lay 6, 1915.

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stranger, and dashed off in different directions. The shrew-track circled faintly here and there, then started off in a lonely trail, ran for some distance and—stopped.

The sword of Damocles, which hangs winter and summer over the head of all the little wild-folk, had fallen. The shrew was gone. A tiny fleck of blood and a single track like a great X on the snow told the tale of his passing. All his fierceness availed nothing when the great talons of the flying death clamped through his soft fur. An X on the snow is the monogram of the owl-folk, just as a K is of the hawk-kind. The size of the mark in this case showed that the killer was one of the larger owls, probably the great horned owl, that fierce king of the deep night woods whose head, with its long ear-tufts or herns, I had seen peering from his nest of sticks on the mountainside in a high treetop, as early as February. On wings so muffled with soft downy feathers as to be absolutely noiseless, he had swooped down in the darkness and broken the tiny bubble of the shrew's life.

Now the trail wound upward toward the slope of the Cobble, a steep, sharppointed little hill which suddenly thrust itself up from a circle of broad

meadows and flat woodlands. By the road the snow had drifted over a low patch of sweet-fern in a low hummock. As I plodded along I happened to strike this with my foot. There was a tremendous whirring noise, the snow exploded all over me, and out burst a magnificent cock-partridge and whizzed away among the laurels like a lyddite shell. When the snowstorm began he selected a cozy spot in the lee of the sweet-fern patch, and had let himself be snowed over. The warmth of his body had made a round, warm room, and with plenty of rich fern-seeds in easy reach he was prepared to stay in winter quarters a week if necessary.

A little way farther the road crossed a round level circle where fifty years before, when the Cobble was being coaled, the charcoal-burners had made one of their pits, the stamp of which will stay forever. On the level snow was a curious path of zigzag tracks. They were deep and near together, and were evidently made by a walker, not a jumper, and by an animal that moved slowly and heavily.

I recognized it at once as the trail of the unhasting skunk. animals may jump and run and hurry through life, but the motto of the skunk is, "Don't hurry, others will." This member of the family had proceeded in a dignified way across the clearing to a rotten log, in which be began to dig, in the hope of rooting out some winter-bound crickets or a few of his favourite fat white grubs. Converging on the skunk's trail, and nearly at right angles, was a series of fox-tracks. They looked like those of a dog, except that they were neater and more compact, and ran in a nearly straight line, while the tracks of a dog spraddle out from the line of his

The trail told what had happened. At first the far-apart prints were those of a hunting fox bounding along and ranging through the thickets and When he reached the clearings. skunk's trail, the footprints became close together, and it was evident that the fox followed the trail in a thoughtful mood. He was evidently young and inexperienced or he would not have followed them at all. Finally, on the edge of the clearing he had sighted the skunk and stopped and watched him for some time, for the prints were melted deep into the snow. The snow showed what happened. By the log was a tangle of fox tracks mixed with flurries and ridges and holes in the snow, and finally leading off in tremendous bounds out of this confused circle; then came the neat, methodical trail of the unruffled skunk, who trotted sedately away leaving a wiser and a smellier fox rolling and plunging and burrowing in the clean

Along the edge of the slope ran a track made up of four holes in the snow. Two were wide apart and two were far apart. Suddenly the track seemed reversed. The far-apart marks now showed where the tracks that were near together had been. farther on the trail changed again. In front were still the far-apart tracks, but the two near-by ones were now in a line perpendicular instead of parallel to the front tracks. The trail was that of a cotton-tail rabbit. At first he had been hopping contentedly along with an eye open for anything edible in the line of winter vegetables. The farapart tracks were the paw-marks of the big hindlegs, and in front of those came the marks made by the two forepaws as they touched the ground at every hop. Suddenly the rabbit sensed something alarming coming from behind, for the sedate hop changed into bounds. With each leap the long hindlegs overlapped the forelegs and came down in front, so that the position of the marks was reversed, the far-apart ones now leading. A little farther the trail said that the rabbit had caught sight of its pursuer as it ran, for a rabbit by the position of its eyes sees backwards and forwards equally well.

The tracks showed a frantic burst of speed. In an effort to get every possible bit of leverage the forelegs were twisted so that they struck the ground one behind the other, which accounted for the last set of marks perpendicular to those in front. A line of tracks that came from a pile of stones and which paralleled the rabbit's trail told the whole story. They were in a series of twos, side by side. Vertically from each track ran a straight shallow line to the track in front. The paw-marks were small and dainty, but beyond each padprint were the marks of fierce claws. It was the weasel, who moves in bounds like the uncoiling of a steel spring. With every spring the slim body bends until it touches the snow, making the long vertical marks in the trail. At first when the rabbit saw the weasel looping along its trail like a hunting snake, it had started off with a sprint that in a minute carried it out of sight.

Then a strange thing happened. Although a rabbit can run for an hour at nearly top speed, and in this case had every reason to run, after a half mile of rapid circling and doubling the trail changed, and showed that



the rabbit was plodding along as if paralyzed. One of the weird and unexplained facts in nature is the strange power a weasel appears to have over all the smaller animals. Many of them simply give up and wait for death when they find that a weasel is on their trail. A red squirrel which could easily escape through the treetops sometimes becomes so hysterical with fright as to fall out of its tree ... Even the rat, which is a cynical, practical animal, with no nerves, and a bitter, brave fighter when fight it must, loses its head when up against

This night the rabbit, with every chance for escape, began to run slowly and heavily as if in a nightmare, watching the while its back-trail, and when the weasel came in sight again the trail stopped and the rabbit crouched in the snow waiting for the end,-and the reddened snow told the

So the last story of the snow ended in tragedy, as do nearly all true stories of the wild-folk. But better a thousand times the quick passing at the end of a swift run or a brave fight than the long weariness of pain and sickness: that animals seldom know. Rosemont, Pa.—The Sunday School Times.

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Everybody dreads the thought of paralysis locomotor ataxia. Nothing is worse to look forward to MRS. M'KELLAR. Sometimes it is than helplessness.

helplessness of body, and at other times the mind is affected, which is far worse. The writer of this letter did not know what to expect, but fortunately Dr. Chase's Nerve Food.

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