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STRONG AND STEADY

By HORATIO ALGER, JR.

CHAPTER X.

In due time, to Joshua's great delight, the lottery ticket reached him. It was several days in coming, and he had almost given it up, but the sight of it raised his spirits to the highest pitch. It seemed to him the first step to a fortune. He began at once to indulge in dazzling visions of what he would do when the prize came to hand; how the "old man" would be astonished and treat him with increased respect; how he would go to the city and have a good time seeing the lions, and from henceforth throw off the galling yoke of dependence which his father's parsimony had made it so hard to bear.

Whenever he was by himself, he used to pull out the ticket and gaze at it with the greatest satisfaction, as the key that was to unlock the portals of fortune, independence and happiness.

But at length the long expected letter arrived. Joshua did not like to open it in the postoffice, lest it should attract the attention of the postmaster. He therefore withdrew to a place where he was not likely to be disturbed, and with trembling fingers opened the letter. Something dropped out.

"I wonder if it is a check?" thought Joshua, stooping over and picking it up. But no, it was an announcement of the drawing. Joshua's numbers—for each lottery ticket contains three numbers—were 9, 15, 50. But of the thirteen lucky numbers drawn out of sixty-five, neither of them was one.

Slowly it dawned upon Joshua that he had drawn nothing, that his five dollars had been absolutely thrown away. But there was a letter. Perhaps this would explain it. Joshua read as follows:

"Dear Sir—We regret to say that we are unable to send you a prize this time. We hope, however, you will not be discouraged. Some of our patrons who have been most fortunate have commenced by being unlucky. Indeed, singularly enough, this is a general rule.

"Hoping to hear from you again, and to send you in return better news, we subscribe ourselves, very respectfully,

"HARRIS & CO."

The effect of Joshua's ill success was to make him very despondent. He thought of all he had intended to do, and now his castles had crumbled, and all in consequence of this letter. He had been so sanguine of success. Now he must write to Sam that his visit to New York was indefinitely postponed—that is, unless he could induce his father to provide him with money enough to go. The prospect was not very encouraging, but he felt desperate, and he determined to make the attempt. Accordingly, just after supper, he detained his father, just as he was returning to the store, and said:

"Father, I wish you'd let me go to New York on a visit."

"What for?" asked Mr. Drummond, elevating his brows.

"Because I'm eighteen years old, and I've never been there yet."

"Then, if you've gone eighteen years without seeing the city, I think you can go a while longer," said his father, under the impression that he had made a witty remark. But Joshua did not appreciate the humor of it.

"I've lived in Stapleton ever since I was born," grumbled Joshua, "and have got tired of it. I want to see something of life."

"Do you? Well, I'm sure I've no objection."

"May I go, then?"

"Yes; but, of course, you will pay your own expenses."

"How can I?" exclaimed Joshua, in angry disappointment. "I have no money."

"Then you can save up your allowance till you have enough."

"Save up on twenty-five cents a week? I couldn't go till I was an old man!"

"I know of no other way," said Mr. Drummond, with provoking indifference, "unless you earn the money in some way."

"You treat me like a little boy!" said Joshua, angrily.

"You are better off than I am. I have to work for all I get. You get your board, clothes and pocket money for nothing."

"Other boys go to New York when they are much younger."

"I have told you you can go when you like, but you mustn't expect me to supply the money."

Mr. Drummond put on his hat and crossed the street to the store, leaving Joshua in a very unflattering frame of mind.

CHAPTER XI.

Two days later two women entered Mr. Drummond's store. One was Joshua's customer and she wore the same shawl which she had purchased of him. It happened that Walter was out, but Mr. Drummond and Nichols were both behind the counter.

"Have you got any more shawls like this?" asked the first lady, whom we will call Mrs. Blake. "Mrs. Spicer, who is a neighbor of mine, liked it so well she wants to get another just like it."

"Did you buy this shawl of us?" asked Mr. Drummond.

"Yes, sir. I bought it about a fortnight ago, and paid five dollars for it."

"Five dollars! There must be some mistake. We never sell such a shawl as that for less than ten dollars."

"I can't help it," said Mrs. Blake, positively. "I bought it here, and paid five dollars for it."

"Why, those shawls cost me seven dollars and a half at wholesale. It is not

likely I would sell them for five. Mr. Nichols," said Mr. Drummond, "did you sell this lady the shawl she is wearing for five dollars?"

"No, sir; I have not sold a shawl like that for two months. I know the price well enough, and I wouldn't sell it for less than ten dollars."

"I didn't buy it of him. I bought it of a boy," said Mrs. Blake.

"It must have been that stupid Conrad," exclaimed Mr. Drummond, angrily. "Wait till he comes in, and I'll haul him over the coals."

"Then you won't let my friend have another like it for five dollars?"

"No," said Mr. Drummond, provoked. "I don't do business that way. I've lost nearly three dollars by that shawl of yours. You ought to make up the whole sale price to me."

"I shan't do it," said Mrs. Blake. "If you've made a mistake, it's your lookout. I wasn't willing to pay more than five dollars."

The two ladies were about to leave the store when Mr. Drummond said: "The boy will be back directly. I wish you would wait a few minutes, so that if he denies it you can prove it upon him."

"I've got a call to make," said Mrs. Blake, "but I'll come in again in about an hour."

They left the store, and Mr. Drummond began to berate the absent Walter. He was provoked to find that he had lost two dollars and a half, and if Walter had been in receipt of any wages, would have stopped the amount out of his salary. But, unfortunately for this plan of reprisal, out here received his board only, and that could not very well be levied upon. However, he might have some money in his possession, and Mr. Drummond decided to require him to make up the loss.

"When did she say she bought the shawl, Mr. Nichols?" asked his employer.

"About a fortnight ago."

"Will you look on the books, and see if you find the sale recorded? I am surprised that it escaped my attention."

Nichols looked over the book of sales, and announced that no such entry could be found. Mr. Drummond was surprised. Though not inclined to judge others any too charitably, he had never suspected Walter of dishonesty.

"Are you sure you looked back far enough?" he asked.

"Yes," said Nichols; "to make sure, I looked back four weeks. The woman said only a fortnight, you know."

"I know. Then it seems Conrad has concealed the sale and kept the money."

"Perhaps," suggested Nichols, who rather liked Walter, "he forgot to put it down."

"If he did, he forgot to put the money in the drawer, for the cash and the sales have always balanced. He's an ungrateful young rascal," continued Mr. Drummond, harshly. "After I took him into my house and treated him as a son"—this was not saying much, if Joshua be believed—"he has robbed me in the most cold-blooded manner."

Nichols was astonished by the evidence against our hero. He did not like to think him guilty, but it certainly seemed as if he must be.

"What are you going to do about it, Mr. Drummond?" he asked.

"I suppose I ought to have him arrested. He deserves it."

"I hope you won't do that. He may be able to explain it."

"If I do not proceed to extremities, it will be on account of his relationship, which I blush to acknowledge."

The time had been, and that not long since, when Mr. Drummond felt proud of his relationship to the rich Squire Conrad, of Willoughby; but that was before his loss of property. Circumstances alter cases. Quite unconscious of the storm that was gathering, Walter at this moment entered the store.

"So you've got back?" said Mr. Drummond, harshly. "You haven't been in any particular hurry. However, that was not what I wished to speak to you about. We have had a discovery since you went out, and not a very agreeable one."

"No doubt you are sorry," sneered Mr. Drummond. "I should think he would be, eh, Mr. Nichols?"

"I am sorry also," said Nichols, who, though rather weak-minded, was a good-hearted young man.

"So am I sorry," said Mr. Drummond. "It strikes me I have most reason to be sorry, considering that the loss has fallen on me. I have discovered how you have repaid me for my kindness. You didn't think I would find out, but your inquiry has providentially come to light."

"I don't know what you are talking about, Mr. Drummond," said Walter, impatiently. "I wish you would stop talking in riddles."

"Did you ever witness such brazen effrontery, Mr. Nichols?" demanded Mr. Drummond, turning to his head salesman; "even when he is found out he brazen it out."

"Wouldn't it be as well to tell him what is the matter, Mr. Drummond?" asked Nichols, who was in hopes our hero would be able to prove his innocence.

"To come to the point, did you, or did you not, a fortnight since, sell one of those shawls, such as you see on the counter, for five dollars?"

"I did not," said Walter, promptly.

"It might not have been exactly a fortnight. Have you sold such a shawl within four weeks?"

"I have not sold such a shawl since I have been in your employ, Mr. Drummond."

"You hear what he says, Mr. Nichols," said Mr. Drummond. "You see how he adds falsehood to dishonesty. But that is not uncommon. It is only what I expect. Do you mean to say, Walter Conrad, that you didn't sell such a shawl for five dollars—only half price—and, instead of entering the sale, put the money into your own pocket?"

"I do deny it most emphatically, Mr. Drummond," said Walter, impetuously, "and I challenge you to prove it."

"I shall soon be able to prove it," said Mr. Drummond. "The lady who bought the shawl came into the store half an hour since, and asked for another. When I told her that it would cost ten dollars, she said she only paid five for the one she had on. She then told us that she bought it of you a fortnight since."

"There is some mistake about this, Mr. Drummond. She has made a mistake. She must have bought it somewhere else."

"She would not be likely to make such a mistake as this. Besides, the shawl is like others I have. How do you account for that?" queried Mr. Drummond, triumphantly.

"I don't pretend to account for it, and don't feel called upon to do so. All I have got to say is that I did not sell the shawl, nor pocket the money."

"Mr. Drummond, the ladies have returned," said Nichols.

"Ah! just my employer, with exaltation. 'Now we will be able to prove your guilt, you young rascal! Here is the lady who bought the shawl of you.'"

NEWS OF THE WEEK

In a Condensed Form for Our Busy Readers.

HAPPENINGS OF TWO CONTINENTS

A Resume of the Less Important but Not Less Interesting Events of the Past Week.

The Panama elections passed quietly, with no need of troops.

Japan is willing China should build one railroad into Manchuria.

Missionaries say America is to blame for the Japanese war scare.

Railroads report business generally good, though somewhat less than last year.

Governor Cummins, of Iowa, will resign and return to the practice of law.

The treasury deficit for the fiscal year just ending will be the largest in years.

A tramp was arrested at Hood River who was found to have about \$1,000 in cash in his ragged clothes.

It is generally admitted that Bryan will be the Democratic nominee for president, but a fight is expected on vice-president.

Mexican rebels are reported to have from 4,000 to 7,000 men under arms.

A tornado in South Dakota did immense damage to crops and buildings, and another in Minnesota killed seven persons.

Filipino leaders have been studying the Russian domain. They will visit other nations of Europe before returning home. They are traveling under the auspices of the American war department.

Mrs. Frank J. Gould is suing for divorce.

Centralia, Wash., was swept by a disastrous fire.

Desperate fighting continues between factions in Persia.

Mexican rebels have captured the town of Vesca. The government has sent troops.

Bryan expresses perfect confidence that he will be the Democratic nominee for president.

Cleveland was buried in Princeton cemetery with simple ceremonies and no military display.

There will be 1,250 American marines ashore in the canal zone to keep order on election day.

A Portland fruit peddler was fined \$5 for staying too long in one place to sell his last box of cherries.

James S. Sherman, Republican nominee for vice-president, is rapidly recovering, and will soon be able to travel.

American authorities do not expect any open trouble with Venezuela. They expect to just let Castro severely alone.

Harvard beat Yale in the great intercollegiate boat race. Secretary Taft, who is a graduate of Yale, witnessed the race, and was sorely disappointed.

A collision between a freight and a circus train in St. Paul injured eight persons.

A Chicago professor has fallen heir to an immense fortune, mostly in Idaho mines.

Henry accused Ruef of plotting his death, and Ruef promptly called Henry a liar.

A Pendleton man who is afraid to trust the banks has \$75,000 in postal money orders.

The Venezuelan envoy to the United States is awaiting orders to leave this country.

Shooting and looting continue in Teheran, the capital of Persia, causing a reign of terror.

A French passenger steamer was wrecked on the Spanish coast and about 100 persons perished.

A Seattle man was killed by a cake of ice falling down an elevator shaft and striking him on the head.

Flour and other provisions are getting so high priced in Chicago that many are scarcely able to buy enough to eat.

A well-organized ring has been discovered in Southern California engaged in smuggling Chinese coolies across the Mexican border.

The youngest son of the late Charles Crocker, the San Francisco millionaire, has undergone his second operation for cancer of the stomach.

A Russian paper predicts that when reinforcements arrive for the Persian revolutionists, the shah's army will be defeated and the government overthrown.

Three Rivers, Quebec, had a million dollar fire.

The wrapping paper trust has pleaded guilty, and each member was fined.

The bribery case against Tiry L. Ford, of San Francisco, has been dropped.

MASSING TROOPS.

Mexican Government Preparing for Extensive Revolution.

El Paso, Tex., June 30.—Fifteen hundred troops have arrived in Torreon to protect that city from the expected attack by revolutionists, and the Americans are preparing to send their families to the States for safety, according to reports brought here last night by passengers on the Mexican Central.

It is reported that the revolutionists have attacked the village of Matamoros, Coahuila, about 15 miles from Torreon, and have occupied that town. Official advices relative to sending troops to Torreon say that with the forces already stationed there the town is "impregnable."

In Chihuahua there is considerable alarm among citizenry, and guards numbering from 20 to 25 soldiers in a single patrol are continually passing through the streets. A great many extra police have been sworn in to do guard duty.

Information brought here last night by passengers on the incoming Mexican Central train is that all bridges and approaches to Torreon on every road except the Mexican Central have been burned.

The international line out of Torreon, on which is located the town of Matamoros, reported to be in the hands of revolutionists, has suffered heavily, and the Coahuila Pacific is entirely tied up as the result of depredations committed by revolutionists. A pay train on the Coahuila & Pacific was attacked on Friday night, soon after leaving Torreon, but the crew succeeded in running the train back to Torreon and escaping.

There is a general movement of troops from Mexico City to north, according to news received here, and reinforcements are being rushed to Jimenez, which is said to be still in the hands of revolutionists.

"BET YOU MILLION."

John W. Gates Wakes Up Slow Old Illinois Town.

St. Charles, Ill., June 30.—John W. Gates, the "Bet You Million" man, who founded the home in this village for boys, slipped in here yesterday, and what he did during his short stay has left the town gasping. There will be no other topic mentioned here for the next six months. Epitomized, here is what Gates did in about five hours.

Kissed his old mother.

Got shaved by the town barber and gave him a \$10 gold piece.

Threw showers of quarters and half dollars to the street boys.

Was run home by a curious crowd. Bought a fine stock farm for \$25,000 and gave it to an old friend.

Buffed for "dear old 5-cent cigar" and smoked it blissfully.

Yelled at the son of a friend to come and go to Europe with him and took him along.

Left for Chicago at 11:30 last night with Mrs. Gates and the boy, after one of the greatest days of his life.

Gates and his wife will tour Europe in an automobile.

Worst Ice Pack Known.

Seattle, June 30.—First to reach None of the fleet which sailed June 1 was the steamship Victoria, Captain Porter, who is the first home, arriving last night. The steamship brings news of the worst ice ever known in Behring sea since it has been navigated by white men, and Captain Porter is authority for the statement that several of the returning fleet cannot be expected on schedule time unless conditions have changed radically since the Victoria sailed. The Victoria arrived in Seattle with 62 passengers and \$650,000 in gold.

Officers and passengers of the ship describe the voyage to and from Nome as an unprecedented battle with ice. Great bergs which drifted from the Arctic ocean last fall, and are frozen in the Behring sea, packed as high as the steamer's stack, were found in 65 feet of water.

Expose Royal Grafters.

Lisbon, June 30.—A mass meeting organized by the Republicans and presided over by Bernardino Machado, the Republican leader, yesterday, passed resolutions demanding a vigorous investigation of the advances of money to the royal family and the misuse of public funds during the regime of the late King Carlos.

A strong force of police surrounded the meeting place, but there was no interference with the speakers, some of whom were most violent in their expressions. No untoward incidents took place.

Cloudburst Floods Homes.

Beatrice, Neb., June 30.—The Bous river at this place is on another rampage, caused by a two-inch rainfall and a cloudburst. The precipitation is placed at seven inches. The rise here was very sudden, and water is running over West Court street for several blocks. Thirty families in a low-lying section were compelled to abandon their homes. Traffic over the Union Pacific is abandoned, water running over one section of the track to the depth of eight feet.

Sherman Improves.

Cleveland, O., June 30.—Congressman James S. Sherman continues to gain strength. He slept much Sunday. His condition remains normal, and there has been no change made in the plans for him to leave the hospital no later than next Wednesday.

PRUNE MEN COMBINE

Packers of Northwest Organize for Protection.

FIX PRICE TO EASTERN BUYERS

Settlement of Disputes No Longer be Left to New York Exchange—Also Instruct Growers.

Salem, Or., June 30.—Representatives of all the prune packers of the Northwest met here last night and organized an association for mutual protection and promotion of the interests of their business.

The organization is one that has long been desired by some of the packers, but which could never be effected heretofore for the reason that competition among packers has been too severe. In the season now about to open, the packers will work together for their common interests. The association will control all the Northwest prune pack.

Among the packing houses in the organization are H. S. Gilie & Co., Willamette Valley Prune Association and W. C. Tillson & Co., all of Salem; the Roseburg packing houses, owned by Gilie & Co. and Tillson & Co., Allen's packing house, of Eugene; Lang & Co., of Portland; Mason, Ekman & Co., of Portland; French Packing Company, of Myrtle Creek, and the packing house at Vancouver, Wash.

The new association has formulated two forms of contracts which all the firms in the combine will use. One contract is that to be used in selling fruit to eastern buyers, and the other in buying from local growers. The packers have determined that they will no longer sell according to forms of contract put out by eastern buyers, but will dictate the terms of the contract or not sell at all.

The new contract contains a number of provisions favorable to Oregon packers, and what he did during his short stay has left the town gasping. There will be no other topic mentioned here for the next six months. Epitomized, here is what Gates did in about five hours.

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