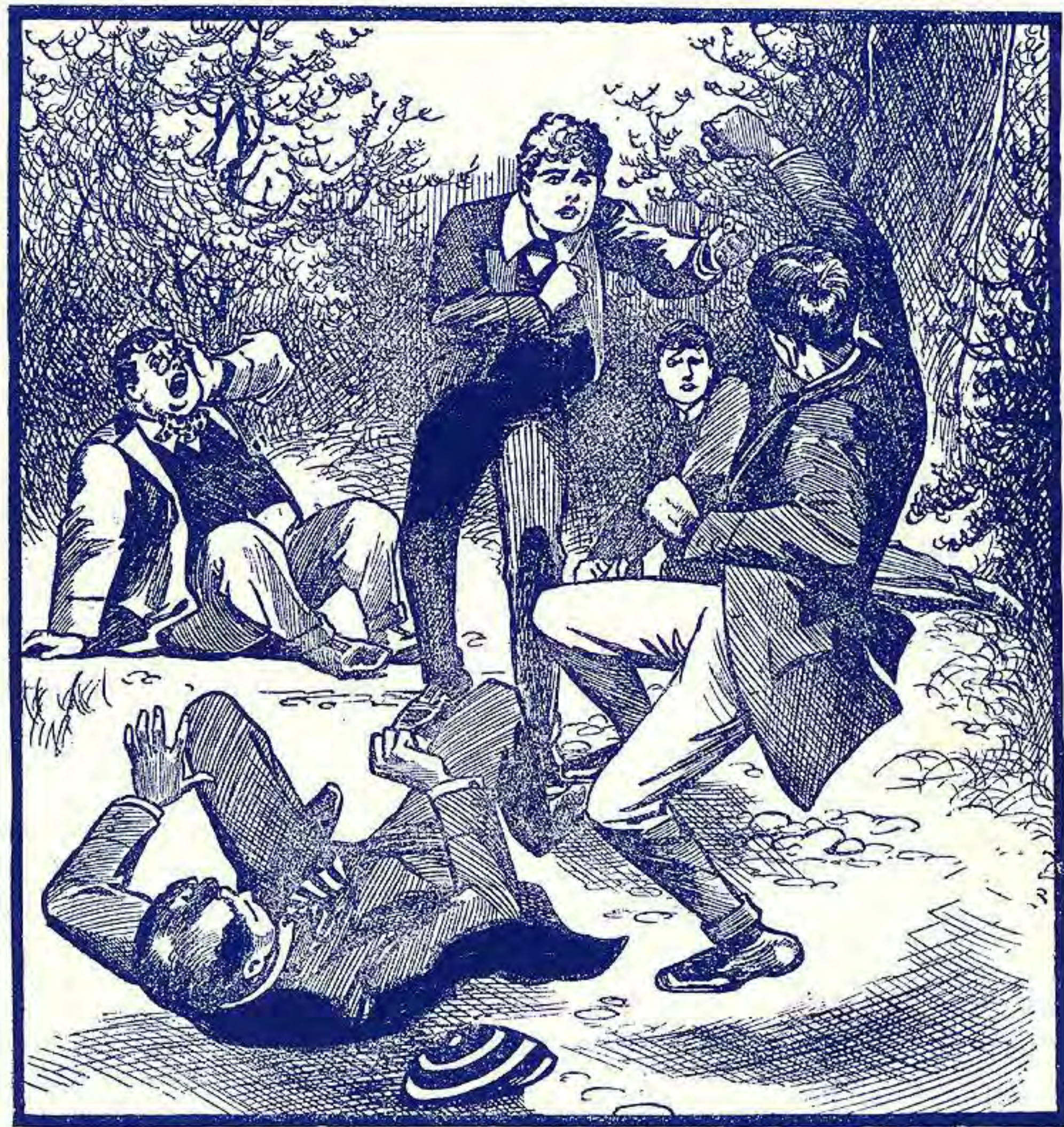


CLAVINGING OF THE REMOVE!



CLAVINGING AMONG THE NUTS!

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CLAVERING OF THE REMOVE!

By FRANK RICHARDS.

A Magnificent New Long Complete Tale of
Harry Wharton & Co. at Greyfriars School.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The New Boy at Greyfriars!

CLAVERING!

"Ay, ay, sir!"

Mr. Quelch started, as well he might.

The Remove fellows glanced round curiously.

It was certainly the first time that the Remove-master of Greyfriars had received that reply when addressing a member of his Form.

Leonard Oswald Clavering, the new boy in the Remove, coloured a little as the curious glances were turned upon him.

"You duffer, Clavering!" whispered Harry Wharton, the captain of the Remove. "Don't be funny with Quelch; it isn't safe!"

Clavering's colour deepened.

"You are speaking to Clavering, Wharton!" rapped out Mr. Quelch.

"Ahem!"

"Kindly be silent!"

"Clavering!" snapped the Remove-master once more.

"Ay, ay—yes, sir?" stammered the new junior.

"You are a new boy at Greyfriars, and not yet used to our customs," said Mr. Quelch. "But I see no reason why you should reply to me in such an extraordinary manner, unless from a misplaced sense of humour."

"Oh, sir!"

"If your intention is to be impertinent, Clavering—" rumbled the Remove-master.

"Oh, no, sir! I—I—"

Clavering's face was crimson now.

"You are, I understand, the son of a military officer, and have hitherto lived at an inland country vicarage," said Mr. Quelch. "Under those circumstances, kindly explain why you are speaking to me like a seaman."

"I—I—"

"The Form-room, Clavering, is no place for absurd jokes, especially with your Form-master as the object of them."

"I—I was not joking, sir," stammered the new junior. "I—I spoke from—from force of habit, sir. I—I mean—"

"You could not use a mode of speech familiar only to men of the sea, Clavering, from force of habit."

"I—I—"

Clavering's voice died away.

"I can only conclude, Clavering, that upon your first day in my Form you have sought to distinguish yourself by impertinence to your Form-master, in order to gain a little cheap notoriety among your class-mates."

"I—I—"

"As you are quite new here, Clavering, I shall pass over this incident; but I warn you not to let it recur. You understand me?"

"Ay, ay, sir!" gasped Clavering.

Mr. Quelch fairly jumped.

"What!" he thundered.

"I—I mean, yes, sir."

"Stand out here, Clavering!"

The sturdy, sunburnt new junior stepped out reluctantly before the class. He had made a bad beginning with Mr. Quelch.

"Silly ass!" murmured Skinner to Bolsover major. "All very well to pull Quelch's leg, but that's simply asking for trouble."

"Off his rocker, I should think!" grunted Bolsover.

Mr. Quelch picked up his cane from his desk.

"Hold out your hand, Clavering."

Swish!

"Now go back to your place, and kindly bear in mind that impertinence to your Form-master is not permitted at Greyfriars."

"Yes, sir!" muttered Clavering.

He went back to his form with the eyes of all the Remove upon him, his cheeks burning.

The lesson proceeded, Mr. Quelch considerably passing over Clavering for a time. Bunter was called upon to construe, and Billy Bunter's construe was always entertaining to the Remove and exasperating to the Remove-master. It was William George Bunter who was celebrated at Greyfriars for having rendered "*arma virumque cano*" into "the armed man to the dog!"

Bunter's performances now quite took attention off Clavering. There were some minutes of anguish for Bunter, and then Wharton was called upon, and acquitted himself to Mr. Quelch's satisfaction. Then Clavering was ordered to stand up and construe.

He did not say "Ay, ay, sir!" this time. The tingling of his palm was a sufficient reminder.

Mr. Quelch's eyes were fixed upon him grimly as he began. But the Form-master's expression relaxed as Clavering proceeded, and surprise and approval dawned in his face.

"That will do, Clavering," he said. "Very good—very good indeed; in fact, excellent!"

"Crib!" murmured Skinner, with a sneer.

"Bet you!" whispered Snoop. "Chap couldn't construe like that without a crib."

"Rotten swot, if he could!" was Stott's whispered opinion.

"You have certainly done justice to your tutor, Clavering," Mr. Quelch was proceeding. "I am very pleased with you."

"Thank you, sir!" faltered Clavering.

His palm was still smarting, but the commendation of the Remove-master had brought a flush of pleasure into his sunburnt face. New as he was to the school, he was more than holding his own among the Remove fellows.

When the morning's work was over, and the Remove were dismissed, Mr. Quelch called to Clavering to come to his desk.

And the Remove fairly jumped as Clavering answered:

"Ay, ay, sir!"

Mr. Quelch stood petrified.

"Clavering!" he thundered.

"Ye-es, sir?" said the unfortunate junior.

"Come here!"

"Yes, sir."

The Remove filed out, leaving the new fellow standing before the Form-master with crimson cheeks and hanging head, his eyes on the floor. Mr. Quelch gazed at him severely, but with more surprise than anger.

"Clavering, I do not understand you," he said quietly. "In some respects you are likely to prove a credit to your class. You are a little behind in some subjects, but in others you are fit to take your place in a higher Form. What perversity is this that is causing you to flout your Form-master in this extraordinary way?"

"I—I am sorry, sir," stammered Clavering. "I never meant to be cheeky, sir—I—I mean, impertinent. It—it's a way of speaking I have picked up."

"You have not lived among seafaring men, Clavering?" said Mr. Quelch, eyeing him very curiously.

"I—I've known a lot of sailormen, sir."

"I was not aware of that. Surely sailormen did not come in any great numbers to the village of Cotswood, at a distance from the sea?"

"N-n-no, sir. But—but—"

"Then how have you mixed a great deal with seafaring men?" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

"I—I've been about a good deal, sir."

"Since your father brought you home from South America, do you mean?"

"I—I mean, since—since I've lived in Kent, sir."

"That is the same thing. I was not aware of this, Clavering. But, as I believe you are speaking the truth, I shall excuse you. You will make an effort, however, to rid yourself of seafaring expressions you have picked up. They are quite out of place in a school."

"Oh, certainly, sir!"

"Very well. You may go, Clavering."

The new junior followed the other fellows out of the Form-room, his face crimson and troubled.

Mr. Quelch looked after him oddly, and shook his head. He was perplexed. There was much about Clavering, the new Removeite, that perplexed him. Yet he was inclined to like the boy. The open, frank, sunburnt face appealed to him. He could read in it a frank and manly nature. And yet—Mr. Quelch shook his head again, and dismissed the matter from his mind. It was futile to ponder over a matter so odd and perplexing.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Clean Bowled!

HALLO, hallo, hallo! Here you are!"

Bob Cherry's powerful voice greeted Clavering as he came out into the quad with a clouded brow.

He looked up, and all the Famous Five gave him friendly looks. Harry Wharton & Co. liked the new junior, and took more than usual interest in him because Captain Clavering had fallen in the war.

"Hallo!" replied Clavering confusedly.

"You boulder!" said Bob, shaking a warning finger at him. "You mustn't pull Quelch's leg in class! We rag Mossoo a little sometimes, and sometimes the old Gander, but Quelch's too dangerous. He bites!"

"He do—he does!" grinned Nugent.

"What on earth did you do it for, Clavering?" asked Johnny Bull.

"I—I did not mean to," faltered Clavering. "I never intended—"

"Then why did you answer him like a sailorman talking to a skipper?" asked Harry Wharton, laughing.

"It—it was habit. I mean—"

"You haven't been to sea?" exclaimed Bob.

"I—I've been on the sea a great deal," said Clavering.

"My hat! I thought you lived at an inland place. Of course, you had a long voyage coming over from South America, but you didn't travel in the fore-castle, did you?"

"N-n-no!"

"Well, then— Yaroooh!" roared Bob Cherry suddenly, as his remarks were interrupted by a snowball whizzing across the quad and catching him under the left ear.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ow! Ooooh! Oh!" gasped Bob, grabbing at the snow in his collar. "I—I'll— Who was that?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Temple of the Fourth, whose unerring aim had landed the missile on Bob's neck.

"You Fourth-Form monkey!" yelled Bob. "Give 'em socks, you fellows!"

There had been a heavy fall of snow, and a good deal of it was left in the old quad. The Famous Five grabbed up snow at once in handfuls, under a fusillade from Temple, Dabney & Co. of the Fourth. Snowballs were soon whizzing on all sides.

"Go it, Remove!" shouted Johnny Bull. "Pile in, Clavering, you ass! What are you standing like a stone image for?"

"Ay, ay!" gasped Clavering.

He realised that, as a member of the Remove, he was called upon to back up. He joined in the snowballing with great zest.

"Back up, Remove!" shouted Wharton.

Remove fellows came racing up from all sides.

There was a crowd of the Fourth with Temple, and a snow-battle was soon raging far and wide.

Clavering, his face flushed and his eyes sparkling, joined in as if he had been at Greyfriars a whole term at least. He was surprised to find himself so soon feeling at home in his new quarters.

"Charge!" shouted Wharton. "Come on!"

Temple & Co. were driven back towards the gates.

The air was thick with flying snowballs, and Cecil Reginald Temple was already bowled over, and Peter Todd and Squiff were rolling him in the snow. His comrades rushed to his rescue, but they were driven back, and they had to retreat across the quad.

The Fourth made a last stand in the gateway and round the porter's lodge. Missiles fairly rained upon them from the hilarious Removeites.

"Look out!" shouted Tom Brown suddenly.

Hands that were raised to hurl snowballs dropped to the juniors' sides again



Sir Hilton in the wars! (See Chapter 2.)

as a tall, angular figure came striding in at the gates.

It was Sir Hilton Popper, a great local magnate, and a governor of Greyfriars. Sir Hilton was not popular at Greyfriars, and the juniors would have been glad enough to snowball him, but they did not venture to do so.

But the warning came too late for Clavering, who was in the very act of hurling a massive snowball.

Smash!

Right upon Sir Hilton Popper's prominent nose the missile crashed, and the baronet staggered back with a gasping yell.

"Gurrrrggh!"

"Oh, crumbs!" gasped Bob Cherry. "You've done it now, Clavering!"

"The donefulness is terrific!" ejaculated Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "The clear-off-fulness is the proper caper now, my esteemed chums!"

And the Removeites fled.

Bob Cherry caught Clavering by the arm and rushed him away with the rest.

The Fourth-Formers had also melted away as if by magic.

Sir Hilton Popper sat in the gateway and gasped.

The baronet had been fairly floored by that unexpected missile, and the expression on his face was what Hurree Singh would have described, justly, as "terrific."

But the juniors did not wait to see how he looked. In a few seconds the Famous Five were in the Cloisters, and the other fellows had scattered far and wide.

"Oh, holy smoke!" gasped Bob Cherry, releasing Clavering's arm. "Fairly on the merry dial! Ha, ha, ha!"

The chums of the Remove roared. The sudden fall of the tall, pompous baronet had struck them as extremely comic.

"Who—who was it?" gasped Clavering.

"Don't you know? Sir Hilton Popper!" said Wharton.

Clavering started.

"Sir Hilton Popper! My—my guardian!"

"Your merry old guardian!" grinned

Bob Cherry. "Don't you know your own guardian by sight, young 'un?"

"We've never met."

"All the better for you. He isn't a nice man to meet!" grinned Frank Nugent. "I hope he didn't spot it was you who floored him. He will be in a terrific wax!"

"It was an accident! I didn't see him!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You don't like him?" asked Clavering.

"No fear! He's a regular old Prussian!" said Bob. "No offence, you know!" he added.

Clavering smiled.

Bob Cherry scouted cautiously along the Cloisters, and peered into the quad, keeping out of sight. Sir Hilton Popper was striding towards the School House, evidently in a towering rage.

He disappeared into the House, and Bob Cherry rejoined his chums, grinning.

"Spotted him?" asked Harry.

"Yes; he's gone in. Looks like a Hun!"

"The Hunfulness is terrific!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "It will be sage and prudent for Clavering to keep it darkfully that he floored the esteemed and ridiculous baronet."

"He can't have seen him," said Nugent. "But if he makes the Head inquire—"

"We'll all bear witness that it was an accident," said Johnny Bull.

Clavering looked troubled.

"Surely he will believe that it was an accident?" he exclaimed.

"Ahem! He isn't of a trusting disposition."

"But it was, you know!"

"Yes, we know. But old Popper doesn't!"

"Hallo! There's Smithy's pater!" exclaimed Bob.

Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith, the father of Vernon-Smith of the Remove, came slowly through the Cloisters, walking with his hands clasped behind him, and a thoughtful expression on his face. The millionaire was leaving Greyfriars that

day. He had been staying there because his son was in the sanatorium, laid up. The juniors capped him respectfully.

"How is Smithy?" asked Harry Wharton.

Mr. Vernon-Smith looked up.

"He is better to-day," he said. "He will be out in a few days, I hope."

"Oh, good! Can a chap go in and see him?" asked Bob.

"To-morrow, the doctor says."

"Good! We'll drop in and cheer him up!" said Bob heartily. "We miss Smithy a lot, sir!"

Mr. Vernon-Smith smiled genially. He walked on, and disappeared in the direction of the sanatorium. Wingate's voice was heard in the quadrangle a few minutes later. He was calling up the Remove to come in.

Bob Cherry whistled.

"Looks like a row for us!" he remarked. "Old Popper can't let the matter drop, of course, the blessed old Hun! Br-r-r-r!"

And the Famous Five, with the new boy, reluctantly joined the crowd of Removites and Fourth-Formers, who were being shepherded into the School House by the prefects.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Bounder Is Grateful!

"HERBERT, my boy!" The Bounder of Greyfriars turned his head on the pillow as his father stopped by his bedside.

Vernon-Smith was looking pale and worn, but there were signs of returning vigour in his face. The Bounder of Greyfriars had a constitution of iron, and, terrible as his late experience had been, it had not knocked him out as it would have knocked out most fellows.

"All serene, dad," he said, with a smile.

"I'm glad to see you looking better, Herbert." The hard face of the millionaire, usually inflexible, was curiously tender now. "You're pulling round."

"You're wasting a lot of time down here, father," said the Bounder. "What about business?"

Mr. Vernon-Smith smiled.

"Business comes second in some cases, even with me, Herbert. But I'm going after I've had lunch with the Head to-day. I've come in to say good-bye, for the present. I shall give you a look-in again, however."

"You won't forget what I asked you, fother—about that chap Redwing?"

"No. I've done my best," said the millionaire. "It's odd enough, but the boy seems to have completely disappeared from Hawkscliff."

"I owe my life to him, father," the Bounder said. "If you'd seen what he did—it was pluckier than anything I've ever seen. I was fairly among the breakers in my boat when he came and helped me, and got me ashore at Hawkscliff, and then he carried me over the cliffs, or I should have been drowned in the tide after all. He's a splendid chap—and rather a queer beggar, too. He's a sailor's son, and does odd jobs on coast craft, as far as I can make out, for a living; but he studies hard in his hut, and he can read Horace. Precious few chaps in my Form here who can tackle Horace as he does! I—I was thinking, father, that you might take the kid in hand, and perhaps send him to a good school."

"I'll do anything for him that you ask me, Herbert—anything that money can do," said the millionaire.

"He's jolly proud, though," said the

Bounder. "I offered him—well, anything I could do, and he cut me pretty short. But he's too good to be allowed to grow up into a longshoreman. You can't find him?"

"I went over to Hawkscliff personally, and inquired right and left," said the millionaire. "I spent half a day there. Everybody in the place knew Tom Redwing, and had a good word for him. I heard that he had gone away to take a job somewhere—nobody knew where. He was expected to return, though, and I've left word for information to be sent to me when he does."

"Good!" said Vernon-Smith. "I don't want to lose sight of him. I should be six fathoms deep now but for him. He risked his life a dozen times over in saving mine. But—but you'll be careful with him dad; he's as proud as Lucifer, though he's as poor as a church mouse. His father's ship was sunk by a submarine, and it left him on his uppers. He's kept himself since then, and he's only a kid of fifteen."

"What was his father?" asked Mr. Vernon-Smith.

"Just a sailorman, I understand."

"And the boy studies Horace?" ejaculated the millionaire, raising his eyebrows.

Vernon-Smith grinned.

"Yes; he's the studious sort, you know. He's quite gone on old Q. Horatius Flaccus. Not what we would call a swot, though; he was as strong as a horse, and as hardy as a Polar bear. He carried me like an infant."

"A queer customer," remarked Mr. Vernon-Smith. "Well, you can leave it to me, Herbert. If he saved my son's life, he has a claim on me, and I shall make him recognise it. He's young enough to be sent to school."

"Oh, yes."

"Well, then, if that's what he wants, I'll do that for him," said Mr. Vernon-Smith. "No reason why he should refuse that; and, in fact, I won't let him. I shall hear about him as soon as he returns to Hawkscliff, and then I shall make it a point to go and see him."

"Thank you, father!" said the Bounder gratefully.

The millionaire rose from his chair.

"And don't you get running into danger again, Herbert," he said. "You've given me some days of terrible anxiety."

"I'll be careful, father."

The millionaire shook hands with his son, after a few more words, and left the ward.

Vernon-Smith's head sank upon the pillow again.

He was still weak, though he could feel his strength returning. He lay in a thoughtful mood, resting.

He was thinking of that fearful experience, amid the breakers that roared and foamed round the Hawk's Cliff, when he had been within an ace of death. He was thinking, too, of the gallant lad who had risked his life to save him.

The Bounder of Greyfriars had always been considered a hard case. He was rather a chip of the old block in that respect.

But Smithy could be grateful; and he was grateful to Tom Redwing of Hawkscliff. He wanted sincerely to testify his gratitude, and make life easier for the sailorman's son. Money could do that; and money, certainly, was not wanting in the Vernon-Smith family. And, apart from his gratitude for a generous service rendered, Smithy was interested in the seafaring lad, in his efforts to educate himself, in spite of the disadvantages of his position.

The Bounder of Greyfriars was not easily moved to friendliness. Of all the fellows at Greyfriars, Harry Wharton was perhaps the only one for whom he felt any strong friendship. But he was feeling a real regard for Tom Redwing, and he would have been glad to see him again.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

A Very Pleasant Interview!

"I SAY, you fellows, old Popper's at it again!"

Billy Bunter made that remark as the juniors came crowding into the School House.

He blinked inquiringly at the Famous Five through his big glasses.

"You fellows been snowballing him?" he asked.

"B-r-r-r!" grunted Bob Cherry.

"Somebody has," said Bunter, with a grin. "He's been complaining to the Head. I happened to hear him—"

"Listening again!" growled Peter Todd.

"Oh, really, Toddy! I couldn't help hearing him when he was roaring like a mad bull," said Bunter. "Fairly raving, you know. You could have heard him a mile off. Somebody biffed a snowball right on his nose, and he's raging for blood."

"It was an accident," said Clavering, with a troubled look.

"You, was it?" chortled Bunter. "Then you're booked for a high old time, my pippin! Better put some exercise-books in your bags! He, he, he!"

"Oh, shut up!" growled Johnny Bull.

"There's nothing to cackle at!"

"Now then, get into Hall!" called out Wingate.

"By gad, what a lot of trouble to take about biffin' an old Hun with a snowball!" said Cecil Reginald Temple discontentedly. "I wish I'd given him one now, as there's goin' to be a row, anyway."

The juniors went into Hall in a dismal mood. They were extremely exasperated with Sir Hilton Popper. The fussy old baronet seemed to bring trouble with him whenever he came to Greyfriars.

"By gum, Clavering," said Bolsover major. "I don't envy you having that old Hun for a guardian! I'd as soon have the Kaiser!"

"And it was Clavering biffed him with the snowball," cackled Bunter. "He, he, he!"

"Shut up! Here comes Quelch!"

The Remove-master came in with a severe brow.

Silence fell upon the array of juniors.

"Boys," said Mr. Quelch, "someone threw a snowball at Sir Hilton Popper as he was coming in at the gates. The boy who did so will come with me to the Head."

Clavering, with a crimson face, stepped out.

"It was an accident, sir," he said. "I did not see Sir Hilton Popper—I was throwing the snowball at the Fourth Form fellows."

"I have no doubt that it was an accident, Clavering," said Mr. Quelch kindly. "However, you must come with me to the Head."

"Ay ay—yes, sir!" said Clavering hurriedly.

"Dismiss!" snapped Mr. Quelch.

The culprit had been found easily enough.

It had not occurred to Clavering to keep silent, and leave the Form-master to investigate. He followed Mr. Quelch, and the other juniors dispersed.

Clavering's face was quiet but troubled as he followed the Remove-master to Dr.

Locke's study. It was his first meeting with Sir Hilton Popper, and it was not to take place under favourable circumstances.

And Clavering had other reasons, too, for dreading his interview with the baronet, which Mr. Quelch did not suspect.

Sir Hilton Popper was in the Head's study when he entered with the Form-master.

Dr. Locke was frowning, and Sir Hilton was fuming.

That snowball upon his lordly physiognomy had evidently upset Sir Hilton. He was not the kind of man to take an accident like that quietly. To his arrogant mind such an incident savoured of sacrilege.

He jammed his eyeglass into his eye, and fixed it upon Clavering with a stare as if he would burn a hole in him.

"Is that the boy?" he rumbled.

"That is the boy," said Mr. Quelch.

"I am sorry, sir," faltered Clavering, looking apologetically at the baronet. "It was quite an accident, sir—"

"Nonsense!"

"I—I assure you, sir—"

"Nonsense!" thundered Sir Hilton. "I do not believe one word of it! It was not an accident!"

"Pray allow the boy to speak, Sir Hilton!" said the Head, with a note of sharpness in his voice. "Clavering—"

Sir Hilton started.

"Is that boy Clavering?" he exclaimed.

"Yes, Sir Hilton; he is your ward."

The baronet stared at the new junior more grimly than ever.

"Not my ward, Dr. Locke," he rumbled. "I have taken charge of Clavering at his father's request—a request which I regard as somewhat unreasonable, but do not care to refuse. I am responsible for his expenses at this school, but he is certainly not my ward."

"As you please, Sir Hilton," said the Head tartly. "At all events, this is the boy you have sent to me."

"And he has commenced his career at this school by assaulting the man who has taken charge of him, and preserved him from the workhouse!" snorted Sir Hilton.

Clavering crimsoned.

"I ask nothing at your hands, Sir Hilton Popper!" he exclaimed, with spirit. "I am quite willing to leave Greyfriars at once."

"Silence, Clavering!" said the Head.

"Yes, sir. But—"

"You must not argue with Sir Hilton Popper!"

"Very well, sir!"

"I should say not!" rumbled Sir Hilton. "I should certainly say not! The boy has been thrown upon my hands, and I cannot refuse to take charge of him. I expect civility from the boy. Huh!"

The junior bit his lip, but did not speak.

"And it was you, sirrah, who threw a snowball at me?" exclaimed Sir Hilton.

"No, sir. I threw it at some fellows we were having a snow-fight with," said the junior. "I did not know that you were just going to come in at the gates. How could I know?"

"Then it was an accident, Clavering?" asked the Head.

"Yes, sir."

"I am sure, Sir Hilton, that you will accept the lad's assurance—"

"Nonsense, sir!"

The Head coughed.

"You should not have been throwing snowballs in the gateway, Clavering. You might have struck anyone," he remarked.

"I am sorry, sir. I did not think."

"You are old enough to think!" rapped Sir Hilton. "And a soldier's

son should be honourable enough to tell the truth!"

"I have told the truth, sir."

"Huh!"

"The boy has been very careless," said the Head. "He should be punished for recklessness. His Form-master will cane him. You may go, Clavering."

"One moment!" rumbled Sir Hilton. "As the boy is here, I will speak to him. I called in order to do so, though I was far from expecting to be greeted with a snowball by the lad I am keeping from beggary!"

The Head winced, and Mr. Quelch quietly left the study. Sir Hilton's mode of speech was brutal, though he was far from realising the fact.

"Look at me, boy! Are you afraid to meet my eyes?" said Sir Hilton harshly.

Clavering's eyes were on the floor, but he raised them, and looked steadily and fearlessly at the baronet.

"So you are Captain Clavering's boy!" grunted Sir Hilton. "You are not what I expected to see. How old are you?"

"Nearly fifteen, sir."

"I was given to understand that you were very tall for your age, and almost a young man in appearance. You are nothing of the kind!"

Clavering was silent.

"And in the name of goodness, what tailor made your clothes?" snapped the baronet. "Are you aware that your clothes are at least two sizes too large for you, and flap upon you like rags on a scarecrow?"

"I—I did not make them, sir!" faltered Clavering.

"I did not suppose that you did!" snorted Sir Hilton. "Mr. Shepherd might have taken a little more trouble, I consider, in fitting you out for a school like Greyfriars."

"The matter shall be seen to, Sir Hilton," said the Head mildly. "The school tailor will soon make the alteration."

"Very good, very good!" Clavering, you are aware, I presume, that I am meeting your expenses at this school. Those expenses are heavy, and it is impossible for me to increase them by a lavish allowance of pocket-money. You will receive one shilling a week; quite enough, in my opinion."

"I do not want it, sir."

"What?"

"I do not want any pocket-money, sir," said Clavering, his cheeks burning. "Neither shall I accept it from you!"

"Clavering!" murmured the Head, in distress.

Dr. Locke was feeling extremely uncomfortable. But for the fact that Sir Hilton was once again a governor of the school, and that the Head felt a sincere compassion for the fatherless lad, he would certainly have washed his hands of the baronet and the boy together. But under the circumstances he could not take that step, and he endured the interview with all the stoicism he could muster.

"I am not here to listen to your impertinence, Clavering!" thundered Sir Hilton. "A sum of money will be placed in your headmaster's hands, to be paid to you one shilling weekly. Not a word! Do not dare to answer me, or I shall lay my cane about you!"

Clavering set his lips hard.

"That is all!" snapped the baronet angrily. "You can go!"

"Go to Mr. Quelch's study, Clavering," said the Head gently.

"Yes, sir."

The junior went out quietly, and made his way to Mr. Quelch. It was Mr. Quelch's duty to cane him for his reckless conduct in snowballing the baronet. Mr. Quelch carried out his duty, but the

junior scarcely felt the light flick of the cane on his hand.

"You may go, Clavering," said Mr. Quelch, very gently.

The Form-master frowned a little after Clavering had gone. He liked the boy, much as Clavering puzzled him in some respects, and he felt for him, in his position as the unwelcome ward of a grudging guardian. He intended to be very kind to Clavering, as some recompense for his guardian's harshness.

A few minutes later Sir Hilton Popper's tall figure was seen striding away to the gates. The Greyfriars fellows watched him go with grim looks. Bob Cherry had to be restrained from sending a snowball after him.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Raises a Loan!

"CHEERO, kid!"

Harry Wharton spoke kindly, as he came on Clavering in the Remove passage, his hands in his pockets, staring out into the dusky quadrangle.

There was a wrinkle in his brow, and his whole expression was one of deep and troubled thought.

Wharton tapped him on the shoulder, with a smile, and Clavering started and looked round.

"Feeling a bit down?" asked Harry cheerfully.

"Yes, a little," stammered Clavering.

"New kids often do," said the captain of the Remove. "You'll soon shake down here, you know. Get on all right in your study?"

"Oh, yes!" said Clavering, hesitatingly. As a matter of fact, he did not much like his study-mates, Snoop and Stott.

"How do you like Greyfriars?" asked Wharton, generously resolving to waste a few minutes on the lonely new boy.

"First rate!" said Clavering heartily. "I—I'm glad to be here. What a splendid old place it is, isn't it?"

"Topping!" said Harry, with a smile. "Greyfriars first, and the rest nowhere, you know. We're the salt of the earth in this school, and we don't mind saying so."

Clavering laughed.

"You should hear Temple of the Fourth on the subject," said Harry, laughing. "Temple says the population of the country consists of two sorts—Greyfriars fellows and rank outsiders. You seem to get on all right with Quelch. That parson chap must have taken a lot of trouble with you in the cheery classics."

"That—that what—"

"You were brought up in the vicarage of Cotswood, I've heard—that is, since you came home from South America," said Harry.

"Oh! I—I see!"

"Quelch was quite pleased by the way you did your construe, and he would have let you off, as it was your first day," said Harry. "He was only testing you, to see how much you knew, and you could have blundered like Bunter if you'd liked. And you were an easy first in the whole class."

"Do you think so?"

"Quelch does," said Harry, smiling. "If you're a bit of a swot, you'll get on with Mark Linley—he's a grinder. Pity you weren't put in his study; but there's four there already."

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" Bob Cherry came up the stairs and joined them. "Hallo, Clavering! Did your merry old guardian scalp you?"

"Pretty nearly," said Clavering. "He wouldn't believe that it was an accident."

"Regular old Hun!" said Bob. "It was old Popper's fault that Smithy nearly got drowned the other day. Smithy went out in a boat to escape detention, and he was detained because of old Popper grumbling."

"Smithy?" repeated Clavering.

"A Remove chap you haven't seen yet. He's in sunny. Know anything about boats, Clavering?"

"Boats?" repeated Clavering, with a start.

"Yes—boats!"

"Oh, yes!"

"You're getting out of your 'ay, ay,' already," grinned Bob. "As you said you'd had a lot to do with seafaring chaps, I thought you might know something about boats. Can you sail a boat?"

"Quite easily."

"Good! Got anything on for Wednesday afternoon?"

"N-no."

"It's a half-holiday here," explained Bob. "If the weather's fine, we're thinking of getting out for a sail, and if you'd like to come—"

Clavering coloured a little.

He knew that Bob would care very little whether he came or not, as he was a new fellow, and hardly known. It was the exuberant kindness of Bob's cheery nature that led him to ask the new fellow.

"I'd be glad," said Clavering. "You're very kind!"

"Bow-wow! If you can handle a boat, you'll be useful, too. It's a go, then—Wednesday afternoon?"

"Yes."

"Right-ho! Come on, Harry!"

The chums of the Remove went, with a nod to Clavering, and he was left alone again. His face was more cheery now. He thought wistfully that he would like to have a friend like Bob Cherry, and he wondered whether he would ever be on chummy terms with that exceedingly cheerful young gentleman.

"I say, Clavering!"

It was Billy Bunter this time. His manner was effusively friendly as he joined Clavering in the window-recess, and the new junior regarded him inquiringly. He did not yet know Bunter.

"Feeling a bit lonely—what?" purred Bunter. "My dear chap, you stick to me. I'll see you through!"

"Will you?" said Clavering, in surprise, and without much gratification. William George Bunter did not impress him as a fellow he would particularly like to stick to.

"You bet!" said Bunter. "I'm a good-natured chap! It's my pet weakness to take a new kid under my wing. I'm an old hand, you know. I've got a good deal of influence in the Remove. Properly speaking, I ought to be Form captain. But there's a lot of jealousy about."

"Oh!"

"That chap who was just speaking to you is captain of the Remove," said Bunter. "Now, look at Wharton, and look at me! No comparison, is there?"

"No, I don't think there is," said Clavering, with a smile. "In fact, I should say, certainly not!"

"You're a sensible chap, Clavering! Wharton's a bit of a stuck-up fossil, you know—"

"He did not seem anything of the kind to me."

"Oh, you don't know him yet!" said Bunter cheerfully, unheeding the snub.

"That's him all over! Bob Cherry—that other chap—is rather a beast! I say, Clavering, don't walk away while I'm talking to you. The fact is, old chap," said Bunter impressively, "I'm going to ask you a little favour."

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 518.

"Oh!"

"You know how this blessed war causes delays in the post?" asked Bunter, eyeing Clavering very cautiously.

"I suppose it does," assented the new junior.

"An important letter to me has been delayed—a letter containing a postal-order from one of my titled relations," said Bunter. "It's rather awkward. You see, I'm actually hard up at the present moment. The postal-order will be here to-morrow morning at the latest. I suppose you could lend me five bob? I'll hand you the postal-order when it comes—it's for exactly five bob. Comes to the same thing, doesn't it?"

"I—I suppose so."

"You've got five bob—what?" smiled Bunter.

"Oh, yes!"

"Well, I'd really take it as a favour, Clavering," said Bunter loftily. His manner implied that he was doing the new fellow a tremendous honour in borrowing his money.

Clavering hesitated a moment. Bunter watched him hungrily. But the new boy extracted five shillings from his pocket at last, and dropped them into the fat palm of the Owl of the Remove.

"Thanks, old chap!" said Bunter carelessly. "I'll remember this. Ta-ta!"

The fat junior rolled away hurriedly. He had time to reach the school shop before it closed, but no more time to waste on the new fellow. He disappeared promptly, and Clavering moved away to his study.

He found Snoop and Stott there, and Skinner visiting them. The three young rascals jumped up as Clavering came in. They were smoking cigarettes, and the sudden opening of the door alarmed them.

"Oh, all serene! Only the new kid!" said Skinner, sitting down again. "Shut the door, Clavering!"

Clavering shut the door, and coughed. The atmosphere of No. 11 was quite hazy, and he found it uncomfortable.

"Have a fag?" asked Snoop, pushing a box across the table towards him.

"No, thank you!"

"Don't smoke—what?" asked Stott, with a sneer.

"No!"

"Goody-goody—eh?" grinned Skinner.

"I hope not," said Clavering. "But I have never smoked. I'm not old enough to smoke, and I shouldn't care for it, anyway."

"You'll get on all right with Wharton and his set," sneered Skinner. "I can see you're a member of the Good-Little-Georgie Brigade!"

Clavering made no reply to that.

"Well, we're not going to have any goody-goody bizney in this study," said Sidney James Snoop emphatically. "You can take that as a tip, Clavering!"

"Is this sort of thing allowed here?" asked Clavering.

"Ha, ha! No!"

"Isn't it rather risky, then? You might be punished!"

"Pooh! We risk that! Not much chance of a prefect coming in!"

"A—a what?"

"Oh, my hat!" exclaimed Snoop. "He doesn't know what a prefect is! Ha, ha!"

"I—I know what a prefect is, of course," said Clavering. "A prefect was a Roman governor."

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked Snoop & Co.

"I don't see where the laugh comes in!" said Clavering sharply.

"Oh, dear!" gasped Skinner. "A Roman governor! Haven't you ever been to school before, Clavering?"

"No."

"So I should think!"

And the three blades of the Remove roared again.

Clavering left the study. It was his own study, but he felt decidedly like a fish out of water there. He left the three chuckling.

Clavering knew he had to prepare his lessons that evening, and he had hoped to get some little assistance from his study-mates. But Snoop & Co. were thinking of anything but prep.

The new junior hesitated in the passage. He could guess that Wharton or Bob Cherry would cheerfully have given him any assistance in their power; but he hesitated to make a demand on their good nature.

A good-looking lad came rather quickly along the passage from the stairs. He stopped as he saw Clavering.

"Not getting on with your prep yet?" he asked.

"N-no. I—"

"You don't know where to begin—eh?"

"It's all rather new to me," said Clavering.

"Naturally. I'm just going to begin. I'll bring my books into your study, if you like, and give you some tips about it. My name's Linley," added the junior.

"It's a bit smoky in my study," said Clavering. "If you don't mind that—"

"Anything wrong with the chimney?" Clavering laughed.

"No. Another kind of smoke."

"Oh! I understand. Get your books, and come along with me, then," said Mark Linley, with a smile. "I don't care for smoke, as a matter of fact. We shall be rather crowded in No. 13. But you won't mind that?"

"Not if I sha'n't be in the way."

"Oh, that's all right!"

Clavering was glad to take his books into No. 13. He found Bob Cherry and Hurree Singh and little Wun Lung there, and they gave him a friendly greeting. And Mark Linley's aid was very useful and welcome to him. The evening prep passed very cheerfully for the new boy at Greyfriars.

And when it was over Bob Cherry and Mark Linley marched him down to the Common-room, chatting as if they had known him a whole term. They did not stand upon ceremony in the Greyfriars Remove.

Clavering's face was bright. He had liked Greyfriars from the first moment he had set foot within its grey old walls, and he liked it better with every hour that passed. He knew that he would be very happy at the school; but the lurking thought was always in the back of his mind—what would these fellows, who were so kind and cheery, have said if they had known the strange secret that was locked in his breast?

But it was useless to speculate upon that.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Skinner Wakes Up the Wrong Passenger!

"WHERE'S the Roman governor?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

It was Harold Skinner who called out, as Clavering came into the Common-room with Mark Linley and Bob Cherry. Wharton, Nugent, and Johnny Bull were already there, and they looked round in surprise as Skinner spoke, and the chuckle followed.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's the little joke?" asked Bob Cherry, looking at Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bolsover major. "The Roman governor! Ha, ha!"

Clavering's cheeks were dyed a deep red.

"What on earth does that mean?" asked Harry Wharton.

He could see that it was some joke against the new boy, but he could not see the joke.

"Ask Clavering!" chortled Snoop.

"Well, what's the merry joke, Clavering?" asked Bob Cherry. "Do you know why Skinner's going off like a cheap alarm-clock?"

Clavering did not answer.

"Blessed if I can see it," said Mark Linley. "For goodness' sake dry up, Skinner!"

"Oh, I'll let you fellows into it!" said Skinner, chortling. "Clavering asked us what a prefect was! Ha, ha!"

"Oh!"

"And he said he knew what a prefect was—a Roman governor!" howled Snoop, with a yell of laughter.

Some of the fellows laughed.

"Well, Clavering was quite right," said Harry Wharton. "A prefect was a Roman governor, if you come to that."

"But we don't come to that!" grinned Skinner. "We were talking about school prefects! Clavering doesn't know what a school prefect is!"

"What rot!" said Bob.

"It's a fact! Ask him!"

"Well, how should he know?" said Wharton. "Nothing extraordinary in that. A school isn't exactly the whole wide world, Skinner. Our little local manners and customs are not known in every corner of the kingdom."

"Oh, rats!" said Skinner. "Where was the fellow brought up?"

Some of the fellows looked at Clavering rather oddly. It was known that he had never been to a public school before, and so it was natural that many public school ways would be unknown to him. Still, it was odd.

"Never known a public school chap—eh?" grinned Bolsover major. "Wasn't your pater a public school man, Clavering?"

"Oh, shut up, Bolsover!" said Bob Cherry. "Don't be a silly snob! About one man in a thousand in England is a public-school man; and the other nine hundred and ninety-nine seem to get on pretty well without it."

"Still, it's funny," grinned Skinner. "A Roman governor, you know—a prefect! Where on earth was he dragged up?"

"Don't mind him, Clavering," said Bob. "However, I will enlighten you, as you don't seem to know what a merry prefect is. It's a mighty Panjandrum in the Sixth Form, specially selected by the Head to help to keep young cads like Skinner in order, and to lick them when they smoke or break bounds."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, don't be a silly idiot!" growled Skinner.

"That's what a prefect is, and you have to treat him awfully respectfully," said Bob. "No harm in your not knowing. I should advise you to pull Skinner's nose for him. He's always more civil after his nose is pulled."

"The pull-fulness should be terrific, my esteemed Clavering!" remarked Hurreo Jamset Ram Singh.

"Eh?" ejaculated Clavering.

"That's another thing you don't know—Inky's wonderful English!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "Inky learned it under the best native masters in Bhanipur—didn't you, Inky?"

"The replyfulness is in the esteemed affirmative, my worthy fat-headed Bob!"

"Better pull Skinner's nose, old chap," added Bob. "He can do with it. He has to have his nose pulled regularly by somebody or he gets past all limits."

"Good egg!" said Nugent. "Come and have your nose pulled, Skinner!"

"Yes, I can see that mum-chance

duffer pulling anybody's nose!" said Skinner contemptuously. "He's a Good Little Georgie!"

"The dear boy doesn't smoke, and doesn't like it!" chortled Snoop.

"Well, that shows his sense!" said Bob. "You wouldn't smoke in your study, either, Snoopey, if I were your study-mate! I recommend Clavering to lick you if he catches you doing it!"

"He couldn't lick a rabbit!" sneered Snoop.

Clavering certainly did not look very warlike.

He was standing in a very uncertain way, with a deep flush on his cheeks, and his eyes on the floor. His ignorance of the use of the word prefect in a school was a trifling matter enough, but Skinner's sneering laughter seemed to have struck him hard. And the more confused he looked the more the cad of the Remove was disposed to persecute him.

Skinner was not a fighting-man, and so he seldom had the pleasure of acting the bully; but upon a safe occasion he could be as bullying as Bolsover major.

The present occasion seemed safe enough, judging by Clavering's looks; and Skinner fairly swaggered up to him, and thrust his face towards him.

"There it is!" he said, with a sneering grin.

Clavering started, and looked at him.

"There's what?" he exclaimed confusedly.

"My nose!"

"Your—your nose?"

"Yes! Bob Cherry's advised you to pull it!" grinned Skinner. "Well, there it is! Pull it if you dare!"

The juniors were gathering round now. At a glance, Clavering was a much better-made fellow than Skinner. Though he was too small for his clothes, he was big for his age, and strong and sturdy—quite a contrast to the weedy slacker.

But though he was evidently strong, courage and resolution might be wanting—and it looked as if they were. Almost any other fellow in the Remove would have accepted Skinner's challenge on the spot. Clavering stepped back.

"I don't want to pull your nose," he said. "Why should I? I don't even know you."

"You'd want to pull it fast enough if you did know him!" said Bob Cherry.

"Oh, I'll introduce myself. Master Funk!" said Skinner. "I'm Skinner of the Remove—Harold Skinner of that ilk! There, you know me now! Pull away, if you're not afraid!"

"For goodness' sake pull his nose, Clavering!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "He's asking for it!"

"I—I suppose this is a joke?" said Clavering.

He looked a little bewildered.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Skinner. "Of all the blessed funks—"

"Pull his nose, Skinney!" chortled Stott.

"Let him alone!" snapped Harry Wharton. "What are you chipping a new chap for? Let him alone!"

"You mind your own bizney!" said Skinner. "The chap's a funk, and we don't like funks in the Remove!"

Skinner was quite elated and triumphant now. He was more than suspected of being a funk himself; but here was a chance of reaping some cheap glory.

"And I'll tell you what," went on Skinner victoriously. "If he doesn't pull my nose, I'll pull his!"

"Go it, Skinney!"

"You hear that, Clavering?" demanded Skinner, in a bullying tone that was quite worthy of Bolsover major at his best.

Clavering's blue eyes gleamed.

"Do you mean that?" he asked.

"You bet!"

"I suppose you mean that you are going to quarrel with me whether I like it or not?" said Clavering. "I don't see why you should. But you won't pull my nose, that's certain! There!"

Some of the fellows had an impression that Clavering was what Skinner accused him of being—a funk. But it was soon clear that the new fellow was only surprised and a little bewildered by Skinner's unprovoked hostility. Now that he understood he acted promptly enough. His right hand shot out, and before Skinner could jerk his head back Clavering's finger and thumb closed upon his nose like a vice.

There was a wild howl of anguish from Skinner.

"Gurrrrrrg!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry, in great delight.

The Common-room rang with laughter.

Skinner, with his nose in that vicelike grip, was fairly dancing with pain and rage. He struck at the new boy with both fists; but Clavering, with his left, knocked his blows aside—so forcibly that Skinner's wrists were hurt. And all the time he retained that terrible grip on Skinner's unfortunate nose.

"Leggo!" howled Skinner, in muffled tones. "Led do! Oh, by dose! Yow-ow-ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Make him led do, Snoop!"

Snoop moved forward, and Bob Cherry promptly shoved him back.

"Fair play!" he said. "Skinner's asked for it. If you're spoiling for a scrap, Snoopey, you can begin on me!"

Evidently Snoop wasn't, for he backed away with great promptitude.

"Will you led do?" wailed Skinner.

"He, he, he!" cackled Billy Bunter. "Have his nose off, Clavering! He's always sticking it into something. Have it off!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Clavering released Skinner's nose at last, and stepped back, smiling.

"I'm sorry," he said, "but you asked for it!"

Skinner caressed his nose with both hands. It was crimson, and it was painful. He mumbled with anguish.

"Lick him, Skinner!" said Bolsover major. "I'll back you up! Shut the door, Ogilvy. No prefects wanted here. Off with your jackets, you two!"

"Yow-ow-ow!" mumbled Skinner.

"Off with your jackets!" rapped out Bolsover. "Now, then, Skinner! Now, then, Clavering! I'll keep time."

"Yow-ow! I'm not going to fight the cad!" moaned Skinner.

Skinner had had enough, now that he had discovered, only too painfully, that the new fellow was not, after all, afraid of him.

"You're not going to let a new kid pull your nose, I suppose?" snorted Bolsover major. "You're a funk, Skinner!"

"Yow-ow-ow-ow!"

"Take your jacket off!" roared Bolsover major in his most hectoring tone. The bully of the Remove was not to be gainsaid. "You, too, Clavering! Get a move on!"

"I'm not going to fight him, if he doesn't want to," said Clavering quietly.

"I tell you you are!"

"And I tell you I'm not!"

"Would you rather fight me instead of him?" demanded Bolsover major threateningly.

"I shall certainly not fight him, unless he chooses," said Clavering. "I don't want to fight you, either; but I'll do it, if you wish!"

"By gad, I'll give you a chance, then!"

Bolsover major made a rush at the new boy, only to find himself caught in the

grasp of Bob Cherry and Harry Wharton. They flung him back with so much force that he went spinning into a corner, and sat down there with a grunt. "No, you don't!" said Harry Wharton grimly.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Man to Man!

CECIL REGINALD TEMPLE of the Fourth looked round from his armchair with a lofty glance. "Would you fags mind makin' a little less noise?" asked Cecil Reginald in his most superior tone.

Cecil Reginald's next remark was "Yooop!" as Bob Cherry suddenly upended his chair and pitched him out on the hearthrug. Cecil Reginald made no more superior remarks to the fags.

Bolsover major scrambled slowly to his feet. There was a good deal of the bulldog about Percy Bolsover. He was always ready to fight, and he never knew when he had had enough.

"Get out of the way, you two cads!" he roared. "I'm going to lick that cheeky new kid."

"You're not," said Bob Cherry. "You'll let him alone."

"I'll lick you instead, you rotter!"

"You're welcome to try!"

Bolsover major tore off his jacket, and pitched it on a chair. Bob Cherry was about to follow his example, when Clavering caught his arm.

"Hold on!" said Clavering quietly. "If the fellow wants to fight with me, don't stop him!"

"Rats!" said Bob. "We don't allow bullying."

"But I don't mind."

"Oh, don't be a young ass!" said Bob good-naturedly. "Bolsover's a handful for me. He would make mincemeat of you."

"I'm willing to let him try."

"You hear him!" snorted Bolsover major. "Mind your own business, Cherry!"

Bob hesitated.

He could hardly insist upon defending the new fellow if the latter did not want to be defended.

"Well, have your way, Clavering," he said. "Sing out when you've had enough, and we'll jolly soon bottle up Bolsover!"

"You'd better have gloves on, if you're going to fight," remarked Peter Todd.

"Pooh! He won't stand up to me for two minutes!" grunted Bolsover major. "I'm not going to hurt him; only going to give him a lesson."

"Oh, rats! I've got some gloves here," said Squiff. "Put 'em on."

"I don't mind," said Clavering.

He put the boxing-gloves on rather clumsily.

"You've boxed before?" asked Nugent.

"Not with gloves on."

"My hat! Haven't you?"

"I—I mean—"

Clavering coloured, and did not finish. Frank Nugent could not help giving him a curious look.

"Look here, if you can't box, you'd better not tackle Bolsover," said Harry Wharton uneasily.

"Oh, do dry up, and let him come on!" snorted Bolsover major. "I'm not going to kill him."

He came at Clavering, and the latter put up his hands promptly. Bolsover major was a tremendous fellow, a match for some fellows in the Fifth Form, and the two adversaries looked very disproportioned. Bolsover started with a rush, intending to knock the new junior flying.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 518.

Having thus taught him a lesson, as he regarded it, Bolsover was magnanimously going to let him off. But, as it happened, the new fellow did not want letting off.

Bolsover's rush was stopped by a terrific right-hander fairly upon his chin, which knocked him backwards.

Greatly to his own astonishment, Bolsover sat down with a heavy bump.

"Ow!" he gasped.

It was fortunate for Bolsover that Clavering had the gloves on. As it was he was hurt, and his head was singing.

"Hurrah!" chortled Bob Cherry, in surprise and delight.

"My hat! That kid can hit!" remarked Temple to Dabney and Fry. "Bolsover's woke up the wrong passenger this time!"

"Oh, rather!" grinned Dabney.

Harry Wharton looked with a new interest at Clavering. He knew that there must be splendid muscular power behind that knock-down blow.

Bolsover major rose rather slowly. He was quite game, and he came on again, but more cautiously than before.

The juniors gathered round in an eager ring. It was something to see the burly bully of the Remove tackled by a new fellow, and Clavering certainly was holding his own.

He had some knowledge of boxing in a rough-and-ready way. He was at least



as scientific as Bolsover, and he was quicker, keener, lighter on his feet—as lithe and active as a panther. Pluck he certainly did not lack. He took a great deal of heavy punishment, but he did not flinch from it. And he gave more than he received—much more.

Bolsover major went down a second time, and a third. He came on again, but he was very groggy.

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Skinner, still caressing his nose. "And—and I jolly nearly got into a fight with that merchant! Oh, my hat!"

Skinner congratulated himself. He had had a lucky escape, and he was really feeling very much obliged to Bolsover for taking the licking instead of his worthy self. And a licking, it was plain, was what was coming for the bully of the Remove.

But the door opened, and Wingate of the Sixth looked in. The trampling of feet and the buzz of voices had reached farther than the Common-room.

"Stop that!" rapped out the captain of Greyfriars.

Bolsover major dropped his hands and jumped back. He was glad of the chance, as a matter of fact. Clavering stood still, looking inquiringly at Wingate.

"What do you mean by fighting in the Common-room?" exclaimed the prefect.

"This isn't the first time I've caught you bullying a new boy, Bolsover!"

"Oh!" gasped Bolsover.

Wingate frowned at him, and then he grinned.

"You seem to have run up against something hard," he remarked. "Don't let there be any more of this, either of you, or you'll hear from me!"

And with that warning Wingate went out.

"Who's that chap?" asked Clavering.

"Captain of the school, and a merry prefect!" grinned Bob Cherry. "Not a Roman governor. Ha, ha!"

"Do you have to do as he tells you?"

"My hat! Yes, rather!"

"Oh, all right!"

Bolsover major peeled off the gloves slowly. There was a rather queer expression on his face. He put on his jacket, and then came towards the new junior. To Clavering's surprise, he put out a big hand.

"You're a good man," said Bolsover grudgingly. "I almost believe you'd have had the best of it if we'd gone on. I don't bear any malice, if you don't."

"Not at all," said Clavering; and he shook hands with Bolsover willingly enough.

Bob Cherry marched Clavering away to bathe his nose, which needed it. The new junior was showing some signs of the combat when the Remove went up to their dormitory.

Bolsover major was showing still more marked signs, but he was not so surly as usual. The bully of the Remove respected a fellow who could stand up to him and give him what he, in fact, deserved, and he gave Clavering quite a friendly nod in the dormitory.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

A Sudden Shock!

"**S**TART in half an hour!"

Bob Cherry made that announcement after dinner on Wednesday.

It was a calm and sunny afternoon, though cold and sharp, and the weather was good for the projected sail on the bay. Bob Cherry called to Clavering as the latter came out into the quadrangle.

"Right-ho!" said the new junior cheerily. "I'll be ready. Better take a coat, I suppose?"

"Yes, rather—it will be jolly cold—and a scarf," said Bob. "It's cold enough here, and colder on the sea."

Clavering's eyes sparkled at the mere mention of the sea.

"I'm jolly glad to come!" he said. "It's about the best way to spend a half-holiday, isn't it? Where are we going?"

"Hawkscliff," said Harry Wharton.

Clavering gave a violent start.

"Where?" he ejaculated.

"Place called Hawkscliff, about ten miles down the coast," said Harry, looking at him in wonder.

Clavering's face was so startled that the chums of the Remove could not help noticing it.

"Know the place, Clavering?" asked Nugent.

"I—I—" Clavering's voice died away. "What—what are you going to Hawkscliff for? Isn't it rather a dangerous quarter?"

"Only in bad weather," said Bob. "We're not going to take you away and drown you, my dear chap!"

Bob's expression was rather curious as he answered. Clavering had shown plenty of pluck in his fight with Bolsover major, but his look and his question gave Bob an impression that he was afraid of a sail down the coast to Hawkscliff.

"It's rather a long run, too," said Clavering.

"Oh, we shall do it easily!" answered Wharton. "A ripping sail on a fine day, too!"

"Don't you want to come?" asked Johnny Bull. "If you're nervous you'd better stand out, Clavering."

"I—I'm not nervous!"

"Well, come or not, just as you like," said Bob. "That's where we're going."

"I—I—I think—"

Clavering paused.

"You seemed keen enough on it when I mentioned it before," said Bob. "Do you know the coast round by Hawkscliff?"

"A-a-a little, yes. But—but what are you going there for?" asked Clavering. "It's not an easy run for a boat without a pilot who knows the coast."

"We want to see the place," explained Wharton. "A chap in our Form was nearly drowned there the other day, and a fellow got him out. We're rather curious to look at the place now the weather allows."

Clavering breathed hard.

"A Greyfriars fellow was nearly drowned there?" he asked, speaking as if with difficulty.

"Yes; a chap you've heard us speak of—Smithy. He's in the sanatorium now."

"Smithy! Yes, I've heard you speak of him. I—I supposed his name was Smith, from your calling him Smithy."

"So it is; but it's a double-barrelled name—Vernon-Smith."

"Vernon-Smith!" repeated Clavering, his face growing so white that Wharton started towards him in alarm.

"Are you ill?" exclaimed Harry.

"No, no! But—but—but you said—"

"You don't know Vernon-Smith, do you?" exclaimed Bob Cherry, in surprise.

"Vernon-Smith!" repeated Clavering.

"Oh, I—I didn't know there was a fellow here named Vernon-Smith!"

"It's the chap who's called the Bounder," said Nugent.

"Oh, I have heard the Bounder mentioned. And—and his name is Vernon-Smith?"

"That's it."

"But—but how did he come to—to be nearly drowned at Hawkscliff?" asked Clavering, stammering.

"He went down there sailing on a rough afternoon a week or two ago," said Wharton. "He would have been drowned, so we hear, but a fellow belonging to the place got him out—a sailor chap."

"Do you know the chap's name?" faltered Clavering.

"Yes—Redwing."

"Redwing!" repeated Clavering, his lips twitching.

"Yes—a kid named Tom Redwing," said Harry. "You know the name?"

Clavering did not speak.

He was evidently trying to pull himself together, aware that the uncontrollable emotion he had shown was amazing the juniors.

"Well, it's time we went in to see Smithy if we're going to start in half an hour," remarked Johnny Bull. "Will you be coming, Clavering?"

"I—I think I'd rather not, if you don't mind," stammered Clavering.

"Just as you like, of course," said Harry.

Clavering nodded, and passed on, leaving the Famous Five looking at one another in utter astonishment.

"What on earth's the matter with the chap?" asked Harry. "I thought he was going to faint for a minute."

"Off his rocker, I should think!" grunted Johnny Bull. "Looks to me as if he funks going down the coast to Hawkscliff."

"I don't think he's a funk," said Bob. "He mayn't be used to the sea, though. But he said he'd known seafaring men, too. That's how he picked up his 'Ay, ay!'"

"There's something rather queer about that chap!" said Johnny Bull, in his slow, deliberate way. "He's a queer customer. He seems a good sort, and I rather like him, but he's queer. I should never have guessed for a minute that he was the son of an Army captain. I don't understand him."

"Neither do I," said Harry. "He must have some reason for not wanting to go to Hawkscliff. He was keen enough on the sail before he knew where we were going. He's a queer fish. Still, it's no business of ours. Let's get along and give old Smithy a look-in."

"That is a wheezy good idea!" agreed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

The Famous Five made their way to the sanatorium, where they had permission to pay the Bounder a ten-minutes' visit.

Vernon-Smith greeted them with a smile.

"Hallo! I'm glad to see you!" he remarked. "A bit dull here. What are you doing this afternoon? Not footer?"

"No. We're going to explore the

Bounder. "My pater's been there looking for him, and he was gone. I remember he told me he was going away on a job. We had rather a jaw together. I suppose he'll come back."

"Might have him over here, and stand him a spread in the study," said Johnny Bull.

"That's a good idea," assented Vernon-Smith. "He's a fine fellow—a sailor's son, but a bit of a swot. He mugs up Horace in his spare time."

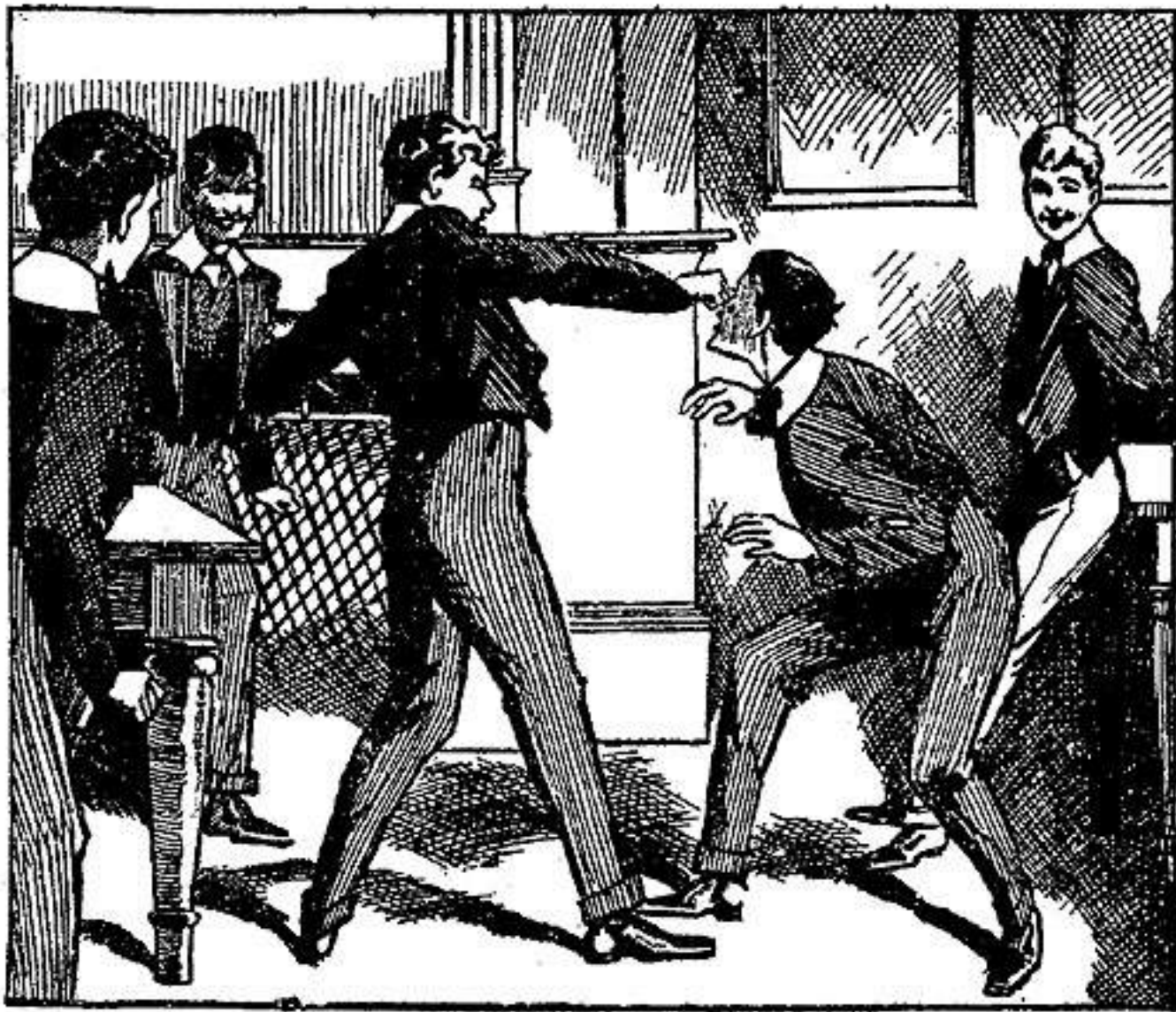
"My hat!"

"My pater's going to take him in hand when he can be found," said the Bounder. "He's proud, and rather touchy, but the pater will make him see sense. With his tastes he ought to be at school, and that's going to be arranged if we can work it. By gad, I'd like him to come to Greyfriars!"

"There's a new chap here since you were laid up, Smithy. Do you know a chap named Clavering?"

"Not that I remember."

"He seems to know you," said Harry.



Skinner has asked for it! (See Chapter 6.)

place where you tried to visit Davy Jones," said Bob, with a grin.

"You want to be careful if you take a boat there," said the Bounder warningly.

"That's all right. It's a ripping afternoon."

"Now, tell us what happened to you that day, Smithy?" said Wharton. "We've never heard the full yarn yet."

"Not much to tell," said Vernon-Smith. "My boat got among the breakers at the foot of the Hawk's Cliff. A chap came jumping down the rocks, and reached me, leaping out into the boat like a blessed acrobat. He brought the boat in for me, and it was smashed up in the surf. But he pulled me through. Then he carried me over the cliff, or I should have been mopped up by the tide. His name was Tom Redwing, he told me."

"I'd like to meet that chap," said Wharton. "It was fine of him!"

"Might see him at Hawkscliff," remarked Nugent.

"He's not there now," said the

"He looked knocked in a heap when he heard your name."

The Bounder looked puzzled.

"Clavering!" he repeated. "I don't remember. What sort of chap is he?"

"Seems a decent sort—sunburnt, and blue eyes, and rather good-looking," said Harry. "He got Quelch's rag out by saying 'Ay, ay!' instead of 'Yes, sir,' in class. He said he'd mixed a lot with seafaring men, and picked it up. But he's the son of an Army man—a Captain Clavering, who came over from South America to join up. He was killed at the Front, poor chap, and this kid is sent here by old Popper."

"Well, I don't know him," said Vernon-Smith. "He may know my name, but I don't know him."

"He's had a row with Bolsover, major already, and as good as knocked him out," remarked Bob.

"Must be a good man, then," said Vernon-Smith. "But I don't know him from Adam. I don't see why he should be startled by hearing my name."

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 518.

"He turned quite white."

"My hat!" The Bounder was perplexed. "I'm rather curious to see that chap! He must be somebody I've forgotten. Tell him to come and see me. You can bring him along to-morrow with you, if you care to take the trouble to pay me another visit."

"Fathead! Of course, we shall look in to-morrow. And we'll bring Clavering," said Harry. "I'm jolly glad you're mending, Smithy."

"The doctor says I can get out on Saturday, if all goes well," said the Bounder. "No footer for a few weeks, I'm afraid; but I shall be jolly glad to be back among the fellows again. Here comes nurse to shoo you out!"

The Famous Five took their departure. They did not see Clavering again before they started on the sail down to Hawks-cliff. On the sunny sea, speeding along with canvas drawing and the waves curling under the prow, they forgot the new junior at Greyfriars.

They little dreamed how Clavering was spending that half-holiday.

In a secluded corner of the old Cloisters, away from all eyes, the new junior was tramping restlessly to and fro, his face pale, his brow lined. Unnoticing the passage of time, the boy paced there, thinking, thinking, thinking! One thought was hammering in his brain:

"Will he know me? Will he know me?"

It was not till the winter dusk was falling that the weary junior turned from his monotonous tramp and went slowly towards the School House. His heart was heavy, and his sunburnt face sombre.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Hard Up!

L EONARD CLAVERING had dropped into his place at Greyfriars, and, like most new boys, he ceased to excite any special interest after a day or two. He was a quiet and somewhat reserved fellow, and did not obtrude himself on the public notice. He was friendly with Harry Wharton & Co., and with other fellows in the Remove, but he had not made any special chum. His study-mates were not fellows he could chum with, though he had no disagreement with them since the tussle with Bolsover major. A fellow who could stand up to the bully of the Remove was not a fellow Snoop and Stott wanted to quarrel with.

Clavering liked Greyfriars, and he found pleasure even in the Form work, owing to what the juniors considered his rather peculiar tastes. There were few, if any, fellows in the Remove who cared for Virgil personally—they took P. Virgilius Maro as a task, and disliked him accordingly. But Clavering had been seen reading the *Æneid* as another fellow might have read a novel, and so was set down as a swot. Why any fellow should read Latin without being compelled to was a puzzle that beat the comprehension of the average junior.

Yet, in spite of somewhat bookish tastes, Clavering could not be considered soft. His tussle with Bolsover major proved that. It turned out that he did not play footer, but that was not owing to any dislike of the game—it simply hadn't come his way hitherto; and that was rather curious, too. But he joined in footer practice with the Lower Fourth, and seemed to enjoy it.

There were, in fact, several circumstances about Clavering that were rather curious, but it was nobody's business to take special note of them, and they passed almost unnoticed.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 518.

Only Harry Wharton & Co. had not forgotten how startled, almost frightened, he had looked at the mention of Vernon-Smith. Wharton had told Smithy that he would bring Clavering along to see him the next afternoon; but, on reflection, Harry rather wished that he had not mentioned the matter. However, as he had said so, he spoke to Clavering about it after lessons on Thursday.

He joined the new junior in the passage when the Remove were dismissed.

"We're going in to see Smithy before tea, Clavering," he said. "Would you care to come with us?"

He purposely avoided looking direct at Clavering as he spoke, but he was aware of the scared look that leaped into the new junior's eyes.

"I—I— He doesn't know me," faltered Clavering.

"He'd like to see you."

"Would he?"

Wharton coloured a little.

"The fact is, Clavering," he said frankly, "you looked so startled yesterday when Smithy's name was mentioned that I spoke of you to him, thinking he might know you. I spoke without thinking; of course, it's no business of mine. Smithy said he'd like us to bring you along to-day, but it doesn't matter, if you'd rather not come."

"I—I don't think I'll come," said Clavering unsteadily. "Vernon-Smith doesn't know me, you know."

"Right you are!" said Harry. And he left the new junior—left him looking relieved, for it was pretty clear that the new fellow had expected questioning. He was well aware that the captain of the Remove was puzzled.

Clavering went into Hall to tea, and after tea he turned up in his study. Snoop and Stott were there, conning over financial matters, and they gave their study-mate quite agreeable looks as he came in.

"I suppose you're going to have tea in the study, Clavering?" remarked Snoop. "We generally do, you know, and every fellow stands his whack. It doesn't come very high, with the new grub rules."

"I've had my tea in Hall, thanks," said Clavering.

"Measly spread," said Stott. "I dare say you could do with another in the study."

"Is that allowed?"

"Well, it isn't, as a matter of fact; but it can be worked."

Clavering knitted his brows.

"I shouldn't care to work it," he said. "We're supposed to stick to the food regulations."

"That means you don't want to stand your whack in the study tea?" asked Snoop, with a sneer.

"I don't mean that," said Clavering, colouring uncomfortably. "But—but I couldn't stand my whack, as you call it, anyway. I'm obliged to have tea in Hall. I haven't so much money as you fellows."

"Doesn't old Popper make you an allowance?" asked Stott, with a stare.

"He has offered to."

"Well, you take it, I suppose?"

"No."

"Great pip! What are you going to do for pocket-money, then?"

"I have some money of my own."

"Money goes!" observed Stott oracularly.

"Mine won't go very fast. I must be very careful with it, and make it last."

"You won't be very popular in the Remove if you're going to be stingy!" sneered Snoop.

"It isn't stingy to be careful with money when you have very little."

"This chap is another Linley!" growled Stott. "Talks just like him!"

Haven't you any relations to squeeze out tips, Clavering?"

"No."

"Your tin will peter out some day!" remarked Snoop. "You'll have to come on your guardian then."

Clavering was silent. He did not see why he should discuss that matter with Snoop and Stott, who were nothing to him.

"So you're going to have tea in Hall every day?" asked Snoop discontentedly.

"Yes."

"Old Popper's rich. If you got on the right side of him you might squeeze a decent allowance out of the old Hun."

"I shouldn't care to."

"Well, you're a silly ass!"

"Let it go at that," said Clavering, with a smile.

"You'll be harder up than Mark Linley," said Snoop. "He would be pretty nearly stony-broke all the time, only he bags prizes."

Clavering looked up quickly.

"Is it possible to do that?" he asked, with new interest.

"Of course it is! There are some money prizes. Are you thinking already of swotting for them?" jeered Snoop.

"Why shouldn't I, if the other fellows do? I'd like to earn some money!"

"Oh, my only summer hat! A blessed prize-hunter!" exclaimed Snoop, in utter disgust.

Clavering did not reply to that, but he left the study and walked along to No. 13, where he found Mark Linley. The Lancashire lad greeted him with a good-humoured smile.

"Trot in!" he said.

"Snoop says you win prizes sometimes," said Clavering. "Could any chap do the same, if he liked?"

"Of course! Any junior can enter for the junior prizes!"

"Would you mind if I did?"

Mark stared at him, and burst into a laugh.

"Why should I?"

"Oh, I—I thought—"

"My dear chap, it won't make any difference to me. If you're thinking of entering for anything, I'll take you through the list, and we'll see what you can do," said Mark.

"You're jolly good!" said Clavering gratefully. "I—I should like to try. It would help me a lot to win a money prize."

"Would it?" said Mark. "I should have thought you were pretty well off. Sir Hilton Popper is fairly rolling in money!"

"I can't touch his money!"

"Eh? You're his ward, I understand."

"In a way," said Clavering, flushing. "But—I don't mind telling you, Linley—Sir Hilton has arranged for me to have a shilling a week—"

"Oh!"

"He looks upon me as a burden, and doesn't make any secret of it. I shall not take his allowance, and, of course, I shall need money here, and I only have what I've saved. So if I could work for some—"

"I understand," said Mark softly.

Meanwhile, the Famous Five had gone in to see Vernon-Smith. They found the Bounder looking better, with more colour in his cheeks.

"You haven't brought Clavering," he remarked.

"No; he didn't come, as you don't know him," said Harry. "May have thought he would bother you."

"I'm rather curious about that chap," remarked Vernon-Smith. "It's queer that he knows my name, and I don't know him. I shall see him on Saturday, at any rate."

The Bounder was looking forward with some curiosity to seeing the new junior. He did not guess with what feelings the new junior was anticipating the meeting.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Ponsonby Is Suspicious!

"O H, dear!" It was William George Bunter who uttered that dolorous exclamation.

"Oh dear! Those rotters!"

It was Friday, and Billy Bunter was rolling podgily down Friardale Lane on his way to Uncle Clegg's. Bunter had extracted a loan from Lord Mauleverer, and, as tuck at the school shop was limited by order, Bunter was going down to the village to try his luck there as a food-hog. And he halted, with dismay on his fat face, at the sight of three Highcliffe juniors sauntering up the lane.

Ponsonby, Gadsby, and Monson grinned at the sight of the fat junior.

Bunter was a safe fellow to rag, and the Highcliffians were in a humour for a rag. They bore down upon him at once.

Billy Bunter greeted them with a feeble grin as they came up. It was useless for the Owl of the Remove to run.

"I—I say, you fellows, I—I'm jolly glad to see you!" said Bunter.

"The feeling is reciprocated," said Ponsonby solemnly. "We are very glad to see you, Bunter!"

"Awfully glad!" grinned Monson.

"Terrifically glad!" chortled Gadsby.

"I—I say, you know—"

"I was just talking about you, dear boy," continued Ponsonby. "Monson thinks that if you were bumped on the ground you would burst. I think that you might stand one bump without bursting, but not two. What do you think?"

"He, he, he!" cackled Bunter feebly.

"Hallo! Anything wrong with your inside?" asked Monson.

"N-n-no!"

"Then what are you making that row for?"

"I—I— He, he!"

"Fatty degeneration of the tummy, I think," said Ponsonby. "Now, Monson, we'll settle our bet. Two to one that Bunter doesn't burst at the first bump!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows—" mumbled Bunter. "Don't be beasts, you know! You'd be afraid to touch me if Bob Cherry was here!"

That remark was true enough, but it was not very tactful in the circumstances. Ponsonby's eyes gleamed.

"Well, we'll touch you," he said, "and you can tell Bob Cherry we'll do the same for him when we see him again!"

"Collar him!" grinned Gadsby.

"Yow-wow-ow!"

The three Highcliffe juniors collared Bunter promptly. The Owl of the Remove hit out in desperation, perhaps upon the principle that he might as well be hanged for a sheep as a lamb. His fat fist landed on Gadsby's waistcoat, and Gaddy went over with a gasping howl.

"Gerrrooogh!"

Gadsby sat gasping spasmodically. That punch, with Bunter's weight behind it, had winded him. The next moment Bunter was bumping on the ground, and roaring, in the grasp of Ponsonby and Monson.

"Smash him!" gasped Gadsby. "Ow-ow! Smash the fat beast! Oh! Grooogh!"

"Yaroooh!" roared Bunter, as he

bumped. "Yow-woop! Help! Fire! Murder! Rescue! Yaroooh!"

There was a rapid footstep in the field adjoining the lane, and a junior came bursting through a gap in the hedge. It was Clavering, coming back from a tramp down to the seashore.

He ran into the road.

Clavering knew nothing of Bunter, excepting that that enterprising youth had borrowed five shillings of him and failed to return it. But Bunter was a Greyfriars fellow, anyway, and he was a fat, short-sighted fellow, being bullied—and that was enough for Clavering!

"Let him alone!" he exclaimed breathlessly, as he ran up.

Bump!

"Yaroooh! Make 'em leggo!" howled Bunter. "Is that you, Wharton? Go for 'em! They're all funks, you know!"

It was not Wharton, but the new junior was quite prepared to go for the ragers. As Bunter bumped, he caught Ponsonby by the collar, dragged him away, and sent him spinning with a powerful swing of his arm.

Ponsonby, with a howl, collapsed in the road.

Monson jumped back.

Billy Bunter sat up in the slush, roaring.

"Yow-ow-ow! Is that you, Squiff? Go for the cads!"

"All serene, Bunter!" said Clavering quietly. "I'm looking after you!"

Ponsonby and Monson came on, with set teeth. Gadsby was still groaning in a sitting posture. Clavering faced the two with quiet coolness.

"Smash him!" muttered Ponsonby between his teeth.

Clavering did not call on Bunter to lend a hand. It would not have been much use. And he did not seem to care for the fact that the enemy were two to one. He faced them, his hands up, and his eyes gleaming over them.

"Come on, Gaddy!" panted Monson.

But Gaddy only sat and gasped.

Clavering backed a step or two as he received the rush of the two Highcliffe fellows; but he was hitting out fiercely, and Monson caught a terrific drive with his chin. Monson went sprawling in the road.

The next moment Ponsonby and Clavering were grasping one another, and fighting furiously at close quarters.

But it did not last long.

Ponsonby, much to his surprise, was swept up in the arms of the Greyfriars junior and tossed away. He landed in the ditch, which was half-full of partly-melted snow. There was a loud squash, and a louder howl, as he landed.

Clavering grinned as he looked at Pon's furious face.

Bunter staggered up.

"Good man!" he chuckled. "I told you they were funks! Is that you, Clavering? You back me up, and I'll give 'em gip!"

And Bunter, quite valiant now, fell upon Gaddy and smote him hip and thigh. The unfortunate Highcliffian yelled wildly.

Clavering dragged Bunter off.

"Stop it, you fat duffer!" he cried.

"I'm going to smash him!" roared Bunter.

"Don't hit a chap when he's down!"

"Rats! They had me down, hadn't they?"

"Still, don't do it!"

"Mind your own business, Clavering!" snorted Bunter.

"Oh, all right! Good-bye!"

"I—I say, don't you leave me here!" howled Bunter, in alarm, catching at the new junior's sleeve as he turned away. "I—I was only joking, you know!"

Clavering stopped again. Ponsonby had clambered out of the snowy ditch,

his elegant attire in a shocking state, and his temper in a still more shocking state. The language he was using was rather shocking, too. Pon's elegance was never more than skin deep.

Monson was sitting dazedly in the road. He did not want another drive like the one he had received. As for Gadsby, he did not want any at all. Ponsonby shook a wet and muddy fist at Clavering, without coming close.

"Want any more?" asked Clavering, with a smile.

"He, he, he!" cackled Bunter.

"I'll make you suffer for this!" snarled Ponsonby. "Who are you, you cad? I've seen you before somewhere."

Clavering compressed his lips.

"Come on, Bunter!" he said. "You'd better come with me!"

"Let's mop 'em up!" said Bunter. "They're the Highcliffe cads, you know—sneaking rotters—and we're down on them! Come on, Clavering!"

"Oh, let them alone! I'm going in!"

"Clavering!" repeated Ponsonby, his eyes burning at the new junior at Greyfriars. "Is that your name? A new Greyfriars chap—what? I'll remember you, Clavering!"

"Oh, rats!"

Ponsonby was searching the new boy's face, which had grown strangely troubled. Clavering seemed eager to leave the spot, but Billy Bunter was tugging at his sleeve.

"Clavering!" repeated Ponsonby deliberately. "I've seen you before, my pippin! I've seen you somewhere when you weren't in Etons, and you weren't a schoolboy. Your name's not Clavering!"

"Come on, Bunter!"

Clavering fairly dragged the fat junior along the lane.

"But I'm going to Friardale!" gasped Bunter. "I'm going to get some tuck."

"Well, go, then!"

"Come with me, or those rotters—"

"Rats! I'm going in."

"Look here, Clavering—"

The new junior strode on, with a clouded brow, and Billy Bunter trotted by his side. He did not venture to leave his protector, with Ponsonby & Co. still in the vicinity.

Ponsonby & Co. looked a dolorous crowd as they dusted themselves down and moved on to Highcliffe. Their encounter with the new Greyfriars fellow had not been a glorious one—for them.

"Ow!" mumbled Monson, as he rubbed his chin. "Ow! I'd like to boil that fellow in oil! Ow-wow!"

Ponsonby gritted his teeth.

"I'll make him smart for it!" he said.

"Yow-ow! You can't! Don't swank! Yow-ow!"

"I don't suppose I could lick him," said Ponsonby. "But there's something dashed fishy about that fellow. You heard what I said to him?"

"Yes. You were talking out of your hat, as usual!" grunted Monson.

"I wasn't talking out of my hat! I've seen that fellow somewhere before, and heard his name, though I forget it just now. But the name wasn't Clavering. He's some sort of a spoofer; he's passing under an assumed name."

"What rot!"

"Well, you'll see!" snarled Ponsonby.

And the three heroes of Highcliffe gasped and groaned their way homeward.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

A Great Cccasion!

"SOME sort of a celebration!" said Bob Cherry meditatively.

"Hear, hear!"

"The hear-hearfulness is terrific!"

"I suppose," went on Bob, "it wouldn't be any good telephoning the Food Controller, and telling him it's a special occasion, and we want a good old-fashioned study spread?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

It was Saturday, and the Famous Five were discussing the forthcoming release of Vernon-Smith from sanny.

They felt that the occasion called for some celebration.

Greyfriars had very nearly lost the Bounder for good—would quite have lost him but for the heroism of Tom Redwing of Hawkscliff. And he had been a good time in sanny, away from his usual haunts. A study spread to welcome the invalid back to the Remove was an excellent idea; but study spreads were very sparse in these days of war and submarines.

"Never mind! We'll do our best!" said Harry Wharton. "I don't suppose the Bounder will have much of an appetite, either. It isn't as if we were celebrating the recovery of Billy Bunter."

"Ha, ha! No!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Talk of angels! Buzz off, Bunter!"

"I say, you fellows, if you're going to stand old Smithy a feed I don't mind standing my whack."

"Shell out, then!" grinned Bob.

"I'm expecting a postal-order—"

"Oh, cheese it!"

"Anyway, I'll come to the feed," said Bunter generously. "Smithy will be glad to see me. I'll cheer him up, poor old chap!"

"By bolting his feed?" asked Nugent.

"Oh, really, Franky—"

"Buzz off!" said Wharton. "Now, the Bounder's coming out at four o'clock, you fellows, so we'll fix a high tea for five!"

"Good!"

"I'll be there!" said Bunter.

"You won't!" roared Bob Cherry. "Buzz off!"

"Have you fellows seen Clavering?" asked Bunter, unheeding. "He cashed a postal-order for me the other day—"

"And you're in a hurry to settle up?" grunted Johnny Bull sarcastically.

Bunter blinked at him.

"Not exactly. The fact is, I'm expecting another postal-order, and I want Clavering to cash that, too. Some fellows have faith in a chap, and can take his word!" added Bunter disdainfully.

"Only new fellows, in your case!" chuckled Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter snorted.

"Well, have you seen him?" he asked. "I'm pals with Clavering. He's a decent sort, not a suspicious cad, Bob Cherry!"

"What?" howled Bob.

"I—I mean—Ahem! In fact, I want to see Clavering!" said Bunter hastily. "I backed him up in thrashing the Highcliffe cads yesterday. You should have seen Ponsonby & Co. when I'd done with them. Simply crawling. I say, you fellows," rattled on Bunter, as his volatile mind took a new turn, "is Clavering's name really Clavering?"

Harry Wharton & Co. jumped up. "What do you mean, fathead?" exclaimed the captain of the Remove. "Are you fairly off your rocker?"

"Ponsonby said—"

"You silly owl!" said Bob.

"Well, Ponsonby said he'd seen him before, and his name wasn't Clavering," said Bunter, blinking at them. "That was rather a funny thing for Ponsonby to say, wasn't it?"

"Oh!" said Wharton.

"I asked Clavering, and he told me to shut up!" said Bunter. "I asked him

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 518.

whether there was anything fishy about him—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Naturally, he would tell you!" grinned Nugent.

"Well, I'm his pal, you know!" said Bunter fatuously. "It was jolly odd what Pon said, wasn't it?"

"Oh, bother Pon, and bother you!" said Wharton impatiently.

"Oh, really, Harry—"

Wharton swung round his boot, and the Owl of the Remove departed hurriedly.

The Famous Five proceeded to discuss the celebration. Billy Bunter searched for Clavering.

That inexperienced youth having cashed a postal-order for him in advance, Bunter did not see why he should not do the same again. Indeed, there was no reason why he should not cash in advance a whole series of apocryphal postal-orders as long as his money lasted—so far as Bunter could see.

But Clavering was not easily found. It was quite a good while later that Billy Bunter discovered him at last pacing in the Cloisters. And, for a pal, Clavering did not look over-pleased when Bunter did discover him.

"Hallo! Here you are, old chap!" said Bunter affectionately. "I've been looking for you."

"Well, you've found me!" muttered Clavering, frowning.

"Like to come to the feed?" asked Bunter. "I'll take you with me if you like. I'm sure Wharton won't mind my bringing a friend."

"Eh? What feed?"

"It's a bit of a celebration because the Bounder's coming out of sanny to-day," explained Bunter. "By Jove, you do look seedy, Clavering—quite pale! I'll take you, if you like. A feed will do you good!"

"I don't want to come."

"Ahem! By the way, you cashed a postal-order for me the other day. I owe you five shillings."

"I shall be glad of it, if you can settle."

"Ahem! The fact is, I'm expecting another postal-order, and my idea is that you should lend me another five, and take the ten when it comes," explained Bunter—"Monday morning at the latest."

"Nonsense!"

"Eh?"

"Don't bother!"

"Look here, Clavering—"

"Oh, buzz off!" said Clavering irritably.

Bunter blinked at him in surprise and wrath. It was the first time the new junior had shown an irritable temper, even to the worrying Owl of the Remove.

"Look here, will you lend me five bob, or won't you?" demanded Bunter loudly.

"No, I won't!"

"Perhaps you think I sha'n't settle up!" exclaimed Bunter indignantly.

"Yes, I do think so, if you want to know!" snapped Clavering. "Now give me a rest."

"Why, you cheeky rotter!" exclaimed the Owl of the Remove, in great wrath at seeing his supposed horn of plenty run dry in this sudden manner. "You—you rotter! Pon says your name's not Clavering at all! Yah!"

Clavering's eyes blazed, and he made a movement towards Bunter, and that fat youth promptly scuttled off. He returned in a state of great discontent to the School House. There Bob Cherry collared him.

"Seen Clavering?" he asked.

"Yes; the rotten cad's in the Cloisters!" growled Bunter.

Bob chuckled. That reply was a sufficient indication that the new fellow had

given up cashing postal-orders for Bunter. He ran Clavering down in the Cloisters a few minutes later, and interrupted his gloomy meditations with a powerful smack on the shoulder.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

"Oh!" gasped Clavering.

"Come along!" said Bob. "Feed's just ready—only a war feed, but the best we can do, and quite unusually good. You'll meet Smithy. Like to come?"

"Smithy?" repeated Clavering, with palsied lips.

"Yes. The Bounder, you know."

"I—I won't come, thanks!"

"Oh, all right! Just as you like!" said Bob, a little huffily. And he marched off, and left the new junior alone.

Clavering pressed his hands to his burning forehead.

"Will he know me?" he muttered. "Will he know me? And if he does—"

He moved restlessly to and fro, and then, as if making up his mind, he left the Cloisters and started for the gates.

There was a sudden exclamation as he came into the quadrangle. A junior was crossing from the direction of the sanatorium towards the School House, and he stopped suddenly as he saw Clavering.

It was the Bounder of Greyfriars.

"My hat!" exclaimed the Bounder.

Clavering stopped dead. Every vestige of colour, for the moment, had forsaken his cheeks. The Bounder came towards him, with smiling face and outstretched hand.

"Tom Redwing! You here?"

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

The Bounder's Resolve!

"TOM REDWING!"

Clavering stood rooted to the ground.

Vernon-Smith looked at him. His outstretched hand, which Clavering did not appear to see, dropped to his side. There had been surprise and pleasure in the Bounder's face as he came up. But his look was changed now. He was puzzled, amazed, and something more than that.

Clavering did not speak. It seemed as if he could not.

"You remember me?" asked the Bounder at last. "You haven't forgotten pulling me out of the sea at Hawkscliff, Redwing?"

Clavering breathed hard.

"My pater went to Hawkscliff inquiring after you," continued Vernon-Smith. "You weren't there. He hasn't had news of you yet."

Still no answer.

The Bounder's expression was very strange now. What was Tom Redwing, the son of a sailorman, doing in the quadrangle at Greyfriars, in Etons and a Greyfriars cap? That there was something wrong—something strangely wrong—the Bounder felt. What did it mean?

"I haven't forgotten, Redwing!" he said. "You risked your life to save mine, and I'm not the chap to forget a thing like that. I want to be your friend, if you'll let me, Redwing."

Clavering muttered something indistinctly. The face of the Bounder had come before him like some terrible spectre, robbing him of the power of speech.

"I never dreamed of seeing you here—in Greyfriars rig, too," continued the Bounder. "What does this mean, Redwing?" He did not wait for an answer. "Whatever it means, I am your friend, after what you did for me. But—but why don't you speak—why don't you take my hand?"

There was a shout in the quadrangle.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here he is!"

Bob Cherry came speeding up, with half a dozen juniors at his heels. He lifted his hand to give the Bouncer a tremendous clap on the shoulder, but paused in time, remembering that Smithy was fresh from a sick-bed. He was not quite in a fit condition for Bob's hearty greetings.

"Jolly glad to see you again, Smithy!"

"We were coming along to sanny to meet you," said Harry Wharton. "Tea's ready in No. 1."

"The feast is spread in the festive halls of the Remove!" grinned Nugent. "Come on, Smithy! You're the merry, honoured guest!"

"You come, too, Clavering," said Wharton. "This is the new chap, Smithy!"

Vernon-Smith drew a deep, deep breath. He began to understand. In the joyous excitement of greeting the Bouncer the juniors hardly noticed Clavering. The Bouncer was beginning to understand.

"Clavering?" he repeated.

"Yes; the new chap we mentioned to you!"

"Do you know him, Smithy?"

"Yes," said the Bouncer deliberately. "I know Clavering well. We've met before. I'm jolly glad to see you at Greyfriars, Clavering!"

Clavering looked at him then with a start.

His eyes met the Bouncer's with a

mute, almost anguished inquiry in them.

Vernon Smith smiled.

"Fancy meeting you here, Clavering, old fellow!" he said. "I'm jolly glad! Come and join the festive board!"

He slipped his arm through Clavering's and walked him away, in spite of the new junior's hesitating reluctance. Harry Wharton & Co. followed.

The colour was returning to Clavering's cheeks.

Quite a triumphal party marched into Study No. 1 in the Remove. But Leonard Clavering did not enter. He drew his arm away from Vernon-Smith in the Remove passage, and went on to his own study. Smithy let him go.

"You'll miss the spread, Clavering!" called out Bob Cherry.

"I—I'm not feeling quite fit just now," faltered Clavering. "You'll excuse me?"

"Oh, all serene!"

The Bouncer was the guest of honour at the festive board. He was in great spirits at his release from the confinement of sanatorium.

"Ripping to see you grinning over the table again, Smithy!" said Bob Cherry.

"Hear, hear!"

"The joyfulness is terrific, my esteemed and ridiculous Smithy!"

The Bouncer laughed.

"I'm glad to be back," he said.

"Heard anything yet about that fellow you told us of—Tom Redwing's the name, I think?" said Johnny Bull.

"Yes," said Vernon-Smith calmly. "I understand that he's gone to school now—a good school. I wish him luck!"

"Oh, good!"

"May see him hero some day?" remarked Wharton.

"Very likely, I think."

"By the way, you do know Clavering, after all?" remarked Harry Wharton.

"Oh, yes! I didn't recall the name, but I knew him the minute I saw him," said Vernon-Smith. "He's a splendid chap! He did me a big good turn once. We're going to be friends here, I hope."

"He seems a decent sort. We all pull with him very well," said Harry.

And that was all about Clavering.

The Bouncer was very cheery and bright at that little celebration in Study No. 1. But later, when he was alone in his own study, a thoughtful frown darkened on his brow.

"What does it mean?" he asked himself a dozen times over. "Tom Redwing, the son of a sailor, at Greyfriars under the name of Leonard Clavering! What can it mean? But—but, whatever it means, he saved my life, and I'm standing by him, through thick and thin!"

And, puzzled and dismayed as he was by the strange mystery, that resolution of the Bouncer's never faltered.

(DON'T MISS "THE WHIP-HAND!" — next Monday's grand complete story of Harry Wharton & Co., by FRANK RICHARDS.)

THE GREYFRIARS GALLERY.

No. 54.—Mr. CAPPER.

IT must be admitted that the master of the Upper Fourth is not among the conspicuous figures of the Greyfriars stories.

But there are not many conspicuous figures left to be dealt with, though there are many of more or less interest.

You have already been told that when this series was started there was no intention of carrying it on so long. But it made a big hit at once, and thus far I have only had one query as to when it will finish. That came from an obviously youthful reader, who may not have been moved by a dislike of the articles, but merely by the impatience of his years. Well, to a very great extent it is for you readers to say when it shall end. I should not take much notice of a dozen letters suggesting a finish, after the hundreds of enthusiastic letters I have had; but I should close down if I got a lot of them.

Nothing remains quite as interesting as Harry Wharton or Billy Bunter, Bob Cherry or Fisher Tarleton Fish. But there are still such as Gatty and Myers of the Second, Gwynne, Walker, and Valence of the Sixth, Hoskins of the Fifth, Newland, Vivian, Dick Trumper, Phyllis Howell, Mr. Mobbs, Miss Primrose, Dabney and Fry, Potter and Greene, Gadaby and Vavasour, Tunstall and Merton—and more besides. If you are not sufficiently interested in them to have the series running on—say so, that's all! But say so politely, please!

Mr. Algernon James Capper is on pretty good terms with his Form. The lordly Temple condescends to approve of him, and Mr. Capper thinks well of Temple. No reason why he should not. Temple, for all his swank, is the right sort in the main. But Mr. Capper has somewhat too much of an inclination to exalt his own flock at the expense of Mr. Quelch's woolly lambs—which fails to please everyone.

From Mr. Capper's photo you might imagine him to be a big, tall man. He is not that. He looks bigger and more imposing when seated than when standing. He is short-legged, but broad in the shoulders. In height he does not overtop the average junior, but



in breadth it takes Bunter to come anywhere near him. Bunter would probably be further through from front to back, but not across. The master of the Upper Fourth usually wears gold pince-nez, which grip so tightly as to give his nose a bulbous appearance at the tip. His temper is quick and his temper is scanty. From this it may be deduced quite easily (my dear Jotson!) that he is at times something less than absolutely just.

Once, when Mr. Quelch was absent for a time, Mr. Capper took the Remove with his own Form. It was easy enough; the Upper Fourth are not really so far ahead of the

Remove in work. But in another sense it was not so easy. The Remove is a more difficult Form than the Upper Fourth to handle.

Mr. Capper is reputed to be a great Greek scholar, and to be at work on an edition of Plato (if you don't know who that ancient gentleman was, don't trouble to ask—he would not interest you as he does Mr. Capper!) which is going to knock spots out of any other edition ever published. He has a bust of Socrates (another Greek gentleman you are not likely to take any great interest in) stuck up in his Form-room; and while the Remove were under his sway that bust was decorated with a false moustache and a clay pipe. Mr. Capper took it for granted that some Removeite was the joker, and said he would keep all the Remove in. Not the Upper Fourth, mind!

Bob Cherry said it wasn't fair—and it most certainly wasn't, for no reasonable person could suppose that the whole of Mr. Capper's Form shared their monitor's enthusiastic reverence for Greek gentlemen who have been dead quite a time, and who left behind them works rather of a boring nature than otherwise. So Mr. Capper caned Bob. Tom Dutton, quite by mistake—as usual, he heard something that was not said—owned up to the offence. Mr. Capper caned Tom. Bunter was caught eating a jam-tart. Mr. Capper caned Bunter. Bob made a remark about Mr. Capper's ability as a cane-wielder. Mr. Capper caned Bob again—in fact, Mr. Capper dealt with the Remove so very liberally, while his own Form went scot-free, and, of course, chortled, that the Remove rose in rebellion. Temple & Co. took the side of authority, and there was something like a riot. The Head came, and the visitors to the Upper Fourth were ejected—sent to their own Form-room with a prefect in charge.

But before that other things had happened. Bunter had used his ventriloquial ability to annoy Mr. Capper. The bust of Socrates had been made to say "Waltz me round again, Willie!"—a request utterly unreasonable as coming from a bust, which would be decidedly awkward to waltz

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 518.

around. Socrates had also—like King Cole—called for his pipe.

Then Bunter, wanting to be well out of the way when his P.O.—a real one—was required to add to the Self-Denial Fund, visited Mr. Capper's study, and professed a lively interest in the late Plato. Bunter did not really feel that interest. Little as he knew about the defunct gentleman, he did at least know that his name had no real association with the dinner-table. But it served his turn. Peter Todd waited to intercept Bunter when he came out; but the Owl tumbled, and ventriloquised in Peter's voice—and Mr. Capper caned Peter. Too bad!

It was to Mr. Capper that William Wibley confessed his identity after masquerading as Harry Wharton's entirely imaginary Cousin George. But Wib did not do that from choice—only because, being cornered, he had to.

Apart from Greek, philately is Mr. Capper's

great passion. Philately will appear to most of you a more human interest than Greek. For even those who don't collect stamps regard as no worse than harmless lunatics those who do; whereas a fellow who felt keen about Greek—well, 'nuff said!

Mr. Capper will take a special half-holiday if he hears of a rare stamp for sale anywhere near. He lectured to the Upper Fourth and Remove once on philately—also on a fine summer afternoon. It wasn't easy to get out of it; but the vast majority were thinking of the cricket-field or the river all the time. About this time a very rare British Guiana stamp was stolen from Mr. Capper's collection. Newland and two fellows named Gadsby (not the Highcliffe nut) and Banthorpe were known as keen collectors. Inspector Grimes was called in, and the three were questioned. Banthorpe was so nervous that suspicion rested upon him. But Gadsby was the thief, as Dalton

Hawke, the boy detective, proved. The stamp was recovered, and Mr. Capper made happy.

Do you remember when Bunter lost his memory? While he was still wandering in mind Mr. Capper caught him wandering in cap and gown, and, on being interrogated, William George said that his name was Capper, and his status that of a master. Did Mr. Capper treat him with sympathy? Mr. Capper did not. He took Bunter to Mr. Quelch, and Bunter's memory was quickened by a smart and smarting application of the cane.

Mr. Capper was once suspected by Mr. Quelch of having had too much to drink. But it was not his fault—Alonzo was to blame, and there was no warrant in fact for the suspicion.

Not a bad sort, on the whole, the master of the Upper Fourth, though the Remove scarcely love him!

Extracts from "THE GREYFRIARS HERALD" and "TOM MERRY'S WEEKLY."

THE CAVE-MEN!

By MONTY LOWTHER.

(A little impression of life at St. Jim's in 1917 if our civilisation had not advanced since the Stone Age.
Not to be taken too seriously.)

"I WONDAH what those wottahs will be up to next?"

Thus speculated Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

He was standing in the mouth of the School Cave at St. Jim's Habitation. He was arrayed in a beautiful garb of nicely-pressed leaves and sections of Teddy Bear's coat.

Herries grunted and thumped his club on the ground.

"We'll biff those New Cave bounders if they come over here!" he said.

"Better idea to go over to their cave and rag 'em first," said Digby, as he started poisoning a fresh set of arrows.

"Wippin' idea, bai Jove!" said the swell of the cave.

The Fourth-Slabbers—they sat on slabs instead of forms, you see—emerged from the cave and made their way amongst the trees towards the New Cave. Figgins & Co. had been giving a lot of trouble lately. They had been warring on the School Cave to an alarming extent. Gussy had just missed being flattened into a new shape by a piece of rock overbalanced from a precipice only the previous day, and Digby had been chased by a fierce pterodactyl which the New Cave fellows kept as a mascot.

The Fourth-Slabbers approached the New Cave stealthily. They were just getting their bows and arrows ready when a sudden rustle attracted their attention. Gussy looked above him amongst the trees, and started.

"Look!" he whispered. "There's Watty!"

Sure enough, Mr. Ratcliff, of the New Cave, was swarming through the trees, swinging from bough to bough with amazing dexterity.

"I'll pot him!" said Jack Blake, drawing an arrow. "You just watch!"

The arrow shot from the bow, and caught Mr. Ratcliff many happy returns on the funny-bone.

"Yarooooogh!" he roared.

He missed his hold and fell out of the tree, descending right into a pterodactyl nest.

Now, the bird in question was an ugly-looking affair, considerably larger than Mr. Ratcliff, and as that worthy sat on her eggs, to which she had been giving undivided attention for several weeks, she got wroth. Swooping down, she caught the New Cave master by the neck, and soared up into the air with him, amid a great flapping of wings—her own, of course, not Mr. Ratcliff's.

The unfortunate master felt several square inches of his best Sunday jacket of blue paint disappear off his neck as he started to rise in the world. He shrieked in dismay.

"Serves him right!" grunted Digby. "I

suppose he'll get eaten now. Then the poor old bird will get a cruel indigestion!"

"Don't want that to happen!" said Herries.

"Let's make her drop him!"

The bird was above the tree-tops now, but Herries was a good shot. He drew his bow, and the arrow went well and truly. It smote the pterodactyl on the fifth rib.

"Groooooogh!" it roared.

(Could they speak?—Ed. This one could.

—M. L.)

As the bird opened its mouth to make the remark recorded, Mr. Ratcliff felt himself suddenly released, and he came to earth in a swift volplane, landing on the ground with a bump that made everyone think it was a bomb.

(But there weren't any bombs then. Do be reasonable. Zepps weren't even thought of then!—Ed. Oh, yes, they were! They had stone ones then!—M. L.)

Mr. Ratcliff picked himself up and started rubbing himself. He was rather shaken up.

The Fourth-Slabbers laughed as he hobbled into the New Cave.

"Serves him right!" said Herries. "Now, what about this ragging that we're up to?"

"Come on!" said Gussy. "I'm weady!"

The juniors advanced on the New Cave in fine style. But just as they got to the entrance something smote Gussy's head violently.

"Yawooooogh!" he roared.

The others looked above them, and saw the grinning faces of the New Cave fellows as they started hurling down cocoanuts upon the discomfited raggers.

"I'll teach 'em!" roared Herries, as a juicy nut caught him on the nose and sprinkled him with milk. "I'll climb the tree and chuck 'em down. You count them as they fall, and swot 'em with the clubs!"

He swarmed up amongst the branches, and was quickly lost to view. The three juniors stood expectantly awaiting the arrival of the New Cave fellows.

They did not have long to wait. There was a sudden rustle in the leaves, and a figure came hurtling to the ground beside them.

"One!" shouted Blake triumphantly.

Biff! Bang! Wallop!

The three clubs descended almost at once.

"Shut up, you fatheads!" roared Herries from the ground. "It's me!"

He scrambled to his feet furiously, and made an attack on his companions. But, fortunately, his warlike intentions were frustrated. A shower of missiles descended from the trees, and a New Cave nut caught the

nut of the School Cave on the nut! (Rotten! —Ed. So was the nut!—M. L.)

The fusillade got hotter, and, after exhausting their stock of arrows into the trees, the four beat a hasty retreat. They arrived back at the School Cave breathless and bruised.

This, of course, was a reverse for the School Cave, and no one liked it. They were determined to revenge the defeat.

The Shell—so called, you know, because they worked in a tremendous shell which a gigantic snail had presented them with on departing this life—offered to help revenge the defeat.

The first thing they did was to dig a big pit outside the New Cave in the middle of the night and plant it with sharp stakes. Mr. Ratcliff, being sore and bruised, slept badly that night, as he found that the lime-stone blankets were unkind to his bruises. He got up early in the morning, and, going out of the cave-mouth, walked into the pit, and sat on the spikes.

"Yarooooogh!" he bellowed.

Tom Merry had been waiting to watch the effect of his scheme, and he smiled blithely at the New Cave master.

"Anything the matter, sir?" he asked politely, raising his cocoanut-shell cap.

"Groooooogh!" came from the pit.

"Have you fallen down there, sir?" asked Merry.

"Do you think I live here?" howled Mr. Ratcliff.

"How can I tell, sir?"

"Well, I don't! Help me out! I fell in the pit!"

"That's a pit-y!" grinned Tom Merry.

Nevertheless, he helped Mr. Ratcliff out of the hole that he was in. No sooner had he done so, however, than Mr. Ratcliffe pounced round, snatched up a club, and smote Tom Merry on the napper. Tom blinked as though he had seen a napper-ition.

"You did that!" snarled Mr. Ratcliff.

"I didn't!" retorted Tom Merry, who was rather angry. "Do you think I'd hit myself? I'll tickle you up with a poisoned arrow if you're not careful!"

"I was not referring to the blow with the club," said Mr. Ratcliff acidly. "I know perfectly well who did that. I mean that you dug that pit into which I fell!"

"Oh!"

"You will carve me fifty lines on the best granite!" snapped Mr. Ratcliffe, as he went back into the New Cave.

Tom Merry went back to the School Cave

(Continued on page 16.)



"WIDGEY,"
West Hampstead.



A BRISTOL READER.



A KEEN MAGNETITE.



ANOTHER BRISTOLIAN.



A LOYAL BIRMINGHAM
READER.



H. IRVINE,
Longfleet.



ONE OF THREE.



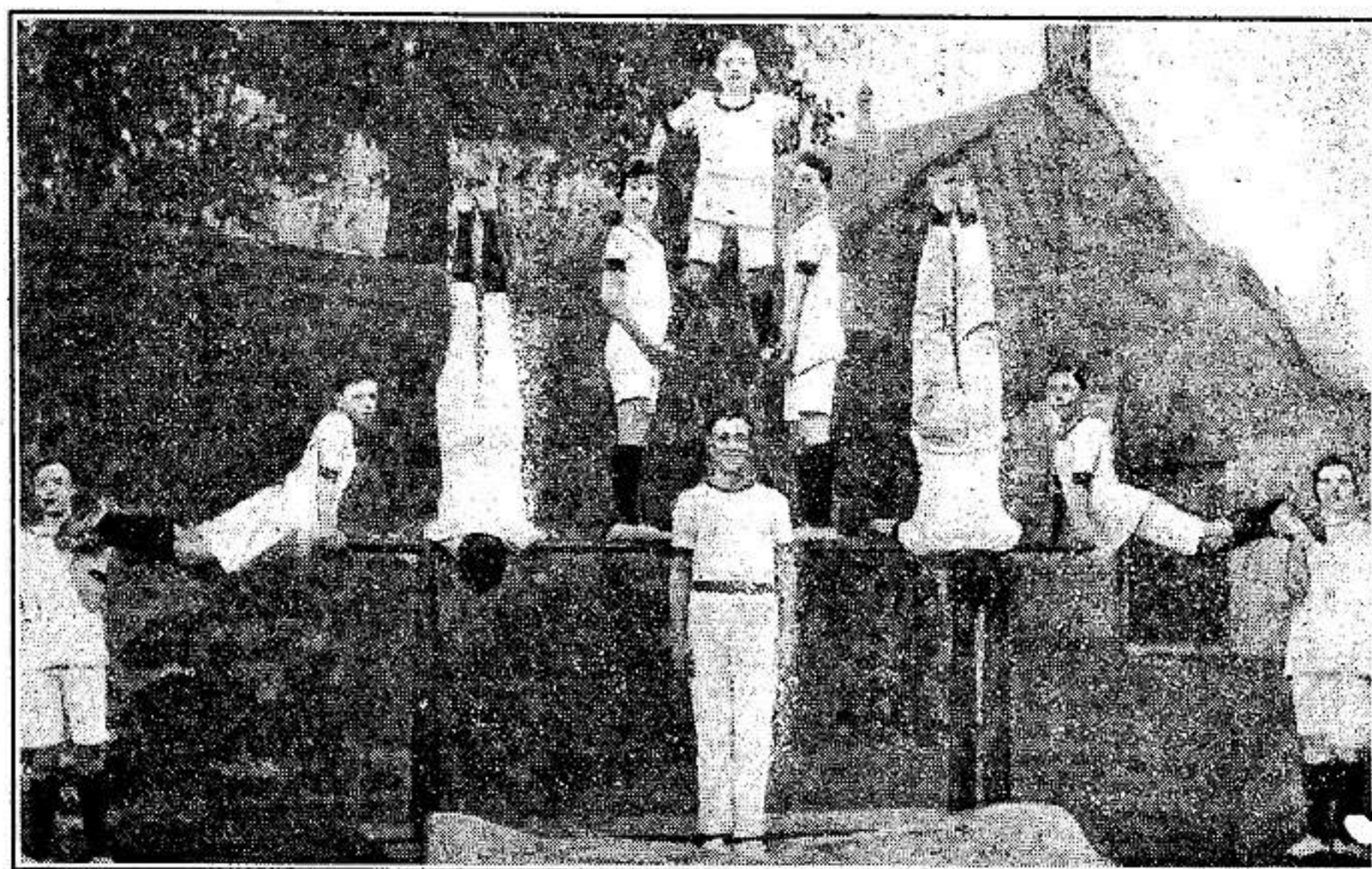
A LOYAL READER.



ANOTHER OF THE
THREE.



ANOTHER BRISTOL
READER.



A SCOTS GYMNASIUM CLASS—ALL READERS.



F. N. STALLARD,
Hucknall.



A. C. TURNER,
Hull.



A BOY OF BRISTOL.



V. GODFREY,
Woodbury.



THE THIRD OF THE
THREE.



L. BRADLEY,
Darnall.



NORMAN H. FREEMAN,
Moseley.



A BRISTOL CHUM.



A MATLOCK READER.



DICKY BONN,
Cleethorpes.

THE CAVE-MEN!

(Continued from page 15.)

in a perfectly Hunnish mood. Carving fifty lines meant that he would have to spend a half-holiday at work.

He summoned a meeting in the Common-cave.

"We've got to do something to the New Cave bouncers!" he said. "They're getting too uppish for words. What do you fellows suggest?"

Grundy dropped Trimble on the ground. He had just been trying to toast him over the fire, but Baggy Trimble objected.

"Better go and club 'em all!" he suggested. "The Head wouldn't like that," objected Tom Merry wisely. "Their people wouldn't send him any more nuts for teaching 'em!"

"I know what!" said Bernard Glyn suddenly. "I've got an idea for an invention!"

Everyone turned. Bernard Glyn could do marvels with stones and trees.

He had invented a booby-trap with heavy stones which once put Racke in bed for a month. And the crafty way in which he had tied Mr. Ratcliff's leg to a mammoth and kept him running round for a whole afternoon was still well remembered.

"Suppose," said Bernard Glyn, "that we catch a dinosaur?"

"Whew!" whistled Tom Merry. Dinosaurs usually ran to forty feet in length. It was rather a tall order. (You mean long, don't you?—Ed. Not a tall!—M. L.)

"I've got an idea for a trap," said Bernard Glyn quickly. "We catch one, and tie it up just outside the cave. Then we cover it over with stones, and wait till those New Cave fellows come over to rag us. All we have to do is to pull a string, the stones roll off, and the dinosaur gobbles 'em all up!"

"Wathah a good ideah!" said D'Arcy approvingly.

Skimpole coughed.

"I think," he said mildly, "that Professor Stoneycranium would consider that rather a barbarous way of doing things. If I could offer a little disinterested advice, I think that a less drastic method might be employed. I should propose a vitriolic distillate—"

"Stun him!" said Grundy dispassionately.

Skimpole was stunned.

"To come back to the point," said Grundy, as Trimble retired into the corner, presumably with the idea of eating Skimpole, "we've got to do something. Now I suggest—"

"B-r-r-r-r-r!"

"If you won't listen——"

"Shurrup!"

"I tell you that I know best!" roared Grundy. "Now what I say is—— Yar-ooooogh!"

Manners flicked his club deftly in the direction of Grundy, and that worthy lay down on the floor and went to sleep.

"Bernard Glyn's idea is best," said Tom Merry. "We'll go out and catch the dinosaur!"

The juniors sallied forth on their quest. By the time Grundy and Skimpole came to they were well away from the Cave.

The two stunned juniors were not hurt very much. It must be remembered that, on account of the times they lived in, their skulls were very thick, and the club has yet to be invented which would do them harm for any length of time. (Grundy has not changed much.—Ed. But he has! He doesn't wear blue paint now!—M. L.)

The School Cave fellows, meanwhile, were out catching the dinosaur. This they did without very much bother by following Bernard Glyn's advice. But, as he patented the process, we can't tell you how it was done.

The captive forty-foot monster was brought back to the school, and covered over with stones, in accordance with the previous plan.

All that the School Cave fellows had to do then was to wait.

Mr. Ratcliff was the first to appear. He was coming over to lodge a complaint with Mr. Railton. Behind him came about a dozen New Cave fellows, sitting from tree to tree. They evidently intended to spring a surprise on the School Cave fellows as soon as Mr. Ratcliff was inside.

But at the critical moment the dinosaur woke up, and, shaking the stones off his back, spotted Mr. Ratcliff. His eyes twinkled humorously.

The next moment he swept his great tongue out, and gathered Mr. Ratcliff and about a dozen fellows into his mouth. It certainly seemed as though something dramatic was going to happen. But Mr. Ratcliff was the salvation of the party.

His whiskers were bristling with fear, and standing almost on edge. They tickled the dinosaur's throat terribly. He paused for a second, and then broke down.

"Aitishooooo!" he roared.

Mr. Ratcliff and his fellow cave-dwellers found themselves expelled suddenly from their temporary lodgings and littered on the ground. They scrambled up, and darted off for the New Cave. But their alarm was unnecessary.

Much displeased with the adventure, the dinosaur turned and ambled off.

"Sold again!" muttered Tom Merry.

And the juniors retired into the School Cave to think out further plots, while Tom Merry made his way to the study and commenced carving his lines.

Mr. Ratcliff would be asking for them in the morning. And Tom Merry had dwelt in the Stone Age long enough to know that no "rags" were likely to cause anything more than temporary inconvenience.

Whatever happened, Mr. Ratcliff would be alive in the morning to receive the granite slabs!

THE END.

EDITORIAL CHAT.

For Next Monday:

"THE WHIP-HAND!"

By Frank Richards.

Clavering—who is really Tom Redwing of Hawkcliff—we don't make any mystery as to that—is again the central figure of next week's fine yarn.

The right sort, Clavering, even though he may be sailing under false colours. I am sure you all like him, in spite of his little weakness for Latin, which you will not find it easy to understand. Unless you are a Scot, that is. There is lots of difference between the system of education in England and in Scotland; but the difference is in the main due to the fact that the Scots, as a race, are keener on getting education than the English. The story told of Redwing—his studying Latin all on his own in a humble cottage—is one that could be told of thousands of boys in Scotland. Many of them have won big names later, too. As a rule, the English boy who goes up to Oxford or Cambridge has had every advantage he could reasonably ask for, and when there he spends more on superfluous things than would keep the hardy Scot who goes up to Edinburgh or Glasgow or Aberdeen from the Highland glen or the Lowland farm.

But this is only indirectly connected with the story. Clavering falls foul of Ponsonby and the nuts, and Pon, who has heard of the whispers at Greyfriars, recognises him as Tom Redwing. He means to expose him by way of revenge. But Vernon-Smith takes a hand. Redwing has saved his life, and the Bounder is grateful. He appeals to Pon—no go! Then he acts. I am not going to tell you how—wait till next week. But I think you will all guess who, in the long run, had the whip-hand!

A CHANCE FOR THE GENEROUS!

A year or so ago I asked for small subscriptions from my readers for the purpose of sending a couple of pairs of boxing-gloves to a man at the Front. Now I want enough for a couple of footballs to go to the same locality. I have started the subscription in the office, and have a few shillings in hand thus—my own contribution and those I called upon my colleagues to hand over. (But they were all willing—I did not have to do anything drastic such as putting them on the floor and rifling their pockets. That is not often necessary here when money is wanted in a good cause, though if it should prove necessary—well, 'nuff said!) The footballs have been sent, with the best wishes of the Editor of the MAGNET and his readers; and I am open to receive subscriptions from any of you to make up the amount. Don't send along more than sixpence, and send less if that is too much; but send at once. Any balance after the bill is paid will be handed over to some fund for the benefit of the men to whom we all owe so much.

THE CITY OF LONDON R.E. CADET TRAINING CORPS.

The Commanding Officer of this Corps asks me to insert the notice which follows, and I do so with great pleasure. No words of mine are really needed to recommend the movement; but, as I have told you before, it has my hearty support, as all such movements have.

"The Cadet movement is rapidly spreading all over the British Isles, and Corps, affiliated to various regiments of the British Army, are springing up in London and the Provinces.

"The City of London Royal Engineers Cadet Training Corps, whose headquarters are at the Guildhall, E.C., affords a splendid opportunity for the

older lad, desirous of getting a practical training in the various branches of field engineering, as well as providing an excellent school for 'hardening' youths within a few months of military age.

"Applicants are invited to see the Commanding Officer (Major Charles Assiter), on Tuesdays, from 8.30 to 9.30 p.m., and Thursdays, from 7.30 to 9, who will be glad to furnish all particulars. The Corps is also in urgent need of funds to carry on the work which has already produced such good results."

NOTICES.

Correspondence, Etc., Wanted By:

J. Townsend, 58, Duke Road, Chiswick, W.—with readers in any part of the world, 15-16, interested in stamp collecting.

Harley de Villiers, 17, Roberts Road, Woodstock, Cape Town, South Africa—with readers in California and other Pacific States.

F. E. Eekersley, 19, Brook Road, Fallowfield, Manchester—with boy readers about 16 in the United Kingdom.

Miss Joan West, Oaklands, Grove Park, Denmark Hill, S.E.—with girl readers in her neighbourhood.

Players wanted for orchestra—violin, viola, 'cello, bass, etc.—either sex—age immaterial—wanted to enlarge orchestra now consisting of seven players—small subscription monthly.—"Conductor," 23, Chivalry Road, Wandsworth, S.W.

Your Editor