

Triumph of John Kars
By RIDGEWELL CULLEN.
A Thrilling Tale of Love, Adventure, Gold and Indians,
With Its Stirring Episodes Set in Alaskan Wilderness.

Alban Mowbray, a trader of the Yukon region, surrounded by hostile Bell river Indians, gets a letter to Allan, his wife, and Murray McTavish, Allan's partner, sets out on a rescue expedition. Allan remains at the post with her son and daughter, Alice and Joseph. But Allan is killed before the rescue party arrives, and Father Jose, mission priest and executor of Allan's will, finds that Allan owned several tenths of the post, the source of whose tremendous wealth seems incalculable. When McTavish asks for Allan's hand, all Allan will promise is that she would put no obstacles in his path.

(Continued From Yesterday.)

CHAPTER II.
THERE WAS PERHAPS no better known name in the wide world than that of John Kars. In his buoyant way he claimed for himself, at 32, that he was the "oldest inhabitant" of the northernmost part of the continent. Accompanying his father, he had formed one of the small band of gold seekers who fought their way to the "placers" of forty-mile creek years before the great Yukon rush. Good fortune and sanity had been his greatest assets. The first seemed to have been his all through. Sanity only came to him at the cost of other men's experience. For all his hardihood, he was deeply human. The early temptations of Leaping Horse had appealed to the wild youth in him. He had had his falls. But he, to use his own expression, "quit the poultry ranch" and "hit the bank roll trail" and good fortune followed him behind him like a faithful spouse.

He became rich. His wealth became a byword. And later, when out of disorder and vice the city of Leaping Horse grew to capital importance, he became surfeited with the accumulations of wealth which rolled in upon him from his manifold interests. Then it was that the man which the Yukon world now knew suddenly developed. He could have retired to the pleasant avenues of civilization. But these things had no appeal for him. The battle of the trail had left a fever in his blood. So he still sought gold. He sought gold for the joy of search, to provide excitement. He sought gold for the romance of it. He sought it because adventures lay in the track of virgin gold as it lies nowhere else. Besides, the battle of it suited the man's hardihood. Once, to his friend, Dr. Bill Brenden of Leaping Horse, he said: "The trail I know. Gold I know. The Yukon I know. Then what's the use in quitting it for something I don't know, and don't care a cuss for any way?"

And now, with five canoes, he had arrived at Fort Mowbray. In five minutes John Kars had made his explanations. They were made to the daughter of his old friend, Allan Mowbray. He told her that he was out for the whole open season. That he'd practically had to kidnap Dr. Bill from his beloved Leaping Horse. He said that he hoped to make Fort Mowbray on the Mackenzie river some time in the summer and maybe even Fort Simpson. Meantime, Dr. Bill Brenden deliberately completed the work of superintending the "sausage" of the canoes for the night. For a whole week John Kars pervaded the mission with a personality too buoyant to allow of anything but his cheering influence, perhaps, was Murray McTavish. But the week of his stay had more meaning for him than for anyone else. Her frank delight in his presence found no denial. Every shadow was banished out of her life by it.

The last day came. It was a day of labor and preparation at the landing. Under the supervision of Kars and Bill the work went forward to its completion, with a precision and care for detail which means perhaps the difference between safety and disaster on the long trail. Then came the evening festival planned by Allan in her hospitable home. A homely supper and a gathering of all the white folk of the post. It was nearly midnight when the party broke up. Father Jose were said and the men departed. Mother and daughter were left alone. No word was spoken for some moments. Then a sound like the quiet of the room. It was the sound of a stifled sob, and the mother looked up anxiously. "Why, child," she cried, and sprung to her feet. The next moment her protective arms were about the pretty figure of the girl, and she drew her to her bosom, with a world of tender affection which could no longer be denied. "Oh, mother, mother," the girl cried, through her sobs. "I—I can't help it. I—I love him, and—he's gone." Far to the north Kars, Dr. Bill and Peigan Charlie, Kar's Indian scout, were examining the incinerated ruins of a recently destroyed Indian encampment. There were bodies, in varying stages of decomposition, lying about, many of them burned, many of them half eaten by the wild scavengers of the region. All were mutilated in a dreadful manner. And they were mostly the bodies of women and children.

John Kars shrugged his shoulders. "It's the work of the Bell river Indians, sure. That's if the things we've heard are true." He turned to his white companion. "Say, Bill, if you can't make it, what do you think of this?" "Much of what lies back of most desperate acts," Bill said. "Guess the Bell river folk have got something other folk need, and the other folk don't figger to hand over to anybody. Maybe it's hunting grounds, maybe it's fishing. Can't say. But you see this crowd are traveling Indians, or were," he added drily. "We're within 20 miles of Bell river." Peigan Charlie was carrying a broken modern rifle in his hand, and offered it to his chief. "Him Bell river," he stated bluntly. "Him Bell river," Kars said. "Bell river necke steal 'em." "There's just about three things worrying the back of my head now," Kars resumed. "They've been worrying it all summer. Why are these Bell river neckes always shooting up their neighbors, and anyone else? How come it Allan Mowbray died worth half a million dollars on fur trade? What was he doing on Bell river when he was shot? Why did he make camp in a rocky gorge about a mile from Bell river. The Indian went out on a scout, leaving the two white men in the camp. There was a sound of some one approaching through the trees. Bill eased himself. But Kars never lost a moment. "A feller wearing boots," he said. "Bill had risen to his feet. 'I'm going to look,' he announced. He moved off, and presently his voice came back to the man by the fire. "Ho, John! A visitor," he cried. "The man at the fire replied cordially. "Bring him right along. Pleased to see him."

A moment or two later he was gazing up smilingly into the face of a man who was obviously a half-breed. The man was dressed in a headed buckskin shirt under a pea-jacket of doubtful age. It was worn and stained, as were the man's moccasins. The man's eyes were tucked into long knee-boots. A great scar split the skin

of his forehead almost completely across it. And beneath the attenuated moustache another scar stretched from the corner of this month half way across his right cheek. The man's greeting came in the white man's tongue. "Nor was it tinged with the 'pigeon' method of the Indian. 'Say, you boys are takin' all kinds of chances,' he said, in a voice that had little pleasantness of intonation. 'I had some scare when I see you come over the hills there. The darn neckes bin out the way you come, burnin' an' massacin'. How you missed 'em beats me to death.' Kars was only concerned with the information of the Indians' movements. 'They're out?' he said. 'Sure they're out!' The man laughed. 'The hell out most all the time. Gee, it's livin' with a cyclone playin' around you on this God-forgotten river. But, say, you boys need to beat it, an' beat it quick, if you want to get out with your hair on. They're crazy for guns an' things. If they git their noses on your trail they'll git you sure as death.' 'Yes, I've live around this river, an' I hand the neckes a bum sort of trade fer their wares. My name come of this tribe. I guess my paw belonged to you.' 'Where d'you get your goods for trade?' The man's retort came roughly enough now. 'What in—' he cried. 'Say, that ain't no darn bizness of anyone but me. Gat me? There's a dozen posts I could haul from. I handed you the trouble waitin' around if you ain't wise. I ain't got your names. I don't know a thing. I ain't no interest if you're alive, or hauled to small chunks. But if you got any value for your lives, why git 'right out of this just as fast as the devil'll let you. That's all.' 'Thanks—we will,' Kars had suddenly abandoned all his previous assurance of manner. He seemed to be laboring under the influence of the warning. 'Guess we're kind of obliged to you. Guess we best get out west if the neckes are southeast.' Kar's changed attitude seemed to please the half-breed. 'Since I shot up Allan Mowbray I'm scared,' he declared. 'I've taken a big chance coming around. Jest get to it an' set all the damnation territory you ken find between you an' Bell river before tomorrow I'm out, so long. I've handed you warning. It's right up to you.'

He turned abruptly away and moved off. To the dullest it was obvious he was anxious to escape further interrogation. They waited until the sound of his footsteps had died out. Then Bill spoke. "He's a crook and a bad one. When do we pull out?" Kars looked up. "When I've nosed out the secret of this darned layout, I figger we've hit right on top of a big secret here, and well. I don't fancy being bluffed out of it by any low-down bum of a half-breed. That feller wants to be quit of us. He's bluffing. We've hit the camp where the neckes out. Do you get that? If they'd bin around we wouldn't have seen any Louis Creal. Wait till Charley gets back." Peigan Charlie returned and reported. "I mak him," he said. "Neche all out. Only sawaw, an' papoose by the camp. Old men—yes. Him all by river. Charley not come by river. No rood. Charley him look by camp. Him see much teepee, much shack. Yes, breed man run him store." "You didn't risk the river?" Kars inquired. "No. Charley him all get kill up dead by river. No bush. No nothing. He pointed at the hill directly behind him. "That's all I need, Bill," Kars said. "The rest I'll do myself. I'm going to quit you for the time. Maybe I won't join you till nearly morning. I can't say. I want you to strike camp right away. Get on the move along to the river bank—above the gorge. Then follow it along for a few miles. Maybe ten. Then wait around, an' keep an eye wide. Then send Charley back to wait for me on the river bank—just above the gorge." (To Be Continued Monday.)

Parents' Problems
Should children be permitted to borrow and lend books?
By all means. They get much more pleasure from their books when able to talk about them with their little friends. Of course they should be taught to respect other's property and to care for it, and much stress should be laid on this. If taught the care of books when they are very young, they will naturally be careful of them when they grow older. Nothing is more trying than to lend a book, and have it returned mangled in some way. Unfortunately this is a very common occurrence. Begin very early with the children.

Report of the Treasurer of Douglas County, GENERAL FUNDS

Table with columns: FUNDS, Balance July 1, 1922, Tax Collections, Miscellaneous Collections, Transfers, Total Credits, Disbursements, Transfers, Fees, Total Debits, Balance Dec. 31, 1922. Includes categories like State, County General, Bond Sinking, etc.

Totals: \$1,874,393.80, \$1,048,203.70, \$950,556.32, \$340,022.74, \$4,213,176.56, \$2,715,962.22, \$340,022.74, \$3,055,984.96, \$1,157,191.60

FUNDS ON HAND DECEMBER 31, 1922
Checks on Hand for Deposit: \$ 9,304.65
Cash in Drawer: 5,939.65
Balance on Hand in Banks: 1,013,848.28
Warrants Purchased and Investments: 128,099.02
Total: \$1,157,191.60