

## Our Pacific Province.

### VICTORIA INDUSTRIES CONSIDERED.

Victoria is by no means lacking in industrial institutions, though there is plenty of room for further extension in this direction. The need of an industrial population aside from the Chinese has been keenly felt. There has been a great deal of opposition to the Chinese in certain quarters, but it is difficult to see how the country could well get along without these people. White laborers and mechanics are scarce and very high priced, and it is certain that had manufacturers been obliged to depend entirely upon the latter, several of the principal institutions of Victoria would be obliged to close up at once. It would be found impossible to compete with the manufactures of cheap eastern labor at the price at which white labor has been for sale in British Columbia. Several of the industrial institutions of Victoria are kept alive, and made remunerative solely through the opportunities offered by Chinese labor. In course of time it will no doubt be found possible to extend manufactures with the aid of white labor, when the industrial population of the country is increased, as it certainly will, to a sufficient extent. In the meantime, however, the Chinese will have to be employed to quite an extent, if the manufacturing interests of the coast are to be kept up.

In considering the industries of Victoria the

#### ALBION IRON WORKS

undoubtedly stand at the head of the list. This industry was established in 1862, by Jos. Spratt, and was incorporated in 1882, and is now known as the Albion Iron Works Co. (Limited). The officers are: Robt. Dunsmuir, president; R. P. Rithet, vice-president, and W. F. Bullen, secretary. The works cover a large space of ground, embracing about sixteen average-sized city lots. The buildings are as follows: Machine shop 250x50; two storeys high; three foundries, one for stoves, 60x110; one for machinery, 90x50; and one for miscellaneous work, 50x100 feet. There is also a brass foundry shop, 65x30; blacksmith shop, 90x50; boiler shop, 240x50. The works are employed in turning out railway work, coal and other mining machinery, saw mill machinery, shipping machinery and appliances, contractors' work, steam engines of all kinds, boilers, stoves, etc. Lately a contract for bridging machinery for the Island Railway bridge across the harbor has been in hand, and also manufacturing steel tubing for water mains for Victoria water works extension. A great deal of work was turned out in connection with the construction of the Island Railway, such as car wheels, bridging, etc. It will be seen from the nature of the work turned out that the establishment is an extensive one, and contains a large amount of valuable machinery. It is in fact the leading industry of the district. From 100 to 150 men are employed; according to the season. Scotch pig and British bar iron and steel are used, which are imported by water. Pennsylvania coal is also used, and is brought from the east via Cape Horn. In addition to the Albion, there are two similar institutions in Victoria, though on a smaller scale. These are: The Vancouver Iron Works, Wilson Bros., proprietors, and the Novelty Iron Works, Thos.

Gowen, proprietor. Wilson Bros. have lately completed a new foundry building.

Another industry of considerable importance is the

#### BRITISH COLUMBIA SOAP WORKS.

of which Pendray & Co. are the proprietors. This business was established thirteen years ago, and has since enjoyed a satisfactory and steadily increasing business. Owing to the fact that the oils required in soap manufacture can be imported cheaply from San Francisco and other markets by water, it has been found possible to compete to good advantage with eastern goods in the home market, and indeed shipments have been made from this establishment to Eastern Canada, as well as to Manitoba and the Territories, in addition to largely supplying the local market. Mr. Pendray is a practical man, and he has given a great deal of attention to the manufacture of a soap especially adapted to the alkaline waters of the west, in which direction, he claims, to have attained very desirable results. The manufactures of the firm include all kinds of laundry and toilet soaps, washing powders, sal soda, glycerine balls, etc. A shaving soap is also manufactured, which has attained a market all over Canada. A special effort will be made to introduce the manufactures of this establishment into Manitoba and the Territories. There is also another soap manufactory in Victoria, of which McDonald & Co. are proprietors.

#### SHOE MANUFACTURING.

This is an industry which is carried on to a considerable extent, with the aid of Chinese labor, without this aid it would be found impossible, at the present time, to continue the industry, in competition with the cheap eastern goods. There are two establishments in Victoria engaged in the manufacture of boots and shoes in a wholesale way. These are: William Heathorn, and the Belmont Tanning and Boot and Shoe Manufacturing Co. (Limited). Wm. Heathorn established his business in 1872, now known as the Victoria Boot and Shoe Manufactory. The business grew steadily up to about three years ago, and since then has held its own, notwithstanding the keen competition with eastern goods. Mr. Heathorn suffered a considerable loss from fire last year, but he went to work at once to rebuild, and is now in full running order. He owns the premises used as the factory, and two flats, each 60x90, are occupied in manufacturing, besides outbuildings for storage, etc. All classes of boots and shoes are manufactured, excepting fine ladies' goods. The goods turned out are of a more substantial nature than eastern make, and are better suited to the requirements of the country. In this way competition is made possible. For a time eastern goods crowded the home industry very hard, owing to their cheapness, but, not being adapted to the special requirements of the trade in the direction of durability, they are now thought to be less sought for. The trade extends all over the province, but particularly along the coast northward to the Alaska boundary, and into the Yukon country. About 70 hands are usually employed in the factory. The Chinese perform the rougher work, and are paid about \$30 per month. White men are employed for foremen and for finer work; their wages ranging

from \$15 to \$18 per week. New machinery is now being put in, which will do the work of a number of men. It is the intention to enlarge the premises in the spring, by continuing the building through to the street at the back. Mr. Heathorn also has a tannery in connection with his shoe business, where all kinds of leather are manufactured, except fine qualities, such as French calf and kid. Leather is manufactured both for sale and for use in the shoe factory. Abundance of hemlock bark can be obtained in the province for tanning, but oak tanned leather must be imported owing to the scarcity of oak bark.

The Belmont Company has been established fourteen years. Wm. Dalby is the manager of the company, and Wm. Wilson is chairman. In the busy season as many as 70 men have been employed. The manufactures of the company are largely substantial goods, suitable for the mining and Indian population, but finer goods are also turned out. A great many top boots are manufactured, there being a proportionately large demand for this class of foot wear. The company has felt eastern competition keenly, and for a time the west was heavily overstocked with the cheap makes of the east. Something of a reaction is now thought to have set in, and the home trade is said to be on the mend. The company also owns a tannery, where leather of all kinds except some very fine qualities are manufactured, for sale and home use. Harness leather from this establishment has been shipped eastward into the Territories.

In addition to the two wholesale shoe manufacturing concerns, there are an unusually large number of establishments where boots and shoes are made to order, indicating that the people of the coast go in more for custom-made shoes than is usual in the east. This is probably owing to the damp climate of the winter season, which necessitates something more substantial than the ordinary shop goods. Another feature of the coast shoe trade is the very extensive use of cork-soled goods, also as a protection against moisture. Whilst dealing with the leather trade it might be noted that Victoria has a third tannery, lately operated by Johnson & Magill, but temporarily closed owing to the death of the junior partner. This tannery was largely engaged in operating with oak bark, imported from San Francisco. Mr. Johnson expected to resume the business shortly.

#### FURNITURE MANUFACTURING.

This is an industry which is carried on at Victoria on a considerable scale. There are two factories engaged in manufacturing in a wholesale way, in addition to the smaller concerns. J. Weiler is the proprietor of one of the large factories, located on Humboldt street, a little out of the business portion of the city. Large show and stock rooms and office are also kept on Fort street. About 50 men are employed, and an extensive variety of furniture is manufactured from native and imported woods. The maple found on Vancouver Island is an excellent furniture wood, and takes a beautiful finish. It is largely used for fine furniture. Douglas pine is also largely used; also spruce, for common furniture. The size of the factory is 40x80, three storeys, and is well