

## BRITISH COLUMBIA.

(This department is in charge of R. E. Gosnell, who is permanently engaged as a regular member of The Commercial staff, to represent this Journal in British Columbia. Parties in British Columbia who wish to communicate in any way with this paper, may apply directly to Mr. Gosnell, at Vancouver.)

## British Columbia Sealers.

From press despatches it would appear that Great Britain and the United States have entered into an agreement to arbitrate on the Behring Sea question, a course which, if involving many delays, vexation and irritation, will commend itself as much superior to a recourse to fighting. War, on the most economical scale possible, would mean a direct loss to both nations, laying aside consideration of the long train of consequences, a thousand times in excess of the value of the seals in Behring Sea. No provision it appears has been made for a renewal of the *modus vivendi*, and all the sealers on the coast are fitting out for the approaching season. Already one Vancouver sealer, the Beatrice, has left for the Californian coast and will go north, expecting to reach Victoria about the first of May. Two others will start out in a month's time. The Victoria fleet will soon be in readiness as well. What the outcome of the arbitration will be is needless at present to speculate on. Canadians of course and especially the people of British Columbia have decided opinions as to what it should be. One thing is quite certain that the selection of Dr. G. M. Dawson and Sir George Baden Powell to collect evidence by a visit to the sealing grounds and otherwise, was an eminently wise step to begin with. Dr. Dawson has the most comprehensive, and at the same time, most minute knowledge of the subject of any man living, with the exception, perhaps, of Judge Swan, who favors the Canadian contention. He has, as well, the faculty of investigation highly developed. Sir George Baden-Powell, on the other hand, having been entrusted with various important missions and possessing a wide experience of men and things, has the qualifications for presenting data in their most convincing form, and viewing them diplomatically. Evidently no time is being lost, now that a course of action has been decided upon, and a speedy settlement may confidently be looked forward to.

## BRIEF BUSINESS NOTES.

James Fullerton, general store, Rockford, is dead.

The Newcastle stone quarry has been reopened.

The C. P. N. Co.'s steamer, Irving, has been tied up for the winter.

W. E. Weber, bakery, etc., Nanaimo, has sold out to Peter Gerodie.

A shaft is being sunk at Protection Island by the new Vancouver Coal Co.

Another Vancouver steamer, the Iona, has gone out in search of halibut.

A new baggage car has arrived for the Vancouver-Westminster tramway.

Dansmuir's ocean tug Lorne has been laid up, owing to dullness in shipping.

Plans have been received for a magnificent Church of England cathedral in Victoria.

J. S. Stannard & Co., dry goods, etc., Nanaimo; A. Bullock retiring from this firm.

Vancouver is promised a weekly financial review journal about the middle of March.

The Brunette Saw Mill Co. is going to build a large extension to its factory at Sapperton.

The Vancouver Steamship Company is building a fine steamer at their shipyard, English Bay.

Schell Indians are reported as destroying deer by the hundreds on the Island for their skins.

S. S. Comox, the U. S. S. Co.'s new boat, has been put on the Nanaimo route in place of the Cutch.

There are two more applications for charters to run tramways between Vancouver and Westminster.

Branch offices of the Northwestern Express Co. are to be opened in Vancouver and Westminster.

A joint stock company, \$5,000 capital, is forming at Northfield for erection of a soap factory.

The new government steamer Quadra has arrived at Esquimalt eighty days out from Glasgow.

S. T. McIntosh, secretary of the Vancouver-Westminster tramway, is dead. His loss is greatly mourned.

Vancouver bakers have raised the price of bread from twenty loaves for a dollar to sixteen and eighteen loaves.

Weiler Bros., Victoria, have received an electric lighting plant for their furniture factory from Toronto.

The ss. Batavia of the Upton Line has arrived in Victoria with 1,850 tons of freight, 150 of which are for that city.

The business of Mr. Pease, general store-keeper, Esquimalt, has been purchased by Goodwin & Fuller, Victoria.

A gang of men is removing the obstructions in the Columbia River below Revelstoke and is placing buoys in Arrow Lake.

The American barque Hesper 664 tons, Capt. Sodergren, has been chartered to load lumber at the Hastings mill for Shanghai.

An effort is being made to float another daily paper in Nanaimo. Mr. Potts, late of the Vancouver World, is the promoter.

A commission has been appointed to investigate the circumstances connected with the wrecking of the steamer San Pedro.

Macpherson & Thompson have purchased the stock and goodwill of the drug business of Hill & Coatham, New Westminster.

Col. Tracy, Vancouver's city engineer, has located a site for a water-works reservoir in Stanley Park, 23 feet above water mark.

A pork packing establishment is about to be started in Vancouver. It will be a branch of the firm of George Matthews, Peterboro.

One hundred and fifty thousand dollars stock has been subscribed in the Victoria Brewery and Ice Co., and a brewery will be erected at once.

As shown by Bradstreet's annual report of failures in Canada, British Columbia makes a better showing than any of the other provinces.

The Reid & Currie Iron Works Co., Westminster, have secured the handling of Leonard & Sons' manufactures, of London, Ont., for the province.

The old arrangements for the running of the San Francisco steamers to Vancouver has been renewed and the Umilla will arrive on the 15th instant.

W. R. Wilson, who formerly owned and built the Wilson Block, Vancouver, is going to erect another block on Columbia avenue, between Hastings and Dupont.

The British Columbia Mills, Timber & Trading Co. is filling an order for the Montreal Harbor Commissioners for three sticks of timber 60 feet long and three feet square.

The contract has been let for the construction of the telegraph line to Comox. The line will run from Nanaimo through Wellington to the Union mines and thence to Comox.

Mr. Andrew Heinrich, of the Bay View Brewing Co., Seattle, has incorporated with

Loeman & Erb, Victoria, and a large new brewery for ale, beer and porter is to be erected.

D. W. Higgins, M.P.P., of Victoria, Sheriff Armstrong, of New Westminster, and Mr. Wilmut, Superintendent of Fisheries will be the British Columbia Salmon Fisheries Commission.

The Fraser River Freezing Company have received a telegram to ship another car of frozen salmon to Hamburg, Germany. A carload, consisting of 15 tons of fish, will be forwarded at once.

John A. Lundsen, Sumas, has just returned from Holland, where he has been studying the dyking problem with a view to reclaiming the Sumas prairie. He is going to start in on a reclamation scheme.

It is alleged that gold-bearing quartz has been discovered in the northeast end of Victoria city, and litigation is likely to follow the refusal of the gold commissioner to grant licenses to work the claims.

It is said to be the intention of the Canadian Pacific Navigation Co. to enter into competition with the Pacific Coast Steamship line for a share of the Alaska tourist travel. Capt. Carroll, an old Alaska trader, will it is said have charge of this department of the service.

J. P. Pife, manager of the Pitt Meadows Dredging Co., and J. S. O'Dwyer, C. E., have gone over the route of the proposed canal to connect Pitt River with Burrard Inlet. Such a canal, it is claimed, would divert a good deal of the overflow water in the river, develop trade with Vancouver, and destroy the teredos in the harbor by freshening it. It is not expected that it would pay for some time.

The output of coal for 1891 at the various mines on Vancouver island is reported as follows: Southfield, 201,027 tons, 17 cwt.; No. 3 shaft, 61,235 tons, 8 cwt.; No. 1 shaft, 158,320 tons, 19 cwt.; Northfield, 108,006 tons, 10 cwt. The total output of the Wellington colliery for the year is reported to have been 328,627 tons; and of the Union colliery, Comox, 130,917 tons. Foreign shipments of coal were for the year, divided as follows: New Vancouver Coal Co., 377,561 tons; Wellington, 229,271 tons; East Wellington, 36,093 tons; Union colliery, 94,990 tons.

## Biggest Crops on Record.

The estimates by States and Territories of area, product and value of the principal cereals of the United States for 1891 made by the statisticians of the Department of Agriculture was made public on Jan. 6. The total for corn has been exceeded only once. The wheat product is the largest ever grown in any country and the yield per acre in the United States the largest ever reported. The total for oats was slightly exceeded in 1889. The aggregates are as follows:

	Acres.	Bushels.	Value.
Corn	76,201,315	2,009,151,000	\$833,439,328
Wheat	39,916,897	611,730,000	513,472,711
Oats	24,591,361	738,391,000	232,312,267

The aggregate of all cereals is the largest yet produced and will supply fifty-four to fifty-five bu per unit of population. The wheat supply averages nine and four-tenths bu to each person, against nine and two-tenths for the largest previous crop—in 1884. The average value to the farmer is 40 6c for corn, \$3.93c for wheat and 31.46c for oats. The value of wheat is greater than in any year since 1883, that of the short crop of 1888 alone excepted. The products are, of course, in measured bushels.

The Barnum Iron Works company, of Toronto Junction, has assigned. The assets are said to about equal the liabilities, which are about \$50,000.

Halifax refiners on January 9, advanced all grades of refined sugar, the increase ranging from an eighth to a quarter cent per pound and a further increase is expected. The advance was caused by a strong feeling in the raw article.