

### Our Pacific Province.

With the completion of the C.P.R. through the mountains of British Columbia, a new life has dawned upon the Pacific province. Though British Columbia was a member of the Canadian Confederation for several years previous to the construction of the railway, that membership might be termed merely nominal. True, the province elected members to the Canadian Parliament, sent its representatives to Ottawa, and was subject to the customs and general laws of the Dominion; but in the important direction of trade and commerce, British Columbia could hardly be considered a part of the Dominion. Its trade, both import and export, was carried on, not with the provinces and territories of Canada, but principally with Great Britain and the States of the Pacific coast to the south, especially California. The three principal exports of the province—canned salmon, lumber, and the products of the mines—were almost unknown in other parts of Canada. On the other hand the manufactures of Eastern Canada were not largely to be had in the markets of British Columbia. Now the

#### SCENE IS CHANGING;

we say changing, because the province is not yet entirely reconciled to the new order of things. In place of British and California goods, the products of Eastern Canada and the Northwest are crowding upon the markets of British Columbia. In turn also the products of the province are finding their way eastward to other parts of the Dominion. Instead of being an isolated province, with little in common with the rest of the country, British Columbia is rapidly being brought into harmony with the national pulse. It is not to be expected that such a change could come about without some indications of friction in certain quarters. The derangement which the commerce of the province has undergone could not but cause depression and dissatisfaction in some directions. The closing up of the old channels of trade and the opening of new could not be expected to work to the perfect satisfaction of all concerned. So it has been in the case of British Columbia. Some few individual interests have certainly suffered by the new order of things, and a people naturally conservative from long isolation, have not viewed the change with general satisfaction. The manufactures of Eastern Canada, being of different quality and pattern from those formerly used, have not always been kindly received, likewise the different style of doing business in the east has not infrequently been a matter of adverse comment. Hence it is that British Columbia is still a large importer of British and foreign goods in proportion to population, as compared with other parts of Canada, though the geographical position of the province also has something to do with this fact.

As already stated, some interests have perhaps been injuriously affected by the change which has been going on of late in the commerce of the province, but taken as a whole, the result will certainly prove to the general advantage of the people. The country is being opened up to settlement; new industries will be developed and new avenues for commerce will be opened. New settlers are flowing in from

the east, and gradually but surely the province is becoming assimilated with the rest of Canada. In no respect has the completion of the railway been more marked than as regards the trade intercourse which has sprung up between Manitoba and British Columbia. During the past season

#### BRITISH COLUMBIA PRODUCTS

including fish, fruits and lumber, have found their way to Northwestern markets all along the line from Calgary to Winnipeg. On the other hand, Manitoba products, such as flour, feed, millstuffs, grain, butter, cheese, eggs, etc., are now largely used in British Columbia. This inter-provincial trade has come into existence entirely within the past few months, and is the result of a single season. The prospects are for a continuous growth of trade in the same direction, and with the experience now gained the result should prove more satisfactory in the future.

Owing to this trade intercourse which is so rapidly extending between Manitoba and the Territories and British Columbia, it is desirable that the business communities of the different sections should become better acquainted with each other. With this object in view the writer has undertaken the preparation of a series of letters, on matters particularly of a commercial and industrial nature, pertaining to the Pacific Province. British Columbia and the Northwest must in the natural course of events become very intimate in their trade relationship. These two great divisions are quite different in their leading features and resources, and on this account the products of each are required by the other. It is most desirable that Northwestern shippers should fully understand the requirements of British Columbia markets, in order that the greatest benefit may be derived from the trade. It will therefore be the object to endeavor to throw out in future letters some useful hints in the direction indicated. In the meantime, however, a fitting introduction to British Columbia would be to give a sketch of the

#### TRADE OF VICTORIA

the commercial, industrial and financial capital of the Pacific Province.

The readers of THE COMMERCIAL with some exceptions, are probably but slightly acquainted with the extent of the wholesale trade of Victoria. Perhaps many are hardly aware that the city has any standing as a wholesale centre, though as a matter of fact its importance in this respect is by no means inconsiderable. Victoria ranks amongst its business institutions wholesale houses in almost every branch of trade, and many of these are of the first order. A number of old and substantial firms are here engaged in the wholesale trade, some of these having a financial standing second to none in Canada. A glance over the commercial references will quickly dispel any belief that Victoria has no first-class houses. As a matter of fact the rating of the wholesale houses of the city is very high as a general rule, and the amount of capital represented in this way is much greater than would be naturally supposed, for a city with the population of Victoria. No failures of any consequence have occurred for years, and the trade of the city appears to be in a prosperous and healthy condition. An

enumeration of the houses engaged in wholesale trade, with a brief special reference to each would perhaps best serve to show the extent of the wholesale trade of the city. It will be noted that several of the houses have been established for a considerable length of time. Another feature which will be observed is, that several firms carry a general stock of staple goods, instead of confining their business to one branch of trade.

A glance at the commercial reference will show something over

#### 450 TRADING INSTITUTIONS

of all kinds in Victoria. This is exclusive of Chinese, of whom there are a large number in business in various branches of trade. Besides these there will be a number of smaller institutions which have been overlooked. Among this total of business establishments there are a number which may be classed as straight wholesale and jobbing houses. In wholesale dry goods there are several houses engaged either in this branch alone, or in connection with other lines. Lenz & Leiser handle foreign and domestic goods in this branch; also gents furnishings. They carry a heavy stock and do an exclusively wholesale trade. They also manufacture shirts, overhauls, smocks, cottonade goods, etc. Premises 50x80, two floors and basement, are occupied. Mr. M. Lenz established this business eight years ago, and about a year ago the business was changed to present style. C. Strouss & Co. handle dry goods and any goods principally, but also do a wholesale commission trade in other staple goods, and manufacture shirts, overhauls, etc. This firm is one of the oldest, having been established 20 years. Mr. C. Strouss resides in London, Eng., where the firm has an office for convenience in purchasing. J. H. Todd & Son do a wholesale trade in staple goods of several branches, including dry goods, clothing, hats and caps, groceries and provisions, etc. The firm is also proprietor of a salmon cannery on the north arm of the Fraser river, where they put up the Horseshoe brand of salmon. Mr. Todd was president of the board of trade last year. This house was established in 1872. A. B. Gray & Co. devote special attention to wholesale dry goods, though also handling some other staple lines. They also manufacture duck, denim and cottonade goods. The firm has handled liquors largely, but contemplates giving up this branch of business. Established 20 years. Turner, Beeton & Co. are wholesale general merchants, and import largely in dry goods and other branches of trade. They are also interested in the canning industry, and own two canneries on the Skena river, besides handling the product of other canneries. The firm is connected with H. C. Beeton & Co., of London, Eng. Mr. H. C. Beeton is agent general for the colonies in London. J. A. Caton & Co. do a wholesale trade in dry goods, furnishings, notions, jewelry, etc., and have been established five years. A. McLean & Co. do some jobbing trade in clothing, etc., though their business is principally retail. Imported goods are handled exclusively by the latter house. In

#### WHOLESALE GROCERIES

there are a large number of houses doing business alone or in connection with other branches, besides those handling groceries previously mentioned, in connection with the dry goods trade. S. J. Pitts deals largely in groceries, provisions, produce and green fruits.