

STRONG AND STEADY

By HORATIO ALGER, JR.

CHAPTER XII.

Walter went up to his room, and hastily packed his trunk. He felt wronged and outraged by the unfounded charge that had been made against him. Why, he argued, should Mr. Drummond so readily decide that he had cheated him out of five dollars? He felt that he could not, with any self-respect, remain any longer under the same roof with a man who had such a poor opinion of him.

He was not sorry that his engagement was at an end. He had obtained some knowledge of the dry goods business, and he knew that his services were worth more than his board. Then, again, though he was not particular about living luxuriously, the fare at Mr. Drummond's was so uncommonly poor that he did sometimes long for one of the abundant and well-cooked meals which he used to have spread before him at home, or even at his boarding house while a pupil of the Essex Classical Institute. He was packing his trunk, when a step was heard on the stairs, and his door was opened by Mr. Drummond, considerably to Walter's surprise.

The fact is that Mr. Drummond, on realizing that a mistake he had made, and that Joshua was the real culprit, felt that he had gone altogether too far, and he realized that he would be severely censured by Walter's friends in Willoughby. Besides, it was just possible that Walter might, after all, recover a few thousand dollars from his father's estate, and therefore it was better to be on good terms with him. Mr. Drummond determined, therefore, to conciliate Walter, and induce him, if possible, to remain in his house and employ.

"What are you doing, Conrad?" he asked, on entering Walter's chamber. "Surely you are not going to leave us."

"I think it best," said Walter, quietly.

"You won't—ahem!—bear malice on account of the little mistake I have made. We are all liable to mistakes."

"It was something more than a mistake, Mr. Drummond. What had you seen in me to justify you in such a sudden charge of dishonesty?"

"Well, Conrad, I was mistaken. I shall be glad to have you come back to the store as before."

"Thank you, Mr. Drummond, but I have decided to go back to Willoughby for a short time. I want to consult Mr. Shaw about the future. It is time I formed some plan, as I shall probably have to earn my living."

"If you have made up your mind, all I have to say is that my humble dwelling will be ever open to receive you in the future. Perhaps, after a short visit at your old home, you may feel inclined to return to my employment. I will give you a dollar a week, besides board."

Mr. Drummond looked as if he felt that this was a magnificent offer, for which Walter ought to feel grateful. But our hero knew very well that he could command better pay elsewhere, and was not particularly impressed. Still, he wished to be polite.

"Thank you for your offer, Mr. Drummond," he said; "but I am not prepared to say, as yet, what I will do."

"I hope," said Mr. Drummond, rather embarrassed, "you won't speak of our little difference to your friends in Willoughby."

"No, sir; not if you wish me not to do so."

By this time the trunk was packed, and Walter, locking it, rose from his knees.

"If it won't be too much trouble, Mr. Drummond," he said, "I will send for my trunk to-morrow."

"Certainly. Why don't you wait till to-morrow yourself?"

"As I am ready, I may as well take the afternoon train. I will go down and bid good-by to Mrs. Drummond."

Mrs. Drummond had just come from the kitchen. She looked with surprise at Walter and her husband, whose presence in the house at that hour was unusual.

"What is the matter?" she asked.

"Conrad is going home a short time on business," explained Mr. Drummond. "I have offered him increased pay if he will return to the store. I hope he may decide to do so. Our humble roof will ever be ready to shelter him."

Just at that moment Joshua, unconscious of the damaging discovery that had been made relative to himself, entered the room.

"Hello! what's up?" he asked.

It was the first time his father had seen him since the discovery of his dishonesty, and his anger was kindled.

"You ought to be ashamed to show your face here, you young reprobate!" he exclaimed.

Joshua stared in amazement, and Mrs. Drummond exclaimed, "What makes you talk so, Mr. Drummond? What has he done?"

"What has he done?" ejaculated Mr. Drummond, adding, rather ungrammatically, "He's a thief—that's what he's done. It would serve him right if I should flog him within an inch of his life."

"If you try it," said Joshua, sullenly, "I'll have you arrested for assault and battery."

her husband. "That boy sold a shawl a fortnight ago, when alone in the store, and pocketed the money."

"Who said I did?" asked Joshua, boldly, though he looked a little pale.

"The woman who bought it of you was in the store to-day."

"Did she know my name?"

"No; but she described you."

"I remember now."

"What made you keep the money?"

"I didn't. I waited till Conrad came into the store, and gave the money to him. What he did with it, I don't know. Perhaps he forgot to put it in the drawer."

"That's a lie, Joshua Drummond!" said Walter, quietly, "and you know it is. I think your father knows it is also."

"Do you mean to say I lie?" blustered Joshua.

"I wouldn't if I wasn't obliged to; but in my own defense I am compelled to do so."

"What could I want of the money?" demanded Joshua.

"I think you wanted the money to buy lottery tickets with," said Walter, calmly.

"To buy lottery tickets with!"

"What does this mean, Joshua?" demanded his father, sternly.

"It's a lie!" said Joshua, unblushingly.

"Can you prove this charge which you have made against my son?" asked Mr. Drummond, turning to Walter.

"I can, but I am sorry to be obliged to do so. I picked up this letter a day or two since, and intended to give it back to Joshua, but it escaped my mind. I would not have exposed him if he had not tried to charge me with theft."

He placed in Mr. Drummond's hands the letter already given, announcing to Joshua that he had drawn a blank. Mr. Drummond read it with no little anger, for he detested lotteries.

"Unhappy boy!" he said, addressing Joshua. "I understand now what became of the five dollars. This decides me to do what I had intended to do sooner. I have supported you in laziness long enough. It is time you went to work. Next week you must go to work. I will take you into my store; but as I am not sure of your honesty, if I find you appropriating money to your own use, I will put you into a shoe shop and make a shoemaker of you."

This was an alarming threat to Joshua, who had a foolish pride, which led him to look upon a trade as less respectable than the mercantile profession. He slunk out of the house, while Walter set out on foot for the railway station, three-quarters of a mile distant.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Give me a ticket to Willoughby," said Walter.

Five minutes later he was occupying a seat, or, rather, half a seat, for there sat next to him a brisk, energetic-looking man of about thirty years of age. He had been reading the morning paper, but apparently he had got through with it, for he folded it up and put it in his pocket.

"Fine day," he said, briskly.

"Yes, sir, very fine," answered Walter.

"Some people are affected by the weather; I am not," pursued his fellow traveler. "I feel as smart one day as another. I'm always cheerful. I've got too much business to do to mope. When a man's got enough to busy himself about, he hasn't time to be in the dumps."

"There's a good deal in that," said Walter.

"Of course there is. Push along, keep moving, that's my motto. Are you in business?"

"No, sir, not at present."

"I'm in the subscription book business—got an office in New York. We send out agents everywhere to canvass for our publications. Lots of money in it."

"Is there?"

"Yes. I used to be an agent myself, and, though I say it, I don't think there are many agents that can get ahead of me. Sometimes I used to make twenty dollars a day. At last I thought I'd like to settle down, so I bought partnership, and now, instead of being an agent, I send out agents."

"Isn't twenty dollars a day pretty large for an agent to make?" asked Walter.

"Yes, there are not many who do it, but plenty make from five to ten right along. You look as if you would make a good agent."

"What makes you think so?" asked Walter.

"You look smart."

"Thank you," said Walter, laughing. "I am afraid you won't think so much of my ability when I tell you that I have been working for the last three months for my board."

"It's a shame. You'd better come with us. We'll do much better by you than that."

"I am going to consult some friends about my future plans. If you are willing to tell me a little of your business, I will think of what you propose."

tures alone was absolutely e-nor-mous!" he added, dwelling upon the last word by way of emphasis. "But we're going to make it pay. The sale will be immense. Our agents already in the field report remarkable sales."

"What's the title of the book?" asked Walter, who had yet been unable to determine this point, by reason of the rapid turning of the pages.

"Scenes in Bible Lands. We include other countries besides Palestine, and we've made a book that'll sell. Most every family will want one."

"What terms do you offer to agents?"

"Why, the book sells at retail at three dollars and fifty cents. Of this the agent keeps one dollar and twenty-five cents. Pretty good, isn't it?"

"Yes, I should think it was."

"You see you have only to sell four copies a day to make five dollars. If you're smart, you can do better than that."

It really did seem very good to Walter, who couldn't help comparing it with the miserable wages he had received from Mr. Drummond.

"I think that would pay very well," he said.

"Most paying business out," said the other. "Say the word, and I'll engage you on the spot."

"Where would you want me to sell?"

"I should like to have you go West. This way districts are mostly taken up. It would give you a good chance to travel and see the world."

Now Walter was, like most other young people, fond of new scenes, and this consideration was a weighty one. It would enable him to travel, and pay his expenses while doing so.

"Better say the word."

"I can't say now. I must see my friends first."

"Well, I'll give you the number of our office in New York. When you get ready, report to us there, and we'll put you in the field."

To this Walter assented, and asked several questions further, to which he received encouraging answers. The stranger gave him his card, from which our hero learned that he had made the acquaintance of Mr. James Pusher, of the firm of Flint & Pusher, subscription publishers, Nassau street, New York.

"Good-by," said Mr. Pusher, cordially, when Walter left the train for the Willoughby station; "hope to see you again."

"Thank you," said Walter; "very likely you will."

Taking his carpetbag in his hand, for he had arranged to have his trunk come next day, he walked over to the house of Mr. Shaw, his father's executor.

Mr. Shaw was in his office, a little one-story building standing by itself a little to the left of his house. He was busily writing, and did not at once look up. When he saw who it was, he rose up and welcomed Walter with a smile.

"I'm very glad to see you, Walter," he said. "I was just wishing you were here. When did you leave Stapleton?"

"This afternoon, Mr. Shaw. I have just reached Willoughby. What progress have you made in settling the estate?"

"I can give you some idea of how it stands. There will be something left, but not much. After paying all debts, including Nancy's, there will certainly be a thousand dollars; but if you pay Nancy's legacy, that will take half of this sum."

"The legacy shall be paid," said Walter, promptly, "no matter how little remains. I am glad there is enough for that."

"I honor your determination, Walter, but I don't think Nancy will be willing to take half of what you have left."

"Then don't let her know how little it is."

"There is a chance of something more. I have made no account of the Great Metropolitan Mining stock, of which your father held shares to the amount of one hundred thousand dollars, cost price. How these will come out is very uncertain, but I think we can get something. Suppose it were only five per cent, that would make five thousand dollars. But it isn't best to count on that."

"I shan't make any account of the mining stock," said Walter. "If I get anything, it will be so much more than I expect."

"That is the best way. It will prevent disappointment."

"How long before we find out about it?"

"It is wholly uncertain. It may be six months; it may be two years. All I can say is that I will look after your interests."

"Thank you, I am sure of that."

"Now, as to your plans. You were at the Essex Classical Institute, I think?"

"Yes, sir."

"What do you say to going back for a year? It is not an expensive school. You could stay a year, including expenses, for the sum of five hundred dollars."

HOUSEHOLD

Spoon and Fork Combined.
A useful addition to the housewife's collection of cooking utensils is a combined mixing spoon and fork, invented and patented by a Massachusetts man.



In beating up eggs and other ingredients for the cake or pie the cook sometimes uses a spoon and at other times a fork, as best suited for the purpose. By combining the spoon and fork but one implement is required. Formerly the fork, because of its open construction, failed to properly grasp and lift the batter. The half section of the spoon overcomes this fault, affording ample means of lifting the ingredients to be beaten. In combining the fork with the spoon the prongs are inserted transversely of the bowl, the mixing being thus more thoroughly accomplished than with an ordinary fork.

Self-Freezing Ice Cream.
Pour your cream of whatever kind into the freezer, surround with alternate layers of ice, shaved or cracked almost as fine as snow and rock salt. Fill to the top and pour over all two quarts of the strongest brine. Bury the freezer out of sight in cracked ice, throw a piece of carpet or a double sack over all and do not touch for an hour. Open then and beat and churn when you have scraped the frozen cream from the sides down into the middle. Have a stout paddle made for this and work diligently for at least five or six minutes. Now close the freezer, pack it down again in rock salt and firm chopped ice, burying it out of sight as before, put a weight on the top, unless the freezer be fast to the bottom of the outer vessel, and let all alone for two hours longer.

Whole-Wheat Bread Without Yeast.
Three cups of fine whole wheat flour, three teaspoons baking powder, level teaspoon salt, milk or milk and water to mix to a light, soft dough (about one and one-half cups), two teaspoons sugar is desired. Sift twice flour, salt, baking powder and sugar. Mix either with a spoon or a knife in a large bowl with the milk. When smooth turn into a greased pan and cover with another pan inverted. Let the bread stand five or ten minutes, then bake in a steady oven, not too hot, about forty-five minutes.

Jelled Figs.
Wash a pound of whole figs and cook in boiling water until the skins are tender. Soak two level tablespoofuls of granulated gelatine in a half cup of cold water for twenty minutes, then add it to the hot liquid and figs. When dissolved add one-half cup of sugar, then measure the liquid, add to it enough orange juice to make three cups. Set aside until it begins to thicken. Then stir in the figs, cut in pieces, and pour into mold wet with cold water. Chill thoroughly and serve with cream or boiled custard.

Dutch Apple Cake.
Two cups flour, half teaspoon salt, two teaspoons baking powder, two tablespoons butter, one beaten egg, one scant cup milk. Stir and put in a long pan, not too deep. Then press into the dough apples cut in quarters, sprinkle with two tablespoons butter, also cinnamon and small bits of butter. Bake till apples are done and eat with sugar and milk.

Useful Tea Leaves.
Tea leaves have many uses and should not be carelessly thrown away. Drain them and they are useful to strew over a carpet or floor to keep the dust from rising while sweeping a room. They are good to clean glass water bottles; it is also good to leave fish knives and forks in the wet leaves to remove the disagreeable odor.

Cool Box for Pantry.
My pantry window is nineteen inches wide. I got a box the size of the lower sash and a foot deep; put two shelves in it and nailed to the outside of the window. Now by raising the window I have a cool place this fall weather to put my butter, eggs and milk.

Heat Potatoes Before Baking.
To save gas and time when baking potatoes heat them through on top of stove before placing in oven and they will bake in one-half the time otherwise required.

Serve Green Cabbage.
To preserve the fresh, greenish color of cabbage, put a little soda in the water in which it is boiled. About a quarter of a teaspoonful for a medium-sized cabbage.

Short Suggestions.
If pecan nuts are soaked over night in water when cracked the kernels will come out whole.

FLASHES OF FUN

Stranger—This village boasts of a choral society, doesn't it? Resident—No; we just endure it with resignation.—London Tit-Bits.

Her Husband—Oh, I wish I had never learned to play poker. His Wife—You mean you wish you had learned, don't you?—Chicago Daily News.

"A woman's 'No' means 'Yes.' " "You think so?" "I know so. Don't you?" "No; I am all over that illusion. I am married."—Nashville American.

"That new preacher you have is a pretty wideawake young man, isn't he?" "Yep. Keeps right on preachin' when everybody else is asleep."—Cleveland Leader.

Nell—A girl shouldn't marry a man till she knows all about him. Belle—Good gracious! If she knew all about him she wouldn't marry him.—Philadelphia Record.

"Why do they have consultations of physicians, pa?" "Sometimes one doctor can think of something to operate for that hasn't occurred to the other."—The Smart Set.

Today—Jennie tells me young Woodby proposed to her last night. Viola—I don't think I know him. Is he well off? Today—He certainly is. She refused him.—London Tit-Bits.

Constable—Come along; you've got to have a bath. Tramp—A bath! What, wiv water? Constable—Yes, of course. Tramp—Couldn't you manage t' wiv one of them vacuum cleaners?

Mrs. Gramerey—I hear the customs authorities seized all the finery you brought over from Paris. Will it be a total loss? Mrs. Park—Why, no fear; I got my name in the papers.—Puck.

"Why did you shake your fist at the Speaker?" "Well," replied the Congressman, "I didn't want the whole session to slip by without my having made a motion of some kind."—Philadelphia Ledger.

"Who is the old file over there with the comic coat, the stovepipe hat and the baggy-kneed trousers?" "That's the professor who is lecturing on the absurdities of woman's dress."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

"Bridget," said Mrs. Grouchy, "I don't like the looks of that man who called to see you last night." "Well, well," replied Bridget, "ain't it funny, ma'am? He said the same thing about you."—Philadelphia Press.

"I never object to fair criticism," said the pompous young actor. "What you object to, I suppose," said the critic, "is the understanding most people have of the meaning of the word 'fair.'"—Chicago Record-Herald.

On reaching a certain spot the driver turned around on his seat and observed to the passengers: "From this point the road is only accessible to mules and donkeys; I must therefore ask the gentlemen to get out and proceed on foot."

"Lady," said Meandering Mike, "I don't blame dat dog of yours for tryin' to bite me." "Why not?" "Because it shows his intelligence. De last time I came dis way I handed him a piece of pie you gave me."—Washington (D. C.) Star.

Visitor—And how is Pat this morning? Mrs. Patrick O'Grady—Sure, yer honor, it's still alive he is. Visitor—Did you give him the soup I sent? Mrs. Patrick O'Grady—Well, no, sir. Father Phelan said it would only be 'after delayin' him.—London Sketch.

"Ah, yes," said Senator Smugg, in a self-satisfied way. "I got my start in life by clerking in a humble grocery store at a salary of \$3 per week, and managed to save money on that."

"But," replied the astute reporter, "that, of course, was before cash registers were invented."

Brown—About the greatest man who ever lived in this community was Jenkins—broad-minded, big-hearted and brilliant—and yet he died with all his talents and goodness unsuspected.

Jones—How did you come to find out about it? Brown—I married his widow.—London (Eng.) Tit-Bits.

"Ladies," called the president of the Afternoon Whist Club, "ladies, it has been moved and seconded that there shall be no conversation at the card tables. What shall we do with the motion?" "I suggest that we discuss it while we play," piped a shrill voice from table A. And the suggestion was adopted.

Publican—And how do you like being married, John? John—Don't like it at all. Publican—Why, what's the matter w' she, John? John—Well, first thing in the morning it's money; when I goes 'ome to my dinner it's money again; and at supper it's the same. Nothing but money, money, money!

Publican—Well, I never! What do she do w' all that money? John—I dunno t' ain't in her any yet.—Punch.

(To be continued.)

Hydrocephalous.

"He isn't exceedingly clever, is he?" "Clever? I should say not. Why, if an idea should get into that fellow's head you could hear it splash."—Kansas City Times.

In employments requiring quickness and dexterity of the hands women are far more valuable than men.