Are You a Lucky Winner?—Turn to Page 70 and See!

The BOSSIE TWENTY-SEVENTH YEAR!

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THREE HALFPENCE.

[Week Ending February 12th, 1921.

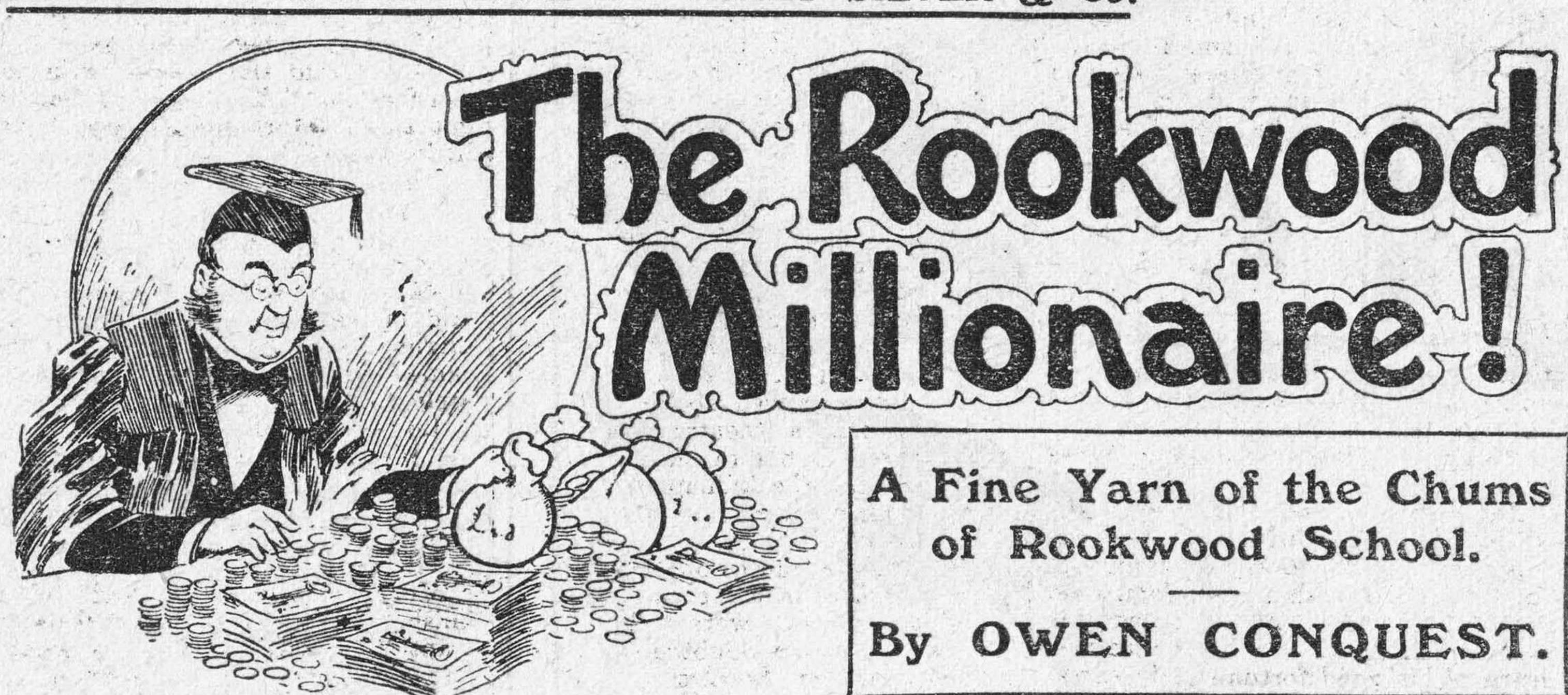


BACK TO SCHOOL!

With decorations flying, Chuta sitting on the bonnet, Snap barking, and various loud calls from the boys on top, the 'bus made its way through the London streets regardless of all speed limits. Don Darrel & Co. were going back to Eaglehurst School—and they meant it to be known!

New Story of Don Darrel & Co.—"The Schoolboy Multi-Millionaire!" APPEARS NEXT WEEK!

A LONG COMPLETE TALE OF JIMMY SILVER & Co.



The 1st Chapter

Looking after Bootles!

"Jimmy!" Arthur Edward Lovell of the Classical Fourth burst into the end study, his face flushed with excitement.

Jimmy Silver was sitting on the corner of the table in that famous study, laying down the law on the subject of the off-side rule to Raby and Newcome. Raby and Newcome possibly because they were consuming | that he came to no harm. toffee from a packet belonging to finished, the lecture would have to I finish as well. But as yet all was

"Jimmy!" throw-in-" said "From the

Jimmy. "Jimmy!"

"Dry up a minute, old chap," said Jimmy Silver, without turning his head. "I'm trying to lighten the darkness of these benighted duffers, so Yaroooh!"

Lovell's hand descended upon inquired Jimmy Silver succinctly. Jimmy Silver's shoulder, and he was whirled off the table quite suddenly. Jimmy just contrived to land on his feet. He had a narrow escape of landing on the back of his neck.

Then he spun round on Lovell in

great wrath.

"You howling ass!" he roared. "Have some toffee, Lovell," said Raby hospitably. "It's Jimmy's. Help yourself, old top!"

"Bother toffee now-" "And listen unto Uncle James expounding the off-side rule," grinned Newcome. "We're going to let him run on so long as the toffee lasts. The toffee's all right, at least!"

"Why, you ass-" began Jimmy Silver warmly. "Jimmy-" shouted Lovell.

"Fathead! Dry up a minute-" "Mr. Bootles-"

"Never mind Mr. Bootles now," said Jimmy Silver crossly. "I was just getting some sense into the heads of these duffers-at least, I hope I

"Mr. Bootles-" persisted Lovell. "Bother Bootles!" hooted Jimmy Silver. "What do you mean by howling Bootles, Bootles, Bootles, at a chap like that?"

"There's a man—" gasped Lovell. "A man, you know-a chap -a fellow with a long beard-come to see him!"

"Well, let him see him, and be jiggered!" said Jimmy Silver. "No. law against a chap with a long beard seeing Bootles that I know of!"

"Don't you savvy?" "No; dry up! Now," said Jimmy Silver, turning to the grinning Raby and Newcome, "I was just saying that--"

Lovell grasped his shoulder again. "You've got to listen to me, you ass!" he exclaimed.

"I never seem to be doing anything else," said the exasperated captain of the Fourth. "When it comes to jawbone solos, Lovell, you can beat anybody in the House of

Commons. Why not give your chin a rest?"

"About Bootles-" "Bless Bootles!" shrieked Jimmy

Silver. "What on earth about Bootles?" asked Raby, in surprise. "Has somebody been trying to kidnap the dear old gent again?"

"That's it!" said Lovell. "Oh!" exclaimed Jimmy.

son or persons unknown, the previous looks.

week, to kidnap the master of the Fourth Form, was still much talked Raby of in Rookwood School. The Fistical Four, in the kindness of their hearts, had taken the Form-master under their protection-without acquainting him with the fact, naturally

Probably Mr. Bootles would not have been specially pleased at being taken under the wing of his four most | nearer view, anyhow." unruly pupils.

business. They were going to look were listening meekly and dutifully- after the little gentleman, and see

Already they had once distin-Jimmy Silver It was barely guished themselves-by collaring a possible that when the toffee was suspicious character they had found watching the school. True, it had turned out that the suspicious calm and bright; and Jimmy Silver | character was Inspector Sharpe, of was expounding his views with con- Rookham-watching over Mr. Bootles siderable eloquence, when Arthur for his own good! But a little error Edward Lovell burst in like a hurri- like that couldn't be helped; and the Fistical Four were not discouraged for long.

> If somebody was "after" Mr. Bootles again, Jimmy Silver & Co. were quite prepared to chip in.

> "Go it—tell us all about it, old top!" said Newcome. "I'll finish the toffee while you're burbling!" "There's a man-"

"Which, who, where, and what?"

"A man asking to see Bootles," said Lovell. "I've just seen him in l the hall. Johnny with a long beard. Might be disguised—you know that scarred villain who attacked Bootles had a false beard? Tupper's just taken his name in-and if Bootles sees him-"

"He may seize Bootles!" suggested Newcome, venturing on a pun. But Lovell was too excited to heed this feeble effort at humour.

"If Bootles lets him in, he may be landed," he said. "You know Bootles hasn't been outside the gates since they tried to kidnap him. Now somebody's come to see him. It looks suspicious to me."

"But people have called on Mr. Bootles before now," objected Raby.

"This man's a stranger." "How do you know?"

"Because I heard him speak to Tupper!" said Lovell trimphantly. "His name is Tulkerton-"

"That sounds suspicious!" said Newcome gravely. "Chap oughtn't to go around loose with a name like

"Ass! He mentioned to Tupper that he was a stranger to Bootles, but said his business was important!"

Jimmy Silver looked thoughtful. "Well, Bootles is a good little ass, and we've made up our minds to look after him," he said. "Let's go down, anyhow. If it's a rotter after some mischief, we'll stop him fast enough."

"Shall we pull his beard and see if it'll come off, like Lovell did the inspector's the other day?" asked Raby innocently.

Arthur Edward Loyell gave a snort.

"If we're going to waste time lis- supposed. tening to Raby being a funny idiot | The high back of the chair was -- "he began.

"Oh, come on!" said Jimmy Silver.

way from the end study, and the Co. of the chair. followed him. They hurried along the passage,

and down the big staircase. sitting, with a little black bag rest-

features, very sharp eyes, and a long, | that whistled round the ancient pile straggling white beard. His lips were of Rookwood. Some minutes elapsed thin and straight, and seemed to shut | before Mr. Bootles arrived. Apparlike a vice. The Fistical Four, taking a to finish his chat with Dr. Chishelm,

"Is that the johnny?" whispered

"That's the rotter!" said Lovell. his mind that Mr. Bootles' visitor was a rotter.

"I don't like his looks," commented Jimmy Silver. "Looks as if

But Jimmy Silver & Co. meant stairs, and passed within easy dis- were conscious of the very best in- "Not only possible, but true," said tance of the waiting visitor, and went along the passage.

Mr. Talkerton did not take the slightest notice of them.

Whether that was a suspicious circumstance or not, Jimmy Silver & 1 Co. could not quite make up their minds.

They moved on towards Mr. Bootles' study, in an undecided frame of mind. Tupper, the page, came along the corridor from the Head's study, and Jimmy Silver stopped

"Where's Mr. Bootles?" he asked. "With the 'Ead," said Tupper. "I been a-looking for 'im-man waiting to see 'im, sir. In a 'urry, if you don't mind, Master Silver!"

. "Hold on a minute!" said Jimmy. "Is Mr. Bootles going to see the

"Yessir; I'm to show 'im into the visitors'-room, sir." Tupper passed on.

Jimmy Silver turned quickly to his

"This way-quick!"
"What-"

"Buck up, and don't jaw, old

Jimmy hurried away, and his wondering chums followed him. It was into the visitors'-room that he led

"Cover!" said Jimmy hurriedly. "But-I say-"

the man, when Bootles sees him here," Jimmy explained, in a hasty whisper. "If he means mischief, we |

doesn't, well and good!" "But-" gasped Raby.

"Take cover, you ass! I can hear one in the room beside ourselves, Mr. astounded them as much as it had Tupper's hoofs in the passage now." There was a massive screen near the window, and Jimmy Silver darted be-

hind it, and his chums followed. They were only just in time. Scarcely had they vanished, when Tupper's voice was heard in the door-

"This way, sir!" And the page showed Mr. Tulker-

The 2nd Chapter. Mr. Bootles-Millionaire!

Jimmy Silver & Co. scarcely breathed.

Tupper stirred the low fire together, and placed an armchair near it for Mr. Tulkerton, and then quitted the room.

The visitor was left alone—as he

towards the screen, and Jimmy Silver, peering out from cover, caught just a glimpse of the bald spot on top The captain of the Fourth led the of the visitor's head, over the back

Evidently the bearded man did not suspect that there were four keen and excited watchers in the room.

On a seat in the lower hall, a Mr. Tulkerton blew his nose, there has never been any special affecgentleman dressed in rusty black was | sniffed, coughed, and put out his feet to the fire. It was a cold day, and man, and did not care for family ties. ing on his knee. He had very sharp | there were flakes of snow in the wind | I have had no news whatever of him | ently that gentleman had remained Jimmy Silver was serious at once. | strategic survey of the possible enemy | before attending to his visitor. But The attempt on the part of some per- | over the banisters, did not like his | his footsteps were heard approaching | the visitors'-room at last.

The door opened, and Mr. Bootles came in. The plump little gentleman blinked inquiringly at his visitor over his glasses.

"Mr.—er—Tulkerton?" he asked. "Yes, sir. Mr. Bootles, I presume?" said Mr. Tulkerton, rising to his feet.

"Precisely!"

"No doubt you are surprised by this call on my part."

"A little, certainly," answered Mr. Bootles, advancing towards the fire, but keeping at a certain distance from the visitor. Since his amazing advenwas very chary of strangers. "I do you, by his will." not remember having had the pleasure of meeting you before."

"You have never met me before," said Mr. Tulkerton. "But I have important business with you, notwithstanding."

"Indeed!" Behind the screen, Jimmy Silver &

Co. exchanged a glance.

They were growing more and more suspicious of this mysterious Mr. Tul-

It was very odd, at least, that a man who had never seen Mr. Bootles Arthur Edward had already made up | before should have important business with him.

It occurred to Jimmy-rather late, certainly—that the Co. had placed topmost point of his ambition. themselves in the position of eaves- A millionaire! he would bite like a rat. Let's get a | droppers, if the visitor was bona-fide | after all. That reflection was rather Bootles, at last. "Is-is-is it The Co. descended the rest of the | an uncomfortable one, though they | tentions. If the man turned out to be one of the kidnapping gang, their conduct was certainly above reproach. But if he didn't-"

These reflections came too late, as reflections sometimes do. The Fistical Four were in for it now.

"You may wonder why I did not write," resumed Mr. Tulkerton. "I preferred a personal interview for many reasons."

"I know the reasons, you rotter!" murmured Lovell, sotto voce. "But we've got an eye on you!"

"Shurrup!" breathed Jimmy Silver.

Mr. Tulkerton was glancing round. Perhaps he had heard a faint sound. "We are alone, Mr. Bootles?" he

"Quite sir."

"I thought I heard a sound-"

"The wind probably. Please come to business, Mr. Tulkerton," said the Fourth Form master. "Lunch will be announced soon-"

"Quite so. I preferred to see you personally; it will be necessary for your identity to be clearly established. Mr. Bootles. I shall refer to the headmaster on that point, before I leave. Prepare yourself, sir, for very startling news.'

"Really, sir-"

"My card, Mr. Bootles, has informed you that I am a solicitor." "We're going to keep an eye on "A blessed lawyer!" whispered Lovell. "I knew he was a wrong

"Upon my word! I am sure I shall be on the spot-see? If he heard something!" exclaimed Mr. Tulkerton, who evidently had very sharp ears. "There is certainly some-

> Bootles!" Jimmy gripped Lovell's arm. "Not at all!" said Mr. Bootles. backing a pace farther away from his visitor. "You seem very particular on that point, Mr.-er-Tulkerton. I should be very glad if you would ex-

> And Mr. Bootles leaned on the carelessly on the bell-push. Mr. Bootles had been in a twitter of nerves ever since the kidnappers' attack; and he was beginning to regard his mysterious visitor with considerable uneasiness. At all events, he did not mean to be taken by sur-

"As a solicitor," resumed Mr. Tulkerton, "I have had the honour of acting for your late uncle, Mortimer

"My late uncle!" repeated Mr.

"'Yes-he is now dead!" "Ah!"

There was a pause.

plain yourself."

"I am sorry to give you such dis. The 3rd Chapter. concerting news-" "I will be frank, sir," said Mr.

Bootles. "I have not seen my Uncle Mortimer for thirty-five years, and tion between us. He was a hard for a quarter of a century. He might have died that time ago, and I should have been none the wiser. I am not. therefore, upset by the news. I am sorry, that is all."

"There is more startling news to come, sir."

"Indeed!"

"Your uncle died in South Africa,

a rich man." "I was aware that he was a rich man," said Mr. Bootles. "I never expected any of his wealth to descend to me, however. He had another nephew-my cousin, Mortimer Stacey, who was named after him. Doubtless

he is my uncle's heir." "Quite a mistake, my dear sir," said Mr. Tulkerton. "Mortimer Stacey, unfortunately for himself, went to the dogs, and for many years past Mr. Mortimer Bootles refused to have any dealings with him. Your ture with the kidnappers, Mr. Bootles | uncle's fortune descends wholly to

> "What-what?" "One million pounds, sir!" said Mr. Tulkerton impressively.

Mr. Bootles jumped.

"Are you serious?" he stuttered. "Undoubtedly! That is the news I have brought you," said Mr. Tulkerton. "You are a millionaire, sir!"

Mr. Bootles sank feebly into a seat. He was quite overcome.

It was, indeed, startling news to a little gentleman whose life had been spent in retired scholastic shades, who found difficulty in putting aside a yearly twenty-pound note as a provision for his old age, and who looked forward to a headmastership as the

"Bless my soul!" gasped Mr. possible? What-what?"

Mr. Tulkerton, with a smile. "You are now worth well over one million pounds, sir, as I shall have pleasure in demonstrating to you when you honour me with a visit at my office in London. That will be necessary, of course, as there are steps to be taken

"But-but what of Stacey?" exclaimed Mr. Bootles. "I have not seen my cousin since childhood. I should not know him if I met him-

"He is cut off with one shilling in the will," said Mr. Tulkerton. "I may say that he deserves it. At the time of your uncle's death he was in prison for forgery, and was only released several days later. He is a thoroughly bad character, I am sorry

"He is, however, my relation," said the kind-hearted Mr. Bootles. "I shall certainly make a provision "That is as you wish, of course."

"Bless my soul! A million pounds!" said Mr. Bootles faintly. "Doubtless you will go through these papers with me?" said Mr. Tulkerton, opening his black bag.

"And if you can fix the date, fairly soon, for seeing me at my office--" "Most certainly! I-I will speak to Dr. Chisholm, and I have no doubt can see you to-morrow-to-day, indeed," said Mr. Bootles, getting animated. "I will return with you to London, if you wish. You will

"Very good!" Behind the screen Jimmy Silver & Co. stared at one another blankly. The news they had heard had

stay to lunch, and afterwards-"

astounded Mr. Bootles. But Arthur Edward Lovell pressed Jimmy's arm significantly.

"Spoof!" he whispered.

"Wha-at?" "It's a trick to get Bootles out of gates with him!" breathed Lovell. Jimmy shook his head.

"Really, sir, I am absolutely cermantelpiece, with one hand resting | tain we are not alone in this room!" exclaimed Mr. Tulkerton. "I am assured that I heard a distinct whisper!"

"Oh, my hat!" breathed Raby. Mr. Tulkerton rose to his feet, staring round him very suspiciously. He came towards the screen and looked round it.

"Upon my word!" he ejaculated. The next moment he threw the screen aside, and it crashed against

Mr. Bootles sprang to his feet in astonishment. Jimmy Silver & Co., with crimson faces, stood revealed.

Lovell Knows Better!

"What-what-" stuttered Mr. Bootles. "Oh dear!"

"Ha! Some inquisitive youths!" ejaculated Mr. Tulkerton. "Paul Prys-ha?"

"Silver-Lovell-you have dared

"Now we're in for it!" murmured Newcome. "Oh crikey!"

The unhappy four stepped forward. Mr. Bootles was fairly glaring at them over his glasses.

"Boys, I am surprised-shocked-

astounded! This-this petty inquisitiveness-this-this-"

Jimmy Silver's face burned. "We-we didn't listen, sir-" "What? You must have heard every word uttered in this room!" thundered Mr. Bootles.

"Only by accident, sir-" "Silver!"

"We-we came to look after you, sir," stammered Newcome.

"What-what?"

"Well, we thought that chap was one of the kidnappers, sir," said Jimmy, in desperation. "We-we were going to collar him if—if he tried any tricks, sir."

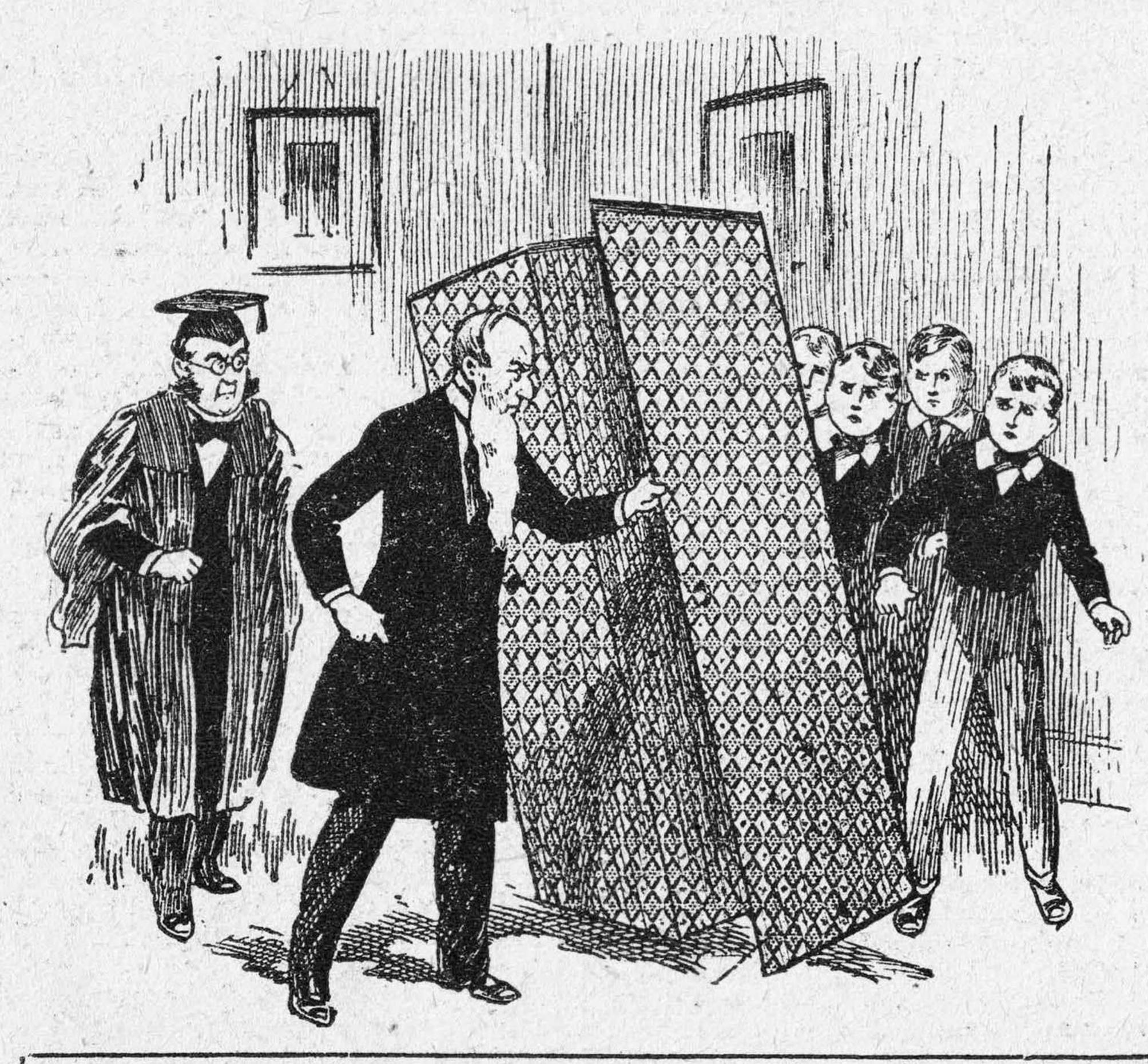
"If these boys saved you they have done you a very great service," said Mr. Tulkerton. "I should recommend forgiving them for their present very extraordinary action."

"Quite so, quite so! Silver, you may go! But if anything of this kind should occur again--"

The Fistical Four hurried out of the visitors' room without waiting for Mr. Bootles to finish.

They were glad to escape.

In the corridor they breathed more freely. The door closed on them, and in deep consultation.



Published

Every Monday

LOOKING AFTER BOOTLES! "What—what?" stuttered the Fourth Form master in surprise. "What are you boys doing here?" "We-we c-came to look after you, sir," stammered Newcome. "We thought this chap was a kidnapper! " said Jimmy, in desperation.

claimed Mr. Bootles.

Mr. Tulkerton blinked. "Kidnappers!" he repeated. "Is Raby, with a whistle.

the boy mad?"

made to kidnap me by two ruffians I to take care of him." utterly unknown to me. These boys "Gammon!" said Arthur Edward came on the scene and saved me- Lovell obstinately. which I suppose is their reason for "Eh? What's gammon?" asked this astounding act of impertinence." Jimmy.

The Fistical Four wriggled pain- "All gammon! There isn't any fully. It was rather hard lines to million quids, and that lawyer is a hear their generous devotion to their | sea-lawyer, and it's all a trick to get Form-master's interests characterised | Bootles out of Rookwood!" said as "astounding impertinence." Their Lovell. unhappy faces were the colour of would open and swallow them up.

through with this painful scene.

"This is—is very startling," said called it the obstinacy of a mule. Mr. Tulkerton, turning to the Form- | "Oh, that's rot!" said Jimmy demaster, evidently greatly interested. "An attempt to kidnap you-" "Yes, by two ruffians--"

"Unknown to you?" "Quite!"

"If you have their descriptions through."

"One was a man of about forty, with a scar on his face-"

"Your cousin Mortimer Stacey is a man of forty, with a scarred face," said Mr. Tulkerton drily. "Good heavens!"

chair again.

He understood now. And so did Jimmy Silver & Co. The amazing attempt to kidnap Mr. Bootles, which | said Lovell. "The road to the station had so perplexed Rookwood, was ex- is lonely at all times; more so in this plained at last.

Mr. Tulkerton grimly, "your uncle's Bootles and bagging him, if this fortune would pass to Stacey—as he is lawyer chap gets him outside the doubtless well aware. My client was | gates. That's what he's here for! You extremely bitter against him on ac- leave it to me," said Lovell concount of his conduct; but he did not | fidently. "I know a rascal when I desire his money to pass out of the see him—and he's a lawyer, anyhow family, and, failing you, it goes to | -- " Lovell gave a snort. "It was

"Good heavens!" repeated Mr. | bonds that time-"

bad as he is," said Mr. Tulkerton. | as "furred law-cats." "But, in the event of your disappear- | "Lovell, old man, you're wandering ance, after a time death could be as. | in your mind," said Raby. "Let's go sumed in the courts, which would and see whether dinner's ready. I'm come to the same thing. I greatly hungry." fear, sir, that you have had a narrow | "Well, you can do as you like; but escape of falling into the hands of a I'm not going to let poor old Bootles villain, who would not have scrupled get nabbed," said Lovell. "Luckily. to keep you hidden in some obscure it's a half-holiday! I'm going to keep place in perpetual confinement, in an eye on them when they go." order to inherit your uncle's fortune." | "Bow-wow!" said Newcome.

"You utterly absurd boy!" ex- "Well," said Jimmy Silver, with a deep breath, "here's a go!"

"Fancy Bootles a millionaire!" said

"Good old Bootles!" said New-"There is—dear me!—some reason | come. "I'm jolly glad! He's a good in his observation, sir," said Mr. Llittle sort; though he isn't so grateful Bootles. "Last week an attempt was I as he ought to be for fellows trying

When Arthur Edward Lovell had an newly-boiled beetroots by this time. | idea in his head it was exceedingly They fervently wished that the floor | difficult for that idea to be got out again. There was what he considered But it didn't. They had to go the firmness of a rock in his character; his chums sometimes

> cidedly. "The yarn's true enough! F'rinstance, it's clear now that that scarred chap who tried to kidnap Bootles is his cousin Stacey, who gets the dibs if Bootles does a fade-

"Yes, that's very likely--" "It's certain, ass!" said Raby.

"I dare say. All the same, this Tulkerton is a spoofer, and he's trying to get Bootles into harm's way," said Lovell. "I'm quite sure that if Bootles goes out with him this after-Mr. Bootles sank limply into his noon that scarred chap and Gadger his pal will be waiting for him."

"My dear chap-" "Look what a chance they've got!" weather. Nothing whatever to pre-"In case of your death, sir," said | vent the rotters piling on poor old Mortimer Stacey." a lawyer who bolted with my father's

Bootles. Evidently Arthur Edward Lovell "Please do not infer that I believe | hadn't a high opinion of the gentle-Stacey capable of causing your death, | men whom the ancient poet described

opened, and Mr. Bootles came out | but undoubtedly Mr Bootles and the with the solicitor. The Fistical Four | lawyer from London were inside. departed from the vicinity at once.

Mr. Bootles did not appear at the Fourth Form table at dinner. He had his lunch in his study with his visitor, whom, evidently, he delighted to honour.

After dinner, Tubby Muffin informed Jimmy Silver & Co. that Bootles had taken his visitor to see the Head. Tubby was very curious on the subject of that visitor. But the Fistical Four did not impart their startling information to Musiin. That informa-Mr. Bootles and the solicitor were left | tion was Mr. Bootles', to be announced when the Form-master deemed fit.

But very shortly after dinner it was known.

Mr. Greely of the Fifth, and Mr. Wiggins of the Second, had been invited into Mr. Bootles' study to smoke a cigar with the distinguished visitor. Probably Mr. Bootles was not unwilling to let his colleagues learn of his good fortune quite early.

Soon after that all Rookwood knew. The news flew through the school

like wildfire. Bootles a millionaire!

Little Bootles a gilt-edged capimore than a nine-days' wonder for Rookwood School.

take jobs as Form-masters—even with | tering with alarm. to lose our Bootles!"

"I say, he ought to stand a spread or something before he goes!" said Tubby Muffin. "I would if I were a millionaire."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He's goin' back to London with the giddy lawyer," remarked Mornington. "Fancy little Bootles! Some bounders have all the luck!"

"He could buy up all Rookwood if he liked!" said Tubby Muffin. "I-I wonder if he would lend a chap a five-pound note? He ought to, now he's a millionaire. I say, I saw old Greely being awfully civil to him. He always used to patronise little Bootles."

him myself! I wonder if he would hedge.
like to adopt a really nice chap—" "At him!" yelled Jimmy.

"Ha, ha, ha!" Edward stood aside with a thought at once that the game was up. a millionaire or not, Arthur Edward | side, and disappeared. Lovell was convinced that "that lawyer-chap" was simply leading him into a trap. It was no use arguing with Lovell, and his chums had given it up. But Lovell, at last, began to argue with them.

"You fellows think I'm wrong--" he began.

"We know it, old sport," answered Newcome. "Will you back me up in looking

after Bootles this afternoon?" demanded Lovell "Ahem!"

"I haven't the slightest doubt that Tulkerton-if his name's really Tulkerton-is leading him out to be bagged," said Lovell. "They've telephoned for the station-cab. Now, look here, let us be on the road, in case anything happens. Say a dozen of us-"

Jimmy Silver laughed. "My dear chap, it's all moonshine. But a walk after dinner won't

hurt us, and there's no footer to-day. We'll come, if you like." "Any old thing!" yawned New-

"I'll speak to some of the others, then," said Lovell.

"You'll only get cackled at, ass."
"Rats!" Lovell meant business. Morning-

ton and Conroy and Rawson, though they certainly cackled, agreed to join the party. Putty Grace and Oswald came, too. Nine juniors walked out of Rookwood under the lightly-falling snowflakes, and sauntered down the lane towards Coombe.

along, and passed them, and turned in at the gates. And Jimmy Silver | with upraised umbrella. The um- | "By gosh!" said the Coombe & Co.—all but one smiling-took up | brella came down with a crash on the | cabman. their stand under the trees, on a ruffian's head, and he reeled. Before It was his first remark. He drove hillock close by the lane, to watch.

The 4th Chapter. A Desperate Attack!

"There's the giddy hearse!" | "Get after the other." grinned Mornington.

The old hack, rolling away from in hot pursuit of the scarred man, the gates of Rookwood, showed up who was running like a hare across in the distance on the powdery snow | the fields. Mr. Bootles leaned on the | to the Rescue!" A fine, complete of the lane.

Mr. Bootles gasped. | The door of the visitors'-room | It was closed against the weather; | went to the aid of Lovell and Morny, | Monday's Boys' FRIEND.)

Lovell made a move at once.

"We'll follow it, inside the hedges, at a bit of distance," he said. "Then we shall be on the spot when-" "Look!" gasped Mornington sud-

"My hat!"

Through a gap in the hedge the feebly. juniors saw the hack again. It had

The juniors gazed spellbound. It was like a theatre scene suddenly revealed before their eyes.

"It-it-it's the kidnappers!" stuttered Jimmy Silver. "Come on!"

The juniors raced on—their foot-

attack upon Mr. Bootles. "Step out!" The scarred man | was above suspicion. "Step out, or I shoot! Quick!" Tulkerton, with a sharp look.

"Good heavens!" talist, as Mornington put it. It was | Mr. Bootles bundled out of the be danger-"

such nice boys as us! We are going "You can get back, you meddling "We shall take this rascal to the fool! Mr. Bootles, come with me. | police-station," said the lawyer, "and One shout—one cry—and I lay you probably he will help the police to dead in the road."

"Bless my soul!"

his seat, dazed. But he made no covey!" sneered Gadger. "You won't movement. The sight of the threaten- get nothing out of me." Jimmy Silver burst through the Stacey?" demanded Mr. Tulkerton. hedge, ahead of his comrades. The "Find out!" answered the ruffian scarred man spun round furiously at sullenly.

Whiz! It was a snowball from Putty Grace. | streaming back from the fields-It struck the scarred man full in the | empty-handed. face, and smashed on his nose, and "He dodged us," said Jimmy. he staggered back with a gasp, and | "There was a car waiting on the fell against the wheel.

"Bootles will get so much civility | Jimmy Silver was on him in a | we've got one of them."

"Help!" gasped Mr. Bootles.

Lara looking on the dancers, Arthur | into the road, and the rascal realised | here-

and the captured ruffian, Gadger, was bound with his own muffler. He lay in the snow and spat out curses.

"One of them, at least, Mr. Bootles," said the lawyer, with grim satisfaction. "The other, I fear, will get away-Mortimer Stacey, I have little doubt."

"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Bootles

"I have no doubt they were on the stopped. A rough-looking man had watch, and saw me arrive at Rookthe horse's head in his grasp. Another | wood," said Mr. Tulkerton. "They man, with a thick beard, had leaped laid in wait on the chance that you from the hedge, and run to the cab- might return with me. But how door. He had a revolver in his hand. | came these boys here-very fortunately for us?"

Lovell chuckled.

"We came to look after Mr. Bootles, sir," he said. "Lovell thought-" began

"Shurrup!" steps soundless in the snow. Whether Mornington grinned, and did not Lovell's suspicions were well-founded | finish. Arthur Edward Lovell did not or not, it was undoubtedly another want Mr. Tulkerton to know what he had thought. It was evident now. The cab-door was wide open now. even to Lovell, that the lawyer-chap

with the false beard was speaking. "Lovell thought-" said Mr. "Ahem! He thought there might

cab, followed by Mr. Tulkerton. The "It-it was very-very thoughtful latter was white as a sheet. It was of Lovell," gasped Mr. Bootles. "Oh "He'll leave now, I suppose," said | clear, from his look, that he was no | dear! I-I begin to wish that-that Putty Grace. "Millionaires don't party to the ambush; he was twit- my uncle had not- Oh dear! This is—is—is most distressing."

find his associate, to save his own

The hack driver stared down from | "Don't you reckon on that, old

ing revolver was enough for him. I "Was your companion Mortimer

the sound of the crashing hedge. | And he refused to utter another word. Jimmy Silver & Co. camo

Rookham road, and he got off. But

now he'll be staggered," chuckled second, and he had wrenched away "My dear boys, how can I thank Mornington. "I've always admired the revolver, and tossed it over the you?" exclaimed Mr. Bootles. "You have saved me-a second time. 1 shall invoke the protection of the police, these these experiences are Arthur Edward Lovell took no part | The scarred man sprang away, his | most-most unnerving. Perhapsin the cheery discussion of Mr. | face blazing with savage rage and | you boys would not mind coming Bootles' wonderful fortune. Like chagrin. The juniors came crowding as-as far as Coombe-as you are

"Certainly, sir," said Jimmy ful brow. He was thinking deep | He tore across the road, plunged | Silver. "We'll walk after the cab." thoughts. Whether Mr. Bootles was | through the hedge on the opposite | "Thank you very much, my dear



TO THE RESCUE! Whiz! It was a snowball from Putty Grace. It struck the scarred hold-up man in the face, and he staggered back. For the moment the situation was saved.

The man holding the horse essayed Mr. Bootles and the lawyer was nearest to him, charged after him | lifted in. down with a crash.

Jimmy Silver & Co. streamed away

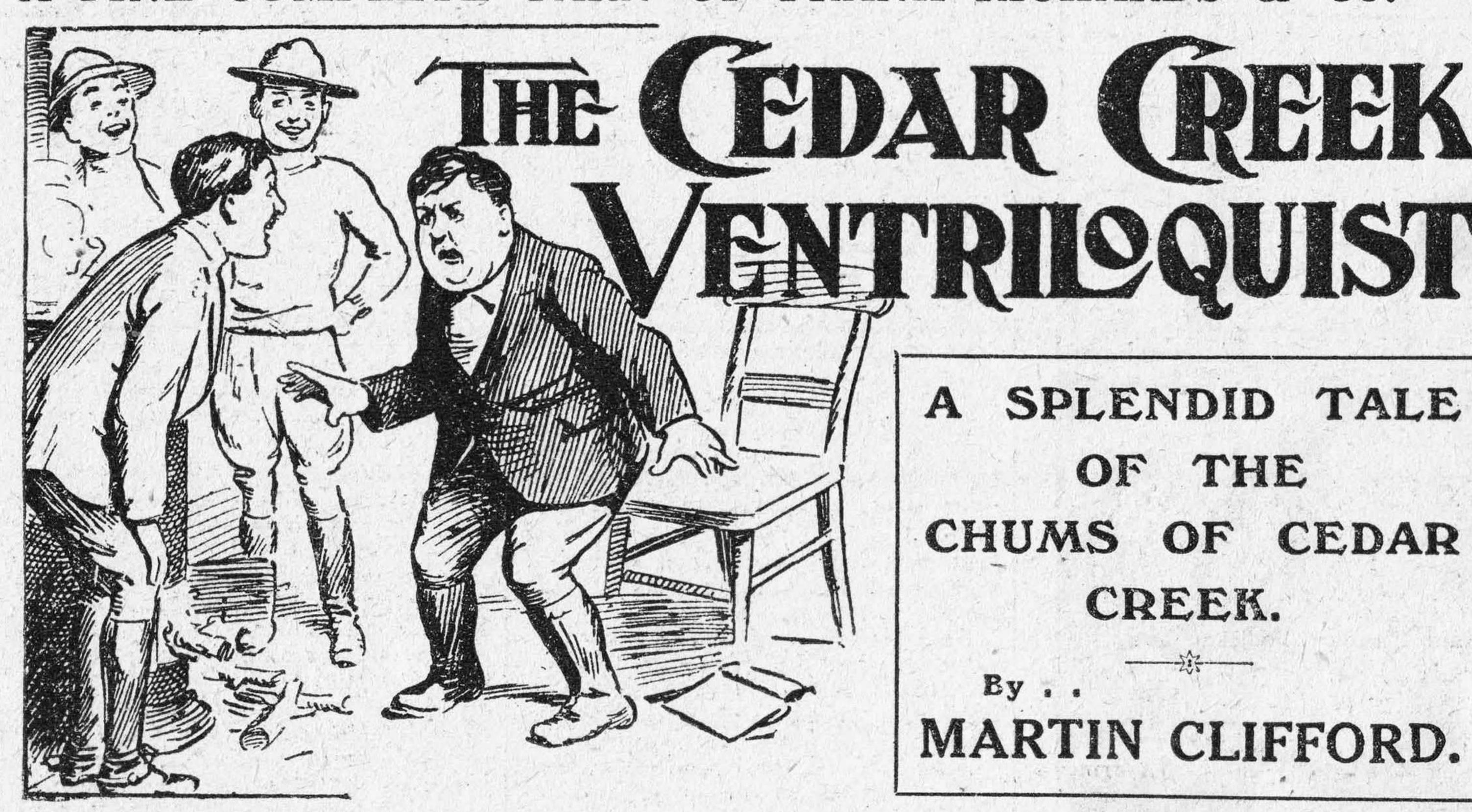
The station-cab came rumbling to follow, but Mr. Tulkerton, who re-entered the hack, and Gadger was

he could recover, Lovell and Morning- on, and Jimmy Silver & Co. trotted ton were upon him, and he went after the cab as far as the policestation, where Mr. Gadger was duly "Pin him!" yelled Jimmy Silver. | charged and handed over to the "We've got him," panted Lovell. | police. Then they saw Mr. Bootles off at the station.

THE END.

(Mind you read "The End Study hack, and gasped. Mr. Tulkerton | yarn of Jimmy Silver & Co. in next

A FINE COMPLETE YARN OF FRANK RICHARDS & Co.



SPLENDID TALE THE CREEK.

MARTIN CLIFFORD.

The 1st Chapter. Todgers' Latest!

"Chunky's at it again!"

Frank Richards & Co. chuckled. The snow was falling in the playground at Cedar Creek school, and the three chums had strolled into the school-room, where the logs were crackling cheerily in the stove.

It was not yet time for afternoon lessons, and the big school-room had as yet only one occupant.

That solitary occupant was Chunky Todgers.

Chunky was seated before the stove, with a book on his knees, held in his plump hands. But he was not reading. He was leaning back in his chair, his eyes fixed on the crackling logs, an expression of deep thought upon his fat face.

Chunky was thinking. He was in a

deep reverie! imaginative Chunky plunged into the at it. realms of fancy, he was deaf and blind to his immediate surroundings.

The Co. chuckled softly as they

looked at him.

They had seen Chunky Todgers in that dreamy mood before-many a himself in the character of the hero of the latest volume he had borrowed The open book on his fat knees | book--" indicated the trend of his thoughts. If it was a cowboy story, Chunky Richards & Co. Todgers was riding furious mustangs novel, Chunky was laying down his | Chunky changed like a chameleon | school-room. embroidered cloak for a queen to walk them!"-always, of course, in his book who was a ventriloquist--" thoughts. If it was a sea story, Chunky was nailing his colours to the mast, or cutting away the wreck, or subduing a mutinous crew with mighty blows from a capstan-bar. If treading unknown paths, in thrilling regions of thick-ribbed ice. If it was a fashionable novel, Chunky was life, I guess!" lounging, elegantly clad, in an operabox, his white shirt and diamonds reflecting back the electric light, murmuring languidly in the ear of a fair lady, "Rather a bore, the operawhat?"

It all depended on the book he had

just been reading!

"I guess that fat jay is about a million miles away at the present moment!" murmured Bob Lawless. "Shall I wake him up out of dreamland? Quiet a bit, you fellows!"

gathered up a handful of snow. Then he re-entered the school-

room, and trod softly towards the dreamy Todgers.

Frank Richards and Vere Beauclere stood still, and grinned.

Wherever Chunky Todgers was, in his thoughts-whether gliding in a Borgia?' Stick to 'Valentine Vox'!" ball-room, or exploring untrodden

He did not turn his head as Bob | suspect 'em, you know!" approached. He was lost to time and space. His round eyes blinked at the

fire dreamily. him.

and reached over Chunky's head, and longed and painful squeak. dabbed the snow on Chunky's little fat nose.

Then Chunky woke up. "Grooooooch!"

The fat youth bounded to his feet, I spluttering wildly. "Valentine Vox, the Ventriloquist "-for that ancient | Lawless, in astonishment. book happened to be the one Chunky "Eh? No!" had been reading-crashed on the

Chunky roared and spluttered. "Gerroooooch! Grooh! You silly jay, wharrer you at? Ooooooch!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Yurrrggggh!"

"Only waking you up, old scout!" said Bob Lawless.

"Yoooooccchhhh!"

Frank Richards, laughing. "Killing | sound to you like a canary?" Saracens along with old Cœur-de-

"Or tracking the Iroquois along Todgers. with Chingachgook?" asked Beau-

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You silly jays!" gurgled Chunky. He did not hear the three school- face, and blinked indignantly at the it?" boys come in. He was too deep in | chums of Cedar Creek. Bob Lawless | his reverie for that. When the picked up the fallen book, and glanced "You silly jay!" howled Chunky.

"'Valentine Vox!" he said, read- from, then?" out the title. "Is that it? Never heard of it before! What's it about,

Chunky?" "Groooogh!"

time and oft. Chunky always fancied | ginning it once," said Frank Richards. | gift. But it's no good telling me that "A relic of the Victorian era!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Frank

There was really no need for up his fat features again, as if he were and shooting Red Indians-in his Chunky to tell them that. They were trying to tie them into a sailor's knot. thoughts. If it was an historical well aware that the imaginative A wild howl rang through the

with every book he read. upon, or drawing his rapier to pierce | "You needn't snigger, you jays!" | "There!" gasped Chunky. "What | a caitiff to the heart, or shouting to said Todgers. "I've got no end of did that sound like?" his faithful followers to "Have at an idea! There's a galoot in that | "Like a fat idiot yelling!"

"A which?" asked Bob. "Chap who chucks his voice about, yet," chuckled Bob, "and you'd. you know," said Todgers. "Makes all sorts of weird voices come from unexpected places, and makes people it was an Arctic story, Chunky was jump, you know. No end of fun in ventriloquism, I should think!"

"Easier to do in a book than in real

"Well, it's in the way of a gift," perfect, you know. I've been thinking it over. Just fancy making a bear growl behind Miss Meadows' desk when she's giving us lessons!"

"How on earth could you make a jump!" bear growl behind her desk, when there isn't a bear there?" asked Bob.

"With my ventriloquism, I mean," explained Chunky. "Then, suppose I made a voice come from somewhere, Five - Hundred - Dollar Jones, the rustler? Make the folks jump-eh?"

"Ha, La, ha!" "So you're going to be a ventriloquist now!" said Frank Richards, chuckling. "I wonder what would of me!" happen if you read the 'Life of Cæsar

"It never occurred to me before," jungles, or bewitching the world with | continued Chunky, unheeding. "Felnoble horsemanship—he was about to lows have gifts, you know, and never be brought back to reality-suddenly! suspect 'em, until-until-until they

"Go hon!"

"F'rinstance, listen to this!" Chunky Todgers screwed up his Bob Lawless arrived just behind | mouth, compressed his fat throat, and, with a look of expiring anguish in his | perfect! He raised his hand, full of snow, round, bulging eyes, emitted a pro-

Frank Richards & Co. stared at him. Chunky unscrewed his face, and gazed at them, evidently expectant of approval.

"There!" he said.

"Have you got a pain?" asked Bob

"Not been eating too much maple-

"Nope!" roared Chunky. "I was ventriloquising!" "Oh! Is that ventriloquising?"

"Throwing my voice, you know." "Blessed if I noticed it thrown!" said Bob.

Chunky sniffed.

"Don't be an ass, if you can help "Where were you, Chunky?" asked | it, Bob!" he snapped. "Didn't that

"A-a-a canary! Nunno!" "Singing at the window?" said

"At the window! Great Scott!

"What did it sound like, then?" "Like a fat pig squeaking!" said He dabbed the snow from his fat | Bob. "That's what it was, wasn't |

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Where did it seem to you to come !

"From your silly neck!"

Snort from Chunky. "Perhaps I'm not quite perfect yet," he said. "I may need some "It's an old novel-I remember be- practice, though I'm convinced it's a that didn't sound-like a canary at the "I-I say, you chaps," said Chunky | window, because I know it did! Now from Gunten's Circulating Library. Todgers, "I've got an idea out of that I'll make a wolf howl behind the

> " "Go it!" Chunky Todgers proceeded to screw

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Co.

"Look here, Lawless-"

"I guess you want some practice better be rather careful, Chunky. Suppose your face got fixed like that. Anybody that met you on the trail would shoot you at sight!"

"Oh, rats!" snapped Chunky. "I tell you, I'm quite sure that I'm a born ventriloquist, just like that chap make his voice come from all sorts of Joseph Todgers' sanity. places. That chap in the book had no end of fun. So I'm going to! I guess I'll jolly well make you fellows | getting on nicely with his ventrilo-

"Go it! We're ready to jump!" chuckled Frank Richards.

"Richards! How dare you!" "Eh?"

Bob stepped back to the porch, and saying "Hands up!" in the voice of Miss Meadows' voice just behind brain. you?" asked Todgers, rather crestfallen.

Frank Richards yelled. "Ha, ha! No! I thought it was

the voice of a fat duffer just in front

"Ha, ha, ha!" "I guess I'll show you some more

But the school bell rang just then, and the Cedar Creek boys and girls came trooping in, and Chunky Todgers' ventriloquism was cut short. which was, perhaps, not a heavy loss. the Cedar Creek ventriloquist needed come more practice to make him

> The 2nd Chapter. Misunderstood!

"Gurrrrgg!" Mr. Slimmey jumped.

Lessons were over for the day at doorway into the porch, with a Cedar Creek, and the backwoods startled expression on her face. school had emptied. Mr. Slimmey came back for a book he had forgotten, and in the doorway he stopped and fairly jumped, as a weird and mysterious sound suddenly smote on his ears.

"Gurrrrg! Goooooooo! Goooo! G000000!"

"Bless my soul!" ejaculated Mr. Slimmey.

The school-room was dusky, and for a moment or two he could not see whence the mysterious sounds proceeded.

Then he spotted the fat figure of Chunky Todgers, standing by one of the windows.

A glimmer of the setting sun fell upon Chunky, and showed his podgy face contorted into an extraordinary expression.

His mouth was open, his eyes were bulging, and he seemed on the very verge of a severe attack of apoplexy.

And from his open mouth issued the astonishing sounds that had startled the young master.

"Gurrrrrrrg! Goo! Goo! Goo!" Mr. Slimmey ran into the room in great anxiety. He could only suppose that Joseph Todgers was in the grip of a fit.

"Todgers!" he gasped.

"Gerrroooogh!" "My poor boy! My dear Todgers!" exclaimed Mr. Slimmey. "Whatwhat is the matter? Try to calm yourself! Do not gasp in that way! Try to breathe regularly-"

He clapped Todgers on the back to help him get his breath.

Chunky Todgers ceased his wild and weird ventriloquism suddenly, and gave a howl.

"Ow! Leave off!" "Do you feel better, my boy?"

"Groogh! Leggo! I'm all right." Chunky squirmed away from the anxious master. In the midst of his ventriloquial efforts, the thump on the back had nearly—as he afterwards described it-"spiflicated" him!

"I-I-I'm all right!" he stuttered. "Leave me alone! Ow!"

"Can you get your breath now?" asked Mr. Slimmey anxiously. "Eh? Of course I can!"

"Are you subject to fits, Todgers?" "Fits!" gasped Chunky. "Yes. You had better see a

doctor." "I-I-I-"

"If you are quite well now, Todgers, you had better go," said Mr. Slimmey. "Why did you remain behind after the others?"

"I-I guess I wanted to practise

"To-to what?"

"Practise," said Todgers. Mr. Slimmey blinked at him. He failed to understand, which was not surprising, in the circumstances. He did not know that Chunky Todgers was a wonderful ventriloquist-yet!

"Todgers! Were you not in a fit when I saw you?"

"Nope! Of course I wasn't!"

"You were not ill?" "Nope!"

"Then why were you making those ridiculous noises, and assuming such a very alarming expression of countenance?" demanded Mr. Slimmey warmly.

"I-I was practising-" "Are you out of your senses, Todgers?" exclaimed Mr. Slimmey. "Nunno! I--"

"Leave the school-room at once!" in the book. I'm going to develop snapped Mr. Slimmey. He really said Chunky. "But practice makes my gift. Tain't everybody who can began to have some doubts as to

Chunky left the school-room, grumbling to himself. He had just been quial practice when Mr. Slimmey had interrupted him. He rolled out into the porch—and stopped there. Chunky was very keen on his practice -he was always keen on any new "D-d-d-didn't you think that was stunt that came into his powerful

silly jay!" Chunky. "I'd nearly got it when he came moseying in! Just catching the trick, and that ass had to interrupt me! I guess I'm going to try again."

And Chunky tried again in the

"Gurrrggggh!" Chunky Todgers was throwing his voice in the manner of the ventriloquist in the novel. But perhaps he was not throwing it according to the rules. The sound that issued from For there was no doubt whatever that his fat throat was like the last expiring croak from a frog.

> "That's better!" murmured Chunky, with satisfaction. sounded as if it came from the playground. Now I'll see if I can make a rat squeak behind the wall." "Squeeeeeeaaak!"

"Upon my word!" Miss Meadows looked out of the asked.

Chunky Todgers grinned. He concluded at once that the Canadian schoolmistress had heard the squeak of the rat, and had been scared by it. It was proof positive

that the Cedar Creek ventriloquist was getting on! "Todgers-" "Were you frightened, ma'am?"

"Frightened!" exclaimed Miss "Yep! Shall I look for the rat,

"The—the rat?"

asked Chunky, much gratified.

"Yep! I guess I'll look for him, and rout him out, ma'am, if you like," said Chunky, grinning.

He was going to keep it up that it was a real rat. He was not going to let Miss Meadows discover his wonderful ventriloquial powers yet.

But there was a slight misunderstanding. "Todgers! Are you being impertinent or silly?" exclaimed Miss

Meadows, with asperity. "Eh?" ejaculated Chunky, in

surprise. "What rat are you speaking

about?" "The-the rat that squeaked just now, ma'am!" stammered Todgers.

"D-d-d-didn't you hear it?" "I shall cane you, Todgers, if you talk such nonsense! I looked out to see who was making ridiculous noises in the porch. It was you! Why are you acting in this foolish way?"

"Oh!" gasped Chunky. "I believe you are the stupidest boy in my class," said Miss Meadows crossly. "But you are expected to have sufficient common-sense, Todgers, not to play foolish tricks like

Miss Meadows turned away frowning and Chunky's eyes gleamed. He determined to give Miss Meadows a fright, which he felt she deserved. A mouse squeaking close by her skirts would give her a lesson, Chunky

thought. "Squeeeeak!" Miss Meadows spun round again. For a moment Chunky thought she was frightened by the supposed mouse. The next moment he realised his mistake. Miss Meadows strode towards him grasped his fat shoulder,

and shook him. "Todgers-"

" Ow!" "What do you mean, sir, by emitting those ridiculous noises, when I have just reprimanded you on the subject?"

Evidently Miss Meadows had not even suspected that it might possibly be a mouse!

Shake! Shake! "Oh dear!" gasped Chunky. "Now, go home, and don't be so

silly!" said Miss Meadows severely. And she pushed Chunky out of the porch. Chunky Todgers trotted away dispiritedly for the corral, to fetch out his fat pony. These repeated disappointments were discouraging, even to a determined youth like Joseph Todgers. He led his pony out at the

and Tom Lawrence before starting for home. Chunky could not resist the temptation to make one more attempt. 'I'he sudden growl of a grizzly bear from the dusk would startle that chatting group, and Chunky promised himself a laugh at their expense when he explained that it was only he—the Cedar

gates, and found Frank Richards

& Co. there, chatting with Molly

"Gurrrrrrh!" That deep and savage growl was supposed-by Chunky-to proceed from the dusk of the trail; he was throwing his voice again.

Creek ventriloquist.

But again there was something wrong with the throw. Instead of shrieking with terror. Molly Lawrence looked round, and

gazed at Chunky Todgers in astonish-"Todgers! What is the matter?" she exclaimed. And Tom Lawrence stared at him blankly, while Frank

Richards & Co. chuckled. They could guess what was the matter. "Matter!" repeated Chunky.

"Have you a bad cold?" asked

"A-a-c-c-cold! Nope." "Or a cough?"

"Nope!" roared Chunky. "I-I sav. didn't you hear the bear growl?" "What hear?" asked the astonished Molly.

ha, ha!" roared Frank Richards. Chunky Todgers gave a grunt, and

climbed on his fat pony, and rode

away. Tom Lawrence looked at the chums of Cedar Creek in dismayed

inquiry. "Has Chunky gone potty?" he "Not more than usual, I guess,"

chuckled Bob Lawless. "What was he barking like that for, then, like a dog with bronchitis?" asked the puzzled Lawrence.

"Ha, ha! It's only Chunky's latest stunt-he's a ventriloquist now!" shrieked Bob. "He was throwing his voice!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" That roar of laughter followed

Chunky Todgers down the trail, and sonorous- * it made his fat ears burn. And Chunky vowed that, somehow, by hook or by crook, he would develop table. Miss Meadows looked up his wonderful ventriloquial gift, and show these doubting Thomases who was who, and what was what!

The 3rd Chapter. The Duck that Quacked!

The next day Chunky Todgers was met by smiling faces at Cedar Creek. His latest weird stunt was known to all the backwoods school now, and the Cedar Creek fellows were much entertained by it.

Until the bell rang for lessons, Chunky was besieged by demands to "throw his voice"; and he obliged willingly, until the shouts of laughter apprised him that his fat leg was being pulled.

Chunky went in to lessons in a morose mood.

But Chunky was a sticker! The gift was there-he was quite sure about that. It only remained to develop it. That chap in the book had done it easily enough! And Chunky had more brains than any chap in any book! He was well aware of that.

Over-night he had done some practice at home-but it had been interrupted by Old Man Todgers-who was one of those who least appreciated the genius of his gifted son. Old Man Todgers had wanted to know what he was kicking up that pesky row for, and made an emphatic allusion to the cowhide—and Chunky's experiments in "throwing his voice" had had to

But after morning lessons at Cedar Creek, he retired to a secluded corner of the corral, and practised till dinner. He succeeded to his own satisfaction, and there was a contented grin on his fat face when he rolled into the lumber dining-room. His powers were developing, and he was ready to put them to the test again. He dropped into a seat on the pinewood form beside Yen Chin, the little Chinee, who grinned at him. Chunky regarded that grin as disrespectful, and he determined to give Yen Chin a lesson. He threw his voice behind Yen Chin in an imitation of a dog growling.

Yen Chin stared at him for a moment, and then looked round with a startled expression.

"Bad doggee-go way-no bitee pool lil' Chinee!" he exclaimed. Chunky chuckled.

"He, he, he! Only my ventriloquism, you young ass!" he said. "Chunkee velly clevee ventliloquist!" murmured Yen Chin. Chunky Todgers smirked.

"I guess I can throw my voice where I like," he said. "Nothing to me! It's a gift, you know."

The little heathen's almond eyes glimmered. He jerked his thumb towards a fat duck that Miss Meadows was carving.

"S'pose makee duckee talk!" he whispered. "Chunkee so clevee, he makee duckee quack, quack-oh, yes!" Chunky nodded.

After his many disappointments, he would have hesitated to try his wonderful gift at the dinner-table, in the presence of the schoolmistress, had he not just had proof positive of success. It did not dawn just yet on the fatuous Chunky that the wicked little heathen was pulling his leg.

Certainly a ventriloquial quack from a duck that was being carved ought to have a startling effect—and Miss Meadows did not know that Chunky was a ventriloquist, so the 'quack ".could not be traced to him! Chunky cleared his throat in readi-

ness. Frank Richards leaned over towards him.

"Don't play the goat here, you ass!" he whispered. Chunky's lip curled.

"I guess I'm going to make that duck quack!" he whispered back. "You awful chump, Miss Meadows

will--" "Don't you give me away,

Richards." "Give you away!" gasped Frank. "You thundering ass, do you think

Miss Meadows won't know who's quacking?" "I've just made a dog growl behind Yen Chin, and he thought it was a real dog, anyhow," said Chunky

disdainfully "Fathead! He was pulling your leg!"
I'm accustomed to jealousy from

draw it mild, you know," said a disdainful sniff. Chunky, with increased disdain.

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Frank. He gave it up! If the Cedar Creek | you! ventriloquist chose to rush upon destruction, he had to have his own way.

Chunky cleared his throat again, | roof!" and started. Throwing his voice with all his skill—which was not perhaps | making a horse neigh yet--" so great as he supposed—he emitted a

"QUACK!"

Published

Every Monday

There was a start, all along the the present-" blankly.

If the carved duck had actually quacked, there could hardly have I think!" been more astonishment at the Cedar Creek dinner-table.

"Qua-a-a-ack! Kuk - kuk - kuk!" plunged on Chunky recklessly. "What the thump-"

"Todgers--"

"Is he potty?" "You silly ass-"

"Silence!" Miss Meadows rose to her feet, a picture of wrath. "Todgers!"

Chunky looked as unconscious as possible.

Doubts crept into his fat mind. "Todgers!"

"Ye-e-e-es, ma'am?"

"Are you out of your senses?" "N-n-nunno, ma'am!"

imitating the quack of a duck at | board where the easel's kept." the dinner-table?" exclaimed Miss! "I don't think!" said Frank.

you, Richards; but you really might | can ventriloquise!" said Chunky, with

"Ha, ha! Not quite!" "I guess I'm going to prove it to

"Go ahead!" chuckled Bob Lawless. "Make a horse neigh on the

"I-I guess I haven't practised "Well, make a dog bark under the

bench in the porch-" "I-I'm leaving over dogs just for

"Well, give us any sample you like," said Vere Beauclerc, laughing. "You're best at making ducks quack,

"Ha, ha, ha!"

a man call for help from an empty cupboard?" asked Todgers.

"Topping!" said Frank Richards. "The only drawback is that you can't do it, old chap."

"I guess I'm going to show you!" said Chunky Todgers loftily. "You ing Thomases were being convinced. can jolly well watch me do it!"

"We'll watch you."

"Come on, then!" the school-room.

"Then what do you mean by I'll make a voice come from the cup- Lawrence.

"What do you think of that?" he asked.

"Jolly good!" said Bob heartily. "Blessed if I don't begin to believe sternly. it isn't all gas, after all! Keep it

Todgers went on cheerily: "What are you doing there?"

voice.

And the schoolboys jumped again. It seemed unmistakable that the voice came from the cupboard.

"What's your name?" "John Brown."

"How old are you?"

"Forty."

"Great Scott!" ejaculated Tom Lawrence, much impressed. "Blessed "What would you say to making | if I wouldn't swear there was a man in the cupboard answering!"

> There were admiring glances cast at the Cedar Creek ventriloquist now, and Chunky Todgers seemed to grow an inch or two taller. He was beginning to score at last. The doubt-

"It's a gift, you see," explained "Hear, hear!" grinned Bob. | Chunky loftily. "Later on I shall be able to give a show in Thompson, and sell seats. Not yet, of course. Frank Richards & Co. grinned as But I guess you fellows will have to they followed Chunky Todgers into own up that I'm a jolly good ventriloquist now."

"Sit down," he said. "I'll stand "I say, I suppose there isn't really here by Miss Meadows' desk, and anybody in the cupboard?" said Tom

Chunky started. "It's locked!" he said hastily.



CHUNKY'S ASSISTANT! to the unfortunate youth from Chicago whom she had just let out. "Yow, shucks, you fat jay!" snorted Bunker H. Honk, to the frightened Chunky. "Catch me helping you in a stunt again! You owe me half-a-dollar, anyway!" So this was how Chunky did his "ventriloquism"!

place for foolish pranks?"

If you cannot behave yourself with I like." propriety, you shall not sit at the table!" snapped Miss Meadows. "You may ask the cook for some bread and cheese for your dinner!" "Oh!"

"Go at once!"

Miss Meadow's hand pointed to the

"Oh dear!" groaned Chunky. He detached himself from his seat, cast a last, lingering, affectionate look in!" at the duck, and vanished. While the duck was disposed of, Chunky Tod- fellows had strolled into the schoolgers gnawed bread and cheese in the kitchen, and bemoaned his fate. The life of an amateur ventriloquist at

Cedar Creek was a hard one.

The 4th Chapter. Ventriloquism Extraordinary!

"You fellows-" "Still throwing your merry voice about, old chap?" asked Frank Richards.

"Ha, ha, ha!" It was two or three days later when Chunky came up to the Co. in the playground at Cedar Creek, after morning lessons. Chunky, it was tainly sounded as if the voice prounderstood, was still cultivating his ceeded from the locked cupboard. great gift, though he had not been heard "throwing his voice" so much Richards.

of late.
"You fellows don't believe that I | glance.

Meadows wrathfully. "Is this a . "You see, I've had a lot of practice!" Miss Meadows keeps the key in her now," said Todgers. "I've cultivated room. You know that." "I-I-I Did-did you think it my gift, you know. I can hold a "Yes, that's so," agreed Lawrence. was me, ma'am?" gasped Todgers. | conversation with an unseen person, | "Well, I must say it's jolly clever. | ing you in a stunt again! You owe "Leave the room at once, Todgers! making the answers come from where Let's hear some more, Chunky."

> "Rats!" "Well, just listen!"

"Oh, we'll listen!" said Bob Lawless. "I guess you're only blowing

off gas, as usual, Chunky!" Chunky turned an expression more of sorrow than of anger on these

doubting Thomases. "You watch out!" he said.

"Well, we're watching out!

Chunky started. Half a dozen Richards. were all grinning. There was a plenti- hook." ful lack of faith in Chunky's ventriloquial powers.

"Are you there?" called out Chunky.

"I guess we're here!" said Bob. "You ass! I'm talking to the unseen supposed person-"

"Oh! My mistake! Get on!" "Are you there?"

A faint voice was heard in reply: "I'm here!"

The Cedar Creek fellows jumped. For-to their ears, at least-it cer-

"My hat!" murmured Frank

"Are you still there, John

Brown?" called out Chunky. "I'm here!" came the faint voice. "Just like real!" said Bob Lawless.

"Chunky, old man-" Bob was interrupted by the entrance of Miss Meadows from the passage. The Canadian school-

mistress was frowning. "Has anyone here taken a key from Pile my sitting-room?" she asked. "A-a-a key?" exclaimed Frank

"Yes; the key of the easel cuproom to see what was on, and they board. It has been taken from the

"Oh!" gasped Bob. Chunky Todgers' fat face had become suddenly crimson. Miss Meadows' eyes were fixed accusingly

upon him. "Todgers!" "Yes, ma'am!" spluttered Chunky. "Dinah says she saw you leaving my sitting-room. Have you taken the key? If so, return it to me at once.'

"I-I-I-" stuttered Todgers. "I can see by your expression, Todgers, that you have taken the key!" said Miss Meadows severely. "Give it to me at once!"

"Oh dear!" With a limp hand, Chunky Todgers

"If you meddle with things that do not concern you again, Todgers, I shall cane you!" said Miss Meadows

And she quitted the school-room, with the key in her hand, leaving Chunky Todgers dumbfounded. There was a howl from Frank Richards & "Sitting down," came the faint | Co. as soon as the schoolmistress was gone.

"You fat fraud!"

"You spoofer!" "You had the key!" roared Bob Lawless. "You've got a chap locked up in that cupboard to pull our legs!" "I-I--" stuttered the hapless Chunky.

"Is there somebody in the cupboard?" demanded Frank Richards.

"Nunno! I--" Bang!

It was a loud thump on the inside

of the cupboard door. "Here, lemme out of this!" shouted a voice. Evidently the hidden individual had heard all that had been said in the school-room. "You go and get that key and let me out,

Todgers!" The voice from the cupboard was no longer faint. It was an alarmed yell. And the chums recognised it now. It was the voice of B. H.

Honk! "Honk!" yelled Bob Lawless. Chunky's fat face was a study. "I-I-I don't know how he got in the cupboard!" he gasped. "I-I didn't know anyone was there when I

started!" "Ha, ha, ha!"

Thump! "Let me out!" roared Bunker H. Honk. "I guess I'm not staying in here for keeps! Get that key, Todgers !

"I-I-I can't!" gasped Chunky. "Miss Meadows has got it!" "Let me out, you fat clam! Do you think I'm going to stay in hyer

and miss my dinner?" shrieked Honk. "You-you'll have to! Miss Meadows has got the key--" "Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Frank

Richards & Co. Thump, thump! "Lemme out, you fat clam-"

"Oh dear!" "Let me out!" yelled Honk. "I guess I shall suffocate if I'm left in hyer! You said it was only to be for ten minutes, you fat jay!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "I-I can't get the key!" Thump, thump, thump! Honk was getting desperate. "Bless my soul! What is this?" Honk's yells and thumps had reached the ears of Miss Meadows, and she

came, in again hastily. "Whatwhat---' Thump!

"Lemme out!" "Ha, ha, ha!" "Is-is somebody locked in the cupboard? Todgers, you bad boy-" Miss Meadows hastily unlocked the cupboard, and Bunker Honk, dusty and red and breathless, staggered out.

"Honk-Todgers-what-what-" Frank Richards & Co. beat a retreat from the school-room leaving the two culprits to explain as best they could. When Honk and Todgers emerged into the playground a few minutes later, they were both rubbing their hands, and looking very excited.

"Yow-ow!" Chunky Todgers was remarking "Oh swipes!" groaned Bunker

Honk. "You fat jay, catch me helpme half å dollar, anyhow!" "You silly ass!" howled Chunky Todgers. "You spoiled the whole

thing! Catch me giving you a half-"I guess I'll--" "You pair of pesky spoofers!" exclaimed Bob Lawless. "Collar them, you chaps, and roll them in the snow!

That's what they want!". "Hear, hear!" "I-I-I guess- Yarooooop!" "Leggo! Help! Yoop! I-I say -only a joke on you fellows! I-

Chunky Todgers and Bunker Honk went rolling together in the thick snow, and they were rolled, and rolled, till Frank Richards & Co. were tired. By that time, Chunky Todgers had probably repented of his fraudulent attempt to convince Cedar Creek of his wonderful ventriloquial powers, and Bunker Honk had probably repented of helping him, for the consideration of half-a-dollar-unpaid! And from that unlucky day. nothing more was heard from Chunky Todgers on the subject of his new and amazing gift. It was the last performance of the Cedar Creek Ventriloquist.

THE END. (You've - got to read "False Witness!" A fine complete yarn of extracted a key from his pocket, and | Frank Richards & Co. in next Chunky gave them a triumphant handed it to the Canadian school- Monday's Boys' FRIEND. Have you mistress.