

THE ARGOSY

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Rupert's Ambition.

BY HORATIO ALGER, JR.,

Author of "Chester Rand," "Lester's Luck,"
"Ragged Dick Series," etc.

CHAPTER I.

RUPERT LOSES HIS PLACE.

"Rupert, the superintendent wishes to see you."

Rupert Rollins, a tall boy of sixteen, was engaged in folding some pieces of cloth which had been shown during the day to customers. It was the principal salesroom of Tenney & Rhodes, who conducted a large wholesale dry goods house in the lower part of New York City.

"Very well, Harry," he said. "I will go at once. I wonder what he wants to see me about."

"I don't know. I hope it is to raise your wages."

"That isn't likely in these dull times, though a raise would be very welcome."

When Rupert had finished folding the pieces he was upon he left his place and knocked at the door of a small room occupied by the superintendent.

A man of about forty was seated at a desk, writing.

"Mr. Frost," said Rupert respectfully, "I hear you wish to speak with me."

"Yes; take a seat."

Rupert was tired, for he had been on his feet all day, and was glad to sink into a chair near the door.

"How long have you been in our employ?" asked the superintendent in the quick tones habitual to him.

"Nearly six months."

"So I supposed. You are one of the last clerks taken on."

"Yes, sir."

"I am sorry I have bad news for you. Mr. Tenney feels, in view of the dullness in business, that it will be advisable to diminish his clerical force. As you are one of the last taken on, he has selected you and a few others for discharge."

Rupert turned pale. What a terrible misfortune this would be to him he well knew. The future seemed to him dark indeed.

"I hope, sir," he said in a unsteady voice, "that the firm is not dissatisfied with me."

"Oh no. No indeed! I have heard only good reports of you. We shall be glad to recommend you to any other firm."

"Thank you, sir. When do you wish me to go?"

"You can stay till the end of the week."

Rupert bowed and left the room. His head was in a whirl, and he felt that a calamity had indeed fallen upon him. His wages were but five dollars a week, but this sum,

small as it was, was the main support of his mother and sister, the latter a chronic invalid only two years younger than himself. What they were to do when this small income was taken away he could not conjecture. He felt that he must look out at once for a new place.

"Well, Rupert, what business did the superintendent have with you?" asked Harry Bacon, Rupert's most intimate friend in the store.

know business is dull elsewhere as well as with us. It isn't a good time to change places."

"Well, you'll get something else. All branches of business may not be as dull as ours."

Harry Bacon had a sanguine disposition, and always looked on the bright side. His assurances encouraged Rupert a little, and he determined to do his best to find something to do, no matter what.

poor mother from her position of despondency.

"What is the matter, mother?" he asked. "Are you not well?"

"Yes, Rupert," she answered raising her head, "but for the moment I felt discouraged. Grace has been suffering more than usual today. Sickness and poverty, too, are hard to bear."

"That is true, mother," and Rupert's heart sank as he remembered that by the end of the week the poverty would become destitution.

"Grace has been unable to eat anything today. She thought she could eat an orange, but I absolutely didn't have money enough to buy one."

"She shall have an orange," said Rupert in a low voice.

The sick girl heard and her face brightened. It was an instinctive craving such as a sick person sometimes has.

"I should enjoy an orange," she said faintly. "I think I could sleep after eating one."

"I will go right out and get one."

Rupert put on his hat and went down stairs.

"You may buy a loaf of bread, Rupert," said his mother as he was starting, "that is, if you have money enough."

"Yes, mother."

There was an Italian fruit vender's stall at the next corner. As he stepped out on the sidewalk Rupert took out his slender purse and examined its contents. It held but thirty five cents and this must last till Saturday night when he would receive his weekly wages.

Going to the stand, he examined the Italian's stock. He saw some large, attractive oranges marked "five cents." There were some smaller ones marked three cents, but Rupert judged that they were sour and would not please his sister. Yet five cents was considerable for him to pay under the circumstances. It represented one seventh of his scanty stock of money.

"Won't you let me have one of these oranges for four cents?" he asked.

Nicolo, the Italian, shook his head.

"No," he answered. "It is good-a orange. It is worth more than I ask."

Rupert sighed and hesitated.

"I suppose I shall have to pay it," he said regretfully.

He drew out his purse, and took out a nickel.

"I'll take an orange," he said.

"Is it for yourself?" asked a gentle voice.

Rupert turned and saw a tiny woman not over five feet in height with a pleasant, kindly face.

"No," he said, "it is for my sister."

"Is your sister sick?"

"Yes. She has taken a fancy to an orange, and I want her to have one, but—it is extravagant for one in my circumstances to pay a nickel for one."



RUPERT STEPPED FORWARD AND STROVE TO RAISE HIS MOTHER FROM HER POSITION OF DESPONDENCY.

"Only to tell me that I was discharged," said Rupert quietly.

"Why, that's a shame!" exclaimed Harry impetuously. "What are you discharged for?"

"Only on account of dull times. The house will give me a recommendation."

"It seems too bad you are to go. Why didn't they discharge me, too?"

"You have been here longer, and it is only those last taken on who must go. I suppose it is all right, but it is hard."

"Keep up your courage, Rupert. It isn't as if you were discharged for cause. With a recommendation from Tenney & Rhodes you ought to find another place here."

"Yes in ordinary times, but you

At five o'clock the store closed. Retail stores kept open later, but early hours are one of the advantages of a wholesale establishment.

Rupert bent his steps towards Elizabeth Street. In an upper apartment in one of the shabby houses fronting on this thoroughfare lived his mother and sister. It was only a three story house, and there were but two flights of stairs to ascend.

Entering the principal room, Rupert saw his mother with her head bent in an attitude of despondency over the table. Through a door he could see his sister lying uneasily on a bed in a small inner room, her face showing that she was suffering pain.

Rupert stepped forward and with tender sympathy strove to raise his

"Would you mind," said the little woman hesitatingly, "would you mind if I sent an orange to your sister?"

Rupert hesitated. He was proud, but not foolishly so, and he saw that the offer was meant in kindness.

"I should say it was very kind in you," he said candidly.

The little woman nodded contentedly, and spoke a low word to the Italian.

He selected four oranges and put them in a paper bag.

"But, that is too many," expostulated Rupert.

"No," answered the little woman with a smile. Keep the rest for tomorrow," and before Rupert had a chance to thank her she had paid Nicolo, and was hurrying down the street.

The spontaneous kindness of the little woman, who was a perfect stranger, helped to cheer Rupert. He felt that there were some kind people in the world, and his trust in Providence was increased. He went to a baker's near by, and purchased a ten cent loaf of bread. Then he made his way back to his humble home in Elizabeth Street.

As he entered the room, the sick girl looked up eagerly. Rupert emptied the oranges on the table, and her face brightened as she saw the yellow fruit which she craved.

"Rupert, I am afraid you were extravagant," said his mother. "These oranges must have cost five cents each."

"Yes, they did."

"We cannot afford such a large purchase in our circumstances."

"They cost me nothing, mother. They are a present to Grace from a lady who met me at the stand."

"She must have a kind heart. Do you know who she was?"

"No, I never saw her before."

"The world is not all unkind. Grace, I will prepare an orange for you. I hope you will relish it."

The sick girl enjoyed the fruit, and after eating it lay back content.

"May I have another in the morning?" she asked.

"Yes, my child."

So the evening passed not wholly unhappily, but still Rupert could not help thinking of the next week when he would be out of a position.

CHAPTER II. OUT OF WORK.

On Saturday Rupert received his last week's wages at the store.

"I am awfully sorry you are going, Rupert," said Harry Bacon. "It is a shame you are discharged."

"No, it is not a shame. It is only because business is dull that I have to go. I can't blame the firm."

Rupert ascended the stairway at his humble home in Elizabeth Street with a slow step. He felt that he could no longer conceal his discharge from his mother, and he knew what a blow it would be to her. So as he handed the money to Mrs. Rollins he said, "I have bad news for you, mother. I am discharged."

"Discharged?" repeated his mother in dismay. "Why? What have you done?"

"There is no dissatisfaction with me. I am discharged because times are dull, and business has fallen off."

"I am glad at least that no fault is found with you, but what shall we do? Your salary was all we had to depend upon except the little I make by sewing."

"Don't be discouraged, mother. I shall start to find a place Monday morning. I am allowed to refer to the old firm."

"But—do you think there is any chance to get in elsewhere? Won't other firms be affected by the dull times?"

This was precisely what troubled Rupert, but he answered his mother cheerfully.

"Tomorrow is Sunday," he said. "Don't let us think of the future till

Monday morning. I am sure something will turn up. At the worst I can earn something by selling papers."

When Monday morning came Rupert started out on his quest. He had been sent on errands to several houses in the same line, and he resolved to go from one to another in the hope of finding a vacancy.

At the first he was pleasantly received. He was recognized as coming from Tenney & Rhodes, and it was supposed he came on an errand from them. When he asked for a place the superintendent looked distrustful.

"Why do you leave Tenney & Rhodes?" he was asked.

"Because the times are dull, and they are parting with some of their clerks."

"Will they recommend you?"

"Yes. Here is a recommendation," and Rupert took a folded paper from the envelope in which he had placed it.

"That is satisfactory," said the superintendent, his face clearing, "but the same dullness which has reduced their business affects ours. So far from taking on new clerks we may have to discharge some of those at present in our employ."

Of course there was no more to be said. Rupert visited five other firms, but in each case the answer was the same. They had no vacancy, and did not expect to have any.

It was one o'clock, time for lunch, but Rupert did not feel hungry. His anxiety had taken away his appetite. He rested for an hour on one of the benches in City Hall Park, and then started out again. He resolved now to apply for a position of any kind since there seemed no opening in the business to which he had been trained.

But he met with no better success. Everywhere there were complaints of hard times.

"You are doing better than I am, my boy," said one business man bluntly.

Rupert looked about the large store in which he was standing, and said: "I don't see how that can be sir, I am making nothing."

"And I am making less than no-thing. Last month I fell behind five hundred dollars."

"I am sorry to hear it, sir," said Rupert in a tone of sympathy.

The merchant looked at him approvingly.

"You appear to be a good boy," he said. "I wish I had a place for you. I can send you on an errand if that will be any object to you."

"Anything, sir, will be welcome."

"Then you may take a note from me to a firm in Astor Place. Wait five minutes and it will be ready."

Rupert took a seat, and in five minutes the merchant reappeared with a sealed note.

"This is the note," he said, "and here is a quarter for taking it."

"Thank you, sir."

The sum was not large, but Rupert was pleased to think that he would earn something.

"Well," said his mother, when at five o'clock he entered the room. "Have you found a place?"

"No, mother, places seem to be scarce. Still I have earned something."

She looked at him inquiringly.

"It isn't much—only twenty five cents. I received it for going on an errand."

"It is better than nothing."

"Yes, it will buy our supper."

Two days more passed. They were equally barren of results. It was nearing the end of the week and except the silver quarter Rupert had earned nothing.

Things began to look serious. But little was left of his last week's wages, and the time was coming when they would be entirely destitute. Rupert, as he passed through the business district, reflected sadly

that while thousands were at work there seemed to be no place and no work for him. He was going down Chambers Street towards the Elevated station when he saw in front of him a young man, perhaps thirty years of age, whose unsteady movements seemed to indicate that he was under the influence of liquor. He came near falling as Rupert neared him.

"Can't I assist you?" asked Rupert, stepping to his side.

The young man glanced at the boy who addressed him with a look of inquiry.

"Yes," he said. "Take my arm."

Rupert did so.

"Where do you wish to go?" he asked.

"I live in Harlem—at One Hundred and Seventeenth Street," replied the young man. "Have you a couple of hours to spare?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then see me home. I will make it worth your while."

"I shall be glad to do so," said Rupert cheerfully.

"I suppose you understand what is the matter with me?"

"I should think you had been drinking too much."

"You are right. I have. Shameful, isn't it?"

"Well, it isn't altogether creditable," said Rupert, not wishing to hurt the other's feelings.

"I should say not. However, it isn't quite so bad as it seems. I haven't been drinking hard, only I am so constituted that I can drink but little without its affecting me."

They had now reached the stairway leading up to the Elevated road.

"Help me up stairs, boy. What is your name?"

"Rupert."

"Very well, Rupert."

When they reached the landing the young man took his purse from his pocket.

"Pay out of that," he said.

Rupert selected a dime, and bought two tickets. Then they passed the box where the tickets were to be deposited and entered a train which had just arrived. They took seats in one corner, and the young man sat down with an air of relief.

"I feel sleepy," he said. "If I should fall asleep, wake me up at One Hundred and Sixteenth St. station."

"Yes, sir."

Rupert was able now to examine his companion a little more closely. He did not have a dissipated look, and Rupert judged that he was not in the habit of allowing himself to be overcome by liquor. Indeed he had rather a refined look. It seemed to the boy a pity that he could not resist the temptation to drink.

As they were approaching One Hundred and Sixteenth street Rupert aroused his companion, who opened his eyes in a bewildered way.

"Eh? What?" he asked.

"This is where we are to get out, sir."

"Oh yes. I remember. Let me take your arm."

With this help he got down stairs, and they turned to the left.

"It is perhaps ten minutes walk," said the young man. "You will see me all the way home?"

"Yes, sir. Do you feel any better?"

"I can walk a little more steadily."

You are sure I am not putting you out?"

"Oh yes, sir. I have plenty of time on my hands, for I am out of work."

"Indeed! And are you poor?"

"Yes, sir."

"Don't you live with your father?"

"My father is dead. I am helping to support my mother and sister."

"Why, that is too bad!" said the young man in a tone of sympathy.

"I am out of work, too, but then I am rich."

"I am not troubled in that way," said Rupert, smiling.

"I live with my mother. I am glad she is out of the city so that she won't see me in my present condition."

"Don't you think of working, sir? I shouldn't think you would know how to pass the time."

"I only lately returned from Europe. I may go into business after a while. To be sure I don't need to earn anything, but if I have some steady employment I shall be less likely to disgrace myself."

"May I ask your name, sir?"

"Certainly. My name is Frank Sylvester. I hope you are not a newspaper reporter."

"Oh, no, sir," said Rupert, smiling again.

"I should not like to have this little adventure of mine get into the papers. Do you see that house yonder?"

"Yes."

"It is the one where I live. If you have a little more time to spare, won't you come in and stay a short time?"

"Yes, sir, if you desire it."

They reached the house and Sylvester rang the bell.

The door was opened by a maid servant about forty years of age. She looked at Sylvester's companion curiously.

"A young friend of mine, Rachel," said the young man. "Get ready a little supper for us, will you? Some tea, cold meat and toast?"

"All right, Mr. Frank."

They went into a pleasant sitting room, where Rupert was invited to sit down.

"That was an old family servant," explained Sylvester. "If you hadn't been with me, she would have taken me to task, for she saw I had been drinking."

CHAPTER III. IN A TIGHT PLACE.

Presently Rachel announced tea. Sylvester had bathed his face, and thus removed some of the indications of his conviviality.

The house was handsomely furnished. The room in which the tea table was spread was particularly cozy and comfortable, and when he took his seat at the table, Rupert could not help wishing that his mother could be with him.

"What are you thinking about, Rupert?" asked Frank Sylvester, who noticed his expression.

Rupert hesitated.

"Come, tell me. I am your friend."

"I couldn't help thinking of the very different supper my mother will have."

"To be sure. You are a good boy for thinking of her. Where do you live?"

"At 117 Elizabeth Street."

Frank Sylvester took out a note book and jotted down the address.

Rachel Clark waited upon the table. Sylvester saw that her curiosity was excited about Rupert, and he decided to gratify it.

"I suppose you are wondering where I met my new friend, Rachel?" he said.

"Yes, sir."

"He met me. I had been drinking too much, and I am afraid I should have got into trouble if he had not taken charge of me."

Rachel beamed upon Rupert.

"He was very kind," she said, "but oh, Mr. Frank—"

"I know just what you are going to say, Rachel," said Sylvester good humoredly. "I am going to have Rupert come and see me often, and he will help keep me straight. And by the way, Rachel, his mother is poor, and I want you to put up some cold meat and other nice things in a basket. I will send them to her."

"I shall be very glad to do so, Mr. Frank."

"You will stand high in Rachel's good graces, Rupert," said Sylvester, as she left the room. "She thinks

everything of me, and evidently believes I am safe in your company. Suppose I make you my guardian?"

"I am afraid you wouldn't look up to me with the proper respect, Mr. Sylvester."

"Then for respect we will substitute attachment. Now tell me a little about yourself. How does it happen that you are out of a place?"

"It's the dull times, Mr. Sylvester. I was in the employ of Tenney & Rhodes."

"I know the firm."

"And they would have retained me if business had been good, but I was laid off on Saturday."

"What wages did they pay you?"

"Five dollars a week."

"And you lived on that?"

"We tried to."

"While I have had and wasted large sums of money. If I were in business, I would give you a place. As it is, I will see if any of my friends want a clerk."

When supper was over, Rupert said he must go.

"Won't you stay the evening?" asked his new friend. "At least wait a few minutes. Rachel is putting up a basket for you."

The servant presently appeared with a basket neatly covered with a napkin.

"Perhaps I had better send it by an expressman, Rupert."

"Oh, no, sir. I shall be glad to carry it myself. It will be very acceptable at home."

As Rupert lifted it, Sylvester took from his pocket the purse from which Rupert had paid the care fare and handed it to him.

"Accept it," he said, "in return for your friendly services."

"You are paying me too liberally, Mr. Sylvester."

"Let me judge of that."

In the street Rupert did not wait to examine the purse. It was growing late, and he was in haste to get home. He feared that his mother might feel anxious about him, and he made his way as quickly as possible to the nearest Elevated station.

The train was only partly full, and Rupert found a seat near the door. He placed the basket on the floor in front of him.

Next to him sat a young woman rather showily dressed. Rupert casually took out the purse which had just been given him with the intention of examining the contents, but it occurred to him that he might find a more suitable place than an Elevated car, and he put it back again. His action had, however, been noticed by the girl at his side.

At Fiftieth Street she rose to leave the car, but had not quite reached the door when she put her hand into her pocket and uttered a cry.

"I have been robbed," she exclaimed.

"Of what have you been robbed?" asked the guard.

"Of a purse."

"Where were you sitting?"

"Just here."

"Do you suspect any one of taking your purse?"

"Yes, this boy took it. I am almost sure of it."

As she spoke she pointed to Rupert who flushed with indignation.

"It is false," he said.

"If you don't believe me," said the girl, "search him. I am sure he has the purse in his pocket."

"What kind of a purse was it?" asked a quiet looking man, sitting on the opposite side.

"It was a morocco purse," and the girl described the purse Rupert had in his pocket.

"Young man, we shall have to search you," said the guard. "If you have a purse in your pocket, produce it."

Rupert did so mechanically.

"There!" said the girl triumphantly. "Didn't I tell you? Give it to me."

"I won't say anything more about it."

"I can't do that," said Rupert sturdily, "for it belongs to me."

"What barefaced depravity!" groaned a severe looking old lady opposite. "And so young, too."

"You're right, ma'am. It's shocking," said the girl. "I didn't think he'd go to do it, but you can't tell from appearances."

"Young man, you'd better give up the purse," said the guard, who was quite deceived by the young woman's assurance.

"No, sir!" said Rupert, pale but resolute. "The purse is mine, and I will keep it."

"Did you ever hear the like?" said the girl. "You'd better call an officer. I did mean to get off here, but I'll stay till I get my purse."

"Stop a minute," said the quiet looking man opposite. "How much money was there in the purse you say the boy took from you?"

"I can't rightly say," repeated the girl, hesitating.

"You can give some idea."

"Well, there was a little over two dollars in silver change."

"My boy," said the new actor in the scene, "will you trust me with the purse while I ascertain whether this young woman is correct?"

"Yes, sir," answered Rupert, who felt confidence in the good will of his new acquaintance.

The lawyer, for he was one, opened the purse and his eye lighted up, as he looked inside.

"Did you say there was as much as five dollars in the purse?" he asked.

"No, sir, there wasn't as much as that," answered the girl positively.

The lawyer nodded as if a suspicion were verified.

"Then the purse isn't yours," he said.

"There may have been more," said the girl, finding she had made a mistake. "Yes, I remember now there was for my sister paid me back some money she was owing me."

"That won't do," said the lawyer quietly. "The purse isn't yours."

"If it isn't hers," said the old lady sharply, "how did she happen to describe it so exactly?" and she looked round triumphantly.

"I could have described it just as accurately," returned the lawyer.

"You're smart!" said the severe looking old lady with a sneer.

"Not at all. Soon after the boy got in the car he took out the purse, so that any one could see it. The person who charges him with taking it from her saw it in his hands and scrutinized it closely. I understand now the object she had in doing so."

"It's a shame," said the girl with a last desperate effort at imposition. "It's a shame that a poor girl should be robbed, and a gentleman like you," she added spitefully, "should try to protect the thief."

"So I say," put in the old lady, frowning severely at Rupert. "I don't know who you are, young woman, but I advise you to call an officer and have the young scamp arrested."

Rupert felt uneasy, for he knew that in an arrest like this he might not be able to clear himself.

"Why don't you ask the boy how much money there is in the purse?" continued the old lady.

"Well thought of. My boy, can you tell me what the purse contains?"

Rupert colored. He saw at once that he was in a tight place. He wished now that he had examined the purse when he left the house in Harlem.

"No," he answered. "I do not know."

"Didn't I tell you?" cried the old lady venomously.

Even the lawyer looked surprised.

"How is it that you can't tell if the purse is yours?" he asked.

"Because, sir, it was given me this evening by a gentleman in Harlem,

and I have not yet had time to examine it."

"Your story may be true," said the lawyer, "but it does not seem probable."

"Oho!" the old lady said, "the boy owns up that he is a thief. If he didn't get it from this young woman he stole it from a man in Harlem."

Rupert glanced from one to the other, and he realized that things looked dark for him.

(To be continued.)

[This Story began in No. 565.]

Belmont;

OR,

MARK WARE'S COLLEGE LIFE.

BY WILLIAM D. MOFFAT,

CHAPTER XXXIII.

A TALK WITH MR. LEWIS.

Mr. Clark Lewis sat alone in his somber, dimly lighted library, enveloped as usual in a cloud of tobacco smoke, his feet stretched out toward the fire, his attention fixed on a book he was reading.

It was the last night of the old year. The weather was raw and stormy. The wind blew about the great stone house in fierce, fitful gusts, driving the fast falling rain and sleet against the windows with a sharp rattle. It was a lonesome scene in the library for a New Year's eve, but Mr. Clark Lewis was used to being alone. He was comfortably settled with his book and pipe—his closest companions—and quite oblivious, apparently, of the storm that raged outside. So completely was his attention centered in his reading that he did not hear the footsteps that sounded on his side piazza, as some one stamped the snow and rain off; and he only became conscious of the presence of a visitor when the latter rattled repeatedly at the latch of the outer door.

Then, throwing down his book, he rose and hurriedly opened both doors.

"Why, Mark," he exclaimed, "What are you doing out a night like this? Come in and get dry."

Mark entered quickly, and the doors were slammed behind him.

"Take off your overcoat and sit here near the fire," said Mr. Lewis. "You are drenched."

"I will be dry in a minute," answered Mark, drawing up to the hearth. "It's a bad night out."

"And New Year's Eve too—the night one usually stays at home," said Mr. Lewis. "Is this the first of your New Year's calls?"

"No, sir, not a New Year's call—a business call. I wanted to see you about a matter of great importance to me."

"Very well—what is it?" asked Mr. Lewis, resuming his pipe.

"Mr. Lewis," said Mark, resting his feet on the fender close to the flames, "you told me once that you wanted me to let you know if I ever needed help of any kind."

"I must have told you that a dozen times. Well, go on," answered Mr. Lewis in his abrupt manner.

"You have been so good to me in various ways that I determined not to trespass any further on your kindness unless it was absolutely necessary."

"And that time is now come—all right, what's the matter?" interrupted Mr. Lewis, as usual, going straight to the core of the subject.

"I want to ask you a great favor."

"Very well—speak out."

"Mr. Lewis, I want you to lend me five hundred dollars."

Mr. Lewis gave Mark a quick, searching look. "You shall have it, of course—but, tell me first, are you in trouble—what do you want of so much money?"

"I am not in trouble exactly. I want this money to buy my independence."

"What do you mean by that?"

"I will tell you everything. Colonel Morgan, as you know, has done a great deal for me. He has since I came to Medford. He has helped me in every way. Wherever he has gone to any expense in helping me I have always carefully noted it down, for I intended to repay him every cent. He never would consider it seriously as a loan, but I have always felt it a debt of honor—the first of all to be repaid. It never rested heavily on me, for the colonel always said that it gave him pleasure to help me, but I was determined to repay him all the same. Now the time has come when I must repay him."

"Why now?"

"For some reason that I cannot fully explain the colonel has turned against me."

Mr. Lewis took out his pipe and looked at Mark curiously.

"Why do you say that?" he asked.

Mark related the whole story of his gradual estrangement from Herbert, closing by reading to Mr. Lewis the letter he received from the colonel on the occasion of the latter's visit to Belmont.

Mr. Lewis remained silent and attentive throughout the narrative, his face quiet and emotionless.

"Well, and what did the colonel mean by your conduct?" he asked, when Mark finished.

"I don't know, sir. It absolutely stunned me. I am not conscious of having done or said anything wrong."

"You have been to see the colonel about it, haven't you?"

"Yes, sir—the first day of my vacation."

"Well, what did he say?"

"He was out the first two times I called. I did not find him till day before yesterday. Then I asked him to explain his letter. At that he flew into quite a passion—you know how irascible the colonel is when his temper is up. He told me that I had not been a good friend to Herbert—that I had broken my promise to him, and had deceived him—"

"But the explanation," interrupted Mr. Lewis. "What did the colonel mean by his note?"

"I couldn't get much out of him on that matter, sir. He seemed to think it a rank impertinence on my part to ask an explanation. He said that I knew as well as he did what I had done to give offense—which I don't at all—and that it was useless for me to pretend ignorance. Then I got angry—I couldn't stand some of the things he said—and that only made matters worse."

"He said that if I had come in a proper spirit, with an acknowledgment of my wrongdoing, and an humble apology, he might have listened to me and talked the matter over frankly with me. I told him that I had done nothing that I was ashamed of, and that I considered that he was treating me very unjustly in accusing me without a hearing. He then said that he could trust his own son, and that it was evident from what Herbert had told him that I had not been true to Herbert."

"I lost my head for a minute then, and said just what I thought. I told him that I had been a firm friend of Herbert's from the start, and had stuck to him long after he had slighted me—that I was far more of a friend to him than that fellow Chapin, whom I considered a contemptible snob, and—well, a lot of other things. Then the colonel cut me short by telling me that I did myself no credit by abusing Chapin—that my reason for it was easy to see, and that he didn't intend to listen to such language about a guest in his own house. That took my breath away for a minute. I didn't know that Chapin was spending the vacation with Herbert."

"What do you actually know about

tion with Herbert."

Mr. Chapin? the colonel asked me. That made me feel ashamed of myself, for really, after all, I didn't know much about Chapin. There wasn't much to say after that, so I came away, feeling worse than before."

"Naturally—you made a mistake in abusing Chapin. Who is the fellow anyhow?" asked Mr. Lewis.

"The son of a broker in New York, I've been told."

"Of good family?"

"So Herbert says, but—"

"Never mind 'buts.' You know actually nothing about him."

"That is true, sir."

"Then better leave him alone for the time. What are you going to do now?"

"Well, sir, I feel that there is only one thing to do, now that the colonel has turned against me, and that is to free myself from all obligation to him. While he was so good a friend to me I was willing to be in his debt for a while—now the thought of it is hateful to me. I must feel free and independent."

"So that is what you want five hundred dollars for?"

"Yes, sir. That represents as nearly as I can calculate it the actual amount of money he has expended for me. My tuition at college is free, for I am a scholarship student, as you know; my books and small running expenses I met myself by money that I earned in your office and saved. But the colonel paid the expense of the room at college, and he loaned me three hundred dollars as a bank account to fall back upon—"

"Didn't you save Colonel Morgan's barn from burning down two years ago?"

"Yes, sir, but any one would have done that, and, besides, he repaid me for that service long ago by his many acts of kindness. The money I want to return now is what he has actually loaned me."

"And do you think you will be more independent if you owe me the five hundred dollars than if you owe it to the colonel?"

"Yes, sir—now. I can repay you by work in your office, and I am willing to be in your debt for I know you believe in me. I cannot bear the thought of being under obligations to a man who thinks I have deceived and injured him."

"Well, Mark, you have the right spirit, and you shall have the money, if you really need it. But make sure before you take so decisive a step as this that it will be necessary."

"I don't see what else I can do, sir. Should I try to talk to the colonel again?"

"No, for you might only make more mistakes, but let me see him for you. The colonel and I have known each other for years. I know his temper well. We've had numerous little tiffs, and weathered them all without weakening our friendship. I can approach him on this subject better than you. I believe he has misjudged you, but you must remember, he rests his judgment on the testimony of his own son. He would naturally believe what Herbert tells him. I think that Herbert has done you wrong; but then, perhaps he has been influenced by some one else—I say, perhaps."

Mr. Lewis looked at Mark sharply. "I understand you, sir," said Mark.

"That is my own opinion."

"Don't be rash now. Wait till I have had a talk with the colonel. I will try to see him tomorrow. Then everything may be explained."

"All right, Mr. Lewis," said Mark, rising. "I will leave it all to you, and I will do nothing more till I hear from you. Only," he added hesitatingly as he stood by the door, hat in hand, "I thought the colonel was going to clear everything up, too, when I told him my story, and he went to see Herbert. He said he would straighten the matter out at once,

but now it is only worse. Mr. Lewis, you believe in me, don't you?"

"Certainly."

"Excuse my asking you the question, but you see the colonel changed so completely after he left me that I don't know what to think. Whatever the colonel may say—however he may have misjudged me, it won't alter your opinion of me, will it, Mr. Lewis? You believe that I have done everything for the best—you trust me, don't you?"

"Yes, Mark, I trust you—thoroughly," said Mr. Lewis, and he shook Mark warmly by the hand. "Don't worry now—leave it all to me for a day or so. Good night—and," he added as the town bells just then began to ring, "Happy New Year."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

AN AFTERNOON'S SKATE.

"Patty," said Mark the next morning, "would you like to try those new Christmas skates of yours?"

Patty turned away from the window at which she was standing, her face full of animation.

"Yes indeed—is there skating?"

"So every one says down town, and I'm sure they are right. Just as soon as it stopped raining last night it began to get cold, and I knew that would mean good ice skating today. Lots of people are going out to the lake this afternoon."

"Oh, splendid! When can we start?" cried Patty.

"Not till you've had dinner—it will be ready in half an hour," put in Miss Betty. "My stars, I believe the child would rather go skating than eat her dinner! You must change your dress, too, Patty, before you go, and be sure you take your cloak and tippet—the thermometer says two degrees below zero."

Patty was all ready by dinner time, and a half hour after that, she and Mark were making a short cut through the fields, their skates dangling over Mark's arm.

By the time they reached the high ground overlooking the lake, they found the sheet of ice quite covered with skaters. The "lake," as the townspeople called it, was an artificial sheet of water made by damming up the stream that flowed by Medford. The dam was very wide and high, the object of it being not only to furnish a water supply for the Medford mills, but to make a lake for sailing and fishing.

The lake was over a mile long, the land being low and the water having backed up a great distance. In high water and freshest seasons, the lake poured over the dam in an imposing fall of nearly sixty feet in height. The previous night's rain had made the falls especially heavy on this day, and its roar could now easily be heard. This overflow kept the water in motion near the dam, so that it did not freeze there, but up at the other end, nearly three quarters of a mile from the dam, there was a fine sheet of ice, and, on this, gay crowds of skaters were weaving and interweaving.

"Oh, there is Curry, and Alfred Chase, and Bobby Barlow, and Tracy Hollis—I know him by that grapevine," cried Patty. "He must skate the waltz with me now I have my new skates. He taught me last year, but I couldn't do anything with those old strap skates. I'll simply fly now. And there is Mr. Baker—why simply everybody is here."

"Yes—and there is Herbert Morgan," said Mark as his eyes rested on a figure curvetting about at one side of the pond.

"I know—and that friend of his who stares so," answered Patty. "T'gh, I hope he doesn't come near me."

Patty Otis was a genuine favorite on the ice. There was no girl in town that carried herself so well on her

skates. She was light, graceful, and quick to learn, and that, added to her bright, attractive manners, made her much sought after by the boy skaters. For politeness' sake they would half drag, half carry some clumsy, tottering, wobbling girl around the pond once, or, if they were very good natured, twice, but they would hurry up eagerly for a chance to spin around the ice with Patty Otis, and would keep possession of her as long as she would let them.

"With all the boys here, where do I come in?" asked Mark as he and Patty came down to the lakeside.

"Any time, Mark," she said with sparkling eyes. "Aren't the new skates yours?"

"No I gave them to you," answered Mark.

"Well, that's just the same thing."

Mark blushed a little. Somehow the more he thought about Patty's words the more they pleased him. At this moment Tracy Hollis saw them, and, waving his hat, hurried to the side of the lake.

"How are you, Miss Patty—glad to see you—been looking for you," he called out. "Can I have the first skate?"

Just then Teddy Binks came flying along, and, dropping on his knees, slid in toward the bank.

"Let me put on your skates, Miss Patty," he said. "See, I'm all ready."

But Mark had the advantage of both of them. He had the skates—so it was he that put them on, and he that got the first skate.

Then the sport began, and it left Patty little rest. She skimmed about the lake almost continually for the next hour, first with one of the boys, then with another. Herbert Morgan had not approached her, but he had spoken to her as she flew by on one of her circuits around the lake. She returned his greeting, keeping her eyes, however, away from Chapin, who was with Herbert, and who, she knew, was staring at her in his usual cool, bold manner.

Herbert had no reason to feel ashamed of the acquaintanceship today. Patty was looking her best—which meant a great deal in Patty's case. She was dressed in a smart skating dress of dark red, fur trimmed, and wore a natty little cap to match, that set off her bright, rosy face to the best possible advantage. She was feeling her best, too, and modestly conscious of being one of the attractions of the lake.

She felt quite as much in place here on the ice at Medford as she had felt out of place and uncomfortable that afternoon at Belmont in September. Chapin noted the attention she received, and followed her about with his eyes as she glided to and fro.

After the first hour, she began to feel a little tired, and sat for a moment on one of the benches. While there Herbert Morgan suddenly came up.

"You know my friend, Mr. Chapin, Miss Patty," he began.

Patty looked vacantly across the ice.

"Mr. Chapin—Mr. Chapin?" she repeated.

"Yes, I introduced him to you in my room at Belmont, you remember."

"Oh, yes, I remember."

"May I bring him up? I know he wants to skate with you."

Patty looked at Herbert now—straight into his face.

"I think I would rather not," she said slowly.

"He is an excellent skater. I would like to have him meet you. I know you would—"

"I think I would rather not," repeated Patty, this time quite coldly.

Herbert was confused for a moment. He knew that Patty must have felt slighted by his manner at Belmont, but he had by no means realized how thoroughly hurt Patty had

felt nor how fully she had guessed his true feelings on that occasion.

"Well—will you skate with me once?" he asked, after a moment's pause.

"No, I can't do that. I promised to skate next with Mr. Baker—here he is now—good by."

With that she took Walter Baker's hand and skimmed away.

"Humph!" exclaimed Herbert, as he struck out to join Chapin. "I thought so. Mark has been putting notions into her head and setting her against me."

At this time Mark was with Tracy Hollis and several others of the boys at the upper end of the lake, trying new tricks, and cutting fancy figures. This continued for about half an hour, and Mark, Tracy, Curry, and Alfred Chase were in the midst of cutting a big double eight, crossing hands in the middle, when a commotion among the people at the lower end of the lake attracted their attention.

Something's happening down there—look at that crowd—let's see what the trouble is," said Mark, and off he started down the ice followed by the rest.

At that moment a loud snap sounded over the lake, and a crack ran across the ice. The crowd immediately surged back.

"Quick, or we'll all be in!" cried some one.

"What's the matter?" asked Mark as he came up.

"Look there—three boys in—they'll drown sure—they'll freeze before they can get out," panted a man beside him.

Mark looked, and there in the water at the edge of the ice struggled three figures.

One of them Mark saw at once was Herbert Morgan.

CHAPTER XXXV.

FACING DEATH.

How it had all happened no one could tell. A group of people was standing near the end of the ice. It seemed quite firm and thick there. But either from the pressure of so many at one time, or a settling in the ice bed, there was a sudden snap, and, before the crowd could all take warning, three of them were in the water, and pieces of broken ice had parted from the main body and floated away.

A few got wet to their knees in the scramble for safety, but all escaped except the three. These were Herbert Morgan, Chapin, and Teddy Binks. Teddy had a firm hold on the main ice, and was able after a minute's struggle to raise himself up and roll slowly out of the water. Then, though the ice on which he rested was bending beneath his weight, he turned, like a plucky little fellow, and reached out a hand to his companions in the water, hoping to draw them to a place of safety.

Meantime the crowd watched them in agonized silence. Only a few loud exclamations, and nervously worded directions broke the stillness. Men were hurrying to the bank for the benches, ripping from them the top boards so they could slip them along to Teddy for a partial support. Others were running desperately up the hill to the nearest house for a rope.

Herbert and Chapin were both clinging to a projecting piece of ice—a sort of small peninsula from the main sheet, and about six or seven feet from Teddy. As Teddy reached out a hand Herbert was quite near, but Herbert did not see him. He was struggling to get out on the piece of ice to which he clung.

"Here take my hand!" cried Teddy. Immediately Chapin pushed Herbert aside and made for Teddy's outstretched hand. This threw Herbert back into the water, but Chapin paid no attention to that. Without looking back, he kicked and scrambled along until he reached Teddy, and

was slowly pulled by him out upon the surface of the ice.

By that time several of the boards had been shoved forward within reach of the half frozen boys. Chapin immediately seized one of these and worked his way over the ice to a position of perfect safety. There he rose up, and was at once taken in charge and hurried away to a farmhouse.

Teddy remained near the water, endeavoring to assist Herbert, who had floundered about helplessly for a minute, but had now regained his grasp on the small peninsula of ice.

"Here take this board!" cried Teddy, pushing one of the planks into the water and toward Herbert. The latter, however, could not reach it, but after several frantic efforts, at length managed to get out and upon the ice to which he was holding.

"He's safe, too!" cried the crowd, but at that very instant a sharp snap sounded, and the small peninsula of ice on which Herbert lay, strained by the weight of his body, cracked and, parting from the main sheet, began floating away down the lake. Herbert sat up and looked dismally about him.

"Jump in and swim back!" cried Teddy but the valtness of such an effort was apparent. Herbert, now quite numb and chilled from his exposure to the water, could only sit there and shake. Another plunge in the icy lake would mean sure death. But was the prospect before him more hopeful? The cake of ice on which he was seated was floating away, down—down, and gaining speed with every second.

Then a cry rang out that sent a thrill of horror through every breast. "The falls! The falls! He will go over the falls!"

There was a terrible hush for a moment, while the roar of the falls sounded menacingly loud and clear. Once Herbert reached the dam, certain destruction awaited him. No one could survive that fall of sixty feet on the rocky bed of the stream below.

There was but one chance; the bridge that crossed a part of the lake a half mile below, running across from the main land to the island formed by the mill race, and the lake—the island on which the mills stood. Herbert would pass under this bridge. It was a low bridge, and he might easily reach up and grasp it if he were not too numb—or he might lodge against one of the piers and cling there till some one could reach the spot and rescue him.

Meantime he floated on away from the main ice—from his friends—from life perhaps, and as he watched the anxious faces receding from his sight, and heard the roar of the falls sounding louder in his ears, the full horror of his situation seemed to dawn on him. He struggled to his feet, and trembling, shivering with the cold, he stood looking back at his friends. Instinctively he reached out his arms, and that mute appeal struck home to every heart. All stood transfixed with fear and pity.

Just then the thought of the bridge occurred to Mark.

"Come—quick!" he cried to Tracy. "Let's run to the bridge and stop him. Perhaps we can get there first." He tore off his club skates. Tracey, who wore straps, was slower, and, by the time he was ready to start, Mark was half way down the bank. "Watch out for the bridge, Herbert!" he shouted across the water, as he ran. "Catch hold as you go by. I'll be there to help you."

Herbert seemed to hear and understand, for he turned now and faced the bridge.

Mark sped along over the hard ground at a perilous pace, mentally praying that he might not trip. Every half second was precious now. The cake of ice was increasing its speed every moment. Could he reach the bridge before it?

Nearer and nearer he came, flying along on the wings of the wind, while Herbert, floating down swifter and swifter toward the bridge, nerved himself for the single effort that would save or lose him his life. Small chance he had of winning it alone. His limbs were stiff and numb, his hands had lost all power to grasp. Even if he caught at the bridge successfully, he could not hold on. Success depended chiefly on Mark, and he was racing bravely along with a fair winning chance, while the crowd back on the ice watched breathlessly this contest of life and death.

The seconds passed, each bringing matters closer to the terrible crisis. A moment more and Mark had reached the end of the bridge. Whirling in, he dashed along toward the center, his feet beating loudly on the hollow plank flooring. His heart bounded wildly. He could get there in time—that was plain now.

Herbert was still some seventy or more feet from the bridge. Mark reached the center and came to a sharp stop. An instant's glance showed him just where the ice cake would pass under. He shifted his position quickly, and leaned down over the railing.

"Now then, Herbert, stand firm and grasp my hands as you come under. Watch now—careful!"

Careful indeed he must be, for the ice cake was now flying along at a considerable speed, and the least misjudgment in reaching for Mark's hands would lose him everything. Herbert braced himself and raised his stiff, cold arms.

"You'll have to catch me—my hands are frozen—I can do nothing—for heaven's sake Mark, save me!" cried Herbert, his teeth chattering.

"All right!" answered Mark. "Reach up now—steady!—Quick! Quick! catch hold! There!"

The ice cake shot under the bridge. Herbert's arms were up, and, as he came flying along, Mark caught him neatly by the wrists, and drew him half way up.

"He is saved! Hurrah!" came the shouts of the crowd, and so it seemed.

But a moment later, there was a sickening crack, and the railing on which Mark leaned, unable to support the weight of both boys, broke in two, and Mark plunged forward heavily into the water with Herbert. It was an awful spectacle—just as safety seemed assured, destruction overtook them, and now two lives were at stake.

As Mark came up, he still retained his grip on Herbert's wrist. To that he clung fiercely. "If we go, we go together," had been his last thought as he plunged in.

By the rarest good fortune, the forward dive he had been compelled to take had carried Mark off to one side, so that now, when he came up, he found himself bumped by the swift flowing water against one of the piers of the bridge. He seized it at once, throwing his left arm tightly around one of the piles. Then he drew Herbert closer to him.

The latter was now quite helpless. Chilled and stiff from his first immersion, Herbert was weak enough before, and now this second plunge completely exhausted him. He came up limp and unconscious, lying back with his white face against Mark's shoulder, while the latter gripped him about the waist with his right arm and held him above water. Meantime succor was coming fast. Footsteps of running men now sounded on the bridge. Tracy Hollis was hurrying fast to the spot accompanied by others who had joined in the rescue. One of them carried a rope.

"Hold on, Mark! Hold on! A few seconds and we'll have you safe!" cried Tracy.

Mark was growing cold, too, now, and every second numbed the arm that clung to the frozen, slippery

wooden pile. It was simply a test of strength and endurance.

Could he hold on till the rescuers reached him?

Mr. Clark Lewis and Colonel Morgan stood facing each other in the latter's library. From the flush on the colonel's cheek it was plain he was angry. Mr. Clark Lewis did not betray his feelings so plainly, but his lips were set and hard and his stern eyes flashed as he laid his hand on the door as if to go.

"Well, colonel, there is no use continuing this interview any longer," said Mr. Lewis in his clear, incisive tones. "I have no taste for altercations—and that is what our conversation has become. I will take my leave, only saying in conclusion that I know you have misjudged the boy. You have been unfair to him. Mark is—"

"I know Mark well enough," interrupted the colonel. "He has proved himself a poor friend to Herbert, and—"

At this moment the butler hurried into the room.

"Pardon me, sir," he exclaimed, "but a carriage has just come up to the door, and they're taking Mr. Herbert out of it all wrapped up in blankets."

"Why, bless me, what's the matter?" cried the colonel.

"Half drowned, colonel—but safe and sound—don't be alarmed," called out the sturdy voice of one of the townsmen, who now pushed his way into the room, helping two others to lift the inanimate body of Herbert, closely swathed in warm blankets.

"How did it happen—what is it?" gasped the colonel leaning anxiously over his son.

"Fell through the ice—narrow escape from drowning. He'll come through all right now. We took him to one of the farmhouses and warmed him up a bit, so all he needs now is care and nursing."

As if in response Herbert here opened his eyes, and seeing his father's face, reached out and took his hand.

"Thank God, he is safe—bring him nearer to the fire," said the colonel, his voice trembling.

"How did it happen?" asked Mr. Lewis.

"Ice broke—Herbert went in. Then he got on a small cake of ice and went floating down toward the dam. He would have gone over the falls sure as snakes if that other young fellow hadn't reached him just in the nick of time, and saved him."

"What other young fellow—who saved him?" asked the colonel quickly.

"Mark Ware," answered Tracy Hollis, who stood back near the door.

Mr. Lewis turned sharply and looked at the colonel. The latter struggled a moment with his feelings. He seemed absolutely confused and dumfounded.

"Where is Mark?" he at length managed to ask.

"Out in the carriage, warm and well bundled up. I'm going to drive him home now," said Tracy, turning away. "I must not wait another minute. We only stopped to leave Herbert here on the way—"

"No—stop!" cried the colonel, raising his hand. Tracy paused.

"Bring him in here."

"But, colonel," said Tracy, "Mark said he wanted to be driven home."

"Bring him in here—we will care for him till he is able to go home," answered the colonel.

(To be continued.)

AND MARY ANN RESIGNED.
"Mary Ann," remarked Mrs. Wickwire, "I think if you will take a sweeping glance around this parlor you will see that you have given it a very glancing sweep."—*Indianapolis Journal.*

ONE OF THE CONTENTED.

Any season does for me—
Kinder made for all time
Jes lief melt in summer heat
As freeze ter death in fall time.

Summer—carvin' melons ripe;
(Makes my mouth grow wider!)
Winter—finds me with my pipe,
Drinkin' apple cider!

When it's hot, why, clothes is cheap—
Don't take much to do you;
When it's cold—the red flames leap—
Warmin' through an' 'round you!

Spring, or summer time or fall—
Don't mind how you get her;
Take this here world, all in all—
They don't make no better!

—Atlanta Constitution.

A Mystery of the Forest.

BY E. E. YOUMANS,
Author of "The Lone Island," etc.

CHAPTER X.

A NIGHT OF TERROR.

The thicket through which the road had been made was soon left behind, and traveling became much easier.

Rocks and boulders abounded in great numbers, and the trees were large and close together, but the underbrush was not so thick, and they could push forward with increased speed.

The boys took advantage of this opportunity, and covered several miles in a few hours. They kept a constant lookout for the marauders, but no signs of them appeared. When at last they stopped for the noon-day meal the boys began to believe that they could not overhaul them before they reached the mountains.

Had they not been ravenously hungry they would not have lost this time, but the hard tramp through the forest had sharpened their appetites in spite of the excitement, and they felt much in need of refreshments.

The provisions were attacked with energy and hunger satiated as soon as possible, then, having taken a long draught from an adjacent spring, they resumed the journey.

As the vicinity of the mountains came gradually nearer, their anxiety increased accordingly, and they pushed on regardless of fatigue. That they were tired was plainly evident, for the way was growing rougher again, and progress steadily becoming more difficult.

The most annoying feature about it was the fact that they did not appear to be gaining upon the tramps. Several times they came to places where the men had cut a road through the thicket for the oxen, but appearance seemed to indicate that the work had been done several hours previous.

"They've got a good start somehow," said Charlie, "and if we manage to overtake 'em, we'll be doing a good deal."

"We must overhaul 'em," rejoined George. "I will get back my gun. Can't we go ahead faster?"

"I don't see how we can," Tom put in. "It's impossible to run through this place, and we're doing our best in the matter of walking."

"There's no use worrying about it," was the philosophical remark of Charlie Burke. "That won't do any good, and will only make us more discouraged. We can only keep on as we are, and trust to luck."

This they did, and, as Charlie said, it was all they could do. But luck did not appear to favor them, for when the sun sank from view and night fell over the woods the objects of the chase seemed to be as far ahead as ever.

"I'm afraid we've failed," said George despondently, as tired and weary they came to a halt, "and our property is gone for good. The mountains can't be more than eight miles away, and the men will get there be-

fore we can overhaul 'em. I don't know what to do."

"Can't we eat something, and keep right on?" asked Charlie.

"That is impossible," said Tom. "We've had all we could do to get through the woods by daylight, and in the darkness we couldn't find the way at all."

It was a discouraging situation, but there was no help for it. They had done all they could, but the consciousness of this fact failed to give satisfaction.

"If the day was only a few hours longer," cried George, "we might succeed after all. As it is—"

He shrugged his shoulders, and looked so discouraged that his brother quickly rejoined:

"As it is there's no use giving up. We'll follow 'em clear through the mountains if necessary. I don't want to lose my oxen any more'n you do your gun, and I'll follow 'em to the end."

"I'm with you," said Charlie. "I think the best thing we can do is to get some sleep, and start again as soon as daylight appears."

This was a wise suggestion, and they proceeded to act upon it. Their hunger was first appeased, after which a bed was constructed similar to the one of the preceding night, and, as they were really very much fatigued, they retired early. That is, all lay down but Charlie, for it was now deemed advisable to keep watch during the night, and he insisted on taking the first turn.

The brothers were so tired that they speedily fell asleep, and Charlie found guard duty very lonesome work, as he paced back and forth under the stars.

The silence was so profound that he began to get nervous after a while, and when at last a slight noise reached his ears from a little distance to the right, he started back, scarcely able to suppress a yell.

The sound was very low, however, and he could not have heard it at all had the stillness been less, but it came to his hearing with such sudden distinctness that he was sure some one was near.

The tramp of the preceding night was the first idea that entered his mind, and he prepared himself for the appearance of the fellow now. But the minutes passed, and although he stood there with every sense fully aroused nothing more could be heard or seen, and he finally half persuaded himself that he had been unnecessarily alarmed.

"I'm a coward after all," he muttered in disgust, "and George is right when he thinks so. But it is beastly lonely, and I'm as nervous as can be."

He was only partially reassured, however, and continued to listen for a repetition of the noise. But the stillness of the night remained the same, and he began pacing up and down again, satisfied that he had been mistaken.

"It gave me a shock all the same," he told himself, "and I came very near letting out a howl that would have awakened the boys in a hurry. Then George would have geyed me; but I'm glad I didn't do it, for they're tired and need their sleep."

And truly the brothers were sleeping. Several times as Charlie passed them he made noise enough to awaken any ordinary sleeper, but the boys did not move.

"They're enjoying it for all it's worth," said he. "How I wish my time was up so I could turn in and snooze too."

Snap!

Charlie jumped four feet. There was no doubt about it this time. Clear and distinct came the same peculiar noise that had at first arrested his attention, and he was sure it emanated from the same direction.

He was thoroughly alarmed now, and wanted to yell out his terror; he

subsequently wondered why he did not give way to his feelings and do so. But he did not; he suppressed the inclination, and turning his eyes in that direction endeavored to penetrate the gloom sufficiently to see what it was.

A tall clump of bushes stood a little ways off, the outlines of which he could just discern, and he was sure the author of the disturbance was ensconced behind them. Charlie was at first inclined to raise his gun and fire toward it, but did not do so, for the noise was not heard again, and, even though he was prodigiously excited, the fear of arousing the boys and being geyed by them, if nothing serious came of it, deterred him from yielding to the impulse.

As he stood there and listened for the noise again he was conscious of a queer sensation creeping up his back, and a cold wave striking to his heart.

Suppose it was one of the tramps lurking near, his object this time might be something far more serious than the stealing of a gun, and as the youth reflected how they might all be murdered by the desperate men he was driven almost to the verge of flight.

Yet, strange to say, in the midst of his terror, he could not force himself to call his companions, and he stood there in the somber silence expecting to be attacked each moment, while the brothers, happily unconscious of the supposed peril, slumbered peacefully on.

CHAPTER XI. CHARLIE'S ADVENTURE.

In after years when Charlie Burke looked back on the experience of that night the horror of it stood out clear and distinct in his mind, and how he succeeded in resisting utter collapse at the time he was never able to comprehend. He did resist it, however, and for fully twenty minutes stood there, his gun held ready to fire at a second's notice, and his eyes centered on the suspicious bush in front of him.

Then, as nothing more of an alarming nature took place he slowly lowered the weapon, while at the same time a feeling of shame at his own timidity began surging over him.

"If there was a tree near me I'd rap my head against it," he savagely muttered, "and see if I couldn't knock some brains in it, or else knock what little there is there out. To be so broken up over the noise made by some miserable little mouse or squirrel running over the ground is ridiculous. All the same that feeling was simply horrible. I wouldn't go through it again for worlds. It was my own fault though; I shouldn't have been such a fool."

Thus soliloquizing he continued his lonely tramp, and, when at last he grew tired of walking, he sat down, intending to rest a while and then resume his march as before. How long he sat here he could not determine, but when he finally came to himself he knew he had been sleeping.

He also knew something else. The dark muzzle of a rifle was held within two feet of his head, while behind the weapon stood a man whom Charlie instinctively knew to be one of the tramps.

His hat was pulled down low on his forehead, and his coat buttoned close around his neck with the collar turned up, so that it was impossible to get a full view of his face.

A heavy moustache added to the ferocious appearance of the ruffian, and the youth felt that his position was terrible as he sat there not daring to move, and stared into the gleaming muzzle of the death dealing rifle.

"Not a sound, youngster, for your life," said the marauder in deep tones.

As Charlie made no attempt to disobey the enemy continued:

"Just gather up that gun of yours, and come along with me. No nonsense either, or—"

A suggestive jerk of the rifle he held indicated what would be the result, and, as Charlie had no disposition to offer himself as a target for the robber's bullet, he made no resistance.

He picked up his gun, which was lying at his side, and slowly got upon his feet. The idea flashed through his mind that the ruffian was acting in a singularly negligent manner to allow him to retain a loaded weapon, but then his eyes were fastened constantly upon his captive, and the least move on Charlie's part to use the gun would be quickly detected.

Fully cognizant of this Charlie handled his gun with the utmost care, turning the stock toward his captor in order to show his peaceful intentions.

The tramp backed away and Charlie followed, but he cast a longing glance in the direction of the sleeping boys which his enemy was quick to discern.

"They can't help you, youngster," he said, laughing softly. "I'd advise you not to make any attempt to call 'em. I don't intend to harm you, if you do as I tell you, but if you don't, look out for squalls."

They were far enough away from the camp now to avoid waking the sleepers, and the tramp paused, saying:

"Just step around in front of me, and go as I tell you. No fooling you know, but right down to business—see?"

Charlie complied, and the ruffian compelled him to march on in advance.

The tramp directed him which way to turn at intervals, and thus they continued for more than an hour. By this time Charlie was sure that a couple of miles had been covered, and he wondered how much farther the man was going. How tired he was, and how he longed to stop and rest!

This was out of the question, however, for his captor continued to urge him on, and he dared not complain. At the same time he was amazed at the fellow's wonderful knowledge of the forest. He appeared to be entirely familiar with every portion of it, and directed their course with as much ease as if they had been following an open highway.

When at last another mile or so had been covered, tired nature began to assert itself. Charlie felt himself slowly but surely giving out. Would the tramp ever stop?

His captor must have noticed that he was almost exhausted, for at last he inquired:

"Tired, young fellow."

"Yes," said Charlie. "I can't walk much longer without falling."

"You won't have to. We're there now. Halt!"

The boy did so, dropp'ng upon the ground in a heap. He had reached that condition where he did not care what became of him, and probably decided that he might as well meet death one way as another.

"It doesn't make any difference," he thought with a groan. "I'm nearly dead now."

The man made no attempt to harm him, but stood over him in silence for some time. Finally he said:

"Pretty well fagged out, eh youngster?"

Charlie did not reply, and his captor continued:

"I'm sorry you had to take such a long tramp, but it couldn't be helped. I wanted that gun of yours, and if you hadn't woke up just as you did, I'd have got it and left without disturbing you. When you knew I was there, however, it wouldn't have been safe for me to leave you alone as you'd have called your friends and pursued me, so I was compelled to

bring you along as a matter of personal safety. In a few hours, however, I'll be far away."

"Was it you who took a gun from us last night?" asked Charlie, as the tramp paused.

"No," replied the other, laughing. "that was another fellow. He happened to come upon you by accident last night, and took the gun to remember you by. It was the merest chance that I came across you to-night, and, as you kept me waiting so long before you went to sleep, I must take your gun to pay me for my trouble. Hand it over, and I'll be off. You won't be sorry either, eh?" he added with a laugh.

Charlie did not reply, but handed up the gun which the robber took. Then he turned away.

"Thank you for carrying it for me," he said as he moved off. "Don't forget what I said, and remember that if any of you follow me you'll be shot on sight."

He tramped away through the bushes, and the boy lay there listening to his receding footsteps. Of course he did not for a moment contemplate following, and indeed could not have done so had he wished, for he was utterly exhausted, and had not strength left sufficient to get upon his feet.

He regretted the loss of his gun, but what could he do? Tired, disheartened and alone in the vast wilderness, he felt that being robbed of his shooter was not the worst calamity that could come to him, and his thoughts soon turned from the weapon to his future welfare.

But he was in no condition to think much, and his ideas soon ran into chaos, merging finally into oblivion as slumber overtook him.

When consciousness returned again the sun was shining brightly, and he knew the morning was well advanced. He sprang up much refreshed from his long sleep, but a trifle stiff, and ravenously hungry.

Then the events of the night crowded into his mind, and kept him busy thinking for some time. What a fool he had been! Why did he allow the tramp to bring him away from the camp, and rob him of his gun? Why did he not shoot the rascal on the spot, and thus save his property, and rid the country of a nuisance?

This was the nature of his reflections, and for a little while he was angry at himself for not having made a vigorous resistance. Then the conviction that there was a vast difference between thinking in the bright sunlight with the joyous songs of birds around him and the dark hours of the night before the muzzle of a rifle, began stealing over him. He dismissed the subject from his mind, and turning his attention toward getting back to the camp, so that he could get something to eat, and relieve the boys of the anxiety they must be enduring because of his mysterious absence.

It was a comparatively easy matter for him to retrace his steps. He lost no time in starting, and by keeping the sun as a guide managed to hold the right course.

He reached the camp at last, and found the brothers wildly excited over his disappearance.

CHAPTER XII. IN WHICH THE TRAIL IS LOST

There was that in Charlie's face as he stepped into the presence of his friends which told them something unusual had occurred during the night.

"Where have you been," cried the brothers, "and what's happened?"

"Give me some grub first," rejoined Charlie. "I'm nearly starved."

They had not yet eaten, for the discovery of young Burke's absence had driven all thought of anything else from their minds, and they had about concluded to institute a

search for him when he suddenly made his appearance.

The provisions were accordingly got out, and the trio sat down to breakfast, Charlie giving a detailed account of his adventure as the meal progressed.

"Why didn't you call us?" asked George, when he finished. "What were you thinking of?"

"And get a bullet through my head for it?"

"We'd have prevented that. I guess three of us would be able to handle one man."

"Perhaps so, if he didn't have a loaded gun to defend himself with," said Charlie dryly.

"He says they'll shoot us on sight, does he?" asked Tom, his eyes flashing.

"That's what he told me to tell you."

"Well, we'll give him a chance to die it now," continued Tom, a ring of stern resolve in his voice as he spoke, "but he'll have to be a good deal quicker, and considerably smarter than we are, if he succeeds."

"Why, what do you intend to do?" "Follow them up, steal on 'em unawares, and riddle 'em with shot before they know it. This old run of mine is not to be compared with either of the ones in their possession, and it can shoot just as well, I think, and the first time I see 'em they'll get it."

There was no doubt the boy was in earnest, and that he would execute his threat if the opportunity was afforded.

The men had no business to steal the oxen and to rob his friends of their weapons, and he was determined to adjust the matter, even if the severest measures had to be adopted.

There was no time lost in disposing of breakfast now, and in a few minutes they were again following up the trail. Tom was the only one who was armed, so he placed himself in the lead, his indignation against the tramps increasing with every step.

He led the way rapidly, for there was no immediate danger of an encounter, as the men were probably at this hour well advanced on their way toward the mountains.

Tom had abandoned the idea of overhauling them before the hills were reached, but he was resolved to follow right on, and take the chance of coming upon them later.

They journeyed on through the woods hour after hour. Several times they came upon the imprints of the oxen's hoofs in the soft earth, and felt considerably encouraged. They were still on the right track.

Tom had experienced a little uneasiness after listening to Charlie's account, for he thought the marauders might approach the mountains from another direction.

He had laid their course toward the nearest accessible point to the hills under the impression that the tramps would take that route. As this would bring them to the easiest trail through the mountains, he was justified in supposing they would take it.

He knew that somewhere in that vicinity a deep canyon cleft the hills. Through this it would be an easy matter to drive the cattle, and he was sure the tramps would avail themselves of it.

The appearance of the trail from time to time, therefore, convinced him that his idea was correct, and allayed the fear that had at first assailed him.

"They're going right on in the way I supposed they would take," he said when another imprint came into view, "and if we don't lose any time, we won't reach the hills far behind 'em."

"I hope we can overhaul 'em before they get there," said George anxiously. "They'll have a double advantage of us if they reach the canyon first, for there are probably

caves and holes all along where they could hide from us, and they could either shoot us as we pass, or allow us to chase on ahead, and then come leisurely along behind us."

"We must make a point of carefully inspecting all such places," replied Tom. "Wherever we find a cave large enough to conceal an ox, we'll examine it."

"And get a bullet through us for our trouble," said Charlie grimly.

"We'll have to risk that," Tom rejoined.

They made a brief halt to dispose of dinner, and pressed on as before. They were tired of course, but had no time to rest.

Toward the middle of the afternoon they came upon another stream. Here they paused with rising fear. Had the men driven the oxen straight across, and continued on their way, or had another journey in the river been made?

An examination revealed the trail leading down into the water, and they began fording the stream, hoping to discover it on the opposite side.

The most vigorous inspection failed to find it, however, and they looked at one another in dismay.

"Folled again," cried Tom angrily. "The rascals have taken to the water."

"What's to be done about it," asked George.

"We can't do anything without a serious loss of time," Tom continued. "The only thing we can do is to follow the river on this side, and look carefully for the trail till we find it, but we're just as liable to take the wrong way as the right, and the delay will ruin all."

"We can separate," Charlie suggested. "You've got the gun, Tom, and you could go in one direction alone, while George and I follow the other."

"We wouldn't gain much by that," said Tom doubtfully.

"What's the reason we wouldn't? We'd save a good deal of time, and that's the only important point to consider. If you should find the trail first, you could fire the gun and let us know it. If we were successful, we could mark the place and hurry back to tell you."

The plan looked feasible enough, and they determined to adopt it.

Some further details were discussed, then they started, Tom continuing down the river, and his companions following the opposite course.

"We'll go about three miles each way," he said at parting; "then if we're not successful, we'll return again, and meet here. I'm afraid, though, the loss of time will prove disastrous."

"It's the only thing we can do," said Charlie. "We'll travel as fast as we can, and save as much time as possible that way."

But although young Burke had advocated this course, he found himself feeling a trifle uncomfortable, as he and George set out alone without the possession of a weapon.

If it chanced that they had taken the right direction and should encounter the tramps, they would have no opportunity to make a successful resistance in case they were attacked, and the tramps would win an easy victory.

He did not mention this to his companion, for he did not like to have it appear that he was afraid, but ideas similar to these must have entered George's mind, for he suddenly looked up and said:

"I'd go hard with us if we should meet the tramps now, eh?"

"Yes; that's just what I was thinking of," answered Charlie, free to confess his fear since his companion had mentioned it first.

"Oh, well, we may not meet 'em," continued George, "but we must be on the watch all the same. We mustn't come upon 'em suddenly. I'm no afraid, you know, but I'd feel safer if we had a gun with us."

They pressed on, keeping a careful watch along the shore for the appearance of the trail, and occasionally looking up the stream to see if the men were near. But neither the men nor the trail came into view, and the journey was kept up for more than an hour with no better success.

They had listened constantly, too, for the report of Tom's gun, but it was not heard, and they knew he had encountered no better luck than themselves.

A few minutes later, however, they made a great discovery.

(To be continued.)

WHY THE MINERS NEVER CAME BACK.

A bear story that a refreshingly original flavor was told some time since in a dispatch from Buena Vista, Colorado, to the New York "Sun." In this instance Bruin was not so terrifying of himself as he was an object that inspired horror by the nature of some plarthings with which he undertook to amuse himself. But here is the story.

Jack O'Rourke and Tom Springer, two prospectors who have been working a claim in the Texas Creek district, came back to Buena Vista a few days ago. They had been absent about ten days. When they left they took enough provisions to last at least two months, and their return was something of a surprise to their friends.

However, their short absence was soon explained. When they arrived in the gulch where their cabin was located they found everything as they had left it last fall, and they unloaded their burro and stored their supplies, and went to work again in their tunnel up on the mountain side, half a mile distant. Everything progressed nicely until last Monday a week ago. On that day, about four o'clock p.m., they started down from the tunnel to the cabin, which had been securely locked when they departed in the morning. They each carried a number of drills which they intended to sharpen. O'Rourke led the way and reached the cabin first, about fifty feet in advance of Springer.

He walked around to the door, and the next thing Springer saw was O'Rourke making rapid headway down hill in the direction of a clump of pines, and loudly crying, "Bear in the cabin, Tom. Run!"

Springer dropped his load and followed, and both climbed trees and awaited developments. The bear came in time to see them ascending, and came and sat on his haunches at the foot of the trees and eyed the two men curiously. He remained two or three minutes and then leisurely retraced his way to the cabin and entered it. He'll ate everything in the cabin, and everything," said O'Rourke, and Springer nodded an affirmative from his tree.

The bear could be heard at work in the cabin, and Springer suggested that they descend and run away, but just as they were going to do so Bruin came out with a box in his arms. The two prospectors were greatly perplexed, as the box contained nearly fifty pounds of sticks of dynamite.

Springer at once inquired of his partner where he had put the dynamite. O'Rourke said he had put them in the box on top of the giant powder, which had been left open. This state of things was somewhat alarming to the two miners, but they felt sure that the caps must have been knocked off the box by the bear and were out of harm's way if the animal did not enter the cabin again and tread upon them with his great weight.

The bear sat outside the cabin and began rolling the box over and over and soon had his snout in it. There was no particular danger in this frolic on his part provided the caps were not in the box, because the powder does not ordinarily explode except from heavy concussion.

Proudly he began to pass out the sticks of powder with his paw. The scared miners had scarcely thought of the results that might follow this proceeding when a terrible explosion occurred, and both men were blown out of the gulch. They recovered their senses they found themselves at the bottom of a gulch into which they had rolled. They were badly bruised and severely cut about the face and legs from contact with the rocks in their descent down the side of the gulch, but were able, after a time, to get around.

They climbed to the site of the cabin and saw that not a vestige of it remained. Their supplies and bedding were totally demolished and obliterated. Before leaving the scene for civilization they found one of the hind feet of the bear. They brought it back with them, and also the burro, who, fortunately, had been grazing

a mile distant when the singular catastrophe occurred.

The fact of the powder being very oily and sweet to the taste is supposed to have invited his bearship to take possession of it, although the prospectors say he must certainly have devoured everything especially agreeable to him before he found it. The bear had evidently just emerged from his winter's sleep. Both men assert he was a monster.

BELLYING ITS REPUTATION.

"A man of straw" is a phrase employed to designate a dummy, a mere figurehead, something without stability. The inference is that straw is the frailest of all materials and yet here is a Texas newspaper telling of a case where a bridge of straw withstands a pressure before which iron at once gives way.

It is said to be built across the Red River, seventeen miles from Quanah, Hardeman County, Texas. The bed of this river is very wide, and is of a very fine, red, treacherous sand, making heavy hauling impossible. The bridge is really a causeway, three miles long, about five feet high, and wide enough for two teams. It was constructed by a neighboring settler, who charges a small toll for its use. It is built of alternating layers of long grass and sand, and is rebuilt every season, as the high water washes it away. An attempt has been made to build an iron bridge, but it was washed away almost immediately, and the straw bridge is said to have proved itself cheaper and better.

WHAT IT MAY COME TO.

"O'm sorry, ma'am," said the queen of the kitchen, "but O'll have to leave yez."

"Why, don't we treat you well?" "O'ive nothin' to say agin the treatmint; but yer ways o' livin' is uncongalian to me. However, O'm perfectly willin' to give yez a letter of recommendation to yer next cook."—Washington Star.

SAD MEMORIES.

"Madam," said the tramp, "take back yer loaf of bread. I return it unbroken."

"What's the matter?" "He brings back too many sad memories. I can't tech it." "Does it," she asked gently, "make you think of the bread your mother used to make?"

"No'm. It makes me think of when I wuz doin' 'time on the rock pile."—Washington Star.

A PROFITABLE VISIT.

Miss Daisy (who has spent her whole summer in trying to elevate the simple country people with whom she has boarded)—"Good by, Mr. Stiles, I hope my visit here hasn't been entirely without good results."

Farmer Stiles—"Sartin not, sartin not. You've learnt a heap since you first come here, but, by cracker! you was purty nigh the greenest one we ever had on our hands."—Detroit Tribune.

A DUBIOUS COMPLIMENT.

"I used to think you were not a man of your word, Jones, but I've changed my mind."

"Ah, you understand me now, friend Smith. But, what led you to change your mind?"

"You remember that \$10 you borrowed from me?"

"Yes."

"You said if I lent it to you you would be indebted to me forever."

"Yes."

"Well, you are keeping your word like a man."—New York Press.

SEEING THE GAME.

There were two covered wagons at the football game. One of them had a grocer's sign plainly lettered on its side, but the nature of the other was not so easily determined.

"Get out o' me way," said the driver of the grocery wagon. "You ought to be off to yer work, anyhow."

"Get out yerself," was the reply.

"I reckon I've got a heap more business here than you have."

"Well, I guess not. I'm a-drivin' a grocery wagon. I am, and I'm waitin' ter get one of the player's order for dinner."

"Grocery wagon! Well, partner, fer a football game you ain't in it. This wagon what I'm a-drivin' is an ambulance."—Washington Star.



PUBLISHED WEEKLY.

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FRANK A. MUNSEY & COMPANY,
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THE CYCLISTS AND THE INNS.

The increasing use of the bicycle is making changes in the very manners and customs of people whom, at a casual glance, it could hardly seem to touch. In France before the days of the railroads there were hundreds of inns which became almost historical. They had famous cooks, and nearly every one on the great roads was known for some specialty.

But the railroad changed all that. The old inns with their cheery big fire places, with their hearty hosts, and brisk hostesses, were closed because there was no one to patronize them. Servants that were once educated in the trim kitchens to make the famous dishes of France, went into factories or turned their hand to other ways of earning a livelihood.

The closing of the inns was almost a national calamity. But here they are, open again, and the spits are turning as merrily as of old. There is an army of cyclists rolling through picturesque France to be fed. Every year it increases in numbers.

It would be an excellent thing if the old American taverns which figured so largely in the early stories of America could come back to their own again. As our roads are made better doubtless they will.

THE FERRIS WHEEL.

Speaking of wheels, the biggest one that has ever been made, most of you have seen at Chicago, but how many people realized the size of the great toy? If you were to put it by the side of Bunker Hill monument, that great shaft would come within fifty feet of reaching its top. If the wheel were set on Broadway by the side of Trinity church, one revolution would swing you even with the top of the spire. If you were to take the great bridge in Cincinnati, which is a quarter of a mile long, and put it on one side of a giant scale, and the Ferris Wheel on the other, the two would about balance. Two regiments of soldiers could be seated in the thirty-six cars at once. The adjustment of all this was so perfect that the motion was almost imperceptible.

HALF A DOLLAR A YEAR.

Do you realize that in renewing your subscription to The Argosy and inclosing only fifty cents more—that is, \$2.50 in all—you will receive Munsey's Magazine for one year? That is the new club rate—\$2.50 for both periodicals. Just think of it! A first class magazine for fifty cents a year!

WHAT IS THOUGHT OF MUNSEY'S.

"In the whole course of my reading experience, I never saw two numbers of a magazine that contained matter of more living interest than the Octo-

ber and November numbers of Munsey's."

This was the remark of one who has been accustomed to reading the high priced magazines and was uttered spontaneously, without an opinion being asked for. And this was in November before the great December issue, now on the market, was ready.

Have you seen this? It is for sale everywhere and costs only 10 cents—the cheapest periodical in the world in every sense of the word except that of quality. In this respect it is A1, superfine, a delight to both the eye that sees and the mind that apprehends. The first edition, by the way, was a hundred thousand copies.

WHAT IS A FRIEND?

The London "Tid-Bits" gave a prize for the following definition of friend:

"The first person who comes in when the whole world goes out."

Some of the others were:

"A bank of credit on which we can draw supplies of confidence, counsel, sympathy, help and love."

"One who combines for you alike the pleasures and benefits of society."

"One who is himself true, and therefore must be true to you."

But to have this friend a man must have the qualities which draw him, which hold him, and must go into the proper places to seek him.

MONEY FOR CHRISTMAS.

Have you acted on the suggestion made in these columns two or three weeks ago and sought to obtain Christmas money by securing subscriptions to Munsey's? If you have not, a great many others have, for the subscriptions came pouring in at the rate of hundreds a day. The commission is twenty cents on each subscription, and there is really no trouble at all to obtain these. You simply show the magazine, mention the price—one dollar a year—and presto, the other's pocketbook is opened and he or she says, "Put my name down."

ATHLETICS.

The Greeks knew a great deal about athletics, and more than any other people that ever lived they made a point of physical culture. But there came a time when their greatest men spoke against it, saying that too much physical training made a mind dull and sluggish.

There are some people who are beginning to say that the members of the college athletic teams are getting to be a "stupid lot." When a man is constantly occupied in attending to his body it is natural that his mind should suffer. There is a saying that "Such as are your habitual thoughts such is the character of your mind." If your habitual thoughts are upon the rough play of football you cannot expect your mind to be a straying place for gentle and beautiful and elevating thoughts. Games have an element of courage, of pluck, and of generalship which every boy would do well to cultivate, but he need not apologize if he prefers a book to a game.

THE CHRISTMAS ARGOSY.

Next week's Argosy will contain a generous supply of matter appropriate to the season. There will be Christmas poems and editorials, a special article on the history of the famous holidays and a story by Matthew White, Jr., entitled, "Frank Winter's Christmas Assignment."

A PRESENT THAT LASTS ALL THE YEAR.

Do you want to give a Christmas gift that will cause you to be remembered pleasantly by the giver all the year round? Then send a dollar, with the address of your friend to the publishers of Munsey's Magazine.

In the December number of Munsey's, for example, there are 1048 square inches of illustrations, and they are pictures that interest everybody, not a select few who

happen to have studied up on certain lines. Munsey's, in fact, is the great popular magazine of the day. It appeals directly to the tastes of the people without descending from a high standard of good taste.

Lobengula's Weapons.

BY LIEUT. JOHN LLOYD.

In all the newspapers for the past month we have seen headlines, "The Matabele War," "The News from Mashonaland," "The Impis of Lobengula." And at last the news that Lobengula had been driven back. But who Lobengula is, and where he has been driven back to, is a story.

A long time ago, Lobengula's father was a young Zulu prince, who found some grievance against the king of his land and tribe, and calling together his friends who were the fiercest warriors in all Zululand, he made a fight, and Mr. Rider Haggard would have delighted to tell you the tale. Lobengula's father was driven back, and he went over into the Transvaal and settled there.

The Dutch had selected the Transvaal as their own property, and they drove the rebel warrior and his men out. They then went over into Matabeleland.

If you will take the map of Africa you may locate it roughly. It is bounded on one side by that little strip of Portuguese property, which lies along the coast. It is almost north of the Transvaal, and Lobengula's chief kraal or palace, was about three thousand miles north of Cape Town. It takes forty days for a letter to reach Matabeleland, but if you direct it and stamp it properly, and a flood doesn't carry off the wagon in the rainy season, it will reach its destination. For one thousand miles from Cape Town it will go by rail, and then another thousand by regular wagon to Fort Salisbury, and then it will take some chances on the last thousand. If you want to go to Matabeleland by the shortest route, you will sail into the India Ocean, and up by Fort Beira.

The war is all about gold as almost all wars are. There were great quantities of gold found in Mashonaland which Lobengula considered under his dominion. He was a hard working king, trying to do the best for his people, and with ideas of honor, although his palace was a hut with animals penned in one corner, his throne an old cheese box, and his royal robes a half dozen monkey skins strung around his great waist. He lived upon meat and beer and was a terrible object to look at, weighing over three hundred pounds.

The British South African company came in three years ago, to work the mines, under contracts with Lobengula. One of these contracts was that they should not bring in any women. The king knew that there was no danger of their beginning to really live there, unless they had homes. But the company constantly had trouble with the natives. Not Lobengula's Matabeles, but the Mashonaland men whom he claimed to govern. Finally it came to war. The English were not sorry. To them it only meant a new, and wonderfully rich territory, and its conquest by the men who knew the value of the gold, had been from the beginning only a matter of time.

Lobengula thought himself invincible. His father had done wonders with his few warriors, and in these years they had increased to over two hundred thousand fighting men. But the old king forgot that the mothers of these men were not the Zulu women, but the soft and indolent native women of Matabele and Mashonaland. The men had been brought up with Zulu principles, but Matabele natures. They did not stick to their native weapons either, the assegai and the long, tough hide shield which did

such cruel work in the war where the Young Prince Imperial of France was killed. They used them, it is true, but they tried to meet the arms of the English with old fashioned rifles whose use they did not understand. And so the end came.

They were driven away northward to seek some land which they may inhabit until that happens to be valuable to the English, when they will be driven on again, until their tribe is finally extinct. It is the history of every savage race—whose possessions are valuable to the civilized and enlightened.

With the retreating Zulu will go his assegai, as the bow and arrow have gone with our American Indian tribes. The assegai is a sort of javelin, which was the weapon of the earliest races of humanity. It is a most graceful one. The shaft is a kind of bamboo cane, being tough, light and pliant. The stick is taken just as it grows, and it is perfectly impossible to break it between the joints. It is said that some of the Zulus are so strong in the hands that they can tie the assegai into a knot, and when loosened it will spring back again.

To the smaller end is fitted a flat, broad, two edged spear head about three inches across. There is a ridge along the center of each face, making four cutting edges to the point, which is tempered and sharpened until it is like the finest razor, and it is fitted to the cane shaft with a solidity and a neatness which no European can rival. Then molten lead is poured into the end of the hollow shaft, until the weapon is perfectly balanced. The test is to place the new assegai upon the needle pointed tip of one which has been driven into the ground. It must perfectly balance from the exact point where the hand is to grasp it in hurling. It is usually about five feet long.

In war, the Zulu carries from fifty to one hundred assegais. He takes as many of these as he can hold in his left hand, which is protected by his tough bull's hide shield. In his right hand he poses his best weapon. The assegai is thrown while running at full speed, and they can snatch and hurl six of the spears while running a hundred paces. Their aim is almost absolutely true, as they are trained from their infancy in this act.

The exercise is very violent, calling into play every muscle in the body. To see an impi of three thousand naked black men springing forward and throwing the cruel spears with lightning like rapidity is a sight which once seen is never forgotten by the soldiers who have been attacked.

GOLDEN THOUGHTS.

Fear is the tax that conscience pays to guilt.—Sewell.

When a man loses his temper, somebody else is apt to find it.

The love that is dumb until it speaks on a tombstone doesn't say much.—Ram's Horn.

It is better to say, "This one thing I do," than to say, "These forty things I dabble in."—Washington Gladden.

Many of our cares are but a morbid way of looking at our privileges. We let our blessings get moldy, and then call them curses.

Take thy self-denials gayly and cheerfully, and let the sunshine of thy gladness fall on dark things and bright alike, like the sunshine of the Almighty.—James Freeman Clarke.

He who prefers the material delights of life to its intellectual pleasures is like the possessor of a palace who takes up his abode in the kitchen and leaves the drawing room empty.—Anon.

Pride is as loud a beggar as want, and a great deal more saucy. When you have bought one fine thing, you must buy ten more, that your appearance may be all of a piece; but it is easier to suppress the first desire than to satisfy all that follows it.—B. Franklin.

DUTY AND PLEASURE.

O righteous doom, that they who make
Pleasure their only end,
Ordering the whole life for its sake,
Miss that whereto they tend;
While they who bid stern Duty lead,
Content to follow,—they
Of duty only taking heed,
Find pleasure by the way.

—Trench.

When I Was Stranded.

BY MATTHEW WHITE, JR.

"I don't care who it is, you are always suspicious of a man who wants to borrow money of you."

How clearly I recalled these words of mine! They were spoken at a dinner of three of us Belmont fellows had eaten together at a hotel in New York that fall, just before college opened. We had been talking about the great city and how it must feel to be stranded there without a pocketful of money such as each of us had. Charlie Clark had said that, provided he was short through accident, he should have no hesitation in going to any friend he might have in town and asking for a loan. Perry Minturn had agreed with me unfortunately, for it was Perry Minturn I was now on my way to visit in his Western home, and I had just made the appalling discovery that I had lost every cent I possessed.

It was shortly before the holidays. The Minturns lived in one of the suburbs of Cinaukee. Perry had been injured in a football game on Thanksgiving Day, and had been home ever since. He had begged me to take pity on him and spend my Christmas vacation with them; and as my folks were going to Bermuda for mother's health, I was very glad to accept the invitation.

And here I was, only six miles from Perry, and with no means of getting any nearer to him.

When I wrote mother that I was going to Cinaukee, she wrote back that I must be sure to stop and see Amelia Fitch, my old nurse, who lived in that city. I had first purposed going straight to Glenside, but recalling that Perry had two younger brothers who would undoubtedly expect me to bring something for their Christmas stockings, I determined to kill two birds with the one stone—stop over in Cinaukee to see Amelia Fitch and purchase some gifts for the young Minturns in the city's best stores.

My train from the East brought me in on time at nine in the morning, and I at once inquired my way to the region of retail shops, where I purchased a blue acrobat with red legs; also a book with a gaudy cover and pictures that looked like different denizens of the ark from whichever point of view you gazed at them. These paid for and dispatched by the store's delivery wagon to Glenside, I proceeded to hunt up Amelia Fitch.

She was no end glad to see me. Of course she expatiated on how I had grown, and went into raptures over the silk handkerchief I had bought for her.

Nothing would do but I must stay to lunch with her, and as it was then past noon and I was pretty hungry, I accepted the invitation.

She sent me up stairs to wash, and I could not but note how neat everything about the house looked. Still I was in the humor to be pleased. I was anticipating just a tip top time on my coming visit. Perry and I were great chums, and the Minturns' house was almost like a palace, I had heard from Clark, who had been there.

Amelia was properly impressed when she heard who my hosts were to be, and as she helped me on with my overcoat said that I deserved it every mite. I had been such a good baby.

Well, I bade her good by and went off in

great spirits to take a car down to the station, where I was to board the suburban train for Glenside. I was whistling "Elephant on His Hands" softly under my breath when the conductor came in for my fare.

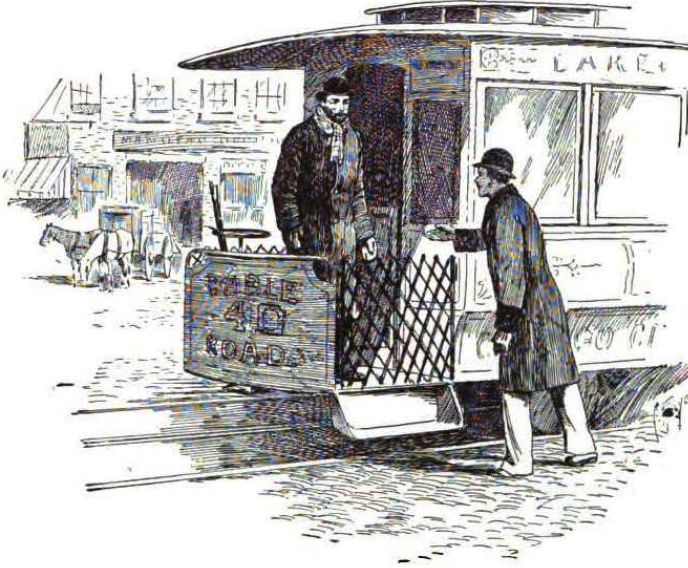
I felt carelessly in the change pocket of my overcoat, but there was nothing there. Then, with considerable difficulty, for I had my gloves on, I shoved my hands into either trouser pocket. Vaanney there too. "Guess I'll have to break a bill," I told myself, remembering now that I had been spending small change pretty freely since I had been in Cinaukee.

The next second I could actually feel myself turn pale. My fingers failed to clutch anything but the lining in the breast pocket of my coat, where I carried

everybody to get up that I might look under them. Some obeyed willingly, others morosely and as if I was accusing them of robbery; but what cut me worse than all else was the smile on the faces of nearly all as they watched me move anxiously up one side and down the other.

I felt so relieved when at last I got out of the car that for one instant I forgot to lament the fact that I had not found the pocketbook. But it was not long before the full height and breadth of my predicament impressed itself upon me.

Here I was in a strange city without even a nickel about me to pay my car fare. How was I to get to Glenside? And even if I did succeed in getting there, what sort of a figure would I cut without a penny in my pocket?



I BEGAN TO STATE MY SUSPICIONS TO THE CONDUCTOR.

the card case which served as my purse. Was it possible I had lost all my money?

I saw the other passengers all observing me with curiosity. The conductor was growing impatient I could tell by the way he kept glancing toward the rear platform.

The pocketbook was gone though. There was no disguising that. I felt in my overcoat and my trousers—everywhere, but in vain.

With cheeks burning, I got up and sprang off the car. I felt that I must get somewhere out of range of those piercing glances that, coming from every side, seemed concentrated on me as the calcium light is centered on the dancer.

"Here's a pretty go," I muttered to myself. "What am I to do now? I must have dropped it—in that car."

This last thought flashed over me like a positive conviction. What an idiot I had been to leave so quickly without looking on the floor. I broke into a run and started after the car. But it was a cable road and I soon would have been bested in the race had there not been a block on the track.

I ran, panting, up to the rear platform and began to state my suspicions to the conductor.

"Dropped your purse in the car, did you?" he said scornfully. "And I suppose you think I picked it up. Well, I didn't, nor I didn't see it neither. But you can come in and look for yourself if you don't believe me."

I hated most unmercifully to face those people again, but I must find that pocketbook. So, with my cheeks scarlet once more, I went through the car and asked

Perry? Yes, I am proud, and when I reflected on what I had said at that dinner in New York, and remembered how Perry had agreed with me, I felt that the Minturns' was the last place at which I should present myself in my present plight.

But where should I go? Not to a hotel. That was out of the question. And I could not telegraph home for funds, as the folks were now on the ocean.

Amelia Fitch? I might go back there, although it would be rather a come down after the gilded pictures I had painted for her of the enjoyment I expected to enter upon about this time.

Still, I must go somewhere, where I might have a chance to think out quietly some way out of the scrape.

I turned and walked back toward Amelia Fitch's little house. It took me quite a while, and the winter afternoon was half over before I arrived there.

I lifted the knocker and let it fall. But there was no answer. After three rappings a woman next door with a shawl about her shoulders put her head out of the window and called over:

"Sure you won't see Mrs. Fitch the day. She has gone to visit her married daughter and locked up the house."

"Oh," I said, and let the knocker fall weakly for the fourth time, and went away, feeling that my last gleam of hope had faded out.

What was I to do? I thought of a pawnbroker's shop; but even if I had been willing to resort to this extremity, I did not know where to find any of these misery's trading places.

And there was Perry. What would he

think when I didn't come, and he had no word from me? If it hadn't been for that luckless talk about borrowing I might wire him a C. O. D. telegram, stating my predicament and begging him to send somebody after me, if it was only the footman.

But I could not do this now. It would be bad enough to send the message without paying for it. To have this contain an appeal for money would about finish me in Perry's estimation, I decided.

Still, something must be done. I could not wander about the streets of the city all night, and there was my valise at the railroad station.

It was checked in the parcel room and, of course, I could not get it out until I had paid ten cents. What a pickle I was in all around, to be sure!

"But I won't be a fool," I said to myself. "This is an experience liable to befall any one, Perry Minturn himself. I know what I'll do. It is only six miles. I'll walk it. That'll make me keep my appointment, at any rate. When I get there I'll make a clean breast of it to Perry and throw myself on his mercy in the matter of sending for my valise."

With that sense of relief which any one experiences when he once makes up his mind about a thing, I set out at a good swinging gait. Of the first policeman I met I inquired the way to Glenside, and following directions I obtained in this way from point to point, I at last found myself in sight of the picturesque towers and turrets of the Minturn mansion.

It was by this time after five o'clock. My patent leathers were covered with dust, and to make matters worse I stumbled and fell just as I was entering the driveway.

"It never rains but it pours," I muttered, as I bent over to try and brush the dust from my overcoat.

As I did so my hand struck something in the lining—something oblong and rather bulky. I would have sworn it was just the shape of my pocketbook if I hadn't lost this.

But it was so like this precious article that I lost no time in thrusting my hand into my overcoat pocket to see whether there

was any hole there through which the case might have slipped. But there was none. The mystery was deepening.

Hurriedly taking out my penknife, I slit open the lining and—out fell my pocketbook, as large as life and with not a dollar of its contents missing!

I did not stop to stare at it, in the dazed amazement I felt. I hadn't time to do that. I mustn't lose a minute in securing my valise and presenting myself with due formality at my destination.

I looked about me for the railroad station and was soon passing in at the ticket window a two dollar bill with the words "Cinaukee and return."

I actually almost gouted over the handful of silver that was pushed out to me in change. I kept both hands over it in my trousers pockets when I dropped into a seat in the train. Then I began to try and solve the mystery.

How had my pocketbook got into the lining of my coat when there was no hole in the pocket? I understood clearly enough how I shoved it back by mistake into my overcoat instead of my other coat after paying for some of my purchases. But how it had contrived to escape downward from here was a problem that seemed destined to remain forever unsolved.

And to think that I had walked all the way to Glenside and endured untold tortures of mind, with almost fifty dollars about me!

I resumed possession of my satchel, had myself brushed up by a bootblack and then took a train back to Glenside. Perry received me with open arms and I entered upon a season of unlimited fun.

But my stranded experience was too amazing to keep. Before the week was out I told Perry all about it and invoked his aid to help me to an understanding of the matter. He was no more able to explain matters, however, than I had been, and doubtless I would have looked upon the occurrence as inexplicable to this day had I not acceded to Perry's wish one morning and taken him to see the woman who had nursed me as a baby.

She was delighted to receive this second call from me; and thinking she might be interested to hear that I had been there once when I couldn't get in, I told her of my remarkable experience.

"Why, Mr. Herbert," she exclaimed, when I had finished, "I'm afraid it's all my fault!"

"Your fault, Amelia?" I cried. "Why, how can that be?"

"This way. You remember when you gave me that pretty silk handkerchief, you pulled it out of the breast pocket of your overcoat. The pocket came with it and I noticed that there was a rip in it. So when you went up stairs to wash, I got my needle and thread and mended it."

Is there anything more simple than the plain facts—if you only know them?

[This Story began in No. 568.]

A Bad Lot.

BY ARTHUR LEE PUTNAM,

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

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ITALY SEEN THROUGH AMERICAN SPECTACLES.

Still Mr. Cunningham reflected that in case of an attack it would be convenient to have such an addition to his party as the American, for Amos Sanderson seemed like a brave man who would have his wits about him and might render valuable assistance.

"Are you travelling on business, Mr. Sanderson?" asked Bernard.

"No. I've been pretty lucky, and put by a considerable pile, and my friends told me I ought to see Europe. So I left my business in the hands of my brother, and came over last March."

"Are you enjoying it?"

"Well, middling well! I can't get used to their cookery. Why, I haven't seen a doughnut, or eaten a plate of pork and beans, since I left America."

"I never ate a doughnut in my life," said Walter Cunningham.

"Then you've missed a great deal. I reckon Bernard knows how they taste."

"Oh, I have eaten a great many."

"The fact is, there's no country where you can get such good living as in America," said Amos Sanderson with patriotic complacency.

Mr. Cunningham smiled, but did not dispute the statement. It is doubtful, however, whether he would have agreed with the man from Nebraska.

Mr. Cunningham was not sorry that he had permitted Amos Sanderson to join his party. The American was singularly ignorant, as regards the antiquities of Italy, but he had a shrewd common sense, and his quaint remarks were unintentionally humorous. He always spoke from the point of view of a Western American.

Scattered along the route, or a little distance from it, were the ruins of ancient or mediæval buildings, churches, temples, monasteries, and other edifices. Many of these had historical associations. These were quite unknown to Mr. Sanderson, and even where they were explained to him he was not much interested.

"It isn't creditable to Italy," he said one day, "to have so many ruined buildings. They'd ought to be repaired when they're worth it, and when they're not the best way would be to pull 'em down."

"But, my dear sir," said Walter Cunningham, "it would be a great loss to Italy if your advice were followed. Most travelers come here on purpose to see the ruins."

"Then I don't admire their taste."

"And naturally they bring a great deal of money into Italy. If the ruins were repaired or pulled down they wouldn't come and the people would lose a good deal of their income."

"That's practical. That's what I understand. But it seems foolish after all. When Chicago burned down a number of years ago, suppose they kept the ruins instead of building up again, everybody would have laughed at them."

"There were no associations connected with the burned buildings of Chicago."

"What's associations any way? They won't pay your butcher's bill."

"Surely, Mr. Sanderson, if you could see the house once occupied by Julius Caesar, for instance, you would be interested."

"I don't know that I would. Caesar's dead and gone, and I don't believe any way that he was as great a man as General Jackson."

"I see, Mr. Sanderson, you are hopelessly practical."

"Yes, I'm practical and I'm proud of it. There's some folks that can write poetry, and leave their families to starve, because they can't earn an honest penny. Why I knew a man once named John L. Simpkins that could write poetry by the yard. He often wrote poems for the Omaha papers, and never got a red cent for it. His folks had to support him though he was strong and able to work."

"I shouldn't have much respect for a poet like that."

"Nor I. He had a brother Ephraim Simpkins that kept a grocery store, and was forehanded. John fell in love with a girl and used to write poetry to her. Everybody thought she'd marry him. But when she found that he didn't earn more'n three dollars a week she up and marrie'd his brother, the grocer, and that showed her to be a girl of sense."

When the travelers reached Ceparano, Mr. Cunningham suggested making an excursion to Isota and Arpino.

"At Isota," he said, "we shall see the falls of the Liris, and at Arpino we shall see the site of Cicero's villa."

"Who was Cicero?" asked Amos Sanderson.

"Surely you must have heard of Cicero," said Walter Cunningham in surprise.

"Well, mebbe I have. What d'd he do?"

"He was a great orator."

"Did he go to Congress?"

"There was no Congress in Rome. However, he was a consul—that is, one of the two rulers or presidents of Rome."

"I'll bet he couldn't talk as well as Joseph L. Higgins of Omaha. Why that man can get up in a meeting and talk you deaf, dumb and blind. The words will flow like a cataract."

"I don't think Cicero could talk like that," said Bernard, smiling, "but I have read some of his orations, and they were very eloquent."

"I'd like to match Joseph L. Higgins against him. I'd like to hear a specimen of Cicero's speeches and judge for myself."

"Here is a specimen," said Bernard, "the beginning of his speech against Catiline, 'Quousque tandem abutere Catilina patientia nostra.'"

"Why, that's nothing but gibberish," said Amos in great disgust. "If Joseph L. Higgins should talk like that the people would fire bad eggs at him."

"I hope you don't object to visiting Cicero's villa, Mr. Sanderson."

"Oh no, I'm ready to go wherever you and Bernard do. I suppose I must do the same as other people."

"Your minister at home will be very much interested when you tell him you have visited the house where Cicero lived."

"Do you think he ever heard of Cicero?"

"Oh yes, all educated men have heard of him."

"Then I'll take particular notice of it, and describe it to him."

When they reached Cicero's villa, however, Mr. Sanderson was not favorably impressed by it.

"For a president of Rome," he said, "Cicero didn't live very well. Why for twenty five dollars a month he could get a house in Omaha with all the modern conveniences that would beat this by a long shot."

"They didn't have modern conveniences at that time, Mr. Sanderson."

"Then I'm glad I didn't live in them days. Give me the solid comfort of an Omaha house rather than all these marble pillars and ancient fandangoes."

"I am inclined to agree with you there, Mr. Sanderson," said the young Englishman, laughing. "I enjoy seeing the remains of ancient edifices, but I think myself I should rather live in a nice English or American house."

"From all I can see," continued the American, "I'd rather be an alderman in Omaha than the biggest man in old Rome. Did they speak English?"

"No. English was not known."

"How did they talk, then?"

"You haven't forgotten the few words Bernard recited from one of Cicero's orations?"

"No."

"That was Latin, the language that was spoken at that time."

"It's the most foolish kind of gibberish I ever heard. There ain't no language like English."

"I prefer it myself to any other."

"I should say so. I heard two Frenchmen jabbering the other day, shrugging their shoulders and waving their arms like windmills. It seemed awfully foolish."

"They think their language much finer than English."

"Then they must be fools," said Amos Sanderson scornfully. "Why, it made me think of monkeys, by hokey it did."

"Where did you receive your education, Mr. Sanderson?" asked Cunningham curiously.

"I went to a deestric school till I was eleven. Then my father died, and I had to hustle. Didn't have any time to study after that."

"That's the way most of your great men began, Mr. Sanderson."

"I expect they did. Education isn't everything. Why, the boy that stood at the head of my class is a clerk at fifteen dollars a week, while I have an income of fifteen thousand. He's got a lot of book knowledge, but it hasn't done him much good."

This conversation will give some idea of the American's peculiar ways of regarding everything foreign to his own experience. He could not like the Italian ruins, and this was not surprising. The Inns on the route which they had selected were uncommonly poor, and the cookery was such as might have been expected from the comfortless surroundings.

One morning, however, Bernard and Mr. Cunningham were agreeably surprised by an excellent dish of ham and eggs.

"Really," said Cunningham, "This seems something like what we get in England."

"Or in America," suggested Amos.

"Yes, or in America."

"They must have an unusually good cook in this inn."

"Thank you, squire," said Sanderson, who seemed very much amused at something. "You do me proud."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that I cooked the breakfast."

"You!" exclaimed Cunningham and Bernard in concert.

"Yes. I went out into the kitchen and scraped acquaintance with one of the understrappers who knows a lit-

tle English and I offered a piastre for the privilege of cooking the ham and eggs. They accepted the offer, and gave me what I needed. So here you see the result."

"We missed you during the last half hour, but had no idea you were getting our breakfast. Really, Mr. Sanderson, you have quite a genius for cookery."

"I guess I could make a good living as a cook if I had to. Any way if I couldn't cook better than them furriners I'd be ashamed of myself."

"I hope this isn't the last time we are indebted to your skill."

"Well, I don't think I'd be willing to do it regular. It would be too much like work."

Apart from the poor hotels the travelers enjoyed their leisurely journey. Sometimes they proceeded only fifteen miles a day. The trip was pleasant, but not exciting. The excitement was to come.

CHAPTER XXIX.

CAPTURED BY BANDITTI.

Though on joining the party Amos Sanderson had spoken of the possibility of encountering banditti, his companions had scarcely given a thought to the subject since. In the scenes of beauty through which they were passing such a possibility seemed incongruous, and no apprehension was felt. But danger there was, notwithstanding.

They had spent the night at a wretched inn in the town of Melfa, and proceeding on their way, passed on the left the picturesque town of Rocca Secca. About a mile beyond they were startled by the sudden appearance of three dark and swarthy Italians who, darting from a clump of bushes at the wayside, seized one of the horses by the bridle, and pointing pistols at the party, called out in English in a menacing tone, "Money!"

"Well, I'll be jiggered," exclaimed the American, "here's the banditti sure enough."

Walter Cunningham looked troubled. It was a very disagreeable interruption.

"Look here, gentlemen banditti," said Amos, "we haven't any money to spare. We are only poor travelers. You have made a mistake. There's some rich gentlemen on the road who will be here about this time tomorrow. You'd better wait for them."

Of course all this was thrown away upon the Italians, who did not understand English, and frowned impatiently while Mr. Sanderson was speaking.

"Give up your money, and that at once," said the foremost of the banditti.

He spoke in Italian, but Bernard, who had picked up some familiar phrases, understood and interpreted.

"Really this is very disagreeable," said Cunningham.

"I wish they understood English. I'd argy a little with them," added the American.

"I am afraid it wouldn't do much good, Mr. Sanderson," said Bernard. "They would probably shoot you for an answer."

The party looked undecided. By way of hastening a decision one of the banditti came up to the door of the carriage, and holding his pistol in one hand, held out his hat in the other.

"I suppose we must surrender at discretion," said the young Englishman. "They won't make much of a haul in my case."

"Nor in mine," added Sanderson. "I have about enough money to last me as far as Naples, where I intend to call on my banker."

"We had better give up what we have. It won't ruin us."

The American, who was pugnacious and liked to argue, yielded unwillingly. He and his companions emptied their pockets, and passed the

contents over to the black bearded fellow who acted as collector. He looked at the sum, and frowned fiercely as he turned to his companions and spoke a few words to them.

"What does he say?" asked Amos Sanderson.

"I don't understand," said Bernard. "He talks too fast for me."

Here Pasquale broke into the conversation.

"He says it isn't enough," he explained.

"But it is all we have. Tell him so." Pasquale put the message into Italian, and communicated it to his countrymen.

"Well, what does he say?" asked Walter Cunningham.

"He says it is not enough, and that you can get more."

"Where can we get it?"

"He says you can get it at your bankers."

"Bring the bankers along, and we will ask them."

"The signor will only anger them and that will be bad."

"How much in the name of wonder do they want?"

Pasquale repeated the question.

"They want five thousand scudi more," he reported.

"How much is a scudi?" asked the American, turning to Cunningham.

"A dollar."

"And the rascals want five thousand dollars? Jumping Jehosaphat! haven't they got cheek? Why do they ask so much of three poor travelers?"

Pasquale repeated the question, and received an answer.

"They say you are not poor, that one of you is a great English milord, and that you are a rich American."

"I'd like to know how they found out I am rich," said Amos, disgusted.

"Have they seen my tax bill?"

"They say all Americans are rich."

"That's where they make a big mistake. I know plenty of men in Omaha that wouldn't be worth a hundred dollars if their debts were paid. As to my friend here being a rich milord, I don't know but he is. I am not a milord at all, but only a plain American citizen."

"I am not a milord," said Walter Cunningham, smiling.

"However, I am aware that in Italy every Englishman who has money enough to travel is supposed to be a lord, just as every American is called rich."

"They don't say anything about me," said Bernard. "I wonder whether they take me to be rich or a milord."

"They don't make account of you because you are a boy. They think you are related to Mr. Cunningham or myself."

"I am willing to be overlooked."

"I wonder if I could pass myself off for a boy," said the American humorously.

"Hardly. You have lost too much hair."

"The gentlemen are getting impatient," said Pasquale warningly.

"Are they? Well, I guess we shall take our time."

"It will not be well to provoke them needlessly," said Walter Cunningham. "You may tell them that we cannot give them five thousand scudi," he added, addressing the vetturino.

The bandits held a conference, but it was not prolonged. Evidently they were incensed at the contumacy of their victims.

After the conference, during which the three travelers were very anxious, they spoke to Pasquale who communicated their decision.

"They say you must either make arrangements to pay the five thousand scudi, or go with them."

"Where in thunder do they mean to carry us, Pasquale?"

"I don't know. They would not tell if I asked them."

"Tell them to take us along then," said Mr. Sanderson, leaning back in his seat, and nodding obstinately.

Walter Cunningham seemed to acquiesce, and the answer was returned.

Immediately one of the bandits took his seat beside the vetturino and took the reins from him. The other two walked beside the carriage. The party turned off from the main road, and entered a lane leading up the hill to the left.

"Well, boys, we're in for it, I s'pose," said Amos Sanderson. "It's too bad, I vow. Such things couldn't be done in America under the Stars and Stripes."

"Don't robberies ever take place in the States?" asked Walter Cunningham.

"Well, perhaps so, but these fellows have not only robbed us of all we have, but are carrying us off because we won't give them more. I'd just like to wrestle with them one by one. If I didn't throw them, I'd be jigged that's all."

"I don't think they would agree to any such plan. They carry pistols, and probably knives. They are more used to them than to wrestling."

"No doubt you are right, milord," said Amos, at which Cunningham laughed.

"Where do you think they're going to carry us?"

"They probably have some secret resort somewhere among these hills. We shall find out before long. What do you think of our adventure, Bernard?"

"I wish I knew how it was going to turn out, Walter," returned Bernard soberly.

"So do I," said the American. "I shall have to have a good think. I can't think unless I have a smoke. Will you have a cigar, Cunningham?"

"No thank you."

"Or you, Bernard?"

"No, but it might be a good idea to offer cigars to our new friends."

"That's a good idea. I'll act on it." Mr. Sanderson took out a cigar, and lighting it put it in his mouth. Next he selected three others, offering the first to the man who sat beside the vetturino.

"Will you have a cigar, my friend?" he said.

The bandit took it, and said politely, "Grazia, signor."

"What's that?"

"He says thank you," returned Bernard.

The other bandits accepted the cigars graciously, and were evidently more favorably inclined to the travelers they were escorting.

"I say, Bernard, we look like a friendly family party," said Amos, who was amused by the situation.

The new driver was in no hurry. He drove in leisurely fashion, partly because their way ran up hill, partly because his two companions were obliged to walk, and could not otherwise keep up.

"I wish I knew where they were taking us," said Amos Sanderson.

"To a free hotel," answered Bernard.

"It'll have to be free, for they haven't left us any money to pay for that or anything else."

"Their hotel can't be much worse than the one we stooped at last night at Melfa."

"I wish their bill might not be any larger," said Walter Cunningham.

The cigars were smoked, and then the party subsided into silence. Even the lively American realized that they were in a difficult and perhaps dangerous situation. All three were busy with their own thoughts. Bernard was anxious, but he was also curious and excited. He remembered to have read a story three years before in which a party had been surprised by bandits somewhere in Sicily. He forgot how the story ended. When he read it he certainly was very far from thinking that some time a similar adventure would happen to himself.

CHAPTER XXX. IN A TRAP.

They proceeded thus for a short distance when there was a sudden stop. The vetturino was ordered to

descend from the driver's seat and he and the bandits had a conference.

Bernard was the only one of the party who understood Italian at all, and he failed to get any idea from the rapid words spoken by the four Italians. What they could be talking about not one of the party could conjecture.

At length the conference seemed to be over. One of the bandits took out a few scudi and handed them to the vetturino. The latter looked very much dissatisfied, and had the appearance of one who was making a bad bargain.

Then the bandit who had taken the lead came to the door of the carriage.

"Gentlemen, you will descend," he said.

"What's that?" asked the American.

"He says we are to get out of the carriage," interpreted Bernard.

"What's that for, I wonder?"

"Probably we shall find out after a while."

When the three travelers had left the carriage their traveling bags were taken from the vetturino and placed in their hands.

Then Pasquale mounted the box and drove away.

"Where are you going, Pasquale?" asked Walter Cunningham.

"I am obliged to go. The gentlemen will not allow me to go any further."

"Will you inform the authorities of the outrage that has been perpetrated?" said the American.

Pasquale shrugged his shoulders.

"It would be as much as my life is worth," he replied.

"I suppose," replied Cunningham, "that the bandits are unwilling to let the vetturino know their headquarters. So they have sent him away."

"I believe he is in the plot."

"I don't think so. He seems an honest sort of fellow. But what can he do single handed? Should he betray these men, it would as his life is worth."

The captives did not particularly enjoy carrying their baggage, and the American in particular grumbled not a little, but there seemed no help for it.

They ascended a rising ground, and then made a descent to a plain. After an hour's walking, quite spent with fatigue, they reached a large, irregularly built stone house, which was in a state of partial ruin. It was very old, dating back probably to the middle ages.

"I wonder whether that is the bandits' retreat?" said Bernard.

"At any rate it is an improvement upon the hotel where we spent last night."

The question was soon settled. Through a doorway the bandits led the way into a courtyard, and crossing it one of them took out a huge key, and opened an oaken door.

He signed to the captives to follow him.

They did so and found themselves in a spacious room nearly twenty five feet square. The floor was of stone, and it was nearly bare of furniture.

In one corner there was a heap of bed clothes. Along one side was a bench on which Amos Sanderson seated himself without asking permission.

"I feel about ready to drop," he said. "My valise is as heavy as yours and Bernard's together."

"Have you a dress suit?" asked Bernard, laughing. "If our captors should give a ball in our honor you might need it."

"It doesn't seem like a very gay place. I have never been in jail, but this room carries out my idea of a dungeon cell."

The room was indeed a gloomy one. There were windows, it is true, but so high up that they only admitted a limited amount of sunshine.

"Now how long are they going to keep us? That is what I would like

to know, and what object they have in detaining us."

"I suppose," said Cunningham, "they will keep us till they get the five thousand scudi."

"Then they'll wait a long time, I reckon."

The bandits left the room, taking care to fasten the door on the outside.

"Boys," said Amos Sanderson, "I don't mind admitting that I have never been more hungry in the whole course of my life."

Bernard and Walter Cunningham agreed that their feelings harmonized with his.

"Suppose we order dinner," said Bernard humorously.

"They will be sure to feed us," observed Cunningham. "They won't kill the goose from whom they expect golden eggs."

He proved to be right. In a short time the door was opened, and one of the bandits appeared bringing a large loaf of black bread, with a small dish of olives, and a supply of macaroni. A quart bottle of sour wine completed the generous collation.

It was not very tempting. It was worse than they had fared at any of the poor inns where they had lodged, yet Amos Sanderson's face brightened when he saw the food, and he did full justice to it.

"I am so hungry that I really believe I could eat shoe leather," he said.

Bernard and Walter Cunningham also ate with zest.

"Now I suppose they will bring in the bill," said Amos Sanderson grimly.

But when the meal was over they were left to themselves for a time.

"Now that I have eaten I feel sleepy," said the American. "I suppose that heap of rags in the corner is meant for a bed. I will make one."

He picked up a narrow mattress which had been rolled up before it was laid away, and spread it out on the floor. Then he selected a quilt and stretching himself out spread it over him.

"That walk with my valise quite tuckered me out," he said. "Just call me when the carriage is ready."

Bernard and Walter Cunningham could not so readily throw off the burden of anxiety. They sat together upon the bench and discussed the situation.

"We are in a bad scrape, Bernard," said his friend, "and I have led you into it."

"I think we will get out of it after a while," said Bernard, trying to be cheerful.

"Yes, if absolutely necessary, I will persuade Mr. Sanderson to join me in paying the ransom, though I should hate to let these rascals reap the reward of their knavery."

They were served with supper at six o'clock. Scarcely was this over than the three bandits entered the room accompanied by a man of thirty five, or thereabouts, who looked like a clerk or bookkeeper. It was soon evident that he was present as an interpreter.

"Gentlemen," he said in tolerable English, "my friends here who are not acquainted with your language, have asked me to act as interpreter. They wish to confer with you about your release."

"That's the talk," said Amos Sanderson with alacrity. "A release is what we are anxious about."

"I may say that you won't have to stay here any longer than you desire."

"Then we'll go now, and thank you for your consideration."

"Upon conditions."

Walter Cunningham smiled. He quite understood that there would be conditions.

"I suppose you want us to keep your secret," said the American.

"We'll do it."

"That is not quite all," replied the

interpreter. "My friends want to be paid for their trouble."

"They needn't have taken any trouble. We didn't ask them to."

The interpreter frowned slightly. He began to think Mr. Sanderson "too fresh."

"You talk too much," he said curtly. "They have fixed your ransom at five thousand scudi. That is certainly small for such wealthy and illustrious signors."

"Look here, my friend, five thousand scudi is a great deal of money."

"Not for millionaires."

"Who said we were millionaires?"

"All English and American signors are rich."

"How are we to get the money to pay you? You, or your friends rather, have taken all we have."

"You can get some from your bankers in Naples."

"You seem to have got our affairs down fine. Well, let us go to Naples—you can go with us if you like—and we'll see whether our bankers will let us have the money."

"The signor takes us for fools."

Here Mr. Cunningham thought it time to interfere, as the American was likely to anger their captors and upset all negotiations.

"Even if we have money," he said, "it would probably be necessary for us to see our bankers. They do not know us, and might not give the money to a messenger."

"Just what I said," put in Mr. Sanderson.

The bandits conferred together, and then the interpreter spoke again.

"To whom does the boy belong?" he asked.

"To me," answered Walter Cunningham.

"Is he known to your bankers?"

"No. He has never been in Naples."

"Are you fond of him?"

"Very much so."

"If he should go to Naples with a letter from you, could he get the money?"

"I am not sure."

"Then I am not sure about your release."

"Mr. Sanderson, will you join me in paying the ransom this gentleman has mentioned?"

"No. I'll be jiggered if I will."

"Then I am afraid you will have to remain here."

"If you will pay three thousand scudi we will release you and the boy," said the interpreter.

"What, and leave me here?" exclaimed the American.

"It is your own fault, signor."

After considerable conversation a plan was agreed upon, in which Amos Sanderson unwillingly acquiesced.

(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 XXIX.

A FAMILY REUNION.

Mr. Green walked as rapidly as possible toward the hotel.

"I was sorry to let that tramp go scot free," he muttered. "He deserved to be put under lock and key for his villainy. The real Wentworth is a different looking man, but it beats me how he can explain his long absence."

When he reached his destination, he went at once to the room occupied by Ogle. The boy was much better, and greeted him with a glad smile.

"Is mother well?" he asked. "Does she know I am here? Can I see her soon?"

"In answer to your triple question," returned Mr. Green, "I will say yes. But I have a bit of news to impart

which I hope will not prove unpleasant. That villainous looking tramp is not your father."

Ogle's face lighted up instantly.

"And furthermore," continued Mr. Green, "your real father has turned up. He it was who picked you up and brought you here."

For a moment Ogle could not find words to express himself. Then he said with a bright smile:

"I started out to find my father, but, instead, he found me."

"I remarked, if I remember rightly, that perhaps you would come back together," said a familiar voice, and turning, Mr. Green saw Josiah Quigley standing in the doorway, his hands gliding over each other with a sort of serpentine motion.

Before Mr. Green could make any reply, Philip Wentworth came into the room and the other two visitors withdrew.

"I'll tell you what, Josiah," said Mr. Green as they walked into the hotel parlor, "the less you say about this matter the better. You have made a bad enough mess of it now."

The schoolmaster made an attempt at explanation.

"It's no use, Josiah," interrupted the other. "Your only course is to hold your tongue, and you might as well begin now."

The meeting between father and son was very affecting, and soon a carriage came to the hotel door to convey Ogle to his home.

The next day who should drive into Mill City but the jolly old man whom Ogle had assisted in sheep driving, and who proved to be his grandfather.

With him came Caleb Dodge, who had determined to brave the parental wrath.

"Well, well," said the elder Mr. Wentworth, when he had greeted his son's wife and two little girls and listened to Ogle's story, "I could have set your mind at rest in a jiffy."

"But you said he was a namesake of yours," returned Ogle.

At this his grandfather laughed.

"I remember," he said, "but his name isn't Wentworth by a long chalk. Our given names are the same—Clark—though I'm not particularly proud of the fact."

The brows of Philip Wentworth drew together ominously as Ogle related his experience with his pretended father, and his strong hands clenched tightly as he said:

"It is well for this scoundrel that he is out of my reach. I should do him bodily harm if he were here."

"Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord; I will repay," quoted Mrs. Wentworth, and the hands of her husband relaxed, the frown faded from his face, and he answered gently:

"After all, our reunion is in great measure due to this man."

When Mr. Green entered the mill office the morning after the return of Ogle's father, he found Mr. Stanton pacing the floor, in great agitation.

"See here, Green," he said, stopping suddenly, "you've always found me to be a just man, haven't you?"

"Oh, yes, quite so," replied the junior partner, wondering what would come next.

"Well," continued the other, "the story that Dodge boy told about the keys was true, after all. Now don't crow over me."

"How did you become convinced of this fact?" queried Mr. Green. "You scouted the idea at first."

"Yes, I know I did," returned Mr. Stanton in a distressed tone. "It's a hard thing for a father to believe. But I can doubt it no longer. My hostler found the keys secreted in the stable, and Gullford confessed the whole miserable truth. I should have chastised him severely had it not been for his mother, and so he got off with a lecture."

"If it was a hard thing for you to credit the story when told of your

own son, how could you believe it so readily of a poor friendless boy?" asked Mr. Green, his voice growing stern.

"Oh, now, Green, don't be too severe," rejoined Mr. Stanton. "You were not slow to believe evil of this boy yourself."

"Very true, very true," said the other humbly. "I am sorry your boy wandered from righteousness, but I am glad the truth is known at last."

The matter proved a salutary lesson to Caleb Dodge and Gullford Stanton, and their parents had no reason to complain of them from that time forth.

Philip Wentworth had amassed some property during his ten years of exile, and located himself in Mill City, while his boy Ogle, or Ogle, as he is generally known, devoted his time to the development of his genius for drawing in other branches of the art besides mechanical work, much to the joy of Mr. Green, who looks upon him as his especial protege.

As for Clark Artwright, he never again put in an appearance, and the Wentworth household is one of the happiest in town.

THE END.

[This Story began in No. 571.]

Checkmate.

BY WILLIAM LIEBERMANN.

CHAPTER XIX.

DISMISSED.

Ralph's first care after leaving the hotel, was to walk quickly some few minutes, turning out of the direction in which he had started, his object being to put himself beyond the reach of Jones or Coltwood, should it occur to them to follow him. Then he remembered the address Jones had mentioned—Adolph Green, 433 La Salle St. It would be wise to put it down before he forgot it; there was no telling whether he might not one day be glad to know where to find Jones.

No doubt Adolph Green and Adolphus Jones were the same; he remembered Green was the name he had heard Coltwood use on the train. So he made a note of the address, noticing as he did so that his pockets were uncomfortably full of papers. This was not only inconvenient, but unsafe, for it would be easy to lose some of the precious letters; or his bulging pockets might attract thieves. So he stopped on his way and bought a small tourist's hand bag, with a strap by which to sling it across his shoulder.

Inquiring his way, he reached the depot in good time, and once again was started for St. Louis. He would be nearly a week behind time, it is true. But better late than never.

He wondered what the colonel would think. That was a point he had not considered before. The colonel was really a stranger, of whom he knew absolutely nothing. It was possible he would be angry at Ralph's delay. And Ralph, as he thought it over, was a little uneasy. In reality, his future was very much in the hands of this unknown colonel; and it would be a pity to start out with a bad impression.

On the train Ralph was careful to make no new friends. He remembered his first journey, and the chance acquaintance, Adolphus Jones, who had been the cause of all his mishaps. Of course Jones had been on that train for no other purpose than to prevent Ralph from reaching his destination; but Ralph never thought of that. So, in his loneliness, afraid to speak to any one, and suspicious of any one who addressed a remark to him, he wearily counted the minutes as the day wore on, and was glad when, at four o'clock, the train reached Burlington.

Ralph at once made his way to the

steamboat landing. The boat was lying at the pier, ready to start, and the dock hands were busy loading the last freight. He bought a ticket to St. Louis.

"Stateroom?" asked the man at the office.

"Yes," said Ralph, hesitating.

"Three dollars," said the man, opening a big book. "Name?"

"Eh?"

"Your name?"

"Oh! Walpole, Ralph Walpole."

"Oh! So you're Ralph Walpole, are you?" said the man. "Been looking for you some days."

"For me?"

"Yes. Here's your key. Stateroom 23."

"Looking for me?" repeated Ralph, taking the key.

The man wrote Ralph's name in the register, shut up the book, and answered:

"Party in St. Louis told me to look out for you. A Colonel Clifford, I think. Told us to wire him at once, if we found you."

"How did he know I should come this way, though?" said Ralph.

"Don't know, I'm sure. Move on, please. There's a gentleman wants a ticket."

Ralph moved on, and went up on deck, not a little uneasy to think that he should have put the colonel to so much trouble and annoyance. However, the novelty of the busy scene before him, with the dockhands hurrying to finish their labor, soon made him forget all about it.

At five o'clock the boat started. Ralph sat on the deck for an hour, watching the stirring scene with the eagerness of a boy to whom it is all new—boat, and river, and scenery. By that time, he was feeling hungry, having eaten nothing since breakfast. Dinner, one of the deck hands told him, could be had below, and below Ralph went.

That night, before getting into the comfortable berth in his stateroom, he examined Mrs. Hernden's letters once more, to make sure they were safe.

Yes, they were all right. No wonder he took such care of them. They were to be his passport to Grace Hernden's good opinion.

Toward evening next day the steamer reached St. Louis.

On the dock Ralph was addressed by an old man.

"Are you Master Walpole?" he asked, touching his cap.

"Yes," replied Ralph, eying the stranger suspiciously. "that's my name."

"The colonel sent me to meet you," went on the man. "I'm Jackson Seaman. Perhaps he's mentioned me in his letters."

"Yes," said Ralph, offering his hand. "But how did you know I was coming?"

"The agent at Burlington telegraphed to us."

"But how did you know I should come that way? Wasn't there another way to get to St. Louis from Chicago?"

"Oh, yes, several. But we notified them all to watch for you. Come. I've got a buggy waiting for you outside."

During their drive, Ralph questioned Jackson about the colonel. The result was hardly what Ralph had hoped. It was clear the old servant did not wish to say anything against his master, but it was also clear that the colonel was a cold, stern man, and that he was very angry at Ralph for his delay.

Ralph was at once shown into the study. The colonel, a gray haired, sharp eyed gentleman, was busy at his desk.

"Well?" he said, looking up from his work, as Ralph entered.

Ralph, already a little nervous at the prospect of the colonel's anger, was not reassured by this curt reception.

Ralph at once made his way to the

"I—I am Ralph Walpole," he answered. He could think of nothing more to say.

The colonel wheeled his chair round sharply, and looked Ralph over.

"Well," he said, "you've been a good long while getting here."

"I telegraphed you, sir, from Porson's Hollow," said Ralph. "I had my pocket picked."

"But you could have kept on the train, till you got to Chicago. I sent my man Jackson to meet you. You were not there. Where were you?"

"I—I missed the train," said Ralph, feeling more and more uneasy.

"Missed your train? How? Come, give an account of yourself. I can't waste any time asking you separate questions, one by one. Tell me as clearly and simply as you can, just what you have been doing these last four or five days."

Ralph hesitated. How was he to tell this stern, cold man about Grace? And how, otherwise, was he to tell of his trip to Chicago with Jones? If he had only thought of this before!

"Well!" said the colonel, impatiently.

Ralph began, and as well as he could, told his story, beginning with the loss of his pocketbook, to the time he left Chicago for St. Louis. Having decided that it would be best to tell the whole truth, he left out nothing, telling why he had followed Jones, how he had seen and recognized Harvey Coltwood, how he had found the papers, and the means he had taken to prevent Jones from discovering that they were gone.

All this he told hesitatingly and unevenly, like one who knows his story will be doubted, yet who knows, too, that it is the best he has to tell.

While he was talking, Jackson Seaman entered. The colonel looked at him inquiringly. Seaman nodded.

"Well, young man," said the colonel, when Ralph had finished, "do you know what you have been telling me?"

Ralph was silent.

"Do you know that you have just admitted, without any urging, and without shame, that you followed a young man, a stranger, and one who had done you a service, too, followed him to Chicago for the single purpose of robbing him?"

"Robbing him!" exclaimed Ralph, indignantly, and too much surprised to think of any defense. "Robbing him!"

"You admitted that you picked the lock of a valise that did not belong to you. That, when you look at it in the right light, is not very different from burglary, except in degree. And then, you say you took from this valise some papers which did not belong to you, and which you had no proof did not belong to him. You thought he stole them. Did his crime make yours any less? And as to all your careful precautions to avoid detection, of which you seem to be quite proud, they prove nothing except that you seem to have a natural aptitude for crime."

Ralph stared at the colonel in amazement during this speech. But the more he thought about it, the more he was forced to admit that to most people his actions must appear just as they did to the colonel.

Perhaps even Grace would be shocked; which thought worried him more than the colonel's anger. Ralph saw now that he had made a bad beginning; but he hoped in a few weeks to change the colonel's opinion of him.

So he was quite unprepared for the other's next remark.

"On the whole," said the colonel, "I think it would be unwise for me to carry out my intention of educating you to fill the place left vacant by my nephew's unfortunate estrangement. Let me tell you, too, that that part of your story in which you describe him as in conspiracy with this

man Jones to hinder your journey, and to steal certain papers from a lady in Ohio, seemed to me altogether untrustworthy, and a sign of a small and selfish mind."

"Colonel Clifford!" said Ralph, indignantly, "do you mean I lied!"

"I don't quite know," rejoined the colonel. "The rest of your story would hardly lead one to impose much trust in your words. At best, you have no proof that the man you saw was my nephew, Harvey Coltwood."

"But Frank said it was Harvey Coltwood. He said he often came there, to play poker."

"That will do!" interposed the colonel, sharply. "Harvey was, of course, in some sort a rival, and I can understand why you should wish to prejudice me against him. But the evidence of an elevator boy is not enough. And had you been generous, you would have made no mention of poor Harvey, even had the story been true."

Ralph with difficulty kept his temper at this second slur upon his truthfulness. The colonel went on:

"So, on the whole, I think it would be the wisest course for me to pay you for your journey and the time you have lost, and send you back again. Of course, you may stay here for tonight. Tomorrow you can start for home."

"I'll go now," declared Ralph briefly. He felt that the sooner he was out of this house the better.

"Well," said the colonel, "you can suit yourself. Do you think one hundred dollars will pay you for your journey and your trouble?"

"I don't want any of your money," retorted Ralph, angrily, rising to go.

"Come, young man, don't let your disappointment make you foolish. You must admit that I owe you something for your trouble. Besides, you will need the money to get back with. You are not lowering yourself in any way in accepting it. It is a simple debt I owe you."

Ralph hesitated. The colonel certainly did owe him some sort of recompense for his disappointment and his fruitless journey. And besides one hundred dollars would be very acceptable now he was likely to be thrown on his own resources. For once wisdom triumphed over pride, and he accepted the money.

As he turned to go, the colonel offered his hand.

"I am sorry," he said, "that you have had your journey for nothing. But I believe I have acted for the best."

Ralph hesitated a moment before he accepted the offered hand.

"I hope you will one day have a better opinion of me," he said. "Good by."

In the hall, Seaman handed Ralph his bag.

"I'm sorry, sir, you're not going to stay," said he.

"So am I," returned Ralph. "We should have been good friends, I know, Jackson."

"I'm sure we should, sir. Good by, sir. Nothing I can do for you, sir?"

"No, Jackson, thank you. Good by."

So it ended, and the whole of his eventful journey had come to nothing. Ralph was no better off than when it began; indeed even worse, for if he went back to his native town he would have to tell why he had returned, and the judgment of the town would be, if anything, harder than the colonel's. As he had no relatives living that he knew of, he quickly decided he would not go back there.

He walked on blindly, not noticing which way he went. Night was coming on, and still he kept up his aimless march, planning over and over again new lines of action for the future, and always coming back to the one fixed point from which he started, namely, that the first thing he would do would be to go to Porson's Hollow with the papers for Mrs. Hernden. There he might con-

sult with the doctor, who perhaps might tell him what would be the best course to pursue.

At last weariness began to tell on him, and he looked about for a place to spend the night. He soon found a quiet looking hotel. Sitting at one of the cafe tables, he remembered that he hadn't looked at the letters since the night before. He opened the bag, and stared in blank dismay at the contents. The letters were gone. In their stead were a lot of old newspapers!

What should he do? Without those letters he was ashamed to go back to Porson's Hollow! And where else was he to go?

Truly, in less than two hours his prospects had changed for the worse most remarkably. That afternoon he had stepped from the boat full of bright hopes. This evening he found himself adrift in a strange city, with a little money, it is true, but otherwise without means of support when that should be gone; and utterly without friends.

CHAPTER XX.

AGE THERE TWO OF THEM?

"I say, youngster!"

Ralph took no notice, but stared blankly before him. A hand was laid on his shoulder. He looked up.

A bluff, weather beaten face, this man had, but a kindly one.

"I say, youngster! You're looking down in the mouth. What's it all about?"

Ralph, in the last few days, had grown suspicious of strangers, so he answered brusquely:

"I don't know that it concerns you." "Right you are, youngster. It doesn't. But 'Humani nihil' you know. Nothing human can be out of my line, seeing I'm a man myself. That's how I translate it."

Ralph had not been educated in classic literature, and did not see the allusion. The stranger noticed it. "One of my bad habits," he said. "They sent me to high school when I was young, more's the pity. All the good I got from it was a trick of feeling off Latin quotations, that has stuck by me for thirty years. That's one of 'em."

Ralph stared curiously at the speaker. The latter laughed, and said:

"Taking my measure, eh? Well, what's the verdict?"

"You look honest," replied Ralph, speaking more to himself than to the stranger.

"Snake!" said the stranger, offering his hand. "I've always said I could pass on my good looks!" And he laughed a genuine, hearty laugh, that set all Ralph's doubt at rest.

"Come now," he went on, "have you ordered supper yet? No? Well, we'll have supper together. Here, waiter!" and before Ralph could protest he had given his order.

"It's all right," he said. "What's the use of two people supping alone when they can just as well, and a great deal more sociably, sup together?"

"But—" began Ralph.

"Bah! you don't know who I am? Well, I'm Miles Burnham, captain of the Flying Spray. I don't know who you are? Well, I don't want to know, if you don't want to tell me."

"My name is Ralph Walpole."

"Thanks! That shows you've half got over the idea I may be a land-shark in disguise. Now we shall feel more comfortable. As to your being down in the mouth, why, as you say, that's none of my business."

"I'll tell you about it, though," said Ralph, who, now that he felt sure his new friend was not another Adolphus Jones, was glad of the opportunity of telling his troubles to some one.

"Wait till after supper," returned the captain. "You'll be feeling better then. Troubles always look twice as big when a man's hungry."

Then he launched out into a won-

derful yarn of the sea, and followed it up by another, and another, and another. So that, before they had finished supper, Ralph had, for the time, forgotten all about his trials.

But he was tired out, and securing a room, went to bed early.

"What do you mean to do?" asked the captain the next morning, when they met at breakfast.

"I haven't the least idea," replied Ralph. "I suppose the best thing for me to do is to try and find something I can work at."

"Have you no friends?"

"No, except those I made at Porson's Hollow."

"Why don't you write to them, any way?"

"They're almost strangers," returned Ralph. "I've no sort of excuse for applying to them. If I hadn't lost those papers, I might have gone there. And once there, I know the doctor would tell me what's best to do."

"Well, you must try and find out where those papers went to, at any rate."

"It's no use!" said Ralph, disconsolately. "Luck seems against me every way."

"Well, we'll try, at any rate. If we don't succeed, how would you like to come to sea with me?"

"Wouldn't I just!" exclaimed Ralph, enthusiastically. But almost immediately he became despondent again. "But what's the good?" he added. "I'm not a sailor; I never was even on a boat; I suppose I should be seasick."

The captain laughed.

"You'd soon get over that," he said, "and I'd quickly make a sailor of you. But I don't want to turn you out only a sailor. I want you to become a captain."

Ralph's spirits rose again.

"That would be splendid!" he exclaimed.

"Don't be too sure about it," said the captain. "It means hard work, and study."

"But," said Ralph, doubtfully, "why do you pick me out? Why do you want to make an officer of me?"

"Well, for several reasons. You're about the right build to make a good sailor. I like the look of you. You're young enough to be taught, and you seem bright enough to learn. And you don't appear to know what to turn your hand to. And then, you have a little money, you say?"

"Money!" said Ralph, suspiciously. "How much do you want?"

"Well, say a hundred dollars."

"A hundred dollars!"

"Just think it over a bit. You pay me a hundred dollars—the money your colonel gave you—and I take you with me on my next trip, teach you what I know about ships and managing them, and give you every chance to study. In a year's time, if you turn out anything at all, I'll pay you a small salary. As soon as you're capable I'll make you third mate on my vessel. By the time you're twenty, you can be second, perhaps first mate on a good ship. If you stay here, your hundred dollars will keep you, at most, six months. Then it'll be gone, and nothing to show for it."

"I suppose you're right," said Ralph.

"Of course, if you don't want to pay me a hundred dollars, and still want to go to sea, I'll take you as a common sailor. But you'll find it a rough life, and it'll take you years and years to work up from before the mast to first mate."

"But how shall I know you will do what you say?" asked Ralph.

"Good boy! Level head! I'll take you to the company that owns my ship. They'll find a lawyer to draw up an agreement for you, and tell you how far I'm to be trusted."

Ralph was silent, thinking it over some few minutes. Then he held out his hand.

"It's a bargain," he said. About half an hour later, when the

two were sitting in the lounging room of the hotel, the captain suddenly looked up from the paper he was reading—a Chicago paper—with an exclamation of surprise.

"I say," he cried, "here's something that concerns you." And he passed the paper over to Ralph who read:

"One hundred dollars reward for information as to the whereabouts of Ralph Walpole, aged 16, who left Porson's Hollow, Ohio, for Chicago, on the eighth of this month, in company with an unknown man. Address J. Seaman—St. Louis."

"Yes," commented Ralph, "that's the old servant who met me at the depot yesterday. Of course, that advertisement was put in before the colonel saw me."

"Well," remarked the captain, "they seemed mighty anxious to find you, and mighty anxious to get rid of you when once they did find you. By the way, why not go back and ask that fellow Seaman what he did with your papers?"

"He?"

"Why, yes. Why not? He was the only man that had that bag of yours in his hands besides you. It seems to me only natural to suspect him."

Ralph, knowing the trusted position Seaman had held with the colonel for many years, thought the idea altogether absurd; but the captain argued that if the papers had any value, even the most unlikely clew was worth following up. And in the end he gained his point, and the two set out together.

Ralph, after his interview with the colonel, when all his bright hopes and plans for the future had been so suddenly and unexpectedly dashed to the ground, had been so depressed he had not noticed the direction nor the distance in which he had walked. Without the address given in the advertisement, he would have been at a loss to find the house. Indeed, as it was, he was surprised to find how far he must have walked without noticing it.

At last he reached the place. Ralph found he had forgotten even the outside of it. They rang the bell. A maid showed them into the parlor, and said Mr. Jackson would see them in a few moments. Then a short, rather thick set man, perhaps forty five years old, entered, with a sharp business like step. He stood with his legs wide apart, like a man who was used to the rolling motion of a boat.

"Well," he asked, "what can I do for you?"

"There's some mistake," said Ralph, "I want to see Mr. Seaman."

"I am Jackson Seaman."

"You! but—"

"Yes, I'll bear witness to that!" said the captain, coming forward.

"Don't you remember me, Seaman?"

"Why, Burnham! Miles Burnham, where on earth did you come from?"

"From nowhere on earth! From the sea, my boy! I'm on land for a couple of months resting, and recruiting for my next voyage. There's my last recruit, who seems to have made some kind of a mistake here. Let me introduce my future first officer of the Flying Spray, Master Ralph Walpole."

"Ralph Walpole? Are you Ralph Walpole?" asked Seaman, turning to Ralph. "The colonel is very anxious about you. He will be glad to hear you've got here at last."

"He knows it," said Ralph. "I've seen him already."

"Seen him? When? Where?"

"Yesterday afternoon, in this house."

"In this house?"

"Yes. In the room at the end of the hall."

"What room?"

"This one," said Ralph, stepping to the door, and throwing it open.

To his surprise, instead of the study he expected to find, he entered a large conservatory. A gen-

tleman who had been picking a few dead leaves from a remarkably fine rose bush looked up as they entered. He was a stranger to Ralph.

"Beg pardon, colonel," said Seaman, raising his hand in military salute, "but this is Master Ralph Walpole."

"Ralph Walpole! Well, my boy, you've been a long time getting here," said the colonel, coming forward and shaking hands cordially.

"I was half afraid something had happened to you. But I'm heartily glad you've got here at last!"

(To be continued.)

[This Story began in No. 567.]

A Curious Companion.

BY GEORGE KING WHITMORE,
Author of "Fred Acton's Mystery," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XXX.

ANDY BEGUM EXPLAINS.

"Murder, eh?" said Begum, crossing his legs and flicking the ash from the end of his cigar. "Well, that is pretty serious. And the only basis you have for connecting me with the crime that I seemed not to like it when the fellows jollied me about feeling kittenish over something that happened in Harristraw. That's pretty slim evidence on which to hang a man. Come now, don't you think it is?"

"But you were certainly squeamish about something," Max replied.

"Aren't there other things a man would hate to have brought up besides murder?" Begum went on. "Say, he had deserted his wife, or she had deserted him; failed in business; got burnt out; quarreled with a life long friend. Wouldn't any one of these things make him touchy when the name of the town where they happened was mentioned?"

"Yes, that's true enough," answered Max. "And if you had brought all this up in the ice cream saloon last night, I might have found it easier to think it was one or the other of the things you have mentioned that made you sour on Harristraw."

"Well, and why can't you think so now?" inquired Begum, as Max paused.

"Because of what has happened to me since; because of your associates. You know a man is judged by the company he keeps, and when I find you hand in glove with fellows who take advantage of a small boy's misfortune and hold him prisoner till a large ransom be paid, what am I to think of you but the worst?"

Begum laughed, the first time Max had ever seen any sign of mirth from him.

"That's a great idea," he said. "Just as if a wife beater or a repeater at elections or any other mildly off color member of society couldn't consort with gentlemen of shady reputation without laying himself open to the charge of murder. But to keep you from feeling nervous any longer in my company, I will tell you that I left Harristraw Friday night. The murder you say was committed on Saturday."

"I will go farther and tell you why I felt touchy about the thing. I was to have been married on Thursday to a Harristraw girl. These friends of mine from Chicago had come on to the wedding. Everything was ready. But I was impatient. I went to the bride's house half an hour before the stated time, and what do you think I found?"

"I'm sure I don't know," returned Max, interested in spite of himself.

"What did you find?"

"I found my wife that was to be just going off with another man. I met them in the very doorway. Rage took complete possession of me. I knocked him down, and card not that his head struck hard on the doorstone. Then I waited in town until the next day to give his friends the opportunity to search me out if

they wanted to. But they did not come and I came back here with my friends. You can imagine though that I don't feel very jolly, nor care very much about running against my Chicago acquaintances who imagine that I am happily married. That's the reason I steered the fellows into an ice cream joint instead of a liquor saloon last night."

"And what is the reason you locked the door when you brought me in here just now?" Max demanded quickly.

"Because I knew that my friend Kenny would like to find you here when he got back," was the calm rejoinder.

"I don't see what good I am to him without the boy," said Max. "You couldn't raise fifty dollars on me. Now if it was my friend, who is here in Chicago with me—or is supposed to be with me—his father is president of a bank and has got lots of money."

"But Jim can't let you go now, boy or no boy, don't you see he can't?"

"No, I confess I don't."

"Why, the first thing you would do would be to blow about the place here and our nice little home would be broken up."

"Did he expect to keep me always then, even after the boy had been restored?"

"Of course not. But in that case he'd have had money enough to have bought a neat little home somewhere else."

"But I could have walked off easily a few minutes ago."

"I guess he knew he could trust you."

There was a marked change in Begum's demeanor since he had told his story to Max. Although the latter had expressed no credence in it—indeed Max hardly knew himself whether he believed the tale or not—the man appeared to feel that the mere telling of it settled matters, and he became almost jovial.

"Suppose we have a Welsh rarebit while we're waiting for Jim," he said and taking a spirit lamp from a table in one corner, and the ingredients of the dish from a cupboard in another, he proceeded to concoct it forthwith.

"I suppose you came on to see the big Fall?" he began. "How do you like it as far as you've got?"

"Hark!" exclaimed Max. "I think I hear some one at the door!"

He was greatly excited. Had Kenny found Morris?

Begum hurried into the hall and demanded to know who was there before he opened the door.

Max could not hear the response, but the next instant Begum dashed into the room and blew out the light.

CHAPTER XXXI.

UNDER SUSPICION.

Before Max could make up his mind to what had happened, there was another rap at the door, accompanied by an impatient shaking of the knob.

"That can't be Kenny or any other of Begum's friends," Max said to himself, "or he would have let them in at once."

He got up from his chair and began to grope his way into the hall in the dark.

"Hold on there!" he cried out, fearful lest whoever was outside might go away. "I'll let you in."

But it took him some little time to find the handle of the door and even after he had done this he was brought up with a round turn by discovering that the key had been taken away.

And not a sound betrayed that Begum was anywhere near.

Max put his lips down to the keyhole and called through:

"Who's there?"

"Never mind who it is," was the answer. "All you've got to do is to open the door."

"But I can't open it," Max called

back. "That fellow Begum has made off with the key."

"Who are you?" was the next message that came through the abbreviated speaking tube.

"My name is Max Purdy. I am from Harristraw, Pennsylvania, and I've been kept a prisoner in this house since last night. Come around and try the window, to your right."

"I don't know about that," was the response. "You tell a queer sort of story which I don't know whether to believe or not."

"Do as you like about that," retorted Max, nettled. "You're the one that wants to get in. Good by, I'm going to get out, now that my captors have taken French leave," and with these words Max turned and groped his way up stairs, to get together his belongings.

The man outside hammered away on the door, but Max paid no attention to him until he had gone up to the room he had occupied—where the candle was by this time almost burned out—got his things together and with the candle in his hand, returned to the lower hallway.

He stopped and put his mouth to the keyhole again.

"Now," he said, "I am going away. If you want to see me you can go round to the window of which I have already spoken."

"I suppose," he reflected, "whoever it is will think sure I belong to the gang now from the way I talk. But it made me mad to have him doubt me."

It was the work of only a moment to open one of the windows in the sitting room. When he had done so Max found himself face to face with a big man on whose vest glittered a badge that the Harristraw boy knew betokened some connection either with the police or the detective force.

"Who did you come here after?" Max asked at once, before the other could say anything.

"I'm not sure that I didn't come after you, you young jackanapes," was the other's retort as he laid his hands on the window sill and swung himself into the room.

"Well," said Max philosophically, "I ought to be glad if anybody would take me out of this place. I wish you'd come a little sooner though. I rather think now that I ought to wait here for the boy."

"The boy! What boy?"

"The little fellow they kidnapped along with me and proposed to keep here till his mother pays a big ransom."

"Where is the boy now?"

"Gone. Wandered off. I've been out looking for him. That's where Jim Kenny is now. He's the man that lives in this house."

The officer laid his hand on Max's shoulder.

"Look here, young fellow," he said. "I gave you credit for being smarter than this. You've got yourself all tangled up. I thought you said you had been kidnapped and here you've just been telling me that you've been wandering about the city hunting up a boy. It seems to me you must have been pretty fond of your prison to return to it after you had such a good opportunity to escape."

"But don't you understand that the boy was in my charge and that I feel responsible for him? What did I want to get away for without him? How could I face his mother?"

"Look here, young man," said the officer, "I think you had better sit down and tell me this whole story straight from the beginning."

"I will be very glad to do that," returned Max. "If you will come up stairs with me and not sit near the window?"

"What will be the need of that?" asked the man, beginning to look suspicious again.

"I'll tell you. You came here to investigate the character of the people who live in this house, didn't you?"

"You've guessed it."

(To be continued.)

A LION ON HORSEBACK.

Some weeks ago The Argosy printed an article about the Hagenbeck establishment at Hamburg, where wild animals, collected from all parts of the world, are trained for menageries and circuses. A number of these animals were exhibited at the World's Fair last summer and lately these have been brought to New York. One of the most celebrated feats in the exhibition is the riding of horse by a lion. During the Chicago season the horse in this strange partnership led. The manner in which a new one was appointed to take his place is described for the New York "Tribune" by the manager of the show, in these words:

"One who has never given the matter a thought has little idea of the undertaking of taming a horse and a lion to perform the equestrian act. As a rule this is begun when the horse and lion are very young. They are kept close together and in time become very much attached to each other, so that the lion is not, at that early age of the animals, a very remarkable one. When Prince's horse led in Chicago it brought up a problem of an entirely different nature. The first thing to be done was to get a horse. It took me two days to find one that looked anything like the one that had died. I finally found one, and had him carefully examined by a veterinary surgeon, to ascertain if his temperament was one we could depend upon. It was, and then began the work. Prince knew his business all right, but a horse knew nothing. We first began by king him into the cage for half an hour at a time, and leading him around the circle. Ten days were spent in teaching him to obey the whip and to understand the German language, for all of our trainers are Germans. Then came days in which the big animal hound which accompanied the lion was taken into the ring with the horse, and finally the horse and the lion were stabled together until they became thoroughly acquainted. They were fed at the same table, and every effort that we could summon was directed toward teaching the horse and the lion to be friends.

"Finally one day we strapped a padded saddle on the horse's back and got the lion to mount. He sat in the saddle about a second. Up went the horse's heels, and a sound was thrown against the side of the cage. But this did not discourage the trainer; they kept at it until they got the horse that he would permit the lion to ride.

Then came the next step. We had made for the purpose a padded lion's skin, which we drew over the body of the lion, except the head. For days the horse and the poor lion, which was swathed in the padded lion's skin, were kept together until the horse got used to the changed appearance of the dog. Then the skin of the head of the lion was put on the lion, and the lion and the horse were taken into the ring together. The poor horse did not understand this at first, and made a lot of trouble, but finally permitted the lion, in disguise, to mount his back and take a ride.

"A week was spent at this, until the horse knew his business thoroughly. Then came the most ticklish part of the whole business, that of bringing the horse and the lion into the same cage. For a week or more the horse had been stabled where he could see the lion. We took the horse in one morning, and then, after putting him through his paces, let the lion, Prince, in. The big beast came up the incline leading to the cage with that long swing so well known to observers of animals. He evidently did not recognize a difference in the horse, and mounted his pedestal, ready to begin the act. At the crack of the whip he leaped on the horse's back, and off they went together around the ring.

Several circuits had been made when, for some reason, no one knows what, the lion sat down on his haunches and emitted one of those terrific roars which startle everybody. That settled it. For the next ten minutes pandemonium reigned, and I did not know but it would be a case of Kilkenny cats, with trainer, keeper, dog, horse and lion, instead of felines. The lion was thrown against the cage; he resented it and made a spring for the horse. The trainer grabbed an iron rod and the keeper a whip, and it was only after a sharp struggle that the lion was subjugated, and it took a much longer time to quiet the horse.

"For days we could do nothing with the horse, but finally the Fair was closed and the animals were brought to New York. For the last week the training has been going on, and we have now the horse and lion in good working order. They will be seen for the first time when we open."

TWO LAGGARD LETTERS.

Students of French all know that there is no w in that language, but how many of those who speak and write the English tongue realize that this, too, was minus this very im-

portant letter until some three centuries ago? J is another member of the alphabet which is of comparatively recent addition. A writer in the St. Louis "Republic" has this to say about these two laggard letters:

The use of the j may be said to have become general during the time of the English Commonwealth, say between 1649 and 1658. From 1630 to 1646 its use is exceedingly rare, and I have never as yet seen a book printed prior to 1652 in which it appeared. In the century immediately preceding the seventeenth it became the fashion to tail the last letter when Roman numerals were used as in this example: viij for 8, or xij in place of 12. This fashion still lingers, but only in physicians' prescriptions, I believe. Where the French use j it has the power of s as we use it is the word "vision." What nation was the first to use it as a new letter in an interesting but perhaps unanswerable query.

In a like manner the printers and language makers of the latter part of the sixteenth century began to recognize the fact that there was a sound in spoken English which was without a representative in the shape of an alphabetical sign or character, as the first sound in the word "wet." Prior to that time it had always been spelled as "vet," the v having the long sound of u or of two u's together. In order to convey an idea of the new sound they began to spell such words as "weather," "wet," "web," etc., with two u's, and as the u of that date was a typical v, the three words in quotations above looked like this: "Vweather," "vvet," "vweb." After a while the type foundry recognized the fact that the double u had come to stay, so they joined the two v's together and made the character now so well known as the w. I have one book in which three forms of w are given. The first is the old double v (vv), the next is one in which the last stroke of the first crosses the first stroke of the second and the third is the common w used today.

A TIME TALK.

The 18th of November this year was the tenth anniversary of the adoption of standard time. Prior to this date solar time was employed, and as a consequence clocks in cities as close together as New York and Philadelphia were at a five minutes' variance, a fact which travelers were obliged to remember, especially at the New York end, when they set out to catch a train. The railways were the first to adopt the new system, which is now in use throughout the United States



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P. U. T. O. U. T.

"You give me a pain," screamed the broken window to the naughty little boy.—Harvard Lampoon.

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