

# Runaways Who Have Become Famous

## TWO AMERICAN BOYS LANDED IN THE UNITED STATES SENATE PERKINS OF CALIFORNIA AND MCLAURIN OF MISSISSIPPI



W. R. GRACE, A FORMER MAYOR OF OLD NEW YORK CITY.



JOHN WEAVER, LATE MAYOR OF PHILADELPHIA.

BY JOHN S. HARWOOD.  
COUNTING from the prodigal son, the list of runaways who have failed lamentably to realize the ambitious dreams that led them to up stakes and pull away from the parental roof-tree is very much longer than the list of runaways who have become famous. Still, not to go into the careers of the prodigal son, Dick Whittington and other famous runaways of olden time who could not now defend themselves against any statements that might be made about them here, there remains quite an imposing list of modern runaways who have become famous in one way or another.

There is the Marquis de, one of the elder statesmen of Japan and Governor-General of the despairing dependency of Corea. Mark Twain, the world's most famous living humorist, ran away. Joaquin Miller, "the poet of the Sierras," did the same. The New York Yacht Club has successfully defended the America's Cup three times against the assaults of three Englishmen who first sailed past Sandy Hook as a runaway. John Weaver is a Philadelphia Dick Whittington; the late W. R. Grace was a metropolitan Dick. The late Tony Pastor ran away with a circus; John Wallace Crawford, "the poet scout," ran away to war.

### National Lawmakers Who Ran Away

Considering the relatively small number of boys who run away from home, the United States Senate at the present time has more than its share of former runaways in Anselm Joseph McLaurin, junior toga wearer from Mississippi, and George Clement Perkins, California's senior representative in "the most august legislative body of the world." The National House of Representatives is far weaker in runaways; it can boast of but one, George Washington Cook, who represents the state of Colorado at large.

Anselm Joseph McLaurin, of Mississippi, ran away from home when he was 12 years old, not to go to sea, as did Senator Perkins, but to go to war. The latter part of the year 1848, when their son and heir was a few months old, the parents of the future Senator removed to a farm in South County, Miss. On this farm the boy grew up, attending occasionally the neighborhood schools until he was 16. When he had reached this age the great struggle at arms between the North and the South came on. Young Anselm, like the rest of the youth of the country, was filled at once with a martial fire. His parents wanted him to continue on with his studies—he was too young to go to war, anyway. But the boy took matters into his own hands, slipped out the first good chance he got, and enlisted as a private soldier. All through the war he carried a musket.

state, and now with a seat in the Senate of the United States, prosperous and respected, Anselm Joseph McLaurin, once a runaway boy, accounts his success in life to the fact that he not only worked, but worked with a definite end and purpose in view all the time.

While McLaurin was running away from home to enlist in the cause of the Confederacy, George Washington Cook, Representative-at-Large from Colorado, was bidding his parental mansion a surreptitious farewell in order to link his fate with the cause of the Union. Cook was born in Indiana, and his family has such a fighting history that it was natural he should insist upon going to the war with or without the consent of his parents.

His father, who was an officer on the Union side, died from the effects of disease contracted in the Civil War, and his mother was a daughter of an officer who served with distinction in the war of 1812. His brother, a bugler in his father's regiment at the age of 15, died for his country at Montgomery, Ala. Of course George Washington Cook could not be kept at home under these circumstances. And then, too, there is his name, that of the country's first great patriot and father.

Representative Cook was 13 years old when he took matters in his own hand and enlisted under the flag as a drummer boy and went to the front with an Indiana regiment. At the age of 14 he was company clerk, the youngest, according to the records of the War Department, who ever held that position in the history of the great army that Lincoln called into being.

When the war was over young Cook realized, as did so many other boys who had run away from home to enlist, that what he most needed was an education. He returned to the family roof and doffed his uniform so to take up his school books again. He was elected senior vice-commander-in-chief of the G. A. R.; he is a member of the Loyal Legion, and at one time was president of Colorado's Soldiers' and Sailors' Home. Wherever veterans of the Civil War congregate to talk over old times, and the talk drifts around to the "babies" who went to the war willy-nilly, as far as their parents were concerned, some one is pretty apt to spin the story of George Washington Cook, who today is 65, but was only 3 years old when Fort Sumner was fired upon. His career as a runaway, and in many other respects, has been much like the career of Senator McLaurin, and to the fact that after the war he, like Senator McLaurin, worked hard and for a definite purpose, not stopping to loiter on the way, his success is attributable.

### MAEQUIS ITO



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and over, until he had become a big boy of 17, the lad knocked about in the forecastles of Western ocean packets. In the year 1855 young Perkins shipped before the mast in the sailing ship Galatea, bound for San Francisco. It was the Autumn of that year when he arrived within the Golden Gate, which was destined to be golden, indeed, for him. "The days of old, the days of gold, the days of 'Forty-nine" had not entirely vanished from California when Perkins arrived here. The state swarmed with opportunities if only a young man had the sand and the level-headedness to take advantage of them.

Young Perkins saw these opportunities looming around him. He severed his connection with the good ship Galatea and took his trunk ashore for a full due. The runaway sailor boy had not taken life very seriously before, but now, like Grace in New York and Peru, he thought the matter out with himself and decided that if he was ever going to amount to anything it was about time to set about it. He got a job in a store, he saved money, he went into the shopkeeping business himself; he started a bank; he went in for farming and for mining. In fact, wherever he saw an opportunity Perkins seized upon it. He gradually became well off. Today he is a millionaire. Then he took a prominent part in the affairs of his adopted state and city, finally landing in the United States Senate.

Finally, he got a job in a shipping house. Then his career was shaped. Four years after he had landed a penniless boy in New York he had so mastered the shipping business and had been so saving that he was able, at the age of 18, to return back across the water and to establish himself in Liverpool under the firm name of W. R. Grace & Co. It was a shipping firm, and though it promised well, the business did not come up to the ambitious expectations of young Grace. The runaway boy, of course, could now visit his relatives in Dublin. He had made no great fortune, but to be the head of a business house at 18 was no small thing.

While he had been away from home Grace's father had lost a considerable part of his fortune in South American ventures. Young Grace had a longing to try to retrieve some of those losses. He broached the matter to his sister, who was a woman of considerable means. The runaway had already made good and had proved that he could do things, and his sister agreed to back him in his South American venture. He went to Peru and opened in the city of Callao the mercan-

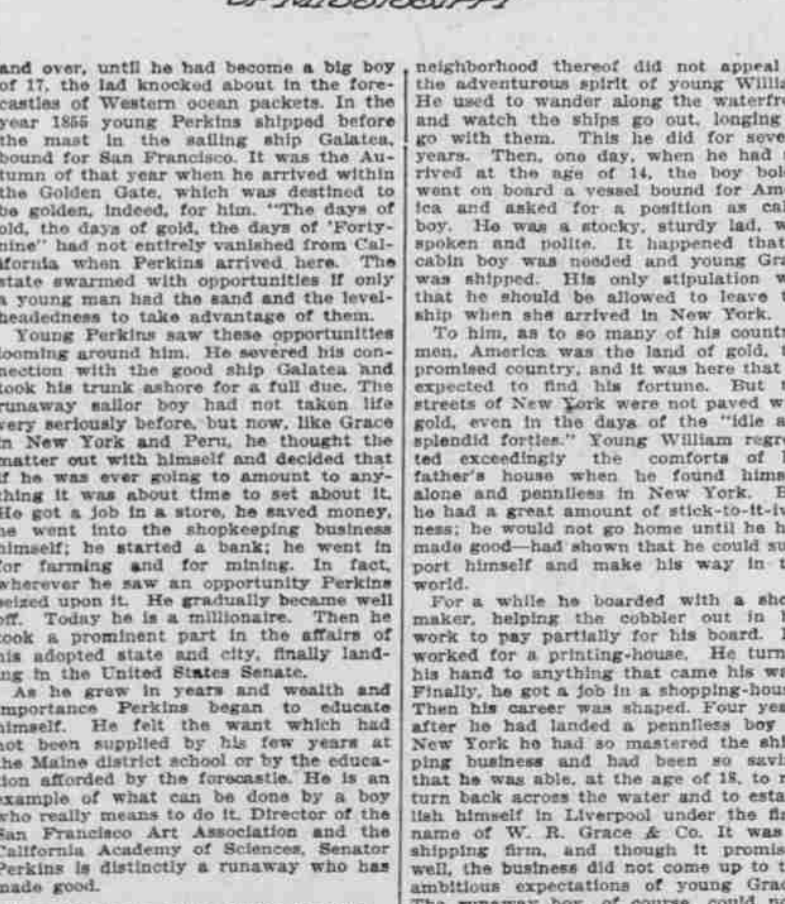
tile business which became so widely known as Grace Brothers. The runaway boy, who had dreamed of greatness in New York, saw now the rapid fruition of his hopes.

It was not long thereafter that William R. Grace came ashore to the island of Manhattan. The shores which a few years before he had trod as a runaway sailor boy he now stepped upon as a man of business prepared to make the city the center of a great South American trade. He was still young and still ambitious, and what he accomplished is a matter of the romance of trade. His fleets penetrated into the forests of the Amazon and brought out the rubber; they sailed from Valparaiso and Callao laden with the many-scented products of the west coast. They carried back to South America the products of the New England factories and the canneries of New York and the West. Grace became a veritable monarch of the trade of South America in time, and in time also he first became the mayor of the city which he, a poor and helpless boy of 14, had twice seen from the decks of an immigrant ship.

Somewhat once asked Mayor Grace how he did it. He replied that at first, when he had just landed upon these shores upon the occasion of his runaway, the burdens and problems of life weighed very little on him. Everything was new, everything was interesting. He had confidence in himself, and in his own future. But one night, while lying in his humble bed in the shop of the shoemaker, he suddenly realized that in order to make his dreams realities he must be able at once to pay more attention to detail. He must not let his dreams outrun his work. The game was to do whatever his hand found to do, and to do it with his whole heart and soul. It was not long after that that he got his first job in a shipping house. He got it by applying for it. The man he saw liked his manner and gave him a trial. Then he made good by buckling down hard on whatever he could do.

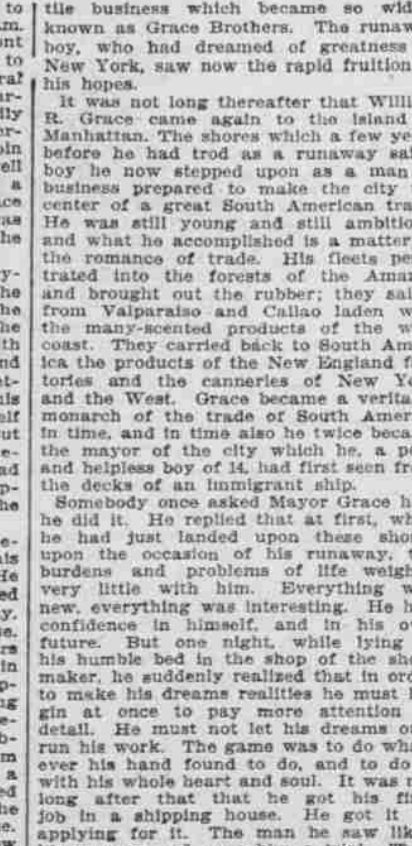
It was the same way with young Grace in Peru. A few days after he had arrived in Callao, some English and American sailors got into an argument in a drinking place, and the argument ended in a fight. Young Grace pitched in and fought on the side of the Americans—and the Americans won. But that night, as he lay in his bed, he thought, "Never again will I mix up in brawls. I came to Peru to do business and not to waste my time, as so many Europeans and Americans are doing here." Opportunities were numerous in Peru in those

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days, the Mayor used to say, and if any person from the North or from Europe had made the same resolution which he made and had stuck to it, he, too, could not help but have succeeded.

John Weaver, who, several months ago, became the latest ex-mayor of Philadelphia, took French leave of his native roof because his father did not agree with his boy's belief that this country held better opportunities for an ambitious young man than does old England. Young Weaver was extremely short of cash when he finally set foot in America, and on his chest he bore a tattooed design, but there by some of the sailors with whom he was thrown in contact on his way to the New World.

Weaver's first experiences in this country were heart-breaking, and a least stout-hearted youngster would have thrown up the sponge so to speak, placed himself in the hands of the nearest policeman, and with tears in his eyes, begged the authorities to notify his parents to prepare the fatted calf, and, incidentally, to forward sufficient money to pay the cost of passage home. Weaver, however, took all sorts of humiliating knocks and cuffs for some weeks; then he landed a job as errand boy, and things began to look up with him. Later on, his industry secured for him a clerkship. All the while he clerked he studied stenography by himself; then, one day, blossomed forth as a law steno-grapher. This work naturally interested him in law, which he studied while his cronies slept or played, and in due course he found himself a member of the Philadelphia bar.

He was a lawyer in good standing and comfortable circumstances when the Quaker City "machine" made him its candidate for district attorney, and of course, elected him. He was still filling this important post when the "machine" made him its candidate for mayor; and it was as mayor that this former English runaway broke with the "machine," and fought with it so strenuously and picturesquely that the newspapers some months back were mentioning Weaver almost daily. Today he is following his profession, which has honored him with numerous important positions in various legal associations.

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