

PACIFIC SECTION

RESOURCES OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.

Fruit Exhibits Across the Atlantic—New Year Opens Brightly—Development of New Industries.

(From Our Own Correspondent.)

Vancouver, B.C., January 2nd.

The year opens with conditions altogether promising. In ordinary business circles, merchants report a better holiday trade than was expected; lumber manufacturers anticipate the resumption of activity, and mining operations are increasing.

Hon. R. G. Tatlow, minister of finance and agriculture, is back from an extended trip to Great Britain. He went with the primary object of attending the shows at which the exhibit of British Columbia fruit was displayed. He reports great success. Apart from the commendation received and the medals won, the province was, at the same time, brought particularly before the British people, by means of cinematograph pictures. At Birmingham it was necessary to keep two men at the door to hold back the pressure of people, so great was the desire to view the display of British Columbia's industries. Mr. Tatlow states that from what he heard he is sure that the work done on this trip, in which he was assisted by R. M. Palmer and Mr. Scott, will attract a good class of immigrants to the province in the near future.

New Offices in London.

While in London, Hon. Mr. Tatlow changed the location of the Agent-General's office. Formerly, it was in the eighth story of a building fronting on Finsbury Circus; now, commodious quarters have been secured on the ground floor, giving a more advantageous position. Several propositions directly affecting this province are already in hand. It may now be said that British Columbia is one of the best advertised of the provinces of the Dominion.

The time was found to be inopportune by Mr. Tatlow to press the request to have the provincial inscribed stock placed on the list of securities available for investment as trustee funds in Great Britain. Great objection exists on the part of the English treasury to widen the scope of that list, more particularly as the Imperial Government itself will soon be in the market for a large amount.

The Swift Company have recently established branches in a number of cities in British Columbia. Some time ago, this company completed the construction of a large packing plant at Edmonton, and since then stores have been opened in Revelstoke, Vancouver, Prince Rupert and other places. These are not operated in the name of the Swift people, although their interests are represented. It is the intention to make a bid for the trade here, which has been held almost exclusively by P. Burns & Company.

C. N. R. Real Estate Deal.

Definite announcement as made this week by L. C. Gilman, of Seattle, general counsel for the Great Northern Railway, that the purchases of real estate on False Creek, Vancouver, aggregating \$500,000, were made for his company. He further stated that the Great Northern will endeavor to co-operate with the Northern Pacific in the erection of large terminals here, and that any scheme these two companies may have in hand will in no way interfere with the project of the city to improve the False Creek basin; on the contrary, they will join in the work of improvement. The effect of these recent transactions has been to give an impetus to affairs generally, and to impart a confident tone. Because, perhaps, of the immense interests involved, railway companies are reticent as to what they propose, but it is conjectured that these companies, which are on the ground, are making every effort to become more firmly established before the Grand Trunk Pacific enters the arena.

With this activity on the lower mainland, the C.P.R. is pushing its extensions on Vancouver Island, and the contract for ties for the line across the Island to Alberni has already been let. From time to time, Victoria hears news of the action of one or other of the big railway companies that affects that city, and now that aggressive movement is being made, it should not be long before something definite is

given out. The capital city is not only the principal point on the Island, but holds a key position on the Fuca Straits, and the location and circumstances are all to her advantage.

Banks Enlarging Their Premises.

The Canadian Bank of Commerce moved this week into its handsome new building at the junction of Granville and Hastings Streets, the best corner in the city. The building is a massive and imposing granite structure, with every modern idea in its construction. It is located diagonally from the new federal building, another granite building, while on a third corner is the four-story stone Williams block. These are all located one block up from the C.P.R. depot, and the first corner struck by those who enter the city. They will give an air of substantiality that will at once create a good impression. The cost was about \$300,000. When William Murray, the manager, came here in 1893, his staff consisted of nine clerks. To-day, it is 38.

The Bank of British North America, which is located two blocks further down on Hastings Street, the main thoroughfare of the city, is doubling its capacity by the construction of a five-story addition. This building is of stone, and the addition will be in the same style of architecture. The expenditure will be close on \$100,000, and will give the bank fine quarters.

The Bank of Montreal has also been modernizing and enlarging its premises, and the improvements are now about complete. They will total about \$50,000. When the bank built on the corner of Granville and Dunsmuir Streets fourteen years ago, it was thought that the accommodation would be sufficient for twenty years. The growth of business has necessitated the enlargement. A large addition has been made in stone to conform with the main structure, and the old quarters have been entirely remodelled, including every convenience for the members of the staff.

To Repeal United States Lumber Tariff.

Despatches this week state that large lumber operators in the province are getting together at Minneapolis to plan a campaign of publicity for the repeal in the United States of the tariff on lumber. These men practically control the timber lands in British Columbia's interior, and to a large extent on the coast, and with the duty off they could find a large market south of the boundary, where they have personal interests and business connections. With the duty off and lumber going out of the country fast, it will not be long before the timber will almost entirely disappear. The present holders want to make money, and they see a way to do it. As a preventive against slashing of limits, the timbermen are urging the government to extend the tenure of the leases beyond 21 years, the present term. As matters now stand, they claim that if this is not done, those who have timber leased will endeavor to get it cleared off in the time specified, with the result that only the best will be taken, the refuse and smaller stuff afford feed for fire. Lumbermen anticipate legislation dealing with the matter at the session of the legislature, which opens next month.

On the steamer "Lonsdale," which has arrived on her regular trip from Mexico, was the first cargo sent out from Liverpool to arrive in British Columbia by way of Mexico. It was consigned to Victoria and Vancouver, and transportation took about 47 days via the Tehuantepec Railway. It is not improbable that this first consignment will be the forerunner of a big business in the future. When the Canadian-Mexican line was started, there was little freight offering, but with transportation comes business, and these boats will soon have all they can carry both ways. Development of shipping and commerce weans progress for the western coast of Canada.

Oil Refinery to be Established.

Another infant industry which has promise of expansion is that to be established by the British Columbia Oil Refining Company. A lease has been secured of the old terminal holdings of the C.P.R. at Port Moody, comprising 1,500 feet of front on Burrard Inlet. Fred. L. King, president of the Keystone Oil Company, of Seattle, is associated in the

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