

The Tracks of Wild Animals.

By Ernest Harold Baynes.

A SNOWFALL is a blank page from the notebook of Nature, and upon it her children write the stories of their lives, each in his own way. When we begin to read and translate them the winter woods no longer present a cheerless appearance; they no longer seem a dreary waste of snow-covered ground and bare, gray trees. We find that they are peopled by a busy community, whose lives are as full of problems as our own.

Here, you see, the first note we come across has been written by a mink—a uniform trail, which might be imitated by dragging a narrow board through the snow. The legs of the mink are very short, so that his body sinks in the snow, often covering up the prints of his webbed feet, and the trail is simply a gutter in the snow, with deeper spots at intervals marking the points at which the feet have sunk. The trail of an otter through deep snow is similar, but very much larger, as a full-grown otter is sometimes nearly four feet in length. In moving through the snow an otter leaps forward, and slides for a considerable distance, plying up the snow with his chest, then leaping again, and sliding, as before. The distinctness of the footprints depends upon the depth of the snow; when there is only a thin covering they are as plain as the tracks of a hare.

Here is quite a different trail, also leading to the water. It was made by a muskrat, and in one important particular differs from nearly all other trails—there is a sharp and almost continuous line connecting the tracks. That line was cut into the snow by the sharp-edged and almost hairless tail, which drags on the ground as the animal moves.—Woman's Home Companion.

American Women in Europe.

By Henry Labouchere.

THE American woman has unquestionably been a success in Europe. She is generally pretty. She is clever. She takes pains to please those whom she considers worth pleasing. She has that instinct for the class above which only they have who belong to the class below, and, to use Taine's expression, she always "stands with shouldered arms and feels herself on parade." Her affectations and the sins which she commits against the commandments of European good manners are overlooked because of her American origin, and the favor accorded to her by royal personages and the exalted position she sometimes acquires by marriage.

With those advantages is it to be wondered at that American women have succeeded socially in Europe? But are they also a success as wives? It is true that comparatively few American women have trailed their characters through the divorce court in England. Social success is what they aim at, and the exposure entailed by divorce court proceedings might endanger this success. They are tolerant and expect their husbands to be tolerant. Society is the end-all of the life of such an American woman and since she has obtained a foothold in England, society has degenerated from a polite pleasure into a profession.

Has the American woman come to stay? If the women of this country can maintain their higher and more womanly ideals and profit by the education and experience of modern surroundings, they may await a reaction with confidence, assured that their beauty, their home-making qualities and their disinclination to thrust themselves under the limelight will be appreciated when men of the Old World cease to go the new to procure money and when the American woman and her ways are no longer popular novelties in Europe.—London Truth.

A Steady Atmosphere.

It is a Prime Requisite For the Study of Planets' Surface Conditions.

From William H. Pickering's "A Lookout Into Space," in the Century.

ASTRONOMICAL science is divided naturally into two parts, that pertaining to the stellar universe and that pertaining to our immediate family of planets. The latter are the only bodies in the heavens of which we are aware that at all resemble our earth, and they are all, comparatively speaking, our near neighbors, and have, therefore, a much more personal and popular interest than the stellar universe at large. The study of their relative motions was virtually completed during the last century, so that at the present time the astronomy of the planets is confined chiefly to a study of their dimensions and surface conditions.

For this study there is one paramount requisite, and that is a steady atmosphere. With a good atmosphere, important results may be obtained even with a small telescope of only five or six inches diameter; but without such an atmosphere the very largest telescope will be of no avail. This is not the case in other departments of astronomy; for many kinds of observations on the stellar universe the quality of the atmosphere is of little account, provided only that it is cloudless and transparent; but for planetary and lunar astronomy a steady atmosphere is the fundamental requisite. To understand what is meant by a steady atmosphere, we have only to look at some object across a hot stove, or along the line of a railroad track upon a summer day. There is a shimmer in the air, a wavering motion, with which we are all more or less familiar. This wavering is always present in our atmosphere, although we usually cannot see it; but when we magnify the image of a planet in a telescope one thousand times, we magnify the atmospheric tremors in the same proportion, and they are then not only conspicuous, but they interfere very seriously with our observations.

In some parts of the world the atmosphere is much more steady than in others, and it is evidently a matter of the highest importance for the astronomer interested in planetary research to find where these places are situated. To illustrate the importance of this matter, I may say that a year ago, situated in one of these favored spots, I saw night after night, with a five-inch and even with a four-inch lens planetary markings and details that I have never seen even with the largest telescope in Cambridge.

Desire is Weak Without Resolve

By Margaret Stowe.

MANY times in this column you have been told that you are what you will be to.

It is such an important truth that I do not think it can be repeated too often.

Parents could do so much for their children by training them along these lines and carefully guiding them to the point where they have the understanding to choose for themselves the sturdy qualities of mind.

Teach them that it is will—force of purpose—that enables a man to do and to be whatever he sets his mind on doing or being. It is not a new saying that "Whatever you wish, that you are; for such is the force of our will, joined to the divine, that whatever we wish to be, seriously, and with a true intention, that we become."

No one ardently wishes to be submissive, patient, modest, or liberal, who does not become what he wishes.

You have possibly heard the story of a working carpenter, who was observed one day planing a magistrate's bench which he was repairing with more than usual carefulness; and when asked the reason, he replied, "Because I wish to make it easy against the time when I come to sit upon it myself."

This same carpenter actually lived to sit upon the bench as a magistrate. The strong desire for that position that the man had could accomplish nothing without resolve, or force of purpose.

Each one of us feels that he is free to choose between good and evil—that he is not here to be blown in any or every direction by the wind, but that he has within him the power to direct his own movements, and is capable of pushing along on the path of his choice no matter how strongly the wind may blow or how often it may change.

This will, or force, or purpose is the only thing that is wholly yours, and it rests with you individually whether you give it the right or the wrong direction.

Your habits or your temptations are not your masters, but you of them. The advice that Languennais once gave to a gay youth is something that each one of us might read and take home to ourselves with some benefit.

He said: "You are now at the age at which a decision must be formed by you; a little later you may have to groan within the tomb you yourself have dug, without the power of rolling away the stone."

That which the easiest becomes a habit in us is the will. Learn then to will strongly and decisively; thus fix your floating life and leave it no longer to be carried hither and thither, like a withered leaf, by every wind that blows.—New York Journal.

O'GORMAN'S HOUSEMAID.

By David Christie Murray.

O'GORMAN was painting away for dear life in his studio, an empty brier between his teeth, and a draped lay figure on the throne before him. O'Keefe, with an empty brier between his teeth, was standing at his shoulder, looking on.

"You'll be done with it before light goes," said O'Keefe.

"I'll be done with it in an hour," replied O'Gorman, "and an hour later I'll be in possession of ten sterling guineas, English money."

"I wish I'd the tenth of it," said O'Keefe.

"I wish ye had," replied O'Gorman.

"Well," O'Keefe began, in the tone of a man used on the edge of a request, "I'll tell ye what brings me here. We were chums in a way in the old Dublin days."

"I may tell ye, O'Keefe," said O'Gorman, busily mixing a tint upon his palette and not pausing to look at his companion, "that I don't like the news I'm hearing of you. There's none of the money going in your direction."

"I'm not asking it," returned O'Keefe.

"It's years since I had ye in my thoughts till this afternoon, but I'm just after meeting O'Reilly, and he tells me ye're wanting a housemaid. According to O'Reilly, ye'd like her ugly and ye'd like her Irish. There's a poor widow woman that lived, so she tells me, on your father's land in Derry before ye were born. She came to me in distress the day before yesterday, and all she wants is work for her hands. 'This little enough I can do to help anybody, circumstances as I am, but when I heard from O'Reilly that ye were wanting a maid, I began to wonder whether a widow wouldn't serve your turn, and I thought I'd drop in and put it to ye, anyway."

"It's my grandfather she's thinking of," said O'Gorman. "My father's property in Derry would have gone into her eye without hurting her. What's her name?"

"'Tis Malone," said O'Keefe. "They'd a little holding under your own people on the Clonkilly road."

"I'm not recalling the name," O'Gorman replied, reflectively. "But I'm wanting some kind of a woman about the house, and if she can cook and scrub she's welcome to a place as a candidate. What's her age?"

"She's about forty, I should say," said O'Keefe, "may be a day or two older."

"And she's ugly?"

"As sin!" said O'Keefe with emphasis. "I've known some kinds of sin that were prettier to look at by a mile."

"That's a point in her favor," said O'Gorman, "for I'll not have my character besmirched in my own house."

"I'll be telling her to call this evening?" asked O'Keefe.

"At 8 o'clock," returned O'Gorman, and went on with his painting so resolutely that his companion, after lingering for a minute or two, offered an embarrassed goodby, and faded from the room. O'Gorman listened till the front door closed behind him, and peered through the studio window into the street, along which, with a disconsolate eye on the empty brier, he was slowly walking away. Then the artist laid down his palette and brushes and went to a little cupboard, from which he drew a tobacco jar, a bottle of Dublin Upple, a glass and a decanter of water. When he had helped himself to a drink and had filled and lit his pipe he sat down, in smiling contentment, and sipped and smoked at ease. "I'd never have got rid of the blagyard at all if I'd let him smell these," he said to himself.

"O'Keefe? It's like his cheek to be coming into a decent house at all with the record that's behind him. I'm not the man to be hard on an old friend that's a little down at the heel, but I draw the line at the Old Bailey."

He sat smoking and looking at his work from time to time with the satisfaction of a workman who has come near to his own purpose, and he was thus tranquilly engaged when twilight fell. Then he went downstairs and ate a chop and a floury potato or two which had been sent round from a neighboring tavern, and just as the clock on the dining-room mantelpiece pointed to the hour of 8 a knock sounded at the front door, and O'Gorman himself answering the summons found a respectable-looking person in black dress, black beaded mantle, black bonnet and black gloves, who courtesied to him reverently, and in a very mellifluous brogue announced herself as Mrs. Malone.

"Come in," said O'Gorman, holding the door aside, and the respectable person, after executing another courtesy, obeyed. She waited while the master of the little house closed the door and then followed him into the dining-room, where she lifted her veil, folded her black gloved hands, and stood as if expectant of cross-examination. O'Gorman regarded her for a moment. "I'll not be charged with dalliance with this young person," he said, invariably, and indeed the candidate was plain enough to look at, with her bold and harsh features and a very decided cast in the eye. "I suppose," he said aloud, "ye'll be able to give me a character from your last place?"

Mrs. Malone explained that she had not been in domestic service for some years. Her late husband had been a steward aboard ship, and she as stewardess had served on the same vessel. She could do plain cooking and all necessary housework. She had excellent testimonials, and in immediate

confirmation of this statement she produced a number of orderly papers from a reticule she carried. O'Gorman stood looking at them stroking his nose with his thumb and finger, after a way he had, and he was just thinking that it was no great recommendation to the lady that she was introduced by O'Keefe, when Mrs. Malone made an exclamation:

"O, but it's droil, sir," she said, "but just as ye stood there I thought I could see the cullid squire. Is it Mister Richard I've the honor of speaking to?"

"O," said O'Gorman. "Ye're a Clonkilly woman."

"I am, your honor," said Mrs. Malone, "for next door. I was born at the corner of the barony wall, sir, in the little white house half way between the lodge gates and toll bar."

"'Twas the Moriarty's lived there," said O'Gorman. "Generations of them."

"Ay course it was, sir," said Mrs. Malone, "and meself was a Moriarty till I married."

"Oh, ah," said O'Gorman. "Married."

"Ye'll not likely to remember your grandfather, sir. He'd be dead before your time, sir. A fine hearty gentleman he was, with his hand in his pocket for all an' sundry."

"I'd have something more than me hands in me own pockets," said O'Gorman, "if the extravagant old villain hadn't made the place a wilderness."

"Don't be miscalling him, Mister Richard," said Mrs. Malone. "There wasn't a dry eye for miles when he died."

O'Gorman lit his pipe and stood reflecting.

"When can you begin here?" he asked.

"Anny minute, sir," she answered.

"Very well," said he. "I go to bed at 11. If you can be here with your boxes by that time you can take up your quarters to-night. If ye're not you can come in to-morrow."

Mrs. Malone was certain that she could be back in little over an hour, and she kept her promise. O'Gorman showed her the kitchen and her own quarters, warned her that the studio was sacred territory, and went back to his pipe and his Upple. He thought that O'Keefe had not done him half a bad turn in sending Mrs. Malone in his way. It was pleasant in a fashion to feel that there was a link with old Clonkilly in his neighborhood. Mrs. Malone's aspect did not inspire sentiment, but she brought the half forgotten home of his fathers to mind, and he drank an extra glass to the names of his ancestors.

He was an early riser, and next morning he had to bellow for rather an unbecoming time before Mrs. Malone descended to provide his customary cup of tea.

"It shan't occur again, sir," said Mrs. Malone. "Once I know your hours and your habits, I'll be on hand."

And, in truth, while she was under O'Gorman's roof she made an admirable servant. He suspected her with the tobacco jar; but if she pilfered, she kept her deprecations within bounds, and she came from Clonkilly.

Outside his studio, O'Gorman was a lazy man and hard to move, and sometimes for a month together he would not so much as put his boots on for a stroll. But one night in late autumn, when the first hint of frost was in the air, the fancy took him to look up some one of his few friends.

"Don't sit up for me, Mrs. Malone," he said, on leaving, "and don't lock the door."

Some response came from the kitchen region, and he went upon his way. He had scarce traversed a hundred yards when he encountered O'Keefe, who came in a rush round a street corner and ran straight into his arms.

The shock was a little bewildering for an instant, but before either could oblige the other's clumsiness, there was a recognition on both sides. The two exchanged a word and parted, but O'Gorman had time to note two things. One was that his undesirable acquaintance was handsomely and expensively attired, and another that his look was terror-stricken.

"Gives one the idea of a swell mobman with the police behind him," said the artist, and dismissed him from his thoughts.

The friend with whom O'Gorman had meant to pass the evening was away from home, and he retraced his steps at leisure. Inserting his latchkey in the keyhole he was surprised to find that the door did not yield. He tried again, with the same result. He knocked, and there was no answer. He knocked more loudly and more loudly yet, and by and by was aware of Mrs. Malone's voice from within.

"Who is it that's raisin' Cain outside there?"

"It's I," cried O'Gorman; and Mrs. Malone opened the door, looking somewhat flushed and tremulous.

"'Tis lonesome here for a solitary farmole," said Mrs. Malone. "I'd med up me mind I'd sit up for ye, sir, an' I must have dropped into a dose beside the foire."

O'Gorman was an easily irritated man, and he entered his room with a growl. A minute later he laughed.

"Mrs. Malone was right," he said; "beauty tempts thieves more than gold."

He tried to settle himself to his customary smoke and his temperate tumbler, but he was oddly restless. A feeling he had not experienced since childhood was upon him. He could not be-

lieve that he and Mrs. Malone were the sole inmates of the house. He listened, but he heard nothing to justify his own queer sensation. Yes. No. Mere fancy. Yes, again. No fancy this time. Surely that was a stealthy footstep in the little hall. Surely the door was opening. He was out in a flash, just in time to see the figure of O'Keefe as he darted into the street.

Mrs. Malone was a little more perturbed than she had been ten minutes earlier.

"What was that fellow doing here?" O'Gorman demanded in a wrathful wonder. "'Twas that blagyard O'Keefe."

"An' what wouldn't it be?" asked Mrs. Malone. "Wasn't it in his mother's house I tuk me first service in Dublin? Many's the time I carried him in me arrums."

"What was he here for?" O'Gorman asked.

"That's his saycret," said Mrs. Malone, coolly.

"I'll not have him here," said O'Gorman, "and, above all, I'll not endure that he shall sneak into the place in my absence and go out again like a thief."

"He's not likely to trouble you more," said Mrs. Malone. "He'll be out of the country to-morrow."

"He'd the look of a fugitive upon 'm," said the outraged O'Gorman. "I'm not saying that I don't appreciate your position in the matter. I'm not blaming you for remembering the time when that bad egg could be warranted new-laid, and you were his infancancy's companion. But I object to his clandestine presence beneath my roof."

"'Twill not happen again," said Mrs. Malone, "and at that they parted for the night, O'Gorman, when he came to think about it, being rather disposed to sentimentalize over abiding affection which could find a resting place even in the heart of so unaccountable a representative of the softer sex as Mrs. Malone."

He was rather full of work just then, and he was up early. His servant brought him his morning cup of tea, and announced that the household was out of sugar.

"I'll not be ten minutes in gettin' it," said Mrs. Malone.

He was setting his palette for the morning's work, and only half consciously heard the hall door slam behind her. Then he raked his color box in search of a special tube.

"Now, what the juice did I do with that verdigris?" he asked perplexedly.

"'Tis the very thing that I'm in need of, I know." He darted upstairs and entered Mrs. Malone's bedroom.

"There should be a little handful of things here." He gave a little tug at the handle of the right hand upper drawer of a shabby little combination of toilet table and chest of drawers, and stood like one petrified; for there, under his nose, was a set of shaving tackle—razor, strop, bowl and brush, all complete—and it was plainly to be seen that they had been used that morning, for the brush was still in a moist lather. And while he was still staring and wondering what on earth the portent signified there came a triple knock at the front door and an almost simultaneous ringing of the bell, and when he ran down to answer the summons, beheld Mrs. Malone in the custody of two gentlemen in plain clothes with a policeman in uniform behind her. And, to add to the strangeness of it all, a growler cab at the curb, with one uniformed man beside the driver and another inside keeping ward over O'Keefe.

"We'll come inside, with your leave," said the nearest man in uniform to O'Gorman. He set a steady hand on Mrs. Malone's broad back and impelled her into the hall. "You'd better bring him this way a minute, Jim," the speaker added, turning to the policeman in the cab.

The amazon O'Gorman recoiled backward step by step, and the whole six crowded into the hall. O'Keefe and Mrs. Malone now seen to be in handcuffs.

"I'll take off your bonnet for you, ma'am," said one of the plain clothes men.

He suited the action to the word, and Mrs. Malone's respectable head of hair went with the bonnet.

An unmistakably masculine countenance was revealed, with the appearance of an unmistakably masculine crop of very red hair, cut as close as that of a convict.

"In the name of Heaven, what is it?" gasped O'Gorman.

"It's a little case of making and uttering false coin, sir," said the official spokesman of the party. "This is O'Keefe, alias Mitchell, this is. This one is Moriarty, alias the Lord alone knows what. Had one of 'em under observation for a month—the other ever since I've been in the force, to say the least of it. If you'll be good enough to show me the lady's room, sir, I'll take a look at her belongings."

O'Gorman, still feeling as if he were in a trance, obeyed, and in the first place indicated the shaving kit.

"I had just found that," he said, "when your party knocked and rang."

"O, had you?" asked the officer. "You needn't say anything to criminate yourself, you know; but of course you know what my duty is."

"Heavens!" said O'Gorman, sinking heavily on the bed. "Forging and uttering!"

He was released upon his own recognizances that very morning, entirely exonerated at the remanded hearing of the case, and dismissed with apologies.

But unto this day, if O'Gorman shows any signs of torpor, he can be roused by anybody who chooses to whistle a bar or two of the air which goes to Lever's song of the Widow Malone.

On the whole, his friends have decided that it is better not to rouse him.—Black and White.

Electric lights now disturb the ghosts of the Pharaohs in the royal tombs in the Valley of the Kings.

The Funny Side of Life.

NO USE.
"Post No Bills." I stole that sign And nailed it on my door.
No use. By every mail that comes I get more than before.
I fear I'm getting in a groove; I fear that soon I'll have to move.—New York Sun.

THE PARENTAL BLESSING.
Algy—"So you asked old Jones his daughter's hand? What did he say?"
Ferd—"He said, 'Take her, and me be happy!'"—Puck.

SHE HAD NINE.



Agent—"Madam, I called to your life."
Mrs. Katt—"Which one?"—New York Times.

THE SUPPLEMENTARY SEMESTER.
During a lesson in physiology his teacher asked him if he knew the name of the last teeth people get, which he replied:
"Yes'm; false teeth."—Little Canada.

VAIN COURTESY.
De Style—"What did that polli do after they got him strapped into electric chair?"
Gumbusta—"He wanted to see and offer a lady his seat."—New York Sun.

OUT OF WHOLE CLOTHES.
Jaggles—"Animals in captivity do to do more wonderful things than in their native wilds."
Waggles—"Perhaps that's because they have press agents."—New York Times.

PROSPECTING.

Von Blumer—"Do you mean to say you have been shopping all day and didn't buy a thing?"
Mrs. Von Blumer—"I haven't been shopping—I've only been making noiring."—Brooklyn Life.

PUT TO THE TEST.

Truth, being crushed to earth again, but with a visible effort, said:
"This resiliency is all right," she remarked, "but it grows to be a strain one when she is crushed into another prospectus!"—New York Times.

THEY DIFFER MUCH.

Ascum—"Say, a 'bibliophile' and 'litterateur' are the same, aren't they?"
Newitt—"Not much. A bibliophile most pleased with first editions, a litterateur struggles to achieve one fifth or fifth editions."—Philadelphia Press.

CLOTHES AND THE MAN.

"What a mistake it is to judge by their clothes!"
"I know it. There is a self-made millionaire in this town who dresses as well and with as much taste as any of the clerks in his establishment."—Chicago Record-Herald.

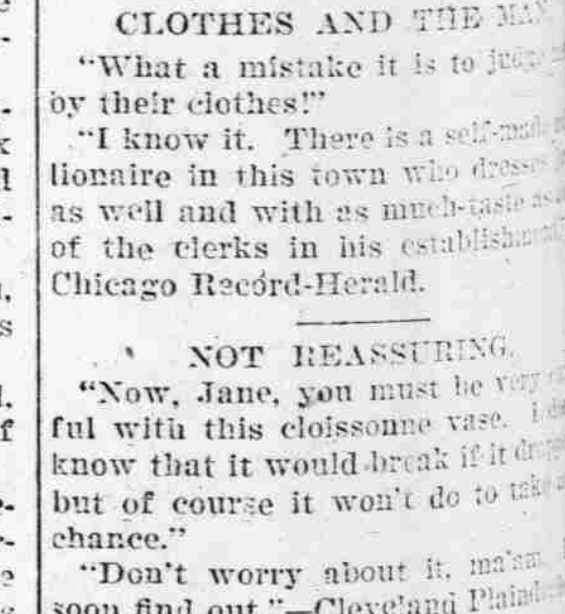
NOT REASSURING.

"Now, Jane, you must be very full with this cloisonne vase. I know that it would break if it dropped; but of course it won't do to take chance."
"Don't worry about it, ma'am; soon find out."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

CLUES.

"Have you any clues to the mystery?"
"We have plenty of clues—too many in fact."
"Then what are you waiting for?"
"We can't decide which to follow first. If we tried to follow them all we would take a lifetime."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

THE REASON.



Customer—"How is it you don't have your man stop at my house for any more?"
Butcher—"Why, you see, your jilted him last week, and since then can't get him to go near the place."—New York Sun.