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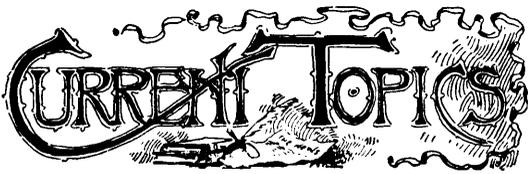
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Any one who has watched some of our horses ascending a hill in winter, with heavy loads behind them, must have observed the sore struggle of the poor creatures to keep their footing. Use, of course, works marvels in accommodating their feet to the task that they have to perform. Animals, like men, learn caution and tact in the use of their limbs. It is well that they are gifted with the sense that makes them thus circumspect, for their owners, as a rule, do little to help them. Let any human being have an iron shoe attached to his foot, which entirely neutralizes the power of movement natural to it, and how quickly he would stumble in making an ascent up slippery ground! If the horse proves unequal to the twofold strain imposed on him, he has learned by experience what treatment to expect. It is painful, therefore, to see his super-equine efforts to escape slipping and the driver's whip. Now, a shoe has been devised which, being let on the foot, leaves the frog of it free to grip the ground. It is also a counter-agent to several diseases, of which the ordinary method is the known cause. This shoe has been examined and commended, and has even won prizes at exhibitions. There is an American invention and an English adaptation or *vice versa*. Nothing but lazy adherence to tradition prevents its general adoption. This is a point on which the Veterinary Medical Association might advantageously exert its influence. There is no part of the world where horse-shoeing needs reform more glaringly than in this province.

The Alaska seal monopoly has been awarded, but not to the old Commercial Company. On the 28th ult., it was announced that Mr. Secretary Windom had directed a lease to be granted to the North American Commercial Company, of New York and San Francisco, for the exclusive privilege of taking fur seals on the islands of St. Paul and St. George (the Pribyloff group) for a period of twenty years, from May 1, 1890. The president of this company is Mr. S. Lieber. The company has undertaken to pay an annual rental of \$55,200 and a royalty of \$10.75 for every skin taken. It is expressly understood that the catch shall not be limited to less than 100,000 annually after the first year of the new company's operations. The old company offered only \$50,000, with \$6.75 for each skin. But it also promised to provide churches and schools and a hundred comfortable dwellings. The company also undertook to pay as high a rent as that which any other responsible corporation might offer in good faith. The Government evidently deemed it more secure to accept at once the more favourable bid of the rival North American

Company. The church, schools and houses, which the Alaska Company was willing to erect and establish, Mr. Windom probably regarded as more satisfying to the conscience of the bidder and the communities concerned than to the United States. In the announcement of the sale the Government had reserved the right of declining to accept any offer, however apparently and comparatively advantageous. Though the bids were not very numerous, they represented all sections of the Union—East, West, Centre and South.

All civilization, outside of the domain of the Czar, has been roused to indignant protest against the odious inhumanity of the Russian prison administration. This far-reaching condemnation of brutality is striking evidence of the change which a century has wrought in the mind of Europe. Even Russia pays her tribute of approval (whether in good faith or not the terrible revelations that have stirred the sympathy and the wrath of both hemispheres may bear witness) to the merciful reform inaugurated by John Howard. Yet even after Howard's day "the atrocity and almost grotesque absurdity of the English penal code" was a reproach to British statesmen and a grief to all humane and thoughtful men. When Blackstone wrote his Commentaries there were on the English statute book no less than 160 offences (some of the most trivial nature) punishable with death. The sanguinary code was retained, and even defended by draconic legislators and judges. Persons like Beccaria and Romilly, who counseled rational reform, were deemed guilty of a sort of *lèse-majesté*. The former, whose treatise seems to us now so commonplace, was looked upon as revolutionary because he made the aim of all law the greatest happiness of the greatest number, while the latter could with difficulty obtain a serious hearing from those in power. A hundred years earlier women were burned as witches, and some generations before the rack and the thumbscrew were a terror to more than evil-doers. Still further back the record is still darker. "Men branded on the forehead, without hands, without feet, without tongues, lived as an example of the danger which attended the commission of petty crimes, and as a warning to all who had the misfortune of holding no higher position than that of a churl." The world has seen worse years than those of the nineteenth century; but Russia is a long way behind the time.

Educationists in New England have been agitating for normal schools for higher education. The rule hitherto has been that professional training has been confined (almost exclusively) to the lower grades. It is practically taken for granted in the prevailing system that, while elementary and model school teachers require special instruction in the art to which they purpose devoting their lives, no such instruction is necessary for those who are to hold positions in high schools or occupy chairs in colleges. In our normal schools there has, indeed, always been provision made for the training of those who seek to obtain academy diplomas. But in practice, there is no special course of training for the teachers of the higher classes. The old system, which was in almost universal operation before the organization of normal schools, took no note whatever of capacity to teach. The fact that a person had acquired a more or less intimate knowledge of a number of subjects was supposed to imply ability to impart that knowledge. Mr. Oscar Browning, who has written a little volume on "Educational

Theories (the first of a series published by the Harpers and called the Education Library), says that, in spite of great advances in late years, the science of education is still far in advance of the art, and that teachers give their best energies to subjects which educational reformers have condemned for the last two hundred years. "It is plain," he writes, "that the science and art of education will never be established on a firm basis until it is organized on the model of the sister art of medicine. We must pursue the patient methods of induction, by which other sciences have reached the stature of maturity; we must discover some means of registering and tabulating results; we must invent a phraseology and nomenclature which will enable results to be accurately recorded; we must place education in its proper position among the sciences of observation. A philosopher who should succeed in doing this would be venerated by future ages as the creator of the art of teaching."

The Behring Sea question has reached a stage that promises a just settlement. The attention of the Washington Government has been directed to the note addressed by Mr. Adams, Secretary of State, on the 30th of March, 1822, to the Russian Minister to the United States, in which the latter distinctly rejected the Russian plea of a *mare clausum* and of exclusive jurisdiction based thereupon. The language of this note leaves no doubt whatever as to the opinion then entertained on the subject by the Government of the United States. It appeals at once to the inherent insufficiency of the Russian claim and to precedent, American vessels having had unrestricted admission to the waters of Behring Sea from the date of the recognition of the Republic by the powers of Europe to the date of the note. *A fortiori*, it would be impossible either on the grounds of usage or of international law, to maintain the exclusive jurisdiction of the United States in those waters, the American case being not nearly so strong as the Russian. There is no reason, however, why the seal fishery, which, if not protected, would soon be exhausted, should not be regulated by international convention, England, the United States and Russia being the powers chiefly concerned.

We are glad to see that the *Chambre de Commerce* of this city has taken up the question of a statue to the Founder of Montreal. It is now many years since Abbé Verreault urged upon the city the patriotic duty of marking in a worthy manner its respect for the memory of DeMaison-neuve. Abbé Rousseau, in his excellent biography of that great and good man, earnestly seconded the appeal. The Numismatic and Antiquarian Society, led by its learned president, the Hon. Judge Baby, was no less desirous that so just a debt should be paid, even at this late hour. We believe that if the matter were vigorously laid before our citizens, there would be a hearty and generous response. In 1892 Montreal will be holding its 250th anniversary. No more convenient season for the inauguration of a monument to DeMaison-neuve could be imagined. Elsewhere we call attention to the triple significance of the year 1892. We are glad to know that our esteemed Mayor has cordially welcomed the proposal of the *Chambre de Commerce*, and, as the undertaking is now in good hands, we may rest assured that 1892 will not pass without due honour being done to Montreal's Founder and one of Canada's most valiant pioneers.