

# STRONG AND STEADY

By HORATIO ALGER, JR.

## CHAPTER VI.

Mr. Drummond's store was of fair size, and contained a considerable and varied stock of dry goods. Besides Mr. Drummond there was a single salesman, a young man of twenty-two, who wore a cravat of immense size, and ostentatiously displayed in his bosom a mammoth breast-pin, with glass imitation diamond, which, had it been real, would have been equal in value to the entire contents of the store. This young man, whose name was Nichols, received from Mr. Drummond the magnificent salary of four hundred dollars per annum. Having a taste for dress, he patronized the village tailor to the extent of his means, and considerably beyond, being at this moment thirty dollars in debt for the suit he wore.

Besides this young man there had formerly been a younger clerk, receiving a salary of four dollars weekly. He had been dismissed for asking to have his pay raised to five dollars a week, and since then Mr. Drummond had got along with but one salesman. As, however, the business really required more assistance, he was quite willing to employ Walter on board wages, which he estimated would not cost him, at the most, more than two dollars a week.

"Mr. Nichols," said Mr. Drummond, "I have brought you some help. This is Walter Conrad, a distant relative"—had Walter been rich, Mr. Drummond would no doubt have styled him a near relative—"as he knows nothing of the business, you can take him in charge, and give him some idea about prices, and so forth."

"Yes, sir," said the young man, in an important tone. "I'll soon break him in."

Mr. Nichols, who gave up what little mind he had to the subject of clothes, began to inspect Walter's raiment. He had sufficient knowledge to perceive that our hero's suit was of fine fabric, and tastefully made. That being the case, he concluded to pay him some attention.

"I'm glad you've come," he said. "I have to work like a dog. I'm pretty well used up to-day. I was up till two o'clock dancing."

"Were you?"

"Yes. There was a ball over to Crampton. I go to all the balls within ten miles. They can't do without me."

"Can't they?" asked Walter, not knowing what else to say.

"No. You see there isn't much style at these country balls—I mean among the young men. They don't know how to dress. Now I give my mind to it, and they try to imitate me. I don't trust any tailor entirely. I just tell him what I want and how I want it. Higgins, the tailor here, has improved a great deal since he began to make clothes for me."

Just then a customer came in, and Mr. Nichols was drawn away from his dissertation on dress.

"Just notice how I manage," he said in a low voice.

"Have you any calicoes that you can recommend?" asked the woman, who appeared to be poor.

"Yes, ma'am, we've got some of the best in the market—some that will be sure to suit you."

He took from the shelves and displayed a very ugly pattern.

"I don't think I like that," she said.

"Have you not some with a smaller figure?"

"The large figures are all the rage just now, ma'am. Everybody wears them."

"I should like to look at something else."

"I'll show you something else, but this is the thing for you."

He brought out a piece still uglier; and finally, after some hesitation, his customer ordered ten yards from the first piece. He measured it with an air of triumph and, folding it up, handed it to the customer, receiving in return a two-dollar bill, which the poor woman sighed as she rendered it, for she had worked hard for it.

When the customer had left the store, Nichols turned complacently to Walter.

"How did you like that calico?" he asked.

"It seemed to me very ugly."

"Wasn't it, though? It's been in the store five years. I didn't know as we should ever get rid of it."

"Haven't you got any prettier patterns?"

"Plenty. I wanted to get off the old rubbish first. It isn't everybody that would buy it; but she swallowed everything I said."

"She seemed like a poor woman, who could not afford to buy a dress very often."

"No, she doesn't come more than twice a year."

"I think you ought to have given her the best bargain you could."

"You can fold up those goods on the counter, and put them back on the shelves," said Nichols. "Customers put us to a great deal of trouble that way sometimes. Mrs. Captain Walker was in yesterday afternoon, and I didn't know but I should have to get down all the stock we had before we could suit her."

"Why didn't you pick out something and tell her it was all the rage?" asked Walter, smiling.

"That wouldn't go down with her. She's rich and she's proud. We have to be careful how we manage with such customers as she is. That reminds me that her bundle hasn't gone home yet. I'll get you to carry it up right away."

It had been a considerable disappointment to Joshua to find that Walter was poor instead of rich, for he had proposed to make as free use of Walter's purse as the latter would permit. Even now it oc-

curred to him that Walter might have a supply of ready money, a part of which he might borrow. He accordingly took an opportunity one day to sound our hero on this subject.

"Walter, have you a couple of dollars about you to lend me for a day or two?" he asked, in a tone of assumed carelessness.

"Yes, I have that amount of money, but I am afraid I must decline lending. You know my circumstances, Joshua, and that I am in no position to lend anybody money."

Joshua stalked away in a fret, angry that Walter would not permit himself to be swindled. From that time he cherished a dislike for our hero, and this he showed by various little slights and annoyances, of which Walter took little notice. He thoroughly despised Joshua for his meanness and selfishness, and it mattered very little to him what such a boy thought of him.

This forbearance Joshua utterly misinterpreted. He decided that Walter was deficient in courage and spirit, and it encouraged him to persevere in his system of petty annoyances until they might almost be called bullying. Though Walter kept quiet under these provocations, there was often a warning flash of the eye which showed that it would not be safe to go too far. But this Joshua did not notice, and persisted.

"Joshua," said his mother one day, "I really think you don't treat Walter right. You are not polite to him."

"Why should I be? What is he but a beggar?"

"He is not that, for he works for his living."

"At any rate, he's a mean fellow, and I shall treat him as I please."

One afternoon there were a few young fellows standing on the piazza in front of Mr. Drummond's store. Joshua was one of them, and there being no customers to wait upon, Walter also had joined the company. They were discussing plans for a picnic to be held in the woods on the next Sunday afternoon. It was to be quite a general affair.

"You will come, Walter, won't you?" asked one of the number.

"No," said Joshua; "he can't come."

"I didn't authorize you to speak for me," said Walter quietly.

"You didn't authorize me to speak for you!" repeated Joshua, in a mocking tone. "Big words for a beggar!"

"What do you mean by calling me a beggar?" demanded Walter, quietly, but with rising color.

"I don't choose to give you any explanation," said Joshua scornfully. "You're only my father's hired boy, working for your board."

"That may be true, but I am not a beggar, and I advise you not to call me one again."

Walter's tone was still quiet, and Joshua wholly misunderstood him; otherwise, being a coward at heart, he would have desisted.

"I'll say it as often as I please," he repeated. "You're a beggar, and if we hadn't taken pity on you, you'd have had to go to the poorhouse."

Walter was not quarrelsome; but this last insult, in presence of half a dozen boys between his own age and Joshua's, roused him.

"Joshua Drummond," he said, "you've insulted me long enough, and I've stood it, for I didn't want to quarrel; but I will stand it no longer."

He walked up to Joshua, and struck him in the face, not a hard blow, but still a blow. Joshua turned white with passion, and advanced upon our hero furiously, with the intention of giving him, as he expressed it, the worst whipping he ever had.

Walter parried his blow, and put in another, this time sharp and stinging. Joshua was an inch or two taller, but Walter was more than a match for him. Joshua threw out his arms, delivering his blows at random, and most of them failed of effect. Indeed, he was so blinded with rage that Walter, who kept cool, had from this cause alone a great advantage over him. Joshua at length seized him, and he was compelled to throw him down.

As Joshua lay prostrate, with Walter's knee upon his breast, Mr. Drummond, who had gone over to his own house, appeared upon the scene.

"What's all this?" he demanded, in mingled surprise and anger. "Conrad, what means this outrageous conduct?"

Walter rose, and, turning to his employer, said, manfully, "Joshua insulted me, sir, and I have punished him. That's all."

## CHAPTER VII.

Without waiting to hear Mr. Drummond's reply, Walter re-entered the store. He had no disposition to discuss the subject in the presence of the boys who were standing on the piazza.

Mr. Drummond followed him into the store, and Joshua accompanied him. He was terribly angry with Walter, and determined to get revenge upon him through his father.

"Are you going to let that beggar pitch into me like that?" he demanded. "He wouldn't have got me down, only he took me at a disadvantage."

"Conrad," said Mr. Drummond, "I demand an explanation of your conduct. I come from my house, and find you fighting like a street rowdy, instead of attending to your duties in the store."

"I have already given you an explanation, Mr. Drummond," said Walter, firmly. "Joshua chose to insult me before all

the boys, and I don't allow myself to be insulted if I can help it. As to being out of the store, there was no customer to wait upon, and I went to the door for a breath of fresh air. I have never been accustomed to confinement before."

"You say Joshua insulted you. How did he insult you?"

"I was asked if I would go to the picnic on Saturday afternoon. He didn't wait for me to answer, but said at once that I couldn't go."

"Was that all?"

"When I objected to his answering for me, he charged me with being a beggar, and said that but for you I would have been obliged to go to the poorhouse. If this had been the first time he had annoyed me, I might have passed it over, but it is far from being the first; so I knocked him down."

Mr. Drummond was by no means a partisan of Walter, but in the month that our hero had been in his employ he had found him a very efficient clerk. Whatever Walter undertook to do he did well, and he had mastered the details of the retail dry goods trade in a remarkably short time, so that his services were already as valuable as those of young Nichols, who received eight dollars a week. Therefore Mr. Drummond was disposed to smooth over matters, for the sake of retaining the services which he obtained so cheap. He resolved, therefore, to temporize.

"You are both of you wrong," he said. "Joshua, you should not have called Conrad a beggar, for he earns his living. You, Conrad, should not have been so violent. You should have told me, and I would have spoken to Joshua."

"Excuse me, Mr. Drummond, but I don't like tale-bearing. I did the only thing I could."

"Ahem!" said Mr. Drummond, "you were too violent. I would suggest that you should each beg the other's pardon, shake hands, and have done with it."

"Catch me begging pardon of my father's hired boy!" exclaimed Joshua, scornfully. "I haven't got quite as low as that."

"As for me," said Walter, "if I thought I had been in the wrong, I would beg Joshua's pardon without any hesitation. I am not too proud for that, but I think I acted right under the circumstances, and therefore I cannot do it. As for being a hired boy, I admit that such is my position, and I don't see anything to be ashamed of in it."

"You are right there," said Mr. Drummond; for this assertion chimed in with his own views and wishes. "Well, it seems to me you are about even, and you may as well drop the quarrel here."

Walter felt satisfied. He felt that he had won the victory and maintained his self-respect. There was one thing more he desired, and that was to go to the picnic. He would not have urged the request, but that he was well aware that Joshua would report that he was kept at home by his desire.

"It won't be very convenient for you to be away Saturday afternoon," said Mr. Drummond, who was principled against allowing clerks any privileges. "You know we have more trade than usual on Saturday afternoon."

"I don't think we shall have next Saturday," said Walter; "everybody will be gone to the picnic."

"If you insist upon going," said Mr. Drummond, reluctantly, "I must try to let you go."

Walter felt no scruples about insisting. Meanwhile Joshua went home in a very unhappy frame of mind. He had not succeeded in humiliating Walter as he intended, but had an unpleasant feeling that Walter had got the better of him. He was very angry with his father for not taking his part, and was not slow in making his feelings known to his mother.

"What's the matter, Joshua?" asked Mrs. Drummond, observing the scowl upon his face.

"Matter enough! That beggar has been insulting me—that upstart, Conrad. He pitched into me, and tried to knock me over."

"What for? I am surprised to hear it, he seems so polite and well bred."

"Nothing at all. He sprang at me like a tiger, and all for nothing. He took me by surprise, so at first he got the advantage, but I soon gave him as good as he sent."

"I am really sorry to hear this," said Mrs. Drummond, distressed. "Are you sure you didn't say something to provoke him?"

"I only said, when he was invited to go to the picnic Saturday afternoon, that he wouldn't be able to leave the store."

"I am afraid you said it in such a way as to offend him."

"Seems to me you think a good sight more of him than of me in the matter," grumbled Joshua. "That's just the way with father. He wanted us both to beg each other's pardon. Catch me begging pardon of a beggarly hired boy!"

"He isn't any worse because your father hires him, Joshua."

"Oh, yes, of course, you stand up for him," said Joshua, sneering.

"Now, Joshua, you know I always take your part when you are right."

So Joshua continued to scold, and Mrs. Drummond to soothe him, until she found a more effectual way, by placing at his disposal half an apple pie which was in the cupboard. In the evening she told Walter that she was sorry there had been any difficulty between him and Joshua.

"So am I," said Walter, frankly, for he was grateful for her gentle kindness. "I am sorry, if only for your sake, Mrs. Drummond."

"I know he's provoking; but he doesn't mean what he says, Mr. Conrad."

"I'll try to keep on good terms with him, Mrs. Drummond," said Walter, earnestly, "if only in return for his mother's kindness."

"I am sure Joshua was hasty, and misjudged Walter, said the mother to herself, trying to find an excuse for her son. (To be continued.)

# Science AND INVENTION

As we reach lower and lower depths the water becomes colder; the warm water, being less dense, remains at the surface. At about 12,000 feet the temperature is little above the freezing point of fresh water. Light gradually disappears, and at 1,400 feet, says Country Life, absolute darkness prevails; and as no plant can live without light, the vegetable kingdom is unrepresented, except by some boring algae which have been dredged from a depth of over 3,000 feet. Further, there are no currents, oxygen is scarce and uniformity of temperature prevails.

Prof. A. Herschel, in the Quarterly Journal of the Royal Meteorological Society, describes the extraordinary effects produced by lightning in the midst of an open moor in Northumberland. A hole 4 or 5 feet in diameter was made in the flat, peaty ground, and from this half a dozen furrows extended on all sides. Pieces of turf were thrown in various directions, one 3 feet in diameter and a foot thick having fallen 78 feet from the hole. Investigation showed that in addition to the effects visible on the surface, small holes had been bored in the earth radiating from the large excavation.

Many readers may recall the surprise they felt on reading Darwin's book on earthworms to find how the great naturalist had lent an irresistible charm to so apparently unpromising a subject. It led them to entertain a respect they had never previously felt for the humble borers in the earth. It now appears that earthworms must be regarded as useful otherwise than as simple cultivators and renewers of the soil. According to E. A. Andrews, they are tree-planters also. They draw the flat seeds of the silver maple into their burrows, and such seeds, in districts too dry for them to germinate if left upon the surface, sprout from the wormholes, and grow into seedlings, which, under favoring conditions, may become flourishing trees.

Maj. W. V. Judson, the government engineer in charge of harbor work at Milwaukee, Wis., is reported by the Railway and Engineering Review to be experimenting with re-enforced concrete blocks, made hollow, so that they can be floated to place in constructing the government breakwater at that point. The proposed block of standard size will weigh about fourteen tons, but in the experiments the weight is only about seven tons. The blocks will consist of re-enforced concrete walls, enclosing a hollow space. After it has been towed to the site of the work an opening in the bottom is uncovered and water is permitted to enter the block and sink it. The interior of the block is then filled with sand and gravel, and the open space in the top is filled with concrete.

This question, always interesting for the light it throws on the past history of the earth, has had many answers. The latest is that of Dr. J. W. Spencer, who, from recent studies on the spot, finds that the mean rate of recession of Niagara falls at present is 4.2 feet per year, and this has been the rate for approximately 227 years. But owing to the fact that originally the waters of Lake Erie only were discharged over the falls, giving but one-fifteenth of the present water supply, the rate of recession was at first much lower. A sudden widening of the gorge above Foster's Flat indicates the position of the falls when the other great lakes began to discharge into Lake Erie. From his data, Dr. Spencer calculates the entire age of the falls at 39,000 years. The cutting, with the full power of the four lakes, is estimated to have lasted 3,500 years.

## Chinese Faith in Ginseng.

Many of the Chinese believe that when all other remedies fail, and death is at hand, ginseng has the power to bring back health and longevity; hence, when they feel the need of it they will pay fabulous prices for certain kinds of roots. A root to be really valuable as a commodity must come from the mountains of Kirin or be reputed to have come from there. It must be bifurcated, so as to resemble as much as possible the human form, and be semi-transparent, dry, and flinty. Of course, the larger the root the better, and as it is sold by weight it is not very uncommon for a good specimen to bring as much as \$100 an ounce. The value of such a root is in its shape, its texture, the manner in which it has been cured, and the region whence it came.

## The Fall Guy.

"I dropped four stories this morning without being injured."

"Wh-what?"

"Fact. They'd just been returned with thanks, and I dropped 'em to the fireplace."—Kansas City Times.

A man does his own love-making, but he hires a lawyer when it comes to trying to get it undone.

## WHEN HE MET HIS MATCH.

New Stenographer Wanted to Find Out About Employer. He was engaging a new stenographer, and he bit off his words and hurled them at her in a way to frighten any ordinary girl out of her wits, says Judge.

"Chew gum?" he asked.

"No, sir."

"Talk slang?"

"No, sir."

"Make goo-goo eyes at the fellows when you're not busy?"

"No, sir."

"Know how to spell 'cat' and 'dog' correctly?"

"Yes, sir."

"Chin through the telephone half a dozen times a day?"

"No, sir."

"Usually tell the office force how much the firm owes and all the rest of its private business you learn?"

"No, sir."

He was thinking of something else to ask her when she took a hand in the matter and put a few queries.

"Smoke cheap cigars when you're dictating?" she asked.

"Why—er—no," he gasped, in astonishment.

"Take it out of the stenographer's hide when you've had a scrap at home and got the worst of it?"

"Cer-certainly not."

"Slam things around and swear when business is bad?"

"N-ever."

"Lay for your employes with a club when they get caught in a block some morning?"

"No, indeed."

"Think you know enough about grammar and punctuation to appreciate a good stenographer when you get one?"

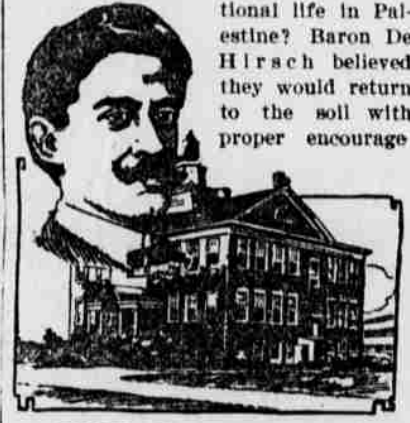
"I—think so."

"Want me to go to work, or is your time worth so little that—"

"You bet!" he broke in, enthusiastically. "Kindly hang up your things and let's get at these letters."

## NEW WORLD JERUSALEM.

Agricultural School at Woodbine, N. J., Is Turning Out Farmers. Is the Jew essentially wedded to the commercial life, or, given the opportunity, would he again become a tiller of the soil as in the old days of the national life in Palestine? Baron De Hirsch believed they would return to the soil with proper encourage-



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ment and opportunity. He established an agricultural school for Jews at Woodbine, N. J. The result is a new world Jerusalem.

Woodbine is to-day the only exclusively Jewish town in the world. It has a population of 2,500, is up-to-date in municipal improvements, and is well ruled. It has none but Jewish residents. Jewish town officials, Jewish policemen and firemen; in fact, Jewish everything. Seventy-five per cent of the people own their own homes.

And, the inhabitants are showing the world at large that the Jews of today are as capable of self-government as they were in the days of the Judges of Israel.

Baron De Hirsch's theory is being vindicated. The school turns out graduates every year, who are scattered all over the country managing large farms or conducting smaller ones of their own. There are fifty Jewish farms scattered around Woodbine; many others around Millville, Varnel, Rosenhaym, Alliance and other southern New Jersey towns.

In every instance the Jew is proving himself a capable farmer. The graduates of the school leave it well drilled. Henry W. Geller, agricultural expert, is the superintendent. The college and its superintendent are pictured here.

## Hard Hit.

"There is one thing I dread," remarked Johnson, "and that is a premature burial."

"Don't worry about that," replied Brown; "the thing is impossible. There's no danger of your being buried too soon."—Tit-Bits.

## Rightly Named.

"Say, paw," queried little Tommy Toddles, "what is the bone of contention?"

"The jawbone, my son," answered the old man, with a side glance at his wife.

## Others Whenever.

Some people make happiness wherever they go.—Success Magazine.

Nobody is so much alive as the dead beat.