

WICKLY'S WOODS

By H. W. TAYLOR

CHAPTER XIX.—(Continued.)

"What is it, Mr. Dikes? Not a million of dollars bid upon any of this land?" Lizzy cries, in great amazement, and with a jumping of something in her throat.

"Hush! Shet up! Lemmy lissun!"

But Mr. Biler turns away and looks at the crestfallen gentlemen who represent the S. & N. W., and who are now upon their feet, and walking out of the door.

"Huntley, I suppose you'd a run that coal-ground up to two millions rather than lose it! Joy of your bargain! Hope you won't lose more than a million on that purchase. There are other good coal lands besides the Wickly plat."

Then there is such a roar of shouts and cries in which "Lizzy Wickly, Lizzy Wickly," and "Huntley, Huntley, Huntley!" are the audible words.

"Git up un show yourself at the window, Liz! Git up! Git up!" and the greatly excited young Doc seizes her by the arm, and raises her to her feet, whereupon, loud as was the clamor of voices before, it is nothing to the mighty sputter of yells that rise like the whirling wings of a vast covey of birds piercing and rending the very air above them. When this has gone down there are cries of "Huntley! Huntley! Huntley!" that grow in volume and importunity, till they are no longer to be resisted. Then Coonrod Redden steps to the carriage, throws back the top, and taking Mr. Mason by the hand, raises him up.

"Feller farmers!" shouts the mighty-voiced Coonrod Redden, "h-yur's the man at's saved your lan' fur your families! This is Mr. W. Mason Huntley. You've seed him before, un knowed 'im, un talked to 'im, un h-yurn him talk, un—"

But the very climax of prolonged and sound-exhausting cheering drowns every attempt to say an audible word. Mr. Mason Huntley stands with his hat off, and smiling. The roar of cheering and yelling rises and swells, and sinks and rises—but does not cease. Suddenly it gets a great impetus, as the carriage with Coonrod Redden and Mr. W. Mason Huntley standing on the back seat, is raised straight up into the air, and with scores of these big, long-limbed, brawny, excitable, enthusiastic, hero-worshipping Hoosiers, under it and holding it high above their heads, is changed into a triumphal car, that, leaving the trembling horses securely tied to the fence, proceeds all around the square, nad up and down every road that leads into Sandtown, and finally down the Overcoat road to Coonrod Redden's, followed, flanked and preceded by a great broad tide of men, boys and women, horses, wagons and dogs, and all conspiring and combining to make the most deafening vocal clamor that ever shook the wild-beep and jimson leaves along the unfenced sides of the Overcoat road.

"Well, by gum! ef that haint one way uh hessun up a feller," said the young Doc, drawing a long breath. "Come awn, Lizzy! I'll teck yuh home, I reckon. Then I'll light out fur Coonrod's. They'll be some big speakun un han' shakun down thar, thurreckly! They'll want yuh thar, too! One million the'e humnerd un eighty-four thousan' dollars fur the Wickly Woods! By gum! you're the richest young womein in Indyanny. At's a shore theng!"

CHAPTER XX.

Another night, in which Lizzy Wickly is in a tumult, a brain-whirl of excitement that shuts out of her mind any of all the thoughts and feelings of her ordinary everyday life.

That wealth is not even the least of the elements of happiness she demonstrated effectually in her own self-contemplation. The first flash of excitement had been that feeling, perhaps, which in the gambler makes him tremble with unutterable eagerness over a heavy stake, which, when he has won, is of no further value in his eyes than is given it by its power to reproduce that same state of expectation. This she recognized as that inherent love of peril, that disposition to brave dangers, that in some degree and in some form exists in every human organization. The feeling of gratification had been as transient as the flitting moment in which the event had been in abeyance. She had at once settled back into the groove of her ordinary thought.

For now she fully recognized the fact that it never had been Huntley, the invisible professor of geology; Huntley, the man of straw; Huntley, the principal and employer, that she had loved. She did not doubt now that had a real Huntley appeared—such a real Huntley as Mr. Mason Huntley had imposed upon her—she would have decided between them at once, upon their simultaneous presentation before her. And that decision, she now knew, would, at any moment of all the time in which she had known the genuine Huntley, have been against any other man in all the world.

Early in the evening she had dressed herself in one of those prettiest of all pretty summer dresses—a white Swiss muslin—with an unlimited number of ruffles and tucks in the skirt, and with little knots of blue ribbon here and there, and a bunch of the purplish, sweet-smelling wild flowers pinned upon her shapely left shoulder. She had gone backward and forward before the little mirror, in the middle of the room, with her face turned first over this shoulder and then over that, to see if the skirts hung exactly right, and to see how well she really looked in the glass, as even the best and most sensible girls in the world will do, in spite of all the jeering and sarcastic remarks about them for their vanity and self-love. She had taken out of its

velvet receptacle a strand of little pearl and gold beads, that looked very becoming against the linen collar here, and over the looped knot of narrow blue ribbon there, at opposite sides of her shapely throat, whose winter-whiteness had taken on a little of that rich, warm tint that our intermontane valley climate so plentifully bestows upon all sojourners, and which in unhealthy people we call "sallow," while in the more robust it goes by the unobjectionable title of "ruddy."

Then, with her new, bright "patent leather" slippers, showing a very little band of white stocking about her shapely ankles, when she sat down and crossed the very neat little left foot over the right, she was as pretty a picture as ever a little mirror exhibited in any little plain middle-room in all Christendom—the white pond lily of Reelfoot Prairie, as could be proved by every admiring Hoosier from the mouth of Big Rattlesnake Creek on the north, to the very rush-tangled limit of Reelfoot Pond on the south.

She was in her gayest and most teasing mood, too. She couldn't help it. She would think of her father, and his misfortune, for a moment, and feel that it was perfectly shocking in her to be so demonstratively, boisterously merry as she was. But she couldn't help it. She could not repress her buoyant animal spirits. She flew about the house from room to room, with her stiff-starched underskirts rustling like the fluttering wings of the wild pigeons now feeding their young up in the dark thickets of Wickly's Woods. She sang little bits of song in the sweetest voice that ever led a class of young Hoosier hoodlums in a public school. She picked up her guitar off the haircloth sofa, and slipping its sling ribbon over her left shoulder, went about the rooms playing pretty and mellow old rondeaux in a way that she had never played them before.

She made short little flights out to the front gate of the narrow little hollyhock and morning-glory yard, and back again. She stopped at least twenty times in her delightful little flutterings here and there about the house to kiss her mother on the cheek, or to pat her on the shoulder reassuringly and lovingly, out of the very enthusiasm of her mood. In fact, she did hundreds and hundreds of foolish little things that she was perfectly aware a mature young woman school teacher shouldn't permit herself to do. But she couldn't help it. And, what's more, she didn't try.

In any one of the little, rustling, white-dove flights to the front gate she could hear the sounds of shouting, clapping hands and multitudinous laughter of a delighted audience. And she could almost see and hear Mr. Huntley in the merry humor of his new character that he had shown of late, exchanging humorous repartee with his audience as is now, and always has been, the custom and the delight of the Hoosier audience and the Hoosier orator. Perhaps, after supper was over, she would walk with her mother down to Coonrod Redden's. She would be heartily welcome. She needed no invitation. For such is the broad and simple hospitality of the native Hoosier people to-day, that to "be acquainted" constitutes a perpetual and unlimited invitation to come when you please and be sure of a hearty welcome.

But after the supper was over Lizzy could not fully make up her mind to start. He had not been long enough in Hoosierdom to thoroughly understand that informal freedom of manner which sanctioned the unpremeditated gathering of neighbors at each other's houses at any and all seasons of the year.

True, she remembered that he had readily conformed himself to the prevailing customs in Sandtown society. But he had always exhibited much more of reserve, even to the point of diffidence, than was quite agreeable.

"A leetle mite backward. A leetle mite backward," Coonrod Redden had said of him at first. "But I don't think the feller means any harm by ut. He haint yusen to ar ways yit. He's been raised whar people haint gut nuthun to do but git acquainted. Un they kin teck as much time to ut as they want to. Un they ginurly teck a plenty, I low. We haint gut time fur no sich foolishness as that out h-yur en Indyanny. Feller comes h-yur we want to know right away whurrer he's sittun fur a neighbor ur nuth. Ef he haint, we want to hoss 'im up, ur git 'im out, jist quick's we kin, by gum!"

She knew that Mr. W. Mason Huntley had ostensibly subscribed to this doctrine which Coonrod Redden had not failed to enunciate on all fitting occasions. But had that subscribing been more than a piece of amiability on his part? She had thought that in the case of a man having only the humble and subordinate place of "assistant," it was not at all to be expected that he would not readily fall into the ways of the Sandtown people as easily as he had fallen into the sandy windings of the Overcoat road.

So she hesitated about starting, in the secret hope that he would make that unnecessary by coming to her "soon," as he had said. But if he did not come within an hour, she would go. She felt that she must see him. She could not content herself with the thought of remaining away until after twilight. She would go down in the twilight at the very furthest.

So when the young Doc Dikes came over presently, to get Mrs. Wickly to come and stay half an hour with his aunt and her sick little boy, she felt that it would be a way of occupying the interval of time. And so she went along, taking care to look back once in every

twenty yards to see if he were coming.

Then there were presently so many of the Sandtown women dropping in at Mrs. Dikes' to see how little Jimmy was, and to ask Lizzy Wickly about her great fortune and take note of how she looked and talked, and whether she had begun to be stuck up, and proud and exclusive, as rich people very foolishly do. And perhaps with the thought of making it very prominent that she had not begun to be a bit stuck up, and perhaps because she still felt the very unusual exhilaration of her naturally buoyant spirits strong upon her, Lizzy did her best to convince her neighbors, the former Arguses of Sandtown, that she was sufficiently sensible and well-groomed in the simple democratic doctrines and practices of Sandtown not to be made giddy, even when suddenly elevated to the great height of an inconceivable fortune like the one which Wickly's Woods had brought her.

CHAPTER XXI.

It was quite dark when Lizzy finally reached home, after getting up to start half a dozen times, and being stopped as often by a fresh incursion of congratulating Arguses.

There was a light in the middle room that they certainly had not lit before starting upon their enforced visit to the sick. Some one familiar with the house was there. And who so familiar as the man she had been waiting and watching for, all this evening?

Instinctively she drew back a little, and permitted her mother to precede her, so that she would have time to hide her real feeling, so far as not to appear ridiculously sentimental in the presence of others. When they should be alone she could pour out the wealth of her heart to him. She was rich now! And no selfish motive could be imputed to her in so suddenly making up her mind that, in spite of what she had said to him on that stormy night in the edge of the woods, near the Overcoat road, she now knew that she loved no imaginary man, no image of straw, but the veritable Mason Huntley, and she was ready, willing and even anxious to make this confession.

It was a confession due to him. It was a confession without which she must remain an enigma to him. It was one she would make that very evening, and just so soon as they were fairly alone together.

Even in that brief space of time in which she had seen the light in the middle room, and had slackened her quick, springy, school-day walk, timing her steps to reach the front door when her mother should get so far as the middle door, she had thought over what recompense of maidenly caress was due him.

She remembered how he had held her to his heart in the center of that dreadful cyclone, and the dangers and destruction that encompassed them. She thought of that too brief and vivid tingling parting near the clump of shadowy, long, arching black raspberry vines. She could repay him, clasp for clasp, kiss for kiss! She would not remain his debtor in any token of love. And her red lips parted and her brown eyes sparkled in the gleam of the lamp as she put her dainty slipped foot lightly across the threshold, thinking only of him and for him.

She was certain that she saw him sitting there, beyond the little stand-table on which the lamp was blazing. So occupied was she with the certainty of meeting him that not until Congressman Billy Biler arose to meet her and she heard a cry of surprise and delight from her mother's lips could she see that Billy Biler was standing there smiling very pleasantly, while beyond him were her mother and her father locked in each other's arms.

"There's nuthun like good luck, Miss Wickly, to bring people out of sickness, and fetch un round generally. H-yur's yur father, now—as soon as he gut to hear that you were a millionaire he found himself completely cured, and started home at once. He knew it before you did, too. He's sharpened up a bit by his short stay at the hospital, you see. But while they're talkun to thurselves, Miss Lizzy, I want to try to persuade you to intercede for me with Ole Coon Redden. The ole man's terribly out with me, 'bout this railroad sale business. I'm not to blame. I took a fee from the San'town un Northwestern folks, ur course. I didn't do it as a Congressman, nur as a citizen of San'town. I done ut as a lawyer. Ur course, they's lots a things that, as a lawyer, you can do that you wouldn't want to do as a Congressman, nur as a citizen, nur as the friend ur the adverse party. Now, h-yur, fur instance, Coonrod Redden, he telegraphs fur me to come home un see that all these h-yur San'town supporters ur mine has thur rights in this mortgage business. Well, I had already taken a fee from the S. & N. W. folks, as I said. But I done that as a lawyer, yunnerstand. Un I tole Redden I'd see that the railroad didn't steal nuthun from any uv yuh. Un they didn't. Did they? But he's on his high hoss. Un he says I shant have the delegation from this county. Un I've gut to have ut."

(To be continued.)

Strictly Private.

"It seems strange," she said, "that of all the girls you know you should love me alone."

"Nothing strange about it," replied the young man in the parlor scene. "I never was much for making love in a crowd."

Infections.

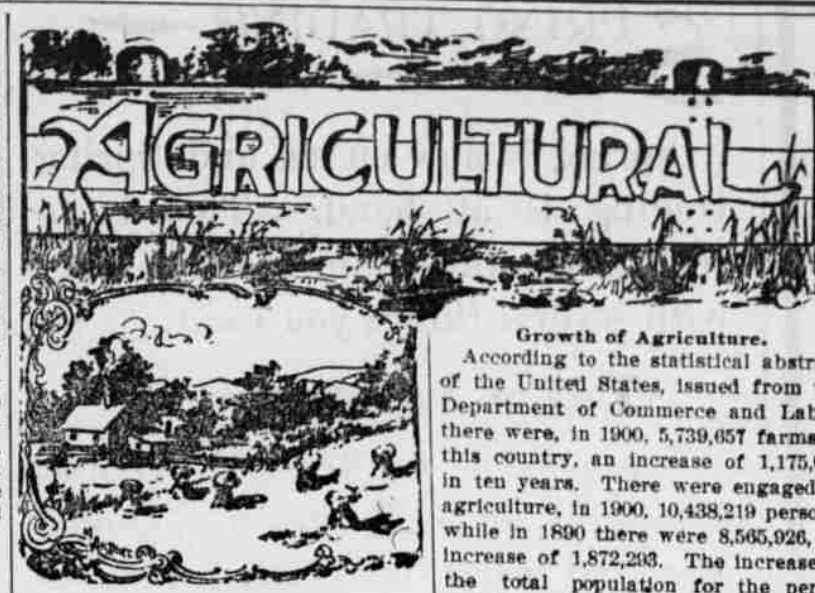
"I haven't seen Harvey of late."

"Haven't you heard? Why, he has a fever."

"You don't say! Not dangerous, I hope?"

"Yes, dangerous to pedestrians. He has the automobile fever."

Do good constantly, patiently and wisely, and you will never have cause to say that life is not worth living.—Colton.



The Hanging of the Kettle.

There are many farmers in need of something convenient to hang a large kettle on. Many support the kettle on three stones, which is unsatisfactory, especially if the heat cracks one stone and the kettle tips over. The accompanying cut is drawn from a photograph I took recently on a neighboring farm, and it comes very near to explaining itself. The device consists of three moderately heavy pieces

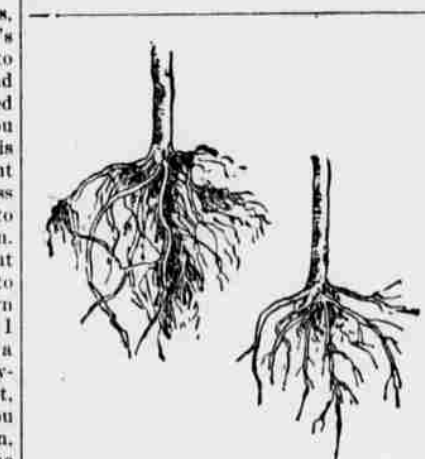


KETTLE PROPERLY SUSPENDED.

of wood for legs, which are attached together at the top by a heavy bolt. Some six or eight inches below the union of the three legs a heavy clevis is secured to the middle leg. From this clevis two chains extend downward to proper distance and double backward to fasten on to the ears of the kettle, which then hangs suspended. The length of the legs will depend on convenience and the size of the kettle they are to support. Those shown in the cut are eleven feet in length and were made from medium sized well seasoned fence rails. When the derick is not in use it can be lowered, folded together and laid away.—Cor. Orange Judd Farmer.

Pruning Roots of Trees.

While there may be merit in the method of planting known as the Stringfellow plan, which provides for cutting away most of the roots of the young tree as well as the top, it is a plan which does not work well with all species of trees nor in all soils. As a result the average orchardist will stick to the best of the old methods



HOW ROOTS ARE PRUNED.

which provides for a cutting back of the top so as to form a proper head and balancing the roots somewhat after the manner of the lower cut in the illustration. The upper cut shows the roots of the two-year-old tree after it is dug in the nursery and the lower drawing shows how all the mass of fibrous roots, which would die anyway after exposure to the sun, have been cut away and most of the longer roots shortened. It is easier to plant a tree prepared in this manner and strong young rootlets will form from the ends of the roots which were cut, forming a mass of roots during the one growing season following planting which will give the young tree a good start in life.—Indianapolis News.

Aberdeen-Angus in the Dairy.

In Australia the Aberdeen-Angus cows are highly esteemed for dairy purposes. A correspondent, writing to a Scotch exchange, says that pure bred heifers are not to be had in sufficient numbers and that breeders are mating the Angus bull with Ayrshire cows to obtain good milkers. At the royal show at Sydney in 1902 a cow of this cross was champion in the dairy test and gave in three days 134.14 pounds of milk, yielding 6.95 pounds of butter fat.

Growth of Agriculture.

According to the statistical abstract of the United States, issued from the Department of Commerce and Labor, there were, in 1900, 5,739,657 farms in this country, an increase of 1,175,016 in ten years. There were engaged in agriculture, in 1900, 10,438,219 persons, while in 1890 there were 8,565,926, an increase of 1,872,293. The increase in the total population for the period stated was 13,071,484, so of this increase over 14 per cent must have engaged in farming.

The value of farms and farm property increased from \$16,082,267,689 in 1890 to \$20,514,001,838 in 1900, a difference of \$4,431,734,149. The value of farm products increased \$1,304,070,252, the value in 1900 being \$3,764,177,706. This does not include value of products not fed to live stock.

The total number of acres in farms in 1900 was 838,591,774, the average number of acres to a farm being 146.2, while in 1890 it was 136.5. The per cent of improved farm land was decreased 8 per cent in the last ten years.

The greatest increase in the number of farms has been in the States of Colorado, Arizona, Idaho, Montana and New Mexico.

In the production of corn and wheat there has been a corresponding increase. In 1890 there were 1,489,970,000 bushels produced and in 1900 2,105,102,516 bushels, while of wheat in 1890 the crop was 390,262,000 bushels and it increased to 522,229,505 bushels in 1900.

Thus it will be seen that whatever the gain in commerce and manufactures the relative gain in farming has held its own. Agriculture, too, has been lifted to a higher plane than formerly. It is no longer said that "anybody can farm." Agriculture is rapidly attaining the dignity of a profession, and special preparation and educational equipment are now regarded as necessary for success in this avocation as in any other.

Radishes.

The radish is one of the early season garden crops, quick growing and hardy. For best development it requires rather cool weather, and to grow tender radishes it is necessary to have a continuous growth from beginning to end.

As soon as the ground can be worked in spring, sow large, heavy seed. The soil should be clean, rich garden soil. It is advisable to sow a new crop every ten days, to keep up a continuous supply. In about four to six weeks after planting, the radishes will be ready for table use.

The roots should be from six inches to a foot apart, and the seed covered about half an inch in depth. Drop two or three seed every inch in the row. It will require about an ounce of seed for 100 feet of row; eight to ten pounds for an acre.

When grown in hot weather, radishes are apt to be stringy and tough.

Winter radishes are planted the latter part of July or the first of August, and are grown the same as turnips. Being firm and tender they keep well over winter if stored in pits or a dry cellar.

The most popular market radish is the French Breakfast, Scarlet Short Top, Chertier and Wood Early Frame.

For winter the White and Black Naples and the White Vienna are very good.

Preserving the Eggs.

By the water glass method eggs may be preserved, and be in good condition for use several months later, although they will not pass as strictly fresh eggs. The procedure is as follows: Obtain the water glass from the druggist and dilute one pint of it with nine pints of water. Use a vessel of some kind not metal. The old-fashioned crockery three or four gallon jars are ideal. Have the eggs fresh, put them in daily and see that the shells are not cracked. Put the water glass solution in the crock and then put in the eggs, seeing that the eggs are completely covered with the solution at all times. When the eggs are taken out of the solution rinse them in clean water, wipe them dry and they are ready for use.

Feeding Young Pigs.

Pigs after weaning should have more or less milk, as it is one of the most economical as well as profitable feeds that can be supplied. Wheat bran fed to the brood sow aids materially in securing a good development of bone and muscle in the offspring.

Hen on Goose Eggs.

Early in spring give a hen four to six eggs, according to her size. A large Cochon hen can incubate six or seven eggs in a warm nest. Set eggs on the ground if possible and use some straw in the nest.