A SON OF COURAGE

BY ARCHIE P. McKISHNIE

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Synopsis of Preceding Chapters.

Billy Wilson, who lives with his father and stepmother and her son Anson, is the leader among the boys of Scotia, a pioneer settlement near Lake Erie. Cobin Keeler, one of the trustees, is telling the new teacher, Mr. Johnston, about his predecessor, Frank Stanhope, who was blinded while trying to save horses from a burning stable. A will made by a wealthy hermit, Scroggie, in Stanhope's favor could not be found. Billy and Maurice Keeler go fishing.

CHAPTER IV.—(Cont'd.)

They had topped a wooded hill and were descending into a wide green valley, studded with clumps of red willows and sloping towards a winding stretch of pale green rushes through which the white face of the creek flashed as though in a smile of welcome. Red winged blackbirds clarioned shrilly from rush and cat-tail. A brown bittern rose solemnly and made across the marsh in ungainly flight. A blue crane, frogging in the shallows, paused in its task with its long neck stretched, then got slowly to wing, long pipe-stem legs thrust straight out behind. A pair of nesting black ducks arose with soft quacks and drifted up and out, bayward.

Billy, who stood still to watch them, was recalled suddenly to earth by his companion's voice.

"Bill, our punt's gone!"

With a bound, Billy was beside him, and peering through the rushes into the tiny bay in which they kept their boat.

"Well, Gee whitticker!" he exclaimed. "Who do you s'pose had the nerve to take it?"

Maurice shook his head. "None of our gang 'ud take it," he said. "Likely some of them Sand-sharks."

"That's so," Billy broke off a marsh-flag and champed it in his teeth.

Maurice was climbing a tall poplar standing on the bank of the creek. "I say, Billy," he cried excitedly. "There she is, jest 'round the bend. They've beached her in that piece of woods. It's Joe LaRose an' Art Shipley that took her, I'll bet a cookie. They're always goin' 'cross there to hunt fer turtle's eggs."

"Then come on!" shouted Billy.

"Where to?"

"Down opposite the punt. I'm goin' t' strip an' swim across after her."

Maurice dropped like a squirrel from the poplar. "An' leave them boat thieves stranded?" he panted. "Oh gosh! but won't that serve 'em right!"

"Let's hustle," urged Billy. "They may come back any minute."

They ran quickly up the valley, Billy unfastening his few garments as they ran. By the time Billy had reached the bend he was in readiness for the swim across. Without a thought of the long leeches—"blood-suckers" the boys called them—which lay on the oozy bottom of the creek's shallows ready to fasten on the first bare foot that came their way, he waded out toward the channel.

"Bill, watch out!" warned Maurice. "There's a big womper coiled on that lily-root. You're makin' right fer it."

"I see it," returned Billy. "I guess I ain't scared of no snakes in these parts."

"But this beggar is coiled," cried his friend. "If he strikes you, he'll rip you wide open with his horny nose. Don't go, Bill."

"Bah! he's uncoilin', Maurice; he'll slip off, see if he don't. There, what did I tell you?" as the long mottled snake slide softly into the water. "You can't tell me anythin' 'bout wompers."

"But what if a snappin'-turtle should get hold of your toe?" shuddered Maurice.

"Shut up!" Billy commanded. "Do you want them Sand-sharks to hear you? You keep still now, I'm goin' after our punt."

Billy was out in mid-stream now, swimming with swift, noiseless strokes toward the boat. Just as he reached it the willows along shore parted and two boys, both larger than himself, made a leap for the punt. Billy threw himself into the boat and as the taller of the two jumped for it his fist shot out and caught him fairly on the jaw. He toppled back half into the water. Billy seized the paddle and swung it back half over his shoulder. The other boy halted in his tracks. Another moment and the punt was floating out in midstream.

LaRose had crawled to shore and sat dripping and sniffling on the bank.

"Now, maybe the next time you boat-thieves find a punt you'll think twice afore you take it," shouted Billy.

"How're we goin' to get back 'cross the crick?" whined the vanquished LaRose.

"Swim it, same's I did," Billy called back.

"But the snakes an' turtles!" wailed the marooned pair.

"You gotta take a chance. I took one." Billy urged the punt forward across the creek to where the grinning and highly delighted Maurice waited.

"Jump in here, an' let's get fishin'."

Maurice lost no time. "Where'll we go, Bill?"

"Up to the mouth. There's green bass up there an' lots of small frogs, if we need 'em, fer bait."

CHAPTER V.

A Wilderness Merchant.

Caleb Spencer, proprietor of the Twin Oaks store, paused at his garden gate to light his corncob pipe. The next three hours would be his busy time. The farmers of Scotia would come driving in for their mail and to make necessary purchases of his wares. His pipe alight to his satisfaction, Caleb crossed the road, then stood still in his tracks to fasten his admiring gaze on the rambling, unpainted building which was his pride and joy. He had built that store himself. With indefatiguable pains and patience he had fashioned it to suit his mind. Every evening, just at this after-supper hour, he stood still for a time to admire it, as he was doing now.

Having quaffed his customary draught of delight from the picture before him Caleb resumed his walk to the store, pausing at its door to straighten into place the long bench kept there for the accommodation of visiting customers. As he swung the bench against the wall he bent and peered closely at two sets of newly-carved initials on its smooth surface.

"W. W." he read and frowned. "By ding! That's that Billy Wilson. Now let's see, 'A. S.' I wonder who them initials stand fer?" With a shake of his grizzled mop he entered the store.

A slim girl in a gingham dress stood in front of the counter placing parcels in a basket. She turned a flushed face, lit with brown roguish eyes, on Caleb, as he came in.

"Had your supper, Pa?" she asked.

"Yep." Caleb bent and scrutinized the basket.

"Whose parcels are them, Ann?" he questioned.

"Mrs. Keeler's," his daughter answered. "Billy Wilson left the order."

"Humph, he did, eh? Well, let's see the slip." He took the piece of paper from the counter and read:

One box fruit-crackers
10 pounds granulated sugar
Two pounds cheese
1 pound raisins
1 pound lemon peel
4 cans salmon
50 sticks hoardhound candy

There were other items but Caleb read no further. He stood back sucking the stem of his pipe thoughtfully. "Whereabouts did that Billy go, Ann?" he asked at length.

"Why, he didn't go. He's in the liquor-shop settin' a trap for that rat, Pa."

"Oh he is, eh? Well, tell him to come out here; I want to see him."

Caleb waited until his daughter turned to execute his order, then the frown melted from his face and a wide grin took its place. "The young reprobate," he muttered. "What'll that boy be up to next, I wonder? I've got t' teach him a lesson, ding me! if I haven't. It's clear enough t' me that him and that young Keeler are shapin' fer a little excursion, up bush, and this is the way they take to get their fodder."

He turned slowly as his daughter and Billy entered from the rear of the shop and let his eyes rest on the boy's face. "How are you, Billy?" he asked genially.

"I'm well, thanks," and Billy gazed innocently back into Caleb's eyes. "I hope your rheumatiz is better, Mr. Spencer."

"It is," said Caleb shortly, "an' my eyes are getting sharper every day, Billy."

"That's good," said Billy and bent to pick up the basket.

"Jest a minute, young man." Caleb's voice was stern. "I see you've cut your own and your best gal's initials onto my new bench. Did you have much trouble doin' it, might I ask?"

Bily stood up, a grin on his face. "That pine bench looked so invitin' I jest couldn't help tryin' my new knife on it," he explained. "But I didn't s'pose fer a minute that you'd mind."

"Well, by ding! I don't know but what I do mind. What if you should take a notion, some day, to carve up the side of this buildin', hey?"

Billy grew thoughtful. "I hadn't thought o' that," he said slowly. "It's pine, too, ain't it? It 'ud carve fine."

Caleb turned quickly towards a pile of goods, behind which an audible titter had sounded.

"Ann," he commanded, "you run along and get your supper."

He waited until his daughter had closed the door behind her. "Now, Billy," he said sternly, "understan' me when I say that if you ever so much as lay a knife-blade onto the walls of this here store I'll jest naturally pinch the freckles off'n your nose, one by one. Hear that?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, heed it, and heed it close. I'll overlook the cuttin' of my new bench, but, by ding! I'd ruther you'd carve me than carve this store." He paused abruptly and bent on Billy a quizzical look. "Whose 'nitials are them under yourn?" he asked.

Billy started. "Oh gash! I dunno, Mr. Spencer; I jest cut the first ones come into my head."

"Umph! I'm not so green as I look. I know whose they be. They're Ann's."

Billy was silent. Should he tell the truth and say that he had carved Ann's initials on the bench and those of Walter Watland beneath them at that young lady's pleading request? No!

"Well?" Caleb asked finally. "What about it?"

Billy drew himself up and lied like a gentleman. "I guess that's all there is about it," he said with dignity. "Ann's my girl, an' she said I could cut my 'nitials under hers if I wanted to take the chance."

"Oh, so she's your gal, is she?" Caleb thrust his hands deep into his pockets, striving hard to keep his face stern. "How long you and Ann been sweetheartin'?" he asked.

"Five er six years; maybe longer."

"Loramighty!" Caleb sank weakly on a pile of horse-blankets, and gasped. "But, Billy, she's only twelve now, and you—you can't be much more'n fourteen at most."

"I'm growin' fifteen," said Billy gravely. "Me an' Ann's been goin' together fer quite a long spell."

Caleb placed his empty pipe in one pocket, fished in another and drew out a plug of Radiant Star chewing tobacco. He took a generous bite from one corner of the plug and champed it meditatively.

"Well, Billy," he said with a twinkle in his eye, "seein's we're to be right close related, some day, I guess it's up to me to give you your supper. You go right along over to the house and eat with Ann."

"But I'm not hungry, Mr. Spencer," said Billy quickly.

"That don't make no difference; you go along. I see Ann's made a mistake in doin' up Mrs. Keeler's parcels. You can't go back for a bit, anyways, so you might as well have your supper."

Billy went out and Spencer watched him cross the road and enter the cottage. "Well, now," he chuckled, "ain't that boy a tartar? But," he added, "he's got to be slicker than he is to fool old Caleb. Now, you jest watch me."

He lifted the basket to the counter and, taking the parcels from it, carefully emptied their contents back into the drawers from which they had been filled. Then from beneath the counter he drew out a box and with exquisite pains filled each of the empty bags and the cracker-box with sawdust. He tied the bags, packed them in the basket, tucked a roll of tea lead in the bottom, to give the basket weight, and placed it on the counter. Then he went outside to sit on the bench and await Billy's return.

(To be continued.)

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Good Fruit.

Healey spent all his time talking about his health. He was always ill, and usually when anyone went to see him he was in bed with a headache, or rheumtism, or something else.

One day Healey was totterng miserably down the road, when he fell in with a burly friend of his named Jenkins.

"Jenkins," he cried, "I'd give anything to be strong and healthy like you. What do you live on?"

"I live on fruit," answered Jenkins.

"Fruit, eh?" said Healey eagerly. "That sounds good. I'll have to try it. What kind of fruit, Jenkins?"

"The fruit of labor," Jenkins replied significantly.

Not Fit for Company.

Jane—"Please, ma'am, I've broken something."

Mistress—"Well, Jane, what is it?"

Jane (crying)—"I'm very sorry. I couldn't help it."

Mistress—"Don't be silly, Jane; tell me what it is."

Jane—"Oh, ma'am, the cucumber was crooked, and seeing you had company I tried to bend it straight."

It is well enough to die happy, but it is far better to live that way.

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Woman's Sphere

Advice for Warm Weather.

Don't forget that mother's milk is the best milk for babies.

Don't give the baby anything but the best in food and drink, graduated in amount according to age.

Don't clothe or cover the baby too heavily.

The baby should sleep alone.

Don't fail to give the baby a tub bath daily and several spongings in addition.

Don't allow flies, mosquitoes or bugs to bite the baby.

Don't give the baby medicine except on advice of a physician.

If the baby is sick send for your doctor.

Don't forget that the baby gets thirsty. Give him a little water several times a day.

Don't wear heavy clothing yourself. Bathe frequently and change your clothes as often as possible.

Make water your beverage.

Don't overwork, overeat or overdrink.

Don't allow flies or other insects in the house around your food.

Keep the baby's food in the icebox and covered.

Don't fail to clean thoroughly and frequently all articles used in feeding the baby.

Don't doctor yourself—if ill consult a physician.

Pin Money Methods.

When a city girl feels the need of money—her own money, to pay for the things girls imagine they must have these days—she goes to work in an office, a store, or a factory, according to her education and opportunity. In the country a girl, with much the same longings for nice things and "good times," looks to the poultry yard, the milk house, or the garden for her spending money. If her parents are the right kind, if they are intelligent enough to help her and encourage her in her work, she will soon establish herself as a semi-dependent member of the family. If, as often happens, the parents are not disposed to have such goings-on, and there is no home demonstration agent, no girls' club, no extension work of any kind in the community, the country girl goes to the city and the farming regions have lost one more potential home and family.

Many girls have made, as well as saved, money, by baking, dress-making and millinery work. Home-baked bread is always in demand if it is good and in several cases girls have worked up a good trade supplying bread to town people.

Popcorn culture and canned goods have helped one girl to get started in college, and she has gone back to the farm this summer to rely on these two things again. In addition she will have a pickle patch to help the finances out.

In another district a girls' canning club started a contest to determine which of the members could produce the most tomatoes at the least expense, and with the lowest percentage of waste. One girl grew 3,140 pounds of tomatoes on one-tenth of an acre at a cost of $31.40 and net returns of $109. With the same expense her sister grew 3,020 pounds and had a net return of $107.89. A third girl grew 2,803 pounds, costing $27.42, with a net return of $76.66 and a fourth had 3,070 pounds costing $29.91 with net returns of $68.

Wanted—Experience.

In the course of seventeen months Rena Stone had held fourteen different positions. They were good positions, too. Rena was triumphant.

"You're all moss-grown round here," she declared, paying a flying visit to the crowd in Arnold & Yetman's. "Look at you, plodding on at the same old work month in and month out. I don't see how you stand it. Why, I've been in an automobile office, sold stock for an ice company, had a look-in at the real-estate business, received the patients of the famous Dr. Roscoe and been at the complaints desk in Morris & Phelp's, to say nothing of other kinds of offices. I'm living. One of these days I'll decide what I like best, and then I'll settle down and make a run for the top. But now I'm after experience!"

"Experience and experiences are not always the same thing, Rena," Marcia Stevens reminded her.

"Indeed they are not," Rena retorted. "It's like the difference between being the native of a two-penny town and being a citizen of the world."

"You forget a proverb about Jack-of-all-trades."

"You make me tired," Rena retorted good-naturedly. She could afford to be good-natured, for she had just obtained a position the pay of which exceeded by five hundred dollars a year the pay of any girl in Arnold & Yetman's. "You're afraid to leave your little dooryards. Good-bye. Come and see me sometime; my address is The World."

There were times in the next year or two when some of the girls wondered wistfully whether Rena were not right. It must be wonderful to have so many experiences and meet so many different kinds of people. Then something happened. Mr. Harrow of Harrow & Daily wanted a private stenographer. The salary was unusual, and the applicants were numerous. Among them was Rena.

Rena met Mr. Harrow confidently; she knew that her "approach" and appearance were exceptional. She smiled to herself when she saw among the applicants several of the girls whom she had known. She was sure that they had no chance at all.

And for a moment it seemed so; she clearly made a good impression. But Mr. Harrow was shrewd; before Rena realized it he had learned more of her varied career than she had ever told any other employer. In five minutes he shook his head. "I am sorry, Miss Stone, but I think you misunderstood our need. What we are looking for is a capable young woman who has had experience, not experiences. I feel that your career, although doubtless interesting, could hardly have equipped you with those qualities of faithfulness, loyalty and thoroughness which are fundamental to any real and lasting success."

Stunned and bewildered, Rena left the office. She did not realize that Mr. Harrow and Marcia Stevens had said the same thing.

The Islander.

By Grace Agnes Timmerman

Pagan, untamable, no hand could rule,
No love could win him. In the mission school
No other lad so savage, so perverse,
Perplexed the Bishop, while from bad to worse
His heathen madness grew; he turned at length
Upon the Bishop, striking with full strength
The kindly face! The Bishop turned away
In hopeless grief that had no word to say.
Still patiently the teachers did their part
As time went by to change that stubborn heart
With wise endeavor; every day grew less
Their fading vision of a late success,
Ten vanished, and the boy was sent away;
And ,oh, how biter their defeat that day!
Years came and went; slow miracles of grace
Brought strange new beauty to the lightened face
Of many a convert, many a heathen child
From savagery redeemed. The Bishop smiled
Upon the nine-and-ninety; none the less
He prayed for one sheep in the wilderness.
(The youth, to vile barbaric life returned,
At times recalled some truth that he had learned).
The river of the years had borne away
A generation, and the Bishop, gray
And worn, had entered into rest with one
Whose missionary work was but begun
In that far island of the southern sea
Where once the boy had dwelt was urgently
Entreated by a messenger to go
To one whom wasting illness had brought low
And near to death. The pastor with due haste
Accompanied the man as he retraced
His journey, finding in the man they sought
A native who at some time had been taught
Our speech and our religion. He had turned
To seek at last a boon he once had spurned
And pleaded for baptism! It was best,
The pastor thought, to grant him his request,
And that without delay; so after prayer
And earnest converse suited to prepare
The eager convert, whose repentant soul
Now led him freely to disclose the whole
Of his dark life, he questioned, "By what name
Will you be called?" Humility and shame
Spoke in the voice, and grateful passion shone
In earnest eyes that answered to his own,
"Give me the name John Selwyn! It was he
Who when I struck him showed the Christ to me!"

Wouldn't Risk It.

A surgeon was imparting clinical instruction to a class of students. The young men accompanied him round the wards. The surgeon halted by the bedside of a doubtful case.

"Now, gentlemen," he said, "is this a case for operation?"

The dozen students made their diagnosis, and each decided it was not a case for operation.

"You are all wrong," said the surgeon. "I shall operate to-morrow at two-fifteen."

The patient jumped out of the bed. He looked at the students, and then at the surgeon.

"No, you won't," he said to the latter. "Twelve to one is a good majority. Give me my clothes."

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The End of the World Problem Puzzles Professors.

Mme. Curie, the discoverer of radium, believes that the earth, instead of cooling, is steadily getting hotter as the result of its store of radio-active substances, and a French colleague has calculated that if the mass of the earth contains two parts of radium in every billion, this would increase the temperature of the interior by 1,800 degrees centigrade in a hundred years.

Very little of this heat can escape through the earth's solid crust, so one day or other there will be an explosion—radium will blow the earth up. This is a new addition to the long list of ways in which the end of the world will arrive.

The most popular theory seems to be that a comet will bump into us and send us to destruction. As a matter of fact, although some comets occupy more space than the sun, and possess tails which stream for millions of miles behind them, they are exceedingly light in composition. A collision with a comet, even if it occurred, would not be attended with fatal results.

On the other hand, Professor Flinders Petrie, the eminent Egyptologist, prophesies that the end of the world will come about 200,000 years hence, by reason of the disappearance from the atmosphere of the last traces of carbonic acid gas, which, though forming only 0.020 per cent. of the atmosphere, plays an important part in the operations of Nature, and provides the whole of the vegetable world with carbon, its essential food.

If, however, M. Martel, the well-known French scientist, is right, we need not worry about the nature of the atmosphere 200,000 years from now, for his investigations into the erosion and corrosion of the earth's surface have led him to predict the end of the human race in a few generations.

"The water level of the earth," M. Martel tells us, "is being lowered continually, and unless we can discover how to prevent this the human race will perish from lack of water in a few centuries."

In direct contradiction is the prophecy of Sir Archibald Geikie. "Decay of the land is going on at such a rate,' he said a few years ago, "that a comparatively short period will suffice to reduce most of the dry land to the level of the sea, and bring about a second deluge."

Those who believe that the earth is flat have a theory equally fantastic. They declare that the portion of the world which we occupy is bounded by great icefields, which form a barrier between us and vast oceans. The ice barrier is being pressed continually by these oceans, and our end will occur when the enveloping waters burst through and flood the land to its highest peaks.

Another idea is that the sun is a bright light towards which the earth-moth flits to its doom. As we circle round and round it, we are supposed to be decreasing the distance between the two bodies, till eventually we shall be so close that there will be no resisting the sun's attraction. Then it will swallow us up.

Minard's Liniment for Burns, etc.

Rainbow Revelations.

An arched rainbow is a pretty sight, but it may be assumed that few of us are learned in rainbow lore. Here, then, are some interesting rainbow revelations.

To produce a rainbow there must be falling rain, bright sun, and dark clouds—the latter always opposite the sun. The sun't rays are then divided into colors by the raindrops, which act in exactly the same way as a prism, or triangular piece of glass.

The continued span of a rainbow is caused by billions of raindrops splitting the sun's rays into colors, and making a band or series of them.

A double rainbow is not, as some think, the shadow or reflection of the first. Each rainbow is distinct. In one we see the sun-rays entering the raindrops at the top, and reflecting the colors to the eye from the bottom. In the second rainbow the sun's rays enter the drops at the bottom, and reflect the colors from the top

And who has noticed that the colors of the second bow are, when compared with the first or primary bow, all reversed? The cause of this is the same as that which makes the colors of the secondary bow weaker. To get the latter there has been two reflections—one more of the last than is the case with a primary bow. The colors are, therefore, weakened.

An evening rainbow in the east is a sign of fine weather. The rain-clouds, which generally come to us on west and south-west winds, are passing away.

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