

## Between the Pacific and the Prairie.

Having dealt with the fruit and fish prospects of British Columbia, next in order comes lumber resources, and so far as the natural supply goes, there is quantity unlimited awaiting the hand of industry and the aid of capital to develop. Thousands of square miles of the finest cedar in the world are to be found in the Pacific province, and actually millions of huge trees standing two to three hundred feet in height, and as straight as they can grow.

The lumber resources of British Columbia have been worked to some extent for over thirty years, especially for spar timber, in which line they have no equal in the world. It is only since the completion of the C.P.R., that any of the forests except those on the west line have been touched for the purpose of lumber manufacture. Now a score of saw mills are at work, cutting for the local trade, and the demands of the prairie country, while those on the coast find foreign markets along the Pacific coast, and especially in South America. There is no reason why the demand from the prairie country should not increase rapidly, and indeed it will do so as settlement of the Northwestern territories advances.

Occasionally complaints are heard about the high freights from the mountain to the prairie market, but these freights are bound to be reduced just as soon as the trade grows to such proportions as to make the C.P.R. management consider it an object worthy of special consideration. There is no valid reason, why the people of Manitoba and the territories should year after year import millions of feet of lumber from the United States, when the resources of a neighboring province are lying undeveloped. Lumbermen on the Pacific slope must make a special effort, to produce cheaply and meet competition; the people of the prairie country must give the advantage to their fellow citizens of another province, so far as they can with safety to themselves; and this mutual effort will soon swell the trade between the two countries to a volume, which will compel railway managers to make it a subject of special consideration.

But British Columbians are entitled to considerable credit for the progress they have made and excellence they have attained in lumber manufactures. A representative of THE COMMERCIAL recently visited and inspected the planing mills and sash and door factories of Messrs. Cassaday & Co., of Vancouver, and the British Columbia Mills, Timber & Trading Co., at New Westminster. At both of these mills he had the pleasure of seeing the manufacture of a class of sashes, doors and panel work generally which were both beautiful in design, and artistic in finish, comparing favorably with the white pine and other manufactures of the same class, which are too freely imported into this province from the States, and which have to depend mainly on the painter's skill to make them look decent in appearance. Some of the panel work, done in different shades of cedar and red-wood at the above named mills, furnished a series of pictures, such as no grainier can imitate. Paint they do not require, for polished and varnished they possess a beauty of design, such as no house painter's skill can produce. The residents of our prairie cities and towns are gradually procuring for themselves and families comfortable, and in some instances luxurious homes. They can add

greatly to the inside beauty of their new domiciles, by fitting them up with doors and panel work made from the beautifully colored cedar and other woods of the Pacific slope. Let us hope, therefore, that from this date forward the lumber manufactures of British Columbia, will continue to gain ground in the prairie country, until they drive out all competition from other outside markets.

British Columbians are also entitled to not a little credit for their efforts to get a hold in general manufactures, and a fine monument to their commercial courage in this field can be seen in the new sugar refinery in the suburbs of the city of Vancouver. A COMMERCIAL representative recently visited and inspected this institution, and received some instruction in the manufacture of sugar from the raw article to the granulated one, but unfortunately the institution was not thoroughly impressed, and only a vague recollection of a bewildering maze of machinery has remained. The study was an interesting one from the boiling pans heated with steam, boiling the raw sugar through the first pumping, to where the liquor is mixed with blood and lime, then run through the bag filters, then through the second pumping to the upper floor or black room, from which it is filtered through a charcoal dust made from burned bones, and through huge incomprehensible cylinders from which the filtered syrup runs. This is again pumped to the upper floor of the refinery proper, and the first or clear portion run off for the making of granulated, while the residue is used for the different grades of yellows. The mystery of boiling in the vacuum pan requires a practical person to explain, but when the liquid reaches the cylinders, when a rapid centrifugal motion forms the sugar in a crust, while the syrup drops through sieves, the uninitiated begins again to comprehend the process. When the run is granulated the hard sugar is taken to a huge hollow metallic cylinder, with a steam chest in the centre, and while this cylinder moves around the drying process goes on, and when completed the sugar in granulated form is run through spouts to the packing floor below, where it is packed in barrels or sacks, as the case may be. Altogether a visit to the refinery is a great treat to any person with a taste for mechanism.

The refinery stands on a site of over three acres on the shore of Burrard Inlet, and the buildings are constructed in the most solid fashion, Winnipeg white clay brick being used in the walls. The works have their own wharf, where sea going vessels from raw sugar markets can discharge cargo, or load refined goods. The main building of the refinery covers an area of 109 by 90 feet, and the institution gives employment altogether to over ninety hands, so that it is a valuable industry in a local sense, and probably the most valuable to the city of Vancouver.

A spur of the C. P. R. track runs into the yards of this refinery, and that it is a valuable institution to that road is certain, from the fact that its products are fast superceding those of Atlantic coast refineries in the country, stretching from the Pacific to Lake Superior.

There are other attempts being made to locate general industries in British Columbia, which cannot now be noted in detail. A fine new flouring and meal mill at Victoria is one of the latest, and a pickle and cider factory has also been established there. At no very distant

date THE COMMERCIAL will do doubt contain accounts of other manufacturing institutions which will show, that real industrial progress has set in in British Columbia.

It might be well before closing this article on general manufactures to remind British Columbians, that from the summit of the Rockies down to the Pacific shore there are waterfalls and rapid running rivers, on which thousands upon thousand of horse power are going to waste, which might be utilized. Across the mountains is a country now exporting twenty millions of bushels of the finest milling wheat. Across the Pacific in sluggish over-crowded Asia is a practically unlimited market for flour. The wheat export of the prairie land is yearly increasing and so is the flour market of Asia. Let us ask the question, must the wheat exports of the prairie continue for all time to come to go out by the Atlantic? Surely not, while British Columbia has the water power to mill it, and the Asiatic market for its flour products. Millers above all other men know how to get from railway managers, milling in transit and other little special privileges, and a milling interest in British Columbia would not fail to look after such. Assuredly, therefore the people of that province are wanting in enterprise if they do not soon utilize some of their grand waters, secure their share of the hard wheat of the prairie land across the mountains, and make good their footing in the flour markets of Asia.

In the next issue of THE COMMERCIAL we shall give a few hints to our exporters in Manitoba as to their shipment to British Columbia and probably say a little about the mining affairs of the mountain country.

## Prices in British Columbia.

The Vancouver News-Advertiser says: "Mention was made in last week's report of a flour war that is being carried on between several retail firms. This state of things still exists, but in order to protect themselves the wholesale firms intend forming a trust, and will not sell below a certain figure. This is without doubt the only means by which this war can be stopped, and will probably have the desired effect. The quotations at present are unchanged, being as follows:—

Manitoba patents, \$6; Manitoba bakers, \$5.75; Oregon flour, \$6. Oatmeal is quoted at \$1.25 per 100 pounds; Eastern rolled oats, \$1.25; California do, \$1.00. Feed shows an upward tendency, the prices being as follows: Wheat, \$35 per ton; chopped feed, \$36 to 38; bran, \$25; shorts, \$27; oats, \$35; oil cake, \$40; hay, old or new, \$15 to \$16.

The recent rains have spoiled a considerable amount of the Fraser river oat crops and in all probability the greater portion of the local supply will be obtained from the Northwest.

Cheese—Held at 12 to 12½c.

Butter—Creamery is held ½c higher, at 27 to 27½c; dairy, 17 to 22c.

Eggs—Higher, at 18 to 20c per dozen.

Vegetables—Potatoes, \$14 to \$17 per ton.

Fruit—Coming in freely, and is in good demand. Apples are quoted at \$1 to \$1.50 and even \$1.75 per box for extra choice. Pears are quoted from \$1.50 to \$1.75; peaches, \$1 10 to \$1.25; plums, \$1 to \$1.15; tomatoes, \$1.25 to \$1.50; grapes in boxes, \$1.40; in crates, \$1.75; tokays, \$1.65; bananas, \$3 to \$3.75 per bunch; coconuts, 8c each; lemons, \$8 per box.