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. Scroggie's namesake and apparent heir takes possession. Returning from an excursion into Lost Man's Swamp, Billy meets Hinter, a new resident.

CHAPTER X.—(Cont'd.)

Hinter shook his head. "Nobody would have them, they're too savage; and I haven't the heart to make away with them, because they are fond of me. I've had those dogs a long time, Billy."

"I understan'," said Billy, sympathetically.

Hinter put his hand in his coat pocket and drew out an ivory dog-whistle. "Would you like to know them, Billy?" he asked, his keen eyes on the boy's face.

"I wouldn't mind," said Billy.

Hinter put the whistle to his lips and sent a warbling call through the woods. "Stand perfectly still," he said, as he placed the whistle back in his pocket. "I won't let them hurt you. Here they come now."

The next instant two great dogs plunged from the thicket, their heavy jaws open and dripping and their deep eyes searching for their master and the reason for his call.

Standing with feet planted wide, Billy felt his heart beat quickly. "Easy, Sphinx!" Hinter cried, as the larger of the two sprang toward the boy. Immediately the dog sank down, the personification of submission; but its bloodshot eyes flashed up at Billy and in them the boy glimpsed a spirit unquelled.

"Be careful, Billy. Don't touch him!" warned Hinter, but he spoke too late. Billy had bent and laid his hand gently on the dog's quivering back. The low growl died in the animal's throat. Slowly his muzzle was lifted until his nose touched Billy's cheek. Then his long flail-like tail began to wag.

"Boy, you're a wonder!" Hinter cried. "But you took a terrible chance. "Dexter!" he said to the other dog, "don't you want to be friends with this wild-animal tamer, too?"

Billy, his arm about Sphinx's neck, spoke. "Come, ol' feller; come here," he said.

The great dog rose and came slowly across to him. "Good boy!" Billy slapped him roughly on the shoulder, and he whined.

"Well, it's beyond me," confessed Hinter. "I've heard that you could handle dogs, young fellow, but I didn't think there was anybody in the world besides myself who could bring a whimper of gladness from that pair. Now then, Dexter! Sphinx! away home with you." Obediently the big dogs wheeled back into the thicket.

Billy started to move away. "I must be gettin' home," he said. "The cows 'll be waitin' to be watered."

"Well, I'll just walk along with you as far as the Causeway," said Hinter. "My saddle-horse has wandered off somewhere. I have an idea he made for Ringold's slashing."

He fell in beside Billy, adjusting his stride to the shorter one of the boy. In silence they walked until they reached a rise of land which had been cleared of all varieties of trees except maples. Sap-suckers twittered as they hung head downward and red squirrels chattered shrilly. In a cleared spot in the wood, beside a spring-fed creek, stood a sugar-shanty, two great cauldrons, upside down, gleaming like black eyes from its shadowy interior. A pile of wooden sap-troughs stood just outside the shanty door.

Billy's eyes brightened as they swept the big sugar-bush. Many a spicy spring night had he enjoyed here, "sugarin' off"—he and Teacher Stanhope. The brightness faded from his eyes and his lip quivered. Never again would the man who was boy-friend to him point out the frost-cleared stars that swam low down above the maples and describe to him their wonders. Those stars were shut out from him forever, as were the tints of skies and flowers and all glad lights of the world.

Hinter's voice brought him back to himself. "He is blind, they tell me, Billy."

Billy gazed at him wonderingly. "How did you know I was thinkin' of him?" he asked.

Hinter smiled. "Never mind," he said gently. "And how is he standing it?"

A spasm of pain crossed the boy's face. "Like a man," he answered shortly.

Hinter's eyes fell away from that steady gaze. Billy turned towards the log-span across the creek, then paused to ask suddenly: "Mr. Hinter, who owns that Lost Man's Swamp? Do you?"

The man started. "No," he answered, "I don't own it exactly, but I hope to soon. It is part of the Scroggie property. I am negotiating now with Scroggie's heir for it. It is useless, of course, but I desire to own it for reasons known only to myself."

"But supposin' ol' Scroggie's lost will comes to light?"

"Then, of course, it will divert to Mr. Stanhope," answered Hinter. "I must confess," he added, "I doubt very strongly if Mr. Scroggie ever made a will."

Billy was silent, busy with his own thoughts. They crossed the bridge, passed through a beech ridge and descended a mossy slope to the Causeway fence. As they sat for a moment's rest on its topmost rail, Hinter spoke abruptly. "I saw you fighting your way across the swamp this afternoon, Billy. Weren't you taking a useless risk?"

Billy made no reply.

"You are either a very brave boy or a very foolish one," said Hinter. "Will you tell me what prompted you to dare what no other person in the Settlement would dare? Was it simply curiosity?"

"I guess maybe it was," Billy confessed. "Anyways I've got all I want of it. It'll be a long time afore you see me there ag'in."

Hinter's sigh of relief was inaudible to the boy. "That's a good resolve," he commended. "Stick to it; that swamp is a treacherous place."

"It's awful," said Billy in awed tones. "I got as far as the first pond. It was far enough for me."

"You got as far as the pond!" Hinter cried in wonder. The eyes turned on Billy's face were searching. "And you found only a long shallow of stagnant, stinking water, I'll be bound," he laughed, uneasily.

"I found—" Billy commenced, his mind flashing back to the bubbling geysers of the pond—then chancing to catch the expression in Hinter's face, he finished, "jest what you said, a big pond of stinkin 'dead water, crawlin' with all kinds of blood-suckers an' things."

He leaped from the fence. "Good-bye," he called back over his shoulder. "I hear old Cherry bawlin' fer her drink."

Hinter was still seated on the fence when Billy turned the curve in the road. "I wonder what he wants of Lost Man's Swamp," mused the boy. "And I wonder what he's scared somebody 'll find there?"

CHAPTER XI.

Educating the New Boy.

As Billy rounded a curve in the road he met the cattle. Anson was driving them. "You needn't mind turnin' back, Bill," he said. "I don't mind waterin' 'em fer you."

Billy whistled. "Gosh! you're gettin' kind all at once, Anse," he exclaimed.

"I don't mind doin' it," Anse repeated. He kept his face averted. Billy, scenting mystery, walked over to him and swung him about. Anson's lip was swollen and one eye was partly closed and his freckled face bore the marks of recent conflict.

"Gee whitticker!" gasped Billy, "you must been havin' an argument with a mule. Who give you that black eye an' split lip, Anse?"

His brother hung his head. "You needn't go to rubbin' it in," he whined; "I didn't have no chance with him. He piled on me from behind, when I wasn't lookin'."

"Who piled on you from behind?"

"That new boy; his name's Jim Scroggie. His dad's rented the Stanley house on the hill."

"Likely story that about his pilin' on you from behind," scoffed Billy. "You met him on the path an' tried to get gay with him, more like, an' he pasted you a few. You shouldn't hunt trouble, Anse; you can't fight, an' you know it. What's this new boy like?" he asked curiously.

"Oh, you'll find that out soon enough," promised Anson. "He told me to tell you that he would do the same thing to you first chance he got."

"Oh, no, he didn't neither," laughed Billy. "He can't be that foolish."

"You wait till you size him up," said Anson. "He's taller'n you are an' heavier, too. Oh, you'll have your hands full when he tackles you, Mister Scrapper-Bill."

Billy pinched off a fox-tail stock and chewed it thoughtfully. "Maybe," he said, cheerfully. "He certainly tapped you some, but then you're always huntin' trouble, an' it serves you right."

"Listen to me!" Anson cried. "He made all the trouble, I tell you. All I did was tell him not to throw clubs at Ringdo—"

"What! Was he throwin' clubs at my coon?" Billy shouted.

"You bet he was. Had Ringdo up a tree an' was doin' his best to knock him out."

Billy spit out the fox-tail. "Where's this feller Scroggie now?" he asked in a business-like tone.

"I dunno. I s'pose he's prowlin' 'round the beech grove, up there. He said he intended lickin' every boy in this settlement on sight. You best not go lookin' fer him, Bill. I don't want'a see you get beat up on my account."

"Well you needn't worry; if I get beat up it won't be on your account, I kin tell you that. I don't aim to let anybody throw clubs at my pets, though. You drive the cattle on down; I'm goin' up to the grove."

A gleam of satisfaction lit Anson's shifty eyes. "All right," he said shortly, and went off after the herd.

Billy climbed the rail fence and crossed the basswood swale to the highland. He approached the beech grove cautiously and peered about him. Seated on a log at the lower end of a grassy glade was a boy about his own age, a boy with round, bullet head poised on a thick neck set between square shoulders.

Billy, taking his measure with one fleeting glance, stepped out from the trees. Simultaneously the strange boy rose slowly, head lowered, fists clenched. There was nothing antagonistic in Billy's attitude as he surveyed the new boy with serious grey eyes. That expression had fooled more than one competitor in fistic combat, and it fooled Jim Scroggie now. "He's scared stiff," was the new boy's thought, as he swaggered forward to where Billy stood.

"I've been waitin' for you and now I'm goin' to lick you," he said.

Billy eyed him appraisingly. He did look like a tough proposition, no doubt about that. His face was round, flat, small-featured. "That face 'll stand a lot of pummelin'," Billy told himself, and as he noted the heavy chin, thrust antagonistically forward, "no use bruisin' my knuckles on that," he decided.

"You heard what I said, didn't you?" growled the challenger. "I'm goin' to lick you."

Billy grinned. He had caught the gasp at the end of the speaker's words; now he knew where lay the stranger's weak spot—his wind!

"But I ain't wantin' to fight," Billy returned gently.

"Why? Scared?"

"Nice boys don't fight." Billy shifted his feet uneasily, the movement bringing him a step or two closer to the other.

"Bah! mommie's baby boy won't fight!" taunted the eager one. "But by gollies! I'm goin' to make you," he added, scowling fiercely.

Billy wanted to laugh, but he was too good a ring-general to give way to his feelings. Instead, he shifted his feet again, thereby getting within reaching distance of the one so anxious for battle.

"Now, then," declared Scroggie, tossing his hat on the sward and drying his moist palms on his trouser-legs. "I'm goin' to black your eyes and pummel the nose off your face."

The last word was drowned in a resounding "smack." Billy had delivered one of his lightning, straight-arm punches fair on the sneering lips of the new boy. Scroggie staggered back, recovered his balance, and threw himself on the defensive in time to block Billy's well-aimed right to the neck.

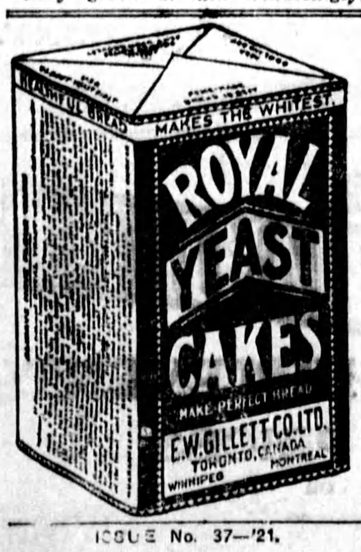
"So that's your game, is it?" he grunted. "Here's a new one for you, then." That "new one" was a veritable "hay-maker." Had it landed where it was intended to land the fight must have ended then and there. But it didn't. Billy saw it coming and ducked.

Scroggie rushed, managing to get in a stiff jab to Billy's body and receiving in return one which promptly closed one of his small optics. He struck out wildly, but Billy was prancing six feet away. Scroggie's swollen and bleeding mouth twisted in a grin "Oh, I'll get you," he promised. "Stall if you want'a, it's all one to me. You won't find me sleepin' again, I promise you."

Billy advanced in a crouching attitude. His eyes were on Scroggie's uninjured eye and Scroggie, now grown wary, read that look as Billy intended he should. Older fighters have made the same mistake that Scroggie made. As Billy leaped in Scroggie raised his guard to his face and Billy's right and left thudded home to the flabby stomach of his adversary.

With a gasp Scroggie went to earth, where he lay writhing. After a time he struggled to a sitting posture.

(To be continued.)



ISSUE No. 37—'21.

Fine Weather.

Weather is fine for livin'—and that's
what most of us want
As much as we do the shadows of
glory that hound and haunt;

Weather is fine for loving,
And dreaming and sitting by
Hearing the harp of the evening wind,
The lark of the morning sky.

Weather is fine for laughin'—and that's
what most of us need
To hurry the heal of the wounds we
feel when the old, sore places
bleed;

Weather is fine for dancing,
And delving with what life sends
To help us along to the smile and song
And the beautiful faith of friends.

Weather is fine for fightin'—and that's
what most of us know
As over the hills and hollows strug-
gling for joy we go;

Weather is fine for singing
And swinging and smiling away
To the lilt of the looms of twilight,
The boom of the mills of day.

Building New Plane in Secret.

Much is expected from the tests of Great Britain's new secretly constructed hellocopter (vertical flying machine), made at the Royal Aircraft Works at Farnsborough by a few trusted workers, says a London despatch.

Extraordinary precautions are being taken to insure that no spy will gain the slightest inkling of the principles of construction. The place of the tests and the time they will occur are kept secret and it is not improbable that the tests may be made at dusk.

Keep Minard's Liniment in the house.

Tasty Salads.

A good little salad which the housewife should have at her fingers' ends is made of apples and celery chopped together and dressed with mayonnaise. This salad can be charmingly served in apples. A word about preparing your apples:

Select, of course, the prettiest and firmest you can find, peel them carefully; take out the core, and scrape out as much of the inside as is possible without allowing your knife to burst through.

In serving them, place each apple on a bed of watercress, lettuce leaves, grape leaves, nasturtiums, or other dainty green thing. They may be decorated, too, with red beets in fancy shapes. Many delicious salads may be served in these pretty apple cups.

A bit of crisp cabbage or lettuce makes a good combination with the apples and celery, and a few chopped nuts are always a splendid addition.

Different combinations of fruits may be used for variety, and a cream dressing instead of mayonnaise will be relished by everybody. To make enough dressing to serve salad to six people, pour one and one-half tablespoonfuls of vinegar over one tablespoonful of granulated sugar, flavor with a little lemon and vanilla extract, and just before serving add three tablespoonfuls of rich cream, either sweet or sour. Mix the ingredients, pour over the fruit or vegetable mixtures, and toss lightly until well commingled. When vegetables are used they should be slightly seasoned with salt and pepper.

To serve salad in cucumber boats, scoop out your cucumbers after cutting them in two lengthwise, and cut them in boat shape. Then refill with your salad mixture. Take some wafers in the shape of triangles and fasten them like three-cornered sails upright in the front of the canoe-shaped cucumber, lay a wreath of greenery around on the plate.

For a very easily prepared dish on the salad order, there could be nothing daintier and more appetizing than whole tomatoes served with mayonnaise. The tomatoes are dropped in hot water to loosen the skins, which are very carefully stripped off. Arrange each tomato on a bed of green, pour a spoonful of dressing over it, and chill before serving.

The Blue Envelope.

Everyone knew that the blue envelopes were coming. Like hundreds of other firms, Copeland & Co. had doubled its business during the war and now saw it shrinking again to its normal size. That meant that many employees could no longer be kept. The firm had given a month's notice of the coming cut, yet when it came it nevertheless seemed like a thunderbolt.

Eight of the office girls were dismissed. Florrie Evans went, of course; Florrie's attitude toward her work had never been serious. She only laughed at her dismissal and remarked that she should not let it worry her. Nellie Scott, who also lost her place, turned pale but said nothing. Others of the dismissed girls sputtered angrily. Of them all only Gertrude Ellis walked straight to Mr. Copeland's office.

She had to wait half an hour before she could see him. At the end of it she was facing Mr.Copeland across his desk. Her eyes met his steadily. She even managed to smile.

"I'm one of the blue envelope girls, Mr. Copeland," she said. "I've come to ask you for a little help. I know of course that I am being dismissed because my work isn't so good as that of the girls who are staying. Would you mind telling me where I have failed? You see, I want to get something out of this. I may be dismissed somewhere else, but I don't intend that it shall be for the same thing."

Mr. Copeland's keen eyes looked interested. He turned to his files and took out her rating card.

"You understand, Miss Ellis," he said, "that neither we nor anyone else would consider you a failure. You do good average work,—even above the average,—but naturally we are keeping the best."

"I understand. But I mean to be the best myself some day, and I want to know what I have to correct."

Mr. Copeland glanced at the card. "You are a little slow. Still, speed is not the first requisite. Your chief trouble seems to be your spelling."

"I was afraid so. I'm a wretched speller. I've worked and worked at it, but evidently I'll have to work harder. I'll plaster my walls with the words that trip me till I can see them with my eyes shut! Thank you, Mr. Copeland."

She had risen, but Mr. Copeland detained her. "One minute, Miss Ellis. We cannot afford to let a girl go who is determined to make her defects help her to victory. You are what we consider to be a very good risk. You will report as usual Monday morning."

And then, with a blue envelope still clasped tightly in her hand, a dazed but smiling girl found herself out in the corridor.

Start a Little Country Theatre.

More and more since the boys came back, country folk are coming to realize that if we keep the young folks on the farm we must not only eliminate a lot of the drudgery, but we must provide entertainment for them. The days when early to bed and early to rise, and all play and no work makes Jack a lazy boy, had power to move, are long since passed. The cities with their dance halls and movies, or perhaps their concerts and lecture course, are too easy to reach. Factories and stores offer to both boys and girls a means of earning a living easily, with several hours of fun besides. So if the country is to hold its young folks it must hustle up and establish some way of catering to the pleasure-loving side of normal, healthy boys and girls.

A form of entertainment which is growing more and more popular in country places is home talent theatricals. In communities where the idea has been worked out thoroughly the method of organizing has been to send out a questionnaire, asking those who will join to tell what they can best do. The volunteers are then divided into scene painters, costume makers, or actors, according to individual talent. To be successful the Little Country Theatre must be a real community affair, with everybody and his wife working. A one-person show will not work out.

Of course, a suitable hall must be found. If you have a consolidated school with an assembly room, this may be utilized. In lieu of either school or community house which is suitable, a town hall, or unused loft over a store, or even a barn, may be made to do, with the aid of an ingenious carpenter. Many manuals are published which give directions for building the stage, and on scenery and costumes, making up, etc.

Pageants, in which everyone can take part, are as much a part of the work as one-act playlets with a half dozen actors. Ontario, with its wealth of historical stories, all dripping with dramatic interest, offers unbounded material for pageants. Starting with the coming of the French and following with the many thrilling events of the French and Indian wars, the British conquest, coming of the United Empire Loyalists, the War of 1812, and pioneer life in Ontario, there is much to be drawn upon for pageants with a provincial appeal. Then nearly every locality has its own particular history which is replete with local interest. A pageant written, directed and acted by home talent should furnish enough entertainment to keep a neighborhood busy almost a season.

Would You Spend Ten Dollars?

In considering the matter of home conveniences, a common tendency is to think in terms of the hundreds of dollars that are necessary in order to buy the furnace, the lighting plant, the water system or other fairly expensive necessities. Every farm home is entitled to such modern conveniences but they come only in time as the purchase money becomes available.

Did you ever stop to think that for about ten dollars you can purchase at any good hardware store some twenty-five conveniences that will save you almost as much labor and trouble as the more expensive improvements? You may have to wait for the furnace, or the lighting plant or the water system but you need not wait for the little conveniences.

Take for example the inexpensive dish drainer. It is estimated that a dish drainer will save at least thirty minutes a day or a total for one year of over twenty working days of nine hours each. This is only one of a dozen or more simple, inexpensive conveniences that will give the worker in the home a total of hours and hours of leisure. Think this over and make a few purchases the next time you go to town.

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Mention this paper.

An Airless Earth.

Were the earth deprived of its atmosphere, and existence possible under such conditions, we should find that no rosy dawn would herald the rising of the sun in the darkened east, or gorgeous colors mark its setting in the west The sky would be dark by day as well as by night.

The stars would shine brightly through the entire twenty-four hours, but we should see thousands more of them than are now visible on even the clearest nights. They would not twinkle in the least.

They would be seen almost up to the very edge of the sun itself, but immediately round the sun there would be a glow having the appearance of broad wings, and red flames would add their grandeur to the impressive scene.

The Zodiacal light would appear as a broad beam of light in the spring, up to the left of the place where the sun had set. It would be possible to study this remarkable object, and no doubt to solve quickly the mystery which has clung to it for so many centuries.

The appearance of the Milky Way would be far more magnificent than it is now, seen even from tropical countries.

A big comet would be seen months before it got to the sun, and we should witness it sweep round the sun with incredible speed and dart off into space again.

Mercury and Venus could have their movements followed with ease, and any other planet there might be between Mercury and the sun would soon be discovered.

Garlic Blocks Hardening of Arteries.

Eat plenty of garlic and your arteries will not harden, according to a report just made by three French doctors to the Biological Society at Paris. The garlic treatment can be taken in two ways. One may eat it, or a steeped solution of it may be injected into the veins. The advantage seen in the latter method is that the garlic solution is alcoholic.

By steeping garlic bulbs for three weeks in four times their weight of alcohol a filtering liquid is obtained, and by taking thirty drops of this daily, according to the report, a rapid softening of the affected arteries is certain to result.

A man who lives on hope will spend his old age at somebody else's expense.

Minard's Liniment used by Physicians.

S O S For the Doctor

A woman sat rocking her baby one Saturday at sundown in the steamship Venetian, homeward bound in the Bay of Biscay, from Alexandria For a week past she had nursed her dying child, and there was no doctor on board.

The grey outline of a man-of-war appeared in the distance, and a wireless message was sent asking for help. The war vessel flashed back a reply. The Venetian stopped, the war vessel drew to within a quarter of a mile, and in spite of the heavy swell a lifeboat put out to her.

Passengers on the Venetian watched their progress breathlessly as the little boat swung up and down in the trough of the sea. At length the side of the Venetian was reached, and the man whose help was so sorely needed mounted a rope ladder prepared for him. The baby's life was saved. The name of the baby was Elizabeth. The name of the warship was the Queen Elizabeth.

Some time ago James Arthur, a fireman of the Canadian Pacific liner Monmouth, was attacked in mid-ocean with severe internal hemorrhage. He owes his life to wireless. The Monmouth carried no surgeon, but her commander secured wireless communication with the Allan liner Hesperian, gave details of the man's symptoms, and received daily prescriptions from the doctor on board the Hesperian. The fireman was well on the road to recovery when he reached Montreal.

The captain of a tramp steamer in the Gulf of Mexico was taken ill with ptomaine poisoning. With death staring him in the face on account of inadequate medical aid, he decided to call by wireless for assistance from a naval station many miles away.

A liner 700 miles farther away picked up the call, and the ship's surgeon made haste to reply with the necessary prescription, which was then filled from the tramp steamer's medicine-chest, and the captain recovered.

The mail-packet was crossing from Ostend to Dover, and one of the passengers, donning his overcoat in half a gale, put his shoulder-joint out, and was in great pain. A wireless message was sent from the vessel to Ostend and thence to Dover for a surgeon to meet the boat, and on arrival at the Admiralty Pier the passenger was promptly attended to.

Bovril sets you up