

BRITISH COLUMBIA.

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British Columbia Business Review.

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Trade is not particularly brisk. The cold, fall rains which have been unusually severe this season, have had a depressing effect, and the same kind of weather is likely to continue for several weeks yet. One thing which relieves the situation is the approach of the holidays, which always imports an element of activity into trade in certain lines. Generally speaking there is no noticeable change in the business situation. The volume of trade is large and a good deal more might be done by wholesale men, except for the limiting of credit which is carefully looked after. One favorable condition noted is that the general tendency is towards the cash basis of doing business. The coal and wood dealers are pretty generally adopting it; the butchers and grocers are getting as near it as they can and it would not be at all surprising if the stringency in the money market did not before very long make it general. "Live on less and pay as you go," would be an excellent method if it could be carried out fully.

Lumber still remains dull, both at home and for export. It is quite safe to say that few of the mills in the province are making money at the present time.

Seal skins have gone up 40 per cent. in the London market and the sales of British Columbia dealers have been very satisfactory, some, if not all, realizing handsomely. Unfortunately, the sealers, most of them, sell at low figures.

Business in flour, feed, grain, vegetables, game and fish is steady and featureless.

Fresh meats are selling cheaper owing to a cut among the butchers. Cured meats are scarce, stocks not yet arrived from the east, and prices bullish, but this will be only temporary.

Canned salmon is reported dull in England. About all the season's pick has been disposed of, however, at good prices.

Dairy products are firm and the prospects are for higher prices. Fresh fruits, with the exception of apples and grapes, are out of the market. Japanese oranges are coming and selling at from 75c to \$1 per box.

Prospects for the coal trade have much improved, owing to the congested state of trade in the San Francisco market having been largely relieved. There is therefore greater activity in the mines and in the shipping. The volume of shipping all round is just now pretty large, although locally it is quiet. There is the usual shrinkage at this season in the Oriental traffic. Merchant vessels have done a fairly large business of late. A good deal of lumber is being carried, but not profitably.

B. C. Market Quotations.

FURS, SEALS, ETC.—The very latest advices from London in regard to the fur sales are very encouraging and have made the dealers jubilant. At Thursday's sale prices are reported by cable to have advanced forty per cent., with consequently big profits. Some of the dealers have realized large sums. Cablegrams from London state that marten is quoted 10 per cent. higher; Halifax, Eastern and British Columbia mink 10 per cent. lower and western and southwestern mink the same as at the summer sale. Seal skins averaged in recent sales about 57s.

FREIGHTS—No change, and not much business offering. Lumber freights from British Columbia or Puget Sound are quoted as follows:—Valparaiso for orders

30s 3d; direct port on west coast, South America 33s 9d.; Sydney 30s; Melbourne, Adelaide or Port Pirie 35s to 37s 6d.; United Kingdom, calling at Cork for orders, 45s; Shanghai 42s 6d.; and Yokohama 40s nominal. Coal freights are quoted: Nanaimo or Departure Bay to San Francisco \$1.75 to \$2; to San Diego or San Pedro \$2.25 to \$2.50.

SUGARS AND SYRUPS.—The B. C. Sugar Refinery quote in not less than 100 bbls lots as follows: Powdered icing and bar, 6½c; Paris lumps, 6½c; granulated, 5½c; extra C, 4½c; fancy yellows, 4½c; yellows, 4½c; golden C, 4½c. Above prices are for barrels or bags; half-barrels and 100 pound kegs, ½c; more, boxes ½c more.

Wholesale merchants quote: Dry granulated, 5½ to 5½c; extra C, 5½c; fancy yellow, 5c; yellow, 4½c; golden C, 4½c; syrups, per lb, 3c. Red-pith's syrups, 2½ tin, 15c; do, 8 lb tins, 50c; do, kegs, 3½c per lb. Syrups are quoted by the B. C. Refinery Co.: Finest golden, in 30 gal. bbls, 2½c; ditto, in 10 gal kegs, 3c; ditto, in 5 gal. kegs, \$2.25 each; ditto, in 1 gal tins, \$4.50 per case of 10; ditto, in ½ gal tins, \$6 per case 20. Prices cover delivery in Vancouver, and at Victoria, New Westminster and Nanaimo, and are subject to 2½ per cent. discount for cash in fourteen days.

DAIRY—Butter is very firm and creamery is being held by some firms at 30c, although sold by some as low as 27c. Manitoba dairy is about 23c. Cheese is steady at from 13½ to 14½.

FRUITS.—The only fresh fruits in the market are apples and grapes. The coast apples range from \$1.10 to \$1.50 per box, and eastern apples from \$5.25 to \$5.50 per bbl. Cranberries imported are \$12 a bbl, native 8c per lb.

FISH.—Salmon is quite scarce, and prices are Halibut 8c; salmon, 10c to 12c; codfish 6c to 7c; flounders 4c to 5c; sturgeon 4c to 5c; sole 10c.

VEGETABLES.—No change. California onions are quoted 1½c per pound; B. C. onions 1½c; turnips, beets and carrots, \$15 a ton; Fraser Valley potatoes average about \$14 a ton; and Ashcroft \$18.

DRESSED MEAT, LIVE STOCK, ETC.—Wholesale prices remain the same, but the price of meat has been reduced by the retailer. The butchers in Westminster have combined, and sell only for cash. Quotations are:—Live steers are quoted at 4c; cows 3½c; dressed beef, 7½c; lamb, \$4.50 a piece; dressed, 5½c; sheep, 5½c; mutton, 12c; hog, 8c; pork, 11c; calves, 7c; veal 11c.

GAME, POULTRY, ETC.—Poultry is scarce and game is not offered largely: Blue grouse, per pair, is worth 75c; pintails, 35c; mallards, 50c; teal, 20c; partridges, 50c; chickens, \$4.50 to \$5.50; ducks, 50c; geese, \$7; turkeys, 18c per pound, live weight. Venison, 5c to 6c per pound.

MEATS.—Prices of Canadian meats have advanced and stocks are limited. This is owing to non-arrival of consignments ordered. Quotations: Wiltshire cured hams, 16c; do backs, 15c; eastern hams 15½c; bacon 15c to 16c; rolls 13c; smoked sides, 12½c; long clear 12c; barrel pork, \$24; 3, 5 and 10 lb tins lard, 13c; 20 lb pails lard, 12½c; 50 lb tubs lard, 12c; tierces lard, 11½c. Commission agents quote American meats f.o.b. Victoria, duty paid as follows: Medium hams, 15½c per lb; heavy hams, 15½c; choice breakfast bacon, 15½c; short clear sides 13½c; and dry salt clear sides, 11c. Armour's white label pure lard, 10 lb pails, 15½c per lb.

COAL.—The coal outlook seems to be improving. Latest advices from San Francisco report the coal market to be as follows: "The receipts for the past week consist of 10,515 tons from the coast mines and 5,002 tons from foreign sources. The market is very firm in feeling and prices have a marked upward tendency. Stocks in the yards are daily diminishing in volume, and two or three domestic coals are already becoming rather scarce. There is an active demand for tonnage in Australia, but owners are holding for higher rates than shippers are willing to pay."

J. W. Harrison writes in reference to the San Francisco market: The receipts for the past thirty days from Australia have been very moderate, but liberal shipments have come to hand from the coal mines. Our winter trade has already commenced, but thus far the weather has been very mild. Quotations are a trifle higher than was the case last month, and a still further improvement in values can be looked for as soon as the winter rains set in. The quantity of coal to arrive here from Australia within the next three months is very light.

CANNED SALMON.—The season's wack is pretty well all cleaned out, the last shipments from the north now being loaded for England. Late advices report the British market dull.

LUMBER.—Foreign shipments are considerable, but prices are low and no improvement is noticeable in the demand. Low freights and low prices account for what shipments occur. No local quotations can be given and the following for foreign are nominal: Rough merchantable, ordinary sizes, in logs to 40 feet inclusive, per M. feet, \$9.00; deck plank, rough, average length, 35 feet, per M. \$19; dressed T. & G. flooring, per M. \$17; pickets, rough, per M. \$9; laths, 4 feet, per M. \$2.

FLOUR, FEED, GRAIN, ETC.—Continues steady and in good demand, yet without change. Quotations are: Flour, Manitoba patents, \$5.65; strong baker, \$5.30; ladies' choice, \$5.70; prairie lily, \$5.30; Oregon, \$5.55; Spokane, \$5.65; Enderby mills—Premier \$5.65; three star \$5.25; two star \$5.25; oatmeal eastern \$3.40; California granulated in gunnies, \$4.35; National mills, Victoria, \$4.25; rolled oats eastern \$3 to \$3.25; California \$3.75; National mills \$3.65; corn; meal \$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, \$31 per ton; bran \$19, shorts \$21; Man. oats, \$28; B. C. oats; \$26; wheat \$29 to \$32; oil cake, \$40; hay, \$16. Wheat is quoted in car lots for feed No. 2 regular at \$22 to \$23 per ton; oats \$24; chopped hay \$25. California malting barley, \$26 to \$27 f.o.b. in San Francisco. California chop, \$32 to \$33. The Western Milling Co. quote bran in car lots \$19.50 per ton; shorts, \$20.50; mixed chop, \$25; ye, \$38; patent flour, \$4.60; strong bakers \$5.30. Graham flour, \$4.40; B. C. wheat is quoted at \$29 to \$30 per ton, and oats at \$25; beans are 4c per lb. Hay is quoted at \$12 ton on the river bank or \$12.50 placed on the scows.

A Crofter Delegate.

Over a week ago a representative of the Glasgow Herald arrived in the province to obtain information regarding the crofter scheme, with a view to influence public sentiment at home on the scheme of crofter colonization now under way. Mr. Buick, the gentleman in question, interviewed a large number of persons regarding the matter and undoubtedly the result of his mission will soon be made known in the columns of the Glasgow Herald and other Old Country papers. It is quite probable that the report will not be altogether favorable, as there is every reason to believe that Mr. Buick is not only a sympathiser, but in co-operation with the Highland Land League, who oppose the colonization of the crofters on national and political grounds. It is very evident that in Scotland the scheme is looked upon in quite a different light than in this province. There it is a political question, entering deeply into the social and national problems arising out of conditions which has suggested emigration as a remedy. Apart from the question whether the crofters can make a living in this country at all, the commercial aspect of the scheme is entirely lost sight of. The success or failure of the enterprise as a commercial project, depending upon the supply and character of the fish and the market for the same, was one of the things of which Mr. Buick was