

of an electric current sent through the wires and the two gases unite, forming water, which serves as a nucleus to precipitate the moisture of the atmosphere, and there is rain.

Exploding the gases in this way has already been tried, and the explosion is described as being something terrific. In addition to the explosion of these gases, there will be dynamite bombs exploded in the Texas experiments, and mortars will discharge large quantities of giant powder. The artificial production of rain in this way must depend upon the quantity of water or moisture held in suspension by the atmosphere. It is obvious that trying to get rain out of a dry atmosphere will be entirely futile, since concussion or explosion cannot condense moisture where there is no moisture. The atmosphere at all times and under all conditions holds in suspension some moisture, but not until it reaches a certain amount is there a fall of rain. It seems at least plausible that detonation or concussion at an altitude might induce precipitation where there was a considerable quantity of moisture in the air, but in the places affected by long and severe droughts the air must be comparatively dry and free from moisture, leaving little or nothing to work upon. Considering the scarcity of water that is felt in many parts of this Province, our people will watch the results of these experiments with more than ordinary interest.

### TURNED BACK.

Already a number of sealing schooners have been driven out of the waters of Behring's Sea by the fleet of police ships which were despatched by both the United States and British Governments. Indeed, it is reported that one or more of them has been actually seized by the Americans and turned over to the British authorities. And this, it would appear, has been done before the Home Government has satisfied itself, by the report of the special commissioners, that the representations made by the American Secretary of State are actually the facts of the case. They appear to have been only too willing to take for granted all that is said to them and right or wrong, for the mere sake of avoiding trouble with the Americans, to do exactly as those people call upon them to do, no matter the serious injury that is done to trade and the suffering and loss to which individuals engaged in seal hunting are subjected. The more one sees and hears, the more necessary does it appear that compensation should be made, and that without delay, to the sufferers, as individuals are not as a rule in a position to wait the circumlocutory processes that are characteristic of governments.

In these columns reference has been made to the satisfactory advance that is being made in the volume of trade done in this Province, and to the fact that the augmentation is manifestly such a one as will hereafter continue. The return of exports for the entire Dominion for the fiscal year ending 30th June last is also very satisfactory, and shows an improvement upon last year of upwards of a million dollars. This is encouraging.

### EDITORIAL NOTES.

THE Imperial Bank at Melbourne has suspended. The liabilities are £150,000. It is stated that the depositors will be paid in full.

THE San Francisco *Chronicle* is responsible for the statement that the Union Steamship Company of New Zealand has purchased the Wellington coal mines and that the Union Steamship Company of British Columbia will put on steamers to carry the coal to San Francisco and bring back local freight.

A COMMERCIAL and maritime paper published at Vancouver is after THE BRITISH COLUMBIA COMMERCIAL JOURNAL because it dared to present to its readers what are described as "the usual arguments—the stock in trade, in fact." They were the facts which were offered by us in connection with the dry dock project and commented upon—the economic aspect of the case alone having been presented. We have no antagonism to Vancouver; we wish to see every part of the Province flourish, but it is certainly possible to have too much competition—too much rivalry, in fact—particularly in carrying out an enterprise whose success is mainly dependent upon casualties that no one wishes should occur.

THE quibbling of some of the aldermen in the matter of the appointment of a police magistrate for the city of Victoria has been a subject of unfavorable comment for the past three weeks. When the matter came up in council, some time ago, Mr. Belyea received the appointment by a majority of votes, but it being necessary for the police magistrate to be also a Justice of the Peace, delay was thereby occasioned in entering on the duties of the office, awaiting his appointment as a J. P. At the time and since the appointment of Mr. Belyea considerable opposition has been offered from certain sources. The actions of certain members of the council in this matter appear to be very weak and frivolous and have been looked upon with disgust by the public generally. Mr. Belyea is well qualified to fill this position, and will no doubt serve the best interests of the public.

### BRADSTREET'S REPORT.

NEW YORK, July 24.—Special telegrams continue to point to some increase in the activity of raw wool, (at Boston and St. Louis, but not New York or Philadelphia), of hides, the manufacture of Boston shoes, to a better request for sole leather, rubber stock, wheat, flour, cattle and hogs. Prices of wheat are 3c. higher per bushel, and those of corn 1c. higher, while quotations for oats are off 1½. Flour is firmer but not quotably advanced. Cattle and hogs are 10c. higher per hundred weight. Corn is 5-10c. lower. A menace to the general industrial situation would be found in the extraordinary increase in the output of pig iron of 16 per cent. within the month of June without a corresponding advance in the demand, and in the 2,000,000 tons of anthracite coal more than was mined from January to July 18, 1890, an increase

in 1891 of 15 per cent. (under an agreement to restrict production), were it not for continued industrial disturbances among iron and coal workers, which tend to check the output.

Business failures in the United States number 292 against 202 last week and 180 this week last year. The total from January to date is 6,917 against 6,069 last year.

Bank clearings at 58 cities for the week ending July 23 amounted to \$212,807,508, a decrease for the like week last year of 6.5 per cent. At 57 cities (New York's total excluded) an increase of ½ per cent. is shown. New York city's total decreased \$70,000,000 as compared with the same week a year ago.

The New York loan market exhibits a tendency by lenders to restrict time engagements in order to have command of funds later on. Call for money is abundant at 1 to 2 per cent., but money on collateral commands 6 per cent. for six months. The beginning of the movement of funds to the west, \$1,500,000 having been transferred from New York to the interior through the treasury this week, and the continuance of gold exports, \$2,100,000 having been shipped, prolong and intensify the dullness of the New York market. Speculation is in a condition of dead-lock, with a natural tendency toward decline, although the crop prospects still exercise a partial sustaining influence on prices.

The outlook favors a large export of grain between the present and the end of the calendar year. Conservative estimates place the amount already booked for charter or berth at twice that actually sent in like period last year. Exports of wheat from both coasts (counting flour as wheat) equal 2,330,000 bushels this week, an average of 2,250,000 bushels for the last four weeks as compared with a weekly average of 1,500,000 in the same four weeks of 1890, 1,400,000 bushels in 1889 and 1,300,000 bushels in a like portion of 1888.

General trade is of a seasonable volume in the Province of Ontario. In Quebec there has been a noticeable revival in the demand. Prospects point to a good fall trade. The crop outlook remains very favorable. The Dominion reports 15 business failures this week as against 32 last week and 22 this week last year. The total number from January 1 to date is 1,091 against 942 last year.

### FOREIGN COAL SHIPMENTS.

The following are the shipments for the week ending July 25th:

#### NEW VANCOUVER COAL CO. SHIPPING.

Date.	Vessel and Destination.	Tons.
20—	Memnon, bk., Honolulu, H.I.	1,300
20—	Wanderer, ss., Port Townsend.	28
20—	Santa Cruz, ss., San Fran.	22
21—	Ivy, shp., San Francisco.	1,927
23—	Haytian Republic, ss., San Fran.	1,203
23—	Bundaleer, bk., San Francisco.	1,487
23—	Mogul, ss., Port Townsend.	57
23—	J. C. Brittain, ss., Whatcom.	213
24—	Wanderer, ss., Port Townsend.	64
25—	Glory of the Seas, shp., Wilmington, Cal.	3,510

Total..... 9,820

Sidney Shore has purchased the hardware and tinware stock of the S. J. Martin estate, and intends opening in business in the Anderson block, Johnson street, Victoria.