

British Columbia Trade Letter

(SPECIAL CORRESPONDENCE.)

VANCOUVER, May 4.—The great event of the week in British Columbia, has been the arrival of the Empress of India, the first of the new C. P. R. steamships. Her arrival was celebrated by all the *clat*, which such an event could reasonably call forth three days of celebration being accorded it. A tremendous crowd had assembled on the wharf on Tuesday at noon when she was sighted on English Bay, and as she came through the narrows at low tide and afterwards swung gracefully to at the dock, there were manifestations of delight and a sprightly welcome by the city band. On the track drawn up was a special train ready to take the passengers on board, and the cargo of silk and the mails. An address was presented on board to President Van Horne by Mayor Oppenheimer on behalf of the citizens, which was appropriately responded to. The trip from Yokohama was made in 10½ days, which, as the New York *Sun* says, was a marvellous record. The last special train left the same evening and reached Montreal in less than four days, all that was claimed for the new route being fully and successfully demonstrated. Lacrosse matches and the opening of the new C. P. R. opera house marked the first day; Lacrosse matches and canoe races and a ball in the Hotel Vancouver, the second; and the laying of the new women's and children's hospital, and a Board of Trade banquet the third. A feature of the banquet was the speech of Hon. Ed. Blake, the *gravamen* of which was an apology for his past political record in regard to British Columbia, crystallized in his celebrated descriptive phrase "a sea of mountains." It is needless to say that the living fact of a completed and successful transcontinental railway system was not to be gainsayed and that Hon. Ed. Blake should be the guest of a festive occasion to celebrate the forging of the last link is very much like the wing of fate, and the late leader of the Opposition caught its spirit with beautiful effect. His speech was able and characteristically phrased; but it was a significant withdrawal from his old-time position. The Empress of India had a freight and passenger list and leaves for the Orient again this week.

Business during the past week was affected somewhat by the celebration and also by an unexpected spell of wet weather. It is now fine again with the usual salutary effect. The influx of immigrants continues large, the greater number remaining in British Columbia, instead of going down the Sound, as was the rule heretofore. The Washington Territory boom has subsided. Real estate continues active and the townsites of Vernon and Mission are being principally advertised. Building operations are active all over the province, and especially in Nelson, where mining prospects are decidedly bullish. There is a marked briskness in shipping circles and fleets everywhere are fully employed, and shipbuilding, as an industry to supply the demand for medium sized crafts, is assuming more than modest proportions. Two of Vancouver's new sealers have left for the north and another goes in a day or two.

The British Columbia sugar refinery is working successfully, and owing to a rise in prices on the other side of the line, has made some shipments to Portland. Granulated is quoted at 7½ cents and yellow at 6½. Cube sugar will be placed on the market shortly.

Flour in sympathy with advances in the east has gone up. California butter, the principal dairy article on the market, sells at from 26 to 29c. Provisions generally have risen. Vegetables are coming in freely, and fish retail all round at about 10 cents per pound, and is fairly plentiful. Fresh eastern eggs are expected to arrive shortly.

Two large deals have now been fully and finally consummated, both of which have been referred to in THE COMMERCIAL. One is the transfer of seven or eight Fraser river canneries

to an English syndicate, represented by Bell, Irving & Paterson. The consideration is understood to have been about \$100,000. All the canneries with the exception of A. A. Ewen's, are now under the control of two syndicates, one at Victoria and one here. The other deal is the purchase of the Moodyville saw mill, timber limits and all other property for a round million. The prospectus for a woollen mill has been issued, the industry to be located at Vancouver. The import and manufacture of Australian wools are contemplated. Prices are as follows:—

Flour and Grain—Manitoba patents, \$7; Manitoba bakers, \$6 60; Oregon flour, \$6 to \$6 50; oatmeal, \$3.75 to \$4; corn meal, \$3 to \$3.75; rolled oats, \$1.25; oil cake, \$40 per ton; shorts, \$27; bran, \$25; wheat, \$36 to \$40; oats, \$40 to \$43; hay, \$17 to \$18.

Vegetables—Potatoes, \$22 to \$30 per ton. Some Manitoba potatoes have been received and are fetching good prices. California cabbage, 2 to 2½c per pound.

Eggs—Oregon fresh eggs, 23c per dozen; fresh ranch eggs, 27 to 28c.

Fruits—Oranges, Nava's, \$4.75 to \$5; River side seedling, \$2.50 to \$3; Sicilian lemons, \$7 \$7.50 per box, and California, \$4.50 to \$4.75; Bananas, \$4.50 per bunch.

Meats—Dry salt, 11½c; roll bacon, 11½c; breakfast bacon, 13½c; backs, 13c; hams, 14½c; pickled pork bellies, 11½c; mess pork, 12½c; lard, in tubs, 12c; in pails, 12½c; in tins, 13c; compound, 12c.

British Columbia.

J. Ordine, general dealer, Lillooet, is dead.

J. Williams, hotel, Vancouver, is out of business.

An electric coal cutter will be put in the Un-Mines.

D. Morello, grocer, &c., Nanaimo Out of business.

Collett & Hunter are starting a sawmill at Nicola.

R. T. Mizoney, hotel, Vancouver, now Mizoney & Rose.

J. T. Stewart, plumber, has opened business at Victoria.

W. R. Puckett, saloon, Arkercroft, has succeeded K. T. Nesbitt.

Robertson Bros., stoves, &c., Vancouver, adding hardware.

D. & A. McLennan, hotel Vancouver; succeeded P. Gorman.

J. S. Schubert, hotel, Vernon, contemplates adding wholesale liquors.

Rose & Marshall, stoves, &c., Vancouver, have dissolved; now M. S. Rose.

Odell & Squire, of Victoria, has opened a merchant tailoring establishment at Nelson.

Smith & Burton, produce, &c., Vancouver, are closing out their Vancouver branch.

S. J. Martin, clothing, &c., Victoria. Damaged by fire, no insurance; loss considerable.

G. F. Welch & Son, house painters and decorators, have opened business at New Westminster.

William Middler, of Vancouver, has established a black smithing, and carriage shop at Steveston.

The British Columbia Dental Association will hold its first annual meeting on the 17th and 18th of July.

Wm. Kirkup & Co., dealers in stoves, tinware, Revelstoke, intend opening a branch store at Nelson.

Bourne Bros' new store at Revelstoke, in which they have recently moved, is one of the finest in the interior.

Another Nova Scotia schooner, the Annie E. Paint, has made the trip around Cape Horn to Victoria, and will engage in sealing in Pacific waters.

Heisterman & Co., Victoria, have received the appointment of general agents for British Columbia, for the Mutual Life Insurance Co., of New York.

J. O. Johnston, who went to Japan three months ago as purchasing agent for J. F. Galbraith, dealer in Japanese goods, Vancouver, returned on the Empress of India.

Tracklaying on the Mission Branch of the Canadian Pacific Railway has been completed to the boundary and a junction made with the road in Washington. Regular traffic will be commenced shortly between the C. P. R. and Piget Sound points.

Customs collections at Victoria during April, were \$103,166.81, of which \$93,415.02 was from duties, and \$4,721.79 from miscellaneous sources. This shows a considerable increase over the corresponding month last year when the receipts were \$73,441.81, an increase of \$24,722.

Victoria Times: Wm. Jenson, who since 1887 has successfully run the Occidental hotel, at the corner of Wharf and Johnson streets, has disposed of the business to H. R. Berryman and C. Andrews. The former has for years had charge of the bar, and the latter the office, so they are both thoroughly acquainted with the way the Occidental should be run. All Mr. Jenson's time will be occupied at his new hotel on Dallas Road which is now nearing completion.

Mr. Van Horne met the Victoria Board of Trade on his recent trip west at the invitation of that body. The President of the Board and other members explained to Mr. Van Horne the proposals now before the citizens for the construction of railway ferries. Mr. Van Horne in replying pointed out that the railway ferries, now in operation, with scarcely an exception were financially unprofitable and were only operated from necessity as connecting links on long lines of railways. But these were across rivers while any ferry to connect Victoria with the mainland must cross the sea, the shortest being at least 13 miles. Freight could only be carried at a higher cost by them than by the present steamers.

Columbian: The deal by which a company of English capitalists, known as the Anglo-British Columbian Canning Co., secured control of seven Fraser River canneries and two on the Skeena, was finally closed yesterday. Following are the canneries included in the deal, and prices paid: Phoenix Cannery, \$15,000; D. Drysdale, \$40,000; Duncan & Batchelor, \$10,000; Garry Point Canning Co., \$40,000; E. A. Wadhams, \$10,000; B. Young, \$15,000; R. Young (Skeena), \$40,000; B. C. Packing Co., \$15,000; North Pacific Canning Co., Skeena, \$10,000. Several of the former owners take shares in the new company, and the management of the various canneries will be practically unchanged.

J. Bethune, general store, Fort William, assigned in trust to Donald Frazer, Winnipeg.