

## Vancouver Board of Trade

At the last monthly meeting of the Board, the following communications were received: From Arthur Lindsay, secretary of the Postmaster-General, stating that the communication of the board re daily mail service with Nanaimo was receiving the attention of the Minister. From John Hardie, Deputy Minister of Marine, acknowledging the receipt of the letter of the board re the appointment of an agent of that Department with head-quarters at Vancouver. From Mr. Wolf, secretary of the Nanaimo board of trade, enclosing the following resolution passed at a meeting of that body: "That owing to the unnecessary delay in receiving eastern mails and freight, we, the council of the Nanaimo board of trade, respectfully urge that a daily mail service be subsidised to run between Vancouver and Nanaimo, such service to be performed by boats, capable of making the run in all weather."

The dry dock question was discussed informally, but nothing new elicited.

A lengthy discussion followed on the False Creek question. The value of the creek was admitted by all. The points discussed were the building of bridges across the creek, and the dumping of refuse from the mills into it. The building of bridges without draws, so as to interfere with navigation, was condemned. Finally Mr. Berteaux moved, seconded by Mr. Clark, that the secretary be instructed to communicate with the Harbor Master, and request him to put a stop to the throwing of refuse by the mills into False Creek. Carried.

Mr. Skene then brought up the question of the Trades License By-Law. He reminded the meeting of the strong position which the board took last year in regard to this by-law number 79, and also the strong public feeling there was against it. The board had at that time sent a deputation to the city council, and an understanding had been arrived at that the by-law should not be put in force. Now it seems that the by-law was being amended, though not as the board desired. Mr. Skene then took up the objectionable clauses and pointed out how they would adversely affect trade. The clause taxing commercial travellers \$10 was one; and that in which the wholesale trader was taxed \$25 was another, and the most objectionable feature of the by-law. He pointed out also that the clause in which real estate dealers were exempted while other commission men were taxed, was inconsistent, as real estate men were nothing else than commission men.

A general discussion followed in which decided opinions against the by-law were expressed.

Mr. Berteaux said that the by-law was smuggled through the council.

Mr. Skene moved the following resolution, which was carried by the board:—

In reference to by-law No. 102 of the city of Vancouver, as published in the *British Columbia Gazette* of July 17th, inst., this board is surprised to find that, notwithstanding the strong expression of public feeling and the representations made by the board to the city council regarding by-law 79, it is still intended to levy a trading tax on commercial travellers, wholesale and retail traders and butchers; and, further, that while by clause 10 of said by-law, real estate agents are specially exempted, the same clause levies a tax of \$20 on commission merchants or others

doing business on commission; and this board considers the imposition of such taxation as prejudicial to the commercial interests of the city, and strongly urges on the city council that by-law No. 102 should be amended by striking out the clauses referred to; and, further, that clause 57 of by-law 79 should be rescinded.

Mr. Berteaux moved, seconded by Mr. Ferguson, the following resolution:—

Whereas, by resolution of the city council of Vancouver, a special tax is being imposed upon resident traders in the city, this board desires to protest emphatically against such action as detrimental to the best interests of the city, inasmuch as resident traders already pay their share of civic taxation. This board considers that any such special tax is invidious and unfair to the citizens doing business in this city, and is class legislation which is to be deplored, and that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the city council.

The meeting then adjourned.

## The Business Situation.

It may be freely confessed that while the total volume of general trade is quite large, possibly larger, as has been claimed, than at any similar preceding period, yet there are several features which leave something to be desired.

The unsatisfactory conditions in the iron and steel industries, the woolen goods manufacturing industry, the coal trade, and, of necessity, the traffic in raw wool are more particularly noticeable. These taken in connection with a marked increase of labor disturbances within three months, has excited something more than curiosity as to underlying causes. There is no doubt that an enormous quantity of iron is going into consumption each week; in fact the total active blast furnace capacity on July 1 has been reported as only about 3,000 tons less than on June, 1, and this with the added statement that stocks of crude iron have not been accumulating at the furnaces. Yet prices have slowly, but surely, reacted \$1 to \$2, and the question is an open one whether the bottom has actually been reached.

The steel rail mills are fairly well employed and are said to have orders enough to keep them employed for three months to come. But the price—\$31 at eastern mills—is much complained of, notwithstanding it is \$4 per ton higher than a price at which rails have been sold over and over again.

The eastern woolen industry is in a distinctly unfavorable position. The increased list of failures among manufacturers and jobbers has been a matter of common notoriety, and recent similar failures would seem to indicate that the trouble has not all been eliminated. A very large proportion of New England woolen spinning machinery is idle, and the prospect is not for an early revival. There was an advance in prices for anthracite coal on July 1, and another on August 1 has been promised, but the consumption of anthracite since the first of the month has not called for the active distribution anticipated. In fact, the mid-summer business of the large coal producing companies has been disappointing.

The cotton and leather markets, on the contrary, have steadily improved both as to price and demand, and the outturn of boots and shoes has not only been very heavy, but in at this time noticeably large. Quite a number

of cotton mills have shut down, owing to the high price of raw cotton, but the industry as a whole has enjoyed a year of reasonable prosperity. The advance in the price of cotton is due primarily to the world's increased requirements thereof, but secondarily to the American crop having been very generally overestimated by the trade early in the season.

Live stock and provision exports, including hog, beef and dairy products, have been heavier than usual, and prices have been fully sustained. The leading cereals, too, have been well maintained in price, considering the excesses carried over on July as compared with like totals a year ago. Wheat goes into the new cereal year 9 to 10c. per bushel higher in price than one year ago, after a crop, as the government reports, 78,000,000 bushels larger than in 1888. It has now become an important subject of discussion in the grain trade whether wheat will be able to weather the opening months of the cereal crop year 1890 91 and hold on to the advance in price; for harvesting season is a time of decline.

But it is not alone in these conspicuous lines of trade and industry that the bulk of the enormous volume of general trade moving throughout the country is to be found; rather in the many thousand minor metal, woodworking or other isolated industries that have been constructed throughout the south, west and northwest within a decade. These smaller industries are generally encouraged and protected by the lines of railway along which they are located, and it is to them to a large extent that a large proportion of our industrial growth is due. The purely commercial side of the account is shown in our reports of bank clearings to have been expanded relatively much more at cities west of the Alleghanies than at the large Atlantic ports. Notwithstanding this, of course, New York city continues to furnish two-thirds of the total volume of bank clearings at 61 cities throughout the country as reported each week. This brief resume would seem to indicate, therefore, that relatively the greater activity in trade and industry is to be found at this time south and throughout the great west.

—Bradstreets.

## Dairy Matters.

The cheese factory plant at Grenfell, Assa. has been sold to go to Lethbridge, Albert.

The new cremery at Fort QuAppelle, Assa., is now in operation under the management of Mr. Herbison.

It is a well-known fact that a given quantity of cream in Manitoba produces more butter than a similar quantity in Eastern Canada.

The new cremery at Saltcoats, Assa., has been completed and put in operation, with Robert Herbison, late of Clinton, Ont., in charge.

Speaking of California butter, which is so largely consumed in British Columbia, a Vancouver commission merchant says:—Its only recommendation is that it is got up in neat rolls, is always hard, even in the dogs days, and is of course clean, also cheap. It is a mixture of tallow and butter. Its proper name is "butterine," and therefore is prohibited according to law. This is a matter that should interest the whole Dominion, but more especially that portion of it west of Winnipeg.