

THE BRITISH COLUMBIA COMMERCIAL JOURNAL

ISSUED EVERY TUESDAY AT VICTORIA, B. C.

SUBSCRIPTION - - \$2.00 PER YEAR.

Advertising Rates on Application.

D. M. CARLEY EDITOR.
L. G. HENDERSON - - BUSINESS MANAGER.

Office No. 77 Johnston Street.

VICTORIA, TUESDAY, AUGUST 4, 1881.

THE CENSUS.

With the results of the census, so far as they have been announced in a semi-official sort of a way, the people of Victoria and Vancouver are much dissatisfied, the announced figures being less than they have for long been building upon. The people of the Terminal City, if the newspapers accurately gauge the general opinion, are indignant at the idea that it is possible to suppose for a moment that they have made such little progress with all their natural advantages and the facilities that have been at their disposal. It occurs to us that 16,800 of a population for Victoria, and 11,800 for Vancouver are altogether behind the mark, and, therefore, the proposal to have independent municipal censuses taken is but a reasonable one. No doubt the census commissioners are gentlemen of the utmost reliability; but it can readily be supposed how difficult it has been for them to secure competent men to act as enumerators. As far as we can hear, there are many instances in which there has been utter neglect to take the lists properly, and that the work should be correctly done is of the highest importance. It may, therefore, be supposed that the Corporation will take the necessary action in order to have the work done over again.

FIRE PROTECTION.

Victoria has every reason to congratulate herself on a variety of matters. Among these is a comparative immunity from fire, and, in addition, the cheap manner in which her fire department is conducted. The fire department of this city costs the citizens only about \$12,000, besides \$8,000 contributed by the insurance companies, or \$20,000 in all, as against \$20,000 for Tacoma, and \$25,000 in Seattle. For the seven months ending July, the fire loss of Victoria was only \$3,500, while the annual loss in the cities named is not less than \$100,000 per annum. A condition of affairs like this has a tendency to make people conclude that the fire department is ample for all requirements. So it has been, but there are contingencies to be provided against. Are we prepared to meet them as they arise? No doubt the fire fighting force of Victoria is equal to a great deal more than has ever been demanded from it, but supposing a really big

fire should break out, where would we be? The volunteer and paid force, at its utmost, is but a handful of men, whose appliances are but few and small.

Then, as to its water supply, the city cannot be said to be other than very badly off. Suppose, for instance, a conflagration should break out on the upper levels, the pressure of water obtainable would, comparatively speaking, be little stronger than that which the school boy is accustomed to obtain from his toy squirt. Moreover, the present water commissioner has tendered his resignation on account, it is understood, of friction and misunderstanding between himself and the leading official of the fire department. It should be made impossible that there should be any trouble in this way. The salvation of Victoria, Vancouver and most of the cities—indeed of all of them—depends upon the possibility of promptly dealing with fires and extinguishing them in the most expeditious manner. The buildings here are of the most inflammable material, and once let a fire get a good hold and its sweep would be tremendous. Every one should be careful how he deals with anything that is in any way liable to produce fire, every one should insure his belongings, and every one should encourage the authorities to make their fire protective system the best that it is possible to have.

WHAT IS NEEDED.

In several recent articles the Vancouver *News-Advertiser* has been attempting to show that the progress of that city is due but in a small degree to the Canadian Pacific Railway. It admits that Vancouver sprang up as the result of the arrangement between the Railway Company and the Provincial Government to continue the railway to Coal Harbor and English Bay. It, however, strenuously denies that Vancouver has been "spoon-fed" by the railway, the benefit obtained having been "only in name or reputation, and not in anything more tangible." Opinions differ very widely upon this point, which there is no need of discussing on this occasion. Our contemporary deprecates the bonusing of any other railway to be brought into the Terminal City, urging that "if there is a reasonable prospect of traffic, railway companies will build lines to secure it, without being paid to do so." But the fact is that if it had not been for the immense amount of bonus and other considerations accorded by the Dominion Government there never would have been any Canadian transcontinental line, nor would there have been any Vancouver, at any rate within the present century.

It can be well imagined why the *News-Advertiser* does not desire to have any rival railway brought into competition with the C. P. R. It, however, makes one remark which is peculiarly applicable to Victoria. That is "given connection by railway and by water, and the factors necessary to make a city wealthy, populous and prosperous are manufactures and commerce." As concerns Victoria, she wants a railway; she requires better facilities for communication with the outside world, both by railway and by steamboat, and she must and she will have them. If the Canadian Pacific Railway

does not show us more consideration we must look outside, and we must give other inducements than the mere prospect of trade, and the sooner we set about doing something the better. But if Vancouver wants manufactures and commerce Victoria requires them also; for she has only just begun to establish them. Still, as was pointed out in a recent issue, the preliminary essentials to this is a greater development of the country round about us, and it must be by a healthy process of settlement by an eligible class of people. It is satisfactory, as has been previously stated, to know that the Government is vigorously endeavoring to satisfy itself as to the class of land which there is to offer to colonists, and judging from the amount of exploration that is being accomplished, settlement is ere long likely to have a boom otherwise than by the advent of the Scottish Crofters, who seem likely to have their steps directed to this island.

THE SALMON OUTLOOK.

Advices from the Fraser River, of the most reliable description, are by no means of a favorable character. It appears to be beyond all question that the salmon pack will be small, and that the results will be a source of disappointment and loss to all concerned. This loss will not only be entailed by the comparative idleness of the plant with which the canneries are supplied, but considerable quantities of cans, cases and other material already prepared will be required to be held over. The canner will undoubtedly be a sufferer, inasmuch, as a rule, he is not accustomed to carry over stocks of fish, and cannot benefit by the advance; but the middleman and the dealer will hardly fail to be advantaged, as the value of their stocks must be materially enhanced. They have been mostly laid in at a comparatively low figure, and must go up, the difference enuring to the holder, who is likely to make a good thing out of it. There is one mistake to be guarded against, and that is that should there be a late run—of which there appears to be some probability—the cannery, with a view to utilizing their material and employing their hands, may use every endeavor to make up for lost time, and catch and pack all the fish that is possible for them to do. This would hardly be good policy, as it would tend to keep the market in a demoralized state, and to continue the existing unsatisfactory condition of the trade, which a little waiting would in all probability be the means of resuscitating. There are many packers who feel gloomy and look gloomy, too. Let them look ahead and make up their minds to build upon the future.

MUNICIPAL ASSESSMENTS.

There has been considerable objection taken in the city of Victoria to the fact of the municipal assessor having, in preparing his valuation lists, placed the property of the citizens at its actual value, instead of at a figure much below what it would really bring. It is not a necessary consequence of this that the property will be more heavily taxed than now, for the rate of taxation has to be fixed hereafter by the