# 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 plan a search for the lost will. Twin Oaks store is robbed.

CHAPTER X.

**In Lost Man's Swamp.**

The August days were passing swiftly, each fragrant dawn marking another step towards that inevitable something which must be faced—the reopening of the Valley School by a new teacher. Billy's heart saddened as the fields ripened and the woods turned red and gold. For once his world was out of tune. Maurice Keeler was sick with measles and Elgin Scraff lay ill with the same disease. Taking advantage of this fact, the Sand-sharkers had grown bold, some of the more venturesome of them going even so far as to challenge Billy to "knock the chip off their shoulders."

Billy had not only accommodated the trouble-seekers in this regard, but had nearly knocked the noses off their freckled faces as well, after which he had proceeded to lick, on sight, each and every Sand-sharker with whom his lonely rambles brought him in contact. But his victories lacked the old time zest. He missed Maurice's "Gee! Bill, that left swing to his eye was a corker"; missed Elgin's offer to bet a thousand dollars that Billy Wilson could lick, with one hand tied behind him, any two Sand-sharkers that ever smelled a smoked herrin'. Victory was indeed empty of glory. And so the glad days were sad days for Billy. It was an empty world. What boy in Billy's place would not have been low-spirited under like conditions? What boy would not have paused, as he was doing now, to itemize his woes?

He was seated on a stump in the new clearing which sloped to Levee Creek, fingers locked about one knee, battered felt hat pulled over his eyes. The green slope at his feet lay half in the sunlight, half in the shadow. Across from a patch of golden-rod, the cock bird of a fox-scattered quail-covey whistled the "All's Well" call to the birds in hiding. Ordinarily Billy would have answered that call, would have drawn the brown, scuttling birds close about him with the low-whistled notes he could produce so well; but to-day he was oblivious to all save his thoughts.

Two weeks had passed since the robbery of the Twin Oaks store and that which he and Maurice had planned to do towards finding the Scroggie will and capturing the thieves had, through dire necessity, been abandoned. Sickness had claimed Maurice just when he was most needed. For days Billy had lived a sort of trancelike existence; had gone about acting queerly, refusing his meals and paying little attention to anybody or anything.

It had become a regular thing for his father to say each morning, "I guess you ain't feelin' up to much to-day, Billy; so all you have to do is watch the gap and water the cattle"; which was quite agreeable to Billy, because it gave him an opportunity to be by himself. Men who sit in the shadow of irrevocable fate are always that way; they want to be left alone—murderers on the eve of their execution, captains on wrecked ships, Trigger Finger Tim, who was to be shot at sunrise, but wasn't.

Billy wanted to shadow old Scroggie's ghost and so discover the will; he wanted to seek out the robbers of the Twin Oaks store and earn a reward; he wanted Maurice Keeler with him; he wanted to hear Elgin Scraff's laugh. But all this was denied him. And now a new burden had been thrust upon him, compared with which all his other woes seemed trivial. Old Scroggie's namesake and apparent heir had turned up again. Billy had seen him with his own eyes; with his own ears had heard him declare that he intended to erect a saw-mill in the thousand-acre forest. This meant that the big hardwood wonderland would be wiped away and that Frank Stanhope would never inherit what was rightfully his.

It seemed like an evil dream, but Billy knew it was no dream. Scroggie, astride a big bay horse, had passed him while he was on his way to the store with a basket of eggs for his mother, and he had pulled in at the store just as Deacon Ringold had taken the last available space on the customers' bench outside, and Caleb Spencer had come to the door to peer through the twilight in search of the Clearview stage, which was late. Noticing the stranger on horseback Caleb had hurried forward to ask how best he could serve him.

Hidden safely behind a clump of cedars Billy had watched and listened. He had heard Scroggie tell the storekeeper that he and his family had come to Scotia to stay and that he intended to cut down the timber of the big woods. He had then demanded that Spencer turn over to him a certain document which it seemed old man Scroggie had left in Caleb's charge some months before his death. Billy had seen Spencer draw the man a little apart from the others, who had gathered close through curiosity, and had heard him explain that the paper had been taken from his safe on the night of the robbery of his store. Scroggie had, at first, seemed to doubt Caleb's word; then he had grown abusive and raised his riding-whip threateningly. Here Billy, having heard and seen quite enough, had acted. Placing his basket gently down on the sward he had picked up an egg and with the accuracy born of long practice in throwing stones, had sent it crashing into Scroggie's face. Gasping and temporarily blinded, Scroggie had wheeled his horse and galloped away.

But to-day Billy, musing darkly, knew that Scroggie would do what he had said he would do. The big woods was his, according to law; he could do as he wished with it, and he would wipe it out.

With a sigh, Billy slid from the stump and stood looking away toward the east. What would Trigger Finger Tim do in his place? When confronted by insurmountable obstacles Trigger Finger had been wont to seek excitement and danger. That's what he, Billy, would do now. But where was excitement and danger to be found? Ah, he knew—Lost Man's Swamp!

Billy's right hand went into a trouser's pocket; then nervously his left dived into the other pocket. With a sigh of relief he drew out a furry object about the size of a pocket-knife.

"Ol' Rabbit-foot charm," he said, aloud. "I jest might need you bad to-day." Then he turned and walked quickly across the fallow toward the causeway.

Some three miles east of the imaginary line which divided the Settlement from the outside world, on the Lake Shore road, stood a big frame house in a grove of tall walnut trees. It was the home of a man named Hinter—a man of mystery. Before it the lake flashed blue as a kingfisher's wing through the cedars; behind it swept a tangle of forest which gradually dwarfed into a stretch of swamp-willow and wild hazelnut bushes, which in turn gave place to marshy bog-lands.

Lost Man's Swamp, so called because it was said that one straying into its depth never was able to extricate himself from its overpowering mists and treacherous quicksands, was lonely and forsaken. It lay like a festering sore on the breast of the world—black, menacing, hungry to gulp, dumb as to those mysteries and tragedies it had witnessed. It was whispered that the devil made his home in its pitchy ponds, which even in the fiercest cold of winter did not freeze.

For Billy, who knew and understood so well the sweeping wilderness of silence and mysteries, this swamp held a dread which, try as he might, he could not analyze. On one other occasion had he striven to penetrate it, but as if the bogland recognized in him a force not easily set aside, it had enwrapped him with its deadly mists which chilled and weakened, torn his flesh with its razor-edged grass and sucked at his feet with its oozy, dragging quicksands. He had turned back in time. For two weeks following his exploit he had lain ill with ague, shivering miserably, silent, but thinking.

And now he was back again; and this time he did not intend to risk his life in those sucking sands. From a couple of dead saplings, with the aid of wild grape-vines, he fashioned a light raft which would serve as a support in the bog, and carry his weight in the putrid mire beyond. Strange sounds came to his ears as he worked his way across the desolate waste toward the first great pond—scurrying, rustling sounds of hidden things aroused from their security. Once a big grey snake stirred from torpor to lift its head and hiss at him. Billy lifted it aside with his pole and went on.

Great mosquitoes whined about his head and stung his neck and ears. Mottled flies bit him and left a burning smart. The saw-like edges of the grass cut his hands and strove to trip him as he pushed his improvised raft forward. Once his foot slipped on the greasy bog, and the quicksand all but claimed him. But he pushed on, reaching at last the black sullen shallows, putrid and ill-smelling with decayed growth, and alive with hideous insects.

Great, black leeches clung to the slimy lily-roots; water lizards lay basking half in and half out of the water, or crept furtively from underwater grotto to grotto. And there were other things which Billy knew were hidden from his sight—things even more loathsome. For the first time in his life he experienced for Nature a feeling akin to dread and loathing. It was like a nightmare to him, menacing, unreal, freighted with strange horrors.

One thing Billy saw which he could not understand. The greasy surface of the shallow pond was never still, but bubbled incessantly as porridge puffs and bubbles when it boils. It was as if the slimy creatures buried in the oozy bottom belched forth their poisonous breath as they stirred in sleep.

So here lay the reason that the swamp-waters never froze even when winter locked all other waters fast in its icy clutch! What caused those air bubbles, if air bubbles they were,

At last, sick and dizzy, he turned from the place and with raft and pole fought his way back to the shore. Never again, he told himself, would he try to fathom further what lay in Lost Man's Swamp. Weary and perspiring, he climbed the wooded upland. He turned and dipped into the willows, intending to take the shortest way home through the hardwoods. On top of the beech knoll he paused for a moment to let his eyes rest on the big house in the walnut grove. In some vague way his mind connected its owner with that dead waste of stinking marsh. Why, he wandered, had Hinter chosen this lonely spot on which to build his home? As he turned to strike across the neck of woods between him and the causeway the man about whom he had just been thinking stepped out from a clump of hazelnut bushes directly in his path.

"Why, hello, Billy," he said pleasantly. "Out capturing more wild things for the menagerie?"

Hinter possessed a well modulated voice whose accent bespoke refinement and education. He had come into the Settlement about a year ago from no one knew where, apparently possessed of sufficient money to do as he pleased. An aged colored woman kept house for him. He held aloof from his neighbors, was reticent in manner, but nothing could be said against him. He led an exemplary if somewhat secluded life, gave freely to the church which he never attended, and was respected by the people of Scotia. With the children he was a great favorite. He was a tall man, gaunt and strong of frame and well past middle age. His face was grave and his blue eyes steady. He was fond of hunting and usually wore—as he was wearing to-day—a suit of corduroys. He kept a pair of ferocious dogs, why nobody knew, for they never accompanied him on his hunts.

He smiled now as he noted Billy's quick look of apprehension.

"No, Billy," he assured the boy, "Sphinx and Dexter aren't with me to-day, so you have nothing to fear from them. I doubt if they would hurt you, anyway," he added. "You can handle most dogs, I am told."

"I'm not afraid of no dog, Mr. Hinter," said Billy, "but I've been told your dogs are half wolf. Is that so?"

Hinter laughed. "Well, hardly," he returned. "They are thoroughbred Great Danes, although Sphinx and Dexter both have wolf natures I fear."

"Is that why people don't go near your place, 'cause they're scared of the dogs?" Billy asked.

Hinter's face grew grave. "Perhaps," he answered. "I hope it is."

"Then why don't you get rid of 'em?"

(To be continued.)

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## Counting Out.

Red, white and blue,
All out but you!

Could any rhyme be briefer, simpler or more purely Canadian? It seems too trivial a scrap to be of interest, yet it is only one more variation in a long line of childish rhymes and games that are deeply interesting to the student, since the more he studies them the more he sees that in their fundamental similarity they link nation with nation and past with present. For children have always played games; and of course some one of them has always had to be "it."

In the very beginning, it is now supposed, all counting-out rhymes were simply enumeration; and many of them are still so in part. Gradually for the sake of rhythm or rhyme or alliteration ofter neaningless syllables or words or sentences were intermingled.

What Canadian child has not at some time followed eagerly the pointing finger of a comrade chanting and counting:

One, two, three, four, five, six, seven—
All good children go to heaven.
One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight—
All bad children have to wait!

Or the equally familiar, if less edifying:

Little man driving cattle,
Don't you hear his money rattle?
One, two, three
Out goes he (she)!

Of curse all the "one-cry" forms fall into the same group, and so probably (through distant foreign derivations) do our old friends the "eeny-meenies." A recent writer in a richly varied collection of counting-out rhymes includes several of the eeny-meenies, notably that ancient and inelegant favorite of both patrician and plebeian youth:

Eeny, meeny, miny, mo,
Catch a nigger by the toe;
If he hollers let him go,
Eeny, meeny, miny, mo.

It is probable that with the influx of children from many foreign countries the very games that in their likeness bring all children so happily together may take on here and there new and wider variations, which will interest and perhaps puzzle future students of folklore. Some of our students of French may like to translate for themselves this little counting-out rhyme just as it comes to us from France:

Petite fille de Paris
Prete-moi tes souliers gris
Pour aller en Paradis.
Nous irons un a un
Dans le chemin des Saints;
Deux a deux
Sur le chemin des cieux.

## The Trail.

By hill and dale there is a trail
That leads my vagrant footsteps far;
And if perchance my courage fail
There is the ever beckoning star.

The beckoning star, the guiding sun,
And sooth, why should I ask for more?
The pathways to oblivion
Stretch on and on before.

Oblivion, or the bourne of dreams,
Serene within the afterglow,
Where joy sits by the singing streams,
And there is peace for friend and foe.

So, high of heart, I take the trail;
So, sure of soul, I make the quest,
But at the end, whate'er prevail,
I needs must bow to what is best.

Love is the quest of life, marriage the conquest, and divorce the inquest.

# Spectacles for Russian Cows

A good deal of surprise was created when a long list of goods required by Russia was found to contain an order for spectacles for cows, says an English newspaper.

Surely this must be a joke, said the business men, or someone must have blundered in writing the word cows, for spectacles could certainly not be needed for animals.

But there was no mistake. Cows on the Russian steppes have long worn spectacles to protect their eyes from the glare of the snow, which stretches for hundreds of miles on all sides till late spring, and sets up a serious affection that may result in total blindness.

Snow blindness is not a new complaint. There are many instances of it in history. The glare of the sun shining on the snow causes a pricking pain; then there is a sensation of grit under the eyelids; light of any kind becomes extremely painful and the sight begins to go. If the matter is not attended to, the eyelids swell and the vision may remain impaired for months.

On the vast steppes of Russia the cattle that graze during the early spring, when the ground for hundreds of miles is glistening white, are troubled with snow blindness; but several years ago an Englishman invented a special form of spectacles with brown glass which could be fastened round the horns of cattle with leather straps.

Quite a thriving business grew up in the manufacture of these spectacles, but the war put a stop to it, and the cattle suffered severely. Now Russia is anxious to adopt the remedy again.

Mountain climbers and Arctic explorers have to wear blue or green glasses when in snow-clad regions, and any neglect to do this may lead to serious trouble.

No amount of familiarity or usage gives immunity, even to the people whose ancestors have lived amid the snows for centuries. The Eskimos have long made snow spectacles in a very crude form from driftwood. This is cut to the curvature of the face: a notch serves as a bridge for the nose, and in each of the discs that cover the eyes, where the wood is about two inches thick, a narrow slit, about the width of a thin saw cut, is made. Through the slits the light passes to the eyes sufficiently diminished to prevent snow blindness.

Nansen used these Eskimo snow spectacles in Greenland, and found them very good, as the absence of glass prevented the obscuring of the sight by the condensation of moisture on the lenses. Captain Perry, an earlier explorer, and his men, also wore native snow spectacles. On one occasion, when a party of men set out from Parry's boat without this protection, every man was struck with blindness, and no one was able to direct the sledge.

Large bodies of men have sometimes been affected by snow blindness. In Peru a whole division of the army marching from Cuzco to Pano became blind, and a hundred guides had to be summoned to lead them to their destination. Many of the afflicted men wandered away and fell over precipices. In 1793, in the Alps, bodies of Piedmontese troops were similarly incapacitated.

But the lesson has now been learned and modern travellers in snowy regions invariably wear colored spectacles, and, thanks to English enterprise, which has done so much to foster kindness to animals, the lower creatures are similarly protected.

# Woman's Sphere

**Cooks Less—Smiles More.**

There was a vegetable soup for dinner that has required several hours of preparation and cooking; a delicious roast; potatoes that had been mashed and creamed; cauliflower with a cream dressing; lettuce salad; pineapple that had been bought that morning, sliced and cut in cubes; nuts that had taken a half hour for the cracking and picking; mayonnaise that had made a right arm ache with the stirring and the beating; homemade jam; hot biscuit; and hot apple pie with whipped cream.

"Do you wish any of the roast?" the husband asked his wife as he carved.

"I don't want any. I don't want any dinner at all. I'm too tired to eat."

"Then why do you go to so much trouble? The children and I would be satisfied with a much simpler meal, you know."

"I guess I know my duty to my family."

Then followed the silence that marks the knowledge of a futility of argument and the father and the children ate a perfectly cooked meal without comment or enjoyment.

When Serena, the oldest daughter, repeated her employer's compliment over some acceptable work she had done that day, it was her father who gave her a smile of encouragement. The mother remembered that she, too, had worked that day and—sighed.

When Tom, aged ten, related an amusing incident that had happened in school, Mother was the only one that didn't laugh.

The next evening, Serena was a guest at the Whites, next door neighbors. It was warm. The open dining-room windows revealed the Whites and their five children and Serena sitting at the table. Across the partition fence came sounds of repeated laughter.

"What," she asked of Serena a few hours later, in a reproachful tone, for she remembered the laughing, "did you have to eat?"

Serena was not sure if she could remember. They had talked so much she had not noticed what they were eating, except that the dinner was good. Soup? No, there wasn't any soup. Potatoes? Yes, scalloped. Dessert? Little cakes covered with custard. She remembered that the cakes were cookies.

Was it good? Oh, everything was good; she had never enjoyed anything so much in her life. But was not that a plain meal to serve a guest? Serena did not think so. She could not have eaten more, everything was so good and Mrs. White was so happy and jolly.

"I had more than that for our dinner," said Mrs. Brown resentfully, "and there was no one here but your father and brothers." This with a sigh, the corners of her mouth drooping.

Serena looked at her thoughtfully. Mrs. Brown resented the look.

"I cook so much for my family," she began defensively, "that I am too tired to be what you call jolly. "I," growing more antagonistic, though she could not explain why, "know my duty to my family."

"So does Mrs. White know hers," answered Serena sorrowfully. "She cooks less than you do but she—smiles more!"

"Cooks less and smiles more!"

The words rang through Mrs. Brown's brain the next morning when she beat batter for muffins, whipped up an omelet, put potatoes in the oven to bake and otherwise prepared breakfast. She could not go to the school exhibition, she told Tom at breakfast, because she had a pudding to make that would require four hours steaming; she could not eat lunch with Serena and her father down town because there was an angel cake to be made that would require at least an hour to beat. Both refusals made with a sigh.

As she turned from the door after seeing the last child start to school, she caught a glimpse of Mrs. White starting off to the school exhibition with her children. "I wonder," she thought, feeling very self-righteous, "what my family would think if I left my cooking for such a trivial excuse? They'd soon be tired of pick-ups."

Perhaps she thought, when later in the day she caught a glimpse of her face in the mirror, Mrs. White was right and she was wrong. There were deep wrinkles in her forehead. Mrs. White had none. Her eyes were tired and listless. Mrs. White's were full of purpose and laughter. Her cheeks were white and hollow. She saw a vision of Mrs. White's plump and pink.

With her chin in her hands, she sat before her mirror a long time. She stared earnestly into her own soul.

She shuddered. She had worked so hard for her family—so much harder than Mrs. White worked for hers—and her family loved her less for it. Her children never trooped into the kitchen after school, as Mrs. White's did. There was a pie, a cake, or a pudding in the oven, and a step across the floor might make it fall. Her children never played around her when she cooked, for her cooking had always been too elaborated and complex for such interruptions as childish needs and questions.

She never knew how long she sat there taking inventory of her soul but it was a long time and when she returned to the kitchen there was a smile on her face, a smile that was still there when the family came home. It dimpled her cheeks when her husband praised the extra good meal. "Your cooking improves all the time," he said with a look that reflected the love in his wife's face.

This time the smile swept away every wrinkle. She knew that she had never cooked less! She had mixed wisdom with her service.

**A Successful Woman Farmer.**

Another name added to the list of women who are successfully operating farms in Western Canada is that of May V. Hazlett, an English girl who for four years has lived alone on a homestead in the Touchwood Hills, in Saskatchewan, and made it pay. Her brother who homesteaded the land was killed in the Canadian forces at Vimy Ridge, and Miss Hazlett who was working as a stenographer, and tired of the eternal pounding, determined to go contrary to the advice to sell the farm, and though she had never lived in the country, decided to operate it herself. Success has attended her efforts and she now owns several head of horses, a fine bunch of cattle and has more than one hundred acres under cultivation. She is again reversing the order of things, as having built a Western home she is returning to England to marry her fiance and bring him out to the Saskatchewan farm. She is an ardent advocate of homesteads for women.

**An Entertainment Exchange.**

A contributor describes a novel plan for community entertainment that an invalid originated and brought to practical use.

In a brief letter, copies of which she sent to a number of residents in her town, she called attention to the fact that recreation is as necessary to the life of a community as food and clothing are; that its cost per capita amounts to a good deal in a year's time; that to attend the usual places of amusement requires not only money but time and effort. She concluded by asking her neighbors to exchange with one another their ideas on community recreation, as well as their actual entertainment facilities — magazines, catalogues, phonograph records, books, games, puzzles, sheet music and so on.

The plan having been tried and having proved useful, its most valuable result was felt to be that the persons concerned were convinced that it took only a little thought and interest to put in operation a scheme that kept children happy at home, entertained both old and young and created an undercurrent of good feeling in the community.

"And," said the happy invalid, "think what it has meant to me—persons coming and going; the interest in exchanging opinions. I have even persuaded them to go a step farther and to exchange their own special gifts. One who sings sings occasionally for us all; another who is a trained reader sometimes reads aloud to us. Since the introduction of our entertainment exchange we have all been entertained more pleasantly and more wholesomely than we ever were before."

Minard's Liniment used by Physicians.

## Fancy That!

One ton of coal yields 10,000 ft. of gas.

The Bible is printed in 528 different languages.

The Polish alphabet contains forty-five letters.

Mars has a day forty-one minutes longer than our own.

A large nest of wasps will account for 24,000 flies in a day.

A single orange tree of average size will bear 20,000 oranges.

An ounce of gold could be drawn into a wire fifty miles long.

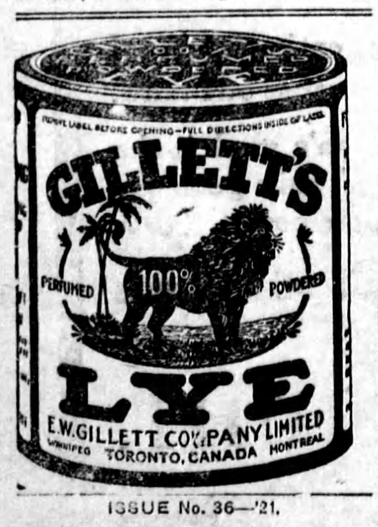
The King of Sweden has been wedded longest of any European crowned head.

The family Bible of William Burns, the father of Robert Burns, has been sold for $2,250.

The world's envelope of air has just been proved to extend for 300 miles above the earth.

Pills imported into India are colored, to show their use; those tinted red contain poison.

Portable gasoline pumps up to ten horsepower and capable of forcing water through 1,500 feet of hose are now used in fighting forest fires by Canadian federal and provincial forest services.



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