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BOVRIL

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, tells the new teacher, Mr. Johnston, about his predecessor, Frank Stanhopo, 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. Scroggie's namesake and apparent heir takes possession. Twin Oaks store is robbed. Harry O'Dule finds the stolen goods in old Scroggie's cabin, known as the haunted house. Hinter, middle-aged and well-to-do, goes wooing Erie Landon, loyal sweetheart of Stanhope, and daughter of the invalid lighthouse keeper. Two strangers make a fruitless search of O'Dule's hut.

CHAPTER XIV.—(Cont'd.)

"Faith," cried Harry, "ut's divil a bit I know concernin' that man Trigger Finger, but ut's small reward they'd be gettin' fer their pains if they tied me up and tried torture, an' I'll be tellin' ye fer why, byes. The stuff's gone back to Spencer. Load ut I did meself on Joe Scraff's buckboard, not more than an hour agone. The box wid the black fox skins an' two big jugs av whiskey. Back I sent ut all, byes, wid the compliments av the both av ye an' me poor self. But now it'll be there, and the heart av ould Caleb 'll be beatin' two skips fer one wid jye at recoverin' all av his stolen possessions. I did right, I hope now, in sindin' ut along back?" he finished.

"You bet you did!" cried the boys, together.

Maurice stood up. "Well, as there's no need to keep watch here, maybe I best trail along home. Anse'll be gettin' tired waitin' fer me."

"That won't hurt him; he's always tired anyway," rejoined Billy. "But we'd best go."

At the door he paused and turned toward Harry. "Where's Gibson's Grove?" he asked.

Harry, who had picked up his hat and taken his tin whistle from his bosom, shook his head. "There's no sech place, I'm thinkin'," he answered.

Billy frowned. "What did Hinter say when you gave him the message, Harry?"

Harry chuckled. "Faith, ut's crazy he thought I was I guess," he cried. " 'Oould man,' sez he, 'somebody has been playin' a trick on ye. I know no such place as Gibson's Grove.' Thin begobs! he laughed, like he saw the humor av ut, and had me sate meself in the shade and smoke a cigar while I risted. So I'm thinkin', byes, them min jest wanted to get rid av me the while they ransacked me house and belongin's, bad cess to 'em!"

Billy laughed. "Come along as far as the clearin', Harry," he invited, "and play us a tune that'll cheer Maurice up, will you?"

"Faith, an' that I'll do," cried O'Dule. "Lilt him a chune I wuil that'll make his laggin' feet dance, and his laggin' spirit look up above the slough av despond."

And so down the path ridged with the bronze bars of late afternoon sunlight, they passed, Harry strutting in the lead, wrinkled face lifted, scanty white locks streaming in the breeze as he drew from his whistle a wild sweet melody.

"There now," he cried, when at last the clearing was reached, and the whistle was tucked away in the bosom of his flannel shirt, "I'll be partin' wid ye now, byes, fer a spell. Over to Spencer's store I'll be goin', to glimpse the jye in his eyes, and axe him to trust me fer a few groceries I'll be needin' till me next allowance arrives from the home land. And ut's no doubt I have in me mind that he'll do ut gladly, fer ut's a tinder man he is at heart an' no mistake."

CHAPTER XV.

Billy's Problems Multiply.

Recovery of the stolen goods caused considerable excitement in the Settlement. For a week or so nothing else was talked of and conjecture ran rife as to why the thieves had not made off with their pillage rather than hide it in the haunted house. Harry O'Dule came in for plenty of praise for the part he had played in finding the loot, but beyond hinting that the job had been more than easy for a seventh son of a seventh son, he was reticent on the subject. That he should have returned the liquor almost intact, to the owner, was a conundrum to all who knew him, with the exception of Billy and Maurice.

Billy was anything but easy in his mind during these exciting days. Who were the two strangers who had searched old Harry's hut? Were they the same two he and Maurice had seen in the woods on the night of the storm? If so, why did they send a message to Hinter, and what was its significance? Where was Gibson's Grove, anyway? These questions bothered him, and pondering upon them robbed him of appetite and sleep. Maurice and Elgin were no help to him in a dilemma of this kind and the new boy, Jim Scroggie, he knew scarcely well enough to trust.

It was, perhaps, just as well for Anson that he kept out of Billy's way during this period. However, very little that Billy did was missed by his pale blue eyes. He knew that his step-brother had visited the haunted house alone and had searched it nook and corner. For what? He had seen him fasten his rabbit-foot to a branch of a tree and dig, and dig. For what? He wanted to find out but dared not ask. Perhaps Billy was going crazy! He acted like it. Anson made up his mind that he would confide his suspicions to his mother. But on the very day that he had decided to pour into Mrs. Wilson's ear all the strange goings-on of his brother, Billy caught him out on a forest path alone and, gripping him by the shoulder, threatened to conjure up by means of witchcraft at his command a seven-headed dragon with catfish hooks for claws who would rip his—Anson's—soul to shreds if he so much as breathed to his mother one word of what he had seen.

In vain Anson declared he didn't know anything to tell. Billy looked at him calmly. "You been follerin' me an' I know it," he said. "Croaker saw you, an' so did Ringdo."

Anson's mouth fell open in terror. "You don't mean—" he commenced, then gulped, unable to proceed.

"That Croaker's a witch? Of course he's a witch, an' so's Ringdo. They both know exactly what you're thinkin', an' what you're doin'. Listen, you," as Anse shivered. "Didn't you dream, jest t'other night, that Croaker was bendin' over you to peck your eyes out?"

Anse nodded a reluctant admission.

"Well, s'pose it wasn't any dream? S'pose it was all real? An' s'pose, if I hadn't waked up in time to stop him, he'd have picked your eyes out an' put in fisheyes in their place? Then you couldn't see anythin' unless you was under water. An' s'pose, when I asked Croaker what he wanted to do that awful thing fer, he up an' told me that you'd been spyin' on me an' you didn't deserve to own human eyes? I say s'pose all this. Now then, Anse, you best mind your own business an' let your mouth freeze up close, else you're goin' to have an awful time of it. If I get Croaker to say he won't gouge your eyes out till I give the word it's more'n you deserve."

Hope stirred in Anson's fear-ridden soul—hope which Billy remorselessly killed with his next words.

"But I couldn't get no promise out o' Ringdo. He says you're workin' 'gainst us."

"But I ain't, Bill. Cross my heart, I ain't," protested Anson. "Why should I be?"

"Maybe jest 'cause you're a sneak," Billy answered, "but you're my brother an' I don't want anythin' horrible to happen to you if I kin help it. The best thing fer you to do is keep mum, an' when you see me strikin' off anywhere look t'other way."

"An' you'll see that Ringdo don't bite me, Bill?" pleaded Anson. "You'll keep him off me, won't you?"

Billy considered, "I'll try," he promised, "but it's goin' to take a whole lot of coaxin' to do it. That old witchcoon has been prowlin' down through the tamarack swale huntin' copperhead snakes for a week now, gettin' ready to do fer somebody er other."

"Oh gollies!" gasped Anson. "What's he huntin' copperheads fer, Bill?"

"Why to poison his teeth with. He's loadin' up fer somebody, sure as shootin'. Gosh! I am sorry you've been sech a fool, Anse. Jest think, one little scratch from that coon's teeth and—"

"Bill," Anson's voice was husky with terror. "You won't let him touch me, will you Bill?"

"I'll keep him away from you so long as you keep away from us, an' hold a close tongue in your head," Billy promised. "Understan', though, it's goin' to be a mighty hard thing to do; I saw him trying the bark of that elm jest under our winder only this mornin'. He's likely aimin' to shin up that tree an' fall on your face, most any night, so if you want your eyes an' your life you'd better do what I say."

"I'll do jest as you say, Bill," Anse promised, fervently, and Billy knew that he meant it. "All right, that's a go," he said and went off to the menagerie to feed his pets.

Something else was to happen shortly to make Billy feel that his world was full of mysterious agents sent for no other purpose than to give him fresh worries.

That evening, as he drove the cattle down along the Causeway for water he met two teams of horses hauling loads of greasy-looking timbers and black, oily pipes. The men who drove the teams were strangers to him. Scroggie, or Heir Scroggie, as he was now commonly called in the neighborhood, sat beside the driver of one of the wagons.

"He's movin' a saw-mill up into the big woods," thought Billy. "But where in the world did it come from?" he pondered as he looked after the creaking loads.

He was not long to remain in doubt on that point. As he approached the lake road another load of timbers and metal rounded the corner. Two men were seated on the load, a big, broad-shouldered man and a thin one. Some little distance behind another man was walking. It was Hinter.

As the load drew close to where Billy stood partly concealed by a clump of red willows, the driver halted his team for a rest after the pull through the heavy sand, and apparently not noticing the boy, spoke in guarded tones to his companion.

"If I had only listened to you, Jack, we wouldn't have lost that whisky," he said. "I was dead sure nobody would go near that place. And at that we didn't find what we did the job to get, did we? It'll be just our luck to have that will turn up in time to cook our goose, yet."

"Well, Tom, I reckon it's none of our funeral whether it turns up or not," growled the other. "We're gettin' paid well fer what we're doin', ain't we? If it turns up, Scroggie and the boss 'll have to do their own worryin'."

The driver cracked his whip and the load went on, swaying and creaking as it left the soft sand for the corduroy.

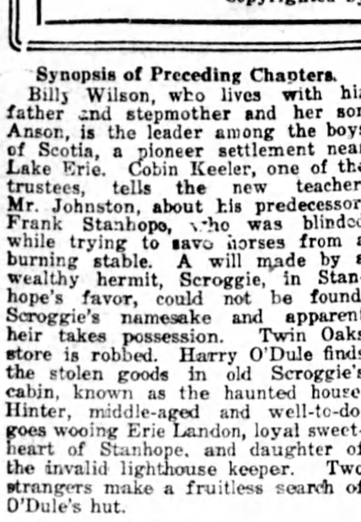
A little further on Billy came face to face with Hinter. "How are you, Billy?" spoke the man, pleasantly. "Still driving the cows down to the lake for water, I see."

"Yep; they don't seem to take to the crick water," Billy replied. "It's sort of scummy an' smells queer."

Hinter laughed constrainedly. "I've been pretty well through the Settlement, and most of the creeks are like that," he replied. "What do you suppose causes that scum and that peculiar odor?" he asked, casually.

The boy shook his head. "I dunno; them cricks shouldn't be that way; they're all spring-fed. Maybe you know?" looking straight into Hinter's eyes.

(To be continued.)



ISSUE No. 43—'21.

Dyed Her Wrap Blue and a Skirt Brown

Each package of "Diamond Dyes" contains directions so simple any woman can dye or tint her worn, shabby dresses, skirts, waists, coats, stockings, sweaters, coverings, draperies, hangings, everything, even if she has never dyed before. Buy "Diamond Dyes"—no other kind—then perfect home dyeing is sure because Diamond Dyes are guaranteed not to spot, fade, streak, or run. Tell your druggist whether the material you wish to dye is wool or silk, or whether it is linen, cotton or mixed goods.

World's Biggest Cave.

The largest cave in the world is in Edmondson County, Kentucky. It is known as the Mammoth Cave, and consists of a succession of irregular chambers, situated at different levels. Some of the chambers are very large, and the navigable branches of a subterranean river—the Echo River—run through them. The fish in these rivers are blind.

Matter of Money.

Fred—"If I were to propose, what would be the outcome?"

Freda—"That would depend very much on the income."

November Holiday Favorable.

Taking the world over, November is the favorite holiday month, twenty-six out of its thirty days being kept as official holidays by as many different countries.

Minard's Liniment used by Physicians.

A nursing bottle has been patented that is made of a collapsible material which can be folded from the bottom.

Eighty-six thousand French soldiers fell victims to tuberculosis during the war.

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Woman's Sphere

Cleansers and Polishers.

It frequently happens that one has in the pantry or wood-shed the very ingredients that go to make up many expensive compounds for keeping the house bright and clean. It is especially desirable for the farm housewife to know the formulas for some good, home-made applications.

If your floors are dark in color, a good polish for them may be made of one-half gallon of boiled linseed-oil and one gill of soft tar. Do not apply it too liberally and be sure to rub it well, as an excess of oil only serves to collect dust. For the waxed floor, never use a linseed-oil preparation, as the oil cuts the wax. One sperm candle, melted and combined with one pint of kerosene may be used to brighten a waxed floor. Another excellent formula calls for one-half cake of melted paraffin to one cupful of turpentine, applied with a flannel cloth. The very finest preparation for waxing a floor, however, is made of one pound of melted beeswax to one pint of turpentine. Any wax preparation goes farther and is easier to apply if the container is set in a vessel of hot water while being used.

A floor wax that both cleans and polishes is composed of one part melted paraffin to two parts of kerosene. This is also an excellent compound for making a dustless duster. Wring squares of cheesecloth out of the mixture and let dry in the open air. Store these cloths in a metal or fire-proof container, or spontaneous combustion is likely to occur. Twine mops may be dipped in the same solution. To stain a cheap floor so that it resembles oak, paint with about ten cents' worth of permanganate of potash dissolved in one quart of boiling water. Let cool before using, then apply, and when the floor is dry, wax it.

Many expensive furniture polishes contain nothing more than equal parts of boiled linseed-oil and vinegar. Shake well before using. Two parts of crude linseed-oil and one of turpentine, with the addition of a tablespoonful of salt to the gallon, make another good polish. For waxed furniture, use one ounce of beeswax, half an ounce of Castile soap and one-half pint of turpentine. Put all ingredients into a quart bottle, let stand for twenty-four hours, shake well, then fill the bottle with water and it is ready for use.

A fairly good wall paper cleaner is composed of ordinary bread dough, quite stiff, into which a few drops of ammonia have been worked. If you have a large room to clean, it will be worth while to make the following preparation: To one heaping cupful of sifted flour, add one tablespoonful of salt, one tablespoonful of kerosene, two tablespoonfuls of vinegar, two tablespoonfuls of ammonia, and one-half cupful of warm water. Mix and boil until the flour is well scalded and the mixture is quite thick, stirring constantly. Take it from the kettle, cool, then knead with the hands. Pinch off pieces the size of one's fist, rub the soiled paper with short downward strokes, turning and kneading the dough between the strokes to keep the surface clean.

A carpet-cleaning paste consists of two cakes of white soap, shaved fine, one-fourth of a pound of borax, two tablespoonfuls of saltpetre, boiled in three gallons of water until everything has dissolved. Remove from the fire and stir in one-half pint of ammonia. This may be used hot, or cold when it will be in the form of a jelly. Take a little warm water in a pan, dip a scrubbing-brush in the water, then into the soap jelly, and scrub a small space at a time. Avoid the use of too much water. Take the edge of the brush or a small flat stick to scrape up the lather, then wipe the spot with a cloth wrung out of clean hot water.

Equal parts of naptha washing-powder and any good scouring-powder make an excellent polish for metals or glass. This is also good for painted woodwork that resists ordinary methods of cleaning. If used for the latter purpose, wring the cloth as dry as possible and dip into a little of the mixture, then apply with a firm, perpendicular, "wiping" stroke rather than a circular rubbing motion. Baking-soda, similarly used, is also effective on painted surfaces. Use no more water than is necessary in cleaning paint or enamel.

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