Bovril prevents that sinking feeling

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 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. 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. Billy meets Heir Scroggie and Hinter with the drivers of wagon loads of timbers and pipes. Billy falls in love with Lou Scroggie. Arriving early at school on the first day of the term, Walter Watland decides that the empty stove is a good hiding-place for the package of sulphur his mother had told him to buy for her.

CHAPTER XVII.—(Cont'd.)

The new teacher paid no attention to the little scrimmage between La Rose and Billy. He stood on the platform, tall, spare, hard-featured and stern, and let his black eyes bore into the souls of the pupils, one after the other. Not until the silence of suspense was almost unbearable did he speak; then clearing his throat he gave forth in stern tones the following edict:

"Boys and girls, I am your teacher. I shall expect you to obey me implicitly. If you do not, I shall punish you. I am here to teach you; you are here to learn and profit from my teaching. I have heard bad reports of most of you, but for the present I shall refrain from mentioning any names. When in the school-room you will be allowed to address me as 'Sir.' Outside the school-room you will not address me in any manner whatsoever."

He paused to survey the rows of uplifted faces and let his words sink home. Then lifting a long hickory pointer from his desk, and holding it much as a conjuror might hold his wand, he gripped the edge of the desk with one bony hand and leaning forward, said:

"Boys and girls, from what has been told me I surmise that my predecessor has spoiled you. I do not censure him; undoubtedly he worked according to his lights. I have been twenty years a teacher. I am your superior in strength, wisdom and intellect; and this I want you always to keep in mind. I shall tolerate neither familiarity nor disobedience. You will do well to obey me without question and do, worthily, the tasks I set for you. I believe in administering punishment to wrong-doers, severe punishment. It is not my purpose to deceive either you or the ratepayers of this school; therefore, I will admit that I like neither this district nor its people. That, however, will not prevent me from fulfilling my duty to the best of my ability."

He ceased speaking and drew himself up slowly, pursing his stern lips. "That is all I have to say for the time being," he said. "We shall endeavor to air this building, after which we will form classes. Will the fat boy with the rumpled hair and dirty neck, the one who is whispering to the boy behind him, be good enough to step forward?"

All eyes switched from the teacher to Fatty Watland. Fatty, his face very red, rose slowly and stood before the frowning Mr. Johnston.

"What is your name, boy?" asked the teacher.

"Walter Watland."

"Walter Watland—what?"

"That's all. Jest Walter Watland."

Mr. Johnston frowned darkly. "Walter Watland—what?" he repeated.

"Sir," prompted a voice from the back seat.

"Walter Watland, sir," panted Fatty, glimpsing the light in the nick of time.

"Very well, Walter, you may go home and get a pail of water. My experience with school wells," glancing out of the window to the blue pump, "has been that during the holidays they become a veritable death trap for frogs, mice and other vermin."

Walter moved quickly to execute the order. Mr. Johnston addressed the rest of the pupils. "School is now dismissed until we raise the windows and air the room."

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Metal of the Breed.

Immediately thirty boys and girls leaped to their feet and windows went up with a bang.

"I think," Mr. Johnston's voice was heard above the din, "it would be a good plan to start a fire in that big stove. This place is positively vault-like with dampness."

A number of the boys ran out to gather kindling and wood and soon a fire was crackling in the stove.

"Pupils will now take their seats," commanded the teacher, tinkling the bell on his desk. There was a hurried scramble as each boy and girl found his and her place.

"We will now have—" resumed the teacher, then paused to glare angrily at the stove. From every crack in its rusty sides was pouring forth a whitish-yellow smoke that gripped the throat and smelled like a breath from the very pit of darkness. Mr. Johnston attempted to proceed and failed dismally. He was choking, as was every boy and girl in the room.

It was Billy Wilson who acted promptly. Running to the stove he opened the door and lifted out the blazing wood and, at the risk of scorching himself badly, ran with it from the room.

It was nearly half an hour before Mr. Johnston summoned the boys and girls from the open windows to their seats. The room still smelled strongly of sulphur, but one might still breathe and live.

In the interval of waiting for the air to clear the new teacher's face had turned a ghastly white. His black eyes blazed; his thin lips were drawn back from his strong, irregular teeth. Gazing upon him, the boys and girls quaked in apprehension. Their fears were well founded. Never before in all his long career in administering knowledge to grubby and inferior minds had Mr. G. G. Johnston been subject to such deadly insult as had been offered him here. It was fully a minute before he could command his voice sufficiently to speak and when he did the words trickled through his stiff lips thinly.

"Boys and girls," he said at length, "one or more of you have been guilty of the most unpardonable misdemeanor that has ever come under my observation as a teacher. I realize that the dirty trick has been deliberately planned, the motive being perhaps to test me. You may believe me when I inform you that the one who placed that sulphur in the stove will have plenty of reason to regret having done it. I intend to flog him—or her—until he—or she—cannot stand. I shall now ask the one who is guilty of the offense to stand up."

Nobody stood. Anson was on the point of jumping to his feet and telling who had brought the sulphur into the room but, on second thought, sat still. The teacher had asked who had put it in the stove. Certainly it had not been Fatty Watland, because he had gone on an errand for the teacher long before the fire was started.

Mr. Johnston smiled darkly and nodded. "As I thought. The one who did it is too much of a coward to confess it," he grated, his voice shaking. "Well, there remains but one thing to do. If the guilty party is to be punished, I must punish you one and all."

There was the sound of the quick intaking of breath, and an audible long-drawn "Oh!" from the girls.

"I must punish each and every one of you," Mr. Johnston reiterated, picking up the pointer. "I shall begin on the boy who is smiling so defiantly in the back seat, if he will be good enough to step up here."

"I guess that's me," said Billy, jumping to his feet and starting for the platform.

"That's a nice smile you wear," said Mr. Johnston scathingly as he gazed down at Billy, his bony fingers caressing the long, supple pointer.

"Glad you like it," said Billy.

"Eh? What's that?" Mr. Johnston fairly recoiled in surprise and indignation at the affront to his dignity. "Silence! boys and girls," he shouted, as a titter ran through the schoolroom.

"Now, young man," he said grimly, grasping one of Billy's hands and pulling it forward and out, "I'm going to drive that happy smile from your face."

"You're a'goin' to find that some job," said Billy quietly.

"Well, we'll see, young Mr. Impudence." The long pointer rose and fell. Billy caught the stroke full on his palm. His face whitened with pain, but the smile did not leave his lips.

"Your other hand," commanded Mr. Johnston.

He bent forward to grasp the hand which Billy raised slowly, thereby dodging a stone ink-bottle hurled by Maurice Keeler. As it was the bottle struck the blackboard and broke, deluging the teacher's face with spray.

Billy turned quickly. "No more of that," he said. "This is my funeral—and the teacher's. Everybody else keep out of it."

He squared his shoulders and held out his hand. The pointer came down with all the strength that the man dared put behind it. Johnston peered closely into the boy's face. It was white and quivering but it still wore a smile.

"Take your seat," commanded the teacher. "Next boy forward!" One by one the boys walked up to receive their punishment. All took it bravely.

When, at last, the boys had all been attended to, Mr. Johnston paused for rest. "I shall now begin on the girls," he said, "but before administering punishment I am going to give the guilty boy, or girl, one more chance to confess. Will the one who put the sulphur in the stove stand up?"

As before, nobody moved.

Mr. Johnston smiled. "Very well. The girl with the handkerchief to her eyes, the one dressed in white and blue five seats down, wll come forward for punishment."

Billy felt his blood run cold. He could not believe his ears. The girl dressed in white and blue! Why, that was she—his angel—his light—his everything. And she was crying now. She was standing up, moving forward.

Like a flash Billy was on his feet. "Stop!" he cried, his voice ringing out like a challenge. "You don't whip her if I know it."

For the second time that morning Mr. Johnston received a violent shock to his dignity. Such rank insubordination he had never experienced before. The black eyes turned on Billy fairly darting sparks. "Take your seat, you impudent boy!" he thundered, "I see I have been too lenient with you. When I am through with the girls I shall flog you until you cry for mercy, and with you the boy who threw that bottle."

Billy was running up the aisle.

"Please, sir, don't whip her," he said, pleadingly. "I'll own up. It was me that put the sulphur in the stove."

"You?" gasped Mr. Johnston. "You coward! to let your companions be punished for your despicable act. Oh," he exulted, removing his coat and rolling up his sleeves, "won't I make you pay for playing the sneak?"

Billy was giving no attention to the teacher. He was edging towards Lou Scroggie, who stood looking at him from dumb, pleading eyes.

"Go outside," he whispered. "Please do; I kin stand anythin', but I don't want you to see it."

She turned slowly away, then came back and put her hands on his shoulders. She did not speak but the look she gave him was enough. His heart laughed. He turned toward the teacher with so glad a light in his grey eyes that the schooled moulder of young souls gazed back at him in bewilderment.

Was this the brand of boy this Shagland Settlement bred, he wondered. If so, God help him and his precepts.

From the bottom of his heart he wished that he had never seen the place, never encountered the spirit of its woods-born. He knew his capabilities and for once in his life, he confessed to hiself, he had over-estimated them. He wanted to give this boy now standing so fearlessly before him a whipping such as he would remember to his dying day, but to save his life he couldn't enter into the task with his old-time zest—not with those clear eyes looking so contemptuously into his very soul.

The room had grown still—a graveyard hush, broken only by a sob from the tenderest-hearted of the girls, who knew that Billy had lied to save one of their sex.

Johnston had turned to his desk and secured a shorter, stronger pointer. The veins between his shaggy eyebrows stood out clearly defined as he motioned Billy up on the platform.

(To be continued.)

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Feeding the Baby.

Improper feeding of infants and young children is blamed by an eminent doctor for the fact that one person out of every six is not physically able to do the amount of daily work that a normal, healthy human being should do. With this grave charge resting upon mothers, it behooves every one with children to learn the proper thing in feeding, and having learned it to practice it. Many mothers who know what is right in child feeding allow themselves to be coaxed or bullied into giving the child improper foods, or allow it to form bad food habits. If mothers realized that it is as wicked to feed a child improperly as it is to administer slow poison, a large per cent. of the malnutrition we see about us would disappear.

Of course, the ideal food for the infant is the natural food, and lucky are the babies whose mothers have led such sane, well-ordered, restful lives that they can supply mother's milk for their young. Nothing else, no matter how carefully prepared, will take the place of mother's milk, nor so well insures health and life. Out of fifty thousand babies studied those who died under one year of age showed a percentage of one to two for bottle-fed babies, and one to thirteen for breast-fed. Mothers' milk for the infant contains a promise of longer life, too, if one may trust statistics. In a group studied, eighty-five children, breast-fed, were all alive at eleven years of age, while one hundred and nine bottle-fed did not reach the eleventh year.

To be able to feed her baby the mother must first take care of herself. She must see to it that she has plenty of fresh air and exercise, but on the other hand, she must avoid exposure and over-work. Her food must be plentiful and easily digested. For this reason she must avoid foods which she knows always "upset her stomach" and those like sweets which cloy the appetite and keep her from eating enough plain, nourishing food.

Her daily diet should include fruit and vegetables, green vegetables to be preferred, cereals, meat or fish or eggs, milk, and fat, either cream, butter, bacon, oil or something similar. A bowl of gruel or milk or egg-nog just before the mid-morning and mid-afternoon nursing is helpful.

Above all, she must avoid excitement and danger.

In feeding anything, animal or human, regular hours is a prime factor in success. Schedules vary according to the physician, but having adopted a schedule which promises success adhere to it. Feedings four hours apart with the last one at midnight up to three months of age, were for a time followed. After three months the midnight feeding was dropped. Three-hour intervals are now more generally followed, and the new-born babe has its last feeding at eight o'clock at night. The mother is then insured uninterrupted rest until six o'clock in the morning, when feedings again begin.

Occasionally, in the case of small, delicate infants, smaller and more frequent feedings are necessary. In all things the mother must be guided by the reaction of the infant to its food. Common sense in feeding babies is as valuable as in everything else in life, and it must be remembered that even with infant feeding "one man's meat is another man's poison." The main point is to find out what is best for your baby, and having found it, stick to your schedule without regard to what some other mother does.

If the milk supply is insufficient it may be necessary to supplement it with some other food. But continue nursing so long as the supply lasts, unless illness on the part of the mother prevents, or the milk plainly disagrees with the baby. A small amount of mother's milk often means the difference between life and death to a baby.

Do not give the baby "tastes" of food at the table. For the first six or seven months at least, milk is its only requirement.

Home Remedies.

When pouring medicine from bottles, be sure to turn on the side opposite the label. This prevents soiling and giving a mussy appearance and also leaves the directions plain.—Mrs. E. G. W.

If the weight of a hot water bottle is oppressive for an invalid, use hot cloths, preferably cotton, as they retain the heat longer than flannel.—E. L. C.

When using poultices lay in a steamer over boiling water to keep hot.—Mrs. L. L. G.

To relieve quinsy, put boiling water in a can, add a few drops of peppermint oil, invert a funnel over the can, place the mouth over the funnel and allow steam to go in throat.—Mrs. L. L. G.

For an obstinate case of hiccoughs, the following will stop the worst cases: Give a tablespoonful of vinegar in which a half teaspoonful of salt has been dissolved.—Mrs. L. M. T.

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Self-Evident.

Little Eva (in the country)—"Oh, mamma, look at those Leghorn chickens!"

Mamma—"Yes, I see them, dear. But how do you know they are Leghorns?"

Little Eva—"Why don't you see the little horns on their legs?"

To the Point.

Teacher—"You don't appear to be up in history."

Tommy—"No, Miss, I'm down on it."

Women cannot stand physical strain as well as men, according to a London specialist, who lays the blame on weaker nerve centres.

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