

STRONG AND STEADY

By HORATIO ALGER, JR.

CHAPTER I.

"This is a nice room you've got, Walter."
"Yes, you know I am to stay here for two years, and I might as well be comfortable."

It. He was still more surprised to recognize in the visitor Dr. Porter, the principal of the institute.
"Good-evening, Conrad," said the doctor. "I am rather a late visitor. I was not sure but you might be in bed. Have you heard from home lately, Conrad?"

"That's more than my father said. He told me it wouldn't do me any harm to rough it."

"I cannot tell, my boy; this telegram furnishes all the information I possess. Who is Nancy Forbes?"

"Perhaps he's right," said Walter. "Of course, I don't object to the new carpet and furniture, but I shouldn't consider it any great hardship if I had to rough it, as you call it."

"Let us hope it is only a brief sickness. I think you had better go home by the first train to-morrow morning."

"Wouldn't you? Then I'll tell you what we'll do. Let's change rooms. You can go round and board at Mrs. Glenn's, and I'll come here."

"The principal shook hands with Walter and withdrew. When his tall form had vanished, Walter sat down and tried to realize the fact of his father's sickness; but this he found difficult. It was a long time before he got to sleep, but at length he did sleep, waking in time only for a hasty preparation for the homeward journey."

"I am not sure what my father would think of that arrangement," said Walter, smiling.

He was so occupied with thoughts of his father that it was not till he was well on the way home that it occurred to him that this was his fifteenth birthday, to which he had been looking forward for some time.

"I thought you'd find some way to crawl out," said Lemuel. "For my part, I don't believe you'd enjoy roughing it any better than I."

The seat in front of Walter was for some time vacant; but at the Woodville station two gentlemen got in and entered upon an animated conversation. Walter did not at first pay any attention to it. He was looking out of the window listlessly, unable to fix his mind upon anything except his father's sickness. But at length his attention was caught by some remarks made by one of the gentlemen in front, and from this point he listened languidly.

"I don't know," said Walter; "I've sometimes thought I shouldn't be very sorry to be a poor boy, and have to work my own way."

"I suspected him to be a swindler when he first came to me," said the gentleman sitting next the window. "He hadn't an honest look, and I was determined not to have anything to do with his scheme. Mining companies are risky things always. I once got taken in to the tune of five thousand dollars, so that I taught me a lesson. So I was not particularly impressed with the brilliant prospectus of the Great Metropolitan Mining Company, in spite of its high-sounding name, and its promised dividend of thirty per cent. Depend upon it, James Wall and his confederates will pocket all the dividends that are made."

"That's very well to say when you're the son of a rich man."

"Very likely you are right. But it may be that Wall really believed there was a good chance of making money."

"So are you."

"Of course he did, but he was determined to make the money for himself, and not for the stockholders."

"Yes, but I don't get the benefit of it, and you do. What would you do now if you were a poor boy?"

"I might have been tempted to invest, but all my money was locked up at the time, and I could not have done so without borrowing the money, and that I was resolved not to do."

"Perhaps you are right," answered Walter, with a smile. "Now suppose we open our Cigar."

"It was fortunate for you that you didn't, for the bubble has already burst. There will be many losers. By the way, I hear that Mr. Conrad of Willoughby was largely interested. He is a rich man, but for all that he may have gone in beyond his means."

"Lemuel Warner was a pleasant looking boy of fourteen, the son of a prosperous merchant in New York. Walter Conrad was from a small country town, where his father was the wealthiest and most prominent and influential citizen, having a handsome mansion house, surrounded by extensive grounds."

"I am sorry for him, but that was reckless."

"Nobody knew just how rich he was; but he was generally supposed to be worth two hundred thousand dollars. Mrs. Conrad had been dead for five years, so that Walter, who was an only child, had no immediate relation except his father. It was for this reason, perhaps, that he had been sent to the Essex Classical Institute. Being a boy of talent, and well-grounded in Latin, he was easily able to take a high rank in his class. Lemuel Warner had become his intimate friend, being in the same class, but inferior to him in scholarship. They usually studied their Latin lessons together, and it was owing to this circumstance that Lemuel made a better figure in his recitations than before Walter came to the school."

"Yes, he was completely taken in by Wall. He's a smooth fellow."

"There, that job's done," said Lemuel, closing his book with an air of satisfaction. "Now we can rest."

"When the gentlemen left the cars Walter saw one of them had left a morning paper lying in the seat. He picked it up and examined the columns until his eyes fell upon the following paragraph:

"You forget the Latin exercise. You know the doctor expects each boy to write a letter in Latin, addressed to his father, not less than twelve lines in length."

"That looks rather discouraging, to be sure," thought Walter. "I suppose father will lose a good deal. But I'll tell him he needn't worry about me. I shan't mind being poor, even if it comes to that. As long as he is left to me, I won't complain."

The boys started on their new task, and finished by nine o'clock. Lemuel's letter was written with a brilliant disregard of grammatical rules, but it was considerably revised in accordance with suggestions from Walter.

"That's the rub. He'd show it to the minister the first time he called, and then my blunders would be detected. I guess I'd better wait till it comes back from the doctor corrected."

"I've a great mind to send my letter home, Walter," said Lemuel. "Father expects me to write home every week, and this would save me some trouble. Besides, he'd think I was getting on famously, to write home in Latin."

"Yes, if he didn't find out the mistakes."

"That's the rub. He'd show it to the minister the first time he called, and then my blunders would be detected. I guess I'd better wait till it comes back from the doctor corrected."

"I expect to hear from home to-morrow," said Walter. "It is my birthday."

"Let me be the first to congratulate you. How venerable will you be?"

"As venerable as most boys of fifteen, Lem."

"You're three months older than I am, then. Do you expect a present?"

CHAPTER II. This sudden announcement of his father's death was a great shock to Walter. The news stunned him, and he stood, pale and motionless, looking into the housekeeper's face.

"Come in, Master Walter, come in and have a cup of hot tea. It'll make you feel better."
"Tell me about it, Nancy; I—I can't think it's true. It's so sudden. When was he first taken sick? It's last night just after supper. Richard went to the postoffice and got your father's letters. When they came he took 'em into the library, and began to read 'em. There was three, I remember. It was about an hour before I went into the room to tell him the carpenter had called about repairing the carriage house. When I came in, there was your poor father lying on the carpet, senseless. He held a letter tight in his hand. I screamed for help. Mr. Brier, the carpenter, and Richard came in and helped me to lift up your poor father, and we went right off for the doctor."

"What did the doctor say?"
"He said it was a paralytic stroke—a very bad one—and ordered him to be put to bed directly. But it was of no use. He never recovered, but breathed his last this morning at eight o'clock."

"Nancy, have you got that letter which my father was reading?"
"Yes, Master Walter, I put it in my pocket without reading. I think there must have been bad news in it."

She drew from her pocket a letter, which she placed in Walter's hands. He read it hastily, and it confirmed his suspicions. It was from a lawyer, Mr. Conrad had asked to make inquiry respecting the Great Metropolitan Mining Company, and was as follows:

"Dear Sir—I have, at your request, taken pains to inform myself of the present management and condition of the Great Metropolitan Mining Company. The task has been less difficult than I anticipated, since the failure of the company has just been made public. The management has been in the hands of dishonest and unscrupulous men, and it is doubtful whether the stockholders will be able to recover anything."

Walter folded up the letter, and put it into his pocket. He felt that this letter had cost his father his life, and in the midst of his grief he had very bitter thoughts about the unscrupulous man who had led his father to ruin. Had it been merely the loss of property, he could have forgiven him, but he had been deprived of the kindest and most indulgent of fathers.

"I should like to see my father," he said.
An hour later he came out of the leath chamber, pale but composed. He seemed older and more thoughtful than when he entered. A great and sudden sorrow often has this effect upon the young.

"Nancy," he said, "have any arrangements been made about the funeral?"
"No, Walter, we waited till you came."

"My father had no near relatives. There is a cousin, Jacob Drummond, who lives in Stapleton. It will be necessary to let him know. It will be best to telegraph."

Jacob Drummond kept a dry goods store in the village of Stapleton. He had the reputation of being a very mean man. He carried his meanness not only into his business, but into his household, and there was not a poor mechanic in Stapleton who did not live better than Mr. Drummond, who was the rich man of the place.

(To be continued)
One Thousand Men, \$1,000.
If 1,000 men were to come in here and each one eat a dollar's worth, I would have just \$1,000," said the manager of one of those restaurants where each person helps himself. "On the other hand, if I should feed 1,000 women and allow them to pick out their own checks, I might possibly have \$500, but I doubt it. Every woman is a natural born cheat. It seems to be a sixth sense in her makeup to try to get ahead of the person who provides her meals."

The woman to whom these horrifying revelations had been made walked away trying to evolve some plan for emancipating her sex from the web of dishonest propensities in which they had become enmeshed. Outside the restaurant she met a man friend.

"I've just been down there for lunch," he said. "Glorious place; cheap, too. If a fellow knows his business it is dead easy to get a fifty cent meal for a quarter. They never watch the men, but I tell you they keep a close eye on you women."

The woman with an ambition to reform her sex looked back into the restaurant.

"One thousand men, \$1,000," she said, and smiled wickedly.—New York Times.

Ultra-Fashionable.
Whatever became of that plain family called the Dewberrys who used to live in the little house at the end of the lane? queried the man who had just returned to the village after a five years' absence.

"Oh, they struck oil, stranger," replied the old postmaster. "They own a big mansion on the hill, three automobiles and their daughter is engaged to a real duke."

"Strange! And do they still have 'Dewberry' on the gate as they did when they lived in the little house in the lane?"

"Oh, no. They call themselves Du-Barry now. Dewberry sounds too plain."

Changed.
They're not as loving as they were when they were married last spring."

"No; she has developed a terrible temper."

"But he used to consider her an angel then."

AMUSEMENTS

AT THE CHICAGO THEATERS.

"FOLLIES OF 1907" RETURNING TO THE AUDITORIUM, CHICAGO. AT POPULAR PRICES.

One of the most delightful surprises of the season is the announcement of the return to the Big Auditorium of the big Ziegfeld musical revue "Follies of 1907," commencing next Monday night, Feb. 10th, at popular prices.

The big cast of over one hundred includes our old favorites Bickel and Watson, Grace LaRue, Annabelle Whitford, Frank Mayne, Lillian Lee, Grace Leigh, Marius Libby and Dazle, America's greatest dancer. One of the many new features is Miss Lucy Weston, England's daintiest character comedienne, who is said to be the prettiest and most vivacious of all the English artists, that have been seen in this country. Also the fifty Ziegfeld beauty girls, the Gibson bathing girls, the sensational drummer girls, bewitching peacock girls and many others. The biggest of all is the announcement that the prices during this engagement will be 25 and 50 cents for matinees, which will be given on Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday, and the prices for the evening performances will be 25, 50 and 75 cents. No higher. The engagement is limited. Seats now selling for next week.

GARRICK.
Augustus Thomas' delightful play, "The Witching Hour," unanimously praised as the very best that has yet been given by him to the footlights, has entered upon its third week of unqualified popularity at the Garrick theater. Chicago, and the sale of seats has been extended four weeks in advance. The background of Kentucky politics and of the Garret assassination affords a striking setting for the drama of inherited prejudice and crime. The tender love romance the one with its tragic aspect and the other with its more mellow side, are fascinatingly unfolded. The acting is in every respect worthy of the drama, notably so in the cases of William Morris, as the gambler, Jack Brookfield, of Lawrence Gratian, as the Supreme Justice, with his peculiar views of thought waves as equal forces with deeds in people's lives, and of Amelia Gardner, as the sweetheart of a long and curious courtship. Edward Lee, as the "clean-cut" card player, gives a capital realistic and humorous portrayal of a certain type of gentleman of leisure who ruins himself at the game.

MAJESTIC.
For the week of Feb. 10th, the Majestic Theater will offer one of the most entertaining bills in its brilliant career, with Nancy O'Neil, the famous dramatic star as the principal headliner. Patrons of the splendid Majestic are not unaccustomed to the appearance of musical and dramatic celebrities in that theater, but that Nancy O'Neil, the great tragedienne, should be seen in vaudeville they realize is one of the treats that the Majestic management is constantly giving their audiences. Miss O'Neil presents the one-act drama, "The Jewess," a condensed version of the once popular "Lash, the Forsaken." She is supported by a very able company, which includes McKee Rankin, so well known on the dramatic stage as an actor of the highest class. A genuine bit of comedy will be provided by the Baggesens, whose eccentric novelty is sure to keep the audience in a continuous state of laughter. The principal musical features of the bill will be the La Scala Sextette, whose singing voices are said to be of the most pleasing sort. Bent Levy, the famous cartoonist of the New York Telegraph, will be another brilliant number. The Three Lightnings, with their laughing act, "A One-Night Stand in Minstrelsy," will add another element of comedy to the bill, and there are still another half dozen expert acts composing a most diverting bill.

IF WOMEN ONLY KNEW
What a Heap of Happiness It Would Bring to Downers Grove Homes.
Hard to do housework with an aching back.
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Mrs. M. Heintz, 66 Carpenter street, Downers Grove, Ill., says: "I have been a sufferer from kidney trouble of the most painful and troublesome kind. If I attempted to stoop over, sharp pains would shoot through my back in the region of the kidneys. I had dizzy spells when everything seemed to be whirling around me. The secretions from my kidneys were very irregular in passing and of an unnatural color. Doan's Kidney Pills were brought to my attention and I began using them. I am taking the fourth box now and am glad to say that words cannot express the benefits that I have derived from their use. I am able to perform any duties without the slightest pain or annoyance. I procured Doan's Kidney Pills at Bush & Simonson's drug store."

For sale by all dealers. Price 50 cents. Foster-Milburn Co., Buffalo, New York, sole agents for the United States. Remember the name—Doan's—and take no other.

Catching the Wayfarer.
Cogger—The good parson told me I should always be trying to lift up my fellow man.

Motorwood—What did you answer?
Cogger—I told him I would put a scoop in my automobile at the earliest opportunity.

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