

STRONG AND STEADY

By HORATIO ALGER, JR.

CHAPTER XXIII.—(Continued.)

Leaving Walter busily engaged in selling books, he will glance at the Drummond household, and inquire how the members of that interesting family fared after Walter's departure.

Joshua's discontent increased daily. He was now eighteen, and his father absolutely refused to increase his allowance of twenty-five cents a week, which was certainly ridiculously small for a boy of his age.

While he was thinking this matter over a dangerous thought entered his mind. His father, he knew, had a small brass-nailed trunk, in which he kept his money and securities. He had seen him going to it more than once.

"I wonder how much he's got in it," thought Joshua. "As it's all coming to me some day there's no harm in my knowing."

There seemed little chance of finding out, however. The trunk was always locked, and Mr. Drummond carried the key about with him in his pocket. If he had been a careless man, there might have been some chance of his some day leaving the trunk unlocked, or mislaying the key; but in money matters Mr. Drummond was never careless. Joshua would have been obliged to wait years, if he had depended upon this contingency.

One day, however, Joshua found in the road a bunch of keys of various sizes attached to a ring. He cared very little to whom they belonged, but it flashed upon him at once that one of these keys might fit his father's strong box. He hurried home at once with his treasure and ran upstairs breathless with excitement. He knew where the trunk was kept. Mr. Drummond, relying on the security of the lock, kept it in the closet of his bed chamber.

Joshua made his way at once to the closet, and, entering, began to try his keys, one after the other. The very last one was successful in opening the trunk.

Joshua trembled with excitement as he saw the contents of the trunk laid open to his gaze. He turned over the papers nervously, hoping to come upon some rolls of bills. In one corner he found fifty dollars in gold pieces. Besides these, there were some mortgages, in which he felt little interest. But among the contents of the trunk were some folded papers which he recognized at once as United States bonds. Opening one of them, he found it to be a Five-Twenty bond for five hundred dollars.

Five hundred dollars! What could he do with five hundred dollars! He could go to the city and board and enjoy himself meanwhile, till he could find a place. His galling dependence would be over, and he would be his own master. True, it would be a theft, but Joshua had an excuse ready.

"It will all be mine some day," he said to himself. "It's only taking a part of my own in advance."

He seized the gold and the bond, hastily concealing both in his breast pocket, went downstairs, first locking the trunk, and putting it away where he found it.

He got out of the house without his mother seeing him, and made his way to a railway station four miles distant, where he purchased a ticket for New York.

He took a seat by a window, and, as the car began to move, he said to himself, in exultation, "Now I am going to see life."

CHAPTER XXIV.

Three months later Walter arrived at Columbus, the capital of the State, after a business tour of considerable length, during which he had visited from twenty to thirty different towns and villages. He had now got accustomed to the business, and understood better what arguments to employ to those whom he wished to purchase his book. The consequence was that he had met with a degree of success which had far exceeded his anticipations. He had tested his powers, and found that they were quite equal to the task he had undertaken—that of earning his own living. He had paddled his own canoe thus far without assistance, and he felt confident that, if his health continued good, he should be able to do so hereafter.

After eating supper, and spending an hour or two in the public room of the hotel, Walter went up to his room. Here he took out a blank book, in which he kept an account of his sales and expenditures, and, taking a piece of paper, figured up the grand result. He wished to know just how he stood.

After a brief computation, he said, with satisfaction, "I have sold two hundred and eighty books, which gives a gross profit of three hundred and fifty dollars. My expenses have been exactly two hundred and sixty three dollars. That leaves me eighty-seven dollars net profit."

This was a result which might well yield Walter satisfaction. He was only fifteen, and this was his first business experience. Moreover, he was nearly a thousand miles away from home and friends, surrounded by strangers. Yet, by his energy and business ability, he had been able to pay all his expenses, and these, of course, were considerable, as he was constantly moving, and yet had made a dollar a day clear profit.

"That is rather better than working for my board in Mr. Drummond's store," he reflected. "I am afraid it would have taken me a long time to make my fortune if I had stayed there. I wonder

how my amiable cousin Joshua is getting along."

This thought led to the sudden recollection that he had written to Mr. Shaw, asking him to write to the hotel at Columbus, where he was now stopping, giving him any news that he might consider interesting. Such a letter might be awaiting him.

He went downstairs, and approached the clerk.

"Have any letters been received here for me?" he inquired.

"What name?" asked the clerk.

"Walter Conrad."

"There is a letter for that address. It was received a week since."

"Give it to me," said Walter, eagerly.

He took the letter, and recognized at once in the address Clement Shaw's irregular handwriting. Cut off, as he had been for over a month, from all communication with former friends, he grasped the letter with a sensation of joy, and hurried back to his room to read it quietly, and without risk of interruption.

The letter ran as follows:

"My Dear Young Friend—I have just received your letter asking me to write you at Columbus. I am glad to obtain your address, as I have a matter of importance to speak of. First, however, let me congratulate you on the success you have met with as a book agent. It is not a business to which I should advise you to devote yourself permanently; but I have no doubt that the experience which you acquire, and the necessary contact into which it brings you with different classes of people, will do you good, while the new scenes which it brings before your eyes will gratify the natural love of adventure which you share in common with those of your age. When you set out, I had misgivings as to your success. I admit, it was certainly an arduous undertaking for a boy of fifteen; but you have already demonstrated that you are able to paddle your own canoe, and I shall hereafter feel confident of your success in life, so far at least as relates to earning your living. That you may also be successful in building up a good character, and taking an honorable position among your fellow-men, I earnestly hope."

"I now come to the business upon which I wish to speak to you."

"You will remember that a man named James Wall was prominently identified with the Great Metropolitan Mining Company, by which your poor father lost his fortune. Indeed, this Wall, who is a plausible sort of fellow, was the one who induced him to embark in this disastrous speculation. I suspect he has feathered his own nest pretty well already, and that he intends to do so still more. I was surprised to hear from him some ten days since. I will not copy the letter, but send you the substance of it. He reports that in winding up the affairs of the company there is a prospect of realizing two per cent for the stockholders, which, as your father owned a thousand shares, would yield two thousand dollars. It may be some time, he adds, before the dividend will be declared and paid. He professes a willingness, however, to pay two thousand dollars cash for a transfer of your father's claims upon the company."

"Now, two thousand dollars are not to be despised; but my impression is that such a man as James Wall would never have made such an offer if he had not expected the assets would amount to considerably more than two per cent. I am unwilling to close with the offer until I know more about the affairs of the company. Here it has struck me that you can be of assistance. This Wall lives in a town named Portville, in Wisconsin, on the shore of Lake Superior. I would suggest that you change your name, go at once to Portville, and find out what you can. I can give you no instructions, but must trust to your own native shrewdness, in which I feel sure you are not deficient. If it should be necessary to give up your present business, do so without hesitation, since the other business is of more importance. I will write Mr. Wall that I have his offer under consideration. If you need money, draw upon me."

"I hear that Joshua Drummond has run away from home, carrying away considerable money belonging to his father. The latter appears to lament the loss of his money more than of his son."

"I remain your sincere friend,

"CLEMENT SHAW."

This letter gave Walter much food for reflection. He determined to give up his book agency, and leave as soon as possible for Portville. It was encouraging to think that, in any event, he was likely to realize two thousand dollars from the mining shares, which he had looked upon as valueless. Besides, he felt there was every reason to hope they would prove even more valuable.

Three days later, having closed his accounts as agent, he started for Portville.

He had made a new start in life, and this unexpected money would prove a stepping stone to new ambitions. His future proved his courage and integrity, with his motto always, "Strong and Steady."

Walter found a cheap boarding house and gave his name as Carl Walters. He at once made inquiries about James Wall. He found out that Wall was regarded as a shrewd speculator and was associated with several men of dubious business reputation in various copper and iron mining enterprises.

The man had an office employing several clerks, who sent out considerable advertising matter offering shares of stock to investors at a distance. Walter managed to get employment in the office.

Within five days he had learned all the ins and outs of the business; in ten he was ready to make a move in his own interests.

The stock for which Shaw had been offered two thousand dollars he discovered was really worth ten thousand dollars.

Walter hired a lawyer. When he left Portville he carried with him a check for a small fortune.

Stapleton was his destination. Walter decided to invest some of his money in a general store there. Joshua Drummond was surprised and indignant when he learned of this new business rival, but Walter went steadily on his way. He made a complete success of the enterprise.

New ambitions arose as time went on, and his future proved his courage and integrity with his motto always "Strong and Steady."

(THE END.)

THE ART OF JUGGLING.

It Demands Much Hard Work and Unlimited Patience.

"To be a successful juggler it is necessary to possess infinite patience. Some tricks require such long and continuous practice that unless a man possesses great patience and unflinching powers of perseverance he would despair of ever being able to perform them," says Paul Cigneyvalli, in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch. "Take a trick, for example, like balancing a tall glass on four straws placed on the forehead. It looks easy enough, but it took me years of practice before I could do it. While I am balancing the glass I also juggle with five hats at the same time. I never, as a matter of fact, see the hats. They are handed to me by my assistant, and I then set them going, but the whole time my eyes are fixed on the straws upon which the glass is balanced. If I took my eyes from the straws for a hundredth part of a second their balance would be upset. I know instinctively where the hats are all the time and know exactly where each hat is when I put out my hand to catch it."

"It took me close on eight years practice before I was able to balance two billiard balls on top of each other and then balance the two on a billiard cue. I started practicing it an hour a day, as a rule. After a couple of years' practice one night I woke up, having dreamed that I had performed it. I got up, rushed downstairs and began to practice with my cue and two billiard balls, and at the first attempt I balanced them. About five years later I performed the feat in public."

"For the cannon ball trick I first used a wooden ball weighing just one pound. I caught it on the wrong place and was knocked senseless, but I kept on practicing until I found out how to do it. Now I use an iron ball weighing sixty pounds. If I didn't catch the ball on the right place on the back of my neck it would kill me, but there is no chance of my making a mistake."

Billboards as Nuisances.

California reports an inspiring advance in the campaign against offensive posters, billboards and advertising boardings in the judicial decision that such objects are nuisances, subject to abatement by the police authorities under the common law, says the New York Tribune. It was argued that anything needlessly offensive to the senses was a nuisance. A soap factory or a pigsty would not be tolerated in close proximity to residences because of the vile odors which would outrage the sense of smell. A stone crusher or a boiler factory would be similarly forbidden because of the outrage upon the sense of hearing. But the eyes are as precious as the nose or ears, and the sense of sight, the most useful and valuable of all the senses, is as much entitled to protection against outrage as any other. So it was contended, and it was decided by the judge that posters or billboards which grossly offended the eye were for that reason nuisances and might be suppressed as such.

Surfacing Natural Wood.

White pine, birch, cherry, whitewood, maple, sycamore, gum and hemlock need no filling at all. They are classed as the close grained woods, and their surface presents no pores or cellular tissue to be filled. Still the surface needs to be sealed up so the wood will not suck the oil out of the varnish. This is called surfacing. It consists of coating the surface with shellac and then sandpapering down to a smooth finish. When thus treated the wood is ready for the varnish.

Right Kind for Him.

"Boss," said the waiter, "there is a copper outside and he wants me to make him a sandwich. What kind should I make him?"

"A copper?" laughed the restaurant proprietor. "Oh, make him a club sandwich."

His One Speech.

"Did you ever make a speech?"

"Yes."

"Was it well received?"

"No."

"What did you say?"

"Not guilty."—The Tatler.



FARMS AND FARMERS

Ground Wire Fences.

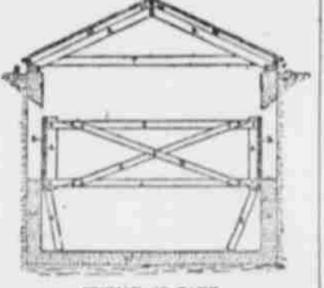
In the summer season many farmers sustain considerable loss of live stock from lightning striking wire fences and killing animals standing near. This loss can be avoided if the fence is grounded—that is, a connection made between the wires and the damp soil beneath. This can be done by stapling a No. 9 wire along the post from top to bottom and burying the end in the ground deep enough to reach damp earth. These ground wires should be fastened to about every third post. When the lightning strikes a fence thus fixed the current is conducted into the ground instead of being deflected into the body of some animal.

When a storm comes up stock in a field will naturally drift toward the fence for protection, especially if there are no trees in the field. The bars on wires attract the lightning, which has been known to travel several miles on a fence before it was discharged into the ground. Lightning takes the path of least resistance, and if the body of an animal is standing near the fence it makes a good conductor and the charge is deflected, with the result of a dead horse or cow.

The cost and time needed to ground a wire fence is small and need not enter into the question, but when a valuable animal is killed, or maybe a whole herd, as has often happened, the cost is then very considerable. While you may never have had any losses of this kind, it will not pay to put this matter off, for the next storm that comes up may be as disastrous to you as it has been to some of your neighbors. Avoid it by grounding your wire fences in time.—Goodall's Farmer.

Concrete Water Tank.

The diagram shows a sectional outline of a concrete water tank with the bottom and top finished, and a portion in the middle of the walls in course of construction. The bottom is shown in position, but as a matter of fact, the walls are built first, and the bottom put in afterwards. A quantity of 1 1/2 inch by 6 inch unplanned board, sufficient to make a large box of the length and breadth the finished tank is to be, and two feet deep, will be required. The sides and ends of this



SECTION OF TANK.

box are made as separate shutters, the boards being nailed to cross-pieces of 2 inches by 3 inches latten, put about four feet apart. The end shutters are made to go inside the side shutters, and two of the cross-pieces, in this case, are fixed right at the end of the boards.

A War on Insects.

Massachusetts scientists have evolved a plan for the destruction of the gypsy and brown-tailed moths. They have looked with dismay on the ravages of these moths in the foliage and have planned what, in military science, would be a fine bit of strategy. Unable by any direct assault to destroy the moths, the scientists have enlisted the aid of an army of moth parasites. Little insects that fasten themselves on the moths, feed upon and finally destroy them. Eight hundred thousand of these parasites have been secured, and at the right moment will be set upon the enemy. A singular fact is that the moths do not recognize the parasites as enemies, but seem to find their presence grateful. They give of their life to support the parasites, and ultimately, fall a victim to their own generosity. How similar this relationship to that which too often obtains among human beings! So striking is that similarity and so many unpleasant things does it recall that we almost feel pity for the destructive moths and resentment against the ungrateful parasites whose services have been invoked. But a look at the devastation wrought by the moths gives pause and resolution, and we welcome the scientists' strategy and wish for its success.

But what of the parasites? What mischief, if any, will they work in the affairs of man when they have destroyed his enemies, the moths? Will it be necessary to employ another army

Trees and Lightning.

There is a popular belief that certain trees are less likely than others to be struck by lightning, and that during a thunderstorm it is quite safe to stand under a beech, for example, while the danger under a resinous tree or an oak is, respectively, fifteen or twenty times greater. This is disputed in a recent writing by Dr. A. W. Rothwick in his "Notes of the Royal Botanical Garden of Edinburgh." The doctor says that no tree is immune, and the beech is struck quite as frequently as any other species. Apparently the taller trees in a neighborhood are the ones most likely to be struck. Contrary to what is believed by some people, the cells are not "ruptured or torn by the formation of steam, as might happen if the heating by the electric current was very great. The cells collapse and shrink up, but are never torn." The root system does not seem to be ever damaged by lightning.

Prevents Runaway.

After being trained to pass locomotives, bicycles, etc., without shying, the horse must now be broken in to automobiles.



BLINDS THE HORSE. The mechanic coupling, let him hear it, let it pass him slowly at the other side of the road—the effect is likely to be the same. He shies, he rears, breaks his harness and throws the occupants, the carriage and himself into the ditch. The horse cannot see in front of him—only to the right or left. A California man thinks the safest plan is to let him see nothing at all. He suggests enclosing the eyes in the novel blind shown here, which he recently patented. A pair of blinds are attached to the bridle. Normally these blinds remain open. When the driver sees an approaching automobile he pulls on a strap which extends to the driver's seat and the blinds are folded over the horse's eyes, completely obscuring his vision. The danger of the horse becoming frightened and running away is thus reduced to a minimum and the occupants assured of safety.

Wagon Road Bridges.

State supervision of all bridges erected is proposed by State Engineer Frederick Skene of New York. That gentleman has drawn up a proposed law covering the matter. He would require his approval, as well as the approval of the county engineer, of the plans and specifications of every bridge exceeding \$500 in cost to be built by a town. He also recommends that contracts for such bridges be required to be awarded to the lowest bidder, after the work has been properly advertised, and, finally, that the approval of the State engineer be required before payment for a completed bridge is made. There is a law in that State providing that the assistance of the State engineer may be invoked to superintend such constructions, but it has been ignored by the counties and towns, and contracts have been irregularly awarded, with the result that there are many inferior structures. Such a law as that proposed would be the means of correcting the evils of the existing system.

Animals and Flies.

To protect animals from the annoyance of flies the following preparation is recommended: Two-thirds linseed oil, one-third crude carbolic acid. Apply with a swab to the tips of the hair, especially about the horns, and the animal will not be bothered with flies of any kind for a week. The preparation, it is asserted, is excellent for horses, answering the same purpose. The linseed oil prevents the hair from coming out, and also retains the carbolic acid.

Another remedy is to take two or three small handfuls of walnut leaves or pennyroyal, on which pour two or three quarts of cold water. Let it infuse over night, pour the whole next morning into a kettle and boil for fifteen minutes. When cold it is fit for use. Moisten a sponge with it, and before the horse goes out of the stable let those parts which are most irritable be smeared with the liquid.

Leather from Frog Skins.

There is some leather made from frog skins in this country, and American novelties made of this leather, include pocketbooks, card cases and similar things. In France some children's shoes are made of this leather.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES.

New Canning Process Preserves Natural Color and Flavor.

Prepared by James Deyton, Oregon Agricultural College, Corvallis.

Certain fruits and vegetables may be preserved in such a way that they will retain indefinitely their original flavor, color and structure. This is in the nature of a discovery, made by Prof. F. E. Pernot, of the Oregon Agricultural college. A report of Prof. Pernot's investigations is given in Bulletin No. 87 of the Experiment station, Corvallis, and for the benefit of the housekeeper who is wrestling with the canning problem we give the salient points of the bulletin.

Successful canning is a question of sterilizing. If a can of fruit spoils it means that it was not properly sterilized to start with, or there was a leakage in the can. Spoiling of the fruit is due to germs which were in the fruit when it was canned or entered the can later. Sterilization kills the germs, and the fruit may be sterilized by cooking or heating. We quote the following paragraph from the bulletin:

"Micro-organisms, not unlike all other plants, possess the power of self-preservation and of perpetuating their kind; one is by means of producing spores, or seeds, which are very resistant; while others which do not produce spores have a resisting power nearly equal to that of spores."

Heating the fruit to 160 degrees for ten minutes will kill the germs without injuring the good qualities of the fruit, but the spores, which are "unincubated" germs will not be injured at that temperature and will become "germs" in another day, when the heat should again be applied. A few spores may escape the second heating, making a third steaming necessary.

How It Should Be Done.

First—Clean the fruit jars or cans by means of a brush, using hot water to which washing powder has been added. After washing thoroughly steam the jars to remove any dirt that may remain.

Second—After washing the vegetables or fruit place them in jars, completely filling them. Then add water to fill the interstices, and put on lid. Don't screw it on tight or the jar will burst when heat is applied.

Third—Procure a wooden steam chest, the wash boiler will do, and put some water in the bottom of it. Put slats in the bottom on which to set the jars.

Fourth—To get the proper temperature, put a thermometer in the center of an extra jar of fruit or water and steam the fruit at a temperature of 160 to 165 for ten minutes. Do not let temperature get above 165. Then remove jars and screw lids on tight immediately. Repeat the steaming a second and a third time at intervals of 24 to 48 hours. The jars are then sterile. Cans may be used instead of jars. If the latter are used the vent in the top of the can will have to be soldered after the first steaming. Boiled but not boiling water should be used for filling the jars, or a syrup may be used instead of water. Unsterilized water or syrup may contain about ten million germs in a quart jar, and it is just as well to "nip them in the bud" by sterilizing the water. It is important that the fruit or vegetables be neither under-ripe nor over-ripe. The same good judgment used in selecting material for the table should be exercised in the matter of canning.

It was found in the tests made at the experiment station that a temperature of 165 degrees was sufficient to sterilize the fruit when treated as above, and this temperature did not impair the flavor or structure of the fruit. Where only one heating is given, as is the case at the canneries, it is necessary to heat the fruit as high as 240 degrees in order to kill both spores and germs.

It should be stated that this method of canning was not successful with sweet peas and corn, as they have a germ normally that is not killed at a temperature of 165.

This method would probably not be practicable at canneries, where fruit is sold at low prices, owing to the additional expense of treating the cans three times; but for first class high priced goods the additional expense would be warranted. In the case of home canning, however, it is a more desirable method of putting up fruit and vegetables than the methods usually in vogue.

A farmer residing near Almira, Washington, inquires concerning the milk weed pest which is infesting that locality. Professor R. Kent Beattie, of the department of botany, answered as follows:

"The perennial milk weed, which I believe you have, is very difficult to destroy. The only principal upon which you can work is to keep the tops of it closely cut down, so that the plant cannot make food, until you have starved out the roots. This, of course, is a difficult task, especially if they cover a large field. I would put the patches into clean cultivation, either as graden, or potato plots; then it would pay you to work very hard to exterminate these weeds, for they are difficult to kill once they take possession of the land."—From the Washington State College, Pullman.