

WICKLY'S WOODS

By H. W. TAYLOR

CHAPTER XXI.—(Continued.)

Mr. Billy Biler, talking very earnestly, and mumbling his words a little by prying among his white, even teeth with a goose quill toothpick, and constantly turning his white looking eyes out of their corners so as to see what Mr. and Mrs. Wickly are doing, pauses a minute after having fairly stated his case, before he goes on to argue it.

"So now you're the heaviest taxpayer in this county, by a long ways, Miss Lizzy. Un if you haven't no vote you've got influence—plenty of it! You are the very person to bring Con Redden round all right. And I hope you'll do that for me."

What else he said in the innumerable repetitions of every statement which he happened to think, as a lawyer, needed repeating, she could not remember. He staid long after her own somewhat affecting meeting with her father. In fact, so far from having the delicacy to withdraw, he assumed an air of legal adviser and supervisor of the whole affair, making remarks upon the various phases of the unhappy portion of this episode that were intended to be humorous and light, but which were, in fact, coarse and brutal.

Again, the good-natured people of Sandtown who "neighbored" with the Wicklys, or the Weeklys, as they were indifferently called, dropped in to see the "Squar." It was plain that they still had apprehensions—serious apprehensions—of the mental condition and stability of the returned patient.

"Hello, 'Squar,'" said Conrad Redden, when he came in some time after 11 o'clock at night. "Hitts mighty late fur usse farmers to be up, but I've got to shake han's. How're yuh feelun, Squar, any way? Tar'd, haist yuh? Rld all the way over h-yur without restun? Better lay down, purty soon, haist yuh? Wont do to set up all night, yuh know."

There was the deprecating solicitude in every word and look of Conrad Redden's, that showed very plainly that he could not divest himself of the preconceived notion that the "Squar" still needed medical advice and supervision, and in his opinion, and that of the public of Sandtown, he might always need it.

"Well, I got to go home now, Squar. Lizzy, yuh didn't come down to ar house this evenun? They was lokun fur yuh! I think Huntley wanted to see yuh bad, 'fore he left."

"Is he gone?" she asked, with an unavailing effort to keep back the hot rush of blood to her face.

"Yes," said Conrad Redden, looking at her curiously and contemplatively. "He's gone. He had to light out on that train that went at 8:30. I thought he druv up h-yur before he went. I'm shore he did. Didn't yuh see 'im?" He was looking at her rather scrutinizingly.

"Yes, he drove up h-yur jist ahead of me," put in Mr. Biler, "but he couldn't stop a minute and he couldn't find where Lizzy was at. He said he'd write in reference to the payments on the land and the signing of deeds, and so on. Well, if you're ready, Conrad, I'll go down with you a piece."

CHAPTER XXII.

Congressman Billy Biler having been John Wickly's attorney in the prosecution of his claim against the English crown for his thirteen hundred and twenty-fourth of the Wickly estate, naturally retained his employment in the management of the much greater estate that had suddenly and fortuitously fallen to John Wickly's pretty and accomplished daughter as she was termed by the very first issue of the Sandtown Gazette, after the fabulous purchase of the Wickly Woods by the munificent S. & S. W.

In this capacity of attorney and counselor, Mr. Billy Biler found it indispensable to the proper conduct of the business that he should put in an appearance at the Wickly house at least once a day, when he was not in company with John Wickly, journeying to and from the great city of the lakes that was faster and faster reaching out across the prairies and drawing into itself all the ambition and all the enterprise of the Washington country.

The question of the proper, safe and profitable investment of such large sums of money being one in which Miss Lizzy Wickly herself must actually be consulted in direct reference to her opinion achieved upon a personal inspection of the property or securities, it also became indispensable that she should be a member of the traveling party on many of these expeditions to that grasping and reaching, and hauling city that seemed to be seriously attempting the feat of spreading itself all over the great yellow and purple-flowered prairies outlying and contiguous to it.

She had been to the city once before her first trip in the aftermath of heiress. That was on a rainy afternoon when the great fat prairie looked like a mighty pool, white and boundless, and bleak and chill. Then she had seen the little, new, somber-hued cottages, dripping with rain, and the great smoke-blackened parallelograms of brick, looking so illimitable in their interlacing reduplications as the cars flew along upon—that it had been days before she recovered from the sense of loneliness and depression that the inevitable contrasting of her own little familiar Sandtown with this mighty black-browed, puffing, roaring, steaming, ringing, reaching and grabbing city had caused her.

Not at all the less had she remembered the very different sense of quiet Sabbath loneliness that had displaced the other, on her return to Sandtown. How still and oppressively slow and quiet, and deliberate this little old Sandtown was to be sure!

Now, however, it was as a well-known rich and unmarried young woman that she went. And how differently everything appeared to her. Surely wealth does something!

It was the president's own car that took her. And how many gallant and accomplished gentlemen were introduced to her by Congressman Billy Biler, and by the president himself!

She had never dreamt that here could be in all the world one-half so many presidents as she met on every trip. There

were presidents of banks, and presidents of railroads, and presidents of insurance companies, and presidents of mining, stock, real estate and newspaper companies, and—these were only a foretaste.

What agreeable and accomplished gentlemen they were, too! How they were perpetually putting this and that, and the other, at her disposal. What bales of invitations she received to every imaginable kind of an entertainment, public and private. And how was she astonished to find that her very first visit designed originally to occupy but three days, drew it itself irresistibly and inexorably into four weeks, in which time she had gone with each and every president in the known world, she believed, to some fascinating entertainment of some sort or other—always chaperoned by her happy and buoyant father and Congressman Billy Biler of course.

The newspapers had annoyed her a little by publishing apparently well authenticated statements, always from reliable sources, and conveying the detailed information of her approaching marriage with a certain brilliant young Congressman and four or five young and fascinating presidents of banks and railroads. But her natural buoyant organization soon enabled her to so far overcome her annoyance as to permit her to laugh as heartily as could her jubilant father.

And how quickly she learned some of the ways of the city! For instance, she had not completed the second week of her first stay, until she had acquired the remarkable art, utterly unknown to Hoosierdom—of having a headache just at the time when, had it not been for the timely interposition of the said headache, she would have been compelled to entertain Congressman Billy Biler, or one of the five young and fascinating presidents above mentioned.

About that time, too, that is to say about the beginning of the era of the headaches, she fell into the habit of taking her father's left arm and slipping out of the side entrance of the hotel, and then walking him all up and down State street and Wabash avenue, and goodness only knows where she didn't walk him, according to his own assertions!

On one of these walks she had acted in such an unaccountably strange and reckless way as to seriously disconcert her father, and even begin to make him think that the city was entirely too exciting for her; although nobody could deny that it was just the thing for him.

They had been talking about Mr. Mason Huntley. Or, to speak more accurately, he had been talking about that mysterious and elusive gentleman who had not shown himself or signified in any way whether he yet held residence on any part of this planet, when all at once Lizzy stopped, dropped his arm, ran a little way down the sidewalk, and just as he was starting to run after, she turned and ran back in great and eager agitation.

"Call that cab, father! Quick, or he won't hear you! There! Cab! Cab! Cab!" She had screamed out in such a shrill, resonant, penetrating Hoosier, Reelfoot Prairie voice, that two or three cabs came dashing up that way. Then she had literally broken into one of them before the driver could open the door, and pulling her father in by the collar, had stood up where she could see and tell the driver where to go.

And my! but she did tell him. She nearly drove the fellow wild telling him to go first this way and then that, and now to gallop his horses faster and faster! And now to pull short up and turn round and dodge down a cross street somewhere! What a lot of wagon drivers stopped and shook their whips at that cabman! But he was a conscientious fellow, and obeyed orders with a single-mindedness of purpose and an energy that would have insured success if success had been one of the attainable things.

But it wasn't. The young lady showed after awhile a wavering and a hesitancy in her directions that discovered an irresolution not incompatible with the stern and peremptory decision of her earlier manner. At the end of the half-hour she gave it up, and told the cabman to drive back to the hotel.

As Mr. John Wickly handed her out at the side entrance and hunted the cabman's fare out of his vest pocket, he said:

"Lizzy, if you take me such another chase I'll start right back to Sandtown with you on the spot."

"Sandtown?" cried the cabman in smiling surprise and evident gratification. "Sandtown, Indyanay?"

"Yes."

"Well, by gum! I used to live right down there at the lower end of Reelfoot Pon myself. Know everybody from there up to the Overcoat road. Anything else I kin do fur yuh!" There was so much of that remarkable Hoosier trait of "sandtown" in the cabman's smiling and ready way, that Lizzy, who had been so much of the cabman, that Lizzy instantly beckoned him to her and held a low-toned conversation with him, in which her father only heard this:

"What? The yaller'n? The yaller-wheeled buggy? Why, I'd a kotch that yaller-wheeled buggy way up h-yonder at Madison street of I'd knowed him was the one."

Then there was more of this conversation in an undertone, ending with this, that Mr. Wickly heard:

"I'll be right h-yur to the minute. H-yur's my number. You knowed old Cappen Joe Ellet up awn Big Rattlesnake Creek? Well, I'm little Joe Ellet's son! Bad Ellet! You've h-yearn um talk about Bud Ellet? Clabber-eyed Bud, they use to call me! My eyes is all right now. Un I'll do anything I kin fur you folks! Jist lemmy know." And the cabman was up and off.

On the next day there were more presidents to take them to new places of interest, and Bud was sent away empty as to his cab, but with his fare in his pocket, against his earnest protest. In fact, it was not during that visit that Lizzy Wickly found an opportunity to ride as far as she wished in Bud Ellet's cab.

But on the second or third, perhaps, they had slipped away again between periods of possible new presidents, and

had bowled along those delightful, long, broad streets on the north side almost a whole afternoon. Again had John Wickly made Mr. W. Mason Huntley the subject of their conversation. He had been to the city office of the S. & S. W. to make inquiries as to his whereabouts. There he had found that Mr. Huntley was only a special agent of the company, and nobody could tell him anything about where he was at present.

They did not know whether he was in the employ of the company, even. And as to knowing where he lived, and such like minutiae, that was too much for the red headed young man who was writing at a desk all the time he was making short and pointed answers to these questions. The president might know, but he was out of the city. Ah! where was he? Mr. Wickly had ventured to ask. Where? And there was astonishment for you, on that clerk's face! He had said out of the city! And there were only two geographical points to him—one of which was in the city, and that was of vast import, while the other was out of the city, and that was of no import at all!

Mr. Wickly, with his great exhilaration, and his fair average sense of humor, was making this conversation in the repetition, as ludicrous as possible for the purpose of amusing his daughter a little. For when they were alone she was utterly unlike her old self—being dull, absent-minded and brooding, or surprisingly excited and anxious.

For this purpose, too, he had told her how every man and boy along the Big Rattlesnake Creek had procured long iron rods for drilling in the ground, and were spending their Sundays and rainy days, when they couldn't "plow for wheat," in rumbling over the hills north of the Overcoat road, drilling down into and below the yellow clay, after coal. And many of them had found good veins, too! And the whole country was wild about it! And companies were being formed to work these mines. And the Sandtown Farmers' Bank had resumed business, with Columbus Redden as cashier and president. And money was plenty again. And—

Lizzy, springing straight up off her seat, and fairly screaming to Bud Ellet, through the little aperture in the roof of the cab, back of his seat!

"I need 'um!" Bud answers, swinging his whip. "Blame it don't run the thing to us hole this time."

And away they go at a terrific pace up the street with a yellow-wheeled, top buggy, with the top laid back, leading them about a square, and fairly humming along "after a mighty good steper," as Bud turned to inform Lizzy.

Not was it a very difficult task this time for Bud Ellet to "run the thing to us hole!" The "thing" was a comparatively short run of six or eight squares up the thoroughfare, and then turned upon a little, short, quiet street to the left, and stopped before a small, plain two-story cottage.

Directing Bud to wait and watch the horse that had been tied to a hitching post—Lizzy, preceding her father, ran up the front steps, and finding no door bell, turned the knob, pushed the door open and walked into a little hallway. Through an open doorway on her left she saw a man standing beside a little table, and removing his gloves slowly and abstractedly, as he looked down at some plans and diagrams, drawn in broad red and black lines upon a wide sheet of paper.

"At last I've chased you to your lair," Lizzy said, as she threw the door wide open and almost ran into the room, with her right hand outstretched in good, hearty Hoosier fashion, and her pretty face beaming. "How do you do, Mr. Huntley? And haven't you treated me wretchedly! Positively wretchedly!"

(To be continued.)

RAILWAY SAFETY.

Standards on Better American Roads as High as in England.

American railroads have recently come in for considerable unfavorable criticism on account of the number of serious accidents in some of the less thickly populated districts of the United States, while at the same time English roads have been praised as having attained a combination of speed and safety unknown in this country. As a matter of fact, many American railroads are gradually being brought to a standard of safety which is fully as high as the English, while the comfort of passengers is given far more attention here than on the other side of the water.

From the American standpoint safe railroadings is primarily dependent on a system of signals which are practically infallible. This is attained by a combination of automatic machinery and human intelligence, each of which supplements the other and each of which is powerless to do anything without the consent of the other. In the operation of such a system the salient feature is the division of the road into short sections or "blocks" by means of signals—worked primarily by an electrical connection with the rails.

On the New Haven system, for instance, which has built up a line of 233 miles from Boston to New York that complies with all the requirements found necessary in American experience for safety, these blocks are from half a mile to four miles in length. A train cannot enter one of them until the preceding train has left it, a fact indicated by the rising of an automatic semaphore at its further end, which protects the next block ahead.

The system is so arranged that the normal position of all semaphores is at danger and were the towerman a maniac he could do no harm beyond neglecting to lower a signal at the proper time to let approaching trains through. He might tie up all traffic on the road in this way, but he could cause no accidents.

While signal systems, roadbeds and bridges have been brought as near perfection as ingenuity can bring them, the safety of others than their passengers is not neglected by the well-managed railroads. Between New York and New Haven, for example, a distance of seventy-three miles, there are no grade crossings at all and between New Haven and New London there are only five, none of which is considered dangerous.



For Taking Up Barb Wire.

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

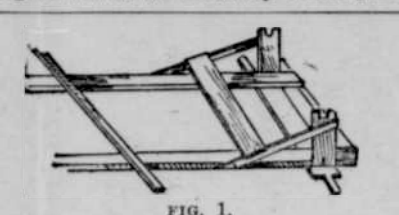


FIG. 1.

securely bolted to side pieces, and high enough to reach above wheels. The cross bar may be 1½ inches square, ends round for handles. The whole (see Fig. 1) should be well braced, as it must be strong. For windlass axle (Fig. 2), take oak, 1½ inches square, 24 inches long, fit crank on one end, for reel, take barb-wire reel, cut hole through it square to fit axle. To take up wire, fasten end to reel, take cross bar in left hand, turn crank with right.



FIG. 2.

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

Breeding Polled Calves.

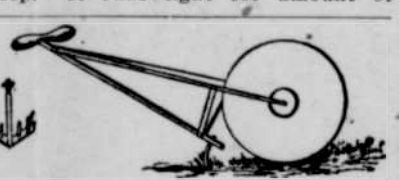
Answering the query, "Are double standard Polled Durham bulls as sure to get polled calves from horned cows as are Angus bulls?" F. S. Hines says in Breeder's Gazette:

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

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

Hand Cultivator.

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



WEED KILLER AND CULTIVATOR.

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

Ropy Milk After Setting.

Bacteria in one form is probably responsible for the ropy milk that we hear about coming after setting for the cream. In such cases the first thing to do is to thoroughly disinfect the stables by the use of carbolic acid and then a thorough whitewashing of walls and ceiling. Then turn attention to the utensils used—the milk pails and the other vessels. The chances are they at the bottom of the trouble and need scalding repeatedly with hot water, and then more cleansing, such as only the sun will give. If these remedies abate the trouble, as they probably will, then remember that this scalding with hot water should be done daily with every vessel used in the dairy. Hot water and sun are death to bacteria.

When Lambs Need Dipping.

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

Hay Versus Corn Fodder.

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

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

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

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

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

Harrow for Stony Ground. Take six pieces of 3½x2½ inches. Plane them and set them as shown in illustration. Sink the wings into the center piece ½ inch. This saves making mortise. Get ½-inch bolts with heads and bore holes as shown by dotted lines. The hinges, etc., can be

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

This season's growth of raspberry canes should be pinched off and they will throw out fruit laterals. This is important, for on it depends next season's crop of berries.

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

In May the seeds of sweet corn and all the wrinkled varieties of peas should be sown and a little later cucumbers, melons, squashes, pumpkins and gourds may be put in the open ground. A fork full of well rotted manure in the hill is the proper food for these plants.



WASHINGTON GOSSIP.

It is stated that in his next annual message President Roosevelt will recommend that the balance of \$22,000,000 due this country from China as indemnity for the Boxer outrages be released from payment on condition that China devote the money to education.

The claims for American missionary property destroyed, amounting to \$2,000,000, have been satisfied, and the cost of our expedition to Pekin was not over \$1,000,000. An award of \$25,000,000 indemnity to the United States was felt to be excessive, though not larger in proportion than the amount agreed on for the other nations that marched to the relief of foreigners in Pekin. But the idea of taking the amount awarded is distasteful to this country for several reasons. It is far too much, under the circumstances, and China's helplessness appeals to sympathy. The plight of the immense Chinese empire excites compassion. Its territory is a battle ground for other nations, and the neutrality of its harbors is violated by belligerents. Non-resistance is a terribly poor national policy. On the part of the United States there is a sincere wish that China may be able to claim a place among nations in which it can not be wantonly imposed upon. To hand the \$22,000,000 to China without conditions might be construed as a criticism on the countries that take all the indemnity awarded them. But China can accept our share as a gift to an object which it holds in high esteem, that of education. Americans do not want the money as a windfall. They wish for China better times and national security, a position in the world where it can respect itself and command the respect of others. The relinquishment of the \$22,000,000 will strike the people of the United States favorably.

From the United States Census Bureau has recently come the report of the first complete census of the Philippine Islands. Nearly eight thousand people were employed in gathering the statistics, and all but 125 of them were native Filipinos. This census, therefore, is the first in modern times which a tropical people have made of themselves. Many interesting facts were disclosed by the canvass of the islands. In the first place, it was found that the population numbered 7,600,000; that near 7,000,000 possessed some degree of civilization and professed the Christian religion. It was also discovered that almost the whole population live in villages, as there are nearly 14,000 villages with an average population of 500. Of the larger towns, 35 have 5,000 population each; four have 10,000; and Manila has 220,000. The people own the houses, or "huts," in which they live—only 6 per cent of the houses are rented—and the farmers own their farms. About 4,000 children are enrolled in the schools, and they are said to be eager to learn. The night-schools in Manila, 21 in number, have an enrollment of more than 4,000 adults who are studying English.

The Cuban minister, Senor Gonzalo Quesada, says that in some respects Havana can give Washington a few points on the management of schools, writes a correspondent from the capital. Some months ago the municipal authorities of Havana introduced a system which is gradually becoming popular in every part of the United States. It is called the "School City" and the system means simply governing the school as a township, electing a Mayor, a Board of Councilmen, and every officer needed for general government, even to that personage who commands the respect and admiration of the small boy in every part of the globe, the policeman. The poor urchins of the Cuban capital are enthusiastic over the plan, and the schools are filled to overflowing. Mr. Quesada is authority for the statement that nothing introduced since the Spanish departed has so aroused the pride and good qualities of the juveniles.

A new carpet has been purchased for the United States Senate. About 900 yards of material is required, and the cost of the carpet is a trifle over \$2,000. Carpet concerns all over the country had their agents in Washington in the hope of landing the contract. Colonel Randall, sergeant-at-arms, chose a green Wilton carpet made by a New England firm. The average life of Senate carpets is four years.

The Panama railway board of directors has decided to double-track the road across the isthmus to accommodate the increased business due to the construction of the canal without interfering with the ordinary freight business. The chairman of the Canal Commission has been made president of the railway company.

Fourth Assistant Postmaster General DeGraw has made public a report on the rural free delivery service in the United States, showing a total of 30,682 routes in operation May 1, with 4,708 petitions for the service pending in the postoffice department. On April 1 last there were 29,063 routes in operation and 4,521 petitions pending. Of the 4,708 cases pending, 884 have been assigned for establishment, either May 15 or June 1, leaving 3,824 petitions unacted on.