

rangement that will ensure the building of an 80-ton blast furnace. From this industry, which will furnish iron cheaply, many other industries will spring.

The town council is considering the evidence of experts as to the best system of water works for the town. When that question is settled, a by-law will be submitted to the ratepayers and will undoubtedly be carried. We can therefore confidently expect a first-class water supply during the present year.

Your board took an active part in the numerous discussions relative to the street railway matter. So successfully has this complicated question been adjusted that the road is now an assured success. The owners of the road are empowered and obligated to build through to West Fort William, and we will early in this year have a complete street railway service from end to end of Fort William, and also connecting directly with the neighboring town of Port Arthur.

Although the town has made rapid progress during the past years we can confidently expect a larger growth for the coming year. Many substantial and costly buildings are already projected.

The canals, railway development and other matters are also dealt with.

To Improve Butchers.

The new State of Idaho has come to the front with a suggestion that might be studied to advantage by those living in some of the older states. Last week there was introduced into the legislature of Idaho a bill to establish butchers' schools. The bill provides that each county in the state shall organize and maintain a board for the examination of butchers, and that no butcher who shall not secure from one of these boards a certificate of proficiency in his trade shall be permitted to kill animals for food. The framers of this bill include many prominent physicians and meat dealers, and set forth as their reason for asking its passage that too many inexperienced men are employed in slaughtering live stock. The bad effects from work done by men who do not understand their business result from not properly bleeding the animals. The blood, when left in the meat, ferments and renders the meat unfit for food. They also claim that by leaving the hide on the animal after it is dead certain poisonous humors permeate the flesh, ruining its good qualities and afflicting its consumer with blood diseases. They recommend the Hebrew method of slaughtering animals.

If such a law is good for Idaho it is good for every other state in the union. There is probably no other industry followed throughout the country by more novices than the butchering business, and as the result of unskilful work directly affect human life and health it is a matter of vital importance.—*National Stockman*.

The Retail Fur Trade.

A marked change has taken place in the retail fur trade of this city during the past few years, says the *Montreal Trade Bulletin*, in consequence of retail dry goods merchants having gone into the business so extensively that it now comprises one of their leading departments. This change was a matter of very easy accomplishment, as customers, when making their purchases of dry goods, were naturally induced to select their furs from the attractive assortments spread before them, until now a large proportion of consumers go direct to the dry goods stores for their requirements. This has undoubtedly had a material adverse effect upon retail fur stores, which have lost a great portion of their former patronage and which has been a leading factor in precipitating the recent failures, showing liabilities of about \$120,000. Wholesale fur-

riers, however, have experienced a good business, as they have had to supply the dry goods houses, which have no doubt pushed the sale of furs to a greater extent than if the trade had been allowed to run in its old channels; and as they were content to receive a less percentage of profit than the retail fur stores had been accustomed to make, this also had the effect of increasing the sales at the dry goods houses. These are among the causes which divert the course of trade in the present day from one channel to another, as business will tend to the cheapest centres, just as water finds its level.

Pork Packing and Provisions.

The winter packing season has closed with a shortage in number of hogs greater than was generally looked for as late as the first of January. Exact figures cannot be stated at this time, but the final returns are not likely to vary much from 4,675,000. This compares with 7,760,000 last year, implying a decrease of approximately 3,085,000, with also a decided reduction in average weight. For the past week the total packing has been about 160,000 hogs, against 195,000 the preceding week, and 225,000 last year.

Comparing the totals now indicated with the estimates two weeks ago, when an aggregate of about 5,000,000 hogs for the season was suggested, or 32,000 more than appears to have been reached, the greater portion of the deficiency is represented by Chicago. Most of the other points of prominence have fallen short of the January estimates, although there are some exceptions.

But once in twenty years has the winter packing at Chicago been so small as this season. At St. Louis it has not been so small since 1869; at Milwaukee, since 1866; at Indianapolis, since 1873, at Kansas City, since 1855; at Cincinnati, since 1845.—*Cincinnati Price Current*.

British Columbia Notes.

The ship *Ivy* is at the Hastings saw mill, where she will load spars for the east.

American ship *Joy*, 1,151 tons, Capt. Lovell, is in port to load lumber at the Hastings mill for Wilmington, Del.

The *People's Journal* is the latest candidate for public favors in the weekly journal line. It is a labor paper published in Vancouver.

The new tramway short line from Westminster to Vancouver is about finished, and trams will be running over it next week.

The Hawaiian ship *Johnena*, 2,600 tons, is at Cowichan from San Francisco to load lumber for Port Pirie, under Robert Ward & Co's charter.

The New Westminster *Commonwealth* as a weekly has ceased to exist. A new company has been formed to run it as an illustrated monthly.

The Hudson Bay Co. are going to build a new store in Vernon, to be placed to the west of the present building and extend through from Coldstream street to Barnard avenue.

Sir William Campbell Stefney, Bart., is negotiating for the purchase of Col. Baker's beautiful place, Cranbrook, East Kootenay. It is expected about \$50,000 will be paid.

The Victoria board of trade has passed a resolution in favor of the abolition of the Provincial mortgage tax. The board is now comfortably installed in handsome rooms in its new building.

The Okanagan Telephone Co. have been incorporated, and held their first meeting for business and the election of officers. B. Lequime being elected president and T. Spence secretary.

The formation of a shingle trust has been delayed through one manufacturer standing out, but the others are making arrangements with the Retail Lumbermen's Association of Mani-

toba and the Territories that is hoped will make the trust a necessity.

The Westminster Board of Trade has held the annual election of officers. They are as follows: President, J. L. Trapp, re-elected by acclamation; vice-president, John Wilson, by acclamation; secretary treasurer, D. Dobson, by acclamation. Council: C. E. Woods, E. A. Wyld, C. G. Major, W. A. Keary, John Reid, D. J. Munn, W. A. Duncan, D. S. Curtis. Board of arbitration: H. Hoy, G. D. Brymner, W. J. Walker, E. A. Jenns. It was moved and carried that in consequence of the increasing wealth and population of the mainland of British Columbia, the law requiring the residence of three supreme court judges on the mainland should be enforced, and that the minister of justice be earnestly requested to take the necessary steps in that behalf.

Gold Commissioner Cummins is down from Donald and speaks most encouragingly of his section of the country. The recent discovery of a rich bed of Galena at St. Mary's near Fort Steel, is attracting a great deal of attention, and is believed to be one of the best things yet to hand. The lead is about 30 feet wide where exposed, and when Mr. Cummins left they were down some 36 feet without any variation in the quality of the material, which throughout is a very high grade. This splendid bed of ore was discovered last summer by two enterprising prospectors, Messrs. Bourgeois and Langell, and so excellent were samples produced that they found no difficulty in interesting capitalists in the undertaking. The worst of it is that the mine is somewhat out of the way, being 200 miles from Golden by wagon road, and there is the nearest smelter. However, it is hoped the difficulties of a transit will soon be overcome, as the Upper Columbia Navigation Co. are about to put a steamer on the waters. Their steamer at present only run as far as Jennings in connection with the Great Northern railway. The new discovery is said to be almost illimitable, and will no doubt attract a good deal of attention as soon as the season opens.—*Colonist*.

The Cost of Raising Wheat.

Will the cost of producing wheat in this country ever be accurately settled? One Minnesota farmer gives the following results of wheat raising, with sales at low prices. "Self, four horses and disk 25 days at seeding, \$100, seed wheat and oats, \$80; rent on 130 acres, \$65; two men, horses and header 12 days, \$96; threshing and marketing 1,114 bushels of wheat and 346 bushels of oats at 17c, \$393.60. Total cost of crop marketed, \$734.60. Value of crop at 45c for wheat and 30c for oats, \$1,055.10. Net profits \$320.50, or 43 per cent."

Another farmer, commenting on the foregoing figures, puts the case as follows. "It takes, on the basis above given, to plant, \$112.50; wear and tear on disk, \$5.00; seed, \$80.00 rent of land \$351.70, one-third of the crop, the present rent value in this country; binder wear and teas, \$24; wages to cut, \$90; twine, \$32.75; to thresh and market, \$393.50. Total, \$1,001.10. The net profits for the season's work is \$53.45. This does not include insurance and a score of other miscellaneous items, which always come in and would so increase the cost as to make it impossible to produce wheat at 45c at anything but a net loss.

It is noted that the difference in the estimates is largely in the rent of land, one putting that at \$65.00 and the other at \$351.70. It appears, therefore, that the difference in results depends upon the land value. Fifty cents an acre would require land worth no more than \$5.00, while the other calculation would pay rental on land worth five and a half times the value of the other, \$27.50 an acre, on a rental of 10 per cent of value, to cover interest and repair. The latter calculation based on land at \$27.50 an acre shows practically no profit in selling wheat at 45c a bushel, while the other shows a profit of more than 40 per cent on the capital employed.—*Milling World*.