

there : but, what has been the logic of events ? Why is it that we find now only a scant tenth of the number of young male seals which I saw there in 1872 ? When did this "work of decrease and destruction so marked on the breeding-grounds there, begin ? And how ? This answer follows :

1sts. *From overdriving without heeding its warning*, first begun in 1879, dropped then, until 1882, then suddenly renewed again with increased energy from year to year, until the end is abruptly reached, this season of 1890.

2nd. *From the shooting of fur-seals (chiefly females)* in the open waters of the North Pacific Ocean and Bering Sea, begun as a business in 1888, and continued to date.

Thus, the seal-life candle has been literally "burning at both ends" during the last five years.

That day in 1879, when it became necessary to send a sealing gang from St. Paul village over to Zapadnié to regularly drive from that hitherto untouched reserve, was the day that danger first appeared in tangible form since 1870—since 1857 for that matter.

The fact then, that that abundant source of supply which had served so well and steadily since 1870-81, should fail to yield its accustomed returns to the drivers—that fact ought to have aroused some comment—ought then to have been recorded by the officer in charge in behalf of the Government at the close of the season's work in 1882 ; but, it did not : possibly, the gravity of the change was not then fully appreciated by the sealers themselves either through ignorance or inattention.

But, when in 1882 it became absolutely necessary to draw from that time on until the end of the present season, heavily and repeatedly upon these hitherto untouched sources of supply for the rookeries, in order to get the customary annual quota—at that time that fact, that glaring change from the prosperous and healthy precedent and record of 1870-'81, should have been it was ample warning of danger ahead :—it seems however, to have been entirely ignored—to have fallen upon inattentive or incapable minds : for, not until the report for 1889 from the agent of the Government in charge, who went up in the spring of that year for his first season of service and experience—not until his report came down to the Treasury Department, has there been the slightest intimation in the annual declarations of the officers of the Government, of the least diminution or decrease of seal-life on these islands since my work of 1874 was finished and given to the world.

On the contrary strange as it may seem, all the Treasury Agents