

since 1879 have, whenever they have spoken at all, each vied with the other in their laudations of the "splendid condition of the rookeries"—"fully up to their best standard", etc., and one report in 1888, declares a vast increase over the large figures which I published in 1872-'74 which is again reiterated by the same officer in 1888.

But, how could these gentlemen reconcile their statements with that remarkable evidence of the decrease in supply of young males from the records made and before them—staring them in the face—of 1872-74? When they saw and daily recorded the fact that sealing gangs were being daily sent out from the village, miles and miles away to hitherto undisturbed fields, for killable seals—the *regular, customary hauling-grounds, then at the point of exhaustion, from which an abundant supply had been easily secured during the last thirty years*, and grass growing all over the hauling grounds of 1872,—how indeed did that fact escape their attention? it did however; it was utterly ignored.

I can see now, in the light of the record of the work of sixteen consecutive years of sealing, very clearly one or two points which were wholly invisible to my sight in 1872-'74. I can now see what that effect of driving overland is upon the physical well being of a normal fur-seal, and from that sight, feel warranted in taking the following ground.

The least reflection will declare to an observer that while a fur-seal moves easier on land and freer than any or all other seals, yet, at the same time it is an unusual and laborious effort, even when it is voluntary; therefore, when thousands of young male seals are suddenly aroused to their utmost power of land locomotion, over rough, sharp rocks, rolling clinker stones, deep, loose sand, mossy tussocks and other equally severe impediments, they in their fright exert themselves violently, crowd in confused sweltering heaps one upon the other so that many are often "smothered" to death; and, in this manner of most extraordinary effort to be urged along over stretches of unbroken miles, they are obliged to use muscles and nerves that nature never intended them to use, and which are not fitted for the action.

This prolonged, sudden and unusual effort, unnatural and violent strain must leave a lasting mark upon the physical condition of every seal thus driven, and then suffered to escape from the clubbed pods or the killing grounds; they are alternately heated to the point of suffocation, gasping, panting, allowed to cool down at intervals, then abruptly started up on the road for a fresh renewal of this heating as they lunge, shamble and creep along; when they arrive on the killing grounds after four or five hours of this distressing effort on their part, they are then