

The Colonist.

FRIDAY, APRIL 1, 1892.

A SETBACK.

The silver men of the United States must be sadly disappointed at the result of the recent debate on the free coinage question. When the session began, they were confident that they would carry their measure through the House of Representatives by a large majority, and they also calculated upon its passage through the Senate. The majority in that body would not be large, but they had no fears of its being defeated. It turns out that they could not muster enough votes in the House of Representatives, where they were certain of carrying all before them, to have their bill laid upon the table. The probability is that it is shelved for the session, for there are indications that quite a number of members who favored free silver a little while ago, are too well pleased to witness its temporary defeat to encourage the party leaders to bring it up again.

It has, of late, been very evident that the Democrats made a mistake when they placed the free coinage plank in their platform. Sagacious observers saw that the great majority of the people are in favor of honest money. They saw that the artificial inflation of silver by the Government would throw business into confusion, and not make things better or money more plentiful. The Republicans, by their opposition to free silver coinage, were strengthening themselves in the country, and were, therefore, putting themselves in a good position to carry on the presidential campaign. The chances of that campaign are now always before the eyes of American politicians, and almost everything they do, or refrain from doing, has reference to the presidential election. As free coinage has been found not to be a trump card, it will, most likely, be discarded by the Democrats, with all convenient speed.

WILL JUSTICE BE DONE?

We are glad to see that measures are to be taken to indemnify the sealers of this province for the damage they have sustained on account of the sudden action taken by the governments of Great Britain and the United States, last year, in keeping sealing vessels out of Behring Sea. The sealers had been permitted to fit out their vessels for the long and expensive voyage. They did not receive a single word of warning. It was only when they arrived at Behring Sea, and were overhauled by the British or American cruisers, that some of them were told that an agreement had been entered into by the two governments, and that they must return home. Every one can see that such a way of treating men, engaged in a legitimate industry, was unfair. It would have been hard enough to keep them out of the sea for the season, after due warning had been given them, but to meet them on the high seas and turn them back after they had engaged their men, and fitted out their vessels at great expense, was an exercise of power which it is hard to justify. There can be no doubt that the men who were made to suffer loss by the action of the Government are entitled to compensation.

It must be remembered that according to the British contention hunting the seal in Behring Sea, more than three miles from United States territory, is a perfectly legitimate occupation. The seals swimming on the high seas are *ferre natura*, and are the property of those who can either catch or kill them. This is what the British Government holds, and British subjects, therefore, when they hunt seals on the high seas, are entitled to the protection of that Government. It is on this understanding that British Columbians have, for years, fitted out vessels to hunt seals in Behring Sea. When Great Britain agreed to the *modus vivendi*, without giving British Columbians sealers notice, it took them at a disadvantage, and caused them to suffer loss, through no fault of their own. We are glad to see that there are indications that Lord Salisbury's Government takes this view of the matter, and we may be sure that the Commissioner who is on his way here to investigate the claims, will deal with the men interested in the sealing industry fairly and intelligently.

NOT LOGICAL.

The Oregonian, usually moderate and logical, is calling out for retaliation because Lord Salisbury will not consent to continue the *modus vivendi*. It declares that the United States gives Canada commercial privileges worth \$20,000,000 a year, and now "to force us to give more, she proceeds to plunder our property in Alaska." In the first place the United States does not give Canada one single dollar for which she does not give a full equivalent. American shippers do not send their goods by Canadian railroads to benefit Canada, but because it pays them to do so. They are quite as much the gainers by the traffic as the railway companies. So, to speak of it as a favor extended to Canada, is for our contemporary will pardon us for speaking so plainly, childish.

Then, Canadians do not plunder American property in Alaska. The property of our neighbors in Alaska is as safe as it is in New York or Maine or Oregon. Canadians, as the Oregonian very well knows, are not plunderers. Any property that United States citizens own in Alaska is as safe, as far as Canadians are concerned, as if it were stored in or protected by the strongest citadel ever made by man.

We find it very difficult to believe that the Oregonian means by "our property" the seals that swim on the high seas of the North Pacific Ocean. It knows very well that the high seas are not Alaska, and that the seals that swim in them are not the property of the United States. People who

claim as their own property to which they have no right, are sometimes called by a name which we would hesitate to apply to our neighbors across the line. That they do not deserve any such reproachful designation is seen from the fact that their Government has consented to refer the right to call the seals "our property" to arbitration, and the Oregonian, like the sensible patriotic journal it is, approves of that reference. It should not, therefore, anticipate a decision favorable to the American claim by calling the seals "our property" before the arbitrators have handed in their award.

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE SEAS.

The significance of the Behring Sea dispute does not seem to be fully understood. Whether or not British subjects shall have the right to kill a few seals in the Northern Pacific ocean is a matter of comparatively small importance, but whether any nation shall be allowed to exercise sovereignty over the high seas in the Pacific or any other ocean, is a far-reaching and a most momentous question. If it is admitted that the United States can make a large area of the Pacific ocean its territory, other nations may have a pretext for claiming the ownership of seas of much less extent and which could, with far greater propriety, be defined as closed seas than Behring Sea, which is a glance at the map shows cannot, with the slightest approach to exactitude, be called "a closed sea." It is the interest of all nations to keep the ocean free as the highway of nations, and the United States, before it purchased Alaska, was the foremost nation in the world to assert the right of the ships of all nations of the weak as well as the strong—to traverse every part of the ocean without let or hindrance. But since it has purchased an interest in the fur seal rookeries of the Northern Pacific, its zeal in favor of freedom on the high seas has ebbed, and it has become as intolerant and as ready to encroach upon the rights of other nations as the most exclusive and the most despotic power in existence.

But the principle that the ocean is the common property of all nations was asserted before it was known that there was a seal of any value in the North Pacific, and will continue to be asserted long after the fur seal, about which such an ado is now made, has disappeared from the face of the earth.

The United States has as great an interest as any other nation in denying to any power the sovereignty of the sea. This, its statesmen saw, when they protested against Russia exercising the very jurisdiction which they now claim over the waters of the Northern Pacific, and when they grudgingly accorded to Great Britain jurisdiction over a belt of sea three miles in width off the Atlantic coast of British America. The action of the United States with respect to territorial limits on the eastern side of this continent is in striking contrast with its claims on its western side. On the eastern side the Americans contended that the British territory extended no farther than three miles from the shore, following the sinuosities of the coast. They treated with ridicule the British claim that the three miles should be measured from a line drawn from headland to headland. They held that their vessel had a right to fish three miles from the shore, in the bays, as well as in the open sea. It should be remembered that the body of water in which they claimed this privilege—the Gulf of St. Lawrence—is almost entirely surrounded by British territory and can, with great propriety, be considered a "closed sea." But the Americans kept up their claim to fish within a marine league of the shore of the British colonies bordering the Gulf of St. Lawrence as strongly and with as much confidence as they now claim exclusive jurisdiction over a section of Behring Sea, which is many times larger and greatly more open than the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The inconsistency of the claims on the two sides of the continent, must strike any one who studies them, as grossly and even absurdly inconsistent. If the Americans were at all consistent, they would not even go so far as to submit their claim to jurisdiction over the waters of the Northern Pacific to arbitration, but would frankly and honestly admit that such a claim is untenable, and in the interest of the United States itself ought not to be insisted upon.

The talk about the United States going to war to assert a claim which, only a few years ago, comparatively speaking, it, through its representative, declared to be untenable, is simply absurd. The Americans know as well as the British do that they have no greater rights on the Pacific Coast than they are willing to allow the British on the Atlantic Coast. The Seattle Post-Intelligencer expressed the convictions of a very large proportion of the American public, when, on Thursday, it said: "The treaty of arbitration before the Senate involves really but two points: first, have we any right of exclusive jurisdiction over the waters of Behring Sea, and second, have we any right 'not protection or property in the fur seals frequenting the islands of the United States in Behring Sea when such seals are found outside the ordinary three-mile limit'?"

"On both of these points in our judgment we are morally certain to be beaten. No international tribunal is likely to concede our claim of exclusive ownership of a part of the North Pacific ocean, in area twice as large as the Caribbean and larger than the Mediterranean sea."

Our Seattle contemporary speaks of the theory that Americans have a property right in the seals and that they should not be treated as *ferre natura* as absurd. Our contemporary looks at the question from a commonsense point of view, and we feel satisfied that the conclusions at which it has arrived are those which the great majority of the American people will come to after they have thought over the subject.

WILL THE CHINESE RETALIATE?

We see by a Washington telegram to the San Francisco Bulletin, that the Chinese Government is very well posted as to the condition of the Chinese in America, and as to the legislation before Congress, with respect to the men of that race. From an interview which its correspondent had with the Chinese Minister, Tui Kwo Gie, it would appear that the Chinese Government is not at all well pleased with the treatment which Chinese men are receiving in the United States, and with its exclusion laws, present and proposed. The Minister holds that if the United States wishes to put a stop to Chinese immigration, it should be done by means of a treaty with China. He contends that for the United States to agree to a treaty, providing for the admission of Chinese, and then to override it by an Act of Congress, is hardly acting in good faith. This conclusion is a very natural one to come to, and it does seem as if the Heavens Chinese had a pretty clear idea as to what constitutes covenant-breaking and covenant-breaking. When asked plainly "If the United States puts further restrictions on Chinese immigration, will China exclude Americans from her territory?" he answered after some hesitation, and in a diplomatic way. This is his reply:

"It seems to me that the Americans should consider the situation and withdraw from China of their own free will. I will answer your question by asking you mine. Let us suppose that the American Minister in London should say to the Chinese Minister, 'You keep away from the American Legation house; we don't want you here. Do you think the Chinese Minister would visit the American Legation any more?' and do you think the American Minister would expect much of a welcome at the Chinese Legation? You may draw your own inference. Again, suppose that one of the Washington banks should say to another 'We won't have anything more to do with you; we will not handle your paper,' and say that next week that same bank should ask the other for a loan of \$100,000 or so, do you think it would be accommodated? The American people are talking in great deal about reciprocity just now. They should remember that reciprocity works two ways."

This is pretty well for a Chinaman. From this it is but reasonable to conclude that the Government of China will not retaliate against the measures which the United States has taken to protect its subjects, and that if the United States wishes to keep up a friendly and profitable intercourse with China it must treat the Chinese fairly. It is quite evident that the Chinese Minister at Washington is clearly of opinion that non-intercourse is a game that two can play at.

A FORECAST.

The British Conservatives have been making careful enquiries in order to find out what are their chances of success at the next general election. The Times has had a commissioner engaged in the work, and he has carefully gone over the constituencies, one by one, and has given the public his conclusions in a series of letters which must be exceedingly interesting to all who wish to gain a knowledge of the political condition of the country. The frankness of the Times correspondent will astonish Canadian party politicians. He evidently described the constituencies as he found them, not permitting his political predilections to bias his statements or to vitiate his calculations. His conclusions are not at all favorable to the party which the Times supports. He makes no attempt to buoy up weak-kneed Conservatives with false hopes. He does not allow them to live in a fool's paradise until after the election, but does his best to convince them that if they are to win while the hard is made to the people they must work hard and perseveringly. This is his forecast: The general election will result in the return of 254 Conservatives and 42 Liberal Unionists; that is he expects that 296 supporters of the Government are sure to be returned. On the Opposition side he calculates that 200 Gladstonians will be returned and 82 Irish home rulers. This will give the Opposition 282 supporters. There are, he considers, 92 seats doubtful.

This calculation is not very satisfactory to either party, and amounts to an admission that the commissioner himself has no idea what will really be the result of the elections. The ninety-two doubtful seats are an element of uncertainty which must be wilder and dishearten all but the most confident and courageous of the political calculators and prophets.

There were in the present Parliament a few months ago 304 Conservatives and 65 Liberal Unionists. This makes the Government Party 369 strong. The Opposition was formed of 215 Gladstonians and 36 Irish home rulers, 301 in all. This gives the Government a majority of 68. It is not quite as much as that now, but the by-elections have not made as much difference as many seem to suppose. This calculation, by a competent man, who had made the matter a special study, does not give either party much to build on. There will be no doubt, changes in public opinion before the election, but at the present moment it does not appear that the men of either party have much reason to be at all confident as to what will be the result of an appeal to the people.

AN INTERESTING DISCUSSION.

It can no longer be said that British Columbia is not known abroad. Gentlemen who have visited the province sound its praises wherever they go, and British Columbians themselves are evidently making it part of their business, when they visit Eastern countries, to let those whom they meet know what the Pacific Coast province of the Dominion is like. Our readers saw extracts from the excellent paper which the Rev. Mr. Beaudry read before the Royal Colonial Institute, on the 9th of February last. In that paper that gentleman did his adopted country justice. That it made a

favorable impression on those who heard it may be gathered from the very interesting discussion that followed the reading.

Both Canon Beaudry's address and the discussion are published in the March number of the Journal of the Royal Colonial Institute. The speeches made by Sir Charles Tupper, Mr. A. Staveland Hill, M.P., Mr. A. W. Harvey, of Newfoundland, Senator Macdonald, Colonel W. J. Englehead, R.E., and others, are exceedingly interesting, as they contain information about this province which cannot but make a favorable impression on those in Great Britain who are looking for homes in a new country, which offers them good chances for the investment of capital and a favorable field in which to exert their energies. In view of the proposals now before the Provincial Legislature to aid in the development of the deep sea fisheries of the province, the following extract from the speech of Col. Englehead, who has evidently devoted much attention to that subject, will be welcome to our readers. In the course of his remarks, the gallant Colonel said:

"Our development of the Deep Sea Fisheries of British Columbia is of so great an importance to that province that I must ask your indulgence and pardon if I detain you for a short time with a brief account of the industry which is being brought into existence. Up to the present time, beyond some small spasmodic attempts, no efforts have been made to utilize the rich harvest of the sea which may be reaped from the Pacific waters on the coast of Vancouver Island, and off Queen Charlotte Islands. Fishing banks exist of a large area, many within the three-mile limit, which literally teem with fish of the choicest and most delicate quality. Several harbors abound where fishing villages could be located, and in the sheltered waters of which fishing could be carried on if too stormy weather prevailed outside. Forests, producing a practically inexhaustible supply of useful timber, cover a large proportion of the coast lands, and are capable of providing materials for boat-building, for the construction of houses and stores, and for barrel and box-making, and for many other requirements, the outcome of a fishing industry. To reap the full advantages of the natural resources, population and capital are required. Steps are being taken by the Government, aided by the Imperial Government, to promote the emigration of Scotch crofters, who are also fishermen, and negotiations are being carried on to enable the necessary capital to be raised to encourage the industry. To utilize the catches of fish, which may be reasonably expected, will be the reward of the crofter labor. When it is considered that the supplies of fish on the Pacific coast, equal, if they do not exceed, those of the Atlantic seaboard, both in quantities and quality; that markets exist within a reasonable distance, as regards carriage, for every description of fresh and cured fish, it can be easily understood that a vast industry is capable of being built up, which cannot fail to benefit both the province, the crofter and the investor. Contingent interests, such as the extraction of oil from the whale, dog-fish, cod, herring, codlin, and the manufacture of fish glue and fish oil, will be promoted by the fishery, and will swell the profits and make the fishing industry of the West Coast equal in magnitude to that of the Eastern Provinces, where 70,000 fishermen now find profitable occupation."

No one who is acquainted with the deep-sea fishery of the province, and who has had a glimpse of the wealth which the sea washes the shores of the province contains, will say that Col. Englehead's picture is overdrawn. It would, indeed, be difficult to imagine a richer field for men engaged in a great fishery enterprise than that which exists around the coasts and islands of this province. It is, too, a field which is as yet unworked. We believe that as the deep-sea fisheries of the coast become developed, the sources of wealth whose existence is not now dreamed of, will be discovered. The exploration is nearly all to be done, and who can tell what the explorers may find? The enterprise to which Col. Englehead alluded is most promising one, and we believe that when once a beginning is made it will be carried on skillfully and energetically. It is, we learn, in good hands, and if the encouragement asked for is extended to the Commercial Company by the province, as much money as may be required will be forthcoming.

"THE DIGNITY OF THE PRESS."

The Columbian, we see, declares its determination to "maintain the dignity and rights of the Press to the bitter end." This is a very commendable resolution. The dignity and rights of the Press should be precious in the sight of every true journalist. But, then, it is well to understand what the rights of the Press are, and in what its dignity consists. If our contemporary thinks that the Press has the right to attack the character of every man with whom it disagrees or who crosses its path, or that of its friends and inspirers, we differ from it very widely indeed. No newspaper has the right causelessly to smirch the reputation or impugn the motives of any body of men; and it is not in accordance with either right or dignity to use language with regard to a rival or an opponent that would not be tolerated in an assembly of respectable men. Decent men are not in the habit of saying to their neighbors that their conduct on a certain occasion was a "scandal" and an outrage, and that it had at a stated time reached "the same of rotteness and impudence."

We do not think that a journalist has a right to characterize the ways of opponents as "dark and devious," and their methods as "crooked," and to assert that they were "unscrupulous" and that the means they used to accomplish their ends are "questionable," unless he has proved clearly that their conduct has been such as to justify the use of these epithets. He has a right, and it is his duty, when men in public positions have done wrong, to show where and how they have misconducted themselves, but he has no right, on mere suspicion, or to gratify his spite, or to express his disappointment, to speak of such men as if they had betrayed the trust confided in them and were unfit to occupy

the positions in which they had been placed.

A newspaper has, we hold, no right to set out a mere scandal or a malignant vilification. And the language which the Columbian has used with regard to the Private Bills Committee, is nothing more or better than scolding and vilification. It has proved nothing. It has not even attempted to show that there are any grounds for the charges which it makes. For anything that the reader of the Columbian can see in the article to which exception has been taken by the Legislative Assembly, the members of the Private Bills Committee may be as pure, as patriotic, and as disinterested as it is possible for men to be. It has not been shown that they have done anything that is in the slightest degree blameworthy. It suspects them of being unfaithful and corrupt, and goes on to denounce them as if its suspicions were proofs.

Journalism such as this does not deserve to be defended. It deserves indeed, and that from journalists, the severest condemnation. Its tendency is to lower the tone of journalism and to bring journalists into disrepute. When the public finds that a newspaper abuses and ridicules every man who does not belong to the party whose cause it advocates, and covers with lavish commendation all who are on its side, they soon come to despise both its praise and its censure.

This is why we do not think that it was worth the Legislative Assembly's while to cite the publishers of the Columbian to appear at its bar. A respectable man does not often reply to the abuse of a street loafer who has taken offence at something he has said or done. He knows that if he notices his insolence the fellow will become more impudent and more insulting. The most prudent way is to pass the ruffian by without paying the slightest attention to what he has said. Nothing gives him more satisfaction than to know that he has annoyed the respectable man whom he has insulted. In the same way the newspapers of the Establisment class can be made perfectly harmless by treating them with contemptuous silence. Noticing them and attaching importance to their violently abusive utterances makes them conceited and increases their virulence. It is easy to see that the Columbian is proud of being prosecuted, and is already giving itself the airs of a patriot and a martyr. But we can assure it that it has done nothing to be proud of and that the course it is pursuing is far more likely to degrade the Press than to maintain its dignity and its rights.

A LUCID REPORT.

The Report of Mr. Justice Crease, acting as Royal Commissioner to enquire into the conduct of Mr. Isaac Hoyt Hallett, as Stipendiary Magistrate for the county of Westminster, is a remarkably clear and vigorously worded document. The charges against Mr. Hallett are succinctly stated. They were for receiving fees to which he was not entitled by law, in two cases. The law, as cited in the report, shows that Mr. Hallett, when he acted as Stipendiary Magistrate, had no right to charge any higher fees than those set down in the schedule, and he was also bound by his oath of office to "take nothing for his office as Stipendiary Magistrate to be done, but of the Queen and fees accounted, and costs limited by statute." These fees, (save those otherwise applied by statute), the law directs to be paid monthly into the public treasury. The circumstances of the office in Westminster really could get nothing, or next to nothing, for his services. He had no stipend, and was not allowed to take fees. This Mr. Hallett knew, or ought to have known. Yet he, nevertheless, took fees in the two cases named. One amounted to forty-eight dollars, and the other to twelve.

The case against him was clear. There could be no doubt that he took fees to which he was not legally entitled. Mr. Hallett's own evidence proved that this was the case. Respecting Mr. Hallett's testimony, the Royal Commissioner says:

"Personally, it was impossible not to pay tribute to the complete frankness and simplicity, not only of the matter, but of the manner in which he delivered his evidence. There was not the slightest effort at equivocation or concealment; and, although his testimony must have made it transparently evident to all who heard him, that he was peculiarly ill-adapted to fill a responsible position which he never sought, and which was from the very first distasteful to him, he is, nevertheless, not a man who could be induced knowingly to give utterance to an untruth."

Mr. Hallett's truthfulness and openness, in one sense, made the Royal Commissioner's duty easy. He could come to but one conclusion.

Judge Crease's lucid report must show the well-meaning persons, who busied themselves in this affair in Mr. Hallett's behalf, the impropriety of jumping at conclusions and of passing judgment on the conduct of the authorities before they were in possession of the evidence on which their decision was based. There are cases—and in which the men in power have a very unpleasant duty to perform, and it is improper, even when the motive is praiseworthy, to endeavor to induce them to refrain from performing that duty, or to make its performance doubly hard and painful.

BULLETIN NO. 5.

Consuls Bulletin No. 5 relates to the population of the sub-districts of Manitoba, the Northwest Territories and British Columbia. The population of Cariboodist district is given as 4,938; in 1881 it was 7,550. New Westminster district is represented as having 42,229 inhabitants. This includes Vancouver city, the population of which is 13,709. Vancouver district is reckoned to

have 18,229 inhabitants, and Victoria district is placed at 18,538; this includes Esquimalt and Metchesen. This is how the population is computed—
John Bay Ward 3,673
Johnson Street Ward 3,707
Yates Street Ward 4,261

Total 16,841
It will be interesting to see how this compares with the census taken by Mr. Williams, last summer.

There are, according to the census, 13,061 souls in Yale District. The Indian population is set down at 25,691. Mr. George Johnson seems to think that his figures for British Columbia are, notwithstanding all doubts, fairly accurate. He is evidently of opinion that an increase of 98 per cent., since 1881, ought to satisfy all reasonable British Columbians. His reasons for concluding that the figures of the census are correct, are: That the number of families has increased by exactly the same percentage as the number of inhabitants; that the number of habitations occupied has increased by 108 per cent., against an increase of 98 per cent. in the number of families; and that although there has been a general increase there has been a decrease in the Cariboo District. There is a strip of territory between the 54th and 60th parallels, and the 120th and 124th meridians the population of which has not yet been received by the Census Branch. This deficiency would chiefly affect the Indian population. The official figures are regarded with a considerable amount of scepticism in all parts of the province. The Chief Statistician will find it impossible to make the citizens of Victoria, particularly, believe that their city has had justice done it by the census. They know that there are a great many more than seventeen thousand people within the city's limits. We see by the Bulletin that the difficulties in taking the census of this province have been very great.

INFORMATION WANTED.

Our respected correspondent, "Ontario," asks us the following questions:

"Is there a license fee charged for any loan company opening a branch in Victoria? If so, how much? Are mortgages taxed? If so, are they taxed in the municipality in which the property is situated? If so, situated in Victoria I suppose the average rate would be about two per cent. Is there any law to prevent the mortgagee stipulating in the mortgage that he will pay not only the taxes on the property mortgaged, but the taxes on the mortgage as well?"

Practically the answer to the first question is, No. So far, loan companies in Victoria have not paid any license fee. The municipality, however, has power "to issue licenses for the purposes following, and to levy and collect, by means of such licenses, the amounts following: From every express company, gas company, telephone company, electric light company, street railway or tramway company, investment and loan societies, fur dealers or fur traders, a sum not exceeding fifty dollars for every six months."

Mortgages are taxed by the Provincial Government and not by the municipality. They are taxed as personal property under section 2, sub-section 4, of the Assessment Act, 1888, which says:

"The terms 'personal estate' and 'personal property' include all income, goods, chattels, shares in incorporated companies, mortgages, dividends from stocks, money, notes, Government or Municipal bonds or securities, accounts, and debts at their actual value, and all other property, except land and real estate, and real property herein expressly exempted."

There is no law which specifically states that the mortgage may not contain a provision binding the mortgagee to pay the tax on the mortgage, but had such a provision been inserted, it would not, we are advised, be binding. Every man is responsible for his own taxes, and while he may make an agreement with another man to bear his taxes, such an agreement does not absolve him from liability, and is not recognized by the collectors.

It is, of course, in the interest of the authorities to place as few obstacles as possible in the way of the introduction of capital into the province. The incidence of taxation must be made as fair as possible, and the legislator should be sure that the burden of the tax he imposes shall fall on the person he intends shall bear it. It sometimes happens that the legislator makes curious mistakes in this matter, as for instance, he may impose as he thinks a tax on the lender, but he may find that when his law goes into operation, that all he has done has been to add to the burdens of the borrower.

TOO LATE.

The notice given to the sealers by Collector Milne yesterday caused a good deal of excitement among those who are interested in the sealing business. The notice took them by surprise. It is very difficult, indeed, to see why it was sent so late in the season. Nearly the whole of the sealing fleet is at sea. The owners of the vessels have incurred the expenses of the voyage. The notice which they received to-day will not save one of them a single dollar. They cannot recall their vessels if they would, and even if it were possible to send them word, the whole expense of preparation would be lost.

It would appear as if the British officials were completely ignorant of what is going on in the world outside of Downing Street. If inquiries had been made, it would have been the earliest thing in the world to have found out that the sealers of British Columbia, depending upon the protection that the vessels of a British colony flying the British flag have a right to expect, were fitting out their vessels for the coming season. They made no secret of their intentions. Every one who took the least interest in their work could see what they were doing. A word of warning

would, while the preparations were going on, have been effective. It would have prevented countless men from running any unusual risk. They all would then know what they were to expect, and there would be some justice in telling them if they went this year to hunt seals in Behring Sea, they would do so at their own risk. But, to delay that warning until the preparations had been completed, and the ships had been weeks at sea, seems to us to be both senseless and unjust.

We would like to know what Lord Knutsford means by requesting Lord Stanley to warn owners of sealing vessels, who have cleared this year for Behring Sea, of what is being done in Washington, and what is likely to be done. He surely cannot expect those owners to send cruisers to that sea to hunt up the vessels and to recall them. It is evident that the notice given, yesterday, cannot apply to them. It can only apply to all sealers "proposing to sail in the said waters" on the 28th of March, the day the warning was published in Victoria. It is evident that all sealers which cleared from Victoria previous to that date, are entitled to the protection of the British Government on the high seas, or to compensation, if their protection through no fault or neglect of theirs is withdrawn. This is the position in which the greater number of the vessels of the sealing fleet were when the Colonial Minister's warning reached Victoria. They cleared when they had every reason to believe that they would be protected by the nation under whose flag they sail, and it is not to be supposed that they will be capriciously or unjustly deprived of that protection.

We see that in the negotiations that have been going on between the two Governments, the interests of British subjects in this province have been forgotten. If the United States Senate sanctions the Arbitration Treaty, regulations restricting the catch of seals are to go into effect immediately. What those regulations are, no one except the negotiators and the members of the Senate knows, but we see that Lord Salisbury, in his letter of the 26th, says:

"We think that the prohibition of sealing, if it stands alone, will be unjust to British sealers, if the decision of the arbitrators should be adverse to the United States. We are, however, willing when the treaty has been ratified to agree to an arrangement similar to that of last year, if the United States will consent that the arbitrators should, in the event of their decision being adverse to the United States, assess the damages which the British sealers shall have incurred on British sealers during the pendency of the arbitration, and in the event of a decision adverse to Great Britain, should assess the damages which the limitation of slaughter shall, during the pendency of the arbitration, have inflicted on the United States or its lessees."

This seems fair as far as the two Governments are concerned. But it is not to be expected that the British Government will permit British sealers who depended upon it for protection to be great losers even if the award is adverse to Great Britain.

Again in reply to objections made by President Harrison, Lord Salisbury in another note says—

"I am ready to consent to a reference on this point on the following terms: That the case the arbitrators shall decide in favor of the British Government, that Government may ask them further to decide whether the United States Government has since 1885 taken any action in Behring Sea inflicting wrongful loss on British subjects, and if so to assess the damages incurred thereby; and that in case the arbitrators decide in favor of the Government of the United States or their lessees, they assess the damages incurred thereby."

Here again we see Lord Salisbury making provision for compensation to British subjects who have sustained losses through the assertion of the United States of her claim to exclusive jurisdiction over the waters of Behring Sea. The limits to those whom it is, of course, free to accept or reject these proposals, but it is not likely that they will be rejected. The proposal to compensate those who have suffered loss through the action of the two high contracting powers is so reasonable that we cannot see how it can be lost sight of.

The probability, then, is that if the award is in favor of Great Britain the Victoria sealers will be indemnified by the United States. If it is against Great Britain we do not think that its Government will ignore the claims of those who suffered loss last year through the establishment of the *modus vivendi* or who will suffer loss this year for want of timely notification of the course it intended to pursue pending the ratification of the Arbitration Treaty. Notice this year, to be of any benefit to those whom it concerned, should have been given months before it was sent to the Victoria Collector of Customs.

EDITORIAL COMMENTS.

The Columbian is evidently under the impression that it is the Government which has instituted proceedings against its publishers. The Government has nothing to do with the matter. The offence which the Columbian committed is against the Legislative Assembly, and it is that body, and not the Government, which has summoned the Messrs. Kennedy to appear at its bar to answer for the scandalous libel they have published, and the contempt they have shown. The resolution containing the accusation was passed by the Legislative Assembly, and the summons, citing the publishers to appear before its bar, was signed by the Speaker. There is a very wide distinction between the action of the House of Assembly and the action of the Government, but, wide as it is, the Columbian does not appear to see it.

SOME space like who sent a telegram from Victoria to the Fresno Weekly Republican, says that no white men are engaged in the British Columbia sealing vessels, but that there are over 800 Chinamen and 540 Indians employed. The truth is that there are 800 white men employed by the sealers and 525 Indians. The number of Chinamen on board the sealing vessels is so small as to be not worth mentioning.

FROM THE DAILY C.

THE O.

A Special Of the shareholders Coal and Minerals Co. office of the company, the afternoon of Monday.

Salaries in The wind blew a mild quarter, last evening, and in Victoria appeared place either in the air, unfortunate pedestrians pelleted to be on the stage.

Benchers The British Columbia special meeting held for a second term the They are Hon. C. E. Eberts, M.P.P.; Thomas Yates, L. G. McPhillips, the Attorney-General.

Interred at The remains of the were consigned to a Comets on Sunday being held at St. And deceased was a native of Chuscuta, and came to Victoria in 1884. She was the wife of one son, mourn his decease.

Kootenay Bo The new town of known as Sprout's Last city of Kootenay, situated on the boundary line of Columbia and Pend D. subdivided at an early Smith, C.E. (Keefer) in connection with the Kootenay river, as me paragraph, require its locality, will carry out.

The Old, e A few Johnson street named Raymond, who strength of an order, the departure of said sum of \$1—, to be the aforesaid Raymond on the Thistle. The machinery was not installed in paying the under these circumstances.

Mails and The Danube on he North brought with quantity of mail matter of considerable importance to whom the correspondence Postmaster Skelton the fact sent to the vessel. As the Danu mail-carrier was not installed in paying the under these circumstances.

Slough Co It is understood the manager of the Slough has disposed of nearly of stock. He is now week for the Sound, will go to Cariboo for menancing operations on the machinery to now. Among the subscribers city are some of V. There is every reason projected for the future. Once it is done, places will pay, as when worked by me will be all the more further mining enterprise.

Sabbath Scho The Sabbath School of the Methodist Church, situated on Sunday last, circumstances. The and besides the service, occasion, the music a special effort on the were also recitation children. There were the day, and it was gone through. This on which the anniversary on Sunday, particularly the day, addressed the of 200, and it tary showed as sub membership as in finances. The at will be held this eve.

AN AMERICAN.

Gives His Opinion of the B The Port Towns last contain the Columbia embargo—done solely with the cattle syndicate in a representation of and Packing Co., yesterday. "That drive out of the but luthers in British with the syndicate demand for our beef and hogs regard duty on the prices lower than the dictate."

This quarant affect sheep. W no sheep