

# THE ARGOSY

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WHOLE No. 429.

## A SHOP ON WHEELS.\*

BY WALTER F. BRUNS.

### CHAPTER IV. OFFICIOUS TRAMPS.

"WHAT'S up?" demanded Chub, a trifle bewildered, trying to make out the shadowy form that stood in the center of the tent. All he could distinguish was that it was a very tall one.

"You're not," said the man.

"Who're you?"

"You can call me Foxy, an' my partner'll show up if any one calls for Roper."

"Then there are two of you?"

"Nobody said there wasn't."

"Well, what do you want?" asked Chub, sitting up again, and trying to throw a good deal of fierceness into his tone. "Dick! Dick!"

The man promptly shoved him back with his foot, and said angrily:

"That's my business! The other feller's sleepin' peaceful, an' there's no use wakin' him. I told you once before not to kick up a row. I've got a good piece of hickory in my hands that you'll feel the weight of if you don't lie still an' keep quiet!"

Chub subsided.

"I say, Roper, ain't you about ready?" the man called softly.

"In a minute," replied a voice in the direction of the wagon. "Better pull the pegs on that tent."

"One of these brats is awake."

"You ain't 'fraid of him are you?" cried Roper angrily. "When we took this job I didn't low on doin' it all."

"You ain't doin' it all as I knows of," growled Foxy. "Now, look yere, feller," he continued, addressing Chub, "if either of yer' tries any moseyin' around while we're yere you'll git neck deep in trouble. See?"

Chub couldn't see very much, but he understood a great deal. The moment the man left the tent he aroused Dick.

"What's the trouble?" asked the latter. "Morning already?"

"Yes, and there's a couple of fellows here taking all we've got!"

That was enough to erase all thoughts of sleepiness from Dick's mind, and he sat bolt upright, just as Foxy began to pull the pegs.

A moment later the tent was whisked off and rolled up, leaving the boys sitting on their brush heaps staring at the surroundings. The horses had been hitched to the wagon, and a small man was taking down the tent rope. Foxy tossed the folded tent upon the wagon, and then approached the boys, saying:

"You folks are mighty high toned, sleepin' on blankets an' brush. Me an' my pardner think we're mighty lucky when we find a straw stack to sleep on, let alone blankets."

He caught hold of the corners of the blankets as he spoke, and without any ceremony hauled them from under the boys.

\*Begun in THE ARGOSY of last week.

"This is a little too much!" cried Chub, indignantly.

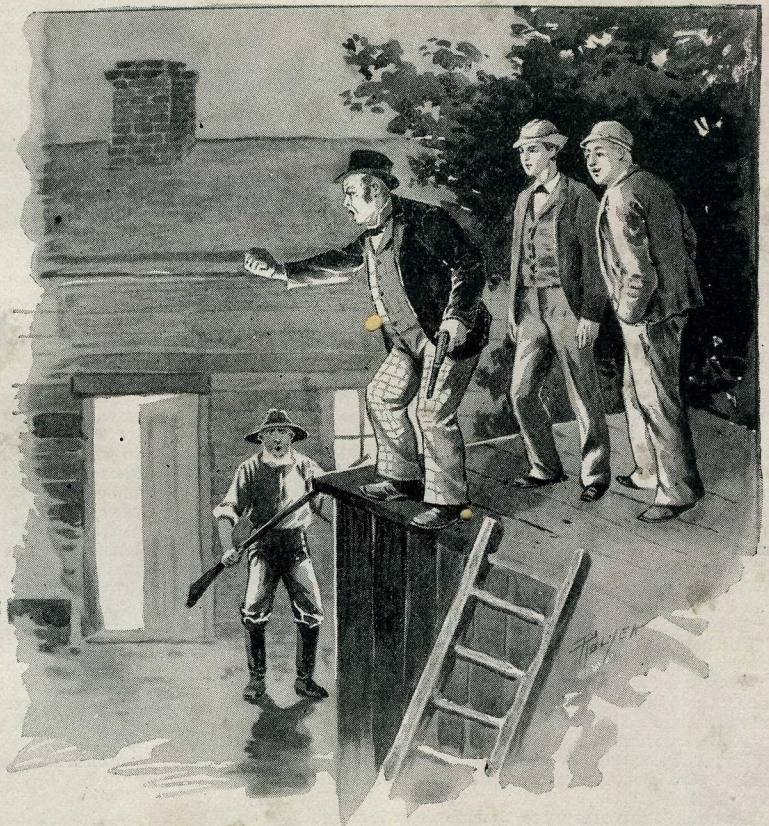
"If it gits too deep to wade, why swim," advised Foxy.

"Youse fellers wanter stay right where y' are till we git to the road," was Roper's threatening injunction, as they clambered upon the wagon.

And quickly turning the team they rode toward the road at a rate that threatened to leave the wheels behind.

"Come on," cried Dick, paying no attention to Roper's orders. "We have got to keep them in sight."

The boys reached the road just in time to see the wagon disappear in the gray dawn of morning, in the direction they had come. They heard a coarse laugh, and the rattling of the wheels, which soon died away, leaving them standing in the road in profound silence.



"THE HOUNDS TREED US," SHOUTED DUFFY, "AN' I'VE GOT A WARRANT HERE."

"We're in a nice fix now," Chub said desperately. "Every cent we had is stowed away in a thread box in that wagon, and all we've got is on our backs."

"They've gone the way we came," said Dick. "I wish some one would suspect that something is wrong and arrest them."

"No danger of their being apprehended unless they drive into Kirkville," Chub replied bitterly, "and I should think they would

be wise enough to avoid towns. The way the people acted toward us yesterday, they wouldn't take the trouble to stop them, even if they knew the true state of affairs."

"That's so," Dick was forced to admit. "We can't do anything but follow them up. I should never go back to Kirkville without that wagon. They're getting farther away every moment, while we stand here doing nothing."

"Then come on," cried Chub. "We've got to walk, and the sooner we begin the farther we will be before night. If they care to they can go twice as far in a day as we can."

And suiting the action to the words he started down the road at a brisk walk, and Dick was not slow in following.

"I'm going to ask the first farmer if—Hi, there! Did you see two fellows drive past here with a peddling wagon?"

And in response to Chub's hail the farmer who was moving through the orchard came over to the fence.

"I seed two fellers pass last night in—oh, you're the same two. Where's your waggin?"

"That's what we want to know," replied Dick. "Two fellers took it away from us this morning."

"Sarved y' right."

"Eh? What's that?" demanded Chub, in astonishment.

"I said it sarved ye right," said the farmer, in a louder tone. "For once retribution's landed in the right spot!"

The boys looked at each other in amazement.

"What can he mean?" asked Chub.

"Oh, you don't know nothin' about it," cried the farmer sarcastically. "Mebby you've forgot about how you fleeced a poor old man!"

This was getting too deep for them, and they began to regard him as an escaped lunatic.

"Mebby ye deny knowin' old Jim Bolton?" said the farmer, seeing that neither was inclined to speak.

"Of course we know him," exclaimed Dick, impetuously. "It is his wagon that we are looking for."

"Is, eh? I'd think you'd be ashamed to own it. If I was you fellers I wouldn't want to look an honest man in the face agin, after runnin' over him an' breakin' his leg, an' cheatin' him outen his wagon an' goods an' leavin' him destertute!"

"Who said that?" and Chub began to get angry.

"Oh, Mason told me all about it!" replied the farmer, with a wise shake of his head.

For a moment the boys were speechless, and then they said a few uncomplimentary things about Mr. Mason that made the farmer open his eyes.

"Andy Mason ran over Uncle Jim and broke his leg under very suspicious circumstances," Dick told him, "and as for the rest it is simply an unwarrantable prevarication. He must have told this story to every one he met along the road, for no one would have anything to do with us while he was ahead."

"That's what he told me," said the farmer in a more friendly tone.

"An' he ended by askin' me if I'd patronize any one that done that way an' I told him no. I reckon I owe you boys somethin' for talkin' the way I did, an' if y' can wait a bit, breakfast'll be ready."

Breakfast would be very acceptable, especially as they had a long day's tramp before them, and the boys found it convenient to wait.

"Now that we know Mason's tactics we will be prepared for them," Chub said, when they once more resumed their tramp. "Uncle Jim said he wouldn't hesitate to play us a mean trick; but I didn't think he would go that far."

"And think how far he will get ahead of us," Dick added bitterly.

"He will have plenty of time to spread the tale," Chub replied.

"We might hang a sign on the wagon informing every one that it was a falsehood—"

"Better find the wagon first," Dick interrupted dryly.

They inquired at the next farmhouse if the peddling wagon had been seen to pass, and received an affirmative reply.

"They was two fellers in it, a big one an' a little one with an eye gone," the family explained. "They was joggin' long mighty easy, an' ain't more'n a mile or two ahead of ye."

"A big one and a little one with an eye gone," repeated Dick. "Why, that answers the description of the two tramps we met yesterday. Come on, Chub, perhaps we can catch them without having to walk all day."

"I wouldn't run over more than three or four miles of stubble in my bare feet to catch them, if there was no one to help us," Chub replied, and from his tone Dick concluded he had lost his pugilistic propensities for the time.

It was pretty hard for them to ask for food, having nothing to pay for it; but Dick bridged the difficulty in a way, by promising to pay on their return.

They came near losing the trail at a fork of the road, but a farmer put them on the right track. He also informed them that he had made a few purchases at a remarkably low figure, which caused the boys to put forth additional efforts.

From one to four miles was as close as they could get, and with each additional farmer they interviewed their alarmed increased, for the tramps were commencing to close out the stock.

Darkness found the boys still walking. They were beginning to feel discouraged and homesick, when Dick discovered a campfire through the woods on their right.

"It may be the parties we are looking for," Chub said joyfully, and then he added: "We are not able to cope with them single handed, so we'll have to resort to their tactics and catch them napping."

The boys crept noiselessly through the woods, only to find that the cause of their hopes was a graders' camp, composed of a score or more tents for mules and men. Three large campfires lit up the surroundings.

Chub was about to start toward it, when Dick drew him back, exclaiming:

"There is our wagon standing near one of the stables! You can see the shape of it every time the wind allows the flames to rise. See?"

"Yes, that's it," returned Chub gloomily, thinking how the sight of it did not cause him as much happiness as he had expected. "But if those fellows will welcome Roper and Foxy with a rig they must know they did not come honestly by, it's a place for us to keep away from."

The boys stood watching the scene in silence. Some one in the camp began to sing in a high treble. At the end of the first verse the wind wafted it their way, and the boys heard:

"For thirty years a siction boss,  
He wurruked upon the track,  
An' truth to say, from the very first day,  
He niver had a wreck!  
For he made it a pint, to keep up the low jint,  
By the force av the tampin' bar—  
So it's a jint ahead an' a cinter back,  
An' Jerry go ile the car."

"Let's crawl up to the beginning of the shadow," said Dick. "We can see more and maybe hear something. If there isn't Foxy and Roper sitting by that fire as big as life."

Foxy and Roper were seated on a log, surrounded by an admiring audience. The boys were near enough to hear one of the men say:

"How did you git hold of the rig, Foxy?"

"Took it," replied the tall man dryly. "We met a peddler yesterday afternoon that said there was a couple greenies follerin' him. He hinted that he'd like to change the deal, an' tipped us a five to play the cards over this way. So we turned back, let the kids pass us an' took the rig this mornin'."

"How far are you goin' to take it?"

"We're goin' nor-east, and I reckon we'll hang to the waggin jess as long as there's stuff in her to keep us in feed. It's soft enough for me. We kin jog along mighty brisk, an' ain't wearin' out no shoe leather, either."

And every one but the two lying in the grass indulged in a hearty laugh.

"I'll be blamed if I can see anything funny enough to laugh at," growled Chub.

"Well, I can see that it is a poor way of doing; but we will have to get the horses and wagon without their knowledge. Those fellows have evidently fallen in with friends, and they would pretend to believe anything they would say. We will lie here and wait until they turn in."

After a while the men straggled off to their tents. The campfires burned low, and after waiting until the occasional stamp of a mule was all they could hear, the boys cautiously approached the stables.

"Would you know our team in the dark?" Chub asked.

"I think we can tell them," Dick replied, as they entered the tent nearest the wagon. "All their teams seem to be mules."

There was a team of horses at the farther end of the row, and Dick stepped in to untie them, when a firm hand laid hold of his collar, and before the boys understood what the trouble was, they were flat on their backs.

"You'll find, young fellers," said the cause of their reclining positions, "that it's purty risky business to try to steal hosses while I'm watchin' the camp!"

#### CHAPTER V. PURSUIT.

IF Dick had thought it would be a poor way of regaining their horses, the boys were sure of it now. Their captor was a strong man, and, although they twisted desperately to get away, he held them easily, and emitted several shrill whistles.

"What's the row, Red?" some one asked, coming from one of the tents.

"Caught a couple fellers tryin' to run off some stock," replied Red. "Ketch hold of one of 'em. Reckon they b'long with that gypsy camp below yere."

"Let's trot em' over to the fire an' see what they look like," suggested the other.

With a firm grip on their collars, the men shoved their captives over to the fire, and stirred the embers into a flame.

"Why, they ain't gypsies!" exclaimed Red.

"Of course we ain't," Dick cried indignantly.

"What d' y' want prowlin' round the stables?"

"Our team."

"Your team? Oh, mebbey Grigsby sold you one today, an' you jess came after it," and he laughed sarcastically.

"We don't know Grigsby."

"No? Well, you'll know him afore mornin'! You'll find out, too, that hoss stealin' is a penitentiary offense!"

"Then Roper and Foxy stand a good show of being cared for for several years free of charge," said Chub boldly.

"Say, I believe these is the two greenies Foxy was tellin' us about," Red's companion said in a low tone.

"Better tell Grigsby to come out an' settle this," Red replied.

His companion not only aroused Grigsby, but the whole camp. The fire was replenished, and soon the boys were the center of a gaping crowd of rough looking men.

A short man, with bushy whiskers, elbowed his way through the crowd, and Dick rightly conjectured it to be the foreman.

"What is the trouble here?" he asked sharply.

"Two fellers tryin' to steal Roper an' Foxy's rig," replied Red.

"Nothing of the kind!" corrected Dick quickly. "The team belongs to Uncle Jim Bolton, and is in our charge. It was taken from us early this morning by Roper and Foxy."

Grigsby looked first at one, then the other, and ended by turning to a man and saying:

"Callahan, tell Roper and Foxy to come over here and explain this." Then, turning to the boys, he continued: "If the rig belongs to you, you shall have it."

And having found some one that would see fair play, the boys told their tale of misfortune. Callahan was gone quite a while, and when he returned it was anything but cheerful news he had to give.

"They've cut their lucky," he said, shuffling his feet. "They're not in the tint, and the waggin's gone!"

"Gone!" gasped the boys.

"They've taken the alarm and skipped," added Mr. Grigsby. "I'm sorry this occurred in my camp. I'm afraid I can't do anything more. You can stay here until morning if you like."

And then he turned abruptly and walked away, washing his hands of the whole affair.

The men began to ply them with questions, but the moment the boys learned they did it only for amusement, they refused to answer. They were too tired with the day's tramp to continue the chase, and were only too glad to accept Grigsby's offer.

They were both gloomy and despondent the next morning, and the breakfast of black coffee and coarse graders' camp fare did not tend to raise their spirits in the least. It was not long after the meal before they were once more in pursuit.

"There is no telling where we will find them this time," Dick said, breaking what had been a long silence. "They may drive faster, now that we caught them at the end of a day's journey."

"We're in a nice fix," Chub added gloomily. "Not a penny in our pockets; no prospect of getting any at this rate; don't know how many miles we are from home, and everything we have to depend on is being carted promiscuously about the State by a couple of tramps."

"There is only one thing we can do with any show of success," and Dick spoke in a decided tone, "and that is to hire some one to help us."

"I'd like to know what you will hire them with?" Chub asked with a grin. "I don't think the people around here are willing to worry themselves over our affairs with only promises for pay."

It was something new to be thrown on their own resources without money, and the boys found it anything but pleasant. Dick relapsed into silence at Chub's reply, and they plodded along, each intently absorbed in trying to devise some plan.

They did not see the spires of a small town showing among the trees, and were as much surprised as the inhabitants when they walked into it half an hour later.

Dick was beginning to get desperate. There were only half a dozen streets, and a mixed crowd on the porch of the general store and post office combined, and, walking up to the latter, he asked:

"Can any of you direct me to the constable, marshal, sheriff, or whatever officer of the law you have here?"

They surveyed him for several minutes in silence, and then a little, bald headed man exclaimed:

"I'm the dep'ty sheriff of this county! What do you want?"

Paying no attention to the fact that every one made it his business to listen, Dick told their story, ending with:

"Whatever expenses there are we will pay as soon as we get possession of the wagon, for all our money is in it."

"Come right up stairs an' swear out a warrant," said the "dep'ty" excitedly. "I ain't rested a feller since I caught one stealin' sheep last fall."

"An' you wouldn't got him if the farmers hadn't caught him for you," said somebody in the crowd, and the deputy sheriff grew very red in the face, and hurried the boys up the steps before they should hear anything more to his detriment.

A beetle browed man, with an immense pen and a crabbed voice, issued the warrant after a confidential talk with the officer of the law, and, armed with the official document, the three hurried over to the deputy sheriff's house.

Here a span of black ponies that were very fleet footed—so the officer informed them—were harnessed to a light buggy, and after a hasty lunch they started.

"My name's Duffy," volunteered the brilliant officer, as they drove out of town, and, to farther impress them with his importance, he showed them two pairs of handcuffs and an ancient horse pistol. "Whenever I go after a feller," he added pompously, "I git him or bleed!"

Giving credence to his words, the boys concluded from his ruddy face that some time had elapsed since his last encounter with a desperate character.

"I seen them fellers when they drove through," said Mr. Duffy, after a time. "I thought it looked suspicious for fellers with faces like they had to own such a rig; but they told a purty straight story an' wore good clothes."

"Wore good clothes!" repeated Dick, wondering where Mr. Duffy had left his judgment while surveying the parties.

"Leastwise the small one did," he explained. "The tall feller's was too wide an' too short, an' looked like they'd been made for some fat chap; but the goods was good."

"Chub," cried Dick, "they are wearing our extra suits."

"Let 'em," growled Chub. "I won't want them now."

"How did they explain their having the wagon?" Dick asked.

"They've been harvestin' out west of here," replied Duffy, "an' are goin' home to Injiana. There was a peddler goin' out of business an' they bought his rig low, 'cause it's a cheap way of travelin', an' they can make a little money besides."

"Very nice tale," mused Dick.

They inquired at the farmhouses as to how far the tramps were ahead, and were kept well posted. They were gaining rapidly, but it was late in the afternoon before they caught sight of them.

They were nearly a mile ahead, standing in front of a farmhouse making a sale; but happening to catch sight of the buggy coming towards them at a rate no farmer would drive, they became suspicious, abruptly left the customer, and the race began.

The ponies had scarcely been out of a trot since noon, and were not a bit inclined to quicken their pace. Roper and Foxy were in no great hurry until they saw beyond a question of a doubt they were pursued, and then a cloud of dust arose.

Mr. Duffy was in his glory, the ponies on a dead run, the boys excited, and the peddling wagon—out of sight for dust.

Andy Mason was right when he said Uncle Jim Bolton's horses could go! They too, the peddling outfit down the road at a rate that taxed the ponies with their light load to their utmost. They were half a mile ahead, and holding their own.

"I wish I could cut across the fields," shouted Duffy, as the pursued turned a curve in the road. "This race would soon be ended."

"If you could take short cuts so could they," Dick responded.

"That's so," Duffy was forced to admit. "The road forks about a mile from here, and it'll be hard to tell which one they take if we don't keep 'em in sight."

Unfortunately the fork was on the other side of a long hill, and although the pursuers came up rapidly while the pursued were mounting it, the latter made up the distance, and were out of sight when Duffy drew up at the fork.

Neither road could be seen for a great distance, and Mr. Duffy solved the difficulty by tossing up a quarter. They went two miles before they found they were on the wrong road, and it was dusk before they were well started on the right one.

"It's gittin' too dark to do much more, boys," said Mr. Duffy, after a long silence, during which time the ponies were trotting leisurely.

"We'll put up for the night at this farmhouse on the right. I don't know who lives there; but that won't make any difference."

They stopped before it, and were about to dismount when the light of a lantern flickered across the space between barn and house, and three forms were seen moving toward the latter.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE QUEER PASSENGER.

MR. DUFFY was half out of the buggy, and the boys were preparing to follow; but the sight of the three forms left them motionless. A moment later a door was thrown open, and the ray of light that pierced the darkness revealed a farmer, Roper and Foxy.

"There they are," whispered Dick excitedly.

"I know it," replied Duffy, without moving, and after the three had entered the house and closed the door, he continued: "We'll go right in an' get your rig."

"But I thought you wanted to arrest them," said Dick, not at all pleased with the idea.

"So I do," Duffy returned nervously. "We're bound to make some racket hitchin' up, and when they come sailin' out I'll nab 'em!"

"You ought to know your business best," Dick said, and Mr. Duffy cautiously unfastened the gate and led the way toward the barn. "I would suggest that we leave the wagon alone, you arrest your men, and we stop here for the night."

"Now, look here," cried Duffy decidedly. "If you're runnin' this excursion I'm goin' back to the buggy an' let you go. All you want is your wagon, an' I'm a-gittin' it, ain't I?"

"Go it," thought Dick. "I'll bet a wafer against a worn out watch you're afraid."

"Lead on," said Chub, for Mr. Duffy had stopped to argue the question, and when he did lead it was in an entirely different direction.

Half a dozen big voiced hounds flew toward them from the house, and without stopping to see what his companions intended to do, Mr. Duffy sprinted grandly for a ladder leading to the roof of a smoke house, with Chub and Dick close at his heels.

The hounds immediately surrounded them, and their deep toned baying soon brought the farmer out.

"It's some more o' them tramps after chickens!" the boys heard him say. "I'll give 'em a couple charges o' rock salt and bacon rinds!"

"Don't shoot!" called Duffy, in quivering accents.

"I say, there's three o' 'em," he went on excitedly. "Come out yere, fellers! The dogs have treed 'em on the smoke house!"

"Don't shoot!" called Duffy again. "I'm an officer of the law!"

"If you're an officer o' the law what you doin' up there?" demanded the farmer, as Roper and Foxy came out and stood near him.

"The hounds treed us. I've got a warrant here—what do you want?—for—"

"Great Scott! what do you want to tell them that for?" interrupted Dick, who had been jabbing Duffy as a hint to stop.

"Got a warrant for us, eh?" called Foxy. "Well, you won't get a chance to serve it. Come on, Roper, we'll have to pull stakes."

"Don't go near that barn, or we'll fire!" Dick cried, as they moved in that direction.

"Yes, we'll fire!" echoed Duffy, beginning to feel brave.

And he went so far as to raise the ancient weapon, when Dick pulled his arm down, saying in a low voice:

"Don't, for Heaven's sake, shoot that thing off up here! It will do us more damage than it will them."

Roper and Foxy talked earnestly together for a few minutes, and then they started for the road, the former calling out:

"Good by, fellers! I reckon we've used your wagon as long as we want to, so you can have it now. Sorry it ain't daylight so we could see what that freak with a warrant looks like!"

"Oh—I—you—!" spluttered Duffy, enraged in a moment, and forgetful of Dick's injunction he raised his horse pistol and fired.

There was a deafening report, the tinkling of glass as the bullet shattered a pane in the upper story, and the farmer became so excited that he forgot what he was doing, and turning his gun on his retreating guests, who were climbing the fence, he pulled both barrels.

Roper and Foxy stopped a package of bacon rinds and a sample of rock salt, and the howls of pain that arose from the road made Duffy thirst for glory.

"If it wasn't for them hounds," he shouted, dancing about on the roof, "I'd come over an' take you single handed."

"Don't let a little thing like that stop you," called Foxy, between his imprecations. "If you come over here we will make you think an elephant stepped on y'!"

Then they limped off down the road, and the farmer drove the hounds away, and the boys, with the illustrious Duffy, descended.

The latter made no effort to start in pursuit, but contented himself with telling what he would have done had it not been for the hounds, until Dick stopped him by saying:

"This gentleman says he has no objection to our stopping here tonight, so you had better get your ponies stabled. We will sleep on our wagon, so if they come back to steal it they will steal us at the same time."

"I'm going to tell you something," Chub said, as, with a lantern, he hunted up the thread box containing their money, which fortunately the tramps had not discovered, while Dick spread their blankets on the roof of their vehicle. "In the future we will make it a rule not to retire without that rifle and gun within easy reach."

"Yes, we've had trouble enough for half a dozen boys," Dick replied, after Chub had extinguished the lantern and they had made themselves comfortable.

Roper and Foxy did not take the trouble to molest them, and the farmer aroused them at an early hour next morning.

Breakfast was over when Chub turned to Duffy and asked:

"How much do we owe you?"

"I think five dollars will let you out," he returned promptly, and after he received the money he continued: "If you fellers hadn't chipped in last night, I think I'd got both of them."

"Yes, you would," replied Chub dryly.

And leaving Duffy studying over the reply, he turned to the farmer and asked:

"Is there no road near here leading to Hannibal but the one we came over?"

"Why, yes. Go back over this road to the fork, take the right hand road fur two miles and you'll come to another fork. The left hand road's the one."

And leaving Duffy to settle with the farmer for the broken window, the boys started on their journey once more in high spirits.

"Mason will be four or five days ahead of us," Chub said; "but we will be on a different road, so that won't make any difference. By the looks of the inside of the wagon, those tramps got away with a third of our stock."

"I'm glad it is no worse," Dick replied. "If we can sell out between here and Hannibal we can stock up and start anew, though the profits are going to suffer because of those tramps' work."

"Better say Mason's," corrected Chub, "for Roper and Foxy would never have troubled us if he had not paid them to take the outfit. I declare, it seems like home to be on this cushioned seat once more and feel the wheels rumble under us."

"Everything will be all right if we don't get into trouble," Dick said. "We've had nothing but trouble ever since we left home."

"We won't get into any more," Chub returned with a smile. "I wonder who that dandy looking chap is, there by the fence!"

"He is certainly no farmer," said Dick, noticing that the fellow's complexion and hands were as white as a bank clerk's.

The young man nodded as they came up with him, and asked:

"How far do you go this way?"

"To Hannibal," Dick replied.

"Then you will go through Milton?" he went on eagerly.

"I don't know," answered Dick. "Where is it?"

"On this road, about four miles ahead. I want to catch a train that arrives there at 9:05. If you have no objection, I'll ride with you."

"None whatever," was Dick's cheery reply, and the young man clambered nimbly up between them.

"My name is McMahan," he volunteered. "I clerk in a dry goods house in Hannibal, and ran down here last night to see a friend of mine, who has a farm over here," and he jerked his thumb over his shoulder. "Unfortunately for me," he added, "the only available horse he had was taken sick this morning, so I would have had to walk to the depot if you had not come along."

After a few moments of silence he asked hesitatingly:

"You are in the—"

"Peddling business," finished Chub bluntly.

"Very profitable business, I presume?" remarked young McMahan affably.

"Nothing extra," Chub replied; and before the boys realized it the young man knew as much about their misfortunes as they did themselves.

"An easy life," said McMahan. "I used to think—"

"Hear those hounds off there," interrupted Chub. "What are they hunting?"

"The farmers are having a fox hunt, I believe," returned McMahan nervously, looking at his watch. "I hate to ask it, but would you mind driving a little faster? I am afraid I'll lose my train, and I promised my employers I would be back before noon. My position at present is not very substantial, and if I lose this train I won't get in before evening."

Dick complied by urging the horses to a more rapid gait, and young McMahan kept up a brilliant conversation, absorbing the boys' attention so they would not notice how fast they were moving.

"Is it any harder to drive two horses than one?" asked their passenger, with a hasty look over his shoulder.

"I don't think so," Dick replied.

"I have always thought I would like to try to drive two," went on the young man. "I am perfectly familiar with driving single."

And Dick, taking the hint, and wanting to be accommodating, passed him the lines.

"There is Milton," the young man exclaimed a few minutes later, touching up the horses until they fairly flew. "And there is my train! We won't get there a moment too soon."

They drove up to the depot, and, bidding them a hasty good by, the young Mr. McMahan ran across the platform, and, managing to catch the last coach, he boarded it just as three men rode up on horses with a pack of hounds.

The leader was a fierce looking fellow with a sunburnt counte-

nance, and, as he hurried along the platform, he called sharply to the boys:

"Have you seen a smooth faced young fellow with a black suit and stiff hat around here?"

"Yes; he left on that train," Dick answered.

"He's given us the slip," the man cried, turning to his companions, who remained on their horses. "I'd like to know how he got here so quick."

"Why, we brought him—what's the matter?"

"You brought him!" cried the man, with a half yell. "Do you know who he was?"

"Why, yes. We picked him up four miles back by the road, and his name is McMahan—"

"McMahan be hanged!" cried the other angrily. "His name is Dandy Russell, and he's one of the finest bank burglars outside of the State of New York! You've got yourselves and us into a pretty mess!"

(To be continued.)

## RICHARD DARE'S VENTURE;

OR,

### STRIKING OUT FOR HIMSELF.\*

BY EDWARD STRATEMEYER.

#### CHAPTER LXIII.—(CONTINUED.)

##### A STRANGE SITUATION.

THE shipping clerk was dressed in the height of style, including low cut shoes and a heavy gold headed cane.

"Hello, Dare!" he exclaimed pleasantly. "What brings you up here?"

For an instant Richard was taken aback, not only at meeting Norris, but at being greeted so familiarly after what had occurred during the day.

"I have just finished my errand, and thought I'd take a walk to see the sights," he returned. "How is it you are not at the theater?"

"As I said, I didn't care to go alone, so took your advice and sold the extra ticket, and also my own. I'll take a walk along with you if you don't mind."

Richard was not overpleased at the proposition; yet he could not very well object except by seeming rude, and from this he shrank; so he gave a mild assent.

"You see I like to get on good terms with all the boys," explained Norris, as they walked leisurely along. "I'm on the best of terms with every one in the establishment but Massanet, and I'd like to be with him, only he's so awfully slow."

"Frank Massanet is a very nice fellow," said Richard stoutly.

"Oh, yes—too nice for me, though. But let that pass. Everybody has his peculiarities. Have a smoke?"

And Norris pulled two strong looking cigars from his vest pocket.

"I'm much obliged," replied the boy. "I don't smoke."

"Try one. They are fine," went on the shipping clerk, stopping to get a light. "No time like the present for making a beginning. I'm quite sure it won't make you sick."

"I don't think I care to try," was all Richard could say; and he heartily wished Earle Norris would go his own way.

"Oh, well, it's all right if you don't care to. I find it just the thing to settle my nerves after a big day's work."

They walked on in silence for nearly a block, and the boy was wondering how best to leave Norris without offending him when the latter spoke up.

"Here are the rooms of the Laurel Club," he said, pointing up to the narrow but brilliantly lighted stairways of a handsome building just around the corner of a side street.

"The Laurel Club?" repeated Richard.

"Yes; it is a club of about twenty young fellows. I am a member. We have a reading room, and another for all kinds of games."

Norris did not take the trouble to add that "all kinds of games" had narrowed down to simply card playing, and that for money, too.

"Just come up for a moment," he went on. "I wish to get a book I left there a few nights ago."

"I'll wait for you here," replied Richard.

"No, no; I want to show you the rooms. We have some fine pictures and all that up there."

Somewhat against his will Richard consented. Norris led the way up three flights of stairs and then down a side hall.

Stopping at a certain door he gave two distinct knocks, followed by a single one.

There was a hurried movement within, and then the door, which had been securely locked, was cautiously opened.

"Hello, Springer!" exclaimed Norris to the tall young man who had admitted them. "You're locked up as if this was a sub treasury. This is a friend of mine. Mr. Dare, Mr. Springer, our worthy secretary."

"Glad to know you. Mr. Dare!" said the other, and he gave Richard's hand a tight grip, but at the same time cast a sidelong, inquiring glance at Norris.

"He's a green one," murmured Norris, as he brushed past. "Don't you think we have it cozy up here?" he continued, turning to Richard.

Richard was not prepared to answer in the affirmative. His introduction into the place, even though his curiosity has been small, was a disappointment. The room had been nicely furnished once, but the carpet and the furniture showed signs of much wear, and the pictures of which Norris had spoken proved to be several of a remarkably "loud" sort, but of no real artistic value or excellence.

"Many of the boys here tonight, Springer?" asked Norris.

"Foley, Nichols and two or three others. Will you take a hand in?"

"Maybe; I'll see in a little while."

"My night at the door," growled Springer. "I hate it."

"Never mind; as long as we can't pay a porter some one has got to do it among us. I'll get my book," added the shipping clerk, glancing at Richard.

He entered the next room, closing the door carefully behind him. Richard thought he heard the clinking of glasses within, but he was not sure.

In a few moments Norris reappeared.

"Come in!" he said. "The boys would like to know you."

Not dreaming of what was to come, Richard accepted the invitation.

He found himself in a small room, well lighted. The air was heavy with tobacco smoke, and the fumes of liquor were not wanting. But what astonished him most was a group of five fellows seated at the center table, playing cards, with several piles of money in front of them.

"They are gambling!" he thought, with something like horror.

"I wish I was out of it."

"Gentlemen, my friend, Mr. Dare," said Earle Norris. "Come, sit down and make yourself at home," he added, slapping Richard on the shoulder.

#### CHAPTER XIX.

##### THE LAUREL CLUB.

RICHARD felt decidedly uncomfortable over the situation in which he now found himself. It was so unexpected—it had been so forced upon him that he did not know what to do.

"Come, take a hand in," repeated Earle Norris, offering him a chair at the table and at the same time removing his hat.

"Thank you, but I do not play cards," replied Richard coldly.

"Oh, you'll soon learn!" returned the shipping clerk. "Come, sit down, and I'll give you a few points."

"I don't care to learn," was Richard's firm reply. "I never gambled in my life, and I don't intend to begin now."

"Say, Norris, what do you want to bring such a fellow up here for?" asked one of the players, with a scowl. "We were just having a jolly good game, and don't care to have it spoilt."

"Oh, that's all right. I'm aware of that; but Mr. Dare is a new comer to New York, and I'm only showing him around a bit."

"We don't want any one here who is going to give us away," put in another player. "Harrison, your cut."

"I'm quite sure Mr. Dare won't be so mean," said Norris. "Come, make yourself at home."

But during the last few minutes Richard had been doing some heavy thinking, and the conclusion of it all was that he had better get out as soon as possible. He had nothing in common with such a crowd, and to remain might place him in an awkward if not dangerous position.

"I thought you only wanted to get a book?" he said to Norris.

"So I did; but now we are up here we might as well stay awhile and have some fun. It's early yet."

"It's not early for me," responded Richard. "I promised to be back by nine o'clock, and it must be near that now. Just give me my hat."

For Norris had taken his guest's hat and placed it on a hook beside his own.

For reply, the shipping clerk pulled Richard down into a seat.

"Don't be a fool," he whispered. "We won't hurt you. All the fellows here are gentlemen. No use of offending them."

Richard sprang to his feet.

"I don't want to stay, and that's all there is to it," he exclaimed. "If your friends are offended by my going away, why I can't help

\* Begun in No. 423 of THE ARGOSY.

it. I didn't come up here of my own choosing in the first place, and I claim the right to leave whenever I please."

"Oh, you do, do you?" sneered Norris. "Well, we'll see about that."

And he placed himself between Richard and the door.

Richard grew pale.

"Perhaps I'll have to fight my way out," he thought. "I suppose this is nothing but a gambling den. Well, I'll fight if it comes to that," he finished; and his eyes flashed with determination.

"Come, Norris, none of that," said a tall young man, who sat at

he slowly arose to his feet. "But we'll get even yet, and more than even, too!"

Richard breathed a sigh of relief when he emerged once more upon the street.

"I'm glad I found Norris out, any way," he said to himself as he hurried along. "I think I can safely put him down as a bad egg."

Retracing his way down Broadway the boy at length crossed over to Grand Street, and directed his steps towards the east side.

When he reached the Massanets' it was quarter past nine. Mattie let him in, stating that her mother and her brother had not yet returned.

Frank had told her of the street urchin and the letters, and she was anxious to hear about the result of Richard's visit to Doc Linyard's, trusting it had been good.

Richard related the particulars. He did not mention Norris; and finally the talk drifted around to Pep, the street urchin.

"I feel sorry for him," said Mattie Massanet. "We must find out where he lives, and see if we can't do something for him and his sick father."

"I've been thinking of it," returned Richard. "He is very shy, and wouldn't even tell me his last name. But perhaps when he sees that I mean him no harm he'll grow more communicative."

"We might go down and see his father on a Sunday," went on Mattie. "I suppose the neighborhood in which he lives isn't a very nice one to visit at night."

"I'll ask him if we can come."

There was something about Mattie Massanet that Richard liked very much. She was gentle as well as lively, and sympathetic as well as full of fun. She reminded him strongly of his sister Nancy in one way, and his sister Grace in another. Indeed it was Mattie who made the Massanet flat a real home for him.

Presently there were footsteps on the stairs, and in a moment Mrs. Massanet and her son entered. They had been shopping over in the French district, and carried several bundles.

It was now drawing towards ten o'clock, and only a few words were

spoken before the good nights were said.

In the upper hall Richard asked Frank to come to his room, and giving his friend a chair and seating himself upon the edge of the bed he told of his adventure with Norris.

"I have suspected Norris of something like that for several months," said Frank. "I was tolerable sure that he was spending more money than he was making now. He must be an expert player or else an unfair one. I suppose he thought as long as he got you there the rest would follow easy enough. I'm glad you didn't give in. If you had he or his companions would have won every cent you had, and perhaps have placed you in debt to them."

"What would you do? Tell on him?"

"Williams & Mann ought to know what kind of a fellow their shipping clerk is," replied Frank. "Yet one word about it may cost Norris his position. Suppose you wait a day or two. Watch how he acts and think it over."

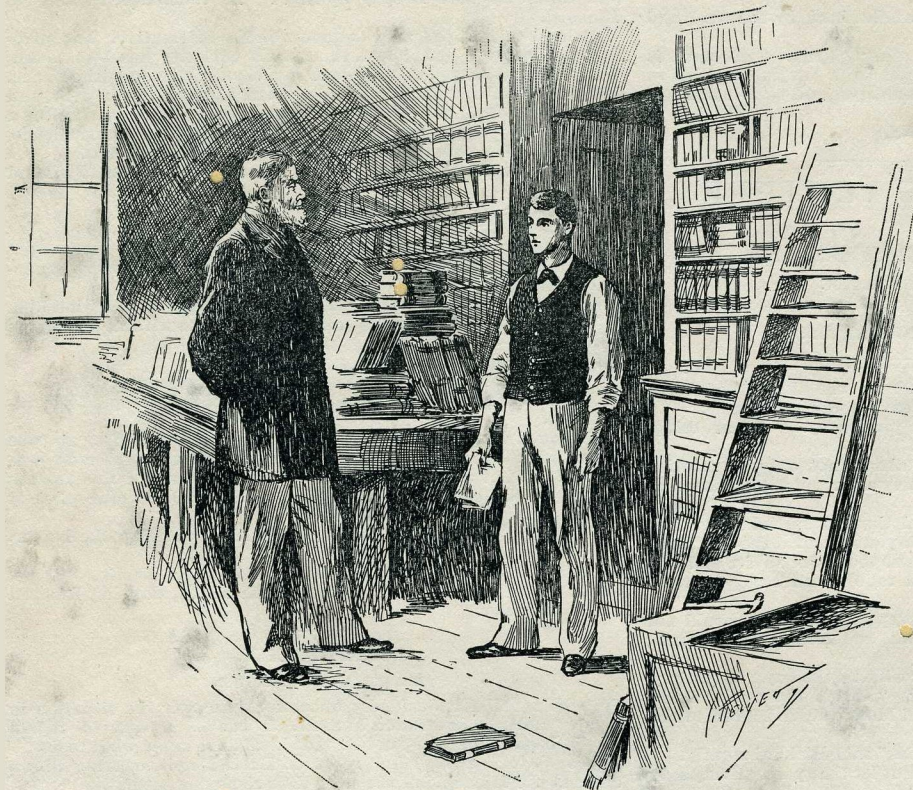
Richard thought this was good advice, and told Frank he guessed it was just what he would do; and on this conclusion the two separated.

Far better would it have been for both, however, if they had taken their information to the firm at once. Later happenings will explain why.

## CHAPTER XX.

### TROUBLE BREWING.

IN the morning Richard went to work as if nothing out of the ordinary had happened. It was not until after dinner that business called him down to the packing room, and then there were several others besides Norris present.



"I CAME UP TO SEE HOW YOU WERE MAKING OUT," SAID MR. WILLIAMS.

the head of the table. "No one shall be forced to stay here against his will. You should have found out if your friend cared for this sort of thing before you brought him."

It was seldom that Don Wimler said so much, either at the club rooms or outside, and every one knew he meant every word.

Earle Norris's face fell.

"Of course, if Dare won't stay, he needn't," he said slowly. "I only thought I was doing him a favor by bringing him."

"I hope, Mr. Dare, that you will not speak of what you have seen here tonight," went on Don Wimler. "It might place us in an unpleasant predicament."

Richard hesitated.

"If I do, it will only be so far as it concerns Mr. Norris and myself," he replied. "I have no desire to hurt you or the others."

And going to the door Richard passed swiftly through it to the outer room.

Norris was after him on the instant.

"What do you mean by saying you may tell on me?" he demanded, with an evil look in his eyes.

"I meant just what I said," retorted Richard. "I may be green, but I'm not so green as you take me to be. Let me go."

Norris had taken a tight hold of his shoulder.

"You sha'n't go till you promise to keep the thing quiet," he replied grimly.

For reply, Richard gathered himself together and gave the shipping clerk a shove that sent that individual sprawling to the floor.

Before Norris could regain his feet, Richard had unlocked the outer door, and was speeding down the stairs.

"I made a failure of it this time," muttered the shipping clerk, as

Yet the shipping clerk evinced a strong desire to talk to Richard privately, and finally accosted him just as he was going up the stairs.

"Say, I hope you'll let what happened last night pass," he said in an undertone. "I only wanted to show you a little of life here, and didn't dream you'd resent it as you did."

"Well, next time you will understand that I mean what I say," returned Richard sharply.

"I know I was to blame," went on Norris humbly. "But to tell the truth I'd had a glass of champagne at supper time, and my head wasn't as clear as it should have been. If you say anything of it here, though, I may be discharged."

"Well, I won't say anything unless something more happens," Richard replied. "I don't want to get any one into trouble. But I'll tell you, Mr. Norris," he went on, "I think you're on the wrong track. Take my advice, even if I am younger than you, and steer clear of the Laurel Club."

"I'll think of it," replied the shipping clerk, turning away.

"I guess I've shut the young fool up," he muttered to himself. "He might have placed me in a decided fix if he had told all he knew."

Of course Richard reported the interview to Frank. Indeed the two were now deep in each other's confidence, and no such thought as keeping the matter to himself would have crossed Richard's mind.

"Perhaps it will teach him a lesson," said Frank. "But I doubt it. Better keep an eye on him."

Later in the day Mr. Mann came up to the stock room, looking very black. He asked a number of questions about some books that had been sent to Troy four days before. "The party that received them says there were five or six sets of Irving's works badly damaged. Do you know anything about it?"

"No, sir," replied Frank promptly. "Those we packed up were all in first class order."

"Well, there was some damaged stock here."

"Yes, sir, quite a good deal that was soaked by that water pipe bursting three weeks ago. But Mr. Williams ordered us to sort it out, and it was all sent to the second hand dealer's last week."

"Are you sure?"

"Positive, sir. Dare, here, helped me ship it off."

Mr. Mann turned to Richard.

"That's so, Mr. Mann," put in the latter. "And I remember well that before the last box went down we hunted high and low to see that nothing that was damaged in the least should be left behind."

"Well, it's mighty queer how those people in Troy should get twenty odd volumes of damaged stock. We'll have to make a reduction in their bill, I suppose. Be careful of the goods shipped in the future."

And with this retort Mr. Mann took the elevator and went below.

"I can't see how those people could have got a single damaged volume," said Richard when the head of the firm had departed. "I remember that box well, and every volume in it was perfect."

On returning to the Massanets' that evening Frank heard bad news. An aunt had died over in Port Richmond, on Staten Island. His mother had gone to the place at once, and wished her son to come to the funeral, on the following afternoon.

"Of course I'll have to go," said Frank to Richard. "I'll stop at the store on my way down and let the firm know, and also help you enough to get along while I am gone."

This Frank did. He readily obtained permission from Mr. Williams to be absent, and at ten o'clock Richard found himself in sole charge of the stock room.

There were a number of important orders to fill, and the boy worked like a beaver to get them done in time.

"I'm so glad for the chance to do something for Frank; he has been so kind," said Richard to himself. "Besides, some day I may wish him to do me a like favor."

Richard was careful that there should be no mistakes, and it is perhaps needless to state that he had both eyes wide open for damaged books.

While hard at work, with his coat off and his sleeves rolled up, Mr. Williams appeared. He was quite an old man, and in many respects much pleasanter than his partner.

"I came up to see how you were making out," he said. "You will have your hands full, trying to do two men's work."

"Oh, I guess I can manage it," replied Richard pleasantly. "I wouldn't want to do it very long, though," he added.

"I'll give you a hand," said Mr. Williams. "This used to be my work years ago, and I still like it."

"Here is an order from Pittsburgh I can't read very well," said Richard. "I'd be much obliged if you will help me on that."

"All right. Give it to me."

In a few minutes employer and employee were hard at work together. Mr. Williams had not intended to stay very long, but he became interested, both in the work and in Richard, and it was only when, two hours later, a message came for him, that he went below.

"He is a nice man," thought Richard, when Mr. Williams had gone. "I am sure he would not have treated Mr. Mann with more consideration than he did me. No wonder Mr. Joyce called for him first the day he brought me here."

A little later Earle Norris came up.

"Hello! alone?" he exclaimed.

"Yes."

"How's that? Thought Massanet was as steady as clockwork."

Richard told him why Frank was absent.

"Oh, that's all right," said Norris.

"What brought you up?" asked Richard.

"I came up to see if Martin's order from Pittsburgh was filled yet. It's got to go first thing in the morning."

"There it is; been done half an hour ago," replied Richard.

He did not think it necessary to add that Mr. Williams had filled it.

"All right; send it down at once," replied Norris. "Rather tough, making you do all the work," he added. "I'd strike for higher pay."

"I am very well satisfied with the way I am treated," returned Richard.

Norris disappeared, and a moment later Richard sent the crate containing the goods down on the elevator to be packed up below. After that he worked steadily until six o'clock, at which time he had the satisfaction of knowing that every order sent up had been promptly and correctly filled.

Richard found Frank and his mother already at home when he reached there in the evening. The funeral of Mrs. Massanet's sister had been a quiet, but sad affair, and Richard saw that no one was in humor for much talking, and all retired early.

Frank was not a little astonished in the morning to find that Richard had done all the work so well, and also that Mr. Williams had helped.

"I declare, between you, you'll soon be cutting me out of a job," he laughed.

"Oh, I hope not," returned Richard. "If I'd thought that, I surely would not have worked so hard."

"Oh, it's all right," replied Frank.

"If I ever go into business for myself," he thought, "Richard Dare is just the clerk I want to help me. He is bright, and not afraid of work, and those are the fellows who get along."

Frank Massanet's one idea was to some day own a bookstore of his own. He understood the trade thoroughly, and with the proper location and a fair amount of cash he was tolerably certain that he could make such a place pay. His savings amounted to several hundred dollars now; he was only waiting for the time to come when they would be at least a thousand. Then he intended to strike out for himself.

The two worked on steadily through most of the day. Late in the afternoon a boy came up from below.

"Mr. Mann would like to see you in his private office," he said to Richard.

The latter was surprised at the announcement. Since he had gone to work he had not been called for once before.

"What does he want of me?"

"I don't know," replied the boy. "He is awful mad about something, and has sent for several of the others."

"I can't understand it," said Richard to Frank, as he put on his coat. "I don't know of anything that has gone wrong."

And considerably worried, Richard descended to the ground floor, and knocked on the door of the private office.

(To be continued.)

#### BRINGING DOWN FISH WITH A SHOTGUN.

WHAT is that old conundrum about an oyster's inability to climb a tree? Well, you all know it doubtless, but perhaps are not as familiar with the fact that there *are* fish who can and do climb trees. In an article about dry land fish in the San Francisco *Chronicle* we find the following interesting facts:

The climbing perch was first noticed by a naturalist over a century ago, one having been caught high up a palm tree, where it had gone, it is said, to obtain the moisture that might be found in the crevices of the leaves. This story was doubted by many, but the perch was found in the tree by N. Daldorf, so the circumstance may be placed among the strange facts of natural history.

The most remarkable dry land fish is the one known as the periphthalmus. The little creature is about four or five inches long, with a big head, prominent eyes and side or pectoral fins that are more like legs than anything else. This goby, for this is the family to which it belongs, is a marine fish, and actually goes ashore to obtain some of its food. If we were on the watch at low tide, say at Mauritius, where it is common, we should see as the rocks become bare, various broad heads popping up here and there, then a big, tadpole-like creature, jumping from one to another or edging its way up the side. Their object is to catch small crustaceans.

Some years ago a friend of the writer, an ardent naturalist, was very much interested in these little fishes, and combined sport and collecting in a novel manner. He caught his periphthalmi with a shotgun, picking them off as they hopped along the muddy, flat as though they were snipe.



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#### A STERLING ATTRACTION.

*In next week's number of THE ARGOSY we shall begin the publication of*

### DIGGING FOR GOLD; A STORY OF CALIFORNIA.

BY HORATIO ALGER, JR.

Author of "Walter Sherwood's Probation," "The Young Acrobat," "Luck and Pluck," "Tattered Tom," etc.

Mr. Alger's name is known from the Atlantic to the Pacific, while across the sea and clear in the upper part of Europe, the Russians are to have one of his books reproduced in their own language. Thus a new work from his pen is a matter that interests many thousands of people, and fortunate indeed is that periodical that is chosen as the medium by which the fresh story is first given to the public. And for many years now THE ARGOSY has been that medium.

That the new serial will be entertaining goes without saying; the title explains the subject of it, and for the rest it is enough to say that the famous writer's pen has not lost its cunning in the delineation of character nor its fertility in the creation of incidents.

\* \* \* \*

#### "HE'S TRULY VALIANT THAT CAN WISELY SUFFER."

THE age is not entirely given over to money making. Bravery and true heroism are still something more than descriptive terms and attributes of the characters in "stage-land." Every little while we will find in the daily press chroniclings of deeds that cause the heart to swell within us at the realization of the nobility to which men can at times attain.

One of the first instances of the kind for the present year was that of the Long Island life saver, Hampton Raynard, who, after heroic work at a wreck, went out to patrol his "boat," and was found frozen to death on the beach at the post of duty. And the same issue of the paper that printed the foregoing facts contained the account of the enterprise of a young girl, still in her teens, who after fever had carried off her father, the captain, and all but three of the crew, took charge of the ship herself and brought it safely into port.

\* \* \* \*

#### OF THE NATURE OF A BOOMERANG.

PERFECTION sometimes has its drawbacks. Here is the report from France that in certain coal and iron mines, where very powerful electric lights are used, the workmen are affected very much in the same way as they would be by sunstroke. The consequences are quite serious, especially as regards the eye.

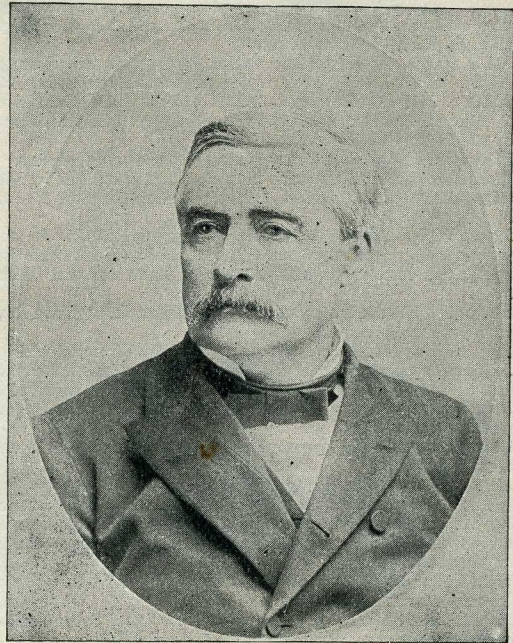
Thus man, in his efforts to provide his fellows with a substitute for the sun, has succeeded so well as to reproduce the evils along with the good.

#### EDMUND G. ROSS,

A WESTERN EDITOR AND PRINTER, WHO HAS BEEN A  
GOVERNOR AND A SENATOR.

THE accompanying portrait is that of a typical son of the West, whose career has been full of such adventures and vicissitudes as have fallen to the lot of very few of those who have figured in American public life. Mr. Ross has been in turn soldier, editor, and printer; has sat for seven years in the United States Senate; has been governor of a Territory; has faced both prosperity and adversity, and experienced the sunshine of popularity and the fiercest storms of political obloquy with the same unflinching courage.

His first entrance into public affairs took place several years before the war. Brought up as a printer, he had become, when a young man of about twenty four, editor of a Kansas paper called the *Tribune and State Record*. He was a free soiler, and entered heartily into the long and bitter fight against slavery and its advocates, that won for the Territory the name of "bleeding Kansas."



EDMUND G. ROSS.

From a photograph by Bell, Washington.

Soon after the outbreak of the war, Mr. Ross enlisted in the Federal army, and served for three years, being mustered out in 1865 with the rank of major. Then, in 1866, he was appointed by the Governor of Kansas to fill a vacancy caused by the suicide of one of the representatives of the State. The following year he was elected by the Kansas Legislature for a full six years' term.

The movement to impeach President Johnson, which took place during Mr. Ross's tenure of a seat in the Senate, proved to be a turning point in his political life. His opinions on that burning question of the day were entirely opposed to those of his constituents and of his party associates. But neither entreaties nor invectives could turn him aside one hair's breadth from the course he had chosen, or stifle the free expression of his honest convictions, although he knew full well that by thus opposing his party he was putting an end to all hopes of further advancement in public life. In reply to a demand from citizens of Kansas that he should vote for the President's impeachment, Senator Ross sent the following memorable dispatch: "I do not recognize your right to demand that I shall vote either for or against conviction. I have taken an oath to do impartial justice according to the Constitution and laws, and trust that I shall have the courage and honesty to vote according to the dictates of my judgment and for the highest good of my country."

Senator Ross voted against the impeachment, and the storm of obloquy descended. All the bitterness of the partisan feeling of the time was poured out upon him. Even the soldiers of his own regiment burned him in effigy in front of the State House at Topeka. His influence was gone, and his career seemed to be ended. When his term in the Senate expired, he retired to private life, and published a country paper at Coffeyville, Kansas. His estrangement from his former friends became complete, and he finally joined the Democrats as editor of the *Leavenworth Standard*. He had many vicissitudes, and in 1885 he was working as a printer on the *Democrat* at Albuquerque, New Mexico, when President Cleveland appointed him to be Governor of New Mexico. He held the office, discharging its duties with his oldtime firmness, until 1889, when he again returned to a printer's case on the *Santa Fe New Mexican*. In September of that year he undertook the editorial management of the *Headlight*, a weekly paper published at Deming, New Mexico.



## RIDING A WOODEN HORSE.

BY W. BERT FOSTER.

"NO, there ain't much fun in a log camp," said Jed Perkins, in answer to a question, and stretching his long legs out toward the fire crackling merrily on the hearth, he continued: "There ain't much fun, but there's lots of work—dead lots of it."

"You've tried it, eh?" inquired one of the listeners.

"I spent three seasons on the upper Kennebec," replied Jed, "an' there ain't money enough in the United States Treasury to hire me to spend another there."

"Ye have to move 'round too lively in a log camp to please Jed," remarked Uncle Sammy, with a sly chuckle, for his long legged man of all work was not what might be called a hustler.

many as usually go inter the woods. But we was all the squire'd been able to muster.

"There warn't nothin', as the story books say, to break up the monotony of things all winter. We worked, an' eat, an' slept—told stories nights, an' played checkers, an' read what few books there were in the camp. I read 'Robinson Crusoe' that winter fourteen times from cover to cover—it belonged to the cook, who was a young Searsport chap—and he lent me 'Sanford and Merton,' too. But that wasn't nigh as interestin'.

"Long before spring came I made up my mind that 'twould be many a year 'fore anybody got me into another camp. But when the river begun to break up and the freshets came down from the hills, it got a leetle more lively. We prepared for our drive and got the whole season's logs into the river in good shape.

"'Twould be a great sight for you folks that have never seen a



"I SET TO WORK A-SHOVIN' OFF THE GROUNDED LOGS AN' FORE LONG HAD ALL BUT ONE AFLOAT."

"Wal, mebbe that's so," said Jed, with a good natured grin; "but any way, I don't want no more loggin', thank ye. My last season's work for Squire Graham cured me."

"Let's hear about it, Jed," spoke up Jack, stretching his own limbs out toward the warmth, while the rest of us prepared to listen.

"Wal," said Jed, (that "Wal" was usually the prefix of his remarks) "'twas some years ago, an' I was consider'bly younger than I am now. Men was scarce that fall, an' a good many gangs went into the woods short handed. Squire Graham owned a likely tract of timber up on the Kennebec, east of the old Canada road and Dead River. I'd been there two winters before and had declared I wouldn't go agin; but the squire came to me himself and jest about begged me to go. So I went.

"The gang was bossed by Moses Durkee, a blue nose from St. Croix, who'd lived in the woods all his life about, and was the squire's right hand man. We was fed good, had a warm camp, an' take it altogether fared as well as men kin in the wilderness. There was ten of us, without countin' Moses an' the cook—not more than half as

drive. The river black with logs, with a great cake of ice now and then thrown in amongst 'em—all rolling an' plungin' jest like so many wild animals tryin' to git loose. But 'tain't so fine when ye have to watch the drive day and night, an' if they git stuck, or a log gits wedged across the stream in a narrer place, (as they sometimes do) 'tain't so much fun to walk right out on 'em, slippery with ice, an' cut 'em adrift. I'd rather face a loaded musket than cut away some jams I've seen.

"Mose useter cut 'em usually himself. He an' two other men kept up with the first logs an' the rest of us follered along on both sides of the river. I was usually sent to the rear to look after all stray logs an' cut 'em adrift if they got caught. It isn't the nicest, nor yet the safest part of the business; for quite often I had to cross the stream on one of the slippery, rollin' logs to reach one caught on the opposite shore.

"One day I got considerably behind the rest of the boys—all of a mile. The river was full of ice that day, and there was every appearance of there bein' a jam at the Narrers—a place in the river

not far below. At that p'int the river runs very swift between steep banks an' it is considered as dangerous a place as there is on the river.

"'Bout ten o'clock in the forenoon I reached a little p'int o' land stretching out inter the river, an' about a dozen logs were aground here. From the lower side of the p'int (which warn't a dozen feet long) I c'd see 'way down the river to where the other boys were at work. Beyond where I stood the stream commenced to flow faster, an' the logs an' ice cakes were whirlin' together down towards the Narrers.

"On each side of the Narrers Moses had stationed most of the boys with their pike poles and the logs an' ice was goin' threw like all possessed. I c'd see the eends o' the logs shoot into the air as they struck an ice cake, an' the way the boys was workin' to keep 'em from piling into a jam was a caution, now I tell ye.

"I set to work a-shovin' off the grounded logs, an' fore long had all but one afloat. That one was a big stick, forty foot long, and all of three feet through the butt. The top had got broke off somehow, an' the butt had been grounded so firmly that 'twas about all I could do ter start it.

"After workin' over the pesky thing ten or fifteen minutes I got it fixed so 't I thought I could start it by pushin' it from the bank. Jest as I stepped my foot on shore suthin' moved in a tree over my head, and I heard a low growl. I was startled, for I only had my pike pole with me an' a camp hatchet slung at my belt. Looking up into the tree, whose branches stretched out over my head towards the river, I see a long, dark body clingin' close to a limb.

"I didn't have ter ask any questions ter know what the critter was. 'Twas a painter—that's what they call the critter hereabout—an' by the way he lashed his tail to and fro like the pendulum to a clock, an' tore the bark of the tree with his claws, I knew he was mad.

"Painters are rare critters in this region nowadays, and I'd never seen one afore. But I heard about 'em an' knew how fierce they be, and 'twas purty ev'dent that this feller was riled at suthin' an' was gittin' ready to spring.

"Wal, you kin bet I didn't wait for him. I made a sideways leap onto the log an' run to the further eend. The painter dropped at the same moment an' landed jest where I'd been standin'! 'Twas a narrer shave for me, I tell ye!

"My weight was enough to raise the butt of the log, and it began to move, a-swingin' 'round inter the stream. Just as it swung free of the shore the painter leaped again, a-landin' square on the log! My goodness, but wasn't I scart!

"The log was rollin' so that at first all the critter could do was to cling to the bark. I stood at one end, steadyin' myself with my pike, an' he lay at the other, while all the time the log was movin' faster an' faster down the stream.

"By'm'by the log got steadier an' the critter's tail begun ter lash from side ter side an' he got ready for another spring. I dropped my pike and pulled the hatchet from my belt, droppin' on one knee as I did so, an' poisin' the hatchet over my head as an Injun would a tomahawk.

"The painter watched me a minute with his great yaller eyes, an' then, shrinkin' clost ter the log, he sprang into the air. At the same instant I let drive with the hatchet with all my might!

"The force with which I threw it carried me forward face downward upon the log, and the painter sprang clean over me. He tore the bark behind me with his great claws a minute, and then rolled off into the water. The hatchet had cut a terrible gash in his neck, but in spite o' that he tried to crawl back on the log.

"But I had him there in good shape. I beat him off with the pike, until finally he grabbed the pole with both paws, an' I had ter le'go to save myself from fallin'. The loss o' blood now begun ter tell on him, an' he only made another sort o' feeble attempt, and then the current swept him down towards the Narrers.

"About this time I found that that was jest where the log was takin' me. While I'd been foolin' with the painter, the current had been carryin' me along until now I was goin' suthin' like greased lightnin' towards the Narrers. I'd lost my pike, an' as the log felt the motion o' the water more and more, I had ter git right down on it an' cling with both hands an' feet.

"Great cakes of ice went sailing past me, an' every time the old log struck an' extra big one I would almost go overboard. The boys had seen my danger an' were runnin' along the banks, shoutin' an' tellin' me what to do. But I didn't pay much attention to 'em. I jest lay there an' held on an' let the log go. I knew well 'nough nothin' c'd stop me 'fore the Narrers was passed.

"Mose was cool headed all through it, an' if he hadn't been I guess I sh'dn't have got out alive. He an' another feller kept the Narrers clear an' give me a free passage.

"When the log struck the rapids it went through like a shot. I went clean under twice, an' ice water baths in March ain't very comf'able, now I tell ye.

"Wal, the log run half a mile beyond the Narrers 'fore the boys got me off, an' I was jest about froze stiff. I'd cling like a burr to the log, an' was cased in ice from head ter heel. 'Twas a toss up for a day 'r two whether I should ever see the folks down this way agin; but Joe Peabody an' the cook worked right over me till I got onto my pines once more.

"I got back all right at last, though; but no more loggin' for me, thank ye. I've had 'nough. Ridin' wooden hosses ain't in my line!"

## A HEART OF GOLD.\*

BY ANNIE ASHMORE.

### CHAPTER LXI.

OUT OF THE WILDERNESS.

HERBERT VOLNEY was so overjoyed at the meeting that nobody else could edge a word in, so his two companions, handsome young fellows, seized the dead jaguar by the tail and dragged it out of the way, then vigorously set to work pulling the wrecked front wall straight, so that the ladies, whose slight forms they had already detected in the taldo, might get out comfortably.

Georgie disengaged himself from the debris, looking as wild and bewildered as a moon-eyed squirrel escaping from a trap. Sport had no strength to rise from the ground where the shock of the tiger had thrown him, so only Ned was left to do the honors.

He grasped the hunters' hands with feverish energy, thanking them over and over again for coming.

"Another minute, and"—he shuddered—"and ladies with us, too! I say, I'm Ned Volney; tell me your names," he rattled on in boyish enthusiasm, it was so good to see a civilized face once more.

"We're clerks in your uncle's firm—brothers—Norman and Claud Gilroy," answered one. "Your sister is with you, isn't she? Introduce us, will you?"

"With all my heart," cried Ned. "Nellie—Lilian—Miss Rosenthal, I mean." He checked himself with a joyful laugh. "We're back among polite society again, and must drop free and easy ways."

The girls came forth, very pale they were, and excited, yet not altogether with the joy of their deliverance, for tears glittered in their eyes. The young men gazed at the lovely, wan, girlish faces, and their flowing hair and strange garb, as if they had been moonstruck.

"We need not say how welcome you are," murmured Nellie, offering her hand with simple dignity. "We were in terrible straits, and now we are safe; yet we are in great sorrow." She turned her brimming eyes upon her brother. "Mrs. St. John is about to breathe her last," she faltered, and bursting into tears, withdrew into the taldo.

Meanwhile "Uncle Herbert" and the doctor had been giving each other hasty explanations, and the former, a man of very warm feelings, as may have been gathered, accompanied his friend into the taldo with a saddened face, grieved to the heart that one of the precious lives which he had been striving so hard to save, should be passing away when he had found them.

To the surprise of those who had not seen her since nightfall, the dying lady's eyes looked upon them all, clear and lucid, and she smiled faintly. Sport, hearing what Nellie had said, came in, too, and sat where he could see her face, marveling at her ineffable peace. Yet something in the radiant countenance, so strangely triumphant in its mortal weakness, struck dread to his heart. It was as if already the spirit was half loosed.

"And so you have come, Mr. Volney, and in time for my children," she said in broken murmurs. "I am well satisfied. Their peril was all that kept me here. Now I go to my own."

Mr. Volney reverently took her hand, thanking her earnestly for all that she had been to his poor little niece, cast into such rough experiences without a mother. Nellie and Lilian, kneeling close, with the tears streaming down their faces, whispered broken expressions of love and gratitude.

"Oh, that you could stay with us a little longer!" sobbed Nellie. "We have borne so much together; and now, when all is over, no more terror or hardship, friends and happiness waiting for us—now we lose you."

She feebly stroked their clinging hands.

"That is all very beautiful and right for you," she said; "but for me, now that you are safe, what should chain me here? For I miss *him* so terribly! Think, children; we were together fifty years! Oh, my dears, do not grudge me my happiness. I am going home."

Friends and strangers stood around her with bowed heads, the joy of their reunion forgotten in mournful pity. She asked for "Theodore." He pressed near, his eyes wet with manly grief. Only an old woman, but it was fitting that a brave man should mourn her death, after all she had borne with such noble fortitude!

\*Begin in No. 408 of THE ARGOSY.

She then beckoned Mr. Volney closer, and said, with a loving look at Sport:

"This Theodore, who has acted a brave man's part by us from the moment when we were cast on his protection, who has saved our lives over and over again at the risk of his own; this heart of gold I have chosen to be my heir, and I leave him all that I possess. Hush, my dear. I have no ties; owe no successor anything. This is my will. Mr. Volney and Dr. Granford, will you see that he gets his rights?"

They solemnly promised, and Sport, completely broken down by her loving faith in him, bowed his head with a passionate uprising of the wild heart to the beneficent Power which could create so good a woman.

But she was speaking again. She was asking to be laid at rest on that islet gem which had been their pleasant home for a time. She loved the spot. She would slumber sweetly there, she said; and since her body could not be laid beside her Bernard, why carry it further?

And so, with a whispered word to each of those pleasant friends who had journeyed with her through the last checkered weeks of her life, the failing voice failed altogether, the gentle eyes ceased to see, and with a smile she passed away.

\* \* \* \* \*

We will not sadden the reader by dwelling further upon this brave lady's death, except to say that they left her in her island grave, at rest beneath the flower wreathed trees, and built a cairn of bright river stones above it, as a memorial to mark a spot fraught with sacred memories to all who had known here there.

The message which Nellie had written on the raft had at last fallen into Uncle Herbert's hands, and as he was a man of influence in Para, he was accommodated without loss of time with a government steam launch to track the Jivaros to their malocca. Now that they had done so, it need not be detailed. Possibly the Indians knew more about the marauders than the whites did, and where to look for them.

They had left the steam launch in the lake, half a day's journey below, and had ascended the stream in several light boats. When it came on dark, they had just gone into camp under their rubber tents, well protected by their scouts, when they heard Bravo's barking, and the roaring of the jaguar, and, supposing that some party of Indian rubber, or cabbage palm collectors, were coming to grief, Mr. Volney and his two clerks had rushed towards the sound to take a hand in the fray.

Next afternoon saw the rescued party comfortably settled in the excellently appointed cabin of the steam launch. The girls were made happy in a dainty stateroom, with elegantly polished panels and rich furnishings, a decided contrast to the bamboo or leaf toldo they had been dwelling in lately; and let my girl readers imagine the satisfaction with which the travel worn maidens availed themselves of the toilet luxuries and stores of fresh linen provided by thoughtful Uncle Herbert.

Knowing something of the vicissitudes of travelers on the Amazon, Mr. Volney also had brought with him an excellently appointed medicine chest; and the doctor had the solid satisfaction of prescribing and dispensing the medicines of science instead of the unfamiliar herbs of nature's pharmacy to Sport, who soon threw off his fever when the conditions of his life were altered, besides recovering his strength which had been wasted by the loss of blood. By the time they arrived at Para he was almost as strong as ever, and ah, how happy the poor fellow was!

His relationship with Ned and Nellie had been publicly acknowledged, and his position rendered more worthy of them, and more comfortable for himself by his heirship to his generous friend, Mrs. St. John. Besides that, the narrative of his brave leadership during the adventures of the party had turned all hearts toward him. Uncle Herbert was perfectly delighted with him, and called him his other nephew.

Long ago Sport had told his story to Ned and the doctor, but it would be a thankless task to enter into his confession now. Enough to say that he had indeed gone very far wrong; that he had fallen so low as to be his Uncle Gride's accomplice in swindling the public, and that he was actually fleeing from justice for attempted burglary the night Ned and Nellie came upon him in the old tower; that he had been a prodigal son for years, not even knowing where his mother was when our story opened.

Nellie was never told his story in detail. She knew that he had sinned and repented. She wished to know no more. The experiences through which they had passed together proved him to be a brave and unselfish man, and that was enough for Nellie.

In due time the launch, the Algere, steamed up the Estuary of Para, and our voyagers beheld the beautiful city, with its spires and cupolas, white mansions, magnificent public buildings, and rows of wealth filled warehouses fronting the river. They had passed through so much that was wild and heart subduing in the realm of primeval nature, that their hearts swelled with joy at this return to

civilization, and they almost felt as if they were coming home, even to this foreign city.

Of their reception by half the town which had been on the *qui vive* of expectation ever since the departure of the rescue party; of the public rejoicing afterwards, and the fetes with which Uncle Herbert's friends would have overwhelmed the rescued ones; of the photographs of the whole party which enterprising firms published (who procured, let those up to the tricks of the trade explain), with imaginary reproductions of the scenes they had gone through, with Bravo persistently in the foreground; of the harvest the daily papers reaped through their highly spiced narratives of their adventures, woven out of the few reluctant words squeezed out of the doctor and Ned (for brave Sport was as adamant in the hands of the most skillful interviewer); or of the fabulous sums which were offered for Bravo by showmen, dime museums, and enthusiastic ladies and gentlemen—of all these matters we will make but this brief mention, for though they might be interesting in the beginning of a story, they would certainly prove very tame in the end of such a tale as this.

Instead of detailing their Para experiences, we will hurry on to graver matters which await us. The restoration of the brother and sister's patrimony has yet to be compassed, and for that purpose Uncle Herbert, excessively annoyed at the publicity already given to his wards' rescue, made all preparations to proceed north with them, before Mr. Gride should take alarm, and vanish, carrying their property with him.

The loss of the Southern Queen had of course plunged thousands of friends, north as well as south, into mourning, and all connected with the wreck had been copiously detailed in the Brazilian press, and copied into the United States news. The item of Nellie's message to her Uncle Herbert had also been published, and now the facts of the rescue were being disseminated through both continents.

It would be strange if Paul Gride had not kept himself posted; and now all that Uncle Herbert could do was to keep his own counsel as to the intended departure of the party until they had actually gone, hoping thus to confound Gride before he guessed their approach.

The doctor decided to accompany his friends north, and return with Mr. Volney to enjoy the tour up the Amazon with him when he would be more in the mood for it; Georgie of course went with his guardian, and expressed himself as "most burstin' with the fun he was goin' to git out of the boys when he told them the circus he'd been havin'."

Lilian, too, clung to her friends, and preferred returning with them to her father in New York, to going with her aunt, Senora Manchena, to Buenos Ayres, from which place the lady had hurried to embrace her niece, restored from the dead, and to weep over the lost sister, Mrs. Rosenthal.

Sport, you may be sure, made one of the party; he was going to take his mother under his own protection; henceforth, he hoped, they would live together, in the home which he could give her, and that he could make up to her now for all the grief he had cost her in the past.

And Bravo—that celebrated canine hero—was escorted to the steamer by half a hundred admiring friends. Nellie had bought for him in one of the curious Paranense silver bazars a beautiful ancient silver collar of Peruvian manufacture, and had had the following legend engraved upon it:

*"Bravo Volney, captured from the Jivaros."*

Many an inquisitive stranger scraped acquaintance with Ned to inquire the story of the Indian dog; wherever he went he was the sensation of the hour.

## CHAPTER LXII.

### AT ASHLANDS AGAIN.

THE time for details is over; briefly, then, they all arrived safely at New York, where they were met by Mr. Rosenthal, who received his child with heartfelt gratitude from these generous strangers who had cared for her so tenderly; for Lilian had written him a minute account of her experiences immediately upon arriving at Para.

Not till now had she allowed Sport to give up her mother's jewels, which he had so faithfully guarded for her; and when he had passed them all into the hands of Mr. Rosenthal, after a fond interchange of whispers between father and daughter, Lilian chose a beautiful sapphire ring, and, with a light blush, and a lovely expression in her dark eyes, lifted the slight, strong brown hand which had many a time snatched her from death, and slipped the ring on his finger, saying proudly:

"Wear this in memory of my gratitude to you; it's the stone of truth, and should be worn by the loyal hearted."

And Sport pressed the girlish hand in token of his pleasure; and life took on a fairer hue as he thought of marching upward and onward, spurred not only by his love towards his half sister Nellie,

but by those sweet eyes which had all unwittingly told him that the girlish heart had stirred into womanhood for him.

Lilian parted with them all most lovingly, promising early meetings with Nellie, and uninterrupted friendship; and so she passed away with her father.

Dr. Granford and Georgie were the next to part from the diminished party, but with hopes of meeting very soon; and an hour or so after leaving the steamer, Uncle Herbert, Sport, Ned, and Nellie and Bravo, boarded the train for Mecklenburg, Long Island.

Arriving there early in the afternoon, they drove to the nearest hotel, where Ned and Nellie were comfortably disposed of in a private parlor; then Mr. Volney sent for the proprietor, as he wished to ask a few questions before making a move.

Ned and Nellie had kept in the background, and had not been recognized by the hotel keeper; Mr. Volney, too, had reserved his name, not wishing to create a stir prematurely.

He inquired whether Mrs. Volney's brother, Mr. Gride, still resided with her at Ashlands, and drew forth a strange story.

Mrs. Volney was no longer at Ashlands, though Mr. Gride was. Mrs. Volney had been terribly broken down by the drowning of her two step children, along with a young man whom she claimed as her own son by a former marriage—a young man whom nobody had ever seen or heard of. Her ravings about this son were pitiful, the servants said; she acted as if she were going mad.

At this point Sport rose and went to the window, where he leaned with his face hidden on his arms. She had felt all this love for him—for him who had never caused her anything but sorrow since he was fifteen! Sport felt the iron of remorse pierce his heart.

"Where had Mrs. Volney gone?" Uncle Herbert asked.

The man hesitated, and shook his head. It wasn't his business, he prefaced, and of course he only said what he heard; but there had been queer goings on up at Ashlands, and that was a fact. Mr. Gride had got Mrs. Volney to sign a power of attorney in his favor, and then took her away, he said for her health; but in a couple of days he came back without her, and nobody had ever heard where she was. The minute he came back he began to settle up the property as if she, too, was dead, and that looked mighty queer.

Here Sport wheeled round for a moment, his face blanched, his eyes flashing with anger. Uncle Herbert glanced pityingly at him, and he turned to the window again, burying his face as before.

What had the dying lady, Mrs. St. John, said to him?

"Your mother is in trouble. She is friendless, beset—weak as water against her enemies. She needs her son to fight for her."

Ay, she had seen it all with her dying eyes. He had come; but was he too late?

Mr. Volney next inquired where Mr. Gride was now.

"Hiding like a criminal in the empty house at Ashland," replied the proprietor. "He dismissed every servant when he came back without Mrs. Volney, telling them that the property was to be sold as soon as a purchaser could be found. How he lives, no one knows, except that he is drinking himself mad. He used to be in town every day, urging forward his business, but for the past week he has never left the house; the tradespeople who carry his necessities to him are bidden to set them down on the steps, and he takes them in after they are gone."

Mr. Volney inquired whether it was known if he took the newspapers; the answer was that he did not. He used to see them in the reading room in town, but now he never visited it.

So far, good; Gride could not have learned of the rescue of Ned and Nellie.

Thanking the man for his information, Mr. Volney dismissed him, and Sport joined him with a face of bitter trouble.

"What can this mean?" exclaimed he. "Can he have harmed my mother? Come, sir, let us start; I can't bear this suspense."

They hired a light wagon, and drove themselves. Whatever was to be the issue of this matter, they wished to avoid scandal if possible.

What a revulsion of character had taken place in Theodore Lecane since that last day, when he had passed through these scenes, fleeing from justice, expecting to see a pursuer whenever he looked back, glad when the ruined tower appeared above yonder grove! Flying with reckless defiance of all that was good in his heart, shameless, full of craft and hardihood! Ay, and his good angel was even then on her way to enter into his life and bless him!

The carriage gates were bolted, but the side wicket was open; they tied the horses to the gate post, and went up to the house. It looked what it was—desolate, neglected—the abode of a disreputable wretch who cared nothing for appearances.

They went up to the front door; it was locked, and they sought a way of admittance without giving the wretch a chance to see who they were; turning the corner, they came upon the glass door of the summer parlor—the room Sport remembered, in which he had seen his mother in an interview which wrung his heart with pain now, as he recalled her passionate entreatments, and how she had implored him not to leave her.

The door was unlocked, and they entered the room. All appeared to be just as Mrs. Volney had left it; her white crepe shawl lay across the silken couch, there was the dent of her aching head on the velvet cushion, with her lace handkerchief crumpled under it. Theodore stood looking at these things with bursting heart and smarting eyes; but only for a moment. A thought of Paul Gride stung him like a stab; he strode from the room, and, as if led by knowledge, went straight to the library door. It was locked, the key inside. He knocked loudly; a hoarse voice within asked who was there.

Sport signed to Mr. Volney, who replied:

"Gentlemen on important business."

A hesitating step crossed the floor, a hesitating hand turned the key, and grudgingly opened the door an inch or two. Sport pushed it open wide, and they confronted Paul Gride.

## CHAPTER LXIII.

### CONCLUSION.

WHEN Ned and Nellie saw Paul Gride first, he was as disreputable a looking wretch as dissipation, lack of self respect, and poverty could make a man; but he was far worse now, even though his raiment was that of a gentleman. He had drunk himself well nigh mad; here he was, broken down under the sheer terror of conscience, reckless, desperate, destroying himself to drown the misery of recollection.

He had, as he believed, acquired great wealth; it was all in his own hands, and he could be far away with his booty before inquiries were made; but the knowledge of his guilt outweighed it all, and crushed him into the trap of his own devising.

It was evident that he had made this room his quarters; bedclothes were heaped on the lounge, bottles and unwashed dishes strewed the carpet and chairs; the front of the bookcase was filled with a row of corked spirit bottles; a stale loaf and a wedge of cheese represented his daily food.

The young man faced him with dark and threatening mien.

"Paul Gride, where is my mother?" he demanded.

It is not likely that the besotted drunkard had recognized the well dressed young man for his depraved nephew till he heard his voice; Mr. Volney was, of course, an utter stranger to him.

But he knew the voice, and then he recognized the stern, dark eyes which were fixed full upon his; and he staggered back, shading his own inflamed orbs with his shaking hand, as if the sight had blinded him, muttering confusedly, and scarce crediting his senses.

"Speak, sir; where is my brother's widow?" chimed in Mr. Volney.

At the new voice, Gride pulled himself together, feeling a stranger a protection from that wronged son.

"Your brother's widow?" repeated he, trying to command his quavering tones; "and who are you, sir?"

"I am Alfred Volney's brother Herbert," was the answer.

Gride recoiled violently; his limbs failed him; he fell into a seat by the littered table.

"Their Uncle Herbert come after them! to think of that!" muttered he, passing his hand across his twitching mouth, and trying hard for self possession. Sport stood waiting with fierce impatience for the broken down rascal to collect his faculties. "You see before you a man broken by trouble, Mr. Volney," continued Gride, trying the pathetic key. "You will pardon my shortcomings in manners, I know. Left desolate by all he loved—and yet," turning a startled glance upon Sport, as the situation grew clearer to his fogged brain, "how is this, young man? You alive? Surely you went down with the other two?"

"You poor hypocrite!" said Sport with utter scorn, towering over the trembling scoundrel. "You deserve no mercy. Nobody was drowned. You deserted Ned and Nellie, only to make me see what a beast you were, an' to make me turn over to their side, body an' bones. We've been together ever since. When I come back they come back with me, them an' their Uncle Herbert; an' you've got to pony up, every red cent you stole from 'em—we're here to make ye do it."

Alive! close at hand! Gride's jaw dropped, a nervous spasm contracted his face.

"Quick now, answer me, for I won't be put off, not another minute. Where's my mother?" cried Sport.

The wretch took no heed; he was shaking all over, his eyes fixed on vacancy.

"Speak, man, speak!" echoed Mr. Volney, catching him by the arm.

"I—I d—don't kn—know," stammered Gride. "C—can't you give me time to think?"

"Speak, or—I'll make ye!" thundered Sport, almost beside himself with apprehension.

"Sh—she's in an in—insane asylum," muttered Gride thickly; 'she—she went m—mad."

Mad! Sport stood back, pale as ashes. He felt sick at heart. He

noticed Gride no longer; did not heed that he had fallen on the floor in a fit of delirium tremens, foaming and writhing, while Herbert Volney tore open his collar to give him air.

The shock of Sport's news had been too much for the drunkard's shattered system. At last he lay in a stupor before them, exhausted. Clearly no more information was to be got from him that day.

"Rouse yourself, my dear fellow," said Mr. Volney, sympathetically, laying his hand on Sport's shoulder as he stood gazing with unseeing eyes through the window. "We may find your mother without his help. There's sure to be some kind of correspondence between him and the proprietor of the institution where he placed her; and as a son has the best right on earth to find out where a villain has hidden his mother, go ahead, I say, and search his papers; and good luck to you," and seating himself patiently beside the prostrated schemer, he awaited the result of Sport's vigorous examination of the contents of the secretary.

And, sure enough, Sport soon discovered the business card of a certain Dr. Spofford, proprietor and house physician of a private in sane asylum in New York State.

"There you are, my boy," cried Uncle Herbert warmly; "now you tear back to the town, and engage a room at another hotel for this scallawag, and send out a team and an attendant for him, for I mean to have him well out of here before I fetch my children home. Wish you could have been here to receive them; but instead, we'll have a grand house warming when you come back with your mother—if she can come." The last words were spoken in sadder tones, and with a glance of kindest commiseration.

And so, with a hearty hand clasp, and warm wishes for his success, he sent brave Sport away.

\* \* \* \* \*

"I am sorry to disappoint you, sir, but I can allow no one to disturb Mrs. Florence Volney without an order from the person who intrusted her to my care," quoth Dr. Spofford with profuse regret. He was a small man, irreproachably attired, had a respectable bald head, but the physiognomy of a rat.

"I am asking to see my mother, Dr. Spofford," replied Sport, curbing his impatience as best he might.

"That, I regret to say, makes no difference. Without an order—"

"But Gride is too sick himself to give an order—he's half crazy from drink," insisted Sport, beginning to look formidable.

Was that a gleam of satisfaction in the mad doctor's mean little eye?

"Ah, very sad, very sad indeed," murmured he, rubbing his hands unctuously; "in danger, you think?"

"And since the heirs to Ashlands have turned up all right," went on Sport brusquely, and the doctor's ears distinctly pricked at the news, "Gride has to step down an' out. A beggar—d'ye understand? Now I s'pose Gride made a big contract with you to keep my mother caged up—"

"Come, come, young man, no invidious insinuations," cried Spofford, swelling up. "This is no cage; patients are fortunate who can secure the benefit of my care and treatment. But—a beggar, you say—" subsiding anxiously. "Bless my soul! Who's to pay my bills? To be sure the estate owes the widow her maintenance—"

"The estate won't pay a red cent towards keepin' her here; the estate means to hev her home, or know the reason why," burst out Sport fiercely.

"Oh, sir—keep cool, I beg," remonstrated the little schemer, looking very red and wretched. "If things have turned out as you say, and the heirs have returned—" he stopped, choking over the words of concession; fain would he have argued the matter out, convinced himself that this was not a bluff game to do him out of a richly paying patient, whom he had considered a permanency; but the dire news that the heirs, (and well he knew who they were) had come home to claim their own, and to turn out the usurper, (who also was well known to him, and had been for many a year) this sadly unnerved him; and besides, he was hurried on by this tall, exceedingly disrespectful, nay, fierce young man, so that he hardly knew what he was doing.

"In fact, ye begin to see that you've made a bad bargain," chimed in Sport, "so you may as well acknowledge the corn, an' hand her over. Lead on, man; don't stand there puzzlin' it out; I'm in a hurry."

Dr. Spofford reluctantly led the way to the female side of the establishment, and now a terribly awkward feature of the case occurred to him, and he anxiously strove to explain it away while yet he had time.

"You will find a vast improvement in the patient," began he nervously, as they threaded the corridors; "she cannot remember it now, I am glad to say, but she was very violent when Mr. Gride brought her first."

His labored sentences faltered into silence under the keen, penetrating eyes of Sport. Why was he stammering so? Why did his rat eyes run hither and thither, and everywhere except look at Sport?

"Look here, Dr. Spofford," said Sport, arresting him with such a



"QUICK NOW, ANSWER ME! WHERE'S MY MOTHER?" CRIED SPORT.

dark look that the little man started and edged farther from him; "Was my mother ever mad at all? Blood an' thunder! I don't believe she was! The lie sticks out all over yer face. Ye miserable little midget!" thundered he, bursting into a sudden rage, as the truth revealed itself in the disconcerted and conscious looks of the trembling sharper; and he laid his iron hands on his shoulders with a weight as if a house was settling down on them.

Without another syllable the doctor led Sport to a door, drew the bolt and saw him inside; and then hurried off to his office to make up as big a bill as he could as compensation for his sorely wounded sensibilities. Gride, or the estate, or that ruffian up there, should pay it, if there was law enough to make them. . . .

The pale and beautiful woman who sat by the barred window, with a book in her hand, did not turn round to see who entered. What was the use? Nobody ever came that she cared to see. With her thin hands clasped upon the open page, and her hopeless, dark eyes lifted to the silver clouded sky, she remained immobile as a statue.

She wore heavy widow's weeds, and her beautiful hair was covered by a widow's cap; the listless indifference of her manner was gone forever, broken up with the breaking of her heart at the loss of the one being on earth whom she had loved with all the passion of her reserved nature.

And not only for Theodore did she mourn now in humble self blame; she wept over the husband who had been so devoted to her; and over his loved children whom she had never been kind to, and whom she had permitted her treacherous brother Paul to drive to their death. Ay, and her own boy had gone down with them—caught in the same snare—the snare which would never have been set if she had acted a womanly part.

"Oh, my own son! My Theodore!" Her pale lips moved, but no

sound came from them; her eyes grew wild and yearning as they strained towards the sky, and she stretched her clasped hands toward it in mournful supplication for death, that she might join him there. Theodore, watching her with a full heart, felt that it was himself she longed for, and went to her side with a cry of love.

"Mother! My poor mother! Theodore is here." And he took her in his arms.

Hers at last—not dead, but closer to her than ever before; her tower of strength and haven of rest while they two lived!

The house warming? It was the grandest affair Ashlands had ever seen, barring not even the great receptions given in historical times to famous personages.

Not because of its splendor of appointment, or the magnificence of its guests, or the prodigality of its feasting; although all these were above the average too; but because of the warm hearts that were united there; because of the past injuries that were buried deep under a happy future of love and trust; because of the noble lives mapped out before the eager feet of youth and strength; and because of the glimmer of love's young dream on one or two happy hearts:

Who all were there? Doctor Granford and his old time chum, Uncle Herbert, sticking together like two jolly brothers; Mrs. Volney, tremulously happy in the presence and gentle forgiveness of her step children, and proud beyond words of the esteem in which her noble boy was held by them all; Sport, of course, quiet and reserved as was his nature, but with depths of emotion welling up every now and then, if he met his mother's eyes, or if Nellie, (ever his "missy"—he loved to know her best by that endeared name—) came to shed a little of her brimming joy upon him; and Lillian was there, with her father; and although both the lads (meaning Ned and Sport) were more than half in love with her, it was Ned who boldly followed her about, while Sport's eyes only followed her, and yet—it was Sport whom she glanced at oftener, a new light in her sweet dark eyes! And Georgie was there, larger than life size, for had he not obtained permission to fetch his famous henchmen along, Tommy Kerr and Sam Gilpin, their illustrious selves, that he might show them the "very feller" that led the party through all their adventures, "an' the very dog that saved his life once by hanging on to the hind leg of a bear" whose snout was within a foot of his person?

And Bravo, faithful dog, trotted from one to another of his admirers, fervently returning everybody's affection, and no doubt giving many a thought to the difference between savage Indian masters with their kicks and beds of acrid wood ashes which singed a fellow's glossy coat, and Christian white masters, who looked into his eyes with love in theirs—almost understanding what a dog was thinking about; and their constant thought for him, and the pride they took, and the care, of his beautiful hair. And best of all, his dear mistress, whose gentle hand had caressed him out of his savage state; even as her gentle heart had won brave Sport out of his, and showed him as he is—A HEART OF GOLD.

THE END.

#### SYMPATHY CARRIED TO GREAT LENGTHS.

WHY is it that women servants seem so much more independent than the men? A female domestic appears never to have the least fear for the future, or a doubt about the possibility of securing another place should she elect to give up the present one. Perhaps this is the reason that the popularly accepted term applied to a maid servant who remains in one household for a lengthy period is "treasure." And it is concerning an ex "treasure" that the Woman About Town of the New York *Evening Sun* has the subjoined amusing story to tell:

An uptown family has had a cook for several years who has been perfectly devoted to their interests. But not long ago she met a middle aged man, whose wife had been dead but a short time, but who succeeded in persuading her that his interests alone were paramount to those of the entire family, and after a short hesitation, away she went with him to become his bride.

In a fortnight or so she came back to pay her respects to the family, but dressed in a most uncouthly suit of black. And when her former mistress inquired the cause of all this display of grief in the first weeks of her honeymoon, she explained as follows: "You see, Misses Jones, my husband tells me his first wife was a perfect lady, and never a soul wuz thair to wear black for the poor thing when she died. An' he said if I didn't mind he'd like me to wear decent black for her. An' bein' there wuz no one else, I done it gladly, an' that's the cause an' the reason o' my black dress an' me black bonnet an' me floine black veil. An' it's comfort he gets in seeing me wear 'em, and it's comfort I get in wearing 'em."

#### TAKING IT TOO LITERALLY.

JAYSMITH—"Can you lend me \$20, Blanders?"

BLANDERS—"No, I can't. You haven't returned the \$10 you borrowed last week."

JAYSMITH—"I know, Blanders. That is what I wanted the \$20 for. I intended to pay you back in your own coin."—*New York Sun.*

## THE PENROSE PLOT.\*

BY WILLIAM MURRAY GRAYDON.

### CHAPTER XXVIII.

IN WHICH DICK WEARS A STRAIT JACKET.

IN obedience to the doctor's command, Jason lifted Dick to his shoulder and carried him out of the room through a long, narrow corridor, lined with many doors, and finally into a small apartment, or cell, as it should properly be called, for it was barely six feet square, and contained not a single window.

Dr. Clinch—Dick, of course, did not know his name—followed close behind with an object on his arm resembling a coat.

"Now put him down, Jason," he said, "and bear a hand here."

Dick made a hard struggle, but the strange object was buttoned tightly around him from his neck to his waist, pressing his arms firmly against his sides, and rendering them useless. Then the gag was taken from his mouth, and his jailers hurried out and closed the door, leaving him in total darkness.

The first use Dick made of his voice was to shout loudly, and the sound terrified him, it was so strange and unnatural. Then he made a dash for the door, forgetting that he could not use his hands, and, instead of striking the hard wall, as he expected, he ran against something soft and flexible that tossed him back into the room. Even the floor was soft and spongy to the feet, and as he noted this fact the whole truth flashed suddenly into his mind. He was a prisoner in a lunatic asylum, confined in a padded cell, and the strange, armless coat in which he was enveloped was that horrible instrument of torture—a strait jacket.

As soon as he realized this, Dick calmed himself with a great effort, and sat down on the floor with his back against the cushioned wall. Then, commencing at the very beginning, he carefully reviewed all the circumstances he could recall, and the conclusion to which these led him was a very shrewd one.

In the first place, he was convinced that his own father and Ford had committed the assault upon him, and that it was Ford who had brought him to this place. He was almost equally clear as to the motive for such a deed, and the reader may imagine with what horror Dick realized that Squire Penrose was being poisoned by his own son. Ford was, of course, his accomplice, and their incentive to such an appalling crime could be only one thing—money.

It must be confessed that since the major's return Dick had never learned to love and respect him as a son should a father, and this fact went far to mitigate the horror with which Dick regarded these disclosures.

He was chiefly concerned for his grandfather—alone and unprotected, at the mercy of two such miscreants.

How could he escape from his prison? That was now the important point to Dick. He was not ignorant on the subject of asylums, and he felt sure that he had been brought to some retreat where no questions were asked, and where, in consideration of certain sums of money, a perfectly sane man could be kept until he either died or became genuinely insane.

If this was the case, and the manager of the asylum was in connivance with Ford and Major Penrose, then Dick's chance of escape was indeed small. His story would only be laughed at. Still, it was worth trying, and he made up his mind to grasp the first opportunity that offered.

He was puzzled to know in what part of the country the asylum was located. It must be many miles from home, for he remembered vaguely of traveling by rail, by carriage, and by water. Moreover, he had heard that very morning what sounded like the distant whistle of a steamboat.

This seemed to prove that he was near the seacoast, or some inland stream that was navigable for large steamers. He was certainly many miles from home. There could be little doubt on that point.

For more than an hour Dick's mind was thus diverted from his present situation, and his naturally buoyant temperament made the future seem hopeful.

Then the darkness and the horrible position of his arms began to tell on him. His face itched all over, and the desire to scratch it was tremendous.

For a long while he fought against the inclination, and then, losing all control, he dashed himself against the padded walls of his prison, and shrieked at the top of his voice.

This paroxysm lasted some minutes, until he fell back on the floor, bruised and breathless.

Then he lost all track of time. The hours passed on—days they seemed to him—and he began to be conscious of hunger and thirst.

When at last his cell door opened in a flood of light, he was thoroughly cowed, and ready to sue for mercy.

\* Begun in No. 420 of THE ARGOSY.

He tottered into the corridor, where Dr. Clinch and Jason were waiting.

"Have you come to your senses?" demanded the doctor sternly, and Dick meekly answered "Yes."

The obnoxious jacket was removed, and then he followed Jason back to his room. The attendant went away, locking the door behind him.

Dick glanced out of the window. Twilight was coming on. He had been confined in the padded cell since early morning.

On the table was a tray containing bread, cold meat, and a cup of coffee. This caused him to forget everything else, and, sitting down, he made a hearty meal. It grew dark very soon, and, after



"DO YOU KNOW THAT I AM THE VICTIM OF AN INFAMOUS PLOT?"

trying in vain to collect his thoughts, Dick undressed and went to bed.

It was late in the following day when he awoke, after an unbroken night's rest.

The sun was well up in the sky, and shining brightly into his room.

Some person had already been there, for a tray of breakfast stood on the table. Dick ate the food leisurely, pondering some plan of action with every mouthful. He had made up his mind what to do when the time came, but the desired opportunity was slow in arriving. No one came near the room until late in the afternoon, and then Dr. Clinch himself entered.

"I'm glad to see that you are becoming sensible, my young friend," he said in a smooth, oily voice; "you will find that such behavior will greatly mitigate your lot, and I trust that it will not be necessary to repeat the unfortunate affair of yesterday."

"My chance has come," thought Dick, and, facing the doctor, he said quietly: "Do you know Major Penrose or Henry Ford?"

The doctor looked at Dick in a half pitying manner, and only shook his head.

"Do you know that I am the victim of a most infamous plot?" continued Dick, making an effort to speak calmly, "a plot that may bring to the gallows those who brought me here, and any one whom the law may regard as an accomplice?"

He looked his companion steadily in the face as he spoke, and for an instant the doctor paled and an ominous light shone in his eyes that told Dick all he wanted to know and at the same time warned him to go no farther.

The doctor's demeanor quickly changed, and when he spoke again his manner expressed anxious concern and solicitude.

"My poor boy, don't let your mind dwell on these disagreeable

topics—that is what you are here for. Your friends have put you in my hands for treatment, and I hope soon to send you back to them perfectly cured. Try to remember that your name is not Penrose, that no such person exists. Your name is Patton—Randolph Patton. Don't that strike a familiar chord?" and the doctor repeated the name aloud three or four times. "Ah! you can't remember yet," he added; "too soon to hope for such favorable symptoms. That will come by and by. I will send your dinner up shortly. I hope you retain a good appetite. Nothing like that to induce a healthy condition of mind and body."

Then the doctor gracefully left the room, locking the door behind him.

"Well," said Dick angrily as he flung himself back on the bed, "that point is settled to my satisfaction. The doctor—whoever he is, and don't I wish I knew his name?—is in league with my enemies. His attempt to deceive me was very clever, but he can't pull the wool over my eyes. I scared him pretty badly, too. It's a game of wits between us now, with the advantage on his side. My only hope is escape—and that is about as slim as slim can be. Meanwhile my grandfather is at the mercy of those fiends, unless Dr. Galen has been able to do anything, and that I doubt. Dear old man!

Even now he may be past all aid."

The thought brought tears to Dick's eyes. Then with bitter anger in his heart he walked up and down the narrow room.

He paid no attention to Jason, who came in with his dinner, but when the man had gone Dick sat down at the table and ate the food with a keen relish. At his age sorrow rarely takes away one's appetite.

Then he determined to spend the hour or more of daylight planning some method of escape, and as a first resort he drew the ablenoiselessly the window and climbed on top of it.

#### CHAPTER XXIX.

IN WHICH DICK IS STRANGELY ACCOSTED.

THE view from the window was not encouraging to Dick. He could see down into a large yard, ornamented with patches of shrubbery and gravel walks, but the distance was so great that it made him dizzy. The yard was inclosed by a high iron fence. This could be easily scaled, Dick concluded, if once he reached the ground.

The table made a pretty solid resting place and was just high enough to bring Dick's breast on a level with the window sill.

"If I only had my knife!" he said half aloud.

He thrust his hand into his pocket, but Jason had removed all the lad's valuables long ago—no, not quite all, for deep down in his vest pocket Dick discovered a small, flat key which opened the tin box in which he kept fishing tackle. It was not much of a weapon, but something might be done with it, and after peeping down the yard to make sure that no one was watching him from below, Dick commenced work on the narrow side strips which held the window sash in place. His toil met with a speedy reward, for in five minutes the sash slipped gently inward and with it a blast of cold air that made the lad shiver. Elevating himself on tiptoe Dick leaned out and looked into the yard below him. The iron grating was just far enough beyond the window ledge to permit him to see down the side of the house.

The wall fell sheer to the ground, a distance of six stories. Escape in this direction was hopeless, and Dick now turned his attention upward. The window, as has been stated, was high up in the wall, and Dick's heart throbbed with joy as he saw the projecting edge of the roof only a few feet overhead. If he could but loosen the iron bars now, it would be an easy matter to gain the top of the building, and there he hoped to find a trap door, or some other means of communication with the ground.

It would never do to begin work while daylight lasted, so he replaced the sash and made his way back to the floor. He had not long to wait, for it was twilight now, and in a very short time it grew so dark that the opposite side of the room was invisible.

Now was the time to act. Dick listened for a moment or two with his ear to the keyhole of the door, but could hear nothing. His room was on the top floor and probably remote from any inhabited part of the house. He went quietly back to the table and climbed to the window. It was an easy matter to lift out the sash and drop it

gently to the floor. Then he seized one of the iron bars firmly in both hands, and to his delight it rattled in his grasp. The mortar between the bricks was probably old and crumbly. Dick tried each of the six bars in turn, and every one was more or less loose. His greatest pressure failed to tear them from the wall, however, and he saw that some other expedient must be resorted to.

Dick was a quick witted fellow, and he proved this fact in a remarkable manner. Descending to the floor he tore a long strip from the bed sheet, doubling it and knotting both ends to make it more secure. Then, taking a heavy blanket and one of the bed slats, he climbed to the window again. He doubled the blanket and hung it outside so that it protected the wall of the house for a distance of three or four feet. One end of the strip of linen he fastened to the first of the iron bars, the other end he tied to the button hole of his vest.

Then with the bed slat he dealt a quick blow at the bar, and out it came, dropping noiselessly against the blanket. Dick hauled it in and connected the strip with the second bar. This was removed with equal facility, but in the operation some bits of mortar were dislodged and rattled noisily to the ground.

Dick remained quiet for some time after this, but no alarm followed and his fear vanished.

Something had to be done to prevent a repetition of the noise, and after a little reflection Dick constructed two pockets out of the remainder of the sheet and fixed them, by the aid of strings, in such a manner that they caught most of the loose mortar. One after another the remaining bars were dislodged, and finally Dick drew the last one inside and tossed it over on the bed. Leaning out of the window he could see rays of light shining from various windows in the side of the house.

The most difficult part of the task yet remained to be accomplished. It was an ordeal from which the bravest of men might well shrink, but Dick nerved himself by thinking of all that depended on his escape. This gave him courage, and creeping up on the narrow window sill he remained for an instant half suspended over the terrible abyss.

He dared not look down, but breathing a silent prayer he rose right up—and clutched firmly the stout edge of the roof. Still retaining his foothold on the window he drew himself higher and higher, until with a quick spring he landed on the flat top of the house.

He lay here prostrate for a moment or two, until he had fully recovered breath. Then he rose to his feet, and walking hastily away from the edge paused to take a survey of his surroundings.

The night was dark, but the sky was thickly studded with stars. Eastward—Dick knew the direction from the sun shining into his window in the morning—nothing was visible but blackness. To the north many twinkling lights were seen. Southward the whole sky was tinged with a bright silvery glow, and here and there were glittering objects—far too bright and distinct to be stars.

"That must be some great city," thought Dick, as he turned his gaze westward. Here several more twinkling lights were seen—some with wavy reflections in their wake. This was the river of whose existence Dick had felt certain; and even as he looked a shrill whistle rose on the air, and a massive craft with colored lights steamed into view around the nearest promontory.

The sight so entranced the lad that he remained oblivious to his surroundings for some seconds. Then with sudden remembrance he started to make the circuit of the roof. Round the whole four sides he walked, and then back and forth in a dozen different places, but what he hoped to find was not there. No trap door existed.

Sick at heart he sat down for a little while to think. The outlook seemed hopeless, unless he could gain the roof of some lower building. Perhaps one side of the house had a balcony! Cheered by this possibility, Dick rose and carefully approached the south edge of the roof. On hands and knees he peeped down. There, right beneath him, was the shadowy framework of a fire escape. The first platform, which communicated with the upper story of the house, was only half a dozen feet, apparently, from the roof.

Dick's resolution was made instantly, and without giving it a chance to weaken he lowered himself by the arms and dropped. The distance was greater than he had supposed, but he landed squarely on the platform and clutched the railing for support.

A door opened on the fire escape, probably from a corridor, but it was tightly closed. Dick crawled down the ladder to the next floor. Here also the door was shut, and he kept on for three more stories. This was the last platform from the ground. The corridor door was open, and inside Dick could see a long narrow hall lit dimly by a small lamp suspended from the ceiling. He was just about to climb down the last ladder when the sound of footsteps came audibly from below. Dick's first thought was that his escape had been discovered. He remained perfectly still, unable to move from fright. The footsteps came closer, and then a gleam of light from an unseen lantern pierced the darkness.

The slow, measured tread told Dick that it was only the watchman

on his beat. Realizing, however, that he was in great danger of discovery, he chose the lesser of two evils, and bolted noiselessly into the corridor.

Once fairly inside he was amazed at his own daring. He glanced at the row of doors on each side of the hall. Uncertain what to do next, and fearing recapture at any moment, he glide down the corridor and turned the angle at the other end. Another corridor was before him, not so long as the first, but this, too, was lighted by an oil lamp.

At the farther end he could see what appeared to be a staircase, and he was about to move in that direction what a voice close at his ear, said in a low, hoarse whisper:

"George! George! Is that you, George Washington?"

Terribly scared as he was, Dick turned to the door at his side. It was pierced by a square hole covered with an iron grating and against the bars was pressed a haggard face with great staring eyes and a long, matted beard.

(To be continued.)

#### A STRANGELY CONTRASTED LIFE.

Don't be afraid to be ambitious. It is said that everything comes to him who waits. Whether this be true or not, certain it is that waiting and working together have time and again produced wonderful results. Take the case of Dr. Schliemann, for instance. He was perhaps the most celebrated archaeologist that ever lived, and the modern world owes more to him than it will ever realize for his services in unearthing the buried cities of the past. He died in the latter part of December, wealthy, honored, and in the consciousness of having achieved at sixty eight, the ends which as a youth he set himself to accomplish. Here is some account of that period of his life, which we find in an obituary notice in the *Philadelphia Times*:

The son of a Lutheran parson in straitened circumstances, he had to struggle for bread and not for learning in the years usually devoted to study. Not that he did not love study, for he says of himself: "As soon as I learned to speak my father related to me the great deeds of the Homeric heroes. I loved the stories; they enchanted me."

From fourteen to twenty he worked eighteen hours a day, selling herrings, butter, brandy, milk and salt by retail, grinding potatoes for the still, sweeping the shop and so forth. He forgot, but he never lost the love of learning. A well educated young man, whose bad conduct had condemned him to be a miller instead of a student of theology, came drunk into the shop one evening and recited about a hundred lines of Homer with rhythmic cadence.

This incident revived the desire for knowledge in his heart. When his apprenticeship was at an end he had received a hurt which disabled him from hard physical labor, but which proved a blessing rather than otherwise, as it compelled him to seek other employment as a means of livelihood. A merchant, who found him in the hospital at Hamburg, procured him employment as a clerk, which left him some little time for study. His yearly salary was 800 francs (\$160); he lived on half, in a garret without a fire, and spent the other half on his studies.

Beginning by learning to write properly, young Schliemann next devoted his spare time to a study of modern languages, beginning in English, which he learned in six months. He devoted a like period to the mastery of French, and then took up Dutch, Spanish, Italian and Portuguese, to each of which he devoted six weeks, learning to speak and write each with sufficient fluency for practical purposes in that short period. When he took up Russian, without the help of a teacher, he learned a translation of Telemachus by heart, and recited it to a poor Jew, who received four francs a week for listening two hours at a time to the language of which he did not understand a word. He had obtained an improved situation before he learned Russian, and this acquisition proved the foundation of his fortune.

In the beginning of 1846 his employers sent him as their agent to St. Petersburg, where he went into business a year later. But the new demands upon his time suspended study for eight years, and it was not till 1854 that he found leisure to learn Swedish and Polish. Greek, the proper goal of all his studies, was reserved, with no small self denial, till he had secured a competent fortune, lest the fascination of the language should entice him from his commercial industry.

When at length he could no longer restrain his zeal, he set vigorously to work, in January, 1856, and, with the help of two Greek friends, he learned modern Greek in six weeks. Three months more sufficed him to learn enough of classical Greek to understand the ancient writers, and especially Homer, "whom," says he, "I read again and again with the liveliest enthusiasm."

Dr. Schliemann's home in Athens, which was built about 1880, is an imposing structure of marble, bearing on its front above the door the inscription in letters of gold: "Hall of Ilium." All the decorations in the house commemorate Dr. Schliemann's great researches. The floors are paved with Italian mosaics, the walls covered with Pompeian frescoes and patterns of objects found at Troy and Mycenæ, and Homeric mottoes and inscriptions abound.

#### JOHNNY'S GREAT HEAD.

MISS QUIDNUNC—"You must be very fond of reading, Johnny; I never see you without a book."

JOHNNY—"Yes'm."

MISS QUIDNUNC—"What are you reading?"

JOHNNY—"I don't know, mum."

MISS QUIDNUNC—"You don't know?"

JOHNNY—"No'm; I just hold the book, 'cause when ma sees me with a book, she says to pa, 'Now, don't disturb that boy; don't you see how he studies? He'll make a great professor or something; let him alone and go and split the wood yourself.'"—*Boston Courier*.