

BRITISH COLUMBIA.

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British Columbia Business Review.

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Business has very much improved in nearly every line, and the demand is increasing for all staples. On Saturday business men generally report having done an unusually large trade.

It is now pretty certain that the salmon run in the Fraser has been a failure this year and the cannors are now considering the advisability of putting up cohoes. It is said that the entire Fraser river pack will not exceed 40,000 cases. At Alert Bay the cannery there has started in canning clams instead. It is a wonder that the trade in canned clams is not greater, as when properly put up the Alert Bay canned clams are equal to anything on the market, and for clam-chowder are superior, if anything, to the fresh clams. This is probably due to the fact that clams will stand a good deal of cooking. At Rivers Inlet it is understood the pack is short also but the Skeena River pack has been full and is as follows: Windsor cannery, 11,250 cases; North Pacific cannery, 11,250 cases; Inverness cannery, 11,250 cases; Standard cannery, 11,250 cases; Cunningham's factory, 11,250 cases; British American cannery, 11,250 cases; Balmoral cannery, 11,250 cases; Royal Canadian cannery, 12,000 cases. Total pack on Skeena, 99,750 cases.

The question now for the authorities to consider is the benefit of the hatchery on the Fraser river supply of salmon. The hatchery has been running for some years and the present is one of the worst years ever known. The cannories have contended that the hatchery was of little or no benefit and if it cannot alter the natural conditions which exist in the Fraser and which produce two years of plenty and two years of scarcity in salmon then its usefulness may be questioned. Up to the present these conditions have not been altered materially and some doubts are being expressed. Last year it looked as though a change was to be brought, but the bright hopes inspired then have been largely dispelled now.

Talking about matters piscatorial, it may be mentioned that oyster fisheries have been inaugurated in this province, and the native beds in the vicinity of Chemainus have been leased by the government and experiments will be made in introducing the eastern oyster. Conditions out on this coast do not seem to be so favorable as on the Atlantic coast, judging by the native oyster of both places. His natural enemy here, the star fish, is in great abundance; but from the latter protection is possible. The greatest drawback here is the abundance of mineral constituents in the water and sea bed, which affect the flavor and in some way affect the growth.

Notwithstanding the temporary depression which we are sharing in common with the world, there never was a time when so much railway construction was promised and likely to take place. It has definitely been announced that the C. P. R. Co. has commenced or is about to commence the line through the Crow's Nest Pass, a step which has no doubt been hastened by the news of the Nelson and Fort Sheppard coming into Nelson. D. C. Corbin, of the Spokane and Northern, has purchased the charter, has deposited the necessary security with the provincial government and sent out the surveyors to locate the line. Engineers have been at work locating the line of the Revelstoke and Arrow Lake railway, a subsidy for which was given at last session of the Dominion Parliament, and work is likely to proceed without delay. On Vancouver Island the Victoria and Saanich Railway is also being located, the

bonds for which have been guaranteed by Victoria city, and which will in all probability be built. Surveys are out on the line of the proposed Canada Western, and a deposit has been made with the government, but this is an earnest not of its being built, but of simply of an earnest effort being made to test the feasibility of the scheme, after which no doubt capital will be interested and the line gone on with, if possible. The C. P. R. has called for tenders for the construction of a line of railway from Vancouver to Ladner's Landing. A by law is now before the citizens of Vancouver asking them to bonus the Northern Pacific to come in from Sumas City and from present appearances it may pass. The Chilliwack railway has hung fire for a long time, and action now depends upon receiving a subsidy from the Dominion Government, which was expected last session, but for some unexplained reason did not come to pass. However, it is promised just as soon as the financial features of it can be arranged. It is one of the most needed railways in the province, to open up the richest agricultural sections in the province, which at the present time has only slow and round about communication. There is also a good deal of activity in the southern Okanagan district. The C. P. R. Co., with commendable enterprise, as soon as it took over the Shuswap and Okanagan line of railway, placed steamers on the Okanagan Lake and opened a fast line of express from the southern end of the lake to the boundary and now close and quick connections can be made, not only opening a new country in British Columbia to trade, but securing to the C. P. R. the business of a large section of United States south of the boundary. It is reported that D. C. Corbin and the C. P. R. Company will join hands and that the Shuswap and Okanagan Railway will be continued to the boundary to make connections with a line of Corbin's projected from the south. There is the usual accompaniment of activity of the kind, viz., the plotting of a town site or two.

In addition to the above there, are of course, any number of railway schemes—none to the moon as yet, but some of them very near it—but the foregoing are those most seriously considered and which are most likely to materialize.

As will be seen elsewhere in this issue Major Clarke, head of the deep sea fishing enterprise in this province, has come and gone again. His visit this time was the result of Hon. John Robson's death, which necessitated his returning again to make certain arrangements with the government not otherwise possible. He will make every arrangement necessary and use every precaution in connection with the shipment of fishermen to the west coast. About fifty families will be sent out at first, and not a stone will be left unturned to secure their comfort and the success of the enterprise.

Chief Justice Begbie has given a decision in the supreme court with respect to the retail traders' bylaw of the city of Victoria, under which a conviction was made and an appeal taken therefrom. An agent named Poole was fined \$50 and costs and in addition was made to take out a license at a cost of \$50. The Municipal Act of 1891 gives power to make bylaws as to shop and trade licenses under section 96, subsection 96, by section 166, subsection 12: "Every person who either as principal or agent solicits or takes orders for the sale by retail of goods, wares or merchandise to be supplied or furnished by any person or firm doing business outside of the province, and not having a permanent and licensed place of business within the province," may be charged with a license fee not exceeding \$50 for six months. It is admitted that Poole is a person coming within this description. By sec. 165, "Every person using or following within the Municipality any of the trades, occupations or professions enumerated in sec. 166 or the subsections thereof, shall take out a periodical license therefor, for such period as in the said section set out, pay-

ing for such license such periodical sum as is there specified," payable to the collector in advance. The Chief Justice's decision sustained the connection under the municipal retail license by law. This has long been a vexed question in this province as in the east and H. A. Lordship's ruling sets the matter at rest so far as British Columbia is concerned.

The Lumber Manufacturers' Association of the North-west has decided to class Pacific coast hemlock as Alaska pine, it being altogether different from the eastern hemlock. It is reported that a large lumber combine is to be formed, which will include all the mills from Mexico to Alaska. It is not definitely stated whether British Columbia manufacturers have decided to join it or not, as the scheme originates on the other side of the line. The object is to establish uniform rates, restrict the cut to legitimate demands of the trade, and as far as possible regulate the foreign trade. The unsatisfactory condition of the lumber market for the past year or two, the excess in output and the low prices and disastrous competition have led to this.

Fine weather is prevalent and the crops, though late, are turning out well. There will be no exhibit sent to the eastern fairs this year from British Columbia. The World's Fair, the small pox epidemic and the demands on the public purse all combine to prevent it. A small exhibit of fruits, however, will be likely handed over to the C. P. R. Co. to exhibit in Toronto and elsewhere.

B. C. Market Quotations.

FLOUR AND FEED, etc.—The market is firm, and business reported good. Prices for feed wheat have recovered as the result of the samples put on the market some time ago being now all disposed of. Hay is \$17 a ton. Quotations are: Manitoba patents, \$5.85; strong bakers, \$5.45; ladies' choice \$5.75; prairie lily, \$5.65; Oregon \$5.75; Spokane \$5.65; Enderby mills—Premier \$5.85; three star \$5.75; two star \$5.10; oatmeal eastern \$3.40; California granulated, in gunies, \$4.35; National mills, Victoria \$3.65; rolled oats eastern \$3 to \$3.25; California \$3.75; National mills \$3.75; cornmeal \$3.10; split peas \$3.50; pearl barley \$4.50. Rice—The Victoria rice mills quote wholesale: Japan rice, per ton, \$77.50; China rice, do, \$70; rice flour, do, \$70; chit rice, do, \$25; rice meal, do \$17.50; chopped feed \$32 to \$33 per ton; bran \$24; shorts \$25; oats \$30 to \$32; wheat 32 to \$35; oil cake \$10; hay, \$17. Wheat is quoted in car lots for feed No. 2 regular at \$23 to \$28 per ton; oats \$26; chop barley \$27. California malting barley \$26 to \$27 f.o.b. in San Francisco. California chop \$32 to \$33; The Western Milling Co.'s quote bran in car lots, \$19.50 per ton; shorts, \$20.50; mixed chop, \$25; rye, \$38; patent flour, \$5; strong bakers, \$4.60; Graham flour, \$4.60. Dealers report demand better.

DAIRY.—Butter is slow and stocks large. Eastern creamery is 25c to 26c; pickled Manitoba dairy is 18c, and second quality 15c to 16c. Some of the north west dealers have been asking f.o.b. the price of butter here. At present dairy stock is not in demand, but may be expected to improve shortly. Cheese remains unaltered at 12½c.

EGGS.—Eggs are advancing. Eastern stocks have reached the market in good shape and are freely purchased.

FRUITS, NUTS, Etc.—There is little demand for evaporated goods and dried fruits at this season and consequently prices are largely nominal. Fresh fruit is coming rapidly and is being bought up freely. Perhaps one-fifth of the fruit that finds its way on the market is from British Columbia, perhaps not that. Generally speaking, it is inferior as yet, and sent to the market in very bad shape. Prices are as follows: California lemons, \$6.50; Sicilies, \$9.00 to \$10.00. Coconuts, \$1.00 per dozen; bananas, \$3.50 to \$1.00, Turkish figs, 14½c; almonds, 18c; walnuts, 15c;