

NEXT MONDAY: "FRANK RICHARDS' SCHOOLDAYS!"

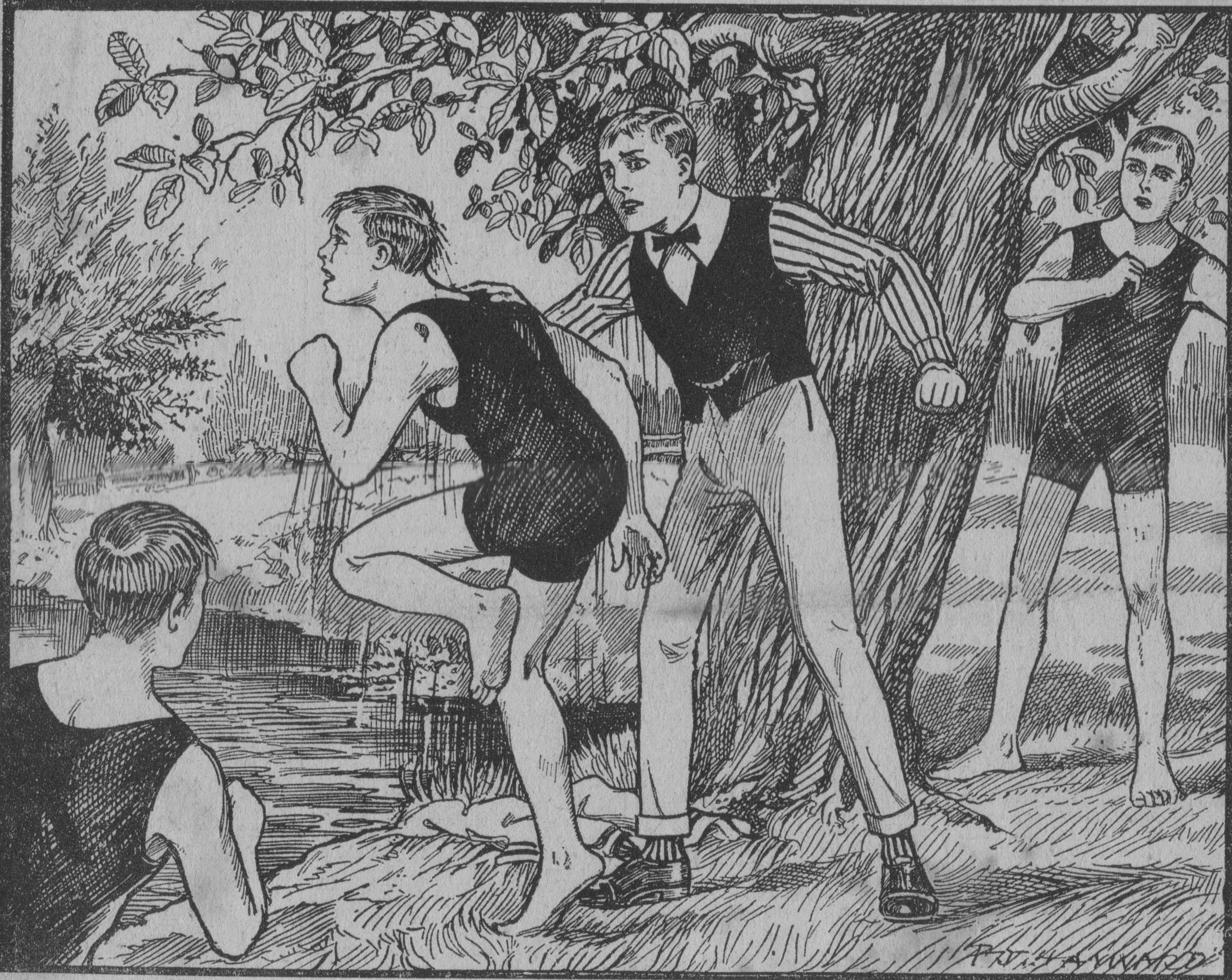
# The BOYS' FRIEND 1d.

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No. 844, Vol. XVII. New Series.]

ONE PENNY.

[Week Ending August 11th, 1917.]



MORNINGTON MAKES A STARTLING DISCOVERY!

## THE MISSING HEIR!

A Magnificent New Long Complete Story, dealing with the Adventures of Jimmy Silver & Co. at Rookwood School.

By OWEN CONQUEST.

### The 1st Chapter. Mornny Resigns.

"Trot in, Mornny!"  
Jimmy Silver, the captain of the Rookwood Fourth, was sitting on the corner of the table in the end study, needle and thread in hand, repairing a rent in a pink-and-white blazer. He looked up and nodded cordially as Mornington of the Fourth looked in. Jimmy's manner was very friendly. It was quite a new thing for Jimmy Silver to be friendly with the dandy of the Fourth, but Mornington had held out the olive branch, and Jimmy, with his usual cheery good temper, had been willing to meet him half-way.

And Mornny, who had given up breaking bounds, and smoking in the study with Lattrey and Peele and the other "nuts"—at least, for the present—was quite a new character just now. Jimmy Silver hoped that the change in him would last, and the nuts of Rookwood hoped precisely the reverse. There was certainly no telling. Mornny was never quite reliable. There was a cloud on Mornny's brow as he lounged into the study. "Mendin' your clothes—what?" he asked, staring at the blazer in Jimmy's hands. "Exactly!" "By gad!" Jimmy Silver went cheerfully on

with his mending. He could not afford to be so extravagant in clothes, or in anything else, as the wealthy Mornny. And he did not want to be. Mornington's lip curled for a moment—Jimmy affecting not to observe it. He did not want to quarrel with Mornington. "Well, about the Bagshot match this afternoon?" said Mornington, abruptly. "All serene! We're starting immediately after dinner," said Jimmy. "Don't tell me you're not fit." "I'm as fit as a fiddle!" "Good!" "I suppose you'd miss me a lot if I stood out of the team?" said Mornington sarcastically. Jimmy Silver looked up.

"I've put you in the team, Mornington because you can bowl, and we want bowlers," he said. "I think you can be stood in the eleven because you seem to have got over your swank a good deal. But if you want to get out I can replace you easily enough." "I don't want to get out!" "That's all right, then. You'll come to Bagshot with us," said Jimmy, more amiably. "I rather fancy we shall pull it off this afternoon. Three bowlers like you and Errol and my humble self will rather surprise Pankley and Co." "I've looked in to tell you I can't come, after all!" "Oh!" "I'm sorry!" said Mornington. Jimmy Silver's eyes gleamed. He

had half expected some "rot" from Mornington on the eve of the match. It was exactly like the old Mornny, to work his way into the junior eleven, and throw it over like this at the last minute.

Jimmy dug the needle savagely into the blazer.

"I was an ass to think of trusting you," he said. "This is just like you, Mornny. Another engagement, I suppose?"

"Yes!"

"And it's turned up since your name was put down for the eleven?"

"Yes!"

"And you're not coming to Bagshot?"

"I can't!"

"Go and eat coke then!" snapped Jimmy Silver. "Keep your precious engagement. What is it—billiards at the Bird-in-Hand?"

"No!"

"Banker in Lattrey's study—what?" growled Jimmy Silver.

"No!"

"Well, I don't care a rap what it is! Buzz off and don't bother!"

Mornington gritted his teeth.

Lovell and Raby and Newcome came into the end study before he could reply.

"Finished that rag, Jimmy?" asked Lovell.

"Just on."

"It's close on dinner. Hallo, Mornny!"

Mornington did not speak.

"You fellows haven't been rowing?" said Lovell, glancing from one to the other. "I thought rows were off now Mornny's taken up cricket, and joined the eleven."

"Mornny's resigned his place!" snapped Jimmy. "He won't be playing against Bagshot this afternoon."

"Isn't that just like him?" exclaimed Lovell, in tones of exasperation. "Right at the last minute. Oswald's gone home for the afternoon. He'd have stayed if he'd known. Mornny couldn't tell you before, of course. Just one of his old tricks!"

"Look here—" began Mornington savagely.

"Oh, ring off!" exclaimed Lovell. "What are you resigning for? Has somebody come between the wind and your nobility? Did you expect Jimmy to lick your shoes, and the rest of the team to bow down and worship? Br-r-r-r!"

"Did you expect to be kow-towed to, your swanking ass!" said Raby, in tones of deep contempt.

"Or did you want to leave the team in the lurch, by sticking out at the last minute?" snapped Newcome. "You'll have to play another Modern chap, Jimmy."

"I'll find somebody," said Jimmy. "And I shall know better than to trust Mornny again!"

"Does that mean that I'm out of the team for good?" sneered Mornington.

"Yes, it does!"

"I should jolly well say so!" exclaimed Lovell indignantly. "How often do you expect to be able to play tricks like that? Do you want us all to go down on our knees, and beg you to play?"

"That's it!" growled Raby. "We've got to be jolly civil, and then the dear fellow will condescend to play, after all! I'd rather kick him out of the eleven myself!"

Lovell threw the door open wide.

"There's your way, Mornny, and be glad you don't get a boot behind you to help you out!"

Mornington looked furiously at the Fistical Four of the Fourth. His hands were clenched hard.

"You confounded cheeky cads—" he broke out fiercely.

"That's enough! Get out, or —"

"Or what?" sneered Mornington. "Or you'll be put out!"

(Continued on the next page.)



## THE MISSING HEIR!

(Continued from the previous page.)

"Put me out then, you cad, if you think you can do it," said Mornington with his teeth.

"What-ho!"

Edward Arthur Lovell was not slow to accept the challenge. He ran straight at the dandy of the Fourth. Mornington met him fiercely enough.

Lovell grasped him, receiving, without heeding, two or three savage blows, and swung him through the doorway.

There was a crash as Mornington landed in the passage.

He rolled over, gasping, and Lovell glared at him from the doorway. Mornington picked himself up, his brow like thunder, and his eyes glittering. He gave Lovell a deadly look, and went down the passage.

Jimmy Silver slid off the table, and put away his needle and thread.

"Finished!" he said. "Let's get down. There goes the bell!"

And the Fistical Four went down to dinner.

### The 2nd Chapter.

#### A Little Too Hasty!

Jimmy Silver wore a thoughtful look at dinner.

He had the responsibilities of junior cricket skipper on his shoulders. He had been very well satisfied with the eleven he had made up for the match at Bagshot School. Now he had to replace Mornington.

Jimmy could not help feeling exasperated.

Morny had shown up so well in cricket practice lately, and he seemed to have overcome his tendency to "swank" and temper so much since he had chummed with Kit Erroll, that Jimmy had put aside his old distrust, and let his old rival into the team.

Now Mornington had let him down at the last moment—and at an awkward moment.

Oswald, who could have filled his place, though not so well, had gone home for the half-holiday, and he had taken Rawson, one of Jimmy's most reliable men, with him.

Neither was available now, though either would willingly have played if Jimmy had known in time.

The captain of the Fourth could not help thinking that Morny had timed his resignation on purpose—doubtless with the intention of being entreated to play. That sort of thing was quite in keeping with Morny's old character.

Jimmy Silver was not likely to entreat anybody to play. His problem was to replace Mornington with the least possible danger to the team.

He decided upon Towle, of the Modern side, and after dinner he cut across the quad to Mr. Manders' house to tell Towle.

The three Tommies of the Modern side—Dodd and Doyle and Cook—were in the eleven, and they were pleased to hear Jimmy's news, their opinion being that there weren't enough Moderns in the team anyhow.

"Good for you!" said Tommy Dodd heartily.

"Sure you don't want a few more Moderns in the team, old scout?" "We want to beat Bagshot, you know, and I don't quite see how we're going to do it with such a gang of Classical duffers."

"Rats!" said Jimmy Silver.

"But what is Mornington standing out for?" asked Towle. "I'm glad to play, of course, but my bowling isn't a patch on Morny's, to tell the truth."

"His lordship has another engagement," said Jimmy Silver sarcastically. "A merry engagement that's turned up since he was put in the eleven."

"Swanking ass!" commented Tommy Dodd.

"Of all the nerve, to tell you so!" remarked Tommy Cook. "Morny's got plenty of cheek."

"A little too much for a member of the Rookwood junior eleven!" grunted Jimmy Silver. "Get ready, you fellows! We've got to start early, as we're walking over to Bagshot."

"Ready, my son. If you'd like a few more Moderns in the team—"

"Bow-wow!"

Ten minutes later the Rookwood cricketers walked out of the gates. A good many juniors were going over with them to see the match, but Mornington was not among the crowd that came out into the road.

The eleven was a good one, consisting of Jimmy Silver, Lovell, Raby, Newcome, Erroll, Conroy, Van Ryn (Classicals), and Tommy Dodd, Tommy Cook, Tommy Doyle, and Towle (Moderns).

But Jimmy would have been glad to have Mornington in the ranks—if only that superb youth could have forgotten his swank and learned to play the game.

Kit Erroll joined Jimmy Silver as the cricketers strode down the lane, en route to Bagshot. Brakes were "off" owing to war economy.

"Hard cheese on Morny, isn't it?" Erroll remarked.

Jimmy stared at him.

"I don't see it," he answered drily. "I don't want to say anything against your special chum, Erroll, but I'm sorry I didn't give him a thick ear before I left."

"Jimmy!"

"Blessed if I know how you can stand the swanking ass, Erroll," growled Raby. "Fancy resigning at the very last minute—"

"He couldn't help it, could he?"

"I suppose he could," growled Jimmy Silver. "Banker in Lattrey's study may be awfully important, but not quite so important as a cricket match."

"Didn't Morny tell you why he couldn't come, then?"

"He told me he had another engagement."

Erroll frowned.

"He couldn't come, Jimmy. He's bound to stay in this afternoon, as his guardian's coming down to the school especially to see him."

"His guardian coming down?" ejaculated Jimmy Silver.

"Yes; Sir Rupert Stacpoole."

"Oh!"

"Sir Rupert's letter was delayed in the post, and Morny only got it just before dinner," said Erroll. "He came to you at once to tell you—"

"Oh, my hat!" said Jimmy.

The Fistical Four looked at one another. Their faces were rather pink, and they looked sheepish.

Erroll looked at them inquiringly.

"Didn't Morny tell you that?" he asked.

"Nunno. I—I don't think—perhaps—I gave him much time," murmured Jimmy Silver. "I—I concluded that it was some more of his swank."

"And I slung him out of the study," mumbled Lovell.

"And—and he wanted to come and couldn't!" said Raby. "I—I must say it was rather hard cheese on Morny."

"I think it was," said Erroll very quietly.

Jimmy Silver knitted his brows as he walked on.

He had been a little hasty.

Morny, in fact, was a dog with a bad name, and Jimmy Silver & Co. had judged him on that bad name, without giving him a chance. Certainly Morny could not leave Rookwood that afternoon if his guardian was coming down specially to see him.

"Well, I'm sorry," said Jimmy at last. "It was so exactly like Morny's old swank, that—that—"

"That's how it was," murmured Lovell. "Still—"

"We'll tell him we're sorry when we get back," said Raby.

"Yes, rather."

The cricketers went on their way, the Fistical Four, and especially Arthur Edward Lovell, wishing sincerely that they had been a little more patient with Mornington of the Fourth.

### The 3rd Chapter.

#### Mornington's Protege.

"Hang them!"

Mornington uttered that comment, as he stood at the window of No. 4 Study, and watched the cricketing crowd stream out of the gates of Rookwood.

Mornington was in a savage temper. The misunderstanding in the end study had enraged him, and certainly he had some cause for complaint.

He could have nipped that misunderstanding in the bud by hastening to explain to Jimmy Silver, but he had not chosen to do so, his lofty temper being at fault. He really had

himself to thank for it, but he did not look at it in that light.

He was annoyed at having to cut the cricket match, enraged with Jimmy Silver for the way his resignation had been accepted, and discontented generally.

The visit of his guardian was not a pleasant matter, either. Morny had his own reasons for looking forward to it with uneasiness.

As he stared gloomily from the window, Lattrey of the Fourth passed below, and, glancing up, caught his eye.

Lattrey smiled sneeringly.

Lattrey, at least, knew of the secret misgiving that weighed upon Morny's heart, and he rejoiced to know of it, since his bitter quarrel with the dandy of the Fourth.

Mornington watched him savagely out of sight. Then he swung round from the window as the study door opened.

Peele and Gower and Townsend looked in.

"Comin'?" asked Peele.

"Where?" snapped Mornington.

"We're going to have a little game in the abbey ruins. As you're not playin' cricket it seems—"

"Be a sport, old scout," said Townsend. "Lattrey's goin' to be there, an' he's willin' to overlook your little tiff with him."

"I'm not!" growled Mornington.

"Are you keepin' this game up?" asked Peele with a sneer. "Is banker off for good—and billiards?"

Mornington glared at the smiling nuts.

"Get out!" he snapped.

"You're not coming, dear boy?"

"No!"

"Go an' eat coke, then!" grinned Peele, and he slammed the door; and the nuts of Rookwood went their own way.

Mornington paced the study with knitted brows and restless strides. He had broken with his old friends—the nuts—as much for Erroll's sake as anything else. He had taken up cricket and got into the eleven, and now—

He was in a savage and discontented mood. He spun round angrily as a tap came at the door. It was a fag who entered—Murphy of the Second Form, more familiarly known as "Erbert."

The waif of Rookwood glanced timidly at Mornington's scowling face.

Much as little 'Erbert admired the superb youth who had rescued him from want, and to whom it was due that he was admitted to Rookwood, he was generally a little timid in approaching him.

Morny's temper was uncertain.

He was capable of great generosity, as when he picked up the little vagrant on the road, and brought him home to Rookwood. He had stood 'Erbert's steady friend, and he had prevailed upon his guardian to enter the little waif at Rookwood and pay his fees there.

But for Mornington, the little nameless waif would still have been tramping the roads, in misery and want.

But all the same, Morny was as likely as not to snap his head off when he approached, as 'Erbert had learned from experience.

He might be overflowing with generous kindness, or in a savage and irritable mood—there never was any telling.

It was the latter mood that had the upper hand now, and as soon as 'Erbert saw his face he repented him that he had come to the study.

"Well?" snapped Mornington.

"I—I— Ain't you going over to Bagshot, Master Mornington?"

"No."

"I—I was going over with Snooks and Jones to see you play, sir," said 'Erbert. "As you didn't start with them—"

"Well, I'm not going. Old Stacpoole's coming this afternoon," growled Mornington.

'Erbert, who was backing through the doorway, stopped.

"Your guardian coming, sir?"

"Yes."

"Pr'aps he'll want to see me, Master Mornington. I'd better not go out."

"Why should he want to see you?" growled Mornington. "Don't be a young ass!"

'Erbert's face crimsoned.

"I—I—"

"Oh, don't stutter!"

### TO THE BOYS AT THE FRONT!

If you are unable to obtain this publication regularly, please tell any newsagent to get it from:

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"No, sir—I—I—thought—Sir Rupert generally does say a word or two to me when he comes," faltered 'Erbert. "I—I shouldn't like 'im to think as I wouldn't stay in to see 'im."

"Oh, rot! Old Stacpoole's comin' down specially to see me about a private matter," said Mornington impatiently. "You won't be wanted. You can clear off with the fags, and the sooner the better."

'Erbert's lip quivered.

"Yes, sir," he said, in a low voice. Mornington caught his expression as he withdrew hastily into the passage, and his own expression changed.

"Hold on, 'Erbert!" he said. "Come in, kid! Don't mind my beastly temper; I'm worried horribly to-day."

The little waif's face cleared at once.

"I don't mind, sir," he said brightly. "I didn't mean for to bother you, sir, only—"

"That's all right, kid," Mornington paused, and looked curiously at the fag. "I believe you care a little bit about me, 'Erbert."

"I'd do anythin' for you, Master Mornington," said 'Erbert earnestly. "Only you jest say the word."

Mornington smiled.

"You were pretty hard up when I found you, 'Erbert, weren't you?"

"Starvin'," said 'Erbert simply.

"Dashed queer position for a chap to be in," said Mornington musingly. "Suppose—suppose for a minute, 'Erbert, that I got into the same fix—what?"

'Erbert stared.

"You, Master Morny?"

"Yes. Suppose I lost my money, and hadn't anything left but the clothes I stand up in—what?" Mornington laughed sardonically. "Then I'd be in your old fix, 'Erbert—except that I have a name to be called by, and you hadn't."

"But—but there ain't no danger of that, Master Morny!" exclaimed 'Erbert breathlessly.

Mornington did not answer.

He moved restlessly about the study, and the waif of Rookwood watched him with uneasy, troubled eyes.

The dandy of Rookwood turned to him at last, with a smile.

"All serene, 'Erbert. I was only gassin'. Are you goin' over to Bagshot to see the match?"

"Not if you ain't playin', Master Morny," said 'Erbert simply. "Snooks and Jones would rather come for a swim, so we'll be goin' up the river, if you don't want me to stay in."

"Right-ho! Cut off, and I hope you'll have a good time. Don't get out of your depth."

'Erbert grinned.

"I'm a good swimmer, Master Morny."

"Yes—I remember your fetchin' Jones minus out of the river," said Mornington. "How do you get on with Jones now?"

"We're pals," said 'Erbert. "Old Jonesy don't mind my droppin' my aitches now—he's a good sort."

The little waif left the study, much cheered by Morny's return to good-humour. But there was something of a cloud on his face.

Morny's reference to a possible fall from his high estate troubled him, though he could not think that the Fourth-Former was speaking seriously. Mornington continued to pace the study restlessly.

'Erbert's devotion to him, which, with all his cynicism, he knew was genuine, touched him a good deal. 'Erbert, with his queer language and his dropped aspirates, had been looked down upon and sneered at by Morny's friends, the nuts; but he would be loyal to his benefactor if disaster came.

Certainly he was not so aristocratic as the elegant Townsend or Topham—he did not even know what his name was; Murphy merely being the name of the kind-hearted soldier who had taken charge of him, and who had since given his life for his country.

But the nameless waif of Rookwood had qualities in his nature that Townsend and Topham did not share.

It came into Morny's mind that, if the worst happened, he would not be able to carry out his plans for 'Erbert's future—the waif of Rookwood would be left without a friend again. Somehow, that was a troubling thought, even to the cynical black sheep of the Fourth.

The sound of wheels in the quadrangle aroused him from moody thoughts, and he went downstairs to meet his guardian.

### The 4th Chapter.

#### The Missing Heir.

Sir Rupert Stacpoole came up to Study No. 4 with his ward. The baronet had come down specially to

see Mornington. There was a grave expression on the old gentleman's face as he sat in Morny's armchair.

The junior stood before him, with knitted brows.

"You know what I wanted to see you about, uncle?" he said, plunging directly into the matter.

"I gathered from your letter that someone had been talking indiscreetly to you, my boy."

"I want to know whether it's true," said Mornington abruptly.

Sir Rupert pursed his lips. He tugged uneasily at his white moustache. It was easy to see that this interview was not a pleasure to him.

"What is it you have been told, Valentine?" he asked.

"There's a new fellow here, in my Form, named Lattrey—"

"Lattrey?"

"You know the name?"

"Yes. Go on!"

"Lattrey's the son of a man who runs an inquiry agency, or somethin' of the kind—sort of private detective," said Mornington. "At least, so he's told me. He's a sneakin' spyin' sort of cad, and accordin' to his own account, he's spied into his pater's business, and learned a lot of things that don't concern him. He's told me that his father is employed by you, sir."

The baronet shifted uneasily.

"That is true, Valentine."

"That you've employed Mr. Lattrey for years and years, making an inquiry."

"That is correct. The boy has no right to know anything about it, however," said Sir Rupert, frowning. "And he's told me about the inquiry."

"The young rascal!"

"He says that my pater's elder brother had a son, who would be my cousin," continued Mornington quietly. "My cousin Cecil. You never told me that I had a cousin, uncle."

Sir Rupert was silent, gnawing his moustache.

"It sounds a queer yarn," went on Mornington. "Accordin' to Lattrey, this kid Cecil was lost, stolen or strayed, and never turned up. He's younger than I am—a mere kid, Lattrey says. If he's alive, he's the heir to the Mornington property, and I'm a beggar. Is it true, uncle?"

"My dear boy—" began the baronet gently.

Mornington drew a quick breath. "That means that it's true," he said.

"I had not intended to tell you, at least till you were older," said Sir Rupert quietly. "There is not one chance in a hundred that your cousin will ever be found, Valentine. But the search for him is still proceeding. That matter was left in my hands, and a large sum of money set aside for the purpose. Naturally, it is my duty to do all that can be done. But I have no hope of success."

"How did it happen, uncle? I never heard of this fellow, Cecil—never saw him."

"You were a child at the time, Valentine. You were only five or six years old when your cousin was three. He was lost at that age."

"Then he would be nearly thirteen now?"

"About that."

"And all that time he's been searched for, and hasn't been found?"

"That is so."

"Not a clue to him?"

"None."

"It looks as if he won't be found, then?"

"Most likely not, Valentine! He may be dead; it is quite probable. It is simply by the wish and the arrangement of his dead father that the search is still carried on. It was not necessary for you to know anything about the matter; it would simply have made you uneasy without cause. It was infamous for this boy Lattrey to tell you what he knew—infamous of him to have found out anything about it. I shall speak very severely to his father, and dispense with his further services."

Mornington hardly seemed to hear. "But if it happened that the kid turned up, uncle, he would take everything, I suppose?"

"I—I fear so. The Mornington estates are strictly entailed."

"And there would be nothing left for me?"

"You would still be my nephew, Valentine. And I am not a poor man, though not a rich one," said the baronet.

Mornington repressed an angry shrug of the shoulders.

"You have sons of your own," he said bitterly. "I couldn't take their money."

"I wish you could have got on better with my sons, Valentine," said the old gentleman, with a sigh. "I am afraid you were mostly to blame."

"I shouldn't wonder!" said

Mornington coolly. "I generally do quarrel with fellows. Still, I couldn't pull with them."

The baronet was silent. Mornington took a turn up and down the study. If he had to choose between beggary and dependency upon his guardian there was not much to choose.

His Stacpoole cousins, whom he had always disliked, and who had always disliked him, would regard him as an interloper and a rival. He could imagine their sneers if he became a dependent on their father's bounty.

His cheeks crimsoned at the thought. Better a life like 'Erbert's old life than that!

He stopped as a new thought came into his mind, and looked at his uncle.

"But the money I've had, uncle! I've always had lots of money. That was my own—at least, my cousin Cecil's!"

Sir Rupert nodded. "Cecil Mornington's death is presumed," he explained. "Of course, if he should be found living the estates go to him. But for legal purposes his death is presumed. Your late father's instructions with regard to money matters are quite legal, and are carried out by me."

"Then if Cecil Mornington turned up I should be in his debt?"

"Ye-es."

"Every shilling I've had, then, really belongs to him, and he could claim it?" exclaimed Mornington.

"He would not, Valentine! Your cousin would not be likely to be grasping. If he did—" The baronet paused. "But he would not, and could not. As his death has been legally presumed, it would be a difficult point in law. But it is absurd to consider such a point. I have not the slightest doubt that if Cecil Mornington were found he would be ready and willing to make proper provision for you!"

"By gad! A choice of beggary for me!" said Mornington bitterly. "I could sponge on you or on my cousin Cecil—what?"

"You should not look at it in that light, Valentine."

"But how did it happen?" exclaimed Mornington. "How was it that Cecil was lost and never found?"

"By chance. He was lost by a careless nurse, and it was supposed at first that he would be found in a few days at the furthest. He had wandered away from his nurse, who returned without him, and he was searched for at once, and for days following. It happened on the moor near Mornington Manor, within two miles of his father's home. It was learned later that a band of gipsies had passed that way, and it was surmised that they might have taken the child. But the gipsies were never traced. And from that day to this nothing has been seen or heard of the boy."

"By gad!" Mornington was silent for a minute.

"But if he was found, then, he would have to prove his identity!" he said at last, with a gleam in his eyes. "That wouldn't be easy for him."

"If he is found, Valentine, his identity will be easy enough to establish. Like yourself, and all the Morningtons, he bears the Mornington birthmark on his shoulder."

The junior started. "By gad! I'd forgotten that!"

"Other evidence would certainly be forthcoming if he were found. That alone would be sufficient to establish his identity, however."

"I—I suppose so."

"But you need not be uneasy, Valentine. Ten years have passed, and no trace has been found of him. It is only because his father's dying wish cannot be disregarded that a useless inquiry is still proceeding."

Mornington looked sharply at his uncle.

"Must it go on?" he muttered. "Valentine!"

"After all, if he's alive, he doesn't know he's a Mornington—he doesn't know what he's entitled to. It's no loss to him, when he doesn't know it. He may be a beggar, or a thief; he can't be educated; he can't be decent. What's the good of dragging such a wretch out of poverty and making him master of the Mornington estates. It would be foolish, rotten—"

The baronet rose. "I am sure you do not speak from your heart, Valentine," he said severely. "I repeat, there is practically no chance that Cecil will ever be found, even if he is living, which I doubt. But if any efforts of mine can discover him, he will be restored to his rights. And when you are calmer you will wish the same. If it should happen, you will always have a friend and protector in me. I shall see that Master Lattrey is punished for having

disturbed you with this story. Dismiss it from your mind!"

Mornington did not speak. "I shall now call upon the Head, Valentine." Sir Rupert moved to the door. "I repeat, Valentine, dismiss the whole matter from your mind, and do not allow yourself to be disturbed by shadows."

Sir Rupert Stacpoole left the study, evidently troubled and shocked by the suggestion Mornington had made.

The junior did not speak. He looked after his uncle with gleaming eyes.

"He won't be found—he can't be found—he can't be still livin'!" he muttered. "But—but if he should be—" He gritted his teeth. "A beggar—a pauper! I! And they're goin' to hunt for him still—to make him head of the Morningtons in my place! Bah!"

In a savage mood the dandy of the Fourth strode from the study. He did not want to see his guardian again. He jammed the straw hat on his head, and strode out of the school-house. He was still out of gates when the station cab bore Sir Rupert Stacpoole back to Coombe.

**The 5th Chapter. Under the Shadow.**

Mornington of the Fourth paused as he came in sight of the school. He had tramped away from Rook-

wood ground his teeth at the thought of that! Better poverty, hunger, death itself, than such a wound to his pride.

He was glad to get relief from his bitter thoughts. He joined the crowd round the pitch at Bagshot. Pankley & Co. were in the field, and Jimmy Silver and Conroy were at the wickets.

Kit Erroll was standing with the waiting bats outside the pavilion, and his face lighted up as he saw Mornington.

"Hallo, Morny!" Mornington joined him.

"Your uncle's been?" asked Erroll. "Yes," muttered Mornington. "Nothing wrong, I hope?"

Mornington laughed. "Oh, not at all! How's the game getting on?"

"Bagshot a hundred on both innings!" said Erroll. "We bagged forty for the first Rookwood innings, bad luck. Now we're batting for the second time, and we're two down for fifteen."

There was a shout. "Well bowled, Panky!" "How's that?"

Jimmy Silver came off with his bat, looking rather rueful.

"Man in, Erroll!" he said. "Do better than I've done, old scout, or we sha'n't lick Bagshot."

Mornington stood with his hands in his pockets, looking sullenly on at the game.

Erroll was making a good innings, and his chum watched him with some interest.

In Morny's present humour he was in no mood to meet Jimmy Silver's friendly advances. He preferred to hug his grievance, as it were.

He was in a sulky, savage mood, ready to quarrel with friend or foe—indeed, he would probably have quarrelled with Erroll himself just then if they had been thrown together.

A slap on the back made him swing round savagely. Arthur Edward Lovell had come up, and he gave him a cheery nod.

"Come to see us win—what?" he said cheerily.

"Don't thump me, you fool!"

"Hoity—toity!" grinned Lovell. "Don't be a sulky ass, Morny. Sorry about the mistake in the study. Cap't say more than that."

"No need for you to say anything at all. The less you have to say to me, the better I shall like it!"

"Then I won't inflict my conversation on you!" chuckled Lovell. "Still the same swanking ass—what?"

And Lovell left him. "Bravo, Erroll! Well hit!"

troubled him, and would not be dismissed.

And while that black trouble lay on his thoughts his best chum was thinking only of cricket. It was an unjust thought. It was only by chance that Mornington himself was not playing cricket with Erroll. But he was in no mood to be just.

He was dissatisfied with himself for having repelled Jimmy Silver's frank apology so roughly; yet he would have done the same again.

In the bright sunshine of the late summer's afternoon his face was dark and clouded, and restless discontent gnawed at his heart. He was sick of solitude and sick of company.

He thought of Lattrey, Peele, Gower, and the rest, and the dismal gambling in the recess of the old abbey at Rookwood. That was better than nothing to distract his thoughts. A game of bridge in the study, at least, would distract his mind, and he quickened his steps.

And then as he strode on there came a sudden ringing call along the shining river.

"Help!"

**The 6th Chapter. A Startling Discovery!**

"Help!" Mornington started and looked round him.

He was about a mile from Rookwood now, and the towing-path, shaded by thick old trees, was deserted.

"Help!" "What the dickens—"

He caught sight of two diminutive figures in bathing-pants by a clump of willows at the river's edge.

They were Snooks and Jones minus, of the Second Form at Rookwood.

They were standing, with looks of helpless terror, staring out into the river.

Mornington, as he ran up, followed their gaze.

Far out in the river appeared a dark head on the water, and a white face gleamed up at the sun—the face of 'Erbert of the Second.

"'Erbert!" gasped Mornington. Snooks and Jones minus started round at the sound of the steps.

"Help!" panted Jones. "He's got cramp or something! He'll be drowned! I—I can't swim out there! I'm going to try, though—"

Jones made a desperate move into the shallows, but Snooks caught him by the arm.

"You can't get half the distance, you duffer!"

"I—"

"Don't be a fool, kid!" snapped Mornington. "Leave him to me! Stick it out, 'Erbert! I'm coming!"

The black, savage mood had passed from Mornington, like a dark cloud driven away by the sun, at the sight of the Rookwood wai's deadly peril.

'Erbert was struggling feebly in the deep water, evidently a victim of sudden cramp.

Under him there was a depth of twenty feet at least, and the two fags on the bank, terrified by his danger, were unable to help him.

Mornington threw his jacket down in hot haste. He was a good swimmer, and though the task before him was dangerous enough, he never thought of hesitating. With all his faults, the dandy of Rookwood had boundless pluck.

"He would try to swim across!" muttered Jones minus. "I—I told him not to try it! Didn't I, Snooks?"

Splash!

Mornington was in the water now. With swift, steady strokes he swam towards the struggling fag.

There was a groan from the two fags on the bank. 'Erbert's dark head had disappeared under the swirling water.

Mornington swam on desperately, though his clothes clogged his movements and dragged him down.

"He's under!" muttered Jones minus.

The dandy of the Fourth had disappeared from sight. But he came up again into the red sunlight, and a dark head rose beside him in the swirling water. Mornington's strong grasp was on the drowning fag.

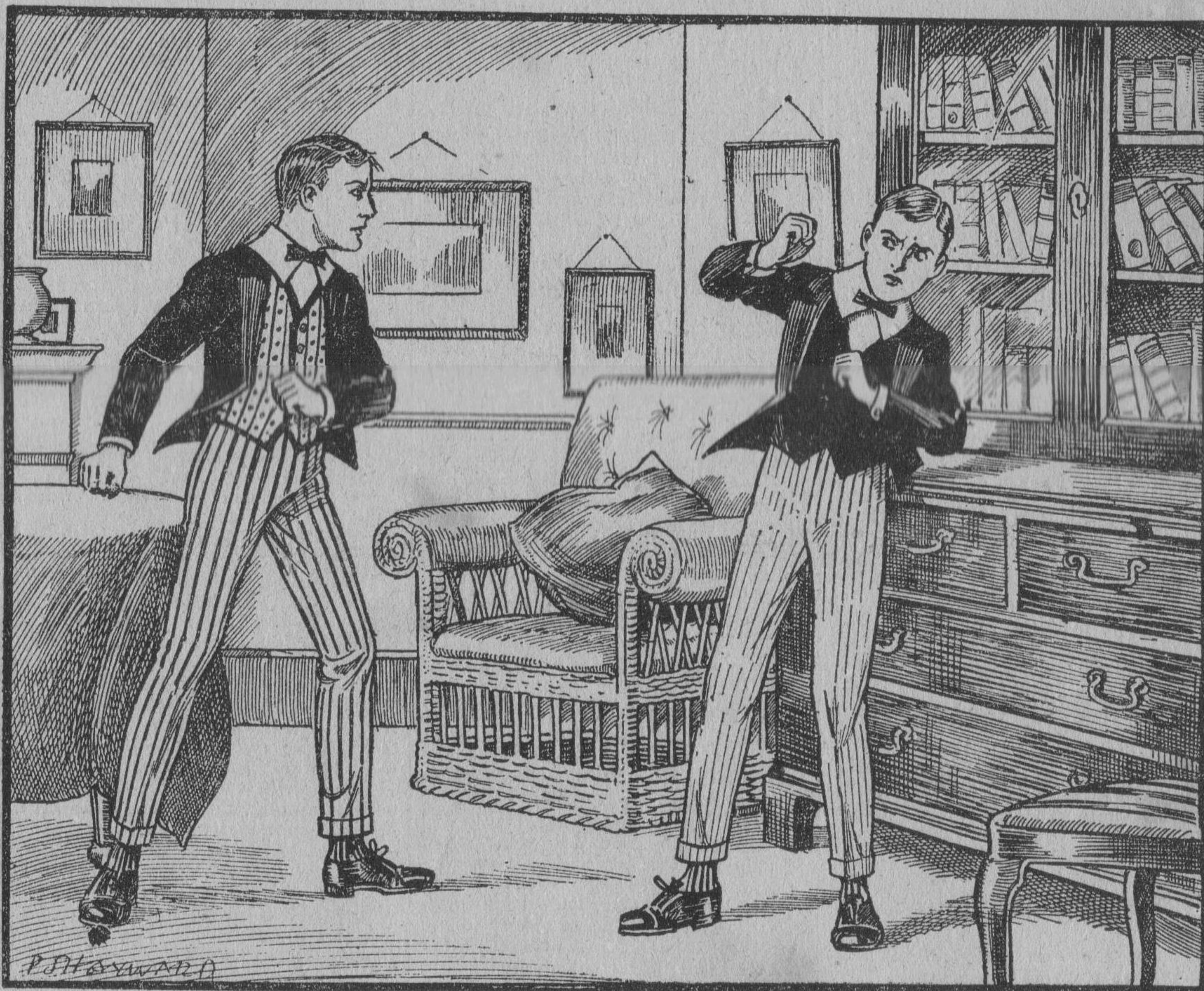
"He's got him!" panted Jones. "Help!" Snooks was crying mechanically. "Help!"

"He's got him!"

With straining eyes the fags watched.

Mornington was supporting 'Erbert's head above the water, and struggling towards the bank.

But his wet clothes were heavy, and the current was strong; burdened as he was it was a fearful struggle, and there was no help at hand. The wide, shining river was deserted.



"You beggar—you tramp—you thief—" Mornington started towards the startled fag, his fists clenched with fury. "Master Morny!" gasped 'Erbert tremulously.

wood in a savage and sulky mood, caring nothing whither his steps led him. He found himself within sight of Bagshot School, and from the distance a sound of shouting reached his ears. It came from the Bagshot cricket-ground.

A sardonic smile crossed Mornington's lips as he remembered the Bagshot match, and Jimmy Silver & Co.

Cricket was not much in his mind just then. But he was sick of his own company and of his gloomy thoughts, and he walked on to look at the cricketers.

Doubtless, in the course of time, the impression of Lattrey's story would fade from his mind.

He had enjoyed a place that was not his own, all unknowingly, for ten long years. What chance was there that the missing heir would be found after that space of time? Surely none!

He felt that in time he would settle down into his accustomed equanimity. But that time was not yet. At present he could not dismiss the lurking fear that haunted him.

Somewhere in the country there was a wretched lad—probably reared in poverty and want—perhaps in dishonesty—who was the rightful—at least, the legal—heir of the Mornington estates.

Some wretched little waster like poor 'Erbert! And the missing heir, if he were found, would take everything, and the lofty, superb dandy of Rookwood would be a pensioner on his bounty!

"I'll try!" said Erroll, with a smile. "So-long, Morny!"

Erroll went to the wickets. "Hallo! You here, Morny?" said Jimmy Silver, colouring.

Mornington gave him a savage look.

"Yes. I'm permitted to look on at the wonderful exploits of the eleven, I suppose?" he sneered.

Jimmy took no notice of the sneer. "I'm sorry for what happened in our study, Morny," he said quietly.

"You needn't trouble."

"It was a misunderstanding," explained Jimmy patiently. "You said nothing about your guardian coming down to Rookwood this afternoon, and I jumped to the conclusion that—well, that you were up to your old tricks. I'm sorry for the mistake."

Mornington shrugged his shoulders. "The other fellows say the same," said Jimmy Silver, with persistent patience. "But as a matter of fact, Morny, you could have explained if you wanted to. You got your back up too soon, you know. Still, we're sorry, and of course, I take back what I said about your not playing for Rookwood again, as it was a misunderstanding."

"I don't care twopence either way!" snapped Mornington.

The captain of the Fourth compressed his lips a little.

Morny was not an easy fellow to deal with.

"Well, if you take it like that I've nothing more to say," remarked Jimmy Silver. And he turned away.

The batsmen were running again. Mornington stood sulkily by himself, looking on. The expression on his face showed the humour he was in, and the Rookwood fellows left him severely alone.

Some of the Bagshot juniors glanced at him curiously. A fellow might be in a bad temper, but it was not usual for a fellow to stand about showing his bad temper off, as it were.

Mornington caught two or three of the grinning glances, and scowled more darkly.

He did not stay long on the Bagshot ground.

Erroll was still batting when Mornington turned restlessly away and left the pitch. He heard a shout as he went:

"Well hit!"

"Good man, Erroll!"

Mornington would have been glad of his chum's company if Erroll had been at liberty, but Erroll was busy now. But it was with an added sense of injury that the perverse junior left Bagshot and strode away.

With his hands driven deep into his pockets, and a sullen frown on his brow, he strode away along the towing-path towards Rookwood.

Everything seemed to be wrong that day.

The discovery of his cousin's existence, of the possibilities it involved, had shattered his sense of security. Doubtless it would fade in time, but now it weighed upon his mind and



## THE MISSING HEIR!

(Continued from the previous page.)

jacket in the grass. Mornington's glance was following him carelessly, but suddenly the dandy of the Fourth gave a violent start. The colour that was returning to his cheeks faded away, leaving him a ghastly white.

As if he no longer felt his weakness, he leaped to his feet, and his grasp fell on 'Erbert's shoulder, with a grip that made the surprised fag utter a cry of pain.

He would have turned, but Mornington's fierce grasp held him helpless. "Master Morny!" he panted.

Mornington did not speak. His eyes were fixed in a deadly stare upon the fag's shoulder. 'Erbert was in bathing costume, and his skin gleamed white in the sun.

On the shoulder, just above the arm, was a dark, strange mark, a deep, dull crimson in hue, and in shape strangely like a wolf's head.

It was evidently a birthmark. "Erbert," Mornington spoke at last, his voice cracked and hoarse, "what's that—what's that mark on your shoulder?"

"Let me go, Master Morny! You're urtin' me!"

Mornington shook him fiercely. "Answer me, you young fool—answer me! How came that there?"

Snooks and Jones minimus stared dumbly at him. They wondered whether Mornington had suddenly gone out of his senses.

"Answer me!" shouted Mornington.

'Erbert's face was startled, almost terrified.

"I—I don't know, Master Morny. It's always been there," he faltered. "Wot does it matter?"

"You never told me of it."

"Why should I 'ave told you, Master Morny?" said 'Erbert, in wonder. "You—you're urtin' my shoulder, Master Morny."

A fierce oath, that startled and scared the three fags, left Mornington's white lips. He hurled 'Erbert from him so savagely that the fag reeled and fell into the grass.

'Erbert gave a cry as he fell.

Mornington did not heed him. He turned away from him, his face white and set. Without a word, but with the same fixed, furious look upon his face, he threw on his jacket and strode away.

'Erbert staggered to his feet. "Master Morny!"

It was like the pitiful cry of a wounded animal. Mornington did not turn his head. The terrible look, unchanged, was on his face as he strode swiftly away and disappeared among the trees.

### The 7th Chapter.

#### The Heir of Mornington.

Jimmy Silver & Co. arrived in a cheery crowd at the gates of Rookwood. They had beaten Bagshot, and they were in great spirits. Three fags were tramping in as they arrived.

"Hallo, 'Erbert!" said Jimmy cheerily, as he clapped the waif of Rookwood on the shoulder. "What's up? You look like a merry ghost!"

'Erbert's lips quivered.

"The young ass has been in the river," said Jones minimus. "Mornington came along and fished him out, or he'd be there still."

"My hat! Good for Morny!" said Jimmy.

"Morny was in an awful wax, though," grinned Snooks. "Jolly near pitched into Murphy. Didn't he, 'Erbert?"

'Erbert did not reply.

He hurried in at the gates, leaving

his two comrades explaining the matter to the interested cricketers.

The waif of Rookwood hurried across the quad, and up to the Fourth Form passage. He paused outside Study No. 4.

Within there was a sound of restless movement. He knew that Mornington was there. The dandy of Rookwood was pacing the study, tirelessly, restlessly.

'Erbert's little face quivered, and his lip trembled.

What was the matter with Mornington?

The scene on the river-bank had astounded and troubled him. Why was Master Morny, who had just risked his life to save him, so angry with him? What did it matter about the queer mark on his shoulder? What was there for his benefactor to be angry about? What was the meaning of that white, terrible look on Valentine Mornington's face?

The fag was troubled and almost terrified. He wanted to see Mornington again, but he dreaded to face him. A vague uneasiness and fear was tugging at his heart. Why had Morny been so harsh, so cruel?

The juniors came in a crowd along the passage, and passed him. Kit Erroll stopped, and tapped at Mornington's door and opened it.

"You here, Morny!"

Mornington paused in his fierce pacing, like that of a tiger in a cage, and gave him one glance.

"Don't come in now!"

"But, Morny—"

"Let me alone!"

Erroll gave one look at the white, savage face, and withdrew, and quietly closed the study door. Mornington of the Fourth was in no mood then to be spoken to, even by his best chum.

'Erbert touched Kit Erroll on the sleeve timidly as he turned away from the door.

"Is there something wrong?" he muttered. "Something wrong with Master Morny, sir?"

"I don't know—better not go in now," said Erroll quietly. And with a kind nod to the fag he went down the passage.

'Erbert lingered outside No. 4.

Within, the steady tramping had been resumed. Mornington was unable to keep still. 'Erbert listened to it with a throbbing heart. He knew—he was quite certain—that Mornington's fierce anger was directed against himself. Why, he could not even surmise.

What had happened? What did that mark on his shoulder mean? What did it matter to Mornington? He dared not enter the study, and he could not go. He stood there almost cowering, like a dog whose master is angry, waiting in dumb misery.

Unconscious that he was there, Mornington of the Fourth was tramping in the study with savage tread. Peele and Gower had looked in earlier, and had been driven away by Mornington's furious looks.

Weariness seized upon the junior, and he threw himself into a chair. He sat with bent brows, his eyes fixed straight before him, glittering.

His guardian had told him that Cecil Mornington would never be found. At the bottom of his heart he had believed so himself, in spite of haunting doubts. And now he had been found, and he, Valentine Mornington, had found him!

There was no doubt in Mornington's mind.

He recalled with sardonic bitterness that in his thoughts of the missing heir of Mornington he had pictured his cousin Cecil as a ragged, untaught little waster like 'Erbert.

That thought had been nearer the truth than he had dreamed.

'Erbert!

The nameless waif, the adopted son of a soldier killed in the war, the famished tramp whom Mornington had picked up by the wayside and brought to Rookwood!

The little outcast who had mingled with thieves and rogues at Dirty Dick's tenement in London—the ragged, footsore tramp of the country roads—and he was Cecil Mornington, master of broad acres and a stately home!

Mornington had no doubt. He knew the birthmark of the Morningtons, which he bore himself—which all the Morningtons had borne for countless generations.

Once the clue was given he knew the truth. The missing heir was a nameless waif of 'Erbert's age. He wondered, now, that he had never thought of 'Erbert in connection with him.

It was 'Erbert, and he might have remained unknown till the day of his death had not Mornington rescued him from want, and brought him to Rookwood!

Mornington ground his teeth savagely.

A terrible thought was in his mind. If he had left the waif where he was—in the river—He shuddered, but the bitter thought would return. If he was robbed of all he had, it was by his own act.

At least he would be silent. He had saved the boy's life. That would be a set-off against—against what? His cheeks burned. If he kept silent, if he kept 'Erbert in ignorance of his rights, he would be a thief!

And if he did not—

He sprang to his feet again, tortured by his thoughts. There was a timid tap at the door, but he did not hear it. The door opened softly.

"Master Morny!"

It was 'Erbert! The little waif could bear it no longer. He had to speak—to learn what it was that he had done.

Mornington spun round, his eyes blazing at the fag. At that moment, blazing at the fag. At that moment, it was only a bitter, overwhelming hatred that he felt for the boy he had befriended and saved.

"You!" he muttered, between his gritting teeth. "You!"

"Master Morny! Wot 'ave I done?"

"You! You beggar—you tramp—you thief—"

Mornington started towards the startled fag, his fists clenched with fury. 'Erbert stood rooted to the floor, his eyes growing wide with horror.

"Master Morny!"

It seemed for a moment that Mornington would strike him, and 'Erbert did not move a hand to defend himself. He only gazed dumbly at Mornington, with the look of a dumb, patient animal, the victim of a wrath he could not understand.

Mornington's hand dropped to his side.

"Get out!" he muttered. "Get out of my sight, before I do you a mischief! Do you hear?" His voice rose passionately, furiously. "Get out!"

Without a word, without a sound, stricken to the very heart, the fag dragged himself from the study, and the door closed upon him.

Mornington was alone with his fury and despair. In the Second Form room, dark and deserted at that hour, the waif of Rookwood leaned upon his desk, his face buried in his hands, sobbing as if his heart would break.

THE END.

NEXT MONDAY!

**"BROUGHT TO HEEL!"**

By OWEN CONQUEST.

DON'T MISS IT!

## TALES TO TELL!

Some Storyettes That Will Interest And Amuse You.

### IN THE SOUP.

Fairly reeking of the salt sea waves, the two old mariners strolled into a cheap restaurant and ordered a dinner. They were captain and mate, ashore after a long trip.

In a few minutes the somewhat grimy waiter appeared, and, with an airy flourish, deposited before the sea-dogs two plates of some thin, anæmic-looking liquid.

"Aho, there!" barked the skipper, as his eye fell upon the concoction. "What in the name of Neptune is this?"

The waiter bowed gracefully, arranged his napkin in the proper position, and replied, in lordly tones: "Soup, sir."

Then it was that the grizzled captain flew into such fits of laughter that he nearly brought tears to his eyes.

"Bill," he cried, giving the mate a mighty nudge, "here's news, my lad! Here's you an' me these forty years bin sailin' on—soup!"

### INFORMATION LACKING.

This was about the fifteenth time that the prisoner had been accused and brought to trial for theft. Unfortunately, on this occasion, the lawyer who was to defend him was ill.

"Your honour," said the prisoner to the judge. "I should like to have an adjournment. My lawyer is not well."

"But," replied the judge, "you were caught with your hand in the gentleman's pocket. What can your counsel say in your defence?"

"Precisely, your honour; that is what I am curious to know."

### THAT WICKED ROUND.

Into the little village of Wuzzlevale there came a circus, with brazen band, gaudy posters, mammoth elephants, clowns, and fiery, untamed lions.

The boys of the place were mad with excitement, and the young son of a notoriously close-fisted old farmer rushed up to his father, and eagerly demanded the nimbly "tanner" with which to view the show.

"What!" demanded the old skinflint. "Sixpence to see a circus?"

"Please, father," came the meek and mild reply.

"Young man," answered the oldster sadly, "it was only last month that I let you go to the top o' t' hill to see the eclipse of the sun. My lad, do you want all your life to be one wicked round of gaiety?"

Then the boy got tired.

### NOT WHAT HE MEANT.

It was a hot—very hot—day, and as Weary Willie plodded along the dusty road, he felt not only thirsty, but hungry.

At last the pangs of hunger could no longer be restrained, and, going up to the nearest cottage, he knocked at the door.

"Well, my man," snapped the hard-faced woman, as she cautiously opened the door, "what do you want?"

"Pardin, lidy," whined W.W., touching his hat, "but could yer spare a copper? I'm—"

"No, I can't!" remarked the lady. "I've only one, and it's washing day. I'm using it!"

Then the door was slammed in his face.

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