

calling similar foot-prints, which are not accompanied by the tail mark, the tracks of the mink. Account for the difference in the tracks of these animals.

The muskrat's summer home is dug out from the bank with the main entrance below the water. The nest of this burrow is also lined with grasses, and always above the high water mark, and provided with an air hole above for ventilation and usually a hidden entrance leading out on the dry land. Locate such burrows along the banks of streams and ponds.

Large numbers of muskrats are killed every year for the sake of their fur, and besides man they have many other enemies;—foxes, dogs, weasels, minks, and even hawks and owls are said to prey upon them.

The muskrat is readily taken alive in wooden traps, set with a "figure four" baited with a parsnip or white carrot. A caged animal presents some advantage in studying structure, but nothing can take the place of observation of these animals in their natural haunts.

[If you chance to obtain a specimen of the gray or black squirrel (for at times they are nearly or quite black) I shall be pleased to receive it. Send live specimens by express, "collect," securely boxed and with sufficient food to last him in transit.]

H. G. P.

SPELL THIS.

Some of you who think you are well up in spelling just try to spell the words in this little sentence:

"It is agreeable to witness the unparalleled ecstasy of two harassed peddlers endeavoring to gauge the symmetry of two peeled pears."

Read it over to your friends and see how many of them can spell every word correctly. The sentence contains some of the real puzzlers of the spelling book.

He felt that everything was possible, and to one who is in this disposition the impossible is sure to come. Want of faith in the impossible is really responsible for all that is deliberately dreary in our lives. Those that go whistling down the road, eyes raised to the sun, and hope waiting round the corner, seldom find the excursion of life a disappointing one. — *Evelyn Underhil.*

CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARIES OF THE WAR OF 1812.

J. VROOM.

XIX.—Another Winter Raid.

March 4.—There was less of actual warfare through the winter months than there had been in the first winter of the war; but an occurrence in itself hardly worth mentioning gives us a date for continuing the series.

Port Talbot, on Lake Erie, the scene of two more raids later in the year, was unsuccessfully attacked in February by a party from Detroit under Captain Holmes. Holmes, in retreating across the country, found his route intercepted by the British in superior force. This was at a point between London and Moraviantown. He chose a good position on an eminence, and threw up defences of logs. Captain Bladen, the British commander, attacked this position on the fourth of March. The snow was about fifteen inches deep, with a heavy crust, making it difficult to approach the little fort. Rejecting the advice of a Canadian to take a circuitous route and attack from the rear, Bladen made a direct assault, and was driven back with a loss of fourteen killed and fifty-one wounded. The raiders got across the river to Detroit with comparatively trifling loss. The attempt to capture them had failed discreditably; but they had failed in their object, and had done well to make their escape.

The story of this incident may be worth telling as a reminder that General Drummond was trying to re-establish military control of the western peninsula of Upper Canada. It corrects the impression that the invaders held the district in full and undisputed possession as conquered territory after the battle of the Thames. In fact, though they had formally annexed it by proclamation in 1813, they had not occupied it. Their most successful incursions in that region in 1814 were looked upon, even by themselves, as brilliant raids for the purpose of plundering Canadian territory; the excuse being that such a destruction of the enemy's resources was necessary for the safety of Detroit.

"Sarcasm," said Carlyle, "is the language of the devil." Be that as it may, it has turned many a school-room into a place of torment.