THREE ETON BOYS.

BY W. E. MARRIN.

"I suppose you know," he said, "that Bracknell has been several times on the brink of a smash, and that this fellow Staines is the kind of man who would cheerfully give away his last farthing if he had only a hundred left. [illegible] man, unknown [illegible] or by crook. The [illegible] said he was going to die. Bracknell wanted a lot of money—how much it was Lady Mildred doesn't know, but she thinks it was a very large sum—to save him from immediate bankruptcy; and the poor old man was so cut up about it that he almost went off his head. He declared that he was the only person to blame, that he had squandered money which ought to have been saved for his son; that he had brought Bracknell up to be extravagant and was bound to send him through, and so forth, and, when he was in the utmost of his despair, as luck would have it, Alfred Beauchamp came in to see him. I suppose," added Jim, with a touch of reluctance, "that Beauchamp must be a good fellow. Anyhow, he insisted upon lending his uncle the money; and so"——

"And so Lord Staines rose from his bed and promptly forgot all about the matter?"

I suggested, as Jim came to a halt.

"No, not exactly that. He told Beauchamp frankly that he didn't think there was much prospect of his ever being able to discharge his debt, but that—that, in a short time, it would be so much mind owing the money to his son-in-law as to his nephew. Do you see?"

I could not help laughing at this amazing method of canceling a liability, which assuredly would never have entered into the head of any human being but Lord Staines. "I can't say that I do see," I replied. "Fathers don't as a rule, expect to be handsomely paid for allowing their daughters to be taken off their hands; on the contrary, in this country they who are expected to make settlements upon their daughters."

"Yes, but the husband makes settlements, too, and it appears that Beauchamp was to deduct this sum from the capital that he would have settled upon Lady Mildred. Most likely the fact of the matter was that he was overflowing with money, and had, in addition, a good-natured feeling that he was glad to hold out a helping hand to his uncle. Whether he was really anxious to marry his cousin at that time or not I can't make out; perhaps it was only to pacify a friend that [illegible] But, he certainly wasn't in any hurry to arrange the condition. He believed Lord Staines not to mention the subject for another year, [illegible] settlements, [illegible] Lady Mildred. Anyhow, [illegible] Bracknell [illegible] to be. Because Lady Bracknell [illegible] dropped the man, and [illegible] you come to think of it, it is [illegible] Bracknell's interest that [illegible] should remain single."

That was un[illegible] interested me more [illegible] had faith was [illegible] sumed by Jim, who [illegible] prepared but anxious [illegible] of his heart to Beauchamp [illegible] to express a little of the [illegible] felt, which had the unexpected [illegible] making him very angry. [illegible] wanted to know, did I take him for [illegible] as I made no reply, being unable to hit upon one which should be at the same time truthful and flattering, he went on to assure me that true love is sentiment [illegible] A few weeks ago, although [illegible] suspected that it was Beauchamp who had got her father out of his difficulties, she couldn't help knowing that [illegible] wanted her to marry [illegible] met him again in the [illegible] season he paid her a [illegible] tion, and everything [illegible] smoothly until Lady [illegible] sons best known for [illegible] her head to put a [illegible] must have seen [illegible] it to do that. Even [illegible] Lord Staines, w[illegible] but was quite [illegible] had promised to [illegible] champ.

"Bracknell k[illegible] money transactio[illegible]

"He knows no[illegible] best to tell him [illegible] same evident, and that is [illegible] afraid he isn't as straight [illegible]