

STRONG AND STEADY

By HORATIO ALGER, JR.

CHAPTER VIII.

The picnic came off on Saturday afternoon. The weather, which often throws a wet blanket upon the festivities of such occasions, was highly propitious, and several hundred persons, young and middle-aged, turned out. The place selected for the picnic was a field of several acres, bordering upon a pond. This had been fitted up by the proprietor with swings, and a roofed building, without sides, under which were placed rough board tables for the reception of provisions. A number of oak trees with their broad branches furnished shelter.

Besides these arrangements for enjoyment, there were two boats confined by iron chains, which were thrown around trees near the brink of the water. After enjoying the swing for a time, there was a proposition to go out in the boats. The boats could comfortably accommodate eight persons each. This number had been obtained, when Joshua came up.

"I'm going," he said, unconcerningly. "You will have to wait till next time," said Ralph Morse. "We've got the full number."

"No, I'm going this time," said Joshua, rudely, and clambered in and took his place as steersman.

The other boat had already set off, and, as it happened, under the guidance of Walter Conrad, who had long been accustomed to managing a boat, having had one of his own at home.

"They've got a great steerer on the other boat," said Joshua, sneering.

"Where are you steering, Joshua?" asked Ralph, suddenly, for the boat nearly half turned round. The fact was that Joshua himself knew very little about steering. In speaking of Walter's want of skill, he had precisely described himself.

"I understand what I'm about," answered Joshua, suddenly reversing the direction, and overdoing the matter, so as to turn the boat halfway round the other way.

"I hope you do," said Ralph, "but it don't look much like it."

"I was looking at the other boat," Joshua condescended to explain, "and the rudder slipped."

Walter's boat kept the lead. His perfect steering made the task easier for the rowers, who got the full advantage of their efforts. Joshua, however, by his uncertain steering, hindered the progress of his boat.

"Can't you beat the other boat?" asked Joseph Wheeler, who was rowing. "I can row as well as either of those fellows."

"So can I," said Tom Barry; "let's try."

The boats were about five lengths apart, the rowers in the foremost boat not having worked very hard, when Tom and Joe began to exert themselves. The intention was soon manifest, and the spirit of rivalry was excited.

"Do your best, boys!" said Walter. "They're trying to catch us. Don't let them do it."

The rowers of the two boats were about evenly matched. If anything, however, Tom and Joe were superior, and, other things being equal, would sooner or later have won the race. But Joshua, by his original style of steering, which became under the influence of excitement even more unreliable, caused them to lose perceptibly.

"Can't you steer straight by accident, Joshua?" asked Tom, in a tone of vexation.

"I know more about steering than you do, Tom Barry," growled Joshua, getting red in the face, for he could not help seeing that he was not appearing to advantage.

"Show it, then, if you do," was the reply. "If we had your cousin to steer us, we could soon get ahead."

This was very mortifying to Joshua. He did not care to be outdone by any one, but to be outdone by Walter was particularly disagreeable.

"It isn't the steering, it's the rowing," he said. "You don't row even."

"Won't you try it, then," said Joe, "and show us what you can do?"

"No; I'd rather steer."

Joshua considered that the steersman's place was the place of honor, and he was not disposed to yield it. Meanwhile Walter, from his place in the first boat, watched the efforts of his rivals. He was determined to keep the lead which he had secured, and had little fear of losing it.

"Give way, boys!" he cried; "we'll distance them, never fear!"

After making the turn, the Arrow met the Pioneer after a little distance. There was abundant room for the boats to pass each other, if they had been properly managed. There was no fault in Walter's steering, but, by an awkward blunder of Joshua's, the Pioneer veered in her course so that the Arrow struck her, to use a nautical term, amidships. As she was being impelled rapidly at the time, the shock was considerable, and the fright still greater. The girls jumped to their feet screaming, and Joshua himself turned pale with fright, but recovered himself sufficiently to call out angrily, "What made you run into us?"

So a younger boy was put in Joshua's place, much to his mortification, and he was degraded, as he considered it, to the rank of a passenger.

"I'm going ashore," he said, sourly. "Let me out here."

"All right," said Tom Barry. "I guess we can get along without you. Here, you fellows on the Arrow, just wait a minute, till we've landed Joshua, and we'll race you back."

True to his determination, Joshua jumped off at the head of the inlet, and the Pioneer was turned by her new pilot.

The Arrow and the Pioneer took their places side by side, and the race commenced. The boats were similar, and thus neither had the advantage on this score. But the rowers on the Pioneer were, on the whole, stronger, and more skillful than those on the Arrow. On the other hand, Walter steered perfectly, while Joshua's successor, though he made no bad blunder, was a novice.

The result was that the race was a clear one. Finally the Arrow came in a length ahead, and Walter felt with quiet satisfaction that the victory had been gained by his efforts.

He hoped that he would be as successful through life in paddling his own canoe. Joshua went home sulkily, and was not seen again on the picnic grounds.

CHAPTER IX.

One morning, a few days later, Joshua was walking moodily up the village road with his hands in his pockets. He was reflecting, in a spirit of great discontent, on the hardships of his situation.

"Here am I," he said to himself, "eighteen years old, and father treats me like a boy of ten. I'm most a man, and I'll be giving me for pocket money is twenty-five cents a week. There's Dick Storrs, whose father isn't a quarter as rich as mine, gets a dollar a week. He's only sixteen, too."

One important difference between himself and Dick Storrs did not occur to Joshua. Dick worked in a shoeshop, and it was out of his own wages that his father allowed him a dollar a week. Joshua earned nothing at all.

"It's mean!" reflected Joshua. "There ain't a boy of my age in Stapleton that's so meanly treated, and yet my father's the richest man in town. I wish I knew what to do to get a little money."

At this moment he saw Sam Crawford approaching him. Sam was perhaps a year younger than Joshua. He had formerly lived in the village, but was now in a situation in New York, and was only in Stapleton for a few days.

"How are you, Joshua?" said Sam. "I'm going round to the ice cream saloon. Won't you come with me?"

"Yes, if you'll treat. I haven't got any money."

"You ought to have. The old man's got plenty."

"That's so. But he's getting meaner every day."

"Look here!" said Sam, suddenly; "I have an idea. Did you ever buy a lottery ticket?"

"No," answered Joshua.

"There's a fellow I know in New York that drew a prize of a thousand dollars, and how much do you think he paid for a ticket?"

"I don't know."

"Five dollars. How's that for high?"

"How long ago is that?" asked Joshua, becoming interested.

"Only two months ago."

"Do you know him?"

"Yes, I know him as well as I know you. He is clerk in a store just opposite ours. When he got the money he gave half a dozen of us a big dinner. We had a jolly time."

"A thousand dollars for five!" repeated Joshua. "He was awfully lucky."

"The fellow I was speaking of gets lottery papers regularly. I'll ask him for one, and send it to you as soon as I get back to the city."

"I wish you would," said Joshua. "Wouldn't it be something great if I could draw a prize of a thousand dollars?"

"I'll bet it would. It would make you independent of the old man. You wouldn't care much for his twenty-five cents a week then."

Joshua and Sam went into the ice cream saloon, which was kept open during the summer only, in a small candy store, by a maiden lady who made a scanty income from such limited patronage as the village could afford. Joshua plied his companion with further questions, to all of which he readily replied, though it is doubtful if all the answers were quite correct. But Sam, having been in the city a few months, wished to be thought to have a very extensive acquaintance with it, and was unwilling to admit ignorance on any point.

was a scheme in which the principal prize was but a thousand dollars. However, the tickets were but a dollar each, and a thousand dollars for one was certainly a handsome return for a small outlay. There were others, however, in which the principal prize was five thousand dollars, and the tickets were, in due proportion, five dollars each.

The more Joshua thought it over, the more convinced he was that a large sum of money was likely to come to him through the lottery if he could only manage to raise money enough to buy a ticket. But the problem of how to get the necessary five dollars he was as far as ever from solving.

While in this state of mind he happened one day to be in the store at noon, and alone, Nichols, the head clerk, wished to go to dinner, and was only waiting for Walter to get back from an errand.

"I wish Walter would hurry up," he grumbled. "My dinner will get cold."

"I'll take your place till he gets back," Mr. Nichols said Joshua, with extraordinary kindness for him.

"Much obliged, Joshua," said the salesman. "I'll do as much for you another time. I don't think you'll have long to wait."

No sooner had he gone than Joshua, after following him to the door, and looking carefully up and down the street, walked behind the counter with a hasty step and opened the money drawer.

There was a small pile of bills in one compartment, and in the other a collection of currency. He took the bills into his hand, and looked over them. His hands trembled a little, for he contemplated a dishonest act. Unable to obtain the money in any other way, he meant to borrow—that was what he called it—five dollars from the money drawer and expend it in a lottery ticket.

Singling out a five-dollar bill from the pile, he thrust it into his vest pocket. He had scarcely done so when he was startled by hearing the door open. He made a guilty jump, but perceived, to his relief, that it was a woman not living in the village, but probably in some adjoining town.

"What can I show you, ma'am?" he asked, in a hurried manner, for he could not help thinking of what he had in his vest pocket.

"I should like to look at some of your shawls," said the woman.

Joshua knew very little about his father's stock. He did know, however, where the shawls were kept, and going to that portion of the shelves, pulled down half a dozen and showed them to his customer.

"Are they all wool?" she asked, critically, examining one of them.

"Yes," answered Joshua, confidently, though he had not the slightest knowledge on the subject.

"What is the price of this one?" asked the customer, indicating the one she had in her hand.

"Five dollars," answered Joshua, with some hesitation. He knew nothing of the price, but guessed that this would be about right.

"And you say it is all wool?"

"Certainly, ma'am."

"I guess I'll take it. Will you wrap it up for me?"

This Joshua did awkwardly enough, and the customer departed, much pleased with her bargain, as she had a right to be, for the real price of the shawl was nine dollars, but, thanks to Joshua's ignorance, she had been able to save four.

Joshua looked at the five-dollar bill he had just received, and a new idea occurred to him. He replaced in the drawer the bill he had originally taken from it and substituted that just received.

"I won't say anything about having sold a shawl," he said, "and father's never know that one has been sold. At any rate, till I get money enough to replace the bill I have taken."

Just then a little girl came in and inquired for a spool of cotton. Joshua found the spools, and let her select one. Then he hurriedly folded up the shawls and replaced them on the shelves. He had just finished the task when Walter entered.

"Are you tending store?" he said, in surprise.

"Yes," said Joshua. "Nichols got tired waiting for you, so I told him I'd stay till you got back."

"I had some distance to go and that detained me. Did you have any customers?"

"Yes, I just sold a spool of cotton to a little girl."

"I met her a little way up the road, holding the spool in her hand."

"Well," said Joshua, "I guess I'll go now you've got back."

He went across the street to his father's house, and, going up into his room, locked the door, not wishing to be interrupted. Then, opening his desk, he took out a sheet of paper, and wrote a note to the address given in his lottery circular, requesting the parties to send him by return of mail a lottery ticket. He added, shrewdly, as he thought, "If this ticket draws a prize, I will keep on buying; but if it don't I shall get discouraged and stop."

"I guess that'll fetch 'em," thought Joshua.

He folded up the paper, and, inclosing the bill, directed it. The next thing to do was to mail it. He decided, though unwillingly, on account of the trouble, to walk to the next postoffice, a distance of three miles, to post his letter there.

FARMS AND FARMERS



Cabbage Worms.

When the first appearance of the worm is made the plants should be dusted with the paris green and flour mixture. When the heads are forming use one pound of pyrethrum powder to four pounds of flour to dust the plants. This is harmless to man. After the head begins forming paris green should not be used. Those who are afraid to use paris green are generally successful by beginning early to use the pyrethrum powder and spraying often.

Cabbage and other plant lice are best controlled by spraying with kerosene emulsion, using the 15 per cent solution—a solution containing 15 per cent of kerosene. If the lice are on trees, flowers or rose bushes, tobacco decoction may be used with good results. The tobacco decoction is made by taking three pounds of tobacco stems and five gallons of water, and boiling for two hours. It is used without diluting, but must not be applied too hot, or it may scald the plants.

If treatment is begun in time plant lice can be controlled. It must be done before the leaves are curled so the spray can reach the pests. There should be several sprayings, four or five days apart, as one spraying will not completely do the work. Clean culture is important in fighting these insects, as with many others.

Automatic Dump Wagon.

The ease with which modern dump carts and wagons can be unloaded is illustrated in the automatic dump wagon shown in the accompanying illustration, the invention of a Connecticut man. The wagon box is pivoted on the



OPERATING THE DUMP WAGON.

axle, the greater portion of the load being in back of the pivoted point. The forward end of the box is normally held in position by a lever directly behind the driver's seat. When ready to dump the load the driver turns in his seat, releases the lever and the load automatically turns over. The driver is thus not compelled to leave his seat, saving considerable time.

Wasted Road Money.

In a recent speech at Peoria, H. H. Gross, secretary of the Farmers' Good Road League and special agent for the National Department of Agriculture to study the question of highways, made the following statement: "In forty years enough money has been thrown away and squandered on the dirt roads of Illinois to pay for graveling or macadamizing every foot of highway in the State." He went on further to state that as good, hard roads could be built on the black land in the corn belt of Illinois as in Massachusetts, or in any other State, and at a moderate annual expense to the landowners of the State, possibly not exceeding their present annual tax for road and bridge purposes.

Milk for Calves.

The calf finds in fresh milk while it is still warm with the animal heat of the cow, it is said, a constituent value not found in the milk after it is allowed to get cold. The chemist can not define it, and it can not be restored again by warming the milk. If every calf could be fed its milk sweet, and while it still retained its animal heat, there would no doubt be fewer cut-throated steers going to the block.

Treatment for Loco.

The results of the loco weed when eaten by stock are unpleasantly familiar to the stockman of the plains east of the Rocky mountains. It has been estimated that the losses from this source in Colorado alone have reached the sum of a million dollars per annum. The national bureau of plant industry has been taking a turn

THE HOUSEHOLD

Fine Corn Cakes.

For a delicate corn cake try one baked in a short-handled frying pan and mixed in a rather unusual manner. Put one and two-thirds cups of corn meal, one-third cup of flour, one-quarter cup of sugar, one level teaspoon each of salt and soda into a sifter and sift, then turn back and sift a second time. Beat two eggs in a bowl, add one cup of sour milk and one cup of sweet milk, heat, add the dry materials and beat again. Have two rounding tablespoons of butter melted in a frying pan, turn in the batter and pour one cup of sweet milk over the top, but do not stir it in. Set in the oven to bake half an hour. The cake will have a custard-like streak all through it.

The Perfect Baked Apples.

When the skins are thin and of a deep red color I frequently do not pare the apples, but at all times I am careful to remove all the core, especially every bit of the lining of the seed cells, and to bake them in granite or earthen, never in tin, as tin gives them an unpleasant flavor and a dingy color. Fill the core cavities with sugar, heated or scalded, according to the tartness of the apples; add also a few grains of salt, and sufficient water to cover the apples. Bake in a quick oven and baste frequently.—The Delinctor.

Egg Substitutes.

Many egg substitutes are made, some from skain milk, some from mixtures of animal or vegetable fats, albumen, starch or flour, coloring matter and a leavening powder, in addition to the mineral waters similar to those found in the egg. Other egg substitutes are little more than starch, colored with some yellow substance. Of course, such products can not be made to replace fresh eggs, in that they do not contain much nitrogenous matter, or fat. Products made from them may be very harmful.

Dumplings for Veal Stew.

One cupful of flour, sifted twice, with a teaspoonful of baking powder. Half a teaspoonful of salt, half a cupful of milk, one teaspoonful of butter. Rub or chop the butter into the prepared flour, wet up with the milk into a soft dough, flour your hands well and, handling as lightly as possible, form the dough into balls and drop into boiling water. Cook for ten minutes. They should be ready at the same time with gravy, as they get clammy with waiting.

To Make Tough Steak Tender.

When meat is high priced it is not always possible to buy the most expensive cuts. The steak that is not porterhouse can be improved by treating it as the French chefs prepare their steaks to make them tender. Put three tablespoons of olive oil and one and one-half tablespoons of vinegar on a plate and lay the steak in, then set in the icebox for four hours. Turn half a dozen times at intervals, then the meat is ready to broil.

Chop Suey of Beef.

Break into a kettle half a package of spaghetti, cover with salt water and boil. When almost tender add half a can of tomatoes. Put butter in frying pan and fry in it three large onions, sliced, till brown. Add two pounds of beef run through the machine. When all is nicely browned add the spaghetti and tomatoes, stir, boil for a few minutes and serve hot.

Browned Potatoes.

Select potatoes of rather small size, peel and cut into quarters. Throw into salted cold water and leave them for half an hour. Take them out and dry them on a clean towel. Have ready in a deep frying pan or a shallow saucepan clean hot fat, boiling hot, and drop the potatoes into this. Fry to a light brown and drain in a colander before serving.

Attractive Service of Tomatoes.

Take a large sized plate, garnish around edges with lettuce leaves or parsley, place slices of deep red tomatoes, peeled, around edge of plate on the leaves, and heap sliced cucumbers in center of dish. The effect is pretty.

Graham Gems.

For one teaspoon soda add three plums of sour milk, two eggs, one teaspoon salt, one tablespoon frying, one-half pint of wheat flour, and enough graham flour to make it thick enough to drop from spoon. Sugar to sweeten if desired.

Baked Ham.

Wash and scrub ham and put in a baking pan two cups water. Bake twenty minutes to the pound. Take it up and remove the skin. Stick into the fat cloves and cover with grated bread crumbs. Brown lightly in the oven.

A Pair of Viewpoints.

"A man," said the elderly suitor, "isn't worth listening to until he is 50."

"True," rejoined the fair maid, "nor worth looking at after he is 40."