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, who for some reason wishes to own the swamp. Later Billy fights Jim Scroggie.

CHAPTER XI.—(Cont'd.)

"Got enough?" asked Billy pleasantly.

The vanquished one nodded. He had not as yet recovered his breath sufficiently to speak. When at last he was able to draw a full breath, he said: "Say, you trimmed me all right, all right."

Billy grinned.

"Who are you, anyway?" asked Scroggie as he got groggily to his feet.

"I'm the feller that owns the coon you tried to club to death," Billy answered.

Scroggie's mouth fell open in surprise. "I didn't try to kill any coon," he denied. "I saw one but it wasn't me that clubbed it; it was a tall, sandy-haired feller with a squint eye. I asked him what he was tryin' to do and he told me to dry up and mind my own business. I had to give him a lickin'. He went off blubberin'; said if I wasn't too scared to stick around he'd send a feller over who would fix me. So I stayed."

"I wish you had licked him harder'n you did," frowned Billy.

"Know him?"

"Well, I do—an' I don't. He's my half-brother an' a sneak if ever there was one. He lied about you to me—so's I'd fight you."

"And what's your name?"

"Billy Wilson."

Scroggie stared. "I've heard of you," he said, "an' the feller who told me you could lick your weight in wildcats wasn't far wrong. You had me fooled, though," he laughed. "I swallowed what you said about nice boys not fightin', swallowed it whole. Oh, Moses!"

Billy sat down on a stump. "I don't bear no grudge, do you?" he asked.

"No, I'm willin' to shake." Scroggie extended his hand.

"Your name's Scroggie, ain't it?" Billy asked.

"Yep, Jim Scroggie."

"Your Dad's goin' to cut down the Scroggie woods, I hear?"

"Yep, if he can get his price for the timber."

Billy sat looking away. His grey eyes had grown sombre. "See here," he said suddenly, "do you know that old man Scroggie left a will?"

"Dad says not," the other boy replied.

"Well, then, he did; an' in that will he left his woods an' money to Mr. Stanhope, my teacher."

"If that's so, Dad has no right to that woods," said Jim.

"But supposin' the will can't be found?" Billy looked the other boy in the face and waited for the answer.

"Why, I can't see that that ought'a make any difference," Scroggie replied. "If you folks down here know that Uncle left his money and place to your teacher, that ought'a be enough for Dad."

"Of course the timber's worth a lot," sparred Billy.

"But Dad don't need it," Jim declared. "He's rich now."

"He is?" Billy respected the new boy for the nonchalance of his tones. Riches hadn't stuck him up, at any rate.

"Yep," went on Scroggie, "Dad owns some big oil wells in the States. He ain't got any business down here anyways, but he's so pig-headed you can't tell him anythin'; I'll say that much, even if he is my father. It's bad enough for him to lug me away from town, but he made Lou come along, too."

"Lou?"

"She's my sister," Jim explained proudly. "She's a year younger'n me. Dad says she looks just like Mother looked. I guess that's the reason she kin do most anythin' she likes with him. But she couldn't get him to let her stay in Cleveland. He brought her along and Aunt too. Aunt keeps house for us."

"I guess your Dad don't think much of us folks down here, does he?" Billy asked.

Scroggie chuckled. "Dad ain't got any use for anybody, much," he answered. "I never heard him say anythin' about any of the people of the Settlement but once, and that was just t'other night. He come home lookin' as if somebody had pushed his head into a crate of eggs. I was too scared to ask him how it happened and Lou wouldn't. Dad said the people 'round here are a bad lot and it wouldn't surprise him if they tried to kill him."

Billy threw back his head and laughed, the first hearty laugh he had known for days. Scroggie, in spite of the pain his swollen lip caused him, laughed too.

"Say," he remarked hesitatingly, you got a great laugh, Billy."

"Oh I don't know," Billy replied. "What makes you think so, Jim?" Scroggie sat down beside him on the log. "I had a chum in the city who laughed just like you do. Gosh, nobody'll know how much I miss him."

"Dead?"

Scroggie nodded. "Drowned through an air-hole in the lake. Say, Billy, do you skate?"

"Some."

"Swim?"

"A little."

"Shoot?"

Billy scratched his head reflectively.

"Not much, any more," he said. "Course I like duck-shootin', an' do quite a lot of it in the fall."

"How 'bout quail?"

"I don't shoot quail any more," Billy answered. "I've got to know 'em too well, I guess. "You see," in answer to the other boy's look of surprise, "when a feller gets to know what chummy, friendly little beggars they are, he don't feel like shootin' 'em."

"But they're wild, ain't they and they're game birds?"

"They're wild if you make 'em wild, but if they get to know that you like 'em an' won't hurt 'em, they get real tame. I've got one flock I call my own. I fed 'em last winter when the snow was so deep they couldn't pick up a livin'. They used to come right into our barn-yard for the tailin's I throwed out to 'em."

"What's tailin's?"

"It's chaff and small wheat the fannin' mill blows out from the good grain. Pa lets me have it fer my wild birds. I've got some partridge up on the hickory knoll, too. They're shyer than the quail, but I've got 'em so tame I kin call 'em and make 'em come to me."

"You kin?" Jim exclaimed. "Well, I'll be razzle-dazzled!"

"So, I don't shoot partridge neither," said Billy. "I don't blame anybody else fer shootin' 'em, remember, but somehow, I'd rather leave 'em alive."

"I see," said Scroggie. Of course he didn't but he wanted to make Billy feel that he did.

"Well you do more than most people, then," said Billy. "The folks 'round here think I'm crazy, I guess, an' Joe Scraff—he's got an English setter dog an' shoots a lot; he told me that if he happened onto my quail an' partridge he'd bag as many of 'em as he could. I told him that if he shot my birds, he'd better watch out fer his white Leghorn chickens, but he laughed at me."

"And did he shoot your quail?" asked Scroggie.

Billy nodded. "Once. Flushed 'em at the top of the knoll and winged one bird. The rest of the covey flew into our barn-yard an' 'course he couldn't foller 'em in there."

"Gollies! Did you see him?"

"No, he an' Pa an' Anse was down at the back end of the place. Ma saw him, though, an' she told me all about it. Say, maybe I wasn't mad, but I got even, all right."

"Did you? How?"

Billy looked searchingly at his new friend. "I never told a soul how I did it, 'cept my chum, Maurice Keeler," he said. "But I'll tell you. That same evenin' I was prowlin' through the clashin' lookin' fer white grubs fer bass-bait. I found a big rotten stump, so I pushed it over, an' right down under the roots I found an old weasel an' six half-grown kittens. Afore she could get over her surprise, I had her an' her family in the tin pail I had with me, an' the cover on. By rights I should a' killed the whole caboodle of 'em, I s'pose, 'cause they're mighty hard on the birds; but I had work fer 'em to do.

"That night I took them weasels over to Scraff's an' turned 'em loose under his barn. I knowed mighty well ma weasel would stay where it was dark an' safe and the chicken smell was so strong. Couple of days after that Scraff come over to our place to borrow some rat traps. His face was so long he was fair steppin' on his lower lip. He said weasels had been slaughterin' his Leghorns, right an' left; six first night an' nine the next.

"'I hope they won't get among my quail,' I says, an' Scraff he turned round an' looked at me mighty hard, but he didn't say nuthin'. He went away, grumblin', an' carryin' six of Dad's traps. Course I knowed he couldn't catch a weasel in a trap in twenty years an' he didn't catch any either. Ma weasel killed some more of his Leghorns, an' then Scraff he comes to me. "Billy,' he says, 'is there any way to get rid of weasels?' 'Sure there's a way,' I says, 'but not everybody knows it.'

"'I'll give you five dollars if you'll catch them weasels that are killin' my chickens,' he says.

"'If you'll promise me you'll stay away from my quail an' partridge I'll catch 'em fer nuthin,' I told him. 'Only,' I says, 'remember, I do what I please with 'em, after I get 'em.' He looked at me as though he'd like to choke me, but he said all right, he'd leave my birds alone.

"That night Maurice Keeler an' me went over to Gamble's an' borrowed his old ferret. He's a big ferret an' he'll tackle anythin', even a skunk. With some keg-hoops an' a canvas sack he had made what we needed to catch the weasels in. Then we put a muzzle on the ferret, so he couldn't fang-cut the weasels, and we went over to Scraff's. As soon as Joe Scraff saw the ferret he began to see light an' turned into the house to get his shotgun. I told him to remember his promise to let me get the weasels alive, so he set on the fence an' watched while we got busy.

"First off we plugged every hole under that barn but two, an' at each of these two we set a hoop-net. Then we turned ol' Lucifer, the ferret, loose under the barn. Holy Smoke! afore we knowed it there was high jinks goin' on under there. Maurice had hold of one hoop an' me the other. It took ma weasel an' her boys an' girls 'bout half a minute to make up their minds that ol' Lucifer wasn't payin' 'em a friendly visit. When the big scramble was over, I had a bagful of weasels an' so did Maurice. We let Lucifer prowl round a little longer to make sure we had all of 'em, then I called him out. I made Scraff give us one of his hens to feed the ferret on. Then Maurice an' me started off.

"'You think you got all of 'em, Bill?' Scraff called.

"'All this time,' I says, an' to save my life I couldn't help laughin' at the look on his face. He knowed right then that I had put up a job on him but he couldn't figure out how."

"Oh, Hully Gee!" yelled Jim Scroggie, "Wasn't that corkin'—Oh Mommer! An' what did you an' Maurice do with the weasels?"

Billy grinned sheepishly. "We should 'a killed 'em, I s'pose," he said, "but we took 'em down to the marsh an' turned 'em loose there. Maurice said that anythin' that had done the good work them weasels had, deserved life, an' I thought so too."

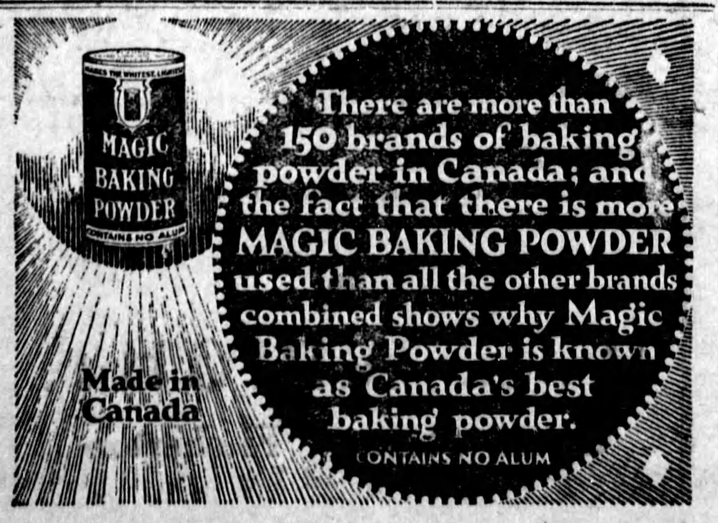
The twilight shadows were beginning to steal across the glade; the golden-rod of the uplands massed into indistinguishable clumps. The silence of eventide fell soft and sweet and songless—that breathless space between the forest day and darkness.

Billy stood up. "You'll like it here," he said to the other boy who was watching him, a strange wonder in his eyes. "After you know it better," he added.

"I'm afraid I don't fit very well yet," Scroggie answered. "Maybe you'll let me trail along with you sometimes, Bill, and learn things?"

"We'll see," said Billy and without another word turned to the dim pathway among the trees.

(To be continued.)



Rubber.

Columbus reported that he found natives of Haiti playing with balls that bounced, which is the first reference to rubber or caoutchouc. Priestly, the English chemist, erased lead-pencil marks with the substance and called it rubber. Mackintosh, a canny Scot, in 1823 dissolved some rubber in naphtha and spread the solution on a slab to dry. He then fastened a rubberized sheet between two pieces of fabric and so introduced the raincoat to the world. But most important, Goodyear let some of a rubber-and-sulphur mixture fall on the lid of a hot stove and noted with amazement that it hardened without melting. He had discovered that it was possible to vulcanize rubber, a process that makes it no longer sensitive to the changes of the season sand increases its strength and elasticity.

Keep Minard's Liniment in the house.

Out in the Fields.

The little cares that fretted me,
I lost them pesterday
Among the fields above the sea,
Among the winds at play,
Among the lowing of the herds,
The rustling of the trees,
Among the singing of the birds,
The humming of the bees:
The fooling fears of what might happen,
I cast them all away
Among the clover scented grass,
Among the new mown hay.
Among the hushing of the corn
Where the drowsy poppies nod,
Where ill thoughts die and good are born,
Out in the fields with God.

British Made Broader by War.

The chief examiner of the Board of Education says that the war seems to have brought not only a wider view, but increased earnestness in men's minds toward professional training, says a London despatch. In every subject under examination there is a marked upward tendency, he says.

The men who served in the war have a greater consciousness of the significance of history and the power of knowledge.

Virtue May Become a Vice.

Virtues can be carried to such an extreme that they degenerate into vices is an axiom. Perhaps the one which most easily and quickly slips over the border is the virtue of criticism.

A little kindly, well meant criticism is one of the best stimulants to growth. But it is seldom a critic can remain just a kindly critic. It is so easy to slip over the line and become a chronic fault finder, from whom Heaven preserve us.

One such pest has almost broken up a community organization in a prosperous farming section. Her first suggestions were constructive, but whether her success in getting the organization to change some of its plans gave her an enlarged sense of her own importance, or whether she was at heart a born fault finder, who can say? At any rate she continued to pick flaws in the methods of work until the discouraged promotors of neighborhood enterprises are all ready to give up.

Probably this woman has done no more harm, though, than her neighbor who finds fault with her family. Every woman knows that no husband is perfect, no children faultless. But why be forever telling them about it? Psychologists tell us that the best way to build up is by praising virtues rather than by stressing faults. Yet this woman—and she has many copies—almost never mentions a good thing about any of her family, but continually harps on their shortcomings.

That woman is giving her children a reputation they will have hard work living down. They are already looked upon in the community as future bad citizens, when as a matter of fact they are only normal, average children. No child ever overwhelms its parents with gratitude for its daily care. Yet because these children are not constantly thanking their mother for their bread and butter, she refers to them as monsters of ingratitude. And where is the child who hops out of bed in the morning and rushes to mother, clamoring to be given work to do? I've yet to see a healthy boy or girl who voluntarily offered to do chores or wash dishes, until months of habit had made the job seem natural. The propensity of children is to dash out to play, and if they don't whine and protest when you dragged them in to work, you'd think there was something the matter with them. Now, wouldn't you?

Yet, because this woman's children are healthy young animals and object to being broken to harness she bewails the fact that her children are lazy and idle. Bewailing at home would be bad enough, it would go far towards making the children lazy, but to tell their faults to the world is little short of crimnal.

A "Never Fail" Pie Crust.

A pastry made with hot water! We ask you—the experienced cooks—can you think of anything more iconoclastic? Here it is:

½ cupful shortening (¼ cupful butter, ¼ cupful lard), ½ cupful hot (boiling water), 2½ cupfuls flour, ¼ teaspoonful baking powder, ⅛ teaspoonful salt.

Cream the shortening with the water by adding the latter only a bit at a time. Mix the salt and baking powder with the sifted flour, and stir this into the butter and water. Turn out upon a floured board and roll thin before lining the tins. And do not forget when lining the plate to carefully press out all air so that none is left to force up the pastry in large bubbles and push the filling out of the pie into the oven. This amount will make upper and lower crusts for one large pie. If filling is uncooked bake forty minutes in 450-degree oven, reducing the temperature to 400 degrees for last ten minutes.

It is claimed that this recipe will never fail. It is more easily and quickly made than by the old method of rubbing the fat into the flour and keeping everything ice cold.

More power to every discovery that saves time and labor but sacrifices no quality!

A Novel Bazaar.

Ladies' Aid: Can you suggest some new way of holding a small sale or bazaar?

A Pedler's Parade is novel and does not require booths. Those who take part dress up to represent peddlers (both men and women), and place their wares in baskets, packs and push-carts. The sale opens with a parade of these "merchants" headed by an organ-grinder carrying a hand-organ, if it is possible to hire one. An agile boy might be persuaded to dress as a monkey and accompany the organ-grinder throughout the evening, holding up his cap for stray pennies. If this can not be arranged, a group of musicians might serve as a street band, producing music on real or fake instruments, but remembering to "pass the hat" between numbers.

After the "parade" the pedlers endeavor to sell their wares, imitating the methods of real pedlers in order to create merriment. Sandwiches can be sold from a basket carried by a man dressed to represent a "train-boy." Another "train-boy" could sell peanut bars, marshmallows, other package candy and sweet chocolate. Ice cream could be sold from a push-cart and should be served on paper plates and eaten with tin spoons. A woman carrying a basket containing cakes should be near at hand. Other baskets should be filled with aprons, iron-holders, tea-towels, fancy-work, notions and flowers if they are available.

Planning Embroidery.

Plan your needlework for the season. Think of something you have always wished for and resolved to get when you could "afford it," or to do when you "had time."

For instance, if you have been longing for a really handsome embroidered linen luncheon set, but never started one because you felt you would never finish it, make that your season's work. When every odd hour is spent on making a piece of work grow, it is surprising to see how the thing gathers speed after it once has a start.

Such beautiful stamped linens are being shown this season that even the busiest woman, who have not given any time to embroidering for years, are trying to spare a few hours to do it. The most important point about these new stamped pieces is that they are of genuine Irish linen, of the full, round thread Derryvale weave. This will wear for years and years, so the worker has the satisfaction of knowing that her labor will last, not for a season, but for a generation. Indeed, if she be of sentimental nature, she will take joy in laying up treasure for her daughter and her daughter's daughter, just as good mothers of half a century ago used to do.

Those women were wise in their work, for material that was to be graced by the art of their hands was always of the finest quality genuine Irish linen. That is why some fortunate daughters—and even granddaughters—have remnants of bridal sets to-day as keepsakes. And how those lovely old silvering pieces are cherished! If anything grows old gracefully, surely it is linen. Its sheen and silky smoothness seem to become more ingratiating with time.

So whether the present-day woman wants merely to satisfy her own longing for beautiful embroidered linen or whether she is sowing that others may reap, there is an abundance of worthy material at hand. The designers have given their best in the patterns, and the manner in which motifs have been carried through sets is admirable.

A centrepiece, accompanied by twelve doilies in two sizes, strikes one as a big piece of work—one that the faint-hearted is likely to postpone until she has "more time." The "more time" stage is a sort of twin sister to to-morrow. It has a way of never arriving. And so a woman goes on longing for the thing right within her reach, if she will only stretch her arm, just a little bit, for it.

Hand embroidery moves faster as the work progresses and faltering fingers grow swift and skillful. A piece that frightens one by its enormity when blank loses all the terror it held for the worker within a week's time. And it is a work that rests the mind while the hands fashion a beautiful thing.

Embroidery may be done at any time, in any place, in any company. The conversation can go along freely, for there are no stitches to count, no clicking needles to interrupt. It has always been a pastime occupation of gentlewomen.

Women's time is too precious to-day to waste it, even in her leisure moments, on unworthy work.

Minard's Liniment used by Physicians.

A Full Stop.

Robert came in from school one afternoon wheeling his bicycle.

"What has happened to your bicycle?" his mother inquired.

"Oh," said Robert, "the tire is punctuated."

"You mean punctured, my boy," said his mother.

"Well, at any rate," said Robert with conviction, "I came to a full stop."

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