

WICKLY'S WOODS

By H. W. TAYLOR

CHAPTER XXIII.

Dropping his gloves upon the outspread map, and with an exclamation of unmistakable astonishment and delight, Mason Huntley sprang forward and seized the outstretched hand in his own. And then, while both were speaking so that neither could understand the other, he threw his arm about her, and seeing something in her eyes that at least did not repel him, he bent his head impulsively and pressed his lips again and again to hers, that were very perceptibly tinged with the pink of passion. John Wickly looked on in the greatest astonishment, set off and illuminated with a half-sarcastic smile of enjoyment.

"I don't care," said Lizzy, still holding Mr. Huntley's hand in her own, and plainly interposing to prevent him from dropping the encircling arm from her shoulder, as she half turned her head with a rosy flush upon her face and some pretty drops of shining tears in her eyes, and along the under lashes, while a smile of enchanting mingled shame and self-justification lighted up her face like a halo about an angel's head. "I don't care! He's treated me dreadfully—I mean horribly, since I've been here in the city. And I'm going to know why, before I let go of your hand sir," she continued, turning away from her father, and shaking her brown curls that hung so charmingly down from under her hat and down a little way upon the sides of her face.

"If that's it," said Mr. Wickly, with a sort of roguish shrugging of his shoulders, "I think I'll step out and see if those horses are standing all right. They might run away and leave us, you know. And then I can't be of any use whatever in this sort of an investigation," and he turned and went out, his daughter calling after him:

"You needn't, sir! I don't care if you are here. I shall say just what I've got to say, anyhow. Now, tell me what you meant by it, Mr. Huntley. Why did you tell me you would see me soon, if it were in your power, and then have me wait here in the city for weeks and weeks, passing me on the streets every day without a word or a look, or anything to indicate that you had ever had even a passing acquaintance with me? Wasn't it your place to come to me at once? Or, if you had any doubts about my treatment of you, couldn't you write to me? Do you think it was my place to chase you all over the city and hunt you down, without even a trace of you? Couldn't you even do so much to facilitate the search as to leave a hint of your whereabouts, upon which I could begin? Suppose I hadn't found you at all; would you have persisted in staying away forever?"

There was enough light from the afternoon sun coming in at the west and southwest windows of the room to throw a very effective gleam upon the lovely form of Lizzy Wickly, clad in a pale brown silk that shed its suit never along every line and curve. It had never seen her so richly dressed. She had never been so richly dressed. And there was, in the heightened effect of her charming dress upon her always pleasing face and figure, that best of all excuses for the very richest dresses that a woman can afford to wear. He stood a moment without a word, but with his eyes telling voluble stories eloquent with admiration, as they flew rapidly from the brown plumes in her darker brown silk hat, that framed her fresh, ruddy face so charmingly, with its broad, brown satin strings, tied in an elegant bow under her dimpled chin; down the sloping shoulders, with the line of faintly glittering light reflected from the silk threads, changing its direction as the bosom rose and fell in quick, sharp undulations of excitement and delight. Ah! W. Mason Huntley! If ever there were a pretty, straightforward, frank and fearless daughter of the Wabash, well worthy of the admiration, the respect and the love of a good man, for those qualities that enabled her to throw aside the conventionalities and go thus boldly about the city, to chase you down and take you to task for your neglect and misfeasance, then this is one!

"And have you actually been hunting me all the time?" he murmured, delightedly. "Have you actually felt that I have mistreated you in not going at once to see you? Have you had time, in all the rush and hurry of the last two months, to think about me long enough to make real search for me?"

He stopped to kiss her again and again, just as she was opening her pretty curbed lips to reply—and so frustrating the reply for a full twenty seconds.

"You know I have," she says, putting up her gloved hand to prevent another frustration of her reply. "I'm sure now, that you knew of it on the very first day that I chased you, and lost you behind a barricade of wagons. If I had known just what your scheme was, sir, I shouldn't have hunted you a step." And she slaps his face and then pulls it down to cure the blow with a kiss that heals like magic. "But you haven't told me one reason for your abstention—and a good one, too. No more shallow excuses will do. What was it?" She looked very eagerly and brightly expectant into his eyes.

"You know already. You know as well as I had said it in every possible form of phraseology," he retorted, laughing.

"But I want you to tell it, even if I do know it. And can you pretend to read a young woman's thoughts in such an off-hand manner? Or to presume upon my ability to read the purposes of such an arch impersonator and dissembler as you? Why in the world did you ever put on that ugly brown wig, Mr. Huntley? Now, there wasn't a particle of reason in that, you must confess. But go on and tell me first, why you didn't come to me at the hotel. Or before I came away from Sandtown, even." He stooped a little and kissed her again before he replied:

"I wanted you to see and mingle with the best people of the city. I wanted you to feel free to form any opinion of them, or of any one of them, without hindrance from me in any way. I knew that you felt sure of my love and devo-

tion. I wanted you also to feel sure of your own. You remember that you said to me on that night in the woods that it might not be abate to tell when you loved an ideal or a real man? You remember? I thought of that almost every hour, and wondered if I were to be punished by such a misadventure of all my plans."

"Ah, you cunning fellow, you! I suppose you didn't know that to surround yourself with all this mystery and difficulty was the best of all methods to make me think of nobody else! Why, it was equal to parents' dissent, I verily believe! Of course, none of the attractive young gentlemen whom I have met here had the slightest chance against all your mystery. But I'm really a little doubtful of you yet. Father's coming in now, and you must get into the cab with us, and go down to the hotel. I have hours of business conversation to be held with you, in relation to my numerous and important financial transactions. And I know of no one whom I could so complacently put in charge of my wealth as the man who put me in charge of it."

What a ride it was, to be sure! Bud Ellet, knowing by intuition, or perhaps by experience, just what was required of him, saw his party of three safely in the cab, and then concerning himself about nothing beyond making this the longest possible trip to the hotel, drove a slowly down one street and across up another, taking the party past all the prettiest and newest and grandest residences, and by every object of interest that he could think of, well knowing that nobody save John Wickly himself would be, by any probability within his comprehension, likely to see these sights.

CHAPTER XXIV.

In fact, the two lovers were in that state of ecstatic somnambulism in which, with eyes and ears wide open, they are able to see absolutely nothing, besides each other, and to hear no sounds save the murmured words that passed between themselves, to the perfect and inexorable exclusion of everybody else. Listening, as anybody in the world will listen, to the cooling of real lovers, and looking at them slyly through the wicket, as anybody in the world will look at real lovers, Bud Ellet could see and hear almost all that could have been seen and heard by John Wickly, leaning back on the front seat, in the shadow so deep as to be in effect absent, and therefore not at all in the way.

"There appeared to be some real excuse for my disguise and my impersonation of a fictitious individual," Mr. Huntley was saying, as his left arm fitted itself snugly into a comfortable support for her head, where his hand could be seen and heard, as he rested his left shoulder without the slightest inconvenience to anybody. "You see the other road held the mortgages as collateral for a debt of the Farmers' Bank. And by some means they had gotten a hint of the existence of coal veins under your land. I was employed by our company to go and make a thorough investigation of the whole matter as secretly and as quickly as possible. Fortunately for us and for you, the other company was not impressed with the value of the deposit to the extent of inducing them to act very promptly. And consequently my work was almost completed when they began their survey that revealed to them the great value of the deposit. Then came strategem and strife. Both companies had obtained rights of way, save some formalities on the part of the respondents that enabled us to claim exclusive right up to that time; and not only to put down our track, but to prevent them from putting down theirs. By means of my character of geologist, and my brown wig, I could come and go between the field of my explorations and the central office of the company without arousing suspicion. On the evening of the hurricane, you remember?"

"I have never forgotten it for a moment. I shall never forget it. I shall always love a storm of wind and rain so long as I live," she interrupts, leaning her brown silk hat down against his cheek in a way that everybody openly derides, and secretly applauds and envies. The protecting and caressing left hand upon her left shoulder beats a little tattoo of grateful applause.

"That evening I discovered that our adversary had become aware of what was going forward, and had prepared to outbid me for the land. It was necessary to go back and present all the facts that went to show the actual great value of the deposit, and get authority, and perhaps means, for a large advance upon the original sum I had been authorized to offer. I found some difficulty, and experienced a vexatious delay in this branch of the work. And when I was finally ready, I found a force of armed men to oppose our rightful entry upon the land, and so was compelled to meet force with force. A bloody conflict was probably avoided by the timely and determined interposition of old Conrod Redden, who, when he discovered that some one else had been at the bottom of the troubles of the Sandtown Farmers' Bank, and that it was not at all to blame, took part with us very heartily and saved us from a very formidable peril in the shape of the militia of Big Rattlesnake Creek and Reelfoot Pond. And now you know all the mysteries of the geological survey of Wickly's Woods."

Not many days after there was a great stir at Sandtown; this time not at all a military nor financial excitement. Quite the reverse. The Sandtown Brass Band was out in full uniform, and the Mount Zion Double Quartet Club were out, too, in an open wagon, and there was the whole available population of Sandtown and its immediate vicinity, gathered about the little new railroad station.

As the train from the city pulled in upon the sidetrack, the band, following a little signal blown by the leader, the young Doc Dikes, upon his cornet, struck up a very popular air of those days, and very appropriate to the occasion, in which every instrument saved the bass

drum had a turn at a bit of solo based upon "Haste to the Wedding."

Then the bridal party got off the car, and was instantly surrounded by the whole crowd, in the center of which the tall, angular form of Conrod Redden could be seen, a head above the tallest.

"Howdy, Mason! Howdy, Lizzy! Or do call you Miss Huntley, now, I 'low. Wash yuh much joy, both uv yuh! By gum! I nudder no more thought uh sich a theng than I thought uh gittun ma'nd ma'nd myself. By gum! I didn't. But Mason, you needn't to eiper on go-un away from Sandtown to live, an uh tackun the purtiest an smartust g-yurl they is about h-yur away from urse. We've gut use fur you h-yur, I kin tell yuh, my good feller! Un we ha'in't uh go-un to let yuh off, nuther. Drive thattair calige rou'n' h-yur, fellers! Closter! That's hit! Now, clam on thar, Lizzy! Mason! H-yur's yur father an mother, right an thar. Lots a room! Now, soon's tham fellers git ready to let the club seng, we'll pull out fur ar house. We're a go-un to have the bustunest infair yuh ever see, Lizzy! By gum; uv'erbody en Redden townshup's thar, by this time. There goes the sengers. 'At's Clumburse sengen tenor thataway! You kin h-yur 'um a mile uv a clur evener, when the wind ha'in't uh blowun. Listen at tham Reelfoot Pon' fellers uh yelun. Yah can't h-yur yurself fur 'um."

What a triumphal march down the Overcoat road, from the station to Conrod Redden's house! What waving of hats and handkerchiefs, and what yells and screeches! There was just that element of the ludicrous, that tint of absurdity, in this noisy demonstration that made it doubly acceptable to the fun-loving Sandtowners. It was an unexpected demonstration, and so had the features of a huge and successful practical joke which the Hoosier loves so well; while it served as an ample opportunity for all to join in a public exhibition of respect and admiration, which the true Hoosier delights to make in honor of any citizen who, in any walk of life, attains distinction and so reflects luster upon his native State, or his adopted town and country.

"There's the Woods," Lizzy whispers in Mr. Huntley's ear. He turns, and glances up the little woods road that branches off from the Overcoat road and winds away into the recesses of the forest, now beginning to exchange its gay green coat for a mantle of brown, trimmed with knots and fringes of yellow, and cardinal and purple.

"My darling wife," he whispers, "I want to keep that little, lone, brier-fringed road just as it is, so long as you shall love me."

(The end.)

WHEN A REINDEER IS ANGRY

He Will Try to Paw a Man to Death Without Mercy or Reason.

We were forced to wait three days after it had stopped snowing for a crust to form so that we could travel again. It was with many misgivings that we began the last half of the journey, since the snow was now very deep and the danger of our sinking into drifts was great. To add to our general feeling of fear, the reindeer behaved very badly and were exceedingly unruly. The wind had moderated somewhat, but it was still intensely cold.

We had traveled half the day without any serious mishap and were beginning to forget our fears at starting out, when we sped merrily down a mountain side, singing and hallooing at the top of our voices, and ran into a gulch and stuck there. The songs stopped in our throats, and we sprang to our feet to sink waist deep in the drifts that had entrapped us.

Every movement of our bodies sank us deeper in the snow drifts, and the infuriated reindeer, finding themselves caught in the banked-up snow, almost to their haunches, turned upon us and would have pawed us to death but for the forethought of Ooslik, who, seeing our danger, sprang forward and, hoisting the overturned pulks in his strong arms, brought them down over our heads and shoulders and pinned us out of sight in the snow.

We heard the hoofs of Uncle Ben beating on the pulk's side as he pawed up the snow in his efforts to get at us, and if we had not held to the straps and had not kept the pulk over us he would have tossed it into the air with one sweep of his horns and would still have had his bout with us, in which case we should have been helpless and completely at his mercy.

For the first time we had occasion to see how fierce an angry reindeer can be. When he was convinced that he could not reach us Uncle Ben turned upon Ooslik, and we heard the Eskimo shouting and clubbing the deer as he ran in and out of the pulks in a swift circuit, pursued by the bellowing reindeer.

We spent an exciting half hour under the pulks, with the hoofs of the deer rattling like hail on the frozen boards, and then the unusual commotion ceased all at once, for the reindeer had found a lichen bed. In a jiffy they were pawing up the snow in their hurry to get at the succulent morsel, and we were forgotten.

Amalik and Ooslik lifted the pulks from our heads and dug us up out of the snow and set us on our feet. By the time the reindeer had eaten themselves into a passable humor Amalik and Ooslik led them back to the pulks.

We had four hours of traveling before we came in sight of the corral that had sent us the reindeer from Eaton Station. As soon as the deer scented the well-known corral they quickened their strides so that we reached the station before it was quite dark, and crawled from the sleds with a deep feeling of relief, glad beyond measure to be at home after the perils of our protracted journey.—St. Nicholas.

In India the power given off by a motor is sometimes expressed in elephant equivalents, a twenty-two horse motor being described as a three elephant power vehicle.

IRRIGATION PRODUCES SWEETS.

Beet Sugar Making in the West Is a Very Interesting Process.

In some of the Western States, especially Wisconsin, Nebraska, Colorado, and the western part of Kansas, the growing of beets for sugar, has become a recognized industry. Large factories for the conversion of the beet into sugar have been erected, and here are employed large numbers of men during the fall and winter months.

Colorado leads in the production of beets. This can be accounted for by the same reason that she is noted for her cantaloupes; that is, irrigation and the large numbers of days of sunshine. The sun shines on fully 300 days of the year and the beet is stimulated to a wonderful growth.

In growing beets the ground is prepared in much the same way as for cantaloupes, a thorough breaking and plowing of the ground being necessary for best results. After leveling the ground, which makes irrigation easier, the beet drill is brought into use. This drill is on the order of an ordinary grain drill, with the exception that it only plants four rows 18 inches apart at a time, and has no attachments for drilling in fertilizer. On the drill are two small shovels, placed so that they make two furrows between the two rows on each side. These furrows carry the irrigating water, which soaks back and moistens the seed.

When through with the seeding, the water is turned into the furrows made by the drill, between each two rows. The water is kept running until the seed is thoroughly soaked, care being taken that the water does not overflow very much, as this causes the ground to bake, and the sprouts cannot force their way through the crust thus formed. When plants have obtained the height of one-half inch to an inch, the cultivator is brought into use. This cultivator is drawn by one

all. The first lot of water turned in takes out 50 per cent of the sugar, and the second lot takes 50 per cent of the remainder. This is repeated ten times, and in the end has exhausted all the sugar from the slices to within one-tenth of one per cent. The slices remaining after this process are dropped from the tanks and run through large presses, and the partly dried pulp is used for feeding cattle, it being a great milk and flesh producer.

The juice remaining is of a dark brown color, containing much organic matter not sugar. It is run into tall tanks holding a couple thousand gallons, and here the lime solution which takes out the organic matter, is added. It now goes through a series of bollings, filtering and clarifying processes, which leave the fluid a moderately thick syrup, ready to be boiled down to sugar. The syrup is pumped up into large round vacuum pans. Inside these pans are coiled large copper steam pipes, and a large air pump produces a high vacuum and removes the evaporated water so that the syrup boils very rapidly and at a very low temperature. This boiling mass is watched through glass windows in the sides of the pans, and when small grains begin to appear they are fed by adding fresh syrup until they reach the required size. When the size is right, and the water evaporated sufficiently, the steam is turned off, the pump stopped, and the mass is allowed to run into the tanks below, by opening a valve at the outlet in the bottom of the pan.

The syrup at this stage has the appearance of dark molasses, thickened with granulated sugar, and is so thick that it will barely run. This is put into the "centrifugals," large whirling drums having their sides perforated, and lined with gauze. As these machines whirl around, the sugar rises along the sides of the drum, and the



Maple-sugar-making is getting to be a restricted industry, and may, indeed, become a lost art. The Bureau of Forestry, which has recently made a study of the business, has brought some interesting facts to light. Since 1850 the area of maple-sugar-farming has greatly changed and shrunk. In early days maple-sugar was made even in the South, because cane-sugar was scarce and expensive. In New England, New York and a few other States the industry has held its own or been extended. The bureau finds that seven-eighths of what is sold as maple-sugar or maple-syrup is spurious; but in most cases the adulteration is the work of middlemen, not of the producers. The net income of a maple-sugar grove is conservatively estimated at \$3 an acre; and since the work can be done at a time when there is little other farm employment, and the grove will also furnish the family firewood without deterioration, a sugar-orchard is a fairly profitable investment.

Greater secrecy than ever before will be exercised this year concerning the scores made at target practice by the various vessels of the Atlantic fleet. While some of the details of the results may be made public, it is not the intention of the Navy Department to give out the scores. This government has never been able to gather information concerning the target practices of other navies and there seems to be no reason why the scores of our navy should be made public. Great Britain carefully guards all of the scores made by her warships. Some years ago an officer of a British vessel on the Asiatic station told of the results of the target practice then just finished. The information reached this country and was published. A thorough investigation was made and the officer would have been court-martialed if it had been possible to produce positive proof against him.

The expenditures of the government exceeded its current income by more than \$9,000,000 in April, and the treasury deficit for the first ten months of the fiscal year is upward of \$34,000,000. While the months of May and June nearly always show a balance on the right side of the government's account books, many fear that the deficit at the end of the fiscal year, June 30, will reach \$30,000,000. The problem of the deficit is a serious one in the opinion of the treasury officials. The cash balance in the treasury has declined to \$133,181,777, including the amounts held by the national bank depositors, and Secretary Shaw has found it necessary to withdraw from the banks \$20,000,000. The cash balance actually on hand in the treasury is said by some to have fallen below the point of absolute safety.

"Beware of the high rate of interest," is the lesson of most of the swindles against which the Post Office Department has recently issued fraud orders. An offer of exceptionally large returns for either labor or capital should at once awaken suspicion. If the enterprise is so promising, why does not the person who controls it keep it for himself? The fact that there are a few, a very few, cases where large risks have been taken and large profits have been realized is the argument most used by those who have patent rights, gold mines and other such properties to sell at a thousand times their value. The person of moderate means cannot afford to take such risks.

In 1904 the number of arrivals at Ellis Island was 606,000, the number in the entire country being 800,000. Of these 263,510 settled down in New York City, and the great majority of the remainder went to other cities as laborers, etc., where they are not needed. It is now estimated that one million immigrants will come to this country during the year 1905. The task of absorbing this great mass into the political system is one of the penalties which the United States pays for its unrivaled economic opportunities, its relief from great standing armies, and its atmosphere of freedom.

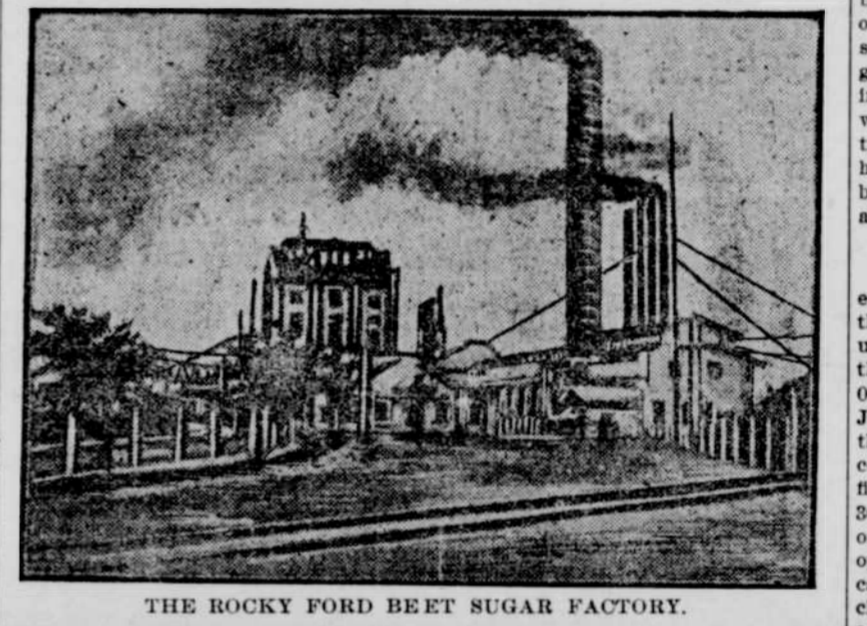
During the last year more than five thousand rural mail routes have been established, and during the coming summer a thousand more will be opened. Every route over which the carrier takes his little packet is a thread which binds this great, spreading country into more solid unity.

Expansion seems still to be the national watchword. The general staff of the army has decided to lengthen the United States bayonet by four inches. Still, it was a dictum of Oliver Wendell Holmes that as nations lengthen their weapons they narrow their boundaries.

Labor Notes.

The teaching of typewriting will be begun in the normal school at Zacatecas, Mexico. The government of the State has bought a number of machines of the most modern and best types for the school.

Chicago and Alton employes have been instructed not only to give up drinking intoxicating liquors, but to stay away from gambling places and dance halls. The company says it means to keep its men up to as high a physical and mental standard as possible.



THE ROCKY FORD BEET SUGAR FACTORY.