

as profitable a branch of farming as any that exists; it is, besides, well suited to the conditions of our land and climate, and if they find, as many claim, that sheep and cattle will not run together—farmers can so arrange their fences as to keep them separate, or to devote themselves to one branch of grazing exclusively.

THE SEALING SEASON.

The Victoria sealer "Triumph" had grand success during the season just closed, having taken no less than 4,560 seal skins during the season, 3,240 of them being the results of a little more than a month's hunting in Behring Sea. Among local sealers opinions differ as to the general outcome of the season, many holding that it will not come up to that of last year, both as to the number of pelts and the prices realized. These latter, it is feared, will be comparatively low, though as for quality it is held that it would be impossible to surpass those taken this year. The "United States" (San Francisco) sealers would appear to have been out of luck, while several schooners have been lost, and others have been seriously damaged when up north, thus materially jeopardizing their take. Altogether it is hard to form an estimate of the nett results, but those who assume to speak with authority assert that the herds are decreasing in numbers.

COLD STORAGE.

It is announced as one of the results of the British embargo against Canadian cattle that it will stimulate action in the direction of the export of dressed meat. In the *Farmer's Advocate* we observe an article entitled "Dressed Meat vs. Live Cattle Shipping." In this it is set forth as a generally recognized fact that the refrigerator system is the one by which cattle can be most economically shipped to foreign markets, while it retains in the country the money expended on the killing and preparation of the carcasses as well as that which is employed in the utilization of the offal. This is an argument in favor of the cold storage system as already established in Victoria, and about to be established in Westminster in connection with the local market.

If the saving be so decided in connection with the shipment to Europe of cattle by the carcass instead of on the hoof, it surely is an important consideration when one thinks of the loss that is annually sustained by the Mainland cattle raisers by their animals dying through disease and privation, whereas if they are killed and put into cold storage at the beginning of the winter, while at their prime, there is not only the avoidance of

the mortality risk but the cost of food and attention is saved, the meats finding their way to market while at their very best. So far, the Victoria refrigerator has been fairly well patronized, and we expect that after the experiences which it has had, the cold storage will be much more largely made available than it has been.

TOO MUCH COMPETITION.

Another crank, for we cannot regard him as much else, arrived in San Francisco on the steamer "Monowai" from Sydney, Australia, with the avowed object of getting up a company to run steamers in opposition to the Oceanic and Canadian Australian lines. Opposition, according to the commonly accepted maxim, is the life of trade; but there is quite enough competition already in the trade which is now being built up, and it is therefore to be hoped that at any rate in the meantime the endeavors of Mr. Witheford—for that is what the gentleman calls himself will not meet with much encouragement. We are anxious to see trade with this continent and Australia developed in every possible way, but we are convinced that an attempt to place another line of steamships on the route will prove a failure, besides intimidating the prospects of the existing companies which cannot prosper at any rate for the present without more encouragement than that which business now affords.

HON. G. B. MARTIN.

The Government have not, it will be admitted, been unnecessarily long in selecting a gentleman to replace Hon. Mr. Vernon in the Department of Lands and Works. At the recent election, he was left in a small minority. We are inclined to think, however, that had a few who voted against the Government from principle known beforehand that their votes would be the means of ousting one of the most popular and attentive heads of department, they would not have voted as they did. However that may be, Mr. Vernon was defeated, and now that matters requiring his personal attention have been disposed of, the defeated Minister has made way for Hon. G. B. Martin. The new member of the cabinet has occupied a seat in the Legislature for a number of years, during which he has occupied a prominent position as Chairman of Committees and as a participant in the debates. In fact, he has been all along looked upon as a coming man, and we have no doubt will worthily discharge the duties devolving upon him.

A PITIFUL CHARGE.

E. B. Harper, of the Mutual Reserve Fund, appears to always have some ground of grievance against the old line companies. Recently at a meeting of underwriters at Boston, he alleged that the managers of the old line "legal reserve" life insurance companies had connived with agents to defraud assessment life insurance companies by placing bad risks on their books and sharing profits. Very properly the "illustrious" assessment man has been called on to make good his statement; but we doubt if he will do so. He has thrown his shovelful of mud in the hope that some of it will stick, as it possibly may. Still, any one who thinks for a moment will see how impossible it is for Mr. Harper's allegations to be true. The lines between the assessment and old line companies are drawn sufficiently widely to prevent the connivance of agents, while the assessment Associations have, or ought to have, the best means of discriminating between good and bad risks before they are undertaken; otherwise the system is radically wrong.

EDITORIAL COMMENT.

The new U. S. tariff has enabled British Columbia coal to enter the United States in successful competition with the American product and under the same law a vessel has been chartered to carry a cargo of British Columbia lumber to San Francisco.

It was noticeable that in some parts of the United States and Canada, Labor Day was taken comparatively little stock in, for the reason that the element most interested had not as they said been consulted in the selection of the day. We note now, however, that the courts of Quebec have endorsed the holiday by declaring that the service of legal papers upon it was not legal. The holiday, therefore, stands with all that it implies.

NANAIMO's recent fire, it is understood, has been the means of teaching practical lessons to the city fathers of the Coal City who, it is said, now appreciate the necessity of improved appliances and of a better trained body of firemen. The majority of the brigade in Nanaimo are volunteers, and if they are prepared, as it is said they are, to qualify themselves more effectively to perform their duties, the city authorities ought most certainly to furnish them with the necessary instruction and facilities.