

## British Columbia Trade Letter.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

Vancouver, Dec. 7.—Business is generally quiet, but firm. The bulk of the wholesale orders has been placed on the holiday trade and as usual at this season there is a lull in the wholesale trade. In the retail trade the merchants are already feeling the effects of approaching Christmas and most of them are largely stocked in anticipation. The volume of business generally is large, but collections are slow. One reason for that is the amount of capital invested in real estate, which has driven from regular mercantile channels a good deal of money that would otherwise be in circulation. This perhaps affects Vancouver more than any of the other three cities, but in the latter place a most buoyant feeling exists on account of the prospects for the coming spring and summer, which perhaps were never brighter, especially in the building line. The outlook, too, in the shipping line is favorable. In addition to the already established connections between Vancouver and Victoria, Nanaimo and China and Japan, regular boats will run to Alaska and along the north coast of British Columbia; up the Fraser to Westminster and beyond and it is thought that trial trips to Australia by steamer will be inaugurated. In all probability the dry dock scheme will be pushed, as the dry dock at Esquimalt is unable to accommodate all the ships, and the result, if the Vancouver scheme does not mature, will be the construction of one some place south of the line. It is understood the delay is for the purpose, if possible, of securing better terms from the city.

On Saturday was consummated the preliminary act in an enterprise of great moment not only to British Columbia, but to all Canada and the empire, viz, the moving of the Jack Tars, whose term of service in the Pacific coast squadron had expired, to England, via the C. P. R. A heavy train, the cars of which were especially fitted up and well victualled, moved out at 8 o'clock a.m., and will move across the continent with all possible speed. The Tars to take their place will be substituted at Hulfax and the train move back to Vancouver where the men-of-war are in waiting. The victuals and supplies alone for a large body of men is of some consequence to the merchants, but when this new system of transport is established it will be of immense importance. Without doubt we shall soon see the whole body of British troops, as well as the navy massed from west to east and east to west over the direct, short route, a route which is cool and pleasant at all seasons of the year compared with the present medium of transport, to say nothing of the saving in time.

On account of the Chinese poll tax being paid in Victoria instead of Vancouver, the receipts of the former place has largely increased over last year and those of the latter decreased; the Island revenue collections all around are showing big advances, being an evidence of industrial development in the manufactures of tobacco and beer.

Speaking of real estate generally throughout the province, it is quiet and little except improved proved properties, business lots and residences, changing hands. The time has arrived when attention must be mainly directed for money-making to business on legitimate

lines, and industrial development, not real estate speculation, except by that slow method of accruing values, which does not satisfy the speculator by instinct. Real estate agents are depending less and less on commission on sales of real estate, and more and more on brokerage in other lines, insurance, money loaning, etc., and it will be only a question of a year or so, when the real estate business will be concentrated in the hands of a few leading firms, as it is in the east. This so far from being deplored should be highly satisfactory, as in British Columbia more especially in regard to farm lands and suburban properties the result of speculation has been to retard agricultural settlement, and as has already been contended in these columns, until land holders can agree to divide their lands and place a portion of it on the market on conditions of a rural settlement and improvement on terms which will induce settlers to buy, further advances need not be expected, rather indeed, a decrease in the price of farm lands. Improvement is the only real basis of values. Such has been the experience in California and everywhere. Land in California is valued at from \$500 to \$1,000 per acre, which is in the eye of many of our land holders, is so valued because it is improved and producing a revenue which would pay at least, a small dividend on such a capital invested. It is needless to take steps to induce immigration, no matter at what cost, until that principle be recognized; but place fruit growing and mixed farming on a systematic basis and make the conditions right for obtaining land, and the province will soon settle up and become industrious and prosperous from an agricultural point of view. You must give the farmer a chance.

Cheese shows an upward, meats a downward tendency. Ontario apples are for sale in good condition, and meet with favor, the British Columbia article is plentiful, but is packed poorly and consequently is not in the same demand. Poultry is showing in the market, and plenty of game. Following are quotations:

Butter—Creamery, 27c per pound for large lots and 23c for small lots. Dairy 20 to 23c.

Cheese, 12½c per lb.

Pickled eggs, 22 to 24c; fresh eggs, 27c.

Meats—Dry salt, 11c. per lb; roll bacon, 12c; breakfast bacon, 14c; hams, 14c; long clear, 11c.

Lard in tubs, 12½c per lb; in pails, 12½c; in tins, 13 cents; lard, compound, 11c to 11½ cents.

Sugar—Paris lumps, 6½c per lb; granulated, 5½c; light yellow, 4½c; syrup, 3c.

Dried fruits—Evaporated peaches, 10c. per lb; apricots, 11c; pitted plums, 11c; apples, 12c; prunes 11c. Raisins, \$2.75 per 20 lb box.

White beans, \$3.25 per 100 lbs., and China beans, \$4.

Potatoes—\$15 to \$16 per ton; Ashcroft potatoes, \$20 to \$23.

Fruits—B. C. apples, 75c to \$1.25 per box; peaches, \$1.40 and grapes, at \$1.75; tomatoes, \$1.50. California lemons, \$6.50 per box.

Flour and feed—Ogilvie's Hungarian, \$6 ditto strong bakers, \$5.60; Keowatin Hungarian, \$6; ditto strong bakers, \$5.60; Oregon, \$5.80 to \$6; Premier, Enderby mills, \$6; XXX, \$5.75; XX, \$5.45. Oatmeal at \$4 per 100 lbs; eastern rolled oats, \$3.50; Californian do, \$4; eastern cornmeal, \$3.75; Californian, ditto, \$4.00. Wheat, \$25 per ton; chopped feed \$36

to \$38; bran, \$24 to \$25; shorts, \$26; oats \$30 to \$34; hay, \$15 to \$16; oil cake, \$40.

Fish is quoted as follows, retail: Cod 10c per lb; salmon, 12½c; smelts, 10c; flounders, 10c; halibut, 15c; herring, 10c.

Gray grouse, 75c per brace; blue grouse, \$1; mallard ducks, \$1; tame ducks, 75c; wildgeon, 60c; teal, 30c; wild geese, \$1 to \$1.25 each; turkeys, 30 cents per lb; venison, 10 cents per pound.

Hay, \$15 per ton. Peas, \$35 to \$37 per ton. Mixed chop, \$35 to \$38 per ton; bran, \$25; shorts, \$28; wheat, \$37.50 per ton. North west wheat, \$35 per ton.

Beef, 3½ to 4½c live weight. Mutton, live weight, 4½ to 5c.

## British Columbia.

R. B. Esnouf, have opened in furniture, etc., at Victoria.

McKinnell & Cole, liquors, etc., Nanaimo, have dissolved.

Featno & Main, commission agents, Vancouver, have dissolved.

Robertson Bros. & Co., stoves, tins, etc., Vancouver, have assigned.

Geo. J. Cook, clothing and tailor, Victoria, succeeded Cook & Burrows.

Gowan & Sons, brewery, etc., Victoria; joint stock company formed.

Housley & Co., planing mill, Vancouver, are out of business and succeeded by Robertson and Hackett.

Jenkins & Calderwood, men's furnishings, Vancouver, have dissolved partnership; business continued by Calderwood.

The customs collections of duties at Victoria for November, 1891, were \$75,436.95; other revenues, \$9,146.14, making a total of \$84,583.09.

The transfer of the Windsor hotel, Victoria, has been made from J. H. Simpson to F. Rendt and H. McKeuzie. Mr. Simpson will devote his whole attention to his tailoring business.

The amount of inland revenue collected at Vancouver during November was \$7,313.31, an increase of \$5,114.29 over last year. The customs collections were \$21,239.38, a decrease of \$3,041.09 under last year's collections for the same month.

Victoria Times: On the 12th of November the schooner Mermaid cleared from the port of London, Eng., for Victoria. She is known as an unregistered vessel, and her owners are not named. Upon arrival here she will be surveyed and probably be placed upon the register here.

The saw mill at Golden, says the Era, is at present engaged in cutting timbers for a new vessel to be built this winter or early next spring by the Upper Columbia Navigation Co. The steamer will be of good size, and is intended for the upper river trade. She will be finished in time to be used next season.

The C. A. C. & C. Co., conducting a farming and ranching business in Alberta and Assiniboia, has shipped a large number of sheep to the Pacific coast this season. About 3,000 head will be shipped in all.

The Grand Trunk and the Canadian Pacific railways have informed the Dominion Live Stock Association that the rate of one cent per mile at which members of the association have heretofore travelled will be withdrawn at the end of this year.