

The list of what are regarded as gentlemanly avocations might be extended at greater length but the result would only be to signalize a greater number of failures by men who, if they had only followed the callings for which God and nature had designed them, would be happy and prosperous members of society instead of as now, an incubus upon it and a disgrace to themselves.

#### LECTURES ON MINING.

We notice with satisfaction that the entrance fee to the lectures on mining and kindred subjects, which are a course of delivery in Victoria, Vancouver and Westminster, under the auspices of the provincial government, has been reduced from 50 cents to 25 cents. We, however, do not think that the reduction goes far enough. It is announced that the halls in which the lectures are given have been obtained rent free and surely, this being the case, no charge for admission should be exacted. Messrs. Carlyle and Carmichael are paid officials of the government, and Mr. Pellew-Harvey, who delivers certain lectures at Westminster and Vancouver, is a resident of the latter place. Every time he lectures he advertises himself and his business, which is connected with mining, and any little expense to which he might be put for travel from the Terminal to the Royal City might readily be refunded out of the public treasury, without any necessity for a special levy to make up for it. The idea of these lectures is admirable, but to make them still more useful, the miners who are working in Kootenay and elsewhere should be given the advantage either of hearing or reading them in pamphlet form.

It is worthy of note that some of the opposition papers have apparently for political effect been drawing special attention recently to scandals unearthed years ago in connection with, as a Halifax contemporary puts it, "swindles foisted upon the British investing public through the indirect agency of the Dominion government." One of these, the "Three Rivers Meat Company," was floated in London in November, 1889, and lived less than six months. Recently two of the English directors agreed to pay £1000 each in discharge of the costs of the liquidation at the time of the bursting of the concern, nearly seven years ago. The entire subject was ventilated in the political papers for all it was worth and more, yet just at the time when we are seeking to enlist outside capital for legitimate enterprises this dirty business is raked up for political effect regardless of its consequences upon our material interests. The swin-

dle was, we admit, a bad one, but there is no use befouling our own nest as is the habit with dirty birds.

#### BRITISH COLUMBIA FIRST.

It is to be noticed that while the depression in 1895 carried down fewer manufacturers than that which prevailed in 1894, it seems to have affected those doing a larger business, as the average of the liabilities of last year was \$13,310 against \$11,940 in previous year. On the whole, however, the business failures in Canada, though more in number than in 1894, involved liabilities \$1,814,000 less. The total failures of the last ten years were 16,407, the liabilities amounting to \$149,135,000, an average of \$9089 each, the average of 1895 having been \$8351 as against \$9490 in 1894 and \$11,690 in 1887. The following statement gives the number of failures, liabilities and assets during 1895, by provinces:

	No.	Assets.	Liabilities.
Ontario . . . . .	906	\$4,362,208	\$5,967,161
Quebec . . . . .	678	5,386,714	7,530,706
Nova Scotia . . . .	108	334,942	690,138
New Brunswick . .	70	201,155	325,697
B. Columbia . . . .	66	701,373	763,148
Manitoba . . . . .	53	473,353	505,439
P. E. Island . . . .	9	40,500	75,700

Total, 1895 . . . \$11,500,242 \$15,802,989  
Total, 1894 . . . 13,510,656 17,616,215

The percentages of assets available for the payment of creditors were: Ontario, 73.10; Quebec, 71.50; Nova Scotia, 48.50; New Brunswick, 61.80; British Columbia, 99; Manitoba, 93.60; Prince Edward Island, 53.50.

At the head of the lists stands British Columbia, whose insolvents had assets equal to the payment of 99 cents on the dollar, while Nova Scotia stands at the foot, the insolvents in that province having only assets enough to pay 48½ cents on the dollar, which conveys the reverse impression to those of British Columbia, as it seems to show that traders at the last can go on doing business until over one-half of their liabilities are unrepresented by assets. This results, probably, from the insolvency laws of that province being so defective, that the assets of an insolvent may be so placed as not to be available for the general body of creditors. A trader who only closes up when his estate has got into so bad a condition as to leave 48½ cents on the dollar has certainly abused his credit to a reprehensible extent.

#### EDITORIAL COMMENT

The Seattle Trade says:—An Oregon lumber firm is sending an agent to Mexico, Central and South America to learn the prospects for doing business there. This is what we have long

urged upon manufacturers and exporters in Seattle to gain foreign trade. It will never do to wait for it to grow." We have in the columns of the B. C. Commercial Journal frequently urged the advisability, nay, necessity, of British Columbia endeavoring to promote trade with Central and South America. Our lumber is ahead of that produced in Oregon and Washington in the matter of quality, while the British Columbia lumber area is probably the largest and most reliable on the North American continent. In other respects, if Seattle can successfully prosecute trade with the countries referred to, surely Victoria, Vancouver and New Westminster can do the same.

The Everett works are, it is said, about to put in five more blocks for drawing wire. In a recent interview, Japanese Consul Nosse, of Vancouver, pointed out numerous directions in which trade with the country which he represents might be promoted, among them the production of iron and steel, and it is to be hoped some of our enterprising people will not allow the suggestions which have been given to be lost sight of.

Mr. M. R. Smith, the well known baker, who died on Friday, came here early in 1878, and like most of the pioneers, tried his luck at the gold fields. Subsequently he established the bakery business, his enterprise having become one of the institutions of the province. He was 64 years of age and succumbed to heart disease at his residence, Dallas road. Mr. Smith left a widow, a daughter and two sons, with whom all who knew him deeply sympathize in their affliction. There was a large attendance of friends at the funeral on Sunday from the family residence, corner of Niagara street and Dallas road, and later from Christ church cathedral, where Rev. Canon Beaulands conducted an impressive service.

Much has been said as well as written in favor of free trade. The country or nation that exports more than they import are gainers. A country or nation that imports more than they export are losers. If some countries or nations gain, it is at the expense or loss of another country or nation. It will be seen, therefore, that free trade cannot be justified, except as to articles the country or nation cannot produce, for it is clear to any mind that the expense of transportation must and does fall on the producer. If a country or nation imports any article that it is capable of producing, it is evident that there is a lack of help, energy or money.