COMMERCE and TRANSPORTATION

FRUIT AND LUMBER DUTIES.

(From Our Own Correspondent.)

Vancouver, June 29th.

It is a remarkable thing that Americans are getting more benefit from trade in Western Canada, in some instances, than the Canadians themselves, and while the Federal Government may remedy matters, it either refrains or refuses. It has been pointed out previously in these columns how the lumber manufacturers of Washington State have profited immensely out of the Canadian trade, owing to the absence of a retaliatory duty on rough lumber. The absence of it enabled the foreign millmen to dump their surplus product into Canada, demoralizing the market for the Canadian, but maintaining the market in the United States for their own people. The result is that after a long period of depression, the lumber industry in British Columbia is in a worse condition than it ever was. The lumbermen hope that with a good crop, large orders will come for lumber. They hoped the same last year, but the expectation was never realized. Money is being lost on every board cut. There has been a little activity in shingles, but with an increase in duty in the United States, these mills will have to close.

Fight for Supremacy.

What has happened in the lumber industry is being repeated in regard to fruit, with the addition in this instance of the American invader having the effrontery to dictate. The particulars of complaint are set forth by Mr. S. J. Fee, manager of the Vernon Fruit Company in Saskatchewan. In commenting on conditions this year, he refers to what took place a year ago. Then there was a fight for supremacy, with the Canadian coming out on top. The starting of it was a demand from the American controlled distributing companies of orders, else they would sell through their competitors and shut them out of the markets on the prairie. The reply was that it was strange if a Canadian could not sell Canadian goods in a Canadian market without paying tribute to an American company. On that occasion the threat was made that the market would be flooded with American fruit, and it was done with a consequent waste and loss. There is a duty of 48 cents a crate on imported strawberries, which is the fruit that has come up for notice so far this year, but it must be remembered that these are grown in Missouri with cheap negro labor, and can be produced with profit at about $1.50 a crate. This, however, is not the only disadvantage.

American Market Protected.

With cheap labor, the British Columbia grower knows where he is at. It is the dumping that works the most harm. If fifteen cars of fruit are in Minneapolis, with a good market for only ten, sooner than put the other five on the market causing low prices all through, the ten are sold at a good price, while the other five are dumped into Canada. Loss is risked, knowing that the price on the first ten will cover it, with the added advantage of maintaining a strong market. The Americans keep their own markets strongly protected by a stout tariff wall, and not only have their own territory but the Canadian as well. The Government in the lumber instance has never taken action, and judging from its action in that instance it is almost safe to assume it will remain inactive in regard to fruit. The development of a principal industry in a Western Province seems to concern very little the powers at Ottawa, which seem to have such strong affiliations with the East.

TRADE INQUIRIES FROM OVERSEAS.

The following are recent inquiries relating to Canadian trade, received at the office of the High Commissioner for Canada, 17 Victoria Street, London, S.W.:—

Asbestos.—Lancashire firm desires communication with Canadian firms who mine and crush asbestos.

Varnishes, etc.—Birmingham firm manufacturing varnishes, colors, and paints desires Canadian represenatives.

Bedsteads.—Firm in the Midlands of England desires names of Canadian bedstead makers who might be interested in a specialty in japans.

Wire Rope.—Yorkshire firm manufacturing wire rope wishes British Columbia agents.

Cobalt Ore.—London firm desires names of Canadian shippers of cobalt ore.

Tinplate Machinery.—London firm wishes Canadian agents for the sale of machinery of all kinds for tinplate works and rolling mills; and works' stores, such as hot and cold neck greases and patent suet for sheet and bar rolls and rolls of every description, lubricating oils, etc.

Cheese and Butter.—Firm in South Wales desires names of Canadian exporters of cheese and butter.

Clothing.—Yorkshire firm manufacturing down quilts and clothing desires communication with a reliable party in Montreal or Toronto open to take up their representation.

Fusel Oil.—London firm desires to get into touch with Canadian distillers who may have fusel oil for disposal.

Provisions.—A correspondent in Denmark is desirous of hearing from Canadian exporters of provisions.

Inquiries from the branch for city trade inquiries, 73 Basinghall Street, London, E.C.:—

Lobsters.—A firm in Gothenburg, Sweden, claiming a connection among buyers of canned lobsters wishes to act for Canadian packers and shippers.

Flooring Blocks.—London firm which handles large quantities of prime maple flooring blocks, cut to dimensions, invites samples and quotations from Canadian manufacturers who are in a position to make large and regular shipments.

Cottons, etc.—Lancashire company manufacturing cotton cloths suitable for servants' dresses and aprons, and also flannelettes for shirts and underclothing, desire Canadian resident agents.

Sulphite Browns, etc.—London firm desire communication with Canadian paper mills manufacturing sulphite browns, caps, etc.

WESTERN GRAIN ROUTES.

(From Our Own Correspondent.)

Vancouver, June 29.

The telegraphic announcement that Mr. David Horne, chief grain inspector for Canada, in a London interview discourages the shipment of wheat via the western ports of Canada, holds no fears for the cities on the Pacific Coast. He declares that there is a danger of the grain becoming heated while en route. It is hardly possible to tell a man in Mr. Horn's position much about the grain business, but in regard to heating he will know that for years wheat has been successfully shipped from Puget Sound ports round the Horn to Old Country markets. This being the case, it is rather late in the day to raise the cry of danger in heating.

The greatest increase in the grain acreage is west of Moose Jaw or Swift Current, as far as it effects the Pacific Coast, and as the eastern route has all it can handle now, what is to become of the surplus? Trade like water finds the easiest channels, and the shippers of the North-West, with the aid of the railway companies, will work their own salvation. Newspaper arguments will have little effect on the outcome. Experiments so far in Canada have demonstrated the entire success of the Western Canadian grain route to Europe.