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# THE ARGOSY

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## A Bad Lot.

BY ARTHUR LEE PUTNAM,

*Author of "Ben Bruce," "Cast Upon the Breakers," "Number 91," etc., etc.*

### CHAPER I.

BERNARD BROOKS.

"YOU'RE a bad lot, Bernard Brooks. I don't think I ever knew a wuss boy."

"Thank you for the compliment, Mr. Snowdon. Let me suggest, however, that *wuss* is hardly correct English."

The speaker was fifteen years of age, but as tall as most boys of seventeen. He had a bold, aggressive manner, which he only assumed with those he thought were hostile or unfriendly.

He could be a devoted friend, and a loyal subordinate to one who gained his good will. Mr. Snowdon he did not look upon as a friend, though he had been placed in his charge two months before by a cousin of his deceased father.

Ezekiel Snowdon, a man of perhaps sixty, tall and with stooping shoulders, colored with anger at the boy's sarcastic words. He claimed to have been educated at a small Western college, and on the strength of it had established himself in the country and advertised for private pupils at a low rate.

These were mostly young, and not competent to see his deficiencies, but Bernard was old enough and well enough educated to perceive and comment on them. This greatly annoyed and angered Mr. Snowdon, who felt that the boy did not treat him with proper respect.

"Quit your impudence!" said Snowdon with a vicious look in his greenish hued eyes. "I don't need no criticisms from a whipper snapper like you"

"I intended it for your benefit, Mr. Snowdon," said Bernard demurely. "Besides, you criticise me. You called me a bad lot."

"And so you are. A wuss—a worse boy I never seen."

"Saw would be more correct, Mr. Snowdon."

"Young man, you'd better look out. I won't sumbit to your aggravating impudence. Besides, you are ignorant of the fact that Chaucer and Spenser use seen for saw. Them are my favorite poets, so it is not strange that I should occasionally make use of their diction."

"Thank you for the information, Mr. Snowdon. I did not know that you had such high authority. I have read a little of Chaucer and Spenser, and I never observed the word you mention."

"A little knowledge is a dangerous thing," remarked Mr. Snowdon with dignity.

"I am sure you are a good judge on that point, Mr. Snowdon," said Bernard with demure face, so that his elder did not catch the covert sarcasm.

"I am glad you give me credit for something," rejoined the teacher. "Now you hear what I say. I won't have you goin' round with that Nat Barclay, as you did last evening."

"What's the matter with Nat Barclay?"

"He was once a pupil of mine, and he defied my authority, so I had to discharge him."

"That isn't what he says, Mr. Snowdon."

"What does he say?"

"He says that he found out you didn't know enough to teach him, and got his father to take him away from your school."

"Then the boy lied," said Mr. Snowdon, coloring deeply. "I'd like to thrash him,"

"I dare say you would, Mr. Snowdon, but I don't think it would be exactly safe. Nat wouldn't stand it."

"He'd have to stand it, if I took it into my head to chastise him."

"I'M AFTER YOU, BERNARD BROOKS," SAID MR. SNOWDON GRIMLY.

"If you had a scrimmage, I'd bet on Nat," said the bold pupil.

"Do you consider *scrimmage* a classical word?" asked Mr. Snowdon with a sneer.

"Well, not exactly. I suppose you know that Dryden uses it," said Bernard with a bold flight of imagination.

Now Mr. Snowdon was not sufficiently versed in English classical writers to know whether this statement was correct or not. So he equivocated, to conceal his ignorance.

"Dryden is not always a correct writer," he added. "I never advise my pupils to imitate him. But that is neither here nor there. I have told you that I don't want you to go round with Nat Barclay."

"Why not? I am sure he is of good family. His father is a clergyman."

"It is from respect to his father that I did not chastise him when he was in my school."

"He says his father does not think much of your scholarship."

"It is because he has poisoned his father's mind against me by false and mendacious charges and statements. I can afford to look upon these with contempt since my alma mater bestowed upon me the honorary degree of P. D. at the last commencement."

"What does P. D. stand for?"

"Doctor of Philosophy," answered Mr. Snowdon in a lofty tone.

"Oh, I thought it might mean something else."

"What?" asked Mr. Snowdon suspiciously.

"Oh, it isnt material. I don't want to display my ignorance," said Bernard meekly.

"I am glad you are becoming sensible."

Mr. Snowdon did not press the question as he conjectured that P. D., as understood by Bernard, would stand for something far from complimentary.

"I am going to the post office, Mr. Snowdon. Can I do anything for you?"

"You may inquire if there are any letters for me."

"All right, sir."

Bernard was about to leave the room, when he turned as if struck by a sudden thought.

"May I inquire, Mr. Snowdon," he asked, "what authority you have for calling me 'a bad lot?'"

"I have the authority of Cornelius McCracken, your guardian."

"Does he say I am a bad lot?" asked Bernard, his brow contracting.

"Yes he did."

"When did he say it?"

"In a letter I received only last week."

"May I see the letter, Mr. Snowdon?"

"Yes," answered the teacher, "if it will give you any satisfaction."

"It will give me satisfaction to know exactly how he expresses himself in speaking of me."

Ezekiel Snowdon opened his desk, and took out a letter postmarked New York.

"There is the letter," he said, handing it to Bernard with a malicious smile. "Out of regard for your feelings I had not intended to show it to you, but since you desire it, I feel that I shall not be responsible for any wound your pride may receive"

Bernard did not answer this speech, but taking the letter tendered him opened and hastily read it.

This was the letter:

Ezekiel Snowdon, Esq.

Dear Sir:

I am in receipt of your letter, complaining of my ward, Bernard Brooks. You say you find him disrespectful and insubordinate, and upon this ground you ask me to increase the price I pay for his education. I am quite aware that he is a bad lot. You will do me the justice to remember that in placing him under your charge I did not seek to extenuate the boy's faults. I told you that he was obstinate, independent and headstrong. You told me that you had had great success in managing refractory boys, and were willing to undertake him. Under these circumstances I cannot feel that I am called upon to increase the remuneration agreed upon between us in the first place. Should you find him impudent I shall not object to your inflicting upon him such punishment—even castigation—as in your opinion he may require. More money, however, I cannot pay you, as it draws heavily upon my resources to pay the amount already agreed upon.

Yours respectfully,
Cornelius McCracken.

"Now I hope you are satisfied," said Mr. Snowdon, as he received the letter back.

"I am satisfied that you have not misrepresented Mr. McCracken."

"You see he gives me complete authority over you."

"I see he does," returned Bernard in a peculiar tone.

"May I ask, Mr. Snowdon," he added after a thoughtful pause "whether my guardian ever told you about how I was situated?"

"In what way?"

"As to money matters. Did he tell you whether or not I had any fortune?"

"He said you had not."

"Did he tell you that I was wholly dependent upon his charity!"

"He gave me that impression. You ought to feel very grateful to him for his great hearted liberality in thus defraying the expenses of a destitute orphan."

"Probably I am as grateful as the occasion requires," rejoined Bernard gravely. "I will inquire for letters for you."

As the boy went out Mr. Snowdon looked after him thoughtfully.

"I hate that boy!" he murmured to himself. "It would do me good to flog him. His guardian has given me leave and I think that I will soon find an opportunity to avail myself of it.

### CHAPTER II.

BERNARD'S BOLDNESS.

ON his way to the post office Bernard met Nat Barclay.

"Where are you bound, Bernard?" he asked.

"To the post office."

"How are you getting on with Ezekiel?"

"There is no love lost between us. He says I am a bad lot. In fact he says he never knew a wuss boy."

Both boys laughed.

"What bad things do you do?"

"Associate with you, for one thing."

"Has Ezekiel forbidden it?"

"Yes."

"Then perhaps I had better leave you?"

"By no means. I don't propose to obey Mr. Snowdon in that."

"Thank you, but I don't want you to get into trouble."

"What trouble can I get into?"

"He may undertake to flog you."

"Let him try it," said Bernard in a significant tone. "What do you think I would be doing? Did he ever undertake to chastise you?"

"No. He knew my father would not permit it."

"If he would whip his own son it might do him good. Septimus is a young imp. He delights in ill treating animals and young children."

"There he is now! I wonder what he is up to."

Septimus Snowdon was an ill favored boy of fifteen with red hair and freckles seeming like extensive patches upon a face in which even the most partial eyes could not have seen a redeeming feature. He was standing a little distance ahead, looking up into the branches of a tree in which a terrified kitten had taken refuge. Standing beside him was a young boy of twelve who seemed to be concerned for the safety of the kitten.

Septimus raised a large stone and taking aim sent it through the air, aiming at the cat. It came very near hitting her.

"Don't stone my kitty!" remonstrated Frank Fisk, the young boy.

"Stop your noise!" said Septimus roughly. "I shall stone her all I want to."

As he spoke he threw another stone which just grazed the kitten's face and elicited a terrified cry.

"There, you bad boy, you hit my kitty."

"Who calls me a bad boy?" demanded Septimus, with an ugly look on his face.

"I did, and you are one, or you wouldn't throw stones at my kitten."

"I'll throw stones at you if you like it any better."

"You wouldn't dare to. I'd tell my father, and he'd——"

"What would he do?"

"He'd stop you."

"We'll see if he will."

Septimus took a strong cord from his pocket, and seizing the boy's hands prepared to tie them together in spite of his cries.

"What are you going to do?" asked Frank in a tone of apprehension.

"I am going to give you a lesson," answered Septimus coolly.

Frank struggled to free himself, but Septimus was too strong for him.

Nat Barclay turned to Bernard.

"Shall we let him hurt little Frank?" he asked.

"Not much."

As Bernard spoke he strode towards Septimus who thus far had not observed him.

"Stop that, you young brute!" he said in an imperious tone. "Do you hear me?"

Septimus turned quickly, and his scowl became deeper when he saw who had spoken to him, for if there was any boy he hated it was Bernard, who had interfered with him more than once.

"Yes," he said. "I hear and I won't do it."

"You won't, eh?"

"No I won't, and you'd better be careful what you say or do, or I'll tell pa, and then——"

"And then what?"

"You'll get a flogging."

"That doesn't frighten me much. Are you going to stop?"

"No, I'm not," and Septimus gave an extra twist that made Frank cry out.

Bernard concluded that the time for remonstrance was past. He sprang forward, and seizing Septimus in his powerful grasp tore him from his young victim.

"I'll pay you out for this!" shrieked Septimus, as he flung himself upon Bernard.

Bernard had him on his back in less than a minute.

"Do you want any more?" he asked, rather contemptuously.

Just at this moment the kitten saw a favorable opportunity to escape, and ran down the trunk of the tree. As she was running away Septimus caught sight of her, and his cruel instincts were aroused. He seized a rock and flung at her. Had it struck the kitten she would have been seriously hurt.

Bernard was fond of pets, and his soul revolted at cruelty in any form.

"I see you can't be trusted, Septimus," he said composedly. "Nat, come here and help secure him."

"What shall I do?" asked Nat.

"Hold his hands."

Nat Barclay complied with his request, and Bernard taking the cord which Septimus had used on Frank, quickly and securely tied the hands of the young tyrant.

Septimus struggled and threatened, but without effect. In less than ten minutes he was securely bound.

"There," said Bernard, "you are safe for a short time."

"Untie my hands, or I'll get my father to flog you!" screamed Septimus.

"Perhaps you'd better," said Nat Barclay in a low voice. He was afraid his friend would get into trouble.

"No, I won't. Septimus needs the lesson. You need'nt worry about me. Now we'll go to the post office."

The two boys kept on their way, and Septimus, his hands tied, with wrath in his heart, started for home.

Mr. Snowdon was just coming out of the front door, when to his astonished gaze was revealed his son and heir walking towards the house, with his hands close together, like a prisoner in handcuffs.

"What does all this mean?" he asked in surprise. "What have you been tying your hands for?"

"I didn't tie my hands," said Septimus sullenly. "Do you think I am a fool?"

"Septimus, you should not speak to your father like this. If you did not tie your hands, who did?"

"Who did? That young loafer Bernard Brooks. I want you to flog him within an inch of his life."

"Bernard Brooks tied your hands?"

"Didn't I say so?"

"But why did you let him do it?"

"How could I help it, when he had Nat Barclay with him?"

"Ha! so Nat Barclay was with him?"

"Yes he was."

"I forbade him to associate with that Barclay."

"Much he cares for your orders. When I told him you would flog him, he laughed!"

"Oh, he laughed, did he?" said Mr. Snowdon, much incensed.

"Yes, he doesn't care for you," said Septimus, craftily fanning his father's wrath.

"I'll learn him!" said Mr. Snowdon, shaking his head vigorously. "He'll see that I am not to be trifled with. But what did he tie your hands for?"

"Just cut the cord and I'll tell you. It hurts like all possessed."

Mr. Snowdon drew a jack knife from his pocket and severed the cord. Septimus breathed a sigh of relief.

"See how very red my wrists are?" he said. "Pa, do me a favor."

"Well, what is it?"

"Keep this cord, and let me tie Bernard's hands with it."

"A good idea, Septimus. Now tell me what he tied your hands for?"

"For just nothing at all."

"There must have been something."

"Well, you see Frank Fisk's kitten was up in a tree, and I was shying stones at it. Frank made such a fuss that I took out a cord and thought I would tie his hands just to give him a lesson. Just then those two loafers came along, and had the impudence to tell me to stop, just as if they had any authority over me. Of course I told them it was none of their business, and defied them."

"Very proper, Septimus. You are only responsible for your conduct to me."

"Then Bernard Brooks made a savage attack upon me, and getting Nat Barclay to hold my hands, he tied them. What do you say to that pa?"

"What do I say? That it was a high handed and outrageous proceeding."

"Bully for you, pa! You express my sentiments. Now what are you goin' to do about it?"

"I shall call the Brooks boy to account. He forgets that he is under my charge."

"He seems to think I am under his charge. Say, pa, you won't allow your son to be insulted and trod upon, will you?"

"No I wont, Septimus. For some time I have been thinking that it would be necessary to flog Bernard Brooks, and now I have made up my mind to do it."

"Good, pa! You'll let me see you tackle him, won't you?"

"Yes, Septimus, I will. I can understand the gratification it will give you."

"If you do that will pay me for what he did to me."

"But perhaps he won't come back," said Mr. Snowdon in an apprehensive tone. "In that case I shall lose the quarterly sum his guardian pays me."

"You don't think he'll run away?" asked Septimus.

Half an hour later this question was answered. Bernard was seen approaching the house, his manner cool and composed, while he looked neither troubled nor flurried.

## CHAPTER III.

### BROUGHT TO BAY.

WHEN Bernard saw Septimus Snowdon and his father standing in front of the house he understood at once from the expression of their faces that trouble was in store for him.

"Well, sir," said Mr. Snowdon curtly, "so you have come home at last?"

"Yes, sir. There was no letter for you."

"Ahem! I shall have to write a letter to your guardian."

Bernard shrugged his shoulders, but did not think it necessary to say anything, rather to the disappointment of Ezekiel who wished to draw him out.

"I find," he said, "that you have made an outrageous assault on my innocent boy. What have you to say in extenuation of your conduct?"

"Only that your innocent boy was stoning a kitten, and bullying a young boy."

"Even if he were, what business was it of yours?"

"It will always be my business to protect children and animals from being abused," said Bernard warmly.

"You are a very impudent boy! Are you aware that the boy you assaulted is my son?"

"I ought to be aware of it. There isn't another boy in town who would be guilty of such brutal conduct."

"Are you goin' to stand that, pa?" asked Septimus, anxious to precipitate a conflict between Bernard and his father.

"No, I am not," said Mr. Snowdon, compressing his lips. "Get me the horsewhip."

No command could have been pleasanter to Septimus. He ran into the house, and soon reappeared with an ordinary horsewhip with which his father was in the habit of punishing the pupils under his charge.

He handed it to his father with a malicious smile.

"There it is, pa!" he said. "Lay it on heavy."

Mr. Snowdon did not immediately proceed to make use of the whip. Considering Bernard to be in his power, he was disposed to play with him as a cat plays with a mouse of whom it is preparing to make a victim.

"Do you know what I am going to do, Bernard Brooks?" he demanded sternly.

"Suppose you tell me," said Bernard quietly.

"I am going to flog you."

"What for?"

"For assaulting my boy."

"Why don't you let him do it?"

"Septimus, do you wish to chastise Bernard with this whip, and so punish him for his attack upon you?"

There was nothing that Septimus would have liked better, but there was something in Bernard's steady look that made him think it would not be prudent.

"I guess you'd better flog him, pa," he said after a pause.

"Very well, my son, I will."

Whip in hand, Ezekiel Snowdon advanced upon his refractory pupil. Bernard did not wait meekly to receive the punishment, neither did he care to get into a fight with the teacher. He turned and ran through the back yard and down a lane leading to a tract of marsh which belonged to the Snowdon farm.

"He'll get away, pa!" said Septimus.

"Try to head him off my son!"

Septimus who was in the path tried to do so, but a swinging blow from Bernard nearly prostrated him, and the fugitive kept on. Mr. Snowdon's blood was up. Brandishing the whip in his long and sinewy arms, he kept his thin legs in motion, and pursued Bernard with as great speed as he was capable of.

But Bernard had several rods the start, and he was a good runner. He kept on, occasionally looking back to see what progress his pursuer was making.

"What does the boy mean by running to the marsh?" thought Mr. Snowdon. "He is a fool. I shall catch him there to a certainty."

Bernard probably had views of his own. Indeed it is quite certain that he had a plan by which he hoped to bring discomfiture upon his dignified preceptor. He made straight for the marsh, till he found his progress barred by a wide ditch about half full of slimy water.

"Aha! the ditch will stop him," reflected Mr. Snowdon.

But no! Bernard poised himself for an instant on the brink, and then lightly leaped over, landing in safety on the opposite side. Close behind him was Mr. Snowdon. That gentleman felt impelled by the impetus acquired in running to follow Bernard's example. But the ditch was quite six feet across, and Mr. Snowdon, though not over burdened with flesh was stiffer in his joints than he had been twenty years before, and this operated against him. Besides it was slippery where he started to jump, and the result was that he landed in the middle of the ditch where he floundered in the miry water in a woeful condition.

Septimus came up directly for he was third in the race.

"Where are you, pa?" he asked.

"Don't you see where I am?" demanded Mr. Snowdon sharply. "Help me out of this quagmire!"

Rather reluctantly Septimus extended his hand for his father's hand as well as his clothes were bedabbled with mire, and Mr. Snowdon nearly pulled him in, in his efforts to extricate himself from the ditch.

"You're all over mud, pa!" said Septimus, surveying the sorry plight of his sire.

Just across the ditch stood Bernard. he had come to a halt, and calmly eyed his would-be captor.

"It's your fault, you young scoundrel!" cried Mr. Snowdon in a fury, his wrath increased by the knowledge that Bernard was as neat and clean as when he started. "If it hadn't been for you I shouldn't have been in this plight."

"I don't see how I could help it, sir. You shouldn't have tried to jump over the ditch."

"Why did you do it?"

"I wanted to get away from you."

"Jump back at once!"

A smile stole over Bernard's face.

'I shouldn't dare to," he answered, "I might fall in as you have."

"And serve you right! I order you to jump."

"Suppose I do, and get safe over?"

"I will flog you within an inch of your life," said Mr. Snowdon rather imprudently.

"That isn't inducement enough," said Bernard. "I guess I had better stay where I am."

"You needn't think you will escape the whipping. You may put it off, but you'll have to take it sooner or later."

Evidently Mr. Snowdon thought it best to put off punishing Bernard for the present. He was so bespattered with mud that it was necessary to go home and change his clothing. Septimus was very sorry for this decision, as he had been looking forward with pleasant anticipation to seeing Bernard flogged.

"You ain't goin' to let him off, pa, are you?" he asked.

"No," answered Mr. Snowdon with a vengeful look. "The longer it's put off, the harder I'll lay it on when the time comes."

Satisfied with this assurance Septimus followed his father home. As from time to time he glanced at the figure of his parent he could not help reflecting that Mr. Snowdon was not a father to be proud of. He never looked attractive, but under present circumstances he looked more unsavory than usual.

Left alone Bernard did not leap back across the ditch, but taking a course to the right emerged into the main road about half a mile from Mr. Snowdon's house.

He took a short cut to the home of his friend Nat Barclay, whom he made acquainted with the catastrophe that had befallen Mr. Snowdon.

Nat laughed—he could hardly help it—as he pictured to himself the miry and bedraggled condition of his old teacher.

"I am afraid he'll try to get even with you, Bernard," he said apprehensively.

"No doubt he would if he got a chance."

"But he can't help having plenty of chances as you live in his house."

"But I am not going to live there any longer, Nat."

"What do you mean?"

"I shall run away."

"You won't do that, will you, Bernard? What will your guardian say? You have no one else to depend upon."

"I don't know."

"But this is serious, Bernard."

"I have myself."

"But what can a boy of fifteen do?"

"He can support himself. At any rate he can try. The fact is, Nat, I don't think Mr. McCracken a friend of mine. I may go to him, and ask if he will make any other arrangements for me. If he won't, I will make them for myself."

"What will you do tonight, Bernard?"

"I will go back to Mr. Snowdon's—creep up to my room, if I have a chance, get out a bundle of clothes, and sleep in the barn. In the morning I can start early, and——

"Where will you go?"

"I don't know yet."

Mr. Snowdon was in the habit of retiring early, and so were his family. Generally at nine o'clock they were in bed. When nine o'clock came he told Septimus to lock the door.

"But suppose Bernard comes back?"

"He can sleep out of doors for one night. It will teach him a lesson."

He didn't know that Bernard had already visited the house, made up a bundle of clothing, and withdrawn to the barn where he had found a comfortable resting place on one of the lofts of hay.

It was Bernard's intention to get up early in the morning, and make his escape before Mr. Snowdon or any of his family were astir.

But a healthy boy, who is a good sleeper, can not always fix the time of awaking. For some reason Bernard slept on till half past seven o'clock. Septimus had occasion to go to the barn, and discovered him still asleep. He ran into the house in great excitement.

"Pa," he said, "Bernard is asleep in the barn. I seed him."

Occasionally Septimus, though the son of a teacher, made grammatical mistakes.

"Is he asleep?" asked Mr. Snowdon in a tone of interest.

"Yes, pa."

"The Lord has delivered him into my hands. I will not neglect the opportunity to chastise him."

"He may wake up when you are getting up."

"I will take you with me to hold the ladder."

"He might stick me with the pitchfork," said Septimus, who was a coward at heart.

"Then I will take Bridget."

Bridget was the kitchen drudge. She was rather a stupid girl, who stood in fear of her employer.

They went to the barn together. Mr. Snowdon went up the ladder, whip in hand, Bridget holding the ladder. He mounted the opposite scaffold, and prepared to cross to the other, when Bernard who had been aroused by the sound of voices, made his appearance cap in hand, and asked composedly: "What are you after, Mr. Snowdon?"

"I'm after you, Bernard Brooks," answered Mr. Snowdon grimly.

*(To be continued.)*

*[This Story began last week.]*

# A Curious Companion.

BY GEORGE KING WHITMORE,

*Author of "Fred Acton's Mystery," etc., etc.*

## CHAPTER IV.

### A FEARSOME MOMENT.

BY a supreme effort Al recovered himself in an instant. He remembered that Marjorie was with him.

He opened the door and leaped down from the wagonette. Going over to the driver of the buggy, he inquired:

"Whereabouts was this murder done?"

He held on to the wheel to steady himself while he waited for the answer. Of course he knew what it would be; knew that the man would say in a cave near the village of Beechwood.

"In the house next door to mine," came the unexpected reply. "It was a man Peterson had taken in as a boarder. Tell me where I can find the coroner in Harristraw, quick."

But all Al could say was:

"In the house next to yours?"

This he repeated twice, and then added, so as to be thoroughly sure that his mind had a right to feel relieved:

"What sort of a looking man was it that was murdered? Did he have light hair and——"

"Thunderation, boy! it was Peterson himself, I tell you. Where can I find that coroner?"

"We'll turn around and I'll find him for you," answered Al. "I guess we can get over the ground faster with our two horses."

He sprang back into the wagonette and ordered James to turn around and drive back into town with all speed.

"Isn't it horrible?" murmured Marjorie. "Is he sure, Al, that the man is really dead?"

"I don't know. It's a great shock to you, Marjorie. We'll stop and leave you out at the parsonage the first thing."

"I say, Al," asked Max, "have you any idea where to find the coroner?"

"No; we'll go to Mr. Spence's and ask him. Where's that man in the buggy? I forgot, if we leave him behind, we won't know where to send the coroner."

"I know, sir," interposed James. "He said the murder was next door to his house."

"And where does he live, James?" demanded Al with an eagerness that the inquiry itself did not seem fully to warrant.

"On the main street in Beechwood, sir, just after you pass the liberty pole. It's on the left."

An inaudible sigh of complete relief escaped Al's lips. There was no possibility then that the murdered man was Arthur Seagrave.

The parsonage was soon reached, and the boys said a hasty good night to Marjorie, then on to Mr. Spence's, who was cashier of the First bank. They caught him just before he went to bed, and obtained from him information as to the whereabouts of Mr. Fillmore, the coroner.

The stop at the parsonage had enabled the man in the buggy to catch up with them and now they were glad to turn the matter over to him.

"Home now, sir?" asked James, as the buggy rattled off down Grove street.

"No, out on the Beechwood road again," replied Al.

He and Max took their places in the extreme rear of the wagonette, so that the coachman should not overhear their talk.

"My heart went up in my throat, Al," began Max, "when that man told us a murder'd been committed. I was sure he'd found Seagrave's dead body in the cavern."

"So was I. I feel now as if I could not treat that Seagrave carefully enough. You know there's blood poisoning and all that may set in from a wound. I wish we hadn't left him in that place so long."

"Oh, he'll be all right. Don't worry. Did you think to bring anything we can make a light with?"

"No, not even a match. How stupid of me. Here's a grocery store. Let's stop and get a supply."

"What's the matter with buying a candle at the same time?"

"The very thing."

So a halt was made and the purchases effected.

"Drive as fast as you can, James," Al said when they took their seats again.

"Where to, sir?"

"Just beyond Squirrel Creek. I'll tell you where to stop."

"Yes, sir," answered James, but he was evidently greatly mystified, for he no doubt recalled the fact that "just beyond Squirrel Creek" was where they had been apprised of the murder.

The blacks seemed to feel especially good tonight, and got over the ground very rapidly. In less than ten minutes the planks of the Squirrel Creek bridge were rattling beneath their hoofs, and two minutes later Al called out:

"Stop here, James."

But neither he nor Max left the carriage. They took a careful observation of the right hand side of the road, and then Al said:

"James, do you think you could drive the wagonette in among those trees all right? There seems to me to be room enough."

"Yes, sir, I can, but how far do you want to go?"

"As far as you can get, that is, if you think there's a chance to turn around and come out again after we get in."

"If I can get in any place, sir, trust me for gettin' out again."

"All right. Go ahead."

And in among the trees they went.

When James finally announced that they could go no farther, they were in sight of the mouth of the cave, on which the moon beams poured their brightest rays through a little clearing in the woods.

"Wait here a few minutes for us, James," said Al, as he and Max, candle and matches in hand, left the wagonette and advanced toward the cavern.

They could see the coachman looking after them, mouth and eyes wide open.

"I suppose our doings tonight will be all over town tomorrow," observed Al.

"Why don't you tell James to keep quiet about it?" suggested Max.

"I don't want to let him think I'm doing anything I'm ashamed of. I'm not, for that matter. Only I suppose it does look a little queer."

"Spookish to say the least," added Max, with a little shiver as they crouched down to enter the cave.

Al went first.

"Seagrave, oh Seagrave!" he called out persistently.

"Hello, is that you, Hall?" came the answer. "I thought you had forgotten all about me."

"No indeed. Wait till we light the candle we've brought."

A tiny flame was soon kindled and by its light the boys advanced more rapidly till they halted beside the mysterious stranger, who was lying in the same position in which they had left him in the afternoon.

"Can you walk?" asked Al anxiously.

"Can I? Just give me the chance to stretch my legs and see. But first tell me whether the coast is clear outside?"

"What do you mean by that?"

"Is there anybody hanging around the mouth of the cave? You know, for your own sake, we want to keep this business as quiet as possible."

"There's nobody there but our coachman. I'm satisfied, if that's what you mean."

"Oh, all right. Start ahead."

"But don't you want help?"

"Not I. I've had a good long rest, you see."

Al and Max turned around and proceeded to make their way out, followed by Seagrave.

"Here's that gun," said Max, as they passed it. "What shall we do with it?"

"Leave it here, for all of me," replied Al. "I've no cause to want to cherish it."

James's eyes looked as if they would pop out of his head when he beheld three persons emerge from the cavern where he had seen only two go in.

"Oh, this reminds me of home," sighed Seagrave, as he sank back into a corner of the comfortable wagonette, with his eyes resting on the liveried coachman.

"Back to the house as quickly as you can now, James," was Al's order.

Seagrave sat with closed eyes, his head resting against one of the standards of the wagonette. He was evidently not in a mood for talk.

In fact he said not a word during the entire drive back. Only when Al announced that they had arrived, and he opened his eyes and saw the house he murmured: "Just the place."

## CHAPTER V.

### MAX'S SUSPICIONS TAKE DEFINITE SHAPE.

THE instant they stood in the hall, with the front door closed behind them, a great change came over Seagrave. He seemed to cast his dullness aside as one would a garment suitable only for out of door wear.

"This is comfy!" he exclaimed, sinking down on the soft cushioned divan that formed a window seat opposite the nook under the stairs where a great fireplace gave things a cosy look.

"I should think it would be a great

improvement on that spooky cave," remarked Max, who had a reputation for never hesitating to say the things that came into his mind. "What under the sun did you want to stay there for all the time you did?"

"Getting up my courage to trespass on your friend's hospitality, as I am doing now," laughed Seagrave. "Isn't that as good a reason as any?"

"That reminds me," broke in Al. "You must be hungry."

"Hungry!" exclaimed the other. "Try me on something and see how a famished man eats."

"I beg your pardon," exclaimed Al. "I ought to have thought of that before," and he hurried off in the direction of the kitchen.

As soon as he had gone, Seagrave turned to Max with:

"Does your friend live in this spacious mansion all by himself?"

"Oh, no, indeed," Max made haste to explain. "His mother is away at the seashore, and Mr. Hall has just been called out of town on business."

"What a chump I am for telling all this," he said to himself the next instant. "If he means anything crooked, he'll know now the coast is clear."

"I trust Mr. and Mrs. Hall will not object to their son taking in a perfect stranger in this way," Seagrave continued.

"Oh, no, I guess they won't mind," returned Max, adding, after a second's pause: "I'm the only one who might object."

"You? Well, you have the virtue of frankness at any rate. And why should you object?"

"Because Al and I have all our plans laid to start for the World's Fair on Monday. Of course if you are here he can't go."

"Well, you are a refreshment, young man, in these days of conventionalities."

"Maybe it was rude in me to talk that way to a fellow who is Al's guest, but you see, I've been looking forward to the Fair all summer. It would come rather hard to be cheated out of it now. It wouldn't be any fun to go alone."

"Reasoning on that basis, you ought to have twice the enjoyment out of two companions that you would get out of one."

"What do you mean?" asked Max, looking blank.

And at that instant Al returned.

"I mean," went on Seagrave, including both boys in his glance, "that I should be only too happy to go to Chicago with you."

Al looked at Max, as if mutely demanding from him the meaning of this.

"Oh, I really mean it," continued the young man. "But as I'm too hungry to explain on an empty stomach, I'll give my young host an opportunity to tell me that he has found me something to eat."

"Yes," returned Al. "If you will step out into the dining room, I can give you a scared up meal, which may be satisfying if it is not very picturesque."

Seagrave looked up quickly as Al uttered the last word. Then he thrust his hand through his arm and said:

"Do you know I like you amazingly. It's very easy to overlook a little thing like being shot at, in a fellow like you."

Seagrave seemed determined that Al should not forget the unpleasant episode that led to their acquaintance.

He was hungry. There was no denying that fact. And yet he did not attack the cold chicken ravenously. His table manners, even under these trying circumstances, were those of the polished gentleman.

"I say," began Max, the irrepressible, when he saw that the other's appetite had been in a measure appeased, "before you go on to explain about that Chicago business, I wish you would tell me why you went into that cave."

"Why, my dear fellow," exclaimed Seagrave, "I thought I explained all about that before you took me out of it!"

"No, sir, you didn't," responded Max, shaking his head at him.

"Well, we shall have plenty of time to talk over that when we get on the train. Oh, yes, I forgot you weren't present, Mr. Hall, when the proposition was made that I accompany you to the World's Fair. You see I wouldn't think of incommoding you and Mr. —— I've really forgotten his name."

"Max'll do," interrupted that young gentleman bluntly.

"You and Mr. Max, so, as I am sure you wouldn't care to have me out of your sight during this critical period, I will fix matters all right by going with you. Now don't say a word; it will be no sacrifice on my part I assure you I haven't seen the Fair yet and to do so in the company of two such bright young men, would only enhance the pleasure. And now that this matter is settled may I ask where you are going to put me for the night. My wound is much better, but I think I should retire as soon as possible and get all the rest I can."

"But are you sure you don't want the doctor?" asked Al anxiously.

"Not for worlds," returned the other. "I think too much of your peace of mind for that."

"If you will come up stairs then, I will show you the room you can occupy. It adjoins my own, which Max will share with me, so that if you should need anything in the night, you have only to knock."

They all went up stairs together, where Seagrave insisted on shaking hands for good night with each of the boys. Then the latter returned down stairs, Al explaining that he must see to the locking up.

But when they reached the hall, Max threw himself full length on the divan, and with his chin propped up by one hand, looked steadily at Al, who had taken a rocker by his side.

"Well?" finally said Max, when the silence had lasted almost a full minute. "What do you think now?"

"I don't know what to think," replied Al, moving uneasily in his chair. "He's certainly a very strange fellow."

"He's more than that, I should say," rejoined Max. "He's mighty peculiar. Fancy his telling you that it was I proposed he go to the fair with us."

"Why, didn't you suggest it to him while I was out in the kitchen?" exclaimed Al.

"Well, I should say I didn't. He suggested it himself. I wonder if he expects you to pay his expenses."

"That's what I've been asking myself. But I wouldn't do it for one thing, and I couldn't for another."

"And where's his valise?" went on Max. "He can't go to Chicago very well with nothing but the clothes on his back."

"He's very well dressed though, did you notice that, Max?"

"Yes, and the diamond and sapphire in his ring. But I'm positive he didn't tell us how he came to be in that cave."

"So am I. And that's a very important thing for us to know."

"Say, Al!" Max sat up suddenly, an inexplicable expression of horror on his face.

"What is it?"

Max leaned forward and grasped his friend by the knee. But he did not speak at once. He first glanced up at the stairway above them, as if to make sure that Seagrave was not leaning over the bannister, listening to them.

Even though he saw nothing, he seemed not to be satisfied. Rising, he beckoned Al to follow him, and led the way out into the dining room, now dark and deserted.

Here he motioned for Al to sit down in the furthest corner, and then, with a hand on either shoulder, he bent over and said in the most guarded tone:

"Have you forgotten about that murder, Al?"

"No. What of it?"

"Doesn't your mind jump at any conclusions?"

"What do you mean?" Al started in a way that showed he had some glimmerings of that to which Max was leading up.

"I mean just this: Why doesn't everything point to the fact that Seagrave is the man who did it?"

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### CHAPTER VI.

#### MIDNIGHT EVIDENCE.

"IT can't be possible," was Al's exclamation in response to Max's suggestion that Arthur Seagrave was concerned in the murder of which they had heard that night. "Besides, how could he do it when he was in the cave all the time?"

"We don't know when the murder was committed," returned Max. "He may have done it in the afternoon before we found him, and hidden himself in that cavern to escape the consequences. Don't you remember how anxiously he inquired whether anybody was around or not before he would come out? Yes, and then he waited four hours, till darkness came. I tell you, Al, it looks mighty suspicious to me."

"But I wouldn't be even suspicious about such a dreadful thing as that until I had more facts on the other side of the case."

"What do you mean by that, Al?"

"I mean that we ought to find out whether they know who murdered this man Peterson. They may have the man jailed already."

"How are we going to find that out though?"

"That'll be easy enough to do in the morning. Particulars of the crime will be all over town by then."

"In the morning!" repeated Max, in strongly accented astonishment. "He may murder us in our beds before then."

"What good would that do him?" asked Al, who as Max became excited, grew calmer himself.

"Well, you can never tell what a fellow like that will do. I'm positively afraid to go up stairs."

"Nonsense. You never heard of a man murdering three people in one day, did you?"

"No, I can't remember that they have, though I suppose it's been done."

"Well then, if Seagrave has killed Peterson, it isn't likely he'll add to his crimes by making away with us. And if he hasn't killed Peterson, I don't see that we can regard him as dangerous."

"Then you think he's all right and that there's nothing queer about him."

"By no means. I think there are a good many queer things about him. His wanting to go to the Fair with us is one of the queerest."

"Well, I must say, Al, you aren't very complimentary to ourselves," and Max smiled.

"There, old fellow, it does me good to see that relaxing of the muscles. I'm sure you're not going to say again that you'll be afraid to go up stairs."

"Oh, I suppose if you can stand it I can, but what are you going to do about that Fair business, Al? Are you going to let this fellow go with us?"

"I don't see how I can help his going on the same train. The railroads are open to all who have the price of tickets."

"Then you won't pay his fare?"

"Of course I won't, for the best of reasons: I can't. You know father left me only enough money for my own expenses."

"But what if Seagrave insists you shall do this?"

"How can he insist? He has no claim on me."

"He evidently thinks he has by the persistent way in which he keeps bringing up that wound you gave him."

"Oh, I had almost forgotten about that," and a brief shadow fell over Al's face. 'But I don't see how he can hold me by that when I was perfectly willing to tell my own father or yours all about it. But come, don't you want to go to bed?"

"If you still think it wouldn't be the wisest thing to prowl about town and find out who murdered Peterson first."

"No prowling for me. I'm too sleepy."

"All right, on your head be it if we wake up in the morning and find ourselves all dead corpses."

Al turned out the lights, saw that the doors and windows were all properly fastened and then the two boys went up stairs.

All was quiet in Seagrave's room. Max stepped softly to the connecting door and turned the key in the lock.

Both he and Al were very tired, so they did not linger over their undressing as they usually did. Neither did they indulge in much talk after their heads touched the pillows.

What little they did have to say was about the Fair, and the next thing Max knew he seemed to be in the midst of a free fight in the Dahomey Village in the Midway. The blacks were going it tooth and nail. Wild screams filled the air, and became finally so shrill that Max awoke.

Somehow he was not surprised to find that he had been dreaming, but he was amazed to discover that the screams still went on.

He rubbed his eyes to make certain he was awake and then realized that the cries came from the next room—that occupied by Seagrave.

He sat up in bed in a cold perspiration. Al was still sleeping soundly beside him.

He was on the point of awaking him when he discovered that the cries were intelligible.

He listened and heard:

"Don't—don't. It wasn't I—I tell you. I wouldn't do such a terrible thing. Won't you believe me?"

That was enough for Max.

"Al, Al," he cried softly, shaking his bedfellow with no gentle hand. "Get up quick. Seagrave is confessing to that murder."

Al resisted at first the attempt to rouse him, he was so tired out by his exciting evening, but finally he was broad awake and listening with Max to the sounds that came from the adjoining room.

"There, won't you believe I was right now?" exclaimed Max triumphantly and proceeding to get out of bed.

"What are you going to do?" demanded Al.

"Get dressed. You don't suppose I can sleep any longer next door to a man like that."

Al made no reply, but he, too, got up, and going over to the bureau started to strike a match.

Max grasped his arm.

"Don't light the gas," he cried in an awed tone. "You don't want him to know we're up. I can see to get dressed in the dark. Here, I'll raise this shade, and let in some of the moonlight."

But Max didn't raise the shade; the cord slipped out of his hands and the thing raised itself with the rush and whirr that only the spring roller can display.

Max was so terrified by the noise that Al actually laughed out. But he kept putting on his clothes nevertheless.

The cries in the next room would subside for a while, then break out afresh.

"Now of course you'll come right over to our house," said Max, as they were pulling on their trousers.

"What, and leave things here?" exclaimed Al.

"What do you propose to do then?" went on Max.

"Wait here while you go and rouse

up Coroner Fillmore and find out what he knows about the Peterson murder. Or, if you prefer to stay here instead, I'll go."

"Oh, no thank you. I'll go."

"But mind you," Al continued, "you are not to say a word about your suspicions of Seagrave unless what he tells you warrants you in doing so. I can trust you for that, can I, Max?"

"If you really wish it, Al. But I verily believe that man has bewitched you."

"I don't want to see injustice done. I'll go down now and let you out."

"What time is it?"

Al held his watch in a ray of moonlight.

"Quarter to two," he announced. "You're not afraid to go, are you, Max?"

"I'd be more afraid to stay here. I don't think it's right for you to do it. Why don't you come with me?"

"Because I don't think it would be right for me to leave the house under the circumstances."

"Well, I'll hurry all I can, and if things are as I think they are, I'll bring a policeman or two back with me."

Quietly the two descended the stairs, Al let Max out by the front door, and then, leaving it unlocked, returned up stairs.

He wondered at his own calmness, for the case against Seagrave now looked very black indeed.

*(To be continued.)*

[*This Story began in No. 559.*]

# The Lone Island;

OR,

## Adventures Among the Savages.

BY E. E. YOUMANS,

*Author of "The Treasure of Wild Rock Island," "The Oakville Mystery," etc.*

### CHAPTER XXIX.

FIGHTING WITH FIRE.

THE savages cautiously advanced. When within a few yards of the cabin they paused. Their voices could be heard in animated discussion for a moment or more, then they rushed forward in a body.

They headed straight for the entrance to the hut, and George saw it was their intention to break down the door. He stepped back, and held his rifle ready to fire.

"They've made up their minds to force an entrance," he said quickly. "When they reach the door we must fire a volley through it. Don't hesitate, but blaze away."

At that moment the blacks could be heard close to the cabin.

It was not likely the door, heavily barricaded as it was, would yield to the first onslaught, but George had no intention of allowing them to reach it.

"Now," he cried, "fire!"

The boys responded promptly, and the simultaneous report of the muskets was almost deafening. The hut was at once filled with smoke and the smell of burnt powder, but they were too excited to heed it.

There was a series of unearthly yells from the blacks, and the intended attack came to an abrupt end. For the second time they retreated in wild confusion, leaving two of their number lying dead on the ground.

George approached the door and looked through the bullet hole. He had no trouble in doing this now, for the bullets had carried away considerable of the wood, and there was an aperture in the door almost large enough to put his hand through.

The enemy had halted at a safe distance, and were engaged in talking and gesticulating vehemently.

"I don't think they'll try that again," said George, "but reload as quick as you can so as to be ready for 'em if they should return."

But it was evident the blacks had got enough of it, and had abandoned the idea of breaking down the door. They would try some other plan, however, and George watched them attentively, not allowing a move to escape his notice.

For a long time the savages remained inactive, and the occupants of the cabin began to hope they would depart without any further hostile demonstration. In this they were disappointed, for suddenly the savages scattered, and began gathering small pieces of wood and branches which they threw in a heap on the ground.

"They're gathering brush and wood," said George from his post of observation. "Wonder what they intend to do with it?"

"Light a fire likely," said Will.

"I don't see what good that'll do 'em," continued George, "unless it is to give us a better view of 'em."

The next few minutes, however, proved that his brother was right. The blacks presently had a large pile of material collected and soon after a bright blaze flared up.

The savages were thus brought out in full view and George was able to count eleven of them. They were fierce and wild looking, and the youth shuddered as he reflected what their fate would be should the aborigines succeed in capturing them.

But what they intended doing with the fire was a question that puzzled him greatly, and, when he saw them take several arrows from their quivers and thrust them in the blaze, his amazement was increased.

"Well, I'll be hanged if they aren't burning up their arrows," he cried. "What the mischief can be the matter with 'em?"

The next move of the savages brought the truth to his mind in strong and terrible reality.

"This is awful," he cried. "They're going to set the cabin afire."

For, at that instant the natives had quickly drawn the arrows from the blaze, adjusted them to their bows, and sent a volley toward the roof of the hut, the sparks dropping down like so many meteors as the weapons sped through the air.

This was repeated several times before George recovered from the awful surprise sufficiently to act.

"Come," he shouted, as he saw the enemy prepare for a repetition of the maneuver, "We must stop that at once, or we'll be roasted alive."

He stepped back from the door as he spoke, and took up his rifle which the other boys had reloaded.

"Fire through the door," he cried. "It's the only thing we can do."

He leveled his gun and pressed the trigger, and his friends quickly followed suit. A roar that jarred the cabin was heard the next moment, and part of the door was carried away by the bullets.

Some of the savages were hit, as could be told by the fierce yells of rage and pain that came to the boys' ears from their direction.

But it was too late to prevent the designs of the enemy from being carried out.

The blazing arrows had lodged in the roof of the hut, and that portion of it was soon in flames.

The fire spread quickly, for the timbers in the cabin were dry, and in a little while the boys were surrounded by a mass of flames.

Their doom seemed sealed, and the exultant shouts of the savages as they witnessed the progress of their fiendish work made the night hideous.

The boys looked around to see what could be done.

They were forced to act quickly, for the burning roof would soon fall down upon them.

"There's only one thing we can do," cried Will, "and that is to unbar the door, rush out at the blacks and die fighting."

All agreed to this, and they were about acting upon the suggestion, when an idea, that offered at least one chance of escape, flashed into George's mind.

"Hold," he shouted; "the window."

It was a small one in the back of the cabin, but the youth thought it would answer the purpose.

"The savages are all in front of the hut," he continued. "We can climb through the window, make a dash for the proa and perhaps escape. Come, we must hurry."

He rushed to the window, quickly unbarred and threw it open. An instant later he had crawled through and paused for the others to join him. They lost no time in doing this, and they had scarcely left the interior, when, with a mighty roar and a shower of sparks, the entire roof fell in.

The wild yells of the savages were awful to hear as they saw the mass of fire fall into the hut, and the fugitives started for the cove as fast as they could run.

### CHAPTER XXX.

AN UNEXPECTED MEETING.

THE whole region was brilliantly illuminated by the light from the fire, and the boys expected to hear the enemy start in pursuit each second, but they were careful to keep the cabin between them and the blacks, and were thus concealed from view until a good distance had been covered.

They were more than half way to the cove before the savages discovered their escape, and, with yells of chagrin and rage at the failure of their scheme, they started in pursuit.

They quickly overhauled the fleeing boys and the proa was still some distance away, when they came near enough to use their bows. A volley of missiles sped past the fugitives, some of them barely missing their bodies.

This was quickly followed by another discharge, and an arrow struck George's rifle, which fell to the ground.

"Turn and fire at 'em," shouted the captain. "We must do something to check 'em."

Their rifles had been reloaded before leaving the burning hut, and, wheeling round they fired a volley at the approaching blacks, stretching one of them on the ground and causing the others to halt with cries of fear.

"Now for the proa," shouted George. "It's our last chance!"

Regardless of all obstacles, they plunged ahead again, and reached the craft just as another discharge of arrows from the pursuing savages fell around them.

In less than ten seconds the boat was shoved into the water, the sweeps thrown into position, and the fugitives straining every muscle to get out of the cove before the saveges could reach the place.

In this they were successful.

The open waters of the ocean were reached by the time the savages arrived at the cove, and when the blacks, running down the strip of land that extended out into the sea, came to the beach, the fugitives were safe from all harm. The natives sent a volley of arrows at them, but they dropped in the water several yards behind the proa.

"Safe at last, thank heaven," exclaimed George. "But that was a close call."

"How the black fiends yelled when they thought they were roasting us!" said Edwin with a shudder.

"Well, we fixed three of 'em anyhow," added Edgar.

They continued their work at the sweeps, and the island fell rapidly astern. The burning cabin could still be seen, but it was by this time almost consumed and the flames began to subside.

Hour after hour passed, and at last dawn appeared in the east. When the sun came up the island could no longer be seen, and the boys knew they were many miles away from Lone Island.

The weather was beautifully clear, but they suffered considerably from the heat of the sun which beat down upon them unmercifully. This, however, they did not mind, and were anxious to have the weather continue clear until a ship could be sighted.

Here again fortune smiled upon them.

For two days the sun shone brightly, and on the morning of the third at an early hour a sail was seen, and every effort made to attract attention.

The signals of distress were observed at last, and the vessel steered toward them. In less than two hours they were safe on board the Silver Star, giving an account of their adventures to the officers.

While thus engaged two persons came on deck from below, and a moment later a familiar voice shouted in ringing tones of gladness:

"Hurrah, boys, we meet again!"

They turned quickly, to see advancing toward them with outstretched hand, a smile on his face, a light of joy flashing from his eyes the chum whom they had mourned as dead, Tom Radcliffe.

Had the glowing sun from the sky above suddenly dropped into the sea before them, their astonishment could not have been greater. Speech failed them, motion deserted them, they could do nothing, but stare at the boy in intense wonder.

But this did not last long, for Tom was soon shaking hands with each in such a vigorous manner that their scattered senses returned.

Explanations on both sides were given in detail, and not until Tom had given a full account of his adventures since parting with the boys on Lone Island could they realize his escape from the awful doom they imagined had overtaken him.

Captain Bolt was introduced and warmly welcomed by the boys, who could not thank him enough for bringing back the lost one. The captain disclaimed all credit, and declared Tom was the one who had rescued him, but this they would not believe.

Well, the Silver Star dropped anchor at last in the harbor that was her destination, and here Captain Bolt bade them an affectionate farewell, and hastened to rejoin his family, who he declared must have abandoned all hope of ever seeing him again in this world.

"I'll write to you," he said at parting, "and you must be sure to let me know what your folks say when you get home and tell your adventures."

The boys promised, and the captain left them. Two hours later an express train was carrying them rapidly toward their home on the Hudson.

They reached there in due time, and as may be imagined a profound sensation was created when the story of their adventure was told.

Captain Bower insisted that he had many times regretted his consent to the voyage since their departure, for he had a premonition that something would happen and the sequel proved he was right.

However, he was rejoiced to have his sons home safe and well again, and when they asked him to have a new yacht built to take the place of the Golden Gale he gave the order at once.

"But no more voyage to England alone," he declared. "Mind that."

The yacht was finished in due time, and named after the lost one, which, by the way, was never heard of.

Many years have passed since then, and the boys are prosperous men of middle age, but the adventures of those times are still fresh in their minds, and they often entertain their friends with an account of some of the thrilling situations through which they passed while on Lone Island, and among the savages.

THE END.

**A SUMMER PICTURE.**

THE fields are turned to tawny green,
And down the lane on either hand,
The tall mock orange thickets stand,
And blooming elder bushes screen
Shy brooding wood doves, and between
Low lacing boughs the sheep are seen
Across the pasture land.

Within the garden poppies spring,
And tangled sweet pea vines have spun
A rosy tissued web, and run
Along the orchard fence, to cling
Beneath the trees where robins sing,
While to and fro the mowers swing
Their scythes athwart the sun.

—EVALEEN STEIN.

*[This Story began in No. 560.]*

# Lester's Luck.

BY HORATIO ALGER, JR.,

*Author of "Victor Vane," "Chester Rand," "Ragged Dick Series," etc.*

## CHAPTER XXX. (Continued).

### A STAGE RIDE IN MONTANA.

"I DON'T know what I shall do," said the schoolmaster. "My health had become undermined by teaching and I was advised to go West. I am ready for anything that offers."

"What do you mean to do, my stout friend?" asked the Yankee, turning to Hans Hoffman.

"I mean to open a saloon and eating house," replied the German. "If West Moultrie is a good place, I stay there."

"And you, my robust friend," continued the Yankee, turning to the dude, "what do you propose to do?"

The young man smiled. He didn't take offense at being called robust, although the description seemed ludicrously inappropriate.

"I don't know," he said. "I am only going out to see the country, don't you know?"

He was looking at Hans Hoffman as he spoke, and that worthy gentleman appeared to regard the question as put to him.

"No, I don't know," he replied. "What makes you ask me if I know?"

"I don't know, don't you know?"

"Then if you don't know who should know, since the matter regards yourself?" It was the ex-schoolmaster who spoke. "You must excuse me, my young friend, for remarking that your use of language is open to objection. I think a series of lessons would improve you in that respect."

The dude did not answer, but raising a single eyeglass he looked at his interlocutor curiously.

"I suppose we all have our little peculiarities," said the Yankee mildly. "Now suppose we give our names, that we may know each other better. My name is Jonathan Kimball, and I hail from the White Mountains."

The dude again raised his eyeglass and gazed with some curiosity at the speaker.

"I have been to the White Mountains," he said. "I boarded at the Glen House all last summer."

"I was raised only ten miles from there," continued Mr. Kimball. "My father owns a farm in that region."

"Then why didn't you become a farmer?" added the dude.

"Because, my robust friend, I had a soul above potatoes. Farming is hard work. I would advise your trying it for a year or two. It would make a man of you."

"Oh, my gracious! I would rather be excused, don't you know?"

"Suppose as you have the floor, you give an account of yourself."

"There isn't much to tell, don't you know? My name is Clinton Livingston Howard Van Hoffman."

"I am Hans Hoffman," said the German, in a tone of interest. "I think we may be relations, ain't it?"

"I scarcely think it likely," returned the dude with a smile. "My family have lived in New York for a hundred and fifty years."

"I suppose it is my turn," said the ex-schoolmaster. "My name is Lycurgus Brackett, and I taught a country academy in Massachusetts till lately."

"My name is Lester Gray," said Lester. "I was born in the country, but have lived for a few months in the city of New York."

There was no time to say more. The coach drew up suddenly, and a man wearing a mask pulled open the stage door. He held a revolver in his hands.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I am sorry to disturb you, but I want your money and valuables."

## CHAPTER XXXI.

### BILL BRAND, ROAD AGENT.

THE passengers looked with startled faces into each other's eyes. They had talked of the road agent, but his coming took them by surprise. The only one who seemed comparatively indifferent was the dude.

He gazed calmly at the road agent, and said, "Oh, now, you're joking, don't you know?"

"You'll find out whether I'm joking, you tailor's dummy!" rejoined the agent with a glance of contempt. "Come now, I can't wait all day. Here, you Dutchman, give me your money."

"Oh!" groaned Hans Hoffman in a lugubrious tone, "what will I do if you take my money?"

"That is nothing to me," said the road agent impatiently. "First you can hand me your watch."

Herr Hoffman had a gold watch, purchased in Chicago, which he valued highly. It was the first gold watch he had ever owned. He drew it forth with a groan, and tendered it to the highwayman. As the road agent reached over to take it, something unexpected happened.

Mr. Van Hoffman, the dude, sat at the end of the seat and was therefore the nearest to the road agent. Seizing the moment when the latter was off his guard, he knocked the revolver out of his hand, planted a blow in his face, and in an instant had leaped from the stage and borne him to the ground.

Such an attack from such a quarter almost paralyzed the robber with surprise, and overwhelmed the other passengers with wonder.

The Yankee was the first to recover his presence of mind.

"Well done, my robust friend!" he exclaimed. "I'll take a hand myself."

He sprang through the open door and went to Mr. Van Hoffman's help.

"Hold him!" he cried.

"I mean to," answered the dude calmly.

And indeed it looked like it. The road agent was on his back with the dude pinning him down with his knees pressed upon his chest. The robber was struggling frantically, and as his opponent was so light he might have succeeded in dislodging him, but for assistance. However, the Yankee took a hand as he promised.

"We must tie him," he said, "and carry him to West Moultrie. Here, Dutchy, come and sit on him while I tie him securely."

Hans Hoffman was not a fighting man, but he was ponderous, and had great staying powers. He sat down on the chest of the road agent and remained there in spite of the protestations of the robber that he was in danger of being crushed.

Jonathan Kimball drew a stout cord from his pocket and proceeded to tie his wrists and feet. While he was doing it he did not observe that the revolver which had been knocked out of the agent's hand was lying within his grasp. He stealthily put out his fingers to grasp it, in which case the tables would have been turned most decidedly, but Lester saw the movement, and springing forward secured the weapon. The road agent scowled menacingly.

"I'll get even with you some day, kid," he said.

In ten minutes he was tied strong and fast and taken into the stage, an involuntary passenger.

"That's a good job done!" said the Yankee. "My robust friend, we owe our deliverance to you. I wish publicly to apologize to you. I thought you a dude and a fop, but you have shown yourself a man. I really didn't think you had the courage or strength to kill a mosquito, but——"

"You have found out your mistake," interposed Van Hoffman with a smile.

"You're brave enough; in fact you're one of the bravest men I ever met, and where in thunder did you get so much strength? Why, you delivered a blow like a blacksmith."

"Feel of my muscle," said Van Hoffman quietly.

The Yankee clasped the arm which the dude extended, and his face showed his astonishment.

"Your muscle is like iron!" he exclaimed. "Where did you get it? Were you born so?"

"No, I fancy I was not unlike other babies, but I have been for five years a member of the New York Athletic Club."

"I thought I had a pretty fair muscle myself, but it doesn't compare with yours. Gentlemen, I move we present a vote of thanks to our robust friend for his manly conduct."

The vote was passed unanimously, but the road agent did not appear to sympathize with the others.

"By the way, my adventurous friend," said the Yankee, addressing the captive, "are you the notorious Bill Brand, of whom we have all heard?"

"I am Bill Brand," was the sulky reply, "but I'm almost ashamed to say so."

"Why is that?"

"It's disgraceful to be done up by a thing like that," and he looked toward Mr. Van Hoffman, who returned the gaze placidly. "I'd as soon have expected to be whipped by that boy."

"I shouldn't like to have you tackle me," said Lester. "I never belonged to an athletic club."

"He couldn't have done it if I hadn't been taken by surprise. Unloosen this cord, and I'll do him up in fifteen seconds."

"I don't think you could," said Mr. Van Hoffman, "but I don't care to try. It would be too much trouble, don't you know?"

"Where are you going to take me?" asked the road agent sullenly.

"To West Moultrie," answered the Yankee, who acted as spokesman for the passengers.

"Then they'll hang me to the branch of a tree. I once robbed the bank, or tried to, but only got away with a little plunder."

"That boy is going to take a place in the bank."

"Is he? I wish all the officers were like him."

"It would be a good idea to put in our robust friend as cashier. He would know how to take care of you."

"Give me a chance for my life," pleaded the captive.

"What do you want us to do?"

"Untie this cord, and let me go."

"Perhaps you would like us to give you back your revolver also?"

"Never mind about that. But even if you give it to me I will let you alone. I'll promise never to interfere with any of the present company, no matter where I find them."

"You are very kind, but I don't think we can accept your very considerate proposal. You are very pleasant and agreeable when your feet and hands are tied, but it would be rather a rash experiment to give you your freedom."

"I give you my solmen promise."

"The promise of a man like you counts for nothing. You may as well make up your mind to stay as you are."

The road agent subsided into sullen silence. He saw that the Yankee, though courteous, was inflexible, and that further entreaties were useless.

"If I only had my revolver," he groaned.

"What would you do?"

"Kill every one of you and him first," returned the robber fiercely, pointing to Van Hoffman.

"My robust friend," said Mr. Kimball, " and when I use that term I beg to say that I mean it. You didn't tell us what you intended to do when you reached West Moultrie."

"Because I didn't know, don't you know?" said the dude languidly.

"I think you had better set up for a thief taker. I think you would make a good sheriff."

"It would be too much trouble, don't you know?"

"You're about the strangest man I ever saw. Why, I would have said the boy could lick you in a fair fight, and now— well, I don't think I'd like to tackle you myself."

"I wouldn't mind trying, don't you know?"

"No; the only good match for you is your Dutch namesake, Mr. Hans Hoffman. I'd like mightily to see a wrestling match between you two. What do you say, Mr. Hoffman?"

"I don't want to fight," interposed the German hastily. "I haven't any practice."

"I'll tell you how you could win. You would only have to fall on him."

"I object," said the dude. "Besides my stout friend is possibly a relative, as he has himself suggested. I think we shall have to give it up."

"We have had fighting enough for one day," said the ex-schoolmaster. "We ought to be thankful that we have been saved from a great peril."

"Our friend, Mr. Brand, probably sees nothing to be thankful for."

While this conversation was going on, Lester was the only one who observed that the captive was quietly working to release his hands from the cord that bound them. He had almost got them free, when Lester called the attention of Mr. Kimball to the fact.

The Yankee sprang to his feet, and despite a desperate struggle succeeded with the help of Mr. Van Hoffman in securing them again.

"It was a close shave," he said. "But for you our friend Brand would have been a free man, and——"

"So he will be yet!" said the road agent fiercely. "As for you, you young kid, I'd like to twist your neck."

Lester was no coward, but in spite of his courage he could hardly help shuddering as he met the malignant glance of the desperate man whose one hope of escape he had frustrated.

Two hours later the sound of wheels was heard.

"It is the return stage," said Jonathan Kimball, putting his head out of the window.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

### A MOUNTAIN TRAGEDY.

THE drivers of the two stages came to a stop to exchange the usual greetings.

"What's the news?" asked stage driver No. 2.

"Only that we were held up by Bill Brand," was the answer.

"You don't say?" ejaculated the other driver. "Did he get much."

"You can ask him. We've got him in the stage."

"You have taken him?" asked the second driver in amazement.

"Yes. You can look at him if you like."

By this time the passengers of the second coach had learned the surprising news. It excited them as might well be supposed, for Brand was notorious through all that region.

"Hold up, driver!" said one of the passengers. "I want to get a sight of that scoundrel."

He got out of the stage and his fellow passengers followed him.

He was a slender man of perhaps forty, quiet in appearance but with a stern look about his eyes. He was not a man that one would willingly offend.

He came to the door of the stage

in which Bill Brand was confined, and peering in he met the glance of the captive. The bandit quailed when he met that stern glance, though he didn't remember ever having seen the man who looked like an avenging Nemesis.

"Take him out! Let us all look at him," he said in a tone of authority.

Two of the passengers, the Yankee and the ex-schoolmaster, seized the prisoner by the arms and drew him not very gently from the stage.

"What's all this for?" growled Bill Brand, looking from one to another. "Am I a wild beast that you make a show of me?"

"You are worse than a wild beast," said the passenger from coach No. 2. "You have the form of a man and the heart—no, the spirit of a fiend."

"What have I ever done to you?" demanded Brand, not without surprise at the fierce, intense tone of the man who had taken upon himself the office of judge. "I never saw you before."

"What have you done to me?" returned the other in a deep tone, thrilling with emotion. "I will tell you."

He paused and the attention of all was riveted upon the speakers. They felt that the first scene of a tragedy was about to be enacted.

"Listen, friends," began the speaker, turning and fixing his burning glances upon the faces of those who surrounded him. "A year ago today a stage was passing over this very road. Among the passengers was a young man of twenty-five, a brave, spirited, generous hearted young fellow, who had just come from his home in the East at the invitation of a brother much older than himself to try his luck in Montana. When this man rode up and at the point of a revolver demanded that all should surrender their valuables to him my brother was the only one who offered resistance——

"'What?' he cried, 'shall ten men submit to one? Are we all cowards?'

"With that he rose and was about to throw himself upon the robber—this man Brand—when the fiend deliberately shot him through the heart. 'You don't know Bill Brand,' he said."

The outlaw listened to this speech, and his face became livid. The tone of the speaker was stern, pitiless, and he foresaw only too plainly what it portended.

"Is this true, or is it not?" demanded the passenger sternly.

"He was a fool," said Brand. "If he had been quiet I wouldn't have harmed him."

"That young man, friends, was my brother," said the passenger—"my youngest brother. I had sent for him and I was waiting to receive him. When I heard that this fiend had deliberately taken his life, I vowed that some time or other I would pursue his murderer to death. I swore that I would be revenged upon him and rid Montana of a pest. Now—after a year—he has been thrown into my power. My poor brother was not the only one whom he has sacrificed, but it is for his murder that I ask that he be given into my hands."

There was a silence. The passengers looked into each other's eyes. All were impressed, even the prisoner himself whose face changed, and seemed to indicate fear.

"What would you do?" he cried hoarsely. "Would you kill an unarmed man?"

"Shooting is too good for you," said his judge. "It is an honorable death—the death of a soldier. You, criminal and outlaw, deserve another death. Is there a rope to be had?" and he looked at the two drivers.

"Here is one," said driver No. 2.

"Don't hang me! Shoot me!" said the prisoner in a voice tremulous with fear.

"You deserve to hang!" was the pitiless answer.

There was no opposing voice. Half a dozen strong men dragged the trembling captive to a position under the extended branch of a tall tree, the noose was made and adjusted, and ten minutes later, Bill Brand, the notorious desperado, was hanging lifeless from the stout limb.

"Willie, you are avenged!" murmured the brother, and overcome by his emotion he would have fallen if strong and friendly hands had not lifted him up and borne him to the stage again.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS REWARD.

THE passengers reseated themselves in the stage from which Brand had been taken. All were grave, and Lester's face was pale, for with his imaginative temperament he did not find it easy to forget the terrible scene which had just been enacted.

"It was awful!" said Jonathan Kimball, breaking the silence, "but I don't see what else we could have done."

"I don't believe in capital punishment," remarked the schoolmaster.

"You wouldn't have let him go free to rob and kill others?"

"I would have put him in prison for life."

"He has been in prison before, and broken out, while he was awaiting trial—so at least I have heard. The man had no redeeming points. He was an enemy of his kind, and deserved to die. So far as I had any part in his execution I feel no compunction. What do you say, my robust friend?"

"I agree with you," responded Mr. Van Hoffman. "He might have shot me, don't you know, like that young man we heard about."

"And he might have ridden away with all our valuables. Our friend, Mr. Brackett, would hardly have liked that."

"No I can't say I should," said the ex-schoolmaster. "Theoretically I am opposed to capital punishment, but in the present instance, considering the desperate character and dark deeds of this man Brand, I am not sure but it was expedient to hang him."

"By the way," said the Yankee, "I understand that a prize has been set on the head of this Brand, and his captor is entitled to a reward of a thousand dollars. To my thinking our robust friend is entitled to it."

"No, thank you," said the dude, shrugging his shoulders. "I would rather not take it, don't you know?"

"Then you ought to have the right to say where it shall go," suggested Kimball.

"Has any driver ever been killed by this outlaw?"

"We will refer the matter to our driver."

"Yes," answered the driver. "Tom Green, a pal of mine, was shot in his seat last year. because he whipped up his horses and tried to get away."

"Did he leave a family?"

"Yes; he left a wife and two children."

"Are they poor?"

"Yes, Mrs. Green has to take in washing to support herself."

"Where does she live?"

"In West Moultrie."

"Then, my robust friend, you will do an act of kindness if you claim the reward and hand it over to this poor woman."

"I'll do it," said Mr. Van Hoffman promptly.

"And we'll all bear witness that but for you Brand would not have been captured."

"I don't like to take it—it's blood money—but if it goes to the poor woman, that will make a difference, don't you know?"

It may be stated here that the suggestion, so happily made by Mr. Kimball, was carried out. There was no difficulty from the unanimous testimony of the stage passengers in making it clear to the authorities that Mr. Van Hoffman was entitled to the reward. He no sooner received it than he made it over to the widow of Tom Green, much to her relief.

And now there is nothing more to record about the stage ride. There were no interruptions, and at the schedule time the stage drew up in front of the chief hotel in this mining town. The editor of the West Moultrie Times, for the place boasted a weekly paper, was on hand to inquire for news. When he was told of the capture and hanging of Bill Brand, he clapped his hands in exultation.

"I'll have out an extra tomorrow morning," he said. "I'll get a bulge on all my contemporaries. The West Moultrie Times shall be the channel through which all Montana shall learn the fate of the notorious desperado, Bill Brand. Who was the brave hero who put an end to his career?"

"My robust friend here," said Jonathan Kimball, pointing to the dude.

"Is that straight?" asked the astonished editor.

"Yes; we can all certify to that."

"Have you a photo about you?" asked the editor respectfully. "We should like to have your picture at the head of our article."

"No," answered Mr. Van Hoffman in horror. "I couldn't think of it, don't you know?"

"But I ought to have some picture?"

"Then," said the Yankee, "publish a picture of our Dutch friend here. His name is the same."

"I have my tintype," said Hans Hoffman flattered.

"Give it to me," said the editor. "You look like a match for Bill Brand or any other outlaw."

The next morning the Times appeared with a sensational account of the capture and execution of Bill Brand, headed by a picture of Hans Hoffman. The artist had managed to impart to the stout German face a fierce expression quite out of character with the good nature of the prospective saloon keeper, but such as might be expected from the captor of Bill Brand.

"What will Katrina say when she sees that?" said Hans complacently. "She will be proud of her husband, nicht so?"

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### LESTER ASSUMES OFFICE.

WEST Moultrie was a representative Western town, the chief part of it lying in one long street, on which stood the bank and the principal business houses. The bank was a one-story brick building standing about midway of the street, next door to the post office.

Early on the morning after his arrival Lester presented himself at the door, and asked to see the president. He was invited into a room in the rear, and was greeted with a look of inquiry by a small man with carroty hair, and insignificant features. This was Lewis Hancock, president of the bank.

"What is your business, young man?" he asked.

"I bring you a letter from Mr. Seth Compton, of New York."

The president extended his hand for it. He put on a pair of glasses, and read it through with deliberation, looking up from time to time and surveying Lester through his glasses.

"Hum—ha!" he said, "Mr. Compton sends you out here to take the post of bookkeeper?"

"Yes, I believe so."

"You seem to be only a boy."

"Yes, sir; I am only a boy."

"How old?"

"Next month I shall be seventeen."

"That is young—very young for a bookkeeper of a bank. Have you ever served as bookkeeper before?"

"No, sir."

"What then are your qualifications?"

"I have studied bookkeeping at a commercial college in New York, with special reference to bank bookkeeping."

"That may be, but theory won't make up for inexperience. Our present bookkeeper is a man of twenty-five."

Lester did not feel called upon to make any comment on this statement.

"He has filled the place for four years."

"Yes, sir."

"Now we are called to supersede him and put in a boy."

"Perhaps you had better write to Mr. Compton, if you object to the change. I understand he has a controlling interest in the bank."

"Hum—yes," the president admitted unwillingly.

"He wished me to represent him here."

"Couldn't he find an older person to send?"

"I have no doubt he could."

"Have you known him long?"

"A few months only."

"How did he happen to have so much confidence in you?"

"He has employed me in his stock purchases."

"Has he been successful in that way?"

"Yes, sir."

"Do you know that the present bookkeeper is a cousin of mine?"

"No, sir."

"And it seems hard that he should be superseded by a schoolboy."

"I am not responsible for this, Mr. Hancock."

"I suppose as Mr. Compton owns a controlling interest I must make the change."

"I shall be glad if the present bookkeeper will remain for a couple of weeks and employ me as an assistant. In that way I shall get an insight into the business."

"No doubt it would be convenient for you, but we can't afford to pay two salaries."

"That is not necessary. I will work for nothing for two weeks, and you can pay the present bookkeeper his usual salary."

"Hum; I shall not object to that arrangement," said the president more graciously. "I will go and introduce you to Mr. Niles at once."

"Excuse me, Mr. Hancock, but have you had no letter from Mr. Compton notifying you of my appointment?"

"Well, yes, I did receive a letter to that effect a few days since, but I naturally thought he would send out an experienced man, of say thirty years of age."

"I asked because I wished to know if Mr. Niles had any notice of his being superseded."

"Yes, I mentioned the matter to him. Follow me, Mr. Gray."

Mr. Niles, the bookkeeper, was a young man not wholly unprepossessing. He had a dark complexion, with dark hair and a face agreeable but weak.

"Julius," said the president, "this is Mr. Gray who is sent out from New York to succeed you."

"I am sorry to take your place, Mr. Niles," said Lester.

"I am sorry to have you do so," responded Niles, but his manner was pleasant. "When do you wish to enter upon your duties?"

"Mr. Gray proposes to work with you without salary for two weeks till he gets to understand our methods. You will be paid as usual."

"Very well, I am agreeable," said the bookkeeper, who evidently was glad of the reprieve. "You can leave Mr. Gray with me, and I will take care of him."

He was as good as his word, and Lester, who had expected a different reception, was much relieved to find himself on such agreeable terms with the man he was depriving of a place.

The method of bookkeeping in practice at the West Moultrie bank was by no means intricate or difficult to understand. At the end of two days Lester felt competent to take charge of the books, but he retained for two weeks the subordinate position of assistant.

*(To be continued.)*

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## A SUGGESTION TO THE CITY BOY.

THE boy who lives in the country generally knows pretty thoroughly the region about him. He has tramped through the woods until it is impossible to lose him in them; explored the brook to its source; can tell you the easiest path to take to reach the top of the hill, and just how far it is to the next village in any direction.

But how much does the city boy know about his environment? He is usually only familiar with those streets through which he is accustomed to walk or ride when bound to school, business, the park, or a railroad station. Of taking a stroll for exploring purposes he very seldom thinks.

And yet some very interesting sights may be seen in a stroll through any city, by one who has watchful eyes and a receptive mind. Then the borderland of the town affords a fruitful field for study, to note just where the country gives way to the encroachments of brick and mortar, to discover the point at which the docks cease and the natural beach of the river once more asserts itself.

If a boy can ascertain which part of his city was first settled and then go there and see how many of the original houses are left, he will find an additional field of pleasurable exploration.

**The Argosy at Three Dollars for two years costs less than three cents a week. See stand ng notice at the head of this column.**

## INDIAN NAMES TO THE FORE.

NEXT Saturday, October 21, has been selected as Manhattan Day at the World's Fair. THE ARGOSY does not mention this fact because it believes that this occasion outweighs in importance all the other special dates which have been set apart at the great exposition, now so near its close. We simply wish to draw attention to the name under which the celebration is to be held. It is Manhattan, and not New York City.

It may be urged that this selection of nomenclature is due to the fact that there has already been a New York day at the Fair, in honor of the entire State, but we believe not the avoidance of repetition, so much as a desire to honor the Indian title, had its weight in determining which term should be used.

The prophecy was made some years back that the time would come when New York would take the name of the island on which it stands. It may be that this prediction is in the course of fulfillment. There is a movement all over the country in favor of the Indian n· mes which were originally attached to localities when the whites settled them. These names are certainly the most appropriate ones for the sites they describe, especially when they replace titles borrowed from England, as they would in the case of New York and Boston, which may yet be known as Shawmut.

And there are precedents for cities as large as these changing their names, Constantinople being one of them.

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## AUTHORSHIP AGAIN.

SOME weeks ago THE ARGOSY printed an editorial in the form of a query as to the reason the vocation of authorship exercised such a charm upon the boyish mind. One or two readers have written to explain, but without doing much more than reassert the fact that the fascination exists.

From the tone of one of these letters we fear that the writer believes the path of the successful author to be strewn with roses; that he has only to sit down at his desk, pick up his pen, and ideas will come without any further trouble. This is so far from being the case that probably the most celebrated writers are the hardest working ones.

Thackeray, for instance, wrote and rewrote, even on his shorter productions. He studied carefully over lines, phrases and words, and when a change was made it was always in the direction of simplicity.

This is where young authors make their greatest mistake. They seek for big woods and stilted phrases, thinking thus to hide their youth. It is the very device that exposes it.

## BOYHOOD FRIENDSHIPS.

ONE of the pleasantest features of boyhood is its friendships. And what loyal comrades two chums are! How they will stand up for each other through thick and thin, and how sometimes one will suffer unjustly that the other may be spared! How much more is it a pity then that time should rob this enthusiasm of its spirit.

For men, alas, seldom stick by each other as they did when they were in their teens and the whole world was before them with a glamor over it that made comradeship seem knightly and bearing one another's burdens partake of the heroic.

Cherish fondly then your friendships, boys. Resolve each that you will be fully worthy of the regard the other has for you, and in this way you will be able to forge those hooks of steel that will not break when the blows that descend right and left in the battle of life, fall upon them.

## THE GAMBLING CRAZE.

IT is a sad, but undeniable fact that the rage for gambling is increasing in this country to an alarming extent. Notice how frequently you see groups of newsboys on our city streets, their papers forgotten for the time while they pitch pennies and watch for the side they have bet on to come up, with cupidity in their eyes that makes them old before their time. Pool rooms abound and now a new device, to administer to the craze for taking chances, is about to be put on the market.

This is an automatic nickel in the slot machine arranged with the figures of half a dozen race horses, so adjusted that none can tell which will reach the goal first when the machinery is set in motion afresh.

Don't try to get something for nothing, boys. If you are successful somebody else must be unfortunate, and it is a sad blunter of the sensibilities to fatten on another's woes.

But this is by no means the worst feature of the deplorable business. It is the desire to try your luck "just once more" that ruins many a life that once was full of promise. This is not fiction but fact. "Playing the races" has brought scores and scores of young men to destruction. Exercise your manliness and say no, when you are tempted.

# The Indian of Today.

WE have become so accustomed to hearing of "boomers" in these later days that we have almost lost sight of the fact that they are interlopers as well. That is to say, interlopers from the Indians' standpoint. Of course the red men are indemnified by the government for their lands, which these same "boomers" are to scramble for, but as the original owners of the soil see the stretch of territory which bears their name cut down strip by strip, it is scarcely to be expected that they will accept the situation with complete equanimity.

Slowly but surely the Indian is being crowded out. It used to be "crowded West," but now that portion of the country is so thickly settled that there is no longer any room for him in that region. So it is now "crowded out," which means in among the whites, where he does not seem to thrive as when he had the prairies for his stamping ground. Be this as it may, the race is undeniably dying out, affording another example of the "survival of the fittest."

The Portland *Oregonian* not long since recorded the death of an old squaw, the last surviving member of the tribe of Rogue River Indians. Of the Narragansetts, living on a reservation in Western Rhode Island, only a handful now remain. It is the same story with the Pequots and the Mohegans. The latter live in the woods on the bank of the Thames River, three miles south of Norwich, Connecticut, while the Pequots are masters of a rugged tract, about a square mile in area, at the foot of Lantern Hill, in the same State, near the towns of North Stonington and Ledyard.

There is one tribe of Indians that is increasing in numbers. These are the Navajos, who are in possession of the San Juan country, in the wastes of Arizona and New Mexico. The tribe now numbers more than 20,000 souls. The reader may recall that there was talk of an outbreak by the Navajos last spring. But this was wholly the fault of the whites, one of whom killed a young Navajo without provocation.

Probably there is no other tribe now extant, in which the original customs of the American aborigine can be studied to better advantage than among the Navajos, who are sometimes called the Bedouin Arabs of America. Last year the statement was made by a retired army officer that the time will come when the Navajos will go on the warpath, and that when they do, the fight will be a terrible one. They are a strong, healthy race, inured to hardship, and zealous of their rights. It is said that when a Navajo buck thinks he has been wronged by the whites, he will march to the nearest fort entirely unattended, state his grievances in the presence of the armed soldiers about him and demand redress. In battles with other tribes of the Southwest, the Navajos have always been victorious. For this reason the Utes both hate and fear them, and would prove useful allies of the whites in case of war.

But in 1859-60, the Navajos met with disaster at the hands of Kit Carson, the celebrated scout, who headed the troops sent against them. Their villages were sacked and they were driven to the hills, where hunger finally brought them to terms. They were then ordered off to Southern New Mexico, but begged so earnestly to be allowed to return to their former home, that the government finally allowed them to do so, and a new treaty was signed in which the tribe had many rights and privileges granted them.

For the warning of any boy who may be thinking of going West to compare the Navajos with the bloodthirsty savage of the dime novel, we will add that the reservation is guarded by several hundred police, every one of them Indians appointed by the agent, who capture all unauthorized intruders, take everything he has, even to his last remnant of clothing, and in this airy condition turn him loose, to get home as best he may.

Like all savages, the Navajos are superstitious. A correspondent of the *New York Herald* who went among them early this year, tells a singular instance of this. Game, it seems, is not very abundant and consequently the Navajo is always hungry. "Yet, in spite of this, superstition prevents him from eating the fish which are plentiful in the San Juan river. Rather than eat fish a Navajo will die of ssarvation. This superstition, as I learned, is based on the idea that the spirits of the women go into the fish when the former die, and as they hold women in great contempt, they fear to touch the fish. Indeed, their feeling in this matter seems to be loathing.

"I remember one day when a party of elderly and important Navajos visited a trading post that they called for a can of peaches. It was opened for them and a spoon, unwashed from its last use, was handed to them. One spoon is considered quite enough for half a dozen Indians, and they use it alternately without any formalities as to cleansing. This particular spoon had been used by a Mexican or cowboy on a can of salmon. When the senior Navajo placed the first mouthful of peaches in his mouth he detected the flavor of the fish, and at once spat the fruit out With agitation expressed in every lineament he smelled the spoon and then passed it to one of his waiting compatriots. The latter took a sniff and then threw the spoon on the floor with disgust, exclaiming, 'Piscado! No bueno.' (Fish! Bad.') The Indians were at a murderous point of anger, and were only conciliated by elaborate assurances that the affair was an accident. The unfortunate who had taken the spoon in his mouth was absolutely nauseated."

Going from the Southwest to the Northwest, we find a strongly contrasted condition of things prevailing with the tribe of Cœur d'Alenes, whose reservation is near the Washington and Idaho State line. Here, according to a recent census, there are 501 Indians, 44 of them Spokanes. Of these there are 88 school children, and many of the 138 families own what is called a "Sunday house," in addition to their regular habitations. These special dwellings are only occupied on Sundays when the Indians attend service at the mission.

The Cœur d'Alenes are reported to be the wealthiest Indians in the Northwest. Some of them have as much as $5,000 on deposit in bank. The tribe was paid nearly $500,000 last year by the government for a portion of their land which was thrown open for the settlers. With some of this money the Indians built houses, barns, windmills, or bought horses, farm implements, and so forth. They are considered to be good farmers and take very readily to civilized customs.

In regard to this willingness to conform to the ways of the white man, it seems that it is at the head and feet that the Indian holds out the longest. Boys who have had the advantages of school and college training, and have for years worn the garments of the "pale face," on going back among their fellows, let their hair grow long again, and while sticking to all the other parts of civilized dress, will discard leather shoes in favor of the easy, pliant moccasin of their youth.

**DAME NATURE'S BOOK.**

DAME Nature has her book, and oft,
When days are growing brief,
She with a wetted finger turns
A sere and yellow leaf.

## The Closed Door.

BY AGNES C. COPLEIGH.

AS the last notes of the song died away, drowned by the rattle of the heavy drays in the street without, the singer swung about on the piano stool and looked expectantly at the little fat, old man whose sharp, twinkling eyes peered out at the world through gold rimmed spectacles. The critical listener sat at the office desk, hidden from the street by the instrument at which the visitor was seated, in one corner of the great piano wareroom.

The youth at the instrument, whose baritone had, but the moment before, filled the large room, was hardly more than eighteen, but the earnestness and feeling he had put into the rendering of the song had quite eliminated the appearance of diffidence which usually characterizes the efforts of young amateurs like himself, in the presence of strangers.

When he had commenced the song he was woefully conscious of the several salesmen and visitors who had all ceased their conversation and turned to listen; but as he progressed he wondered at his own temerity and knew, when the song was finished, that he had never put such feeling into his notes in his life before. The salesmen and visitors went back to their bargaining, and he turned toward Mr. Conrad, eagerly awaiting the critic's decision.

The little man rubbed his hands together enthusiastically and fairly beamed at the young composer. Mr. Conrad was a German, and in moments of excitement spoke quite brokenly.

"*Ach Gott!* Mr. Atwood. your song is goot—very goot indeed; but it needs a contralto to bring out the best there is in it. Madame Dori should sing that. Your voice is not bad, however, Mr. Atwood."

"I wrote it for a contralto voice—my sister sings it better," responded the youth, flushing with pleasure at the critic's praise.

"And you say your sister supplied the words? They are goot—truly. Mr. Atwood, you are a talented family indeed But it is the music that is most taking. The words to these songs matter little—it is the air that pleases the public. Yes, it is a good song, but what do you intend doing with it?"

The young composer's hopes dropped suddenly to zero. Mr. Conrad's praises had been so genuinely enthusiastic that he had expected he would at once make an offer for the composition.

Since childhood Harris Atwood had been what the people of Coneway called "music mad." His father had spent more money on his musical education than he had on other departments of learning, and since Mr. Atwood's death Harris had devoted all his spare time as well as what little money he could save, to the same end.

Fortunately Mr. Atwood had been able to give his son an instrument, and a fine one, too, and at the piano Harris and his sister, Bessie, had spent the happiest hours of their lives. This little song was by no means the first of his compositions, but it was his best, and the young musician's heart had glowed with pride and happiness at Mr. Conrad's praise.

He had been used to the enthusiastic commendation of the "little mother" and Bessie, and even of the wonderful applause of the neighbors, who understood stock raising and farming much better than they did music; but he knew well that none of their criticisms were to be relied upon. But Mr. Conrad—*he* knew what would please the public and would be able to judge of the true merits of the piece. To this end Harris had come down to the city and introduced himself to the little German.

"What do you propose doing with it?" repeated the gentleman, peering at Harris curiously and noting the evident disappointment in his face.

"Why, if you think it worth it, I should like to bring it out," replied the youth, hesitatingly.

"So you want it published, eh?" Mr. Conrad said thoughtfully.

"Yes—that is, I *hoped* to find a publisher——"

"That's all right, Mr. Atwood," interrupted the old gentleman. "We will publish it if you insist—shall be glad to, in fact, and give you a royalty, for it is really a very pretty little song. But, in your interest I say it, *don't do it!* Ha, you do not understand me? Well, let me explain."

He whirled about in his chair and tapped the desk sharply with his fat forefinger.

"It is this way, Mr. Atwood. We publish—say five hundred copies; we introduce it to those dealers whom we can reach; they display them in their windows along with dozens of others—mind you, no better than yours, perhaps, and some not so good, but better known. The people nefer heard of you before. What follows? Your little song remains unpurchased, only a few people ever knowing how sweet a thing it is. What is the result? We get our money back—something more perhaps, for we would not begin to pay you a royalty until we *had*—and you would get next to nothing. Further, you would be little if any better known and might just as well have not had it published. And why is this, you ask? Because, my young friend, you have not opened the closed door!"

"The closed door?" repeated Harris, in perplexity.

"Yes, sir; the door which shuts a young and unknown composer out from success. You have not reached the public. Mr. Atwood, oblige me by opening that door," he said peremptorily, pointing to a door at his right.

Harris arose and approaching the door, seized the knob; but the door refused to open.

"Nefer mind breaking the lock, Mr. Atwood," exclaimed Mr. Conrad, with a fat laugh, as Harris began to exert some muscular energy upon the obstinate door. "It is locked, and I haf the key here. That is an object lesson. The public are beyond that door, let us say: the door is closed; you might have your song published fifty times and it would not have reached the public."

"How *can* the public be reached?" cried the young composer, disappointedly.

"The best and most successful way would be to have the piece sung—sung by some one who is now in favor with the people. For instance, if Madame Dori should sing that—she is giving a series of concerts here now—the popularity of the song would be assured. People would want it. We could have upon the cover 'As sung by Madame Dori.' *Ach!* it would *take* then."

"But Madame Dori is the great contralto—how could I ever persuade her to sing my little song?"

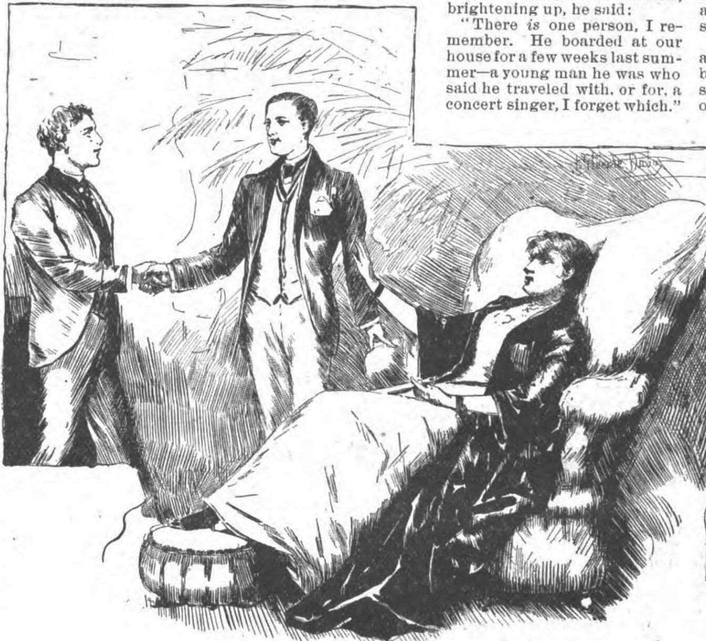
"*Ach!* how indeed?" responded Mr. Conrad thoughtfully. "You have no acquaintance who could introduce you? Well, howefer. I would hold you out no hope that a singer of the madame's class *would* sing your song. But try some one who is in favor."

But Harris felt hopeless.

"Do you know a single person in the musical world?"

Harris slowly shook his head, brightening up, he said:

"There *is* one person, I remember. He boarded at our house for a few weeks last summer—a young man he was who said he traveled with, or for, a concert singer, I forget which."



"NO NEED FOR THAT, FRANK," SAID THE LADY.

"Some recent acqusition to the concert stage, doubtless," said Mr. Conrad musingly. "But perhaps he might help you. Do you know where he is?"

"I have his card at my hotel. He puts up somewhere in this city, I believe."

"Well, Mr. Atwood," said the music publisher, rising and pulling down the top of his desk to show that the interview was over, "see what you can do about this before you have the song published. You will be in the city a day or two yet?"

"Yes, sir."

"Just leave me your address then, and before you go home, come in and see me again. And remember that the 'closed door' must be opened before you gain anything like success."

Harris left the warerooms with a feeling of despondency. He had hoped so much from the composition, and here Mr. Conrad, who ought to know, had gone so far as to even advise him not to publish it! How could *he* ever persuade a concert singer to place his poor, unknown, still unpublished song, in her repertoire? The idea was preposterous.

He tucked his music roll viciously under his arm and plodded on. He had better go back to Coneway and give pianoforte lessons to the village children instead of wasting his time down here in the city.

But just at this moment there occurred something which interrupted his despondent thoughts. He had gone not quite six blocks from the warerooms of Conrad & Fontaine when, around the corner just ahead of him, dashed a heavy wagon belonging to one of the great express companies, piled high with bales and boxes.

The wagon was going too fast for such a crowded street, and in turning the corner the driver was forced to pull back his horses almost upon their haunches to keep them from running down a light phaeton directly in front of him. The horses swerved to one side, the express wagon slewed around the curve on two wheels, and amid the shouts of the passers by the pyramid of boxes and packages toppled over into the street with a great crash.

In the phaeton, to which a great, high headed bay was attached, seemingly all out of proportion with the carriage, was seated a single occupant—a lady who handled the lines as though she was a good horsewoman, but whose slight frame and small hands looked entirely inadequate to the management of the animal. The crash of the fallen merchandise frightened the bay and with a snort of terror he sprang forward, twice his length at one bound, the crowd separating from before him with terrified shrieks, thus increasing his fright.

The street was crowded with vehicles and in another instant there would have been a bad accident had not a lithe figure sprung out from the walk and throwing one arm over the horse's neck, with the other hand on his bit pulled the bay's head down to his breast and stopped him.

As he clung to the snorting beast Harris Atwood showed that there was plenty of strength in his hands if he had spent most of his life at the piano. He understood horses, too, and in a few moments quieted the bay sufficiently for its driver to control it. Then he stepped back to the sidewalk and discovered that his music roll had disappeared.

He remembered its flying out from under his arm as he sprang for the horse, but it was nowhere in sight, either beneath the horses' feet in the street or upon the sidewalk. Some light fingered individual in the crowd had doubtless appropriated it.

"They won't get much for their pains," thought Harris bitterly, as he hurried away to escape an inquisitive reporter who had been on hand. "I wonder what they will do with my song? Fortunately I have the first draft of it at home and both the air and words are drummed pretty thoroughly into my head. Still, I don't know as it matters. According to Mr. Conrad, it won't do any good to have it published, so what does it matter where it has gone?"

He went back to his hotel, casting envious eyes on his way at the great posters on the billboards announcing the series of concerts by the *prima donna*, Madame Dori. He *had* intended going to hear her that very evening, but his disappointment of the afternoon had made him too miserable to enjoy it, so he went to bed instead. All night he dreamed of hopelessly beating at that closed door which was the barrier between the public and himself.

The next morning, with little more hope than he had felt the night before, he hunted out Frank Tillman's card from among a number of others in his valise. Tillman had seemed a pleasant enough fellow, what little he had seen of him the summer before, and had praised his playing enthusiastically; but Harris doubted greatly if he was in a position to help him.

The address was that of a private hotel in a very nice quarter of the town and he went forth to seek it with no very sanguine expectation of finding his man. Doubtless, at this season of the year, Tillman was on the road.

As he passed through the office the clerk called to him,

"Mr. Atwood, here is a boy with a message for you."

With considerable surprise Harris went forward and took the note from the boy. The bearer disappeared at once and Harris broke the seal and read the note with the liveliest curiosity. It ran thus:

My dear Mr. Atwood:
Bravo! You have done nobly. Bring the song to me this morning at ten and, if we can come to a satisfactory agreement, as I sincerely hope we can, we will put it upon the market at once.
Sincerely yours,
Joseph Conrad.

"What under the sun——"

Harris went back into the office and sat down in the nearest chair. What could it mean? Had the music publisher taken leave of his senses? *What had become of his song since he lost it the afternoon before?*

"Well, I'll go and see him," he thought after a second reading of the note; "but what I can do without the score I don't see. Any way, I shan't hunt up Tillman now."

He had hardly left the hotel lobby, however, when he heard a quick step behind him and felt a light tap on his arm.

"Well, it is a coincidence, though I don't see how you knew it," returned Harris, laughing and grasping the hand the other stretched out to him. "I was just thinking of you and had decided *not* to look you up as I had planned—at present, at least."

"Well, I like that!" cried Tillman, who was a cordial fellow, with an easy, agreeable manner, and a face which by no means showed his twenty four or five years. He was, in fact, quite boyish looking.

"But it is doubly a coincidence because I was thinking about you, and had I had the least idea you were in town, should have hunted you up. As it is, now I *have* found you, you must come up to my rooms. They're not far off."

"But I've an engagement at Conrad & Fontaine's at ten——"

"And it's only nine now—there's loads of time yet. My place is right on your way down town, too."

Tillman slipped his hand under Harris' arm and led him away.

"Tell me about yourself—what are you doing in town?" he asked.

"Well, I came in to see about having a piece published."

"Oh!" exclaimed Tillman, and looked at him quizzically. "And where is your piece? I don't see your music roll. Let's have a look at it."

"I can't, for I've lost it. I went to see Mr. Conrad and played it for him yesterday and he liked it; but he advised me to wait and have it introduced to the public and made popular upon the concert stage before having it published. I thought of you, Mr. Tillman, and remembering that you were in that—er—business—that is, I knew you told us you were manager for a lady who sang, and I didn't know but you might be able to help me in some way. Unfortunately—or fortunately, just as you look at it," Harris continued with a rather embarrassed laugh, "I lost my music roll containing the score last night, and to cap the climax, and to add to my sore perplexity, I received this note from Mr. Conrad this morning."

He passed over the note for Tillman to read.

"I should say as a guess, mind you—that your loss of the music was fortunate," returned Tillman gravely. Then he read the note.

"Ha! ha! ha!" he broke out in a moment, without any apparent cause for his hilarity, slapping Harris on the shoulder. "This is too rich. Come on; you *must* go over to the Aldine and see—er, well, let me introduce you to somebody."

And Harris, in great bewilderment, followed. The Aldine was a fine private hotel, and Tillman took his visitor directly to the nicest suite of rooms in the house. In the little anteroom they saw an elderly French woman.

"Is the madam engaged?" Tillman asked.

"No, monsieur. She is at liberty," the woman replied.

"That's good," said the young man, who seemed to be at home in the apartments, and opening another door he beckoned Harris to follow him.

"Now put on your most engaging smile, my boy," he said, with a chuckle, noticing Harris's embarrassed face.

"But——" began the young composer; but there was no time for words. He was already in the room whose single occupant reclined languidly in a deep seated armchair.

At first glance he recognized the lady whose horse had cut up so badly the afternoon before.

"Madame Dori, allow me to present *my* young friend, the talented composer of the song you sang with much success last night. Mr. Harris Atwood!" exclaimed Tillman gayly, leading him forward.

"No need for that, Frank," said the lady, "for I am already acquainted with him. Mr. Atwood, let me thank you for your prompt action in stopping Cæsar yesterday afternoon, and also beg your pardon for having used your sweet little song last night; the latter was so pretty that I could not resist the temptation of singing it as an encore."

Poor Harris was quite unable to master his varied emotions for the moment, and had Tillman not kindly come to the rescue he would have felt like a complete ass. As it was it took him some time to recover himself.

According to Tillman, who took it upon himself to explain, Harris' music roll had found lodgment in Madame Dori's phaeton when its owner sprang to seize the affrighted horse, and Harris had so quickly escaped from the crowd that the lady was unable to restore it to him.

Returning to her hotel, the madame found the score of the unpublished song in the roll, and seeing so much merit in the composition, she decided to add it to her repertoire for the evening. Tillman had recognized Harris' name attached to the music and had announced both the song and the composer, as a change in the printed programme, in a little speech from the stage.

"And *that* explains Mr. Conrad's note," said Harris slowly, beginning to take in the full significance of the result which these occurrences had led to. "He must have heard of it. *How* can I thank you, madame, for your kindness?"

"Let it be as partial payment for *your* kindness in stopping Cæsar when he misbehaved."

"But that——"

"We are quits, then!" laughed the madame gayly, giving him her hand. "I shall add your song to my list with your permission, Mr. Atwood; but I *will* let you have the score long enough to have it published."

"I never hoped for the honor," smilingly receiving the music. "I *did* intend to look Tillman up, but I had no idea that he was the great Dori's manager."

"Pish!" exclaimed madame, with a little shrug of her shapely shoulders. "You are like all the rest of them. I do not care to be great—only to please," and she bowed both young men out.

"I feel as though you had been a great factor in this, Tillman," Harris said, to the young manager.

"That's all right. I shouldn't be madame's right hand man, and therefore be able to assist you, if it did not happen that she is my mother's own sister, who went to Europe some years ago to study music, married a French musician, and is now a widow and bent upon doing all the good possible in her native land with her voice. Chance apparently has a great deal to do with the ordering of affairs in this world, and chance put it in my power to assist you."

"Call it rather Providence," said Harris gravely. "Now I will go to Mr. Conrad. I have the key to that door. But how strangely I got it!"

"What door?" demanded Tillman, standing at the stop of the steps and looking down upon him.

"The door which divides the young composer from an appreciative public," responded Harris, with mock dignity. "I shall proceed to open the closed door."

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### TILL THE LIGHT WENT OUT.

An odd use for candles by daylight was formerly found in England and Scotland, and in Bremen, until about ten years ago, they were the properties in the legally established mode of auction.

Every Friday afternoon a judge and his secretary took their seats in the Old Exchange, attended by a crier and a servant dressed in a flame colored coat, carrying a box of tiny candles, each of which was intended to burn one minute. A candle is lighted, and the bidding for the article on sale begins. At each offer from a would be purchaser the burning candle is extinguished, and a new one is lighted, and the property is only disposed of when a candle burns itself out ere a fresh bid has been announced by the crier. This custom dates from mediæval times, and it is said in Bremen that for five hundred years sales have been held and candles have been burned every Friday without interruption.

### THE ROSE AND THE LAKE.

A ROSEBUD grows upon a lakelet's brim;
It overhangs the limpid water there
Which like a green framed mirror glistens fair.
Scarce rippled by the dragon flies which skim
Upon its surface. On the bush there grows
A beautiful and fragrant wild red rose,
Its drooping stem just lifted from the lake
Where oft the rose a timorous kiss doth take,
For it enamored is of the blue sheen,
While the lake loves the rose of red between
Itself and the clear radiance of the sky.
"What loveliness thou hast; what tender grace!"
The rose doth say. The lake protests: "Not I,
'Tis but thy charms reflected to my face!"

—Dexter Smith.

*[This Story began in No. 565.]*

# Belmont;

OR

*MARK WARE'S COLLEGE LIFE*

BY WILLIAM D. MOFFAT,

*Author of "Dirkman's Luck," "Brad Mattoon," "The Crimson Banner" etc.*

## CHAPTER X.

### A CHAPTER OF CRIPPLES.

"THERE now, old man, is that easier?"

Herbert and Teddy Binks fixed Mark comfortably in the big easy chair, and set his left foot very carefully down on an adjoining chair.

"Yes, thanks," said Mark. "No more bed for me. It's too much like being sick. Now if you fellows will do me the favor to put a pillow under my left foot and leg so my knee won't jump so with pain, I think I'll feel pretty fair."

"Here, Teddy, I'll do it," said Herbert. "You sit down and keep that arm of yours quiet—hullo, come in!"

A rap had just sounded, and the door now opened and admitted Percy Randall.

"Humph, two more cripples!" he exclaimed as he looked at Mark and Teddy. "It seems as if I see nothing on the campus today but fellows limping, arms in slings, and black eyes. I just met Tracy Hollis, and he has an eye on him like an oyster, but fortunately no serious bruises. Confound it anyhow, there ought to be a rule keeping all football men in their rooms out of harm's way until after the games are over—how's your leg today, Ware?"

"Mighty painful still," answered Mark. "I don't dare move it."

"How did you get out of bed?"

"Herbert and Teddy helped me over here. I couldn't stay in bed all day. I seem to feel better sitting up here."

"Well, I'm glad to see you've got your health back, anyhow," said Tracy. "Gosh! when we brought you up here last night, I was afraid your wind was gone for good."

"So was I," rejoined Mark painfully. "When I went down under the feet of that savage gang I didn't know whether I would ever come out alive. I've had eleven or more men run over me and fall on me in a football game, and not mind it so much, but when it comes to playing the role of a common stamping ground for 150 fellows—well, I'm not trained for it, that's all."

"What did the doctor say?" asked Percy anxiously.

Mark shook his head uneasily.

"He says my left knee is pretty bad and——"

"Knee! Is it your knee that is hurt?"

"Yes—strained, and from the way it pains me, I should say a bad strain."

"Oh this is too bad!" exclaimed Percy. "Why you may not be able to get out for several days. A knee is an awfully mean thing to heal."

All three boys looked blue, and remained silent for several seconds as if they had something disagreeable on their minds.

"Yes—fully that long," said Mark at length. "In fact—I'm afraid—well, the doctor said it would be impossible for me even to go out before that time, and that I would have to use a crutch or a cane for a week or so after that."

"What!" exclaimed Percy springing up in alarm. "Do you mean that you can't get about for a week? Why this is simply awful! It can't be as bad as that!"

"I hope not, but that's what the doctor said," answered Mark ruefully.

"Oh, no—it can't be—it must not be. Why, just think, the Halford football game is on for a week from Saturday—ten days from now. Do you realize that?" asked Percy, looking at Mark piteously.

"I know it—I know it," repeated Mark desperately. "I've been thinking of it all day—ever since the doctor left me this morning, and it makes me simply wild, but what can I do about it? I feel as badly as you do."

"You can't—you can't," said Percy walking impatiently up and down. "When you have played for three years to win the college championship, and have at last got a team under you that you are confident will do splendid work—the best team Belmont has had in four years; and you know that the whole college looks with assurance to you, as captain, to carry that team to victory—and then you have one of your best and most necessary players become disabled—when you find yourself in a fix like that, then you'll know how I feel, and not before."

Mark was too much distressed even to notice the compliment that Percy's words contained.

"Well, I feel badly enough, anyhow," he said. "I had set my heart on playing, and now——"

"Oh, why did you go into that confounded rush!" exclaimed Percy, interrupting him. "You might have known you would get hurt in some way."

"I couldn't help it," answered Mark. "I was right in it before I knew what was going to happen. I wouldn't have stayed out of it, anyhow. I'm only sorry I was knocked out so soon, and couldn't have a hand in the fight."

"Now that's all nonsense!" exclaimed Percy. "What business had you, a football man, in a class rush? You ought to have known that the college athletic interests are far more important than mere class interests—and stayed out of the muss."

"What, stand coolly on one side while those blamed sophs were thumping my classmates! Well, I guess not," answered Mark with spirit.

"Well, you'd have stayed out if I could have got hold of you in time—or else you'd have had to thump me first," said Percy with decision.

"Were there any class rushes in your freshman and sophomore years, Randall?" asked Herbert.

"Yes, certainly—several of them."

"Were you in them?"

"Yes—I guess I was—right in the middle too," admitted Percy. "But that was different. I didn't get hurt."

"Well, you were in luck then, that's all," said Herbert.

Percy looked around and saw the three boys smiling.

"Oh, I know how it is," he said. "I suppose there is no use talking to freshmen about this sort of a thing. I'm only an old post graduate, and class affairs don't concern me any more, so I suppose I've no right to judge you. Only it's blamed—hard—luck."

"No doubt of that, but I can only make the best of it," observed Mark. "I'm not going to lie around any longer than possible, and if there's such a thing as curing myself in a week, you can rest assured I'll do it. I'd give anything not to miss that game."

"See here!" exclaimed Percy, coming to a standstill in his walking. "I'm going over to the doctor's and see if I can't get him to take a few days off his statement. We've got to get you in shape for that Halford game. He may have exaggerated a little—that's my only hope. I'll make him tell me the exact and full truth."

Percy caught up his hat.

"Good night now. Be very careful of yourself, and help me all you can by taking no risks."

Percy had been gone hardly five minutes when Tracy Hollis strolled in.

"Come, join the cripples," said Herbert. "Draw up and make yourself miserable with the rest of us."

"The sophs are making all they can out of the rush," said Tracy after he had inquired into Mark's condition. "They are trying to console themselves for the loss of the cane by bragging of the way they cleaned us out at the cannons."

"Well, you are a regular walking advertisement for them," said Teddy Binks. "Why don't you put a pad over that eye of yours?"

"That wouldn't be any better—everyone would know what was under it. Besides I'm not ashamed of my eye. There are lots of eyes just as bad among the sophs. A senior told me this morning that last night's scrimmage was the roughest one he had ever seen in college."

"It wasn't a long one, but it was red hot while it lasted," said Teddy.

"And what a surprise party!" exclaimed Tracy. "I didn't know what struck us till the muss was well under way. Mark was completely off his guard. He didn't have time to turn before that advance body of sophs lit into us. You had a hard time of it, Mark. Great Scott, but I was frightened when I saw you on the grass there, limp as a rag!"

"I guess I got off as well as I had a right to expect," said Mark.

"Has Percy Randall been in?"

"Yes—just left here," answered Mark.

"What did he say?"

"Well, I had to tell him what the doctor said this morning—that I would need about two weeks to cure my knee—and he was very much worked up about it."

"He has gone over to the doctor's to see if he can't get a better report," said Herbert.

"Poor Randall, he's in hard luck about his football men," said Tracy. "I've just learned more bad news."

"What, anyone else on the team hurt?" asked Mark quickly.

"No, not hurt—but it's just as bad for the team. Didn't Percy say anything about Greer, the junior who plays right end rush?"

"No."

"Then he has probably not heard the news."

"What's the matter with Greer?"

"He got a telegram late this afternoon saying that his father is dangerously ill, and he has to leave for home at once. Even if things should turn out for the very best at home, he will probably be unable to get back here in time for the game."

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE NEW END RUSHER.

PERCY RANDALL got little satisfaction from his visit to the doctor.

"It is a case of no seriousness—a mere strain," said the doctor, "but the knees, as you know, are awkward things to mend, and Ware will have to be careful. As to his playing a football game a week from Saturday, that is out of the question. He would be foolish to attempt it."

And that was all Percy could get out of him. But he had not yet heard all the bad news.

It was on his way back to his rooms that he met with a practical illustration of the old proverb that "it never rains but it pours" in the form of Richards, who came to tell him that Greer was called home. This was the last straw, and it completely broke Percy's temper. He retired to his rooms, slammed his door, and flung himself down to brood over his hard luck. An hour of brooding, however, was as much as Percy ever allowed himself, so by nine o'clock he was in Richards' room, busily discussing the best and quickest means of repairing his shattered team.

The results of that conversation became apparent the next day when Percy and Richards scoured the campus and buildings at noon to find Rogers.

"Greer would not be so severe a loss if we could make something out of Rogers," Percy had said. "The freshman has the stuff in him for a grand end rusher."

Rogers, who had been the idol of his class since the cane fight, as well as the center of all college interest, took his victory and the attention he had won modestly and bashfully, shunning as far as possible all publicity, and receiving congratulations in an awkward, embarrassed manner that showed clearly how little he cared for lionizing.

It was only under considerable pressure that he would say anything about the cane fight; and in what he did say, he took but little credit to himself. As for the masterly overthrow that virtually decided the fight for him, he disposed of that in his customary country-like fashion.

"Oh, that wasn't anything to speak of," he said in his slow, nasal tone. "Nothin' more'n jest like pullin' up saplings. You know how that is. You jest get a good hold onto the strong branches, put your whole back and shoulders into it, give a thunderin' yank, and up she comes, roots and all. I had my man so I couldn't help throwing him."

It was no easy matter, for Percy and Richards to find Rogers. He was never at the college in the evening, for, after the afternoon recitation, he set off for his farm home without delay, sometimes on foot, sometimes on horseback—and that was the last of him until eight o'clock the next morning when he turned up in season for chapel.

The best time to find him was the noon hour, and even then Percy and Richards found it no easy matter. By repeated inquiries they at length traced him down to one of the back campuses, where they discovered him seated alone under a tree eating the lunch he had brought from home in the morning like a big schoolboy and preparing his afternoon's recitation.

"Hullo, Cincinnatus!" exclaimed Richards, for that was the classic name with which Richards had dubbed his country protege, in memory of the old Roman who left his plow to lead his people to victory.

Rogers nodded good naturedly to his visitors.

"Want me?" he asked.

"Indeed we do," said Richards. "Can we join your picnic?"

"Certainly—have a peach?"

"No, thanks, but we want to have a talk."

"No more fights on hand, I hope."

"No—no fights—something more important than cane fights."

"All right, sit down."

Percy and Richards dropped on the grass.

"Can you play football, Cincinnatus?" asked Richards.

"Don't know—I never tried," answered Rogers.

"Will you try, if we show you how?"

"Yep."

"Will you come down and practice with the 'varsity this afternoon?"

"You want me to play with the 'varsity?" asked Rogers, his eyes opening.

"Yes."

"Sho'—go 'way," and Rogers grinned doubtfully.

"Yes, we do. We want to try to make a player out of you. We've lost our end rusher, Greer, and we've got to fill the place right away. We think you have the right stuff in you."

"Whereabouts?" asked Rogers blankly.

"All over. Do you understand the game?"

"Oh yes—far as that goes, I know all about the game—couldn't count the games I've watched. But I never played in a real game—never thought I could."

"Well, come down and try, will you?" asked Percy.

"Oh yes—I'd jest as soon do that—what time?"

"Half-past four. Don't fail now."

And the result was Rogers sauntered into the football field promptly on time, and took part in the day's practice, to the great interest of the many spectators, all of whom had now learned of Greer's departure and Mark's disablement, and were very anxious for the future of the 'varsity.

A few days' practice convinced Percy Randall that he was not amiss in calling Rogers out. The country boy understood the game far better than Percy had dared hope; while, as for strength and endurance, he had no need to prove that he possessed both to an extraordinary degree. He was a good, strong runner, an excellent guard, and, in tackling, his arms were as sure as the hand of fate. What he needed was practical experience in the moves of the game and a little more certainty in handling the ball—and this of course would come with training.

As the days went by Percy grew more and more confident as regarded his new man, and by the middle of the following week, three days before the Halford game, he declared that he would not feel the least anxiety concerning his right end rusher—that he was likely to make even a better showing than Greer could have done.

"All that worries me now is the lack of Ware," he said to Richards, his fellow half-back and confidant in all football matters. "We will have to do all our work in the Halford game with our rush line, for I have no confidence in Carr as a full-back."

Carr was the substitute selected to fill Mark's place in the Halford game.

Meantime Mark had improved daily. He was kept in his room for three days only, and then, for a week, he had made his way to and from recitations with a cane, the object of general solicitude. Now that the cane fight and inevitable rush had taken place, and the affair had been thoroughly discussed pro and con, the general decision of the college had divided the honors, giving the freshmen warm commendation for winning the first cane ever won by a freshman class, and the sophomores credit for an overwhelming victory in the rush—and with this the matter rested.

Class feeling subsided for the time, and every one turned his attention to the coming football games. The loss of Mark was keenly felt by all the college men, for it left a weak spot in an otherwise strong and efficient team. Percy Randall kept a careful watch on him that he might not do himself further injury.

The day before the Halford game Mark, who had given up his cane two days before, and was feeling quite strong, was on the ball field and started to kick the ball around with the other men.

"Here drop that!" cried Percy. "Don't you try to do anything today."

"Why it isn't my kicking leg that was hurt. It's my left leg, and I have the elastic bandage around my knee," said Mark, who was simply aching to play again.

"That makes no difference," answered Percy. "I don't intend that you shall take any risks. An injury now might knock you out for good and all. You've got to miss the Halford game, and I'm reconciled to that, but I don't mean to let you miss the Park game three weeks from tomorrow. So be careful and keep still till Monday next. Then you can begin again with us."

After all, as Percy had concluded a day or two before, things might easily have been worse for his team. It was not Halford that he so much feared, but Park college, always the most formidable antagonist of Belmont, and the one that Percy longed most to defeat. It is true, rumors had come from Halford that their team was unusually strong this year, but Percy was ready to face defeat in that quarter rather than let Mark try to play and so run chances of spoiling him for the great event of the fall—the game with Park college.

Percy's advice was wisely given, too, as Mark found to his sorrow, for in making his last kick that noon, he felt his left knee twinge sharply, and the next morning it was swollen and stiff again. That frightened him so that he determined to take no such chances again, and accordingly spent the Saturday resting quietly in his room. The team had taken a train for Halford the night before, and were scheduled to play at two o'clock on Saturday afternoon. That afternoon Mark, Teddy Binks, Bobby Barlow and several others spent in Mark's rooms impatiently awaiting news of the game. Herbert Morgan was one of a crowd of about fifty students who went over to Halford with the team, and he had promised to telegraph the results to Mark and the others the moment the game was over.

It was a trying afternoon for the boys assembled there in Mark's room. They tried various devices for passing away the time, but they all ended the same way—in a discussion concerning the chances of victory, and in exclamations of impatience. As the hands of their watches approached four o'clock the suspense grew almost unbearable.

"There now!" cried Teddy Binks, jumping up and throwing down a pack of cards with which he had been trying to play solitaire, "the game is over—the score is settled—what is it?—what is it?—oh, what is it, anyhow?"

A full quarter hour more elapsed without news.

"I'm going over to the telegraph office!" cried Teddy. "I can't stand this any more," and he darted out of the door.

A minute later and he came flying back.

"Here's the boy with the telegram," he cried. "Quick, open it—quick!"

Mark tore it open and read out in tones trembling with excitement:

"Score; Belmont, 12; Halford, 12—tie game. Will return on seven o'clock train."

## CHAPTER XII.

### PERCY RANDALL'S GREAT RUN.

"AND mighty lucky we were to get off as we did," said Percy Randall that night, as he and several others were discussing the game in Mark's room. "Halford hasn't had a team so strong as that since I can remember. I thought our goose was cooked sure in the first half when Carr let the half-back run right past him and make that second touchdown. My heart was in my throat. We had only 6 points to their 12 at the intermission. Then we went in and shut them out entirely for the second half and made 6 more points——"

"In the last ten minutes—think of that," interrupted Richards, "and the points were made by one of the longest and best runs I ever saw. It gave us a touchdown and a goal from it—and those points were made by the best football captain Belmont ever had, and his name is——"

"Come off," said Percy, "what could I have done if the team work hadn't been so good. The rest of the fellows 'interfered' so well for me that I had a clear open field all the way—the Halford men couldn't get at me."

"How was Rogers?" asked Mark.

"Splendid—never missed a tackle and made two good runs," answered

Richards. "Oh, there's nothing the matter with old Cincinnatus. He got off his trolley several times, once when we were trying that running V trick during the first half, but this was his first game, and he will know what to do hereafter."

"I have no complaint to make," said Randall. "I'm satisfied we have a fine team, and as soon as we get Ware back, I won't be a bit afraid to face the strongest team Park college can put in the field. We have one big point of advantage too—they don't really know the kind of game we are going to play. There were several Park men over at the game today studying our play so as to get points on us, but it will do them no good. We played a rush line game altogether today, for I had no confidence in Carr, and so kept the ball away from him as much as possible.

"Now, when we have Ware back we will put up an entirely different game. I'm going to let Ware kick at every chance and use the rush line chiefly to guard and 'interfere' for him. So there we are. The Park men will be looking for the same kind of game we played today and we will have several surprises in store for them. Moreover I intend to go over to Berkeley next Saturday, and watch Park play Halford, so that I can learn something of their style of game. Oh, I don't feel at all dissatisfied with today's game, all things considered, for Park is sure to beat Halford next week, and then if we can do up Park, the championship will be ours.

"Now I must go over to my room, for I have left old Cincinnatus over there. He was going 'way out into the country to his home tonight, but I wouldn't let him. I made him bunk in my rooms. I suppose he will want to rout me out at sunrise tomorrow morning when the roosters begin to crow, so I'm going to bed early tonight."

With that Percy took his departure.

"There now, I'm glad he's gone," said Richards, as soon as the door was closed, "for I want to tell you the real truth about that game today, and he wouldn't let me. Do you know there was just one man that snatched that game from the jaws of defeat—and that man's name is Percy Randall. Ware, did you ever see Percy play in a real game?"

"No—nothing more than the practice games," answered Mark.

"Well, you know his style then, but you don't see it in full play. Percy Randall is a perfect inspiration to a football team. He's not one of those captains that content themselves with telling their men what to do. He shows them what to do. He don't say 'Go ahead boys.' He takes the lead and says 'Come on, follow me.' Geewhittaker, what a leader he would make on a battle field!—but here, I'm off my trolley now. I meant to tell you about his big run today."

The dozen boys drew up nearer.

"As I told you, it was during the last ten minutes," continued Richards. "We were at our 40 yard line, fighting hard, but almost ready to give up all hope of overcoming Halford's lead of 6 points. We had the ball, and just as we put it in play I heard Percy call out 4—6—2, and I knew that meant the ball was to go to him, so I moved over to support him. Back came the ball an instant later, and off he went around the right end, I close behind him.

"The Halford end rusher made for him first, but old Cincinnatus got in the way like a good fellow, and 'interfered' with the end rusher till Percy got past him. Percy was going now like the wind, the whole field after him. I got up beside him, and, with Cincinnatus running just in front of me and just a little ahead of Percy, we 'interfered' in great shape, keeping off all the Halford men for thirty yards more. Then I stumbled on Percy's heel, I was pressing so close, and fell down.

"That left Percy with only Cincinnatus to support him. The old Roman kept off the Halford rushers mighty well for a time, but they soon got too many for him, and so, as Percy had left the rest of our team behind, he had to make his own way. Then came the sport. He shook off two of them as if they were puppies, but the third jumped and lit on his back. That brought him down on his knees and threw the fellow that tackled him over his head.

"The fellow loosened his grip—Percy staggered up, and on he went like a hero. He was now way over at the right edge of the field, and three Halford men were directly in front of him. He saw he couldn't get through there, so he stopped short and wheeled over toward the left.

"There we were, already up with him, and ready to 'interfere' for him. He dashed along behind us, and, in the shelter of our whole rush line, which stood there like a wall and kept all the Halford rushers off, he completely crossed the field and went around the left end of their line. He then had an open field for twenty yards, and there stood their full-back waiting for him.

"I was with him again now, so together we made for that fellow lickety-split. I pushed him off for several feet, but then he caught Percy's arm. Percy was on the full run, and dragged the fellow ten yards. There were only five yards more wanted now and it looked like a dead sure thing, when Percy's foot suddenly twisted, and down he went, thump!

"My heart jumped up in my throat, for the whole Halford team was close on us now, and if they caught up our cake would be dough. Well, I wish you could have seen what happened! When Percy went down, the force of his fall shook off the full-back, who had been clinging to him, and started him rolling over on the ground. Knowing he wouldn't have time to get up, Percy simply kept right on rolling, and a second later he rolled over the goal line and had the touchdown. Just as he got beyond the line, five Halford men fell on him. Gee whizz! If they hadn't stopped him I believe Percy would have been rolling yet."

"Phew!" whistled Mark as Richards finished. "But I'd like to have been there! What a sight!

"Nothing like it! Percy is a perfect fiend when he gets started," said another one of the group.

And so till late into the night the boys sat and discussed the game, going over the many interesting incidents, and calculating the chances of success in their coming struggle with Park College.

Mark was considerably better by Monday, and during the week his knee troubled him less and less, until by the following Saturday he had almost ceased to feel concerned about it. On Friday he had participated in a full game with the scrub eleven, and played with all his customary snap, tackling hard and taking rough treatment without suffering any evil effects. Of course, as a precautionary measure, he continued to wear the elastic band around his knee, and, with that on, he felt quite himself again.

On Saturday Park played Halford on the Park College grounds, and Percy Randall, accompanied by Richards, went over to see the game.

The results were just as every one foresaw. Park beat Halford 12—4, and showed throughout superior strength and skill.

"All the same they didn't make any more points on Halford than we did, you notice," was Percy's comment on his return from Berkeley that evening.

This year Park College was scheduled to play Belmont on the latter's grounds. This Percy considered another point in his favor, for the backing of one's own college is always a moral advantage.

There now remained about ten days more practice before the great game came off, and those days were busily employed by Percy and his team. His satisfaction and confidence increased steadily as he found Mark strengthen day by day and regain all his efficiency, and Rogers improving in skill and knowledge of the game.

The last week passed fast enough in training and practice. Friday was a day of rest for the team, and Friday night the whole college went to bed with eager, anxious expectations for the eventful morrow, and impatience for its coming.

*(To be continued.)*

[*This Story began in No. 566.*]

# Under a Cloud;

OR,

## *OGLE WENTWORTH'S FATHER*

BY J. W. DAVIDSON,

*Author of "Comrades Three," etc., etc.*

### CHAPTER VII.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN.

"NOW," said Mr. Quigley, as the door closed behind Ogle Wentworth, "we will proceed with the usual exercises. Master Stanton, you can go to your seat."

But Mr. Green did not seem to be at all satisfied, and desired that the boy remain, as he wished to question him. In spite of all Mr. Green's cross-examining, however, Guilford stoutly maintained his innocence.

At length Mr. Stanton grew impatient.

"If you doubt my son's word, how is he going to convince you? Every accused person is innocent until proven guilty. I, will go with you and search Guilford's room for the other two pictures this Wentworth boy spoke of if you wish. Will that satisfy you?"

Neither of them saw the frightened look on Guilford's face at this proposition. His knees fairly smote together as his father turned toward him.

"We'll clear this matter up, my son," he said cheerfully. "Is there anything locked in your room?"

"I guess not," replied Guilford with downcast eyes, and the two men at once took their leave, Mr. Green saying as they departed:

"We will be back in a very few moments, Mr. Quigley."

As the door closed behind them, the teacher noticed for the first time how pale Guilford was.

"It has been a terrible strain on you," he said pityingly, "but it will soon be over. You look badly."

Guilford made no reply for a moment, then he said falteringly:

"I don't feel well at all. Do you care if I go out in the air? It might make me feel better."

"Why no, my dear boy. Go, by all means," said Mr. Quigley. "Only do not stay long, as your father and Mr. Green will return shortly, and there's every prospect of something very pleasant happening to you."

Guilford tried to smile, but it was a ghastly attempt, and without saying a word he went out of doors.

As he stepped out in the bright sunshine, he fairly shivered.

"What will father say," he muttered, "if he finds the other two pictures? Why didn't I destroy them? It's just my luck."

He walked uneasily back and forth before the schoolhouse, calculating how long it would be before his father would return, and trying to contrive some scheme whereby he might get clear of the consequences of his falsehood.

But, think as he might, no way of escape presented itself, and he wandered about aimlessly, bewailing his hard fortune.

As for Ogle Wentworth, when he left the schoolroom, he was in fully as uncomfortable a frame of mind as Guilford. He scarcely knew which way to turn, and he stood for a moment undecided, his face flushed with anger, his small hands clenched.

"I'd have had the prize," he said bitterly, as he pulled his cap down over his eyes and walked away from the schoolhouse, where he had studied so hard for the past two or three months. "I worked for it, and now Guilford Stanton will get it."

Then he remembered what Mr. Quigley had said about his father, and his blood fairly boiled.

"Why is it," he muttered fiercely, "that everything turns against me? Other boys get what they deserve, while I am blamed for what I am not guilty of. I wonder what sort of man my father was."

Filled with conflicting emotions, in which disappointment and anger held the foremost place, Ogle walked blindly along the street. Unconsciously he made his way homeward, and his hand was upon the latch before he realized where he was.

For a moment he hesitated, then he said in a spirit of desperation:

"Mother will know it, any way. I may as well tell her now."

He opened the door and walked in. Mrs. Wentworth was sewing busily, and looked up as the boy entered the room.

The work dropped from her hands as she saw his face. It was white and drawn with pain or some mental disturbance. He closed the door behind him, and stood like some hunted animal, not knowing which way to turn.

"Why, Ogle," she said, "what is the matter with you? Are you sick?"

The white lips of the boy trembled, and he muttered something in reply, but Mrs. Wentworth could not understand him.

She rose to her feet in alarm and went quickly to where he stood.

"My poor boy, what sent you home at this time of day?" she asked anxiously. "You have worked too hard at your lessons."

"Mother," he said, trembling as though with ague, "my work hasn't hurt me, and I would have had the prize if it hadn't been for Guilford Stanton."

And then he told his wretched story in a husky voice.

"It isn't any use for me to try to do anything," he said hopelessly, after he had finished his recital. "Will you tell me all about father? Mr. Quigley spoke of him today as a man of low character."

It was Mrs. Wentworth's turn to grow pale and tremble.

"Ogle," she said in a half sobbing tone, "I wish you would not ask me about him."

The woman sank into a chair and sat with clasped hands, looking helplessly at Ogle.

"I suppose you have a right to know," she said at length, "but if you would only wait. Some time I will tell you. It will be better when you are older."

"I can bear it now," replied the boy firmly. "Don't be afraid to tell me. I can't feel much worse, and I want to know why every one flings my father's crimes at me. What did he do—kill somebody?"

Ogle was shocked at the effect of his words upon his mother. Her face grew livid, her eyes glared from their sockets as though she were bereft of reason and her hands were pressed upon her heart as if to still its wild throbbings.

"Ogle! Ogle!" she gasped, "you are right. He did—he did—I must not tell you, Ogle, I cannot tell you."

She rocked to and fro and moaned and sobbed, while the boy seemed bound to the chair in which he sat.

A great weight rested upon Ogle, and beside this partial revelation all his former troubles became insignificant and trifling. Then a desperate feeling came over him, and he broke the spell which had fallen upon him.

"Mother," he said, and the sound of his voice startled him, "tell me the whole story. It was not our fault, at least."

She sat undecided for a moment, her lips trembling, and then she began slowly and almost indistinctly:

"You remember your father, Ogle?"

"Yes'm," replied the boy, "I can just recollect him."

"You were a little more than four years old when your father went away," continued Mrs. Wentworth, her eyes flooded with tears, "and a kinder husband and father never lived."

She stopped, as though unable to continue, and Ogle waited impatiently.

The silence grew oppressive, but it was suddenly broken by a loud knock on the door.

Ogle answered the summons, and stood face to face with Caleb Dodge, who was breathing heavily, evidently having been running at the top of his speed.

"Mr. Quigley—wants—you—to—come quick as you can," panted Caleb, rubbing his flushed face with his handkerchief. "Hurry up."

"What shall I do?" asked Ogle, turning to his mother.

Before Mrs. Wentworth could make answer, Caleb blurted out in short gasps:

"Come, we haven't any time for fooling. Come on," and seizing Ogle by the arm he half dragged him from the room before he fairly realized what was taking place.

"It can't be much worse than it is now," thought Ogle, as he quickened his steps to keep pace with Caleb.

"I told Mr. Quigley I wouldn't be gone more than ten minutes," said Caleb, as they came to the schoolhouse, "and Mr. Green said he'd give me half a dollar if I brought you back in that time. He marked the time down on this card with a gold pencil when I left—I wonder if it was the one he lost—and I've got two minutes to spare yet."

Caleb looked furtively at Ogle as he mentioned the pencil, and saw his cheeks redden quickly.

"He's got that pencil hidden away somewhere," mused Caleb, while very different were the thoughts of Ogle.

"Does Mr. Green know that I have his pencil?" was the question that tortured the heart of the boy as they entered the hallway of the schoolhouse.

### CHAPTER VIII.

#### VINDICATED.

"I CAN'T see, for the life of me, Mr. Green, why you questioned my boy so closely," said Mr. Stanton, as they came to the residence of the latter. "Now I'll soon show you that Guilford has no pictures hidden in his room."

Mr. Green made no reply, and they entered the house and ascended the stairs to Guilford's room.

"Why what a lot of traps he has," said Mr. Stanton, gazing about him. "Where would he be most likely to keep anything of that sort?"

"I should say in his desk," replied Mr. Green, who felt somewhat ill at ease. "I am sorry now that I consented to this investigation at all."

"Nothing like seeing any one vindicated, be it boy or man," said Mr. Stanton. "Now here goes for the desk first."

He tried to raise the lid as he spoke, but it did not move.

"Zounds, it's locked," exclaimed Mr. Stanton, as he made another effort. "That young rascal told me a falsehood."

He gave it a violent wrench, but the desk, though of elegant workmanship, was evidently made for service, and did not yield.

Mr. Stanton's face flushed. He was a quick tempered man, and was apt to do things hastily.

Casting his eyes about the room they soon espied a pair of dumb bells. Grasping one of these he hastened to the unlucky article of furniture, muttering as he did so:

"I'll teach him to tell me there's nothing locked in his room," and, before Mr. Green could interfere, the dumb bell crashed upon the lock.

"There," said Mr. Stanton, "I don't think he'll lock that again in a hurry."

He raised the lid as he spoke, and began fumbling over the contents of the desk. Then he stopped, raised his head and stared blankly at Mr. Green; turned again to the desk and lifted a piece of paper therefrom, on which Mr. Green saw the picture of a parrot.

"There's one of them," said Mr. Green.

"Yes, and here's the other," added Guilford's father.

Mr. Green's face grew very grave. "I am sorry we did that Wentworth boy such an injustice," he said, but Mr. Stanton took him up sharply.

"I am not half so sorry for him as I am that I have reared such a young scapegrace. I will not return to the schoolroom with you, but if you will send that hopeful son of mine home I will give him a lesson he will not forget in a hurry."

Mr. Green merely bowed, and then, remarking that he must hasten back, took his leave.

After Mr. Green's departure, Mr. Stanton paced back and forth across the room a number of times, muttering as he did so:

"To think that boy would try to deceive me! I'll teach him. I'll teach him."

As for Mr. Green, he walked back toward the schoolhouse as rapidly as his portly legs would allow, arriving somewhat flushed and out of breath.

He found Mr. Quigley awaiting his return with considerable anxiety.

"Well," said the teacher, as he entered the schoolroom, "your mission was fruitless, was it not?"

Mr. Green made no reply to the query, but, after looking about the room, said:

"Where is Master Stanton?"

"He went out to take the air," replied Mr. Quigley. "He is entitled to the prize, I presume."

Mr. Green shook his head. "I am sorry to say," he said gravely, "that Guilford Stanton has been guilty of a very wrong act. We found the two pictures in his desk, just as described by Master Wentworth."

Mr. Quigley's face wore a shocked look.

"Poor Guilford," he said, rubbing his hands together. "I pity him. How badly he must feel."

"Yes," retorted Mr. Green sharply, "and we should have a little pity for the Wentworth boy as well. Do you remember the look that came over his face when you told him he could go home? Now, if you will please send a boy after him you will be doing me a great favor."

Reluctantly Mr. Quigley complied with this request and Caleb Dodge was dispatched.

As soon as Caleb and Ogle entered the schoolroom, Mr. Green approached the latter, and, taking him by the hand, said feelingly:

"My dear boy, there has been a great injustice done you, and I am happy to congratulate you on your complete vindication. You are entitled to the prize, and I can truly say that you have earned it. Use it as you see fit, and may the thoughts of this hour stimulate you to greater exertions as the years roll over your head."

He pressed something that glittered brightly into the trembling hand of the boy, whose voice failed him as he tried to respond.

Ogle looked at it, while his face grew white and grave, as he thought of the gold pencil hidden at home in the old trunk.

It was a twenty dollar gold piece.

Then Mr. Green bestowed a similar prize upon one of the girls, the lucky recipient smiling and blushing with delight.

The brain of Ogle Wentworth was in a whirl during the remainder of the session, and as he started for home his heart at one moment beat high with triumph and then sank like lead in his bosom.

When he entered the humble room that served them for both kitchen and sitting room, he found Mabel and Gracie there. His mother turned her eyes inquiringly upon him. Going straight up to her he held out the gold piece.

"See, mother," he said, "I got the prize after all."

There was no exultation in his voice, and his face was very grave.

Mrs. Wentworth's eyes grew misty. "My poor boy," she said brokenly, "I am glad you have received your just due. I expect great things of you."

A faint smile came into his face.

"Don't expect too much, mother. I'll do the best I can."

The two girls were eager to examine the golden prize, and handled it reverently.

"Wouldn't that buy lots of nice things?" said Mabel wistfully.

The child had not yet fully recovered from her sickness, and she yearned for dainties beyond the reach of her mother's meager resources.

"Ogle must get himself a suit of clothes," Mrs. Wentworth said hastily. "How fortunate that you should win this great sum of money and all the learning that you have acquired as well."

Meanwhile, Guilford Stanton had loitered about the schoolhouse till noon. He had seen Mr. Green return alone, and rightly conjectured that the pictures had been discovered.

"Why is it," he muttered, "that everything works against me so? Now this pauper will carry off the prize and the honors of the school, and Green will pat him on the head and Quigley will grin and rub his hands together, while I will get——"

He paused and looked ruefully about him.

"I don't know what I'll get," he continued. "I wish I hadn't made so much talk about the prize. I'll be glad when it's over."

Then he saw Caleb Dodge come out of the school house and hasten away on a run and shortly after saw him return accompanied by Ogle.

"See the conquering hero comes," quoted Guilford bitterly.

He was in a very disturbed state of mind, and wandered restlessly about. When the scholars began to issue from the door he watched his chance to arrest Caleb.

"I suppose it's all up with me," he said lugubriously.

"Yes," replied Caleb. "Your cake is dough, and no mistake. You should have heard Ogle's speech of acceptance when he received the prize. It was grand."

"What did the prize consist of? A dime or a nickel?" asked Guilford.

"A dime!" repeated Caleb. "Well, I should say it was, and a good many of them. It was a twenty dollar gold piece!"

Guilford whistled. "Twenty dollars!" he exclaimed, "what'll that poverty stricken young scamp do with all that money? He'll think he's a millionaire."

"Perhaps he'll invite us out to a spread," said Caleb soberly. "I think I'll cultivate him for a spell. How are you going to settle this little difference with your sire? He looks as though he might be quite self willed if he took a notion."

"That's a sticker, and I give it up," replied Guilford. "I think, though, that I'll hang around till after dinner and then go home. Perhaps father will cool off after a while."

It went sorely against the grain of Guilford to go without his dinner beyond the usual hour, for, above all things, he enjoyed good living. But fear of his father was stronger than his appetite, and he waited till he felt sure that the coast was clear.

Slowly he ascended the steps and opened the door; softly he crept up the stairway and reached his room with a sigh of relief.

"This is worse than the black eye I got," he said, his hand upon the knob. He turned it, opened the door and walked into the room.

Then he started back aghast.

There sat his father!

"Well, my dear boy," said Mr. Stanton slowly, "so you have returned at last to receive my congratulations. I am exceedingly proud of you."

There was an ominous scowl on the man's face, a peculiar grating sound to his voice that struck terror to the heart of the boy.

He strove to frame some sort of an excuse, but his tongue clove to the roof of his mouth.

"Don't bother yourself with trying to make a speech," continued Mr. Stanton. "Now I have been wondering what sort of a reward I should bestow upon you. I am somewhat averse to physical punishment, it is too brutal and has no moral effect. Consequently I must appeal to the higher faculties."

He paused, and Guilford wondered what was to follow. He had not long to wait.

"I have concluded to deprive you of all spending money for the—space—of——"

He looked keenly at his son, and the heart of the latter sank several degrees below zero.

"For the space of three months," said Mr. Stanton.

"Three months!" gasped Guilford. "No money to spend on the Fourth of July!"

"None whatever till three months have expired," replied Mr. Stanton firmly, "and I hope this little discipline may be of benefit to you. Now go get your dinner, and don't trouble yourself with thanking me."

Mr. Stanton rose to his feet and strode out of the room, leaving Guilford half stupefied.

"Three months!" he said bitterly, "and Ogle has twenty dollars to spend. Three months! No ice cream, no fireworks or bon bons! What am I going to do?"

A deprivation of this sort would not have troubled Ogle in the least, for spending money was a thing unknown to him. But to the only child of the wealthy mill owner it was a matter of considerable magnitude, and he forgot all about his delayed dinner for some little time till the pangs of hunger roused him.

"Three months!" he whimpered, walking dejectedly down stairs.

*(To be continued.)*

*[This Story began in No. 556.]*

## A Publisher at Fifteen

BY MATTHEW WHITE, JR.,

*Author of "In The Grasp of Another," "The Young Editor," etc.*

### CHAPTER XXXVI.

#### FORESTALLED.

"I DON'T believe they're thinking of coming after us," said Dick presently, halting to catch his breath.

Harry stopped too.

"No, they're not," he said. "Their attention is wholly taken up with the horses. It will cost them a pretty penny if anything happens to them."

"Good, but what's to become of us now? We're all of two miles from Reeveport, and even if we weren't, there's no place that would take us in at this hour of the night."

"We must find a place to sleep somewhere around here."

"But how can we do that? Tired as I am, I haven't any mind to roost in a tree or curl up under a bush."

"I don't mean that we shall do that. Let's circle about and get back to the road nearer Reeveport. Then we can probably find a haystack to sleep under."

"Well, I think I could go that for tonight, or rather what's left of it," returned Dick. "You must be about ready to drop, Harry."

"I am. Just show me a nice soft place to sleep and I'll be right in it."

They found one some ten minutes

later at the foot of a stack in Farmer Risley's meadow.

"Let's go round to the other side," suggested Dick. "People can't see us from the road then if we oversleep."

He led the way, but suddenly halted with a little cry. The other side was already occupied.

Before Dick gave his cry he stepped back, bringing one heel of his shoe down on Harry's toe. Harry exclaimed at this, and the two utterances combined, made quite a respectable noise.

At any rate it was sufficient to awaken the sleeper under the haystack.

He appeared to have the faculty of adjusting his mind to the situation instantly, or perhaps he was accustomed to outdoor sleeping apartments.

"Oh, don't mind me, gents," he said. "This bed's a wide one; plenty of room for all, even if all of us are minus a room."

Harry knew the voice instantly. It was that of one of the men who had made prisoners of himself and the small boys in the woods near Podmons.

Naturally he was not anxious to come in contact with the fellow again, unless he would reverse their former positions and do so in the character of captor. But whether he and Dick could succeed in making a captive of the fellow was a debatable question.

At any rate, they were both at present of one mind on one point, that of the desirability of removing themselves to a distance that would not place them on speaking terms with the man who had pre-empted that particular haystack.

"He evidently didn't recognize me," Harry whispered, when they had reached the fence again. "He's made no attempt to follow us."

"Recognize you!" exclaimed Dick. "Why, is the fellow a friend of yours?"

"No, an enemy."

"You don't mean to say you know who it is?"

"Rather. Didn't you recognize the fact before that I had on a coat that didn't belong to me?"

"Well, I had so many other exciting happenings to masticate in my mind that I must confess I didn't. But where under the sun did you get it, and what has that to do with our trampish friend. I beg your pardon—pal under the haystack?"

"Why, he's one of the men that bound those Podmans boys and myself to trees. When I told you the story before I didn't have time to explain that they had the impudence to cut up my coat for thongs. The one I'm wearing now belongs to Mr. King, which reminds me that I shall probably see him again when I take it back, which won't be a very enjoyable episode."

"And this is one of the fellows!" exclaimed Dick.

"Yes, and he's probably got some of the booty they stole with him now. That's why I don't think it's exactly right for us to go off and leave him in undisturbed possession."

"Do you mean for us to go back and tackle the man single handed as it were?"

"We could do him, I guess, you and I."

"Perhaps we could, but what would we do with him after we had done him? You must remember it is only in stories that cord seems to grow in the pockets of the valiant hero."

"What's the matter with doing as he did with me—slashing up his coat and tying him with that?"

"What'll we tie him to? The haystack?"

Both boys laughed, for the first time since Dick had gone in paroxysms over the ducking under Miss Griggson's window.

I'll tell you my plan," said Harry after a minute. "It is to rouse Mr. Risley, tell him about the thing, and get him to help us."

"Yes, we've had such success rousing people tonight," rejoined Dick. "Do you think it time we were dampened down again?"

"But the Risleys may not be such sound sleepers as the others we have tackled. Now I think of it, Mrs. Risley was in to call on Miss Griggson the other day and I heard her telling how much she suffered from sleeplessness. Come on, we may be able to get them to take us in for the night after we capture our man."

"I'm right with you, with that end in view."

The two started off toward the farmhouse. It was quite a substantial dwelling, for James Risley was well to do.

"Now I suppose we ought to commence our operations under Mrs. Risley's window," said Dick. "But do you know which that is?"

"No, and I haven't yet decided which form those operations shall take. What could you suggest, Dick?"

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

### THE PRISONER IN THE CORN CRIB.

"WELL," remarked Dick, in his dry way, "most people, when they want to gain entrance to a house, knock on the door when there isn't any bell to ring."

"Oh, I thought it might be better to throw a handful of dirt against window panes."

"Seeing that most of the windows are open, there isn't a very extensive glass surface for us to practice on."

"Well then, suppose we begin on the door?"

They started towards it, Harry slightly in advance. He didn't stay there long, however.

He had not quite reached the door stone when a black shape bounded towards him with a savage bark.

It was the Risley watch dog.

Harry was in advance again, but this time he was leading the retreat.

Dick lost no time in following him, and neither stopped till they were outside the fence on the road with the closed gate between them and the defender of the Risley estate. The latter sat on his haunches and proceeded to wake the echoes of the night in the manner of his kind.

This continued for about five minutes, the two boys standing outside the fence awaiting possible developments.

One presently presented itself in the shape of a white robed figure which appeared at a second story window over the front door and in a woman's voice called out sharply to the dog:

"Be quiet, Tige."

"Now's our chance, Harry," whispered Dick, whereupon Harry raised his voice and called out: "Hello there, Mrs. Risley!"

"Help, help, James! Somebody spoke to me," and the white robed figure instantly disappeared from the window.

"Now you've done it, Harry. She'll think we're burglars sure enough and 'James' will come out with a gun."

"There he is now. I can see his black beard against his night shirt, and I'm sure he hasn't got any gun."

The dog was quiet now and utter peace brooded over the scene, on which the moon looked down refulgently.

"Pshaw, Miranda," they could hear Mr. Risley say. "What did you wake me up for? There isn't anything the matter."

"Yes there is," cried out Harry at this point. "If you'll keep your dog quiet Mr. Risley I'll come under your window and tell you."

"Sho,' who's that?" exclaimed the good farmer, considerably startled.

"Harry Atwin and Dick Stenhouse. We've got something important to say to you."

"Oh, nothin' but you two boys," said the farmer. "What on earth are you doin' prowlin' round honest folks' houses at this hour of the night?"

"Because there are dishonest folks close at hand," replied Harry, stepping inside the gate and lowering his tone impressively.

Reassured by the voice of his master conversing with the intruders, Tige permitted the boys to advance without offering them any other indignity than a sniff.

"Dishonest folks around," repeated the farmer. "What do you mean?"

"If you'll get on a few clothes and bring a gun and some rope along, we'll show you."

Mr. Risley promptly disappeared from the window.

"We've scared him now," said Dick. "I suppose we'll see him come out in a minute or two, armed to the teeth."

The two boys talked to Tige while they were waiting for his master to dress.

Now that they had not the excitement of action to keep their nerves tense, they both realized how sleepy they were. Indeed Harry could scarcely keep his eyes open.

In about seven minutes Farmer Risley appeared, an old shotgun that would probably do more execution in its rear than in front, in one hand, and a coil of clothesline in the other.

"Now where is this vagabond?" he demanded, whirling about in a style that sent Harry and Dick ducking back and forth wildly in order to escape being possible targets for the old blunderbuss.

"He's out in the meadow asleep under the haystack," replied Harry.

"And how under the moonlight did you two boys come to discover him, and how do you know he's dishonest?" went on Mr. Risley.

"We came to discover him," said Dick, "because we were locked out of our homes tonight and thought to find a resting place under that same haystack."

"And I know him to be dishonest," added Harry, "because I recognized the fellow as belonging to a gang who robbed a jewelry store this afternoon in Podmans and then kept me tied to a tree in the woods for half an hour."

"Thunder'n milk! what goin's on are all these?" exclaimed the farmer.

But they had now come within sight of the haystack and Harry suggested it would be a wise thing to stop a minute and plan out a line of attack.

"Plan nothin' !" cried the farmer. "I'll cover the fellow with my gun, while you two boys rush in and bind him with the clothesline."

"But what'll we do with him after he's bound?" inquired Dick, turning his face so that only Harry should see him smile.

Mr. Risley tilted his hat forward and scratched the back of his head reflectingly.

"I s'pose he might work himself loose if we left him out here all night," he murmured. "I tell you what, boys. We'll put him in the corncrib. It's empty now."

"All right; now are you ready?" said Harry.

"I'm not," exclaimed Dick. "I want to have some sort of assurance first, Mr. Risley, that you won't get Harry and me mixed up with the tramp if you have any occasion to shoot."

"Jumping crickets!" exclaimed the farmer, examining the gun. "You needn't be afraid. I forgot to load the blame thing."

Dick forgot the necessity for quiet and laughed out shrilly.

"You've waked the fellow up now probably," said Harry. "We'd better rush in before he remembers where he is."

"He seemed to remember that in short order a few minutes ago," returned Dick, but nevertheless he followed Harry on a run, each with an end of the clothesline.

They dashed around the corner of the haystack and fell on the prostrate form they found there like an avalanche.

He had not been awakened by Dick's laugh, as it turned out. So the capture was not as heroic a one as it seemed to Farmer Risley, who came up an instant later to find the boys winding the clothesline around and around a trampish looking individual, who swore at them lustily the while.

"Now where's your corncrib, Mr. Risley?" inquired Harry.

"I'll show you," responded the farmer. "Right this way, between the road and the barn."

He started to walk off, leading the way, but Dick called after him:

"Hold on, we've trussed this fellow up so tight he can't walk."

"Don't untie him," cried the farmer hastily, evidently in considerable alarm.

"But we'll have to unloosen his legs," returned Harry, "or we can't get him away from here."

"Maybe he's got a pistol in his pocket," suggested Mr. Risley nervously. "You'd better not."

"He can't draw a pistol with his leg," rejoined Dick, looking at Harry to know what they should do.

"If you'll come here and help us," the latter now called out to Mr. Risley, "we may be able to leave him as he is and lug him bodily over to the crib."

"All right, I'll do that," answered the farmer. "You're sure you've got him fastened good and strong?"

"He's secure enough."

"I wish we had a padlock for his mouth," added Dick, for the fellow continued to abuse them all in the most outrageous manner.

But he was utterly helpless in every other respect, so that except for his weight the three found little trouble in carrying him to the corncrib.

"I'l drive over to Canterbury for Constable Hooker the first thing in the morning," said Mr. Risley, wiping the perspiration from his face when the prisoner was locked up safe.

"And I owe you boys a lot of thanks for helpin' me secure the rascal," he added. "He might have gone through the house."

"Oh, I don't believe he had any such intention," responded Harry. "But if you want to do us a favor, we'd take it as a very great one if you'd find us a place to sleep for the rest of the night. There can't be very much left of it."

"Come right in. You can have the spare chamber. Miranda always keeps it made up. She says if one of us was to die sudden, our folks would have to come an' stay, an' it wouldn't be convenient then maybe to go about gettin' a room to rights."

"That'll be splendid, Dick, won't it? Thank you very much, Mr. Risley."

And, thus, at nearly two o'clock in the morning of the next one, Harry's eventful day came to an end, and he and Dick sank quickly into a sleep so deep that it held them till Farmer Risley pounded on the door about nine the next morning with the announcement:

"Here's Constable Hooker wants somebody to identify the prisoner."

Harry and Dick sprang up with alacrity, ashamed that they had slept so long. They hurried into their clothes and went out into the barnyard to find Mr. Hooker peering through the slats of the corncrib at the prisoner, who was regaling him with some of the choice expressions of opinion with which the boys had been favored the night before.

"You seem to do an extensive business in picking up shady gentry, Harry Atwin," was Mr. Hooker's greeting to the young publisher.

"It's my misfortune rather than my fault," replied Harry. "I don't seek them out, I assure you."

"I hope, Mr. Hooker," put in Dick, who did not like the tone in which the constable addressed his friend, "that you will have better success in getting away with this fellow than you did with Dan Miggs."

To this Mr. Hooker did not deign to make reply, but requesting Mr. Risley to unlock the door of the corncrib, demanded of Harry that he should tell him what the prisoner's name was.

"I don't know," answered Harry.

"Don't know?" repeated Mr. Hooker. "Mr. Risley here told me that you could identify the man."

*(To be continued.)*

### What He Was After.

THE spirit of bartering seems inherent in the human race. It is one of the first ideas that occurs to the savage when the shipwrecked mariner is washed ashore on his coast. But the champion barterer would seem to be a product of civilization, if we may rely on an item in the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*.

"Please, sir," said a young man to the foreman of a paving gang in Selby Avenue, "will you give me one of those round cedar blocks?"

"Those blocks belong to the city, my boy. If you are a taxpayer they are as much yours as mine, but you don't look like a taxpayer. However, I'll give you one if you will tell me what you want it for."

"I want to cover it with carpet and make a hassock."

"What do you want of a hassock? You ain't a married man."

"Oh, no, sir; but I can trade the hassock for a bird cage to Mrs. Brown. Her bird is dead."

"But what do you want of a bird cage without a bird?"

"Oh, I don't want the cage; but I found out that I could trade the cage for an oxidized picture frame."

"There it is again. What good is a picture frame without any picture?"

"But Mr. Oliver has got a picture of General Sheridan, and he said he would trade me a hanging lamp for a good oxidized frame for it."

"So it's the lamp you want?"

"No; I've got no particular use for a lamp, but I can trade a good hanging lamp for a Persian rug, and I can trade the rug for a Mexican parrot, and Tom Higbie will trade me his banjo for the parrot. See?—it's the banjo I'm after."

### School Life in China.

SCHOOLBOYS who are inclined to complain of the hard lines, as they consider them, that fall to their share, should read about the almond eyed learners in the Flowery Kingdom and then rejoice that they have such an easy time of it in comparison.

The Chinese school children have instilled into them at an early age habits of hard, steady study. At the age of five a boy begins his schooling. At daylight he rises, and after dressing as quickly as possible, he starts breakfastless to school. He is assigned a task, and after it is completed he is allowed an hour for breakfast; again, later, he has an hour for luncheon, but he is at his study for nearly twelve hours a day, seven days in the week. All his time, when he is not reciting his lessons, he is studying aloud at the top of his voice. He is under the eye of his master both in school and on his way to and from school.

The lad is taught rudimental astronomy, physics, and natural history, but greater stress is put upon writing and his literary studies. "A Thousand Letters," a poem, is the study that forms the backbone of his literary education. In it are taught the duties of children to parents and all such matters. Whatever the study may be, history, classics, or science, every lesson is learned and repeated word for word.

### Light Bearers of the Sea.

THE forests and lawns of dry land are not the only spots where living animals are provided with natural illuminating powers.

Away down in the dark depths of the ocean, says the Chicago *Inter-Ocean*, there are living lanterns that are borne about to light up the darkness. A queer fish called the "midshipmite" carries the brightest and most striking of all these sea torches. Along its back, under it, and at the base of its fins there are small disks that glow with a clear, phosphorescent light like rows of shining buttons on the young middy's uniform. In this way it gets its name "midshipmite," by which young sailors in the navy are often called. These disks are exactly like small bullseye lanterns with regular lenses and reflectors. The lenses gather the rays and the reflectors throw them out again. There is a layer of phosphorescent cells between the two, and the entire effect is as perfect as if made by some skillful optician.

Many other fish have "reflectors," many have "lenses," but the "midshipmite" is the only kind that has such splendid specimens of both. The fish is so constructed that when it is frightened by some devouring sea monster it can close its lenses and hide itself in the darkness. It can turn its lantern off and on at will, and then it is always "filled" and ready when wanted.

Another marine animal has a luminous bulb that hangs from its chin, and thus throws the light before it to warn it of the approach of enemies. Still another upholds a big light from the extremity of the dorsal fin. Others again have constant supplies of a luminous oil that runs down their sides from the fins, making a bright and constant light all around.

Most of the jelly fish are phosphorescent. These live far down on the very floor of the ocean, where it is always dark and gloomy. The dwellers in these watery depths are provided with lights of their own shining bodies and fins, which illumine their home with a strange though no doubt cheerful glare.

### A Matter of Appearance.

"NEAT in appearance." This was the sentence that attracted our attention as we were glancing over the advertising columns of the morning paper. It was included among the qualifications of a young man seeking employment.

First impressions are very important ones, say what we will about their untrustworthiness. Clean hands, nails that are not in mourning, neatly brushed hair and shoes, all of these are of account when a boy goes to an interview with a business man whom he hopes will become his employer.

There is a vast difference between neatness and dudishness. In fact the habiliments of the latter may be put on to conceal the lock of the former, as a flaring necktie could cover a rumpled shirt bosom and a pair of kid gloves conceal unwashed hands.

Lack of personal neatness means one of two things, either laziness or want of thought, and no man of business wants to hire a boy who is given over to either of these traits.

## CORRESPONDENCE

C. F. M., Findlay, O. There is no premium on the nickel cent of 1857.

C. H. N., Newport, Vt. There is no premium on the five cent piece of 1830.

C. C. P., White Plains, N. Y. There is no premium on the silver dollar of 1878.

R. S. B., Boston, Mass. We no longer purchase old volumes of THE ARGOSY.

F. M., New York City. The numbers you desire will be sent you on receipt of 55 cents.

CONSTANT READER, St. Louis, Mo. THE ARGOSY'S circulation extends over the entire country.

F. S. P., St. Louis, Mo. We hope to print a new serial by the author named in the not distant future.

A READER, Chattanooga, Tenn. The story you mention cannot be republished, as it has already appeared in book form.

READER, Albany, N. Y. We cannot supply you with any books by Optic and Castlemon in 25 cent form.

A READER, Peoria, Ill. The book about which you inquire is published by Porter & Coates, Philadelphia.

A. B., New York City. We have no catalogue of stories in book form. 2. The numbers of THE ARGOSY containing "Under Fire" are out of print.

YOUNG MEN who would like to join together in starting a first class amateur paper are invited to communicate with Harry T. Cook, 312 West 133d St., New York City.

J. P. D., New York City. Yes. Frank A. Munsey's novel, "A Tragedy of Errors," has been published in book form, and can be obtained by sending the price, $1.50, to this office.

W. B. L., New York City. We can give you no information regarding the Hamilton Cadets, or any other of the military companies that were formed some years ago on plans suggested by THE ARGOSY.

E. P., South Boston, Mass. "One Boy in a Thousand" began in No. 519 and ran through thirteen numbers—cost 50 cents. Oliver Optic's "Always in Luck" began in the same issue and ran through fifteen numbers—cost 60 cents.

J. A. B., Kansas. 1. Write to the Superintendent at West Point for the information you desire concerning terms of admission to the Military Academy, inclosing stamp for reply. 2. Consult your doctor about the crooked toe.

E. C. M., Elizabeth, N. J. 1. The matter of the price for stories is a private affair between the publisher and the author. 2. The editor of *Forest and Stream*, New York, can answer your last question better than we can. Address him with stamp for reply.

S. S., Portage, Wis. 1. Life is too short for us to take the time to count the number of stories that have appeared in THE ARGOSY from its start. 2. Yes, Harry Castlemon had a serial in the first volume of THE ARGOSY. 3. The numbers containing "Tom Tracy" are out of print.

A CONSTANT READER, New York City. Mr. Moffat's story, "Brad Mattoon" appeared partly in Vol. XI and partly in Vol. XII; the separate numbers can be had for 55 cents, which is also the price of the same author's previous story, "The Crimson Banner," which appeared in Vol. X.

H. S. H., St. Tom's, Mo 1. No, Oliver Optic is so far from being dead that he is able to take an extended trip abroad every summer. 2. See reply to F. S. P. 3. A very thrilling story by William Murray Graydon began in the August number of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE, single copies ten cents.

G. T., New Haven, Conn. 1. For information about the Leather Clad Tales (which were, to a certain extent, a continuation of MUNSEY'S POPULAR SERIES), we must refer you to the United States Book Company, of New York. 2. You did not complete your question regarding the authors mentioned, so we cannot reply to it.

YELUATS, Portage, Wis. 1. The two serials written by Judson Newman Smith for THE ARGOSY are "The Hermitage Tangle" and "The Fate of Horace Hildreth." 2. The largest State building at the World's Fair is that of Illinois. 3. The first story in THE ARGOSY was the serial, "Do and Dare," by Horatio Alger, Jr.

F. B. You failed to send any address with your MS. Yes, we "deal in serials." If we can find a stirring, spirited story, full of dramatic action, and helpful in its tone without being "preachy" in its style, we are glad to buy it. But of course we can never pass judgment on a story, long or short, until we have had an opportunity to examine it.

D. J. L., San Francisco, Cal. 1. The numbers comprising Vol. V of THE ARGOSY are out of print. It is obtainable only in bound form, price $5. Mr. Alger's "Bob Burton" appeared in this volume. His "Chester Rand," ran from No. 508 to 520 of Vol. XV, which will be mailed on receipt of 50 cents, which may be sent in postage stamps if you so prefer. 2. May 8, 1879, fell on Thursday. 3. We do not pass upon the handwriting of our correspondents.

E. B. H., Charleston, S. C. 1. An index for any of the volumes mentioned will be sent on receipt of two cent stamp. 2. The most northerly town in the world is Upernavik, Greenland; the most southerly, Invercargill, the most southerly island of New Zealand, although there is a settlement called Porto San Julian, in Patagonia. 3. There are thirty two post offices in the United States bearing the name Washington. 4. Cairo has the largest population of any city in Africa, the census of 1882 (the latest obtainable) assigning it, 368,108. 5. To send a paper weighing half a pound would cost, to Asiatic Turkey, or to U. S. of Colombia, 4 cents. There is in this case no special rate to publishers.

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