

WICKLY'S WOODS

By H. W. TAYLOR

CHAPTER XVIII.—(Continued.)
So the forenoon of the second day of the "Railroad War," as it was afterward jestingly denominated by the humorous Hoosiers, wore away. The militia had been out all night, and two half days. And the Overcoat road had been "kept warm" by the friction of the big bare hoofs of courier horses galloping back and forth. The population of Sandtown, and, in fact, of all the dependent districts of the Wabash country, momentarily in expectation of some startling event, are at length gratified by the appearance of an unusually large squad of the volunteer couriers. And at once the word goes round, from mouth to mouth, that Coonrod Redden is only a little way back escorting the representative of the Sandtown and Southwestern Railroad—the opposing organization to the Sandtown and Northwestern—to the court house square, where the sales would proceed at once.

Lizzy Wickly and her mother having gone back to their own little home, so near the very end of the Overcoat road that from the bedroom window up stairs everything was plainly visible, only three hundred feet away from the court house, sat there and looked and listened.

Presently she saw the same carriage in which she had seen Mr. Mason drive through the streets two days ago. Then she remembered that Coonrod Redden had said threateningly that he ought to "be hoisted up," and that he would be if he dared to poke his nose into Sandtown again.

But now he drives confidently in, and with no less a person than Coonrod Redden seated beside him on the front seat of the carriage, and two gentlemen on the other seat. One of them may be Mr. Huntley for aught she knows. But really, she scarcely thinks about it.

There is almost an endless array of this spontaneous levy of Wabash cavalrymen riding along after the carriage. These battalions are headed by some of the Dikeses and the Bilers. And she knows from this fact that the furious people from Big Rattlesnake Creek have been placated in some mysterious way.

As the head of the column comes nearly opposite, Mr. Mason looks up, smiles, and raises his hat. Then Coonrod Redden sees them at the window and leans out and waves his hat and shouts something at them. But not a word can be distinguished because at the very first wave of the hat a vast shout starts at the front among the Dikeses, and goes in an increasing wave back to the very rear of the line, half a mile away, where it sounds like a shrill and high-keyed echo of the nearer and louder shout. Somebody below the window calls out:

"What is it, Jim? What did you fellows do, anyhow?"

"Come up to the court house on see! Come on, come right on, everybody, up to the court house yard!"

Then the words are drowned in another one of those odd, strange and almost frightful shouts that, beginning among the Dikeses in a stentorian roar, goes back along the line, rising in volume and rising in tone as the sound wave sweeps back, until it is pitched two octaves above in a wild, shrill, treble half a mile back, among the boys of fifteen who again prolong it and raise it up after it has almost died away.

A horrible suspicion flashes upon Lizzy. She remembers in an instant all the slow-growing antipathy of these people to Mr. Mason. She remembers the serious charges that they have made and reiterated against him. She remembers, too, the dark and ominous words of Coonrod Redden. And she knows that if the old Hoosier does no more than to remain quiescent, those whooping and yelling savages from Big Rattlesnake will wreak a terrible and public vengeance upon the doomed man.

So maddening was this terrible apprehension that after the first moment of faintness and utter incapacity which it caused, she must have become almost oblivious to everything not directly pertaining to the circumstances immediately environing this man, who had gone past her to his grave, placid and smiling.

She had no recollection of how and when she left her mother, or how she pushed and crowded her way through the throng to the south door of the court room. True, every rough and uncouth rider or footman of them all instantly gave way when she saw her, and even reached out to pluck the sleeves or collars of others in front who could not see her, and hence blocked up the way.

"Let 'er pass along that, boys! Crowd back that a leetle, and let Lizzy Wickly git apast! She's intrusted on this thing more'n anybody. She wants to see 'at she gits her rights!" called out Big Jim Dikes, as he set about pushing this way and pulling that, in order to make a path for the greatly agitated young woman.

"Better let 'er go up stairs thar, Jim! She can git to the window on the shuff's room, on see ut all, 'thout gittin run over by the crowd. Little Seef Dary's gut the key. Seef! H-yur!"

That was young Starr Go-uns, she knew. Then the door was reached, and the stair door to the left being unlocked and instantly locked again after she had gotten inside, she found there was some one on the steps a little way above her.

"Come right up h-yur, Lizzy, if you want to see the show. I guess the shuff's room's open. Yes, h-yur hit is! The window's up, too! Now, if you don't mind the crowd a-lookin ut yuh, h-yur's a good plaist," said the young Doc Dikes, as he pulled one of the large, yellow wooden armchairs up beside the window.

"I'll kin ah stan' h-yur on front ut yuh, un they can't see yuh quite so plain. It's the biggest crowd I've seed h-yur semt the Red Line run against the Nigger Baby, un beat 'er! Whur do all them slick lookin' fellers live at, I wonder? Haint ut funny 'at yuh don't know nobody, barly, when you git up over this way un look down ut um? Why, I scally knowed old Coon Redden. They all looked the earnestest!"

Lizzy scarcely heard a word of the running comments of the young Doc Dikes. The carriage was drawn up at the fence, about sixty feet from the north door of the court house, and she could see Mr. Mason sitting there calmly, with

a surging, roaring throng of armed men all about him. Inside the court house yard, the crowd was so dense that men could scarcely move about, and their red and heated faces all looked strained, excited and threatening.

Not a word could be distinguished in the roar of loud and vehement disputations that seemed to be going on. Now there was a rush of the buzzing mass toward some distant point, and the exclamations, "Fight!" "Fight!" could be heard. Then the crowd would settle back, and the roar of excited voices go on again as before. Once the keen, loud report of a rifle caused the crowd to stream round the two sides of the court house. But presently the reflux of the tide set in, and swept them all back again. What a strange spectacle this wild, hot, angry, roaring crowd, pushing this way and that, and filling the summer air with the roar of their voices, and yet remaining a riddle to the lookers-on—so far as anything that was thought or said or done, was concerned.

"Haint much satisfaction a lookin thissaway!" the young Doc said. "You can't tell nothin at they're sayin ur a doe'n, no more'n of you was across on h-yan side a the river."

But at this moment the tall form of Coonrod Redden was seen to clamber up to the top board of the court house fence.

"Lissun! Lissun! Shet yur talk! Lissun! Lissun! a go-un to make a speech! Lissun! Lissun!" were the numerous exclamations under which the roar died away in a swift diminuendo, and perfect silence prevailed.

"Gen-tuh-men!" began the old Hoosier, with a short jerk of his left forearm and extended palm, forward and to the left, and then back to his side again. "We've cum h-yur to en-quar onto some things cawn-cern-un uv the Sandtown Farmers Bank, un nallo cawn-cern-un uv a lot ah moggijis uv ourn at wair hilt by the Farmers' Bank, when hit busted. Thar moggijis have ben foreclosed, un the lan's gut to be sole to-day. They haint no gittin runn that. Hits the law. Un the law's gut to be enforced. But we know at somebody's ben a tryin to git the best uv ur Sandtown farmers."

Angry and threatening looks are here directed toward the carriage in which Mr. Mason sits, calm and unmoved, save perhaps that slight pallor of the face which betokens the greatest determination, the most unflinching purpose.

Not alone threatening looks. There is a low growl that seems to come from the circumference towards the center of the throng, stirring it in an inconceivable manner, as if the growl emanated from a sudden concentric earth-wave that imparted its sound and its undulatory movement to each individual of the vast mass.

"Jist keep kine uh qui-ut, men! We don't want no furse'n h-yur, lemmy tuit yuh!" He looked round over the crowd as he spoke, and then glanced covertly back into the carriage.

CHAPTER XIX.

Again there was the sudden concentric, undulatory movement that seemed to impel the crowd to a position more compactly about the carriage, there were loud, inarticulate cries and the brandishing of guns, held in excited hands. Men and boys began to climb up into already filled wagons, holding on to those who were standing in these vehicles packed about the streets like a regiment of artillery. From their position in the wide doorway of the court house, the very elaborately dressed Congressman Biler, probably at the suggestion of the two or three gentlemen who sit behind him, and who represent the S. & N. W., as against the S. & S. W., gets upon a chair, and begins to admonish the crowd to keep order.

"You shet up, Billy Biler!" roared old Coonrod Redden, in a voice that effectually "shet" Mr. Biler up, whether he would or no. "I'm a do-un the talkun now! You'll git a chainete after a spell, if you've got anything to say!"

Billy Biler grins in some confusion at this rude and unexpected rebuff, and a vast shout of laughter ripples outward an, eccentrically from the carriage to where the regiment of farm wagons is packed.

"I hope they are getting over that savage humor," Lizzy said, standing up in her excitement. "Don't you think they are? Don't you think by their laughing that way, that they are?" The young Doc Dikes shook his head.

"You can't tell nothin by their laugh-un 'ataway. Ef they was plum ready to hoss up a feller, un anything funny ud happen, they'd stop a minute to laugh, un go right awn a hossun uv 'im up. 'Ats the kine a fellers they air."

"They's a man h-yur at's ben with urse un ben respected un treated right by urse Sandtown farmers," exclaims the stentorian voice of old Coonrod Redden. "But 'e haint treated urse right. He's ben a snake on the grass. At's whut he's ben."

Now indeed is there a very tidal wave of upheaval, and with it not a growl, but a leonine roar and a vast tumult about the carriage, around which in a little confused and narrowing space men struggled with each other.

"What are they doing? O, what are they doing?" Lizzy cries, in a spasm of horror.

"By gum! they're a go-un to hoss up the feller, right h-yur on the court house yard! There goes the judge un the shuff! But they'd us well keep outen thar. No! By gum! they've got um kine uh quieted down. Coonrod un Uncle Jim Dikes us knocked down bout fifteen ur twenty a thar Redfoot Pon' fellers. 'Ats the only way you kin git any salience into thar fellers' heads—'s to knock ut em. You git Coonrod un Uncle Jim Dikes on the Sparks' boys top-yuth-er, un hit'll take a purty good crowd to pile them."

There was an indefinite and indeterminate period of the wildest uproar and confusion all about and in the court house yards. Everywhere the judge, the sheriff and Coonrod Redden could be seen gesticulating wildly, seizing men by the arms or collars, and shouting at the tops of the highest voices in all the Sandtown district. Finally they seemed to succeed in restoring order, to some extent, and immediately the selling was

begun by the sheriff, in the loud, official monotone of the public auctioneer.

Sale after sale was made in the very shortest time of the mere formal and foregone official act. But as each sale was announced with the name of the purchaser, there was, noticeably, an air of surprise and wonder over the whole assembly. Men whispered to each other in little groups, and there was a visible settling back of the heretofore aggressive and on-pressing tendency of the throng, with even a slight tendency to cheer some results.

"By gum! ef thattair feller Huntley haint—"

But here a demonstration below cut off the young Doc's remark, and Coonrod Redden is calling for "Odder; odder, men! Odder, for jist a minute!"

And having secured order for just a minute, he went on:

"All these h-yur sales ats ben made h-yur—the lan's ben bought en by Mr. Huntley, uv the Sandtown 'n' Southwestern Railroad for the benefit uv the farmers. They kin have thur own time to pay off the notes. Un they want no untrust tell afters a year from the date a this sale. You fellers kin go to plow un fur wheat, soon's you're a mine tub!"

What a roar of whoops and yells and cheers for Huntley. Then somebody suggested groans for Mason; and they were given with a heartiness that created an inexplicable amount of merriment immediately about Mr. Mason. What could he find to laugh at in the hearty execration of the crowd about him?

One more sale was announced by the sheriff. And now there was a hitching forward of the chairs occupied by the gentlemen in the doorway. Mr. Biler was regarding Mr. Mason over the heads of a part of the audience with an odd smile of cunning, wonder, amusement and admiration. Lizzy could see this look; for Mr. Biler had stepped out beside the sheriff with a paper in his hand, upon which something was scrawled that looked like figures. What did that look mean? Was there still another surprise and menace for Mr. Mason?

She hardly heard the rapid call of the sheriff. In fact, thinking about the imminent peril in which Mr. Mason had just been; and then of the great execration in which this impulsive assemblage evidently held him, she could only burden her mind with devising ways for his escape. O, that he had remained away! O, that he had never come!

And so she had failed to hear anything of the usual description of the land to be sold, and of the rapid opening bids that kept the sheriff turning this way and that, from Congressman Billy Biler to the carriage in which Mr. Mason was bidding for Mr. Huntley, his principal.

But a great and all-powerful excitement had seized upon the young Doc, communicated from the squeezing, crushing, pushing crowd below.

"This sale will haf to stop if you don't git back!" the sheriff urged again and again. Then she heard his cry for the first time distinctly: "Eight hundred thousand! Eight hun—! Eight twenty-five! Eight fifty! Nine! Nine twenty-five! Fifty! Seventy-five! Nine hundred and seventy-five thousand! One million! One million! One million!"

(To be continued.)

STRAWBERRIES BRING WEALTH.

Lone Island in Snake River Is a Garden Spot.

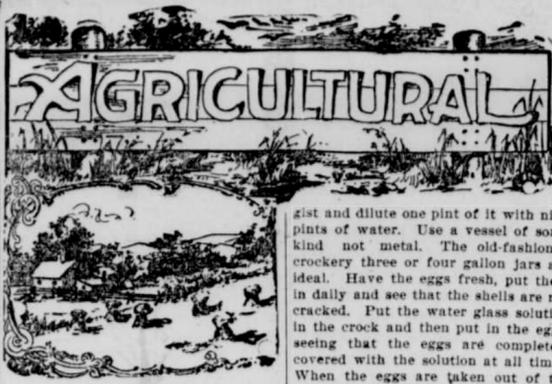
A desert island in the middle of Snake river is one of the most unique strawberry gardens in the State of Washington, says the San Francisco Chronicle. The land is surrounded by water and yet so dry that even sage brush and desert weeds will not grow except under irrigation. For six months in the year the residents are practically cut off from communication with the outside world of humanity. High waters make the river too dangerous to cross in boats and the ice of winter closes all approaches from either shore. On this lonely spot grows the first strawberries of the Northwest.

Strawberry island is government property. The land has never been surveyed and probably will never be platted as available for the homesteader. It is a great mass of sand dunes and cactus covered stones. The Snake river carries down from its mountain sources immense deposits of sand bearing glistening flakes of gold. Many acres of land have been created from these deposits. The winds sweep up the river and great dust storms obscure the sun for days and even weeks in the spring months. Yet the strawberries grow and ripen to perfection.

The loan claimant of this island has six acres planted to early strawberries. Surrounding his cabin is a great field of forty acres planted to alfalfa. He keeps a band of cattle and requires the help of many women and children in harvesting his berries and caring for the milk and butter. When other sections are clothed in mantles of snow this sandy desert is ripening the strawberries for which the people in the inland cities of Spokane and Butte pay 25 to 40 cents a cup. The grower receives from \$4 to \$6 a crate for his fruits.

Irrigation is the secret of success in producing strawberries from the desert. Water is lifted from the river by means of current motors or wheels lashed to a movable screw. Sometimes the river runs twenty feet below the level of the beach. Then the pipes, attached to the water motor are made longer and the water lifted to a higher point. When the river is high and threatens to wash away the island the water wheels work easily and pump great volumes on the land. Small ditches carry water from the pump's point of discharge to the fields, where it is distributed in furrows.

Strawberry island is a great producer of wealth. The owner has an income of about \$500 an acre every year. Last season he made a net profit of \$1,500 from the field of six acres planted to berries. He grows none but the largest and brightest colored varieties and does not attempt to compete with the general market. When others are shipping their berries he has completed his work and the remnant is given to families of campers, who pitch tents about the island to fish for the great Columbia river salmon.



The Hanging of the Kettle.

There are many farmers in need of something convenient to hang a large kettle on. Many support the kettle on three stones, which is unsatisfactory, especially if the heat cracks one stone and the kettle tips over. The accompanying cut is drawn from a photograph I took recently on a neighboring farm, and it comes very near to explaining itself. The device consists of three moderately heavy pieces of wood for legs, which are attached together at the top by a heavy bolt. Some six or eight inches below the union of the three legs a heavy clevis is secured to the middle leg. From this clevis two chains extend downward to proper distance and double backward to fasten on to the ears of the kettle.

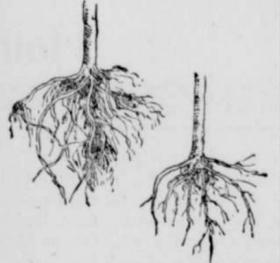


KETTLE PROPERLY SUSPENDED.

which then hangs suspended. The length of the legs will depend on convenience and the size of the kettle they are to support. Those shown in the cut are eleven feet in length and were made from medium sized well seasoned fence rails. When the derrick is not in use it can be lowered, folded together and laid away.—Cor. Orange Judd Farmer.

Pruning Roots of Trees.

While there may be merit in the method of planting known as the Stringfellow plan, which provides for cutting away most of the roots of the young tree as well as the top, it is a plan which does not work well with all species of trees nor in all soils. As a result the average orchardist will stick to the best of the old methods which provides for a cutting back of the top so as to form a proper head and balancing the roots somewhat after the manner of the lower cut in the illustration. The upper cut shows the roots of the two-year-old tree after it



HOW ROOTS ARE PRUNED.

is dug in the nursery and the lower drawing shows how all the mass of fibrous roots, which would die anyway after exposure to the sun, have been cut away and most of the longer roots shortened. It is easier to plant a tree prepared in this manner and strong young rootlets will form from the ends of the roots which were cut, forming a mass of roots during the one growing season following planting which will give the young tree a good start in life.—Indianapolis News.

Fate of the Old Hen.

After the old hen has raised her crop of chicks, she is not a fit subject for the carcass market. Turn her out on the range to get strong and in good shape to be fattened for the summer or early fall market, if she is not to be carried through another winter. It will cost little or nothing to feed her through the coming months and with a few months or even two months on the range she can be plumped up so as to fatten at the smallest possible expense, and the carcass will be reasonably tender and fairly satisfactory to the buyer. If she is not to be set again don't be in a hurry to fatten her away from the chicks. Let her run with them as long as they will stay with her, for she can do no harm, and may be able to help them more or less even though they may be half-grown. Don't be too quick to say the old hen is no longer useful or profitable.

Preserving the Eggs.

By the water glass method eggs may be preserved, and be in good condition for use several months later, although they will not pass as strictly fresh eggs. The procedure is as follows: Obtain the water glass from the drug-

gist and dilute one pint of it with nine pints of water. Use a vessel of some kind not metal. The old-fashioned crockery three or four gallon jars are ideal. Have the eggs fresh, put them in daily and see that the shells are not cracked. Put the water glass solution in the crock and then put in the eggs, seeing that the eggs are completely covered with the solution at all times. When the eggs are taken out of the solution rinse them in clean water, wipe them dry and they are ready for use.

Growth of Agriculture.

According to the statistical abstract of the United States, issued from the Department of Commerce and Labor, there were, in 1900, 5,739,657 farms in this country, an increase of 1,175,016 in ten years. There were engaged in agriculture, in 1900, 10,453,219 persons, while in 1890 there were 8,565,926, an increase of 1,872,293. The increase in the total population for the period stated was 13,071,484, so of this increase over 14 per cent must have engaged in farming.

The value of farms and farm property increased from \$16,082,267,680 in 1890 to \$20,514,001,838 in 1900, a difference of \$4,431,734,149. The value of farm products increased \$1,304,070,252, the value in 1900 being \$3,764,177,706. This does not include value of products not fed to live stock.

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

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

In the production of corn and wheat there has been a corresponding increase. In 1890 there were 1,489,970,000 bushels produced and in 1900 2,105,102,516 bushels, while of wheat in 1890 the crop was 399,262,000 bushels and it increased to 522,229,505 bushels in 1900.

Thus it will be seen that whatever the gain in commerce and manufactures the relative gain in farming has held its own. Agriculture, too, has been lifted to a higher plane than formerly. It is no longer said that "anybody can farm." Agriculture is rapidly attaining the dignity of a profession.

Using Free Help.

Frequent reference has been made to the advantages of using the State experiment stations, which land owners in each State help support, hence have an undoubted right to ask their help when needed. The director of one of the State stations told the writer not long ago that he hoped the subject might not be urged too hard, else the stations might be in the same trouble he was with a farmer in his State. This farmer makes it his business to send to the State station a sample of everything he buys for the farm in the way of stock food and fertilizers and has profited greatly by the plan. If he is attracted to a certain stock food, for example, he will buy the smallest purchasable quantity and send a liberal sample to the State experiment station and obtain its opinion as to its worth. He bases further purchases on the report received from the station and by this plan saves many dollars. Do thou likewise.

Do not be afraid that you will give the station men too much work. Some of them need more work, while the majority of them will be more than glad to be of use to you, for they will see the beginning of an era of usefulness which has hitherto been denied the stations and solely because the worst enemies of the institutions have been to help—the farmers. Try the plan the next time you buy grain or mixed feeds for the stock. You will learn much and save more.

As to the Strawberry.

In some cases and with some varieties it will pay to crop the same bed of strawberries two or even three years, although most growers go to the other extreme and take but one crop and do not use the same soil again for berries until the third year. Possibly this is carrying the rotation too far. We plan to set the berry plants after a crop of corn, fruit them two years and then plow under and set to tomatoes, potatoes or beans, sowing crimson clover in midsummer and plowing under the following spring, when the ground is again set to strawberries.

Some of our neighbors go to a year better and sow corn the year following the turning under of the crimson clover, putting the berry plants out the spring following the corn and permitting the ground to lie fallow during the winter. The plan works well, though we dislike the idea of not having the ground covered during the winter. However, as this may be a matter of personal opinion, we have no comment to make beyond the one that we like our plan best and consider it the most profitable one.

Hen on Goose Eggs.

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

WASHINGTON GOSSIP

Self-government is gradually developing in the Philippines. In 1902 Congress passed a law which provided that a census of the population of the islands should be taken, and that within two years after the completion of the census a representative popular assembly should be elected. The census was completed on March 27th of the present year, and on that day Governor Wright issued a proclamation fixing March 27, 1907, as the date for the first general Filipino election. The legislative body to be chosen is to contain between 50 and 100 members, elected by popular vote, and is to form, jointly with the Philippine Commission, the two-chambered legislature of the new government. This legislature, besides making laws, is to elect two commissioners to represent them in Washington. It is expected that these commissioners will be allowed to sit in the American Congress much as the territorial delegates now have seats there.

Moroccan affairs continue to hold an important place in international discussion. The desire of Germany, as stated in a memorandum to the United States, is for the maintenance of the "open door" in Morocco, for the preservation of the status quo, and for the protection of the commercial interests of all trading nations. It is pointed out, however, on the other hand, that the Anglo-French agreement of April, 1904, expressly declared for the principle of commercial freedom. April 6th, King Edward, on his way to join Queen Alexandra at Marseilles, paid a brief visit to President Loubet at Paris, and the incident, following so soon upon the call of Emperor William at Tangiers, was interpreted by the French press as a reaffirmation of the Anglo-French agreement.

A reduction in freight rates on the Panama railway was suggested to Secretary Taft by the ministers in Washington of the republics in Central America and on the west coast of South America. They said that it cost much more to ship goods to New York by way of this railway than to send the same goods to London by the Strait of Magellan. They also asked that equal facilities be granted to goods shipped by all steamship lines, and charged that under the old management—that is, before the United States gained control of the road—various lines were discriminated against. Secretary Taft promised that the discriminations would cease at once.

The President has, by proclamation, invited "all the nations of the earth to take part in the commemoration" of the 300th anniversary of the first English settlement in America, at Jamestown, "by sending their naval vessels to the said celebration and by making such representations of their military organizations as may be proper." The festivities are to last from May to November, 1907, and are described as "an international naval, military and marine celebration." Gen. Fitzhugh Lee, the president of the managers of the exposition, at the time of his death, was engaged in persuading the various States to be represented at the exposition in some official way.

John Hay, when an undergraduate at Brown University, assisted in defending some lower classmen from unfair treatment in a hazing episode; but when a classmate recently wrote him about the incident, he humorously replied, "I remember nothing of my heroic conduct in the Gordon case. But my recollection of everything in those far-off days is dim, and heroism was my daily habit. I couldn't sleep nights if I hadn't saved somebody's life. Now I only save a nation now and then." Secretary Hay, just before he replied to the letter, must have been reading some Washington correspondent's description of how he had prevented the dismemberment of China.

Chinese Neutrality.—It has been officially disclosed at Washington that the movement in February, 1904, for concerted action by the neutral powers to induce the belligerents in the far East to respect the neutrality of China was made by the United States at the initiative of Germany. The reason that this fact was not made known at the time, it is stated, was that the German Emperor felt that the suggestion would be more certain to be adopted if it emanated from Washington rather than from Berlin.

With the beginning of the new administration for the second time in succession there is no change of party control, whereas from Garfield's inauguration to McKinley's there was every time an alternation from party to party, which made the retiring President seem almost like a captive chief gracing the triumph of a conqueror.

In the Sunday schools of the United States there are fewer pupils by about five millions than the number enrolled in the public schools. Putting the fact in another form, of every three girls and boys who attend the day schools, only two go to Sunday school. It would be a delicate task to apportion the responsibility for this state of affairs; but it is fair to suggest that when children stay away from the public schools their parents are held responsible.