

WICKLY'S WOODS

By H. W. TAYLOR

CHAPTER XXIII.

Dropping his gloves upon the outspread map, and with an exclamation of unmistakable astonishment and delight, Mason Huntley sprang forward and seized the outstretched hand in his own. And then, while both were speaking so that neither could understand the other, he threw his arm about her, and seeing something in her eyes that at least did not repel him, he bent his head impulsively and pressed his lips again and again to hers, that were very perceptibly turned toward him and pouted in the prettiest concession imaginable. John Wickly looked on in the greatest astonishment, set off and illuminated with a half-sarcastic smile of enjoyment.

"I don't care," said Lizzy, still holding Mr. Huntley's hand in her own, and plainly interposing to prevent him from dropping the encircling arm from her shoulder, as she half turned her head with a rosy flush upon her face and some pretty drops of shining tears in her eyes, and along the under lashes, while a smile of enchanting mingled shame and self-justification lighted up her face like a halo about an angel's head. "I don't care!" He treated me dreadfully—I mean horribly, since I've been here in the city. And I'm going to know why, before I let go of your hand sir!" she continued, turning away from her father, and shaking her brown curls that hung so charmingly out from under her hat and down a little way upon the sides of her face.

"If that's it," said Mr. Wickly, with a sort of roguish shrugging of his shoulders, "I think I'll step out and see if those horses are standing all right. They might run away and leave us, you know. And then I can't be of any use whatever in this sort of an investigation," and he turned and went out, his daughter calling after him:

"You needn't, sir! I don't care if you are here. I shall say just what I've got to say, anyhow. Now, tell me what you meant by it, Mr. Huntley. Why did you tell me you would see me soon, if it were in your power, and then have me right here in the city for weeks and weeks, passing me on the streets every day without a word or a look, or anything to indicate that you had ever had even a passing acquaintance with me? Wasn't it your place to come to me at once? Or, if you had any doubts about my treatment of you, couldn't you write to me? Do you think it was my place to chase you all over the city and hunt you down, without even a trace of you? Couldn't you even do so much to facilitate the search as to leave a hint of your whereabouts, upon which I could begin? Suppose I hadn't found you at all; would you have persisted in staying away forever?"

There was enough light from the afternoon sun coming in at the west and southwest windows of the room to throw a very effective gleam upon the lovely form of Lizzy Wickly, clad in a pale brown silk that shed its suit sheen along every line and curve. He had never seen her so richly dressed. She had never been so richly dressed. And there was, in the heightened effect of her charming dress upon her always pleasing face and figure, that best of all excuses for the very richest dresses that any woman can afford to wear. He stood a moment without a word, but with his eyes telling voluble stories eloquent with admiration, as they flew rapidly from the brown plumes in her darker brown silk hat, that framed her fresh, ruddy face so charmingly, with its broad, brown satin strings, tied in an elegant bow under her dimpled chin; down the sloping shoulders, with the line of faintly glittering light reflected from the silk threads, changing its direction as the bosom rose and fell in quick, sharp undulations of excitement and delight. Ah! W. Mason Huntley! If ever there were a pretty, straightforward, frank and fearless daughter of the Wabash, well worthy of the admiration, the respect and the love of a good man, for those qualities that enabled her to throw aside the conventionalities and go thus boldly about the city, to chase you down and take you to task for your neglect and misfeasance, then this is one!

"And have you actually been hunting me all the time?" he murmured, delightedly. "Have you actually felt that I have mistreated you in not going at once to see you? Have you had time, in all the rush and hurry of the last two months, to think about me long enough to make real search for me?"

He stopped to kiss her again and again, just as she was opening her pretty curved lips to reply—and so frustrating the reply for a full twenty seconds.

"You know I have," she says, putting up her gloved hand to prevent another frustration of her reply. "I'm sure now, that you knew of it on the very first day that I chased you, and lost you behind a barricade of wagons. If I had known just what your scheme was, sir, I shouldn't have hunted you a step." And she slaps his face and then pulls it down to cure the blow with a kiss that heals like magic. "But you haven't told me one reason for your abstention—and a good one, too. No more shallow excuses will do. What was it?" She looked very eagerly and brightly expectant into his eyes.

"You know already. You know as well as if I had said it in every possible form of phraseology," he retorted, laughing.

"But I want you to tell it, even if I do know it. And can you pretend to read a young woman's thoughts in such an off-hand manner? Or to presume up-

on my ability to read the purposes of such an arch impersonator and dissembler as you? Why in the world did you ever put on that ugly brown wig, Mr. Huntley? Now, there wasn't a particle of reason in that, you must confess. But go on and tell me first, why you didn't come to me at the hotel. Or before I came away from Sandtown, even." He stooped a little and kissed her again before he replied:

"I wanted you to see and mingle with the best people of the city. I wanted you to feel free to form any opinion of them, or of any one of them, without hindrance from me in any way. I knew that you felt sure of my love and devotion. I wanted you also to feel sure of your own. You remember that you said to me on that night in the woods that it might be my just punishment that you should not be able to tell whether you loved an ideal or a real man? You remember? I thought of that almost every hour, and wondered if I were to be punished by such a misadventure of all my plans."

"Ah, you cunning fellow, you! I suppose you didn't know that to surround yourself with all this mystery and difficulty was the best of all methods to make me think of nobody else? Why, it was equal to parental assent, I really believe! Of course, none of the attractive young gentlemen whom I have met here had the slightest chance against all your mystery. But I'm really a little doubtful of you yet. Father's coming in now, and you must get into the cab with us, and go down to the hotel. I have hours of business conversation to be held with you, in relation to my numerous and important financial transactions. And I know of no one whom I could so complacently put in charge of my wealth as the man who put me in charge of it."

What a ride it was, to be sure! Bud Ellet, knowing by intuition, or perhaps by experience, just what was required of him, saw his party of three safely in the cab, and then concerning himself about nothing beyond making this the longest possible trip to the hotel, drove slowly down one street and across and up another, taking the party past all the prettiest and newest and grandest residences, and by every object of interest that he could think of, well knowing that nobody save John Wickly himself would be, by any probability within his comprehension, likely to see these sights.

CHAPTER XXIV.

In fact, the two lovers were in that state of ecstatic somnambulism in which, with eyes and ears wide open, they are able to see absolutely nothing, besides each other, and to hear no sounds save the murmured words that passed between themselves, to the perfect and inexorable exclusion of everybody else. Listening, as anybody in the world will listen, to the cooing of real lovers, and looking at them slyly through the wicket, as anybody in the world will look at real lovers, Bud Ellet could see and hear almost all that could have been seen and heard by John Wickly, leaning back on the front seat, in the shadow so deep as to be in effect absent, and therefore not at all in the way.

"There appeared to be some real excuse for my disguise and my impersonation of a fictitious individual," Mr. Huntley was saying, as his left arm fitted itself snugly into a comfortable support for her head, where his hand could lie protectingly, caressingly upon her left shoulder without the slightest inconvenience to anybody. "You see the other road held the mortgages as collateral for a debt of the Farmers' Bank. And by some means they had gotten a hint of the existence of coal veins under your land. I was employed by our company to go and make a thorough investigation of the whole matter as secretly and quickly as possible. Fortunately for us and for you, the other company was not impressed with the value of the deposit to the extent of inducing them to act very promptly. And consequently my work was almost completed when they began their survey that revealed to them the great value of the deposit. Then came strategem and strife. Both companies had obtained right of way, save some formalities on the part of our opponents that enabled us to claim exclusive right up to that time; and not only to put down our track, but to prevent them from putting down theirs. By means of my character of geologist, and my brown wig, I could come and go between the field of my explorations and the central office of the company without arousing suspicion. On the evening of the hurricane, you remember?"

"I have never forgotten it for a moment. I shall never forget it. I shall always love a storm of wind and rain so long as I live," she interrupted, leaning her brown silk hat down against his cheek in a way that everybody openly derides, and secretly applauds and envies. The protecting and caressing left hand upon her left shoulder beats a little tattoo of grateful applause.

"That evening I discovered that our adversary had become aware of what was going forward, and had prepared to outbid me for the land. It was necessary to go back and present all the facts that went to show the actual great value of the deposit, and get authority, and perhaps means, for a large advance upon the original sum I had been authorized to offer. I found some difficulty, and experienced a vexatious delay in this branch of the work. And when I was finally ready, I found a force of armed men to oppose our rightful entry upon

the land, and so was compelled to meet force with force. A bloody conflict was probably avoided by the timely and determined interposition of old Coonrod Redden, who, when he discovered that some one else had been at the bottom of the troubles of the Sandtown Farmers' Bank, and that I was not at all to blame, took part with us very heartily and saved us from a very formidable peril in the shape of the militia of Big Rattlesnake Creek and Reeffoot Pond. And now you know all the mysteries of the geological survey of Wickley's Woods."

Not many days after there was a great stir at Sandtown; this time not at all a military nor financial excitement. Quite the reverse. The Sandtown Brass Band was out in full uniform, and the Mount Zion Double Quartet Club were out, too, in an open wagon, and there was the whole available population of Sandtown and its immediate vicinity, gathered about the little new railroad station.

As the train from the city pulled in upon the sidetrack, the band, following a little signal blown by the leader, the young Doc Dikes, upon his cornet, struck up a very popular air of those days, and very appropriate to the occasion, in which every instrument save the bass drum had a turn at a bit of solo based upon "Haste to the Wedding."

Then the bridal party got off the car, and was instantly surrounded by the whole crowd, in the center of which the tall, angular form of Coonrod Redden could be seen, a head above the tallest.

"Howdy, Mason! Howdy, Lizzy! Orto call you Miss Huntley, now, I low. Wush yuh much joy, both uv yuh! By gum! I nudder no more thought uh sich a theng thun I thought uh gittun maid muhself. By gum! I didn't. But Mason, you needn't to ciper bn go-un away from Sandtown to live, un uh teekun the purtiest un smartest g-yuri they is about h-yur away from urse. We've gut use fur you h-yur, I kin tell yuh, my good feller! Un we hain't uh go-un to let yuh off, nuther. Drive thattair calge roun' h-yur, fellers! Closeter! That's hit! Now, clam en thar, Lizzy! Mason! H-yur's yur father un mother, right en thar. Lots a room! Now, soon's thar fellers git ready to let the club seng, we'll pull out fur ar house. We're a go-un to have the bustunest infair yuh ever see, Lizzy! By gum; uvverbody en Redden township's thar, by this time. There goes the sengers. 'At's Clumburse sengun tenor thataway! You kin h-yur 'im a mile uv a clur evenun, when the wind haint uh blowun. Listen at thar Reeffoot Pon' fellers uh yelan. Yuh cain't h-yur yurselfes fur 'um."

What a triumphal march down the Overcoat road, from the station to Coonrod Redden's house! What waving of hats and handkerchiefs, and what yells and screeches! There was just that element of the ludicrous, that tint of absurdity, in this noisy demonstration that made it doubly acceptable to the fun-loving Sandtowners. It was an unexpected demonstration, and so had the features of a huge and successful practical joke which the Hoosier loves so well; while it served as an ample opportunity for all to join in a public exhibition of respect and admiration, which the true Hoosier delights to make in honor of any citizen who, in any walk of life, attains distinction and so reflects luster upon his native State, or his adopted town and country.

"There's the Woods," Lizzy whispers in Mr. Huntley's ear. He turns, and glances up the little woods road that branches off from the Overcoat road and winds away into the recesses of the forest, now beginning to exchange its gay green coat for a mantle of brown, trimmed with knots and fringes of yellow, and cardinal and purple.

"My darling wife," he whispers, "I want to keep that little, lone brier-fringed road just as it is, so long as you shall love me." (The end.)

"Confidential" Bore Squelched.

"Have you ever met him? I mean the fellow who at all sorts of functions goes around with that profound, confidential air. He'll come along quietly, place his hand at the side of his mouth, incline his head towards your ear, and with a semblance of deep mystery whisper some inconsequential nonsense to you, the while others look on and think something of deep moment is being discussed, and that you are as rude and unrefined as he.

"There's a fellow of my acquaintance just like this. He was at a ball the other night. I was there, too. During the evening I saw him steering for where I stood. I knew what was going to happen, so I made up my mind to squelch him.

"On he came. When he reached my side he ducked his head forward and whispered, 'Say, Mr. Doe, don't you think it's awfully warm in here?' Observing that nearly every one was looking in our direction, I dived down into my pockets and laboriously drew forth a five-dollar bill. I turned to the bore, and, addressing him in as loud a voice as was permissible, said: 'Why, certainly, old man. Here's five dollars; that's the smallest I have. Return it when you please.'

"I'll bet that fellow has been broken off a very annoying habit."

Russian Bootmakers.

The most noticeable feature about a Russian at home is his boots. Russian boots are really a form of the old-time jackboot which was in common use centuries ago in the American colonies and England. Its more modern form is known as the Wellington. The Russian bootmaker sets up his shop on whatever sidewalk he finds most convenient, and remains there until traffic or the police drive him away, only to seek another "shop" of the same sort.



For Taking Up Barb Wire.

Take a pair of cultivator wheels, make an axle to fit, out of 2x4 oak, 30 inches long. Side pieces should be 1½ inches by 2 inches, 4 feet long, of hard wood. Bolt to axle securely. The uprights should be 2-inch by 4-inch pine,

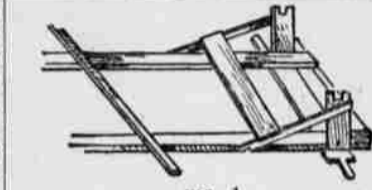


FIG. 1.

securely bolted to side pieces, and high enough to reach above wheels. The cross bar may be 1½ inches square, ends round for handles. The whole (see Fig. 1) should be well braced, as it must be strong. For windlass axle (Fig. 2), take oak, 1½ inches square, 26 inches long, fit crank on one end; for reel, take barb-wire reel, cut hole through it square to fit axle. To take up wire, fasten end to reel, take cross bar in left hand, turn crank with right.

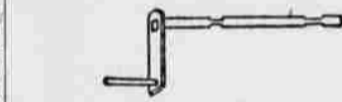


FIG. 2.

The cart is propelled by winding wire on reel; when one reel is full, slip off and put on another.—Sylvanus Scott.

Sub-Soiling for Orchards.

Fruit trees, and particularly apples, require a deep soil and, of course, one that is fairly rich. There are hundreds of acres of rich clay soils that would do splendidly for apples if properly prepared. Trials which have resulted in failures have been almost wholly due to the fact that the soil had not been opened deep enough to permit the roots of the trees properly to penetrate it.

If such soils had been subsoiled, using the implement made for that purpose which does not throw back a wide furrow, the roots would have a chance to get into the soil several inches deeper than otherwise, and after that would be strong enough to pierce the soil below without its being loosened. Of course it must be remembered that if the soil below the distance penetrated by the subsoiler is wet and remains so, it is not suited to tree roots. On the other hand, if it is simply wet enough to retain a good amount of moisture, the trees will then make a most desirable growth.

Hand Cultivator.

Take a board 20 inches wide and long, and cut a wheel out of it. Then make a frame of 1½-inch-square lumber, and two small brace strips near wheel, of light lumber. Get a blacksmith to make the scufflehoe out of steel, as shown in figure 2, with four small short rods, riveted back of blade. These little rods are curved up, and turn up the roots of weeds to the sun. You can take this device off and put on a shovel if you want to cultivate deep. It runs light for amount of



work done, and is superior to any \$5 wheel hoe I ever saw.—J. Holmes Wilson.

When Lambs Need Dipping.

If mature sheep are troubled with ticks and lambs run with the flock most of the ticks in two or three weeks after shearing will have left the old sheep to live upon the tender skin and amid the longer wool of the lambs. It is therefore evident that money will be saved by dipping the lambs. In badly infected cases a second dipping will prove advantageous unless the old sheep were dipped at the first application. Ticks multiply very rapidly, and even if a few escape death their progeny will cause the whole flock untold discomfort.—American Cultivator.

Hay Versus Corn Fodder.

It is difficult to make a comparison between corn fodder and hay, because the quality of either largely depends upon the curing. Bright green corn fodder, shredded or cut fine, is superior to improperly cured hay, while good hay is far superior to corn fodder that was not cut until the leaves turned yellow.

If fodder is tender and juicy the animals will prefer the stalks to the leaves, as the stalks are rich in sugar, but much depends upon the stage of growth at which the stalks were harvested.—Farm Visitor.

Breeding Polled Calves.

Answering the query, "Are double standard Polled Durham bulls as sure to get polled calves from horned cows as are Angus bulls?" F. S. Hines says in Breeder's Gazette:

Without knowledge as to the percentage of polled calves got by Angus bulls used on horned cows it would naturally seem that the Angus bulls would be the surer dehorners, as they have been bred hornless for many generations, while Polled Durhams are not many removes from horns. However, there are many Polled Durham bulls that have made excellent records as dehorners, some having as high as 90 per cent of polled calves from horned cows.

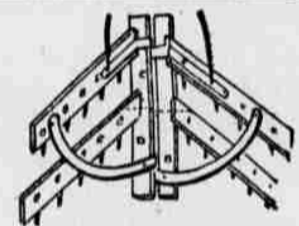
If your correspondent wishes to breed polled calves his best course would be to buy an aged Polled Durham bull with a good record as a dehorner. There is a great deal of the lottery about this "breeding off the horns," just as there is in breeding in general, and some bulls with many polled crosses are not as sure dehorners as those with only one cross of polled blood. Therefore I should advise your correspondent not to try a young bull, but to get one that is known by his works.

Water for Swine.

There are farmers who raise swine and never feel it necessary to give them water to drink. They argue that as the slop is composed largely of water that is all that is necessary. It probably is, in many cases, where the slop consists of one part solids and nine parts water, but if the slop is nutritious, as it should be, and if corn is fed in addition, the swine need considerable water. Men of experience claim that swine carefully watered are rarely diseased, and they have little difficulty in preventing them from making wallows. As a matter of fact, about half of the nastiness of the hog is due to the carelessness of its owner. Give the hog half a chance and he or she will be reasonably clean. Try the trough of cold, clean water at feeding time and see for yourself what the swine think of it.

Harrow for Stony Ground.

Take six pieces of 3½x2¼ inches. Plane them and set them as shown in illustration. Sink the wings into the center piece ¼ inch. This saves making mortise. Get ½-inch bolts with heads and bore holes as shown by dotted lines. The hinges, etc., can be



HARROW FOR STONY GROUND.

made of old wagon tire. Set teeth slanting, and attach chain. This harrow with twenty-four teeth is made to work a width of 6 feet, and is of light draft. It can be made by any one handy with tools, and if well made, is strong, lasting and effective.

Poultry Pickings.

Try feeding little chicks a dry ration of cracked grain, seeds, etc. It is better than Johnny cake, corn dough or mash.

Place a self-feeding box of grain in the coop so the chicks can eat what they want. There is little danger of over-feeding growing stock on free range.

If hens on free range are given a small feed of fresh-cut bone once a day, or a box of beef scraps and granulated bone is placed in the henhouse, they will produce more eggs.

Keep the brooders and colony houses clean and look out for red mites and lice on the chicks. Incubator chicks are hatched free from lice, but it does not take long to contract them.

Set turkey hens this month and if you have plenty of eggs, fill the incubator. Arrange so the hens and incubator will hatch at the same time, then you can give all the polts to the turkey hen.

Keep the chicks growing. Too often after chicks have left the brooder or have been weaned by the hen they get insufficient food to make the most rapid growth. Especially is this true of chicks on free range.

Plant sunflowers outside the wire of the poultry yard and in and by waste places. They will afford shade during the summer and the hens will refresh the seed. If planted inside the yard they must be protected until out of reach of the hens.

Garden Hints.

The suckers of gooseberries, currants and red raspberries should be rigidly pulled.

In making the home garden do not overlook garlic, chives, shallots, herbs, etc., as they are exceedingly desirable for flavoring purposes.

Early varieties of dwarf peas can be grown between the rows of tomato plants. By the time the tomatoes are large enough to occupy the ground the peas will be out of the way. The pea vines may be removed or left as a mulch for the tomatoes.