

# STRONG AND STEADY

By HORATIO ALGER, JR.

## CHAPTER XIX.

An hour passed without a word being spoken by his singular hostess. She went to the window from time to time, and looked out as if expecting some one. At length Walter determined to break the silence, which had become oppressive. It did not seem natural for two persons to be in the same room so long without speaking a word.

"I should think you would find it lonely living in the woods away from any neighbors," he said.

"I don't care for neighbors," said the woman, shortly.

"Have you lived here long?"

"That's as people reckon time," was the answer.

"You don't have far to go for fuel," was the next remark of her hostess.

"Did you say you were a book peddler?" she inquired.

"I am a book agent."

"Is your business a good one?" she asked.

"I have done very well so far, but then I have been at it only a week."

"It's a good thing to have money," said the woman, more to herself than to Walter.

"Yes," said Walter "it's very convenient to have money; but there are other things that are better."

"Such as what?" demanded the woman abruptly.

"Good health, and a good conscience."

She laughed scornfully.

"I'll tell you there's nothing so good as money. I've wanted it all my life, and never could get it. Do you think I would live here in the woods if I had money? No, I should like to be a lady, and wear fine clothes, and drive about in a handsome carriage. Why are some people so lucky, while I live in this miserable hole?"

"Perhaps your luck will change some day," he said, though he had little faith in his own words. He wondered how the tall, gaunt woman of the backwoods would look dressed in silks and satins.

"My luck never will change," she said, quickly. "I must live and die in some such hole as this."

"My luck has changed," said Walter, quietly; "but in a different way."

"How?" she asked, betraying in her tone some curiosity.

"A year ago—six months ago—my father was a rich man, or was considered so. He was thought to be worth over a hundred thousand dollars. All at once his property was swept away, and now I am obliged to earn my own living, as you see."

"How did your father lose his money?"

"By speculating in mines."

"The more fool he!"

"My father is dead," said Walter, gravely. "I cannot bear to hear him blamed."

"Humph!" ejaculated the woman. "I expect you are hungry."

"Yes," said Walter, "I am; but I can wait till your husband comes."

She took out from a small cupboard a plate of bread and some cold meat, and laid them on the table. Then she steeped some tea, and when it was ready, she put that also on the table. Walter understood from this that supper was ready, and, putting on his shoes, which were now dry, he moved his chair up.

The woman poured him out some tea in one of the cracked cups.

The first sip of the tea, which was quite strong, nearly caused a wry expression on Walter's face, but he managed to control himself so far as not to betray his want of relish for the beverage his hostess offered him. The only redeeming quality it had was that it was hot, and, exposed as he had been to the storm, warm drink was agreeable.

"There's some bread and there's some meat," said the woman. "You can help yourself."

Walter ate heartily of the food, and succeeded in emptying his cup of tea. He would have taken another cup if there had been milk and sugar, but it was too bitter to be inviting.

Walter pushed his chair from the table, and sat down again before the fire. She rose and cleared the table, replacing the bread and meat in the cupboard. There was silence for another hour. Walter wished it were time to go to bed, for the presence of such a woman made him feel uncomfortable. But it was too early yet to suggest retiring. At length the silence was broken by a step outside.

"That's Jack," said the woman, rising hastily; and over her face there came a transient gleam of satisfaction, the first Walter had observed.

Before she could reach the door it was opened, and Jack entered. Walter looked up with some curiosity to see what sort of a man the husband of this woman might be. He saw a stout man, with lowering eyes, and matter red hair and beard.

"They are fitly mated," thought our hero.

The man stopped short as his glance rested upon Walter, and he turned quickly to his wife.

"Who have you got here, Meg?" he asked, in a rough voice.

"He was overtaken by the storm, and wanted me to take him in, and give him supper and lodging."

"He's a boy. What brings him into these woods?"

"He says he's a book peddler."

"Where are his books?"

"I have sold them all," said Walter,

feeling called upon to take a personal share in the conversation.

"How many did you have?"

"Twenty."

"How much did you charge for them?"

"Three dollars and a half apiece."

"That's seventy dollars, isn't it?"

"Yes."

"Well, you can stay here all night if you want to. We ain't used to keepin' a tavern, but you'll fare as well as we."

"Thank you. I was afraid I might have to stay out all night."

While his wife was getting out the supper again, the man sat down beside the fire, and Walter had a chance to scan his rough features. There was something in his appearance that inspired distrust, and our hero wished the night were past, and he were again on his way.

## CHAPTER XX.

About nine o'clock Walter intimated a desire to go to bed. The woman lit a candle, and left the room, followed by Walter. She led the way up a rough, unpainted staircase and opened the door of the room over the one in which they had been seated.

Looking around him, Walter found that the chamber which he had entered was as bare as the room below, if not more so. There was not even a bedstead, but in the corner there was a bed on the floor with some ragged bedclothes spread over it.

"That's where you're to sleep," said the woman, pointing it out.

"Good-night," said Walter.

She put the candle on the mantelpiece, for there was no bureau or table in the room, and went out.

"This isn't a very stylish tavern, that's a fact," thought Walter, taking a survey of the room. "I shall have a hard bed, but I guess I can stand it for one night."

There was something else that troubled him more than the poor accommodations. The ill looks of his host and hostess had made a strong impression upon his mind. The particular inquiries which they had made about his success in selling books, and their strong desire for money, led him to feel apprehensive of robbery. He was in the heart of the woods, far away from assistance, and at their mercy. What could he, a boy of fifteen, do against their combined attack? He would have preferred to sleep in the woods without a shelter, rather than have placed himself in their power.

Under the influence of this apprehension, he examined the door to see if there was any way of locking it. But there was neither lock nor bolt. There had been a bolt once, but there was none now. Next he looked about the room to see if there was any heavy article of furniture with which he could barricade the door. But, as has already been said, there was neither bureau nor table. In fact, there was absolutely no article of furniture except a single wooden chair, and that, of course, would be of no service.

"What shall I do?" thought Walter. "That man can enter the room when I am asleep, and rob me of all my money."

Looking about the room, he noticed a closet, the door of which was bolted on the outside. Withdrawing the bolt, he opened the door and looked in. It was nearly empty, containing only a few articles of little or no value. A plan of operations rapidly suggested itself to Walter in case the room should be entered while he was asleep. In pursuance of this plan he threw a few pennies upon the floor of the closet, and then closed the door again. Next he drew from his pocketbook all the money it contained, except a single five-dollar bill. The bank notes thus removed amounted to fifty-five dollars. He then drew off his stockings, and, laying the bills in the bottom, again put them on.

Walter's feelings, as he lay on his hard bed on the floor, were far from pleasant. He was not sure that an attempt would be made to rob him, but the probability seemed so great that he could not compose himself to sleep. Suspense was so painful that he almost wished that Jack would come up if he intended to. He was tired, but his mental anxiety triumphed over his bodily fatigue, and he tossed about restlessly.

It was about nine o'clock when he went to bed. Two hours passed, and still there were no signs of the apprehended invasion. But, five minutes later, a heavy step was heard upon the staircase, which creaked beneath the weight of the man ascending. Jack tried to come up softly, but it creaked nevertheless.

Walter's heart beat quick, as he heard the steps approaching nearer and nearer. It was certainly a trying moment, that might have tested the courage of one older than our hero. Presently the door opened softly, and Jack advanced stealthily into the chamber, carrying a candle which, however, was unlighted. He reeked upon finding Walter undressed, and his clothes hanging over the chair; but the faint light that entered through the window showed him that his intended victim had not removed his clothing.

The robber paused a moment, and then, stooping over, inserted his hand into Walter's pocket. He drew out the pocketbook, Walter making no sign of being aware of what was going on.

"I've got it," muttered Jack, with satisfaction, and stealthily retraced his steps to the door. He went out, carefully closing it after him, and again the steps creaked beneath his weight.

"I'm afraid he'll come back when he finds how little there is in it," thought Walter. "If so, I must trust to my plan."

The door was soon again thrown open, and Jack strode in, bearing in his hand a candle, this time lighted. He advanced to the bed, and, bending over, shook Walter vigorously.

"What's the matter?" asked our hero, his time opening his eyes, and assuming a look of surprise. "Is it time to get up?"

"It's time for you to get up. I've got something to say to you."

"Well," said Walter, sitting up in bed, "I'm ready."

"Where've you put the money you had last night?"

Walter put his hand in his pocket.

"It was in my pocketbook," he said; "but it's gone."

"Here is your pocketbook," said Jack, producing it.

"Did you take it out of my pocket? What made you take it? Do you mean to steal my money?"

"Yes, I do; and the sooner you hand it over the better."

"I have some more money," said Walter; "but I hope you will let me keep it."

"What made you take it out of your pocketbook?"

"Because I thought I should have a visit from you."

"What made you think so?" demanded Jack, rather surprised.

"I can't tell, but I expected a visit, so I took out most of my money and hid it."

"Then you'd better find it again. I can't wait here all night. Get up, and find me that money, or it'll be the worse for you."

"I hid some money in that closet," said Walter. "I thought you would not think of looking there."

No sooner was the closet pointed out than Jack eagerly strode toward it and threw open the door. He entered it, and began to peer about him, holding the candle in his hand.

"Where did you put it?" he inquired, turning to question Walter.

But he had scarcely spoken when our hero closed the door hastily, and, before Jack could recover from his surprise, had bolted it on the outside. To add to the discomfiture of the imprisoned robber, the wind produced by the violent slamming of the door blew out the candle, and he found himself a captive, in utter darkness.

"Let me out, or I'll murder you!" he roared, kicking the barrier that separated him from his late victim, now his captor.

Walter saw that there was no time to lose. The door, though strong, would probably soon give way before the strength of his prisoner. When the liberation took place, he must be gone. He held the handle of his carpetbag between his teeth, and, getting out of the window, hung down. The distance was not great, and he alighted upon the ground without injury. Without delay he plunged into the woods, not caring in what direction he went, as long as it carried him away from his dishonest landlord.

(To be continued.)

## The Other Reason.

A teamster retires at the age of ninety with an accumulation of \$50,000. He says he wants and is entitled to a rest. Some inquirers want to know how he could have saved so much on \$12 a week, the highest wages he ever received. The answer is easy. He got \$2 a day. He lived on 22 cents a day. He saved the difference. I lived in New York on 5 cents a day for nearly six months and was in magnificent health. Some people out to live; others live to eat. As the old chap on the ferryboat said to the small boy:

"Sonsy, why does a pig eat?"

"'Cause he's hungry."

"No. There's another reason."

"What's dat?"

"He wants to make a hog of himself."—New York Press.

## Doing Chores.

To dig one's own potatoes, to shock one's own corn, to pick one's own apples, to pile one's own squashes at one's own barn! It is like filling one's system with an antidote before going into a fever-plagued country. One is immune to winter after this, provided he stays to bask his apples in his own wood fire. One works himself into a glow with all his digging and picking and piling that lasts until warm weather comes again, and along with this harvest glow comes stealing over him the after harvest peace. It is the serenity of Indian summer, the mood of the after harvest season, upon him—upon him and his fields and woods.—Dallas Lore Sharp to Atlantic.

## A Leap-Year Catch.

He—You have a beautiful collection of pressed flowers.

She—Yes; but I still need one variety to complete the collection.

He—You have but to name it and I'll move heaven and earth to obtain it for you.

She—Orange blossoms.

## When the Maid Proposed.

The leap-year girl had just proposed.

"This is—er—so sudden," stammered the young man in the case. "I am dreadfully—er—embarrassed, and—"

"Embarrassed!" exclaimed the fair maid. "Then I take it all back. I thought you had oodles of money."

## Gold Beats.

Manager—Do you play by note? Violinist—No. Cash only.



## A Hay Stacker.

A home-made stacker that will do good service in handling hay is shown in the illustration. There are no castings to break and the timber required in its construction can be readily procured. The dimensions of the various parts are:

The lower timbers which are marked 1 are about 12 feet long and are made of 4 by 5-inch scantling. The side uprights, marked 2, are about 14 feet long, and made of the same material as No. 1. The slanting pieces, marked 3, are about 16 feet long, and made of 4 by 4-inch scantling. The arms of the stacker marked 4, are 16 feet long, and made of 4 by 5 inch stuff. The cross piece, No. 5, is 13 feet long, and made of 3 by 5 inch stuff. No. 6 is of 2 by 5-inch stuff, and is bevelled on the front edge to allow the hay to slide over it easily when being shoved on by the sweep. Timbers numbered 7, 8, 9 and 10, are made of 2 by 6-inch stuff, and are 10 feet long, except No. 7 and No. 8, which should be only as long as the stacker frame is wide. Each end of Nos. 9 and 10 should project a foot on each end over No. 2.

Nos. 11 and 12 are made of 2 by 4-inch stuff, about 10 feet long; those bolted to No. 13 about 15 inches from the higher end of No. 13.

No. 13 is made of 2 by 4-inch stuff, about 8 feet long; the higher end should be about 8 feet above the ground, so that when the stacker is on the ground the weight box, No. 14, should be about two inches from the two pulleys on the upper end of No. 13; also when the stacker is upright, as it is when the hay is thrown on the stack, the weight box should be about 2 inches below the two pulleys on the

upper end of No. 13; and when the stacker is half-way down the weight box, No. 14, should be just clear of the ground.

No. 14 is the weight box, and should be made of 2-inch stuff, about 8 to 10 inches deep, and about 2 feet square; it must be well spiked together. The idea of the weight is to start the stacker back to the ground as soon as the load is delivered from it on to the stack, and when the stacker is halfway to the ground, the weight acts as a brake for the other half of the way down. The box is filled with stones.

The rope which attaches the weight-box to the stacker should be three-quarter inch, passing from the weight up between the two pulleys on the upper end of No. 13, and down to the center of stacker head No. 5. The pulleys on the frame of the stacker should be attached by means of wooden blocks with a notch cut out so that the pulley can fit between the block and frame. Pulleys for this purpose are 6 inches in diameter and made of turned hard wood. These are fastened in place by means of a hard wood pin for an axle. The pulleys should be kept well oiled to keep them from sticking.

The rope for raising the stacker should be either inch or inch and a quarter. The teeth on the stacker can be made of 2 by 4-inch pine scantling, 10 feet long and bevelled on the upper side to allow the hay to slide on easily. The short upright teeth on the stacker head should be about 5 feet long. They are bolted to the long teeth about 2 inches from the stacker head, No. 5, and rest against the stacker head, No. 6. The stacker arms, No. 4 should be bolted to No. 2 with a large bolt, about 12 inches from the ground.

Artificial Honey.

Artificial honey can now be made so like the genuine article in flavor that even the expert cannot tell the difference. Thick sirup of sugar is boiled with a minute quantity of mineral acid, which converts it into the same form occurring in honey. This is mixed with some natural honey of strong flavor, and thus closely simulates the real article. It is said that the following, known as Ley's reagent, will detect the spurious honey: Ten parts of silver nitrate are dissolved in a hundred parts of water, and to this twenty parts of a 15 per cent solution of soda carbonate is added. The precipitate is filtered, washed and dissolved in a 115 parts of a 10 per cent solution of ammonium chloride. It must be kept in the dark in a well-stoppered bottle. The honey

to be tested must be diluted with twice its weight of water. A few drops of the reagent are to be added and heated for five minutes on a water bath in the dark. Natural honey turns brown and shows a greenish-yellow fluorescence; the imitation turns a lighter tint and shows no fluorescence.

## Summer Work With Poultry.

Hot suns debilitate fowls, increase the army of lice, cripple egg production and cause trouble in many other ways.

You cannot control the sun, but you can control the power of it, as far as your poultry is concerned.

Provide shade. Tree shade is the best, but if there are no trees in the run then the next best thing is to erect canopies of some kind.

Have places provided so that the fowls and chicks cannot only get into the shade during the hot weather, but have a place of refuge during rainy, stormy days.

Cut down the supply of heat-producing grains in the diet and feed liberally of green food.

As they mature separate the cockerels from the pullets and give the former all extra allowance, as they will stand more forcing.

It is advisable each week to gather up all hens that are becoming broody and put them in a separate coop where no nests are provided. With this change it will require but a week to break them from their broody instincts and they will go back to laying again.

## Wrecking Windmills.

The passing of the windmill in England, antiquated by such recent power producers as the gas engine and electric motor, has given life to a new industry—windmill wrecking. The old windmill builders understood their business and meant their handiwork to last, and so the demolishing of such structures is no simple task. Many of the old mills stood 100 feet high and had eight or nine floors, fitted with four run of stones, and contained tons upon tons of brick. Often these huge mills stand close to other buildings, and, says Popular Mechanics, accidents would be inevitable if the wreckers did not have experience in their tasks.

## Fight the Late Weeds.

The late weeds in the garden—those that come in August and September—are the ones that produce seed before the fact is noticed, and thus stock the ground with weeds next year. The garden is often neglected late in the summer, but it should be kept clear of weeds until the frost, and the result will be a great saving of labor in the growing of small fruits and vegetables, as most of the work required is due to the weeds and grass which spring up at all times.

## Crooked Breast in Chickens.

Crooked breast bones in chickens are caused by the heavy birds roosting on poles or fences. The bones of the young birds are soft and are turned to one side by pressing on the roost. If you have heavy fowls let them roost on the floor covered thickly with straw, and you will have no crooked breast bones.

## Timely Hints on Farm Work.

A low-wheeled wagon saves many a backache.

A well-oiled, sharp saw saves time and temper.

The stin of the silo marks a progressive farmer every time.

Too much water and wet, mushy foods will not lay on fat. It takes the concentrated stuff to do that.

Nail a leather strap on the side of the wagon box to hold an ax, and never leave the ax at the house.

Paint costs pretty high these days, but it will pay in the long run in saving the buildings—provided it is good paint.

The man who cannot kick the hired man harder than the hired man kicks the cow doesn't deserve the name of farmer.

Do not make the mistake of filling the silo with corn that is green. It sours quickly and has little feeding value. Wait till it is ripe.

Be liberal with the use of kerosene about the place. A good way to use it is with a spray pump. Send it into every crack and crevice on the house.

Make up your mind that you will not get mad and mislead the calf you are trying to teach to drink, no matter what the little fellow may do. Be patient. You will think more of the calf, and surely of yourself.

It is all right to fix up the old harness, rather than to spend money for a new one, providing you can make it good and safe. But don't run any risks. Better go without something else than to work with an old, tender harness.

## SOMETHING FOR EVERYBODY

Professor Wassermann, of Berlin, has succeeded in finding a serum which cures diphtheria poisoning.

With his serum therapy Professor Chantemesse, of Paris, claims that he has in 1,000 cases of typhoid fever reduced the usual mortality of 17 per cent to only 4.7 per cent.

At the meeting of the Plomesgat board of guardians the clerk reported the death of George Smith, who, he stated, had been an inmate of the workhouse for more than seventy years.—London Standard.

Every foreign observer believes that the grand struggle between the "Havoc" and the "Have-nots," which is to mark this century, will be fought out first of all upon American soil.—London Spectator.

Mrs. Tiny La Roux, a Boston girl, claims to be the first woman in the world to ride and propel an airship, which is her own property. Her balloon ascensions are well known to New England people, who have pronounced them most successful. She is a little woman, weighing less than 120 pounds.

R. F. Wilson, of Hagar, Colo., who file on a piece of ground on which is now located the Hagar cemetery. The land belongs to the government. Wilson will, as soon as he acquires title to the land, turn it over to the city. This will be the first time on record, it is said, where a man homesteaded a graveyard.

Abraham Schaeffer, who resides near Elizabethtown, Pa., made a vow in 1820 that if James Buchanan should be elected President he would never part with his mustache. Mr. Schaeffer was at that time in Baltimore. As Buchanan was elected, the West Douglas man has not had a bare upper lip in the last fifty-two years.

I am more than confirmed in the impression I always get when I visit Germany—the impression that the drill-sergeant pursues the German citizen from the army to all departments of life; that the nation remains a well watched, well drilled and very docile army inside invisible barracks, and submitting to iron discipline all the moments of its life.—T. P.'s Weekly.

Robert Sewell, of Bidham, a Creek Indian, is one of the most widely traveled men in Oklahoma, having been in England and on the continent of Europe, besides having claimed a residence in both South America and Australia. He has been around some, and was absent from his country and people more than twenty-five years. He returned only two years ago, just in time to claim his rights as a Creek citizen.—Kansas City Times.

An old-time spelling bee was held at the Carnegie Hall, in Bryan, Tex., between the Ladies' Aid Society of the Baptist church, and the Home Mission Society of the Methodist Church. Mrs. J. Webb Howell was captain of the Baptist side and Mrs. Mattie Hall captain of the Methodist side. There were about twenty-five contestants on each side. The Methodist ladies won the contest, having two spellers up when all the Baptists went out and down.

During the recent Mississippi gubernatorial campaign the Hon. Jeff Truay was one of the unsuccessful aspirants for the majority suffrage of his fellow-citizens. Prohibition doctrines figured in the struggle and seemed very important to a Methodist minister.

"Brother Truay," said the minister, "I want to ask you a question. Do you ever take a drink of whiskey?"

"Here! I answer that," responded the wary Brother Truay. "I want to know whether it is an inquiry or an invitation?"

Taxicabs in London, as in New York, are a marked success, and the hansom is being crowded out, reports say. Although scarcely a year has passed since these swift moving carriages appeared, the capital already invested in London taxicabs is \$10,000,000. There are 758 taxicabs on the streets, 2,000 taxicabs on order and 1,700 licensed drivers. There are eight London taxicab companies, the average day's earnings of a cab being \$11.20. The average cost is \$1,700.

Judge Alum, of one of Havana's correctional courts, found the management of the Albin Theater \$30 a few days ago for violating the ordinance against the playing of the Marcha de Cadiz (Cadiz March). There is a peculiar but reasonable prejudice in Cuba against this Spanish march. It was to that tune, in the days when Spain ruled the island, that the Cuban patriots marched to their execution. So, when the independent government was established, six years ago, a ban was placed on the march and it has seldom been heard since then. Senor Valdes, manager of the Albin Theater, explained that the large Spanish element in the house demanded the playing of the Cadiz March, and he complied to avoid trouble.