

BRITISH COAL COMBINE.

A private circular and prospectus was recently sent to the coalowners of England and Wales, regarding the proposed Coal Trust. It emanated from Sir George Elliot, who asked for the opinions of the coalowners on the subject, and announced his intention of convening meetings in the principal coal districts, with a view to the selection of representatives, who would then meet and settle the details so that the company can be established as soon as possible. The prospectus announces that the company has been formed for the purpose of consolidating the various colliery interests throughout the United Kingdom. Then confronting the objection that monopolies of necessities are undisguised evils, Sir George asserts that "the object is not to create a monopoly for the benefit of the colliery proprietor, but to form a combination which, it is believed, will be equally advantageous to the coalowners, colliery proprietors, workmen, the purchasers, and consumers of all classes, and therefore permanently beneficial to the nation at large." The fundamental principle on which the project proceeds is that the workmen take, in addition to their wages, a share of the profits after the payment of the interest on debenture stock and ten per cent. on the ordinary stock. So far as the consumer is concerned, an undue increase in price is said to be "effectually guarded against by means of a control to be exercised by independent referees" who will be nominated by the Lord Chief Justice of England. The proposed capital is £120,000,000.

EDITORIAL COMMENT.

ALTHOUGH the Moran Brothers, of Seattle, have removed their wrecking plant, they say it is not their intention to abandon operations on the San Pedro, which, until more favorable weather comes on, will remain a spectacle to angels and to men at the entrance to Victoria harbor. They state that, so soon as the season becomes more propitious, they will resume work with every prospect of success.

THERE has been awarded to an American contractor, Mr. Feek, the building of a railway with a three-foot track which is to encircle the island of Oahu, on which the city of Honolulu is situated. The entire road will be ninety-four miles long. The government subsidy is \$700 per mile for five years. The bridge timbers are to be of yellow fir and half the ties and all the line posts are to be of cedar. This timber will either have to be obtained from the Puget Sound country or British Columbia.

WHILE to a certain extent we can agree with the *Mercantile Guardian* of London in its compliments to the enterprise and aged determination of Mr. James Hudson in establishing and carrying on the Canadian Australian steamship service, we must say that in this community much that he has accomplished is overshadowed by the injustice done by him to Captain Arthur, formerly of the Warrimoo, whom

B. C. CUSTOMS RETURNS.

The following is a summary of the customs returns for the four ports of the Province of British Columbia for the month of November, 1893:

IMPORTS.

	VICTORIA	VANCOUVER	WESTM'N	NANAIMO	TOTAL
Dutiable Goods	\$155,100 00	\$ 81,085 00	\$ 31,433 00	\$ 12,346 00	\$285,961 00
Free Goods	32,587 00	53,864 00	76,136 00	300 00	162,887 00
Total Imports	\$187,687 00	\$137,949 00	\$110,569 00	\$ 12,646 00	\$448,851 00

REVENUE.

Duty Collected	\$ 57,618 16	\$ 21,171 30	\$ 11,336 25	\$ 4,187 56	\$ 97,343 27
Other Revenue	1,813 77	3,208 35	205 28	331 34	5,558 74
Total Collections	\$ 59,431 93	\$ 24,379 65	\$ 11,541 53	\$ 4,518 90	\$102,902 01

EXPORTS.

The Mine	\$ 50,819 00		\$ 21,791 00	\$182,449 00	\$255,059 00
The Fisheries	361,133 00	\$ 38,322 00	79,746 00		479,201 00
The Forest	6,156 00	20,033 00	338 00		26,527 00
Animals and their produce	21,201 00	1,326 00	6,680 00	180 00	29,387 00
Agricultural	130 00	3,914 00			4,044 00
Manufactures	7,401 00	3,772 00	3,186 00	45 00	14,404 00
Miscellaneous	1,320 00				1,320 00
Total Exports	\$148,189 00	\$ 67,567 00	\$111,801 00	\$182,974 00	\$ 810,531 00

\$905 gold coin and \$363 silver coin.

he made, despite numerous influential protests, the scapegoat for the too thinly disguised endeavor of the C. P. R. authorities at Vancouver to ignore the port of Victoria.

THE Chinese question it appears will not down in Australia and, according to latest files, is still being discussed at public meetings of the masses. The agitation, it seems, aims at stopping the influx of all Asiatic races, and calls on Parliament to take action. The following is a sample resolution, taken from the *Sydney Morning Herald*: "That the social and industrial consequences resulting from the influx of Asiatics are becoming such a serious menace to the well-being of the entire community, that this meeting urges Parliament to at once provide remedial legislation."

WE cannot say that we think our municipal politicians are working as energetically as they might do in connection with the forthcoming elections. There may, it is true, be a considerable amount of quiet influence being exercised; but, though there were some outside discussions recently, the parties appear to have cooled off. Our advice is to agitate; for the days of hole and corner conventions and of occult, mysterious influences ought to be over. Let the entire system be threshed out and the men threshed, too, who, seeking public office, have only their own aggrandisement or personal pride to consider.

THE New York Legislature, last session, passed a law making it a crime in that State to combine to prevent competition. The law applies equally to combinations of labor to enhance prices, and of capitalists and manufacturers to put up the price of products. The first case under it was not a labor case, but a suit against Lockport coal dealers, who were convicted under it in the County sessions of the crime of conspiracy to raise the price of coal. A fine of \$50 against each party in the combination was imposed. The

defendants appealed to the general term, which affirmed the conviction, and it has been again affirmed by the New York Court of Appeals.

THE people of British Columbia are—and it may be that through them the people of the Dominion will be—brought face to face with the problem of Australian frozen mutton and what to do with it. There is among British Columbia ranchers considerable objection to sheep farming, because, as they say, the sheep crop the grass so close that the cattle cannot get hold of it. The mutton which was brought out on the steamer *Arawa*, has commended itself to the consumers because of its quality and as compared with what the market has been accustomed to receive is cheaper. No doubt a good deal of this mutton can be disposed of here, and in refrigerator cars can be sent further East, so that it is natural to expect that from this one staple the vessels can attain a considerable quantity of freight—an important consideration in reckoning up the prospects of the enterprise.

THE different Boards of Trade of Canada are bringing pressure to bear upon the Government so as to secure the introduction of some insolvency legislation at the approaching session of the Dominion Parliament. With the growth of inter-provincial trade, has developed the necessity for uniformity of law with regard to business matters, particularly as concerning the collection of debts and the liquidation of insolvent estates. As the *Canadian Manufacturer* puts it, "What is wanted is a law applicable alike throughout Canada, by which a creditor in New Brunswick or Nova Scotia would stand on equal footing with a creditor in British Columbia, in any insolvency or bankruptcy proceedings that might be instituted against a creditor in the latter province. Politics cannot possibly enter into any consideration of the matter, as indeed it should not do, and any well-considered bill ought to meet the hearty approval of all the members."