

# WICKLY'S WOODS

By H. W. TAYLOR

**CHAPTER XVI.—(Continued.)**  
 Imaginative boys of fifteen have repeatedly precipitated a panic by dashing down the Overcoat road with certain news of the rapid approach of the enemy, now that everybody knows that Sandtown is in the lawful and peaceful possession of the Sandtown Circuit Court—Judge Jim Skillet upon the bench for the purpose of hearing motions in injunction proceedings, in a vast number of cases of suits to take place on the morrow, unless enjoined.

Squads of riflemen marching in no particular order so far as the keeping of step and alignments are concerned—but not a whit the less formidable, be it understood—marched or straggled out along the Overcoat road past the fields of half-grown corn on the one side and the hazel-fringed edge of "Wickly's Woods," as the timbered hills upon the left had been christened a year ago.

A way to the east along this junction of bottom prairie and wooded hills there were uninvited movements of men across little patches of corn, or standing long and steadily behind a "string" of north and south fence from which the occasional scintillation of the sun upon a rifle barrel gave ominous electric warning of the presence of imminent war in the land.

All manner of reports came thronging into the Redden mansion, and directly up to the bedroom where Lizzy Wickly and her mother sat at an east window, and watched and thought, but spoke little save in answer to the frequent reports and comments that some one or another of the numerous visitors brought up at frequent intervals.

Now it was that Mr. Mason had been captured by the sheriff's re-enforced posse; and the Big Rattlesnake Creek were upon the point of "hossing him up," as the expression was, for summary and dire vengeance. This frequently recurring form of the report always had its effect upon Lizzy. Always startled her out of a pleasant reverie in which she was going over some part of last night's final colloquy with variations of her own invention in the line of her after thoughts and wishes.

Again there were martial stories of sanguinary encounters somewhere in the depths of "Wickly's Woods," or upon the neighboring banks of Big Rattlesnake, where, according to all accounts, the warlike clans were encamped and fortified.

One man brought in a new and unheard-of story to the effect that Coonrod Redden and the sheriff were not in the hands of Mason and his men, but were captives in the camp of an opposing armed body of railroaders belonging to another and opposition company. He said, too, that the whole difficulty was really and in fact a sharp, keen trial of shrewd overreaching between two rival railroad companies. That Mason, representing one of these, had secured a legal advantage over the other in the purchase of some mortgage notes upon some very valuable mining property somewhere. And the other company discovering this, had sent down a force of armed operatives to prevent the making of a track upon the mining lands. He also said that Coonrod Redden and the sheriff's posse had not been held prisoners by anybody. According to his story there had been a sharp and determined encounter between the men of the two contending interests, in which a number had been seriously or slightly wounded, and several killed outright. And that up to the present time Mason had the best of the fight, and his men were working like beavers, protected by two lines of riflemen. He himself had seen a few of these men on picket guard in some openings of the woods; and the hills fairly rang with the echoing blows of hundreds of axes, and the crash of falling trees.

This story, not at all suited to the notions and preconceived opinions of the people at Coonrod Redden's, was generally discredited—especially as no one seemed to be "acquainted" with the man who told it. And hence, he was without a voucher, and his story was without corroboration.

However, word was brought down directly from Judge Jim Skillet that five hundred armed men had been sworn in as deputy sheriffs for the purpose of arresting a large number of railroad employees who had been fighting—one party against another. That these deputy sheriffs in columns of fours had ridden out of town and would be heard from before night.

This news was brought by Columbus Redden, who had prudently refrained from joining his four brothers in the morning hunt for their father, but who now had his coat hitched in the front yard, where he wouldn't be in danger from the teeth or beels of the rapacious marauders of Redden township, that were making day hideous with their screeching and trampling in perpetual combat. Immediately after dinner Columbus was to take the road in person; and everybody believed that he, too, would be heard from.

In this state of active siege, with so many stories in progress or contemplation; with hundreds of rumors coming and going, and the sight of little squads of men riding this way and that, becoming of less and less moment to Lizzy and her mother, the day went by.

Long before it had passed the hungry Hoosier mothers of Reelfoot Pond and vicinity had filled their good, strong, reliable stomachs to repletion; had smoked comfortable pipes of twist tobacco, and had talked in loud, strong voices all at once on the south porch and the north porch, and the back porch, from all of which quarters a roar of "steak" and "sals" had gone up about the four corners of the Redden mansion unrestrained by any of the modern tricks of courtesy that throw plentiful dashes of cold water upon general conversation, with numerous "excuse me's" and "beg pardon f'rinterupting's," etc., etc. And having performed all these neighborly and patriotic offices, by far the larger number had led their refractory maids up beside convenient fences; had seated themselves on saddles of women's and saddles of men's, and even upon tanned sheepskins and folded horse blankets—single, double and sometimes treble—as to riders; had

best. For really, she had not tried to appear well. She had teased him unmercifully. She had taunted him with remaining contented with a subordinate place and a scant salary. She could see now how it was that he could bear such teasing as that with a smiling stoicism.

But, ah! the very last words he had said to her! And the very last thing he did! Her face crimsoned at the recollection, but always wreathed with her sweetest, softest smiles, too. He had looked even in that dim starlight, so eager, so earnest, so handsome. He had said almost in the manner of giving his unbreakable pledge—that he would see her soon again! Remember that, Lizzy! He would see her soon if it lay within his power. If it lay within his power!

And then he started away, up the dark road. And before he had gone ten steps, he turned and saw her still standing there and looking after him. Maybe that was how it came that he thought of running back. Very well! If she had done anything to bring him back for that supplemental parting, she was glad of it. He had held her a moment to his breast. His strong arms had been about her. Even now, at the reminiscence, she felt the tingling that had rippled along every little nerve from her crown to her soles, and to her finger ends. And then the pressure of his warm lips upon her own. Actually upon her lips! This bold, audacious semi-soldier that he was! He would punish him for that. How? By having him kiss her again? Well, the unusual and startling surroundings must be his good excuse. Only let him come soon!

**CHAPTER XVII.**  
 In spite of the prediction that Judge Jim Skillet's extraordinary posse constituted would "be heard from" and that soon," it was no sooner enveloped in the dim and leaf-arched aisles of Wickly's Woods, than it passed as far beyond the ken of the Sandtown people as if it had freighted a Spanish galleon and sailed away down the Wabash with current and wind both favoring the voyage.

And then the certain adventuring spirits came back at intervals, riding down the already drying sands of the Overcoat road as if they brought tidings of stirring things. But they rode straight to the court room, where the judge sat in the midst of his bar and four strange, city gentlemen, who were the clients of Billy Biler, our Congressman, and who represented the interests of the new Sandtown and Northwestern Railroad.

Having ridden straight to the door and dismounted, these messengers would run into the court room, advance straight to the judge, who, seeing them coming, would be upon his feet in an instant, and would lead the way to the grand jury room, where they would remain for some minutes free from intrusion or interruption of any sort.

Then they would all come out, wearing grave and determined faces, the judge coming back to his chair, and the couriers going back to their saddles, and away, up in the Overcoat road and into the mysterious fastness of Wickly's Woods, and there they would remain for some minutes free from intrusion or interruption of any sort.

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riden away in various directions to "see to the house" or "milk," or "feed," or "sit supper" or "Jim" or "Bill," or "Jawa," according to the wording of the various apologies for not remaining longer.

Then, with the coming of night, there fell down upon all the length and breadth of the Overcoat road and its tributaries and purlieus, a supplanting of all the sounds of human life by the strange, lonely, incessant, strident discord of the multitudinous and multifarious insect life of the new country. The sharp, clear grating of the myriads of black and gray crickets, the loud humming of thousands of huge black beetles, the higher and finer shrillings of smaller unknown winged flies of the outer night, all welded together with the thin, resonant hum of the little creatures of the mosquito tribes—these, with the soft flutter of bats' wings and the frequent loud, hoarse, rubbing sound made by the half-closed wings of the bull-bat, falling from unseen heights of night air with mouth wide open in order to sweep myriads of flying insects into his rapacious maw, in this long and lightning-like dive through the thin lake of transparent, starlit air—all these small, shrill, incessant sounds of the night took oppressive possession of the world of sounds, leaving the human sense of sound upon tip-toe, and in breathless suspense.

**CHAPTER XVII.**  
 Far in the night the mother and daughter again lay down to sleep that came readily to the elder woman, and far more tardily to the younger. In Lizzy's central thought two opposite and irreconcilable solutions of one problem centered for sole recognition. Had Mr. Mason played parts in everything he had done, as she had charged him yesterday evening, and which he had not denied in so many words? She had charged him with this, and much more! She had charged him with studied and persistent eulogiums of an unknown man for the purpose of piquing her womanly curiosity, and thereby amusing himself. He had gone on with it day after day, week after week, and month upon month, until he had fully succeeded in bringing her to love him and to yearn for him.

How many and many anxious hours she had passed in doubts and fears for his safety! How eagerly she had pored over chance newspapers from the great city, and from remote parts of the country, hoping and fearing that she might see some mention of the beloved name. And how she had beamed with gladness at each return of the absent man, and announced always by his assistant, and by no one else!

What a fool she had been! Even he said, last night, something about her suspicion reaching its zenith weeks ago instead of beginning to dawn only the day before, when she had seen him driving through the streets of Sandtown, and without his principal!

His principal, indeed! She had thrown that fraud at him hard enough, she hoped. She had given him to understand that there was no longer the slightest chance to continue that imposition upon her.

Mr. Huntley, the man of straw! The myth! The creation of the man who had palmed himself off on her as the assistant of his man of straw! A noble and a worthy work for a man of his attainments! All this merely to amuse himself, while he was living in an enforced exile from the city! She had hoped she had thrown that at him hard enough.

But again, there were many, many sincere looking and earnest-sounding things that he had done and said, all along. He had sought her company from the first day, and persistently and continuously kept it. His manner was not that of the languid and impatient man of the world, tired of his enforced seclusion. No. He had set himself about a laborious task of bringing her to see some glaring deficiencies in what she had thought was her all-sufficient self. He had gone further. He had shown his great liking for her. He had, in effect, sought to tell her what everybody had long before said again and again—that it was the plainest of all plain propositions, that he loved her! She had laughed at that! She had even confessed her love for his principal—Huntley, the man of straw; the myth; the creation of an idle fancy! Not only so, but she had told him plainly that she would not then take whether she were not irrevocably bound, by a strangely romantic passion, to what she at last recognized as the mere creature of another man's idle fancy. That had gone home to him! That had hurt—if he could be hurt.

And here, upon this very point, were a few things that she could not help going over and over. And never did she, in reminiscence, approach the chief of these episodes that her heart did not leap and her ultimate fibrils tingle, with something closely akin to happiness.

First, that sudden and unexpected appearance in that cone of light that seemed to have been photographed upon her retina, so constant was the picture. How well he looked! How fittingly that half-military engineer's dress became him! And what a startling transformation was there in everything that had made the assistant geologist tame and commonplace. Even to the black, close-cut hair. She had forgotten that among her charges of duplicity. Perhaps the fact that she admired black hair had been taken as a silent condemnation of the offense of having concealed it under a brown wig. Had he really loved her when he was playing his many parts on the little Sandtown stage? If she had been sure of that would she have arraigned him so bitterly?

Had she been shrewish? Had she shown an ugly temper? She didn't believe she had an ugly temper. But what had he thought of it? Certainly he had seen no display of it in all his former acquaintance with her. And in that intimate relation that must exist among people who gather in the same room every evening, and eat at the same table three times every day—not forgetting the Sundays in which he had hardly left her side half an hour for the whole day; if she had known this, what a splendid opportunity to have appeared at her very

# Boys And Girls

**The Shearing.**  
 The day they cut the baby's hair  
 The house was all a-fidget;  
 Such fuss they made, you would have said  
 He was a king—the midget!

Some wanted this, some wanted that;  
 Some thought that it was dreadful  
 To lay a hand upon one strand  
 Of all that precious headful.

While others said, to leave his curls  
 Would be the height of folly,  
 Unless they put him with the girls  
 And called him Sue or Molly.

The barber's shears went snip-a-snip,  
 The golden fluff was flying;  
 Grandmother had a trembling lip,  
 And aunt was almost crying.

The men folks said, "Why, hello, Boss,  
 You're looking five years older!"  
 But mother laid the shaven head  
 Close, close against her shoulder.

Ah, well; the nest must lose its birds,  
 The cradle yield its treasure;  
 Time will not stay a single day  
 For any pleader's pleasure.

And when that hour's work was weighed,  
 The scales were even, maybe;  
 For father gained a little man  
 When mother lost her baby!  
 —St. Nicholas.

# LITTLE STORIES AND INCIDENTS

That Will Interest and Entertain Young Readers.

have to have a great deal of board on her side of the horse, and you will have the shorter end on your side." This was soon arranged, and the two children "teeter-tawtered" happily for half an hour. Then they came in, Jack very kindly carrying his little cousin.

"Jean wants to play something else," he explained to mamma.

"Suppose you have a game of checkers," said she. "You can make the moves for Jean, as she is too young yet to know how. She will soon learn, I think."

The smiling little playmate leaned against a book, and did not seem at all annoyed when she was beaten. In the second game she actually beat Jack.

"Pretty good for a half-ounce girl," said mamma, "but she wouldn't have made much headway without your help. She seems to show a very good disposition."

In the afternoon Jean stood by him and smiled encouragingly while he was practicing his music lesson. Then he showed her the pictures in a pile of old magazines.

After that, splendid to relate, all the sewing was put away, and mamma, who was nothing but a big girl herself, put a white cloak on the baby, a straw hat on the boy, and a sunshade on her own head, and all went out in the yard to play.—Youth's Companion.



My Aunt has caught a fearful cold—She's cross as she can be—Tho' you can't call her obstinate—She's 'stiff-necked' as you see!

## STRANDED LAD A YANKEE.

Demonstrated that Fact When He Told of "Skim Milk" Folsom.

A good story is told of the way in which Nathaniel Hawthorne, when he was Consul at Liverpool, tested a Yankee boy. The boy had gone to the Consul's office one day to beg for a passage back to his home. He had gone abroad to seek his fortune, and, not finding it, had become almost penniless. He told a clear story, but the clerk who heard it doubted its truth.

"You are not an American," he said to the boy; but the applicant for the passage to America persisted in waiting at the office until he saw Hawthorne himself. At last the Consul appeared, gave a quick glance at the boy and began to question him:

"You want a passage to America," he asked.

"Yes, sir," said the boy eagerly.

"And you say you are an American?"

"Yes, sir."

"In what part of America were you born?"

"The United States, sir."

"What State?"

"New Hampshire, sir."

"What town?"

"Exeter, sir."

Hawthorne waited a moment, and then bent toward the boy.

"Who sold the best apples in your town?" he asked.

"The boy's eyes shone and the homestead longing in them deepened.

"Skim Milk" Folsom, sir!" he cried.

"It's all right," said Hawthorne to the clerk. "Give him his passage." And he took the boy's hand and bade him godspeed on his homeward way with much heartiness.

**His "Carrying" Voice.**  
 "I never have known just why," remarked Mr. Aiken, meditatively, "but I do seem to have a faculty of making father hear what I say without shouting." "You!" exclaimed his wife, in honest surprise. "Yes, I often think of it when you lift your voice in the shrill way you did just now. I never have to do that. It must be I have what they call the 'carrying' voice."

"What's that you're saying, son?" inquired the serene old gentleman at the side of the breakfast table.

"I was telling Helen, father," repeated Mr. Aiken, complacently, "that, even with your hearing as it is now, you always understand me easily."

Father Aiken looked mystified. Then he reached his hand toward the salt.

"Hand you—what?" he asked.

"Oh, nothing!" Mr. Aiken raised his voice only a trifle, but made an evident effort to articulate. "It was just speaking of the fact that I can always make you hear so well. I told Helen I believed I must have the 'carrying' voice!"

Father Aiken slowly shook his head. "I don't quite get it, my boy," he said, gently.

The younger man felt his wife's amused eyes upon him, and his color heightened.

"It was nothing at all, father," he protested, speaking louder, although still in repressed tones. "I was only saying that you seem to hear me better than you do Helen, even when I talk low. I said"—enunciating very distinctly—"it was—because—I—have—a—'carrying' voice."

"You have—what?" demanded Father Aiken.

"A 'carrying' voice!" roared his son in desperation, beginning to look absolutely foolish.

"Helen," appealed the gentle old man, turning to his daughter-in-law, "for mercy's sake, speak up and tell me what the boy is talking about!"—Youth's Companion.

**Deep Man.**  
 "Sometimes," confided Mrs. Longwood to her intimate friend, "I think my husband is the patientest, gentlest, best natured soul that ever lived, and sometimes I think it's merely laziness that ails him."

# TELLS WHAT THE AUTO DID.

Device Indicates to Owner the Movements of His Chauffeur.

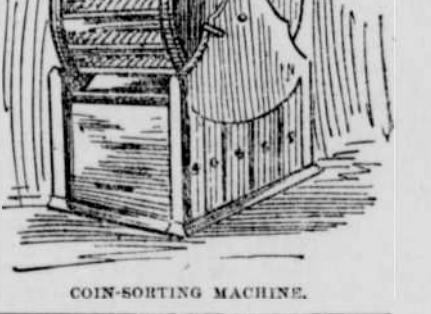
An Ingenious German instrument has been imported which will prove to the owners of automobiles just what their cars have been doing in the hands of the hired operators, which may prevent those worthy men from taking theater parties out at night and riding through the streets at railroad speed.

It is called a velocograph, and besides registering the speed of the car in motion it keeps a record of the number of stops and varying speeds. In other words, the record will show just what the car has been doing without a word from the man who drove it, and should prove an effectual check to the indiscriminate use of the car by men hired to drive them for their owners. The device, though both a speed register and a chronograph, is simple. An ordinary timepiece, with the dial revolving, instead of fingers, furnishes the chronograph. The dial, or clock face, is a separate cardboard disk, which can be removed at will. The spaces between the dial numerals, instead of being divided into "fives," as in ordinary clock faces, are divided into four sections of fifteen each, thus making sixty in all, to denote the minutes in each hour.

Attached to the timepiece is an ordinary speed register, connected with the hub of the vehicle. This speed register shows the usual rotary set of figures denoting the number of miles traveled. At the end of every mile, however, a marker, which protrudes above the rim of the clock dial, shoots forward and registers the fact that it has been recorded. This marker being stationary and the dial chronograph revolving, it follows that as every mile is recorded on the dial cardboard the lapsed time will also be shown.

Similarly when the vehicle is stopped the marker still continues to register while the disk revolves. There being no miles to be recorded, the register will show a line parallel to the circumference of the disk, denoting that the vehicle was motionless during the hours on the dial corresponding with such straight line.

## COIN-SORTING MACHINE.



Wheel Which Picks the Quarters from the Pennies.

That trite saying that "necessity is the mother of invention" may be repeated once more in connection with the coin-sorting machine shown here-with, which is the subject of a recent patent. It is fitting that such a device should have originated, of all places on the globe, at Atlantic City, which vies with Coney Island in its numerous catch-penny amusements. While rather limited in its field of application, a mechanical coin sorter is doubtless justified by the necessities of the amusement business, where a great number of small coins are handled daily. After a monotonous scooping in of innumerable nickels, dimes and pennies during the course of a long day, it must be a great relief to dump them into a hopper, turn a crank a few times and remove the coins sorted into denominations, and possibly counted.

The device is based on the simple principle of graded openings formed by bars arranged in tiers at right angles to the axis of the cylinder. As only coins which will go through the openings of corresponding size are retained, the smaller pieces travel successively through tiers until they reach their proper place.

## MRS. STEPHEN B. ELKINS.

One of the Most Splendid Types of American Womanhood.

In this land of splendid homes none possesses a greater charm of hospitality, or is more thoroughly appreciated and enjoyed by its inmates, than where Senator and Mrs. Stephen B. Elkins, of West Virginia, make their dwelling.

There are several places which they can properly call "home," the two principal ones being at Washington and at Elkins, W. Va.

Elkins is a conspicuous example of the self-made American—money-maker, thinker and worker. He is one of the rich men of the country. His good fortune is not due wholly to his own energy, though that has been the chief factor in his success. He has had the aid of an exceptional wife. Mrs. Elkins has made her home far more attractive to her husband than any club could be. She is possessed of culture and intelligence that make her a congenial companion for a brainy husband. The daughter of a former Senator and a multi-millionaire, Henry G. Davis, there are none of the graces of womanhood she has not acquired. As Halle Davis she was a popular girl. As Mrs. Elkins she has won many new social laurels. Her country house, Haliburton, at Elkins, is one of the finest places in the South.

The average depth of the Atlantic is estimated to be about 16,000 feet.

Good qualities are the substantial riches of the mind; but it is good breeding that sets them off to advantage.—Locke.

Jack laughingly led the way to the back yard, to where a board lay across the sawhorse. It was his favorite place for play.

"You see," said mamma, "as Jean weighs less than an ounce, she will