

STRONG AND STEADY

By HORATIO ALGER, JR.

CHAPTER XXII.—(Continued.)

Jack ran hastily to the spot, hoping to gain possession of the plank which had been of such service to his opponent, and want of which had entailed such misfortunes upon him. But Walter was too quick for him. The plank was drawn over, and again he faced his intended victim with the width of the ditch between.

He looked across at Walter with a glance of baffled rage. It was something new to him to be worsted by a boy, and it mortified him and angered him to such an extent that, had he got hold of him at that moment, murder might have been committed.

"Put down that plank and come across," he called out. Walter did not reply.

Jack might have waded again across the ditch without inflicting much additional damage upon his already wet and mucky clothing, but he fancied that Walter was in his power, and hoped he would capitulate. To this end, he saw that it was necessary to reassure him, and deceive him as to his own intentions.

"Come across, boy," he said, softening his tone. "You needn't be afraid. I didn't mean nothing. I was only tryin' to see if I could frighten you a little."

"I'm very well off where I am," said Walter. "I think I'll stay where I am."

"You won't want to stay there all day," said Jack. "I'd rather stay here all day than be on the same side with you."

"Come, boy, I'll make a bargain with you. You've put me to a good deal of trouble."

"I don't see that."

"You locked me up in the closet, and you've kept me all night huntin' after you."

"You were not obliged to hunt after me, and as for locking you up in the closet, it was the only way I had of saving my money."

Jack did not care to answer Walter's argument, but proceeded: "Now I've got you sure, but I'll do the fair thing. If you'll come across and pay me ten dollars for my trouble, I'll let you go without hurtin' you."

"What is to prevent you taking all my money, if you get me over there?"

"Haven't I said I wouldn't?"

"You might forget your promise," said Walter, whose confidence in Jack's word was by no means great. A man who would steal probably would not be troubled by any scruples on the subject of violating his word.

Fifteen minutes later Jack rose to his feet. An idea had occurred to him. At the distance of a furlong there was a rail fence. It occurred to him that one of these rails would enable him to cross the ditch and get at his victim. He was not afraid Walter would escape, since he could easily turn back and capture him if he ventured across.

Walter did not understand his design in leaving the ditch. Was it possible that he meant to raise the siege? This seemed hardly probable. He watched, with some anxiety, the movements of his foe, fearing some surprise.

When Jack reached the fence, and began to pull out one of the rails he understood his object. His position was evidently becoming more dangerous.

Jack came back with a triumphant smile upon his face.

"Now," he said, "I've got you!"

Walter watched him warily, and lowered the plank, ready to convert it into a bridge as soon as necessary. Jack put down the rail. It was long enough to span the ditch, but was rather narrow, so that some caution was needful in crossing it.

Walter had moved several rods farther up, and thrown the plank across. Though his chances of escape from the peril that menaced him seemed to have diminished since his enemy was also provided with a bridge, and it became now a question of superior speed, Walter was not alarmed. Indeed, his prospects of deliverance appeared brighter than ever, for he caught sight of two men approaching across the meadow, and he suspected that they were sent by the boy whom he had hired. These men had not yet attracted the attention of Jack, whose back was turned towards them. He crossed the rail, and, at the same time, Walter crossed the plank. This he drew across, and then, leaving it on the bank, set out on a quick run.

CHAPTER XXIII.

"What's the matter?" asked one of the two men as Walter came up.

"I got lost in the woods, and passed the night in that man's house," said our hero. "He tried to rob me, but I locked him in the closet, and jumped out of the window and escaped. This morning he got on my track, and would have caught me if it hadn't been for that ditch."

"You locked him in the closet?" repeated the other. "How were you able to do that? You are only a boy, while he is a strong man."

Walter explained the matter briefly.

"That was pretty smart," said Peter Holcomb, for this was the name of the man who questioned him. "You're able to take care of yourself."

"I don't know how it would have turned out if you hadn't come up."

"I happened to be at home when my boy came and told me that Jack Mangum had offered him fifty cents for some breakfast. He told me about you also, and, as I suspected Jack was up to some of his tricks, I came along."

"I am very much obliged to you," said Walter, "and I hope you'll let me pay you for your trouble."

"I don't want any pay, but you may pay my boy what you promised him, if you want to."

"I certainly will; and I never paid away money with more pleasure. As I haven't had anything to eat since yesterday afternoon, I should like to have you direct me to the nearest place where I can get some breakfast."

"Come to my house; I guess my wife can scare up some breakfast for you. She'll be glad to see the boy that got the better of Jack Mangum."

"I don't know as I ought to take it," said the boy, hesitating, though he evidently wanted it.

"You will do me a favor by accepting it," said Walter. "You got me out of a bad scrape. Besides, you had a chance to earn some money from Jack Mangum."

"I wouldn't have done anything for him, at any rate. He's a thief."

Finally Peter, for he was named for his father, accepted the dollar, and, sitting down by Walter, asked him about his adventure in the wood, listening with great interest to the details.

"I wouldn't have dared to do as you did," he said.

"Perhaps you would if you had been obliged to."

The farmer absolutely refused to accept pay for breakfast, though Walter urged it. It was contrary to his ideas of hospitality.

"We don't keep a tavern," he said; "and we never shall miss the little you ate. Come again and see us if you come back this way."

"Thank you," said Walter, "I will accept your invitation with pleasure, but I shall not feel like calling on Mr. Mangum."

Walter thought he had seen the last of Jack Mangum; but he was mistaken. Three days later, while walking in the main street of Riverport, with a book under his arm, for he had received a fresh supply from the agent at Cleveland, he heard the sound of wheels. Looking up, he saw a wagon approaching, containing two men. One of them, as he afterwards learned, was the sheriff. The other he immediately recognized as Jack Mangum.

There was no mistaking his sinister face and forbidding scowl. He had been taken early that morning by the sheriff, who, with a couple of men to assist him, had visited the cabin in the forest, and, despite the resistance offered by Jack, who was aided by his wife, he had been bound, and was now being conveyed to jail. He also looked up and recognized Walter. His face became even more sinister, as he shook his fist at our hero.

"I vow I'll be even with you some day!" he exclaimed.

"Not if I can help it," thought Walter, but he did not answer in words.

He was rather gratified to hear the next day that Jack had been sentenced to six months' imprisonment. He felt some pity, however, for Meg, who might have been a good woman if she had been married to a different man.

(To be continued.)

OVER OCEAN FOR HOUR'S WORK.

Engineer Would Have Returned Same Day if Steamer Sailed.

Alfred H. Williams, a mining engineer of the English metropolis, has just crossed the Atlantic ocean to transact one hour's business, says the New York Herald.

He arrived here on the steamship, Amerika of the Hamburg-American line Saturday afternoon. Before twilight fell he had kept his various appointments, closed the transactions which brought him to this country and would now be on his way home had there been a vessel to carry him. As it happened, however, he has been compelled to wait until Tuesday.

It was not only the brief time required to carry out his negotiations, but the fashion in which his most important engagement was kept that makes Mr. Williams' visit out of the ordinary, even in these days of fast travel. Apart from his mining business he is also interested in railroad affairs in Mexico and it was chiefly to consult with a man from that republic that he made his 3,000-mile journey.



Poet—Have you read my last poem? Friend—I trust that I have.—Judge.

Briggs—You say business is looking up? Griggs—That's what it is. It can't look any other way; it's flat on its back.—Ex.

Little New York Boy—Say, father, when will I be old enough so that I won't have to get up and give my seat to a lady?—Life.

"On my knee I begged her for a kiss." "And what did she say?" "Told me to get up and be practical."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

"My wife made an engagement for me to dine at the Bings'. I forgot and went fishing." "Catch anything?" "Not until I got home."—Plain Dealer.

Curate—I haven't seen your husband at church recently, Mrs. Bloggs. What is he doing? Mrs. Bloggs—"E be a doin' six months, sir!"—London Opinion.

"Maude was afraid the girls wouldn't notice her engagement ring." "Did they?" "Did they? Six of them recognized it at once."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Chapple—Have a cigarette, old man? Sapleigh—No; I don't smoke fool-killers. Chapple—Well, I don't blame you for refusing to take chances.—Chicago Daily News.

"This is a new shaving soap I'm using," said the barber. "How do you like it?" "Applied externally," spluttered the victim.—The Catholic Standard and Times.

Nell—Maude has a new dressmaker; what do you think of the fit of her new gown? Belle—"I shouldn't call it a fit; I should call it a convulsion."—Philadelphia Record.

"Of course you play bridge only for fun?" "Of course," answered Mrs. Spangleton. "But it isn't any fun unless you are playing for money."—Washington Star.

"I heard him behind the door pleading for just one. They must be engaged." "Naw, they're married. It was a dollar he was pleading for."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

"Do you consider your nerve is sufficiently steady to fit you for an arduous navigator?" "I—I wish I'd a picked some different enemies."—Cleveland Leader.

Heless—But, father, that handsome foreign count says he will do something desperate and awful if I do not marry him. Father (dryly)—He will. He will have to go to work.—Baltimore American.

"Well, young man," thundered the head of the house. "S-sir," stammered the youth. "I want to marry your d-d-daughter." "Aw, take her and welcome. I was afraid you were courting the cook!"—Ex.

"Walter," said a traveler in a railroad restaurant, "did you say I had twenty minutes to wait or that it was twenty minutes to eight?" "Nayther. Oi said ye had twenty minutes to ate, an' that's all ye did have. Yer train's just gone."—Everybody's Magazine.

The art photographer had visited the farm. "I want to make an exhaustive study of this particular bit of landscape," he said, "and would like to have your hired man retain his present position on the fence there. Can he sit still?" "For days at a time," replied the farmer.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.



To Keep Juice in a Pie. Anyone who has ever had the juice from an apple, rhubarb or other pie run all over the oven while baking knows just how annoying it is, says the Woman's Home Companion. I have overcome the difficulty by taking a strip of clean white cloth about an inch wide and long enough to lap when put around the edge of the pie plate, wringing it out of hot water, doubling together lengthwise, and pinning tight around the edge of the plate. When the pie is baked take off this strip and you will find the juice in the pie instead of in the oven.

Chicken with Coconut. Stew a chicken and remove the bones. Grate a coconut and cover it with water fifteen minutes; strain it and add more water. This again should be strained through a bag of coarse cheesecloth, and the rich liquor resulting—about a pint—added to the chicken. Cook slowly a few minutes and thicken with two tablespoonfuls of flour mixed smoothly in cold water, one-half teaspoonful of salt and three teaspoonfuls of turmeric powder. Let all cook up with the chicken, then lay it on a platter surrounded by boiled rice and cover partly with gravy.

Steamed Peach Pudding. This excellent recipe comes from Mr. Berry's "Fruit Recipes." Mix well a cup of flour, two of bread crumbs and a half cup chopped nuts, preferably almonds. Stir in the beaten yolks of three eggs, three-fourths cup sugar, a little lemon juice and two heaping cups chopped peaches. Lastly add the whipped whites of three eggs. Turn into a well-buttered mold and steam two hours. Serve with peaches pressed through a sieve and sweetened.

Appetizing Fish Dish. For an appetizing dish take the white meat of a chicken, and two sticks of crisp, bleached celery. Chop them together fine, and season with salt, pepper and vinegar. Allow this to stand a while, then squeeze dry, and add two tablespoonfuls of mayonnaise dressing and mix well. Over some buttered toast lay two or three thin slices of bacon, and on top of this spread the chicken. If not objectionable, sprinkle chopped olives over the whole.

Canned Pears. To every three pounds of fruit allow one and one-half pounds of sugar and a half pint of water. Peel pears and lay them in cold water to keep them from turning dark. When syrup is boiling put in pears and cook until they are clear and a fork will go into them easily. Have jars standing in pan of hot water, carefully fill them with the fruit. Pour syrup over them, filling to top. Seal at once.

Quince Jelly. Take about fourteen quinces and two pounds of sugar. Divide quinces into four parts and put into kettle nearly covered with water and cook until tender. Pour juice through a cloth. This will make one quart of juice. Clarify sugar, pour over juice of quinces and cook for fifteen minutes. Skim the juice. Then pour into jelly tumblers.

Canned Pineapple. Pare ripe, juicy pineapples, cut into slices and inch thick. To one pound of fruit allow one-fourth pound of sugar. Put them into preserving kettle together, and add a very little water if the juice is not enough. As soon as they are well scalded put into jars and seal at once.

Canned Peaches. To one pound of peaches use half pound of sugar. Put sugar on fire with a little water and let it boil until clear. Pack jars tightly with peaches and fill them up with syrup. Put jars in a large boiler of water, standing them on slabs of wood.

A Conkery Mishap. If something has boiled over onto the stove and begins to smoke and cause an unpleasant odor throw a handful of salt on it. This entirely removes the objectionable smell of burnt cookery.

Chicken Stewed with Dough. Another method is to mix spices, raisins, salt and butter through some partly boiled rice and with it dress the chicken, then wrap it in dough rolled thick and boil it in a cloth (not too tight) half a day.

Short Suggestions. Soap well applied to drawer slides will keep the drawers in furniture and closets from sticking.

The skin from a boiled ham will be more easily removed if as soon as being taken from the boiling liquor the ham be plunged into cold water for a moment.

Cheese may be kept from going moldy by wrapping it in a cloth dipped in vinegar and wrung nearly dry. Cover the cloth with a wrapper of paper and keep in a cool place.

The life of the modern battleship put down at fifteen years.

It has been so long since some people were tough, that they forget they ever were.