A SON OF COURAGE

BY ARCHIE P. McKISHNIE

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CHAPTER I.—(Cont'd.)

He completed his chores and went thoughtfully back up the flower-edged path to the house. "There's one good thing about Mary's crossness," he reflected, "it don't last long. She'll be her old cheerful self ag'in by now."

But Mrs. Wilson was not her old cheerful self. Far from it. Wilson realized this fact as soon as he opened the door. She raised stern eyes to her husband as he entered.

"You see them?" she asked with sinister calmness, pointing to a patched and clay-stained pair of trousers on the floor beside her chair. "Them's Willium's. He's jest gone to bed an' I ordered him to throw 'em down to be patched."

Wilson nodded, "Yes, Mary?"

"And do you see this here object that I'm holdin' up afore your dotin' father's eyes?"

He came forward and took the object from her hand.

"It also belongs to your dear, gentle son," she grated, "leastwise I found it in one of his pants pockets."

Wilson whistled softly. "You don't say!" he managed to articulate. "Why, Mary, it's a pipe."

"Is it?"

"Yes, a corn-cob pipe," he repeated weakly.

"Is it re'lly?" she returned with sarcasm. "I wasn't sure. I thort maybe it was a fish-line, or a jack-knife. Now what do you think of your precious son?" she demanded.

Wilson shook his head. "It's a new pipe," he ventured to say, "and," sniffing the bowl, "it ain't had nuthin' more deadly than dried mullen leaves in it so far. Ain't a great deal of harm in a boy smokin' mullen leaves, shorely, Mary."

"Oh, is that so? Haven't I heered you an' Cobin Keeler say, time and ag'in, that that's how you both got the smoke habit? And look at you old chimbneys now; the pipe's never out'a your mouths."

"I'll talk things over with Billy in the mornin'," promised Wilson as he took the boot-jack from its peg.

"A pile of good you talkin' 'll do," she cried. "I'm goin' to talk things over with that boy with a hickory ram-rod, jest as soon as I feel he's proper asleep; that's what I'm goin' to do! Who's trainin' that boy, you er me?" she demanded.

"You, of course, Mary."

"Well then, you best let me be. What I feel he should get, he's goin' to get, and get right. You keep out'a this, Tom Wilson, if you want me to keep on; that's all."

"It don't seem right to wake boys up just to give 'em a whalin', Mary," he protested. "My Ma used to wake me up sometimes, but never to whale me. I'd rather remember—"

"Shut up! I tell you, I'm goin' to give him the hickory this night or I'm goin' to know the reason why. I'll break that boy of his bad habits er I'll break my arm tryin'. You let me be!"

"I'm not findin' fault with your methods of trainin' boys, Mary," her husband hastened to say. "You're doin' your best by Billy, I know that right well. And Billy is rather a tough stick of first-growth timber to whittle smooth and straight, I know that, too. But the gnarliest hickory makes the best axe-handle, so maybe he'll make a good man some day, with your help."

"Humph! well that bein' so, I'm goin' to help him see the error of his ways this night if ever I did," she promised grimly.

Something like a muffled chuckle came from behind the stairway door, but the good woman, intent on her grievance, did not hear it. Wilson heard, however, and let the boot-jack fall to the floor with a clatter. He picked it up and carried it over to its accustomed peg on the wall, whistling softly the tune which he had whistled to Billy in the old romping, astride-neck days:

Oh, you'd better be up, and away, lad,
You had better be up and away!
There is danger here in the glade, lad,
It's a heap of trouble you've made, lad—
So you'd better be up and away!

Over beside the table, Mrs. Wilson watched him from sombre eyes.

"That's right," she sighed. "Whistle! It shows all you care. That boy could do anythin' he wanted to do an' you wouldn't say a word; no, not a word!"

Wilson did not answer. He was listening for the stairs to creak, telling him that Billy had left his eavesdropping for the security of the loft.

Billy had heard and understood. When his dad sent him one of those "up and away" signals he never questioned its significance. He didn't like listening in secret, but surely, he reasoned, a boy had a right to know just what was coming to him. And he knew what was coming to him, all right—a caning from the supple hickory ramrod—maybe!

Up in the roomy loft which he and his step-brother, Anson, shared together, he lit the lamp. Anson was sleeping and Billy wondered just what he would say when he woke up in the morning and found his pants gone. Their mother had demanded that a pair of pants be thrown down to her. Billy needed his own so he had thrown down Anson's.

But how in the world was he ever going to get out of that window with Anson's bed right up against it, and Anson sleeping in the bed? Anson would be sure to hear the ladder when Walter Watland and Maurice Keeler raised it against the wall. He must get Anson up and out of that bed!

Billy placed the lamp on a chair and reaching over shook Anson's long, regular snore into fragments of little gasps. He shook harder and Anson sat up, sandy hair rumpled and pale blue eyes blinking in the light.

"What's 'amatter?" he asked sleepily.

"Hush," cautioned Billy. "Ma's downstairs wide awake and she's awful cross. What you been doin' to rile her, Anse?"

Anson frowned and scratched his head. "Did you tell her 'bout my lettin' the pigs get in the garden when I was tendin' gap this afternoon?" he asked suspiciously.

"No, it ain't that. I guess maybe she's worried more'n cross, an' she's scared too—scared stiff. Well, who wouldn't be with that awful thing prowlin' around ready to claw the insides out'a people in their sleep?"

Anson sat up suddenly.

"What you talkin' 'bout. Bill? What thing? Who's it been clawin'? Hurry up, tell me."

Billy glanced at the window, poorly protected by a cotton mosquito screen, and shivered.

"Nobody knows what it is," he whispered. "Some say it's a gorilla and others say it's a big lynx. Ol' Harry's the only one who saw it, an' he's so clawed and bit he can't describe it to nobody."

"Great Scott! Bill, you mean to say it got ol' Harry?"

Bly nodded. "Yep, last night. He was asleep when that thing climbed in his winder an' tried to suck his blood away."

"Ugh!" Anson shuddered and pulled the bedclothes up about his ears. "How did it get in, Bill? Does anybody know?"

"Well, there was a tree standin' jest outside his winder same as that tree stands outside this one. It climbed that tree and jumped through the mosquito nettin' plumb onto ol' Harry. He was able to tell the doctor that much afore he caved under."

Anson's blue eyes were staring at the wide unprotected wndow. Outside the moon swam hazily above the forest; shadows like huge, misshapen monsters prowled on the sward; weird sounds floated up and died on the still air.

"Bill," Anson's voice was shaking, "I don't feel like sleepin' longside this winder. That awful thing might come shinnin' up that tree an' gulp me up. I'm goin' down and ask Ma if I can't sleep out in the shed with Moll an' the pups."

Billy promptly scented a new danger to his plans. "If I was you I wouldn't do that, Anse," he advised.

"Well, I'm goin' to do it." Anson sat up in bed and peered onto the floor.

"Where the dickens are my pants?" he whispered. "See anythin' of 'em, Bill?"

"Anse," Billy's voice was sympathetic. "I see I have to tell you everythin'. Ma, she's goin' to give you the canin' of your young life, jest as soon as she thinks we're proper asleep."

"Canin'? Me? Whatfer?"

"Why, seems she was up here lookin' fer somethin' a little while ago. She saw your pants layin' there an' she thought maybe they needed patchin', so she took 'em down with her."

"Well, what of it?"

"Oh, nuthin', only she happened to find a pipe in one of the pockets, that's all."

"Jerusalem!" Anson's teeth chattered. "Well, I'm goin' down anyway. I don't mind a hidin', but I'm derned if I'm goin' to lay here and get clawed up by no gorilla."

"Anse, listen," Billy put a detaining hand on his brother's shoulder. "You don't need to do that, an' you needn't sleep in this bed neither. I'll sleep in it, an' you kin sleep in mine. That gorilla, er whatever it is, can't hurt me, cause I've got that rabbit-foot charm that Tom Dodge give me. I'll tie it round my neck."

Anson reflected, shuddering as a long low wail came from the forest.

"That's the boys," Billy told himself. "I've gotta move fast."

Aloud he urged: "Come on, Anse. Get out an' pile into my bed. I ain't scared to sleep in yours, not a bit. Besides," he added, "it'll save you a canin' from Ma."

"How will it, I'd like to know?"

"Why this way. Ma'll come creepin' up here in the dark, when she thinks we're asleep an' she'll come straight to this—your bed. She'll turn down the clothes an' give me a slash or two, thinkin' it's you. I'll let her baste me some—then I'll speak to her. She'll be so surprised she'll ferget all about whalin' you. She's that way, you know. Like as not she'll laugh to think she basted me—an' she'll be good-natured. You needn't worry any about a lickin', Anse."

"Well, I'll take a chance, Bill."

"All hunky," Billy whispered back. "Then come on."

But Billy plucked at the speaker's sleeve. "Wait a minute, Fatty," he urged. "Anson's up there asleep, an' he's goin' to have a wakin' nightmare in about four seconds. I jest heard Ma goin' up."

Silence, deep and brooding, fell. Then suddenly from the loft came a long wail followed by a succession of shorter gasps and gulps, and above the swish of a hickory ram-rod a woman's voice exclaiming angrily.

"I'll teach you to smoke on the sly, you young outlaw, you!"

"Now, let's get while the gettin's good," whispered Billy; and the three crept off into the shadows.

Down through the night-enshrouded woods the boys made their way noiselessly, Billy leading, Walter Watland, nicknamed Fatty on account of his size, close behind him, and Maurice Keeler, Billy's sworn chum and confident, bringing up the rear. Occasionally a soft-winged owl fluttered up from its kill, with a muffled "who-who." Once a heavy object plunged from the trail with a snort, and the boys felt the flesh along their spines creeping. They kept on without so much as a word, crossing a swift creek on a fallen tree, holding to its bank and making a detour into the woods to avoid passing close to a dilapidated log cabin which in the moonlight bore evidence of having fallen into disuse. As they skirted the heavy picket of pines, which even in the summer night's stillness sighed low and mournfully, the leader halted suddenly and a low exclamation fell from his lips.

(To be continued.)

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Anson got out of bed, his white legs gleaming in the yellow lamplight as he tiptoed softly across to Billy's cot and lay down.

Billy blew out the lamp and went through the motions of undressing. He removed one shoe, let it fall on the floor, waited an interval and let the same shoe fall again. Then he put it back on. By and by he lay down and gave a long, weary sigh. Then he held his breath and listened.

Below his window sounded a whippoorwill's call. From the opposite side of the room came the long, regular snores of Anson. Billy sat up in bed and started to remove the tacks from the window screen.

Something fell with a thud against the wall outside, and brushed against the boards. A cat mewed directly beneath the window. Gently Billy rolled the bed quilts into an oblong shape resembling a human form, then silently made his way out of the window.

His feet struck the top round of a ladder. A moment more and he was crouching in the shadow of the wall, two shadowy forms squatting beside him.

"All hunky?" a voice whispered in his ear.

Keep Minard's Liniment in the house.

MERCHANTS BANK OFFICIALS EXPRESS TEMPERED OPTIMISM REGARDING BUSINESS SITUATION

President and General Manager Review the Canadian Business Situation With Much Hope—Financial Position of the Bank an Exceptionally Strong One—Crop Outlook Encouraging.

At the annual meeting of the Merchants Bank of Canada the various reports which were presented showed that this institution occupies a commanding position in Canadian financial affairs. The addresses of the President, Sir Montagu Allan, and the General Manager, Mr. D. C. Macarow, were concise statements of present day conditions and contained an optimistic survey of the future.

The President's Address.

Sir Montagu Allan in part said: "The general depression in business, felt to a greater or lesser degree in every country in the world, has affected the business of the bank to some extent, but we hope the low point of depression has been passed, and that there will soon be a change for the better. The coal strike in England which will no doubt result in the loss of a great deal of trade, and the unrest and discontent which seems to prevail in nearly all the countries of Europe, give rise to serious financial problems to be reckoned with, but no man in this country who is strong and healthy can afford to be a pessimist for any length of time. The known and undeveloped resources are sufficient to ensure future prosperity.

New Issue of Stock.

"As mentioned in last year's report a further issue of $2,100,000 of new stock was made, making the paid-up capital of the bank $10,500,000, and by the transfer of the premium on the new stock to the rest account, the rest now stands at $9,450,000.

"The shareholders of the bank now number 2,997, as against 2,622 in 1920, being an increase of 375 during the year."

Current loans and discounts stand at $109,183,000, as against $113,198,000 last year. It will be seen, therefore, that this bank continues to extend its ample share of assistance to the industries of the country.

General Manager is Optimistic.

Following the president's concise yet comprehensive review of the situation, as reflected in the year's statements, said Mr. Macarow, there is little left for me to add beyond, perhaps, a word or two by way of amplification.

It will be observed that in comparison with last year's figures our total assets show a shrinkage of about $7,000,000, or, roughly, 3½ per cent. which, in view of all the surrounding circumstances, must be regarded as a satisfactory showing, the liquid position being well maintained the while.

The trend of our interest-bearing deposits for the same period has been steadily upward, an increase in that department of about $7,000,000 being shown, but this gain has been more than offset by the decline in the total ordinary deposits. A year ago, however, under the heading of demand deposits, a sum of about $8,000,000 stood to the credit of the Government in connection with Victory Loan payments. This amount, which, of course, was of a purely temporary nature, was withdrawn during the year so that, after making allowance for it, the total deposits and total assets about held their own, a satisfactory achievement we have no doubt you will agree.

Crop Reports Are Promising.

Crop conditions throughout the country are at the present moment exceptionally promising. If I may say a word as to general conditions it will be one of tempered optimism, having a due comprehension of the many difficulties which require to be met but having, at the same time, a proper appreciation of the actual and potential riches of this country.

There are indications that the monetary position, broadly speaking, is less stringent and that the general liquidity of credit now in evidence is continuing to develop further.

Altogether, and in a word, it is not difficult to be an optimist as to the future of "Canada Unlimited," to borrow the apt expression recently used by an eminent Canadian.

The Board of Directors was re-elected, with Sir H. Montagu Allan as President and F. Howard Wilson as Vice-President.

Woman's Sphere

A Community Canning Kitchen.

Here is the story of a successful neighborhood canning kitchen. Possibly there is need for one in your community this summer.

It is eight a.m. Mrs. Burlingame has just received ten bushels of peas, a bushel of currants and some raspberries. Part of these were purchased by the Kitchen, others were brought in by farmers and housewives to be canned by the Kitchen. By ten o'clock, with the help of three or four school children who have come in early in order to earn credits for their domestic science class, the raspberries have been placed in the jars and are cooking, the currants have been sorted and cleaned, and the peas are being shelled.

The telephone bell rings: "Mrs. Burlingame? This is Mrs. Smith. I am sending you two dozen pints of raspberries to-day to be made into a jam."

"Very well," replies Mrs. Burlingame, "but you should bring them before eleven o'clock, for Mr. Kendrick is bringing in a few more bushels of peas for me to do this afternoon. Excuse me, Mrs. Smith, I must start the currants to drip right away. Goodbye."

As she leaves the telephone, Mrs. Kilby enters the Kitchen.

"How do you do, Mrs. Kilby? You brought in half a pck of peas to do some canning yourself? Well, just use that stove over there. You may use this eighteen quart aluminum kettle and this wash-boiler. How much do we charge for gas? Five cents an hour for each burner used. Any time you want me to help you about the canning let me know, and I shall be glad to spare a few minutes."

Mrs. Burlingame goes to the telephone: "318W. Hello, Mrs. Carpenter? My assistant, Mrs. Dow, won't be here until afternoon to-day and Mrs. Smith and Farmer Kendricks are bringing in a lot more stuff; I wish you would come over to help me. The Kitchen can give you forty cents an hour. Do come and bring your lunch with you. I will expect you at one o'clock."

Just as the jelly is being poured into tumblers, in comes Mrs. Blank: "Good-morning, Mrs. Burlingame. I want to place my order with you for my fall canning. You see, I am going away for the summer and will not be able to do a single bit myself."

"Very well, here's our price-list by the single jar and by the dozen. Let me show you some of the work we are doing this morning, just that you may get an idea as to the kind and quality you may expect. All the fruit is carefully hand-picked and sorted, then washed thoroughly. We use only the best quality of fruit."

Thus it goes all day long—visitors coming in, telephone calls asking how to do certain processes in canning, persons coming in to order goods or to sell their surplus produce to the Kitchen, and three or four different canning operations all going at the same time. About two or three times each day, the manager comes in to see if Mrs. Burlingame needs any more help, to see if the supply of vegetables and fruits is sufficient, and to help in any way he can. About five or six o'clock, or if the work is especially rushed, about eight or nine o'clock, Mrs. Burlingame gives him an account of the day's work. When the accounts of all different lots for the day have been completed, and the Kitchen has been cleaned, the business is closed. This hour is supposed to be at six o'clock, but more often an unusual amount of business requires work until nine or ten o'clock, and sometimes it is even necessary to open the Kitchen on the day following.

Caring For Your Feet.

How do your feet feel? Young, strong, and ready for all the hard work you put upon them? Or are they old, tired, and full of aches and pains? If they are not in good condition, do give them attention. Wrinkles, you know, and a down-in-the-mouth look can be traced straight to painful, neglected feet. Don't wear tight shoes or short stockings, and don't forget that your feet need just as many baths as you have time to give them. If your feet are dry or cold, or here are uric acid deposits between your toes, try an alternate foot bath. It will quickly stimulate the circulation and make your feet feel young and ready for work. Incidentally, it will make you better looking.

The alternate foot bath acts as a general tonic for the nerves and other tissues. The way you take it is this: Place the feet in hot water for two minutes, then plunge them into cold water. Keep them there thirty seconds. Repeat this a number of times, always starting with the hot water and finishing with the cold plunge.

To tone up your feet, try an alcohol rub. Toilet vinegar is also excellent to use if it's difficult to get the alcohol. This hardens the feet, and rests them, too. Then there is a bath oil which has a wonderfully soothing effect if rubbed well into the feet after the daily bath. This oil is not only soothing, but also strengthening, and has the refreshing odor of balsam pine about it. Tired feet like powder. An unscented talcum is good to use, and there are powders for this purpose which relieve perspiration and also act as a deodorant.

If you are on your feet a great deal, there are creams that will take out the aches and soothe the tired nerves. A cream rub, at least once a week, will be found most beneficial. If you need arch supporters, don't wear them one day and forget them the next. If they are made of the right material and fit your feet perfectly, they should be worn all the time.

Don't forget that in caring for your feet you are taking a big step toward looking your best.

Diphtheria.

Diphtheria is an inflammation usually of the mucous membrane of the throat and the larynx and is marked by a fibrinous exudation that forms a more or less thick adherent coating.

When the disease affects the larynx the coating tends to suffocate the patient by blocking the air passage in his throat; but the chief danger there as well as in other spots that diphtheria especially attacks is that the toxins of the germs will cause blood-poisoning. The toxins may also weaken the heart to a dangerous degree.

In an ordinary case of diphtheria the beginning is likely to be sudden; the patient's temperature rises rapidly, his throat becomes sore, he loses his appetite and feels generally weak. On looking into his mouth the doctor sees increased redness of the mucous membrane that covers the tonsils and the back of the throat; soon whitish patches appear and gradually enlarge until they cover the whole surface with a tough, adherent, felt-like membrane.

Sometimes the attack begins slowly, and both the local inflammation and the general symptoms take several days fully to develop. In favorable cases the symptoms disappear in the course of a few days, and the patient gradually recovers his health. In severe cases the patient's constitutional depression increases, his heart grows weak and, unless treatment is prompt and energetic, death supervenes.

Antitoxin offers the only hopeful remedy for diphtheria, and even antitoxin may fail unless it is given early and in large doses. Rather than wait for the disease to appear it is often wise to give a preventive vaccination of a mixture of the toxin and the antitoxin. That makes the child immune to the germ just as vaccine does in smallpox. If the preventive action of the toxin-antitoxin were more widely known and all parental prejudice against it overcome, diphtheria would in a short time be as rare as smallpox.

Iceland Spar.

One of the most interesting of nature's processes is that by which cracks in volcanic rocks are filled in with materials brought up in hot solutions from the bowels of the earth. It is by this means that "veins" and "lodes" of gold and silver are formed.

In the eastern part of Iceland there is a locality where such cracks in rocks have been filled in with a pure carbonate of lime which forms clear and beautiful crystals. These crystals, called "Iceland spar," have a peculiar property of "polarizing" light, which makes them valuable for use in connection with microscopes and other optical instruments.

Within the last few years deposits of Iceland spar have been discovered in Montana, and in the Warner Range in California. Efforts are being made to develop them.

Minard's Liniment used by Physicians

Not Born at All.

In a suburban school recently a little Swede presented himself for instruction.

"What is your name?" the teacher asked.

"Young Olson," he said.

"How old are you?"

"Ay not know how old Ay bane."

"Well, when were you born?"

"Ay bane not born at all; Ay got a stepmutter."

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