

THE BRITISH COLUMBIA COMMERCIAL JOURNAL

ISSUED EVERY TUESDAY AT VICTORIA, B. C.

SUBSCRIPTION - - \$2.00 PER YEAR.

Advertising Rates on Application.

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VICTORIA, TUESDAY, JUNE 7, 1892.

THE FRUIT INDUSTRY.

The appointment of Mr. Ernest Hutcherson, of Ladner's, as inspector of fruit pests in this Province, is a move by the Government in the right direction. There are numbers of pests by which what is destined to be an important industry—that of fruit-growing—in this Province is materially disadvantaged, and any endeavor to stop them by preventative or curative measures is a matter that is deserving of every attention. Mr. Hutcherson belongs to a family that have made fruit farming their specialty and from the point of view of experience—and of devotion to the subject as well—is fully qualified for the position. In connection with this subject, it may be observed that the Province is far from supplying the demand for home consumption. The City of Puebla, a few evenings since, brought for the Victoria market no less than sixty tons of California fruits—some of which, although it is yet early in the season, might certainly have been produced here. We note that at a meeting held on Saturday night the business of Okell & Morris, preserve manufacturers, has been formally taken over by an incorporated company bearing a similar name, and the new organization contemplate the construction of new buildings and the operation of a much larger plant, having all the latest improvements.

FISH PROTECTION.

It will strike most people as being very singular that, whether for fish or game, those who ought to know cannot agree as to what are the proper limits of the close season. Year after year, the question is fought out in our different provincial legislatures and at Ottawa, too, the subject, so far as it comes under the Federal purview, is given considerable attention. Mr. Wilnot was here only a short time ago, and we anticipate from him an elaborate, if not learned, disquisition on the subject. The latest developments in this direction are the complaints of Puget Sound fishermen against the State law of Washington which they say in prohibiting the catch of salmon on Puget Sound and its tributaries from March 1st to June 1st, works great hardships on the fishermen, and gives no protection to the fish; that the salmon come into the Sound in very small quantities during the closed period, going to the mouth of the streams and along the shores seeking food, but not to spawn, as the water is too cold. They contend that it would be all right to pro-

tect salmon in the fresh water streams from say October 15 to December 1, when they are spawning, but there is no occasion for protecting them at all in the Sound.

MORE WILNOT.

Premier Abbott, as near as can be gathered from the meagre Ottawa despatches, has announced that the practice of throwing offal into the Fraser River shall, as far as possible, be stopped. In many quarters—indeed, among the greater number of the canners and many other people, too—the opinion prevails that there is no need for a rigid rule with respect to offal. The quantity of water passing the canneries is so great that it is not affected by the offal thrown into it which is carried away to the sea or eaten by fish before it has time to decompose. Moreover, it is claimed that if the water were polluted, the salmon do not remain long enough in it to be in the slightest degree injured by it. But Mr. Wilnot—the obstinate—self opinionated—Mr. Wilnot, who appears almost as if he owned the Fishery Department and ran the entire Government, in the face of all the facts and the experience of men who have been here all their lives, and have the greater part of their resources embarked in the salmon industry—holds a view contrary to theirs and insists that Government carry out his offal regulations. It is time Mr. Wilnot had his comb cut, and cut down pretty close, too.

GRANTS TO RAILWAYS.

It is announced from the capital that Premier Abbott took strong exception to a motion recently presented in the Senate that land grants to railways should, in the future, be done away with. Sir John Abbott has been a railway man and knows how much encouragement and solid backing has been given in this way to enterprisers which without the land grant would have utterly failed to commend themselves to investors and speculators. It is much easier to make a land grant than to raise the money which that land represents in value, while the lands, as a rule, being in the vicinity of a road, are opened up and given a demand which without the road they would not possess.

Naturally, in not a few instances, this land grant business has been done to death in some sections, and valuable charters have been locked up and made of no utility—but, on the contrary, a source of material disadvantage because they have been tied up for a certain period pending the good pleasure or the convenience of the company which had for the time being the right to them. The whole of this subsidy business—municipal and legislative—direct or indirect—whether for railway or other enterprises, requires to be looked into. That there is rottenness in it has been demonstrated by the experiences of the Baie des Chaleurs railroad and other roads in the Northwest and elsewhere, but with the Premier, we are inclined to think that, at any rate for the present, no hard and fast rule can be arrived at.

BLAINE'S RESIGNATION.

Apparently President Harrison prefers Mr. Blaine's room to his company, for the wily Secretary of State—the most potent factor in the Cabinet—has resigned, and the chief magistrate of the United States does not appear to be very much concerned about it. He may have known or suspected what was coming, but, like the brook, men may come and men may go, affairs of state go on. On the other hand, whether in or out of office, Mr. Blaine will, so long as he has health and strength, continue to be a leader, and if he and the President cannot agree, so much the worse for the latter. As experience has shown, the "plumed knight," as he is termed, can, if he does nothing more, sulk in his tent, and by doing so do an infinite amount of mischief to the Republican party—and they know it.

Will the next Presidential candidate be Harrison or Blaine? That is the question which is perplexing many people. Whether in or out of office, Mr. Blaine is bound to be a political power, either openly or by wire pulling, at which latter he has the reputation of being an adept. It has long been apparent that he has been "almost persuaded" to be a candidate for the next Presidential nomination, and may be that this his, so far, latest departure is but preliminary to another Blaine boom which he will not again have the face to affect to discountenance. Now is the time for Mr. Blaine to speak out and declare his intentions. He is strong, exceptionally strong. Both the home and the foreign policy, for which he is accredited with a big share of the responsibility, are generally acceptable, and the twisting of the lion's tail, in which he has indulged in order to capture the Irish vote, is gratifying to at least one influential element of the population. Indeed, the prowess of Tippecanoe and the public record of his grandson, the President, can hardly be expected to bring down the scale if the man from Maine he placed on the other side. As it is, there is a mystery about Presidential possibilities. Grover Cleveland and James G. Blaine have strong claims upon their respective parties.

In making calculations it must not be forgotten that it was the Republican Mugwumps who materially contributed to the success of the former, and so they may again, provided, as some already fear, any rivalry that may exist on the Republican side throws the influence of one or other over to the Democrats. A straight party fight between two straight party men upon a straight party platform would be extremely interesting, and we upon this side the lines might watch it with equanimity, for whatever the result it could hardly affect Canada, which only by way of diversion is occasionally taken into special consideration, and that in view of a Presidential contest, in connection with which it is striven to take some kind of an issue. We may rest assured that none of the politicians appreciate us very highly, except perhaps political specialists of the stamp of Erastus Wiman, who are always expecting that the public anticipate that they will do some great thing. Meantime American politics proper are getting somewhat animated, if not sensational.