

# STRONG AND STEADY

By HORATIO ALGER, JR.

## CHAPTER XII.

Walter went up to his room, and hastily packed his trunk. He felt wronged and outraged by the unfounded charges that had been made against him. Why, he argued, should Mr. Drummond so readily decide that he had cheated him out of five dollars? He felt that he could not, with any self-respect, remain any longer under the same roof with a man who had such a poor opinion of him.

He was not sorry that his engagement was at an end. He had obtained some knowledge of the dry goods business, and he knew that his services were worth more than his board. Then, again, though he was not particular about living luxuriously, the fare at Mr. Drummond's was so unbecomingly poor that he did sometimes long for one of the abundant and well-cooked meals which he used to have spread before him at home, or even at the boarding house while a pupil of the Essex Classical Institute. He was packing his trunk, when a step was heard on the stairs, and his door was opened by Mr. Drummond, considerably to Walter's surprise.

"The fact is that Mr. Drummond, on realizing what a mistake he had made, and that Joshua was the real culprit, felt that he had gone altogether too far, and he realized that he would be severely censured by Walter's friends in Willoughby. Besides, it was just possible that Walter might, after all, recover a few thousand dollars from his father's estate, and therefore it was better to be on good terms with him. Mr. Drummond determined, therefore, to conciliate Walter, and induce him, if possible, to remain in his house and employ."

"What are you doing, Conrad?" he asked, on entering Walter's chamber. "Surely you are not going to leave us."

"I think it best," said Walter, quietly.

"You won't—ahem!—bear malice on account of the little mistake I have made. We are all liable to mistakes."

"It was something more than a mistake, Mr. Drummond. What had you seen in me to justify you in such a sudden charge of dishonesty?"

"Well, Conrad, I was mistaken. I shall be glad to have you come back to the store as before."

"Thank you, Mr. Drummond, but I have decided to go back to Willoughby for a short time. I want to consult Mr. Shaw about the future. It is time I formed some plan, as I shall probably have to earn my living."

"If you have made up your mind, all I have to say is that my humble dwelling will be ever open to receive you in the future. Perhaps, after a short visit at your old home, you may feel inclined to return to my employment. I will give you a dollar a week, besides board."

Mr. Drummond looked as if he felt that this was a magnificent offer, for which Walter ought to feel grateful. But our hero knew very well that he could command better pay elsewhere, and was not particularly impressed. Still, he wished to be polite.

"Thank you for your offer, Mr. Drummond," he said; "but I am not prepared to say, as yet, what I will do."

"I hope," said Mr. Drummond, rather embarrassed, "you won't speak of our little difference to your friends in Willoughby."

"No, sir; not if you wish me not to do so."

By this time the trunk was packed, and Walter, locking it, rose from his knees.

"It isn't too much trouble, Mr. Drummond," he said, "I will send for my trunk to-morrow."

"Certainly. Why don't you wait till to-morrow yourself?"

"As I am ready, I may as well take the afternoon train. I will go down and bid good-by to Mr. Drummond."

Mr. Drummond had just come from the kitchen. He looked with surprise at Walter and her husband, whose presence in the house at that hour was unusual.

"What is the matter?" she asked.

"Conrad is going home a short time on business," explained Mr. Drummond. "I have offered him increased pay if he will return to the store. I hope he may decide to do so. Our humble room will ever be ready to shelter him."

Just at that moment Joshua, unconscious of the damaging discovery that had been made relative to himself, entered the room.

He looked with interest while his new acquaintance drew out from a carpet-bag, which he had beneath the seat, a good-sized paper wrapped in brown paper.

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next day, he walked over to the house of Mr. Shaw, his father's executor.

"I am very glad to see you, Walter," he said. "I was just wishing you were here. When did you leave Stapleton?"

"This afternoon, Mr. Shaw. I have just reached Willoughby. What progress have you made in settling the estate?"

"I can give you some idea of how it stands. There will be something left, but not much. After paying all debts, including Nancy's, there will certainly be a thousand dollars; but if you pay Nancy's legacy, that will take half of this sum."

"The legacy shall be paid," said Walter, promptly, "no matter how little remains. I am glad there is enough for that."

"I honor your determination, Walter, but I don't think Nancy will be willing to take half of what you have left."

"Then don't let her know how little it is."

"There is a chance of something more. I have made an account of the Great Metropolitan Mining stock, of which your father held shares to the amount of one hundred thousand dollars, cost price. How these will come out is very uncertain, but I think we can get something. Suppose it were only five per cent, that would make five thousand dollars. But it isn't best to count on that."

"I shouldn't make any account of the mining stock," said Walter. "If I get anything, it will be so much more than I expect."

"That is the best way. It will prevent disappointment."

"How long before we find out about it?"

"It is wholly uncertain. It may be six months; it may be two years. All I can say is that I will look after your interests."

"Thank you, I am sure of that."

"Now, as to your plans. You were at the Essex Classical Institute, I think?"

"Yes, sir."

"What do you say to going back for a year? It is not an expensive school. You could stay a year, including expenses, for the sum of five hundred dollars."

"It would consume all my money; and as long as I am not going to college, my present education will be sufficient."

"As to consuming all your money," said Mr. Shaw, "let me say one thing. I received many favors from your father, especially when a young man just starting in business. Let me repay them by paying half your expenses for the next year at school."

"You are very kind, Mr. Shaw," said Walter, gratefully, "and I would accept that favor from you sooner than from any one; but I've made up my mind to take care of myself, and saddle my own case."

(To be continued.)

Stronger than They Thought.

On arriving at Barbados, with two small tugboats which had safely made their way from Philadelphia, Mr. Robert H. Hepburn found people greatly surprised that such small boats could make such a voyage. In his journal, quoted by Mr. Neville B. Craig in "Recollections of an Ill-fated Expedition," he says: "We treated the matter coolly, but would willingly have transferred the privilege of keeping up the national name for reckless adventure to some one else for the remainder of the trip. It was just about one year since Captain Symmes had left Barbados for Para with some craft as ours, and was never heard from afterward."

"While breakfasting at the hotel," continues Mr. Hepburn's record, "the proprietor came into the room followed by what at first appeared to be a startling apparition—a tall, gaunt, death-like semblance of a man.

"On being introduced he took me to a window and pointed to a large frigate ship lying in the offing, and stated that it was his vessel, that yellow fever had broken out on board, that several of the crew had been buried at sea, that he himself was only convalescing, that there was a fair wind outside, but a head wind in the bay, and he had been unable to get out for some days past."

"I anticipated him by saying, 'You wish to be towed out.'"



Post—Have you read my last poem? Friend—I trust that I have.—Judge.

Briggs—You say business is looking up? Griggs—That's what it is. It can't look any other way; it's flat on its back.—E.K.

Little New York Boy—Say, father, when will I be old enough so that I won't have to get up and give my seat to a lady?—Life.

"On my knee I begged her for a kiss," "And what did she say?" "Told me to get up and be practical."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

"My wife made an engagement for me to dine at the Blings. I forgot and went fishing." "Catch anything?" "Not until I got home."—Plain Dealer.

Curate—I haven't seen your husband at church recently, Mrs. Bloggs. What is he doing? Mrs. Bloggs—He has been doing his duty. He has been doing his duty for six months, sir!—London Opinion.

"Maude was afraid the girls wouldn't notice her engagement ring." "Did they?" "Did they! Six of them recognized it at once."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Chapple—Have a cigarette, old man? Supleigh—No; I don't smoke fool-killers. Chapple—Well, I don't blame you for refusing to take chances.—Chicago Daily News.

"This is a new shaving soap I'm using," said the barber. "How do you like it?" "Applied externally," spluttered the victim.—The Catholic Standard and Times.

Well—Maude has a new dressmaker; what do you think of the fit of her new gown? Belle—I shouldn't call it a fit; I should call it a convulsion.—Philadelphia Record.

"Of course you play bridge only for fun?" "Of course," answered Mrs. Spangleton. "But it isn't any fun unless you are playing for money."—Washington Star.

"I heard him behind the door pleading for just one. They must be engaged." "Now, they're married. It was a dollar he was pleading for."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

"Do you consider your nerve is sufficiently steady to fit you for an airship navigator?" "Well, I've been out in a canoe with a nervous fat girl."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Tramp—Can you assist me along the road, mum? Lady of the House—Personally I can not; but I will unchain my dog, and I know he will be most pleased to do so!—London Tit-Bits.

"Ma!" "Well, dear?" "Does th' fible honestly say that we gotta love our enemies?" "Yes." "Gee?" "What's the matter?" "I—I wish I'd a picked some different enemies."—Cleveland Leader.

Hedress—But, father, that handsome foreign count says he will do something desperate and awful if I do not marry him. Father (dryly)—He will. He will have to go to work.—Baltimore American.

"Well, young man," thundered the head of the house, "stammered the youth, 'I want to marry your d-d daughter.' 'Aw, take her and welcome. I was afraid you were courting the cook.'—E.K.

"Waiter," said a traveler in a railroad restaurant, "did you say I had twenty minutes to wait or that it was twenty minutes to eight?" "Nayther. Ol said he had twenty minutes to sit an' that's all he'd have. Yer train's just gone."—Everybody's Magazine.

The art photographer had visited the farm. "I want to make an exhaustive study of this particular bit of landscape," he said, "and would like to have your hired man retain his present position on the fence there. Can he sit still?" "For days at a time," replied the farmer.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Fish Ring the Bells.

A fisherman down at Ocean City has created a good deal of amusement by the ingenious contrivance by which he makes the fish help him to catch them, says the New York Sun.

He always has at least six or eight lines out, at a pretty good distance from one another, too. Each line is tied firmly in the slot at the end of an old umbrella rib. The rib, in turn, is fastened at the other end to the rail of the pier. On each rib is a little bell such as are put on collars for pet animals.

When a line gets a bite the umbrella rib is bent, or at least twitched, and the little bell tinkles a summons to the fisherman. In this way the fish themselves give notice to their enemy.

She Said So Anyway.

The young man who was endeavoring to win the favor of Bobby's pretty sister met the boy on the street one morning and greeted him with much cordiality.

"Er—do you think your sister was pleased to know I had called the other day?" he was at last forced to ask, Bobby's conversation in that direction.

"Sure!" said Bobby, with gratifying promptness. "I know she was. I heard her say so."

"When she came home mother said, 'Mr. Brown called while you were out, and she said: "He did? Well, I'm glad of that."—Youth's Companion.

## THE HOMESTEADER.

Wind-swept and fire-swept and swept with letter rain— This was the world I came to when I came across the sea— Sun-drenched and panting, a pregnant, waiting plain Calling out to humankind, calling out to me!

Leafy lanes and gentle skies and little fields all green— This was the world I came from when I fared across the sea— The mansion and the village and the farmhouse in between, Never any room for more, never room for me!

I've fought the wind and braved it. I cringe to it no more! I've fought the creeping fire back and cheered to see it die, I've shut the bitter rain outside, and safe within my door, Laughed to think I feared a thing not as strong as I!

I mind the long white road that ran between the hedgerows neat, In that little, strange old world I left behind me long ago. I mind the air so full of bells at evening, far and sweet— All and all for some one else—I had leave to go!

And this is what I came to when I came across the sea, Miles and miles of unweary sky and miles of returned loam, And miles of room for some one else and miles of room for me— The cry of exile changing to the sweeter cry of "Home!"



The morning was fine. A freshness of spring was in the air. The thrushes sang in the branches and the sparrows twittered on the dusty surface of the road. All nature smiled. But Mr. Henry Cadgitt did not. He had experienced a lamentable chapter of accidents since he had left the workhouse where he had spent the night. For example, a man had offered him work. And though an elderly lady whom he had approached with a request for a meal had given him one, she had protested that he looked ill, and had stood over him while he drank a whole tumbler of cold camomile tea. It was in vain that he had assured her that the medical faculty had been unanimous in recommending hot whisky and water for his complaint. She favored her own prescription. Small wonder then that nature's smile awoke no answering emotion in his breast. Indeed, as he hobbled along the path, he got it into his head that she was smiling at him; and her levity did nothing to improve his temper.

Mr. Cadgitt was venerable in years, though not in appearance. Few would have taken him for more than sixty, though he had passed that age by ten long years. No doubt his comparative youthfulness was due to the care with which, during a long life, he had refrained from labor. True, he was always looking for a job; but then he was equally careful not to find one.

Already the sun was high in the heavens, and he began to think about a second meal. A little before him the village of Sunnydale nestled in the valley. As he entered it, a cottage upon his right hand attracted his attention. It was small, but wonderfully neat. The lilac and hawthorn were in bloom about it, and the garden was bright with spring blossoms. Seated in a chair by the door was an old man of venerable appearance. His face, though lined with years, was free from care. His white beard flowed down his breast. Upon his coat a medal with four clasps glittered in the sunlight. He sat in dreamy meditation, puffing idly at a short pipe. He was more than venerable; he was even a noble old man.

Mr. Cadgitt approached, and leaned over the hedge.

"Mate," he said, "you ain't a bit o' paucy as you could spare to a poor bloke wot's down on 'is luck?"

The veteran waved him away majestically.

"Go away," he said, "I don't give to beggars."

Something in the voice touched a firm chord of memory in Mr. Cadgitt's mind.

"Well, I'm blomed!" he said, too astonished to go more fully into the details of that process. "If it ain't Sam Snider! Wot cheer, Sam? Who'd 'ave thought of meeting you 'ere? You've been getting on in the world, blowed if you 'ave! I'd never 'ave known you if you 'adn't spoke."

The veteran looked annoyed.

"I don't know you," he said. "Go 'way, I tell you. Don't come here disturbing an old soldier wot 'as fought for his country."

Mr. Cadgitt grinned.

"Where?" he asked, coarsely.

"In the Crimea," replied the other, proudly. "Alma, Inkerman, Balaclava, Sebastopol." He fingered the clasps on his medal with loving care.

For a moment Mr. Cadgitt was impressed. His jaw dropped, and he looked hard at the occupant of the cottage as though he half thought he had made a mistake. Then he grinned again, and raised his finger impressively.

"At the time of the Crimea war," he said, slowly, "you were selling winks from a barrer in Seven Dials. Wots the little game, Sam? It ain't no use trying to get round me. Don't you sound on a pal, and I won't!"

He pushed aside the little wicket gate and entered the garden. The veteran looked at him with every symptom of annoyance; and then, as the road was getting rid of him, he readjusted his pipe.

"If you'd mind telling you," he said, "I'd promise not to give it away. I was tramping the country same as you are now. I met the owner of this 'ere medal. Poor chap, he died by the roadside, and the parsh' buried 'im. I didn't see what use they had for his medal, so I took it. By-and-bye, I came to this village. There were an old lady here, and she soon was wearing

it. She stopped me in the street, and asked me all about it. She 'ad a husband when she was young that 'ad got killed out there. I told 'er 'ow I 'ad saved the guns at Inkerman and charged at Balaclava; later it come out that 'er husband 'ad died in my arms. After that she couldn't do enough for me. Ten shilling a week she gives me, and this cottage to live in. It's a good day if you're up to it. You take my tip and try it on when you get far enough from 'ere."

"I will," said Mr. Cadgitt, with fervent admiration. "To think of your 'avin' the brains to think of it! It's fair astonishing."

"Never you mind my brains," said the warrior, annoyed. "Don't think it's as easy as shelling peas. It ain't. I've 'ad to look sharp. I tell you, I've 'ad to read up a bit of history. So I lends me books about the Crimea, so I manage all right."

"I once 'ad a copy of a life of General Gordon," said Mr. Cadgitt, with a melancholy shake of his head. "I pinched it off a bookstall when the owner wasn't looking, and panned it for one and sixpence. I wish I 'adn't now—panned it, I mean. It 'ad 'ave come in useful."

"That's your ignorance," said Mr. Snider, contemptuously. "General Gordon weren't in the Crimea. It were Lord Raglan. And Marshal Canrobert was leading the French."

"Go on," said Mr. Cadgitt. "We wasn't fighting the French. We was fighting the Kosulians."

"That's your ignorance again," said Mr. Snider, contemptuously as before. "It ain't no use your trying the game, Henry. You'd only make a hash of it."

"I'll work 'ard," said Mr. Cadgitt, eagerly. "I tell you wot it is, Sam. You take me up to the old lady and tell 'er as I'm a pal of yours that fought through the war with you. Tell 'er as I was in at 'er husband's death like you was. We can share this 'ere cottage. It'll hold two comfortable. And you can pitch the yams until I get the hang of them."

Mr. Snider regarded him with astonished asperity.

"You always had a cheek," he remarked, "but this caps all. I've given you the tip. Go and find an old lady as 'as lost 'er husband in the Crimea for yourself."

"There ain't too many of 'em about," pleaded Mr. Cadgitt. "I'd rather 'ave a share of this one. She could keep the two of us as easy as one."

"No," said Mr. Snider, decisively. "No, it wouldn't do. You see, Henry, you don't look the part. Anyone might take me for an old soldier; whereas you—you look like—like—"

He paused for an appropriate simile. Mr. Cadgitt danced before him upon the path, black with rage.

"Well," he shrieked; "say it! say it! Wot do I look like? Say it if you're a man, and I'll give you a clip on the jaw as'll make you wish you'd been killed in the Crimea yourself."

"I ain't saying anything against you except that it wouldn't do," replied the veteran, calmly judicial. "If you was to say as you'd worn Her Majesty's uniform, they'd think as there 'ad been broad arrows on it. You'll 'ave to find another way of earning your living."

"I'm going to find one now," said Mr. Cadgitt, turning away, vindictively. "And when I 'ave found one, you'll be looking out for a job yourself."

He marched down the path and on the road. As he turned the corner of the village street, he became aware of an elderly lady advancing in his direction. There was something in the dignified sorrow in her face that made him pause. Mr. Cadgitt was a man of instinct. Instinct told him that this lady was going to the cottage he had left. Instinct told him that she was Sam's patroness. And instinct bade him strike whilst the iron was hot.

"Beg your pardon, mum," he whined, "but could you spare a trifle for an old soldier?"

The lady looked at him with a sudden, quick interest.

"A soldier!" she said. "And where have you fought, my man?"

"Most anywhere, mum," replied Mr. Cadgitt, cautiously. "I were in the Crimea."

The lady's interest quickened.

"Ah," she said, softly. "My husband fought in the Crimea."

"Did he now?" said Mr. Cadgitt, with

a very soft affection of surprise. "What might his name have been?"

"He was Captain Alwin," she answered. "Did you know him?"

"My old officer?" exclaimed Mr. Cadgitt, ecstatically. Suddenly his face dropped. "But he were killed there, mum!" he said, in doleful tones of sympathy. "Perhaps it ain't the same."

"No," replied the lady, sadly. "It was the same. He was killed by a Russian bullet."

She was evidently moved. Her eyes filled with tears.

"Ah, well," said Mr. Cadgitt, gently. "He couldn't 'elp it, poor fellow. And perhaps 'e's better off where 'e is than me, that was swindled something cruel when I got back from the war."

"Swindled?" exclaimed the lady, surprised. "How swindled, my good man?"

"It were this way, your ladyship," said Mr. Cadgitt. "When I got 'ome from the war I fell into bad company. There was a low, sneaking fellow of the name of Samuel Snider, who got me into bad ways—drinking and such. At that time 'e 'ad a winkle barrer in a low part of London, but 'e lost 'is trade by poisoning 'is customers with bad shell fish. 'E wanted me to sell 'im my medal as I'd fought so 'ard to gain. 'E said if 'e 'ad a medal like that 'e could earn a living for 'imself easier than selling winks. But I said no. I'd sooner part with life itself. When 'e found as 'e couldn't get it by fair means, 'e tried others; for 'e were a man as'd stick at nothing. 'E put a drop o' summat in my drink one night, and when I woke the medal was gone and 'e was gone, and I was left penniless and destitute."

He drew his sleeve across his eyes to wipe away the tears of honest emotion.

"This," said Mrs. Alwin, with kindling eyes, "is a very strange story, my man."

Mr. Cadgitt felt himself that it did him credit; but he only murmured a platitude about truth and fiction.

"And wot drives me mad is this, mum," he said. "I could stand being penniless. I could stand destitution. But when I think of that man as is somewhere about with my medal imposing on the charity of kind 'earted folk, it fair drives me crazy."

The old lady drew herself up.

"Come with me," she said. "This must be seen to."

"You don't mean to say as you know him?" said Mr. Cadgitt, with every evidence of surprise. "You don't mean to say as it's 'ere as 'e's been imposing on people?"

"It is certainly 'ere," said Mrs. Alwin, firmly.

"Well, now, to think of that!" said Mr. Cadgitt. "I'll go with you, mum, and expose 'im. Mind you, though, it don't do to let 'im 'ave too much of a say. 'E were a very persuasive man when I knew 'im and 'ad read that many books about the Crimea that 'e knew more about it than us that was there. Don't you let 'im say a word, or 'e'll persuade you of anything."

"I shall inquire into the matter with strict impartiality," said Mrs. Alwin, severely.

"That's right, mum," said Mr. Cadgitt, ceasing his disappointment at best he might. "No man could ask more than that. You be strictly impartial and shut 'im up the moment 'e opens 'is mouth."

He turned and followed her to the cottage. The veteran in the chair noted their approach. His heart failed him; and, feeling that perhaps half a loaf was better than no bread, he made a rapid change in his plan of campaign. Summoning a smile of pleasure and astonishment, he held out his hand to Mr. Cadgitt.

"Why!" he exclaimed, "if it ain't my old pal, Henry Cadgitt, wot fought alongside of me in the Crimea."

Mr. Cadgitt was so taken aback that he responded.

"Why!" he exclaimed, incautiously,