

It is that which Nansen makes one feel. They sailed out, to commit themselves and their vesse to the mercies of the Polar ice-pack for at least a period of two years. Five of the thirteen men who did this were married men with children. Concerning the rightfulness of such a proceeding, in the case of those who have given "hostages to fortune" there may be possibly two opinions. Concerning its heroism—provided they were attached to their families—there can be but one.

But in the case of Nansen, the inspirer and leader of the splendid audacity, the pathos is such as to reach the soul of the reader.

He never "gushes"; he is always quiet and self-restrained; and yet he lets you know that there was hardly a moment of all that absence that his heart and soul were not with his wife and his child. Mrs. Nansen's heroism, Mrs. Nansen's complete belief in her husband, made the magnificent achievement possible. No one could read this book and doubt that, had the woman he loves so deeply vehemently protested against his going, she would have prevailed. All honour to Eva Nansen! And, unlike most of the romances of our day, the wonderful story ends happily. The woman's noble trust was justified to the uttermost, and the returned hero found wife and child safe.

We can readily believe that not all his subsequent privations in his sledge travels with Johansen were quite so hard to bear as the monotonous day and night of that first year, when they could hardly be certain as yet that there was any current at all to drift them where they wished to go. So he writes on the last night of 1894:—

"And now the last day of the year has come, it has been a long year, and has brought much both of good and bad. It began with good by bringing little Liv, such a new, strange happiness that I could hardly believe in it. But hard, unspeakably hard, was the parting that came later; no year has brought worse pain than that. And the time since has been one great longing.

But longing—Oh, there are worse things than that! All that is good and beautiful may flourish in its shelter. Everything would be over if we cease to long."

But the chief grandeur and glory of Nansen's book lies in the fact that his work is the work of a pioneer. Like all others of the great brotherhood—like Galileo, Harvey, James Watt, and a host of others—he had to bear the incredulity, and even ridicule, of those who were considered experts in his own line. There is such a charming simplicity, totally untinged by vaunting, in the way he quotes some of the hostile opinions. It is a comfort to think that our countryman, Admiral Nares, wrote a most chivalrous acknowledgment of Nansen's success on the triumphant return of the expedition, and Greeley, an American, seems to be the only one who, when all his predictions were falsified, relieved his feelings as a false prophet by a most ungenerous criticism of Nansen's conduct in leaving the *Fram*.

G. M. R.

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Bookland.

Mr. William Le Queux's new book, "The Eye of Istar," is an African romance, and will be issued next week.

Women are looking forward with pleasurable anticipation to the work of Professor Karl Pearson, entitled "The Ethics of Free Thought," which is now in the press. It will contain several scientific essays, and will deal with the problems of modern political progress in connection with the position of women.

Miss Beatrice Harraden has chosen the line of William Watson's "I, Too, Have Passed Through Wintry Terrors" as the title of her new book.

Mrs. Alice M. Diehl's new novel, entitled "A Last Throw," will be issued immediately by Messrs. Digby, Long. Her previous work, "A Woman's Cross," published by the same firm last autumn, scored a decided success.

It is announced that a new social, literary, artistic, and fashionable weekly, to be called *Mayfair*, will appear this month, edited by Mrs. Roy Devereux.

WHAT TO READ.

"The Life of Queen Victoria," by the Rev. W. W. Tulloch, D.D. Personally revised by Her Majesty the Queen.

"Memoirs of Baron Lejeune," aide-de-camp to Marshals Berthier, Davout, and Oudinot. Translated and edited from the original French by Mrs. Arthur Bell (N. D'Anvers).

"The Ethics of Diet: A Biographical History of the Literature of Humane Dietetics, from the earliest period to the present day," by Howard Williams.

"Through Unknown African Countries. The First Expedition from Somaliland to Lake Lamu," by A. Donaldson Smith, M.D.

"The Queen of the Moor. A Tale of Exmoor in the Days of Waterloo," by Frederick Adye.

"Lad's Love. An Idyll of the Land of Heather," by S. R. Crockett. Fully illustrated by Warwick Goble.

"The Borderer," by Adam Lilburn. Smith, Elder.

"Guavas the Tinner," by S. Baring-Gould.

Coming Events.

March 16th.—Princess Christian attends a Morning Concert at Bridgwater House in aid of St. Helena Hospital Home, 3.30 p.m.

March 17th.—Annual National Combined Exhibition and Sale of the Irish Industries Association, under the patronage of Her Majesty, at Chelsea House, by permission of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and Countess Cadogan.

March 18th.—A Public Meeting in support of the Bill for the Registration of Midwives, London House, 32, St. James's Square, 3 p.m.

March 23rd.—Festival Dinner of the City of London Hospital for Diseases of the Chest at the Whitehall Rooms, Hotel Metropole, 6.45 p.m. The Hon. W. F. D. Smith in the chair.

March 25th.—The Royal Mint, 3.30. Meeting to discuss "Is there any reasonable objection to extending the Parliamentary franchise to women?" Mrs. Carmichael Stopes will open the discussion.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)