

## PROVINCIAL MATTERS.

The Provincial Parliament has been formally opened, and soon the representatives of the people will be up to the neck in business. The Speech from the Throne, with which they were set to work, began with a very fitting succession of regrets on account of the death of Sir John A. Macdonald and H. R. H. the Duke of Clarence. Then came an array of congratulations upon the past year of solid prosperity and the encouraging outlook for the future. More than once commercial travelers from the East have spoken to the writer of the solid and substantial appearance of the business prosperity of this province, where they discovered none of that stringency which was apparent almost everywhere else. And why has this been? we may ask. The comparative immunity of our people from business failures may be traced to the solid way in which they have done their trade. Our people do not indulge in that "kiteflying" that is so characteristic of those who do business on paper instead of as much cash as possible—and this is much aided by the old-fashioned, though none the less excellent, system of doing business if not upon cash by current account.—"Pay cash at a specified time, and in the meantime as often as you like!"

Moreover, there are few, if any, of those objectionable concerns that are termed "supply houses" in this community, and our retailers are not given to snapping at the baits which are so persistently held out by some Eastern wholesalers to stock up to an unlimited extent upon almost the purchaser's own terms. Our industries are all flourishing, while our coal output was last year almost 50 per cent. greater than the twelve months previous. Then, as to the future, our mineral prospects are of the best. Recent developments of new ledges, both of gold and silver, have been such as to attract general attention to them; the prospect being, as mentioned elsewhere, that they will have an impetus such as they have not previously received by the influx of capital and by improved means of transportation both by water and by rail. Financially, British Columbia has established itself upon the London market on a much more advantageous basis than it ever previously occupied, and for works of real benefit to the country is not likely to be handicapped for lack of resources. The trouble, however, is frequently that too much credit for a country is quite as bad as for the individual. Witness the case of some of the Australasian and other colonies.

The land law is, we are glad to know, to undergo further amendment, in order as much as possible to preserve agricultural lands for actual settlers. Albeit every number of the *Official Gazette* contains additions to the long list of those who are grabbing for the most eligible sections of country that are yet to be disposed of. Definite action is, it would appear, to be taken this session, looking to the actual settlement of the Scottish crofters, about which so much has already been said. It would, however, be well to see that their so-called friends have not too big a hand in the pie; and that it be made impossible for speculative deals to be made out of the departure.

The Speech tells us—what everybody is

supposed to concur in—that "there is reason to anticipate an early settlement of the vexed question of our rights in Behring Sea, and we can only hope that the terms may be such as will permit of our important sealing industry being prosecuted without further obstruction." We are none too sanguine as to the outcome, which will be as little to the advantage of British Columbia as the Americans can manage to make it.—*B. C. Commercial Journal.*

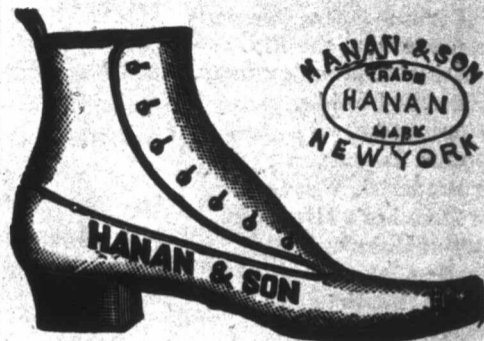
## CHEAP PORTRAITS.

For people who cannot afford the more expensive grade, we will enlarge a Nice Picture from a Small One from \$3.00 to \$5.00. A true likeness guaranteed.

**G. W. BIGGER,**

43 BLANCHARD STREET, VICTORIA.

General Manager for Pacific Coast.

CAVIN BROS,  
Boots and Shoes.

New Store! New Prices!

DOANE BLOCK,

88 Douglas Street, near Johnson.

## THE SEHL-HASTIE-ERSKINE CO.

Extend thanks to their Patrons and New Year Congratulations, and at the same time invite attention to their handsome line of

LADIES' CABINETS IN OAK,  
Secretaries, Music Racks

An immense range of

**BANNER LAMPS, ETC.**

66 TO 68 GOVERNMENT ST.

**THE HOME JOURNAL,  
THE GREAT FAMILY NEWSPAPER,**

**\$1.00 - - - PER ANNUM.**