

BRITISH COLUMBIA.

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British Columbia Business Review.

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If business was not overly brisk before, the small-pox scare, owing to which Victoria has been quarantined and communication generally interfered with, has not helped it any. In fact, trade has been seriously injured thereby. The few cases that had existed in Vancouver and Westminster for some time, as a result of imperfect inspection of the steamers from China, whence the disease was imported, were about disposed of, and by prompt measures of the authorities it was thought the disease was stamped out and all danger of infection about over when suddenly news came of an outbreak in Victoria, which developed rapidly from half a dozen cases to over fifty, several of which proved fatal. In Victoria the suddenness of the outbreak produced almost a panic, and the rush out had undoubtedly some effect in disseminating the epidemic, as well as causing sister cities to declare a quarantine. There is an acrimonious dispute as to the cause of it in Victoria, Victoria people and press attributing it to infection from Vancouver, while the latter attribute it primarily to a cargo of Chinese sugar brought in on the steamer Phra Nang from the Orient, and secondly to the negligence of the officials in preventing its spread at the outset. No doubt the latter kept it quiet as long as they could, a poor policy, for fear of hurting the tourist business, which is at its height just now, until it got beyond their ability to cope with it, and then the public generally was aroused, and, if anything, the other extreme was gone to. Whatever its cause or however it originated, it exists according to the latest health bulletin: fifty in Victoria, five in Vancouver, three in Westminster and none in Nanaimo. When compared with the epidemics in some of the eastern cities, the number itself seems insignificant, and with proper health regulations there would seem to be little fear of general infection or communication of disease. Its magnitude has been greatly exaggerated and its evil results intensified by the action of the press, which in some measure has been disgraceful. In a time of common danger the newspapers, which are supposed to represent the enlightened element, have simply added fuel to the flame, and instead of allaying and mollifying sectional feeling and speaking the truth, have done little else than reflect local prejudices, unfortunately already too strong at any time. When Vancouver had small-pox cases and Victoria none, the press of the latter delighted in magnifying it. And when small-pox broke out in Victoria the press of Vancouver, on the strength of rumor, multiplied the number of cases by two or three; and so it goes on all around, each calling the other liars, slanderers and all the rest of it. When Vancouver put a quarantine on Victoria it was simply as a matter of self-defence, whether right or wrong, and without any ulterior object, but the Victoria press construed it as a malicious blow at the capital, actuated by spite and jealousy. The same thing would have been done under any circumstances. It is an open question if a mutual and strict inspection of passengers and baggage and careful supervision all round would not have been better than a quarantine, because the interruption of entire communication is serious and the legal right to order it may fairly be doubted; but in any event the quarantine was not malicious. So all round, instead of the various cities joining hands to protect each other as well as themselves, as a matter of common interest, they have been actuated by local influences to spit at each other, and it would seem that the press of each gloried in the misfortune of the

other. The hard feelings created in this way will do quite as much, if not more, harm than the small-pox. A sample of this animosity appears in an evening paper as follows: "The author of that despatch is a cowardly, malevolent blackguard and a low, villainous liar." That was inspired by a simple statement in the *Victoria Colonist* that so far Westminster had not declared a quarantine against Victoria. In this way, by accepting rumor as facts, by exaggerating and by straight lying a great deal of damage has been done to business in the cities and to the province as a whole, the effects of which will be felt for some time. Another feature to be deplored that unfortunately cannot be prevented very well are sensational, highly colored dispatches which, being paid for by the word, are padded out to make the most. If the cities had acted in concert from the first and agreed on mutually defensive measures, and the newspapers had kept their hands off and told only the truth the present trouble would have been largely avoided.

During the week the world's fair commissioners have been appointed. Chas. E. Law, Kootenay, is commissioner for the mineral exhibit, Jas. C. Anderson, statistician, for Vancouver island, A. H. B. McGowan, secretary of Vancouver board of trade, and E. Hutchinson, Ladner's Landing, commissioners for the mainland. They are all good, practical men and should worthily represent the resources of this province. The government has evidently made as good a selection as it very well could and has avoided the usual custom of giving offices like these to political hacks or hangers on.

The Imperial and Dominion Governments have evidently acted with promptness in the case of the seizure of the Coquitlam in Alaskan waters. She will be released on bonds, an appraisal having already been made of her effects and cargo.

The last week's rains have had a bad effect on hay and small fruit, both of which are excellent crops but liable to be badly damaged if the rain continues much longer.

News from the interior continues of a pleasant and encouraging character, new finds, investments and development are reported from all sides. Some very rich strikes, both in coal and precious minerals, are reported from Kamloops and vicinity, which, if one quarter as good as reported, will bring that section into prominence.

B. C. Market Quotations.

FLOUR AND FEED, etc.—Market is steady and demand good. No changes in staple lines. New hay is beginning to offer, but in small quantities, haying having been arrested by the rains. Hay is still being imported from Washington. Oats are steady up in price. Following are quotations:—Manitoba patents, \$5.85; strong bakers \$5.45; ladies' choice \$6; prairie lily \$5.75; Oregon \$5.75; Spokane \$5.65; Enderby mills—Premium \$5.85; three star \$5.75; two star \$5.40; oatmeal eastern \$3.40; California granulated, in gunnies, \$4.35; National mills, Victoria \$3.65; rolled oats eastern \$3 to \$3.25; California \$3.75; National mills \$3.75; cornmeal \$3.10; split peas \$3.50; pearl barley \$4.50. Rice—The Victoria rice mills quote wholesale: Japan rice, per ton, \$77.50; China rice, do, \$70; rice flour, do, \$70; chit rice, do, \$25; rice meal, do, \$17.50; chopped feed \$33 to \$35 per ton; bran \$24; shorts \$25; oats \$30 to \$32; wheat \$5 to \$40; oil cake \$40. Wheat is quoted in car lots for feed No. 2 regular at \$20 to \$25 per ton; oats \$26½; chop barley \$25. California malting barley \$26 to \$27 f.o.b. in San Francisco. California chop \$32 to \$33; hay, \$20; oil cake, \$40; chop barley, \$30.

DAIRY—The demand for eastern creamery is good, and likely to increase. It is slightly on the decline at 25 to 26c. Manitoba dairy is not sought after and has been reduced since last quotations to 19c. Cheese also show a tendency to weaken. Quoted at 12½ to 13c.

EGGS—Eastern eggs are plentiful and low, but steady at 14½ to 15c. Local fresh eggs are scarce and in good demand.

POULTRY—Live chickens are worth \$9 a dozen, are scarce and in almost unlimited demand. Ducks are \$9 and \$10 a dozen.

VEGETABLES—New potatoes are worth \$1.50 per cwt and are likely to reduce steadily in price; onion, are worth \$1.25 to \$1.50; cabbage 2c per lb. The local supply is much improved and vegetables all around are cheaper and better.

LIVESTOCK, DRESSED MEATS, ETC.—The supply of British Columbia fresh meats, with the exception of mutton and pork—the former coming principally from Oregon and the latter from eastern Ontario—is more than ample for our wants and all quality. Fine steers are quoted 4c; cows, 3½c; dressed beef, 7½c; lambs \$4.50 apiece, dressed, \$5; sheep, 5½c; mutton, 12c; hogs, 8c; pork, 11c; calves, 7c; veal, 11c.

MEATS—Meats continue firm, and the situation is bullish if anything. Prices are likely to be maintained until cold weather in the east sets in again, when there will be in all probability the same insane attempt to shove bacon and ham down our throats at greatly reduced prices. Quotations are: Hams, 13½ to 14½c; breakfast bacon, 13½ to 15c; backs, 13 to 13½c; short rolls, 11 to 11½c; dry rolls, 11c; green long clear, 11c. Lard is quoted as follows:—In tubs, 12c per lb; in pails, 12½c; in tins, 13c; lard compound 11 to 11½c.

FRUITS, NUTS, ETC.—The wet weather of the past week has given a severe set back to the small fruit now ripening and raspberries, which are plentiful on the vines, are likely to be a failure if fine weather does not set in in a day or two. They are at present selling at 11c. Strawberries are no more. A good crop was harvested and marketed wholesale at between 10 and 12c. The canneries purchased at 7c per lb. Oranges are out of the market until the fall crop comes in. California oranges during the present season have as a rule been inferior. California lemons, \$5; Sicilies, \$6.50; coconuts, \$1 per doz; bananas, \$4 to \$4.25; Turkish figs, 14½c; almonds, 18c; walnuts, 15c; filberts, 15c; pine, 20c; peanuts, 10c; evaporated apples, 11c; evaporated peaches, 11c; evaporated apricots, 11c; evaporated prunes, 11c; California pitted plums, 11c; strained honey, 13c; raisins, \$2 to \$2.75; Oregon cherries, \$1.50; apricots, \$1.35; peaches, \$1.50; tomatoes, \$1.50; plums, \$1.35.

SUGAR.—Granulated 5½; E.C. 5½; fancy yellow 5c; yellow 4½; cube 6½c; powdered, sacks 7½c; do boxes 7½c; syrup 4c.

FISH—Salmon, 7c; halibut, none in and scarce; smelts, 8c; sturgeon, 5c; cod, 7 to 8c; crabs \$1 a dozen and clams 50c a pail. The Sockeye salmon, used by the canneries principally are now running in the Fraser. No large shipments of spring salmon are being made east, but points along the line of the C. P. R. are being supplied by express in boxes. Fish generally is scarce.

CANNED SALMON—The pack this year in British Columbia will amount to 140,000 cases. The ruling rate in London is 22s 6d C.I.F. and in British Columbia \$4.75 a case f.o.b. Prices are likely to remain firm throughout.

The vessels Chili, River Ganges, Frederick and Martha Fisher have been chartered to load salmon for Great Britain for this year's salmon pack.

LUMBER—Prices are low and demand poor. The export trade is not looking up as yet. Saw mill men all say they are not making any money. Schedule prices are as follows for export: Rough merchantable, ordinary sizes in lengths, to 40 feet, inclusive, \$9 per M; rough deck plank, average length 35 feet, \$19; dressed flooring, \$17; pickets, \$9; lath, 4 feet, \$2. Local: Rough merchantable lumber, per M, \$12; double dressed and edged, \$22.50; single, do, \$20; No. 1 tongued and groove flooring, 1 x 4, \$22.50; Rough deck plank, \$14; laths, per M, \$2.25; shingles, common, per M, \$2.25. For contracts, however, dealers make their own prices and it is impossible to quote a regular price.