

A MONUMENTAL HUMBUG.

The *Fur Trade Review*, of New York, commenting on the fact of the United States Government not appearing to be in a hurry to pay the award agreed upon for compensation to the Canadian sealers, says: "Some of our politicians are manifestly not aware of the fact that they are very childlike and bland, to the reproach of this country." "To the reproach of the country" is repeated from Port Townsend, where that eminent authority Judge James G. Swan, a representative of the Smithsonian Institution, says: "I consider our laws regarding fur seals as a monumental humbug system, inaugurated solely for the benefit of the Alaska Commercial Company, and their successors, the present lessees of the Pribyloff islands and not for the public good. The seals will not be extinguished, notwithstanding the howls of the fur dealers of San Francisco, but they will surely be driven from the Pribyloff islands. The laws should be altered or amended so that the public, and not a powerful monopoly, will be benefitted." The *Fur Trade Review* severely reproaches the United States for lack of good faith, while Judge Swan directly charges them with fraud and misrepresentation.

MARITIME LAWS.

A. Furuseth, president of the Seamen's Union, of the Pacific coast, has recently visited Washington in connection with certain legislation before Congress. He significantly remarks that the proportion of Americans sailing on American vessels is less than ten per cent., fifty per cent. of them being Scandinavians, while the number of American seamen on English vessels sailing out of London and Liverpool is five times as large as the number of Americans who are sailing from all the ports in the United States. It is claimed by Mr. Furuseth

that the condition of the American sailor afloat and the protection afforded him by law are a disgrace to any nation. One subject to which special attention is directed is the ease with which old and leaky coffin ships are allowed to be sent to sea, frequently carrying heavy amounts of insurance, instancing the case of the American bark *Detroit*, with whose experiences at Nainimo, Esquimalt, and at sea, most of our readers are familiar. There certainly wants some legislation to permit seamen leaving a vessel which is so notoriously unseaworthy without running the risk of imprisonment and the forfeiture of all their wages. There are other matters of great interest to shipping men which Mr. Furuseth and those who are cooperating with him are endeavoring to promote, and in which the people of this Province are more or less directly interested.

EDITORIAL COMMENT.

The United States have 179,672 miles of completed railway, of which 54,300 have been added in the last ten years. Illinois, Pennsylvania, Kansas, Texas, Ohio, Iowa and New York, among them possess 63,658 miles, Illinois having no less than 10,576 miles.

ACCORDING to J. B. Snowall's Miramichi Wood Trade circular for 1894, the Province of New Brunswick shipped about 326 million feet, nearly fourteen millions more than last year, while Nova Scotia's export 106½ millions, shows a decrease of three million superficial feet.

THE other evening the Hon. the Finance Minister, in moving the second reading of the Bill to provide £420,000 for the public purposes of the Province explained that the object was to pay off the existing overdraft, the greater portion of the amount however

being for expenditure on further public works. He intimated that despite the small temporary falling off in revenue during the year, there were evidences of steady advancement, adding that he felt confident in predicting an early increase in revenue of from 50 to 75 per cent.

THE *Canadian Grocer*, after reviewing the business of 1894, which it shows as not having been altogether satisfactory, adds: "There is one thing, however, that is better than it was a year ago: The prospects are better. A year ago the pall of depression was gathering in consequence of the commercial crisis the world over, and in the United States, particularly, naturally weakening confidence among the people of this country, in spite of the fact that the Dominion had no crisis to contend with. Now the depression is lifting the world over, while in our Dominion the signs of returning commercial activity are met with on every hand."

In their monthly freight and shipping report referring to the year just closed Messrs. R. P. Rithet & Co., say that few people are sorry to see the close of 1894, during which business generally has been dull and somewhat limited in extent; while the launching of new enterprises and the extension of those already in existence have been retarded by the depression which this Province has shared in common with the rest of the world. Still there is a distinct feeling that the worst is past, and this, with much quiet confidence in the future expressed in many diverse quarters, would seem to give good cause for a belief that better times are in store. It only remains to note, as of general interest, the steady extension of the fisheries of the Province; and the vigorous opening up of our boundless resources in minerals—the precious metals and others—which has gone on in the Kootenay, Cariboo and similar districts during the year."