

# North of Fifty-Three

BY BERTRAND W. SINCLAIR

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HAZEL PASSES WINTER IN THE WILDS WITHOUT SIGHT OF ANY WHITE PERSON OTHER THAN "ROARING BILL."

**Synopsis.**—Miss Hazel Weir is employed as a stenographer in the office of Harrington & Bush at Granville, Ontario. She is engaged to Jack Barrow, a young real estate agent. Mr. Bush, Hazel's employer, suddenly notices her attractiveness and at once makes her his private stenographer. After three months Bush proposes marriage. Hazel refuses, and after a stormy scene, in which Bush warns her he will make her sorry for her action, Hazel leaves the office, never to return. Shortly after this Bush is thrown from his horse and killed. Publication of his will discloses that he left Hazel \$5,000 in "reparation for any wrong I may have done her." Jack Barrow, in a jealous rage, demands an explanation, and Hazel, her pride hurt, refuses. Hazel's engagement is broken and, to escape from her surroundings, she secures a position as schoolteacher at Cariboo Meadows, in a wild part of British Columbia. There, at a boarding house, she first sees "Roaring Bill" Wagstaff, a well-known character of that country. Soon after her arrival Hazel loses her way while walking in the woods. She wanders until night when she reaches "Roaring Bill's" camp fire in the woods. He promises to take her home in the morning, but she is compelled to spend the night in the woods. After wandering in the woods all the next day, "Roaring Bill" finally admits that he is taking Hazel to his cabin in the mountains. Hazel finds upon their arrival at the cabin that she cannot hope to escape from the wilderness before spring.

CHAPTER VI.—Continued.

But within the cabin they were snug and warm. Bill's ax kept the woodpile high. The two fireplaces shone red the twenty-four hours through. Of flour, tea, coffee, sugar, beans and such stuff as could only be gotten from the outside he had a plentiful supply. Potatoes and certain vegetables that he had grown in a cultivated patch behind the cabin were stored in a deep cellar. He could always sally forth and get meat. And the ice was no bar to fishing, for he would cut a hole, sink a small net, and secure overnight a week's supply of trout and whitefish. Thus their material wants were provided for.

As time passed Hazel gradually shook off a measure of her depression, thrust her uneasiness and resentment



Bill's Ax Kept the Woodpile High.

into the background. As a matter of fact, she resigned herself to getting through the winter, since that was inevitable. She fell into the way of doing little things about the house, finding speedily that time flew when she busied herself at some task in the intervals of delving in Roaring Bill's storeroom.

On one of these days Hazel came into the kitchen and found Bill piling towels, napkins, and a great quantity of other soiled articles on an outspread tablecloth.

"Well," she inquired, "what are you going to do with those?"

"Take 'em to the laundry," he laughed. "Collect your dirty duds, and bring them forth."

"Laundry?" Hazel echoed. It seemed rather a far-fetched joke.

"Sure! You don't suppose we can get along forever without having things washed, do you?" he replied. "I don't mind housework, but I do draw the line at a laundry job when I don't have to do it. Go on—get your clothes."

So she brought out her accumulation of garments, and laid them on the pile. Bill tied up the four corners of the tablecloth.

"Now," said he, "let's see if we can't fit you out for a more or less extended walk. You stay in the house altogether too much these days. That's bad business. Nothing like exercise in the fresh air."

Thus in a few minutes Hazel fared forth, wrapped in Bill's fur coat, a flannel cap on her head, and on her feet several pairs of stockings inside moosestas that Bill had procured from some mysterious source a day or two before.

The day was sunny, albeit the air was hazy with multitudes of floating frost particles, and the tramp through the forest speedily brought the roses back to her cheeks.

Bill carried the bundle of linen on his back, and trudged steadily through the woods. But the riddle of his destination was soon read to her, for a two-mile walk brought them out on the shore of a fair-sized lake, on the farther side of which loomed the conical lodges of an Indian camp.

"You sabbie now?" said he as they crossed the ice. "This bunch generally comes in here about this time, and stays till spring. I get the squaws to wash for me. Ever see Mr. Indian on his native heath?"

Hazel never had, and she was duly interested, even if a trifle shy of the red brother who stared so fixedly. She entered a lodge with Bill, and listened to him make laundry arrangements in broken English with a withered old beldame whose features resembled a box that had hung overlong in the

smokehouse. Two or three blanketed bucks squatted by the fire that sent its blue smoke streaming out the apex of the lodge.

"Heep the squaw!" one suddenly addressed Bill. "Where you ketchum?"

Bill laughed at Hazel's confusion. "Away off," he gestured southward, and the Indian grunted some unintelligible remark in his own tongue—at which Roaring Bill laughed again.

Before they started home Bill succeeded in purchasing, after much talk, a pair of moosestas that Hazel conceded to be a work of art, what with the dainty pattern of beads and the ornamentation of colored porcupine quills. Her feminine soul could not be civil when Bill thrust them in the pocket of her coat, even if her mind was set against accepting any peace tokens at his hands.

In the nearing sunset they went home through the frost-bitten woods, where the snow crunched and squeaked under their feet, and the branches broke off with pistol-like snap when they were bent aside.

A hundred yards from the cabin Bill challenged her for a race. She refused to run, and he picked her up bodily, and ran with her to the very door. He held her a second before he set her down, and Hazel's face whitened. She could feel his breath on her cheek, and she could feel his arms quiver, and the rapid beat of his heart. For an instant she thought Roaring Bill Wagstaff was about to make the colossal mistake of trying to kiss her.

But he set her gently on her feet and opened the door. And by the time he had his outer clothes off and the fires started up he was talking whimsically about their Indian neighbors, and Hazel breathed more freely. The clear impression that she had, aside from her brief panic, was of his strength. He had run with her as easily as if she had been a child.

After that they went out many times together. Bill took her hunting, lured her into the mysteries of rifle shooting, and the manipulation of a six-shooter. He taught her to walk on snowshoes, lightly over the surface of the crusted snow, through which otherwise she floundered. A sort of truce arose between them, and the days drifted by without untoward incident. Bill tended to his horses, chopped wood, carried water. She took upon herself the care of the house, and through the long evenings, in default of conversation, they would sit with a book on either side of the fireplace that roared defiance to the storm gods without.

And sometimes Hazel would find herself wondering why Roaring Bill Wagstaff could not have come into her life in a different manner. As it was—she never, never would forgive him.

CHAPTER VII.

The Fires of Spring.

There came a day when the metallic brilliancy went out of the sky, and it became softly, mistily blue. All that forenoon Hazel prowled restlessly out of doors without cap or coat. The deep winter snow had suddenly lost its harshness.

Toward evening a mild breeze freshened from the southwest. At ten o'clock a gale whooped riotously through the trees. And at midnight Hazel awakened to a sound that she had not heard in months. She rose and groped her way to the window. The encrusting frost had vanished from the panes. They were wet to the touch of her fingers. She unhooked the fastening, and swung the window out. A great gust of damp, warm wind blew strands of hair across her face. She leaned through the casement, and drops of cold water struck her bare neck. That which she had heard was the dripping eaves. The chinook wind droned its spring song, and the bare boughs of the tree beside the cabin waved and creaked the time.

At dawn the eaves had ceased their drip, and the dirt roof lay bare to the cloud-banked sky. From the southwest the wind still blew strong and warm. The thick winter garment of the earth softened to slush, and vanished with amazing swiftness. Streams of water poured down every depression. Pools stood between the house and stable. Spring had leaped strong-armed upon old Winter and vanquished him at the first onslaught.

All that day the chinook blew, working its magic upon the land. When day broke again with a clearing sky, and the sun peered between the cloud rifts, his beams fell upon vast areas of brown and green, where but forty-eight hours gone there was the cold revelry of frost sprites upon far-flung fields

of snow. Patches of earth steamed wherever a hillside lay bare to the sun. From some mysterious distance a lone crow winged his way, and, perching on a nearby treetop, cawed raucous greetings.

Hazel cleared away the breakfast things, and stood looking out the kitchen window. Roaring Bill sat on a log, shirt-steved, smoking his pipe. Presently he went over to the stable, led out his horses, and gave them their liberty. For twenty minutes or so he stood watching their mad capers as they ran and leaped and pranced back and forth over the clearing. Then he walked off into the timber, his rifle over his shoulder.

Hazel washed her dishes and went outside. She did not know why, but all at once a terrible feeling of utter forlornness seized her. It was spring—and also it was spring in other lands. The wilderness suddenly took on the characteristics of a prison, in which she was sentenced to solitary confinement. She rebelled against it, rebelled against her surroundings, against the manner of her being there, against everything. She hated the North, she wished to be gone from it, and most of all she hated Bill Wagstaff for constraining her presence there.

All the heaviness of heart, all the resentment she had felt in the first few days when she followed him perforce away from Cariboo Meadows, came back to her with redoubled force that afternoon. She went back into the house, now gloomy without a fire, slumped forlornly into a chair, and clung herself into a condition approaching hysteria. And she was sitting there, her head bowed on her hands, when Bill returned from his hunting. The sun sent a shaft through the south window, a shaft which rested on her drooping head. Roaring Bill walked slowly up behind her and put his hand on her shoulder.

"What is it, little person?" he asked gently.

She refused to answer.

"Say," he bent a little lower, "you know what the Tenmaster said?"

"Come fill the cup, and in the fire of spring

Your winter garment of repentance fling;

The Bird of Time has but a little way

To flutter—and the Bird is on the wing."

"Life's too short to waste any of it in being uselessly miserable. Come on out and go for a ride on Silk. I'll take you up a mountain-side, and show you a waterfall that leaps three hundred feet in the clear. The woods are waking up and putting on their Easter bonnets. There's beauty everywhere. Come along!"

But she wrenched herself away from him.

"I want to go home," she wailed. "I hate you and the North, and everything in it. If you've got a spark of manhood left in you, you'll take me out of here."

Roaring Bill backed away from her. "Do you mean that? Honest Injun?" he asked incredulously.

"I do—I do!" she cried vehemently.

"Haven't I told you often enough? I didn't come here willingly, and I won't stay. I will not! I have a right to live my life in my own way, and it's not this way."

"So," Roaring Bill began evenly, "springtime with you only means getting back to work. You want to get back into the muddled rush of peopled places, do you? You want to be where you can associate with fluffy-ruffle, impudenced girls, and be properly introduced to equally proper young men. Lord, but I seem to have made a mistake! And, by the same token, I'll probably pay for it—in a way you wouldn't understand if you lived a thousand years. Well, set your mind at rest. I'll take you out. Ye gods and little fishes, but I have sure been a fool!"

He sat down on the edge of the table, and Hazel blinked at him, half scared, and full of wonder. She had grown so used to seeing him calm, imperturbable, smiling cheerfully no matter what she said or did, that his passionate outbreak amazed her. She could only sit and look at him.

He got out his cigarette materials. But his fingers trembled, spilling the tobacco. And when he tore the paper in his efforts to roll it, he dashed pa-

per and all into the fireplace with something that sounded like an oath, and walked out of the house. Nor did he return till the sun was well down toward the tree-rimmed horizon. When he came back he brought in an armful of wood and kindling, and began to build a fire. Hazel came out of her room. Bill greeted her serenely.

"Well, little person," he said, "I hope you'll perk up now."

"I'll try," she returned. "Are you really going to take me out?"

Bill paused with a match blazing in his fingers.

"I'm not in the habit of saying things

I don't mean," he answered dryly. "We'll start in the morning."

The dark closed in on them, and they cooked and ate supper in silence. Bill remained thoughtful and abstracted. Then from some place among his books he unearthed a map, and, spreading it on the table, studied it a while. After that he dragged in his knapsack from outside, and busied himself packing them with supplies for a journey—tea and coffee and flour and such things done up in small canvas sacks. And when these preparations were complete he got a sheet of paper and a pencil, and fell to copying something from the map. He was still at that, sketching and marking, when Hazel went to bed.

By all the signs and tokens, Roaring Bill Wagstaff slept none that night. Hazel herself tossed wakefully, and during her wakeful moments she could hear him stir in the outer room. And a full hour before daylight he called her to breakfast.

"This time last spring," Bill said to her, "I was piking away north of those mountains, bound for the head of the Nans to prospect for gold."

They were camped in a notch on the tiptop of a long divide, a thousand feet above the general level. A wide valley rolled below, and from the height they overlooked two great, sinuous lakes and a multitude of smaller ones.

"I've been wondering," Hazel said, "This country somehow seems different. You're not going back to Cariboo Meadows, are you?"

Bill bestowed a look of surprise on her.

"I should say not!" he drawled. "Not that it would make any difference to me. But I'm very sure you don't want to turn up there in my company."

"That's true," she observed. "But all the clothes and all the money I have in the world are there."

"Don't let money worry you," he said briefly. "I have got plenty to see you through. And you can easily buy clothes."

They were now ten days on the road. Steadily they climbed, reaching up through gloomy canyons where foaming cataracts spilled themselves over sheer walls of granite, where the dim and narrow pack trail was crossed and recrossed with the footprints of bear and deer and the snowy-coated mountain goat.

Roaring Bill lighted his evening fire at last at the apex of the pass. He had traveled long after sundown, seeking a camp ground where his horses could graze. The fire lit up huge firs, and high above the fir tops the sky was studded with stars, brilliant in the thin atmosphere. They ate, and, being weary, lay down to sleep. At sunrise Hazel sat up and looked about her in silent, wondering appreciation. All the world spread east and west below.

She adjusted the binoculars and peered westward from the great height where the camp sat. Distantly, and far below, the green of the forest broke down to a hazy line of steel-blue that ran in turn to a huge fog bank, snow-white in the rising sun.

"There's a lake," she said.

"No. Salt water—a long arm of the Pacific," he replied. "That's where you and I part company—to your very great relief, I dare say. But look off in the other direction. Lord, you can see two hundred miles! If it weren't for the Bahine range sticking up you could look clear to where my cabin stands. What an outlook!"

"I told you, I think, about prospecting on the head of the Nans last spring. I fell in with another fellow up there, and we worked together, and early in the season made a nice little cleanup on a gravel bar. I have another place spotted, by the way, that would work out a fortune if a fellow wanted to spend a couple of thousand putting in some machinery. However, when the June rise drove us off our bar, I pulled clear out of the country. Just took a notion to see the bright lights again. And I didn't stop short of New York. Do you know, I lasted there just one week by the calendar. It seems funny, when you think of it, that a man with three thousand dollars to spend should get lonesome in a place like New York. But I did. And at the end of a week I flew. I had all that money burning my pockets—and, all told, I didn't spend five hundred. Fancy a man jumping over four thousand miles to have a good time, and then running away from it. It was very foolish of me, I think now. Well, the longer we live the more we learn. Day after tomorrow you'll be in Bella Coola. The cannery steamships carry passengers on a fairly regular schedule to Vancouver. How does that suit you?"

"Very well," she answered shortly.

"And you haven't the least twinge of regret at leaving all this?"

"I don't happen to have your peculiar point of view," she returned. "The circumstances connected with my coming into this country and with my staying here are such as to make me anxious to get away."

"Some old story," Bill muttered under his breath.

"What is it?" she asked sharply.

"Oh, nothing," he said carelessly, and went on with his breakfast preparations.

The evening of the third day from there Bill traveled till dusk. When camp was made and the fire started, he called Hazel to one side, up on a little rocky knoll, and pointed out a half dozen pin points of yellow glimmering distantly in the dark.

"That's Bella Coola," he told her. "And unless they've made a radical change in their sailing schedules there should be a boat clear tomorrow at noon."

CHAPTER VIII.

The Drone of the Hive.

A black cloud of smoke was rolling up from the funnel of the Stanley D. as Bill Wagstaff piloted Hazel from the grimy Bella Coola hotel to the wharf.

"There ain't many passengers," he told her. "They're mostly cannery men. But you'll have the captain's wife to chaperon you. She happens to be making the trip."

When they were aboard and the cabin boy had shown them to what was dignified by the name of stateroom, Bill drew a long envelope from his pocket.

"Here," he said, "is a little money. I hope you won't let any foolish pride stand in the way of using it freely. It came easy to me, I dug it out of Mother Earth, and there's plenty more where

it came from. Seeing that I deprived you of access to your own money and all your personal belongings, you are entitled to this any way you look at it. And I want to throw in a bit of gratuitous advice—in case you should conclude to go back to the Meadows. They probably looked high and low for you. But there is no chance for them to learn where you actually did get to unless you yourself tell them. The most plausible explanation—and if you go there you must make some explanation—would be for you to say that you got lost—which is true enough—and that you eventually fell in with a party of Indians, and later on connected up with a party of white people who were travelling eastward. That you wintered with them, and they put you on a steamer and sent you to Vancouver when spring opened.

"That, I guess, is all," he concluded slowly. "Only I wish—he caught her by the shoulders and shook her gently—"I sure do wish it could have been different, little person. Maybe some

"That's Bella Coola Over There," He Said.

time when I get restless for human companionship and come out to cavort in the bright lights for a while, I may pass you on a street somewhere. This world is very small. Oh, yes—when you go to Vancouver go to the Lady-smith. It's a nice, quiet hotel in the West end. Any back driver knows the place."

He dropped his hands, and looked steadily at her for a few seconds, steadily and longingly.

"Good-by!" he said abruptly—and walked out, and down the gangplank that was already being cast loose, and away up the wharf without a backward glance.

The Stanley D.'s siren woke the echoes along the wooded shore. A throbbing that shook her from stem to stern betokened the first turnings of the screw. And slowly she backed into deep water and swung wide for the outer passage.

In the spring Hazel gets her freedom and then when she has it she exercises the prerogative that has been woman's since the world began. What she did is disclosed in the next installment.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

HEALTH THAT MAKES WEALTH

Nervous Energy Which Enables One to Think New Thoughts and Initiate New Plans Important.

Probably the majority of men do not know what real health means. It means more than the capacity to sit up and eat, to walk, to board a car and to bend over a desk. Real health means more than the real ability to do the same thing day after day. Real health means a degree of stirring, nervous energy that enables one to think new thoughts, conceive new plans and initiate new enterprises. Superabundant nervous energy is back of exceptional mental activity. It is the basis of all those qualities which are most essential in the struggle for success.

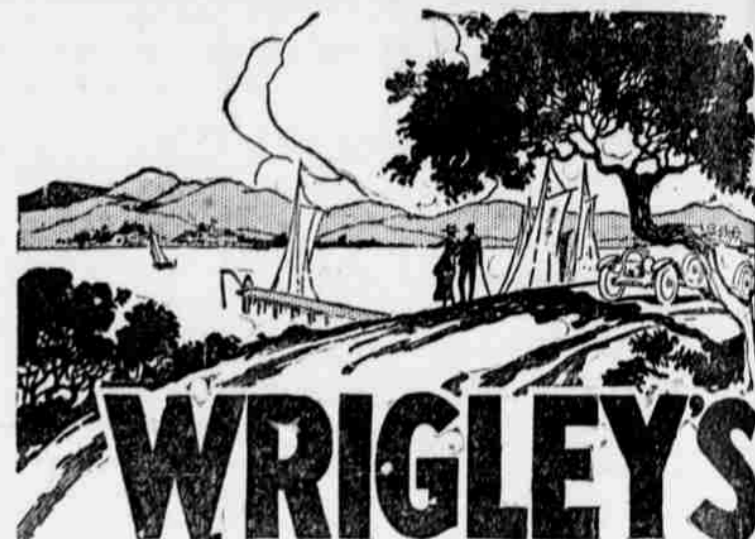
It is not sufficient to have health that will enable you to do a commonplace day's work, Hugo Masters writes in *Physical Culture*. The right kind of health should give you the energy with which to perform far more than a day's work, if necessary, even from a quantitative standpoint. It is commonly the man with an unlimited capacity for work who gets on. He is able to work long hours without tiring. Successful men invariably enjoy the possession of this degree of nervous endurance or working endurance.

But it is not this that is most important. The possession of energy is essential, not so much for the sake of the capacity for long hours of work, but on account of the quality of work which it enables one to perform. Quality of effort is more important than quantity of work and the greatest value of unlimited energy lies in giving one the capacity for concentration, the capacity for an intensity of effort that is beyond the average man.

About Cork.

A good, sound cork is something worth taking care of and using properly. Never "waggle" a cork out of a bottle. That is the best way to break or at least spring a crack in the cork. Remove the cork with a turning or twisting movement, always in one direction only, i. e., not a twist one way and then in the opposite way. Replace the cork with the same twist as when removing it. Never lay a cork down on a dirty, splashed table. If it must be laid down, stand it on its crown or top. For bottles containing liquids in use, e. g., developers, etc., attach the cork to the bottle thus: Pass a crochet needle through the top of the cork, and with its aid draw the end of a piece of fine twine right through the cork, and tie this end of the string round the neck of the bottle, so adjusting matters that the cork just falls to reach the table (i. e., bottom of the bottle) when the cork and string are free. This saves the cork getting lost in the darkroom.

An unwelcome guest is one of the best things going.



## WRIGLEY'S

"After every meal"

Spring is in the air—the fields and woods and waters call—

And to add to the zest of outdoor pleasures nothing affords the long-lasting refreshment of WRIGLEY'S—

So carry it always with you.

The Flavor Lasts

830

The Solicitous Senator. "Have the war appropriations gone through?" "Not yet, senator. I'm glad to see you so interested." "Yes, I want to tack on a little salary increase for a constituent of mine."

His Hope. "I hope they'll try it in July or August." "What?" "Giving us homeless days by government regulation."

A new device which has recently been patented will enable anybody to scale a fish quickly.

There's a lot of morning hours in one little innocent fly.

An Easy One. "I want a good motto for my book on sea travels." "Why not try 'Sea transit?'"



## Both Ends (Producer and Consumer) Against The Middle (The Packer)

The consumer wants to pay a low price for meat.

The farmer wants to get a high price for cattle.

The packer stands between these conflicting demands, and finds it impossible to completely satisfy both.

The packer has no control over the prices of live stock or meat, and the most that can be expected of him is that he keep the difference between the two as low as possible. He does this successfully by converting animals into meat and distributing the meat at a minimum of expense, and at a profit too small to be noticeable in the farmer's returns for live stock or in the meat bill of the consumer.

Swift & Company's 1917 transactions in Cattle were as follows:

	Average Per Head
Sold Meat to Retailer for	\$68.97
Sold By-products for	24.09
Total Receipts	93.06
Paid to Cattle Raiser	84.45
Balance (not paid to Cattle Raiser)	8.61
Paid for labor and expenses at Packing House, Freight on Meat, and Cost of operating Branch distributing houses	7.32
Remaining in Packer's hands as Returns on investment	\$ 1.29

The net profit was \$1.29 per head, or about one-fourth of a cent per pound of beef.

By what other method can the difference between cattle prices and beef prices be made smaller, and how can the conflicting demands of producer and consumer be better satisfied?

1918 Year Book of interesting and instructive facts sent on request. Address Swift & Company, Union Stock Yards, Chicago, Illinois

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