A SON OF COURAGE

BY ARCHIE P. McKISHNIE

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CHAPTER III.

Appraising the New Teacher.

The morning wood-mists were warm, sweet-scented; the wood-birds' song of thanksgiving was glad with the essence of God-given life. But the man astride the dejected and weary horse saw none of the beauties of his surroundings, heard none of the harmony, experienced none of the exhilaration of the life all about him, as he rode slowly down the winding trail between the trees. He sat erect in his saddle, eyes fixed straight before him. His face was strong and seamed with tiny lines. The prominence of his features was accentuated by the thinness of the face. Beady black eyes burned beneath the shadows of heavy brows. A shock of iron-grey hair brushed his soulders. In one hand he held a leather-bound book, a long thumb fixed on the printed page from which his attention had been momentarily diverted by his survey of the woodland scene.

"Desolation!" he murmured, "desolation! the natural home of ignorance."

At the sound of his voice the old horse stood still. "Thomas," cried the rider sternly, "did I command you to halt?"

From his leather boot-leg he extracted a long wand of seasoned hickory and brought it down on the bay flank with a cutting swish. The hickory represented the symbol of progress to Mr. George G. Johnston, the new teacher of Scotia school. Certain it was it had the desired effect in this particular instance. The aged horse broke into a jerky gallop which soon carried the rider out into more open country.

Here farms, hemmed in by rude rail fences, looked up from valley and hillside. Occasionally a house of greater pretensions than its fellows, and built of unplaned lumber, gleamed in the morning sunlight in gay contrast to the dun-colored log ones. But the eternal forest, the primitive offering of earth's first substance, obtruded even here, and the rider's face set in a frown as he surveyed the vista before him.

Descending into a valley he saw that the farm homes, which from the height seemed closely set together, were really quite a distance from each other. He reined up before a small frame house and, dismounting, allowed his hungry horse to crop the grass, as he opened the gate and made up the path. A shaggie collie bounded around the corner of the building and down to meet him, bristles erect and all the antagonism of a bush-dog for a stranger in its bearing. It was followed by a big man and a boy.

"Here you, Joe, come back here and behave yourself," the master thundered and the dog turned and slunk back along the path.

"Mornin', sir," greeted Cobin Keeler.

In one hand he carried a huge butcher-knife, in the other a long whetstone. More big knives glittered in the leather belt about his waist. "Jest sharpenin' my knives ag'in the hog-killin'," he explained, noting the stranger's startled look.

The teacher advanced, his fears at rest. "My name is Johnston," he said, "George G. Johnston. I was directed here, sir. You are Mr. Keeler, are you not, one of the trustees of the school of which I am to have charge?"

Keeler thrust out a huge hand. "That's me," he answered. "You're jest in time fer breakfast. It's nigh ready. Come 'round back an' wash up. Maurice, go put the teacher's horse in the stable and give him a feed."

The teacher followed his host, gingerly rubbing the knuckles which had been left blue by the farmer's strong grip.

The boy, who had been studying the man before him, turned away to execute his father's order. If he knew anything about teachers—and he did—he and the other lads of the community were in for a high old time, he told himself. He went down to the gate, the dog trotting at his heels.

"Joe," he commanded, "go back home," and the collie lay down on the path, head between his forepaws.

The boy went out through the gate and approached the feeding horse cautiously. His quick eyes appraised its lean sides and noted the long welt made by the hickory on the clearly outlined ribs beneath the bay hide.

"Poor ol' beggar," he said gently.

At the sound of his voice the horse lifted his head and gazed at the boy in seeming surprise. A wisp of grass dangled from his mouth; his ears pricked forward. Perhaps something in the boy's voice recalled a voice he had known far back along his checkered life, when he was a colt and a bare-legged youngster fed him sugar and rode astride his back.

"He ought'a get a taste o' the gad hisself," muttered Maurice. "An' he's goin' to be our teacher, oh, Gosh! Well, I kin see where me an' Billy Wilson gets ourn—maybe."

He patted the horse's thin neck. "Come, ol' feller, I'll stuff you with good oats fer once," he promised.

The horse reached forward his long muzzle and lipped one of the boy's ears. "Say horses don't understand!" grinned Maurice. "Gee! I guess maybe they do understand, though."

He gave the horse another pat and led him down the path into the stable. As he unsaddled him Maurice noticed the hickory wand which Mr. Johnston had left inserted between the upper loops of a stirrup.

"Hully gee! ol' feller, look!" Maurice extracted the wand and held it up before the animal's gaze. "Oh, don't put your ears back an' grin at me. I ain't goin' to use it on you," laughed the lad. "Look! This is what I'm goin' to do with the ol' bruiser's pointer." From a trouser's pocket he extracted a jackknife. "Now, horsie, jest you watch me close. The next time he makes a cut at you he's goin' to get the surprise of his life. There, see? I've cut it through. Now I'll jest rub on some of this here clay to hide the cut. There you be! If I know anythin' 'bout seasoned hickory that pointer's goin' to split into needles right in his hand. I hope they go through his ol' fist and clinch on t'other side."

Maurice gave the tired horse a feed of oats, tossed a bundle of timothy into the manger, slapped the bay flank once again and went up the path to his breakfast.

Mrs. Keeler, a swarthy woman, almost as broad as she was tall, and with an habitual cloud of gloom on her features, met him at the door. She was very deaf and spoke in the loud, querulous tone so often used by people suffering from that affliction.

"Have you seen him?" she shouted. "What you think of him, Maurice?"

Maurice drew her outside and closed the door. "Come over behind the woodpile, Ma, an' I'll tell you," he answered cautiously.

"No, tell me here."

"Can't. He might hear me."

"Then you ain't took to the new teacher, Maurice?"

"Not what you'd notice, Ma. He ain't any like Mr. Stanhope. His face—I ain't likin' it a bit. Besides, Ma, he flogs his poor horse somethin' awful."

"How do you know that?" asked the mother, eyeing him sharply.

"Cause he left long welts on him. He's out in the stable. Go see fer yourself."

"No, I ain't got time. I got t' fry some more eggs an' ham. Go 'long in to your breakfast, an' see you keep your mouth shut durin' the meal. An' look here," she admonished, "if I ketch you apullin' the cat's tail durin' after-breakfast prayers I'll wallop you till you can't stand."

Maurice meekly followed his mother inside and slipped into his accustomed place at the table.

Mr. Johnston was certainly doing justice to the crisp ham and eggs on the platter before him. Occasionally he lifted his black eyes to flash a look at his host, who was entertaining him with the history of the settlement and its people.

"You'll find Deacon Ringold a man whose word is as good as his bond," Cobin was saying. "I'm married to his sister, Hannah, but I ain't sayin' this on that account. The deacon is a right good livin' man, fond of his own opinions an' all that, an' close on a bargain, but a good Christian man. He's better off than anybody else in these parts. But what he got he got honest. I'll say that, even if he is my own brother-in-law."

"Yes, yes," spoke Mr. Johnston, impatiently. "No doubt I shall get to know Mr. Ringold very well. Now, sir, concerning your other neighbors?" Mr. Johnston held a dripping yolk of egg poised, peering from beneath his brows at his host.

"Well, there's the Proctors, five families of 'em an' every last one of 'em a brother to the other."

"Meaning, I presume, that there are five brothers by the name of Proctor living in the community."

"By Gosh, you've hit it right on the head. That's what eddication does fer a man—makes him sharp as a razor. Yes, they're brothers an' so much alike all I've got to do is describe one of 'em an' you have 'em all."

"Remarkable," murmured Mr. Johnston. "Remarkable, indeed!"

"Did you say more tea, teacher?" Mrs. Keeler was at his elbow, steaming tea-pot in hand.

"Thank you, I will have another cup," Mr. Johnston answered, and turned his eyes back to Cobin.

"You have a neighbor named Stanhope, my predecessor, I understand," he said slowly.

"I'm proud to say we have, sir," beamed Keeler, "an' a squarer, finer young man never lived. A mighty good teacher he was, too, let me tell you."

"I have no doubt. I have heard sterling reports of him; if he erred in his task it was because he was too lenient. Tell me, Mr. Keeler, is there not some history attached to him concerning a will or property left by a man by the name of Scroggie? I'll admit I have no motive in so questioning save that of curiosity, but one wishes to know all one can learn about the man one is to follow. Is that not so, ma'am?" he asked, turning to the watchful hostess.

"More ham? Certainly." Mrs. Keeler came forward with a platter, newly fried, and scraped two generous slices onto Mr. Johnston's plate. "Now, sir, don't you be afeared to holler out when you want more," said the hospitable housewife.

"Ma's deafness makes her misunderstan' sometimes," Cobin explained in an undertone to the teacher. "But I was just about to tell you Mr. Stanhope's strange history, sir, an' about ol' Scroggie's will. You see the Stanhopes was the very first to drop in here an' take up land, father an' son named Frank, who wasn't much more'n a boy, but with a mighty good eddication.

Roger Stanhope didn't live long but while he lived he was a right good sort of man to folker an' before he died he had the satisfaction of seein' the place in which he was one of the first to settle grow up into a real neighborhood. Young Frank had growed into a big, strappin' feller by this time an' took hold of the work his father had begun, an' I must say he did marvels in the clearin' an' burnin'.

"So things went along fer a few years. Then come a letter from England to Roger Stanhope. Frank read it to me. Seems they wanted Stanhope back home, if he was alive; if not they wanted his son to come. Frank didn't even answer that letter. He says to me, 'Mr. Keeler, this spot's good enough fer me.' An' by gosh! he stayed.

"When this settlement growed big enough fer a school, young Frank, who had a school teacher's di-ploma, offered to teach it. His farm was pretty well cleared by this time, so he got a man named Henry Burke to work it fer him an' Burke's wife to keep house. That was five years ago, an' Frank has taught the Valley School ever since, till now."

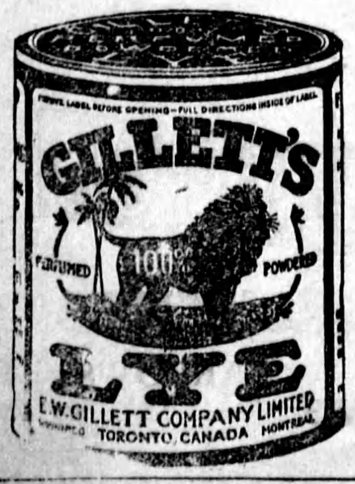
Keeler paused, and sighed deeply. "'Course, sir, you've heerd what happened an' how? He was tryin' to save some horses from a burnin' stable. A blazin' beam fell across his face; his eyes they—" Keeler's voice grew husky.

"I've heard," said Mr. Johnston. "His was a brave and commendable act."

"But he did a braver thing than that," cried Cobin. "He give up the girl who was to marry him, 'cause, he said, his days from now on must be useless ones, an' he wouldn't bind the woman he loves to his blealness an' blackness. Them was his very words, sir."

To this Mr. Johnston made no audible reply. He simply nodded, waiting with suspended fork, for his narrator to resume.

(To be continued.)



Minard's Liniment for Dandruff.

A Brigand of the Air.

He lives in India, and is called a kite-hawk. He is one of the most brazen thieves going, and for audacity beats Raffles into a cocked hat. Here is an instance of his method of working.

A little girl set off for school carrying her lunch in her hand. There came a whirring of wings as a huge brown bird dropped out of the sky. The little girl proceeded on her way crying, while the kite-hawk overhead enjoyed the feed his talons had snatched from her hand.

Notwithstanding their thieving propensities, these birds must not be killed, as they are the natural scavengers of India. However, British troops stationed in the country have a method of their own of dealing with the kite-hawks. A blanket spread on the ground, with a piece of meat thrown on to it, forms a trap.

A marauding bird sees the meat, makes a swoop for it, and tries to make off. But his sharp talons have entered the blanket, which lifts as he rises, and the soldiers who have been waiting seize the blanket and pull down and capture the bird.

A long strip of paper, dipped in paraffin, is then tied to his tail, ignited, and the bird released. Away he goes up into the sky with a flaming tail behind him. Beyond a slight singeing, no injury accrues to the bird. This idea is sometimes used at a football match, where birds are released with a burning strip attached to them to record each goal.

An old syce, subject to fits, was once sent to a barrack stables with a saddle, and on the way was seized with a fit. A native friend of the old man, happening to pass along, and thinking to do him a kindness, took the saddle and delivered it to the barracks. On coming round, the old syce, finding the saddle gone, walked on to the barracks. An officer, knowing the saddle was safe, but pretending to be angry, asked the native where it was.

"Kite-hawk took him, sahib," was the amusing answer.

Fighting Version.

"Suppose, Bobbie, that another boy should strike your right cheek," asked the teacher, "what would you do?"

"Give him the other cheek to strike," said Bobbie.

"That's right," said the teacher.

"Yessum," said Bobbie, "and if he struck that I'd paralyze him."

Proud Mother—"Claude has learned to play the piano in no time." Musician—"Yes, he's playing just like that now!"

The industrious apprentice who buries himself in details may easily become the most ineffective of men. —Bonar Law.

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Woman's Sphere

The Practical Nurse.

There are women who are past youth and have entered middle age who are competent to handle certain cases of illness quite as well as the nurse who has had hospital training; and, as a rule, these practical nurses expect fewer privileges and adapt themselves more readily to homes where luxuries are not common, than do the professional nurses.

A practical nurse should never be engaged to take charge of surgical cases, serious injuries, or illnesses requiring expert care. Such cases require the best skill and the most up-to-date methods of treatment. But in caring for persons debilitated by old age, simple accident cases, and cases requiring only faithfulness and general care, the practical nurse can render service which will be as satisfactory as that given by the professional nurse, while the compensation will average from one-third to one-half the amount received by the professional.

Unfortunately, families sometimes make the mistake of treating a practical nurse as if she were housemaid and nurse combined. A faithful nurse will stay by a case until the patient is well, even though she has housework put upon her, but she will never be eager to return to a household where the nurse's rights are ignored.

It shows great lack of consideration to demand both day and night duty with the addition, perhaps, of chores having no connection with the nursing. People who are unaccustomed to the care of the sick do not realize how much is demanded of the nurse during the night (when patients are usually at their worst) and how necessary it is for the nurse to have a few hours off duty during the day.

For sensible, cheerful, tactful women of twenty-five years and over, possessing health and some little experience in taking care of the sick, a field is opening just now that promises much. It is for women who can obey the doctor's orders, who have tact with sick children or elderly people, who can protect themselves from imposition and not break down in health, who can pick and choose their places. Such women enjoy the work and receive good wages for almost fifty-two weeks in the year. The woman who contemplates such a career should be neat in dress, cheerful in disposition, not given to gossip, and should be sure that she will be equal to the tasks which a nurse is called upon to perform.

There are difficult cases and easy cases, homes where good food is served and homes in which the food is poor. There are families who realize that a nurse is a human being, and families who look upon a nurse as a machine, and invalids who are exacting as well as those who are brave and patient. In fact, every profession has its own problems; and while those of the nursing profession may seem somewhat more difficult to solve, the woman who takes up nursing has few expenses and the demands upon her salary are very small.

The family needing the services of a practical nurse should endeavor to find the very best woman available for this service, and should pay her promptly and without haggling. They should also see to it that the nurse has her regular hours of absence from the sick-room, provide her with good nourishing food, a good bed and the heartiest co-operation possible to give. Anything that helps conserve the health and strength of the nurse helps the patient and that is the important consideration after all.

Nor should the family fail to provide proper equipment for the sick-room. A practical woman will make no unreasonable demands; but no one can keep a patient comfortable with but a limited supply of bed linen, towels, old muslin and flannel, and every patient should have a bathrobe, bedroom slippers and a goodly supply of nightdresses or nightshirts.

Addition by Subtraction.

"We must build on to the house this spring, John," said Mrs. Ashby last year.

"There can't be any addition to this house until the cost of building goes down," Mr. Ashby replied. "I know we are crowded, but if you'd get rid of the things we don't need we'd have room enough."

Mrs. Ashby, of course, didn't believe him, then. But one day she returned from a call on a neighbor and tried to see her own house with her husband's eyes. The neighbor's furnishings were not elaborate—a few well-chosen pictures, substantial furniture of good lines, a vase with a scarlet tulip glowing against a gray background; but the effect was one of luxurious restfulness. The living room was not filled with a clutter of things; there was a feeling of spaciousness.

Mrs. Ashby's pictures were not, as her friends were, keyed to the same note. She had too many chairs and cushions, too many jardinieres; her desk was littered with magazines six months old. She could see that her crowded rooms would gain space and restfulness if she could bring herself to take out every article that the family did not use. Not only her living rooms, but her bedroom, the closets, the bureau drawers, and above all the attic, were crowded with a clutter of things that were "too good to throw away," and that "might come in handy." To the inherited instinct to hold on to what she had, Mrs. Ashby firmly said: "I must have the restfulness that comes from an uncluttered room. I am not giving these things away, though the Salvation Army will think it is getting them as a gift. No, I am swapping them for room."

The next day the Salvation Army man came with his truck, cleared out the non-essentials and left the welcome space.

Did it hurt?

It did, but the attic became a fine big room at the top of the house, which the children love. The other rooms have taken on a new charm. The Ashbys have not built, but they have the addition that came from subtraction.

Rhubarb Jam.

Eight cups of rhubarb, cut up, five cups of sugar, one cup of raisins, and the pulp of one orange. Put sugar over rhubarb and let it stand several hours, then add raisins and oranges and boil slowly for several hours. Can be cooked in the oven when it will not take so much watching. Or set it on an asbestos mat.

Avoiding Accidents.

Take precautions against accidents to the children. Never put a pail of hot water on the floor or on table or bench where it can be reached by these rollicking, careless folk. Also be sure the spout of the teakettle is turned away from the outside edges of your gas range. The steam will not come out of it then on your child's face or arms as he rushes past, but will escape toward the back of the stove. Take the same precaution with the handles of all kettles. Turn them away from the front of the stove so that they will not be pulled down by inquisitive fingers.

Rest Your Brains.

Those who work their brains strenuously during the greater part of the day should take certain precautions.

It is a good plan, after sitting a long while over your work, to walk round the room on one's toes.

A quite short walk out of doors will clear and freshen the head before going to bed. If, however, this is not possible, open the window, and breathe in the cool night air for a few minutes.

A cup of warm milk taken the last thing is both soothing and sleep-provoking.

Then, if possible, the last half hour before retiring should be spent in some entirely different occupation from that which has been carried on during the day. A student should indulge in music; a business man read light literature; a woman who has been running about at household jobs al day should sit down with an interesting book. In this way both mind and body will receive a kind of preparation for the repose of the night.

Minard's Liniment for Burns, etc.

Cooking With Sunshine Direct

Dr. C. G. Abbot, director of the Smithsonian Institution's astro-physical observatory, has during the last year perfected a very curious and interesting machine for utilizing the sun's rays.

He calls it a "solar cooker," and says that it will do anything in the cooking line except fry.

A half-cylinder of aluminum, with polished mirror-like inner surface of 100 square feet, focuses the sun's rays upon a blackened tube—the latter running lengthwise of the cylinder and occupying the position of its axis.

Above is a metal tank in which are two ovens, one above the other. In these the cooking is done.

Thre above-mentioned tube is filled with oil, and from the upper end of the half-cylinder (which slants toward the sun) it extends upward into the tank, through the latter, and down and out again, continuing downward to the lower end of the half-cylinder, where it turns upward again to form the blackened "axis" pipe. It is, in a word, an endless tube, running through the half-cylinder, up into the tank, out again, and around from below.

The tube contains oil, which, expanded in the blackened part of it by the sun's heat, ascends into the tank to heat the ovens. As it cools it descends, to be continually replaced by fresh heated oil. The operation is absolutely automatic, all the work being done by the sun, and the ovens are kept hot as long as the sun shines.

Excellent bread, meat dishes, vegetables and canned fruits were cooked last summer in this machine by Mrs. Abbot, who was much envied by the ladies of the neighborhood for her cool outdoor kitchen and for the ingenious apparatus which furnished heat without fuel.

NURSES

The Toronto Hospital for Incurables, in affiliation with Bellevue and Allied Hospitals, New York City, offers a three years' Course of Training to young women, having the required education, and desirous of becoming nurses. This Hospital has adopted the eight-hour system. The pupils receive uniforms of the School, a monthly allowance and travelling expenses to and from New York. For further information apply to the Superintendent.

A Forest of Gems.

Among the many wonders of the south-western States, the Petrified Forest of Arizona must take high rank.

On the maps it is called Chalcedony Park, but the people of Arizona always speak of it as the Petrified Forest. Neither name is very descriptive. It is not a forest and it is not a peak; nor are the trees petrified, in the ordinary acceptation of that term, for instead of having been changed into stone, the wood has been agatized.

It is probable that the forest once covered hundreds of square miles, for agatized trunks, logs, and bits of wood are found throughout a great radius of country. It occupies now about a thousand acres. None of the trees are standing.

The strangest thing about them is that every one is composed of semi-precious stones. There are millions and millions of amethysts; and there is chalcedony of every hue, jasper, topaz, carnelian, onyx, and every imaginable variety of agate.

The greatest wonder of the Petrified Forest is the celebrated Agate Bridge. This is a huge tree trunk, a hundred feet in length, spanning a sixty-foot canyon. The entire tree is made up of agates, jaspers, chalcedony, and other highly-colored and handsome stones. In the canyon, directly below the Agate Bridge, is a pool of water, and around it grow the only trees in the whole country.

There are no true precious stones to be found in Chalcedony Park—no diamonds, rubies, or sapphires; but the chips and bits of wood covering the ground are as brilliant as if they were precious gems, and the specimen hunter is bewildered by the rich display and finds himself at a loss as to what to take and what to leave.

For hundreds of years the Indians resorted to this strange forest for the material with which they made their arrow-heads, and many samples of these arrow-heads, as perfect as any in existence, have been gathered into various collections.

Keeping Pace With Time.

The division of the day into a certain number of hours, minutes, and seconds is a purely arbitrary measure intended to simplify the process of keeping account of time and scheduling various events which must occur at the same time each day.

Since the dawn of history the revolutions of the heavenly bodies have formed the basis for the measurement of time. These revolutions are three in number—the revolution of the earth upon its axis, which forms the foundation for our twenty-four-hour day; the changes in the appearance of the moon, which consume approximately twenty-nine and a half days and form the basis for the month; and the yearly motion of the earth around the sun.

The sub-division of the time the earth takes to revolve upon its axis into the twenty-four spaces we know as hours is comparatively recent. In the time of Homer only four such divisions were recognized—morning day, evening, and night.

Early Jewish historians record the fact that the night and the day were each divided into eight parts or "watches," a custom followed also by the Romans, who referred to the first, second, third, and fourth vigils of the day——vesper, evening, midnight, and cockcrow. Each of these spaces was three hours in length, the first vigil starting at what we call six o'clock in the morning. But as the Romans started their daily time-keeping at sunrise it followed that their summer vigils were longer than their winter ones—a condition which led to the adoption of the modern division of time into hours, each of a certain exact length.

Sterling.

In this country the word sterling, when stamped on silver, means simply that the manufacturer declares the article to be made of silver eleven twelfths fine; but the British marks, arranged in a column, give a sort of history of the article. Usually the first mark is the maker's sign; next comes a mark that shows where the article was made—for London, a leopard's head; for Birmingham, an anchor; and for Sheffield, famous for its silver, a crown. Dublin has the Irish harp, and Chester uses the city arms. The third mark, a lion, indicates the standard of fineness. The date mark, a letter usually comes last. Since each city uses a different system for indicating the year when the article was made, it is necessary to know the "plate" of the town in order to find the date of a particular piece.

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