

# STRONG AND STEADY

By HORATIO ALGER, JR.

## CHAPTER XV.—(Continued.)

The boy, who had made sure of a sale, took back the fruit reluctantly, and passed on, crying out: "Here's your oranges and apples!"

Walter set about thinking what had become of his money. The more he thought, the more certain he felt that he had put his pocketbook in the pocket in which he had first felt for it. Why was it not there now? That was a question which he felt utterly incompetent to answer.

"Have you lost anything?" inquired a gentleman who sat just behind Walter. Looking back, he found that it was a gentleman of fifty who addressed him.

"Yes, sir," he said, "I have lost my pocketbook."

"Was there much money in it?"

"About forty dollars, sir."

"Who was that young man who was sitting with you a few minutes since?"

"I don't know, sir."

"He was a stranger, then?"

"Yes, sir; I never met him till this morning."

"Then I think I can tell you where your money has gone."

"Where, sir?" demanded Walter, beginning to understand him.

"I think your late companion was a pickpocket, and relieved you of it, while he pretended to be reading. I didn't like his appearance much."

"I don't see how he could have done it without my feeling his hand in my pocket."

"They understand their business and can easily relieve one of his purse undetected. I once had my watch stolen without being conscious of it. Your pocketbook was in the pocket toward the man, and you were looking from the window. It was a very simple thing to relieve you of it."

## CHAPTER XVI.

Walter went through two cars, looking about him on either side, thinking it possible that the thief might have taken his seat in one of them. There was very little chance of this, however. Next he passed into the smoking car, where, to his joy no less than his surprise, he found the man of whom he was in search playing cards with three other passengers.

He looked up carelessly as Walter approached, but did not betray the slightest confusion or sign of guilt. To let the reader into a secret, he had actually taken Walter's pocketbook, but was too cunning to keep it about him. He had taken out the money, and thrown the pocketbook itself from the car platform, taking an opportunity when he thought himself unobserved. As the money consisted of bills, which could not be identified as Walter's, he felt that he was in no danger of detection. He thought that he could afford to be indifferent.

"Did you get tired of waiting?" he asked, addressing our hero.

"May I speak to you a moment?" asked Walter.

"Certainly."

"I mean alone."

"Then, gentlemen, I must beg to be excused for five minutes," said the pickpocket, shrugging his shoulders, as if to express good-natured annoyance. "Now, my young friend, I am at your service."

Walter proceeded to the other end of the car, which chanced to be unoccupied. Now that the moment had come, he hardly knew how to introduce the subject. Suppose that the person he addressed was innocent, it would be rather an awkward matter to charge him with the theft.

"Did you see anything of my pocketbook?" he said, at length.

"Your pocketbook?" returned the pickpocket, arching his brows. "Why, have you lost it?"

"Yes."

"When did you discover its loss?"

"Shortly after you left me," said Walter, significantly.

"I'm very sorry indeed. I did not see it. Have you searched on the floor?"

"Yes; but it isn't there."

"That's awkward. Was your ticket in the pocketbook?"

"No, I had that in my vest pocket."

"That's fortunate. On my honor, I'm sorry for you. I haven't much money with me, but I'll lend you a dollar or two with the greatest of pleasure."

This offer quite bewildered Walter. He felt confident that the other had stolen his money, and now here he was offering to lend him some of it. He did not care to make such a compromise, or to be bought off so cheap; so, though quite penniless, he determined to reject the offer.

"I won't borrow," he said, coldly. "I was hoping you had seen my money."

The pickpocket turned and went back to his game, and Walter slowly left the car. He had intended to ask him point-blank whether he had taken the money, but couldn't summon the necessary courage. He went back to his old seat.

"Well," said the old gentleman who sat behind him, "I suppose you did not find your man?"

"Yes, I did."

"You didn't get your money?" he added, in surprise.

"No, he was perfectly cool. Still, I think he took it. He offered to lend me a dollar or two. What would you advise me to do?"

"Speak to the conductor."

Just at that moment the conductor entered the car. As he came up the aisle Walter stopped him, and explained his loss, and the suspicions he had formed.

"You say the man is in the smoking

car?" said the conductor, who had listened attentively. "Could you point him out?"

"Yes."

"I am glad of it. I have received warning by telegraph that one of the New York swell-mob is on the train, probably intent on mischief, but no description came with it, and I had no clue to the person. I have no doubt that the man you speak of is the party. If so, he is familiarly known as 'Slippery Dick.'"

"Do you think you can get back my money?" asked Walter, anxiously.

"I think there is a chance of it. Come with me and point out your man."

Walter gladly accompanied the conductor to the smoking car. His old acquaintance was busily engaged as before in a game, and laughing heartily at some favorable turn.

"There he is," said Walter, indicating him with his finger.

The conductor walked up to him and tapped him on the shoulder.

"What's wanted?" he asked, looking up.

"You've looked at my ticket."

"I wish to speak to you a moment."

He rose without making any opposition, and walked to the other end of the car.

"Well," he said, and there was a slight nervousness in his tone, "what's the matter? Wasn't my ticket all right?"

"No trouble about that. The thing is, will you restore this boy's pocketbook?"

"Sir," said the pickpocket, blustering, "do you mean to insult me? What have I to do with his pocketbook?"

"You sat beside him, and he missed it directly after you left him."

"What is that to me? You may search me if you like. You will find only one pocketbook upon me, and that is my own."

"I am aware of that," said the conductor, coolly. "I saw you take the money out and throw it from the car platform."

The pickpocket turned pale.

"You are mistaken in the person," he said.

"No, I am not. I advise you to restore the money forthwith."

Without a word the thief, finding himself cornered, took from his pocket a roll of bills, which he handed to Walter.

"Is that right?" asked the conductor.

"Yes," said our hero, after counting his money.

"So far, so good. And now, Slippery Dick," he continued, turning to the thief. "I advise you to leave the cars at the next station or I will have you arrested. Take your choice."

The detected rogue was not long in making his choice. Already the cars had slackened their speed, and a short distance ahead appeared a small station. The place seemed to be of very little importance. One man, however, appeared to have business there. Walter saw his quondam acquaintance jump on the platform, and congratulated himself that his only loss was a pocketbook whose value did not exceed one dollar.

The conductor on seeing the pocketbook thrown away had thought nothing of it, supposing it to be an old one, but as soon as he heard of the robbery suspected at once the thief and his motive.

## CHAPTER XVII.

Walter stopped long enough at Buffalo to visit Niagara Falls, as he had intended. Though he enjoyed the visit, and found the famous cataract fully up to his expectations, no incident occurred during the visit which deserves to be chronicled here. He resumed his journey, and arrived in due time at Cleveland.

He had no difficulty in finding the office of Mr. Greene, the agent of Messrs. Flint & Pusher. He found that this gentleman, besides his agency, had a book and stationery business of his own.

"I don't go out myself," he said to Walter; "but I keep a supply of Flint's books on hand, and forward them to his agents as called for. Have you done much in the business?"

"No, sir; I am only a beginner. I have done nothing yet."

"I thought not. You look too young."

"Mr. Pusher told me I had better be guided by your advice."

"You had better go fifty miles off at least. The immediate neighborhood has been pretty well canvassed. There's Earle, now, a flourishing and wealthy town. Suppose you go there first?"

"I'll go this afternoon."

"You are prompt?"

Walter arrived in Earle in time for supper. He went to a small public house, where he found that he could board for a dollar and a half a day, or seven dollars by the week. He engaged a week's board, reflecting that he could probably work to advantage a week in so large a place, or, if not, that five days at the daily rate would amount to more than the weekly terms.

He did not at first propose to do anything that evening, until it occurred to him that he might perhaps dispose of a copy of his book to the landlord in part payment for his board. He went into the public room after supper.

"Are you traveling alone?" asked the landlord, who had his share of curiosity.

"Yes," said Walter. "I am a book agent."

"Meeting with pretty good success?"

"I'm just beginning," said Walter, smiling. "If you'll be my first customer, I'll stop with you a week."

"What kind of a book have you got?"

Walter showed it. It was got up in the

usual style of subscription books, with abundance of illustrations.

"It's one of the best books I've ever sent out," said Walter, in a professional way. "Just look at the number of pictures. If you've got any children, they'll like it; and, if you haven't, it will be just the book for your center table."

"I see you know how to talk," said the landlord, smiling. "What is the price?"

"Three dollars and a half."

"That's considerable."

"But you know I'm going to take it out in board."

"Well, that's a consideration, to be sure. A man doesn't feel it so much as if he took the money out of his pocket and paid cash down. What do you say, Mrs. Burton?" addressing his wife, who just then entered the room. "This young man wants to stay here a week, and pay partly in a book he is agent for. Shall I agree?"

"Let me see the book," said Mrs. Burton, who was a comely, pleasant-looking woman of middle age. "What's the name of it?"

"Scenes in Bible Lands," said Walter.

He opened it, taking care to display and point out the pictures. So Walter made the first sale, on which he realized a profit of one dollar and a quarter.

"It's a pretty easy way to earn money," he reflected, with satisfaction. "If I can only sell copies enough. One copy sold will pay for a day's board."

He went to bed early, and enjoyed a sound and refreshing sleep. He was cheered with hopes of success on the morrow. If he could sell four copies a day, that would give him a profit of five dollars, and five dollars would leave him a handsome profit after paying expenses.

The next morning after breakfast he started out, carrying with him three books. Knowing nothing of the residents of the village, he could only judge by the outward appearance of their houses. Seeing a large and handsome house standing back from the street, he decided to call.

"The people living here must be rich," he thought. "They won't mind paying three dollars and a half for a nice book."

Accordingly he walked up the gravelled path and rang the front door bell. The door was opened by a housemaid.

"Is the lady of the house at home?" asked Walter.

"Do you want to see her?"

"Yes."

"Then wait here, and I'll tell her."

A tall woman, with a thin face and a pinched expression, presented herself after five minutes.

"Well, young man," she asked, after a sharp glance, "what is your business?"

Her expression was not very encouraging, but Walter was bound not to lose an opportunity.

"I should like to show you a new book, madam," he commenced, "a book of great value, beautifully illustrated, which is selling like wildfire."

"How many copies have you sold?" inquired the lady, sharply.

"One," answered Walter, rather confused.

"Do you call that selling like wildfire?" she demanded, with sarcasm.

"I only commenced last evening," said Walter, "I referred to the sales of other agents."

"What's the name of the book?"

"Scenes in Bible Lands."

"Let me see it."

Walter displayed the book.

"Look at the beautiful pictures," he said.

"I don't see anything remarkable about them. The binding isn't very strong. Shouldn't wonder if the book would go to pieces in a week."

"I don't think there'll be any trouble that way," said Walter.

"If it does, you'll be gone, so it won't trouble you."

"With ordinary care it will hold long enough."

"Oh, yes, of course you'd say so. I expected it. How much do you charge for the book?"

"Three dollars and a half."

"Three dollars and a half!" repeated the woman. "You seem to think people are made of money."

"I don't fix the price, madam," said Walter, rather provoked; "the publishers do that."

"I warrant they make two-thirds profit. Don't they, now?"

"I don't know," said Walter. "I don't know anything about the cost of publishing books. But this is a large one, and there are a great many pictures in it. They must have cost considerable."

"Seems to me it's ridiculous to ask such a price for a book. Why, it's enough to buy a nice dress pattern!"

"The book will last longer than the dress," said Walter.

"But it is not so necessary. I'll tell you what I'll do. I'd like the book well enough to put on my parlor table. I'll give you two dollars for it."

"Two dollars!" ejaculated Walter, scarcely crediting the testimony of his ears.

"Yes, two dollars; and I warrant you'd make money enough, then."

"I should lose money," said Walter. "I couldn't think of accepting such an offer."

"In my opinion there isn't any book worth even two dollars."

"I see we can't trade," said Walter, disgusted at such meanness in a lady who occupied so large a house, and might be supposed to have plenty of money.

## Big Collection.

Gunner—The Ultra-Van Tassels moved to-day. There were seven vans for the furniture and six extra vans.

Guyer—Indeed! And what were the extra vans for?

Gunner—Why, to remove their family skeletons.

The elephant beetle of Venezuela is the world's largest insect. It weighs a half pound.



## The Family Melon Patch.

Many who pride themselves on a good garden and are fond of melons never attempt to grow them. "Cucumber to buy at 25 cents each?" Maybe for the first two or three, but if you would like or dozen or two, enough that if company comes unexpectedly and there is no dessert for dinner, the melons can richly replace the pastry—that is a different matter.

Despite theories to the contrary, melons are as easily grown as cucumbers and there are a number of varieties which will mature unless the summer is unusually short. A rich, light soil, sloping toward the east or south and well fertilized in the hill, will bring the luscious fruit.

If there is danger from dry weather fill an old pail or oyster can (first perforating the bottom with nail holes) with stable manure or poultry droppings, sink it partly in the ground and keep it moistened. This will not only furnish moisture but food. The reservoir being below the surface will tempt the roots to grow down instead of seeking the surface, as when water comes from the hose in only small quantities, and they will be less susceptible to frost.

If the plants go to vines slip off the ends, but do not try to check vigorous growth by starvation. The Rocky Ford is one of the best early muskmelons and one of the easiest to grow, bearing in profusion.

The Indiana Sweetheart is a favorite watermelon, ripening early and of excellent quality.

## Cuts Out the Undesirable Seed.

The real up-to-date farmer, following the most scientific methods in the operation of his ground, is taught to make use of the selected material only in order that the species may be constantly improved, following the law of the survival of the fittest. For instance, in the selection of the seed to be placed in the ground, he is not content merely to secure the best species, but wherever possible he will go carefully over the seed and pick out only the largest specimens to be placed in the ground. In this manner the product is generally of a much higher standard. It is difficult to carry out this selective scheme in the case of corn and stuller seeds which are made use of in great quantities. In the case of corn, however, the small kernels are generally at the tip of the ears, and in order to get rid of these undesirable pieces a corn-tipper has been invented. The device seems to have been suggested by the familiar pencil-sharpener. It is operated by a small crank, and has a cone with a tooth interior. The tip of the corn ear being placed in this revolving cup, all the small seed are cut off, leaving only the full-sized kernels on the ear.



FOR SEED CORN.

## Leg Weakness.

Leg weakness is due to chicks becoming heavy rapidly, so that the weight of their body is too much for their legs. This is not always an alarming condition, for it denotes that the chicks are growing fast, and if carefully guarded and fed properly they will pull through all right. The cause arises from heavy feeding and forcing, which carries the chicks forward so rapidly as to cause the legs to fail. Change the food to a light diet of vegetables and feed bone meal in the food. They should also be well protected against the dampness, and the difficulty will soon pass away. Leg weakness is nearly always due to rapid growth of the body or from lack of uniformity of heat in brooders. If the chicks are small enough to be kept in a brooder. Crowding and pressing together to keep warm at night is a main cause of little chicks having leg weakness. No great alarm need be entertained unless the trouble continues for too long a time, but change the food and keep the birds dry.

## Feeding Cows on Grass.

Professors Stewart and Atwood, of the West Virginia Experiment Station, last year conducted some careful tests to determine whether it is profitable to feed milk cows grain on grass. Without going into the details of these ex-

periments we quote the conclusions as follows:

"This experiment clearly shows that there was no direct financial gain in feeding the grain to the cows while at pasture. It is true that the cows which received grain were uniformly in somewhat better flesh than those that did not receive grain, but as far as the milk yield was concerned the increased flow was produced at an actual loss." Data obtained in similar experiments at other stations are summarized, and from these in comparison with their own investigations the authors conclude "that unless dairy products are especially high in price it is not a profitable practice to feed grain to cows at pasture. It is true that more milk is obtained and the cows hold up their yield better and remain in better flesh when receiving the grain ration, but under ordinary circumstances there is no direct profit from the grain feeding, as the increased production usually costs more than it can be sold for."

## Hogs that Make Meat.

The hog raisers of Kansas station made a test to show what kind of a hog grows the best meat. The weights of hogs in the test were as follows:

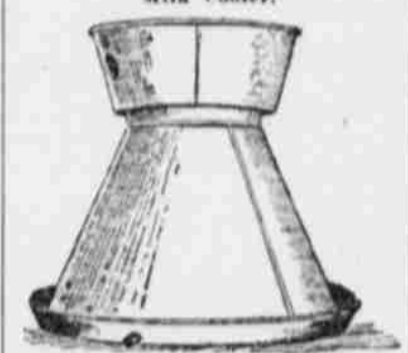
Berkshire hams, 23½ pounds; Duroc-Jersey, 24½ pounds; Poland-China, 25½ pounds. These hogs in size were as near the same weight as possible to get them. The shoulders of the Berkshires weighed 21½ pounds; Duroc-Jersey, 19½ pounds and Poland-China, 19½ pounds. The Berkshires have larger shoulders than the other breeds.

The butcher who saw the hogs slaughtered thought the Duroc-Jersey had the most fat on the back; the Poland-China next, then the Berkshire. The Berkshire ham showed more lean and less fat than the Poland-China. The butchers considered the breed of hogs that had the most fat the most profitable hog, both for the farmer and the butcher.

## Utilizing Waste Timber.

The wood chemistry section of the Forestry Bureau has been giving some attention to the subject of production of turpentine from yellow pine waste. It is stated that for the recovery of turpentine from waste wood the steam distillation process is far superior to destructive distillation, making a more uniform crude turpentine, and usually a higher grade refined product. The wastage from the yellow pine cut each year would yield as much turpentine as the entire present annual output in this country, with a value of \$14,000,000. At the present rate of cutting the supply of long-leaf yellow pine in the South will be practically exhausted in twenty years, but that the methods of exploitation now in use convert only about half the tree into market product.

## Milk Cooler.



This milk cooler is arranged so that the milk flows in a thin sheet over the outside. Cold water enters at the bottom.

## Bacteria in Cold Milk.

M. E. Pennington of the Bureau of Chemistry, Department of Agriculture, reports that experiments on milk kept at about the freezing point showed a continuous increase of organisms for five or six weeks. At their maximum they numbered hundreds of millions per cubic centimeter, and occasionally they passed the billion mark. Although the milk experimented with was never solidly frozen, yet after ten days to two weeks it was a mass of small ice crystals. No odor or taste indicated the higher bacterial content, and even on heating no curd was produced until the very end of the experiment.

## For the Pigs.

Plant a patch of sweet corn handy to the pigery for early green feed. If early varieties are chosen, the green stuff will be ready for feeding by July. By having two or three plots coming on in succession, nice feed will be continually on hand until the field of corn is ready to be fed. Follow the first field of sweet corn with millet or cow peas for dairy feed.—F. L. Risley.



Editor (to daily office)—Ray, Buck, have you read my last editorial? "I hope so," was the crusty reply.—Mimes-basis.

The Indignant One—The idea of 'm a-tolling me 'ow children ought to be fed! Why, I've buried ten o' my own! —The Tatler.

Boy—Sixpen'orth o' cod liver oil, please, sir. An', I say, don't give me too much, 'cos it's me what's got to drink it.—Punch.

Smawley—Do you believe that money talks? Arlupp—You bet I do. I no sooner get my hands on a dollar than it says "Good-by."

Pat—Are ye engaged to Mike Dooley? Biddy—Faith, ah! I'm not. Are ye after wantin' me? Pat—Not unless I can't get ye.—Punch Advocate.

Dick—Money doesn't always bring happiness and peace of mind! Rob (anxiously)—You are right; sometimes it tempts you to buy automobiles, bikes.

Visitor—Well, Carrie, what do you think of your new baby brother? Carrie (aged four)—Oh, I don't think much of him. Why, he can't even speak English yet.

"Did you say the prisoner hit the plaintiff between the court house and the postoffice?" "No, I didn't. I said he hit him between the eyes."—Haltmore American.

Nell—She admits that she is terribly disappointed in her husband. Belle—How is that? Nell—She married him to reform him, and now she finds he doesn't need it.—Philadelphia Record.

"My hair is falling out," admitted the timid man in a drug store. "Can you recommend something to keep it in?" "Certainly," replied the obliging clerk. "Get a box."—Lippincott's Magazine.

Teacher—You have named all domestic animals save one. It has bristly hair, it is grimy, likes dirt, and is fond of mud. Well, Tom? Tom (shamefacedly)—That's me.—Chicago Tribune.

"Do you know that your chickens come over into my garden?" "I thought they must be doing that." "Why did you think so?" "Because they never come back."—Cleveland Leader.

"You should never take anything that doesn't agree with you," the physician told Mr. Marks. "If I had always followed that rule, Marie," he remarked to his wife, "where would you be?"

Assum—How on earth did you ever get a messenger boy to deliver your note and bring back the answer so quick? Wise—I took his dime novel away from him and held it as security.—Philadelphia Press.

Mrs. Jones—Good gracious, Mrs. Brown, why is your husband going through all those strange actions? Is he training for a prize-fight? Mrs. Brown—Not at all; he's merely getting in form to beat the carpets.—Harper's Weekly.

New Clerk—I notice some of these barrels of apples are marked X and some Z. Are they different kinds? Dealer—No; same kind, but differently packed. Some customers want a barrel opened at the bottom and some at the top.

Wife—I'm actually ashamed to go to church with this old hat on. It isn't up-to-date at all. Husband—Is the cook going to church this morning? Wife—No; I think not. Husband—Then why not borrow hers?—Philadelphia Inquirer.

Miss Rattle—Yes, that's a photo of my maiden aunt. Perhaps you saw her name in the papers last winter? She frightened away a burglar. Mrs. Winkler (closely inspecting the portrait)—Did she? Well, I don't wonder at it.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Mr. Justcott—Why, what are you crying about, dear? Mrs. Justcott—Oh, George! nice have got into the pantry and eaten up a beautiful custard pie I made myself! Mr. Justcott—There, there! Don't cry over a few little nice!—Western Christian Advocate.

"But," cried Miss Woodby, indignantly, "since I declare to you that the joke is original with me, isn't it impudent of you to doubt it?" "Not at all," replied Mr. Chesterfield; "I should be still more impudent and ungallant to believe you that old."—Philadelphia Press.

"Physical culture, father, is perfectly lovely. To develop the arms I grasp this rod by one end and move it slowly from right to left." "Well, well," exclaimed her father, "what won't science discover? If that rod had straw at the other end you'd be swooping."—Louisiana Courier-Journal.