hardy workers.

Vancouver, 14th May, 1896.

SHIPBUILDING ON THE GREAT LAKES

The successful launch at the shipyard of the Bertram Engine Works Company, in this city, last Saturday, of the iron steamer "Corona," for the Niagara Steam Navigation Company, is satisfactory proof that good boats can be built in Toronto. The dimensions of the new steamer are as follows: Length on water line, 270 feet; length over all, 277 feet; beam, moulded, 32 feet; breadth over guards, 59 feet; depth moulded at lowest point, 32 feet 6 inches. The hull of the "Corona" bears the marks of construction by skilled and experienced hands, and when completed, the new craft will, there is good reason to believe be one of the finest craft that sails Lake Ontario.

Although the circumstances that led to the building of the new boat, namely, the destruction by fire of the "Cibola," were very unfortunate, it is a cause for congratulation that we have in Toronto facilities for building ships of such dimensions as those of the new passenger steamer. At one time the lake-carrying trade, both passenger and freight, was the source of good profits, but vessel men have suffered heavily in recent years. Lake transportation is undergoing a silent but marked revolution in methods. Much of the grain trade of the upper lakes has, through force of competition, fallen into the hands of the owners of large steamers having enormous carrying capacity. The modern system of powerful steel and iron tow barges, with capacious consorts, renders it difficult for the old and small wooden pro-

pellers to maintain their place. Hence the disadvantage under which the Canadian grain or coal carrier by water labors in comparison with his American competitor, who can easily secure larger and swifter boats. The modern steel fleet that combines capacity and security has a great advantage.

The passenger trade of the lakes ought to be as profitable as ever, if the accommodations of floating craft had but kept pace with the times. On Lakes Huron and Superior, the facilities for travel are excellent, but in Ontario and Erie, with several worthy exceptions, the same old boats that carried our ancestors are still in use, and the public, rather than sail in over-crowded boats with insufficient accommodations, are leaving our beautiful water routes to travel overland. If vessel men would bring back old time prosperity, they must give the public accommodations suited to the new order of things.

The Niagara Navigation Company has set a worthy example in providing, from Canadian shipyards, steel steamers which need fear no comparison with the floating palaces which ply between American cities on the great lakes. The "Chippewa," built at Hamilton in 1894, is a swift and commodious steamer, modelled by a well-known American designer, Mr. Kirby, of Detroit. Not less graceful and staunch, we believe, will be the "Corona," the product of a Toronto shipyard, whose designer and superintendent, Mr. Angstrom, has built some of the finest modern steamships on Long Island Sound and on Lake Erie. Not to produce a model for swiftness alone, or for carrying capacity, has been Mr. Angstrom's care in the present instance, but he has paid special attention to firmness of frame and the distribution of strength where strength is most needed in the scheme of construction. The boilers and machinery of the "Corona" will, there is reason to believe, be adequate to the speed suggested by the graceful hull. And the luxurious patrons of the Lake Ontario route may depend upon it that the owners of the new boat will see that her fittings will be worthy of the reputation worthily made by her sister ships. What the Bertram Engine Works Company has already done is an earnest that the completed steamer will be one of the very best of modern boats.

KOOTENAY MINING.

A letter from a Canadian who has been some months in the mining districts of British Columbia, contains some items which may prove of interest. "I do not wonder," he says in effect, "that people who have been here talk enthusiastically about this country. There is much to be enthusiastic about, especially the ores of Trail, Rossland and Boundary. There is likelihood, I hear, of the erection of a smelter near Nelson of most modern type, which will be needed to handle the output of several mines at Rossland. Besides those already known and fully exploited, there are smaller mines undeveloped not far away, that will be heard of later. For the present, I am engaged to test a mine for a Canadian company. It is my business to develop, sample, test with small mill and report, which will occupy, perhaps, five or six weeks."

We who live on the level can hardly realize what it must be to clamber up and down steep hillsides for three hundred days in the year in the pursuit of one's daily avocations. But this, it appears, is what the residents of a mining camp usually have to do. Our correspondent says, referring to his temporary elevated residence:

"This is a devil of a place to put in a month, fourteen miles hard tramping, including a rise of 8,000 feet at the end of the journey, brought me here from —. On a steep side hill heavily timbered, with nine feet of snow, is the mine. A small dirty cabin near the mouth, with four double bunks across the end, in which sleep five men. Five more in a tent. In a day or two I shall also have a tent. Our cook is a good one and provisions are fair. But just imagine, every pound of food or anything else that has come up here, since Christmas, or will come for the next six weeks, is packed by men on foot, from the railway, at a cost of five cents per pound, and it is only three miles. Last night I had a good game of cribbage with three Swedes. One can always find somebody to chum with, or at least to chat with, if he has a mind to."

MANTLE MAKING.

Canadian capital is being invested in mantle making and the industry deserves to succeed. As durable and stylish cloaks can be made in Toronto or Montreal as in Berlin, London or New York. In these days of rapid travel and communication it is more economical to bring ideas from abroad and convert them into realities on this side of the water, than to import goods. The tariff, although taxing the importation of mantle cloths, affords considerable protection to the manufacturer. If Canadian-made mantles are to win popularity, they must represent the very latest ideas, and manufacturers must keep in close touch with the centres of fashion. From the character of the firms having this work in hand, we have little doubt that, in the course of time, "made in Canada" when printed on a mantle will bespeak for it a good word