

WICKLY'S WOODS

By H. W. TAYLOR

CHAPTER XIV.—(Continued.)

Unfolding her enveloping shawl far enough to free her right arm, Lizzy slipped her right hand with a rapid movement and a certain sense of exhilaration that must have communicated itself to the arm which it gently clasped.

"How very agreeable to have your hand upon my arm," he said, turning his animated face toward her so that she had a last opportunity to see it clearly in the cone of light that had turned with them as far as it could; it turned and now vanished, leaving the darkness doubly intensified.

He had made a short pause, in which her answer ought to have been made; but in which she was looking at his face and studying it so intently as not to be able to withdraw her attention sufficiently from the man himself to catch at once the full import of the words.

If they were more than a mere empty compliment! That could have been determined by his manner, if she had studied the words and the manner together. But he seemed to feel that he had not begun this part of the colloquy auspiciously, and hurriedly said:

"What a black night! I ought to have brought a lantern. But I know this road as well as if I had made it foot by foot. In fact, I can fairly claim to have done much more toward making it than has any one else—it is the road that I used to hurry back and forth upon from Sandtown to the geologist's camp, you remember."

He laughed in such a light, mocking, careless way, as it appeared to Lizzy, that all the exhilarating anticipation of this walk through the midnight woods went out, as the light of the dark lantern had gone out of the road behind them.

CHAPTER XV.

The rain had entirely ceased and the wind had blown itself away to a fitful and occasional rustle high up in the top of the trees. But Lizzy did not notice these signs of the fact that the night was not nearly so black as it had been at the beginning of the period of twenty minutes or ten, or half hour—she had no notion which—in which they had stood and talked in the cone of the light from the dark lantern.

"You are a very successful dissembler, Mr. Mason," she said, unconsciously assuming his own light and frivolous manner. "You have succeeded admirably in imposing upon the simple, frank and unsuspecting villagers and country people in and about Sandtown. But I submit whether this were an object wholly commensurate with your distinguished ability. The feat of deceiving ignorant and uneducated people is one that is easily achieved every day, by very ordinary tricksters. A man of genius, I think, should have exerted his powers upon a community like that of a great city; wide awake and vigilant as to its interests."

He laughed so very heartily at this waspish attack that she felt very much like joining him in it, although the laugh would then bear the construction of being against herself.

"Take care of that brier, Miss Lizzy. I had almost forgotten the locality of that bunch. It dragged my hat off one dark night when I was returning from your house to my tent. And although I hunted and searched for it a full half hour that night, I had to abandon it at last and go home hatless. Next morning I saw it from quite a distance gracefully dangling from a branch of a little ash sapling where the brier had thrown it in the rebound. I thought I would cut them out of the way; but I didn't."

The trivial irrelevancy of this somewhat tiresome anecdote only confirmed Lizzy Wickly in her determination to make this man feel somewhat of the weight and the sharpness of the edge of the Sandtown aversion for him.

She could not see what he must have seen at once—that this acerbity, so foreign to her speech and manner, was the natural outcropping of her wounded self-love and self-pride.

"But, after all, it is perhaps as a simulator, or a personator, that you have made your most brilliant record in Sandtown, Mr. Mason. The pious assistant to an eminent geologist who in answer to the hungry cry of a religion starved people, won his way straight to their simple hearts, Sunday after Sunday, by discourses such as they had never heard nor dreamt of! What possible ulterior design could such a course subserve, Mr. Mason? What possible design could justify that particular phase of imposition? Was it for the sole purpose of affording you some amusement, when all the few sources of amusement in our simple and serious community had been exhausted?"

Oh, Lizzy, how very ingenious! How very incautious in one who wanted to conceal a self-hurt! Anybody could have seen the real and only source and origin of such a philippic!

"I beg to assure you, Miss Wickly, that there was no deception nor dissimulation in that portion of my relations with the Sandtown people. I beg that you will believe this upon my own statement made now; because the immediate future can do less to exonerate me from this charge than from any and all the others. Remember that I declare to you in all solemnity that I have not exceeded my powers and duties. I was once an ordained preacher of the gospel. Years ago I left the pulpit for the business world. But I have remained, I humbly believe, a consistent member of my church."

There was a noticeable quality of com-

plaint and remonstrance in his latter sentences. It was to this that she addressed her answer—her inconsiderate and unguarded answer—as she afterward acknowledged to herself, with burning cheeks.

"Do you think you did me no harm in pretending to take such an absorbing interest in me, and in my plain and simple and uneventful life in Sandtown? Was it no harm to me to lead me to believe implicitly in the extraordinary attributes with which you invested me, in the many conversations you had with my friends and neighbors concerning me? Was it no harm to me, too, to have put before me, in the most fascinating light, the personal and mental characteristics of an ideal man that I might learn to worship him? Was that no—"

"Miss Wickly, for heaven's sake don't tell me that even now, knowing what I perceive you to have divined, you are seriously affected toward—toward—"

"Toward your employer? Toward Mr. Huntley?" she said, with great bitterness, and emphasizing her manner with a convulsive clutch upon Mr. Mason's arm as she pronounced the relationship and the man. "It is, perhaps, the very poetic revenge of fate upon you and upon me that I do not know; that I cannot determine. When on yesterday a dim suspicion of the truth dawned upon me—"

She paused, and almost sprang forward in a sudden caprice of anger, impatience and distraction. He pressed her arm strongly and restrainingly against her side, until she could not fail to recognize the calming and reassuring influence that he had over her.

"Go on," he said in a tone that presupposed an accompanying smile of expectation. "Tell me fully and without reservation all that you thought when you began to see the dawn of the suspicion to which you allude and which I had imagined must have reached its zenith long ago."

There was something pervading all his words and actions, and his whole manner, so very, very different from what she had known of Mr. Mason! Must she begin by telling him this? Yes, plainly, if she entered into such a complete unburdening of her mind, she must tell him this, and tell it first.

But she must know to what it would lead! If he should ask her in which aspect she thought him best, she would be compelled to give the genuine and universal woman's answer.

Even to a woman of education and some degree of refinement, with superior talents and acquirements, this half-military, bold, confident, smiling and jaunty cavalier was infinitely better, more attractive, than the plain, unassuming, philosophic assistant to the geologist, no matter how learned and thoughtful.

She had begun to tell him something of this—choosing her words as carefully as she could, so as to preserve for her own reflection and self-commendation that attitude of womanly dignity and self-poise which she actually imagined she had maintained throughout this short but momentous interview.

She had said perhaps enough to commit her to the whole opinion of him as it has here been outlined, from her last brief cogitation, differing as radically as it does from her more elaborately prepared and expressed opinion as shown in the beginning of the walk, only a few moments ago; and which opinion surely must have been the public opinion of all Sandtown, rather than her own.

The first opinion which she imagined was her true estimate of Mr. Mason was in fact but her version of the verdict of Sandtown upon him, given upon ex parte testimony, it is true.

The last estimate which she had formulated, and had even expressed to all intents and purposes, although she was preparing to formulate it in twenty different ways, perhaps, was in reality her own opinion, and one that she may have really entertained from the first.

So strange are the apparently contradictory and wholly irreconcilable workings of the human mind, and especially that particular quality of the human mind evolved from a woman's brain.

She had scarcely begun to recite some of these impressions when in the now almost quiet woods there leaped upon the distant but perfectly distinct report of a rifle, keen and penetrating in its whistle-like echoes about the resonant aisles of the forest. Mr. Mason stopped instantly, and turning his head, listened intently.

"I hope these men have not been foolish enough to gather up a force of the ruffians of Big Rattlesnake Creek to make an attack," he said, still leaning his head a little, in the listening attitude. "I will have to go back instantly, Miss Lizzy. Can you run on alone and join Mrs. Redden? I saw her a few minutes ago, not more than fifty yards in advance of us. Well, then, good-by till I see you again, which will be soon—quite soon, if I have any control of the matter."

He pressed her hand warmly, as he disengaged it from his arm, and then started to walk rapidly back.

But, as if under an uncontrollable impulse, he turned and ran back, and caught her in his arms for an instant, pressing his lips again and again to her own.

Then, with some inaudible murmur of apology and entreaty, he turned once more, and was gone.

CHAPTER XVI.

Never in the known history of Sandtown had there been a time of excitement equal to this that now emptied all

the cabins and "double-logs" along the Wabash, from Reelfoot Pond to Big Rattlesnake Creek and from the Wabash to the uttermost parts of the Overcoat road.

Everybody who told the story in after-times, and all those who took part in the stirring events as they occurred, were fond of making this commentary upon them. Of course, there were the Dikeses, the Sparkses, the Ellets, the Go-unses and the Shipleys, that knew better. They had seen excitement in their times—the old people. They could tell you of times that were times! But for the time being, and for the purpose of the argument, this was conceded by everybody to be the most exciting of all times. Just as last winter's coldest ten days are universally conceded to have been without a parallel in the history of meteorological observations.

And what would you have? If there are to be held in remembrance maximum phenomena of every variety of incident—epochal, meteorological and seismic—what is to become of posterity in the way of story telling? Are we to be forever silenced simply because our ancestors lived and died before us?

For the purposes of this period, then, there was never an approach to the excitement of the day that followed the night of which we have just spoken. Men seized the just and lawful excuse of the late heavy rain to keep out of their wheat fields, and away from their waiting meadows. Plow horses were saddled, where saddles were; and where they were not, a padded sheepskin or a folded horse blanket, gripped on old Jim or old Nance, or some 2-year-old colt, served the present purpose, and every male inhabitant over twelve and under a hundred was out and mounted, "single," generally, but not infrequently "double," and in each and every instance armed in some sort of fashion—armed to the teeth.

Men frequently, but by far the most generally, boys, galloped across strips of green prairie, loaded with a long hammer-lock squirrel rifle, carried upon the right shoulder or across the lap, upon the pommel of the saddle. Here they dashed through a thicket of yellow blossomed wild artichokes, and Indian cups, and wild hemp, and purple-bellied jimson. They are expecting to come upon the enemy at any moment—all those who come from Reelfoot Pond. For they have heard that the enemy—the railroaders—hold armed and hostile possession of the Farmers' Bank, and, in fact all Sandtown, including the captivity of their leading citizen, Conrad Redden, together with the sheriff and all his posse.

A smoke has been seen in some unaccountable quarter, for a smoke, and from a suspicion unguardedly propagated there arises the authenticated report that little Jim Dikeses' house is being burned, along with others, up on Big Rattlesnake Creek.

Boys are careering about with wild delight, looking eagerly for the enemy in every thicket, at every crossing. Other squads of boys, far off, up or down the wide river bottom, are at times taken for the enemy, and there is danger of collisions among the different squads of the Wabash people themselves.

However, old Captain Joe Ellet, who was in the Revolutionary War, and who has mounted his antique cocked hat, his blue brass-buttoned coat, his one huge leathern epaulette on his right shoulder, and is seated in a two-horse wagon, playing on a very shrill life an absurd travesty on "The Girl I Left Behind Me," pauses to suggest that all Sandtowners tie a piece of red flannel upon their right arms for a sign by day, and a strip of white tow-linen upon the same arm for a sign by night. This suggestion is at once bruited about as a very remarkable evidence of the practical knowledge of an old soldier, and is acted upon at once—even very many women investing themselves with this war badge.

Great numbers of people from all parts of the country have made the wild excitement of this bright, cool, sunny July day a pretext for concentrating at the large house and gathering at the ample board of Conrad Redden. They all wanted to hear, direct from headquarters the story of the noted old Hoosier farmer's capture. And then they were sure that his house would be a sort of central station for the reception of dispatches from the seat of war. The large stables were full of the visiting "nags" of the immediate Redden family, and their wives' nearest relations; and the hitching racks and the lane fences were thronged with squealing, kicking and biting old mares whose manical young colts were careering up and down lanes and roads, neighing shrilly and in chaotic chords as they dashed at every old mother mare save the dam that belonged to the particular dasher.

Not by any possibility was any one of the hundreds of careering and shrieking colts ever able to recognize the mother, past whom it dashed in mad pursuit of some unsympathetic and petulant horse having not the slightest resemblance to the abandoned and ignored dam.

(To be continued.)

His Dilemma.

Miss Willing—You are a widower, I believe?

Mr. Loneleigh—Yes.

Miss Willing—But, of course, you will marry again?

Mr. Loneleigh—I really cannot say. I haven't yet made up my mind whether it would be wise for me to be so foolish.

She Called on Him.

Ascum—Everybody is wondering how you came to get engaged to your wife; for, you see—

Henpeck—But I didn't. She came to get engaged to me.—Philadelphia Press.

Nothing New.

Church—I see a bank is to be opened in New York at night.

Gotham—Well, the burglars have been doing that right along.—Yonkers Statesman.

COLORADO'S NEW GOVERNOR.

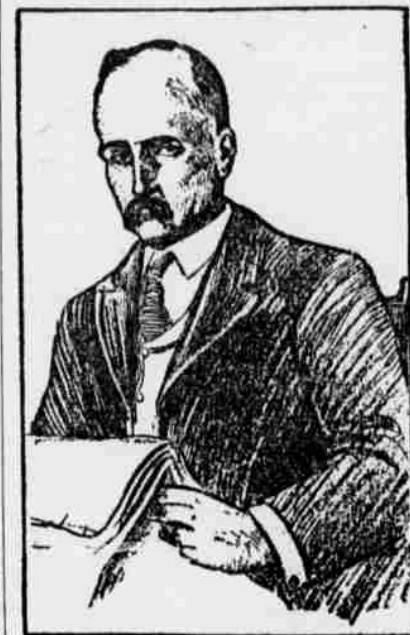
Prominent in Mining Circles and Is Worth \$500,000.

Jesse McDonald, the new Governor of Colorado, who took his seat after three months of turmoil in the Adams-Peabody contest, went into office understanding something of the complications of politics. For Gov. McDonald has himself been ousted from office, and has also enjoyed the unique distinction of holding four public offices at one time.

After Gov. Peabody's resignation was handed in, Mr. McDonald was, in effect, Governor, Lieutenant Governor, State Senator and Mayor of Leadville. The shift simplified his situation somewhat.

These political shifts, typical of Colorado, are peculiarly interesting in Gov. McDonald's case. Two years ago he was elected to the State Senate from his district. There was the inevitable contest, as the vote was close, and a Democratic Legislature decided against McDonald and unseated him for his opponent, Daniel Healey, Democrat. McDonald protested, returned to Leadville—where he was elected Mayor—and bided his time. He was placed on the Republican State ticket as Lieutenant Governor last fall, and received a substantial majority, although the candidate for Governor was, on the face of the returns, defeated.

When the General Assembly met the McDonald contest case, hanging over from two years ago, was again brought up. Healey was unseated, McDonald given his seat, and until he



GOV. JESSE McDONALD.

was sworn in as Lieutenant Governor served as State Senator.

The new Governor is a man of affairs. He was born in Ohio and went west at the time the carbonate excitement at Leadville was at its height. People were flocking to the camp from all over the globe, and there were stories of the fabulous fortunes in Senator Taber's matchless mine and others that gave Leadville its celebrity. McDonald got an "outfit," went to the carbonate camp, and at once took up a number of locations. His mining locations and subsequent investments were fortunate. He gradually became a man of influence and is one of the most prominent figures in mining circles in Leadville. He is rated as being worth \$500,000.

Marketing in Paris.

Almost every woman in France does her own marketing, and ladies take their maid or cook along to carry home their purchases.

I am speaking of the average household. Rich or very chic people leave the marketing to the cook, who deals in stores which have regular deliveries, while in very wealthy households that all important personage, the chef, would not hear of any one interfering with his prerogative of selecting and ordering everything, and this able creator of sauces, of things savory, steaming or jellied, may even have his own coupe to take him to the Halles, the huge market that each day provides the provisions for all of Paris and its suburbs.

Servants love to go to market, for it is a custom with almost every storekeeper to give them a cent on every franc spent, so you will find it next to an impossibility to make your cook deal where she does not receive her sou du franc, and in engaging a servant many will ask, "Does madame do her own marketing?"—Good Housekeeping.

Beating of Dead Hearts.

Hearts of cold-blooded animals will beat for a comparatively long time after death or removal from the body (if kept cool and moist), because of powerful internal collections of nerves, known as ganglia, whose automatic impulses cause the regular contractions of the muscles. Similar ganglia exist in man and other warm-blooded animals, but their action is less prolonged. Scientists have ascertained that a turtle's heart will beat after removal, if put on a piece of glass, kept cool and moist, and covered with a bell-jar. I believe it has been known to beat 36 or even 48 hours; 12 or 14 hours is a common record.—St. Nicholas.



Baking and Jarring.

The idea that a sudden jar or rap on the oven door will cause cake to fall while baking is often scouted as "an old woman's notion," but evidence given by a correspondent of Good Housekeeping certainly goes to prove "there's something in it." She had a cake in the oven which was rising nicely when the groceryman dropped a barrel of flour in the kitchen. Next time she looked at her cake it was "flat as a pancake." It stands to reason that a heavy jar at a critical moment, when the dough is just at the stage where the small air bubbles that make it light are rising and expanding, will cause these bubbles to fall, and once fallen of course the dough, whether cake or bread, will be flat. After the baking has progressed to a point where the crust has formed the dough will not be so readily affected.

Bread Muffins.

Take four slices of baker's bread, and take off all the crust and lay them in a pan; pour boiling water over them—barely enough to soak them—and cover the pan. When the bread has stood for an hour drain it, and stir until it is a smooth mass; add two tablespoonfuls of sifted flour and half a pint of milk. Beat two eggs and stir them into the mixture gradually. Grease some muffin rings and place them on a hot griddle; fill them and bake brown. Serve hot. Tear the muffins open to butter.

German Scallop.

Boil a cabbage, then drain and chop fine. Make a white sauce by stirring into three tablespoonfuls of butter two of flour and adding a cupful of milk. Season with pepper and salt. Butter a baking dish, put in a layer of cabbage, turn some of the sauce over it, a few drops of lemon juice, and some grated cheese. Fill the dish in this manner, cover with a layer of cracker crumbs and drop on bits of butter and a sprinkle of cayenne. Bake and brown.

Green Mountain Buns.

Mix a stiff batter out of three cups of milk, one of sugar and the necessary amount of flour. Add a yeast cake. Let rise for half a day, then add one cupful of molasses, one cupful of currants, a teaspoonful of cinnamon, one of soda, one-half of cloves, and a full cup of melted butter; use sufficient flour to make a stiff batter again, allow it to rise over night and spread with raw egg when baked.

Grease on Kitchen Range.

If your kitchen range or stove has got spotted with grease while cooking, and you cannot get it to polish, a good way to remove it is as follows: Take a little hand-brush, preferably the one used for brushing the pans before putting them away, smear it well with soot from the flue, and rub it well over the greasy parts. Afterward bleached as usual, and you will find the grease has disappeared, and a brilliant polish will be the result.

Pork Roll.

Take a piece of pickled side pork, fat and lean together, spread with a seasoning of powdered sage and a little pepper, roll up tightly, wind a cloth tightly around it and tie so the edges will not curl, boil tender in plenty of water; take from the liquor; when ready to serve remove the cloth and slice. Serve with tomato or currant catsup.

Lemon Waters.

Cream together half a pound of butter and half a pound of sugar; add two well-beaten eggs, half a pound of flour sifted four times, and the grated rind and juice of a large lemon; when thoroughly beaten, press through a pastry bag into desired shapes and on buttered tins, and bake a light brown in a moderate oven.

Chinese Custard.

Wash very thoroughly in boiling water a cupful of rice, then allow it to stand in cold water for a few minutes; stir in a quarter of a cupful of sugar and two quarts of milk; pour the mixture into a deep baking dish and bake for an hour in a moderate oven; when done, spread butter over the top. Any desired flavor may be used.

White House Cake.

Beat very thoroughly together a cup and a half of sugar, half a cup of butter and the whites of five eggs; then add two-thirds of a cup of milk, a little more than two cups of fine flour and a teaspoonful of almond extract. Whip until light and frothy and bake in a moderate oven.

To Cool the Oven.

If when you are baking anything the oven gets too hot, put in a basin of cold water instead of leaving the door open. This cools the oven, and the steam rising from the water prevents the contents burning. When cooking in a gas oven a basin or tin of water should always be kept in the oven.