its oil. This fishery is now almost a thing of the past ; since about 1875 it has been carried on solely from New London in Connecticut, the fleet numbering only four or five vessels. The yield in 1880 was 42,000 gallons of oil, worth $21,420.

The average number of hair seals taken annually may be esti­mated as follows :—

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| Newfoundland, including Labrador and the Gulf of St Lawrence 400,000 | |
| Canadian net fishery, Gulf of St Lawrence | 75,000 |
| Jan Mayen and the adjacent seas | 130,000 |
| Western Greenland | 50,000 |
| Nova Zembla, White Sea, and Arctic Ocean | 75,000 |
| Caspian Sea | 140,000 |
| North and South Pacific | 5,000 |
| Total number of hair seals | 875,000 |
| Value at $2·50 per seal | $2,187,500 |

*Fur Seals.—*The fur seals occupy two distinct areas. None exist on the shores of the North Atlantic. South of the equator they extend from near the tropics to the region of antarctic ice. By far the most important and valuable fur seal fisheries are those carried on at St Paul’s and St George’s Islands, belonging to the Pribyloff group, @@1 off the coast of Alaska, at the Commander Islands in the Behring Sea, and that in the same sea 700 miles west of the Alaskan seal islets. The species found here is the northern fur seal *(Callorhinus ursinus).* The males attain mature size about the eighth year, when their length is from 7 to 8 feet, their girth from 7 to 8 feet, and their weight, when in full flesh, from 500 to 700 lb. The females are full grown at four years old, when they measure 4 feet in length, 21/2 in girth, and weigh from 80 to 100 lb. The yearlings weigh from 30 to 40 lb. The seals resort to these islands late in spring chiefly for reproductive purposes, making their appearance from the southward. The number annually visiting St Paul’s and St George’s is estimated at five millions. About the middle of April the males begin to arrive and take their places along the shore in “ the rookeries, ” as the breeding- grounds are called. The younger males are prevented from landing by the older, and are compelled either to stay in the water or to go to the uplands. By the middle of June all the males have assembled, and then the females begin to appear. Each old male seal collects from ten to fifteen or more females, whom he guards most jealously. The males fight furiously, “ so that night and day the aggregated sound is like that of an approaching railway train.” By the middle of July the family circle is complete. Soon after landing the female gives birth to one pup, weighing about 6 lb, which she nurses at wide intervals without any affection. Pairing takes place soon afterwards. No food is taken by the breeding males while on the rocks,—a period of three to four months. When the males leave after this long fast, they are reduced to half their former weight. In the end of October and middle of November all leave the island, the young males going last and by themselves.

The killing of the seals is carefully regulated. No females are killed, and only a certain number of young “bachelor ” seals whose skins are of superior quality. These younger male seals are spread out on the slopes above the rookeries to rest. A party of men armed with clubs of hard wood quietly creep between them and the shore, and at a given signal start up with a shout and drive the seals inland. When they reach the killing-grounds near the villages, they select those that are two or three years old and seem likely to yield the most valuable fur. These they despatch with a club. The skins are carefully salted for exportation. Besides the skin each seal yields about a gallon and a half of oil. But it is not used, as its rank odour renders refining very costly. The value of the skins in the raw state varies from five to twenty-five dollars each ; at times, when furs are specially fashionable, a higher price is obtained. The quality of the Alaska furs is superior, but those obtained in the South Shetland and antarctic regions are rated best. A cloak of the richest fur seal, a yard deep or more, will cost from £25 to £40. The roots of the loose exterior hairs penetrate deeper into the skin than those of the fur or short hair, and can readily be cut by paring on the fleshy side, without touching the roots of the fur ; the long hairs then drop off, leaving the valuable fur below in a sheet like pure velvet. The number of seals killed on the Pribyloff Islands is limited to 100,000 annu­ally, and with the precautions taken they increase as fast as if left to themselves, “for when the number of males is in excess, the continual fighting ou the rookeries destroys many of both females and young, which get trampled to death.”

Alaska was purchased from Russia by the United States in 1867. The Pribyloff Islands were leased to the Alaska Commercial Com­

pany of San Francisco for twenty years, from 1st May 1870, under Act of Congress approved 1st July 1870. The annual rental is $55,000 with a tax of $2·62 on each skin taken,—making the total rental $317,000 per annum. The Alaska Commercial Company have leased the Commander Islands from the Russian Government. About 30,000 fur seals are annually taken there.

The fishery at the mouth of the Straits of Juan de Fuca and its vicinity is carried on by Americans and Canadians. The seals are captured in the waters, the largest number being secured at and about Cape Flattery, to the extent of 15,000 annually. The Lobos Islands, at the mouth of the Rio de la Plata, are under the protection of the Government of Uruguay, the number of seals annually taken being limited to about 12,000. Some of the numer­ous islands about Cape Horn are the breeding-places of fur seals, as are also the South Shetland Islands farther south. This Cape Horn region is visited by a fleet of seven to ten vessels belonging to New London and Stonington, Connecticut, and also by a few Chilian and other South American vessels. Only occasionally does a vessel visit the South Shetlands, though the quality of skins to be secured there is very superior. The headquarters for the fleet between seasons is at Punta Arenas, or Sandy Point, in the Straits of Magellan. The American fleet in 1880 numbered nine vessels of 1192 tons. The result of the fishery was 9275 skins, worth $90,431. Early in the 19th century the Falkland Islands abounded in fur seals, but they have been exterminated. The number now (1886) annually secured there does not average more than 500 ; in some years only 50 skins are taken.

There are annually received at London from the Cape of Good Hope about 10,000 sealskins taken at various islands in the Southern Indian Ocean and along the south-west coast of Africa. A few fur seals are taken in the Okhotsk Sea.

Nearly all the fur-seal skins find their way to London, where they are plucked, dressed, and dyed. A few, however, are prepared in New York. At the seal islands they are salted and baled with the fur inside, and in this manner shipped to London. The annual yield of the fur-seal fisheries of the world is about 185,000.

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| Pribyloff Islands, Alaska  Commander Islands | | Seals.  100,000  30,000 |
| Straits of Juan de Fuca and vicinity |  | 15,000 |
| Lobos Islands, mouth of Rio de la Plata |  | 12,000 |
| Patagonia, including South Shetland Islands and Straits of | | |
| Magellan |  | 15,000 |
| Falkland Islands |  | 500 |
| Cape of Good Hope, including south-west coast of Africa and | |  |
| islands in Southern Indian Ocean |  | 10,000 |
| Islands belonging to Japan |  | 2,500 |
| Total. |  | 185,000 |
| At an average of $7 per skin the annual value |  |  |
| would be | $1,295,000 |  |
| Value of hair seals annually | 2,187,500 |  |
| Total value of hair and fur seals | $3,482,500 |  |

See Hatton and Harvey, *Newfoundland,* 1883 ; *Returns of the Jan Mayen Seal Fisheries,* by Captain Adams, 1885 ; *United States Fish Commission Reports* for 1873-74 and 1874-75 ; J. A. Allen, *Eared Seals* ; Charles Bryant, *Habits of the Northern Fur Seal* ; H. W. Elliott, *Seal Islands of Alaska.* (M. H.)

SEA LAWS, a title which came into use amongst writers on maritime law in the 16th century, and was applied by them to certain mediæval collections of usages of the sea which had been recognized as having the force of customary law, either by the judgments of a maritime court or by the resolutions of a congress of merchants and shipmasters. To the former class belong the sea laws of Oléron, which embody the usages of the mariners of the Atlantic ; under the latter come the sea laws of Wisby, which reflect the customs of the mariners of the North Sea and of the Baltic.

The earliest collection of such usages which was re­ceived in England is described in the *Black Book of the Admiralty* as the “ Laws of Oléron,” whilst the earliest known text is contained in the *Liber Memorandorum* of the corporation of the City of London, preserved in the archives of their Guildhall. These laws are in an early handwriting of the 14th century, and the title prefixed to them is *La Charte d'Oleroun des Juggementz de la Mier.* How and in what manner these “Judgments of the Sea” came to be collected is not altogether certain. Cleirac, a learned advocate in the parliament of Bordeaux, in the introduction to his work on *Les Us et Coustumes de la Mer,* first printed at Bordeaux in 1647, states that Eleanor, duchess of Guienne (the consort of Louis VII. of France, but subsequently divorced from him and married to Henry II. of England), having observed during her visit to the

@@@1 The sea-lion *(Eumetopias stellen)* is a characteristic pinniped of the Pribyloff Islands and other parts of Alaska. It has very little commercial value ; but by the natives along the Behring Sea coast of Alaska, Kamchatka, and the Kuriles it is highly prized. From the hide they make coverings for their boats ; the intestines are made into garments ; the stomach walls are used as pouches for oil ; the flesh is dried and eaten ; and the whiskers are sold to the Chinese, who use them as pickers to their opium pipes, and in several cere­monies in their joss houses.