WICKLY'S WOODS

By H. W. TAYLOR

CHAPTER VI.—(Continued.)

So far then from an ocular inspection being an essential in a love affair, the very opposite is probably true. Along with the full confession of this fact to herself, came something like a feeling of resentment at the whole conduct of this man Mason.

That he had foolishly permitted himself to fall in love with her was so very plain a case that everybody had seen it long ago! It was certainly not her fault! No, indeed, nobody could say that of her! Not even the long-tongued gossips of Sandtown!

True, too, that he had displayed some magnificent qualities of strong, calm manhood in the face of that awful peril of the storm. She could not deny that. She had no desire to subtract from his real deserts in the least. But then, was not this, like his new and wide philosophy of humanity, a reflection from his superior officer?

He had told her that his strange new philosophy was also entertained by Prof. Huntley. And this had contributed much to give it a standing in her estimation. But had he told her the whole truth? No, she knew he had not. If he had been frank and honest, he would have said that he had imbibed these opinions from Prof. Huntley. And if so, was not that splendid display of practical knowledge, skill and courage the result of Prof. Huntley's training?

Undoubtedly she had been badly used by Mr. Mason. He had stood persistently between her and the perfect man that she had learned to love so quickly. He had misrepresented her to him either directly or by a culpable silence that through a base jealousy refused to put her before him in her proper light.

He was a mean fellow—that Mason. And although her obligation to him must compel her to a formal recognition of him when they should meet again on Monday, yet she was resolved to throw so much coldness into her manner that he could not fail to see that she was through with him, and that he was a very thin article, too!

And when Monday came and went without him, and without rumor of Huntley, she grew even more bitter. If this fellow continued to keep Prof. Huntley away, she shouldn't even speak to him. She would bring matters to a crisis by refusing to acknowledge his first salutation upon his return.

Then when he should demand an explanation, as she knew he would demand it—she would boldly charge him with his perfidious conduct in keeping Mr. Huntley away, upon whatever ground he should choose to put it.

From Lizzy herself, the condemnation of Mason seemed to spread everywhere—to her great surprise—and to grow steadily and in an arithmetical ratio all through the week.

Day after day inquiry revealed little things that looked bad for Mason. The first flutter of anxiety as to his fate had resolved itself on the ascertainment of the fact that he had taken the train for the city on that very Saturday evening after the storm.

That anxiety was not at all an evidence of any good quality in Mr. Mason. He himself had said to her, in one of his philosophic moods, that this vast human interest in a human life was an instinct common to all observed animal life—even cattle ran about wildly and pawed the earth at the smell of the spilt blood of one of the herd.

And that, too, although the slain beast might if alive, be set upon and gored by each separate beast of the herd, with the acquiescence, or the perfect indifference of all the others.

The insatiable desire to penetrate the mysteries of all the violent deaths, was the answer to the universal animal instinct of fair play—most strongly developed in the Saxon Hoosier people. They were known to have taken sudden and terrible vengeance upon the murderer of a man confessedly of very little account to anybody.

But he had had a life! And this it was that had aroused the whole populace to demand who had taken it? So that when the safety of Mr. Mason had been settled by the train dispatcher at the little station a mile from the village, the defense of Mr. Mason withdrew and joined the prosecution.

CHAPTER VII.

As day after day, and even week after week went by without tidings from Mr. Mason he went down to the very lowest plane in the estimation of all Sandtown.

"I tell yuh, Squar, blame if I ever liked that feller Mason, nohow, purtickler," said "Coon" Redden, as "Coonrod" Redden, the wealthiest land owner of Field county, was familiarly or more formally called.

The whole Redden family were visiting at "Squire" Wickly's on that Saturday evening two or three weeks after the storm and the disappearance.

"He tried his level best to argy me down at the Board uv Trade wair nuthun but the ornerriest kine a gamblun. Blamefe didn't! That was that same Sat'dy evenun, Lizzy, at you un him got cotch in the hur-kun, up en the big woods, you reckleleck?" turning to look straight at Miss Wickly, who was now greatly interested in the loud flow of the old Hoosier's "hair-rangue," as he himself termed it. "By gum! he nuvver stopped to say good-by ur how-dy-do, but he ups un he goes aflyun down to the Bank. Un thurreckly he comes aflyun out, un away he went to the tell-graft offus, a walkun so fast yuh could a played sebum-up awn his coat-tails, Squar! Un the next I h-yurn uv 'im, he taken the train fur Chicago 'thout stoppun to settle a lot a little bills roun about h'yur at I know uv myself."

There was a great deal more of the same roaring fire of shrewd, half-humorous comments and observations upon Mr. Mason. Lizzy, fully aware that she violated no rule of Sandtown etiquette, went up stairs to bed in her own little hot room, when she tired of the "hair-rangue," and was soon blissfully unconscious of the weight that began to drag at her hitherto buoyant and merry heart.

It might have been the whistle of the midnight train that awoke her. She did not know. There was no striking of clocks, and there was not sufficient light from the wide open south gable window to enable her to see the hands of her watch, and so she could not make out that it was the reverberating roar of the train from the distant city that broke her rest into unequal segments.

Her bed was drawn out in front of the open window so that the cool soft night breeze coming out of the woods and across the broad river could lave her hot face in its refreshing eddies and ripples. Whatever had awakened her, she lay there looking out into the shady street a little bit dimmed with a summer night's fog. She was sure then that she was fully awake, and that she saw in the road, not sixty feet away, Mr. Will Mason walking slowly toward the river, and having his face turned over his right shoulder and his head thrown back just far enough to allow him to fix his eyes upon that window, that he knew was the window of her bedroom.

He passed on; and she was so anxious to know more of this lonely walk of his, because his very presence seemed to assure the re-establishment of a sort of communication with the hero of her dreams—Huntley—that she arose and glided to the side of the window farthest from the pedestrian.

She had to cross in front of the open window, and she thought there was some danger that he might see the glimmer of her long, white nightdress against the black background of the dark room.

Sinking down upon her knees and doubling back till she sat upon her small, bare feet, and forward till an elbow rested upon the low sill of the window, she looked out and saw him standing with his face turned directly toward her. Her heart leaped hard against the soft, pliant walls of her little chest, and she drew back into the darkness.

In an instant she peeped out to be horrified at the spectacle of a gigantic black figure, half enveloped in the thicker fog toward the river, and seeming to undulate threateningly, and to elongate in an upward direction, as some of the make-believe giants of the circus and the farce are seen to do.

Then, while she lay there in a frozen horror of fascinated, wide-eyed gazing, the huge specter dimmed and vanished. How she got back to bed, and what brought her mother running to her room, she only knew from her.

Mrs. Wickly lay down, taking her frightened daughter in her arms, as she was in the habit of doing yet at times, and endeavored to reassure her by telling her that it was simply the climax of some hideous dream. Her father coming in, more deliberately sat by the window and told her that this was simply a phenomenon of the fog—an unusual one, to be sure, in all its details, but clearly explicable upon maxims of physical science.

For instance, the undulatory motion and the elongation of the specter in a vertical direction, were visual phenomena. The mist concealing the feet of the man concealed all the ground about him, and thus left no object within the range of vision for comparative measurements, such as the eye makes automatically every instant.

The undulating movement upward was the pulsating or wavelike advance of the fog bank toward her, thus putting the gradually disappearing body and head at farther and farther distances, as more and more of the foreground was encroached upon by the advancing fog bank. That might all be good physical science, but she had seen something that frightened her horribly. And she felt that some dreadful misfortune was coming upon her, she couldn't imagine what.

The bright sunlight of the next day did more to explain away the specter than all the physical science that all Sandtown possessed.

All Sandtown, however, got hint of the story in some unaccountable way, and told it with much multifarious, ingenious and original additions, amendments and substitutions, so that it got out that a "hant" was a walkun the "Overcoat Road"—as the strictly ex-urban portion of the continuation of Main street had been called from a time so remote that it was lost in legendary incertitude.

CHAPTER VIII.

Right in the middle of the red-hot month of July the light, loam-mixed sand of the Overcoat Road was in the shimmering air all day long, whitening the dark coats of the sweating horses that drew all sorts of vehicles along it at all hours of the day and night, and hiding the glossy green of wild hemp and jimson leaves under a dull veil of gray. The whilom school boy of Sandtown was baking his back of a lurid brown as far down on his shoulders as the cool, clear waters of the Wabash would permit.

All at once a vast buzz of wonder changed into wrath throughout all Sandtown, far up and down the mellow distances of the river, and out upon all the lanes and "wagon tracks" that were tributary to the Overcoat Road.

To those who had not heard the news by reason of temporary absence, rushed everybody, to be the first to communicate the stunning intelligence that the Sandtown Farmers' Bank had closed its doors.

There was no escapade of a cashier. Nobody had gone to Canada with the funds of the bank in his satchel. If anybody had gone to Canada, it is safe to say that Field county, from Sandtown to Redfoot Pond, and from the Wabash to the end of the Overcoat Road, would have taken its "weapuns," and have gone into the Dominion after the culprit, with no other writ of extradition than a rope.

No! no! Mister Cashier! You may go from the effete "East" to Canada with poor people's money in your pocket, with safety. But by all the Coonrod Reddens of the Wabash country it won't be healthy for you to run away from Hoosierdom with that sort of luggage in your hand.

"I wouldn't k-yur a blame fur what I lost myself, feliers, but stop and thenk uv the people at haint got nothun a-tall left! Nut the wrappuns uv thur little finger, by gum! Un they haint one a the bank company at haint plum busted, nuther! You see we was all a delun en wheat to-g-yuther, un all at once the bottom drapt plum outun ut! Un that left urse all flatter'n un flitter. But that haint the wust uv ut, nuther. I see Billy Biler this mornun, un he tells me at all the bank's klatter'l is hilt by one a tham blame railroad companies. Un thur scheme is to sell uvertheng right slap dad when they haint a dollar at we kin git a holt uv, to buy in nothun with, by gum!"

And now came Billy Biler, M. C., a fresh, rosy-cheeked young gentleman, with a great show of laundered linen in the way of big stiff cuffs, "dog collar," white tie, and all ornamented with massive gold sleeve buttons, gold studs and diamond pin, and all other appointments on a corresponding scale of magnificence.

The whole Sandtown district gloried in Billy Biler's fine raiment, as if it were the individual property of each and every voter that "worked" for Billy all day at the polls on the occasion of each succeeding congressional election.

"Hello, Billy! Har yuh, Billy! When't yuh git in, Billy? Purty warm, hain't ut, Billy? Makes you sweat, don't ut, Billy! Gut hot under the collar haint ut, Billy?"

These and hundreds of other formulas of salutation, together with a disjointing hand shaking, wait upon the popular Billy Biler, and he is at once in the center of the crowd of people who are blocking up the Overcoat Road immediately between the Sandtown Farmers' Bank building and the court house, to that extent that teams still coming through the cloud of dust along that popular thoroughfare, as well as teams coming up the river road, were obliged to turn out of the way, which they did very cheerfully, when it was known that Billy Biler was back from Washington on purpose to help his friends in this extremity.

"Now, boys," said Billy in a loud, jolly, good-natured voice, and taking off his shiny silk hat to permit the thorough mopping of his rosy, smooth, fat face, "I'm a go-un down with Coonrod, h-yur, fur dinner, un when we git back we'll go un see whut these railroad fellers is tryun to steal from yuh. Un if it's too big fur un to pack off in a hurry, we'll make them sweat awhile instead of us."

This speech was followed by a gleeful roar of applauding laughter from the whole crowd, which, with much interchange of knowing comments on Billy Biler's shrewdness and ability to cope with the very smartest of the railroad rascals, and their own shrewd foresight in electing such a Congressman as Billy Biler—broke up in little groups to discuss the situation.

"Billy," said Coonrod Redden, as the two drove past Squire Wickly's house on their way to the big white frame mansion of the old farmer—"right there is the man un the g'yurl at's bout the wust hurt over this bank business uv airry one uv urse fellers. Weekly's mighty nigh plum, slap, dab ravun crazy. Un I low the g-yurl haint much better. Smartest and purti-est g-yurl roun h-yur, too! Blame pity fur um."

"How much do they lose?" asked Billy Biler, as he prepared to light a cigar, without showing any interest in the mental condition of the patients.

"O nut much—fur's the 'mount's gut anytheng to do with ut. But hits all—and a little more, meb-by. They was two moggijis yuh see, un the g'yurl ud gut nuff saved to pay um off. Un when she went, she foun three uv um stid a two! The Squire's tryun to git that fortune 'at he lows he's heired, and he'd thode in a third moggiji right plum slap, dab on top a the yuther two! Un you see that kivered the lan' up so deep at auther could tech bottom, by gum. The lan' haint wuth more'n half uv ut. I'd a bought it in myself, ef hit ud a ben anywhurs nigh worth ut. But shoh!" and Coonrod Redden looked down and kicked the toe of his boot hopelessly against the arm of the dashboard.

"What did Wickly do with the money? He must a gut a thousan ur so, didn't he?" asked Billy Biler, chewing the end of the lighted cigar, and watching Coonrod Redden out of the corners of his large whitish eyes.

"O, you can't nuvver tell whut feller does with money, thataway. Thode ut away, lak as nut. H-yander he goes into the house with both weemun follerin 'im! Shouldn't wonder ef they'd be trouble there, Billy! He's mighty nigh plum slap dab crazy, by gum!"

(To be continued.)

MOST FAMOUS OF PEARLS.

Named the Tavenier and in Possession of the Shah of Persia.

The most famous pearl in all the world is owned by the shah of Persia and called the Tavenier. It was named for the celebrated traveler of that name and was sold to the shah's ancestors by him for $500,000. To-day it is probably worth more than $650,000.

Another eastern king, the isman of Muscat, has in his collection a pearl worth $165,000, weighing twelve and a half carats. The daylight can be seen through it. Princess Yousoupoff's finest gem is wonderfully beautiful. It was first heard of in 1620, when Georgibus Calais sold it to Philip of Spain for $180,000. The pope's pearl is worth $80,000. It has descended in a regular course to the incumbent of the throne from one of the earliest popes, who became possessed of it in a manner which has not been told.

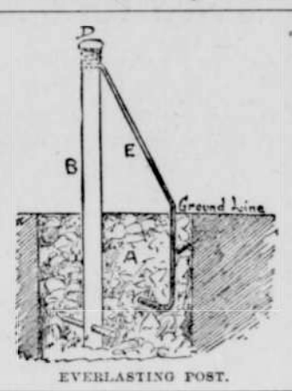
These are all of the truly celebrated pearls. But there are remarkable pearl necklaces which have an enormous value. They are usually made up, pearl after pearl being added to the set, and leading jewelers are constantly on the watch to secure more to add to the chain.

Pink pearls are not as valuable as either the black or the white. Queen Victoria had a necklace of pink pearls which is worth $80,000 and the dowager empress of Germany had one of thirty-two pearls which would easily sell for $125,000. The women of the Rothschild family have gems of this sort which far exceed in value those owned by royalty. Baroness Gustave De Rothschild possesses one made up of five rows of pearls which is valued at $200,000.

Demand in China for Japanese canvas shoes, fans, china and antimony is increasing since the present Far East war began.

An Everlasting Post.

A correspondent in a farm exchange gives the following method of making an everlasting post: A is a cubic pit 4x4x4 feet filled with cobble stones and Portland cement, about 8 inches of the top being strong as used for walks. Post B is 3 inches gas pipe, well galvanized, with screw cap on top at D, and short piece of ⅝ rod C through hole in lower end, and top end also has ¾-inch hole to receive top end of ¾-inch brace rod E, which has short double bend at top as shown, so as to hold firmly when in position shown. For gate post, I use 1¼-inch rod brace drawn at top so end will



EVERLASTING POST.

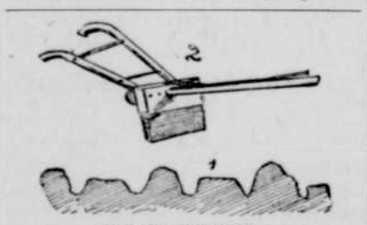
enter the ¾-inch pole, and place the brace on other side of post, forming brace instead of tension brace in the other style. Possibly a smaller cube of cement might hold, but I wished to make sure, so used 4 feet cube. I have four of these posts, which have been in use nearly four years and they show no indication of moving or of deterioration. The materials cost me about $5 each, which some may consider expensive, but for roadway or other places where a post will always be needed, they are not expensive, when durability is considered, for they may well be called everlasting.

Sugar and Tobacco.

The proposal being made to secure the reduction of the duty on Philippine sugar and tobacco promises to bring on another fight similar to the sugar war over Cuban reciprocity. It is proposed now to lower the tariff on sugar and tobacco coming from the Philippines 25 per cent, although it is understood that Secretary Taft proposes to continue a fight from session to session of Congress until free Philippine sugar and tobacco are secured. In this connection it is interesting to know the great and varied development which is going on in beet sugar affairs. In fact, a strong argument which the beet sugar people advance why Philippine sugar production should not be unduly stimulated is that if the beet sugar industry is given a reasonable period, say of ten years, the industry will be upon such a basis where it can stand alone. No less an authority than Secretary Wilson himself is credited with this belief and the statement that it will be posible to produce beet sugar in this country at 2 cents a pound.

Useful Potato Coverer.

When we plant potatoes we furrow with a plow drawn by two horses. When the furrows are made there are ridges in half of the spaces and the other half are level (Fig. 7). When covering we use what we call a scraper. (See Fig 2). It is made of a plank, tongue, handles and several braces and bolts. The length of the plank should be about twice the distance between the rows. The plank should have a strap of iron at the bottom in front for a cutting edge and



POTATO COVERER.

to prevent wear, says a correspondent of Ohio Farmer. The tongue should be fastened to the plank at right angles, and securely braced. The handles, which may be taken from an old plow or walking cultivator, should also be fastened and braced to the plank. We let each horse walk in a furrow, but it is better to use a long doubletree and neckyoke or shafts and but one horse, so the potatoes do not get moved and tramped. The scraper carries some ground ahead of it, which it pulverizes. It may be used to scrape the barnyard if the ground is smooth.

The Sitting Hen.

Eggs intended for early sitting should be gathered at least twice a day and kept where there will be no danger of chilling. Hens that want to sit early in the spring are apt to be rather unreliable and should be allowed to become thoroughly started over a nest of china eggs before being intrusted with a valuable sitting. When a hen really means business, her skin feels hot and feverish, and she usually sheds a few feathers from the breast. Early sittings should not be more than the hen can very easily cover, eleven or twelve being better than a larger number for hens of average size. Build up the nest with plenty of straw, filling with chaff to make a smoother surface, and see that the curve toward the bottom is smooth, so that the eggs roll easily and cannot work into corners.

Good Income from Hens.

In a prize article in a Philadelphia paper, B. F. Lake, of West Virginia, tells how he makes $1,000 a year from 400 hens. The houses are simple, the climate not being severe. They are 10x40 feet, facing the south, divided into four compartments, two roosting rooms and two scratching rooms, after the usual plan, each house being used for fifty to sixty-five fowls. Each house is expected to pay a profit above cost of food of $100. The food is wheat, oats, bran, cut clover and dry blood or beef meal, with plenty of sharp grit, plenty of water, and the lice kept in check. The stock is kept up by incubators and setting hens are also used. In short, the success of this establishment seems to be the result of adopting the thorough-going Northern methods in an especially favorable climate.

Hills for Apple Orchards.

Where there are hills and a clay soil the conditions are suitable for the raising of apples. In the southern part of Illinois and Indiana the land is admirably adapted to the raising of apples, and as yet is but little used for that purpose. The apple tree seems to want air drainage. The drainage in the soil is better on the hills than in the valleys, and this is an advantage that the apple tree appreciates. There is a difference in trees as to the amount of air that must come to their roots to permit them to grow, as is evident in the fact that some trees will die if their roots are in water, while others grow best in swamps where the water covers their roots at all times. The apple tree is never a swamp loving tree. It prefers the dry land, where its roots can get air as well as water.—St. Louis Republic.

Wholesome Milk.

In a bulletin of the Connecticut Storrs station W. A. Stocking, Jr., reports the results of comparative studies of the sanitary condition of milk drawn in open and covered pails. Two pails were used in these experiments. One was a regular open pail; the other was a pail with a cover of special design. An illustration of the latter is here given. It is an ordinary milk pail with a closely fitting cover, which has an opening near one side, into which is soldered a funnel four inches in diameter having a wire gauze of fine mesh soldered across the bottom. This funnel extends slightly above and below the cover and slopes somewhat toward the side of the pail. Another funnel, which is loose, fits inside of the first one. When the pail is to be used a few layers of clean cheesecloth are placed across the opening of the lower funnel and the loose funnel is pushed in to hold the cheesecloth in position. The whole apparatus is simple in structure and can be easily cleaned. By the use of the covered pail an average of 29 per cent of the total number of bacteria and 41 per cent of the acid producing bacteria were excluded from the fresh milk.

COVERED MILK PAIL

Good Prices for Produce.

From prices quoted at Panama there is a chance for truck growers within reach of the line of the proposed canal. Apples are selling for 15 cents each, lettuce 25 cents a head and cabbages $1.50 apiece. Chickens and eggs are selling at high prices and board costs from $3 to $5 a day in the better class hotels.

Garden Hints.

Study the seed catalogues.

Sow peas as soon as the ground can be worked.

Now will you be good and test your seeds?

Cherries and plums should be among the trees grafted earliest.

An "earliest green eating onion" is one of the new things of 1905.

"Trimming time"—the milder days of late winter and early spring.

"Prune when the knife is sharp,' but never when the wood is frozen.

Lettuce and radish seed can go into the ground as soon as the surface can be scratched.

Plowing the garden when the ground is wet makes bad work. Better a good job a few days delayed.

Farm Notes.

Spring trimmed trees produce the most suckers.

Wasteful feeding may mean too much or too little.

Farming is poor business when the farming is poor.

One way to increase the profits in farming is to reduce the cost of production.

The early killed is the easy killed weed and the weed that robs the crop the least.

But few plants will thrive in a wet soil. A good drain is sometimes better than manure.

It is the vigor and not the size of the seed potato that determines the size of the product and the amount of the crop.

With the majority of fruits the aim should be for a few fine, large, smooth and plump specimens rather than for many small ones.

Plants to be kept in pots or tubs and needing more sun, should be given a larger size just as the fresh growth is about to be made, generally early in the spring.

One Hundred Years Ago.

Snow and ice made all roads between Switzerland and Italy impassable.

Five thousand negro soldiers were enlisted to serve in the Leeward islands.

With the closing of the Eighth Congress the political life of Aaron Burr ceased.

Thomas Jefferson was inaugurated for the second time President of the United States.

Minnesota, east of the Mississippi, was made a part of Michigan territory.

The mouth of the Cuyahoga river, where the city of Cleveland now stands, was made a port of entry on Lake Erie.

Nine French gunboats, attempting to get into Brest, were captured by British frigates.

Seventy-five Years Ago.

Bread riots occurred in Liverpool.

The French Chamber of Peers and Deputies met at Paris.

The "Book of Mormon," written by Solomon Spaulding, was published in New York.

William Cramp established his famous shipyards at Philadelphia.

The Indiana State road from Lake Michigan to Madison, on the Ohio, was begun.

Abraham Lincoln's father moved with his family from Indiana to Macon county, Ill.

The first regular news boat to intercept packet ships for foreign intelligence was put in commission in New York.

Fifty Years Ago.

Fire destroyed the quarantine station at Staten Island.

The government hospital for the insane of the army and navy at Uniontown was opened.

The law excluding from the California courts negro and Indian evidence was amended by adding Chinese.

President Pierce vetoed the French spoliation bill, and it failed in the House of the requisite vote to pass over the veto.

The House of Representatives received President Pierce's veto of the ocean steamer bill and attempted to pass it over the veto, but failed.

Ratifications of the treaty of alliance between Sardinia and the western powers were exchanged. Sardinia transmitted to other governments the declaration of war against Russia.

The first steam fire engine built for the city of Boston was exhibited in Baltimore.

Forty Years Ago.

Abraham Lincoln was inaugurated President for the second time.

Col. B. M. Anderson, one of the alleged conspirators from Chicago, on trial before court martial at Cincinnati, committed suicide.

The Treasury Department reported that seventeen national banks, with a capital of $3,523,000, were authorized during the week.

Confederate deserters to the Union lines at Richmond brought report of the capture of Waynesboro by Sheridan.

Gov. Oglesby of Illinois issued a proclamation urging the citizens to respond in filling a deficiency of 14,000 in the State's quota of troops.

Reports from Washington, D. C., stated that 2,000 deserters from the Confederate lines had reported and taken the oath of allegiance within a month. Forty of these were officers.

Thirty Years Ago.

Fifty lives were lost by the burning of a factory in Gottenburg, Sweden.

The Forty-third Congress adjourned after putting a damper on the force bill.

Of an original population of 52,000 in one district in Asia Minor, 20,000 had died of the famine then prevailing.

The German government issued a decree prohibiting the importation of American potatoes.

A bill to admit Colorado as a State was approved, and a similar measure concerning New Mexico was defeated in Congress.

A snow storm with a precipitation ranging from two to eight inches occurred along the Ohio river.

The Pope ordered the Austrian bishops to comply with the civil law requiring reports to be made to the State of the roster of priesthood. It was taken as an unusually conciliatory move.

Twenty Years Ago.

President Cleveland signed the order placing Gen. Grant on the retired list with pay.