

WICKLY'S WOODS

By H. W. TAYLOR

CHAPTER I.

Coming back from the small dry goods store that served the government for a postoffice, John Wickly, as everybody familiarly called the head of the Wickly family, was observed to be moving at a significantly rapid pace, and to have his head extraordinarily high in the air.

Mrs. Wickly, at the kitchen table ironing very diligently, saw him through the open window, dumped the smoothing iron suddenly and heavily upon the scorched section of an old and worn blanket and ran through the sitting room and out to the front door.

"Now what is it you've got this time, John? You needn't try to hide it. I know what it is, sir. I saw you start out of the postoffice on a trot the minute you broke it open."

"Broke open the postoffice, ma? That's an indelicate, offensive, punishable with fine and imprisonment," called out Miss Lizzy Wickly from her writing table in the sitting room.

"Wait till I come and box your ears, Miss Prunes and Miss Prisms. I was talking about the letter—not the post office. Of course I mentioned the post office. But—"

"That explanation is sufficient, ma. I won't mark you as low as zero for this because I want to let you off before you make a more inexcusable mistake. What letter did you get? Suppose you bring the document in, and let's all discuss it."

"You'd better # on with your writing, my young lady. You're only trying to find some plausible excuse for leaving off. I know you, Miss. Now, I'll warrant that you haven't written two pages since you came in from hoeing the cabbage. Where is the letter, John? Don't keep a body waiting all day from her ironing. You won't have a clean thing for to-morrow—neither of you. And preaching at Mount Zion, too! Right under your noses."

"So the preaching isn't through the minister's nose, like it was Sunday before last—we can survive its being under ours, can't we, pa?"

And Miss Lizzy could be seen through the "middle door" chuckling in a very mellow, little good-natured laugh, as she sat at the small walnut writing table in the light of the west window, away from the sun, and shielded from observation of the passing public by a dozen trainings of morning glory vines, now gay with a profusion of variously tinted flowers, too pretty to be also sweet.

"Why, it's a letter from the honorable Mr. Biler concerning my—my estate, you know," said Mr. Wickly, endeavoring to put on an appearance of great unconcern, as if letters of the import of this one passed between the honorable Mr. Biler and himself every day of the seven on which Uncle Sam carries the mail about the continent.

"Now, John Wickly, you know there's more than that in that letter. Hand it here, till I read it myself. Don't you suppose I could tell by the way you struck out for home that there was something more than usual in this letter? Now give it here, and come in till I read it."

And the sturdy Mrs. Wickly held out her hard and full-veined right hand in so imperious a manner that Mr. John Wickly was constrained to draw the document from the pocket of his black alpaca summer coat and deliver it with a triumphant grin into the hard palm afore-said.

"Now then, you read that and see if it doesn't mean something. Some people that I am acquainted slightly with have often expressed doubts on the subject of the great Wickly estates in England."

Here he leered triumphantly in the direction of the walnut writing table and the morning glory vines that just now began to rustle their green gray leaves in the prairie breeze.

"But after one glance at the contents of this letter, I don't think any person of mature judgment would—"

"Now, pa, you wait till I read it," calls out Miss Lizzy, laughing still, but not so gaily—in fact, with just the faintest sound of vexation in the laugh or shade of it upon her fair brow, perhaps. "You know I always get a different meaning out of those letters—every one of them. And haven't the meanings that I got out of them been more nearly the true meanings than those that you and ma got out of them?"

"Why, Liz, that's about the size of it," said John, sitting down in the doorway at the feet of his wife, who was already deep in the mystery of the letter as to be oblivious to everything else. "You've been a great deal nearer right about them than I have been, anyhow. But then it may be said in view of this letter that the others were preliminary. Heretofore the letters have been inquiries into family history, the tracing of relatives and relationships, and so on. But this—"

"Why, there's to be a great meeting of the heirs at Chicago next Tuesday!" cried Mrs. Wickly, in the greatest burst of enthusiasm.

"A meeting of the heirs!" exclaimed Miss Lizzy in amazement, and with real interest very plainly depicted upon her very expressive countenance.

"A meeting of all the heirs," repeated Mr. Wickly, with that grave judicial and impartial nod of the head which discloses the entire lack of any merely personal and selfish interest of the speaker in the subject matter of the discourse.

"The heirs and their counsel meet there for the purpose of—of what is the exact language of the letter on that point, Matt?" said Mr. Wickly, jerking his wife's apron gently, to call her back to the things of this particular portion of the great world. "What is the exact language of the letter on that point?"

"Heh! Why, lemme see! Yes! Here it is! 'For the purpose of determining upon the first step to be taken; and if thought advisable, to select and secure some one of the counsel for their heirs to go direct and at once to England and make the proper examination of all the records so as to enable him to see exactly what proofs it will be necessary for them to make in order to obtain possession of the property.' There; that's the exact language of the letter. And not-

ing, in my opinion, can be clearer than that," said Mrs. Wickly, holding the letter in her hand, and very manifestly appealing to the young lady at the table for confirmation of her conclusion.

The young lady at the table sat absently, and perhaps lazily, drumming upon her pretty, white front teeth with the tip of the ebony handle of her pen. "What do you think of it, Lizzy?" calls out Mr. John Wickly, without looking up, and pretending to occupy himself in picking a "raveling" off his wife's blue calico dress.

"I think that means more expense," finally the young lady spoke, and without stopping the tattoo upon the pretty, white front teeth. "It means car fare and hotel bills at Chicago. And then it means contributions from the heirs to pay the expenses that the lawyer must incur in his trip to England. How many of the heirs are there?"

"Give a guess!" suggested Mr. Wickly, winking at his wife.

"Twenty?" suggested Miss Lizzy, looking sideways out of the corners of her large brown eyes.

"Thirteen hundred and eighty-four to date; and some of the back counts to hear from," said Mr. Wickly, in a burst of triumph at this surprising denouement.

"Thirteen hundred and eighty-four!" exclaimed both ladies in a breath.

"Thirteen hundred and eighty-four!" repeated Mr. Wickly, by way of emphasis.

"I consider that number an ill omen," said Miss Lizzy, again drumming upon the pretty, white front teeth and opening the large brown eyes to their widest in order to see, or not to see, between the greenish-gray leaves of the morning glory vines that ambuscade her as to the prying eyes of the side street and the more remote curiosity of the front street.

"Why?" asked both her auditors, facing round toward her, and remaining so in expectation of the somewhat delayed reply.

"Because it's exactly the amount I gave for the land. And because," she went on after a slight pause, and waving her ebony baton toward the ramshackle of hilly woodland that from the north and east reached almost to the village of Sandtown, "that is the exact amount of the two mortgages upon it now."

CHAPTER II.

The daughter resumed the drumming; and the mother, looking aghast at this coincidence of ominous circumstances, cast her eyes down at her husband.

"Nonsense, Liz," said Mr. Wickly, smiling a little, but slightly annoyed, too, "what can that have to do with it? That's of no consequence at all. The land has grown in value on account of the rise in timber lands everywhere. Of course you couldn't have gotten such an amount upon a mortgage if the cash value of the land wasn't twice as much, at least. And it has again doubled in value—since the last mortgage, I mean."

"How?" asked the young lady, meaning to ask after the particular method of the increase in value.

"I asked at the bank; and Zell told me that you could have as much more upon the land whenever you wanted it." Mr. Wickly glanced keenly at his daughter, and saw a gratified smile come into her eyes and spread swiftly down to her dimpled cheeks and her red lips.

"Twice thirteen hundred and eighty-four are twenty-seven hundred and sixty-eight. And that means that my land is worth more than five thousand. I begin to feel somewhat like an heiress myself," she said smiling. "I guess you will have to go to Chicago, pa. I won't have to mortgage my land for that, you know."

Mr. Wickly drew a long breath of deep and satisfying relief, and the thoughtful puckers at the root of his nose rippled away in a smile that had the peculiarity of starting in the region of his eyes.

"And what becomes of the omen of thirteen hundred and eighty-four, Liz?" "He laughed as he got up and stretched himself as lazy people do, and then drawing down again as to his arms, shoulders and head, emitted what might be termed a notably contented little grunt at the conclusion of the yarn.

"John de Wickly died in 1884," said the young lady, with due solemnity. "He was the only member of the Wickly family at all noted, from its beginning down to myself. We stand as sort of mile-stones along the highway of the Wickly family—the great John, noted for speaking and writing original and heterodox thoughts; and I to become noted for exactly the same things. Now there must be other likenesses in us. For of course I don't look like him."

"Look like him!" exclaimed Mr. Wickly with a laugh. "I should say not. John was as ugly an old mortal as you'd find in a day's ride—according to all the authentic likenesses of him. He must have had eyes like yours, Liz! Big round brown ones."

"Nonsense!" said the young lady, irreverently. "Everybody knows that all those old paintings from which the engravings are made, exaggerated the eyes ludicrously. Why, they all have eyes exactly alike. Look at our presidents, for instance. Don't you see that all of them down to Jackson had those same big round black eyes, according to the artist? Maybe that was the one common trait that made them all presidents. But more likely it was the peculiarity of the artist—that Mr. Mason yonder, ma? I wonder if he is coming here? If he is, I'm going out in the garden to hoe the beets. And you can tell him that I'm engaged for the present."

"Why can't you stay in and entertain your teacher and monitor, Miss Lizzy? I don't understand this new departure as to the garden, John," said Mrs. Wickly, mischievously. "I used to have all the hoeing and weeding of the garden to do until Mr. Mason came here to board. And now I declare I hardly know a garden when I see it. I heard him discoursing to Liz—"

"Now, ma!" said the daughter, with a very pretty frown due to the concentration of purpose in drawing up her gardening gloves, perhaps. "Now, ma! Didn't he have all that about the absolute necessity for physical labor for ev-

erybody, in those sermons that he preach—"

"Through his nose, Liz," suggested Mr. Wickly, with a shout of laughter, boisterous as a boy's.

"Now don't laugh that way, pa. Of course he'll hear you, and know that we're making fun of him. And I wouldn't want to insult him so grossly."

"Insult him, indeed! He's entirely too sensible a fellow to be insulted in any such trivial way. What an everlasting worker he is! That professor, J. Allison Huntley, must have an easy time of it. I can't see what's left for him to do! This man seems to manage all the digging, and all the gathering up of fossils, and all the writing in the field book. And he carries the surveying apparatus himself with one rodman and one chainman. I've seen them myself. And I've never seen Prof. Huntley at all. Not a glimpse of him."

"Yes! Isn't that queer? None of us have seen Prof. Huntley, although he has been here since the last of March—the 24th day exactly. I know, because I made the lettuce bed that day. I suppose he feels too high above the Sandtown people to present himself among them. I should think he'd come to hear his able assistant, Mr. Mason, preach of a Sunday, anyhow," put in Mrs. Wickly, with some energy and indignation.

"Why, ma, he takes the train home on Saturday morning or Friday evening! Of course he wouldn't care to stay over just to hear Mr. Mason preach! Isn't there all the wise preachers of the great city for him to pick and choose among? And isn't it right, too, for him to put all the coarse, mechanical work upon his employees? I don't see why you people should find so much fault with Prof. Huntley. I think he's a splendid gentleman, and I am dying to make his acquaintance. But I must hurry out. Mr. Mason is only across the street."

Shaking her head at her mother, Miss Lizzy, pulling up the long gloves, and pulling down the long sunbonnet, ran out into the garden, chirping a little fragment of a love ditty.

"She won't hear a word against that Huntley," said Mrs. Wickly with a laugh. "I believe the girls in love with a man never saw. So I do."

"Oh, like enough! Like enough! Poor fellow! I absolutely pity him, Matt. She teases and worries him to death, whenever she can bring herself to bear his society for a minute! Now, she'll hoe that garden till high noon if he stays in the house that long. I've a mind to send him into the garden just to tease her a little."

"Better let her have her own way about it. If she doesn't like his company, the less she has of it the better she will be pleased. And I don't want her to get so she won't speak to him. For his preaching and example have certainly done a great deal in stimulating her to more persistent work at her writing. And that pleases me. Besides, he has obtained for her the writing up of a little summer resort pamphlet for some of the railroads, and she is to get nearly a hundred dollars for it. Think of that and other work that it will naturally bring! That's how she can let you go to Chicago this time."

Mr. John gave a low whistle, and muttering something to the effect that he supposed it was in reality a prof. Huntley's influence that was doing all these fine things for their daughter, turned to greet Mr. Mason, while Mrs. Wickly, declaring all her ironies cold, ran back to the kitchen.

(To be continued.)

BALLOONING AT NIGHT.

"Night ballooning has a charm that is all its own," says Monsieur Santos-Dumont, who had plenty of experience with the old-fashioned spherical balloon before he invented his new dirigible air ship. "One is alone in the black void, true, in a murky limbo where one seems to float without weight, without a surrounding world—a soul freed from the weight of matter! Yet now and again there are the lights of earth to cheer one. We see a point of light far ahead. Slowly it expands. Then where there was one blaze, there are countless bright spots. They run in lines, with here and there a brighter cluster. We know that it is a city."

"Then again it is out into the lone land, with only a faint glow here and there. When the moon rises we see, perhaps, a faint curling line of gray. It is a river, with moonlight falling on its waters."

"There is a flash upward and a faint roar. It is a railway train, the locomotive fires, maybe, illuminating for a moment the smoke as it rises."

"Then we throw out more ballast and rise through the black solitudes of the clouds into a soul-lifting burst of splendid starlight! There, alone with the constellations, we await the dawn. And when the dawn comes, red and gold and purple in its glory, one is almost loath to seek the earth again."

"Such a picture would almost tempt the timorous to an ascent. But its companion picture, equally majestic, is less inviting. Ascending once in the gloomy twilight of a late and lowering afternoon, I had a very different experience."

"Soon I had cause to regret my rashness. I was alone, lost in the clouds, amid flashes of lightning and claps of thunder, in the approaching darkness of the night. On, I went, tearing through the blackness. I knew that I must be going at great speed, yet felt no motion. I felt myself in great danger, yet the danger was not tangible. With it there was a fierce kind of joy. What shall I say? How shall I describe it? Up there, in the black solitude, amid the lightning flashes and the thunderclaps, I was a part of the storm!"

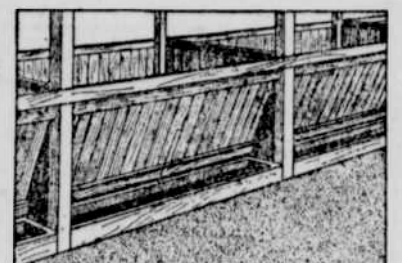
More woman is not counted as a personal entity in the census of Slam, but the queen appears in bloomers and a fancy blouse at public receptions. Electric street cars, controlled by Danes, run at a fast pace over an eleven-mile route in and about Bangkok.



Convenient Pig Pen Front.

The illustration herewith shows a convenient pig-pen front. The feed trough is securely fastened at the front side of the pen, and the side or wall of the pen is hinged at the top so it will swing over the trough. An iron rod is passed through the bottom cross-piece and inserted in another hole in either edge of the trough.

When feeding, the rod is lifted, the gate swung back, and the rod is dropped in the hole in the back edge of the trough. To let the pigs eat, the gate is swung toward the feeder, and the rod pushed down into the hole in outside edge of trough. Such an arrangement will save much annoyance and give each pig a chance to get his



SWINGING FRONT PIG PEN.

share of the meal. The illustration shows the front swung back so that the feed can be put into the troughs.—Exchange.

Paris Green and Weevil.

That the boll weevil is not to be driven out of our Southern cotton fields by the use of paris green is the conclusion of the Bureau of Entomology of the Department of Agriculture after extensive observations and experiments. This conclusion is based upon the following facts: "1. Persistent use of paris green from the time of chopping until picking (in some cases as many as fifteen applications) has failed to materially reduce the numbers of the weevils or to increase the yield. 2. Careful examination of very many experiments with the poison made by planters in Texas has failed to reveal conclusive instances of its successful use. 3. Reasons for the impossibility of poisoning weevils successfully are to be found in the facts that only a very small percentage emerge from hibernation before the squares are set upon the plants, that they do not drink the dew on the leaves at night, and that as soon as squares are set all feeding is done within the shelter of the bracts (shuck) beyond the reach of any poison that might be applied."

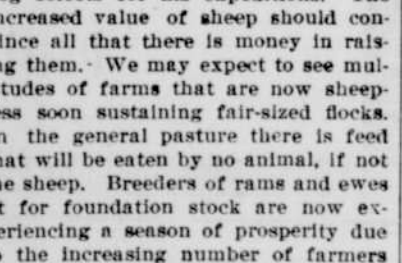
Place for the Sheep.

A place for the sheep should be found in the plans of nearly every farmer. A small flock of sheep can be kept on nearly every farm, while a large flock would prove hard to manage and care for. When the flock is small it may be sheltered every night, and thus losses from dogs avoided, as the night is the time the sheep-killing dog selects for his expeditions. The increased value of sheep should convince all that there is money in raising them. We may expect to see multitudes of farms that are now sheepless and soon sustaining fair-sized flocks.

In the general pasture there is feed that will be eaten by no animal, if not the sheep. Breeders of rams and ewes fit for foundation stock are now experiencing a season of prosperity due to the increasing number of farmers that have concluded to keep a few sheep and are looking for material with which to begin.—Farmers' Review.

Post Puller.

The post puller illustrated is a strong and durable one. It will pull any fence post. The two uprights are 2x6 inches and 3 feet long, mortised



EFFECTIVE POST PULLER.

in 12x36-inch scantling, and 2 inches thick and braced. Bore a 1-inch hole in upper end of uprights, in which insert a small pulley wheel. Take a chain, fasten around lower end of post; put chain over wheel; hitch horse to end of chain. By this device you can pull a more solid post than by hand.

Productive Island Farms.

In some respects, American farmers might take a lesson from those of the Jersey Islands in the English Channel. On one farm of say forty acres, a man expects to keep thirty cows, a large herd of swine, and employ five or six men. The climate is very favorable for fodder crops, but a part of the success of the Channel island farming is owing to the excellent stock kept and the care taken in saving manure and tilling the land.

Progress and Cost of Irrigation.

The Census Bureau has issued a report on the condition of irrigation in the United States in 1902, showing that 33,415 systems with 59,311 miles of main canals and ditches were irrigating 9,487,077 acres on 134,036 farms. The amount expended in constructing

all these systems was \$93,320,452. The average cost of construction per acre in the arid region was \$9.14, and the average per irrigation system was \$2,710. The report says that the great obstacle to the development of irrigation in Texas and New Mexico is the present treaty between Mexico and this country, which prohibits the impounding of the waters of the Rio Grande.

Ownes Want More Money.

A farm exchange says:

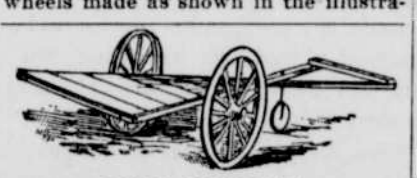
It is reported that in some sections where there are many hogs their owners are positively refusing to take less than 4 cents a pound for them on the farm; and buyers are finding themselves "up against a hard proposition," as they put it, for the packers' price will not allow the farm price demanded. But it looks as if the farmers are standing pat, judging by the receipts of hogs at the big markets. For instance: For the week closing with the writing of this the receipts at Chicago alone were 62,000 head, against 98,000 head the previous week, and 92,000 head the corresponding week last year. It will not be necessary to keep up such light receipts more than a week or two to bring the packers to terms. And at this season that much more feeding can doubtless be done without loss to the feeders. At all events, with feeding stuffs at their present price, hogs cannot and should not be sold at less than 4 cents, if cost of production is considered a factor in the business.

Handling the Apple Crop.

If apples are picked too early they are apt to lose their firmness and color; and if too late, the keeping quality is greatly affected. The proper time to pick is when the color is brightest and while the fruit is yet hard. Do not let the apples stand out after picking, any longer than is absolutely necessary, especially if they are to go to the cold storage. The investigations of the United States Department of Agriculture show that the keeping qualities of apples depend as much on the handling before being stored as on the conditions after storage. If you want your fruit to reach the fancy markets, the straight and narrow way of delivering the best in the best condition is the only way to realize that aim. Careful picking at the right time, careful sorting and packing and careful delivery are essential steps in catering to the fancy apple trade.

Handy Farm Cart.

I have found that a cart with two wheels made as shown in the illustration



HANDY FARM CART.

tion by using the rear wheels of an old buggy with the axle clamped to the frame by clamp bolts to be a nice cart for almost any purpose, and especially for garden use. I recently took the milk to the cheese factory when all the horses were in use.—H. F. Jahneke, in Iowa Democrat.

Bad Way to Break a Colt.

A great many people believe that the only way to break a colt is to throw him, hobble him or tangle him with straps or ropes. An Indiana horseman tells how he prepares a colt for his first visit to the blacksmith's shop by putting a strap around his neck, passing it along the near side and between the hind legs, then up and through the strap around the neck and back to his hind leg. The idea is to hold on to this strap while you lift the colt's leg, and if he kicks or struggles pull on the strap until he falls down. This is an excellent way of frightening a colt half to death, and rendering him vicious. Every colt ought to be handled in such a way until, by the time he is a year old, his feet can be picked up easily and without the aid of straps or ropes. The best appliances for breaking colts are the naked hands and a good halter.

Checking Root Gall.

When new apple trees are received from the nursery they should be carefully inspected to make sure that they are not affected with root gall. This disease is now very prevalent in some nurseries, and great care must be exercised. It is a disease, that spreads through the soil, and a single tree may introduce it into an orchard, where it may undo the work of years. We have several times illustrated root gall in these columns, and it does not seem advisable to repeat the illustration at this time. Suffice it to say that it is a gall appearing on the roots, and any tree affected with a protuberance of this kind should be discarded. This is the first thing to be looked out for in planting trees. The shape of the tree is important, but it is less important than to know whether or not the tree has a disease that will prove deadly to itself and to other trees in the same orchard.

Illinois Farms Sell High.

Why do Illinois farm lands sell for \$125 to \$200 an acre? Because they are productive. This year one Christian County farmer gathered a field of corn which yielded 119 bushels to the acre. The corn was sold for 37 cents a bushel, a gross return of \$43 per acre. Taking out the cost of growing the crop, there still remains a big interest on the investment, even if the land be valued at \$200 per acre. While yields as large as this are exceptional, they are becoming more and more common. With improved seed and improved methods of culture, the average yield on good land is increasing. This is one of the reasons land is going up.

Twenty Years Ago.

Leopold Damrosch, the musician, director of the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, died.

London announced the fall of Kharum and the stabbing to death of Gen. Gordon.

Grover Cleveland was declared President-elect at a joint session of the houses of Congress, the first Democrat in twenty-eight years.

Ten Years Ago.

For the first time the mail trains brought Chicago morning papers into Duluth and West Superior on the day of publication.

THE WEEKLY HISTORIAN



One Hundred Years Ago.

England levied an additional duty on salt.

The first iron bridge across the River Thames was opened for traffic, proving satisfactory.

The King of Sweden acknowledged the Emperor of Germany in his new character of Emperor of Austria.

Congress counted the electoral vote. For President—Thomas Jefferson, Republican, 162; Charles C. Pinckney, Federalist, 14.

The British captured two French war vessels and lost twelve men in the engagement. The French loss was fifty-seven men.

John Randolph of Virginia, enraged by the acquittal of Judge Chase, moved for an amendment to the constitution that judges might be removed by the President.

Work was begun on a new city called "Napoleon," which the emperor ordered built near Fontenoy, France.

Seventy-five Years Ago.

A new administration under Lord Palmerston was formed in England.

The steamer Will o' the Wisp was wrecked off Burn Rock, Lambay, and eighteen drowned.

A family of six suffocated at their home near Paris by the effects of charcoal, accidentally ignited.

Don Miguel, king of Portugal, unable to obtain money from other quarters, levied a tax on all monastic orders.

All sailors of Havre, Fecamp and Dieppe were forcibly enrolled in the French service and merchant vessels were left without crews.

Intense cold prevailed in northern Europe. The Baltic, as far as the eye could reach, was a plain of ice.

France decided to use American vessels for the transportation of troops to Algiers, as these ships could be gotten cheaper than French ones.

Fifty Years Ago.

Two severe shocks of earthquake were felt in Columbia County, New York.

The island of Cuba was declared in a state of siege, and circumstances in blockade.

Congress conferred the rank of lieutenant general upon Major General Winfield Scott.

Slaves on the royal domains of Portugal were freed.

Prussia was excluded from the conference at Vienna.

The cortes voted that all power proceeded from the people, they permitted liberty of belief, but not of worship.

Congress approved the act to secure the rights of citizenship to children of American citizens who had been born in foreign countries.

Forty Years Ago.

The members of the Illinois General Assembly voted to pay themselves in gold.

The report of the capture of Branchville by Sherman was confirmed.

General Grant rejoined his army after a visit in Washington, D. C.

President Lincoln made public the correspondence which had passed between him and Jeff Davis in the peace negotiations carried on through F. P. Blair.

The Rev. Dr. Garnett, colored, preached in the hall of representatives at Washington, D. C.

Dr. I. Winslow Ayer exposed before the military trial at Cincinnati the operation of the Knights of the Golden Circle in Chicago.

Thirty Years Ago.

News from China declared civil war imminent.

Congress repealed the Pacific mail subsidy.

It was reported the French ministry handed their resignations to President MacMahon, who accepted them.

The Indiana black coal region was tied up by a strike of miners.

Great Britain recognized Alfonso as king of Spain.

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