

in 1894 being \$11,502,794. In regard to bank suspensions during the crisis, the amount due to depositors in the Australian colonies was \$73,039,700. These were reduced to \$47,548,123 at the close of 1894 on which in the process of reconstruction interest is being paid. The circumstances of the colonies are reported to be improving, production is increasing and economy in all matters is being more extensively practised—everything pointing to an era of more solid and substantial prosperity. All this will be of special interest here, considering our relations with our fellow subjects to the South with whom we anticipate doing a large and mutually profitable trade.

EDITORIAL COMMENT.

Construction work on the Hudson Bay Railway is to be begun at once and will be vigorously prosecuted until final completion.

It takes a long time to get out World's Fair diplomas and medals. These it is said will not be ready to be issued before June next. Wherefore it may well be asked—why all this delay?

Hon. Premier Turner, in company with Sir Charles Tupper, has, we notice, lodged with the colonial office the formal complaint of the Canadian sealers against the U. S., the complaint having been forcibly supported by the High Commissioner.

The Northern Pacific Steamship Co. are, we are pleased to, notice about to increase and improve their service between the Sound, Victoria and the Orient, having chartered three large and well appointed steamships, which with the Victoria and Tacoma will constitute the company's line. In consequence the service will be a much faster one. The endeavor will be not only to increase the ordinary trade of the company, but to augment the passenger ser-

vice and closely compete in this department with the vessels of the other lines.

We regret to have to announce that the average of this season's catch of seals is a very small one and is not expected to reach 250 skins per vessel, while numerous disasters including the total loss of the schooner Walter A. Earle with all on board and the Winifred have to be recorded. Even the celebrated Triumph has only 350 skins, the weather reported by her captain having been the roughest he had ever experienced with a more than large amount of wreckage on all hands.

The trade and navigation returns of the Dominion for last year show that British Columbia stands third as a customs revenue producing province, even Nova Scotia and New Brunswick coming behind her in this respect. The imports of British Columbia amounted to dutiable goods \$3,457,683. Free goods \$1,732,676. The exports from British Columbia during the year 1894 reached \$8,142,564, exceeding those of 1893 by two and a half millions and of 1892 by a million and a half, and being double the value of the exports of 1888 or any preceding year.

Highly important and significant are the figures just issued, with comparisons, showing the wealth of England in spite of twenty lean years of depression. The taxable property of England and Wales in 1894 was \$800,500,110, compared to \$520,000,000 in 1870. This increase of more than fifty per cent. has taken place when the taxable value of land has decreased within fifty years from about \$200,000,000 to \$115,000,000. The land formed in 1870 about one-half the taxable property of the country. It is now little more than one-fifth.

The contention has all along been, that, the U. S. pretensions to the contrary notwithstanding, the slaughter of female seals has been far greater by U. S. schooners than by those sailing under the British flag. Our neighbors have been accustomed to talk

about Canadian poachers but the facts are that the Americans are those who have been the worst offenders. Here we have another official statement from Port Townsend which fully carries out this view. E. S. Fowler, U. S. sealing inspector, has examined the catches of all the Puget Sound sealers which have returned from sea, and he says that the catches consist of about 90 per cent. females. It is hard to estimate the loss. Many seals, some authorities have estimated as high as 80 per cent., after being fatally wounded escape and, of course, their pelts are lost to the hunters.

We are not of those who are disposed to erect a Chinese wall so as to shut out those who do not belong to us from obtaining employment, as we hold that on general principles and under ordinary circumstances the more we do to encourage the advent of population the better. At times like the present, however, when money is scarce and extensive undertakings are not plentiful, we hold it to be wisdom to do all we can for our own taxpayers, even though it may appear to savor of inhospitality. We therefore approve of Ald. Cameron's idea that the water commissioner be instructed not to employ any person on the water works at Beaver Lake unless his name appear on the municipal waters list for the city of Victoria for 1895.

We observe that in the East one of the subjects of improvement noted is the manner in which the dry goods stores are being patronized, crowds of customers and booming business being reported. It is further stated that the blue ruinists need not look into the dry goods stores for signs of depression, the general verdict being that business is improving. Besides, it is said that the amount of actual cash sales is remarkable, and that, as appears likely, if depression in making its exit, takes retail credit along with it, the pair will never be missed. The conditions here we note are not very much unlike those noted elsewhere. The fact is as Bradstreets in their last number say "general reports from the Canadian Dominion are exceptionally favorable."