

# 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 purses undetected. I once had my watch stolen without being conscious of it. Your pocket-book 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 were innocent, it would be rather an awkward matter to charge him with the theft.

"Did you see anything of my pocket-book?" 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 thought of as cheap; so, though quite penitent, 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 clew 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 we 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, coolly. 'I saw you take the money out and throw it from the car platform.'"

"Shouldn't the binding isn't very strong. Shouldn't the 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'll 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.

(To be continued.)

## THE FIREPLACE.

One Thing that Helps Most to Make a Home Homely.

This I say: Go back and pick up lost good habits—the omitted amenities of life. Especially put back into your house the fireplace. It is the one thing that helps most to make a home homely. Build it big and broad. Let there be no gimcracks of fancy woodwork anywhere near it. Let it be only brick or stone. Then let the hearth be broad and wide. Make it so large every way that you need never fear for a snapping coal. Away with mats, for they are combustible! But a stool—that is another thing. Here you can forget the stocks and the office and the store. Here you can dream of rest and peace. Here it is possible that some of you have Tom and Harry and Bessie about your knees. There is no better way to reconstitute the family. It is the chief want of these modern days.

The world is never quite so independent or we quite so care free without a fire. There are vastness and lack of outline to a summer day. We get our feelings mixed up with the cosmos. The fireplace narrows our lives somewhat, but it completes and unifies things. We are happy to be just a part of the little warm home circle. Did anybody ever commit suicide who had a fireplace?—E. P. Powell, in *Outing* magazine.

Big Collection.

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

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

Gunner—Why, to remove their family skeletons.

The population of Canada, according to the official estimates of that country, was 3,504,900 on April 1, an increase of 21 per cent in six years.

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

# PAPERS BY THE PEOPLE

## SEVEN-YEAR PRESIDENTIAL TERM.

By U. S. Justice Brewer.

Our executive and legislative officials are rulers, while certain limitations are placed upon them to prevent any injurious results from the exercise and unwise exercise of ruling power. The ruler is subject to removal by impeachment or otherwise. But these are only provisions which the people, in framing the constitution, deemed necessary to limit the extent of his authority as a ruler. Take the office of President, the highest executive office in the nation. His term is four years, subject to re-election. The idea that fixed a short term is that of preventing permanent injurious results from the arbitrary and unauthorized action of some ambitious and unprincipled President, if ever there should be one such in office.

It may not be generally known that the convention that framed the constitution at first prescribed a presidential term of seven years, with a prohibition upon re-election; and only as the convention was nearing its end, and so far as the record shows, without any discussion or suggestion of reason therefor, this was changed into a four-years' term, and without the ineligibility. In the judgment of many men, among whom I am one, there was a mistake in that change.

In the light of history I think it would have been better to have left the presidential term of seven years, with an accompanying ineligibility.

WHY LAWYERS ARE UNPOPULAR.

By Attorney James M. Beck.

The chief reason for the unpopularity of the lawyer is due to the fact that men get their impressions of law and of the lawyer through the medium of fiction and not from any personal observation, and it has always been the tendency of the poet, the novelist or the dramatist to select unfavorable and exaggerated types to give dramatic intensity to their productions. An honorable lawyer is too prosaic for literary portraiture. The lawyer is the great conservative force in a nation, and is constantly

called upon to defend the individual against the tyranny of the majority. He must frequently defy and defeat public opinion by protecting the individual from its unreasonable demand.

The lawyer must often share with his client public odium. He must often stand between a relentless public opinion and its victim. In defending the rights of the individual he must often contravene the interests of the many. This is peculiarly true of our country, and of the present time, for with popular passion flashed into fury by frenzied agitators and with great constitutional limitations standing as the only barriers to popular aggression, the lawyer must frequently thwart the public will by invoking the sacred guaranties of the constitution.

## WHY NOT LET THE LOVERS ALONE?

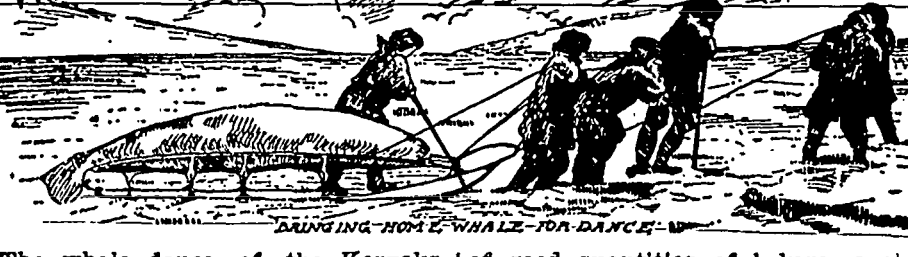
By Helen Oldfield.

If Johnny Jones walks home from church with Susan Smith two Sundays in succession, he immediately is suspected of a more than friendly feeling for that young woman; tongues begin to clack; John is rallied on his fancy for Susan, while she is bantered on her attentions to her. If Edwin and Angelina meet half a dozen times, and he shows the slightest disposition to talk or dance with her ever so little more than with other girls, some, at least, of their mutual friends are certain to imagine matrimonial intent upon his part, and, still worse, to express the suspicion more or less plainly to the persons concerned.

The probability is that the young man has no serious purpose; his attentions merely are the casual consequence of a surface admiration for a pretty and entertaining girl. Humanity is gregarious, and social intercourse with one's fellows is a natural necessity of all normal men and women.

Undeniably the chances are that one or the other of the couple some day will find that friendship has developed into something stronger and tenderer than any other love on earth. Where both step hand in hand into the "primrose path" all is well, and the two who gradually have grown together become one in happy harmony.

## Whale Dance of the Koryaks



The whale dance of the Koryaks, natives of Northern Siberia, is another case where the host has all the pleasure. Like the man who mixes the cocktail, says "Here's to you" and drinks it himself, the Koryaks kill the white whale, or the beluga, cut its head off, eat its flesh, entertain its head as a guest and then set that member adrift with the expectation that it will return to its former comrades and urge them to visit its hosts and be entertained in the same royal manner. Certainly the Koryaks, not noted for mental development, have a peculiar sort of humor or they would not carry out the ceremonies attending the whale feast without laughing at themselves. As the diet of the Koryaks is limited to fish, seal and whale flesh, with Russian brick tea as an occasional luxury, the taking every year

of good quantities of beluga, a mammal of 12 feet long, is essential to their welfare. The white whales are now very scarce in the bays of the Okhotsk seas. They are captured in open fissures in the ice floes, which they are obliged to frequent for breathing purposes. When an animal is caught the festival is held, the entire village taking part. The idea underlying the celebration is that the captured whale has come to visit the settlement. He must be treated with respect, as he, that is his head, is destined to return to sea where he will tell of the good time he had while being relieved of his superfluous flesh, how gloriously he was entertained, and will induce his comrades, like the fox in the fable, to go and have their tails cut off close behind their heads. —Williamsport (Pa.) Grit.

a pound of coffee at the same time who'd have the heart to refuse her?

"These hair-splitting calculations aren't often necessary on account of lack of money, but just because there's no place to keep leftovers."

## DROPS FROM THE CLOUDS.

Dangerous Species of Exhibition that Often Results in Death.

The double parachute descent made the other day from an estimated height of 14,000 feet by the Misses Louie May and Dolly Shepard, probably constitutes a record in long drops.

One writes "probably," because there is always a doubt in these cases, owing to the difficulty in verifying the actual altitudes reached by the parachutists before letting go, says a writer in Pearson's Weekly.

Prof. Baldwin, who first popularized this highly dangerous species of exhibition at the Alexandra palace, London, in 1888, made several descents from altitudes exceeding a mile, but was prevented by the authorities from carrying out his intention of dropping from a height of two miles. Later, however, he descended in the provinces from a height of 9,000 feet. This was his record, so far as this country is concerned.

He soon found emulators, though; several of whom met with violent deaths. Thus, an Englishman named George Higgins, after descending safely several times from altitudes exceeding 10,000 feet, was eventually killed at Kirkstall, near Leeds. This happened on Aug. 8, 1891. A few months later a Miss Van Tassel was similarly dashed to death at Dacca, and on May 20, 1908, Miss Edith Brookes, aged 23, was killed near Sheffield.

On the other hand, there have been chronicled some remarkable escapes of a nature akin to that experienced by the Misses May and Shepard. Thus at Wakefield, some years back, a well-known parachutist named Clissie Kent, was carried high above the clouds through something going wrong with the "test" cord, yet managed to alight safely in the middle of the town after narrowly escaping being impaled on the spire of All Saints' church. Owing to a similar mishap Miss Alma Beaumont was, at Glasgow, once borne aloft to the height of 12,700 feet before being able to let go. Nevertheless, she suffered no hurt, although twenty minutes were occupied in the descent.

It is easy to prevent failure; all one has to do is refrain from trying.

## BUYING IN SMALL AMOUNTS.

Problem of the Butcher in Light Housekeeping Neighborhoods.

"The man who runs a grocery and fruit store with a meat market attachment in a light housekeeping neighborhood is always sure of his share of funny experiences," said a man who has just this sort of job in upper Manhattan, according to the New York Sun.

"These light housekeeping customers take more of our time in proportion to the money they leave with us than any other class, but they keep us so amused, and they're usually so young and pretty and jolly that we never think of really getting mad at them."

"Buying steak to fit the skillet is a light housekeeping proposition we're often up against. What we call Deimonico steaks are best for this and they're favorites with all the women who play the light housekeeping game. We take the bone-out-and-skewer-the-steak-up so it'll just fit their pan, and they go off smiling. One girl brings in a plate just the size of her skillet, so we make the steak fit the plate. We get so used to selling 'just two chops' that

we take a small purchase like that quite as a matter of course.

"I remember the day before Thanksgiving a pretty little thing came in with her tape measure. She said she wanted to buy a small turkey. The turkey must be just the size to fit into a pan which just went into her oven, and she'd brought along the tape measure to make sure. I told her I'd never seen such a small edition of our national bird and that she'd better compromise on a chicken. She was a good deal disappointed, but we found a fine chicken that went into her pan, with a couple of inches to the good. Then she had me look over a big basket of sweet potatoes to find some nice, long, slender ones, because she wanted them to just fit around the chicken in the pan. She bought just four.

"Cheese is another thing the light housekeepers always go slow on. They'd rather buy a few cents' worth every day than have a crumb left over for a stray mouse to nibble on. Lots of stores object to selling less than a pound, but when a pretty girl appeals to you for 'just 5 cents' worth' and perhaps to make up for it plunges recklessly and gets four eggs and a quarter of

## THE WRIGHT AEROPLANE, SHOWING ITS IMPORTANT DIMENSIONS.

