

# The BOYS' FRIEND 1<sup>d</sup>/<sub>2</sub>

"FRANK RICHARDS' SCHOOLDAYS!" "THE BOYS OF THE 'BOMBAY CASTLE'!" "TALES OF THE DORMITORY!" **WAR TIME PRICE**

No. 877. Vol. XVIII. New Series.]

THREE HALFPENCE.

[Week Ending March 30th, 1918.

## THE SCAMP OF THE THIRD!

A MAGNIFICENT NEW LONG COMPLETE TALE OF JIMMY SILVER & CO. AT ROOKWOOD SCHOOL

By OWEN CONQUEST.

### The 1st Chapter.

#### Turning Over a New Leaf.

"Jimmy, old sport!" Algy Silver of the Third Form strolled into the end study at Rookwood, with his hands in his pockets.

His manner was cool and nonchalant, and did not indicate in the least that he was on the worst of terms with his cousin Jimmy.

He nodded coolly to the juniors in the study—Lovell and Raby and Newcome—who looked at him rather grimly.

Jimmy Silver, the captain of the Fourth, looked as grim as his comrades.

"Well?" he snapped. "Well," repeated Algy, "ain't you glad to see me?"

Jimmy Silver looked at him. He thawed a little.

Jimmy was very desirous of getting on better terms with his young cousin, whom he was supposed to be keeping an eye on at Rookwood.

Algy had angrily refused to be looked after.

Indeed, the more Jimmy looked after him, the more determined Algy seemed to be to kick over the traces.

Quite recently Jimmy had come upon the sportive fag smoking and conning over a racing paper, and had felt it his cousinly duty to give Algy a bumping, to help him back into the right path.

To judge by Algy's friendly manner, that cousinly bumping had not been wasted.

"You don't look over pleased," said Algy, eyeing Jimmy. "I've taken the trouble to come and see you. I can tell you the Third don't approve of a chap being chummy with Fourth-Formers. It's considered rather no-class in our Form."

Jimmy grinned.

"There, that's better!" commented the fag. "Put a smile on, and keep it there. Any grub going?"

The Fistical Four were at tea—a very frugal tea.

But they were hospitable.

"Oh, sit down!" said Lovell.

"Thanks—I will."

The cheerful young gentleman pulled a box to the table and sat down—chairs being limited in number.

Jimmy Silver was smiling now.

"Help yourself to the kippers, kid!" he said. "Sorry there isn't any sugar or tea or butter. War-time, you know."

"Oh, don't mind me!" said Algy. "Quite a pleasure to be enjoyin' your company, Jimmy! You were jawin' me the other day about my naughty ways. I've been thinkin' it over."

"I'm glad of that."

"It isn't every fag at Rookwood who has the advantage of having a cousin who's a kind uncle to him," pursued Algy. "I feel that I ought not to throw away this very great advantage."

Lovell and Raby and Newcome grinned, and Jimmy Silver frowned a little.

"Don't be a young ass, Algy!" he said.

"My dear chap, I mean every word. I already feel better—more elevated, you know—in the highly moral atmosphere of this study. Pass the salt, Raby."

"Yes, I think I'd better pass the salt, after that statement," said Raby.

"You see," continued Algy Silver, as he dissected his kipper, "it's dawned upon me that playing the giddy ox is a mug's game. It don't pay in the long run. A fellow like you, Jimmy, whose intellect keeps on the football level, never gets into debt, and never has any worries about meeting bills and things. It must be a happy state!"

"Don't be a cheeky young ass!" growled Jimmy.

Algy's remarks seemed to be entertaining Jimmy's chums; but Jimmy himself was feeling restive.

"But I'm in earnest—deadly earnest!" protested Algy. "I say, this is a jolly good kipper! I mean business, Jimmy. I've been wasting time foolin' round with Peele and Gower of your Form."

"No mistake about that," grunted Jimmy.

"Banker in the study, and smokes in the wood-shed, pall in the long run," the fag rattled on. "In fact, I'm gettin' a bit blase, and am thinkin' of turnin' over a new leaf. My old pal De Vere, at High Coombe, would be shocked if he heard me say so. But there you are. I'm repentin'. I suppose it's the atmosphere of Rookwood—much more elevatin' than that of my old school. Sendin' me here was really bookin' me to become a reformed character."

"You young ass!"

"You don't seem overjoyed at my reform, Jimmy."

"Oh, bosh!"

"I'm takin' up footer," said Algy in an injured tone. "You must have seen me at practice. Third-Form footer isn't quite up to my mark. We played a much better game at High Coombe. Now, you're junior skipper, Jimmy, and I want you to give me a chance."

"Eh?"

"Put me in the junior team."

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Lovell. Algy looked at him.

"Well, is there anythin' surprisin' in that?" he inquired.

"I should jolly well say so!" exclaimed Lovell warmly. "Do you think we play fags in the junior eleven?"

"A skipper's job is to pick up the best men wherever he can find them," answered the fag coolly. "Now Morny and Erroll are away, Jimmy will want some new men. I'm asking for a chance."

"Rats!"

"Cheek!"

"Rats to you!" answered Algy. "It's you I'm talking to, Jimmy. What about me for the junior eleven,



## MORNINGTON SURPRISES MR. BOOTLES!

just to help you wind up the season in style?"

Jimmy Silver smiled, but he looked perplexed.

"If you're taking up footer seriously, Algy, I'm jolly glad," he said. "It will do you good, and you'll find it better than sneaking behind the shed to smoke cigarettes. But—but—"

"Well?"

"Third-Form kids are not up to the form of the junior eleven."

"I am," answered Algy coolly. "Let me practise a bit with the Fourth, and you'll see. If I'm not good enough you can turn me down, I'm not askin' to play in a school match, when you get your men from both sides of Rookwood. But a House match, Classical and Modern—no reason why I shouldn't play for the Classics, is there?"

"Well—"

"You haven't got such a crowd of first-rate men, you know, specially now Erroll's gone home with Mornington. Now, look here, Jimmy, stretch a point, and give me a chance. You'll be reformin' me, you know—snatchin' me like a brand from the burnin'. Isn't it worth while?"

Jimmy reflected.

It was true that Algy was a good footballer for his age, young rascal as he was.

Playing him in a school match was out of the question; but, after all, he might be given a chance against the Moderns, Jimmy reflected.

Jimmy had two places to fill in the team, and if Algy showed up well in practice—

"I can see you're goin' to say 'Yes,'" smiled Algy. "You're a good sort, Jimmy, though a bit of an old frump! You can expect me down to practice to-morrow, and you can

rely on seein' me stagger humanity."

"Cheeky little beast!" commented Lovell.

"Well, look here, Algy," said Jimmy Silver at last. "I can't promise anything, but I'll do my best for you, if you mean business. I suppose this means that you're done with Peele and Gower, and that set?"

"What do you think?" answered Algy. "Peele & Co. haven't been half so goey lately. I'm goin' to pay Peele the quid I owe him, and say good-bye to the dear boy."

"That's right."

"I suppose you could lend me the quid?"

"Oh!" said Jimmy.

"Stony, you know," said Algy. "Peele would be willin' to play double or quits, but I'd rather get clear of the whole shoot. Of course, I'll let you have the quid next week, after my allowance comes."

Jimmy Silver regarded him very thoughtfully.

He could read the expression in the faces of his chums.

He knew what they thought, but he did not agree with them.

"Of course, if you haven't a quid—"

"I had one from the pater this morning," said Jimmy.

"And I'll bet you Algy knew it," growled Lovell.

"Oh, cheese it, old chap!" Algy Silver wagged his forefinger at Lovell reprovingly.

"That's suspicious," he said. "Don't be suspicious, Lovell. It's rather no class."

"You cheeky little worm!" roared Lovell.

"Shush! That isn't the way to talk to a visitor."

Lovell seemed on the point of an explosion.

Jimmy Silver struck in rather hastily.

"Here's the quid, Algy. Settle up with Peele, and have done with him. I'll expect you on Little Side to-morrow."

"Done!" said Algy. He glanced over the table, which was bare, and rose.

He slipped the currency note carelessly into his pocket.

"Thanks, old sport! Ta-ta!" And the fag strolled out of the study, whistling.

### The 2nd Chapter.

#### A Surprise for the Nuts.

"Ass!" Three voices addressed that complimentary remark, in unison, to Jimmy Silver, as the Third-Former took his departure.

Jimmy Silver frowned uneasily. "Oh, rats! What's the matter with you?" he said.

"I'm blessed if I ever saw a chap whose leg was pulled so easily!" said Arthur Edward Lovell in disgust. "The little beast came here for your quid, and pitched you a yaru to squeeze it out of you. Anybody but a born idiot would see that!"

"Oh, rot!"

"As for chucking up Peele, and banker in the study, that's all moonshine!" said Newcome. "He don't intend anything of the sort."

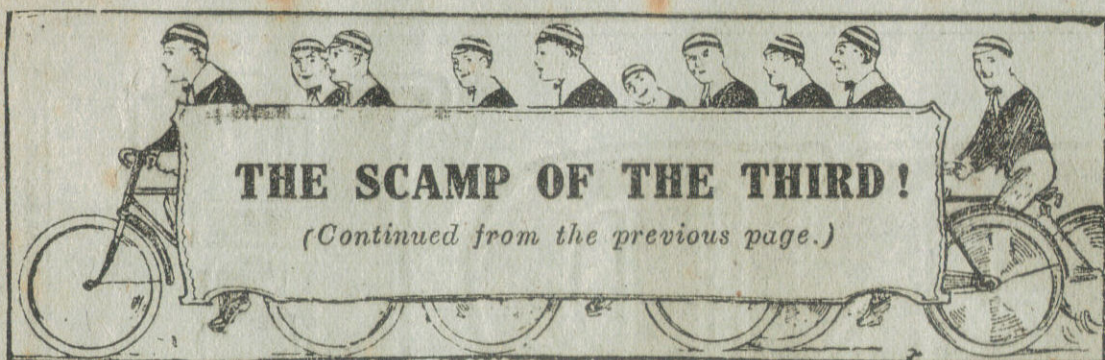
"I believe he does."

"That's because you're a born duffer, Jimmy," remarked Raby kindly. "I don't blame you, old chap; you can't help it. It's a bad handicap."

"Oh, rats!"

"And the cheeky young rascal, to think of pushing himself into the

(Continued on the next page.)



## THE SCAMP OF THE THIRD!

(Continued from the previous page.)

junior eleven!" exclaimed Lovell indignantly.

"I don't see it!" said Jimmy, with a touch of obstinacy. "I sha'n't play him unless he's up to the mark, you know that. As a matter of fact, I've had an eye on him, and his game is miles above the average Third Form game."

"Not up to our mark, I suppose?"

"Well, no. He couldn't play for the School, but he might come in very useful in a match against the Modern side."

"Piffle!"

Jimmy grunted.

"Not that he means it, either," pursued Lovell. "He won't turn up at practice to-morrow. He was pulling your leg."

"I believe he will."

"Well, you're a fathead!"

"Hear, hear!"

Jimmy rose from the tea-table.

"Draw it mild!" he said, as crossly as he had ever spoken. "Algy's my cousin. He's not a bad sort in his own way. He was led into silly rot by some young rascals at his old school; that's why he was sent here this term. I've had some trouble with him, and I'm jolly glad and relieved to see that he's coming round to the right way of thinking."

"I tell you he was spoofing!" roared Lovell.

"And I tell you he wasn't!" exclaimed Jimmy. "I'm certain he will come down to the practice to-morrow."

"Rot!"

"Look here, Lovell—"

"Bosh!"

"Order!" murmured Raby. "No rags in the family circle. After all, he's Jimmy's cousin, and Jimmy has a right to be spoofed if he likes."

"I don't care to see a little rotter pulling Jimmy's leg and squeezing his pater's tip out of him!" snorted Lovell. "That's all he came for!"

"You're suspicious, Lovell," said Jimmy Silver.

"Oh, am I?" exclaimed Lovell. "You cheeky ass—"

"Order!"

"Shut up, both of you!"

Jimmy Silver walked out of the study. His temper was rising.

Perhaps it was rather hope, than faith, that made Jimmy determined to believe in Algy's new leaf.

Probably that made his chums' disbelief all the more irritating.

Lovell breathed hard.

"Of all the silly asses—!" he growled.

"Never mind. Give him his head," said Newcome. "Jimmy has to be given his head. Anybody can spoof him, and it can't be helped."

"I'll bet you that young waster is laughing in his sleeve now, and that quid will go in banker in Peele's study!" snorted Lovell.

"I shouldn't wonder. But, after all, it's Jimmy's quid."

"Oh, rats!"

"Jimmy will see that he was spoofing when he doesn't turn up at practice to-morrow," added Newcome soothingly.

"Well, yes, that's so."

But there was no surprise for the Co. on the morrow when they went down to Little Side after morning lessons.

Jimmy Silver had called together his men for practice, and with them came Algy Silver of the Third.

The fag was on the ground before the Fistical Four, in fact.

Algy looked very bright, too.

"Hallo, he's there!" exclaimed Lovell, very much taken aback.

Jimmy Silver smiled.

"What are you doing here, young Silver?" demanded Lovell gruffly as they came on the field.

Algy looked at him coolly.

"Practice!" he answered.

"Oh! That's it, is it?"

"That's it. I don't need it so much as you do, but here I am."

Lovell murmured something under his breath.

It was bright, spring-like weather, and the juniors joined up in the footer practice with great zest, Algy with the others. And even Lovell had to admit that the fag was in great form, considering his age.

He was as good a man as many fellows in the Fourth, though naturally not up to the level of the junior team.

But there was no doubt that, with his quickness and deftness, he might be made into a very useful forward.

Peele and Gower of the Fourth came down to look at the practice.

They were not footballers, and had very little interest in the game.

They grinned as they saw Algy among the footballers.

Smythe and Howard and Tracy strolled along and joined the nuts of the Fourth, and Adolphus turned his eye upon Algy in considerable surprise.

He jammed an eyeglass into his eye, as if to assist him in realising the surprising sight.

"By gad!" said Adolphus.

Algy Silver, though only a fag, had the honour of being admitted into Smythe's select circle.

Being a sportive youth, with plenty of money, he was looked upon with a kindly eye by the great Adolphus.

"That young merchant playin' footer, by gad!" said Smythe.

"Rather a new departure, playin' with his esteemed cousin," said Howard, laughing. "I understood they were at daggers

drawn. Peele, old man, you'll lose your disciple, at this rate!"

Cyril Peele shrugged his shoulders.

"Not much loss!" he answered. "I'm not yearnin' for fag society."

"Good for you, Algy!" called out Jimmy Silver approvingly at that moment.

"On the best of terms, by gad!" said Adolphus, with a stare. "I suppose that means that Algy won't turn up for banker this evenin'."

The Rookwood nuts waited till the footballers came off, and then Smythe called to the fag.

"Hallo, Algy!"

"Hallo!" answered Algy carelessly.

"I'm expectin' you in my study this evenin'. Some of the fellows are comin'."

"Sorry; can't come."

And with that Algy walked on with Jimmy Silver, leaving the great Adolphus staring.

Jimmy Silver smiled, and even Lovell thawed a little.

It really did look as if Algy was in earnest after all.

The fag went his own way, and Jimmy Silver went indoors with his chums. He was feeling very pleased.

"Are you going to play that kid, Jimmy?" asked Lovell, much less aggressively than might have been expected.

"You saw how he shaped on the field," replied Jimmy Silver. "Why shouldn't I play him against the Moderns next Wednesday, especially as the Modern team will be weak? Tommy Doyle's laid up with a cold, and Lacy is crooked, and Towle is off colour. Tommy Dodd's team won't be up to sample, and it's a good chance for me to give the Third a look-in for once."

"Well, perhaps it won't do any harm," conceded Lovell.

And the next day, when Jimmy Silver wrote out the list for the forthcoming match, the name of Algy Silver of the Third was written down.

### The 3rd Chapter. Mornny's Little Joke.

"Mornny, by Jove!"

"And Erroll!"

Jimmy Silver & Co. were at footer practice after morning lessons on Tuesday when those exclamations from the fellows round Little Side drew all their attention away from football.

Jimmy Silver was just making a shot when he heard, and he looked round at once.

It was some time since Valentine Mornnington of the Fourth had gone up to London, his chum going with him.

All Rookwood knew that the blind junior was to undergo an operation at the hands of a famous specialist, and there were few fellows at Rookwood who would not have given a very great deal to hear that Mornny had recovered his sight.

Erroll's devotion to his chum had been unflinching. He had never felt his blind comrade as a burden.

Never for an hour had his care ceased, and the chums had hardly ever been seen without one another while the blind junior was at Rookwood.

It was known that there was hope for Mornny.

That was all that was known so far.

There was considerable excitement among the juniors as Erroll was seen coming towards the football ground, with Mornny leaning on his arm.

Jimmy Silver's heart sank a little.

Mornnington was walking with Erroll's guidance, as of old, and that did not look as if the hope of his recovery had been well-founded.

"Poor old Mornny!" murmured Lovell.

"Here, get on!" exclaimed Algy of the Third, who was with the junior footballers.

"Here's Mornny!" answered Jimmy.

Algy grunted.

"Well, we're playin' footer, ain't we?" he said sulkily.

"Shut up, you little cad!" growled Conroy.

The footballers moved off the field to meet Erroll and Mornnington, and all the juniors gathered round them.

Mornny's face was very grave and calm.

Kit Erroll was smiling a little. He seemed to be in unusually good spirits.

"Hallo, old scout!" said Jimmy Silver.

"Back again?"

"Yaas; back again," said Mornnington.

"That you, Jimmy Silver?"

"Yes, here I am!" said Jimmy, his face a little shadowed.

The question was information enough as to the condition of Mornnington.

"What did the specialist say after all?" asked Raby.

"Oh, he talked no end of jaw-crackin' words!" said Mornnington.

"But did you have the operation?"

"Oh, yaas!"

"We hoped to see you come back all right, Mornny," said Jimmy Silver.

"Thanks, old scout! I was hopin' to be able to play in the last footer match of the season," said Mornnington. "Think you can lick the Moderns without me?"

"We'll try," said Jimmy, with a smile.

"It will take you all your time!" remarked Tommy Dodd, the great chief of the Modern juniors.

"Bow-wow!" said Mornnington. "I'd undertake to beat any Modern, even as I am!"

"Oh, don't be funny, old chap!"

"Who's bettin' on it?" asked Mornnington.

ton. "I'll beat the best man the Moderns can put into goal, an' chance it!"

"Ten to one!" chimed in Townsend of the Fourth, at once.

"Quids?" asked Mornny.

"Yes, if you like."

"Done, then! Put your man in goal, Tommy Dodd!"

"What utter rot!" exclaimed Tommy.

Jimmy Silver was frowning.

But for the fact that Mornnington was blind, Jimmy would have come down on him sharp enough for making bets on the football-ground.

But Mornny's affliction disarmed him.

Mornny was supposed to have given up gambling and his other shady ways; but he was speaking quite like the old Mornny now.

"Where's the ball?" continued Mornnington.

Lovell had kicked the ball along as he came, and it was lying almost at Mornnington's feet.

Newcome punted it closer to him, and Mornny felt for it with his foot.

That helpless, groping movement touched the hearts of the juniors, though it made still more absurd Mornny's offer to kick a goal against any defender Tommy Dodd chose to put between the posts.

"Put your man in, you Modern ass!" exclaimed Mornnington.

"I tell you it's rot!"

"Let him have his way," whispered Jimmy Silver.

"Oh, all right!" said Tommy resignedly.

"Get into goal, Cook!"

Tommy Cook went grinning into goal.

Mornny in his other days had been a hard man to stop, but Cook did not anticipate any difficulty in stopping him now.

Mornny pushed the ball into the field with his toe, and bumped into Lovell, jabbing him with his elbow.

"Here, look out!" exclaimed Arthur Edward.

"Hallo! Did I rub into somebody?"

"Yes, you did, you ass, and you've nearly punctured me with your blessed elbow!" grunted Lovell.

"You shouldn't get into a blind man's way," chuckled Mornnington.

"Oh, all serene!" said Lovell quite mildly.

"I say, is this a blessed game of blind man's buff?" demanded Algy Silver, with a sniff.

"Shut up, Algy!"

"Well, I call it dashed rot. Here, don't run into me!" howled Algy, as Mornny, rushing blindly after the ball, cannoned him.

Algy went over on his back with a crash.

"You silly ass!" he yelled.

"Keep out of Mornny's way, you young fool!" growled Lovell.

Mornnington felt for the ball again with his feet, and dribbled it away towards the goal where Cook was standing grinning.

Possibly, from old recollections of the football-ground, he took the right direction.

He did not lose the ball, as the watching juniors expected. When it went beyond his reach he recovered it again.

"By gad, he's keepin' the ball goin'!" said Townsend, in wonder.

All eyes were on the blind junior.

It was really wonderful how Mornnington contrived to keep the ball at his feet, and bear down steadily on goal.

The juniors watched him in amazement. Jimmy Silver was rather uneasy, fearing that the blind junior would run into a goal-post and hurt himself.

But Mornnington showed no sign of doing so.

"Well, that beats the band!" exclaimed Conroy, in wonder. "Blessed if Mornny couldn't almost play footer, at that rate."

"He won't get the goal!" grinned Townsend.

"Well, no; that's not possible."

"Here he goes!" shouted Lovell. "Oh, my hat! Goal!"

"Goal!"

"Great Scott!"

It was a yell of amazement on the football-field.

Mornny had dribbled the ball right down to goal, and kicked.

Tommy Cook, in goal, certainly wasn't much on his guard—he did not think there was anything to fear from a blind footballer.

But if he had been at his best, he would have had difficulty in stopping that shot.

Mornnington had seemed to be aiming right at him—but at the last moment he changed his foot, and kicked for the far corner of the net.

The ball lodged before Tommy Cook was aware it was coming there.

"Oh, my only hat!" gasped Cook.

"Bravo, Mornny!"

"Well kicked, sir!"

Jimmy Silver rubbed his eyes.

"Great Jerusalem!" he ejaculated.

"Blessed if I don't think I'd better play Mornny, after all! Why, that was a ripping shot!"

"Bravo!"

The juniors gathered round Mornnington, who was grinning.

Only Townsend of the Fourth looked very green.

He owned Mornnington ten "quids" for that shot.

### The 4th Chapter. His Old Self!

"Well done, Mornny!"

"Good man!"

Lovell thumped Mornny on the back.

"Good man! You've done the trick!"

Bravo!"

"Well, don't burst my backbone!" said Mornnington. "I told you I could do it. It was easy enough."

"Blessed if I see how you did it, all the same."

"Towny here?" smiled Mornnington.

"You owe me a tenner, Towny."

"Oh, gad!" said Towny.

"Mornny!" murmured Erroll.

"My dear Townsend!" said Mornnington, speaking in the celebrated solemn manner of Mr. Bootles, the Form-master.

"Let this be a warnin' to you! Do not indulge, my dear Townsend, in betting or gambling of any description; and, above all, avoid puttin' your money on dead certs."

"Oh, rats!"

"I trust, my dear Townsend, that this warnin' will not be lost on you."

"Oh, don't be an ass!" said Townsend.

"I'm goin' to pay up all right. You'll have to wait till next week for half of it, that's all!"

"Ha, ha! Fathead, I was only pullin' your leg!" chuckled Mornnington. "The bet's off!"

"It's not off!" snapped Towny. "I've lost, an' I'm goin' to pay!"

"You're not, ass!"

"I tell you I am!"

"Don't look so excited, dear boy."

Townsend jumped.

"Eh? How do you know how I'm lookin'?" he exclaimed.

Mornnington burst into a roar of laughter.

The juniors were staring at him blankly.

A suspicion of the truth dawned upon Jimmy Silver's mind, and his face lighted up.

"Mornny!" he exclaimed breathlessly.

"Guessin' it!" smiled Mornny. "By gad, you look astonished, the lot of you!"

"You—you—you can see how we look!" stammered Lovell. "How the merry thunder can you—"

"Because I can see just as well as you can!" grinned Mornnington. "I was only pulling your leg. I wanted to astonish the natives, that's all."

"You can see!" shouted Lovell.

"You bet!"

"You knew it, Erroll, you spoofer!" exclaimed Raby.

Kit Erroll laughed.

"Yes, of course. Mornny wanted to spring a surprise on you, so I played up," he said. "The operation was a success—a ripping success. Mornny's all right."

"Hurrah!"

"Oh, how jolly good!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver heartily. "Why, you spoofing bouncer, you could see Cook all the time while you were kicking that goal!"

"Ha, ha! Did you expect a blind chap to kick a goal?"

Townsend's face was a study.

"All serene, Towny!" chuckled Mornnington. "I was only pullin' your nutty leg. It's no bet!"

"Oh, all right!" gasped Townsend. "That's fair, of course."

"I trust, my dear Townsend, that this will be a lesson to you," said Mornnington, again in the manner of Mr. Bootles; and the juniors chortled.

Townsend chortled, too; he could chortle now.

His tenner was not gone, after all.

"Congratulations, old chap," said Jimmy Silver. "I've never had such good news in my life."

"Jolly good of you to say so," said Mornnington.

a new leaf," he remarked. "I did not think there was anything in it."  
 "Well, I'm done with him, anyway."  
 "What a stroke of luck for Algy!"  
 "Oh, cheese it! I'm not here to jaw about a silly fag!" growled Peele. "I'm layin' money against the Classics, and if you choose to put a quid or two on—"  
 Mornington roared.  
 "Well, what are you cacklin' at now?" demanded Peele savagely.  
 "Ha, ha, ha! Has your dear young pal got into the team to let the Moderns through?"  
 "I tell you, he's not my pal!"  
 "Then why are you layin' money against the Classics? Tommy Dodd's team isn't up to strength, and Classics are bound to win."  
 "I don't think so," said Peele. "I've got the money—don't you fear about that; I happen to be well-heeled just now. Smythe's holdin' the stakes. What do you say?"  
 "My dear man, I've given up bettin'," said Mornington, laughing. "But if I were still a bettin' chap I wouldn't back a team that had a friend of yours in the ranks. Not quite good enough."  
 "I tell you—"  
 "You can tell me what you like, till you're black in the face," said Mornington coolly. "But if you're layin' money against the Classics, it's because your pal in the team has agreed to play to lose the match."  
 "You cheeky rotter!"  
 "Oh, come off!" snapped Mornington. "I can tell you, Peele, you won't find it easy to book bets against the Classics on those lines. Why, every fellow in the Fourth will smell a rat as soon as you make the offer."  
 "I've booked bets already."  
 "Must be with a born lunatic, then," said Mornington drily. "Why, your game's as plain as daylight."  
 "I've booked bets with Tracy of the Shell."  
 "Gammon!"  
 "You can ask him."  
 Mornington stared at Peele.  
 Tracy of the Shell was a member of Adolphus Smythe's select circle, but he had much more brains than Adolphus.  
 He was, in fact, a much more shady fellow than Adolphus, and much keener.  
 Of all the Rookwood juniors he was the most like Lattrey, late of the Fourth.  
 If Tracy had booked such bets, it was a "facer" for Morny, for Tracy of the Shell certainly knew what he was about, if anybody did.  
 It was impossible that Morny's suspicion should not have occurred also to Tracy's keen mind.  
 "How much have you booked?" asked Morny at last.  
 "Five quids, even betting."  
 "And Tracy's laid his money on Classics?"  
 "Yes, Smythe's holding the stakes."  
 "Well, I always thought Tracy was more rogue than fool!" commented Mornington. "He seems to be more fool than rogue, after all. You can tell him that, with my kind regards. Ta-ta!"  
 "Then you're not bettin'?"  
 "Thanks, no. You shock me by the suggestion, dear boy."  
 "Oh, rats!" said Peele, crossly, and he quitted the study, and slammed the door after him.  
 Mornington looked very curiously at his chum.  
 "That's a queer bizney, Kit," he remarked.  
 "Very queer," said Erroll. "I'm glad you had nothing to do with his blackguardly rot."  
 "Oh, I've chucked it all up long ago, but if I was a bettin' chap I shouldn't be taken in quite so easily as that. It beats me how Tracy's been hoodwinked. I wonder—" Morny chuckled. "I wonder if Jimmy Silver knows why his precious cousin has squeezed into the team, after all?"  
 "He ought to know, if it's true," said Erroll, with an angry frown. "Of course, a chap can't say anything without proof."  
 "No fear."  
 But Jimmy Silver was not long in hearing talk on the subject, though no word came from Mornington's study.  
 The fact that Peele was trying to book bets against the Classical team in the morrow's match, was soon the talk of the Fourth.  
 Jimmy Silver was angry enough when he heard it.  
 The shady blackguardism of Peele & Co. was no business of his, certainly, but it irritated him.  
 And it brought into his mind the same suspicion that had occurred to Mornington.  
 In fact, that suspicion was pretty widely held in the Fourth.  
 Townsend and Topham, when Peele tackled them on the subject, winked at him by way of reply.  
 Gower laughed in his face.  
 Even Smythe of the Shell, who was not very bright, chortled when Peele offered him two to one against the Classics.  
 "Dear boy, regard my optic!" said Adolphus.  
 "Eh? What do you mean?" snapped Peele.  
 "Tell me if you see any green there!" smiled Adolphus.  
 And Peele had to give up Smythe of the Shell, and he found that there was nothing doing with Howard, or Selwyn, or any more of the nuts.  
 His five-quad bet with Tracy major was his only one, and how Tracy came to be ass enough to make it beat Tracy's friends.  
 Smythe, indeed, felt it his duty to pull the wool from Tracy's eyes.  
 "Look here, Tracy," said Adolphus kindly, "you're bein' spoofed. It's as plain as the nose on your face that Peele is as thick as ever with young Silver, and is only pretendin' to be off with him."  
 "Think so?" asked Tracy.  
 "Yaas, I do. They don't speak now, but that's only gammon. Peele's put him up to gettin' into the Classic

Eleven, to lose the match. Why, anybody could see it!" exclaimed Smythe warmly.  
 "Jimmy Silver doesn't."  
 "Oh, he's an ass; and, besides, Algy's his cousin! I'll bet you his pals see it! Do you think that young spoofer is goin' to play to win? You know him well. Of course, Peele has squared him to lose."  
 "Well, the bet's made now," said Tracy, shrugging his shoulders.  
 "Call it off, then. Why, you've been more pally with young Silver than any other chap in the Shell, and you ought to know him."  
 "Oh, rot!" said Tracy. "I'm goin' to hag Peele's banknote. He was keen to bet, an' I took him on. Let it go at that."  
 "Well, you're an ass!"  
 Tracy's other nutty pals remonstrated with him, but in vain; not that Peele would have consented to call the bet off.  
 But that was the only bet Peele was able to make, and he looked rather sour when he went to his study that evening to do his prep.  
 He found Algy Silver there.  
 "Well, how's things?" asked Algy.  
 Peele shut the door carefully before he answered.  
 "Rotten!" he said. "I—I rather think the thing's a bit too plain, after all. All the fellows seem to tumble, exceptin' Tracy."  
 "Tracy don't?" grinned Algy.  
 "No; an' that's lucky, or I shouldn't have booked any bets at all, an' all the trouble would have been for nothin'."  
 "Too bad," said Algy; and he departed from the study, whistling.  
 He almost ran into Jimmy Silver. Jimmy caught him by the collar.  
 "You've been to see Peele?" he exclaimed.  
 "Oh, yes!"  
 "You told me you were off with him."  
 "Yes; I dropped in to tell him so, too."

sake of filthy betting! But if you did—"  
 "Keep the fearful consequences till I do it, old scout," suggested Algy calmly.  
 "I tell you, I'm goin' to play the game of my life to-morrow, and show you Fourth-Form chaps how footer ought to be played."  
 "Well, I rely on you," said Jimmy, at last.  
 "That's right. Put your money on me, an' see me romp home," said Algy; and he strolled out of the study, grinning.  
 Jimmy sat down with a worried brow, affecting not to see the expressive looks his study-mates fixed on him.  
 "You're going to let him play, Jimmy?" asked Lovell, at last.  
 "He's in the team, isn't he?"  
 "You trust him?"  
 "Yes," said Jimmy, after quite a long pause, however.  
 "Then you're a thumping ass!" broke out Lovell. "Why, the whole Form knows he's pulling the wool over your eyes, and that Peele's put him up to it!"  
 "He wouldn't do such a thing."  
 "He would, and he means to. And if we lose the match through him, Jimmy, I can tell you there'll be trouble!"  
 "Wait till we've lost the match!" said Jimmy tartly.  
 "You ought to drop him, Jimmy," said Newcome quietly.  
 "How can I drop a fellow on bare suspicion?" exclaimed the captain of the Fourth irritably.  
 "It isn't suspicion!" said Raby. "It's certainty!"  
 "Oh, rot!"  
 With that the subject dropped, but tempers were not quite so good as usual in the end study that evening.  
 The view of the Co. was that Jimmy Silver was deliberately closing his eyes to what was perfectly plain to everybody else.  
 Jimmy's position was a difficult one. He simply would not, and could not, suspect his cousin of such treachery.

Erroll was silent.  
 He was slow to believe evil of anyone, but in the case of Algy it seemed really too palpable.  
 Peele's betting-book was indubitable evidence.  
 Jimmy Silver did not look so cheerful as was his habit on such occasions as he led his men into the field.  
 The feeling in his team worried him, as well as his own secret and unconfessed misgivings.  
 Jobson of the Fifth was referee.  
 He blew the whistle, and the game started.  
 "Now look out for Algy!" murmured Mornington.  
 Tommy Dodd & Co. started with a rush into the Classical ground.  
 Two of Tommy's best men—Doyle and Towle—were off the list, but otherwise the Moderns were in great form.  
 But so were the Classics, as they soon proved.  
 Algy Silver was in the front line, and very nearly all eyes round the field were fixed upon him.  
 Certainly at the start he showed up well enough.  
 He displayed great cleverness in eluding charges from heavier Moderns, and he was remarkably quick and nimble upon his feet.  
 His passing was really first-class, and when Dick Oswald scored the first goal it was from a very neat pass given him by Algy.  
 Jimmy, at centre-half, had his eyes on his cousin a good deal of the time, and he was greatly relieved by the way Algy played up.  
 Oswald's goal was the first in the match, and the Classics round the field cheered vociferously.  
 "Bravo!" shouted Tracy of the Shell. "Well kicked! And well passed, by gad!"  
 "Well passed, young 'un!"  
 Mornington, utterly puzzled, glanced at Peele.  
 The latter's face was a study.  
 It was easy to see that Cyril Peele had

But Algy did not accede. He did not even look towards Peele.  
 The whistle went again.  
 Algy was the centre of attention—a great honour for a fag playing in a match above his weight.  
 Many fellows expected him to begin fumbling tactics, suspecting that he had merely been keeping up appearances so far.  
 They looked for him to fall in the way of the Classic forwards, to pass the ball towards his own goal, or to foul in the penalty area—anything that would help the other side.  
 But nothing of the kind happened.  
 Algy was playing up remarkably.  
 Tommy Dodd & Co. got through at last, and scored, but it was impossible to attribute any blame to Algy for that.  
 The score remained level till close on the finish, the Classics pressing hard, and the Moderns struggling to defend their goal.  
 The ball went in from Pons, and Cook, in the Modern goal, fisted it out.  
 Like a flash, Algy Silver leaped forward, and headed the ball into the net, before Tommy Cook could realise the danger.  
 There was a howl round the field.  
 "Goal! Goal!"  
 "Fag's goal! My hat! Goal! Goal!"  
 "Bravo, Algy!"  
 Jimmy Silver almost hugged his cousin. Algy had taken the winning goal—after so much black suspicion!  
 For it was the winning goal—there were only three minutes to go, and they were drawn blank.  
 Lovell & Co. wore very curious expressions as they came off the field—victorious.  
 Lovell, after an inward effort, clapped the fag on the shoulder.  
 "Sorry, Algy!" he said.  
 "Don't mench," yawned Algy. "You can't help being an ass, old chap."  
 "By gad, I wish I'd taken Peele's bets now," said Adolphus Smythe, in great wonder. "You've won, Tracy."  
 "Looks like it," said Tracy, with a grin. "Here's Peele's fiver—it's yours."  
 Tracy of the Shell pocketed that fiver with great satisfaction.  
 He sauntered away, giving Peele a nod and a smile as he passed him.  
 Peele gave him a look in return that was almost homicidal.  
 "You rotter!" he panted.  
 Tracy looked surprised.  
 "What's the row?" he asked. "Haven't I won square?"  
 Cyril Peele trembled with rage.  
 "Do you think I can't see it?" he hissed. "That young villain was foolin' me—he'd fixed it up with you beforehand to bag my fiver, and you're goin' halves with him."  
 Tracy of the Shell raised his eyebrows.  
 "Mean to say that you fixed it with Algy to lose the match?" he smiled.  
 "You—you know I did!" Peele panted. "I wondered you never guessed, when the other fellows did an' an' you knew all along you were in the game with the young hound to take me in!"  
 "My dear chap, I shouldn't speak too loudly," said Tracy calmly. "If Jimmy Silver knew you'd made such an arrangement with his cousin, I fancy you'd get the hidin' of your life."  
 Peele choked with rage as the Shell fellow sauntered away.  
 It was true. He dared say nothing; his scheme was not one that would bear the light.  
 The swindler had been outwinded, that was all.  
 "Hard cheese!" It was Morny's voice, and Peele started, and stared at him blackly. "I fancy I can see the little game now—delightful youth, Algy! You're lucky that I didn't take your bet, old scout."  
 Peele drove his hands deep into his pockets, and tramped away without replying.  
 A little later, he saw Algy come out of Tracy's study, smiling.  
 Algy eyed him warily as he came savagely up.  
 "Got your half?" hissed Peele.  
 "What are you burblin' about?" smiled Algy. "Feel rather a lame duck? Serve you right for askin' a stainless youth like me to play false in a footer match. And next time we play nap, old chap, don't have a card up your sleeve, as you did last time—I always get my own back in the long run."  
 And Algy sauntered away, leaving Peele speechless.  
 It was fortunate for Algy that Jimmy Silver did not know the facts of the matter; very fortunate indeed that Peele dared not tell him.  
 Jimmy was in a very satisfied mood when he went into tea with his chums, and when Morny and Erroll came into the end study to join them, he greeted them with an exuberant smile.  
 "Rippin' game Algy played this afternoon!" he remarked.  
 Mornington grinned.  
 "Rippin'!" he agreed. "Your young cousin is an enterprisin' blade, Jimmy. I shouldn't have thought of him."  
 "He played a great game of footer, for a fag."  
 "Great!" smiled Mornington.  
 "I fancy that cad Peele was surprised," said Jimmy. "I really think he had some idea that Algy was going to play false—he looked ily black."  
 "What on earth could have put such an idea into his head?" said Mornington blandly.  
 "I wonder!" said Jimmy.  
 Mornington did not wonder; but he did not enlighten Jimmy Silver.  
 But Jimmy was destined to be enlightened, in more ways than one, on the subject of his Cousin Algy of the Third.



Algy Silver leaped forward and headed the ball into the net before Tommy Cook could realise the danger. There was a roar round the field. "Goal! Goal!"

"Come to my study!" growled Jimmy.  
 "Pleasure, old scout! Would you mind lettin' go my collar?"  
 And Algy sauntered cheerfully into the end study, followed by the frowning captain of the Fourth.

**The 6th Chapter.**

**Tricked!**

Lovell & Co. were at their prep.  
 They ceased work, to stare grimly at Algy.  
 The fag gave them an affable nod in return.  
 "Hallo! Improvin' the shinin' hour?" he inquired. "That reminds me that I'm wanted at prep soon. Buck up, Jimmy! What's the row?"  
 "There's a lot of talk in the Fourth about the match to-morrow," said Jimmy Silver, his eyes fixed sternly upon his cousin.  
 "Yes—is there?"  
 "Your old pal, Peele, has been trying to book bets against my team."  
 "More ass he, now that I'm in it," said Algy coolly. "I'm a winnin' player."  
 "Look here, Algy, I don't think you could possibly low cad enough to serve your team a dirty trick," said Jimmy. "But some of the fellows think you've got me to put you into the team so as to play into the enemy's hands and lose the match."  
 "What duffers!"  
 "Even fellows who are keen on betting on anything won't take Peele's bets," said Jimmy. "He's only got one fellow to take him on, so far as I've heard. It looks jolly suspicious."  
 "Go on!"  
 "I suppose there's nothing in it?"  
 "Nothin' at all."  
 "You mean to play to win?"  
 "Naturally!"  
 "Well, that's all," said Jimmy Silver. "I can't think you'd be such a mean cad as to throw away a match for the

not been expecting good play on the part of his "disciple."  
 Tommy Dodd & Co. fought hard to equalise, but at the end of the first half the score remained unchanged—one up for the Classics.  
 Jimmy Silver clapped his cousin on the shoulder when the whistle went for half-time.  
 "Good for you, young 'un!" he said, pleased and relieved.  
 Jimmy's faint suspicion was quite dispersed now.  
 He was ashamed, in fact, that he had ever allowed it to creep into his mind.  
 Algy grinned at him.  
 "Well, didn't I tell you I was goin' to play the game of my life?" he asked.  
 "Have I helped the Moderns through, as Lovell expected?"  
 "Ahem!" murmured Lovell.  
 "Have I got into the way of your merry forwards, an' bumped into the halves, an' made things easy for the Moderns?" grinned Algy. "Bless your little hearts, all of you, I knew what you were expectin'! Jimmy, old scout, do you think I ought to apologise for disappointin' your team?"  
 "You young ass!" said Jimmy, laughing.  
 "I don't understand it!" growled Lovell.  
 "Lots of things you don't understand," remarked Algy. "It's your brain, you know. Sorry you can't get a new one."  
 Lovell controlled his feelings with difficulty.  
 But, really, he had to admit that Algy was playing "up to sample," so to speak. Algy was evidently enjoying the surprise he had caused.  
 "Peele's beckonin' to you, Algy," said Conroy.  
 "Let him beckon!" answered Algy.  
 Cyril Peele had come down close to the ropes, and was making signs to Algy.  
 He evidently wanted to speak to him in the interval.

But even if he did suspect him he could not find Algy guilty on suspicion.  
 If the match was lost through obvious bad play on Algy's part the matter would be different.  
 Certainly then it would be too late to mend matters.  
 That consideration was what Lovell & Co. chiefly thought of, and Jimmy's obstinacy, as they regarded it, made them angry.  
 Other fellows in the Classical team did not fail to express their opinion, too; but Jimmy Silver was deaf to all remarks on the subject.  
 The next day Jimmy Silver was in a thoughtful and uncomfortable mood.  
 Some of the fellows said nothing, from a regard for his feelings, for the young rascal of the Third was his cousin.  
 Some were painfully candid.  
 But Jimmy Silver went on his own way, and Algy's name remained in the footer list.  
 Early in the afternoon that Wednesday the footballers gathered on Little Side, and Algy Silver was there in the Classical colours.  
 All the Classical players gave him grim looks, excepting his Cousin Jimmy.  
 Algy did not seem to mind.  
 He sauntered on the field with the air of a fellow who owned the ground.  
 He nearly exasperated Lovell into assault and battery by the cool nod he gave him.  
 There had been so much talk about the match that there was an unusually large attendance round the ropes.  
 Mornington and Erroll were early on the ground to watch the game.  
 Mornington smiled sarcastically as he saw Algy among the Classical footballers.  
 "There's the dear boy, Erroll!" he remarked. "Merry and bright, as usual."  
 "Jimmy seems to trust him," said Erroll.  
 "Entre nous, dear boy. Jimmy was always a bit of a duffer."

THE END.

**NEXT MONDAY.**

**"PUT TO THE PROOF!"**

By OWEN CONQUEST.

**DON'T MISS IT!**

# THE PARTING OF THE WAYS!

A Magnificent Long Complete Story, dealing with the Schooldays of Frank Richards, the Famous Author of the Tales of Harry Wharton & Co. By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

## The 1st Chapter.

### Beaulerc's Choice.

"How's your popper, Cherub?" asked Bob Lawless cheerily, as Vere Beaulerc came out into the ranch-house porch.

Beaulerc's face was very grave. "Nothing wrong, Beau?" asked Frank Richards quickly.

"No. The doctor thinks father had better keep in his room for a few days, but it is not serious," said Beaulerc.

"Good!" "Then what are you looking so jolly serious about?" asked Bob.

Beaulerc smiled faintly. "My father told me something. Will you fellows come up and see him before we start for school? There's time."

"Certainly!" said Frank. The chums followed Beaulerc into the house and up the stairs to the room occupied by Vere's father.

Lascelles Beaulerc, the remittance-man of Cedar Camp, was in bed, propped up on pillows.

He was looking pale and wan. It was a couple of days since the flood in Thompson Valley, and the rescue of the remittance-man from the shack by the creek.

Frank Richards & Co. were feeling no ill results from their exertions that wild night.

But the experience had told upon Mr. Beaulerc.

The remittance-man was not in a condition to endure exposure and hardship like the healthy schoolboys.

Long devotion to the potent fire-water had sapped away his vitality.

At the first serious strain upon his constitution the unhappy wastrel had to pay for a long course of foolish recklessness.

There was a new expression upon the remittance-man's worn face, which was still handsome, in spite of the haggard lines upon it.

He looked more like his son now than ever before.

It was easy enough to see that the unfortunate man was in a mood of remorse and repentance.

On that wild night at the flooded shack, when his son had stood by him with quiet courage in the very shadow of death, Lascelles Beaulerc had seen things in a truer light, and the mood had not yet passed.

He smiled faintly at the schoolboys as they came in.

"I hope you feel better this morning, sir!" said Frank Richards as they stood by the bedside.

"I shall be well enough soon," said Mr. Beaulerc. "I fear I am giving your father a great deal of trouble, Lawless."

"I guess not, sir!" said Bob cheerily. "The popper was glad we brought you here, and you're more than welcome."

"I have been speaking to my son," said the remittance-man. "I want to ask you, as his friends, to speak to him also—to point out to him what he must do."

Vere Beaulerc smiled slightly and shook his head, while his chums looked at him in surprise.

"Hallo! What's the Cherub been up to?" exclaimed Bob.

"He will not see what is best for him," said Mr. Beaulerc. "I hope that you will be able to influence him. My son has the offer of a home in England."

"I do not want it!" said Vere Beaulerc. "Oh, by gum!" exclaimed Bob in some dismay. "We shall be sorry to lose you, Cherub."

Frank Richards' face was very grave. Frank knew that Vere had wealthy and titled relations in the Old Country, from whom came the remittance upon which father and son lived at Cedar Camp.

He had wondered, sometimes, why they did nothing for Vere, even if his father was too confirmed a waster to have any claim upon them.

"You won't lose me, Bob, if that matters very much," said Vere, with a smile. "I am not going to leave Canada."

"But if your popper goes home—" said Bob.

"My father is not going."

"Oh!" "Let me explain," said the remittance-man quietly. "My brother, a very wealthy man, has offered to take charge of Vere, to give him a home in England, and an education suited to his proper station."

"Father!" murmured Vere. Bob grinned faintly.

The remittance-man had never lost the ideas he had imbibed in the Old Country in wealthy and idle surroundings.

Even in the Canadian West, where all men worked, and men who did not work were despised, Lascelles Beaulerc had never been able to set his hand to labour.

He still dreamed dreams of the past—a past of wealth, idleness, dependance upon others, the life above all that he prized and longed for.

But in healthier surroundings his son had learned a truer view of life.

Social distinctions counted for little or nothing in the great new land of the West.

There, the man to be distinguished was not the man with a "handle" to his name, but the man who could make two ears of wheat grow where one grew before.

To Lascelles Beaulerc life in the West, was a grim exile of hardship, but his son looked upon it with a very different eye.

To him Canada was not a place of exile, but a beloved home.

The remittance-man coloured a little as he caught the involuntary grin on Bob Lawless' face.

He went on rather hastily: "Vere would have great prospects in England. He would have a future. But the foolish boy refuses to go. He does not understand. He chooses to remain buried in this wilderness. You must speak to him."

"I shall not part from you, father!" said Vere quietly. "And my friends wouldn't advise me to go. They don't think as you do, father."

The remittance-man eyed the two chums.

"What do you say, Lawless?" he asked.

"Well, I'm a Canadian, born and bred in the West," said Bob. "I think the Cherub would be an ass to go back to the Old Country, and live like a loafer, when he has a chance of learning to be a farmer out here."

"A—a—a what?" ejaculated Mr. Beaulerc.

Bob coloured.

"Excuse me, I shouldn't have put it like that," he said. "But—of course, you wouldn't look at it as we do."

"Vere is the nephew of an English earl," said Mr. Beaulerc, with a touch of pride. "In England he will have a wealthy home, he will go to a public school, and after that to the University."

"Well, I suppose there's a lot in that," admitted Bob. "It's a jolly good offer, Cherub. You won't have to work, anyway."

"Rot!" said Vere Beaulerc briefly.

"What do you say, Richards?" asked Mr. Beaulerc. "You have only lately come from England, and you were at a public school before you left, I understand. You do not agree with Lawless."

Frank hesitated.

"You, too, have learned Canadian ideas, then?" asked the remittance-man, with a forced smile.

"Well, yes," said Frank candidly. "I think a man ought to lead a useful life. I shall go back to England some day, I suppose; but it will be to work. I don't think a man ought to spend his life hunting and shooting and lounging about the West End of London. If that's the new life for Vere, I think he'd do jolly well to stick to Canada."

"I made a mistake in calling you to my assistance," said Mr. Beaulerc, smiling again. "I think that Vere ought to accept his uncle's offer, but I shall leave him to make his free choice."

"I have chosen already," said Vere.

Mr. Beaulerc nodded, and his head sank back upon the pillow.

The three schoolboys left him.

They came down to the porch and looked out on the sunny plain, with the great summits of the Rocky Mountains in sight on the far horizon.

"So you're going to stick to this, Cherub?" said Bob. "You don't want to change the plains and the Rockies for smoky old London?"

Beaulerc laughed.

"Not at all," he said. Then his face became grave. "Besides, I couldn't go. It's impossible! My father doesn't want me to go, but he thinks it his duty to urge me to accept what he thinks is a great chance for me. But I could not leave him."

"I suppose you couldn't," assented Bob.

"My uncle is kind enough to offer me a home," said Beaulerc, with a flash in his eyes. "I can read between the lines of his letter. He thinks it would be good for me to be away from my father."

His chums were silent.

They could not help thinking that, in

that respect at least, the English uncle was not far wrong, though the remittance-man's son could not be expected to see it in that light.

"The offer is an insult!" said Beaulerc, in a low voice. "My father feels it, too, though he does not say so. He is willing to put himself in the background, and be left alone here. As if I would leave him! If my uncle had been kinder he might never have—" Beaulerc broke off abruptly.

"Still, my uncle means to be kind to me, and I am grateful. But I shall not leave my father—and I do not want to. I should like the public school and the University, of course. But afterwards?"

"Well, afterwards?" asked Frank.

"There's plenty of work to be done in England, if you come to that."

Beaulerc smiled.

"Not by the nephew of a rich nobleman," he said. "I should be found some fat and comfortable job, with a strict regard for my family connections. That



The big horse, lashed and spurred cruelly by its rider, was giving trouble. It began to rear and plunge, and very nearly crashed into the pony ridden by Euchre Dick.

is, I should eat the bread of idleness, with a pretence of being occupied. If I had been brought up to it, it would be different. But when I am older I want to do something useful, to make it worth while to have lived at all. I don't intend to depend on other men for my daily bread. That's what I've learned in Canada."

"And a jolly useful lesson, too!" said Bob, with a laugh. "So you're sticking to Cedar Creek and us, Cherub?"

"You bet!" said Beaulerc tersely.

And the chums went out for their horses.

## The 2nd Chapter.

### The Horse Thieves.

Billy Cook, the ranch foreman, came trotting up the trail as Frank Richards & Co. started from the ranch.

Bob Lawless hailed him: "Billy!"

"Hallo!" replied the ranchman, reining in his horse.

"Heard anything of the gee-gees yet?" Billy Cook shook his head.

"I've been down to the camp," he said. "The floods are down, sonny, but nobody's seen hide nor hair of the hosses. I guess there's hoss-thieves at work."

"They may have been drowned," said Frank Richards.

"I guess not, or the kerkisses would have turned up afore this, I reckon

those geees are stacked away somewhere by a hoss-thief," said Billy Cook, with a shake of the head. "There's other critters been missed at the camp during the floods, too; and some from the farms. I reckon they'll have to be looked for, and somebody will bag trouble over this."

The chums rode on.

Frank Richards' pony and Vere Beaulerc's horse had been lost in the flood, and the chums were very anxious about them.

They were anxious to recover their steeds, and the thought that some horse-thief had corralled them made them angry.

"I reckon we'll take a hand in looking for the critters," Bob Lawless remarked. "If the thieves get them away over the line we shall never see them again."

"But who could have bagged them?" asked Frank.

"Some of the rustlers, I reckon—Dave Dunn, or Euchre Dick, or some of that gang," said Bob. "It was their chance while the floods were on. They'll try to get them out of the section and sell them over the line. They've got to be stopped."

"What price taking a holiday from school and hunting for them?" asked Beaulerc.

Bob whistled.

"Miss Meadows would have something to say about that," he remarked.

"Well, we can ask her. We needn't mention the horse-thieves. After all, they may not have been stolen. No need to make her think we're looking for danger."

"We'll try," said Bob.

"Hallo! Talk of angels!" said Frank Richards suddenly.

Two riders came in sight on the trail through the timber, riding towards them.

The chums recognised Euchre Dick and Dave Dunn, two of the roughest characters in the section.

They were two fellows who were hardly ever known to work, and had their own methods of providing for their daily wants.

Needless to say, they were not looked upon with favour in the Thompson Valley.

The chums glanced at the horses they were riding.

Dave Dunn was astride of a splendid animal, and his companion rode a handsome pony.

But the animals bore no resemblance to the lost steeds.

Beaulerc shook his head. "Look here, I'll stand you a dollar's worth of maple-sugar if you can tell us anything about the horses," said Frank.

"Done!" said Chunky Todgers at once, his podgy face brightening up. "I guess I'll keep you to that, Richards. Well, when I was in Gunten's store at Thompson last evening Euchre Dick came in to buy paint."

"Paint?" said Frank.

"You bet!"

"What the merry thunder has that got to do with our gee-gees?" demanded Frank.

"Hold on!" said Bob excitedly. "What kind of paint, Chunky?"

"White."

"Oh, Jerusalem! And we let them pass us!" shouted Bob, thumping himself on the chest. "Fatheads! Jays!"

"What the dickens—" exclaimed Frank.

Bob rushed away towards the school-house porch, where Miss Meadows was to be seen talking to Mr. Slimmy.

"Miss Meadows!" he exclaimed breathlessly.

"Well, Lawless?"

"Excuse me, Miss Meadows! Sorry to interrupt! Can we clear off from lessons this morning?" gasped Bob.

Miss Meadows elevated her eyebrows.

"Really, Lawless—"

"It's very important, ma'am!"

"You must explain the importance, Lawless, before I can give you leave from school."

"Our hosses, ma'am," said Bob—"Frank's pony and the Cherub's critter. They were lost in the flood the other night—"

"Have you not found them yet?"

"No, ma'am. But we've just got on the track of them, and we can get them back if we get after them at once."

"Oh," said Miss Meadows, "in that case you have leave from lessons this morning, Lawless!"

"Thank you, ma'am!"

Bob rushed away to rejoin his astonished chums.

"Come on!" he shouted.

"But—but what—"

"Get your geees out again, you duffers!"

Bob ran into the corral, his chums at his heels. They led out the three horses as the Cedar Creek fellows were going into the school-room.

"Look here, Bob, what's up?" exclaimed Frank. "Where are we going?"

"After the hosses!"

"But you don't know where they are!" exclaimed Beaulerc.

"I guess I do! Come on!"

Bob threw himself into the saddle, and started.

His chums rode after him, and they galloped down the trail together.

"You thumping ass, Bob!" shouted Frank. "What bee have you got in your bonnet now? I tell you you don't know where the horses are."

"Fathead!" answered Bob. "We passed them on the trail coming to school."

"Passed them!" yelled Frank.

"Yep."

"I didn't see them, then."

"Yes, you did, and so did I, only I didn't know, till Chunky told us," said Bob. "I feel like kicking myself. But there's time yet."

"What on earth are you driving at, Bob? We passed no geegees, excepting those that Euchre Dick and Dunn were riding on."

"That's it! A horse and a pony," said Bob breathlessly. "You and Beau lost a horse and a pony, didn't you?"

"Yes; but my pony was brown!"

"And my horse was black!" said Beaulerc.

Bob snorted.

"Didn't you hear what Chunky said? Last night Euchre Dick was buying white paint at Gunten's store."

Chunky Todgers came to meet them. "Got your critters back?" he asked.

"No," said Frank. "We hope to."

"I guess I can give you a tip."

"Eh? What do you know about it?"

exclaimed Bob. "You haven't seen them, I suppose?"

"Nope. But I've seen Euchre Dick at Thompson."

"He hadn't my horse under his arm, I suppose?" asked Frank Richards.

Chunky grinned.

"It was last evening, in Gunten's store," he explained. "I went in to get some maple-sugar— By the way, got any about you, Franky?"

"No," said Frank, laughing.

"Have you, Bob?"

"No!" roared Bob. "What do you know about the gee-gees, you fat duffer? Let the maple-sugar rest."

"Have you got any, Cherub?" inquired the fat schoolboy, unheeding.

THE PARTING OF THE WAYS!



(Continued from the previous page.)

"What's that got to do with it?" "Oh, you're a tenderfoot!" said Bob. "You don't know horse-thieves and their little ways. The Cherub's horse, for instance, would be known anywhere in the valley—the thieves couldn't run it over the line without being spotted. But if it was painted white—" "Oh!" gasped Frank. He understood at last. "Don't you see?" grinned Bob. "It's a regular dodge of horse-thieves—when they corral a horse, the first thing they do is to change its appearance. I ought to have thought of that when we passed those rustlers." "By Jove!" exclaimed Beauclerc. "They were riding white horses. You think—" "I don't think—I know!" rapped out Bob. "What would Euchre Dick be buying white paint for? Do you think he ever paints out his shanty at Thompson? It was to disguise the horses, of course—and only this morning we passed him on a white horse. It's clear enough." "It does look like it," admitted Frank. "Put it on!" said Bob. "We'll have them yet!" And the three chums urged on their horses, and rode down the timber trail like the wind.

The 3rd Chapter. "Corralled!"

"Billy Cook!" roared Bob suddenly. The riders had left the timber behind them, and were out on the plains. In the distance they spotted Billy Cook, ambling along at a leisurely pace. The ranch foreman looked round in surprise as the schoolboys dashed up. "Hallo! What are you doing out of school, you young galoots?" was his greeting. "Have you seen Dave Dunn and Euchre Dick on white horses?" exclaimed Bob breathlessly. "Nix." "Then they haven't passed this way. They've got Demon and Frank's pony, painted white," gasped Bob. "They're heading south, I know that, to get out of the section with them." The ranchman whistled. "Sure of that, Bob?" "Yes, yes." "Then I guess we'll look for them. Where did you see them?" "Coming south through the timber!" "Come this way—your popper's down by the creek." The chums joined Mr. Lawless, and the matter was explained to the rancher. The Canadian rancher's brows set grimly. "Not much doubt about it," he remarked. "They've got the critters right enough. I guess they turned off east to keep off my land, when they left the timber behind. We ought to pick up their trail at Moose Creek. Have you youngsters got leave from school?" "Yes, dad." "Then you can come along." The rancher spurred on his horse, and the others followed. The wind whistled past their ears as they galloped across the rolling plain. Mr. Lawless had guessed well. As Moose Creek glistened in the sun in the distance, two white patches were sighted beside the shining waters. Bob gave a shout as he spotted them. "There they are, dad!" "I guess so," said the rancher. "Have you got your gun, Billy?" "Have I got my head?" was Billy Cook's reply, an answer apparently conveying an emphatic affirmative. "Keep it handy—you will want it." "You bet!" Billy Cook gave his belt a hitch, and the butt of his "gun"—a big Colt's revolver—came into view. The beat of the horses' hoofs on the plain was a ceaseless tattoo. The white horses in the distance became clearer and clearer. The two rustlers were riding along the creek in a southerly direction. As matters stood, they were likely to be headed off. But Euchre Dick and his pard were accustomed to "keeping their eyes peeled"; they needed to, in their peculiar way of life. The white horses halted by the creek, and the two rustlers stared across the plain at the approaching horsemen. Had they been riding their own steeds, there was no reason why they should have been alarmed. But that the horses they were riding were stolen was evident from the fact that they took the alarm at once. The sight of the rancher and his companions galloping towards them at top speed warned them that they were suspected, and that was enough for the horse-thieves.

They turned from the trail they were following, and plunged into the swollen creek at its side. "That settles it," said Mr. Lawless quietly. "But they will not get away." The two rustlers swam their horses across, and clambered up the opposite bank. But time had been lost, and the pursuers were very near now. Without hesitation, the pursuers plunged in, and went splashing across the creek. The chase was taken up on the other side. Euchre Dick and Dave Dunn were riding hard now. It was not only the loss of their plunder they had to fear, but the punishment for stealing horses—a very serious offence in the West. The white steeds—not quite so white since their plunge in the creek—were lashed savagely, and spurred without mercy. "I guess that'll be trouble with that boss if it's Demon," Billy Cook jerked out. The ranch foreman was right. The big horse, lashed and spurred cruelly by its rider, was already giving trouble. Demon had a savage temper, though he never showed it to his master, Vere Beauclerc. But the cruel punishment at the hands of the horse-thief roused the demon in the horse. He began to rear and plunge, and very nearly crashed into the pony ridden by Euchre Dick. The latter dragged his steed out of the way with an angry shout. "Keep your boss in hand, Dave, you fool!" he yelled. Dave Dunn did not reply. He was trying to keep Demon in hand, but it was not an easy task. The more savagely he lashed with his whip the more furiously the horse snorted, and foamed, and reared, and plunged. Instead of galloping on, Demon was giving an exhibition of buck-jumping. Euchre Dick, forging ahead, glanced back at his confederate. "Get on, or you're a gone coon!" he yelled back. "I can't get on!" yelled Dunn desperately. "The boss's got the devil in him. Stop for me." "I reckon not." "Stop, you hound!" roared Dunn, dragging out a revolver. "By gosh, if you leave me in the lurch, I'll wing you, and chance it!" Euchre Dick was already out of range of his voice, but he heard a sharp report as his comrade fired over his head. He glanced back fiercely. Dave Dunn brandished the revolver. "Stand by your pard, you coyote!" he roared. It was so evidently his intention to shoot in earnest if he was abandoned that Euchre Dick, with a curse, wheeled his pony and rode back. The big horse was still prancing savagely. "Stand by me, and see it through!" snarled Dunn. "Get out your gun, you pesky coyote! We're not taken yet." The pursuers were very close now. The big horse calmed down as Dave Dunn ceased to use whip and spur, but further flight was impossible. Billy Cook's big Colt was glistening in the sunlight, and the horse-thieves were within easy range. They faced the pursuers savagely as the rancher and his party rode up. "What do you want with us, hang you?" exclaimed Dunn fiercely. "I guess we want those horses," answered Mr. Lawless. "You'll get down, sharp." "They're our horses." "Do you generally paint your hosses to improve their complexions?" grinned Billy Cook. "I guess—" "Demon!" called out Vere Beauclerc softly. Dunn's steed whinnied, and trotted towards Beauclerc, heedless of the savage drag on the rein. "Get down!" rapped out the rancher. "I guess I'm keeping this horse," said Dunn, grasping the revolver savagely. "The galoot that tries to take it will get hurt." "Put up that shooter, Dave Dunn," said the rancher quietly. "This isn't Arizona or New Mexico, you rascal! Put it up, I tell you!" He rode straight at the rustler, grasping his riding-whip. The ruffian's six-shooter came up to a level. "Keep back," he said hoarsely—"keep back, or—" Crack! There was a yell of anguish from Dave Dunn as the shot rang out from Billy Cook's "gun." The revolver went spinning from his grasp, and the ruffian sucked his hand wildly. It was red now. "I reckoned I could do it," said Billy Cook complacently. "I guess you'll have

a sore finger, Dunn. It's your own funeral." Dunn mumbled furiously over his injured hand. The rancher grasped him by the shoulder, spun him out of the saddle, and sent him crashing to the ground. "Take your horse, Beauclerc," he said, unmoved. Euchre Dick had his hands up. He was not there for a shooting-match. "I guess I pass, pard!" he exclaimed, in a great hurry. "Don't shoot! I reckon I'm no hog, and I know when I've had enough." "That's your pony, Frank." "Yes, uncle. I know him now," said Frank Richards. "Take him!" Euchre Dick slid hurriedly from the saddle, and Frank recaptured his pony. The rancher fixed a stern glance upon the horse-thieves. "You ought to be taken to Kamloops Gaol!" he snapped. "Let up, old man," pleaded Euchre Dick. "You've raked in the jackpot. Go easy on a galoot!" Mr. Lawless reflected for a moment. "I don't want to be bothered with you," he said. "Billy, give them a dozen each with your trail-ropes, and let them go." "I'm your antelope," answered Billy Cook promptly. "Look here—" yelled Euchre Dick. "That or Kamloops Gaol!" said the rancher grimly. The horse-thieves looked at one another. Kamloops Gaol was not an attractive residence. They decided upon the trail-ropes. Billy Cook handled the coiled trail-ropes as if he were beating carpet. The loud cracks rang across the prairie, and louder still rang the yells of the unhappy horse-thieves. They were left yelling. Mr. Lawless and his companions rode away, taking the recaptured horses with

who was devoted to his father, perhaps all the more on account of the unfortunate man's faults and weaknesses. Yet even Beauclerc could hardly blame the old nobleman in the Old Country, though in his heart he resented the slight to his father. Unless Mr. Beauclerc changed his ways very considerably his relations in England could not be expected to desire his presence there. In fact, his remittance was sent to him, as much to keep him away, as to support him. And those noble relations were doubtless quite ignorant of the Canadian view of their coolness in planting an undesirable scion of the family upon a Colony. Remittance-men were not wanted in the hard-working West. His uncle's offer evoked more resentment than gratitude in Beauclerc's breast on account of his father, to whose faults he was indulgent, if not quite blind. But the lesson the remittance-man had received had not been lost on him. He had lain in the shadow of death, on that terrible night when his son's arm had held him back from the seething flood, and he had not forgotten. There was a change in Lascelles Beauclerc. It was not likely that it would last, but as yet it was there. When Vere came home from school he would find his father cultivating the clearing, with a patient devotion to hard work that was surprising enough in the lounge of the Cedar Camp bars. Beauclerc rejoiced in the change; he only hoped that it would be permanent. "I have had another letter from England, Vere," said Mr. Beauclerc, one day after Vere had returned from school. "Yes, father." "My brother has repeated his offer." Vere Beauclerc was silent. "He must have his answer," continued the remittance-man. "It must be 'Yes' or 'No,' and it will be final." "No, then," said Vere firmly. "You must think, my boy," said the remittance-man gently. "If the answer is 'No,' it does not merely close the matter for the present—it closes it for ever." "All the better, father." "Your uncle will, I fear, be offended—he means kindly." "He has no right to be offended," said Vere. "Why should I leave my home and my own father, to go among strangers?" "This is no home for you, Vere," said the remittance-man, with a sigh. "Your uncle points that out, and quite truly. My boy, you have learned strange ideas in this country, but you must remember that you come of a noble family, that it is possible that some day you may bear an old and honoured title, and that you were not born to be a hewer of wood and a drawer of water. You must think of your family, and the claim of your name, Vere." The boy was silent. "Your uncle's offer is generous. You will have every chance that I had, and you will make better use of your chances. Cedar Creek School, my boy, is not the place for you—you may go to Eton or Harrow if you choose. After that, to my old college, to do better there than I did. Money will not be wanting. Here, my dear boy, what is your prospect? To become, perhaps, a farmer, a rancher, or a miner, and spend your life in a remote province, far from the heart of things, from the people you ought to know. You will make friends—" "I could not make better friends than I have already." "Perhaps so, in a way. But there are other considerations. Vere, I have thought the matter out. It will almost break my heart to lose you—but—" The schoolboy started. "Father! You don't want me to go?" "I do not want you to go, Vere, but it is my duty to see that you do," answered his father. "I have wasted my life, but I cannot let you waste yours." "It's not waste," said Vere. "Why should I not become a rancher like Mr. Lawless? It is a splendid life!" "For him, perhaps, but not for you, Vere. You are not a rancher's son—you are the son of the Honourable Lascelles Beauclerc." Vere Beauclerc was silent. He could not tell his father what was in his heart, that infantile distinctions did not appeal to him in the least. Between the views of father and son there was a great gulf fixed. The remittance-man broke the silence at last. "You see that you must go, Vere." "I do not want to go!" broke out the boy passionately. "I've made my choice, and I have not altered my mind. You can't want me to go!" "You know I do not. But it is for your good. I am older and wiser than you are, my dear boy; wiser for you, if not for myself. I will not command you, Vere, but I ask you to accept your uncle's offer." "I—I can't!" "You must!" Vere Beauclerc rose to his feet. His father's face was troubled, but there was an inflexible determination in it. He had made up his mind, and Vere Beauclerc's heart sank as he realised it. The remittance-man, in his new mood, was determined to do his duty, to atone, as much as he could, for the harm his way of life had done to his son. There was a long silence. "You will do as I wish, Vere!" said Beauclerc at last. "I have already written to your uncle." "Father!" "When the post-waggon passes tomorrow, I shall post the letter. The die is cast, my boy. You must go. When you have entered upon your new life, you will thank me for this, and you will

wonder that you could ever have dreamed of refusing such a chance." Vere did not speak. Nothing more was said, but the matter was evidently taken as settled by the remittance-man. With a troubled face, and a heavy heart, Vere set about getting the simple evening meal in the shack. The next morning, he saw his father hand the letter to the driver of the post-waggon, and his heart beat painfully. He watched the waggon drive on, and disappear over a rise in the prairie, with heavy eyes. The die was cast now. "You feel this now, my dear boy," said Mr. Beauclerc gently. "The time will come—and come soon—when you will be glad of it. You must depend on your father's judgment in this, my boy." "I will do as you wish, father," said Vere heavily. "That is right." Vere Beauclerc's face was clouded, as he mounted his horse, and rode away on the trail that morning. He was later than usual, and Frank Richards and Bob Lawless were already at the fork, waiting for him. "Hallo, slacker!" called out Bob, in his cheery, ringing tones. "Here you are, at last!" Frank Richards looked quickly at his chum. "What's the matter, Beau?" he asked. "Hallo! Something the matter—eh?" asked Bob. "By gum, you look like a Digger Injun whose lost his fire-water, Cherub. What's the merry old trouble?" The same thought had come into the minds of the chums at once—that the remittance-man had "broken out" again, and had been painting the town red. Perhaps Beauclerc guessed their thoughts, for his handsome face flushed. "Let's get on," he said. They rode in silence towards Cedar Creek School. It was Beauclerc who broke the silence at last, as the lumber school came in sight in the distance. "Would you fellows miss me much?" Frank started. "You're going then, Beau?" "Yes." "Oh, Jerusalem!" ejaculated Bob Lawless. Vere Beauclerc's face was darkly clouded. "My father thinks it is best for me," he said, in a low voice. "I don't think with him, but I can't refuse what he wishes. I don't want to leave Canada—I don't want to leave Cedar Creek—I don't want to leave you chaps. But—but—" "If your father really wishes it, you must go, old chap," said Frank Richards quietly. "I guess that's so," said Bob dismally. "By gum, we shall miss you, Cherub." Beauclerc's lip trembled. "My father will miss me, I know that," he muttered. "He thinks it's the best for me, and he's written to my uncle accepting his offer. It's settled now, I—I must go!" "Perhaps it is best," said Frank, with a dismal attempt to console. "After all, your pater's a man of the world, and he knows what's best, I dare say. And you'll have a good time in England." "I don't care about that." No more was said, and the chums arrived at school. In his earlier days at Cedar Creek, Beauclerc had seemed to some of the fellows to be lofty and scornful, and perhaps he had erred a little in such ways. But now that he was to leave the lumber school, he realised how dear the place had grown to him. The lumber schoolhouse, the long tarred fence, the rough and homely surroundings—the shining creek, and the long stretches of timber—all were dear to him now, and he realised, with a pang, how bitter it would be to say farewell to all that he had known there. But his face expressed little of his feelings. He was only a little more serious than usual, when he rode on the homeward trail with his chums after school. After they had parted with him, Frank and Bob rode on to the ranch, in a very subdued mood. "It's rotter to lose the old Cherub," said Bob, at last. "Rotter!" said Frank. And that was all. Vere Beauclerc rode up to the shack, and his father met him at the door, with a somewhat anxious expression. The boy forced a smile to his face. "I've been busy to-day, Vere," said the remittance-man. "Yes, father." "I've made all the arrangements. Your place is taken in the waggon from Thompson on Wednesday. You will go in the waggon to Kamloops, and get on the railway there. I shall come with you as far as the railroad. In a short time now, Vere, you will be in the Old Country. You will be happy there." "Yes, father," said the boy dully. Beauclerc went slowly into the shack. Soon—in a time to be counted by days—he would change that lonely shack for a wealthy mansion; his homely surroundings for wealth and ease. But there was no happy anticipation in his heart—his thoughts were all for his Western home, for his father, and the loyal chums he was to leave behind him.

BUY WAR SAVINGS CERTIFICATES—

15/6 is the price of one certificate—  
20/- is the amount your certificate will be worth in five years—  
4/6 is the profit you will make on one certificate.

—AND MAKE MONEY!

them, and Euchre Dick and his pard, after groaning in chorus for a quite considerable time, set out on a twenty-mile tramp to Thompson. Truly, the way of the transgressor was hard in the Thompson Valley.

The 4th Chapter. The Decision.

Vere Beauclerc and his father remained at the Lawless Ranch for nearly a week, and then they left. There was fine, springlike weather in the Thompson Valley, the floods were over, and Cedar Creek ran at its normal level. The shack by the creek, where the Beauclercs lived, had been wrecked in the flood, but there were many hands to help in the rebuilding of the little home. Neighbours came to lend a hand—and in Western Canada a "neighbour" is anyone within thirty miles. Frank Richards & Co. helped, after school and on the days when there was no school. Lumbermen from the river, and cattlemen from the ranches, dropped in to "do a spell." The shack was rebuilt, the materials growing near at hand and free of cost, needing only the axe and a stout arm to procure them. Frank and Bob were sorry enough when Beauclerc left the ranch. They would have been very glad if the Cherub could have remained with them. Of the offer in the letter from England nothing more had been said, but the chums had not forgotten it. Frank Richards wondered whether anything would come of it. It was a great opportunity for Beauclerc, in one way. It opened a prospect before him that many a fellow would have been overjoyed to take advantage of. But Frank knew the Cherub's devotion to his father, and the invitation from England was not extended to the remittance-man. Lascelles Beauclerc was not wanted. That was a bitter item for Beauclerc,

THE END.  
NEXT MONDAY.  
"THE SHADOW OF FEAR!"  
By MARTIN CLIFFORD.  
DON'T MISS IT!