

# DO YOU KNOW CHUNKY TODGERS? Chunky Todgers is one of Nature's

unconscious humorists. Every week Chunky invents some weird and wonderful scheme by which he can become famous in the world of affairs, and always there is a long laugh provided for his schoolfellows!



## The Backwoods' Detective!



Another Gripping Long Complete Story, dealing with the stirring adventures of Frank Richards & Co., the cheery chums of the School in the Backwoods!

### THE FIRST CHAPTER.

#### Foxy Ferrett's Understudy

**W**ELL?" Frank Richards & Co. asked that question together. They were surprised.

The three chums had come upon Chunky Todgers in a corner of the playground at Cedar Creek School after morning lessons.

A big cedar-tree grew in that corner, and under the shade of the cedar sat Master Todgers, upon an old-log, with a book in his fat hand.

Chunky Todgers had been reading—devouring his volume with glued eyes, which was proof enough that it was one of the most thrilling volumes from Gunten's Circulating Library in Thompson Town.

But as the Co. came strolling along Chunky looked up from his book, and fixed his eyes upon them with an intent gaze.

He did not speak. He simply eyed the three chums, staring at them with a watchful intendment that was rather surprising. Frank and Bob and Beauclerc stopped, and returned Chunky's gaze, wondering what was the cause of that fixed and searching stare.

"Well?" they repeated interrogatively. But Chunky did not answer. He only gazed.

"What's biting you now, Fatty?" inquired Bob Lawless.

"Eh?" "Why are you blinking like a blessed gargoyle?" asked Frank Richards. "Is anything the matter?"

"Eh? No!" "Then what—" began Beauclerc.

"I think I can do it all right," said Chunky Todgers, evidently following out a train of thought; though what that train of thought was was hidden in the depths of his powerful brain.

"Can you?" queried Bob Lawless. "And what can you do? Not your

lessons. Miss Meadows seemed to think that you couldn't this morning."

Snort—from Chunky Todgers. "Blow lessons!" he answered. "I say, I think I can manage it all right; in fact, Foxy Ferrett is a fool to me."

"Who—which?" "Foxy Ferrett, the galoot I've been reading about in this book," said Chunky Todgers, tapping the volume on his knee with a fat finger. "I wonder I never thought of it before. It's really a gift, and there's no doubt I've got the gift."

Frank Richards & Co. grinned. They did not know what Chunky was driving at yet, but evidently a new stunt was developing in his fertile fat brain.

"What's the book?" asked Beauclerc.

"It's one of the latest volumes at Gunten's," explained Chunky Todgers. "Almost new, from Chicago, you know. It's called 'Foxy Ferrett: Detective.' Jolly interesting, I can tell you! The way Foxy Ferrett bowled out Colonel Blood, who murdered the millionaire by putting fly-papers into his cigar-case, was wonderful—really wonderful, you know. But I think I could have done it."

"Quite as much as Foxy Ferrett could, I have no doubt," chuckled Frank Richards.

"It's queer," continued Chunky, "that it never occurred to me before, especially as I can see now that I've got the gift!"

"Your stunts never do occur to you till you've read some silly rot in a two-dollar shocker!" remarked Bob Lawless.

"Of course, a galoot don't have much chance here," observed Chunky Todgers, unheeding. "Nobody ever commits a mysterious crime in the Thompson Valley. Even the rowdies at the Red Dog Saloon only kick up a row every now and then, and the sheriff's man runs them into the calaboose. No tracking out required, no sifting of mysterious clues. Still, when a fellow has the gift and—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Oh, cut the cackle!" said Chunky

crossly. "Look here, I guess I'm giving you straight goods. I can work the raffle, just like Foxy Ferrett in the novel, you know. It only needs a cool head, a clear judgment, a calm and penetrating intellect, an eagle eye that nothing escapes—well, that's me all over."

"Oh, my hat!" "If you like, I'll give you a sample," said Chunky carelessly. "That's what I was looking at you for. I was sizing you up."

"Sizing us up!" repeated Frank. "That's it. Foxy Ferrett used to fix his cool, glittering eye on a galoot and size him up. Then he knew. I guess I could tell you something that would surprise you, Richards."

"Go ahead!"

"F'rinstance," said Chunky, fixing his round eyes on Frank, apparently in imitation of Mr. Ferrett's cool, glittering glance. "I can read clues about you, same as Ferrett in the story. I'll tell you what you've done this morning. You didn't come straight to school from the ranch by the timber trail."

"Didn't I?" ejaculated Frank. "Surprised you, what?" chuckled Todgers.

"Yes, rather. How can you tell that I didn't come straight to school?" asked Frank with interest.

Chunky smiled in a very lofty way. It was agreeable to the fat youth to make a surprising impression like this.

"Of course, you wouldn't know how I did it," he said. "You see, it's a gift—the detective instinct. I've got it, and you haven't—that's the difference. But I don't mind explaining. Foxy Ferrett always explains in the last chapter."

"Then suppose we're in his last chapter, and explain," said Bob Lawless with a chuckle.

"I don't mind. Instead of coming straight to school, Franky, you rode round to the Beauclercs' cabin—"

"Did I?"

"You did, to call for the Cherub. I'll tell you the clues I've worked on," said

Todgers. "You've got a daub of mud on your boot!"

Frank glanced down.

"That's right," he assented.

"There's no mud in the playground here, and none on the timber trail—it's as hard as flint to-day. But Beau's cabin is on the creek, and there's plenty of mud there. So I deduce that you rode round by the Cherub's place to call for him, and dismounted there. See?"

"Wonderful!" exclaimed Frank Richards.

Chunky waved a fat hand.

"Nothing to what I could do," he replied.

"But there's a slight error in your theory, Chunky."

"I'd like to know what it is," said Chunky disdainfully.

"You see, I didn't ride round by Beau's cabin this morning," explained Frank Richards.

"Eh?"

"I came straight to school, and Beau met us on the trail, at the fork, as usual."

"Oh!"

"And this mud on my boot is left from yesterday, because I forgot to brush it off."

"Ah!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Lawless.

"Try again, Mr. Detective!"

"I—I—" stammered Chunky.

The amateur detective of Cedar Creek looked quite crestfallen. Frank Richards & Co. strolled on, laughing, and Chunky Todgers returned to his book. Evidently he required to study the methods of Mr. Ferrett a little more thoroughly before he started out to emulate that wonderful gentleman.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### The Detective at Work!

"DEAR me!" said Miss Meadows. The schoolmistress of Cedar Creek was looking over her desk with a frown of annoyance.

Afternoon lessons were going on in the big school-room, with the three classes of Miss Meadows, Mr. Slimmey, and Mr. Shepherd. The lesson for Miss Meadows' class was geography. The recent gold discoveries in the Yukon River had been heard of in the Thompson Valley, as in every other part of Canada, and Miss Meadows was giving instruction on the Yukon district with the aid of a large wall-map. For once the Cedar Creek fellows were quite interested in their geography lesson. They were quite keen on learning about the frozen Yukon, and the Klondyke River, and Dawson City, and the gold-belt that stretched from the extreme north-west of British Columbia across the border into the American territory of Alaska.

Instructing by means of a wall-map required a pointer. And the pointer was missing from Miss Meadows' desk.

If Miss Meadows' pointer had been used only to point out places of interest on maps, probably it would never have been missing. But it was sometimes used to rap the knuckles of inattentive pupils, gently but effectively, especially the fat knuckles of Chunky Todgers, whose wonderful abilities never showed to advantage in his lessons.

For that reason Miss Meadows' pointer was sometimes missing from its place. So it was on the present occasion.

"Dear me!" repeated the schoolmistress of Cedar Creek. "My pointer is not here. Has anyone seen my pointer?"

Miss Meadows looked on the desk, and under the desk, and on the pine plank floor round the desk. But the

pointer was conspicuous only by its absence.

There was no reply from the class, but there were smiles. Miss Meadows did not seem to guess that nefarious hands had been laid on the pointer, but some of her pupils did.

Bob Lawless nudged Chunky. "Chance for you, old man?" he whispered.

"Eh?"

"This is where you put in your Ferrett stunt. The Mystery of the Missing Pointer, you know."

Frank and Beauclerc chuckled.

"Blow the pointer!" said Chunky Todgers. "I jolly well hope she won't find it! I don't like that pointer."

"Go it, Chunky!" murmured Frank Richards. "Can't you deduce from the shape of the desk, or the colour of the map, who it was that bagged the pointer?"

Chunky grunted.

"I dare say I could—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence in class!" exclaimed Miss Meadows sharply. "If anyone has taken my pointer—"

Chunky Todgers jumped up, with a defiant look at Frank Richards & Co. Chunky had taken the hint, and he was going to display his powers as a detective.

"Please, Miss Meadows—"

"Do you know where the pointer is, Todgers?"

"I think I could find it, ma'am."

"Kindly do so at once, then."

"Certainly, ma'am."

Chunky Todgers left his place in class with the eyes of the fellows upon him.

"The silly ass!" murmured Frank.

"How does he think he is going to find it?"

"Watch him!" grinned Bob.

Chunky Todgers was worth watching. He approached the schoolmistress' desk in the manner of Mr. Ferrett approaching the scene of a crime. He blinked over it with what he apparently intended for a searching, penetrating gaze. Then he wrinkled his fat brows in a very thoughtful manner.

Miss Meadows, being quite unconscious of the fact that Master Joseph Todgers was an amateur detective, gazed at him in surprise and annoyance. "What are you doing, Todgers?" she exclaimed.

"Looking for the pointer, ma'am."

"It is not on the desk."

"I'm finding a clue."

"A what?"

"A clue, ma'am."

"What ever do you mean, Todgers?"

Chunky was not at all loth to explain.

"You see, ma'am, I've discovered that I've got a lot of ability as a detective and—"

"A—a—a detective!" ejaculated Miss Meadows faintly.

"That's it. I'm going to discover where the pointer is by deducing that it—"

"Don't be ridiculous, Todgers!"

"Eh?"

"You may go back to your place."

"But I can find the pointer, ma'am."

"Find it at once, then, and do not be silly!" said Miss Meadows crossly.

Chunky had failed to impress the headmistress of Cedar Creek, that was clear.

But he was not dismayed. All eyes in the class were upon him, and the boys and girls were smiling.

To the surprise of the class, however, Chunky's words did not prove to be vain. He left the desk, and moved slowly towards the big stove where the logs burned on cold days. The class watched

him as he rummaged behind the stove, and there was general astonishment as he rose, with the pointer in his hand.

He came back to Miss Meadows with a fat smirk.

"Here it is, ma'am!"

"Thank you, Todgers!"

Chunky Todgers went back to his place, still smirking. Frank Richards & Co. eyed him as he sat down.

"How did you—?" began Frank.

"My ability, you know. I'm a born detective!"

"Rats!"

"Look here, Richards—"

"Silence! Keep your eyes on the map, please. Now, here is the course of the Yukon River—"

And attention had to be given to the Arctic geography of the Klondyke region.

## THE THIRD CHAPTER.

### Not Very Surprising!

"I GUESS you fellows were surprised."

Thus Joseph Todgers, as the Cedar Creek fellows came out of the lumber schoolhouse after lessons.

Joseph Todgers was looking and feeling well satisfied with himself.

It was only that day that he had made his claim to be a wonderful amateur detective, in the style of Foxy Ferrett, of the two-dollar novel; and chance had already enabled him to surprise the doubting Thomases. Frank Richards & Co. could not help feeling puzzled.

"But how did you find the dashed pointer, Chunky?" Frank Richards demanded.

Chunky smiled.

"You see, I found clues, and deduced the facts from the clues, and found the missing article. Simple as A B C to a fellow like me," he explained.

Some of the Cedar Creek fellows gathered round to hear Chunky explain. Chunky smirked with satisfaction to find that he had an audience.

"And what were the clues?" asked Bob.

Chunky reflected.

"I don't mind explaining," he said loftily. "I'm glad of the chance to convince you fellows of my abilities. The fact is, I'm thinking of setting up in business as a detective."

"Eh?"

"They never commit any crimes in the Thompson Valley, worse luck!" said Chunky. "I shall never have a chance with a mysterious murder. Now, over the border, in the States, it's different. I should have a chance there. Still, a fellow must do what he can. Farmers miss a steer sometimes, and galoos bag the fruit in the orchards in the summer, and there's been pilferings at the places on the creeks. I dare say I shall get a lot of cases—small cases, you know. My idea is to have a standing advertisement in the 'Thompson Press.'"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Advertisements have to be paid for!" remarked Bob.

"That's all right. Richards can advance the money—"

"Can I?" ejaculated Frank.

"Sure! You've got money in the bank, and it couldn't be used for a more useful purpose. Now I've proved that I'm a really clever detective, I suppose you won't object to financing me?" exclaimed Chunky warmly.

"Financing you! Oh, my hat!"

"But we haven't heard the history of the mystery yet," said Beauclerc. "How did you find a clue to the missing pointer, Chunky?"

"Well, you—you see—"



"We don't see! Explain."

"I—I found a clue, you know." Chunky seemed to hesitate a little. "A— a spot of soot on the desk—"

"What did that imply?"

"My dear chap, that was enough for a detective. Soot came from the stove. Therefore, the chap who had taken the pointer had hidden it near the stove—see?"

"I don't quite see," answered Frank Richards. "If he took the pointer from the desk to the stove, he would be at the desk first, and at the stove second, and so he couldn't leave a spot of soot on the desk."

"Well, he—he did, you know, and that put me on the scent."

"Bow-wow!"

"Well, I found the pointer, didn't I?" demanded Chunky.

"Yes, and I'm blessed if I know how you—"

"Me know!" murmured the soft voice of Yen Chin, the Chinese.

"Hallo! What do you know about it, heathen?" asked Bob Lawless.

"Me watchee fat Chunkee hidee pointee!"

"What!" yelled the schoolboys.

Chunky Todgers crimsoned.

"I—I say, the heathen doesn't know anything about it!" he exclaimed hastily. "You shut up, Yen Chin!"

"Me knowee—"

"Shut up, I tell you, you pesky heathen—"

"Let Yen Chin alone!" exclaimed Bob. "Now, then, heathen, you tell us. You watched Chunky—"

"Before dinnee," said Yen Chin, grinning. "Me see fat Chunkee sneakee into school-loom, and hidee pointee behind stovee. Chunkee findee because Chunkee hidee!"

"I—I—" stammered Chunky Todgers, quite taken aback.

"You fat fraud!" roared Bob Lawless in great wrath. "You found the pointer behind the stove because you'd hidden it there yourself."

"I—I—"

Chunky Todgers' crimson face was as good as a confession.

Evidently he had been unaware that any eyes had been upon him when he was hiding the schoolmistress' pointer.

"Roll him over!"

"Yaroooh!"

Chunky Todgers went rolling in the playground, as a reward for his unvarnished, and Frank Richards & Co. walked away to the corral. They had been surprised by Chunky's success in finding the missing article; but they were not surprised by the explanation. It was just like Chunky!

But as the chums of Cedar Creek came out at the gates Chunky Todgers met them again.

"I say, Franky—"

"Shurrup!"

"The advertisement ought to be taken in to-day, if Penrose is going to print it this week—"

"What advertisement, ass?"

"Mine, you know—about my detective work—"

"You silly chump!" exclaimed Frank Richards.

"I hope you're not going to be mean, Richards. You've got money in the bank, you know you have—"

"And I know it's going to stay there," said Frank, laughing. And he rode out on the trail, leaving Chunky Todgers' further remarks to be addressed to the pine-trees.

THE POPULAR.—No. 299.

## THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

### A Very Clever Detective!

"WHAT'S the matter, Molly?"

Frank Richards came upon Molly Lawrence in the playground a couple of days later, looking very dismayed and distressed. Her brother Tom was trying to comfort her, in a brotherly way, with the remark:

"Well, it can't be helped, old girl!" A remark from which Molly did not seem to derive much comfort.

"Anything up?" queried Bob Lawless.

"It's my watch!" explained Molly. "The watch my uncle sent me from Montreal on my birthday. I've lost it."

"Oh, that's too bad!" exclaimed Beauclerc.

"Let's all search for it," suggested Frank Richards. "Got any idea where you lost it, Molly?"

Molly shook her head dolefully.

"I wore it on my wrist, you know, and the strap became unfastened. I missed it when I got home yesterday. Nobody has seen it about the school anywhere. I may have dropped it riding, or along the creek somewhere."

Frank whistled.

"That's rather a big order," he remarked. "Along the creek, most likely, as it's grassy; you might have heard it if it had fallen in the trail."

"We've hunted along the creek," said Tom Lawrence. "I kept on telling Molly that it can't be helped."

"But I want my watch!" said Molly.

Tom made a grimace as though to say "Isn't that like a girl?"

"I say, here's a chance for Chunky Todgers, detective!" remarked Eben Haake, with a grin.

"Chunky hasn't hidden it this time, so he couldn't find it," said Bob Lawless.

"Hallo, what's that?" Chunky Todgers rolled up to the interested group surrounding Miss Lawrence. "Something lost?"

"My watch," said Molly.

"I'm your man!" announced Todgers.

"Now, then, you give me some details—"

"Don't be an ass, Chunky," advised Bob Lawless.

"You dry up, Bob! This is my business! I want a few details—"

"A few what?" asked Molly, puzzled.

"Foxy Ferrett always asks for the details first, you know. Then he looks for clues," explained Chunky Todgers.

"You rely on me to find your watch, Molly! I'm your mutton, with the wool on."

"Stuff!" said Molly.

Chunky Todgers looked reproachful. This was really quite ungrateful on the part of the young lady, when Todgers was prepared to place his vast abilities at her service without demanding fee or reward.

"Oh, give Chunky a chance!" said Tom Lawrence, grinning. "He may as well look for it; the exercise will do him good, at any rate."

"I'll guarantee to find it, if it's still in existence," said Chunky. "With my methods, failure is impossible."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You give me some details, Molly, and leave it to me," said Chunky encouragingly. "When did you miss the watch?"

"Yesterday."

"What time?" asked Chunky, taking out a little notebook, which he had apparently laid in, at a cost of fifty cents, for his detective work. He moistened a stump of pencil with his lips.

"When I got home!"

"Sure you brought it to school with you yesterday?"

"Oh, yes!"

"Then you must have lost it while you were away from home," said Chunky Todgers in a thoughtful way.

"I knew that already, silly!"

Chunky frowned. Foxy Ferrett's clients did not address him as "silly." But Chunky had his reputation yet to make.

"Did you hear it fall when it dropped off your wrist?" he inquired.

"If I had I should have picked it up."

"Answer the question," said Chunky severely. "No beating about the bush. Did you hear it fall?"

"No."

"Then it must have fallen on something soft."

"Did it fall on your head, by any chance, Chunky?" inquired Bob Lawless.

Chunky did not heed that frivolous question. His fat forehead was wrinkled in a frown of almost terrific thoughtfulness.

"I guess it didn't fall on the trail—you would have heard it drop," he said. "It fell on soft grass, I should say."

"Just what Frank has just said," answered Bob Lawless. "Why, you fat jay, you heard him—"

"Don't interrupt, Bob Lawless! This is a serious matter. You went along the creek yesterday, Molly?"

"Oh, yes!"

"You didn't notice—"

"I didn't notice anything," said Molly crossly. "And I haven't time to keep on talking nonsense; I'm going to look for my watch."

And she went.

Most of the Cedar Creek fellows went to help, and there was a great going to and fro, and searching and hunting, in the school grounds. But Chunky Todgers caught Frank Richards by the sleeve.

"I say, Franky—"

"Let go; I'm going to help Molly find—"

"The case is in my hands," said Chunky loftily. "Look here, Richards! I'm going to find that watch; I've got several clues already, and—"

"What are they, fathead?"

"You wouldn't understand. But I say, if I discover the missing watch will you pay for my advertisement in the 'Thompson Press'?"

Frank Richards laughed.

"Certainly!" he answered.

"That's a clinch?" asked Chunky.

"Yes."

Frank Richards jerked himself away and hurried off to help his chums in searching the school grounds. Chunky Todgers did not join them. He remained for some time in thought, and then strolled out of the gates.

As a matter of absolute fact, Chunky's mind was a beautiful blank on the subject. He had not even the faintest idea of what might possibly have become of the watch. He rolled along the creek, keeping his eyes well about him on the grass and thickets.

It was as likely as not that the watch had fallen there, and the fact that Tom Lawrence had searched did not amount to much, for in the grasses and herbage any number of watches might have defied search. Even the ticking was not a guide, for no doubt the watch had run down.

Chunky was thinking it over as he rolled along by the shining creek, but—although he did not confess it to himself—he had no idea of being able to find the watch. He hugged the delusion that a clue would crop up in his mind and put him on the track.

Suddenly, however, his thoughts were taken from the subject of the missing watch. On the other side of the creek three fellows came in sight—Dicky Bird, Blumpy, and Fisher, of Hillcrest School.

Chunky was glad they were on the other side of the creek. He did not want to be rolled in the grass by the playful Hilleresters.

"Hallo, Fat Jack!" bawled Blumpy, across the stream.

"When are they going to melt you down for tallow?" Dicky Bird wanted to know.

Safe in the knowledge that the stream flowed between, Chunky Todgers snapped his fat fingers scornfully at the Hillerest fellows.

Whiz!

A soft turf came whizzing across the creek, and it smote Chunky Todgers on his plump chest unexpectedly.

Bump!

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Dicky Bird & Co. roared as Chunky Todgers sat down on the bank. He did not remain sitting. The grassy bank sloped into the wood at this point, and Chunky rolled down the slope.

"Oh! Ow! Yow! Oooooch!" gasped Todgers as he rolled.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oooooop!"

Chunky stopped at last, having rolled into the thicket. He sat up, gasping, and groped round him for some missile to hurl at the yelling Hilleresters on the other side of the creek. His fat hand closed on a hard object in the grass, and he grasped it, for the moment taking it for a stone. He jumped up, and raised his hand; but he did not hurl the missile. Stone-throwing was rather too mean in return for a practical joke, and Chunky paused, and shouted "Yah!" instead.

Dicky Bird & Co. walked on their way along the creek, laughing. Chunky Todgers shouted "Yah!" again with lofty defiance, and then—

Then he realised that what he held in his hand was not a stone. It was much too smooth for a stone.

He opened his fat hand and looked.

"The—the watch!"

Chunky Todgers fairly stuttered.

In his fat palm reposed a pretty little silver watch!

By the sheerest, blindest chance Chunky Todgers had found the missing article!

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

### Chunky's Triumph!

**T**HE watch!"

Chunky blinked at it. It was Molly Lawrence's little watch; there was no doubt about that. He knew it well enough by sight.

"By gum!" stuttered Chunky. "I—I—I've found it! If those Hillerest galoots hadn't pitched that turf at me I'd never have found it."

That was Chunky's first reflection. But it vanished from his fat mind at once.

"I've found it! I told them I would, and I've done it! I wonder what they'll say now?"

That was Chunky's second reflection.

It is said that second thoughts are best; but in this case it was probable that Joseph Todgers' second thoughts would lead him from the straight and narrow path of truthfulness.

There was a grin on his fat face as he turned his steps in the direction of Cedar Creek.

There was still a search going on in the playground when Chunky Todgers came in at the gates.

"Molly!" called out Todgers.

"Hallo! Had any luck, Chunky?" chuckled Bob Lawless.

"Luck!" repeated Todgers. "Oh, no! Luck isn't what a detective wants—he



**THE DETECTIVE'S TRIUMPH!** There was still a search going on for the watch in the playground, when Todgers came in at the gates. "Had any luck?" chuckled Bob Lawless. "Luck!" said Chunky. "Oh, no! Luck isn't what a detective wants—he has to use cool, penetrating brain-power. Molly, here is your watch!" (See Chapter 5.)

has to use cool, penetrating brain-power and—"

"Fathead!"

"Here's your watch, Molly!" said Chunky Todgers coolly.

"Wha-at?"

"You've found it!" yelled Bob.

Chunky Todgers held up the silver watch, which glistened in the sunshine. It spoke for itself.

Molly Lawrence ran up breathlessly.

"Oh!" she exclaimed. "That is it! Where did you find it, Chunky? How did you find it? I'm so glad!"

"Well, Jerusalem crickets!" ejaculated Bob Lawless blankly.

"How did you find it, Fatty?" asked Dick Dawson.

"Just happened on it?" inquired Frank Richards.

Chunky sniffed.

"Happened on it!" he repeated scornfully. "I found it, because—because I'd taken up the case as a detective, you know, and I was bound to find it. With my vast abilities."

"I guess it was lying on the grass," said Bob.

"It wasn't, for I've looked all along the creek for it; it was jolly well out of sight somewhere," said Lawrence.

Chunky beamed again.

"Well, how did you spot it, Chunky?" asked Frank.

"I tracked it out."

"How?"

"Following up a clue, you know."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, I tracked down the missing watch!" said Chunky Todgers disdainfully. "You fellows all hunted where it wasn't; I just moseyed along to where it was, and bagged it. Facts speak for themselves, you know. The fact is, that I'm a born detective, and Foxy Ferret was a fool to me."

By this time Joseph Todgers almost believed that he had found the watch by some transcendent exercise of his own wonderful abilities. "I'm going to start as a detective—"

"My hat!"

"Well, you're a very clever boy for finding my watch," said Molly Lawrence, "and I'm ever so much obliged, Chunky."

"Not at all," said Chunky, with a wave of his fat hand. "Any time you lose anything you come to me! I say, Franky, you can ride with me to Thompson after school."

"What for?"

"To put the advertisement in the 'Press'."

Frank Richards laughed.

"A bargain's a bargain, old chap," he said, "but hadn't you better have some maple sugar instead?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Chunky Todgers did not deign to reply to that question. And after lessons that day Frank Richards called at Mr. Penrose's office with Chunky, and the advertisement was duly inserted. Mr. Penrose received all sorts and conditions of advertisements for his paper; but Chunky's advertisement seemed to give him a surprise. However, the dollar fee was forthcoming, and the advertisement was booked. As the two schoolboys left the office Mr. Penrose doubled up over his type-case, apparently in a state of great merriment.

Apparently he saw something comic in Chunky Todgers, Detective! Frank Richards was grinning, too. But Master Todgers was quite serious.

"You think it's funny?" he snapped, as they came out.

"Well, a little," admitted Frank.

Chunky sniffed.

"You watch out!" he said.

And with that Chunky trotted off on his fat pony. There was no doubt that Frank Richards & Co. would "watch out." They were keenly interested in the career of the Backwoods Detective.

THE END.

(Next week's grand, long, complete backwoods story is a scream. Another case for Detective Chunky, and he makes the fur fly.)