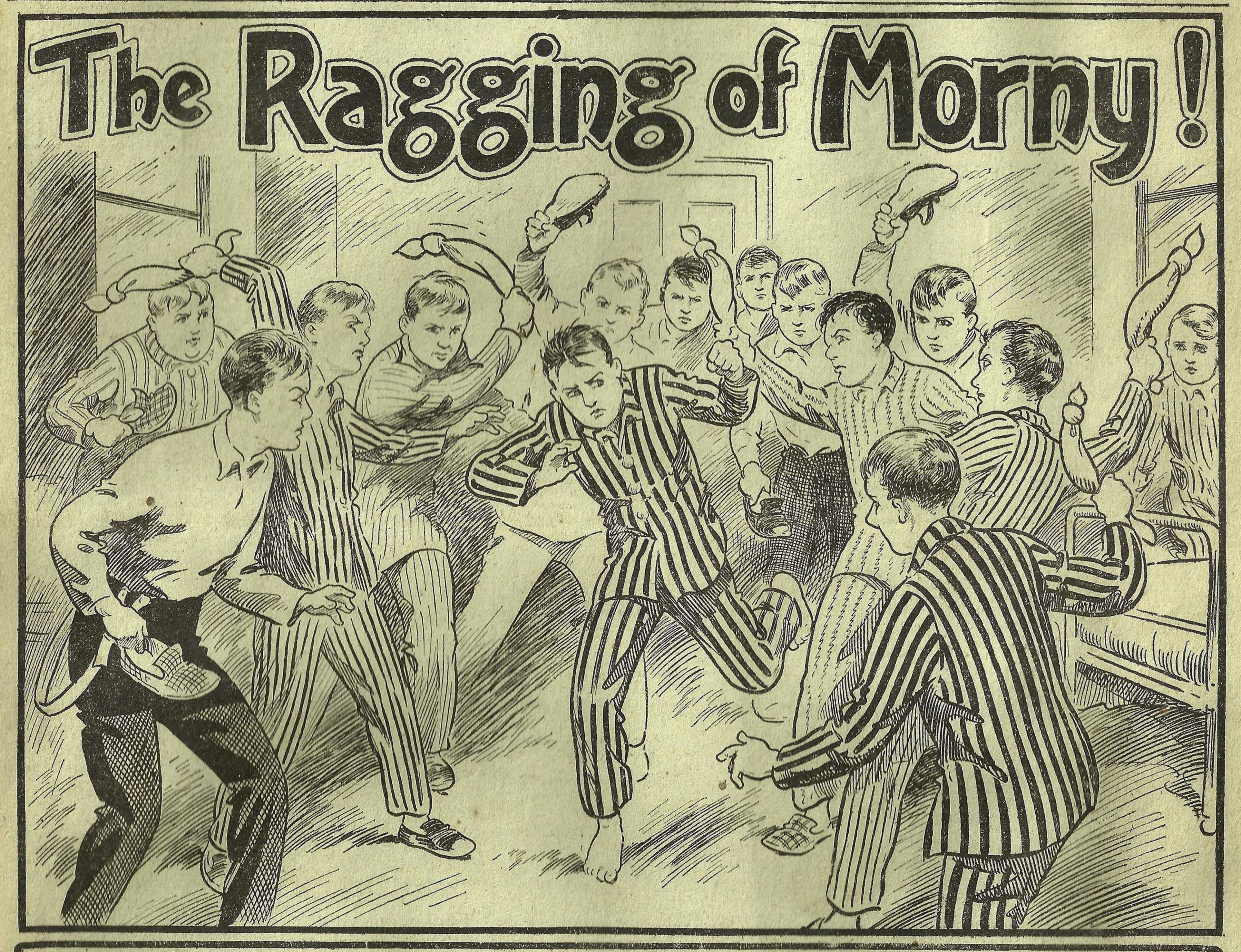
GRAND NEW CINEMA SERIAL STARTS THIS WEEK!

(See Imside.)

No. 987. Vol. XX. New Series.]

THREE HALFPENCE.

[Week Ending May 8th, 1920.



RUNNING THE GAUNTLET!

"Form up, you chaps!" said Jimmy Silver. The juniors formed up in a double row for the "run." Mornington did not move as he was called upon to run. "Start him!" said Jimmy. Conroy and Pons collared the obstinate junior and flung him between the waiting rows. The fellows nearest to Morny started lashing out with socks and slippers, and the hapless dandy of the Fourth had to run. He panted along savagely, with swipes raining upon him from both sides.

The 1st Chapter.

Mr. Bootles is Wrathy! "Morny! It's rotten!" Kit Erroll, of the Classical Fourth at Rookwood, was speaking as Jimmy Silver & Co. came along the Form-room passage. It was close on time for afternoon classes, and the

juniors were gathering round the doorway of the Fourth Form-room. Mornington, with a stump of chalk in his hand, was scrawling on the big were chuckling as they looked on. Only Erroll, Morny's best chum, was remonstrating, and Morny did not

heed his chum.

group. minutes." ington, without turning his head.

"There'll be a row!" "Rats!" "And it's rotten, anyway!" "Rot!"

Jimmy Silver pushed through the crowd of Fourth-Formers, and looked over Mornington's shoulder. Then he frowned.

It was a caricature of Mr. Bootles, oak door, and some of the fellows the respected master of the Fourth Form, that Morny was chalking on the oaken door.

Morny could draw well when he chose to take the trouble, and he was "What's Morny up to?" asked putting all his skill into this work of Jimmy Silver, as he joined the art. Lately Mornington had been called rather severely to account by "Playing the goat!" said Erroll Mr. Bootles, owing to one of his out! What do you want to rag old Langry. tartly. "Chuck it, Morny, you ass! periodical fits of slackness, and Bootles for?" Mr. Bootles will be coming in a few Morny resented being called to "Because he's such a dashed old wilful chum, watching him with "Rot! Let it alone!" account for anything. He was now Hun!" grunted Mornington. "This I great uneasiness.

"Let him come!" answered Morn- I drawing the head and shoulders of will let him know what we think of I Mr. Bootles, much to the entertain- him.' ment of his Form-fellows. Probably nobody but Morny would have had kind of him." the nerve to do it, when Mr. Bootles might have walked along the passage at any moment; but Morny was recklessness itself.

"Rather a likeness, what?" marked Morny, with a grin at Jimmy Silver, as the captain of the Fourth looked over his shoulder.

But Jimmy Silver did not grin. He liked and respected Mr. Bootles, and he was quite well aware that the Form-master's recent severity to Mornington was welldeserved.

"Well, I do!"

"You're an ass, then!" "Thanks!"

re- Form-room door, and Morny had to suspend his artistic work for a moment. But he resumed it, with the door open. The Fistical Four went into the Form-room, and most of the juniors followed them. It was near time for Mr. Bootles to arrive, and they did not want to be on the spot when the Fourth Form-master discovered the caricature. Mild little "Bosh!" said Jimmy. "Rub it was certain that he would be very seventhly."

Only Erroll remained with his door first."

There was no doubt that the caricature was comic, but it did not "We don't think anything of the make Erroll smile. He was thinking of the wrath to come.

"There!" said Mornington, stepping back at last and surveying his handiwork with great satisfaction. Jimmy Silver pushed open the What do you think of that, old

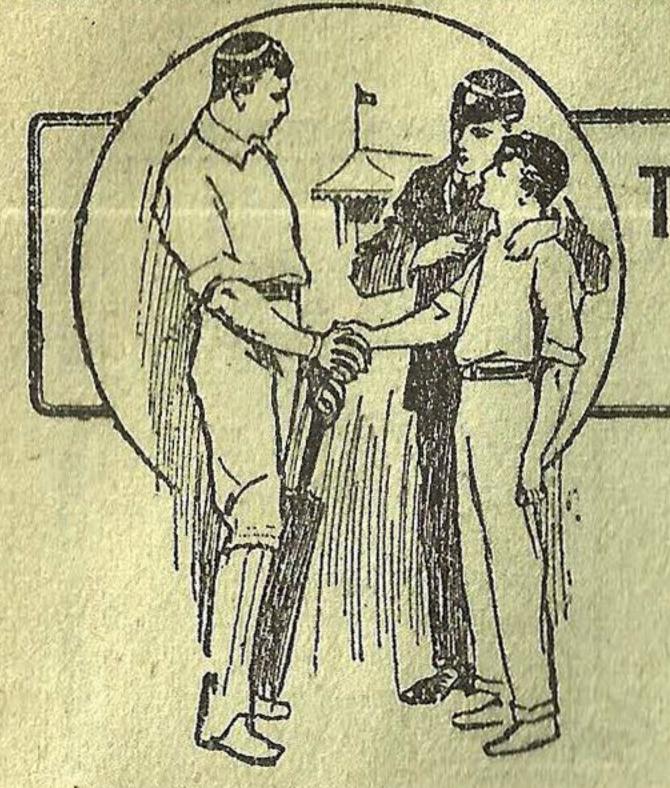
> "How complimentary you are!" "You oughtn't to insult Mr. Bootles. He's a good sort." "He caned me this morning."

"Well, you cheeked him."

"Ratten!"

"Erroll, old chap, you're a good boy, but you're too much given to preachin'!" yawned Mornington. "Let me rub that nonsense off the

I Valentine Mornington took his



(Continued from the previous page.)

chum's arm, and walked into the Form-room. The chalked caricature remained to greet Mr. Bootles'

eyes when he arrived. Mornington went to his place, but

Erroll did not follow. He took a duster from the blackboard easel and turned back to the

Morny called out to him sharply. "What are you goin' to do, you

"Save you from a flogging, fathead!" "Look here-"

Mornington jumped up angrily as Erroll went towards the door. Jimmy Silver made a sign to his chums, and at the same moment he grasped Morny by the arm, and Lovell, Raby, and Newcome grasped him also. In the grip of the Fistical Four, Morny was held in his place.

He struggled angrily. "Let me go, you fools!" "Sit where you are, old top!" answered Arthur Edward Lovell.

"Let me go!" "Not just yet," said Jimmy Silver. "You've no right to insult Mr. Bootles."

"You silly ass!" "Besides," remarked Tubby Muffin, "if old Bootles gets his rag out we shall all come in for it this afternoon. You should do these stunts after lessons, Morny, not

before.' "Will you rotters let me go?" hissed Mornington, struggling in the grasp of the Fistical Four.

"No fear!" Mornington sat helpless, gritting his teeth, while Erroll went to the door and began to rub at the chalked figure. But he was a little too late. He had given one rub with the duster, when Mr. Bootles loomed up |

in the doorway. Mr. Bootles blinked at the junior over his spectacles, and then at the chalked caricature.

"Erroll!" he ejaculated. "Oh! Yes, sir!" stammered

Erroll. "Stand back!"

The junior stood back, and Mr. Bootles approached the door more closely, peering at Morny's workmanship through his glasses.

His brow knitted. duster, and Mr. Bootles had the and Erroll was his best chum. But pleasure—or otherwise—of surveying | the wilful and obstinate side of his own caricatured features under the Prussian helmet. The likeness was quite near enough for recognition, though the features were comically exaggerated.

In the Form-room there was silence as of the tomb. Jimmy Silver & Co. released Mornington, and sat down in their places. Morny shrugged his shoulders. Erroll's interference had come too late, and the storm was going to burst.

"So," said Mr. Bootles, in a very deep voice-"so, Erroll, this is your respect for your Form-master!" Erroll started.

Mr. Bootles, not unnaturally in the | remarked. circumstances, had jumped to a wrong conclusion. All the other fellows being in their places, he took it for granted that Erroll was the author of the chalked caricature on the door.

"I-I was rubbing it out, sir!" stammered Erroll.

"No doubt. After amusing your Form-fellows in this disrespectful way, I have no doubt you wished to prevent me from seeing it. You may now rub it out, Erroll."

Erroll, with a crimson face, rubbed the chalk from the door. Mr. Bootles motioned him into the Formroom, and then followed him in.

> The 2nd Chapter. For Another's Fault!

The Fourth Form looked on in

silence. Mr. Bootles, standing by his desk, fixed his eyes upon Erroll, who stood before him with downcast, crimson

face. pressively at Mornington.

It was for Morny to speak and the matter?"

remove the Form-master's misapprehension before punishment fell upon his chum. It was certain that Erroll would not explain.

But Mornington did not speak.

He looked on with a grim, sardonic smile. He shrugged his shoulders as he met Jimmy Silver's glance, and that was all. Evidently he did not intend to own up.

Mr. Bootles broke the silence: "Erroll!"

"Yes, sir?" faltered Erroll.

"I am very much surprised and shocked. I have always looked upon you, Erroll, as one of my best pupils, and I have certainly never suspected that you could be guilty of this utter want of proper respect. What reason have I given you, Erroll, for acting like this?"

Erroll did not speak. He did not even look at his chum.

He expected to hear Mornington's voice; but he did not hear it. He closed his lips a little. If Mornington chose to leave him to bear the blame, he would not speak.

"I am not surprised that you find nothing to say, Erroll," said Mr. Bootles, after a pause. "I trust you are properly ashamed of your action."

Erroll was still silent.

"I cannot allow this to pass," continued Mr. Bootles. "I do not wish to cane you, Erroll; but I cannot let this pass unpunished. You will be detained for your half-holiday tomorrow, and I shall set you a task in the Form-room. You may go to your place."

Without a word, Erroll went to his

He passed Mornington, and his eyes met his chum's for a moment. Morny smiled mockingly.

Erroll sat down quietly. "Morny, you rotter!" breathed Lovell. "Get up on your hind-legs and own up, you cad!"

"Mind your own business!" "Are you going to let Erroll-" "Silence in the class!" rapped out

Mr. Bootles. And there was silence.

During lessons that afternoon there were a good many whispers in Mr. Booties' class, and most of them reached Morny's ears.

The Fourth Form did not leave him in any doubt as to their opinion of his conduct.

For a fellow to sit silent, while another fellow took his punishment, was quite against all the unwritten laws of Rookwood.

It was surprising, too, in Valentine Mornington. Morny was too reck-Erroll had not had time with the less to care much about punishment, Morny's rather peculiar nature was uppermost now. Erroll had chosen to interfere with him, and Erroll could take the consequences. That was how Morny was looking at it; but it was a view with which nobody else in the Fourth was likely to sympathise.

After lessons, when Mr. Bootles dismissed the class, the juniors were surprised to see Erroll join his chum in the passage as usual. Perhaps Mornington was surprised, too, for he looked very curiously at Erroll's quiet face and compressed lips.

"You're in for it, old bird!" he

Erroll nodded.

"Latin conjugations to-morrow afternoon, instead of cricket," said Mornington.

"Yes." "All your own fault, isn't it?"

"You don't mind?" grinned Mornington.

Mr. Bootles came along the passage, and passed the juniors, giving Erroll a rather grim glance as he passed. Poor Erroll was evidently

When Mr. Bootles was gone, a good many of the juniors gathered round Mornington and Erroll. What had only been whispered in the Form-room could be said aloud in the passage, and it was said with emphasis.

in his Form-master's black books

"Morny, you rotter-" "Morny, you sneak---"

"Morny----"

"Hallo!" said Mornington agree-Jummy Silver glanced very ex- ably. "What a rush for my society all at once! Dear boys, is anythin'

"You know what's the matter!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver. "Why didn't you own up when Bootles was ragging Erroll?"

BOYS' FRIEND

"Is that a conundrum?" "Are you going to let him be detained to-morrow afternoon in your place?" demanded Lovell hotly. "Why not?"

"Why not?" repeated Lovell. "Why, if you do, you're a rotterthat's why not! And a cad! And a worm—,"

"Don't run through the whole list, old top! You're eloquent, but you're | ing at the study table. rather a bore!"

Lovell. "I suppose this is one of your queer jokes, Morny," said Jimmy Silver quietly. "But you can't let it go on. Erroll can't be detained to-morrow afternoon."

"Better tell Bootles so." "You've got to tell Bootles the

truth---" "Rats!"

"Won't you?" exclaimed Conroy. "Not unless I choose, at all answered Mornington events," coolly.

"For goodness' sake let the matter rest!" exclaimed Erroll. "I'm not complaining-"

"You're an ass!" remarked Raby. "A silly ass!" agreed Newcome. "You've got to own up, Morny," said Jimmy Silver. "Not only because it's decent, but Erroll's in the

morrow, and he's wanted to play." "Dear me!" said Mornington nonchalantly. "I'm afraid I'd quite forgotten the Bagshot match."

Eleven for the Bagshot match to-

"You cheeky ass!" roared Lovell. "Besides, I'm in the eleven, ain't I?" pursued Mornington. "If I'm detained instead, you lose a good l man from the team."

"That's awkward!" said Jimmy. "It can't be helped, though. rather lose you than Erroll."
"Thanks!"

"There's such a thing as justice, too, and fair play."

"Is there?" asked Mornington. "To cut it short, are you going to Bootles to own up about that silly caricature?" "No!"

With that, Valentine Mornington turned on his heel and walked out into the quadrangle.

A hiss followed him from the

Erroll, after some hesitation, went up the staircase to his study. The juniors remained in an excited group, discussing the situation. Jimmy Silver's brows were knitted in anger. "He will have to own up, Jimmy," said Lovell. "We can't have Erroll left out of the game to-morrow." Jimmy nodded.

"I can't understand Morny," he said. "He's never acted in this caddish way before. He's got his faults, and plenty of them; but a thing like this—it's rotten, mean!"

"Beastly!" "Anyhow, he's got to own up, and get Erroll off. I'm not going to lose a good man out of the Eleven to

please him.' "I say, Jimmy, I can set that right," put in Tubby Muffin eagerly. "I say. Morny won't own up; he's you where to find a better man than Erroll."

"Where, fathead?" Reginald Muffin smacked his podgy

"Here!" he answered. "You silly ass!" howled Jimmy with a curious glance. Silver, as he strode away, apparently

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Thursday.

with no intention of accepting Tubby's generous offer to fill Erroll's place in the junior eleven.

> The 3rd Chapter. A Peculiar Pal.

Jimmy Silver left the end study, after prep that evening and came along the passage towards the stairs. He stopped at the door of Study No.

The door was half-open, and Mornington and Erroll could be seen, work-

There was no sign of trouble in the "Why, you-you-" stuttered study.

Mornington's face wore its usual careless, nonchalant expression, and Erroll, though perhaps a little quieter than usual, did not look in any way resentful. Probably there was no other study at Rookwood where such an incident as that of the afternoon would not have caused a rift in the

Both the juniors glanced up as Jimmy looked in.

"Hallo, old top!" said Mornington, pleasantly. "Done your prep?"

"Lucky bargee! You always get

through before I do." "I don't slack at it," said Jimmy

Mornington smiled. "A hit—a very palpable hit!" he

remarked. "I stand corrected! If could only follow your shining example---"Oh, don't rot! I looked in to

speak to you-" "Go ahead; no charge for admis-

"I'm putting Putty Grace into the eleven to-morrow, in your place." "In Erroll's place, do you mean?" "I mean what I say."

Mornington's brow darkened for a moment.

"Then I'm not playing?" he asked. "You can't, when you will be detained." "I'm not detained!"

"You will be, when Mr. Bootles knows the facts." "Are you goin' to tell him?"

sneered Mornington. "You're going to tell him," answered Jimmy Silver quietly. "You've got the rest of the evening to do it in."

"And if I don't?"

"I hope you will!" "Hope springs eternal in the human breast!" grinned Mornington. "But supposin', for the sake of argument, that I don't?"

"Then we shall talk to you in the dorm to-night.'

'I understand. Go and eat coke!" said Mornington, and he turned back to his work.

"You've filled my place, Junmy?" asked Erroll, as the captain of the Fourth was turning away. "No; that's not necessary!"

"But I'm detained-" "Mr. Bootles will let you off when he knows the facts of the case."

"But-but-" "Morny's going to tell him," said Jimmy Silver.

And with that Jimmy walked away. Erroll glanced at his chum for a moment, but Morny's eyes were bent too jolly obstinate. But I can tell on his books. He resumed his work. and for some time there was silence in Study No. 4.

Prep was over at last, however, and Mornington rose to his feet. He stood for some minutes leaning on the mantelpiece, regarding his chum

A fat face grinned in at the door-

It belonged to Reginald Muffin, of the Classical Fourth.

"I say, Morn-"

"Cut!" snapped Mornington. "You're going through it!" said Tubby Muffin, impressively, wagging. a podgy forefinger at the dandy of the Fourth. "If you don't own up, we're going to give you a high old time in the dorm to-night. We've been holding a meeting on the subject in the Common-room, I can tell you

Mornington made an angry stride towards the door, and Tubby Muffin promptly backed into the passage. "You wait for dorm, Morny," he hooted. "You're going to be put through it. Yah! You beast!"

Tubby Muffin fled, just in time to escape a lunging boot. Mornington slammed the door of the study.

Erroll had risen from the table. "Goin' down?" asked Mornington.

"May as well." "Shall I come?"

"Of course!" Mornington burst into a laugh. "You're a queer fish, Erroll. Most fellows would be scrapping with me now, for what happened this after-

"Perhaps I'm not like most fellows, then," said Erroll, with a faint smile. "I'm certainly not going to scrap

with you, Morny!" "You don't feel ratty?"

" No."

"You're missing a cricket-match to-

"I suppose it can't be helped." "Everybody else in the Fourth has been calling me some pretty names," grinned Mornington. "Haven't you any to add to the list?"

Erroll shook his head. "I know you're only playing the goat," he said. "The fellows think you've acted meanly---"

'And you don't?" "I think you're playing the goat, as I said. It's only your silly obstinacy. You're not afraid of a licking or detention. You'd have gone to Bootles before this, but you've got

your back up." "They're goin' to rag me in the dorm to night, if I don't go," re-

marked Mornington. "Well, you can't blame them; they don't understand you as I do, and

don't make allowances." Mornington laughed and left the study. Erroll followed him, and they came into the junior Common-room

together. It was a surprise to the juniors to see them still together, and on evidently friendly terms. Dark looks were cast at Valentine Mornington on all sides. He did not seem to observe them. He strolled carelessly into the room, and chatted with Erroll, apparently regardless of the fact that no one else spoke a word to him.

Bulkeley of the Sixth looked in at half-past nine, and there was a general move.

Then Jimmy Silver came over to Mornington, "Have you been to Mr. Bootles?".

he asked. "Oh, no!" "Then there's just time to cut in

before dorm." "Go hon!" "Are you going?"

"Not at all!" "Very well!" Jimmy Silver com-

pressed his lips and turned away. Mornington glanced at Erroll with a smile, as the juniors crowded out of the Common-room. Erroll's face was clouded. He knew what was going to happen in the dormitory, and he was deeply troubled, and Valentine Mornington sauntered into the Fourth Form dormitory with perfect coolness. Whatever was in store for him, there was no doubt that the dandy of the Fourth had nerve enough to go through with it.

The 4th Chapter.

Brought to Book! Bulkeley put out the light, and the door closed.

In the dormitory of the Classical Fourth all the juniors were in bed, and were supposed to be settled for the night.

But, though Bulkeley was not aware of the fact, they were very far from settled.

The prefect's footsteps had hardly died away down the passage, when Jimmy Silver sat up in bed.

"Ready, you fellows?" he called out softly. "You bet!" came an emphatic grunt from the bed of Arthur

Edward Lovell. "Turn out!" "What-ho!"

2d.

"Not too much row!" remarked Putty Grace. "We don't want Bulkeley coming back."

"Anybody got a candle?"

"Here you are!"

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The Popular All-Round Story Paper.

Four or five candle-ends were lighted, and they shed a glimmering light in the long, lofty dormitory.

The Fourth-formers were quickly out of bed, with the exceptions of Valentine Mornington and Tubby Muffin. Tubby preferred to watch the proceedings from his bed, and Mornington appeared to be quite unconscious that anything unusual was going on. Jimmy Silver glanced at Erroll.

"You needn't take a hand in this, Erroll, if you don't like," he said. "It's a Form ragging!" exclaimed Higgs. "Erroll ought to take a hand along with everybody else!"

"Rats!" You can turn in, Erroll." Erroll shook his head, and sat on the edge of his bed. Certainly he was not likely to take a hand in ragging his chum; and still more certainly, he could not hope to be able to help him. Mornington had brought down his punishment upon himself, and there was no averting

Erroll's quiet face expressed only distress.

"Mornington!"

Morny did not move or speak. "Get up, Morny!" rapped out Con-

No answer. "Turn him out!" said Jimmy

Silver. Morny's lofty indifference to their proceedings had a rather exasperating effect upon the juniors. They were not prepared to stand any of Morny's superb loftiness just then.

Half-a-dozen fellows rushed to his bed and rolled him out, bedclothes and all, upon the floor.

Bump! There was a howl from Valentine Mornington as he landed. It was rather a concussion upon the hard floor.

"He, he, he!" chortled Tubby Muffin. "Give him beans!"

"Stand up, Morny!" said Jimmy Silver.

Mornington struggled in the bed. clothes. For a moment his face was like that of a demon. All the evil in his nature—and there was a good deal of it-was aroused just then.

He scrambled to his feet, and looked for a moment as if he would rush at the juniors, hitting out right and left.

But he controlled himself.

His indifferent mannor returned, and he stood with his hands folded across his chest, an insolent smile on his face.

"Well, what's this kid's game?" he inquired, with a sneer.

"Kid's game! I'll give you kid's game!" howled Lovell. "I'll-" "Order!" rapped out Jimmy Silver. "This isn't a dog fight, old chap. Mornington, you know what the Form expects you to do." "Blessed if I care."

"You chalked a silly picture of Mr. Bootles to-day, and he thought it was Erroll's work, and detained him for it," said Jimmy. "It was up to you to speak up at the time." Any decent fellow would have

done it!" growled Lovell. "You didn't do it, Morny," continued Jimmy Silver. "You've been given all the evening, and you haven't done it. If you choose to act rottenly towards your own chum it's your bizney; but as it happens, Erroll's wanted in the cricket eleven to-morrow. That makes a difference. Erroll's got to be let off."

"I-I say, you could fill my place, Jimmy!" interrupted Erroll.

"I daresay I could, but I'm not going to," answered the captain of the Fourth. "I'm not going to leave one of the best bats out of the game because Mornington doesn't choose to do the right thing. I'm skipper of the eleven-not Morny, and Morny can't run the show at his own sweet will. Now, Morny, we don't want to take rough measures---"

"Oh, don't mind me!" yawned Mornington.

"Will you promise to go to Mr. Bootles in the morning and tell him the facts, and see Erroll clear?"

Morny's answer came short and sharp, and there was an angry buzz from the Fourth-formers.

Several of the juniors made a movement towards Mornington, who stared at them with angry defiance. But Jimmy waved them back.

"Hold on! Give him a chance!" he said. "Morny, will you do the sensible thing? You don't want the whole Form to despise you as a sneaking cad-"

"Oh, I don't mind!" "If you don't care what Rookwood

thinks of you--'

"Not a bit!" "Very well," said Jimmy, as there was another angry growl. "If that's so, we may as well get to business.

You're going to be ragged till you promise to own up to Bootles in the morning."

"Rats!" "Nuff jaw!" howled Arthur Edward Lovell angrily. "Collar the cad, and put him through it!" "Collar him!" said Jimmy Silver.

And there was a rush. Mornington's hands went up like lightning, and he hit out furiously as the juniors closed round him.

Arthur Edward Lovell was the first to reach him, and he was met with a drive on the point of the jaw that sent him spinning. Lovell crashed into Jimmy Silver, and bowled him over, and they went to the floor together.

Raby was down, and Newcome staggered-but then a drive from Conroy flung Mornington across his

The next moment five or six pairs of hands were upon him, and he was secured.

Jimmy Silver scrambled up. "Ow! Ow!" came from Arthur Edward Lovell. He sat on the floor, nursing his chin. "Ow!

Ow! Ow!" Mornington was struggling furiously. Jimmy Silver ran to grasp him; but the dandy of the Fourth had no chance. Lovell staggered up, and, holding his chin with one hand, held Morny's neck with the other. The dandy of the Fourth gasped help"Here it is!" "Good! Lay on while I count!"

"You bet!" Mornington struggled desperately as he was laid face down on his bed. But resistance was vain with each arm and leg held in three or four hands. He was spread-eagled on the bed, and Newcome stood over him with the slipper.

"For the last time, Morny!" said Jimmy Silver.

Mornington gasped. "Go and eat coke!"

"Very well. Go it, Newcome!" Whack! Whack! Whack! Whack!

Newcome "went it" with a vim. The slipper rose and fell with sounding thwacks upon Mornington.

Whack! Whack! Whack! Mornington set his teeth hard. His pride would not allow him to utter a cry. But the castigation was not easy to endure in silence. "Slippering" was a severe form of punish-

ment, very nearly as severe as a flogging from the Head. With his teeth shut hard, Morny bore it in savage silence.

"Fifty!" counted Jimmy Silver. "Chuck it, Newcome! Now, will you! do as the Form wants, Morny?"

"No!" choked Mornington. "Give him another fifty!" said Higgs

"He, he, he! Give him five hundred!" chuckled Tubby Muffin.

Jimmy knitted his brows. "You'll run the gauntlet -next, then," he said.

"I won't stir!" "We'll see about that," said the captain of the Fourth curtly. "Form up, you fellows!"

'Jimmy---' began Erroll appeal-

"Shut up! Stand back, Erroll!" Erroll was pushed back, and the juniors formed up in a double row for the "run." Even Tubby Muffin turned out of bed, and stuffed a sock, to have his "whack" at the victim. Mornington did not move, as he was called upon to run.

"You hear, Morny?" exclaimed Jimmy Silver.

"Go and eat coke!"

"Start him!" said Jimmy.

Conroy and Pons collared the obstinate junior without ceremony, and flung him between the waiting

The fellows nearest to Morny started lashing out, with socks and pillows and slippers, and the hapless dandy of the Fourth had to run. He panted along savagely, with swipes raining on him from both sides. Tubby Muffin, in his eagerness, overshot the mark, and missed Mornington, and caught Higgs of the Fourth upon the nose with his stuffed sock. There was a bellow from Higgs, and he rushed upon the fat Classical, who fled frantically among the beds.

Mornington staggered on, with rain-

"Certainly, old top!" answered Mornington, with all his old coolness, and he limped to his bed. "Now, what is all this about?"

demanded Bulkeley. No reply.

Some of the fellows expected Morny to speak, but he did not. As in the Form-room that afternoon, he disappointed expectation, though in a different way.

"Well, turn in!" growled Bulkeley. "Every kid in this dormitory will take two hundred lines!"

"And if there's another sound from this room to-night, I shall come back

with a cane, and then-" Bulkeley did not complete the sentence; he left the rest to the imagination of the juniors.

He collected up the candle-ends, and blew them out, and quitted the dormitory.

Tubby Muffin ceased to snore.

"I say, who's going to do my lines?" Muffin inquired. "Are you going to do them, Jimmy? I was only backing you up, you know."

"Br-r-r-r!" "I say, let's make Morny do the lot," said Tubby. "It's all Morny's

fault, you know!" "Are we going on, Jimmy?" asked Lovell.

"No. Bulkeley will be keeping his ears open after this," answered Jimmy Silver. "Besides, Mornington's had enough."

"But he hasn't promised to own up to Bootles."

"I know. There's a limit, though," said Jimmy. "He's had a Formragging, and a jolly good one. I'm done with him!"

And with that, Jimmy Silver turned his head on the pillow to sleep. The rest of the Fourth followed his example; but it was a long time before sleep came to Valentine Mornington.

The 6th Chapter. Morny's Little Way.

Jimmy Silver did not speak to Mornington, or look at him, when the Classical Fourth turned out the next

Some of the juniors were inclined to renew the ragging; but Jimmy set his face against that, and he had his

Mornington had sinned against the laws and customs of the Rookwood Fourth, and he had had his punishment; and there, so far as Jimmy Silver was concerned, the matter ended.

The ragging had certainly had no effect upon his obstinacy. But Jimmy did not think that another ragging would be of any more use in that respect. Valentine Mornington could not always be led; but he could never be driven.

Mornington had some aches and pains that day, though he made no remark on the subject. Indeed, nobody was very much inclined to listen to remarks from Mornington, or to answer them if made. Morny was sometimes popular, but his uncertain temper made it impossible for him to be popular for any length of time, and undoubtedly his popularity was now at its lowest ebb.

He did not seem to care. He strolled elegantly out of the dormitory, his easy manner not betraying in the least that he was feeling severely the effects of the overnight's ragging.

Some dark glances were cast after him, and that was all. "He ought to have another dose of

the same medicine!" muttered Arthur Edward Lovell gruffly. Jimmy Silver shook his head.

"It wouldn't make any difference," he said. "Morny is as obstinate as a mule. He's had his medicine. The trouble is, that I shall have to fill Erroll's place in the team. There isn't another man as good!"

"What about little me?" grinned Newcome.

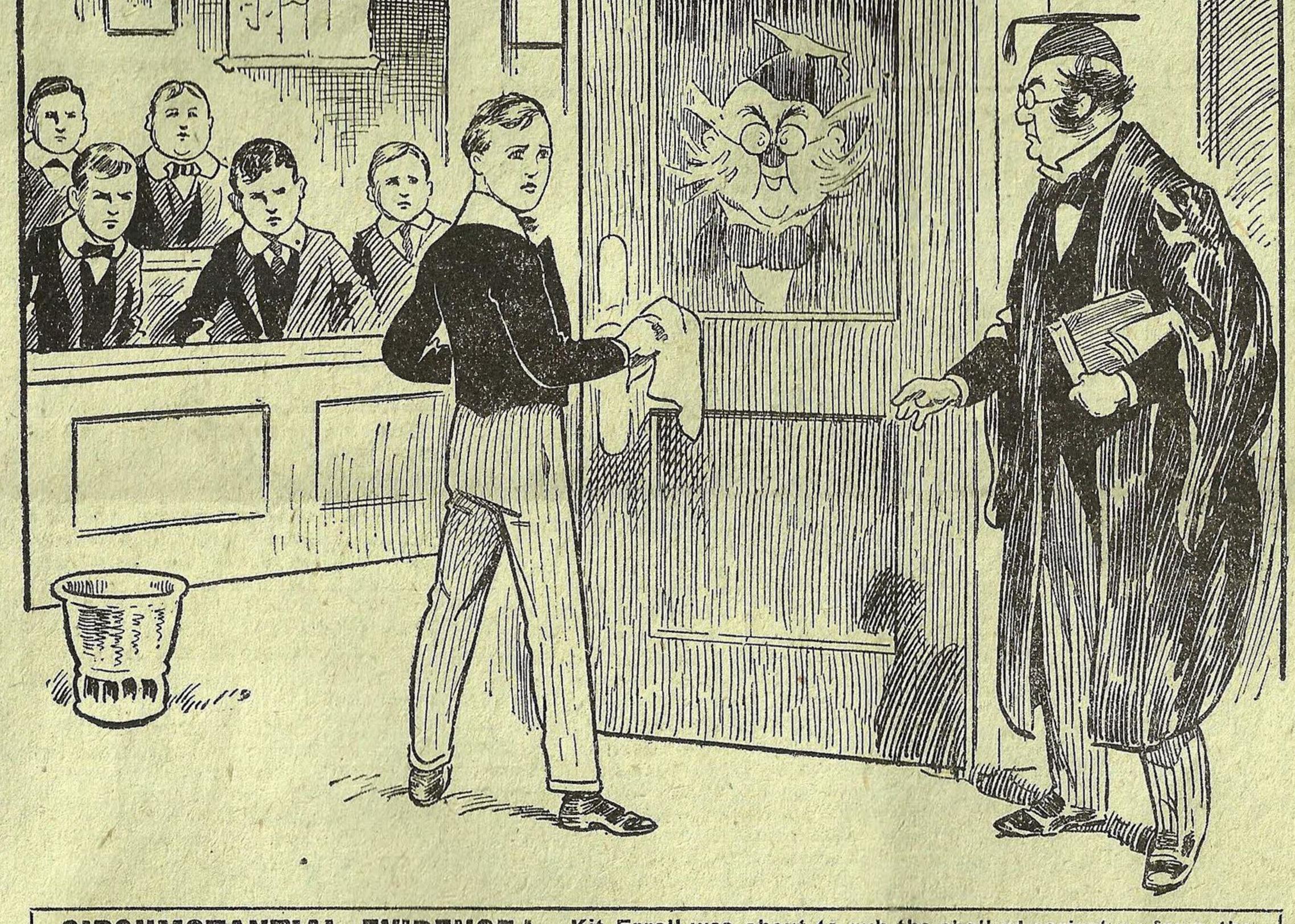
"Next best!" said Jimmy. "If Morny doesn't do the decent thing, you'll have to go in instead of Erroll, Newcome!"

"Then I'll look for my bat!" Jimmy Silver had little hope now that Mornington would do the decent thing, as he termed it. He was almost inclined to explain to Mr. Bootles himself how the matter stood; but that was not quite feasible. He gave Morny a grim look when they went into the Form-room for morning lessons, and the dandy of the Fourth came to him.

"You've decided not to play me to-day, Silver?" Mornington asked. "Quite!" said Jimmy curtly.

"Why lose two men instead of only

'Grace can take your place pretty well; and you know that you ought



Kit Erroll was about to rub the chalked caricature from the door when Mr. Bootles loomed up in the doorway. The Form-master blinked at the junior over his glasses and then at the chalked figure. "So!" he exclaimed. "So, Erroll, this is your respect for your Form-master!" Wir. Bootles took it for granted that Erroll was the author of the caricature, as all the other juniors were in their places. "I-I was rubbing it out, sir!" stammered the junior awkwardly.

"Keep the cad pinned!" said Jimmy Silver. "Hallo! Keep off, Erroll, you ass! What do you

Erroll, with pale, set face, shoved into the group. "Let Morny alone!" he said.

"He's my pal, and I'm standing by him. Let him go!" "You silly ass! Stand back!"

"Sheer off!" Erroll shoved on, and four or five fellows collared him, rushed him back to his bed, and hurled him upon it, breathless. Then they gathered round Valentine Mornington again.

The 5th Chapter. A Form Ragging!

Mornington stood in the midst of his captors, his face flushed grimson, and his eyes glittering. He was still feebly resisting, and the juniors had to keep a firm grasp on him. But no cry had left Morny's lips. One shout would have brought a prefect to the dormitory; but Morny did not | think of uttering it. Wilful and wrong-headed as he was, he was "game" all through.

"Now, you silly, cheeky ass!" said Jimmy Silver grimly. "Now you're going to get your ragging! You'll get it till you give your word to own up to Bootles in the morning. Lay him across his bed, you fellows! Did you bring the slipper, Newcome?"

"Hang you! Let me go! Hang | "The cheek; rotter hasn't yelled yet. It's like his cheek not to yell!" Jimmy Silver hesitated.

Fifty "whacks" with a slipper was a severe punishment, and he would have given a good deal for Morny to abandon his attitude of wrong-headed, obstinate defiance. But nothing, evidently, was further from Mornington's thoughts.

"Am I to go on?" asked Newcome. "A dozen more," said Jimmy Silver

The slipper rose and fell. Still no sign from Mornington-no sign and no sound. Newcome gave. the last strokes lightly, in spite of himself. He was as exasperated as anyone by the obstinacy of a fellow who was utterly in the wrong; but he could not help admiring Morny's grim pluck and endurance.

"That will do," said Jimmy uneasily. "Let the silly ass go!" "But he hasn't promised-"

began Lovell. "If he doesn't, he shall run the gauntlet."

"Good!" Mornington was released, and he rolled, panting, off the bed, and stood ' rather unsteadily. Erroll came quickly towards him.

"Morny-" "Leave me alone!" muttered Mornington. "I won't promise, and I won't do anythin' I don't choose-not if I'm cut in pieces! So you can put that in your pipe and smoke it, Jimmy Silver!"

ing blows descending on him, and as he reached the end of the lines he staggered and fell. Erroll ran to his aid.

"Now-" began Lovell. Arthur Edward was interrupted. The door of the dormitory opened, and Bulkeley of the Sixth appeared in the doorway. "Running the gauntlet" was rather a noisy form of ragging, and the commotion in the dormitory had reached other ears.

"What the thump-" exclaimed Bulkeley angrily, as he surveyed the startling scene in the glimmering candle-light.

"Cave!" howled Putty. The juniors bolted to their beds, like rabbits to their burrows.

Tubby Muffin, thus providentially

rescued from the vengeance of Alfred Higgs, plunged into bed, and drew the blankets over him, bursting into a snore as he did so. Tubby thought that that snore showed great presence of mind.

Bulkeley strode into the dormitory. Only Erroll and Mornington remained out of bed. Erroll was helping his chum to his feet.

row after lights out?" demanded the captain of Rookwood. "Ahem! Only a-a-a little rag, Bulkeley," murmured Jimmy Silver. "Do you know it's nearly ten

"Well, what do you mean by this

o'clock?" snapped Bulkeley. "Ahem!" "Get into bed, Mornington, and

Erroll."

leaving you free to do what is right."

"Oh rats!"

previous day.

When lessons were over, and the sigh. Fourth-Form were going out, Mr. grace.

"Erroll!" "Yes, sir."

quietly. And he followed the rest out of the Morny had declined.

Form-room.

muttered fiercely to Mornington, in the passage.

pockets, whistling.

smiling face.

be enjoying it. gave their attention to preparations | Poole. Erroll gazed at them for a room. for the cricket-match. The Bagshot | minute or two, and then returned | "Yes, sir?" cricketers were expected at two, and | quietly to his desk. As he sat down, ! The some of the so

Published

Every Monday

Jimmy Silver turned his back on House doorway, watching the him with an amused grin. him, and went to his place. He had cricketers as they started for Little had enough of Mornington just then. | Side, with a clouded brow. It was not | cheery old Moses on the mountain, Mr. Bootles came into the Form- pleasant to give up a cricket-match room, and the buzz of talk among the on a sunny afternoon, for detention grinned Mornington. "Feelin' pretty juniors ceased. It was noticeable that | in a dusky old Form-room, and grind-Mr. Bootles had lost his usual ing Latin. And he knew, too, that urbanity in dealing with Erroll. He his presence was required on the had not forgotten the incident of the i cricket-field. But it could not be helped, and he turned away with a

He was in the Form-room at two Bootles called to the junior in dis- punctually, and Mr. Bootles came in a minute later and found him there. With a cold face and freezing voice, | tain amount to grind through." the Form-master set him his task. "You will come to the Form-room | Mr. Bootles was very much offended, | noon!" grinned Mornington, and he at two o'clock, and I shall set you and he did not conceal that fact. And strolled out of the Form-room whist- tion is, of course, cancelled." your task. You will remain till Erroll, painful as it was to him to fall ling. in the opinion of a master he liked | Erroll set patiently to work. "Very well, sir!" said Erroll and respected, could not explain. It was for Mornington to explain; and

"You will remain till five, Erroll!" "And you're going to let him be | concluded Mr. Bootles. "I shall exdetained, you utter rotter!" Lovell | pect your task to be completed by that time."

"Very well, sir!"

He walked away with his hands in his | Form-room. He came in to dinner later with a window, which gave a view of a part of the cricket-ground. The green to bear, as a rule; but to judge from figures, and a crowd of fellows was on the cricket-field. Morny's looks, he really appeared to gathering to watch the game. Bagshot had just arrived, and Jimmy

to be detained instead of Erroll. I'm | the game was to begin very soon | he became aware that the Form-room door was half-open, and that Morn-Kit Erroll stood in the School ington was standing there, regarding

> "Been lookin' at the cricket-like lookin' at the Promised Land!" down-what?"

"A little," said Erroll. "All my fault-what?"

"Yes." "Why don't you row with me?"

Erroll smiled. "I don't want to row, Morny. Clear off, there's a good fellow, and let me get to work. I've got a cer-

"Best wishes for a happy after-

He had always borne with his chum with a patience the other fellows found a little difficult to understand; and to join the cricketers; but his chum presence in the team was a sufficient perhaps, at this moment, Erroll wondered whether he was a little too patient with Mornington. Friendship, ever such deep and sincere friendship as his own, had its limits. Morning-Mornington did not seem to hear. Mr. Bootles rustled out of the ton was not likely to keep another friend. But that reflection was Erroll rose, and glanced from the enough to determine Erroll to be loyal to his trying chum. With a desk. clouded brow he worked at Latin; Unpopularity is not easy or pleasant | field was dotted with white-clad | but his thoughts were with the fellows | just goin' to begin!"

"Erroll!" Erroll started to his feet, as Mr. After dinner, Jimmy Silver & Co. Silver was greeting Pankley and Bootles came hastily into the Form-

"You foolish boy!" exclaimed Mr. I for a moment."

Bootles, in a moved voice. "Why did you not tell me the facts yesterday? I could not guess that you were shielding another!"

"Oh, sir!" gasped Erroll. "You—

Mr. Bootles gave him a very kind

"Mornington has just come to my study and confessed," he replied. "It seems that it was Mornington who chalked that disrespectful picture on the door, and you were only trying to save him from his foolishness, when I came in, and supposed You should have told me, Erroll!"

"I-I-" "However, I understand your motives," said Mr. Bootles kindly. "You may go, Erroll. Your deten-

"Thank you, sir!" stammered His face was very bright now.

It was not only that he was free had done the right thing; that was what made Erroll's face flush with pleasure.

Mornington followed the Formmaster into the room. Erroll's sentence had been transferred to him; he had expected that. He grinned at | come. his chum as Erroll came from his

"Glad you're goin' to play cricket?

Cut off, then!". "Glad you've done the right thing, story of Rookwood is entitled Morny, I was wrong to doubt you "Tubby Muffin's Treasure!" By

Morny's face softened.

"I was only keepin' it up, to show I didn't care for their silly raggin'. You should have known that

"I did know it, Morny-" "Mornington!" It was Mr. Bootles' voice.

"Yes, sir." Erroll hurried from the Form-room, with a last grateful glance at his chum. As he went, he heard Mr. Bootles' voice instructing Mornington in the task that was to occupy him till five o'clock. With a light heart, Erroll ran down to the cricket-field.

Jimmy Silver and Kit Erroll were at the wickets, in Rookwood's second innings, when Mornington strolled down to the cricket-field a few

minutes after five. "How's it goin', Newcome?" drawled Morny, joining that youth

by the ropes. Newcome nodded to him. Erroll's indication that Morny had done the right thing, and Newcome only wondered why he had not done it earlier.

"Thirty all in the first innings; second, Bagshot 40, Rookwood 37, and three wickets to fall!" said New-

"Good egg! We're goin' to win!" said Mornington cheerfully. "Oh, "Cut off!" he whispered. "They're | well hit, Erroll! Well hit, old man!" And Valentine Mornington joined "Morny, old chap, I'm awfully glad loudly in the ringing cheer that greeted the winning hit.

> THE END. (Next Monday's long complete Owen Conquest.)

A WALK ROUND THE WORLD

By LESLIE WILSON.

(A Splendid Series of Articles dealing with the Author's Experiences in Different Parts of the World.)

It is not for me to describe wonderful Australia to my readers; my job is to tell of my experiences, especially the more thrilling ones, and yet I would like to write about this beautiful country and all the many wonders to be seen there.

Going north through Victoria, I struck a farm that was a very wonderful place in its way, for though the farm was but a small one, it produced among other things-wheat, corn, lucerne hay, potatoes, pigs, apples, pears, lemons, oranges, cherries, olives, figs, grapes, and mulberries. This farm was in the irrigated country of Golburn Valley, and Northern Victoria is, I believe, the most splendidly irrigated country in the world.

When I recall the names of Seymour, Hangalore, Euroa, Violet Town, Baddagunne, and Benalla, I get a great longing to tell you of these pretty places, and the very good people I met in them. Euroa I arrived fairly done up, the I soles of my boots were gone, and my feet were in a dreadful state. The heat had by now tanned me a dark brown, and the grey dust of the road had penetrated my clothing to the skin. I badly needed a bath, a good rest, and a pair of new boots.

As I entered Euroa a vicious mongrel, on the principle of "hit a man while he is down," flew out at me from behind a cottage I was passing, and before I had realised what had happened he had fastened his teeth in my trousers at the back of my thigh, and had torn a piece about six inches square right out of the right leg. I turned swiftly, but was not smart enough, for the brute spun round in a flash, and with the cloth | tered with grasshoppers; that season in his evil mouth and his long tail | there was a very bad plague of them | tucked well down between his legs all over the country. As I tramped he simply faded out of sight in a lalong the road, or through the fields. cloud of dust down the long road.

successful attack of the canine enemy now came up to me, and courteously invited me to go on to his place, where the necessary repairs could be made. I accepted his kind offer, but when we came to a beautiful house, and I saw three young ladies playing croquet on the lawn, I felt simply face, my feet seemed to have sud- | tion, during the time I was actually | room, where I found the poor little vineyards. Sometimes the hill, as far | tore around the building like a

the toes of my right foot were fresh air fiends, and would persist in showing themselves-while my imagination became so acute that the hole in the back of my trousers grew so that by now the seat seemed all gone, and my hand not big enough to conceal the damage. But my new friend was a strategist worthy of the occasion, and got me into the house by methods that roused my admira-

Those three young ladies were daughters of my friend, and real trumps they turned out to be.

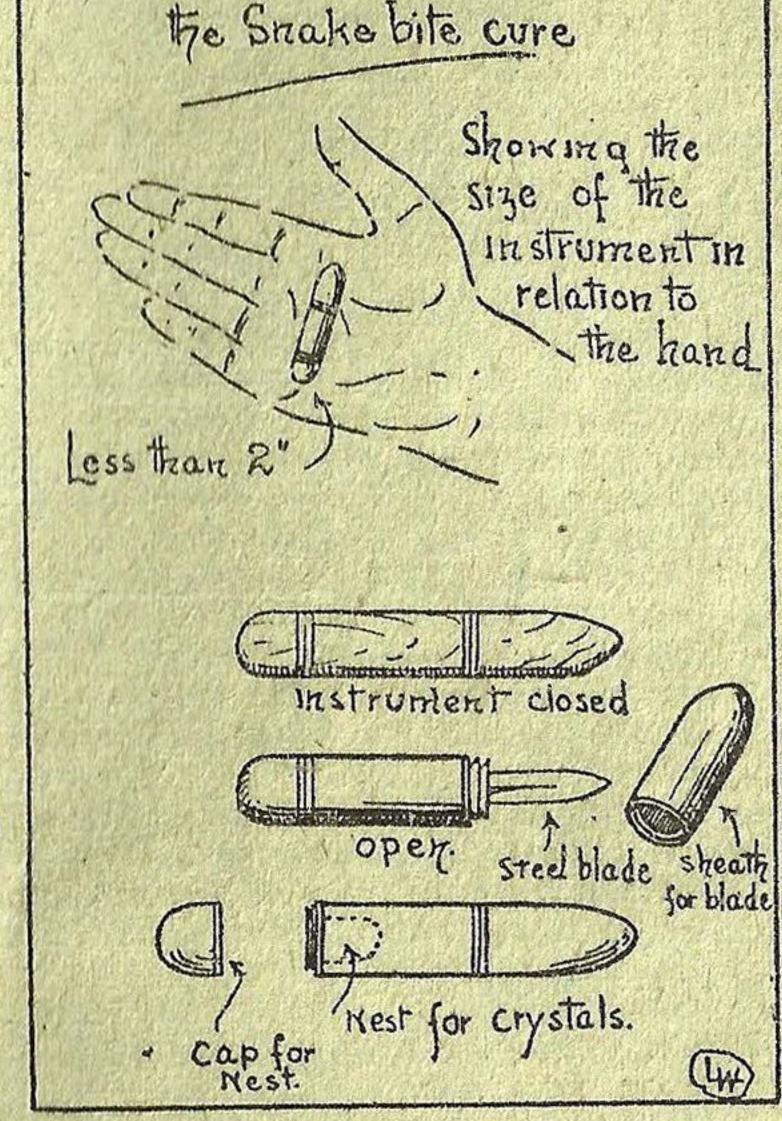
This gentleman was a prominent townsman, and through his energy and interest a lecture was arranged in a small public hall, where, a couple of nights later, I stood up and told the good folk of the town of the little walk I had already done, and what I hoped to accomplish. There were no expenses attached to my lecture, so the whole of the collection taken that evening was handed over to me untouched. I was able with the proceeds of this lecture to buy a new pair of boots, breeches, and other necessities, and when, a day later, I wanted to set off on the long trail again, my new friends would not hear of my leaving until my feet were in good condition-this, in their estimation, would be in about three weeks or a month's time. I gave my feet three more days, and one week after I entered Euroa I left again on the trail, well shod and decently clothed, but with sincere regrets-on both sides-at having to part from so many good friends.

Upon this road I was much pes-A gentleman who had seen the these insects, which would arise in a head in their flight. Hundreds of them would cling to my clothing, my bare arms and my face, and not only was there the unpleasant sensation of

dealy grown to elephantine size—all | walking in brushing the creatures off my flesh.

One hot, muggy day, as I was nearing a small farmhouse to ask for a drink of water. I noticed a man running toward the house with a child in his arms, at the same time calling out in agonising tones to someone within. I felt that here I was on the verge of witnessing a tragedy, and I broke into a run, in case I could be of some help.

A few seconds brought me to the house. At the same time the man whom I had seen running came to the door, seemingly in great distress,



the deadly bite of a snake.

my passage would disturb millions of and when he first saw me I noticed a look of relief pass over his face. In great and continuous cloud all around | a few hasty words he told me that me, striking me all over the body and his little son had just been bitten by would I mind waiting with his wife until he could fetch a doctor from the nearest township. I readily conthese insects striking me continually sented, and passed on into the house, in the face and on my arms, but I | while the farmer made his way to

fellow on a bed, supported by his as the eyes could see, would be hidden terrified mother.

Now, only a few days before this, I laden with luscious fruit. had had given to me by a gentleman | It was while in the wine district in, I think, Wangarratta, a remedy for snake-bite. This consisted of a small | that was on the border-line of double-edged, razor-like blade of steel, about five-eighths of an inch in length, fixed in a cylinder-shaped handle made of boxwood. A little wooden sheath fitted over the blade when not in use, and screwed on to the handle by a small thread corresponding in both parts. The handle was hollowed out at the bottom, and a little cap, which also screwed off, made a little nest or box in the handle. This hollowed-out part was filled with a disinfectant in the form of brown crystals, and the whole instrument was very neat and compact, and could be carried in a small vestpocket, being less than two inches in

Directly I saw the boy I remembered the precious instrument in my pocket, and, as every second was extremely precious, I rather roughly took charge of the boy from the mother, and, having by now the blade bare, ready for work, I took the little fellow's right hand in my left (the bite was on the back of the right wrist), getting his right arm under my left, so that he could neither see what I was doing or stop me.

I made a number of rapid incisions over and all around the bitten part, and then, applying my lips to the wound, I sucked it like a bat, and then rubbed the crystals into the cuts. I worked on the little fellow until I thought all the blood had been drawn out of his body.

I ordered the poor mother to make plenty of hot water and strong coffee; and, watching together from four o'clock in the afternoon until five o'clock next morning, when the the hand doctor arrived in charge of the husband, we were able to keep the little chap alive, awake, and in fairly good condition. .

Neither the doctor nor the husband -who, by the way, could not find a doctor at the first township, and had had to ride twenty-eight miles to the next place, a distance of fifty-six miles altogether—expected to find the boy alive. And when the professional every detail in a few brief seconds of man announced that with ordinary care the boy would soon be out of steel blade sheath danger, the pent-up feelings of the for blade young couple gave way, and I was glad to slip away, out into the fresh [mysterious look about it that under air of a new and perfect morning.

plimented me, and said that I had Only a few yards to go. But the who gave me the snake-bite cure; himself and his mother. While as for | tering with the cold. me, it was Fate that sent me to that of Fate.

It was just the season for grapes,

altogether under green vines heavily

that I had a fairly trying experience

was walking one day along a rather dangerous road, that at times approached the edge of a fairly deep gully, through the bottom of which flowed a swift and noisy river.

The sides of the gully where the road approached were very steep and dangerous, and there was no fence or rail to make the road more safe at these places. Indeed, at one or two parts, portions of the road itself had disappeared, gone in some recent landslide caused by heavy rainstorms.

It was about three o'clock in the afternoon, when the weather, which had been beautifully fine all the morning, suddenly changed.

Within a few minutes from very hot the atmosphere changed to bitter cold; the sky rapidly became overcast, until in a short time it was almost as dark as night. The air had a very slight movement, and in the distance I could see the storm approaching by the rapid play of lightning in the sky, and the far-off angry

murmur of thunder. I did not relish being caught on this road in a tropical storm, and therefore I quickened my pace, until at last L broke into a trot, all the while looking out for shelter. The storm was of such a violent nature that it was easy to mark its approach by the play in the heavens, and just as it seemed that I was destined to be caught I saw ahead, and a little on my left, a long, low building right up against the road. With feelings of thankful-

ness I raced for the shelter. Just as I reached within a few yards of the building a few heavy drops of rain fell; and then, as I was looking for some kind of entrance, a terrific clap of thunder broke very low, and just overhead. It was staggering in its shattering detonation, and I felt a little stunned and momentarily bewildered. And, before I could gather my wits, a flash of vivid sheet lightning lit the whole countryside up in an unearthly glare, and showed me the building before me.

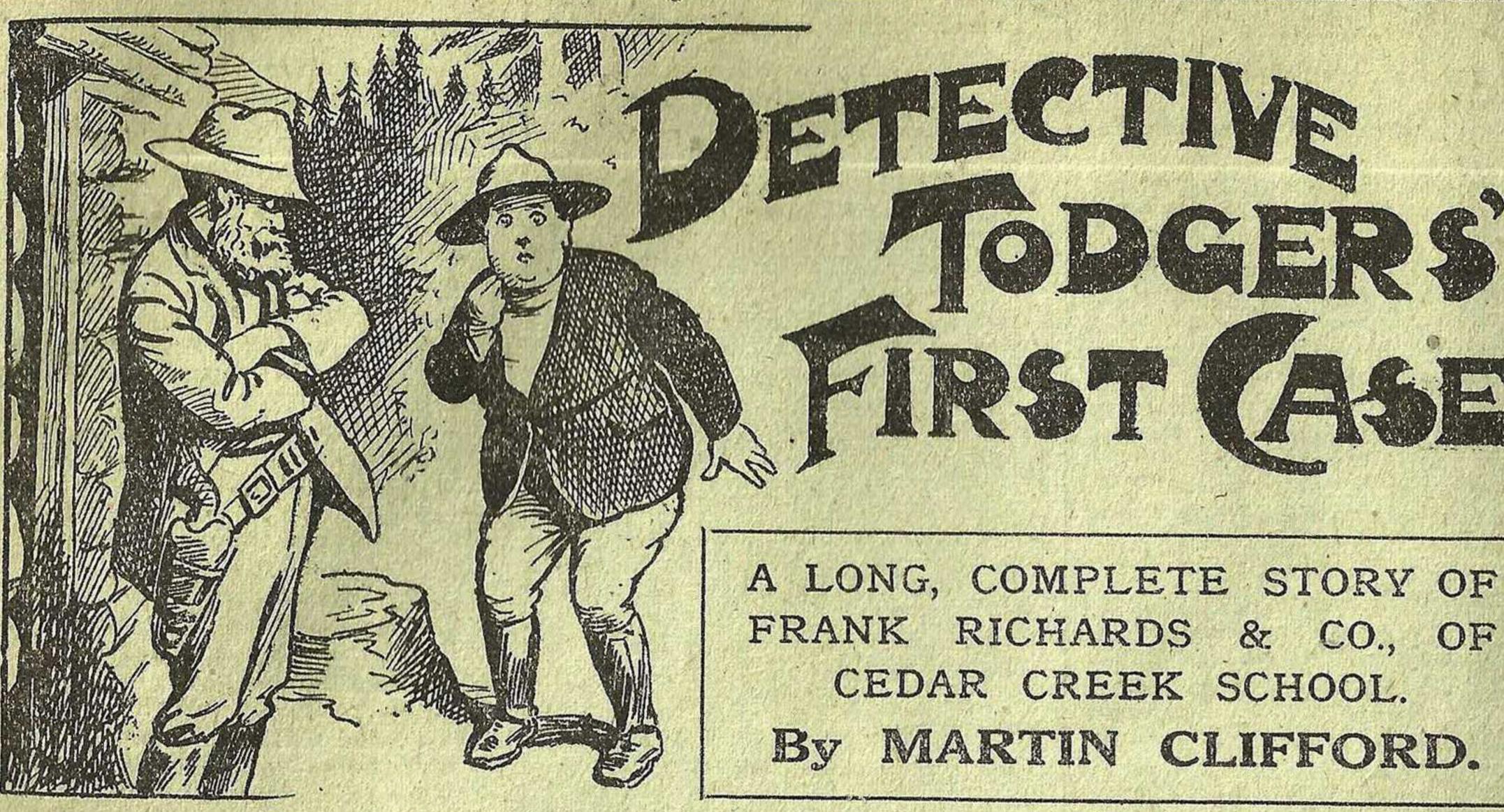
Even in that startled glance there seemed something sinister in the place. There was an old and those conditions I did not fancy. But The husband came out in a little | as the thunder and lightning had while and joined me. I will pass over seemed to have rent the very heavens the overwhelming gratitude that the in twain and let the rain out, I was A compact little outfit for combating | farmer and his wife showered on me. | glad to rush for the low doorway that The medical man warmly com- I had espied a few yards off.

saved the boy's life; but I think a | rain fell bodily in a solid mass, and good number of things contributed by the time I reached the door I was to that end. One, the good friend | simply sopped to the skin. My hat was gone, when and where, I knew a deadly snake, and he asked me the next, the pluck of the little fellow not, and already my teeth were chat-

I pressed against the door, and, homestead-I was but the instrument | much to my surprise, it opened, and

I stumbled inside.

The shrieking wind, that seemed rotten. The blood rushed to my was kept going, almost without cessa- the stables. I hurried into the front and hereabouts I passed enormous to have been released by the thunder,



The 1st Chapter. Chunky Starts.

"It's out!" Chunky Todgers met Frank Richards & Co. as they arrived at Cedar Creek School one sunny morning, with that announcement. There was a beaming smile on Chunky's fat face, and he held up a paper in his podgy hand—the latest number of the "Thompson Press."

"What's out?" inquired Frank Richards.

"My advertisement!" said Chunky Todgers loftily.

"Oh!" ejaculated the three chums together.

Important as that advertisement was to Master Joseph Todgers, it had been quite forgotten by Frank Richards & Co. Now, as Chunky held up the paper for inspection, they chuckled.

"Blessed if I see anything to snigger at!" said Chunky crossly. "I tell you I've been reading all about Foxy Ferrett, the detective, and I can beat him at his own game. If only a murder would happen in the Thompson Valley, you'd see that I'd got the gift. Didn't I find Molly Lawrence's watch when it was lost, owing to my wonderful skill?"

"Wasn't that an accident?"

grinned Bob Lawless. "Certainly not. I found a clue, and followed it up, and-and there you are!"

"What was the clue?" asked Vere Beauclerc.

"No good going into that; you fellows wouldn't understand," said Chunky Todgers. "I worked the riffle, and that's enough. I wish I could get a really serious case to handle-a murder, or a kidnapping, or something. But folks are so pesky law-abiding in this section. What do

ment?" Frank Richards & Co. surveyed it

you fellows think of the advertise-

with grinning faces. Chunky's latest "stunt" seriously as he took it himself, only moved his schoolfellows to merriment. The wonderful exploits of Foxy Ferrett, the detective in the latest novel from Gunten's Circulating Library, had moved the fat and fatuous Chunky to emulation. But there really was not much scope for an amateur detective at the school in the backwoods; and even along the valley, and out on the ranches, crime was almost unknown, which was rather a disadvantage for Todgers the Detective. Certainly, the other Cedar Creek fellows were not likely to credit Chunky's claims. They were only likely to chortle at

his absurdities. The advertisement was really striking. Mr. Penrose had put it quite prominently in the "Thompson Press," perhaps looking upon it as a good joke. Frank Richards had stood a dollar for the advertisement, after much persuasion from the enterprising Chunky. It ran, in evident imitation of advertisements Chunky had seen in newspapers from Chicago:

"THE DETECTIVE YOU WANT! TODGERS!

DO YOU WANT ANYBODY WATCHED?

LOST YOUR WATCH? LOST YOUR BONDS? LOST YOUR PET RABBIT?

CALL ON TODGERS! TODGERS DELIVERS THE GOODS!

Any kind of Detective Business Taken Up and Put Through. Write to Todgers, or Look In. TODGERS, CEDAR CREEK SCHOOL."

Frank Richards & Co. chuckled loud and long. How Chunky could I'll do it cheaper for personal friends. possibly expect anybody to come to a school for a detective was a mystery to them. Any citizen of the Thompson Valley who happened to want a detective was not likely to look for one in Miss Meadows' class at Cedar Creek. But that obvious fact seemed to be lost on Joseph Todgers.

"What are you cackling at, you silly jays?" Chunky demanded warmly. "Isn't that a jolly good advertisement?"

"Oh, ripping!" said Frank, laugh-

"Doesn't it touch the spot?" demanded Chunky.

"Ha, ha! Sure!" roared Bob Lawless. "Ha, ha, ha! Fancy Chunky watching anybody when he adjuncts of a detective.

"Ten dollars and expenses. But If you fellows have missed anything. I'll take on the case, and charge you only half fees. There!"

"You're too generous, Chunky," said Frank Richards, as seriously as he could.

"The fact is, I mean to be generous," said Chunky Todgers. "Besides, I want to show what I can do. Now, is there anything going? Have you fellows missed anything?" Frank Richards closed one eye at

his comrades. "Well, I missed something yester-

day," he said slowly. Chunky's eyes glistened.

He jerked out a notebook and a stump of pencil, being already provided with those indispensable

"A target."

"A-a what?" "A target," said Frank Richards cheerfully. "Bob stuck it up, you know, and we were practising with news for them.
our rifles. I missed it."

But on Frida

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Lawless. Chunky Todgers' face was a study

for a moment. "You-you pesky jay!" he exclaimed at last. "Do you mean that you were shooting at a target and missed it?"

"Exactly." "You silly ass!" roared Chunky. "That wasn't what I mean at all."

"It was what I meant," said Frank, chuckling. "You asked me if I'd missed anything, and I told you. Aren't you going to take up the case?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Chunky Todgers jammed the notebook and pencil back into his pocket, with a withering look.

"You silly chump!" "Hallo! There's the bell!" said

Vere Beauclerc. And Frank Richards & Co. strolled on to the lumber school-house, smilling; and the amateur detective of Cedar Creek followed, with a snort.

> The 2nd Chapter. A Very Injured Youth.

Chunky Todgers' latest stunt caused a good deal of merriment at Cedar Creek, and for some days there was much laughter on the subject, and Chunky received plenty of chipping from his schoolfellows. He bore it all with lofty serenity. He was waiting for his chance to come, and when that chance came he was going to show these doubting Thomases what his quality really was.

Unfortunately, the chance seemed a long time coming.

No doubt Chunky's famous advertisement had been read by a good

tive work was getting on, and whether Chunky had put Foxy Ferrett into the deep shade. But Chunky only replied with grunts. He had no

But on Friday, the last school-day of the week, he tackled Frank Rich-

ards & Co. after lessons. "I haven't had an answer to my advertisement yet, you galoots," he told them in the playground, with a very serious visage.

"Not really?" asked Frank. "Nope!"

"Did you expect any, you chump?" inquired Bob Lawless.

"The fact is, one advertisement isn't much good," explained Chunky. "You have to keep it up. You've got some money in the bank, Richards. I'm relying on you to see me through."

"Oh, my hat!"

Frank Richards' money in the bank seemed to haunt Chunky Todgers. Somehow Chunky seemed convinced that if a fellow had any money in the bank he, Joseph Todgers, had a good claim to some of it. Chunky was a little bit of a Socialist without know-

"My idea is this," said Chunky. "You come along with me to Penrose's office and fix it up., We'll arrange for a standing advertisement for six months-"

"Will we, by Jove?" ejaculated Frank Richards.

"Yep! That will only cost you about twenty-five dollars."

"It won't!" answered Frank. "If you're going to be mean-"

"I am, old scout!" "Of course, if you wanted to do the really proper thing you'd stand me, say, a thousand dollars," said Chunky. "What I really want is to take an office in Main Street at Thompson "Phew!".

"And furnish it with a roll-top desk, and so on, from Montreal, and engage a clerk-" "Oh crumbs!"

"And a typist. Then I could start in proper style."
"Ha, ha, ha!"

"'Tain't easy, beginning a serious business while a galoot's still at school, you know," said Chunky, with a sage shake of the head. "Has that just occurred to you?"

said Beauclerc, with a laugh. "And—and I can't begin at home," said Chunky. "I couldn't have my

clients calling there-" "Your what?" yelled Bob Lawless. "My clients. I couldn't have them calling there. Popper wouldn't understand. He might give me the cow-

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And it looks a bit unbusinesslike to give the school as my address in my advertisement, doesn't it?"

"Ha, ha! Just a few!" "So if Frank will do the decent thing and start me in an office in Main Street--"

"Fathead!" "Do you mean to say you won't Frank Richards?" demanded Todgers, with deep and sorrowful reproach.

"Yes, rather!" "You've got money in the bank

"It's staying there!" answered Frank Richards cheerfully. "Goodnight, Chunky!"

'Hold on! I haven't finished yet, you---' "We have!" answered Frank.

And the chums of Cedar Creek departed. They did not see Chunky Todgers

again till Monday. On Monday at Cedar Creek the fat youth was looking less cheery than of yore.

He met the Co. with a reproachful look, more of sorrow than of anger.

Evidently he looked upon himself as an injured party. There was no advertisement of

Todgers, Detective, in the current number of the "Thompson Press." And Frank Richards had money in the bank! Those two facts taken together, impressed Joseph Todgers with a deep sense of injury. His wonderful gifts could not find

free play and bring him fame and fortune because Frank was keeping his money in the bank, instead of handing it over to Chunky! No wonder Master Todgers looked sorrowful and reproachful.

Naturally, Chunky was not silent about his injuries, especially as he was much given to chinwag.

The following day Frank was surprised when Molly Lawrence asked

"What have you been doing to Chunky?"

"Nothing that I'm aware of," answered Frank. "Is anything the

matter with Chunky?" "He says you've treated him badly,"

"Does he?" ejaculated Frank. "He's telling all the school," said



Two masked men rushed in at the doorway, and Todgers went spinning to the floor. His red-bearded client bolted out of the window. Two men in rough homespun were bending over the startled Chunky, their black beards showing undernoath the crape masks. "Slay him!" growled one, flourishing his dummy revolver. "Yowow-ow-d-don't!" howled Todgers. "Yoop! Keep off!" "Tis Todgers, the detective! Slay him!"

can be seen a mile off! You're rather too fat for a shadower. Chunky. You're more substance than shadow."

"You watch out!" said Chunky disdainfully. "You wait till I get my chance. There may be a robbery at the bank in Thompson, or the Red Dog crowd may go on the rampage and shoot somebody; then you'll see me wade in and nail the man. You watch out!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "I guess I'm expecting some answers to this advertisement. I'll take up any case to begin. Of course, I can't expect a murder to happen around here just to please me."

"Nunno! That would be expecting a lot," chuckled Frank Richards. "I-I suppose you fellows haven't missed anything lately?" asked Chunky.

"Missed anything?" "Yes. I guess I'll undertake to find any lost property for you—at the

usual fees." "The usual fees!" grinned Bob Lawless. "What are they?"

"I'm your man!" he said briskly. "Let's have the details. You missed something yesterday?"

"Where, and when?" asked Chunky, in the brisk, snappy manner that was Foxy Ferrett to the life.

"After I got home yesterday," said Frank.

"What time?" "About six."

"Where did it happen?"

"About a hundred yards from the ranch-house, on the prairie." "What did you miss-some pro-

perty?" "Yes; not mine. It belongs to Mr. Lawless, my uncle."

"That's all right. I'll find it for him," said Chunky Todgers. "Now, give me an exact description of the article missed."

"It was round," said Frank Richards gravely, while his comrades chuckled. "About eighteen inches in circumference."

" Yes?" "Marked with painted circles." "What on earth was it, then?"

many of the Thompson folk-most of them, probably, taking it for a joke of the editor of the "Thompson Press." If anyone took it seriously he did

not call on Chunky for his services. Indeed, if any Thompson "galoot" had wanted a detective, it was very improbable that he would have called at Cedar Creek for one.

The week slipped by, and Detective Todgers had not had a "case" placed in his hands.

For some days Chunky lived in hope, but as day followed day without the advertisement bearing fruit he became rather more serious.

It was true that there were no murders or bank robberies in the Thompson Valley, nothing that Foxy Ferrett would have cared to handle. But Chunky was prepared to take up the case of a lost dog or a missing shirt. Even such trifling cases did not come his way. It really began to look as if the Cedar Creek detective was born to blush unseen and waste his sweetness on the desert air.

Frank Richards & Co. inquired levery now and then how the detec-



Molly. "I suppose it is only his nonsense!"
Frank stared.
"I'm blessed if I know that I've done anything!" he said. "I'll ask the fat duffer. Thank you for telling me."

And Frank Richards looked for

And Frank Richards looked for Chunky.

He found him addressing two or three fellows by the porch of the lumber schoolhouse, and as Frank came up Chunky was saying:

"Mean, I call it! I'd never really have thought it of Frank Richards; but he's treated me very meanly—jolly near dishonestly, in fact—"

"What's that?" roared Frank.

Todgers jumped.

"Oh, I didn't see you, old chap!" he stammered. "I—I was just telling these fellows that—that—"

"That Richards treated you meanly and swindled you!" grinned Eben Hacke.

"Now, v, what have I done, you fat demanded Frank, glaring at Chunky

Chunky. Chunky glared back.

"You know what you've done!" he retorted. "Keeping money locked up in the bank when a chap's badly in need of the use of it—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed Shylock, I call you!" said Todrers.

Todgers. "Why, you—you—"

Frank.

dollars "Only!"

"Only!" roared Hacke. "Only a thousand dollars? Is that all, Chunky?"
"That's all. And, of course, I should pay it back in a few weeks. But Richards is so jolly mean—Yaroocooh!"
Chunky was cut short as the exapperated Frank caught him by the toolar.

Chunky was cut short as the exasperated Frank caught him by the collar.

collar.
Rap, rap, rap!
Chunky's bullet head was rapped on the porch three times, and there were three separate and fiendish yells from Joseph Todgers.
Then Frank walked away with a flushed face.
Chunky rubbed his head.
"Ow! Wow! Oh dear!"
And for some time Chunky was too busy rubbing his head to proceed with his recital of the sins of Frank Richards.

The 3rd Chapter. A Client at Last.

"Hallo! What's the row?"
"Anything up, Frank?"
Bob Lawless and Vere Beauclerc spoke together as they met Frank in the playground. Frank Richards' face was flushed, and for once he was leaking quite angry.

looking quite angry.
"That idiot Todgers—" growled

"That idiot Todgers—," growled Frank.

Bob chuckled.
"What's he up to now?"
Frank Richards explained, and, rather to his annoyance, his chums burst into a roar of laughter.
"It's not such a joke," he exclaimed. "That silly ass is going round telling everybody that I've treated him meanly, because I don't take my money from the bank and give it to him! Jevver hear of such an ass?"

an ass?"
"Just like Chunky!" chuckled Bob.

"Just like Chunky!" chuckled Bob.
"The silly ass!" said Beauclerc.
"He can't help being a born idiot!
He will get fed up with this stunt in
the long run. He always does."
"I guess I've been thinking about
that!" said Bob Lawless. "Chunky
hasn't had any answers to his advertisement. Nobody has put any cases
into his hands. It's rather a shame.
I've been thinking that it's about
time he had a case."
"Fathead! How could he have a
case?"

The been thinking that it's about time he had a case."

"Fathead! How could he have a case?"

"We might find him one."

"Ass! Nobody would give a schoolboy a case, would he, even if there was anything doing."

"Yes, we might. My dear chap, you're dense!" said Bob. "Lend me your ears, as we say in the play. It's some time since the Cedar Creek Thespians did any stunts. We used to be rather strong on theatricals."

"What the dickens—"

"You can make up, old chap. Why

"N. O. Boddie."

"Oh Jerusalem!" murmured Chunky Todgers, almost in ecstacy. "I wonder what Bob Lawless would say if I showed him this? Isn't it ripping? I've a good mind to show him, too, but Mr. Boddie says it must be strictly secret. I've a good mind though. But I'll show him later. I —I wonder what fee I shall get?"

When the bell rang for afternoon lessons Chunky Todgers seemed to be walking on air, as he entered the lumber schoolhouse.

The Cedar Creek detective was in the seventh heaven of delight.

DETECTIVE TODGERS' FIRST CASE!

(Continued from the previous page.)

not make up as a client for Chunky Todgers, and give him a

Frank started.

"My hat! What a wheeze!"

"If it fed him up with his detective stunt it would be all to the good. And it would be fun,

the good. And it would be fun, anyway."

Frank Richards chuckled.
The three chums strolled out to the bank of the creek, there to discuss the scheme unheard by other ears.

They were smiling when they came in to afternoon lessons.

They smiled still more when they saw Chunky Todgers, unimpressed by his reproachful and scornful looks. Chunky was still labouring under his deep sense of injury.

The next day there was a surprise for Chunky Todgers.

Cedar Creek School had been dismissed from morning lessons, and

for Chunky Todgers.

Cedar Creek School had been dismissed from morning lessons, and most of the fellows were in the playground, when a tattered figure stalked in at the gates. It was Injun Dick, the old Apache, who carried half the messages for the citizens of Thompson Town. The old Redskin looked round the crowded playground, and came towards Joseph Todgers.

There was an envelope in his dusky hand.

Chunky Todgers started as he saw him, and his face flushed with newborn hope. Was it possible—

"That for me, Injun Dick?" he exclaimed eagerly.

The Apache nodded.

"Letter for little white chief," he said. "You give Injun half-dollar!"

"I—I say, I'll—I'll settle later. Give me the letter!"

Injun Dick drew the letter back from Chunky's eager grasp.

"No pay, no letter!" he said tersely.

"Oh dear! Frank Richards! I

"No pay, no letter!" he said tersely.

"Oh dear! Frank Richards! I say, Franky, old chap, lend me half a dollar!" gasped Chunky. "There's a letter for me. I feel certain it's from a client!"

"Right-ho!" said Frank, with a laugh. "Here you are!"

He tossed a couple of quarters to Chunky, who handed them to the Redkin, and took the letter. Injuniangh. "Here you are!"

He tossed a couple of quarters to Chunky, who handed them to the Redkin, and took the letter. Injuniangh. "Here you are!"

Hulf a dozen follows grathered blanket round him, and strode away. Chunky tore open the envelope with eager fingers.

tore open the envelope with eager fingers.

Half a dozen fellows gathered round him as he read the letter.

"Well, what's the news?" asked Bob Lawless. "Is it a client at last?" Chunky looked up with a serene countenance,

"Yep!" he answered.

"Gammon!" said Eben Hacke incredulously.

"You'll see later!" said Chunky Todgers haughtily. "At present I'm bound to keep this letter a secret. My client insists upon secrecy."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Hacke.

"You can cackle!" snorted Chunky Todgers. "You watch out, that's all." And Chunky rolled away, to peruse the precious epistle again in privacy.

Frank Richards & Co. looked at

peruse the precious episco. Le privacy.

Frank Richards & Co. looked at one another, and grinned. Evidently the bait had taken.

Chunky Todgers withdrew to a secluded quarter of the playground, and read his letter with gloating eyes. It was a "case" at last.

There could be no doubt about that, for the letter ran:

for the letter ran:

"Dear Sir,—Seeing your advertisement in the 'Thompson Press,' I should be very glad if you would grant me an interview on important business. It is a matter of life or death, and the strictest secrecy must be maintained. I dare not come to the school, for reasons which I will explain later. Can you meet me after school, say, at six o'clock in the timber? I will wait for you in the old clearing near the school. Then you can tell me if you are willing to take up the case.—Yours truly,

"N. O. BODDIE."

Not only was there a "case" in his hands at last, but it was a deeply-mysterious case, involving the

THE BOYS' FRIEND

mysterious case, involving the strictest secrecy.

If Chunky had selected a case for himself, according to his taste, he could not have selected a more agreeable one.

Who Mr. Boddie was, he had no idea. He pictured some hapless person beset by secret enemies, or involved in the mazes of some fearful mystery, exactly the kind of case that Chunky was keen to handle!

It was not easy to put his mind into lessons that afternoon. In fact, he could scarcely keep patience with Miss Meadows.

Lessons seemed a shocking waste of

Lessons seemed a shocking waste of time, in the mysterious and exciting

circumstances.
But school was over at last, and the detective of Cedar Creek was free.
Frank Richards tapped him on the shoulder as he rolled out of the school-

house.
"You're looking very chippy, old fellow," Frank remarked, with a

Chunky Todgers gave him a lofty

He was not in need of assistance now to begin his career as a detective. His first case, which was going to be a great success, would start him, and Chunky already saw fame and fortune ahead of him in his mind's eye!

"Don't stop me, Richards," he said.
"I'm rather busy!"

"Don't stop me, Richards," he said.
"I'm rather busy!"
"Why, what's on?"
"I've got a client to see," answered
Chunky Todgers calmly.
"Oh! My hat!"
"A chap in difficulties, rather
mysterious circumstances," said
Chunky carelessly. "I may tell you
all about it later. At present I'm
bound to keep the strictest secrecy."
"Gammon!" murmured Bob Lawless.

less.
Snort from Chunky Todgers.
"You'll see whether it's gammon!"
he said. "Later on I may be able to
tell you. At present, mum's the
word! Go and chop chips!"
And Chunky Todgers rolled away,
with his fat little nose very high in
the air.

And Chunky Todgers rolled away, with his fat little nose very high in the air.

Bob Lawless chuckled.

"May as well get a move on," he remarked. "It will take some time getting ready for dear old Chunky."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Frank Richards & Co. did not ride home as usual after school. They led it will take some time getting ready for dear old Chunky."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Frank Richards & Co. did not ride home as usual after school. They led their horses out on the trail, and rode about a quarter of a mile, and then turned into the timber.

Meanwhile, Chunky Todgers was hanging about Cedar Creek.

As his mysterious appointment at the old clearing was not till six, he had plenty of time on his hands.

It was not till the last fellow had gone that Chunky Todgers led his pony out of the gates, and walked through the timber towards the old clearing, at a short distance from the school. He left his pony tied on the trail, and tramped into the clearing on foot. His heart was thumping with excitement as he approached the ruined hut in the clearing. And at the sound of a movement in the hut, he jumped.

The 4th Chapter.

The 4th Chapter. A Very Thrilling Case.

"Ha!"

It was a sudden exclamation.
In the doorway of the old cabin a figure suddenly appeared, and Chunky Todgers started back a little.
His eyes simply devoured the stranger.
He saw rather a short, stout "galoot," dressed in shabby buckskin, his face almost hidden by a thick red beard, moustache, whiskers, and eyebrows. A ragged Stetson hat was pulled down over the brows.
"Ha, Todgers, the detective!" exclaimed the stranger.
"That's me!" said Chunky.
"Enter!"
The red-hearded pilgrim stepped

"Enter!"
The red-bearded pilgrim stepped back from the doorway, and Chunky Todgers went into the cabin.
His heart was still thumping.
As a matter of fact, Chunky was feeling a little nervous. The red-bearded man did not look a very pleasant or peaceable individual, and Chunky noted with some uneasiness that a big Colt revolver was sticking in a leather holster attached to his belt.
But, after all, what was there to be

belt.

But, after all, what was there to be afraid of? This was his client—the mysterious client who was in need of his professional assistance. Surely there was nothing to be afraid of, "Todgers, the detective," repeated the red-bearded pilgrim, fixing his eyes upon Chunky.

"Sure!" answered Todgers. "I've kept the appointment, you see," Out came the notebook and pencil.

"Now, let me have a few details, Mr. Boddie."

Boddie."

He sat down on a log in an easy attitude, and wetted the stump of pencil ready for business.

"Listen!" said the red-bearded man, in a deep voice. "Listen, Todgers! I am in peril! Deadly foes are seeking me!"

"Good!"

"What?"

"I-I mean Um in the same seeking me."

"Good!"
"What?"
"I—I mean, I'm just the man you want," said Chunky. "Give me the details of the case. Who are you?"
"I am the rightful heir to a dukedom in the old country. My wicked uncle seeks my life."
Chunky's eyes glistened.
He could not possibly have been offered a case more to his taste. From the novels in Gunter's Circulating Library he knew all about rightful heirs and wicked uncles.
"Even now," continued the ducal heir, "even at this moment, while we speak, they are seeking me. Did you see any masked men in the wood?"
"Nunno." Nunno."

"Nunno."

"I am assured that they are at hand. At any moment they may find me—and you! Your life will not be worth a moment's purchase."

"Oh!" ejaculated Chunky.

The Cedar Creek detective cast a rather uneasy glance round him.

A thrilling and mysterious case was very attractive, but it semed to have its drawbacks, too. Chunky Todgers was prepared to solve any mystery, big or little, but he had no desire whatever to fall in with a gang of blood-thirsty emissaries of a wicked uncle. Chunky placed a very high value upon his skin.

"But you are not afraid?" exclaimed the red-bearded man.

"Nunno! N-n-not at all!"

"Then hear my story."

"G-g-go it!"

The red-bearded man gave a sudden start.

"Ah! They are here! I fly!"

The real scarce of the ruined was through the window aperture of the ruined cabin, and disappearing into the wood. Chunky Todgers jumped to his

feet.

Two masked men rushed in at the doorway and crashed into him, and Todgers went spinning to the floor.

"We have him!"

"Slay him!"

He sprawled on his back, with a heavy boot planted on his chest,

"Slay him!"

heavy boot planted on his chost,
"Slay him!", "varcooch", roared Chunky
Todgers. "Help!"
He sprawled on his back, with a heavy boot planted on his chest, pinning him there.
His startled eyes blinked up at two masked faces that looked down on him.

His startled eyes brinked up at two masked faces that looked down on him.

Two men in rough homespun, with crepe masks over their faces, through the eyeholes of which their eyes glittered, were bending over him, and two revolvers glistened over him. Thick black beards showed underneath the crepe masks.

"Yoop! Keep off! I—I say—"
"Tis not he!" exclaimed one of the masked men. "Tis not the heir of the Duke of Ditchwater! "Tis another!"
"Slay him!"
"Yow-ow-ow! D-d-don't do anything of the kind!" howled Chunky Todgers. "I can tell you the sheriff will jolly soon be after you."
"Unit I—I—I—"
"Tis Todgers, the detective!" howled "Slay him!"
"Slay him!"

"I—I—I—"
"I—I—I—"
"II—I—I ain't a detective!" howled Chunky Todgers. "Honest injum, I ain't! I—I—I'm a schoolboy!"
"You lie!" exclaimed one of the masked men fiercely. "You are Todgers, the detective—the rival of Foxy Ferrett! You must die!"
"Slay him!" repeated the other masked man, whose vocabulary seemed to be somewhat limited. "Slay him!"
"Yow-ow-ow!"
"Tell me!" The masked man knelt on Todgers' plump chest. "Tell me, you dog! Whither is he fled—your client? The heir of the Dukedom of Ditchwater must die! Whither is he fled?"
It was certainly Chunky Todgers' duty, as a detective not to betray his client, but the Cedar Creek detective was too terrified to remember that just then. He pointed to the window. "He—he's vamoosed that way!" gasped Chunky. "I—I say, you get after him, and leave me alone! I—I'm giving up the case! I am, really!"
"Slay him!"
"Slay him!"
"You must die, Todgers!" said the

really!"
"Slay him!"

"Ślay him!"

"You must die, Todgers!" said the masked man solemnly. "We dare not let you live! With your wonderful abilities, your astounding sagacity, you will soon track us down and bring us to justice—"

"I—I won't! I swear I won't!" howled Chunky. "I'll let you off! I will, really! Oh dear!"

"Say your prayers!".

"Yaroooop!"

The masked man rose from Chunky's chest.
"You have one minute to live!" he said. "Make the most of it!"
"Slay him!"
"Yow-ow-ow!"
The two masked men stepped to the window, apparently forgetful of Chunky Todgers for the moment.
Chunky did not lose the opportunity.

Chunky did not lose the opportunity.

With one bound he was upon his feet; with another he had bundled out of the doorway, and was fleeing for his life.

"Ha! He has escaped—"
"Slay him!"
There was a rush of heavy footsteps in pursuit.

There was a rush of neavy locasters in pursuit.
Chunky fled frantically.
Through bush and briar he fled, breathless, panting, towards the trail, his heart thumping. His hat was gone, his hair blew out in the wind. Still behind him sounded those heavy footstans.

gone, his hair blew out in the wind. Still behind him sounded those heavy footsteps.

Never had Chunky Todgers put on such a burst of speed before.

He came bouncing out of the timber upon the trail, and staggered and fell from sheer breathlessness. From the trees behind him came a yell:

"Slay him!"

Chunky scrambled up wildly.

His fat pony, tethered on the trail, was browsing a few yards from him. Chunky bounded to the pony, dragged the trail-rope loose, and clambered frantically on the animal's back.

Without even stopping to get into the saddle, he howled to the pony, and started at a gallop up the trail.

Thud, thud, thud!

The frightened pony galloped off at full speed, with Chunky clinging breathlessly to his back. He had covered half a mile before he was able to drag himself into the saddle.

By that time there was no sound of pursuit behind.

The Cedar Creek detective had escaped!

Whether his client also had escaped was a question Chunky Todgers did

Whether his client also had escaped was a question Chunky Todgers did not even ask himself till he was safe within the fence of the Todgers' homestead.

And while the Cedar Creek detective was fleeing breathlessly for his life, two masked men and a redbearded pilgrim joined in the shadow of the timber, and roared with laughter.

They laughed so much that their masks and heards came off and if the bearded pilgrim joined in the shadow of the timber, and roared with laughter.

of the timber, and roared with laughter.

They laughed so much that their masks and beards came off, and if the Cedar Creek detective had been present then, he would not have needed the penetration of Foxy Ferrett to recognise Frank Richards

& Co.

"Oh dear!" gasped Bob Lawless.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Frank Richards took off his red
moustache and eyebrows, and wiped

his eyes.

"Oh dear! Poor old Chunky! I wonder if he will go to the sheriff and tell him there are assassins around in—"."

wonder if he will go to the sheriff and tell him there are assassins around in—,"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Looking for the rightful heir to the Dukedom of Ditchwater—,"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"We'd better clear," said Beauclerc, laughing. "Poor old Chunky!"

And having peeled off their outward garb, and became Cedar Creek schoolboys again, Frank Richards & Co. quitted the clearing. They had left their horses near at hand in the wood, and they mounted in a merry mood, and they mounted in a merry mood, and they mounted in a merry mood, and they were right.

There was no search for the masked ruffians. Chunky Todgers told his thrilling tale, but his thrilling tale was not believed. As Chunky persisted that it was true, Mr. Todgers had recourse to the family cowhide—and then Chunky held his peace.

But the next day at Cedar Creek Chunky told the tale again, amid roars of laughter. Of all Cedar Creek, Chunky was the only fellow who believed in the existence of the mysterious masked men and the rightful heir of the Dukedom of Ditchwater.

But he did not follow up the case. He had had quite enough, and he was content to leave the case just where it was, and to let the rightful heir take his chance without professional assistance. And he did not ask Frank Richards again to finance his start as a detective.

Chunky Todgers was tired of detective work—and Chunky's First

Chunky Todgers was tired of detective work—and Chunky's First Case was also his last! (There will be constituted to

(There will be another long complete story of Frank Richards & Co. next Monday, entitled "Bob Lawless" Folly!" By Martin Clifford. Be sure and read it!)