WICKLY'S WOODS

By H. W. TAYLOR

CHAPTER XIX.—(Continued.)

"What is it, Mr. Dikes? Not a million of dollars bid upon any of this land?" Lizzy cries, in great amazement, and with a jumping of something in her throat.

"Hush! Shet up! Lemmy lissun!"

But Mr. Biler turns away and looks at the crestfallen gentlemen who represent the S. & N. W., and who are now upon their feet, and walking out of the door.

"Huntley, I suppose you'd a run that coal-ground up to two millions rather than lose it! Joy of your bargain! Hope you won't lose more than a million on that purchase. There are other good coal lands besides the Wickly plat."

Then there is such a roar of shouts and cries in which "Lizzy Wickly, Lizzy Wickly," and "Huntley, Huntley, Huntley!" are the audible words.

"Git up un show yourself at the winder, Liz! Git up! Git up!" and the greatly excited young Doc seizes her by the arm, and raises her to her feet, whereupon, loud as was the clamor of voices before, it is nothing to the mighty sputter of yells that rise like the whirring wings of a vast covey of birds piercing and rending the very air above them. When this has gone down there are cries of "Huntley! Huntley! Huntley!" that grow in volume and importunity, till they are no longer to be resisted. Then Coonrod Redden steps to the carriage, throws back the top, and taking Mr. Mason by the hand, raises him up.

"Feller farmbers!" shouts the mighty-voiced Coonrod Redden, "h-yur's the man at's saved your lan' fur your famblies! This is Mr. W. Mason Huntley. You've seed him before, un knowed 'im, un talked to 'im, un h-yurn him talk, un——"

But the very climax of prolonged and sound-exhausting cheering drowns every attempt to say an audible word. Mr. Mason Huntley stands with his hat off, and smiling. The roar of cheering and yelling rises and swells, and sinks and rises—but does not cease. Suddenly it gets a great impetus, as the carriage with Coonrod Redden and Mr. W. Mason Huntley standing on the back seat, is raised straight up into the air, and with scores of these big, long-limbed, brawny, excitable, enthusiastic, hero-worshiping Hoosiers, under it and holding it high above their heads, is changed into a triumphal car, that, leaving the trembling horses securely tied to the fence, proceeds all around the square, and up and down every road that leads into Sandtown, and finally down the Overcoat road to Coonrod Redden's, followed, flanked and preceded by a great broad tide of men, boys and women, horses, wagons and dogs, and all conspiring and combining to make the most deafening vocal clamor that ever shook the wild-hemp and jimson leaves along the unfenced sides of the Overcoat road.

"Well, by gum! ef that haint one way uh hossun up a feller," said the young Doc, drawing a long breath. "Come awn, Lizzy! I'll teck yuh home, I reckon. Then I'll light out fur Coonrod's. They'll be some big speakun un han' shakun down thar, thurreckly! They'll wawnt you thar, too! One million th'ee hunnerd un eighty-four thousan' dollars fur the Wickly Woods! By gum! you're the richest young womern in Indyanny. At's a shore thing!"

CHAPTER XX.

Another night, in which Lizzy Wickly is in a tumult, a brain-whirl of excitement that shuts out of her mind any of all the thoughts and feelings of her ordinary everyday life.

That wealth is not even the least of the elements of happiness she demonstrated effectually in her own self-contemplation. The first flash of excitement had been that feeling, perhaps, which in the gambler makes him tremble with unutterable eagerness over a heavy stake, which, when he has won, is of no further value in his eyes than is given it by its power to reproduce that same state of expectation. This she recognized as that inherent love of peril, that disposition to brave dangers, that in some degree and in some form exists in every human organization. The feeling of gratification had been as transient as the flitting moment in which the event had been in abeyance. She had at once settled back into the groove of her ordinary thought.

For now she fully recognized the fact that it never had been Huntley, the invisible professor of geology; Huntley, the man of straw; Huntley, the principal and employer, that she had loved. She did not doubt now that had a real Huntley appeared—such a real Huntley as Mr. Mason Huntley had imposed upon her—she would have decided between them at once, upon their simultaneous presentation before her. And that decision, she now knew, would, at any moment of all the time in which she had known the genuine Huntley, have been against any other man in all the world.

Early in the evening she had dressed herself in one of those prettiest of all pretty summer dresses—a white Swiss muslin—with an unlimited number of ruffles and tucks in the skirt, and with little knots of blue ribbon here and there, and a bunch of the purplish, sweet-smelling wild flowers pinned upon her shapely left shoulder. She had gone backward and forward before the little mirror, in the middle of the room, with her face turned first over this shoulder and then over that, to see if the skirts hung exactly right, and to see how well she really looked in the glass, as even the best and most sensible girls in the world will do, in spite of all the jeering and sarcastic remarks about them for their vanity and self-love. She had taken out of its velvet receptacle a strand of little pearl and gold beads, that looked very becoming against the linen collar here, and over the looped knot of narrow blue ribbon there, at opposite sides of her shapely throat, whose winter-whiteness had taken on a little of that rich, warm tint that our intermontane valley climate so plentifully bestows upon all sojourners, and which in unhealthy people we call "sallow," while in the more robust it goes by the unobjectionable title of "ruddy."

Then, with her new, bright "patent leather" slippers, showing a very little band of white stocking about her shapely ankles, when she sat down and crossed the very neat little left foot over the right, she was as pretty a picture as ever a little mirror exhibited in any little plain middle-room in all Christendom—the white pond lily of Reelfoot Prairie, as could be proved by every admiring Hoosier from the mouth of Big Rattlesnake Creek on the north, to the very rush-tangled limit of Reelfoot Pond on the south.

She was in her gayest and most teasing mood, too. She couldn't help it. She would think of her father, and his misfortune, for a moment, and feel that it was perfectly shocking in her to be so demonstratively, boisterously merry as she was. But she couldn't help it. She could not repress her buoyant animal spirits. She flew about the house from room to room, with her stiff-starched underskirts rustling like the fluttering wings of the wild pigeons now feeding their young up in the dark thickets of Wickly's Woods. She sang little bits of song in the sweetest voice that ever led a class of young Hoosier hoodlums in a public school. She picked up her guitar off the haircloth sofa, and slipping its sling ribbon over her left shoulder, went about the rooms playing pretty and mellow old rondeaux in a way that she had never played them before.

She made short little flights out to the front gate of the narrow little hollyhocked and morning-gloryed yard, and back again. She stopped at least twenty times in her delightful little flutterings here and there about the house to kiss her mother on the cheek, or to pat her on the shoulder reassuringly and lovingly, out of the very enthusiasm of her mood. In fact, she did hundreds and hundreds of foolish little things that she was perfectly aware a mature young woman school teacher shouldn't permit herself to do. But she couldn't help it. And, what's more, she didn't try.

In any one of the little, rustling, white-dove flights to the front gate she could hear the sounds of shouting, clapping hands and multitudinous laughter of a delighted audience. And she could almost see and hear Mr. Huntley in the merry humor of his new character that he had shown of late, exchanging humorous repartee with his audience as is now, and always has been, the custom and the delight of the Hoosier audience and the Hoosier orator. Perhaps, after supper was over, she would walk with her mother down to Coonrod Redden's. She would be heartily welcome. She needed no invitation. For such is the broad and simple hospitality of the native Hoosier people to-day, that to "be acquainted" constitutes a perpetual and unlimited invitation to come when you please and be sure of a hearty welcome.

But after the supper was over Lizzy could not fully make up her mind to start. He had not been long enough in Hoosierdom to thoroughly understand that informal freedom of manner which sanctioned the unpremeditated gathering of neighbors at each other's houses at any and all seasonable times.

True, she remembered that he had very readily conformed himself to the prevailing customs in Sandtown society. But he had always exhibited much more of reserve, even to the point of diffidence, than was quite agreeable.

"A leetle mite backurd. A leetle mite backurd," Coonrod Redden had said of him at first. "But I don't thenk the feller means any harm by ut. He haint yusen to ar ways yit. He's been raised whar people haint gut nuthun to do but git acquainted. Un they kin teck as much time to ut as they wawnt to. Un they ginurily teck a plenty, I low. We haint gut time fur no sich foolishness as that out h-yur en Indyanny. Feller comes h-yur we wawut to know right away whurrer he's fittun fur a neighbor ur nut. Ef he haint, we wawnt to hoss 'im up, ur git 'im out, jist quick's we kin, by gum!"

She knew that Mr. W. Mason Huntley had ostensibly subscribed to this doctrine which Coonrod Redden had not failed to enunciate on all fitting occasions. But had that subscribing been more than a piece of amiability on his part? She had thought that in the case of a man having only the humble and subordinate place of "assistant," it was not at all to be expected that he would not readily fall into the ways of the Sandtown people as easily as he had fallen into the sandy windings of the Overcoat road.

So she hesitated about starting, in the secret hope that he would make that unnecessary by coming to her "soon," as he had said. But if he did not come within an hour, she would go. She felt that she must see him. She could not content herself with the thought of remaining away until after twilight. She would go down in the twilight at the very furthest.

So when the young Doc Dikes came over presently, to get Mrs. Wickly to come and stay half an hour with his aunt and her sick little boy, she felt that it would be a way of occupying the interval of time. And so she went along, taking care to look back once in every twenty yards to see if he were coming.

Then there were presently so many of the Sandtown women dropping in at Mrs. Dikes' to see how little Jimmy was, and to ask Lizzy Wickly about her great fortune and take note of how she looked and talked, and whether she had begun to be stuck up, and proud and exclusive, as rich people very foolishly do. And perhaps with the thought of making it very prominent that she had not begun to be a bit stuck up, and perhaps because she still felt the very unusual exhilaration of her naturally buoyant spirits strong upon her, Lizzy did her best to convince her neighbors, the former Arguses of Sandtown, that she was sufficiently sensible and well-groomed in the simple democratic doctrines and practices of Sandtown not to be made giddy, even when suddenly elevated to the great height of an inconceivable fortune like the one which Wickly's Woods had brought her.

CHAPTER XXI.

It was quite dark when Lizzy finally reached home, after getting up to start half a dozen times, and being stopped as often by a fresh incursion of congratulating Arguses.

There was a light in the middle room that they certainly had not lit before starting upon their enforced visit to the sick. Some one familiar with the house was there. And who so familiar as the man she had been waiting and watching for, all this evening?

Instinctively she drew back a little, and permitted her mother to precede her, so that she would have time to hide her real feeling, so far as not to appear ridiculously sentimental in the presence of others. When they should be alone she could pour out the wealth of her heart to him. She was rich now! And no selfish motive could be imputed to her in so suddenly making up her mind that, in spite of what she had said to him on that stormy night in the edge of the woods, near the Overcoat road, she now knew that she loved no imaginary man, no image of straw, but the veritable Mason Huntley, and she was ready, willing and even anxious to make this confession.

It was a confession due to him. It was a confession without which she must remain an enigma to him. It was one she would make that very evening, and just so soon as they were fairly alone together.

Even in that brief space of time in which she had seen the light in the middle room, and had slackened her quick, springy, school-day walk, timing her steps to reach the front door when her mother should get so far as the middle door, she had thought over what recompense of maidenly caress was due him.

She remembered how he had held her to his heart in the center of that dreadful cyclone, and the dangers and destruction that encompassed them. She thought of that too brief and vivid tingling parting near the clump of shadowy, long, arching black raspberry vines. She could repay him, clasp for clasp, kiss for kiss! She would not remain his debtor in any token of love. And her red lips parted and her brown eyes sparkled in the gleam of the lamp as she put her dainty slippered foot lightly across the threshold, thinking only of him and for him.

She was certain that she saw him sitting there, beyond the little stand-table on which the lamp was blazing. So occupied was she with the certainty of meeting him that not until Congressman Billy Biler arose to meet her and she heard a cry of surprise and delight from her mother's lips could she see that Billy Biler was standing there smiling very pleasantly, while beyond him were her mother and her father locked in each other's arms.

"There's nuthun like good luck, Miss Wickly, to bring people out of sickness, and fetch um round ginerally. H-yur's yur father, now—as soon as he gut to hear that you were a millionaire he found himself completely cured, and started home at once. He knew it before you did, too. He's sharpened up a bit by his short stay at the hospital, you see. But while they're talkun to thurselves, Miss Lizzy, I want to try to persuade you to intercede for me with Ole Coon Redden. The ole man's terribly out with me, 'bout this railroad sale business. I'm not to blame. I took a fee from the San'town un Northwestern folks, uv course. I didn't do it as a Congressman, nur as a citizen of San'town. I done ut as a lawyer. Uv course, they's lots a things that, as a lawyer, you can do that you wouldn't wawnt to do as a Congressman, nur as a citizen, nur as the friend uv the adverse party. Now, h-yur, fur instance, Coonrod Redden, he telegraphs fur me to come home un see taat all these h-yur San'town supporters uv mine has thur rights in this mortgage business. Well, I had already taken a fee from the S. & N. W. folks, as I said. But I done that as a lawyer, yunnerstand. Un I tole Redden I'd see that the railroad didn't steal nuthun from any uv yuh. Un they didn't. Did they? but he's on his high hoss. Un he says I shant have the delegation from this county. Un I've got to have ut."

(To be continued.)

HE RECOGNIZED TALENT.

Anecdotes call forth anecdotes. A little story told herein not long ago, about a country postoffice official's interest in his clients' correspondence, moved a woman who is the mother of a daughter at college to relate her experience with a village postman.

It was the daughter's freshman year, and she wrote home daily and graphically of her new experiences. But she was extremely busy, and could spare time for a home letter only on Sunday. This she supplemented by a regular mid-week postal card.

One day the mother, seeing the postman coming, ran down to meet him, and stood leaning on the gate as he approached. He saw her there, but instead of hastening his pace he slackened it a little, obviously to afford himself time to complete the reading of the missive he had in hand, chuckling as he came.

The sight stirred Mrs. Brown's anger. That he should presume to read what Polly wrote! That he should do it before her very eyes, and before she could, and make her wait his leisure! It was outrageous, and she had a sharp rebuke all ready for him. But it was never delivered.

He broke into a beaming smile as he reached the gate, handed over the postal card, and declared in hearty tones before she had a chance to speak:

"That's the funniest postal I ever read! I never thought there was much sense in girls going to college—kind o' wasting four years of life, I been used to calling it—but I don't know! I don't know! Maybe it ain't sensible for ord'nary girls, but a girl that can double a man up laughing with half a dozen words ain't ord'nary. No, ma'am. I guess you was right to give her extry opportunities. You've got a gifted daughter, Mis' Brown—a gifted daughter, and I congratulate you, ma'am!"

He departed, still broadly beaming; and Mrs. Brown had not the heart to chill such appreciative friendliness. She merely warned the "gifted daughter" that her humor was likely to be enjoyed by more than the family circle.—Youth's Companion.

In Saxony there is an industrial school for every 14,641 inhabitants.

UNSHACKLED.

—Chicago Inter Ocean.

The recent ukase issued by the Czar, if carried out in the spirit in which it seems to have been written, will give religious fredom to nearly 80,000,000 people and rank as one of the principal measures of reform and justice in Russian history. All Christians who are not orthodox from the point of view of the state church and all non-Christians, except Jews, are benefited.

Russia has had a semblance of religious liberty, but it has been only a semblance. Anybody might enter the orthodox Greek church, but those leaving it have been punished by deprivation of all civil rights. The ownership of property, both real and personal, by dissidents has been narrowly restricted, and they have not been permitted to establish monasteries, build schools and churches, or print or circulate religious literature. Schismatics have been barred from cadet and military schools, and, while the government has had no scruples against using them as food for powder, they have been prohibited from being officers in the army, or even receiving medals for bravery. The law has told the people they were free to think and worship as they pleased, and has at the same time prescribed punishments for those who exercised their freedom by affiliating with any other than the orthodox church.

The ukase removes all restrictions from the unorthodox and places them, both as religionists and as citizens, on a par with the orthodox. It puts them in much the same position relative to the Greek church as dissenters occupy relative to the established church in England. The Greek church will be supported by the state, but those who belong to other churches will not, therefore, be penalized. A man will no longer be unable to contract a lawful marriage because he makes the sign of the cross with three fingers instead of two, or refused a commission in the army because he does not like the cut of a priest's gown.

It has often happened in Russia, says the Chicago Tribune, that the Czar has decreed an important reform and that the decree has been carried out in such a manner as to accomplish little of the good that was expected of it. The world will be better able to judge of the Czar's motives and of the results his latest ukase will produce after it has been put into effect.

Treatment of Bright's Disease.

A person suffering from chronic kidney disease is the victim of a serious malady, and of course should not attempt to manage his own case if he would avoid the proverbial reproach of the man who is his own doctor or lawyer. Yet in a disease of such long continuance the physician cannot ordinarily be in such constant attendance as in cases of acute disease, and in the intervals of his visits the patient can often aid very materially in the treatment if he is familiar with the general principles upon which it is based.

The main object of treatment is to guard the crippled kidney from anything that will further injure it or tax its enfeebled powers of elimination. To this end the diet should be very carefully regulated. Eggs, meat, rich or highly seasoned dishes, or alcoholic beverages, should be permitted only in the smallest quantities. The ideal food for a sufferer from Bright's disease is milk, since it meets nearly all the requirements of a food which can be digested readily and leaves the smallest amount of waste material, and at the same time flushes the kidneys, washing out the poisons that will injure still more the already damaged tissues if not quickly removed.

Most persons can take milk readily and digest it easily, but some either do not like the taste of it or cannot (or think they cannot) digest it. If it is the palate that rebels, the milk may be flavored with a little tea or coffee, or it may be made into a soup with oysters or clams or onions, or it may be jellied, or buttermilk may be substituted.

When milk is not digested it is usually because it is taken in too large amount or in too concentrated form. It may be diluted with Vichy or limewater, or distilled water containing a little salt or bicarbonate of sodium. It should never be gulped down, but should be sipped and held in the mouth a moment to secure its admixture with saliva before swallowing. An exclusive milk diet can seldom be kept up for a long period, but the occasional resort to it for a week or ten days at a time is often of the greatest service in securing a rest for the kidneys, and in washing them free from all the accumulated debris of the meat-and-vegetable-eating periods.

A sufferer from Bright's disease should also be warmly clad, and should, so far as possible, avoid all exposure to cold and wet, shunning high, and especially east winds. For the few who can pick their climate to suit their needs, a removal to a tropical or semi-tropical country is of the greatest advantage.—Youth's Companion.

POCKETS FOR WOMEN.

Desirable but Almost Unattainable Consummation.

For one blessing man is enviable—his pockets. Woman occasionally has a pocket, but she can't use it. "Put in a pocket," she pleads, and the dress maker sends home the new skirt with a pocket stowed away in the recesses of a hook-up placket hole. It is not a workable pocket for three reasons:

First, it bulges if there is even a handkerchief in it, destroying the symmetry of the outline.

Second, things aimed at it rarely succeed in forcing an entrance, but fall alongside, downward, with a whack on the floor.

Third, who could fumble through a whole row of hooks and eyes, placed in the center seam at the back? As a trifling obstacle in the way of blind manipulation it may be mentioned that such hooks are usually of a tricky patent, or they would not stay fastened at all.

At the hem of the garment, under the "foundation" frill, pockets like a tiny crescent-shaped pouch may also be found lurking. A handkerchief can repose in one in safety, merely involving some suppleness in the owner, who must execute a kind of dive in withdrawing and reinserting it. A silk foundation sometimes accommodates quite a practical-looking receptacle, to which the unwary at first intrust even a purse or a pocket knife. But hard objects dangling on a level with the knee are ill companions, and those who have once knelt on a latchkey never desire to repeat the experience.

"I asked for pockets and they gave me handbags," is the plaint of the petticoated throng, who wonder who will invent them a third hand for their umbrellas while they guard their money with their right and with their left keep their garments from the mud.

Meantime, says the London Graphic, while fashion is decreeing that sovereigns shall jingle in jeweled coat of mail from the end of a slender chain, apparently designed for the ready pliers of the thief, womankind, more cunning than they seem, are carving a way out of the difficulty. They may carry their purse for all the world to see, and a handkerchief peeps out of their sleeves, but in many a silken underskirt, where it will not interfere with the set, is a pocket, roomy and secure. There it is that the wise woman keeps her gold and her love letters.

A girl hasn't much use for a young man who asks for "just one kiss."

FACTORY-MADE PUPILS.

Educational Methods in Vogue in Many Schools Criticised.

"My boy advanced rapidly in all his studies except one last session and because he failed in this he was not permitted to enter the higher grade. This session he is playing with his lessons, having really only one to study, and I doubt if he is studying that."

So spoke a mother, according to the Memphis News-Scimitar, and in what she said she expressed the experience of a good many mothers, whose boys, for one cause or another, fail to "pass."

There should be some remedy for this. Of course rule and regulation are necessary in schools as elsewhere, but causing a boy to throw away a large part of a school session should be avoided if possible.

Children have no aptitude for certain studies. Some can never understand grammar or see the sense of it. Some might study geography all their lives and never be able to bound the county in which they live. Some might put in years on the study of mathematics without ever learning how to add up a grocery bill. There are certain studies that children cannot understand and never will understand. Their minds are so constituted. It is not because they do not learn. Their objection to study is not based on laziness or indifference, but because of the uselessness and unproductiveness of study. What is the use of studying what cannot be learned?

The old remedy for this was flogging. This was in the old, barbarous days, not so very remote either, when physical punishment was the panacea for all mental obliquities and when people who did not do and see and believe as others wanted them to do and see and believe were supposed to be "possessed of a devil" which could be exorcised only by larruping or torturing the one so possessed.

We have outgrown this so far as the infliction of physical pain is concerned, but we have not outgrown it sufficiently to rescue us from the folly of expecting the impossible.

If a child has no aptitude for "figures" and cannot keep up with his class he should not be cast into outer darkness on this account, set back and prevented from learning those things for which he has a special aptitude. There should be some flexibility to the rule.

The trouble with our pupil factories is that they are like shoe factories and all other factories where products are turned out on a large scale. Each individual must adjust himself to the various phases of the process without any regard to his individual characteristics.

With the private tutor the pupil learns what he can learn and what he cannot learn he leaves alone. This is not practicable in the public schools, of course, but the rule that keeps a child back because he has no genius for a particular study makes a laggard of him and should be relaxed.

DESIGN FOR M'CLELLAN STATUE.

The successful design for an equestrian statue to be erected on the reservation at the intersection of Connecticut avenue and Eighteenth and N streets, Washington, has been furnished by Frederick MacMonnies, the noted American sculptor. The composition represents the general sitting easily upon a conventional war horse. The pedestal is simple, and the sides bear the inscription and some beautifully carved symbolic designs. At the corners of the base there will be placed eventually bronze eagles resting on granite spheres. The MacMonnies design has received the unqualified approval of Mrs. McClellan and other members of the late general's family.

A Much-Needed Convenience.

"I see they are making some improvements at the Hammerheads."

"Yes. They are putting in a new window at the side. Mrs. Hammerhead found it almost impossible to look through her parlor windows and see who was calling next door."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

She Had Worn It Before.

Gussie—Did George give you a ring?

Flossie—He had a lovely ring with him, but it was just a little too small.

Gussie (thoughtfully)—Yes. My fingers are considerably more slender than yours.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

One View of It.

"But if she makes all her own dresses I should think she'd be a good wife for you. It shows she's industrious and sensible."

"Not for me, thank you. It simply shows how poor her father must be."—Philadelphia Press.

He who would succeed in any line of business must first plan his work, then work his plan.