

home about the end of October. In Cork previous to the departure of the athletes it is expected there will be a demonstration in their honour.

Tyrone.—The crops in the Dungannon district did not present a more backward aspect since the year 1879. All kinds grew well, but cannot now be saved. The most of the hay crop has rotted or is so far gone that cattle will not eat it. Flax has grown very rank. The potatoes are very inferior in quality and the quantity is also considerably below the bulk of last year. Corn has grown very heavy, but the harvest will be late. The other crops are fair, but the farmers will suffer very much from their inability to secure turf. From all parts of Tyrone reports come of the very bad condition of all kinds of crops.

The efforts of the Drapers' Company's tenants, who are under notice of eviction near Draperstown, to effect a settlement with the agent, Sir Wm. Cunningham, have failed. A force of eighty police under County-Inspectors Garrett, Derry, and Garrett Nagle, R.M., Money, with the Sheriff, proceeded to the house of Michael Morgan, on the Douglass, a tributary of the Moyola. Rev. John McIlDowney and several local Nationalists were present. The house was barricaded but the Emergency men battered in the door with a sledge and crowbars. The Sheriff's officers were allowed to remove the effects quietly. When all was removed except the family, which consists of Morgan, his wife, mother-in-law, and seven children, the eldest of whom is about fifteen years, and the youngest a babe of some five months, the scene was far from cheering. The children clung to the door cases, and were only removed by the police by force, amidst violent screaming. The doors were then nailed up, and the evicting party proceeded to the house of James Quigley. After the eviction of this family a settlement was effected and they were reinstated. Mrs. Mary Ann Dougan, Dunmurry, was then ejected, and the police and crowbar brigade returned to Draperstown, after rendering so many of their fellow-beings homeless.

Westmeath.—Major D. Stevenson, who is a small landlord near Mullingar, in conjunction with Father O'Reilly, President of the National League, has started a new shirt factory in the town. One hundred pounds were collected for the support of this object at the last meeting of the League, and there are over fifty girls permanently employed in the establishment.

As might be reasonably anticipated the crops in the vicinity of Mullingar are backward on account of the heavy rains which have fallen lately. The potato crop is an abundant one, and the tubers, though not up to the usual standard, may be put down as good. The potatoes are wet, but nevertheless with a few dry weeks this should be remedied. The cereal crops all round are promising.

Wexford.—There were placed on view at the Irish Exhibition, London, the other day, some historical relics of the Irish rebellion of '98, consisting of the swords and pistols and sash worn by the famous Father Murphy at the battles of Gorey, Arklow, New Ross, Vinegar Hill, and other hardly-contested engagements between the Royal troops and the United Irishmen, in that disastrous year. Father Murphy, in the first instance, opposed the rebellion, but eventually had to defend his church from an attack by the Royal troops. Subsequently, at a council of war, he was requested by the insurgent chiefs to take command of a division of the Wexford army, under Bagenal Harvey, who was at the time Commander-in-chief. Father Murphy was one of the few Catholic leaders of the rebellion. He displayed extraordinary bravery and daring in many of the engagements which took place in this County and Wicklow.

THE WOLVES.

(EDEN) PHILLIPS, in *Longman's Magazine*.)

WHERE the fir trees began to grow less closely; where, between their tall trunks and in their black foliage, gleamed a few crimson splashes of fire as the sun sank below the horizon; where the snow lay deep and unspotted, save by the multitudinous prints of their own restless feet—there, on the outskirts of the forest, at the wane of day, the wolves were gathering themselves together. Hungry they were, and eager for work to begin. There was no play among them, no leaping over one another's backs, or wrestling, or growling pretences at fighting. They were on business—the first business of life, to keep life, and to keep life, if you happen to be a wolf, means hard work and plenty of it, with but little time to spare on the amenities of existence.

And now their old gray leaders—warriors who have survived many a scene of death and disaster to man and wolf—leap out together from the woods upon the darkening plain. They raise their noses, sniff the wind, and shake themselves. One yawns and stretches his paws, while a puff of hot breath rises from his tongue, and, as he shuts his narrow jaws with a snap, sharp canine teeth, white as the snow itself, glitter in the dusk.

Then began that long, slouching, tireless trot, that infernal gallop which beats horse and man and all things living for combined speed and endurance. The pack covers nearly five-and-twenty square yards of snow, settles into its stride, each beast moving and turning in unison with the rest, as a flight of birds mysteriously wheels in air. They are Norway wolves these, and experience has long since taught them what work will be necessary before supper and a return to their forest fastnesses.

Note what happens almost at the start. One of the brute suddenly slips and strains his leg. Fearfully he glances at his companions on the right and left, but as yet they know not of the accident. All too soon, however, the pace tells upon the injured animal. Nature asserts herself in the great gray wolf, his eyes glow like red-hot embers, his sinewy leg gives under him, he howls his farewell to dear life, and his place in the ranks knows him no more. But the maimed creature's sufferings are over almost instantly, for the fittest alone survive in a pack of wolves. A ravenous fighting mass of fur and legs and teeth close in upon him, and he is gone, leaving no monument more enduring than drops of his own hot blood, which have fallen and melted for themselves deep holes in the trampled snow.

Then forward they sweep, the cannibals, on the best possible terms with one another, and feeling as you would feel after anchovy or an olive or some such preliminary to more important gastronomic efforts.

But now, ahead, there stands a solitary tree, naked save where, on its topmost branches, the dark pine needles mingle in the shapeless clump, or where, lower down, leaf cones still cling to the parent bough. In the rough bark at its foot are flecks of wool; but the sheep which rub themselves there in the summer are a way just now. Something of greater interest meets the wolves here. Along the snow at the base of this tree, and running at right angles to the course they have, till now, been taking, extend two parallel lines, cut by the irons of a sledge. One vehicle alone has passed since the snow last fell, but it appears to have gone by quite recently, for the scent is strong and the pack take it up without a moment's halt. Now supper becomes a probability, for where there is a sledge, there is a horse, perhaps two; where there is a sledge, there is also a man, possibly more than one.

Have you ever heard the howling of wolves?

I have, seated in a comfortable place of entertainment, with my mind at ease and certain knowledge that many iron bars separated me from the invisible howlers. Even under those circumstances, the sound was one that made me turn cold and wonder how nature had produced anything so hideous. It is like nothing but itself; you cannot compare or contrast it with any other cry of living things; a gale of wind in the rigging of a big ship at sea is the nearest approach to it I know. Thin, hollow wails of sound grow and swell and burst into one demoniac howl that embodies in its volume every conceivable note of despair and eternal torture. Then the crescendo dies, sometimes as though suddenly strangled, more often in long-drawn shrieks that fade upon the ear. There is music in their cadence at times; those that I heard were fairly in tune—but such a tune, such a droning, fiendish, whirling blast of melody it was. If the nether world has its own music, that music should be the howl of hungry wolves—the frantic chorus whose culmination is death to lying singers or fleeing audience, or both.

So much for the wolves I know; so much for wolves whose hearts are broken and whose sides have ached often under the heavy whip of their master. So much for tame wolves who do clumsy tricks and have learned the beauty of obedience, forgetting, at the same time, the watchword of all wolves—that union is strength. Return we to my pack, which is moving like one big machine, and the component parts of which are together giving tongue.

The snow, for them, is in perfect order; but somebody ahead may perchance find his horses crushing through the thin frozen surface at every stride. The darkness suits the hunters well, but somebody ahead may be praying for that moonlight which, at present, only shows silver fringes on a black cloud. To them their wolf music is the dinner gong; but somebody ahead may hear nothing more beautiful than his own passing bell in the distant ululations rising and falling and coming over the snow.

Fortunately thought and pen travel quicker even than gray wolves; therefore—though not knowing with certainty whether it can catch us again before the end of the story—we will leave the racing pack and draw level with the sledge.

Here it is, sure enough, plunging through the snow and spinning out those two parallel lines as it goes. The stout brown horses are galloping steadily and the solitary man sitting behind them does not use whip or word at present. He must be some miles nearer home ere the last struggle begins, and he not only knows the road well, but can also guess with tolerable accuracy at the distance which still lends enchantment to the wolf music in the darkness behind him. Physically Rollo Svantsen is a typical Norwegian—strong and in the prime of life. He has been in passing peril from the wolves before to-day; the rug now wrapped about him, one corner of which flaps and rustles in the snow, is made of wolf skins. To-night he appears anxious, however; his horses are powerful but not fleet, and in his judgment, when the journey is ended, there will be a very short quarter of a mile between his sledge and its pursuers. As though to encourage him the moon at last rises free of the far-stretching cloud that till the present has hidden it. A clear, white light floods the darkness and the snowy plain begins to widen out upon every side as the driver, rising in his seat, casts one searching glance ahead, looks to the fastening of a big leather bag which is tied to the floor of the sledge, and then gazes long and carefully behind him. Yes, there they are, just a little dark shadow on the waste, a shadow which one less experienced might have overlooked altogether, but a shadow that is moving hardly less quickly than those cast by the rack of broken clouds drifting across the moon.

What Svantsen had seen in front of him was a black line on the horizon and a tall finger post, still far ahead, where two roads met. What he had not seen was a figure on foot, travelling towards the same black line upon the horizon.

The pedestrian is moving but slowly, and has very little more running left in him. The snow retards every step and clogs in lumps upon the heels of his boots. There is no track to go by, but he keeps as straight as he can for the tall finger post. To reach the black line before those flying feet in the rear have closed with him, is, he knows impossible; and yet he staggers forward. He cannot help himself. The instinct of self preservation would make him struggle on even though safety were a hundred miles distant, instead of scarce five. And he will drag his tired body till he drops or till the wolves pull him down.

Then comes—think of it—the sound of sledge bells in his ears, the only earthly melody he knows that in his present sore strait can mean succour and salvation. He hears it not at first. The Norwegians are a superstitious folk, and our poor wretch thinks that the night demons are abroad, dancing in the drifting snow wreaths, laughing at his agony, and tuning the distant howlings into the sound of bells.

Sledge bells do not always make music. There is nothing to suggest pleasure, and plumes, and nodding of proud equine heads, in the harsh jangle that now rushes down upon the traveller. Svantsen's horses have long since caught the distant chorus, and their ears are