

ALASKA FUR TRADE.

LEASE OF THE SEAL ISLANDS BY THE COMMERCIAL COMPANY.

How the Price of the Sealskin Sacque is Affected, and How the Promiscuous Slaughter of Seals is Prevented.

(New York Times.)
 "There is no question that the Alaska Commercial company, by its lease of the seal islands of that country, enjoys one of the most valuable franchises that could possibly be secured," said an extensive importer of sealskins in this city, "and it is to be regretted that the government granted the privilege it did for so insignificant a return. At the same time, no matter what may be said on that score, the monopoly thus vouchsafed has been a wise thing inasmuch as it prevents the general warfare on the seals of these islands which has caused the virtual extinction of the fur seal from every other fishery in the world. Under the provisions of the company's lease of the Alaska islands only a limited number of seals may be killed annually—100,000 I believe—and the natural increase of the animals is many times that. For these skins the government receives but \$2 each, while they will net the company about \$2,000,000."

"The Privyloff group of islands, over which the Alaska company has supreme control, are 800 miles from Sitka, and are simply small rocky protrusions from the sea. The only life one sees there is in the seal-killing season, which begins early in June and continues all summer, the skin being in its best condition during these months. The seals taken on the desolate shores of these district islands furnish the finest quality of seal fur now to be obtained. The Antarctic islands of Georgia and Desolation formerly contained a still finer clad seal, its value being twice that of the Alaska seal, but as they were free hunting grounds the animals long since became so scarce that it did not pay to send vessels to their haunts after them. The last time that a seal-hunting party was sent to those remote waters less than 100 years were taken, while the time is still within the memory of seal hunters who are not yet old when a catch of 2,000,000 a year on these islands was not an uncommon thing."

"It is not a pleasant sight, the slaughtering of seals, nor is there anything in it requiring heroism or the exercise of skill, or that will awaken the lively emotions of a sportsman. The sealing vessels begin to gather at the islands early in June, and it is a fact that in the heavy fogs of that latitude in summer the sailors depend on the hoarse cries of the seals that are gathered on the rocky shores to guide them to the hunting grounds. From the time the seals begin to congregate at the breeding places until August there is constant and often deadly warfare waged against the pugnacious heads of sleek-skinned bairns, and the howlings of these sealous seals may be heard far out to sea above the roar of the surf. Not less than 3,000,000 seals congregate on these isolated rocks, and the chorus of voices it is possible for them to raise may be imagined. To see the seals literally packed on these islands is a sight never to be forgotten. The whole surface of the rocks seems to be a wriggling, writhing, con torting mass."

"A 3-year-old seal has the choicest fur. Nothing younger than a 2-year-old nor older than a 4-year-old is killed. The hunters start out before dawn, while the seals are asleep along the shores. Taking positions between them, and the sea they cut off their escape. Then the surf-drivers might drive flocks of sheep. They are permitted to take their own time and when they reach the killing round the hunters go around and knock each one, or the ones that are marketable, on the head with a heavy club. The skins are removed from the carcasses at once and taken to the salting houses, where they are covered with salt and piled up. They remain in cure for three or four weeks, when they are counted by the government agent and taken to San Francisco, where the United States collector re counts them and collects the tax. At San Francisco they are packed in tight bands and sent direct to London for the dressing which no one in this country has yet learned to give them."

Plug Tobacco in Washington.

(Washington Letter.)
 There is much more plug tobacco seen in Washington now than ever before. "We sell much more plug tobacco than any other kind," said the manager of a prominent tobacco establishment of the city. "There is a very large number of southern people here, you know, and they all use plug tobacco. You couldn't get a southerner to use soft tobacco, unless it was the case of some old fellow whose teeth were so bad he had to give up the plug. All the southerners use plug. The eastern men, and those from the north and west generally use fine-cut, but you can't sell it to a genuine southerner. The eastern men generally spend the most money for tobacco in one way or the other. They buy the best they can get, and when they smoke, run high up in price. These New York fellows who come here usually buy 35-cent cigars, while your average congressman and senator from the south buy 5 and 10-cent cigars."

Apprehension.

(Philadelphia Owl.)
 Jinks (amateur fisherman)—Yes, aw, our fishing club will start the season next week. Going a long distance, you see, good trout streams are very scarce now.
 Minks—Your club starts out next week, eh? Well, of course, that will cause a good deal of apprehension.
 Apprehension? ha, ha, very good—among the fish you mean?
 "No; among the worms."

Charlemagne's Rosebush.

(Chicago Herald.)
 A beautiful rosebush, said to have been planted by Charlemagne, is one of the great curiosities of the ancient city of Hildesheim, in Hanover. It is gnarled and rugged, as becomes its extreme age, and in some places the principal stem is as thick as a man's body.

Progress in Stove Manufacture.

(Exchange.)
 In the year 1777 considerable interest was manifested in an announcement that six stoves had been completed in Philadelphia. The annual product of the stove foundries in that city is now valued at \$4,000,000, and the industry supports about 12,000 people.

The Philkins: Some people imagine that to be insolent is to impress the world with their dignity. The world is not to be deceived in such matters.

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IN THE ORPHANS' COURT OF CENTRE COUNTY
 In the matter of the exceptions filed to the second and final account of John P. Lucas, administrator of, etc. of Warren P. Lucas, deceased. The undersigned an auditor, appointed by the said Court to hear and determine the exceptions filed to the said account of John P. Lucas, deceased, and report thereon. Will attend to the duties of his appointment at his office in Bellefonte, on Monday, June 15th, A. D. 1886, at 10 o'clock, a. m. when and where all parties in interest may attend.
H. H. HARSBERGER,
 Auditor.

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