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Contents.

EDITORIAL.	etc.	7
Paragaphs.	1	
The Passing Year.	4	
The Herald and the King.	4	
Notes.	4	
CONTRIBUTED.		
Sermon, (H. P. A.).	3	
Rev. J. C. Morse, D. D.	3	
"Maritime" Mon.	3	
East and West.	3	
SELECTED.		
What is Man.	3	
STORY PAGE.		
Nihrvik the Hunter.	6	
THE YOUNG PEOPLE.		
Prayer Meeting Topic.		
FOREIGN MISSIONS.	7	
W. B. M. C.	8	
F. M. Board, Notes by the Secretary.	8	
THE HOME.	10	
THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.		
Bible Lesson Jan. 9.	9	
Mark 4:1-41.	11	
From the Churches.	12	
General Index to Vol. XIII.	13	
Marriages and Deaths.	12	
The Farm.	15	
Quarterly Meeting.	9	
News Summary.	14 and 16	

The Behring Sea Arbitration. It is announced that the joint commission in the matter of the Behring Sea claims has finished its work. The amount agreed upon in satisfaction of the claims of the British sealers who suffered loss by the action of the United States authorities is \$164,000, or, including two claims which the commissioners agree to regard as valid, but which for certain reasons must be left for separate settlement, the amount would be \$470,000. It will be remembered that the losses of British sealers on which the claims now being settled are founded occurred in connection with the remarkable claim of the United States Government, championed especially by the late Mr. Blaine, that, by virtue of the ownership of the Pribyloff Islands and their seal herds, the United States had the right to prohibit all pelagic sealing in Behring Sea. Accordingly a large number of Canadian vessels, prosecuting the sealing industry in the open sea, were seized by United States cruisers and their cargoes confiscated. Finally, the British Government having intimated to the United States that such right of sovereignty in the open sea as was claimed could not be recognized, the matter was submitted to Arbitration, and the Paris Award, discrediting the claim of the United States to a monopoly of pelagic sealing in Behring Sea, recognized the right of British sealers to compensation for losses sustained in the seizure of their vessels, and for other interference with a legitimate industry. A proposal acceptable to the British Government and to the executive at Washington for the settlement of the British sealers claims was in 1896 submitted to the American Senate, but that body, in its wisdom, rejected the proposed settlement. Accordingly a Court of Arbitration was appointed to deal with the claims, which Court consisted of Judge Putnam on the part of the United States and Judge King, of Ottawa, on the part of Great Britain and Canada, with the King of Sweden as a third arbitrator. The two judges appear, however, to have been able to come to an understanding on all points involved, without calling in the aid of His Majesty of Sweden. The amount now named by the arbitrators is substantially the same as that rejected by the Congress in 1896 with interest from that date. The expenses of the arbitration are of course to be added and in that the governments of both nations, as well as the interested sealers, share.

The European Powers and China. There is at present quite a flutter of excitement among the European powers in reference to China. The occupation of Port Arthur by Russian war vessels and the action of Germany in reference to Kiao-Chau have an ominous look, and the officials of the Chinese Embassy in London, it is said, do not conceal the belief that the Powers are intending to seize Chinese ports. The extravagant and grandiloquent speeches made by the German Emperor and his brother, Prince Henry, at a banquet, before the departure of the latter for the East, as commander of the German fleet in Chinese waters, have afforded immense amusement to Englishmen. The tone of the London papers, however, indicates a good deal

of disturbance over the situation. The Globe is quoted as saying: Russia and Germany have now the two most strategical positions in northern China, and Great Britain, whose commercial interests are ten times greater, must be content with the crumbs from the St. Petersburg and Berlin tables. There are rumors, however, of a British naval demonstration about to take place in Chinese waters as a warning, as is supposed, that Great Britain will oppose any scheme for the division of Chinese territory, to which she is not a party.

Peary Will Try Undismayed by all previous failures and by the uncertainty surrounding the fate of Andree, Lieut. Peary is determined to make an attempt to reach the North Pole. To aid him in this purpose, Lieut. Peary has been presented by Mr. Harmsworth, of England, with his ship, the Windward, which has been employed in Arctic cruising, and is believed to be particularly well designed for that purpose. Lieut. Peary's plans for reaching the Pole are described by the New York Tribune as follows:

"The plan of the venture is perfectly simple. The ship will be pushed as far north on the Greenland coast as possible. There the explorer and two companions will land, with provisions for five years' use. They will be joined by a party of sixteen Esquimaux, with their dogs, sledges, canoes and other equipment. The whole party will then proceed along the coast, making caches of provisions at intervals, until the northernmost point of land is reached. Then a bee-line dash across the ice for the Pole will be made. The Pole having been reached, a similar return will be made. The ship, having first landed them, will return to New York and next year will go up again to the landing place to look for traces of the explorers. Not finding them, it will return to this city, and the next year repeat performances, going up every year until it finds the explorers where it left them. That may not be for several years, or it may be in one year. Lieutenant Peary expects to make his landing from the ship in September, and to begin the dash for the Pole early the next spring. Under favorable conditions he thinks the forced march across the ice may be made in three months."

Of course there can be no great difficulty in getting from New York in a good strong vessel to some place well north on the coast of Greenland, and from that point to make the journey to the northernmost point of land, and then—a bee-line dash for the Pole and then a dash back again; it all sounds so simple and easy that one wonders why that way of doing it had not been thought of before.

Church and Parliament. A rumor to the effect that Archbishop Vaughan, the head of the Roman Catholic clergy in England, may be admitted to a seat in the House of Lords, leads the Montreal Witness to remark:

"If the Roman Catholic Church in Great Britain wants to be represented in the House of Lords on the same footing as the Church of England, its desire cannot be regarded as an altogether unreasonable one. But if the Roman Catholic Church in Great Britain is to be represented by Cardinal Vaughan, should not the same Church in Ireland, which is very much stronger in numbers, also have full representation? And if the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church are to be represented in the House of Lords by their Cardinals and Bishops, why should not the Presbyterian, the Methodist, the Baptist, the Independent and the other churches of the United Kingdom be represented by their moderators, their presiding elders and their chairmen, who are all, in a way, general overseers? The bishops of the Church of England are appointed by the government of the day. The Roman Catholic would, of course, have to have its British bishops similarly appointed. Peers can only be in parliament as the representatives of national interests, and it would be quite inconsistent with these to allow a foreign potentate who claims temporal sovereignty to have the appointment of British peers. As the moder-

ator, chairman and other chief officials of the independent churches are elected or appointed by the English members of the churches, there is not the same necessity for having them appointed by the government, though the government could reasonably demand that the elections should be subject to its approval. On the whole however, perhaps consideration would lead to the conclusion that instead of bringing about equality of political position on the part of the churches by making the presiding officers or overseers of other churches 'ex officio' peers, with seats in the House of Lords, it would be better for the Church of England and for all other churches to obtain or retain their liberty at the sacrifice of a position in the House of Lords."

Book Notices.

At Minas Basin, and other poems, by Theodore H. Rand, D. C. L., (second edition) Toronto; William Briggs.

When early last spring we were permitted to examine the proof sheets of this volume, then about to be issued in its first edition, we felt convinced that Dr. Rand had given to the world a little book which would rank among the best products of Canadian literature, and which would do more to perpetuate his name than the distinguished services which he has rendered to his country as an educationist and man of affairs. The poet, however, like the prophet, does not always find prompt recognition. It has probably not happened to any other Canadian poet—perhaps to few in any country—to have a second edition of his first volume called for within a year of the issuing of the first edition. About a score of short poems have been added, nine of which are sonnets, making this second edition a volume of over 200 pages. One of the new pieces included in the volume is a lyric entitled "Lady Dorothea," in which there is reference to a deceased daughter of Lord and Lady Aberdeen. It was recently published in the Toronto Globe, and we learn that the Governor General and the Countess of Aberdeen have made special expression to the author of their great appreciation of the poem. The poems have been given a suitable setting, the mechanical work being in all respects a credit to the publisher.

The Children of Wisdom, and other sermons, by the Rev. John de Soyres, M. A., Rector of St John's Church, St John, N. B. Toronto; William Briggs.

In this volume of 153 pages we have thirteen short discourses. What Mr de Soyres writes is well worth reading as literature simply. He is a man of vigorous and finely cultivated mind. His style, like his thought, is vigorous, and it is also characterized by a singular purity and grace of diction. Formerly Hulsean lecturer at the University of Cambridge, he is, as might be expected, particularly well informed in reference to the men and the historical movements connected with the English Church, a fact which is evinced in some of the sermons in the volume before us. The author, while a loyal churchman, is as heartily opposed as any non-churchman to the extreme ritualism and Romeward tendency so strongly manifest in a large section of the Anglican Communion at the present day. The discourses which the volume contains were for the most part delivered on special occasions. The themes with which they deal are not generally of a profoundly spiritual character. The reader will find much that is interesting and valuable and will be charmed with the fine literary taste and ability evinced on every page of the volume, but he will not perhaps find a great deal to nourish spiritual life. The book is essentially the work of the essayist rather than the preacher. In saying this, however, we do not at all mean to discount its value. Its thought is vigorous, and we judge that no book of its kind has appeared in Canada which in point of literary merit deserves a higher place.

Books: A guide to Good Reading. By John Millar, B.A., Deputy Minister of Education in Ontario. Toronto: William Briggs.

There are many young people, and many parents of growing boys and girls, who should be glad of the aid which this little volume of 112 pages aims to give. Its purpose is to inspire the young with a love for literature, and give some direction as to the books which may be read with profit. Parents can scarcely make a better investment of money for their children than to purchase for them good books and other forms of wholesome literature. Many parents who recognize the truth of this have not themselves that acquaintance with literature necessary to enable them to choose books wisely for their children's reading. Such will be glad of the information which this book gives, both as to what is wholesome for the young and what is suitable to the different stages of development. A book which is a great delight and stimulus to a child's mind when he is five years old, may have lost almost all its charm for him at ten. And on the other hand, a child is not to be blamed if he does not appreciate a good book before he has reached the age and intelligence necessary to enable him to grasp its meaning. Among the matters which Mr. Millar discusses are—the value of books; the choice of books; how to read; children's books; supplementary reading in schools; school libraries; public libraries; books in the home; reading circles; reading courses. Lists of books suitable to different stages of mental development are given, and the information afforded and suggestions made in connection with the subjects discussed cannot fail to be valuable.