Wasting God-given talents is the worst form of extravagance.

OUR BIG SEAL CROP

FUR HUNTING IS ONE OF THE BIG INDUSTRIES.

The Close Season is Likely to Result in an Appreciable Increase in the Value of the Skins.

The treaty recently concluded between the United States, Great Britain, Russia, and Japan, prohibiting pelagic sealing for sixteen years, should naturally result in an appreciable increase in the value of the skins of these creatures by lessening the supply, and a most probable result will be the seeking of substitutes. Among the most likely articles to be used for this purpose will be the skins of the hair seal which are principally taken in Newfundland waters every spring, and which are at the present time, chiefly used for making leather.

The skin of the hair seal, as its name would imply, is covered with long, dark, stiff hairs, but closely adhering to the skin is a furry covering which makes it not possible to convert the pelts to the uses to which the skins of the fur seal are now applied, namely, the making of fur coats for ladies, etc. Hitherto, however, the comparative abundance of fur seals made it unprofitable to utilize the Newfoundland sealskins for this purpose very extensively, even though a fur seal pelt is worth about $20, and that of a hair seal only about $2. Shortly, though, it is expected that there will be a radical change in these conditions, and that a new market will be created for the Terranovan (Nfld.) article, which will much increase its value and cause a more extensive prosecution of the sealing industry in the waters of this colony.

Few enterprises prosecuted at present, afford greater inducements for outside capital to invest therein than does the Newfoundland seal fishery, which yields those operating it now from 20 to 30 per cent. annually and which ranks second in importance among the seafaring occupations of the people of this colony. It is prosecuted in March and April of each year by a fleet of twenty steamers, crewed by 4,000 men; and its product is about 300,000 "pelts"—hide and fat—yielding as many skins and about 5,000 tons of oil, the export value of each being over $500,000, so that this industry really represents the garnering of a million dollars within the brief space of two months each year.

The seal fishery begins the industrial year in Newfoundland, and is reckoned of double importance—for its intrinsic value, and for the impetus a successful quest imparts to the other occupations which follow later in the season. The adult male population of the Island is about 40,000, and as 4,000 are engaged in the seal hunt, practically every family has a relative among the sealers. Thus it is that the return of the first ship is counted among the chief events of the year; thousands throng the wharves to cheer her as she enters St. John's harbor, and the news she brings is speedily wired to every section of the colony.

The industry is a peculiarly perilous one, and is attended with excitement and adventure, such as few other pursuits provide. From the departure of the fleet to the ice-fields, until the return of the first ships, two or three weeks later, personal anxiety is intense throughout the colony, because the venture is associated with such frequent dire disasters that another catastrophe is always dreaded. Scarcely a season passed without some gruesome tragedy, and it is not surprising that anxious hearts should eagerly await the news from the earliest homecomer.

Pork Argument No Good.

When an election campaign gets really hot, the true stories that develop from the action of the drama are invariably better than the stock yarns that are always revived in every campaign. The densely populated and complex riding of Centre Toronto has already commenced to add to the anecdotage of the campaign. It is a riding which contains "The Ward," and embraces voters of many nationalities, with the Hebrews predominating. The Liberal candidate is Mr. Louis Heyd, K.C., a lawyer who has contested ridings in several parts of Ontario, but has never tackled a city constituency before. Now, one of the arguments used in this campaign by Liberals has been the "hog" argument. The speaker, by copious figures, attempts to show that the farmer and the consumer alike get the lean, and that the fat of the ugly brute goes to the "interests" which are arrayed against reciprocity. Mr. Heyd was speaking to a large audience of Hebrew constituents, and forgetful of the Mosaic law, he spoke at considerable length on the hog, promising his hearers cheaper pork this winter if Laurier was returned. He noticed that his audience was growing indifferent and finally hostile, and could not understand it, until finally a prominent Hebrew Liberal, who could stand it no longer, set him right by calling out: "Give us something else, Mr. Heyd, what do we care about pork?"

Mr. Heyd abruptly stopped, and hurried through his notes until he came to the page marked "beans."—Saturday Night.

Toronto Girl an Ocean Queen.

A unique honor not long ago was paid Miss Dorothy Langmuir, a well-known Toronto society girl. Miss Langmuir was returning from Europe on the palatial Royal Edward of the Canadian Northern line.

The passengers on the boat were filled with coronation spirit. Nothing would satisfy some of the gallant gentlemen on board but that they should crown an ocean queen before they reached Canada. Miss Langmuir was crowned. The ceremony was rendered particularly interesting in that Premier Sifton of Alberta, and Premier Scott of Saskatchewan participated—this first time Canadian Premiers ever officiated on such an occasion. Miss Marjory Wilks of Brantford, was a maid of honor.

Graphite by Electricity.

At Niagara Falls graphite is now made artificially by electric power, several thousand tons being produced there last year. Anthracite coal that carries a small amount of finely distributed ash is used in making the ordinary grades. The better grades are made from petroleum coke.

FRIEND OF CHILDREN.

Canadian Woman Revolutionized Method of Teaching Music.

A Canadian woman, who has practically revolutionized the method of teaching music to children, by introducing a kindergarten system that is as unique as it is interesting and practical, is Mrs. Evelyn Fletcher Copp, formerly and, at the time of her invention, a resident of Toronto.

The old saw about the prophet and his country was never truer than in this case, for Canada turned a deaf ear, and it was not until "the Fletcher method" had been adopted and patented in many other countries that Canada awoke to its full significance.

This significance is difficult to realize at first sight. In it one finds the best of Froebel in the teaching of music; but, more than that, it opens to children and, indeed, to those who teach it, an entirely new world in which music is the key; a world in which thoughts, pictures, and impressions may be received and given out again by the mystical language of sound.

I have known Mrs. Copp for a long time, says Katherine Hale in Canadian Century, and I remember when the Great Idea was forming in her mind, here in Toronto, and she would call in little children off the street to teach them the magic games that have become world famous and to watch how quickly their unformed minds responded to the impressions.

"No one knows yet how wonderful it is," she would say in young enthusiasm, "but after a while the world will know, and in the meantime—patience and perserverence and more work on the method."

Always, to this young girl, educated in Germany, amidst the most sympathetic musical conditions in the world, the conviction was borne that she must do something to revolutionize the usual system of music teaching under whose tyranny her soul had suffered as a child.

"Oh, that stiff-backed music teacher!" she would say, "with his endless 'one-two-three,' his torturous scales, his meaningless chords, his dreaded 'pieces' that were as incomprehensible to me, or any other child, as a dead scroll in the hand of an Egyptian mummy. My inherent love of music simply survived his treatment; it never grew an inch. How could it! Something must be done for children. And I must do it. Here, in the land of Froebel and musical freedom, surely I might lay my plans. And I did. Like some slow magic the thoughts came. I would teach scale-building by means of a tone-ladder, and time division by blocks, and rhythm by physical movements, and modulation by a keyboard in which each note should be known, like a little friend, for its own sound, and groups of notes might be taken out and arranged in triads, chords, etc. Indeed, all those earnestly perfected 'toys' that children seem to be playing with all over the world now came into being then."

It was in 1898 that Miss Fletcher founded an association for her own teachers, and this association, in the fall of 1898, began the publication of a unique musical journal—unique in that it was, and probably is, the only music paper in existence edited solely in the interests of the child beginner. In 1899 the system was introduced into Germany, France, and England, and the indorsements of such people as Dr. Hugo Riemann, Liepsic; Dr. Albert Fuchs, Arthur Nikisch, Leipsic, and others, have proved the ready response to this new idea.

And something of the broad ideals that must lie behind all great work are expressed in a recent, personal letter from Mrs. Copp, where she says: "I never expect to make much money. I get my reward, and I get it all along, in the perfect joy that it is to see the financial and artistic success that others are making in teaching my method. And I get it in a constant stream of new ideas and suggestions for the work. I wonder why there is no more unity among musicians? There was a time when I could not see beyond my own highest ideal. But now I believe that when I get a little nearer to the deal I shall still find more ahead, and when I say 'I,' I mean all of us."

Excavated Big Horn.

A peculiar find of a horn of an immense size was made by workmen excavating and deepening a pond on the farm of Harry Smith, a few miles west of Welland, Ont.

The horn is evidently that of some animal which roamed the country thousands of years ago. It is eight feet in height and a true half circle, two feet and two inches around the large end. It tips the scale at 150 pounds. It is in a good state of preservation, and fifteen wrinkles can easily be distinguished. These wrinkles circle it at the big end.

Smith has been offered a substantial sum for his find.

He Couldn't See It.

A little learning may be a dangerous thing, but a little ignorance where least expected sometimes causes amusing situations. The police court reporter of one of the Montreal dailies in an assault and battery case had written blithely: "Patrick Henry asked for liberty or death. John Jones was not so ambitious. He simply asked for liberty." For some time the newest addition to the editorial staff seemed puzzled. Finally he turned to its author and quite seriously inquired, "But what did Patrick Henry get?"

Thinks It's a Freak.

Reciprocity was being discussed by farmers near Belleville, Ont., a little while ago.

"Belleville wants to get it," said a farmer who claimed to know that city's opinion.

A man, who is not engaged in farming, apparently had hazy ideas about the subject under discussion.

"If reciprocity comes to Belleville," he said, "I'm going to go there and see it."

Suspicious.

"Your motorboat is running very smoothly now."

"Yes, I think something's broken."

The slave to bad habits usually insists that he's a free man.

Locking the barn after the horse is stolen may save the harness.

The almighty dollar sometimes causes a crucifiction of friends.

TREASURES OF ROYALTY.

A Glance of the Priceless Contents of Buckingham Palace Vaults.

On the basement floor at Buckingham Palace are vaults, the contents of which are worth a fabulous amount of money, and which are guarded with immense care.

In these vaults are stored accumulations of treasures which have come into the possession of the royal family in different ways during the past fifty or sixty years, and for which it is impossible to find room in the apartments, corridors, or halls of the royal residences, as they are already filled to their full capacity with armor, statuary, and various valuable works of art.

Two of the treasure vaults are of immense size; one nearly square, has a floor space of 300 feet by 260 feet and runs under the state apartments on the first floor. There is a passage leading into it outside the Bow Room which looks out on the gardens, but the entrance to this passage was covered over in Queen Victoria's reign.

The second vault is somewhat smaller than the first; the third has only a floor space of 30 feet by 10 feet. The vault is steel-lined throughout, and it is here that the gold and silver ornaments and other small valuables for which there is no room in the royal palaces are stored. In the two large vaults, which, by the way, are absolutely air-tight, and heated by radiators, are kept the larger treasures, such as statues, big pictures, etc.

Probably the contents of the smallest vault equal in value all that is stored in the other two. The weight of the gold ornaments alone—they are made of the purest metal—is said to be over a ton. There are over six thousand of these. But the weight of many of these ornaments bears no relation to their value. There are, for example, half a dozen grotesque Arabic figures not more than a couple of inches in height whose united weight is probably less than one pound; they were a present to Queen Victoria from an envoy from the Persian court, and are reputed near a thousand years old. In the open market these figures would probably fetch a couple of thousand pounds apiece.

All the wonderful wealth of gold and silver in this vault is placed on tray-tables; each table is fitted with four trays, one over the other, and as the articles accumulate more trays are added to the tables. In Queen Victoria's reign the tables contained only two trays. Every single article in the vault is checked and counted over once a year under the supervision of the Keeper of the Privy Purse.

The pictures and statuary in the vaults are the least valuable of their contents. Queen Victoria purchased and accepted as gifts a great many pictures and statues from a number of modern artists, chiefly Germans, whose work is not of much value, and these, when the late King came to the throne, were removed from the apartments and halls in the royal palaces and placed in the vaults, and replaced by other objects of art of much greater value, which were then in the vaults.

Much of the furniture and armor is, however, of immense value. A set of old oak chairs and two long tables which are of the eleventh century, would fetch thousands of pounds if sold. These chairs are so massive that an ordinary man could not raise one completely from the ground.

Each vault is fitted with three steel doors. The keys of these doors are kept by the Keeper of the Privy Purse, and the vaults are only opened in his presence or that of some responsible official of the royal household.

The French Ambassador In London.

One of the cleverest diplomatists in Europe, M. Paul Cambon, the French ambassador in Lonron, who has been a prominent figure in the Moroccan crisis, is a striking example of how a man may, through sheer force of character and industry, rise to a high position in the state. He was eight years of age when his father died, leaving a widow and two sons not very well provided for. But M. Cambon worked hard, studied for the law, and ultimately entered the diplomatic service. He is one of the most popular men in London society, a favorite at court, and esteemed throughout France on account of his keen interest in French charities. He possesses one of the most valuable collections of autographs in the world, and is quite an expert at chess.

He Thought Right.

Two of Britain's greatest fighters, Lord Nelson, the hero of Trafalgar, and the Duke of Wellington, nicknamed "Old Nosey," met but once in their lives, and that meeting occurred in the little hall at 10 Downing street. Beside the quaint old fireplace there they entered into a general conversation, and Nelson was so impressed with the duke that he asked a servant who was the man with the striking nose.

"Major General Sir Arthur Wellesley, my lord," replied the servant, astounded at the sailor's ignorance.

"Ah!" said Nelson. "I thought he was no common man."

Wisdom of the Serpent.

The serpent is even wiser than the woman tells us, according to Professor Maynard, the noted educator of Cambridge. In a startling statement the professor declared that as a result of study of snakes he is convinced that had they been able to develop hands and feet instead of being obliged to crawl their brains would have enabled them to dominate the world. In that event, he asserts, man probably would have remained in a primitive savage state or possibly even as an ape.

Happiness.

"I am sometimes accused," writes Sir John Lubbock, "of being too optimistic. But I have never ignored or denied the troubles and sorrows of life. I have never said that men are happy, but only that they might be; that if they are not so the fault is generally their own; that most of us throw away more happiness than we enjoy."

The goodness or badness of theory must be determined by testing.

The rolling stone may lose the moss, but it has the experience.

The successful politician looks to his own success and interests first.