

of Cape Braton might be made nothing as compared with that unhappy condition of things. Moreover, it would seem that there is no provision made for the forfeiture of the lease for cause, the Government's only recourse being to exact a pecuniary fine of a practically indeterminate amount. Nova Scotia, many years ago, had experiences of a galling monopoly which will be in the remembrance of some now living, while it is written in history and ought to be so engraven on the minds of all Nova Scotians as to make it impossible for them again to tolerate any such disposition of the provincial heritage.

### EDITORIAL COMMENT.

COL. PRIOR is entitled to congratulation for having presumed—we suppose this is the correct term—to ask for a return showing the expenditure on railways, public works, harbors, etc., in all the provinces, from 1880 to 1892, with the amounts received from the different provinces. When this return comes down—and it is to be hoped it will not be unduly delayed—the public of Canada will be able to satisfy themselves that British Columbia is asking no more than, if indeed as much as, she is entitled to demand in the shape of public expenditures. The question, however arises in the minds of many people whether or not the gallant Colonel will have sufficient courage to press the advantage which the production of the figures is sure to give him and carry out the behests and instructions of the merchants and citizens who sent him to Ottawa to represent them.

AS THE result of the negotiations of Sir Charles Tupper, aided by the British ambassador to Versailles, the Government of the French Republic has agreed to admit Canadian goods free in return for a reduction by the Dominion of the existing duties on French wines. Last year Canada's export to France only amounted to a trifle under \$100,000, the trade, no doubt, having been much restricted by the heavy tariff in that country. There are many people who will be glad that the Canadian imposts on French wines has been reduced, as they form an important item in the beverages of the Eastern provinces—Quebec in particular. On this coast, California supplies us with a very excellent article, and it may be in order to apply for a reduction of the duty upon it, since it is next to impossible for viticulture and wine-making to be carried on here on an extensive scale. In British Columbia, owing to our remoteness from many of the sources of supply, we are exceptionally situated, and this should be borne in mind by both Ministers and members, for we pay handsomely—out of all proportion in fact—for what the Dominion does for us.

WE notice in the columns of a city paper a communication signed "An Idle Bachelor," in which the writer refers to a recent debate in the Provincial Legislature on "Woman's Suffrage." One of the arguments adduced in the House in favor of that departure was that since women successfully competed with men in many of the avocations and professions, there

was no reason why they should not enter the political arena. "Idle Bachelor," however, takes up the argument the other way and shows that if the women did not—many of them for the mere object of earning pin money—enter into competition with men in what have been recognized as their special spheres, both they and the bachelors would be much more comfortably circumstanced. The latter would have comfortable homes of their own over which the "working women" would preside with more satisfaction to all the parties concerned. The "bachelors in spite of themselves" have to work for wages of about half what they used to be, and in consequence the question is asked whether, all things considered, the present condition of things is conducive to morality or happiness?

AS SHOWING what can be done were the business of fruit canning and preserving systematically and scientifically carried on on the island of Vancouver as well as upon the Mainland, we have the last annual report of the Okell, Morris Co., which, though only in existence for about six months, made a profit of 25 per cent. In consequence, the capital stock of the concern is to be increased and operations carried on upon a much more extensive and, it is to be expected, even more profitable scale.

WE feel that we cannot too often or too strongly endeavor to impress upon the Government and all who are interested the necessity of our quarantine arrangements being placed on a much more satisfactory footing. Unless something is done and that speedily we are likely to have more importations of smallpox, cholera or other disease by the direct Oriental steamers, while those which are endeavoring to make Victoria a good port of call, thereby adding to our commerce, will not find it profitable to continue in the business, and we, in consequence, shall be left to the tender mercies of the one institution that gives us the go-by whenever it is possible to do so and seldom if ever has anything to say about us but to our disadvantage. The expenses to which two Northern Pacific steamships have lately been put while under quarantine law have been, it is said, ruinous and unless the Dominion amends its ways in this particular it will drive away from us the entire business, and work for us the most serious injury.

LONDON cables announce that the January fur sales of the Hudson's Bay Company realized £91,700, the prices averaging 8 per cent higher than last year.

RECENTLY the grand jury at Rochester, N. Y., indicted eighteen local coal dealers, members of the coal exchange of that city, for conspiracy in illegally combining to advance the price of coal, also for preventing other coal dealers not members of the exchange from securing a supply of coal and preventing others from joining the exchange. The grand jury also returned a presentment against the members of the western anthracite coal

committee. This judgment may possibly form a precedent for action in connection with some other of the American combines which have been the means while they lasted of so materially enhancing the cost of the prime necessities of life. The fact that such a judgment has been pronounced will doubtless prove of interest and a source of satisfaction to some of our neighbors in Vancouver, where, until recently the trade appeared to be inextricably in the hands of two or three firms and those who were content to act as their agents. While on this subject it may not be out of place to remark that, during the recent cold snap, on the strength of reported short supplies, the cost of fuel in Victoria went up to abnormally high figures.

THE North American Life Insurance Company has elected Mr. J. L. Blaikie, well known in Canadian financial circles, to succeed the late Hon. Alex. Mackenzie in the presidency. The institution boasts that it has never lost a dollar in investments since it was started. It shows a cash income for the past year of \$146,474, against an expenditure of \$216,320 for death claims, endowments and profits to policy holders. The net surplus for policyholders is \$226,635, and the reserve fund amounts to \$1,115,846.

THE Toronto Board of Fire Underwriters at a recent meeting resolved not to amalgamate with the Canadian Fire Underwriters Association but to maintain a separate and distinct organization.

THE statement with which Hon. Mackenzie Bowell is credited—that the late ex. U. S. Secretary of State Blaine was one of the best friends of Canada, has caused not a few persons and papers to take exception to the remark. The public record is against Mr. Blaine in all certainty, whatever his personal opinions and leanings may happen to have been. The *Monetary Times* is inclined to the opinion that on the question of reciprocity between the United States and Canada he may have been checked by President Harrison but as our contemporary observes: "The commercial policy of both these statesmen belongs to the past. Politically President Harrison is as dead as Blaine is physically. The future is in the hands of other leaders, whose victory in the political battle was due to another and more liberal policy." That is of course, so far as concerns the fiscal regulations of the United States generally. What Mr. Cleveland and his advisers may be prepared to do or to order, we shall see when they assume office. Meantime Mr. Goldwin Smith and the traitorous Farrer would seem to be backing up Mr. Harrison in the miserable movements which he has undertaken. What the illustrious one term President may contrive to do in the three weeks remaining to him it is difficult to see, but his incarnate meanness may impel him to attempt many petty and contemptible things which are certain to crown him with discredit and to place him on the pages of history as a chief magistrate of whom his countrymen will have very little reason to feel proud.