

Vol. 3 No. 04

October 1964

A newsletter

Organized 1962

(Non--profit)

Published monthly for the benefit of people interested in Horatio Alger, Jr. Edited and published by Forrest Campbell. Chm. Edward G. Levy, New Haven, Conn. Eastern Rep., Max Goldberg, Natick, Mass. Research, Gilbert WestgardII, Park Ridge, Ill. Ragged Dick Fund Trustees, Kenneth Butler, Mendota, Ill., and Ralph D. Gardner, New York City.

Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Gardner safely returned recently from their European vacation trip and now Mr. & Mrs. Ed Levy are there, but are scheduled to return on October 14th. Final plans are about completed for the Panel Discussion and the 100th Anniversary Exhibit at Brandeis University on October 28th. Ed is calling upon three prominent men to serve on the panel, Ben Trustman, Arthur Vershbow and Phil Neufeld. Ralph will act as Moderator. Ed and Ralph will furnish details for the November issue of the newsletter. Included in the exhibit will be a bound volume of "Young Israel" on loan from Stanley Pachon, (S-87).

Ralph has consented with pleasure to serve as a trustee of the RAGGED DICK FUND. His assignment will be to search New York City for a recipient for our 1965 award. The fund was designed to assist worthy boys of our choice, who in our opinion qualifies as typical Alger heroes. Contributions are solicited for this fund in lieu of subscription fees. Ralph will enlist the aid of competent 'Youth Societies' for their personal recommendation.

Plans are in process for a mid-west district meeting of the Horatio Alger Society to be held in Mendota, Ill. before June 1, 1965. Mr. Levy, Gardner and Butler are favorable, and to make the gathering worth while, we need an advance show of interest from you, the readers.

Plans could also be made for an eastern district meeting to be held in Natick, Mass. on July 18, 1965, the next anniversary of Alger's death. There are enough people interested in Alger in each district to make such gatherings worth while.

By the courtesy of Max Goldberg, I now have prints of the Alger observance held in South Natick this year. They are available in snapshot or 8X10 size. They are beautiful. I can recommend them to you. Price as yet is undetermined, but I think Max is entitled to a dollar to cover all expenses.

My Horatio Alger collection of 111 titles are now on display at the Kalamazoo Public Museum. It is a permanent exhibit, but I still retain ownership. This courtesy was extended to me by Alexis A. Praus, Curator.

Mr. Praus recently drove to Massachusetts to deliver his daughter to Wellesley College, and while in the area, his car broke down (no, it was not a museum piece) in Framingham.

Gilbert Westgard has sent me copies of the Alger engraving which we mentioned last month. They have been beautifully reproduced and would be a wonderful addition to your collection. Gilbert encloses with this newsletter, an order blank and a self addressed envelope. I notice that the price is now established at \$1.00 each, postpaid. This seems like a bargain, but his supply is limited. Mail your order early.

Harry Boniece sent me a clipping from the October 1st issue of the Chicago Tribune. On page 3, section 2 you will find that Gilbert was interviewed by columnist Robert Cromie, in regard to his current publication "ALGER STREET" (J.S. Canner & Co.) Among the complimentary references to ALGER STREET, we found that our newsletter was mentioned as well as Ralph Gardner's current publication, HORATIO ALGER, or The American Her Era (Wayside Press). When I reviewed ALGER STREET last month, I had not yet received the dust jacket, which I now have, and is a compliment to the book and to the printer (Wayside Press) They do nice work! The dust jacket again mentions the NEWSBOY and shows an excellent picture of Gilbert in front of his personal Alger collection.

Mr. Gardner says that in spite of the uncomplimentary reviews of his current biography and bibliography of Horatio Alger, Jr., by uninformed critics; there has been more of the complimentary kind, and he is especially pleased with your personal opinions which he treasures very much. Some of the uncomplimentary reviews have drawn the fire (in defense of Gardner) from our own subscribers, as well as other supporters. It seems to me that lately, Alger name is in the news, second only to the contenders of the current national election, and is used as a newsworthy mention in some of the current campaign speeches. There is one new reader on our mailing list by exchange of publications: R.J. Hussey, Editor-Publisher of the BOOKLOVER'S ANSWER, One West Main Street, Webster, New York 14580 Welcome aboard!

A TRIBUTE TO HORATIO ALGER, JR.

By Max Goldberg

Horatio Alger, Jr. was born in Revere, Massachusetts, January 13, 1832 and died in Natick, Massachusetts, sixty-five years ago on July 18, 1899. Whereas this anniversary date may pass unnoticed by the country in general, the Horatio Alger Society of America, will observe it by placing a wreath on his grave at the old Glenwood Cemetery in South Natick. The Club has awarded me the honor of representing it at the ceremonies.

Alger's writings cannot be judged by today's standards. Times change and people change with them. However, the basic elements of grit, thrift, integrity, hard work, and perseverance which he incorporated in his formula for "Success" remain as valid today as they were in his day.

In Franklin Delano Roosevelt's 2nd inaugural address he said, "One-third of the nation is ill-housed, ill-clad, and ill-nourished."

What must it have been in 1866 when Alger wrote "Ragged Dick"! No one seemed to care what became of the youngsters after a prolonged devastating war. They drifted into chaos stealing, plundering, robbing, and scavenging with no aim in life. Then Horatio Alger books made their appearance.

Mr. O'Connor of the Newsboys' Lodging Home, New York City, noticed a marked change in the attitude of the boys. They stopped stealing and swearing and seemed to have a purpose in life. He requested Alger to lecture to the boys and the former ignited dormant spirit and lit a spark of hope. Many of these same boys became successful men and rose to prominence in their chosen field of endeavor.

The late Judge Daniel J. Gillen condemned what he termed trash literature being peddled to our young people, and suggested reviving interest in Alger stories. Rabbi Joseph S. Shubow of Brighton has called for "reintroduction to the American public especially the youth of our generation, to the writings of Horatio Alger." As recently as August 1963, John J. Connelly, principal of the Ralph Waldo Emerson school of Milton, suggested some one interested in the youth of America might again publish Alger books in a revised edition. Congressman John W. McCormack of Massachusetts has said as a young man he had been an avid reader of Horatio Alger and that the books had a most constructive and influential affect upon him.

His "Phil the Fiddler" was instrumental in the enactment of the 1874 New York State Law for the "prevention of cruelty to children", the first statute of its kind in the world. No other author's work has been revived as often as has Alger's in the past sixty-five years. In less than a year two biographies have been written,

one by Tebbel and the other by Ralph Gardner published as recently as May 1964.

The American Schools and Colleges Association each year presents plaques called "Horatio Alger Awards" to the nation's ten most outstanding businessmen who have risen from humble beginnings and have earned honor and respect in their respective communities and in the nation.

Benjamin Franklin collected proverbs which he cited in giving advice to the younger generation but Alger wrote stories for them. Whenever men rise to great heights, overcoming what appear to be insurmountable barriers and handicaps, it is not unusual to hear, "It's like an Horatio Alger story" a phrase which has become a colloquialism and synonym for "Success" and which is Horatio Alger's legacy to posterity.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: The above remarks by Mr. Goldberg were prepared in advance for the Press and used verbatim by the Natick Bulletin on July 16th. The following appeared in-part on July 23rd:)

Horatio Alger, Jr., the author of scores of boys' books, who spent part of his life in Natick, and is buried in the Glenwood Cemetery, South Natick, was honored with a brief ceremony on the 65th anniversary of his death Saturday, July 18. A wreath was placed on his grave by Max Goldberg of Worcester St., the Eastern Representative of the Horatio Alger Society of America, while the Rev. E. Gordon Ferguson of the Eliot Church gave a word of welcome and offered the benediction. Representatives of the South Natick Historical Society and a few of the townspeople were on hand for the simple ceremony. In his remarks, Mr. Goldberg said: In placing a wreath upon the grave of Horatio Alger, Jr., The Horatio Alger Society of America pays tribute to his genius. It is 65 years today, since his death but the concepts of his teachings are still alive. He taught his readers that integrity, study, courage, thrift and reverence were the rounds upon the ladder of success. In a period of deep depression, when everything seemed bleak and dreary, he gave them a sort of Pandora Box, showing them the ills of the world, but keeping hope as a bulwark against despair. He antedated the practice of auto-suggestion, by telling them to have confidence in themselves, and if others can win, --so can they. In a world confronted with bigotry, avarice, and chaos, we can find an oasis in his teaching of love, kindness and altruism, the practice of which will bring about a renaissance of moral worth and toleration. And an end to--"Man's inhumanity to man."

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Space will not permit the recording of the benediction at this time. It will be presented in due time. Photographs of the ceremony are available with a good view of the monument, Mr. Goldberg, and Rev. Ferguson. Place your order with me, or Max Goldberg, 728 Worcester St. Natick, Mass. 01762. Price yet undetermined.

A DUKE IN DISGUISE By Horatio Alger Jr.
(continued from the September issue)

"My presence is required at Court!" exclaimed the beautiful Constance, as her father communicated the duke's message.

"Yes, my daughter."

"And wherefore?"

"That I know not, but as Philip is fond of beauty, he has perhaps resolved to make you a lady of the court."

"I know not whether that be desirable," said Constance, thoughtfully, "but I will at least obey the summons."

"Good," thought the father, well satisfied. "I would give something to know whether the duke will be successful in accomplishing what I have not been able to do--reconcile her to giving up Henry Dumont."

The next day, mindful of his engagement, Gaspar took his way to the palace to his daughter's wedding.

"I wish I knew who is to be the bridegroom," he said to himself. "it may be De Courcy, or again young Beaumont."

Entering the palace he was again ushered into the long audience room. A curtain concealed from view the lower end. There was present besides himself many noble lords and ladies attached to the court, and his heart swelled when he considered that all this pageant was assembled for his daughter's bridal.

As the clock sounded the curtain rose and displayed upon a raised dais the bridal party. Gaspar glanced anxiously at the bridegroom. What was his dismay when he recognized Henry Dumont richly dressed. The ceremony commenced, but such was Gaspar's bewilderment that he did not think to interfere, and the twain were declared husband and wife.

"Let the bride's father come forward," proclaimed the herald.

Gaspar advanced mechanically to a table, whereon he found awaiting his signature an instrument conveying one half his goods to Henry Dumont.

"I will not sign," he said, hastily.

"Would you rather have it wrested from you?"

"But is that justice?" said Gaspar, sulkily.

"It is just that he who defrauds should make restitution," was the stern reply.

Gaspar seized the pen and affixed his signature. The consciousness of guilt made him a coward.

Need it be said that Henry Dumont and his fair bride lived happily and prosperously, under the favor and protection of the Duke Philip, and the former received in course of time a degree of nobility in return for his faithful services. Rightly did he attribute all his prosperity to the lucky chance which led to his meeting a DUKE IN DISGUISE.

**** THE END ****

(Taken from GLEASON'S WEEKLY LINE-OF-BATTLE SHIP August 27, 1859 Vol. I No. 35

An Alger short story contributed from the collection of Gilbert Westgard II, (S-24)

MR. WILTON'S OFFICE BOY

By Horatio Alger Jr.

It was time for the office to close, but Robert Harvey, the office boy, still lingered, though the bookkeeper had told him he could go home.

"You don't seem to be in any hurry this afternoon," said the bookkeeper.

"Do you think I could see Mr. Wilton before I go?"

"What is your errand?" asked the bookkeeper, curiously.

"I thought as I had been here a year today, he might be willing to raise my salary."

"I advise you not to ask," said the bookkeeper. "Business is only so so, and you are fortunate not to be cut down."

But Robert had a special reason for preferring his request. His little sister was sick, and his mother, who derived some income from making vests for a city tailor, was unable to do as much as usual, and the result was they were hard pressed for money to buy absolute necessities. Then, again, in a week the monthly rent came due. It was but six dollars, but that seemed a large sum to Robert and his mother.

Mr. Wilton sat in his counting room when Robert entered.

"What can I do for you, Robert?" he asked.

"Mr. Wilton, it is a year today since I entered your service."

The merchant began to frown. Already he anticipated what was coming. He had just been figuring up his profits for the year. They exceeded twenty thousand dollars, but still they were two thousand behind the profits of the previous year. This annoyed him, for he confidently expected to do better.

"What then?" he asked, curtly.

"I thought you might be willing to pay me a little more salary."

"How much do I pay you now?"

"Three dollars and a half a week."

"A very fair salary for these times, Robert. The fact is, business has fallen off, and I have not done as well this year by a couple of thousand dollars as I did last year."

"Then you can't raise me?" asked Robert, in a tone of disappointment.

"Certainly not. Most men are cutting down wages. I won't do that but I can't advance you. In another year, if things are favorable, I will pay you something more."

Another year! It was a long time to wait when money was needed so much. Robert felt that there was no more to be said, and he turned away slowly, his face clouded by sadness. Mr. Wilton watched him as he went out, and felt a little twinge of regret.

"It wouldn't have cost me much to pay him a dollar a week more--only fifty-two dollars," he thought. "Still, I must consider the principle of the thing. Why should he receive more when I am getting less?"