

THE ARGOSY

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BLAZING ARROW.

A TALE OF THE FRONTIER.

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CHAPTER I.

ON THE TRAIL.

THE distance between the frontier settlement of Tipton, in Kentucky, and the block house, erected two years

before our story opens, was precisely fifty miles, and along the trail connecting the two, a couple of boys were leisurely making their way one sultry afternoon.

Brigham Edwards had his home in Tipton. His family included his wife, his only son, Wharton, aged seventeen, and an Irish youth, Larry Murphy, a year older. They had lived originally in western Pennsylvania, where Larry was left to the care and kindness of the well to do settler who had been one of the best friends his Irish laboring man ever knew. The mother of the boy died in his infancy, so that he was an orphan without any near relative.

Mr. Edwards was among the prominent citizens of Tipton, where he had dwelt for nearly three years, when he and his wife decided to visit some old friends that had

settled in a larger town about a hundred miles further east. In order to do so they mounted their ponies and followed the well marked trail, crossing several streams and mountainous sections, and running considerable danger from the Indians, who, in those days, were nearly always hostile.

It was agreed between the parents and the boys that they should meet, on the return of the former, at the block house, and make the rest of the journey together. Mr. Edwards fixed on the tenth of August as the date of his arrival at the post. The boys were to reach the block house no later than that date, and no sooner than the day before. The parents promised to wait twenty four hours for them, if necessary, and then, in the event of their not showing up, they would continue their journey homeward. The trail was so plain and the route so well known that it was easy to make accurate calculations, and to figure the time within a very few hours, when the respective parties were due at

the block house, the figuring, of course, being based on the supposition that no accident befell any one concerned.

The boys had covered about two thirds of the distance between the settlement and the meeting point without the slightest incident occurring. They sauntered along chatting or laughing, for their start from Tipton had been made in time to remove all need of haste, so they were in high spirits.

By way of preliminary, one peculiarity of young Edwards must be named; he was the fleetest youth

such high authority, came a general desire to see the two champions pitted against each other, and efforts were made to bring about such a contest.

The great difficulty in the way was that the Shawanoe was one of the most vicious and treacherous members of his tribe. He had committed so many crimes against the whites that he feared to trust himself in their power, and refused to come to the settlement, despite the urgent invitations of the leading pioneers.

He was persuaded, however, to venture out of the woods one day, and the arrangements were

quickly made for a race between him and young Edwards. Before the trial came off some one gave the Shawanoe a draught of "fire water" which roused the sleeping demon in him. Whipping out his knife he emitted his war whoop and charged furiously upon the astonished youth, with the intention of slaying him.

Wharton naturally had no weapon with him, but succeeded in eluding the miscreant, and, before the wrathful settlers could seize him he darted into the woods with a defiant shout and disappeared.

Rather curiously as the youths walked along the trail in the direction of the block house, they fell to discussing this affair.

"I never was sorrier," said Larry, "than when that race didn't come off, except once—when Blazing Arrow wasn't caught. I'm sure you

would have beaten him out of sight."

"I don't know about that," modestly replied Wharton. "Blazing Arrow is a swift runner."

"Which doesn't signify you wouldn't beat him at all. I wonder whether you'll ever have that race out between you!"

"There's no saying. He isn't likely to show himself in the settlement again, but who knows that we won't meet before we reach the block house? The runner who came to the settlement the other day said the Shawanoes and Wyandots are on the war path again, and we are going to have trouble with them."

"And when ain't they on the war path?" was the retort of the disgusted Larry, "but I'm hoping the folks will get home safely."

"I have been worried more than I dare tell; we have seen nothing of the Indians so far, but that is no proof that we shall not do so."

As if in confirmation of this fear, the boys were



HERE WAS THE PLACE FOR THE SUPREME TEST AND WHARTON BENT ALL HIS ENERGIES TO THE TASK.

on the frontier. Despite the fact that he was but a boy, and that he had engaged in many running contests, he had never yet met any one whom he failed to vanquish with ease.

When the Indians were not so hostile toward the whites as they were at the time of which we are writing, they occasionally visited the block house and settlements for the purposes of barter or to engage in friendly contests in shooting, leaping and running. The red men were so trained from infancy to this kind of amusement that they were experts, and held their own well against the pioneers, though it is well known that the Caucasian race, under similar surroundings and environments, surpasses all others in physical as well as in mental attainments.

Among the warlike Shawanoes was the famous Blazing Arrow, who claimed to have beaten every one in running that dared to contest his supremacy. Following the declaration, therefore, from

startled at that moment by the cry of some person evidently in the extremity of distress. The two were walking in single file over the trail, Wharton a few steps in advance, when they were surprised by the unexpected sound. Both instantly stopped.

"It came from over there," said the younger in a whisper, pointing to the left.

"Ye're right, and it is a white man." "We must see what is the matter; maybe we can help him."

The resolution was a worthy one, and was acted upon without delay. But danger seemed to be in the air, and they advanced with the greatest care, not knowing that it was not part of a trap to lead them into greater peril.

The mourning cry was heard again, so they had no trouble in making their way to its source. They had to walk but a few rods among the trees and through the undergrowth, when they came upon a painful scene.

A sturdy white man, in the garb of a hunter, was reclining on the ground, with his shoulders resting against a tree. His con skin cap and rifle, broken at the lock, lay beside him, and one glance at his face showed that he had but a few minutes to live.

Wharton stepped forward and placing his hand on his shoulder, asked tenderly:

"Is there anything we can do for you?"

He opened his eyes, and brightening somewhat, spoke feebly:

"Where are you from?"

"From Tipton."

"And—and what are you doing here?"

"We are on our way to the block house. Brigham Edwards is my father, and we expect to meet him and my mother there."

The stranger looked up for a moment as though he was dazed. Then he slowly shook his head:

"You'd better turn back."

"Why do you say that?"

"The Shawanoes are at the falls; Blazing Arrow is there with them; it was he that gave me my last sickness; he'll serve you the same way; you ain't got any time to lose."

"But what will become of father and mother?" asked Wharton, alarmed for them and deeply sorry for the poor fellow before him.

"If they don't stay there he'll serve 'em the same way—but you can't help 'em; I had a big scrimmage—"

Here the mind of the sufferer seemed to wander and his sentences became broken and disconnected.

"It was a splendid fight; I fetched two of 'em, but they fetched me—right in the side—made me run harder than ever I did—tried to catch me—I run too fast—give it up—crawled off here in the woods—die—good by, mother—never'll see you."

He muttered brokenly—looked at the boys leaning over him with an expression that showed he recognized them no longer.

"Shall I bring you water? Isn't there anything that we can do? Have you no friends that we can send word to?" asked Wharton Edwards, distressed to see the stranger die in this manner.

"Look out for falls—Blazing Arrow there—go back to settlement—don't wait—burry now—"

Those were his last words.

CHAPTER II.

AT THE FALLS.

THE boys stood for several minutes without stirring or speaking; Larry, who had been silent from the first, then said in a low voice:

"He's dead, we can do nothing for him."

"No; it's a pity to leave him alone in the woods, but how many a poor fellow has been left in the same way? I never saw him before, and he did not tell us his name."

"He spoke of his mother," added the other tenderly, "and it may be that she mourns for him—but come, me boy, we mustn't stay here. Do you remember what he said about Blazing Arrow and his party being at the falls?"

"Yes, but do you want to turn back?"

"Have I said so?" asked Larry reprovingly. "If the folks at the block house don't get word of their danger they'll run right into it—and we must hurry there and tell them."

"That sounds like you," was the pleased comment of the younger lad, as the two made their way back to the trail; "but, after what that poor fellow told us, it seems to me that the right thing to do is to leave the trail for a time, and come back to it beyond where Blazing Arrow and his warriors are in waiting."

This sounded wise, and the only difficulty lay in knowing how long a circuit to make. The "falls," to which reference has been made, was an unfavorable spot. A rushing torrent swept for a long distance through the woods before tumbling over the rocks to the depth of thirty or more feet. The trail led close to but did not pass this torrent. In order to make the detour the youths had in mind, it was decided to cross the stream and follow it a considerable distance before coming back to the path leading to the block house.

Two methods suggested themselves. One was to swim the torrent where it could readily be done below the falls, and the other was to seek for some spot within the space between the perpendicular walls narrow enough to allow them to make the leap. Since there was no call for special haste, the latter course was agreed upon.

"Larry," said Wharton, "we'll separate for a time. We know how to signal each other when we want to come together. There's no use of hunting for a narrow place below the falls, for I'm sure there isn't any, but you can make a hunt for a spot within a quarter of a mile of them, and I'll look above. If we don't find something of the kind, why, we'll have to go below and swim across. How does that strike you?"

His companion, after several minutes of thought, agreed to this suggestion, and they proceeded to carry it out without delay.

It seemed to the youths that this course was the easiest and simplest for them, and they ought not to be apart for more than a couple of hours. Neither forgot the warning from the poor fellow whose body they had been obliged to leave in the woods. If Blazing Arrow and his party were in waiting near the falls, the utmost caution was necessary to pass that place without detection, and none knew this better than the young friends, who now lost sight of each other for a time.

Wharton Edwards did not go far before approaching the torrent to which reference has been made. In passing back and forth along the trail at different times he had turned aside to view the falls and the immediate vicinity, so that it was not altogether unfamiliar ground to him.

The height of the solid walls was perhaps twenty feet, with some variation here and there, as one went up or down stream, with a width slightly greater at the point where Wharton reached the gorge. He hoped that it would be found much narrower not far from the point from where he paused to survey the scene.

Between these flinty walls the torrent poured impetuously until it tormented

over the falls, a mass of boiling foam, and spread with a broader and more calmly flowing current below. Wharton stood for several minutes looking down into the swift, deep water.

"It wouldn't do to tumble in there, for a fellow would have to go over the falls, unless there is some opening in the rocks below where he could crawl out. It's a big jump, and I'll hunt a narrower place."

He walked some distance up the bank and did not go far before he perceived a marked decrease in the width.

"I can do it," he muttered, compressing his lips.

He was so confident of his matchless ability in leaping, that not the slightest misgiving came to him, nor did he hesitate. But ever mindful of the peril from the Indians, he carefully studied the forest on the other side in quest of the red men. Nothing suspicious was observable, and he tossed his rifle across. The weapons of those days were so cumbersome that it would have proven a serious encumbrance.

Everything being ready, the young man walked backward several paces, and then gathering his energies, ran swiftly and cleared the chasm as easily as if its width had been only half as great. The next minute he committed an oversight and blunder which remained a mystery to him all through his subsequent life.

Looking back at the opposite bank he turned his gaze up stream. A perceptible narrowing was noticed.

"I believe Larry can jump that," was his thought, as he moved in the direction to investigate.

The unaccountable mistake he made was in leaving his gun lying on the ground behind him. Inasmuch as the weapon had hardly been out of his hand that day, this forgetfulness was all the more extraordinary. It was accountable perhaps, on the ground of his sudden interest in the discovery of a place which looked as if it could be readily leaped by his companion.

Wharton gave another evidence of his activity by bounding across without a preliminary run, landing as lightly as a fawn on the other side.

"This will do," he said; "it won't bother Larry at all—well, I declare!"

This exclamation was caused by the remembrance of his gun, which lay on the other side of the torrent. He laughed at his oversight, and, with as little effort as before, leaped the chasm for the third time.

"If I keep on I'll get enough exercise to last me," he said, making his way to the spot where the weapon had fallen.

To his amazement it was not there.

"What can it mean?" he asked himself with a shudder of dread. "Yes, it must be the Shawanoes. They have taken it."

His startled glances failed to show any red men, but he knew they were lurking among the trees. He was as certain that Blazing Arrow and his band were there as if he had looked into their faces. He had almost literally leaped into their arms, as may be said.

Why then had they not made him prisoner at once! Undoubtedly the reason was because they looked upon him as already a captive. Certain that there was no possible escape for him, they were playing with him as a cat toys with a mouse before devouring it. During the brief while that his back was turned, one of the Shawanoes had slipped forward, snatched up his weapon and then darted back among his companions, who were hidden by the trees.

The peril was so peculiar and so unexpected that the youth was dazed for the moment. It seemed to him that the only thing to do was to regain the trail with the least possible delay, and run

with all speed in the direction of the block house.

But he could not forget Larry, who had no suspicion of the new and dreadful danger that was upon them. Wharton could not desert him, nor could he remain where he was. The gorge separated them and he had no rifle.

With hardly a thought of the consequence the desperate youth gathered his energies and bounded back once more on the side of the gorge on which was the trail. Then he turned towards the falls, with a view of meeting Larry in time to warn him; but, to his horror, he had not taken half a dozen steps when he was headed off.

An Indian warrior, with a whoop of triumph, darted out from among the trees, ran swiftly toward the gorge, and, with as much ease as the youth had shown, leaped the chasm, landing so directly in front of the fugitive, that, had he not checked himself, he would have run plumply against him.

There was but one thing to do and Wharton Edwards did it; he turned squarely about and started in the direction of the block house; but the threatened collision with the Shawanoes and the sight he had caught of his painted countenance made known to the youth that his pursuer was his old and venomous enemy, Blazing Arrow.

CHAPTER III.

THROUGH THE WOODS.

THE race between Wharton Edwards and the famous Shawanoes runner, Blazing Arrow, was to come off at last, but under far different circumstances than either had ever anticipated.

The wretch, while under the influence of liquor, had attempted the life of the youth, and now, when his own natural self, he was equally determined to run him down and to his death. He hated the whole race with a consuming hatred, and his wrath against this lad was more intense than against any human being. It was he that had the audacity to think himself worthy of running a race with him—*he* who had defeated the most renowned runners of the Wyandots, Pottawatomies and the adjoining tribes, to say nothing of his own people.

The action of the Shawanoes, when young Edwards made his leap of the chasm, can be understood. The youth's life was spared, where no other person would have been permitted to live after placing himself in their power. Blazing Arrow, as well as several of his associates, recognized the youth the instant they saw his face, and a hurried consultation took place as to what should be done.

But for the presence of their champion, they would not have permitted him his slight advantage; but their faith in Blazing Arrow was as complete as his own, beside which he was one of their leaders. He ordered them to remain quiet, or rather to devote themselves to bringing down what whites were near, while he made a little dash and brought back the fugitive.

This was how it came about that Wharton Edwards, instead of being pursued by a score of Shawanoes, started off with but a single warrior trailing after him.

But it is noticeable further that the same pursuer carried his rifle, or rather that of the youth, for with characteristic refinement of cruelty, he meant to add this little triumph to his capture of the lad when he should run him down and smite him to the earth.

Wharton had no weapon other than his hunting knife, while his foe took good care to see that a weapon was at his own command. He was the one who, if any accident befell himself,

would feel pleasure in shooting down the lad that had never harmed him.

The sight of Blazing Arrow gave Wharton a knowledge of the situation, and during the few minutes that he was first dodging through the trees he tried to decide upon the right course to follow.

They were but a short way from the main trail. This was clearly marked, although it was traveled so little that, in many places the overhanging limbs interfered with one's passage. He believed he could dash along this faster than his pursuer, and but for his anxiety about Larry Murphy he probably would have attempted to do so, but the report of a rifle which reached his ear a few minutes later deepened his fears and increased his anxiety.

If he should put forth all the speed of which he was capable, it was not likely to surpass that of the Shawanoe, who was accustomed to dodging among tree trunks.

There was little to be gained by speculating at this stage of the contest, but he concluded to help ahead until the opportunity was more favorable for turning his own amazing fleetness to account.

Besides, it should be stated that Wharton was not yet certain that he could beat Blazing Arrow in a contest of speed. The Indian was a wonderful runner, and the youth was not certain by any means that the red man would not overhaul him when the test should take place.

"At any rate he has got to do the hardest work of his life before he captures my scalp," muttered the lad, compressing his lips and ducking under a limb which would have caught under his chin, if he had neglected the precaution.

He headed for the trail, darting a look behind him now and then to note their relative speed. As nearly as he could judge, it was about the same, but as he could not know whether Blazing Arrow was putting forth his best efforts or not, the knowledge was of little benefit. At the moment of striking the path, Wharton recalled a fact that had slipped his mind until then. Less than an eighth of a mile in advance the trail crossed a natural clearing, where, for fully a fourth of a mile, not a tree or shrub obtruded. Then the two could do their best, and the question of supremacy would be decided, providing the red man indulged in no treachery.

Blazing Arrow dropped into the path at a point about a hundred yards behind the fugitive, which was a little more than the space separating them at the moment of starting.

It was necessary to keep the advantage he possessed and to gain all he could before the plain was reached. If Wharton should prove himself superior to the Shawanoe, the latter would resort to his rifle, and either kill or wound him so that he could not run. If the fugitive were the inferior, he must fall into the hands of his enemy, so that no matter how it eventuated, the situation of the youth was full of peril.

"I guess I may as well let myself out while I have the chance," the latter muttered, a moment after striking the trail.

And Wharton proceeded to "let himself out," while Blazing Arrow, the Shawanoe, lost no time in doing likewise.

CHAPTER IV.

A RACE.

WHARTON'S aim was to increase the distance between himself and Blazing Arrow as much as he could, before reaching the clearing half a mile wide, where the way was

open or the test of speed would be decisive.

Within the same moment that he recalled the existence of the clearing, he was dashing along the trail like a terrified deer. This work proved harder than he anticipated. The obtruding branches swished his face with smarting violence, and more than one twig cut his forehead and nose like the lash of a whip. He thrust out his hands to ward these aside and they hurt his hands.

He kept it up, however, for he was now running for life, and what is to be compared to such a stake? But these obstructions, despite all he could do, retarded his progress.

The alarming truth quickly became manifest that instead of gaining ground, as he had hoped, he was losing it.

"Suppose he can beat me," was the terrifying thought that almost paralyzed him for the moment, "but," he added, "he hasn't done it yet."

The Shawanoe did not utter any cry, and he was so far to the rear that Wharton did not hear him as he came along the trail with the grim certainty of fate. He was a marvelous runner, and he did not mean to allow the detested youth, whose beard was not yet grown, to get away from him.

More than once, while speeding in this fashion, young Edwards asked himself whether he could elude his enemy by leaping aside or hiding among the trees. Possibly he might have done it, could he have drawn beyond sight of him for a few minutes only, so that his divergence would not be seen.

But just there lay the difficulty, and he dared not make the attempt.

It was a sight that would have tried the nerves of the bravest man when he looked back, and caught a glimpse of the Indian warrior, partly hidden by the brushing limbs and vegetation, as he sped forward like a furious animal and knew it was a mortal enemy that was after him, impelled by a hatred which nothing but death could quench.

The fugitive determined that for the time he would not look behind him. Almost unconsciously to himself, when he did so, he lost a little ground.

The straining vision which was now cast forward saw the light made by the clearing or opening in front. A few more bounds and he struck the margin of the space, which for half a mile was as free from trees as a stretch of Western prairie.

Here was the place for the supreme test, and the youth, with a muttered prayer, bent all his energies to the task, fully alive to the stake at issue.

Not a breath of air was stirring on this mild summer afternoon, but the wind created by his arrowy speed was like a gale, as it rushed by his face, and lifted the short, auburn hair about his neck until it floated straight out. The arms were bent at the elbows, the chest thrown forward, while the shapely limbs worked with the swiftness and grace of a piece of perfect machinery. The feet doubled in and over each other with bewildering quickness, there seeming at times to be half a dozen of them on the ground, in the air and to the rear, at the same time.

The stride was tremendous. The handsome face of the youth was pale with an unshakable resolve, and the thin lips were compressed, his breath coming quick and fast through the nostrils. The hazel eye gleamed and the brows were knitted, as with a person who means to do or die.

Ah, that was a race worth traveling many a mile to see! Had Simon Kenton, or Daniel Boone, or Anthony McClelland, or the Wetzel brothers been in that open clearing, they would have stood like statues, rapt in admiration and wonder, for never could they have

beheld before such a magnificent exhibition of prowess in the way of speed.

Every thrilling element was present, for not far to the rear rushed a six foot Shawanoe, who, like the youth in advance, strained every muscle to the highest tension.

And he was a frightful object as he ran, for his face was that of a race horse. The long coarse locks streamed behind him, like a whipping pennant in a hurricane, and one of the stained eagle feathers in the crown was snatched loose and fluttered backward.

The naturally hideous face was made more so by the red and black paint, daubed in fantastic splashes over it. The sinewy chest was bare, but the fringes of the parti-colored leggings and the moccasins flickered and twinkled in the sunlight, as the Shawanoe thundered across the clearing, his black eyes fixed on that flying figure in front and the countenance distorted by a passion such as few members of his terrible race are capable of feeling.

As Blazing Arrow ran, he carried the youth's rifle in his right hand. It was grasped just in front of the lock, the muzzle pointing ahead, as though he had but to press the trigger to bring down the fugitive without a change of aim. The left hand rested on the knife thrust in his girdle, the position of the two hands suggesting that he was thirsting to use both weapons upon the lad whom he sought so desperately to run down.

The Indian was doing his best. Had the whole tribe been assembled on that clearing, with eyes fixed on him, and urging him on, he could have done no better. He had run many a race, and, since his manhood, had won them all. Most were gained by no more than half trying, just as he expected to gain this one, when he ordered his companions to remain behind in the wood and leave to him the task of bringing back the white youth who had the effrontery to appear as a contestant in a trial against him.

The expectation of Blazing Arrow was that of running down Wharton Edwards just before or at the time he entered the wood on the opposite side of the clearing. Stretching forward his massive hand, he meant to hurl him from his feet, and then drive him back to where the other warriors were waiting to subject him to their whimsical torture.

(To be continued.)

ACROSS THE CONTINENT.

THE following account of a record breaking trip across the continent by train, from the *New York Tribune*, is an interesting supplement to the recent editorial in THE ARGOSY under the title of "Girdling the Earth."

On water and on land records are being broken; especially has this been the case during the last few months when new records have been established in quick succession by transatlantic steamers, sailing and steam yachts, and by railroad trains. The latest fast trip scored with the latter mode of conveyance was made in September, when the private car Grassmere rolled into the Grand Central Station, having come from the Pacific Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean in 4 days 12 hours and 28 minutes.

On the car were John W. Mackay, the millionaire, and Miss Virginia Fair, daughter of ex-senator Fair. In a little over one hundred hours they had crossed a continent, climbed great mountains, swept by and through a hundred populous cities, and almost before the sight of San Francisco's Golden Gate had faded the Mississippi had been crossed, the great lakes had been passed and down the broad valley of the Hudson they sped into a city on the shore of another ocean.

The route was over the Southern Pacific road to Ogden, Utah. There the Grassmere was rushed to the Union Pacific road, and went to Council Bluffs. From that point the car went to Green River. Mr. Mackay told a *Tribune* reporter that he considered the time nothing remarkable, as any fast mail could equal the record if it were not for the necessary stoppages. The trip was pleasant but uneventful. He remarked that it was, however, rather different from the journey he made across the plains in 1869, when it took twenty two days to go less than half the distance.

SPINNING SONG.

Whether we love or hate,
The world goes round;
Whether we smile or frown,
The sun comes up, goes down,
Early and late;
Whether we love or hate
The world goes round.

—Boston Transcript.

A L F.

BY IDA D. MONROE.

IF anybody 'd told me eight years ago that Alf Wilbour 'd ever amounted to anything, I should 'a' said their opinion wasn't o' such account. You see, brother Hezekiah got a sore by Alf's father, though why I never could see. For Wilbour was a shif'less critter, good, and kind hearted enough, to be sure, but forever puttering over a lot o' rubbish he called "inventions," which never came to anything—for want of capital, Hezekiah said, to carry them through.

Precious little capital he had when he come to die, any way, for when the expenses was paid there was not a cent left for poor Alf. Of course Hezekiah brought him right home. Though goodness knows, the house was full enough 'a'ready.

Alf was twelve years old, and a gawky looking critter you never see. He was mostly arms, legs and forehead. He hadn't been in the house a week afore I see he was "a chip o' the old block." He was allus bother'ng with chips and wire and old iron, just as his father afore him was.

We tried to make sunthing of the boy, but 'twasn't o' much use. Hezekiah had nigh upon twenty five acres o' land, and he an' the boys had to scratch lively to tend it.

He tried to learn Alf to hoe, but likely 's not he'd find the boy settin' under the wall, building forts and houses out o' dirt and stones when he ought to be at work.

Then he tried putting him with the team. But the second day, about the middle o' the forenoon, the oxen came marching up to the barn draggin' the plow along behind. Hezekiah thought Alf must a hurt himself, or sunthing, so off he went down to the lot, and there he found the critter, ankle deep in the brook, with a water wheel he'd made out o' elder, in full blast.

I used to get all out o' patience with the feller, but Rindy—that's Hezekiah's wife—was allus good to him.

"I allus think, Hannah," says she, "s'posen our boys hadn't any father or mother to do for 'em."

One day I found a lot o' Alf's rubbish in the best bedroom. That was more'n I could stand, and I tumbled the whole mess out o' the window. When Alf found it out I thought first he was going to be sassy, his face grew so red and his eyes a blazing. But in a minute he cooled down and laffed in his good natured fashion, and says he:

"Well, Aunt Hannah, I suppose 'twas in the way. I'll have to give you a silk dress when I get rich for all the trouble I make you."

"Silk dress!" says I; "a ninepenny calico 'll be more'n you'll ever be able to make me a present of."

Alf laffed agin, and says he, "Maybe you're right, Aunt Hannah!"

The summer 't Alf was fifteen a man came from Boston and wanted Hezekiah to board him. Things 'd been running behind for some time at the farm, so Rindy said we'd better take him; the money 'd help out a little.

Mr. Keys owned a big machine shop somewhere in the city, and was pretty well to do from all appearances. It did beat all how he 'n Alf took to each other. He examined Alf's rubbish and seemed to think it mighty fine.

Well, he stayed two months, and the day afore he left he says to Hezekiah:

"Mr. Bartlett, this boy o' yourn has a mighty fine head for machinery, and if you'll let him go home with me, maybe I can make it o' some use to him."

Hezekiah was pretty well astonished and didn't know what to say.

But Alf, he went up to him with more life in his eyes 'n 'I'd ever seen there afore.

"Oh, do say I can go! Mr. Bartlett, I can never make a good farmer. I've tried my best, and you see I spoil everything I undertake. Please let me go with Mr. Keys!"

Well, Alf went, and I'll own I did miss the feller for all his shiftless ways.

Things didn't prosper very well with Hezekiah the next year. The dry spell spoilt the crops, and things got pretty well behind hand, and at last he sold the ten acre lot to Squire Talbot.

The next year 'twas was still. The boys did their best to help, but they was young and couldn't do much, and another ten acres went into the squire's clutches. But the squire come over, mighty sorry for Hezekiah on the outside, but chuck full o' meanness within.

"Why didn't Hezekiah mortgage the place for a year? He'd advance the money, and maybe sunthin' 'd turn up afore the time was out."

We hated to give the squire a hold on the place, but there didn't seem to be anything else to be done, so Hezekiah gin him a mortgage for five hundred dollars.

At the end o' the year things was just as I expected. Hezekiah couldn't pay the mortgage. The squire wouldn't renew it, and the place must be sold.

Hezekiah begged and pleaded. The farm had been in the family for generations, and he couldn't bear to part with it. But the squire allus wanted the place, and now he meant to have it. He knew none o' the folks about here would be likely to want it, and he expected to get it for a song.

We was all pretty well cut up, I can tell you. Hezekiah worried himself into a fever, and the day o' the auction Rindy shut herself into the room with him, saying she couldn't stay where she could see it go on.

The boys went off, too, and I was left to face it out.

The old squire was jubilant, I can tell you, when only a few men put in an appearance. But just as the auctioneer stood up to begin a buggy came tearing down the road like mad. It turned into the gate and stopped at the door, and out jumped Mr. Keys and a tall young feller.

Alf hadn't been home for more'n a year now, and I had to look twice afore I could make out the young feller was him.

"Are we in time?" says he to the auctioneer.

"Oh, yes; the bidding hasn't begun yet," answered he.

"All right," says Alf; "you stay here, Mr. Keys, and I'll go in an' see the folks."

He shook my hand till I thought he'd shake it off, a looking so happy and smiling all the time that I felt as if I wanted to shake him.

"How's the rest?" says he.

"Just about used up," says I, "as anybody 'd be 't had any feeling!"

He looked at me and made as if he'd say sunthin', then thought better on 't and marched off into Hezekiah's bedroom.

The bidding outdoors was going on pretty lively, but it seemed to be all the squire and Mr. Keys.

The squire was hopping mad, I could see by the way he trotted back and forth, thumping his old cane into the ground as spiteful as need be.

"Two thousand!" yelled the squire.

"Twenty five hundred!" says Mr. Keys.

"Twenty six!" screeched the squire.

Mr. Keys seemed to be sort o' tired o' this kind o' haggling, so he calls out:

"Five thousand dollars!"

The squire fairly danced.

"Tain't worth it! 'tain't worth half on't! I won't bid another cent!"

And he unhitched the old sorrel from the fence and drove furiously away.

Alf and Mr. Keys went off with the auctioneer, and the rest went home.

Rindy came out of the bedroom, and said "she guessed we'd better get supper, for Alf and Mr. Keys would be there, she s'posed."

"What on airth can Keys want o' the place?" said I. But Rindy could only wipe her eyes and say she didn't know."

"Wants it for a summer place, maybe," says I.

Alf and he was gone a long time. The boys came home, and I had the table ready afore they drove up.

Alf looked as smiling as ever when he came in, and I wished I hadn't taken so much pains with the muffins I'd made, 'cause he used to like them so well.

He marched straight up to Rindy and handed her a paper.

"There, dear Mrs. Bartlett, is a little present for you!"

Rindy opened it, but she didn't read more'n a minute, 'fore she cried out:

"Why, what's this mean? It's the deed of the place made out in my name!"

I looked at Alf. He was smiling yet, but I see two tears in his eyes, and so I didn't mind the smile.

"You tell, Mr. Keys," said he.

"It means," says Keys, "that this boy o' your'n, three months ago, got out a patent, for which the American Manufacturing Company have paid him twenty five thousand dollars! As this is more than he has any need of for himself, he has invested some of it in favor of those who befriended him when he was only 'poor Alf Wilbour.'"

Such a time as followed! Rindy cried and kissed Alf, and Keys too, for all I know, for I had to mop my eyes with the corner o' my apron, so I couldn't see nothin'.

Pretty soon Alf broke away from them, and ran out to the buggy.

He came back with a big bundle, which he threw in my lap.

"Aunt Hannah," says he, "there's sunthin' I promised you a good while ago."

I untied the bundle, and there was the handsomest piece o' black silk I ever sot eyes on. I had to give in then, and be as big a fool as any on 'em.

Well, Alf had a doctor from the city to Hezekiah. Of course he'll never be as smart as he used to be, but he's on his legs agin.

The twenty acres that had been sold made the farm small enough for him and Ned to manage.

Alf took Will to the city with him and he's doing well. And, arter all, that shiftless, good for nothing Alf's a rich man.

A GENTLE HINT.

THIS is the ingenious reminder used by the *Bainbridge Globe* to stir up its delinquent subscribers:

He walked in and put down a dollar, a silver dollar, that clanked like a carriage wheel in the stillness of the sanctum. Said he: "There—there, take it and credit my subscription quick." "What's the matter?" we said.

"Well," said he, "last week I was fishing out on Spring Creek; a thunder-storm came up, and it rained and thundered and lightning flashed all around me. I crawled into a hollow log to escape it. Then the rain made the log swell up till I was fastened in and nearly squeezed to death. I began to think of all my sins and repent. Suddenly I remembered that my subscription to the *Globe* was not settled up, and I felt so small about it that I was able to back right out of the log at once."

A WARNING.

DOWN the smooth stream of life the strippling darts,
Gay as the morn; bright glows the vernal sky,
Hope swells the sails and passion steers his course.
Safe glides his little bark along the shore
Where virtue takes her stand; but if too far
He launches forth beyond discretion's mark,
Sudden the tempest scowls, the surges roar,
Blot his fair day and plunge him in the deep.

—BISHOP PORTEUS.

[This Story began in No. 460.]

WITH COSSACK AND CONVICT.

A TALE OF FAR SIBERIA.

BY WILLIAM MURRAY GRAYDON,

Author of "Under Africa," "The Rajah's Fortress," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XX.

A MESSAGE ON THE WIRES.

IT was not Donald's Chumleigh's body that made the terrific splash far down in the river; it was a slab of rock that had been dislodged from a narrow ledge shortly below the brink of the precipice, and on this ledge lay Donald Chumleigh himself, wedged in between the cliff and a big pine tree that had rooted itself in this precarious spot.

Fortunately for him he was too stunned at first to realize his situation or to make any outcry, and so the murderous convicts made no investigation but hurried away to overtake their companions, in the full belief that Feodor Baranok's command had been faithfully carried out.

The keen air and the thickly falling snow soon revived Donald. He looked into the terrific gulf beneath him with a shudder, and ruefully put his hand to the lump that Valbort's club had raised on his head. Slowly he rose to his feet, catching hold of the pine tree for support, and was relieved to find that no bones were broken; with the exception of a severe headache he was all right.

The top of the cliff was two or three feet over his head, but by the aid of projecting roots and fissures in the rock he gained the brink and with an effort pulled himself out on firm ground. He quickly sprang to his feet and looked around, fearing that his enemies might still be in the vicinity. Then he picked up his cap which had been knocked off in the struggle, and crept cautiously along the path the convicts had taken, keeping a sharp lookout ahead lest he should run upon them unawares.

The motive for the murderous attack was a mystery to Donald. He was convinced, however, that Valbort and Gross had acted by their leader's orders, for he remembered now that Baranok's manner had been furtive and embarrassed when he spoke to him that morning—that he kept his eyes constantly averted.

"At all events the oath he made me take holds good no longer," thought Donald. "I suppose he was afraid to trust me and concluded to make sure by putting me out of the way. You'll repent this step, Mr. Feodor Baranok, see if you don't. I'll make it my object to rescue that young Russian girl if I have to lead the Cossacks to the cavern myself—I can do it, too, without any danger of missing the way. And out of this affair will come my own safety, for if I can see General Tichimiroff I can easily convince him of the truth of my story and I shall be set free. It was a fortunate thing after all that Valbort and his companions captured me from the Cossacks. Had they not done so I should be well on toward the mines of Kara by this time, and without a gleam of hope for the future."

These reflections cheered Donald's heart, and he did not mind the cold or the pain in his head as he tramped on through the falling snow. When he had gone a mile or more along the ridge and the path taken by the convicts was still plain ahead of him, he concluded, for precaution's sake, to make his way into the valley on the right, where he could pursue the same direction as the others and yet run no risk of encountering them. He did not wish to lose track of the convicts entirely, for he was convinced that they had some evil plan in view, and he was resolved to thwart this plan if possible.

He reached the valley with some difficulty, for the mountain side was steep and slippery with snow, and pushed on rapidly to make up for lost time. His strength was beginning to fail him, and the bitter cold was numbing his limbs, but he struggled on heroically through the deepening snow, knowing that if he yielded to the temptation to rest he would never rise again.

At last, when he was on the point of giving up in despair, he forced a way through a dense ticket of young pine-trees and stumbled out on what he at first thought was a bit of clearing. Then his eyes fell on a high, smooth pole by his side, and when he glanced up and saw dimly the wires that were strung to its top, he uttered a cry of joy. He was on the great Siberian post road.

His first intention was to turn eastward and find out what had become of the convicts, but seeing a dim light shining through the snow in the opposite direction he ran toward it as fast as possible.

The light came from a small log building by the roadside which Donald recognized as a telegraph office. He did not stop to look in it, but pushed on for a few yards and was surprised to find himself before the very post station from which he had been carried off a week before. No sign of life was visible, either in the station house itself or in the few surrounding buildings.

Donald stood irresolute for a moment and then turned back toward the telegraph office, resolved to enter boldly and tell his story to whomsoever he found there. As he waded up to the door through the drifted snow, he was startled to see four or five dim figures coming along the road from the eastward.

Donald had little doubt that these were some of the convicts, and he divined instantly that his escape from death had been in some way discovered and that the men were after him. A little reflection would have shown him the improbability of this theory, but he had no time for thought just then. In deadly fear he darted around the side of the building to the rear wall, which stood close up to the edge of the forest. He was about to plunge in among the trees when he observed a shuttered window high up on the wall, and just beneath it a huge, irregular shaped rock, which towered almost to the sill.

This gave him an idea. The house would be the safest place for him if he could get inside, while if he sought to escape through the forest he would almost certainly perish from the cold.

In a trice he was on the summit of the rock, and a quick, noiseless pull drew the shutter back on its hinges, revealing a dark interior. Donald did not hesitate for an instant. He threw his legs quietly over the sill and discovered that he was standing on a board floor covered with straw—no doubt the sleeping loft of the telegraph operator. After listening for a moment without hearing the least sound he plucked up confidence and drew the shutter in place.

"If any one is sleeping up here I shall get myself into a nice fix," he muttered, and the thought sent a chill through him. He dropped to his hands and knees and crept noiselessly over the floor. As he paused again to listen he caught a faint noise from the room below, and at the same instant discovered a yellow line of light just ahead of him. The former convinced Donald that the occupant of the house was on the lower floor, and the latter indicated the existence of a trap door. Crawling a few feet he reached the streak of light and found his supposition to be correct. Feeling about with his hand he touched an iron ring, and with a soft pull he lifted the trap half a foot on its hinges, and propped it up with his heavy fur cap.

Through this opening he had a clear view of the room below—and a very snug little apartment it was. A cheerful wood fire was blazing on the hearth, and near by sat a bearded Russian in his shirt sleeves. He was smoking a short pipe and beguiling his loneliness by sorting a pack of cards on his knee. On a chair beside him rested a bottle, a dirty glass, a package of tobacco and a lighted candle; across the room was the table containing the telegraph instruments.

As Donald peered down on this scene, wondering how he could best make his presence known, the outer door was suddenly flung open, and the convicts Valbort and Gross entered, followed by two of their companions. The telegraph operator sprang to his feet in amazement, but before he could open his lips three rifles were trained on his breast.

"If you make any noise you are a dead man," said Valbort sternly. "Do as I tell you and you will not be harmed."

The operator was a plucky fellow, but seeing that he was cornered he accepted the situation as gracefully as possible.

"You are a set of daring scoundrels," he said quietly. "What do you want with me?"

Valbort pointed his one arm at the telegraph instruments. "Sit down there," he said gruffly, "and prepare to send the message that I am going to dictate." The words were accompanied by such a terrible glance that the man obeyed instantly, and took his seat at the table.

"I know all about telegraphy," continued Valbort, "so that you can't deceive me. If you attempt to do so I will kill you instantly. Are you ready? Go ahead then. Call up the operator at the nearest station to the eastward—the one that lies just beyond the bridge over the Angara."

The man hesitated for a second, but it was either obey or lose his life, so he tapped the knob with a trembling finger.

A brief interval of silence ensued. Donald riveted his eyes on the scene, waiting with breathless suspense for what was to follow.

Click! click! The answering signal came back, and the operator turned questioning to Valbort.

"Telegraph as follows," said the latter, bending low over the table:

"The post house at Tolnar has just been attacked by a force of armed robbers. They are killing the Cossacks and plundering the stores. Send all the help possible. Answer before the wires are cut."

The operator ticked off this message with trembling hands and a face that was as pale as ashes and dark with perspiration; and all the while Valbort stood over him repeating the words and listening keenly to every sound of the instrument. He evidently spoke the truth when he said he was familiar with telegraphy, for the quiet smile on his face showed that the message had been sent to his satisfaction.

Turning to his companions he made a quick signal and Gross and one of the others left the room instantly.

CHAPTER XXII.

A TERRIBLE RACE.

IN a short time the door opened and Gross entered—alone. He nodded quickly to Valbort, and the latter, catching at that moment the click of the instrument, turned to his prisoner and said harshly: "Take down that message, quick! Put it on paper."

The operator obeyed, writing and listening by turns, and as he scribbled down the words with a pencil he trembled violently from head to foot.

Valbort snatched the paper from the fellow's hands and read aloud to his companions the reply just received from the post station on the Angara:

"The government transport of gold happened to be here tonight and the Cossacks in charge of it are just starting for Tolnar."

The faces of the convicts expressed the delight they felt on hearing these words.

"Good!" muttered Valbort. "Communication is severed between here and Tolnar, is it?"

"Yes," replied Gross; "we cut the wires all right."

"Then bind this fellow," ordered Valbort. "Be quick about it," and as his companions hurriedly overpowered the operator and tied and gagged him, he picked up an axe from the table and demolished the telegraph instruments on the table.

Then without even glancing at the rude ladder that led to the loft, the three desperate scoundrels dropped the operator in a corner of the room and hurried away, closing the door behind them. The candle was left burning on the chair.

For a while Donald was afraid to venture down, knowing that his life would not be worth a moment's purchase if Valbort returned and found him there. But when five minutes had gone by and all continued quiet he took heart and made his way slowly down the ladder and over to where the helpless operator lay.

The latter rolled his eyes in alarm at sight of this new visitor, but he was quickly reassured when Donald cut his bonds and took the gag from his mouth.

In a few words as possible Donald accounted for his presence in the house, and offered to do what he could do to frustrate the plans of the scoundrels—though what these plans were he did not know.

The operator was at first unable to speak. He rolled his eyes and gasped for breath, and finally made a grab at the bottle of vodka on the chair and swallowed half of the raw spirit at a gulp. Then he gasped all the more for a little while, and finally recovered sufficiently to walk the floor, shedding tears and wringing his hands.

"I am a lost man!" he groaned. "A lost man! I shall lose my position and be imprisoned besides. I could not help it, could I? It was either obey or lose my life."

"But is it too late to do anything?" demanded Donald. "What is their plan? Can't we frustrate it in any way?"

The operator turned and caught him fiercely by the arm.

"They are going to carry off the gold—the Czar's gold, you understand—and we are powerless to prevent them. Don't you see the meaning of that message? Tolnar is fifteen miles west of here, and the station where the gold transport lies is two miles to the east—seventeen miles between the two. By this time the Cossacks in charge of the

gold have abandoned it and are coming this way bound for Tolnar—"

"Can't we intercept them and send them back?" interrupted Donald, making a rush for the door.

The operator caught him and dragged him back. "Do you want to die?" he cried huskily. "The villains are outside yet. They will remain here till the Cossacks go through—so that no one may interfere—and then they will hurry back to join their confederates who are no doubt attacking the post station on the Angara by this time."

Donald turned pale to think that Valbort was so close at hand, and for a moment he could not speak.

"The scoundrels have it all their own way," continued his companion. "They must have known beforehand that the transport train would arrive at the Angara this evening and they were perfectly safe in venturing here to send the message, for not a soul is in the place except the *starosta* and a couple of peasants. All the Cossacks are out scouring the country under General Tichimiroff's orders, and it is uncertain when they will return. The wires are cut between here and Tolnar—and probably to the eastward as well," he added with a rueful glance at the broken instruments.

"Look here," cried Donald suddenly. "I have a plan. I don't believe these fellows are watching *this* place at all—they are probably up at the post station—so what is to hinder us from slipping out of that upper window and getting to the post road in time to meet the Cossacks? We must hurry though, for they are due by this time if the Angara is only two miles away."

The Russian fairly jumped at this suggestion.

"It is worth trying," he exclaimed, and snatching a rifle from its hooks over the fireplace he sprang up the ladder with Donald at his heels, and a moment later both were standing on the edge of the forest behind the house.

They crept noiselessly among the trees for a few yards, and then struck boldly out to the post road, overjoyed at the success which had so far attended their efforts. It was snowing faster than ever, and without a thought of danger they dashed off on a run.

But sharp eyes were prying about the telegraph office all the time that these things were taking place, and as the fugitives sped on through the deepening snow, momentarily expecting to hear the tramp of troops in front, a very different sound fell on their ears from the rear—a hoarse command to stop.

"Faster! Faster!" panted Donald. "We can outdistance them."

"The race can't last long," gasped the operator in reply, and then they plunged on side by side, every muscle strained and every nerve on the alert.

But the pursuers were coming on behind with great strides, and suddenly a sharp report rang out and a red flash lit up the darkness.

Crack! Crack! Two more shots were fired, and this time Donald's companion uttered a sharp cry and plunged headlong in the snow.

Donald stopped and leaned over him. "Where are you hit?" he whispered hoarsely. "Give me your rifle, quick! I won't desert you."

But the poor Russian neither moved nor spoke. Donald tried to lift him up, but he slipped limply out of his grasp back into the snow.

Crack! Another bullet whistled overhead and brought to Donald a stern sense of his responsibility. His duty was to the living, not the dead, and picking up the poor operator's rifle he dashed off again, with tears of sympathy rolling down his cheeks, and in his heart

a tigerish hatred of the men who had done this cruel murder.

Twice he turned and fired back into the darkness, hoping thus to scare off his pursuers, but he gained only a temporary advantage, and glancing over his shoulder as he ran he saw three dim figures slowly overhauling him.

He thought at times that he must give up the struggle and drop, for the snow had drifted in the road and beat furiously on his face, but the hopes of thwarting the convicts at the very moment of their greatest success gave him superhuman strength, and he plunged on, staggering from side to side to dodge the bullets that whistled at intervals by his ears.

Well might Valbort and his companions strive their best to overtake the fleeing figure in front of them, for they knew clearly what it meant if they failed, but shots proved futile, and in spite of their fleet footedness they gained but slowly on the fugitive.

Sooner or later they must overtake him provided—Ah! it is too late! Hark! a dull, muffled sound echoes through the night, is borne swiftly on the wind. It comes nearer and grows louder until its origin is beyond doubt. The air is shaking now with the thunderous pounding of hoofs, and bearing like a whirlwind through the falling snow come a squad of Cossacks, urging their wiry little horses to their top speed. Dimly Donald sees their approach and realizes that he is saved.

"Stop! Stop!" he cries, and as he reels blindly into their very path, and yells hoarsely, and waves his arms, and shoots his rifle in the air, the fiery horses are reined back on their haunches and stop within a foot or two of the madly gesticulating figure.

Breathlessly Donald tells his story, and there are many exclamations of anger and surprise, but no word of doubt.

Valbort and his companions have shrunk off into the forest where pursuit is useless, so the Cossacks wheel around, Donald mounted behind the leader, and go pounding back through the snowy night—back at terrific speed to the little post station by the Angara to rescue the Czar's convoy of gold from the threatening peril.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A WELL CONDUCTED ROBBERY.

CAPTAIN ANDRE DAGMAR reached the little post station on the Angara with his transport train of gold early on the afternoon of the day which witnessed Donald's journey down the river and his subsequent misadventures.

It was a lonely and desolate spot, but in view of the threatened severity of the snow storm which was then raging, Andre was compelled to remain here until the wheels could be taken off his transport wagons and runners substituted in their stead, and as night came on before this operation was finished he concluded to defer his start until the following morning.

It was unwise to start from Irkutsk in the first place with wagons, but at that time there was no immediate prospect of heavy snows, and moreover Colonel Sudekin would not permit of the delay necessary to make the change. He was in haste to get the convoy of gold safely past the dangerous part of the road.

Captain Dagmar was chatting with the *starosta* when the telegraph operator rushed in with the startling news that robbers had attacked the post station at Tolnar, and that the defenders were in urgent need of help.

Andre lost no time in hesitation or in debating with himself what his duty was under the circumstances. The gold was

not in peril (so he reasoned) but Tolnar was, and he must give the beleaguered station what help he could.

His escort consisted of fourteen Cossacks—including the drivers of the four wagons—and there happened to be three Cossacks and an officer at the station.

The former hurried into the post house on the heels of the operator and breathlessly demanded what was to be done.

"Take your own three men," cried Andre, "and ten of my Cossacks and ride to Tolnar as fast as possible. As soon as the danger is over send my men back, for I must leave here in the morning, and I can't start without them."

The operator flashed back the tidings of aid—little dreaming of its real destination—and after a vexatious delay caused by rousing the Cossacks from sleep, the rescue party mounted in haste and galloped off in the direction of Tolnar, fourteen strong.

Andre followed them to the gates of the courtyard and watched them speed across the Angara bridge and disappear in the night. As he turned back into the yard, where the four heavily laden sledges stood in a row, he was conscious of a vague feeling of uneasiness—a premonition of coming peril which he tried vainly to shake off. There in front of him lay treasure to the amount of 2,000,000 rubles, and the only defenders that could be counted on at the present time were himself, the telegraph operator, the *starosta* and four Cossacks, the latter of whom were then sleeping in the sledges.

"I have done the best I could," thought Andre, "I would have been severely censured had I refused to send aid to Tolnar. On the other hand, if anything happens to the gold my hopes for the future are blasted, and I will be sent back to Irkutsk in disgrace."

The *starosta* coming by at this moment Andre inquired if the gates could not be more securely fastened; calling attention to the frail bar that held them together.

"Yes, your honor," was the reply. "We can prop some heavy logs against them and there are some old sledges in the stable that will help."

"Get them at once," commanded Andre. "I shall not feel easy until everything is secure and—"

Crash! crash! crash! a terrific pounding began on the outer side of the gates, and the whole length of the stockade trembled under the heavy blows.

A hoarse shout from Andre roused the sleeping Cossacks, and the brave fellows came tumbling out of the sledges, rifles in hand.

The *starosta* made a break for the post-house, yelling with fright, and collided so violently with the telegraph operator, who was coming out, that both measured their length in the snow.

Crash! Crash! The pounding went on unceasingly, and as the frail bar split in twain and fell to the ground, the gates flew open and the convicts burst into the yard a dozen strong.

Bang! bang! bang! bang! Rifles cracked, and the air rang with hoarse shouts and groans of pain. Down went two brave Cossacks never to rise again, and down went three convicts headlong in the snow. They were receiving more than they bargained for, but they were desperate fellows, and on they came with a rush.

Andre was armed only with a revolver, and when he had emptied its chambers in rapid succession he sprang back to the nearest sledge where he knew he would find rifles and ammunition.

At that moment the convicts gained the intervening ground with a mad rush that swept the opposing Cossacks aside and trampled them under foot, and an instant later the sledges were surrounded. As Andre appeared at the rear end

of the nearest one, rifle in hand, two ruffians sprang in from the front, and the brave young captain was stricken down by a blow from a clubbed rifle. He dropped heavily beside the chests of gold and lay there unnoticed.

The convicts were now in indisputable possession and they lost no time in carrying out their formulated plan. The horses were brought quickly from the stable and harnessed to the sledges. The dead and wounded were picked up and thrown in with the chests of gold, and then mounting to the seats, the convicts drove rapidly out through the broken gateway. There was none to hinder, for the *starosta* was hidden in the post house and the operator had fled to the telegraph office only to find all communication to the westward cut off.

As the sledges turned into the road a distant trampling of hoofs was heard, and a sentry who had been posted near the bridge, ran up, crying breathlessly, "The Cossacks! The Cossacks! They are coming back!"

Strange to say, the clever scoundrels had provided even for this emergency.

The rear sledge was instantly overturned across the road—which was very narrow at this point—and a short gap as filled up with the chests of gold. Then the remaining three sledges, each with a single man in charge, were driven away at furious speed to the eastward, bearing with them Andre's unconscious body, while the other six convicts looked hurriedly to their arms and ran in the opposite direction toward the narrow bridge that spanned the Angara.

Baranok had planned this daring deed long beforehand in such a manner as to preclude the possibility of failure, and his men had executed their instructions well.

The ride back was a brief and exciting one to Donald Chumleigh. He held tight to his companion with both hands to avoid falling off, and bowed his head behind the Cossack's broad back to escape the severity of the wind and the driving snow.

Never was the speed of these tough little ponies tested more thoroughly than now, and so swiftly did the road vanish under their hoofs that in almost less time than it takes to tell the mile and a half was covered, and peering sideways Donald saw ahead of him a post in the dark forest that skirted the road.

A moment later the Angara bridge loomed out of the shadows, and as the Cossacks swept up to the entrance a rifle volley was fired from the other end and down went the leader's horse with a bullet in its brain. Donald and the officer came headlong to the ground, but the soft snow prevented injury and they rose to their feet just as a second volley was fired.

The Cossacks blazed away in return, but the convicts were snugly ensconced behind the parapets of the bridge, and they instantly let fly a third volley which brought down one of the Cossacks and slightly wounded another.

The troops fell back to a safe distance, dismounted, and left a man in charge of the horses, and then valiantly charged the bridge, only to find that the enemy had vanished.

But the convicts had not fled far, and when the Cossacks returned for their horses and clattered furiously over the bridge and up to the post house they were met by a severe fire from behind the barricade that brought down three of their number.

Donald had been left behind to come up on foot, and when he reached the spot the scene was as warlike as one could wish to see it. Both parties were firing without cessation and the air was thick with powder smoke.

Meanwhile the frightened telegraph operator was working the wires with feverish energy, flashing exaggerated accounts of the fray to Irkutsk and to the intermediate stations—the nearest of which, however, was twenty miles distant. Knowing this the convicts had not meddled with the wires to the eastward.

For full half an hour the Cossacks were held at bay before that slight barricade, and just when they were preparing to blow it up with powder, the foe suddenly melted away into the thick forest, and a deadly stillness succeeded to the crack of rifles.

Eager hands tore down the heap of chests, and through the narrow gap the Cossacks rode one by one and dashed away in pursuit of the stolen sledges, hoping to find their progress plainly marked in the snow.

Donald was now quite alone and forgotten. Two dead bodies lay near him, and a wounded Cossack had just been dragged into the courtyard by a companion.

More than one saddle had been emptied, and, as a riderless horse trotted by Donald dexterously caught it, and picking up a rifle that lay near, swung himself to the saddle with the intention of following the Cossacks and joining the search.

At that instant the operator and the *starosta* appeared on the scene, both brave enough now that the danger was over; and seeing Donald in his military attire they took him for one of the convicts, and with a daring that surprised themselves, they blazed away at the supposed enemy—the one with a pistol, the other with an old musket.

By pure chance one of the bullets grazed the horse in a tender part, and off he went like a hurricane, through the gap in the barricade, and across the post road and then into the dark forest on the left, racing madly on and with his rider clinging to his back.

It was little short of a miracle that the brute did not collide with the trees or rocks, for the path taken was plentifully strewn with both, but he made clear headway for fully a mile in spite of Donald's efforts to check him, and finally slackened speed at the bottom of a steep descent.

"I'm in a pretty fix!" muttered Donald. "How will I ever find my way back?"

As he brought the panting horse to a dead stop and peered anxiously into the surrounding forest a succession of strange sounds fell on his ear—a great splashing, the neigh of a frightened horse, a couple of angry curses, and a cry for help. Spurring his steed in the direction whence this strange tumult came, Donald soon found himself on the brink of a deep and rapid stream, and was greatly startled by the scene that met his eyes.

(To be continued.)

TRAINING IN YOUTH.

The following are the extracts referred to on our editorial page, taken from an article on "Training," by Sir Morell Mackenzie, in the *New York Herald*:

Any system of bodily discipline is likely to be hurtful first, if it is begun at too early an age; second, if it is too severe or too prolonged; third, if, owing to special circumstances, it is unsuitable to the person subjected to it. * * *

Nothing like systematic training should ever be attempted before the growth of the body is nearly completed. * * * During adolescence, while the limbs and organs are in process of active development, the whole available stock of vital energy is required to meet the immediate wants of the growing organisms. * * * Growing lads, in fact, have no assets to avert physiological bankruptcy when there is any extraordinary call on their physical resources, while fully developed men in good health have always a considerable balance in their favor. * * *

If training is begun at too early an age the development of the body, so far from being promoted, is too likely to be pre-

maturely arrested thereby. Growing lads who have to do work beyond their strength often become stunted in stature, and it has been observed in French lycées that boys have stopped growing at as early an age as twelve in consequence of excessive practice in the gymnasium. Not only is the growth interfered with, but deformity and even disease frequently result from premature overuse of the muscles. During adolescence the bones are soft and spongy; they are to a considerable extent composed of gristle rather than solid osseous material, and the different parts of which they consist are imperfectly welded together.

They may not inaptly be compared to a wall in course of building where the mortar is not yet dry. Moreover, young bones have a relatively large amount of blood in them; they are, in fact, in a state of congestion which makes them prone to inflammation from comparatively slight causes, as a building containing a large quantity of combustible material is likely to be set on fire by a trifling accident. This physiological congestion of the bones is particularly marked in the neighborhood of joints, and it is accordingly in these parts that mischief is most likely to arise.

Given the conditions which I have described it is not surprising how curvature of the spine, bruising of the vertebrae, bleeding into the interior of joints, inflammation, abscess, and even partial disintegration of bones, with many other evils, often follow muscular efforts too severe for the imperfectly consolidated framework of a growing body.

CHANGING THEIR NATURE.

In the following paragraph the *Chicago Mail* describes a process of transformation in animals that has been frequently noticed by scientists; this gradual accommodation to circumstances or environments is not confined to the lower animals, but man, also, shares the tendency.

The effect upon animals of a change in the conditions of their life is a favorite topic among zoologists, who find that nearly every species of animals existed in some other form in its present form at some previous epoch of the world. The whale, for instance, was once a land animal. Forced to take to the water for a living, he became in time much more like a fish in shape than like a quadruped.

According to a Tasmanian paper a modification of the form of a familiar European animal is going on in the Australian world under the eye of the people there.

The Australian rabbit, imported from Europe, is acquiring the form of a cat and learning to climb. As is well known, the rabbits of Australia have increased to such enormous numbers that they have become a great pest, swarming over the land and devouring the farmers' crops.

In order to protect the fields the farmers put up wire netting in place of fences. The rabbits could not get through these, but they presently began to burrow beneath them. Then the farmers sank the nettings six or eight inches into the soil. This stopped the rabbits from getting in by digging, but they presently began to attempt to climb over the netting. As the result of this climbing, it is said, the rabbits are developing a new habit. The nail development has been noticed in Queensland, and still later in Tasmania.

According to the theory of natural selection, it is likely presently to happen that in certain districts only those rabbits will survive which can climb trees, and in this way a race of climbing rabbits may be developed.

COSTLY TO MARRY IN MEXICO.

OUR own antenuptial customs are fairly cooperative as regards the sharing of wedding expenses between the groom and the parents of a bride; the custom that obtains in Mexico, described by the *Boston Herald*, would seem to be such as to furnish many decisions of the once rampant question, "Is Marriage a Failure?" by bringing bankruptcy on grooms of moderate means at a painfully early stage of the proceedings.

Among the peculiar customs of Mexico is one which makes it incumbent upon engaged young men to go shopping for their sweethearts before the wedding. The merchant who unites them as one of Young men go up to the city of Mexico from interior towns and lay in a stock of finery for their prospective wives in the most natural and matter of fact way.

It is a touching sight to see a young man, armed with all the measurements of his innamorata, going about from shop to shop sometimes assisted by obliging lady friends, purchasing the wedding toggery. A man shopping is always a pitiful sight, but a young fellow with no experience in shopping trying to do his best for a momentous occasion is enough to make the gods on Olympus weep.

Sometimes, as in a recent case, the parents will not allow the young man to buy more than a few articles, such as the wedding dress and slippers. But then, such is the swain's ardor and superheated generosity, that he almost ruins himself in an endeavor to display even in these restricted gifts his taste and liberality.

FEATURES OF COLLEGE LIFE.

By An Initiate.

HERE is the man who does not look back on his college days with a sense of humorous pleasure? For no matter how difficult his course may have been, no matter what disadvantages he may have labored under, it is hard, indeed, if he was not able to mingle with his most trying labors a variety of genuine fun, to say nothing of the entire novelty

of his experience at a most impressionable age.

Different customs, modes of living and amusement prevail at different colleges; there are some that are common to most of them. The student takes quarters within a building provided by the college for living purposes or in a neighboring boarding house; in either case he sets up a veritable bachelor's den, the main features of which are books, implements of athletic sports, clothes and confusion; in some of the colleges there is a dining hall; more frequently the thrifty housewives of the town provide tables for a small number of students, where daily havoc is played by fierce and healthy appetites. These little cliques are boarded at a fixed price; those who arrange to participate form themselves into a sort of association, dividing the total expense, and call themselves the "Cannibal Eating Club," or some such fantastic name. The first want of man is to eat, and the club life, which is so prominent a feature of the college career, begins at the very beginning—the social board.

A student having taken possession of his quarters, eaten his first meal and reported to the college authorities, then joins his class; the class immediately organizes itself into a formal association, with officers and an abridged volume of parliamentary law and proceeds to devise ways and means to get ahead of all the other classes in any and every way. If it be the Freshman class, it is more likely to purchase "bangers," place itself on the defensive and await events; if the Sophomore class, it probably at once formulates a notice, to be posted in a conspicuous place, warning the Freshmen not to carry bangers (definition, a thick walking stick,) or smoke cigarettes, under pain of annihilation. The Sophomores also resolve themselves into self appointed committees to visit the rooms of the Freshmen at the dead of night, when the moon is not in evidence, pull them out of bed, make them stand on their heads, sing a song, deliver a speech and promise everlasting and implicit obedience to the august Sophomoric mandates; then, perhaps, they make the novice dress, blindfold him and, with many tortuous turnings and doublings, lead him to some open field which seems to be miles away, and command him to stand immovable till the chimes ring out the witching hour of two A. M. The Freshman straightway removes his bandages, sees shadowy forms disappearing in the black night, and painfully makes his way back to town. This is "hazing;" it is usually harmless; sometimes brutal students, throwing off their thin disguises as gentlemen, perpetrate outrages that expulsion but inadequately punishes.

The Junior class organization inaugu-

ates a crusade against the Sophomoric plug hat, and so effectually, that if any remain in town a week or two later, they rest in the stygian darkness of the furthest corner under the bed.

The Senior class do little else as an organization than arrange for the next Commencement solemnities by appointing orators and committees, incidentally being drawn together in pharisaical bonds of thankfulness that they are at last so immeasurably above the youthful follies of the lower classes and have arrived at the age of beardhood.

Not many days have passed after the beginning of the session when the inherent animosity between the Freshman and Sophomore finds expression in a rush; this might be an informal affair in one of the college corridors, where, by a strange coincidence, thirty or forty Freshmen happen to be moving in one direction and somehow chance to meet an equal body of Sophomores, coming toward them in similarly compact array; the impetus of the bodies make them crash solidly together, and a hand to hand struggle takes place; one body, of course, prevails, finally plowing its way through the other, or driving it backward before its irresistible onslaught.

More often, however, the two classes settle disputed questions by a cane rush. Three stout men from each class stand in the middle of an open space, all grasping one strong stick; the two classes are massed together on either side at a little distance; the time keeper gives the signal, and the opposing hordes spring for those six men. Freshmen try to pull Sophomores out of the combat and Sophomores throttle Freshmen; every individual, by fair means if possible, tries to get near to the cane in the center, whether over the others' heads or under their feet, matters not, and having got there tries to grasp the stick and hold on to it, for, suddenly the umpire calls time, the outer crowd breaks away, and a count is made to ascertain whether the Freshman or the Sophomore hands grasping the cane are in the majority. If the Freshmen have more men on the cane when time is called, they thus establish their right to carry walking sticks unmolested throughout the ensuing year; if they lose, each man who thereafter sports a "banger" does it at his peril, for the Sophs will pounce on him, wrest his stick away, and, dividing the pieces of it, hang these in their chambers as the spoil of righteous war.

Then there are football clubs, baseball clubs; tennis, lacrosse, game, walking, running, chess, whist, dramatic, literary—a score of different organizations to which the average college man must belong, and which provide for him unconsciously their own education as valuable in its way as that which he is deriving from his books.

But there is yet to be mentioned the most important of all his organizations—the Greek Letter Fraternity. This is of tremendous influence for good in his college life, often furnishing him a home in the society of close friends, and providing for him an intimate association with upper classmen, who bear themselves toward him as helpful elder brothers; the fraternity gives him the *entrée* into the best social circles in the college town, and, if he wears the badge of one of the half dozen leading fraternities of the country, he will be accepted as a gentleman on sight by virtue of his connection with an exclusive circle known to reject all that are not of refined breeding and with some signs of intellectuality.

There are many of these Greek Letter Fraternities throughout the country, each having branches, called chapters or charges, at various colleges. These

fraternities are secret societies, and in every college, excepting only one, they are welcomed as beneficial institutions, conducive to better scholarship, refinement and orderliness and general elevation of tone. A chapter has a certain membership limit; within this limit it endeavors to get the best men, intellectually and socially, that are in the college; each chapter strives to secure as many commencement prizes and honors as possible, and the fraternity element is dominant in the politics of the class, in the literary societies and on the boards of the college journals. These organizations are known as "Greek Letter," because for names they have the initial letters of a short Greek motto, which is kept strictly secret, and is generally supposed to embody in a general way the particular aims of each. Some of these names are: Kappa Alpha, Alpha Delta Phi, Psi Upsilon, Delta Kappa Epsilon.

Each college has chapters of several fraternities, and as soon as a chapter finds itself in suitable financial condition it builds a house of good appearance and ample proportions, called a chapter house, and in it are established living rooms for the chapter members, kitchen, parlors, and, in fact, all the adjuncts of a home, besides a hall for meeting purposes, the latter usually draped severely and impressively with many of the paraphernalia familiar to the Masonic orders.

The rivalry among chapters for desirable membership is very great, and the process of "sizing up" a new man and securing his pledge to join is oftentimes very amusing; the process is called "soaking" or "rushing."

A desirable looking Freshman is espied by one of the society men, who immediately proceeds to "make up to" the youth, and introduces him to the other chapter members, who expend every possible effort to draw the young fellow out and to make themselves attractive and necessary to him, meanwhile exerting the greatest vigilance in getting in the way of members of other societies who may seek to approach him. When matters have come to a mutually satisfactory pass between Freshman and society, the latter offers an election and the former signs a solemn pledge to join this and only this fraternity.

Being pledged, the Freshman is later initiated. On the night appointed two of his future "brothers" call upon him; perhaps they blindfold him, and lead him thus through the town to the initiation hall. Arriving he is put through a ceremony that is sure to be solemn and very impressive, with much darkness, black gowns and skulls for incidentals; the secrets of the fraternity are spread before him after he has sworn the solemn oaths prescribed; he learns the motto, the meaning of the symbols, of the badge, the aims of the society, its constitution, its worthy history, its great extent, the names of the Presidents, poets, scientists, and other great men who are members. Then the secret grip is revealed to him and the fraternity badge pinned upon his breast. This is the proudest moment of his life; it is possibly the most important, for he may, in the chapter life to follow, have new and hitherto unthought of aims presented to him, may have his budding manhood molded and set into the worthy form, that will distinguish him ever after, under the name of "character."

QUEER ANTICS OF WATCHES.

SOME of the eccentricities of the watch are described by the *Boston Globe*. These are not to be wondered at when the extreme delicacy of this remarkable piece of machinery is appreciated.

Decidedly the watch is a very queer thing. It possesses some unaccountable pe-

culiarities. Some time ago, when there had been a succession of fine displays of the aurora borealis, it is estimated that in a single night in New York, the main springs of not less than 3,000 watches broke. This estimate is based on actual inquiries.

Fine, sensitive watches are particularly liable to be affected by electrical atmospheric disturbances. During the months of June, July and August, when these phenomena are most frequent, there are more mainsprings broken than during all the remaining months of the year. They break in a variety of ways, sometimes snapping into as many as twenty-seven pieces.

It is a fact that since the introduction of the electric light has become so general, a large number of watches, some of them very fine ones, have become magnetized. While in this condition they are useless as time keepers. This defect used to be considered incurable, and because of it thousands of watches have been thrown away, after much money had been spent on them in vain attempts to persuade them to keep good time.

Among the methods resorted to were washing the parts in garlic juice, refinishing and passing through the fire. But all these devices were failures, or only in part effective.

Watches frequently get magnetized in iron mines or machine shops, where they are incautiously brought near swiftly running belts.

It is a well known fact among horologists that no watch can keep the same time with two people. The cause has not yet been definitely ascertained, but it would seem that in some mysterious way a watch is affected by the temperament of the wearer. The mere physical difference in gait and movement of two different people is not sufficient to account for all the variations that have been observed.

ON THE RAIL.

THE railway is tremendously important to a country's development; it is the common carrier of civilization, and as it plows its furrow through new territories it casts in its path the seeds of trade and prosperity. The *Boston Globe* puts together some statistics regarding the railroads of the country:

There are just 30,000 locomotives in the United States. One half of these are used in hauling freight trains. It is pretty safe to say that the locomotives in the United States cost \$450,000,000. There are 1,100,000 cars of all kinds, of which 200,000 are passenger cars, and the remainder freight or road service cars.

The passenger cars cost about \$250,000,000, and the freight cars about \$800,000,000. So, you see, we have approximately \$1,500,000,000 as the cost of the rolling stock of our railways, a sum great enough to pay the national debt and more.

Now, suppose all these locomotives were coupled together and started over the country in one solid train, how long do you think it would be? asks the statistician of the inter-state commerce commission. Three hundred miles; yes, three hundred miles of locomotives; power enough to pull Jupiter down to the earth.

Then add the passenger cars, and we should have three hundred miles more; and if we wanted a huge mixed train, and were to put in all the box, flat, and every other kind of freight car, the train would be more than seven thousand miles long.

The passenger cars could carry more than 1,500,000 of people, and upon the freight cars could be loaded the weight of all the pyramids of Egypt and all the State capitols in the United States.

To every five miles of railroad in the United States there is a locomotive. To every mile of road there are six freight cars. To every five and a half miles there is a passenger car. Each year a freight engine hauls 35,000 tons of load; each year a passenger engine pulls 60,000 passengers.

The railways of the United States employ 725,000 persons, nearly all men. It is estimated that the railway interest provides a living for 3,000,000 in this country, or nearly one twentieth of the population.

A CURIOUS FIGURE.

AN old but odd relation of the figure 9 to its multiples is revived by the *Detroit Free Press*.

A remarkable figure is the 9. Set it down in multiplication, thus:

```

1x9=9
2x9=18
3x9=27
4x9=36
5x9=45
6x9=54
7x9=63
8x9=72
9x9=81
10x9=90

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Now, do you see in the 10 column that it runs, reading down, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and reading up in the unit column it is 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and another curious fact is that the columns when added make 9; and 8, 2 and 7, etc.

FAIR WARNING.

POET (in newspaper office)—"Have you an efficient staff?"

EDITOR—"Perhaps not; but I have a very effective club."—*Puck*.



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BARNUM IN BRONZE.

BESIDESurveying "refined instruction and pure intellectual delight" to the American people, the late Phineas Taylor Barnum performed many other services for the public less open to doubt as to their enduring benefit. Among such, he made the city of Bridgeport many times more important and more beautiful than it was when he found it.

It was here that he placed the winter quarters of his immense show and thus gave employment to scores of people; the trade of the town was thus increased. He built his remarkable residences here, of which the first, of more than local celebrity and widely known as "Iranistan" was burned down; these lent beauty to the neighborhood, as did also parks and public buildings which Mr. Barnum projected; he also built many cottages of superior quality for wage workers, and thus put within financial reach of hundreds that thing so dear to every heart—a home.

It is for such reasons that Bridgeport is about to set up a statue to Mr. Barnum that will be entirely worthy the beneficent services given to the city by this unique man.

DISAPPEARING FROM THE EARTH.

THE sealing question in its various phases continues to be a prominent topic in the columns of the press. It is a question of international importance, and even danger, as regards the sealing vessels of one nation following their quest in the proprietary waters of another nation in violation of international compacts. This side of the question will not, it is to be hoped, go any further than its present limits of acrimonious correspondence between the state departments of the United States and Canada.

Each nation owning sealing grounds finds it its interest to put forth every possible effort for the prevention of killing young seals and of fishing during the breeding season. Already, it is claimed, the seals of Behring Sea have in these ways been decimated and unless such practices are circumvented, the seal will eventually be, as the buffalo and the beaver have already become, an animal of great rarity, seen only in the zoological gardens and the most remote and secluded portions of the northwestern coast.

With the loss of the seal will disappear a commercial product more valuable than the noble buffalo ever produced—more valuable, perhaps, even than the fur of the beaver which was in such universal demand as to have resulted in virtual extermination.

A STURDY GROWTH.

IN May next three more modern and formidable ships of war will be added to the once despised but now growing navy of our country. These three sister cruisers, known as Numbers 9, 10 and 11, will bring the number of new ships up to twenty four, leaving eleven more either building or planned.

These three vessels will be two hundred and fifty seven feet long and will develop a speed of over twenty miles an hour, propelled by twin

screws. They will be armed with many rapid fire, breech loading rifles, and tubes for the discharge of self-propelling torpedoes.

A protective watertight space filled with the plant product known as cellulose will surround all the machinery compartments; this protective belt has been shot through and through in tests and the filling substance has immediately settled and formed a compact mass that excludes all water except about a gallon that rushes in immediately after the shot.

One of these vessels will cost \$674,000, the other two, \$612,500 each. This is money well spent; it is not really appropriated for the purposes of warfare and human destruction, but primarily on the theory of all standing armies—a degree of preparation and perfection so formidable as to make it the wiser policy for a disputing nation to come to an amicable settlement—in other words, "Beware of the Dog."

SUCCESS OF MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE.

THE new monthly issued from the office of THE ARGOSY has scored a hit. Everybody is pleased with with it, and the edition of the present number is almost exhausted. "Vera Shamarin," the great Russian story, by William Murray Graydon, which fills forty four pages of this issue, has been the subject of special praise. If you have not yet seen the October number of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE you can procure it for twenty five cents of your newsdealer, or, if he has sold all his copies, send the amount to this office and you will receive the magazine by return mail. See advertisement on the fifteenth page.

SOLDIERS IN ARMOR.

WITH the increasing use and the perfecting of firearms, the wearing of armor ceased; now it is again coming into use. There are cuirassiers in England and on the Continent who have long worn the resplendent steel breast-plates and flashing casques with their streaming plumes of horsehair, red or black, constituting the most brilliant figures of the European armies; but now France and Germany both are about to furnish their soldiers of the line with cuirasses of copper and aluminum, having a resistance three times greater than steel.

CONCERNING OVERTRAINING.

THE special article on "Overtraining" had hardly gone to press when it received startling corroboration in an article by Sir Morrell Mackenzie, Queen Victoria's physician, which filled several columns of one of the metropolitan journals. This paper was devoted to the dangers of training for athletic sports, and the learned physician was especially emphatic in his warning to youthful aspirants for track honors.

On another page we give a few extracts from this important paper which, it is hoped, will be carefully read by our youthful athletes.

GENERAL ALEXANDER S. WEBB,

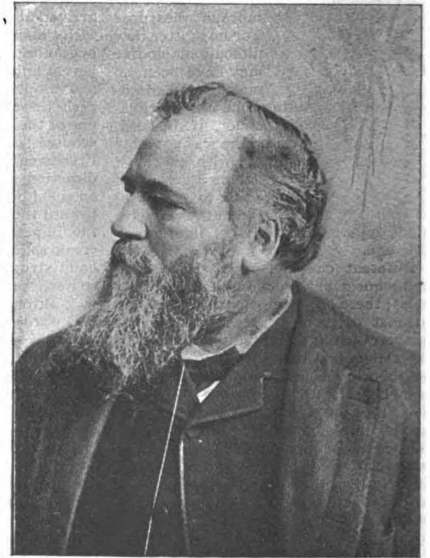
PRESIDENT OF THE COLLEGE OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK.

THE president of the College of the City of New York presents a striking figure as he sits in his sanctum—portly, of noble face and forehead, with a quick, flashing eye, and the bearing of one accustomed to command; the unlucky undergraduate trembles when first he has to meet that gaze on being summoned for some delinquency—trembles until he notices it is not a stern look he is encountering but one apparently of surprise; if he is a sensitive lad he will probably never forget how on this occasion, when he expected severe censure, he was met with this look of surprise and an expression of disappointment that one so bright and so capable as himself had permitted the occurrence to come to pass. The young man need not harden his mind to receive a punishment—he is punished by being made to feel how far above his thoughtless act he really is, and how far he had descended to commit it. It is by such tactful ways that General Alexander S. Webb has endeared himself to an army of students.

General Webb comes of sturdy American stock; his grandfather fought at Bunker Hill and was aide-de-camp and private secretary to General Washing-

ton; his father was James Watson Webb of journalistic fame and a minister to Brazil. The son was born in the City of New York, February 15, 1835. He was a very mischievous little fellow, he says, and they had hard work to keep him quiet; the high spirit of the child later on became the fire and the brilliancy of the soldier.

The boy was educated at private schools and then entered West Point; he made an excellent record there, being graduated in 1855 thirteenth in a class of thirty four. He was assigned to the artillery, and



GENERAL ALEXANDER S. WEBB.

after three years' soldiering in the wilds as a lieutenant he was appointed assistant professor of mathematics at West Point. They remembered him for a long while after his departure as the best mathematical instructor the institution had ever known.

In 1861 he passed through the various grades of first lieutenant, captain, and major. He was present at the Battle of Bull Run and had a prominent command under McClellan in the defenses of Washington until 1852. Then he passed successively through the Peninsula and the Rapidan campaigns, being present also, a brigadier general, at the great battle of Gettysburg, where, stationed at the "angle," he met the terrible charge of Pickett's Confederate division, repulsed them and took the major part prisoners. He was wounded on this field, and received a medal from General Meade for "distinguished personal gallantry." Recovering, he was again wounded in the battle of Spotsylvania in 1864. From 1865 until 1866 he was acting inspector general of the military division of the Atlantic. This closed a field record of great gallantry, recognized by his being commissioned in 1865 a major general "for gallant and meritorious services."

The war over, General Webb was appointed professor of constitutional and international law and of mental philosophy at the Military Academy, where for two years he daily taught without text book, so thoroughly had he mastered the principles of law during the odd hours of the preceding years.

In 1869 he was called to the president's chair of the College of the City of New York, the institution where a free collegiate education is offered to those graduates of the public schools who are competent to pass the entrance examinations. Under the supervision of General Webb the college has increased its efficiency and its scope, and it is now one of the most thorough institutions of learning in the country.

President Webb is a staunch friend to those students who are honest, brave, and manly; a sneak he has no mercy for, and such are the only ones who can complain of severity.

General Webb has received the degree of Doctor of Laws from Hobart College; but dearer to the heart of a soldier than any title of letters is the supreme distinction that came to him in September last—a medal from Congress for "distinguished personal gallantry in the war."

JUDSON NEWMAN SMITH.

THE BRIGHTER SIDE.

FOR, as in the days of winter,
When the snow drifts whiten the hill,
Some birds in the air will flutter,
And warble to cheer us still;
So, if we would hark to the music,
Some hope with a starry wing,
In the days of our darkest sorrow,
Will sit in the heart and sing.

—PHEBE CARY.

THE PIRATES' HOARD.

BY HUGH PENWORTHY.

OLD Henry Pruett, head of the firm of Pruett and Company, Salem, sat in his dingy warehouse office on the wharf one afternoon in the year 1809, watching the *Alice*, the queen of his fleet, as she lay beside the wharf unloading the last of her precious cargo of spices and dyewoods gathered from East Indian ports. At a neighboring dock lay the *Hawk*, almost the counterpart of the *Alice*, and owned by Blade Brothers, his bitter rivals in the Eastern trade. Both ships were full rigged three masters of beautiful lines, with tall, tapering masts that carried an enormous spread of canvas when under full sail; and both were ornamented with the white stripe dotted with gun ports that betokened the dual capacities of trader and fighter that merchantmen of those days had to assume.

The white locks of Captain Tom Plunkett presently appeared above the litter that cumbered the sweeping decks of the *Alice*, and with a more youthful spring than his elderly appearance would warrant, he leaped from the rail to the wharf and advanced toward the office. An idle sailor, who had been lounging at the door, stepped out to meet the captain; a short colloquy followed, ending by the captain impatiently brushing the sailor aside and entering the dusty sanctum.

"Good afternoon, Mr. Pruett, sir!" was the captain's salute.

"A fternoon, Tom!" responded Mr. Pruett. "Things seem to be going slow, very slow aboard."

"No slower 'n usual, Mr. Pruett, sir. Tomorrow evening will see the hold emptied, sir, and ten days is all the leeway I want to stow away a new cargo."

"But the *Hawk* sails on Wednesday Tom, and they say she takes out a light cargo on this voyage. With a week's start for her and a heavy cargo for the *Alice*, you'll be beat, Tom, sure as guns."

"I don't believe it!—begging your leave, Mr. Pruett, sir," the captain had begun hotly, but recovered himself with confusion. "With those new topgallant spars we—well now!" the captain suddenly interrupted himself as the sailor who had approached him outside appeared at the door of the office. "I told you I wanted to hear none of your yarns. Get right out—quick."

"But, cap'n, its no yarn I'm spinnin', so help me. The treasure be there, an' no mistake, 'n all you've got to do is to pick it up without goin' more 'n fifty miles out o' your course."

Mr. Pruett looked inquiringly at Captain Plunkett, who responded:

"Oh, the fellow has a yarn about a pirate's treasure buried somewhere around the Cape and—"

"Madergasker, cap'n, Madergasker!" corrected the sailor.

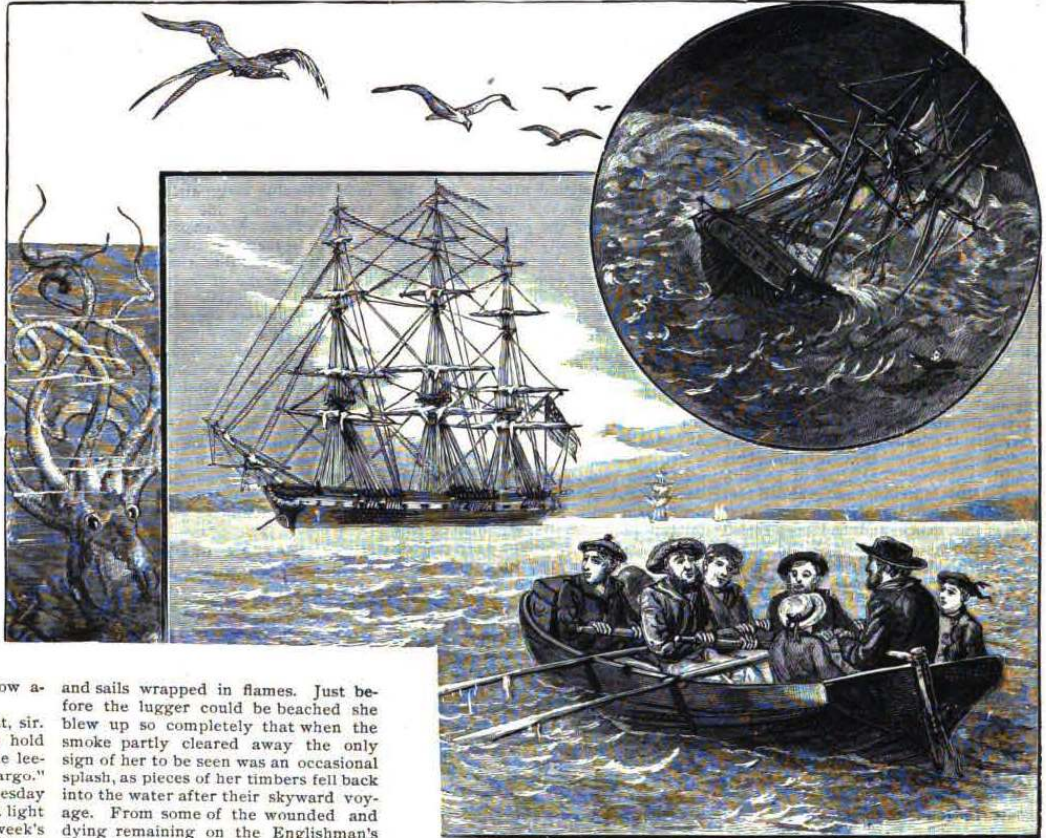
"What he's after is a berth on the *Alice*; he knows we ship no strangers and he thinks we're fools enough to swallow his bait and take him aboard."

But as Mr. Pruett seemed to be anxious to hear the tale, the sailor was told to tell it over again. It was to the effect that, on the homeward passage from Bombay to London in an English East Indiaman, his ship had fallen in with a pirate craft when somewhere off the coast of Madagascar—just where he would not tell, but he claimed he could indicate it precisely. The pirate was in rather a battered condition at the time, as if she had just come out of an engagement, but nevertheless she tackled the Englishman then and there, running afoul her starboard bow and grappling. Her boarders were repelled with frightful carnage, and she somehow got afire. Seeing this the Englishman at once cut loose, while the pirate made for the shore under her lea, her masts

hours later it shifted directly around toward the southwest and for five days they were compelled to scud before it. This was favorable enough for their homeward passage, but it drove them from their treasure store, and, as time was not too plenty, the captain had to rest content with promising himself to land on the Madagascar shore on his next voyage out, trusting that the pirate den would remain undiscovered. He and the sailor (so the story went) had kept to themselves what they had seen, feigning, when they found themselves sailing away from the place, that there was nothing stored there of any account; and the two pirates who did not die under their wounds were kept apart from the rest under the plea of needing quiet and rest for recovery, being

the secret; he came to Captain Plunkett because he knew him for a straightforward man of his word, representing a house that had a reputation for upright dealing and never descending to any of the petty sharpening that their rivals, the Blades, rather prided themselves on. He wanted a half share of what they should find, and suggested several dire punishments he would be willing to have inflicted upon him if he failed to show them the spot—though there was, of course, a chance that the rich stores might be discovered before he arrived.

When the captain had been accosted at the doorway he had listened to only a few words of the sailor, and had brushed him away on general principles. But in the office, when Dan Brock found himself with plenty of sea room, he set all



PROMPT ON THE TEN DAYS THE ALICE WAS LOADED AND HAULED OUT IN MID STREAM.

and sails wrapped in flames. Just before the lugger could be beached she blew up so completely that when the smoke partly cleared away the only sign of her to be seen was an occasional splash, as pieces of her timbers fell back into the water after their skyward voyage. From some of the wounded and dying remaining on the Englishman's decks it was learned that the spot the lugger had made for was the lonely abiding place of the pirate crew, who to all appearances had just been wiped off the face of the earth. Great treasure was spoken of as being concealed within a few hundred yards of the shore. As it was not yet dark the yawl was manned and the captain put off to investigate with one of the wounded pirates as guide; the narrator of the story accompanied the captain as a body guard, and they were conducted to a hill back from the shore, in the side of which had been scooped dugouts or caves, of great extent and literally filled with silks, spices, precious stones and specie, rivaling, if the sailor was to be credited, the tales of the Arabian Nights. Night coming on they returned to the crew of the yawl, who were waiting for them, and boarded the ship, intending to come back the following morning and clean out the pirate treasure. That night one of the sudden gales of those parts came blowing off the island, and, increasing in fury, it drove them from their anchorage out into the Indian ocean; twelve

guarded by this sailor, who gave his name as Dan Brock.

The return voyage was never to be made by the British captain; they were blown ashore near Cape Agulhas; the ship went to pieces like rotten wood in the tremendous surf; Dan Brock himself saw the captain swept away and buried in the waters, while the wounded Orientals were entirely unable to help themselves.

Three of the crew joined Dan Brock on the shore next morning—all that remained of the gallant company who had trounced the pirate at the first saily. Two of these perished from fatigue and weakness on a journey to Cape Town, filled with terrible privation. The remaining survivor had shipped in a short handed brig bound for Australia, while Dan Brock secured a berth on an American of Salem, and had been in port but two days.

He was, he said, the only possessor of

sail and skimmed along with his tale with a heartiness and ingenuousness that perhaps did not carry belief in the substance of the story, yet convinced his hearers of the sincerity of what he thought he had seen.

Mr. Pruett told Dan Brock to come back in an hour for an answer, and the sailor departed. There was no need to caution him to say nothing, for he seemed to have had a keen sense of the importance of his secret being kept; he claimed not to have breathed a word to a single soul from the moment he and his late captain had been together off the Cape of Good Hope.

"Well, captain, the man seems to believe his own tale," commented Mr. Pruett, when Dan had gone.

"So he do, Mr. Pruett, sir, so he do; but there be many a chance against the lad's tale being true—or at leastwise, against the treasure being found."

"What harm in standing a little nearer

the island this time and giving this Brock a chance to prove his story."

"No harm whatever, sir, excepting loss of time. We couldn't beat the Hawk at that rate, Mr. Pruett, sir."

"Well, you know I'm not confident, you can catch her anyhow on this voyage, though you can if anybody could."

They had quite a confab, and when Dan returned he was told to sling his hammock aboard the Alice that very night. The next morning articles were signed, giving Dan a place in the ship's company, and an informal memorandum was drawn up, covering the terms of the agreement for sharing in case the treasure was found.

Dan set to work next morning helping to unload the last of the cargo. When night came he went ashore and when he had taken a few drams at the grog shop he lost his caution; his tongue was loosened and he began to boast of the hidden treasure and especially of the co-partnership he had made with Henry Pruett & Co.

The next day was Wednesday and the Hawk sailed in the afternoon. Dan had not shown up aboard the Alice, and inquiry had only revealed his presence in the grog shop which he left about eleven o'clock the night before; at that time he was very much under the influence of liquor. There had been a very miscellaneous crowd in the tavern; one or two of the Hawk's crew had been there with their second mate, but these had left over a half hour before Dan.

Light was thrown on the matter as the Hawk was hull down on the horizon. A man who rowed a wherry about the port came into Mr. Pruett's office. He said he had taken a belated sailor's chest aboard the Hawk just as she was heaving anchor. He had penetrated to the fore-castle, and while he could not see in darkness, the light from the hatchway had shown on his face, revealing his identity to an occupant of one of the hammocks. This individual had grabbed him by the arm and huskily whispered that he was Dan Brock, and had been seized by three men as he was about to board the Alice the night before. He had been in liquor and could make little resistance. He only knew he had waked up that morning to find himself on board a strange ship. Nobody would give him any information, and when he had attempted to go above he had been forcibly prevented. From these facts and the evident preparations for departure he believed they had impressed him for reasons that Captain Plunkett could guess.

Nothing could be done, of course. To call Blade Brothers to task at that time would be folly; in the first place they would disclaim their captain's action; that alone would settle the discussion, which would only further embitter the existing rivalry. Little more was thought of the matter, in which neither the owner nor the captain had placed entire faith.

Prompt on the ten days the Alice was loaded and hauled out in the stream. The captain's gig that evening pulled out with himself and his two cabin boys—very precious freight they were, being a grandson of Mr. Pruett and one of the captain's own nephews, both on their first voyage.

We have nothing to do with the fortunes of the Alice until, after indifferent luck, which seemed to confirm Mr. Pruett's prediction of a beating, she had crossed the Gulf of Guinea, passed out of the torrid zone and was approaching the Cape of Good Hope.

Here they ran into a terrific gale that compelled them to take in all sail except what was needed for steering way, and so, under bare poles, they ran before the storm. A topgallant spar was carried away, and a heavy sea falling over the

bow had torn away the port rail and battered in one of the deckhouses. Further than this no accident had befallen the Alice when the wind had finally begun to abate.

Toward evening at this time the look-out passed word aft to the quarterdeck that there was something curious ahead. Captain Plunkett came forward with his glass and viewed the speck that was pointed out. Then he dropped the glass and ordered a boat lowered, heavy as the sea still ran. The boat found a man, apparently lifeless, entangled in the lashings of a water cask. They hauled him in, rejoined the ship and placed the inanimate body out on the deck. The second mate, who acted as the ship's doctor, pronounced the man to be alive; they accordingly administered restoratives, wrapped him in blankets and stowed him away in a hammock for a night's rest.

It is no reflection on the courage of Captain Plunkett to say he almost dropped to the deck next morning when he saw in the worn looking sailor who approached him from among his own crew none other than Dan Brock.

Dan doffed his cap and explained. Aboard the Hawk, when she had got under way, they tried to make him believe he had signed articles with the captain to ship on this voyage, but they never produced the papers. Dan had gone philosophically to work with the firm intention of deserting at the Cape. He had two good reasons. The captain of the Hawk had tried every device to get from Dan the whereabouts of the treasure, a description of it and the terms of the agreement with Pruett; but Dan had said to himself that, if the people had used such means as they did to get him aboard, they would probably not hesitate to cheat him out of any profit in his enterprise.

From the first, therefore, he had denied all he said in the tavern that night, declaring it to be the phantasy of a drunken mind. From their actions he judged that they did not believe this, and he feared they would keep him virtually a prisoner until he consented to tell what he knew. So he decided to desert.

Further, if he could get away from the ship at the Cape and secrete himself until the Hawk sailed, it was certain the Alice would be along directly and he could ship with her and carry out the undertaking, as previously arranged.

It seemed the Alice had caught up pretty well on the Hawk when the same gale struck both ships, though the Hawk must have been in the worst of it; she had suffered badly; some of her seams had opened under the straining to which she had been subjected, and with water in her hold in spite of continual relays at the pumps, she had been pounded fearfully by terrific seas which were constantly sweeping her decks. One in particular had carried off Dan himself, besides two or three others, he believed. He had been fortunate enough to have a cask for company in his precipitate exit; he slung himself in the lashings of the cask so that they should not be washed apart, and when picked up had been for over twenty four hours the plaything of the waves.

Dan was hardly well enough to work during the three days it took them to make Cape Town; but he passed the time agreeably enough, chuckling constantly over the way Providence had fooled the unrighteous and restored him and his secret to their just owners. Dan judged that though the Hawk had led the Alice when he was picked up, the almost disabled condition of the former would enable the Alice to reach port first. It was so; they spent two days at the Cape to take water and provisions aboard, when, just as they were about to

sail, the Hawk labored into the harbor and cast anchor a little beyond them. Captain Lowdon of the Hawk leaned on the rail and watched the Alice as she approached making sail; she was coming extraordinarily close he thought; in a minute he turned white as a sheet and called hoarsely for his glass—for Dan was playing the ghost for the second time, holding purposely with Captain Plunkett the most prominent place on the deck of the Alice and grinning in a manner more usually ascribed to a fiend than a phantom.

Eight days later the Alice was skirting the Madagascan coast; under the direction of Dan they found the spot he had described, anchoring in a cove with good depth of water, the beach of which was still strewn with the charred remains of the pirate lugger. They found the caves and in truth Dan Brock had not exaggerated. There were rolls and rolls of costly Oriental stuffs; chests of gold dust and precious stones and casks of spices and gems, with much other valuable spoil of many ruthless expeditions. The Alice continued on to the Indian ports after transferring this valuable prize cargo to her hold and, returning safely to Salem without any further startling adventures, brought back the most valuable cargo that had ever entered that port.

Henry Pruett & Company did not hesitate to spread the particulars of the sharp practice of Blade Brothers or take every advantage of their triumph and successful discovery. They displayed freely the balance sheet of that part of the cargo that they had picked up in Madagascar, and it footed \$47,000, of which Daniel Brock was duly given half and with which he established what became the old and well known firm of Brock & Holmesbury, which went out of business about eighteen years ago after a uniformly successful career, for many years competing sharply, but in a friendly spirit with the house of Henry Pruett & Company.

BY ANY OTHER NAME.

THE hallucinations and the peculiarities of those unfortunates who are demented must be not only borne with but deferred to and honored, as this anecdote from the *Argonaut* illustrates:

The physician in charge of an insane asylum in Ohio, prescribed a large dose of castor oil for one of the inmates, a man of great strength and wild, unmanageable temper. The attendant who had been commissioned to administer the nauseous dose foresaw that he was likely to find the task more or less difficult, and therefore took with him several assistants. On reaching the lunatic's cell the attendant put on a matter of fact air, and, cup in hand, stepped inside the door. The madman divined his purpose instantly, and rushed furiously upon him. The assistants were too quick for him, however, and, after a severe struggle, threw him down and attempted to pinion his arms. The man fought like a tiger, but found himself overmatched. Suddenly he became perfectly quiet, and, putting his hand to his mouth, said in a whisper to the chief attendant: "Call it oysters." The attendant was a man of great natural shrewdness—as dealers with the insane need to be—and at once understood the lunatic's meaning. Directing the wondering assistants to release the patient, he took the cup from the street on which it had been set, approached the crazy man, made him a low bow, and said in a tone of ceremonious politeness: "Good morning, Mr. Smith; will you try this dish of very fine oysters?" The lunatic smiled pleasantly, returned the bow with one still lower, and answered: "Thank you very much; you are very kind." So saying, he took the cup and drained it with every appearance of the deepest satisfaction. "Ah," said he, as he finished the dose and smacked his lips, "those are indeed fine—the finest oysters I have ever tasted." He had saved his self respect and had taught his keepers an excellent lesson in their own line.

THAT IS THE QUESTION.

B. USTED—"Hello, Smith! Say, old boy, can you tell me where I can get a good overcoat for \$15?"

SMITH—"Why, yes. There's a good house right across the street."

B. USTED—"Thanks, Smithy. Could you perhaps also tell me where I can get the \$15?"—*Clothes and Furnisher.*

A TEACHER.

PREACHERS have preached me sermons,
I have heard their sermons through;
All my relations have lectured,
My friends have lectured too.

My foes have given me warnings,
And I have taken them not;
Friends and foes and relations
I never heeded a jot.

Their words were the essence of wisdom,
There was nothing they didn't foresee;
And not one atom of all they said
Has ever remained with me.

They were staid and pallid and solemn,
They were gray and wrinkled and old;
My teacher has cheeks of roses,
And hair of the sun's own gold.

His words run into each other;
He stammers and babbles and cries;
He doesn't know he is powerful,
He never dreams he is wise.

But in three short years he has taught me
More than those gray beards staid,
Had taught me in seven and thirty,
Before he came to their aid.

—*The Independent.*

[This Story began in Number 456.]

A DEBT OF HONOR.

BY HORATIO ALGER, JR.

Author of "Ragged Dick," "Tattered Tom,"
"Luck and Pluck," etc.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

INTERVIEWING A BURGLAR.

VICTOR was not a brave boy, and it must be confessed that he felt dismayed when he saw the burglar, and realized that he was in danger of serious personal injury, perhaps death. This, however, was not his only feeling. He felt responsible for the safety of the goods in the store, having been left on guard. In an emergency one can think rapidly.

Prudence suggested to Victor to lie quite still and counterfeit sleep. Resistance would of course be futile, for he was rather a delicate boy of sixteen, and the burglar was nearly six feet in height and looked as if he might weigh a hundred and eighty pounds.

The burglar, when he had effected his entrance, looked about him to get his bearings.

His glance fell on Victor.
"Hal a boy!" he exclaimed, and with one stride he reached the pallet on which the shop boy slept.

Stooping over, and flashing the dark lantern into Victor's face he saw his eyelids move.

"He is not asleep! He is only shamming," he decided, and shook him roughly.

Victor opened his eyes and looked with alarm into the rough, bearded face and fierce, forbidding eyes of the midnight intruder.

"Well, do you know who I am?" growled the burglar.

"I never saw you before."

"That isn't what I mean. Do you know why I am here?"

"To rob the store, I suppose," answered Victor with a troubled look.

"Right, my chicken! Did you see me get into the window?"

"Yes."

"And then you closed your eyes and pretended to be asleep?"

"Yes."

"I'm on to that trick. Do you see this?" and the burglar displayed a piece of iron which Victor supposed to be a "jimmy."

"Yes," answered Victor, gazing at it as if fascinated.

"A little tap on your head with it and you'd be done for. That's what I call a hint to you to act sensibly and not interfere with what don't concern you. Now where's the money?"

"I don't think Mrs. Ferguson leaves any here. I expect she carries all away with her."

"You expect!" repeated the burglar frowning. "Don't you know?"

"No."

"How long have you been employed in this store?"

"I only came this afternoon."

"That accounts for it. Are you sure there is no money here?"

"I don't think there is."

"I'll look about and see. If you know what's best for yourself you'll keep quiet."

Victor was compelled to look on in helpless anxiety while the burglar rummaged the store. He managed to find a couple of dollars in small change, which he pocketed grumblingly. A few small ornamental articles he also took, and then made his exit from the window after a parting threat to Victor.

No sooner had he left the store than the latter sprang from the bed, drew on his pantaloons hurriedly, and running to the outer door unlocked it, and standing in the doorway looked up and down the street.

By great good luck a policeman was just turning the corner. When he saw the boy in partial undress at the door of the bookstore he ran up, apprehending mischief.

"What's the matter, bub?" he asked.

"The store has just been entered from the rear and the burglar, after stealing what he thought worth taking, made his escape through the back yard."

Instantly the policeman tapped for assistance and three brother officers made their appearance. After a hurried conference, two went through the store to the back, while the other two reconnoitered in front. The chances were in favor of the burglar's escape, but apprehending no danger he had made his way into the next yard and was trying to enter the adjoining store. His imprudence cost him his liberty.

In five minutes he was brought again through the window with a stout policeman on each side. He scowled menacingly at Victor.

"You betrayed me, you young scoundrel!" he said.

"Keep your mouth shut!" said one of his captors.

"Answer me, did you call the police?" demanded the burglar, not heeding the command.

"Yes," answered Victor.

"I'll get even with you, for betraying your old pal."

"What?" ejaculated Victor.

"He's one of us," said the burglar, addressing the policemen. "We got him into the store on purpose to help us. He only got the place this afternoon."

Then for the first time Victor fell under suspicion.

"Is this true?" asked one of the officers, turning to the boy.

"It is true that I got the place this afternoon."

"And you know this man?"

"No; I never saw him before in my life."

"That's a lie, John Timmins, and you know it," broke in the burglar audaciously.

"Is your name John Timmins?" asked the policeman with increased suspicion.

"No, sir. My name is Victor Wentworth."

"Good, John. It does credit to your invention," said the burglar laughing. "That's a high toned name you've got now."

"Is this true that you are saying? Do you know the boy?"

"In course I do. His father, Dick Timmins, is my pal. I thought we could trust the boy, but he's betrayed me, the young rascal, expectin' a reward for his honesty. Oh, he's a sly one, John is."

Victor could hardly believe his ears.

He understood at once that this man was acting from revengeful motives, but he saw also that the story made an impression on the police.

"You'll have to go with us," said one of the officers. "This man has made a charge against you, and you will have to disprove it."

Victor was compelled to dress hurriedly and accompany the officers to the station house. He was questioned by the sergeant, who recognized the burglar and suspected his motive.

"What is your name?" he asked.

"Victor Wentworth."

"Do you live in Kansas City?"

"No, sir. I have been stopping here a few days at a boarding house, but my money gave out and I was obliged to seek a situation."

"When did you secure it?"

"This afternoon."

"Just what I told you," said the burglar. "It was all fixed that John should sleep there and open the window for me."

"What have you to say to this?"

"That it is a lie. This man wants to punish me for calling in the police."

"You're lyin', John Timmins, and you know it. Your father'll whack you for this."

"Bring him here and let him claim me if he dare!" said Victor angrily.

"Who is your father? Is his name Timmins?"

"No, sir. My father is Bradley Wentworth, of Seneca, Illinois."

"We have an officer here who came from Seneca. He will tell us whether your statement is correct. Ah, here he is! Hilton, come here."

A stout, pleasant faced policeman entered the station house.

"Well, sir," he responded, touching his cap.

"Look at this boy and tell me if you recognize him."

Hilton approached, and as he scanned Victor's face, said in surprise, "Why, it's Squire Wentworth's son."

"And he lives in Seneca?"

"Yes; I am surprised to see him here." Victor flushed.

"I left school without my father's knowledge," he said in embarrassment.

"He is working in a book store here in town," explained the sergeant. "This man who has just been caught in the act of burglary declares the boy to be John Timmins, the son of one of his pals."

"That isn't true. I recognize the boy as the son of Mr. Wentworth."

"That settles the matter. Young man, you are discharged. As for the man who has testified falsely against you, he will find that he has not improved his chances by so doing."

Victor left the station house, and returning to the store, resumed his interrupted night's rest. But the last hour had been so full of excitement that it was at least two hours before he could compose himself to sleep.

"I've read about burglars," thought Victor, as he called to mind sundry dime novels that he had perused in his boarding school days, "but I never expected to meet one, or to be suspected of being his accomplice."

Before Mrs. Ferguson reached the store she had already read in great excitement an account of how her place had been entered, and gave Victor high praise for his success in causing the arrest of the burglar.

CHAPTER XXXV.

A STRANGE MEETING.

NOEL BROOKE and Gerald remained at the Lindell Hotel beyond the time originally fixed, as the former found an English friend established in a prosperous business on

Olive Street. Gilbert Sandford was a man of forty five, a pleasant, genial man, who lived in a fine house in the upper portion of the city. He had a wife and three attractive children.

"Come and take dinner with me next Sunday, Noel," he said in a hospitable manner.

"I shall be glad to do so if you will let me bring my friend also."

"By all means! Any friend of yours is welcome. Did he accompany you from England?"

"No. It is a young American—a boy of sixteen—whom I met in Colorado. We have been together three or four months now, and I have become very much attached to him."

"Bring him along by all means. My children will enjoy his company."

"By the way, how old is your oldest child?"

"Edward is fourteen, only two years younger than your friend. The other two are girls. What is your friend's name?"

"Gerald Lane."

"A good name. Is he fond of children?"

"Yes. In our travels he has frequently become acquainted with children, and has always made himself a favorite with them."

The next Sunday found Gerald and his employer dinner guests at the handsome residence of Mr. Sandford. Before heleft, Gerald had made himself an established favorite with the entire Sandford family. The merchant was particularly gracious to him. It was not long before this partiality was to turn to his advantage.

Three weeks later Mr. Brooke received a letter from England which he read with an expression of pain.

"Gerald," he said, "this letter comes from my sister. My father is seriously ill, and I shall be obliged to return to England at once."

"I am very sorry," said Gerald with sincere sympathy.

"One regret I have is, that it will compel us to separate, for a time at least."

"I feared so, Mr. Brooke. I shall feel quite lost without you. I have no relatives, and it will leave me alone in the world."

"I would invite you to go to England with me if it were not a case of sickness."

"I should not expect it, Mr. Brooke. Besides I am an American boy, and I have my living to earn in America."

"That gives me an idea. Remain here, please, till I return from Mr. Sandford's office. I must go there and acquaint him with my recall."

An hour later he returned to the hotel.

"I have engaged my passage from New York by next Saturday's steamer," he said. "I shall leave St. Louis to-morrow morning."

"Then I shall have to form my plans," said Gerald.

"They are formed already. How would you like to go into the employ of Mr. Sandford?"

"I would like nothing better."

"He has a place provided for you. You will remain in the store here for a short time, and then he will send you off on a special mission."

Gerald brightened up.

"I must be indebted to you for this, Mr. Brooke?" he said.

"Partly, but partly also to the pleasant impression which you made on the whole family. You don't ask what salary you are to receive?"

"If it will pay my board with a little over I shall be satisfied."

"It won't pay for your board at this hotel."

"I should not expect it. I will seek a fair boarding house. Probably I can

get board for six or seven dollars a week?"

"I should think so. Your salary will be fifteen dollars a week."

"But does Mr. Sandford know that I have no business experience?"

"Yes, he knows it, but he thinks you have qualities that will enable you to make a success."

After hurried preparations Mr. Brooke left St. Louis, and the same day Gerald moved to a plain, but cheerful boarding-house not far from the store where he was to be employed.

He was at first occupied as stock clerk, and soon familiarized himself with his duties. Three months later he had a summons from Mr. Sandford, who received him in his office. There were about a hundred clerks in the establishment, who got their orders in general from the heads of the departments, and seldom were admitted to interviews with their employer.

Gerald feared that he might have made some mistake and was to receive a reprimand, but the pleasant expression on Mr. Sandford's face relieved him from apprehension at once.

"Sit down, Gerald," said the merchant with a wave of the hand.

"Thank you, sir."

"How long have you been in my employ?"

"Three months today, sir."

"You are stock clerk?"

"Yes, sir."

"Have you learned something about the stock?"

"Yes, sir, I think so."

"Mr. Hall"—this was the superintendent—"tells me that your services are intelligently rendered and very satisfactory."

"I am very glad that he is satisfied with me," said Gerald earnestly. "I have done my best."

"And your best seems to be very good. How would you like to travel for the house?"

Gerald knew that the position of drummer was coveted by all the resident clerks, and was considered a distinct promotion.

"I should like it very much, sir, but do you think I am old enough?"

"You certainly are unusually young for such a position, and this, of course, occurred to me, but you have had some experience in traveling, though not on business, with our friend, Mr. Brooke."

"Yes, sir."

"And this experience will be of service to you. How old are you?"

"Nearly seventeen."

"I have never employed a drummer under twenty, but I am nevertheless inclined to give you a trial."

"I will do my best for you and the house."

"Then you will have a fair chance of succeeding. You may go and ask Mr. Hall for instructions—I have spoken with him on the subject—and I presume he will arrange to have you start on Monday next."

Mr. Sandford bowed, and Gerald understood that the interview was ended.

Two weeks later Gerald found himself in Kansas City. He had had but a fortnight's experience as a drummer, but he had met with a success exceeding his anticipations. Though his youth was against him, and he often found it difficult to persuade dealers that he was really an authorized agent of a merchant so well known as Gilbert Sandford of St. Louis, five minutes' conversation was generally sufficient to show that he thoroughly understood his business.

His stay in Kansas City was drawing to a close. He was a guest of the Coates House, one of the representative hotels of the West, when he had occasion to enter a periodical store near the hotel.

It was the one already known to us as kept by Mrs. Ferguson.

Victor Wentworth stood behind the counter and waited upon Gerald. But he was no longer the bright and healthy boy of a few weeks back. He had contracted malaria, and his face was pallid. Gerald could not but notice the boy's sick condition.

"You are not well," he said.
"No," answered Victor, shivering. "I don't know what is the matter with me."

"How long have you been sick?" inquired Gerald.
"I was taken about a week since."
"You ought to be at home and in bed."

"I wish I could afford to rest," said Victor despondently; "but I cannot. I depend on my weekly wages."

"Have you a home in Kansas City?"
"No; I have no relatives in this place."
"Have you no friends who would help you while you were sick?"

Victor hesitated a moment.
"No," he answered slowly.
"Are you an orphan?"
"No; I have a father living."
"Ah! I understand. He is poor."
"No," answered Victor, shaking his head. "He is not poor. He is quite rich."

"Then how does it happen that you do not write to him and ask him to help you?"

"Because he is angry with me. He is a stern man, and I offended him very much some time since," and Victor flushed as he made the confession.

"How did you offend him? You could not have done anything very bad, I am sure."

"He had placed me at a boarding school and I ran away. I was very foolish, and I have repented it more than once, but he is very angry with me and won't forgive me."

The story seemed familiar to Gerald. Surely he had heard it before.
"Tell me," he asked abruptly, "are you the son of Bradley Wentworth of Seneca, Illinois?"

"Yes; do you know him? Is he a friend of yours?" asked Victor in breathless astonishment.

"I knew him, but he is not a friend of mine."

"Ah! I hoped he was," sighed Victor, his face falling.

"But all the same I am going to help you."

Gerald had a brief conversation with Mrs. Ferguson and arranged with her to find a comfortable home for Victor, where he could rest and receive medical attendance, and deposited a sum of money with her to defray his expenses.

"How kind you are!" said Victor gratefully. "I was very much discouraged when you came in. I didn't know what was to become of me."

"I shall be back again in Kansas City in four weeks," said Gerald. "Till then you will be taken care of. Keep up your spirits and all will turn out well."

"How strange," he thought, "that I should help the son as my father helped his father. I like the boy. I am sure he will not prove ungrateful."

(To be continued.)

A TENDER SUBJECT.

"How many people there are in the world with ridiculous notions!" said one passenger to another.

"I know it," replied the other; "and how they do thrust them on the public! I've laughed a good many times about it."

"Ha! ha! So have I. Now there's the sun spot man, for instance."

"Excuse me. Science is never ridiculous. I am the sun spot man."—*Judge.*

FROM A NEW POINT OF VIEW.

TRAVELER—"What is that tall chimney for? Some one putting up a factory?"

CITIZEN—"Naw. That's Jim Bisbee's well. Cyclone turned it inside out."—*Indianapolis Journal.*

HARVEST SONG.

LAUGH out, laugh out, ye orchard lands,
With all your ripened store;
Such bounteous measure nature yields;
What could hearts ask for more?

With earth's broad lap abrim with food,
The azure skies above,
The heavens whisper, "Earth is good";
Earth answers, "Heaven is love."

The winds that wander from the West
O'er fields afar or near,
Find plenty nowhere manifest
In richer stores than here.

The golden rick, the bursting bin,
Of rich and ripened grain
Bespeak the wealth which all may win
In Industry's domain.

The corn fields set in grand array
Of solid rank and row
Are streams of wealth which set this way,
And soon shall overflow.

Laugh out, laugh out, ye ripened fields,
With e'er increasing mirth;
The joy your bounteous measure yields
Shall bless the whole round earth.

—*Harper's Bazar.*

[This Story began in No. 43.]

TRUE TO HIMSELF;

OR,
ROGER STRONG'S STRUGGLE FOR PLACE.

BY EDWARD STRATEMEYER,
Author of "Richard Dare's Venture," etc.

CHAPTER X.

UNDER ARREST.

I will not hesitate to state that I was nearly stunned by Mr. Aaron Woodward's unexpected statement. I knew that when he announced that I was a worse villain than my father he meant a good deal.

Yet try as hard as I could it was impossible for me to discover what he really did mean. I was not conscious of having done him any injury, either bodily or otherwise. Indeed, of late I had hardly seen the man. The Widow Canby was not partial to dealings with him, and I never went near him on my own account.

It was plain to see that the merchant was thoroughly aroused. His face was pale with anger, and the look he cast upon me was one of bitter resentment. For the instant he eyed me as if he intended to spring upon me and choke the life out of my body, and involuntarily I shrank back. But then I recollected that the minions of the law who stood beside me would not allow such a course of procedure, and this made me breathe more freely.

"Yes, sir; he's a worse villain than his father!" repeated Mr. Aaron Woodward, turning to Judge Penfold; "a most accomplished villain, sir."

And he shook his fist within an inch of my nose.

"What have I done to you, Mr. Woodward?" I demanded, as soon as I could speak.

"Done, sir? You know very well what you've done, you young rascal!" puffed the merchant. "Oh, but I'll make you pay dearly for your villainy."

"I've committed no villainy," I returned warmly. "If you refer to the way I treated Duncan this morning, why all I've got to say is that it was his own fault and I can prove it."

"Treated Duncan, sir? Oh, pshaw! This is a far more serious affair than a boy's quarrel. Don't let him escape, Parsons," the last to the constable, who had his hand on my shoulder.

"No, fear, sir," was Parson's reply. "He's already under arrest."

"Under arrest?" repeated the merchant quickly. "Then you've already heard—"

"He is—ahem—only under detention as a witness," spoke up Judge Penfold.

"I do not think he had anything to do with the theft of the widow's money."

"Widow's money? What do you mean?"
In a few words Judge Penfold explained the situation.

"Isn't this what you came about?" he asked then.

"Indeed, no, sir. My affair is far more important—at least to me. But you can make up your mind that Strong's story is purely fiction. He is undoubtedly the real culprit, undoubtedly. Takes after his father."

"My father was an honest man!" I cried out. "I don't care what you or any one may say! Some day he will be cleared of the stain on his name."

"Oh, undoubtedly," sneered Mr. Woodward. "Meanwhile, however, the community at large had better keep a sharp eye on his son. Whom do you assert stole the Widow Canby's money?"

"A tramp."
"Humph! A likely story."
"It's true. His name was John Stumpy."

"John Stumpy!"
As Mr. Aaron Woodward uttered the name all the color forsook his face.

"Yes, sir. And he claimed to know you," I went on, my curiosity aroused over the merchant's show of feeling.

"It's a falsehood! I never heard of such a man," cried Mr. Woodward, but his face belied his words.

"Well, what is your charge against Strong?" asked Judge Penfold impatiently, probably tired of being so utterly ignored in the discussion.

The merchant hesitated.
"I prefer to speak to you about the matter in private," he said sourly.

"That isn't fair. He ought to tell me what I am accused of," I cried. "Every one who is arrested has a right to know that. I have done no wrong and I am not afraid."

"All assumed bravery, Judge Penfold; quite assumed, sir."

"No, sir. Tell me why you want me locked up," I repeated.

But instead of replying Mr. Woodward drew Judge Penfold to the rear end of the hall and began to speak in so low a tone that I could not catch a word.

"You don't mean it!" I heard the judge say presently. "Come into the library and give me the particulars."

And the two men passed into the room, closing the door tightly behind them.

They were gone nearly quarter of an hour. It was a long wait for me. I wondered what could be the nature of Mr. Woodward's accusation against me, but failed to solve the mystery.

At length they came out. Judge Penfold's face was a trifle sterner than before. Mr. Woodward looked pleased, as if his argument had proven conclusive.

"You will take Strong to the jail at once," said the judge to Parsons, "and tell Booth to be careful of his prisoner."

"Yes, sir."
"Don't let him escape," added Aaron Woodward anxiously. "Don't let him escape, sir, under any circumstances."

"No fear," was Parson's ready answer. "I never had one of 'em give me the slip yet."

And with great gravity he drew from his pocket a pair of ancient handcuffs, one of which he attached to my wrist and the other to his own.

"Come, Roger. Better take it easy," he said. "No use of kicking. March!"

"But I'd like to know something about this," I protested. "What right—"

"It is all quite legal," put in Judge Penfold pompously. "I understand the law perfectly."

"But—"
"Say no more. Parsons, take him away."

"I shall see you later," whispered Mr. Woodward in my ear as the constable hurried me off.

The next instant we were on the street. Arrests in Darbyville were rare, and by the time we reached the jail we had a goodly following of boys and idle men, all anxious to know what was up.

"He stole the Widow Canby's money," I heard one man whisper, to which another replied:

"Light fingered, eh? Must take after his father, I always knew the Strong's couldn't be trusted."

The jail was a small affair, being nothing more than the loft over a carpenter shop. The jailer was a round faced man named Booth, who filled in his spare time by doing odd jobs of carpentering in the shop down stairs. We found him hard at work glueing some doors together. I knew him tolerably well, and he evinced considerable surprise at seeing me in custody.

"What, Roger; arrested! What for?"
"That's what I would like to know," I returned.

In a few words Parsons told him what was to be done, and Booth led the way up stairs.

"Tain't a very secure place," he returned. "Reckon I'll have to nail down some of the windows unless you'll give me your word not to run away."

"I'll promise nothing," was my reply. "I'm being treated unfairly, and I shall do as I think best."

"Then I reckon I'll fasten everything as tight as a drum," returned Booth.

Going below, he secured a hammer and some nails with which he secured the windows and the scuttle on the roof.

"Reckon it's tight enough now," he said. "Just wait, Parsons, till I get him a bucket of water, and then we'll leave him to take care of himself."

This was done, and then the two men left me, closing and locking the door of the inclosed staircase behind them.

The loft was empty, saving a nail keg that stood in one corner of the floor. Pulling this out, I sat down to think matters over.

Try my best I could not imagine what charge Mr. Aaron Woodward had brought against me. Yet such had been his earnestness that for the nonce everything else was driven from my mind.

The sounds of talking below interrupted my meditations. I recognized Kate's voice, and the next moment, my sister stood beside me.

"Oh, Roger!" was all she could say, and catching me by the arm she burst into tears.

"Don't take it so hard, Kate," I said. "Make sure it will all come out right in the end."

"But to be arrested like—like a thief! Oh! Roger, it is dreadful!"

"Never mind. I have done no wrong and I'm not afraid of the result. Have they heard anything of John Stumpy yet?"

"Dick Blair says not. Mr. Parsons and the rest are after him, but he seems to have disappeared for good—and Mrs. Canby's money with him."

"Have you heard from her yet?"

"No; but I've written her a letter and just posted it to Norfolk."

"She won't get it till day after tomorrow."

"What will she say? Oh, Roger, do you think—?"

"No, I don't. The widow always trusted me, and I know she'll take my word now. She is not so narrow minded as the very folks who look down on her."

"But it is awful. Over two hundred dollars. We can never make it up. We've only got twenty eight!"

"We can't exactly be called upon to make it up—" I began.

"But we'll want to," put in Kate hastily.

"I'd feel better if we did. The widow has always been so kind to us."
 "How long must you stay here?"
 "I don't know. As long as Judge Penfold sees fit, I suppose."
 "If only they could catch this John Stumpy."
 "I hope so—for other reasons than those you now know, Kate."
 "Other reasons?"
 "Yes; very important ones, too. John Stumpy knew father—"
 "What!"
 "Yes; knew him well. And he was mixed up in that—that miserable affair."
 "Oh, Roger, how do you know?"
 "I heard him say so. Besides, he dropped a letter that proved it. I have the letter in my pocket now. It is the dying statement of one Nicholas Weaver—"
 "Nicholas Weaver! He was a clerk with father!"
 "So I thought. Who Stumpy is, though, I don't know. Do you?"
 "No; but his face I'm sure I've seen before. Let me see the letter. Have you read it?"
 "No; I hadn't time to spell it out, it is so badly written. Maybe you can read it."
 "I'll try," replied Kate. "Hand it over."
 I put my hand in my pocket to do so. The statement was gone.

CHAPTER XI.

AARON WOODWARD'S VISIT.

PUZZLED and dismayed, I made a rapid search of my clothes—first one pocket and then another. It was useless. Beyond a doubt the statement was nowhere about my person.
 I was quite sure it had not been taken from me. Strange as it may seem, neither Parsons nor Booth had searched me. Perhaps they deemed it useless to take away the possessions of a poor country boy. My jack knife and other odds and ends were still in their accustomed places.
 "It's gone!" I gasped, when I was certain that such was a fact.
 "Gone?" repeated Kate.
 "Yes, gone, and I don't know where. They didn't take it from me. I must have lost it."
 "Oh, Roger, and it was so important!"
 "I know it, Kate. It must have dropped from my pocket down at the tool house. Perhaps if I go down I can find it."
 "Go down?" she queried.
 "Oh, I forgot I was a prisoner."
 "Never mind, Roger. I'll go down myself."
 "Aren't you afraid?"
 "Not now. I wouldn't have been of this Stumpy only he came on me so suddenly. I'll go at once."
 "You'd better," said a voice behind her. "Your five minutes is up, Miss Kate."
 And Booth appeared at the head of the stairs and motioned her down.
 "Good by, Roger. I'm so sorry to leave you here alone."
 "It's not such a dreadful place," I rejoined lightly. "If you discover anything let me know at once."
 "Be sure I will."
 With this assurance Kate was gone.
 I was as sorry for her as I was for myself. I knew all she would have to face in public—the mean things people would say to her, the snubbing she would be called on to bear.
 The loss of the statement rendered me doubly downhearted. Oh, how much I had counted on it, assuring myself over and over again that it would surely clear my father's name!
 But it was gone, and there was nothing left but to make the best of it.

Hardly had my sister left me than there were more voices below, and I heard Mr. Woodward tell Booth that he had an order from Judge Penfold for a private interview with me.
 "Better go right up stairs then, Mr. Woodward," was the jailer's reply. "He's all alone."
 I wondered what the merchant's visit could portend, but had little time for speculation.
 "So, sir, they've got you fast," said Mr. Woodward sharply as he faced me. "Fast and no mistake."
 "What do you want?" I demanded boldly, coming at once to the front.
 "What do I want?" repeated the merchant, looking behind him to make sure that Booth had not followed him. "What do I want? Why, I want to help you, Strong, that's what I want."
 I could not help but smile. The idea of Mr. Woodward helping any one, least of all myself.
 "The only way you can help me is to set me free," I returned.
 "Oh, I can't do that. You are held on the Canby charge solely."
 "But you told me you wanted me arrested."
 "So I did, but I intend to give you a chance—that is if you will do what I want."
 "But why did you want me arrested?"
 "You know well enough, Strong."
 "No, I don't."
 "Yes, you do, sir."
 "On the contrary, I haven't the least idea."
 "Stuff and nonsense. See here, if you want to get off without further trouble hand over those papers."
 "What papers?"
 "The papers you took last night," replied Mr. Woodward sharply.
 I was truly astonished. How in the world had he found out about the statement dropped by Stumpy? Was it possible there had been a meeting between the two? It looked like it.
 "I haven't got the papers," I rejoined.
 "Don't tell me a falsehood, sir," he thundered.
 "It's true."
 "Do you deny you have the packet?"
 "I do."
 "Come, Strong, that story won't answer. Hand it over."
 "I haven't it."
 "Where is it?"
 "I lost it," I replied, before I had time to think.
 "Lost it!" he cried anxiously.
 "Yes, sir," I returned boldly, resolved to make the best of it, now the cat was out of the bag. "Either that or it was stolen from me."
 He looked at me in silence for a moment.
 "Do you expect me to believe all your lies?" he demanded finally.
 "I don't care what you believe," I answered. "I tell the truth. And one question I want to ask you, Aaron Woodward. Why are you so anxious to gain possession of Nicholas Weaver's dying statement?"
 The merchant gave a cry of astonishment, nay, horror. He turned deadly pale and gazed at me ferocely.
 "Nicholas Weaver's dying statement!" he ejaculated. "What do you know of Nicholas Weaver?"
 Now I had spoken I was almost sorry I had said what I had. Yet I could not but notice the tremendous effect my words had produced.
 "Never mind what I know," I replied. "Why do you take an interest in it?"
 "I? I don't know anything about it," he faltered. "I hardly knew Nicholas Weaver."
 "Indeed? Yet you want his statement."

"No, I don't. I don't know anything about his statement," he continued doggedly. "I want my papers. I don't care a rap about any one else's."
 It was now my turn to be astonished. Evidently I had been on the wrong track from the beginning.
 "If you don't want his statement I'm sure I don't know what you do want," I rejoined, and I spoke the exact truth.
 "Don't tell lies, Strong. You know well enough."
 "I haven't the least idea."
 "Tut, tut, sir. Hand them over."
 "Hand what over?"
 "The packet of papers."
 "I haven't any packet."
 "Strong, if you don't do as I demand I'll send you to prison after your father."
 "I can't help it. I haven't any papers. If you don't believe me search me."
 "Where have you hidden them?"
 "I never had them to hide."
 "I know better, sir, I know better," he fumed.
 I made no reply. What could I say?
 "Do you hear me, Strong?"
 For reply I walked over to the slatted window and began to whistle. My action only increased the merchant's anger.
 "For the last time, Strong, will you give up the papers?" he cried.
 "For the last time, Mr. Woodward, let me say I haven't got them, never had them, and, therefore, cannot possibly give them up."
 "Then you shall go to prison, sir. Mark my word. You shall go to prison!"
 And with this parting threat the merchant hurried down the loft steps and rapped loudly for Booth to come and let him out.
 When he was gone I sat down again to think over the demand he had made upon me. To what papers did he refer? In vain I cudgeled my brain to elicit an answer.
 He spoke about sending me to prison, and in such tones, as if it were an easy matter to do. Assuredly he must have some grounds upon which to base so positive an assertion.
 No doubt he was now on his way to Judge Penfold's office to swear out the necessary papers. I did not know much about the law, but I objected strongly to going to prison. Once in a regular lockup and the chances of getting out would be indeed slim.
 I reasoned that the best thing to do was to escape while there was a chance. Perhaps I was wrong in this conclusion, but I was only a country boy, and I had a horror of stone walls and iron bars.
 Escape!
 No sooner had the thought entered my mind than I was wrapped up in it. Undoubtedly it was the best thing to do. Freedom meant not only liberty but also a chance to hunt down John Stumpy and clear my father's name.
 I looked about the loft for the best means of accomplishing my purpose. As I have said, the place was over a carpenter shop. The roof was sloping to the floor, and at each end was a small window heavily slatted.
 The distance to the ground from the window was not less than fifteen feet, rather a long drop even if I could manage to get the bars loose, which I doubted, for I had no tools at hand.
 I resolved to try the door, and was about to do so when I heard the bolts shoot back and Booth appeared.
 The carpenter-jailer was fond of liquor, and had been indulging himself pretty freely. It was all he could do to keep on his feet, and his voice sounded thick and husky.
 For an instant I thought to trip him up and rush past him. But with all his potations his cunning had not deserted him. He stood on the steps completely blocking the way.

"All right, Roger?" he asked.
 "Yes, sir."
 "Quite comfortable, boy?"
 "As comfortable as any one could be in such a place," I rejoined lightly.
 "'Tain't exactly a parlor," he chuckled.
 "No easy chairs or sofas; but the grub's good. I'm a-going to get it for you now. Then after that maybe the judge will call around. If he don't I'm going to take a snooze—I'm dead tired. Bring the grub in a minute."
 He climbed down stairs, bolting the door after him.
 In five minutes—or ten at the most—I knew he would be back. After that there was no telling how long he would stay.
 Now, therefore, was the proper time to escape. Now or never!

CHAPTER XII.

A SURPRISE.

NO time must be lost. Booth lived but a short hundred feet from the jail, if such it might be called, and if his wife had dinner ready it would not take him long to bring it.
 I surveyed the room in which I was incarcerated critically. Escape by either window was, as I have intimated, out of the question. For the same reason (its height) the scuttle was also not to be considered.
 Apparently nothing remained to try but the door. Running down the steps I looked it over. It was of solid oak planking, an inch thick, and fastened, at both top and bottom.
 It was a hard thing to tackle, especially with no tools, and, after surveying it I went up stairs again to search for something that might do as a pry.
 I could see nothing but the empty nail keg, and I could discover no use at first in this until the idea struck me of wedging it between one of the lower steps and the door, and by jumping upon it, forcing the bottom bolt.
 With some difficulty I placed the keg in position and brought down my full weight upon it. The first time the bolt merely creaked, but the second there was a snap, and the lower part of the door burst outward several inches.
 The bottom bolt had yielded, and now only the top one remained. But to reach this was a difficult matter, as no purchase could be had against it.
 While considering the situation I imagined I heard my jailer returning, and my heart jumped into my throat. What if Booth should see the damage I had done?
 I reckoned that things would go hard with me if it became known that I had attempted to break jail. Judge Penfold would surely give me the full penalty of the law.
 But the approach of Booth was only imaginary, and after a brief interval of silence I breathed freer.
 I ascended the stairs once more to see if I could not find something besides the keg to assist me. If only I had a plank or a beam I might use it as a battering-ram.
 The thought of a plank led me to examine the floor, and, going over it carefully I soon came to a short board, one end of which was loose. Raising it I pulled with all my might and the board came up.
 I was astonished to see that it made an opening into the shop below. I had imagined that the floor or ceiling was of double thickness.
 This gave me a new idea. Why not escape through the floor? To pry up another board would perhaps be easier than to force the door.
 I tried the board next to the opening. The end was somewhat rotted, and it came up with hardly an effort.
 In another moment the opening would

be large enough to allow the passage of my body. Putting the first board under the edge of the second I bore down upon it.

As I did so I heard a noise that alarmed me greatly. It was the sound of Booth returning, and the next instant the carpenter had opened the outer door and entered.

In one hand he carried a tin tray containing my dinner. He crossed the floor directly under me without looking up. Then his eyes caught the shattered door and he gave a loud exclamation.

"By ginger! If that boy ain't gone and escaped!"

He set down the tray with a bang and tried to pull the door open. But the top bolt had become displaced, and it was several seconds before it could be shot back.

Meanwhile I was not idle. As quietly as I could I tore up the second board. The deed was done just as Booth stumbled over the keg on his way up the stairs.

As my jailer appeared at the top, I let my body through the opening. It was a tight squeeze, especially when accomplished in a hurry. I landed in a heap on a pile of shavings.

"Stop! stop!" called out Booth. "Roger, don't you hear me?"

I certainly did hear him, but paid no attention to his words. My one thought was to get away as quickly as possible.

"If you don't stop I'll shoot you," went on Booth at the top of his voice. "Don't you know breaking jail is a—felony?"

I didn't know what kind of a crime it was. I had made up my mind to escape, and intended to do so, even if such a deed constituted manslaughter. I made a break for the door and passed out just as Booth came tramping down the stairs.

(To be continued.)

[This Story began in Number 437.]

NORMAN BROOKE;

OR,

BREASTING THE BREAKERS.

BY MATTHEW WHITE, JR.,

Author of "My Mysterious Fortune," "Eric Dane," etc.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

A HARBOR OF REFUGE.

"I WONDER if they will know who Norman Brooke is?" I asked myself after I had sent in my card at the Brintons'.

But the boys had evidently been watching for me from an upper window, and at once came bounding down the stairs to welcome me. Mr. and Mrs. Brinton followed them closely and gave me a very cordial greeting.

Mr. Brinton was a much younger man than I had expected to find him, and an exceedingly pleasant one. He seemed to feel that I had placed him under the deepest obligations in what I had done for Rex and Tad.

"Rex told me that you were all alone in the world," he said, while we stood together in the library window, where he had taken me to get the view down the bay. "Pardon me if I inquire whether that does not mean that it might be in my power to repay in some measure the debt I owe you?"

"There is no debt, Mr. Brinton," I answered. "I am sure any one in my place would have done what I did."

"Then you are certain there is nothing you especially want that I might be able to do for you? Come, stay to tea with us and think it over."

The Brintons' home was a lovely one, and a very happy evening I spent there. Nothing was said about my work

at the theater except by the boys, who asked me a few questions about how Mr. Cooper looked off the stage, what we all did when the curtain fell, and so on. They went to bed at nine, and I rose to leave, but Mr. Brinton prevailed upon me to stay a while longer and appeared to take so much interest in me that I resolved to tell him the whole story of my summer experiences—Powers King episode and all—just as I have set it down in these pages.

"I know Mr. La Farge," he said, when I had ended. "We are members of the same club. I will see that you are set right with him. But I think I can do better by you than to get you your position with him back again. For I presume you do not care about continuing your theatrical career."

"Oh, no, indeed," I hastened to assure him.

"Well, then," he went on, "I have a brother just starting in the banking business in Cincinnati—"

"Cincinnati!" I exclaimed, almost springing out of my chair.

"Yes; our family came from Glendale, one of the suburbs. But perhaps you would not care to go so far away."

"I should like it above all things," I returned. "That's where my aunt and cousin have gone."

"Good!" cried Mr. Brinton. "That does away with the only drawback I could see to my plan. I had no opening here to offer you, but my brother, in starting up a new business, has several, and I am sure he would be delighted to give you one of them. But the building is not quite finished yet; will not open until about the middle of October. For how long are you engaged with the 'Castilian' company?"

I told him that my present contract was for three weeks longer, and added mentally that that would give me just about time to save up enough to pay my fare West.

"I shall write to my brother tomorrow," said Mr. Brinton, "and you will no doubt hear from him before next Sunday. And by the way, let me have your house address to send him."

I wrote it on my card, and then, as I bade him good night, said earnestly: "I wonder, if you realize, Mr. Brinton, what a very happy fellow you have made me this evening?"

"Yes; I see it in your eyes, my boy," he answered. "And, if you please, I do not want any other thanks, but I do hope we shall see you here again before you start for—Cincinnati."

It almost seemed worth while to have passed through such experiences as had fallen to my lot for the sake of the joy that possessed me now in realizing that I was on the home stretch towards a harbor of refuge. Everything about me seemed to take on a different aspect, to be connected in some way with the good fortune that had come to me. A boy that passed me whistling, a dog that trotted across my path wagging his tail, the snatch of a song I caught from an open window—"Oh, happy day!"—all these things seemed to fit in with my mood and make it appear as if the whole world was glad because I was.

And—how strange it seemed—this, the happiest day I had experienced in many weeks, was linked directly with one of the most miserable—that afternoon I left the La Farges' and was walking along the street so heavy hearted and despondent that I had nearly allowed myself to be run over!

What satisfaction I took the next morning in buying a paper and feeling that it was not necessary for me to turn at once to the Want columns! And then when I went over to the hotel to pay down the twenty five dollars and order my trunk sent to Mrs. Ma's, the clerk clapped me on the back, as he had done

that memorable morning, and exclaimed: "Well, you look as if you were ready to laugh over your dilemma, as I presumed you would."

"Yes; I'm going to Cincinnati," I replied.

"Oh," he said, and then I realized that the mention of Cincinnati did not by any means convey to him the impression it did to me. To my mind it seemed to be synonymous with the words: "Home again."

That night at the theater I sought out Mr. Dempster and asked him if we people behind the scenes were allowed any tickets for our friends now and then.

"Now and then, yes," he returned. "For any night but Saturday. When do you want them?"

"Thank you, sir, I'll let you know later," and the next evening I rushed off straight after dinner and went down to the address Archie Dorset had given me so long ago.

The family were just rising from the dinner table when I entered in response to the "Come in."

"Why, it's Brooke from Boston!" exclaimed Dorset, rising to come forward and give me both his hands. "I'm awfully glad to see you. Thought you'd forgotten all about me. Mother, this is Mr. Brooke. Jessie, let me introduce my friend. Now tell me all about yourself."

"I haven't much time to do that," I answered, looking at my watch. "I'm due at the theater by half past eight, and that is what I came down for partly—to give you tickets for the 'Castilian Castaway.' What night can you go?"

Of course this called for an explanation, and then before I came away I had time to ask a few questions about things down at Tick's.

"Oh, they go on just the same," replied Archie, "except that I've had my salary raised."

He seemed highly delighted with the promise of tickets, and agreed to bring his sister on Friday. It was on this night that I received two letters, both of which were most welcome.

One was from Mr. William Brinton, announcing that he should be pleased to take me into his employ on his brother's recommendation, on the fifteenth of October; the other bore on the corner of the envelope the imprint of La Farge & Co., and I tore it open eagerly.

It was from Clair's father, and announced that the writer felt convinced, by what he had heard from his friend, Mr. Brinton, that his judgment of me had been a hasty one. He added that he should be very glad to have me call upon his son before I went away, and then in a postscript, stated that his daughter's engagement to Mr. Willingham had been broken off.

You can imagine that I did not delay long in availing myself of the privilege of presenting myself at the Ecuador flats. I found Clair with a new companion, a young fellow who was exceedingly pleasant, and evidently in every way more fitted for the post than the lately deposed Pierre.

"Yes, Norman," Clair told me, "we have found out dreadful things about that Mr. Willingham. Isn't it queer how I never trusted the man from the first time I heard him speak?"

And now, reader, I am almost ready to say good by. I did not agree to take you with me any further than through the breakers, and these I left behind me when I turned my back on New York as the leaves were falling and started for the Queen City of the West.

It is there—or rather in one of its most charming suburbs—that I am living now, with my aunt and Edna. While my position at the Hamilton Bank does not net me as much per week by five dollars, as what I was getting at the Boulevard Theater, the prospects for

advancement are infinitely greater. I have enough to pay my board and leave me each week with a margin to save up, and then we are all together again.

The future is bright with promise, so bright that as I lay down my pen after finishing this account of my past, I am resolutely determined to look back upon it no more.

THE END.



F. A. G., Norfolk, Va. We do not buy copies of THE ARGOSY.

PHILIP FLOCK, 44 Ave. A., N. Y. City asks all who have back numbers of THE GOLDEN ARGOSY for sale to communicate with him.

P. B. P., Newark, N. J. A canceled post age stamp, of whatever country, is absolutely valueless, unless it can lay some claims to rarity.

P. C. W., Paterson, N. J. You can probably procure information about the pocket road map you want by writing to Gustav Kobbé, Short Hills, N. J.

F. L. H., Palmyra, N. Y. The serial stories written for THE ARGOSY by W. D. Moffat are the two full length serials, "The Crimson Banner" and "Brad Mattoon," and the shorter one, "The County Pennant." In about three weeks we shall begin a new story by the same author, entitled "Dirkman's Luck."

A. T., Baltimore, Md. 1. The rate of three months for fifty cents is a permanent one. 2. You will note that a serial by Edward S. Ellis commences in this number. 3. Vol. XIV. will begin about March 1st. 4. Our charge for binding is \$1.50 per volume. The expressage from Baltimore on a year's numbers ought not to be more than fifty cents.

F. E. D., Washington, D. C. 1. The Court of Private Land Claims has nothing to do with the granting of land tracts. It is for the settlement of disputed titles to land in the territory ceded to the United States by Mexico after the Mexican War. 2. The last report of the Postmaster General gave the number of free delivery offices as 454, with over 9,000 carriers.

S. S., Atlanta, Ga. 1. Mr. Moffat's first baseball serial, "The County Pennant," appeared in six numbers of Vol. VIII, price ten cents each. Five of these, therefore will be mailed to you on receipt of fifty cents. 2. Arthur Lee Putnam's story, "Tom Brace," has not been published in book form. It ran from No. 325 to 338; these numbers will cost you \$1.10.

O. F. S., Elgin, Ill. 1. We cannot tell you where you can obtain a sketch of the author named. He lives in retirement, and writes, we believe, only one book a year. His first story for THE ARGOSY was entitled "Don Gordon's Shooting Box," and appeared in Vol. I. 2. We are afraid we could not undertake to make such a list as you suggest. Have you read our offer of prize books?

BICYCLIST, Lexington, Ky. Training for bicycling and other special sport is marked by the same general features, with special practice on the wheel, or with the oars, or whatever be the instrument used as a vehicle of strength or speed. See the article on "Training for Football" in No. 462, which will give you the desired points, also the article on "Overtraining" in the number for October 17.

YOUNG EDITOR, Phila., Pa. Why ask unanswerable questions or questions that might have a dozen answers, according to the different opinions of various people? 1. English is the most widely used commercial language. French is next, being understood all over Europe. Spanish is necessary if one is in the ever increasing South American trade; German is not very extensively used outside of Germany. 2. The leading actor of France may be Coquelin; of England, Irving; of America, Booth. 3. The Board of Education of New York City has charge of a school ship, the St. Mary's, which educates the boys for the merchant marine; the Minnesota is the naval training ship. 4. Germany and England are most advanced in the construction of cannon for ships and fortifications. The armies of Europe and the United States each have firearms which they believe to be best adapted to their own needs.

APPEARANCES ARE DECEITFUL.

Vanderbilt's

Check is no stronger in Wall Street, than the word of Mr. H. G. Saunders, a prominent carpenter and builder of Auburn, N. Y., is among his fellow citizens. He says under date of Aug. 24, 1891:

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cured me of the last one, when suffering intensely. I urge all who suffer similarly to give Hood's Sarsaparilla a fair trial." H. G. SAUNDERS.

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The phenologist ran his hands rapidly over the boy's head, reflected a moment, and tried it again, but more slowly. "Well, professor," said the boy's father, "what calling do you find him best fitted for?" "Judging from his cranial development," replied the phenologist, breaking it as gently as he could, "I think he would make a good parachute jumper."—*Chicago Tribune.*

FAMILY PRIDE.

OLD DELINQUENT (to editor)—"I'd have you know that I come from a very high, strong family." EDITOR—"Yes; it's getting to be a kind of honor these days for a man's relations to be lynched. And, then, rope is so cheap!"—*Atlanta Constitution.*

IRREPRESSIBLE.

The most persistent borrower heard from lately lives in Bath. She sent to a neighbor the other day and requested the loan of a new pair of scissors. The refusal of the request did not daunt her, for she at once sent her daughter back to the owner of the scissors with the request: "Will you please lend mother a quarter to buy a pair of scissors with."—*Leicester, (M. E.) Journal.*

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BRAVE YOUTH (swimming to the rescue)—"Courage, Miss! Try and—"
STRUGGLING YOUNG WOMAN (from Boston, rebukingly)—"You should (gurgle) say 'try to!'"—*Chicago Tribune.*

TRULY CONSCIENTIOUS.

TOYSHOPMAN—"Beg pardon, miss, but here's your change, which you'd forgotten—one-and-ninety cents."
LITTLE MAID—"Oh, thank you very much. But we're not allowed to take money from anybody but grandpa."—*Punch.*

A DELAYED LUNCHEON.

THE OLD HADLEY LANDLORD—"Jimmy, run up stairs quick, an' ask your mother for th' 'Home Book of Etiquette.'"
JIMMY—"Whatcher wantin' find?"
THE LANDLORD—"That gent has jest asked for some conysummy an' I want ter find whether it's bird, beast 'r jest napkin."—*Judge.*

COMPANIONS SHOULD NOT QUARREL.

"You're a wicked thing!" said the Chimney to the Lamp, as it beamed with brilliancy from its exalted station.
"Don't growl," returned the other; "you may look down on me, but I'm supporting you, anyhow!"—*Puck.*

Munsey's Magazine

In the issue of the 18th of August, MUNSEY'S WEEKLY stated that thereafter it would be issued in magazine form, and that the name would be changed to MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE. The first issue of the Magazine is now on sale. It is handsomely illustrated and contains a wealth of reading, among which is a complete novel entitled **Vera Shamarin**, a story of Siberian exile that portrays the hardships and horrors to which prisoners are subjected under the iron rule of Russian despotism. In addition to this are **Four clever Short Stories**, and a generous number of poems, together with the following special articles: **Cornelius Vanderbilt**, giving a sketch and portrait of the head of New York's greatest moneyed family. **The Colleges of New York**, with illustrations. **The American Museum of Natural History**, with many illustrations. **The Beecher Statue**, with a study of the great preacher as a historical figure, illustrated. **Horseback Riding**, showing the growth of this popular outdoor sport, with illustrations; and **Snap Shots in Central Park**, which is very fully and effectively illustrated, and which tells much of New York's great pleasure ground that is not generally known.

If your newsdealer has sold his supply or has not had the October issue of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE he can get it for you, or you can get it direct from the publisher. Price 25 cents a number or \$3 a year.

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