

SPLENDID STORIES OF SCHOOL FOOTER, AND DETECTIVE ADVENTURE!

The

No. 1,079. Vol. XXXIV.

Week Ending October 20th, 1928.

# Magnet

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EVERY SATURDAY.



**“—AND IT WAS HIS OWN TOPPER!”**

*(A “striking” incident from the grand story of Harry Wharton & Co. inside.)*

# Our Special Football Feature!



## STARS AND THEIR METHODS!

This week "Referee" chats about TOM LAW, the young Scottish International and Full-back of Chelsea.



**I**N my talks about famous footballers I have only included in the series, up to now, those men who may be said to have definitely arrived; men who have already done, perhaps, as much as they will ever do. Now, by way of variety, I am going to take on the role of prophet, and talk to you a bit about a player who is only on the very threshold of his career, but also a player who will, if he has any luck, make a really big niche for himself among the famous.

His name is Tom Law, and he plays at full-back for Chelsea. In my opinion he is one of the brightest youngsters who has been introduced into the game for some time past—perhaps the best in the defender line, that has been found since the War.

I must mention, by way of a start, that Law is a Scotsman. And that may tempt you to say:

"What, another? Is Scotland the only place where they produce footballers?"

### Five Games in One Week!

Yet, in a way, Law is very different from most of the present-day Scottish players associated with English clubs. It is the usual practice for the Scottish player to be developed in his own country, and for him only to be transferred to England for a big figure when he has a reputation already made. But Law does not come under this heading. He was born in Scotland, but actually he has developed his football in England, and if you want to know how much he cost Chelsea when he was brought to Stamford Bridge I will tell you. The sum was exactly ten pounds. That is the fee which a player signing on is allowed to receive. There was no transfer fee to be paid in Law's case for this simple reason—that nobody in Scotland thought he was worth a transfer fee.

I have had many talks with young Law—he is now just on twenty-two years of age—about his early career. Actually, he had precious little early career, so far as football is concerned, to talk about.

At odd times—when he had nothing better to do—he turned out with a church team, playing "in any old position," as Tom himself puts it. Anyway, he never once played at left full-back for that church team. Then he played at left-half and outside-left for the Bridgton Waverley Club, and it so happened that they were in so many cup competitions that he had to appear on the field five times in one week. And it was during one of those five games that a scout belonging to the Chelsea club saw him.

To the credit of that scout be it said that he at once spotted the football

genius in Law. Tom was asked if he would go to Chelsea, and he went, stayed there for a season in the reserve eleven, took to the full-back job as a duck takes to water, was afterwards promoted to the first team, and has been in it ever since.

### A Gamble That Came Off!

I have said that as yet he is only in the "coming masters" stage. But that does not mean that he has not already done things. Chelsea did not win promotion last season, though at one time they had a fine chance of doing so. But it was not the fault of the Pensioners' defence. Last season they went longer than any other club in the big Leagues before they conceded a goal, and, taking the whole season through, they conceded fewer goals than any other side, either in the First or Second Divisions of the Football League. Law didn't do every-



TOM LAW.

A footballer who should soon make a big name for himself.

thing to make that record for Chelsea, but he certainly did his bit.

Then last season a great reward came his way. He was picked to play for his native country against England at Wembley in that memorable match which Scotland won by five goals to one.

The people in Scotland wanted to know who this fellow Law was, how it happened that this "unknown" player should be chosen before so many able left full-backs with the qualifications to play for Scotland. I asked one of the Scottish selectors immediately Law was chosen whether he thought the selection was a wise one.

"Law is playing at my strong recommendation," he said. "I have staked my faith in him; my judgment of a footballer is really at stake. It is a bit of a gamble, I admit, putting a young lad into a Scottish International side."

Well, perhaps it was a gamble, but the gamble came off, and you would never have thought, watching Law that day at Wembley, that he was the youngest fellow on the field, both in years and in experience. He was as cool as could be, and that is one reason why I think he will go on to prove really great, that the bigger the occasion is the better he plays.

### Brain and Brawn!

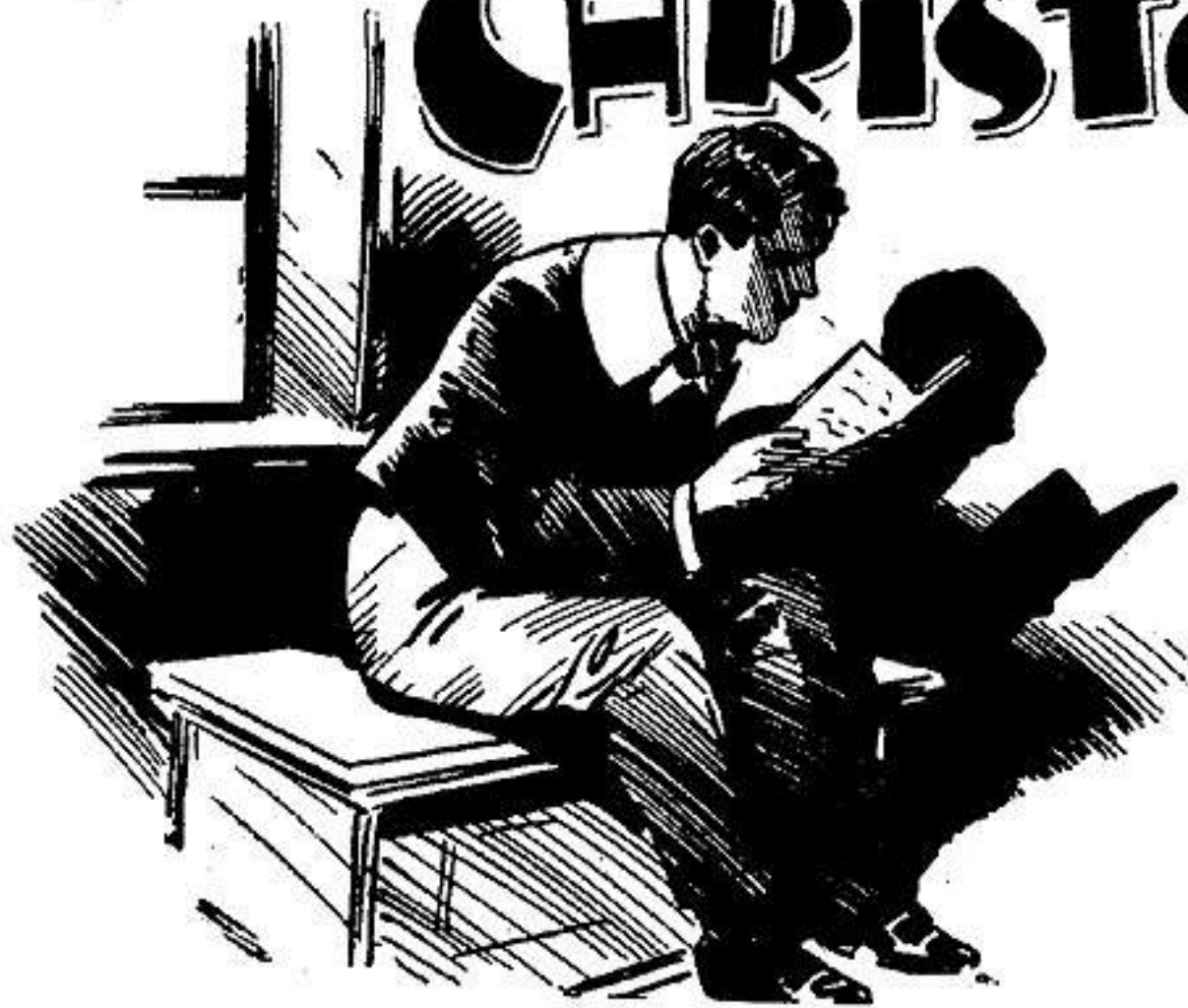
He is well built for the full-back's job, and if you saw him going round the Chelsea ground during training hours you would realise how earnest he is about it all. He has the strength of leg which enables him to come through with the ball at his feet in a tackle in which sheer strength tells. And I like to see him going in to tackle because he has his eye on the ball. And, with his eye on it, he seems to say to himself: "That's mine!" When you go in to tackle in that spirit, and keep your eye on it, then it's long odds you get the ball.

He is now learning, too, that the biggest kick is not necessarily the best kick. He used to think it was. But in these days when he has got the ball in a successful tackle he looks for a Chelsea man to whom he can give it. And he doesn't mind doing a little dash up the field on his own.

But, having done that dash, he comes back in a hurry—and that brings me to another qualification. He has exceptional pace for a short sprint. Now, speed may not be absolutely necessary in a full-back, but it is valuable. Here, then, is a great full-back in the making—a likely master, because he knows a lot, and is willing to learn what he doesn't know.

**THE PRINCE OF JAPERS!** Harry Wharton & Co. are quite ready to admit that Christopher Clarence Carboy is an excellent japer, and a champion leg-puller. But there's a limit to practical joking, and Carboy has reached that limit. Will he read the danger signals ahead, or will he ignore them?

# BE CAREFUL, CHRISTOPHER!



A rollicking fine long complete school story of Harry Wharton & Co. at Greyfriars, featuring Christopher Clarence Carboy, the amazing new boy of the Remove.  
By **FRANK RICHARDS.**

## THE FIRST CHAPTER. Wharton Loses His Temper!

**“WHAT—”**  
“What—”  
Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent ejaculated simultaneously.  
They jumped.  
Really, it was enough to make any fellow jump.  
Wharton and Nugent had come up for tea to Study No. 1 in the Remove—the study which they had the pleasure—or otherwise—of sharing with Carboy, the new fellow in their Form.  
They heard the scratch of a match as they reached the doorway of the study. That was not an uncommon sound at tea-time; Carboy might have been lighting the study fire for tea. But as they entered the study, they saw that the match had not been struck for the purpose of lighting a fire or a spirit stove.  
Christopher Clarence Carboy, the now junior, was standing by the study table, facing the door. He had a large cigar in his mouth, and was applying the lighted match to the end of it as the two juniors entered.  
They ejaculated—they jumped—and then they gazed at Carboy. He gave a violent, almost a dramatic start, as he saw them, and lowered the match with an air of confusion, and slipped the cigar into his pocket.  
“Oh!” he ejaculated. “You!”  
Wharton and Nugent had not been overjoyed by any means when the new fellow was placed in their study. But they had been civil till the japing tendencies of the new fellow produced rather a strained atmosphere in Study No. 1. Japing was all very well, and a good deal of it went on in the Remove; but there was a limit, and all the Form agreed that Carboy did not seem to understand that there was a

limit. So far, however, Wharton and Nugent had looked on Carboy only as a particularly irrepressible practical joker. The cigar was quite a new discovery.  
There were fellows in the Remove who smoked cigarettes in a secret sort of way, behind locked doors, or round corners. Skinner and his set felt “no end doggish” when they smoked the wild and woolly woodbine. But cigar-smoking was something new—amazingly new. The cigar that Carboy had hastily dropped in his pocket looked as formidable as one of Mr. Prout’s heftiest Havanas. How a fellow under fifteen could smoke such things without something like a volcanic eruption, was a mystery. Carboy certainly did not look pasty-faced or flabby, as a boy smoker might be expected to look. He looked healthy and wholesome enough. Yet there was no mistaking what he had been doing when the two chums came into the study.  
There was a short silence. Carboy broke it.  
“You fellows come in to tea?” he asked.  
“Yes,” answered Nugent curtly. Wharton did not speak. His eyes were fixed on Christopher Clarence Carboy grimly.  
“I’ll get the kettle filled,” said Carboy.  
He picked up the kettle and started for the door to fill it with water at the passage tap.  
Harry Wharton stood in the way.  
“Hold on a minute, Carboy,” he said quietly.  
“What about tea?”  
“Never mind tea for a minute. You were just going to light a cigar when we came in.”  
“Oh, no! Nothing of the sort!”  
“What?” exclaimed the captain of the Remove, quite taken aback by that

denial of what he had seen with his own eyes.  
“I wasn’t going to light it, really,” said Carboy.  
“You had it in your mouth, and a lighted match to it!” exclaimed the captain of the Remove.  
“That wasn’t lighting it!”  
“You were just going to.”  
“I wasn’t!”  
Wharton’s eyes gleamed with scorn.  
“You don’t expect me to believe that. I suppose?” he asked.  
“Well, I naturally expect a fellow to take my word,” said Carboy. “I give you my word, if you like.”  
“Your word’s worth about as much as Bunter’s, or less,” answered the captain of the Remove contemptuously.  
“If you weren’t going to smoke that cigar what were you putting a match to it for—and what have you got cigars about you at all for?”  
“That’s my business!”  
“Mine, too!” said Harry. “If you like to sneak behind the wood-shed and smoke like Skinner and Snoop, it’s no bizney of mine. But you can’t turn my study into a tap-room.”  
“My study, too, isn’t it?” said Carboy.  
“Quite! But you can’t smoke in it, as it happens to belong to Nugent and me as well,” said Wharton. “You’d better get that clear in your mind, and save trouble.”  
“I always was a fellow to save trouble,” said Carboy amicably. “Haven’t I told you already I wasn’t going to light that cigar really?”  
“Oh, rats!”  
“But, of course, I shall do exactly as I please in my own study,” added Carboy. “I’ve a right to that, as you’ll admit.”  
“I admit nothing of the kind!” snapped the captain of the Remove. “Why, you cheeky ass, if a prefect found the study reeking with smoke, we might all of us get six each!”  
“Pooh! No Sixth-Form prefect would make a fuss about that cigar,” said Carboy, shaking his head.  
“You don’t know much about Greyfriars if you think so. I don’t know what your last school was like; but it

must have been a queer show if you were allowed to smoke cigars there. Anyhow, you won't do it here, and if you're found smoking you'll get a study ragging!"

"Oh, rot!"

Christopher Clarence Carboy laid down the kettle, moved round the study table, to place it between himself and the captain of the Remove, and drew the cigar from his pocket.

He stuck it in his mouth and grinned at Wharton's angry face. Then he took out his matchbox.

"What price that?" he asked coolly.

Wharton breathed deep.

"If you strike that match, Carboy, I'll jolly soon stop you!" he said.

Scratch!

The match struck, and Carboy lifted the lighted end to the cigar.

That was too much for the captain of the Remove.

With a bound he came round the study table.

Christopher Clarence Carboy had only time to drop the match to the floor, and the cigar into his pocket when Wharton's grasp was upon him.

"Now, you cheeky rotter—"

Carboy resisted, but not very strenuously. He was jammed against the table, with Wharton's angry hands on his shoulders, and the eyes of the Remove captain gleaming at him.

"Now chuck that cigar into the grate!" said Wharton.

"Rats!"

"Will you?" roared the captain of the Remove.

"No."

"Then I'll make you."

"Bosh!"

And the next moment a struggle was proceeding in Study No. 1 in the Remove.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### Not Guilty I

"I SAY, you fellows!" squeaked Billy Bunter.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's the row?"

"I say, you fellows, Wharton's fighting the new chap in his study!" yelled Bunter in great excitement.

"Sounds like somebody breaking up the happy home!" grinned Skinner.

Crash! Bang! Bump! Thump! Crash!

The sounds that rang and echoed from Study No. 1 certainly seemed to indicate that the happy home was in the process of violent destruction.

There was a rush of juniors along the passage. Outside Study No. 1 a crowd crammed in the doorway. Wild excitement reigned outside and inside the study. Wharton and Carboy, locked in an embrace that was far from loving, reeled and rocked about the room. Frank Nugent had hastily dragged the table out of the way. Chairs had been sent flying right and left. The kettle had been kicked over and trampled on. Books and papers were scattered like leaves in Vallambrosa. In the midst of the wreckage, the captain of the Remove and the new fellow surged and struggled.

Harry Wharton was one of the heftiest fellows in the Remove, and there was little doubt that he was more than a match for the new fellow. But for the moment, at least, he had his hands full. The obnoxious cigar was still in Carboy's pocket, and Carboy was resisting strenuously.

"What's the row?" bawled Bob Cherry.

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Bump! Crash! Tramp! Crash!

"The rowfulness is terrific," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "My esteemed friends, this preposterous uproar will bring some of the prefects up here."

The combatants did not heed. There was a terrific crash as Carboy was slammed against the study wall and held there.

"Now will you hand it over?"

"No fear!" panted Carboy.

"Then I'll jolly well lick you till you do."

"I'll try to keep you busy while you're doing it."

"Go it, Carboy!" sang out Skinner.

"But what's the thumping row?" exclaimed Johnny Bull. "Has that new chump been japing again, Franky?"

"The toad wants to smoke in this study," answered Nugent indignantly, "and he's jolly well not going to."

"I should think not," said Bob. "Go it, Wharton, old bean—more power to your giddy elbow!"

"The thrashfulness is the proper caper," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "But the ridiculous noise will bring Quelch here."

"Cave!" yelled Hazeldene from the passage. "Here comes a prefect!"

"Look out, you men!"

But the excited combatants in the study did not heed the warning. The strenuous struggle continued as Wingate of the Sixth, head prefect of Greyfriars came striding into the Remove passage, with an ashplant under his arm, and a deep frown on his brow.

The crowd of juniors parted to make room for the captain of Greyfriars. Wingate strode into the study. Even when the Sixth-Form man entered, the struggle did not cease; the combatants were too excited to see him.

"Stop that!" roared Wingate wrathfully.

"Oh, my hat!"

The two juniors, separated, and stood panting and crimson. Wingate slid the ashplant down into his hand.

"Now, what does this rumpus mean?" he demanded. "Do you know you can be heard all over the House? Wharton, what are you pitching into that new kid for?"

Wharton panted.

"Because he asked for it," he snapped. "That's why."

It was not a respectful reply to a Sixth Form prefect; but Wharton was too excited and angry to measure his words.

"We shall see about that," said Wingate. "That kid hasn't been a week at the school, and I find you pitching into him. If he's asked for it, well and good. What have you done, Carboy?"

"Nothing!" said Carboy, meekly.

"What has he done, Wharton?"

Wharton made no reply to that. Dealing with Carboy himself was one matter; but giving him away to a prefect was quite another. A junior schoolboy found with a cigar in his pocket was booked for "six" at least, well laid on; and it would not be much use for him to state that he had not intended to smoke the cigar. Wharton was yearning to give Christopher Clarence Carboy the thrashing of his life; but he had no idea at all of betraying him to authority.

"Well?" rapped out the prefect.

No answer.

"Haven't you anything to say, Wharton?"

"No."

"Then I'm to suppose that you were bullying this new kid?"

Wharton flushed scarlet.

"You can suppose what you like!" he snapped.

"That isn't the way to answer a prefect, Wharton," said Wingate quietly. "I'm giving you a chance to explain before I give you six."

"Well, I've got nothing to say," answered Wharton stubbornly.

"It was all a mistake, Wingate," said Carboy in his softest voice. "I was pulling Wharton's leg a little, and he misunderstood."

"That's a lie!" snapped Harry.

"Not at all, old bean," answered Carboy imperturbably. "Wharton fancied that I was going to smoke in the study, Wingate. That was what got his rag out."

"Oh!" exclaimed Wingate.

"He fancied I had a cigar in my pocket, and was going to smoke it," explained Carboy. "Only his little mistake. I haven't a cigar about me, and never have had, that I know of!"

"Why, you—you—you—" gasped Wharton, scarcely able to believe his ears.

Frank Nugent stared blankly at the new fellow. There were fellows in the Remove who were not particular about the truth. Billy Bunter, for instance, could have given George Washington points and beaten him hollow. But Carboy's denial really was the limit. Mendacity to this extent had never been heard of in the Remove passage before.

Wingate's rugged face set grimly.

"I think I understand," he said. "If you've got a cigar about you, Carboy, I'm sorry I interrupted. A thrashing is what you want, and what you'll get; and I'll give it to you myself."

"But I haven't—"

"Then what made Wharton suppose you had?"

"Well, he's rather an ass, you know," said Carboy, with an air of thoughtful consideration. "He rather jumps to conclusions. It's well-known in the Form that he is rather an ass."

There was a chuckle from the passage.

"The matter's easy to settle," said Wingate. "Turn out your pockets, Carboy."

"I've no objection."

Christopher Clarence Carboy turned out his pockets, placing various articles on the study table. Wharton and Nugent watched him—Wingate watched him—and the crowd round the door watched him breathlessly. Many and various articles came to light, but nothing in the nature of a smoke.

"Is that the lot?" demanded Wingate.

"Yes, excepting some chocolate."

"Turn out the lot."

Carboy paused.

"There's nothing in my pocket now except some chocolate," he said.

"I've told you to turn everything out."

"Very well."

Carboy's hand went into his pocket again. It came out—with the obnoxious cigar in it. Wingate uttered an exclamation.

"Hand that to me."

Carboy handed it over.

Wingate's brow was black as he received it. But as his fingers touched it and he looked at it more carefully, the frown died away, and his face relaxed into a grin.

"You young ass!" he said.

He tossed the cigar on the table. It fell there with a sharp sound, quite unlike a cigar—and broke into halves! Wingate burst into a laugh, tucked his ashplant under his arm, and walked



"I've had enough of that cad's cheek!" said Wharton in a choking voice. "Yes, but it's not worth a set-ap," said Nugent. "Can't you hold your tongue, Carboy?" Carboy nodded. Then, opening his mouth, he extended his tongue and held it between thumb and forefinger. (See Chapter 3.)

out of the study. He was still laughing as he went down the Remove staircase.

And Harry Wharton, with an expression on his face that was absolutely indescribable, stood and stared at the chocolate cigar.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### Trouble in the Study!

"HA, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry.

He could not help it. The chocolate cigar, which had cost Carboy threepence at the confectioner's in Courtfield, lay in two pieces on the study table—obviously nothing but harmless chocolate. That unexpected discovery, and the look on Harry Wharton's face, brought a yell of merriment from the crowd of Removites. Even Frank Nugent joined in the laugh—it was irresistible.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Wharton stood speechless. Not for a moment had he dreamed that he was the victim of a practical joke. He knew it now. He knew that Carboy had deliberately placed the match to the cigar when he heard the juniors coming up to tea, in order to be caught in the act. And obviously Carboy's statement that he had not really been going to light the cigar was truthful. It would have been exceedingly difficult to light that cigar. Wharton had had only a glimpse of it, and, except on a careful scrutiny, it looked exactly like

a genuine cigar. It was the new fellow's peculiar leg-pulling propensity that had been at work again. The captain of the Remove had fallen an easy victim.

The roars of laughter from the Removites brought a crimson flush into Wharton's face.

He had been made a fool of, or, rather, he had made a fool of himself. That was undeniable. The whole thing was utterly ridiculous. And the hapless captain of the Remove was covered with ridicule as with a garment.

Wharton drew a deep, deep breath as he looked at Carboy. There was a lurking smile on the japer's face, and Wharton had an almost irresistible desire to knock it off with his clenched fist. But the thing was absurd enough already, without making more of it.

"Oh, my hat!" said Skinner, wiping his eyes. "Oh, my Aunt Sempronia! Chocolate—the harmless and necessary choc-choc!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And Wharton thought it was a cigar!" yelled Bolsover major. "He thought a new kid smoked cigars like old Prout."

"And got his virtuous back up," sobbed Skinner. "This study has always been a model of virtue to the Remove. But I shouldn't have thought even this study would be down on choc-choc."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"That guy is some leg-puller," chuckled Fisher T. Fish.

"Wharton, old bean, you've been had!" chortled the Bounder. "Make sure it isn't a chocolate cigar next time you tread the path of rigid virtue."

The juniors roared.

"The rotter made me think it was a cigar!" gasped Wharton.

"He would," grinned Skinner. "And your jolly old high-minded goodness was so quick to take alarm, wasn't it?"

"He pretended to be lighting it with a match when I came to the study—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Wharton was interrupted by a fresh shriek of laughter.

"Look here, if you want to cackle, go and cackle somewhere else!" shouted Wharton.

And he slammed the door of the study, almost on the noses of the laughing juniors.

"Ha, ha, ha!" came in a roar from the passage.

Wharton's exasperation only made the juniors more hilarious.

Wharton turned to Christopher Clarence Carboy, with a gleam in his eyes. It was difficult for him to control his anger, though he was trying hard to do so. Carboy seemed unconscious that he was angry at all.

"So that's some more of your leg-pulling, is it?" said the captain of the Remove, breathing hard.

"Yes. Rather neat, don't you think?" asked Carboy pleasantly.

"Sorry I gave you such a tussle over the business. But I wanted the fellows

to get round and enjoy the joke, you know. No good wasting a good jest."

"You find it amusing to make a fool of a fellow?"

"Always did," sighed Carboy. "It's my little way. I played that same stunt on a Form master at my last school."

"I hope you got jolly well licked!"

"Thanks! I did. Form masters are rather kittle-cattle to jape—as I found out when I tried my hand on Quelchy."

"It may not be only a Form master, who will lick you for playing the goat," said Harry. "You're liable to get a thrashing from any fellow you play your rotten tricks on."

"Now you're getting waxy," said Carboy. "Look here, I'll give up the point in dispute. You wanted to throw that cigar into the grate. Well, you can throw it there if you like. I'm done with it."

That kind offer very nearly earned Christopher Clarence Carboy a drive from Wharton's clenched fist. But the captain of the Remove controlled his anger, and turned his back on the new fellow.

"Anything else I can do?" asked Carboy. "I'll promise, word of honour, not to smoke that cigar, if you like."

Nugent laughed involuntarily; but his laugh died away as he caught Wharton's look.

"After all, I'm really the offended party," argued Carboy. "You refused to take my word when I told you I wasn't going to smoke that cigar. Do you believe now that I was going to smoke it?"

Wharton compressed his lips.

"That's enough," he said. "Shut up!"

"Mayn't I speak in my own study?" asked Carboy meekly. "I admit that I mustn't smoke. I concede the point willingly. I'm ready to undertake never to smoke here—not even a chocolate cigar. But mayn't I speak?"

"I've told you to shut up!"

"May I whisper, then?" persisted Carboy.

Wharton turned on him with clenched hands. His temper was at boiling-point now.

Nugent caught his chum by the arm.

"Hold on, Harry!"

"I've had enough of that cad's cheek!" said the captain of the Remove, in a choking voice.

"It's not worth a scrap! Hold your silly tongue, Carboy!" snapped Nugent. "Can't you hold your tongue?"

Carboy nodded. He opened his mouth, extended his tongue, and held it between thumb and finger. In that remarkable attitude he looked inquiringly at Wharton as if for approval. The action was so unexpected and absurd that Nugent burst into a laugh, in spite of himself.

Wharton gave his chum a glare, and shook his arm free.

"So you find that fool's antics amusing, do you?" he exclaimed. "I'll leave you to enjoy them."

He tramped to the door, threw it open, and went out into the passage.

"Harry!" exclaimed Nugent.

There was no answer from Wharton, as he tramped away savagely to the stairs. Carboy gave a whistle as Frank stood staring in dismay at the open doorway.

"Oh! My hat and umbrella!" ejaculated Carboy. "The fat's in the fire now—what?"

"You burbling dummy!" snapped Nugent.

And he followed his chum.

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Carboy stared after him, and the grin died off his face. He shook his head seriously.

"Christopher, old bean, you're too funny!" he said chidingly. "You'll have to learn not to be so jolly funny, or you'll get landed here like you did at your last school. Careful, Christopher!"

Frank Nugent hurried down the stairs after his chum. Wharton, without looking back, went into Hall, where the fellows were at tea. Most of the fellows who tea'd in Hall were those whom shortness of funds prevented from teeing in their studies; but there were always a goodly number. Nugent dropped into a seat beside his frowning friend.

"No good teeing here," he said. "We've a lot of stuff in the study. We were going to make a spread of it."

"I'm not teeing in the study with Carboy."

"We were going to ask some of the fellows—"

"We hadn't asked them, so it's all right. You can ask them if you like."

"Not without you, old chap."

"I'm teeing here," said Wharton curtly.

"Same here, then."

Wharton gave Nugent a dark look.

"No need for that. You seem to like that new cad. And I wish you joy of him. I haven't asked you to stick to me."

Nugent repressed the reply that rose to his lips—as he frequently did in deal-

## I · SEE · ALL

ing with his best chum. He liked Wharton better than any other fellow at Greyfriars; but there were times when tact was needed. This, evidently, was one of the times.

"My dear chap, you're not going to row with me," he said, good-humouredly. "Let's tea here, and after tea we'll go up to the study and kick that japing fathead, if you like. A kicking would do him good."

And the chums of the Remove tea'd together in Hall, and by the time the meal was over, the clouds had rolled by. But for Carboy's jape, there would have been a spread in No. 1 Study that afternoon at tea-time. But—though Wharton and Nugent were not aware of it—the spread was coming off all the same.

### THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

#### A Birthday for Bunter!

**C**HRISTOPHER CLARENCE CARBOY looked into the study cupboard in No. 1 in the Remove, and made a grimace. On the shelves in the study reposed a number of good things, evidently lately purchased at the school shop, and stacked there in readiness for tea. There was a large plum cake: there were two jars of jam: there was a box of preserved fruits: there was a bag of jam tarts, and a bag of cream puffs, and a bag of doughnuts. There were several other things, and they all looked nice.

None of the good things, however, belonged to Carboy. Harry Wharton had had a remittance that day, and he had nobly expended it on a spread to

which all his friends in the Remove were to have been invited. Carboy was not one of his friends, certainly: but as a member of the study, he would have been asked to share in the spread. Now Wharton had retired in dudgeon to Hall, like Achilles to his tent: and the spread was obviously off.

Carboy was quite ready for tea—now that he had had his little joke—and he realised that his japing propensities had deprived him of a "whack" in a gorgeous spread. His own funds were low that day: almost low enough to drive him into Hall to tea, in the ranks of the stony. In the cupboard was half a loaf, and a pat of butter, and a tin of sardines, that belonged to Carboy—those, and nothing more. So he made a grimace as he looked in.

"Fathead!" he said, addressing himself.

Then he sorted out his own edibles, and placed them on the study table for a solitary tea. But his tea was not destined to be solitary. He had hardly started, when a fat face and a pair of glimmering spectacles looked in at the doorway.

"Hallo, old chap!" said Billy Bunter affectionately. Bunter was not, by nature, an affectionate youth: but when he looked into a study at teatime, his fat voice was dulcet as the notes of a cooing dove.

"Want anything?" asked Carboy.

"Eh! Nothing, old fellow."

"Take it and go," suggested Carboy.

"He, he, he!"

"Bother that alarm clock," said Carboy. "If fellows must have an alarm clock in the study, why can't they set it right? Going off at odd times like this makes a fellow jump."

"Oh, really, Carboy—"

"Oh! My mistake—was it your cackle?" asked Carboy agreeably. "You should get it oiled, Bunter."

"He, he, he!" cachinnated Bunter again. The cupboard had been left half open, and Bunter had a glimpse of the gorgeous things within. He was not the fellow to take offence at a jest—with those excellent things in view. "I say, Carboy, old fellow, Wharton's frightfully ratty."

"I know that, fathead!" grunted Carboy. He was by no means gratified by that result of his jape. It was rather the way of the japer of the Remove not to think of possible results, until they happened.

"Those beasts are hard up, old chap," said Bunter. "I dare say that's why Wharton's ratty, really! They're stony. They've gone to tea in Hall. They don't often come down to that."

Carboy had his own idea why his study-mates had gone to tea in Hall, and it made him rather uncomfortable. He had not intended in the least to get Wharton's "rag" out to that extent. He went on with his frugal tea, and made no reply. William George Bunter insinuated himself a little further into the study.

"I say, old chap," he said amicably. "I'll join you, if you like. Mauly's been pressing me to go to tea with him—but Mauly's rather a bore. Smithy asked me, but I told him no, I was going to look in on the new kid. You needn't thank me—I'm always doing these kind things."

"You're welcome to a sardine," said Carboy, grinning.

"Oh, really, old chap! With all that stuff in the cupboard, you're not going to have sardines for tea."

Carboy chuckled as he realised Bunter's mistake. Having the idea fixed in his fat mind that Wharton and Nugent had gone to tea in Hall

because they were stony—the usual reason for tea in Hall—it did not occur to Bunter that the gorgeous supply in the study cupboard belonged to them. That a fellow, howsoever angry, could forget a stack of tuck even for a few minutes—that another fellow, for friendship's sake, could dismiss that stack of tuck from his mind as a thing of no consequence—was quite inconceivable to William George Bunter. He would not have believed it possible had he been told: he would have considered it the tallest story he had ever heard. So, as Carboy was the only other member of the study, Bunter took it for granted that the supply belonged to him. It was quite a natural conclusion for W. G. Bunter to arrive at.

He pulled the cupboard door wider open and feasted his little, round eyes on the tuck. His eyes seemed to be almost bulging through his big spectacles. He gave the tuck a long, long blink, and then blinked round at the new junior.

"I say, old chap, why ain't you tucking in, when you've got all this stuff?" he asked. "Anything wrong with your inside? I say, you have my sympathy, old fellow. I remember a time when a beast of a doctor stopped me from eating ices—he was potty, of course, but it was awful. If you've got something wrong inside, it's hard cheese, old chap, with all this tuck here. I don't see why you couldn't stand Wharton and Nugent a feed, if you don't want it yourself."

"Eh?"

Bunter gave Carboy a fat wink.

"Of course, I'm wide to your little game," he said. "You got up a row with them so as not to have to whack this little lot out, what?"

"Oh, my hat and umbrella!" ejaculated Carboy. He gazed at Bunter in wonder. That any fellow could misconstrue another fellow's motives to this extent, surprised him, as much as it annoyed him.

"Not that I blame you, old chap," said Bunter reassuringly. "You could hardly get out of asking your own study-mates—unless there was a row on. Wharton's rather a swanking ass; Nugent's a good bit of a milksop. You see, they're old friends of mine, and I know 'em."

"How would you describe them, if they weren't friends of yours?" asked Carboy sarcastically.

"Eh!" Bunter's attention returned to the tuck. "I say, mean to say seriously that you ain't touching this stuff for tea?"

"Quite!" said Carboy. Certainly, he had no intention of touching stuff that did not belong to him.

"Keeping it for supper?" asked Bunter wistfully.

"Not at all."

"You don't mean to say that you ain't going to eat it at all?" exclaimed Bunter in astonishment.

"I do—exactly."

"But you've got a measly tea there, and—"

"Good enough for me," yawned Carboy. "Better a dinner of herbs and contentment within, than a stalled ox—"

"Oh, yes, that's all very well, if you can't eat," said Bunter. "But look here, I came to see you out of kindness. But the fact is, I want my tea. I've had nothing but tea with Toddy, and you know how mean Toddy is. If you don't want all this stuff—"

"I don't!"

"Well, it's a thumping pity to waste it, Carboy, don't you think so?"

"I should certainly think so."

"Well, if you've no objection, I'll sample it for tea."

Carboy laughed.

"Why should I object?" he asked.

"You don't object then?"

"Not in the least."

"Good!" gasped Bunter.

He could hardly believe in his good luck. He lost no time. He began on the jam tarts, which vanished as fast as oysters.

Carboy went on sedately with his frugal tea. Nothing would have induced him to bag the tuck belonging to his study-mates, himself. But he had no objection to Bunter bagging it. It might be a lesson to a fellow who went flinging out of a study in a temper, and to another fellow who was ass enough to go after him to pacify him. But Carboy's real motive was his irresistible propensity to practical joking. To his mind, there was something extremely comic in Billy Bunter devouring the spread, after asking permission from a fellow to whom it did not belong.

"I say, these are ripping tarts, Carboy," gurgled Bunter. "Won't you have just one? It's the last."

"No, thanks!"

Bunter bolted the tart, and opened the bag of doughnuts. Doughnut after doughnut vanished. But Bunter, when he had plenty, could be generous. He held out the bag to Carboy.

"Do have one, old fellow!" he urged.

"Not a crumb!"

"Well, you must be an ass, if you don't mind my saying so, old chap," said Bunter. And the doughnuts vanished. The cream-puffs followed them down, and by that time Christopher Clarence Carboy was gazing at Bunter in wonder. He was not yet accustomed to the wonderful stowing powers of the Owl of the Remove.

"I say, I don't want you to burst all over this study, you know," he remarked.

"He, he, he!" Bunter's cachinnation was a little breathless. Even Bunter was beginning to feel the effects of the jam-tarts, the doughnuts, and the cream-puffs. But he was not finished yet. The box of fruits tempted him, and he started on it. His progress was slower now; but though it was slow, it was sure. The box was emptied.

"I say, this stuff is prime!" said Bunter.

"Glad you like it."

"Mind if I open the jam?"

"Why should I? I'm not going to eat it myself," answered Carboy cheerfully.

Bunter opened a jar of jam, and sorted out a tablespoon. Bunter liked jam, and he liked to take it aboard in bulk. Carboy had finished his own tea now, and he sat watching Bunter. As the whole contents of the jar disappeared, via the tablespoon and Bunter's capacious mouth, it seemed to Carboy that he must be watching a conjuring trick. That any fellow could dispose of tuck at this rate had seemed to him impossible—until he saw William George Bunter.

The Owl of the Remove eyed the second jar of jam. But he did not open it. Even Bunter had a limit. He longed to start on the second jar; and there was the cake, too, which was large and rich and tempting. But Bunter felt that it was beyond his powers. The spirit was willing, but the flesh was weak. He blinked at them, and he blinked at Carboy.

"I say, old chap—" His voice came fat and wheezy.

"You haven't touched the cake," said

Carboy. He was quite interested to see whether Bunter could send a three-pound sultana cake to join the jau-tarts, the cream-puffs, the doughnuts, the preserved fruits, and the jam.

"The fact is, I haven't much appetite to-day," said Bunter. "I never eat much, you know—"

"Oh, my hat and umbrella!"

"But if you don't want the cake, old chap, I—I'll take it along with me," ventured Bunter.

He blinked uncertainly at Carboy as he made that proposition. But there seemed no limit to Carboy's good-nature.

"I certainly don't want it," he said.

"Mind if I walk it off?" gasped Bunter.

"Why should I?"

Bunter tucked the cake under his arm. He turned to the door, and Carboy glanced into the cupboard and chuckled.

"You've left a jar of jam!" he remarked.

Bunter beamed on him.

"You don't mind if I take that, too?"

"Not in the least."

"What about that bag of biscuits, and the oranges?" asked Bunter, feeling that he might as well go the whole unicorn, so to speak.

"I don't mind in the least."

"I say, Carboy, you're a decent chap," said Bunter, stacking oranges into his pockets. "I like you, old fellow. I'll stand you a spread like this some day in my study, when my postal-order comes. If there's something wrong with your digestion now, I dare say you'll be well by then."

"No doubt," agreed Carboy. "I hope to be quite well in my extreme old age."

"Oh, really, Carboy! Look here! Come on Wednesday—no, not Wednesday, I'm teaing with a friend in the Sixth on Wednesday. Say Thursday—No, I'm rather expecting one of my titled relations at the school on Thursday. Friday, say—no; I'm asked out to a tea-party on Friday, and the fellows would be frightfully disappointed if I didn't turn up. Perhaps we'd better fix the day later. Ta-ta, old chap!"

Billy Bunter departed from Study No. 1, heavy-laden if not weary.

Christopher Clarence Carboy smiled after him, glanced into the depleted cupboard, and grinned, and strolled out of the study. He wondered what Wharton and Nugent would think when they went, like Mrs. Hubbard, to the cupboard, and also, like that celebrated lady, found it bare. It was likely that there would be some more excitement in the Remove passage. Carboy rather liked things to happen, so he hoped so.

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

### Hats Off!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!" Bob Cherry came out of the House with Johnny Bull and Hurroo Janset Ram Singh, after tea. He spotted Wharton and Nugent in the quad, and hailed them in his stentorian tones. Bob had a footer under his arm—an old footer that was used for punting about. After tea, it was Bob's idea to put in a little strenuous exercise before dark. Bob was an accommodating fellow, and willing to occupy himself with anything—so long as it was strenuous. Keeping quiet was the one thing he found it very difficult to do.

"You fellows had tea?" asked Johnny Bull.

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"Yes; tea'd in Hall," answered Frank.

"And what the thump did you tea in Hall for?" demanded Johnny Bull gruffly. "If you're hard up, you've got friends along the Remove passage, I suppose."

Wharton coloured a little.

"I went down to Hall because I wouldn't tea with that fellow Carboy in the study," he said. "Nugent came because—"

"Because he's another ass?" asked Johnny Bull.

"That new chap is a japing fathead," said Bob Cherry hastily. "His japes may be funny, but there's too much of them."

"There's certainly too much of them," said Harry Wharton dryly, "and I don't see that they're funny myself."

"The too-muchfulness is terrific and preposterous," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, shaking his dusky head. "But if you, my esteemed chums, are in the stony statefulness, the lendfulness of the harmless and necessary lucre will be a terrific pleasure."

"Not at all. We had a topping feed in the study, and were going to ask you men," said Frank. "But—anyhow, it will make a jolly good supper!"

"Not with Carboy!" said Wharton. "I don't like the fellow, and I won't ask him."

"We'll trot it along to No. 13, then," said Nugent.

"I say, Wharton, you're not going to start a feud with the new kid because of that fatheaded jape with the chocolate cigar?" asked Bob Cherry, rather dismayed. "'Tain't worth it!"

"I'm going to leave the fellow alone, anyhow. What about punting that ball?" asked Wharton. "Bother Carboy; I'm fed-up with him!"

"Here goes! Roll up, Remove!" roared Bob Cherry, as he dropped the ball, and started it with a drop kick.

A dozen fellows ran up to join in the punt-about. Among them was Christopher Clarence Carboy, who had just come out of the House. Wharton did not notice him—or, at all events, affected not to notice him. His resentment against the japer of the Remove was deep, but he could scarcely raise any objection to the fellow joining in punting the ball with a crowd of the Lower Fourth.

Bolsover major came out while the punt-about was going on, but he did not join in it. Bolsover major was dressed in his best, and the silk hat on his head rivalled a mirror in its gleaming polish. It was uncommon for Bolsover major to be carefully dressed, so he was evidently bound upon some unusual excursion.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" bawled Bob, as the whizzing footer shot past Bolsover. "Send that ball back, old bean!"

"Can't!" The football had gone through several puddles, and Bolsover's shoes were spotlessly clean and brightly polished.

Bob Cherry stared at him.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, he's got 'em on!" exclaimed Bob humorously. "He's got a clean collar and a hat that doesn't look like a busby. Are you going to be presented at Court, Bolsover?"

"I'm going to tea with the Head," answered Bolsover major. "It's my turn to be asked by the Beak—and any other fellow that likes is welcome to go instead."

"No takers!" chuckled Vernon-Smith. "No jolly fear!" said Bob Cherry emphatically. "I've been there!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Tea with Dr. Locke and Mrs. Locke in

the Head's house was a tremendous honour to a Lower boy. It was an overwhelming honour—perhaps a little too overwhelming. Certainly nobody in the Lower School at Greyfriars seemed to covet the honour. A fellow asked to tea by the Head had to dress himself with unusual care, and to put on his very best manners and customs. He generally sat in the presence of the great man as if he were sitting on pins. Howsoever good the tea might be, the victim was usually glad to get away, and would gasp with relief when he was safe outside the Head's house again. Bolsover major, certainly, would have preferred to join in the punt-about. But invitations from the headmaster were like invitations from royalty; and he turned reluctantly to walk on to Dr. Locke's house.

Carboy had scudded after the football, while the other fellows gathered for the moment round Bolsover major. The new fellow had the ball at his foot, and his eyes were twinkling.

Bolsover major was an overbearing fellow, and he never made himself agreeable to new boys—rather the reverse. Perhaps that was the reason why Carboy took careful aim with the footer, with Bolsover's gleaming silk-hat as the objective. Perhaps that shining topper had an irresistible attraction for the fellow who seemed unable to resist the temptation to play tricks.

Whiz!

The football flew, and had it been a kick for goal Carboy certainly would have scored. There was a crash as Bolsover major's beautiful hat flew from his head, and the muddy footer rolled after it.

Bolsover jumped almost clear of the ground.

"Why, what—what—what——" he spluttered.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the juniors.

"Oh, Maria! Sorry!" gasped Carboy. He spoke sincerely enough. Carboy often was sorry when it was too late.

Bolsover major spun round on him with a face of fury. Carboy backed promptly away. Bolsover made a stride towards him, then, remembering that he was due for tea in the Head's house, he paused.

Squiff picked up the topper and passed it to him. It was smothered with mud, and there was a dent in the side.

"All serene, old chap," chuckled Squiff. "You'll take off your hat in the hall—the Beak won't see it."

"Do you think I can walk up to the Head's house in a hat like that?" gasped Bolsover. "I—I—I'll smash him! I—I—I—"

"It was an accident," said Nugent pacifically.

"Was it?" said Harry Wharton very dryly.

"No, it wasn't!" roared Bolsover major, with a furious glare at Carboy. "I shall have to go back and change my hat! And you look here, you japing rotter, I'll wait till I see you in your Sunday topper, and then I'll smash it into a concertina, see?"

And with that dire threat—which he evidently meant to keep—Bolsover major tramped back to the School House to change his hat. Bob Cherry chuckled.

"Bang goes fifteen-and-six when Bolsover sees you in your Sunday topper, Carboy!" he roared.

"Mine's a guinea!" said Carboy.

"Bang goes a guinea, then, and serve you jolly well right!"

"Thanks!" yawned Carboy.

The punt-about went on, and when Bolsover major came out of the House again, with another topper—not quite so brilliant—on his head, he gave the mob

of Removites a rather wide berth. Carboy, as it happened, had the ball at his feet again, and Bob Cherry saw him glance across towards the bully of the Remove, who was stalking away to the Head's house. Carboy possibly was thinking of repeating his trick, and possibly he wasn't. Bob did not give him the benefit of the doubt. He made a sudden charge at Christopher Clarence Carboy, and the new fellow went over with a crash.

"Whoooooop!" roared Carboy.

"Oh, my hat!" exclaimed Peter Todd. "What the thump—this isn't a Soccer match, Cherry, you ass! What are you charging a man over for?"

Carboy sat up and gasped.

"You silly chump!" he roared. "You footling ass! What the thump do you mean, you burbling bandersnatch?"

"Weren't you going to biff that footer at Bolsover's topper?" chuckled Bob.

"Eh? No!"

"Oh, my mistake—I thought you were!"

"You footling fathead——"

"All serene—if you weren't going to biff the topper you can consider that that charge wasn't made!" said Bob. "Call it a joke—you're jolly fond of jokes, you know."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You frabjous ass——"

"Pass that ball!" shouted Bob; and the mob of juniors swept on, leaving Christopher Clarence Carboy gasping.

But he picked himself up after a few moments, and joined in the punt-about again with a cheery face. A charge from Bob Cherry was not a light matter, and Carboy had felt a good deal as though he had been run down by a lorry. But if Christopher Clarence Carboy was rather too much of a humorist; he was at least that rare kind of humorist who can take a joke against himself. He rejoined the mob of football punters with perfect good-humour, and Bob Cherry, noticing it, rather liked him for it. Which feeling on Bob's part was not in the least shared by his chum, the captain of the Remove.

## THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

### Bunter Not to Blame!

"Old Mother Hubbard went to the cupboard,

To get a study spread,

But when she got there, the cupboard was bare,

And she supped in Hall instead."

**B**OB CHERRY'S voice was raised in song. He was standing before the cupboard in Study No. 1 in the Remove. Bob and Hurree Singh and Johnny Bull had come along after prep for the study supper—at which were to figure all the good things that had been intended for tea. It was Bob who went to the cupboard to hand out the supplies, having brought along a picnic basket for their transport to Study No. 13—as the feed was to take place in his study. Bob, as he stood looking into the empty cupboard, chanted that new version of the ancient nursery rhyme. The cupboard, most certainly, was bare—absolutely bare. Obviously there had been an earlier visitor.

Harry Wharton, who was putting away his books, looked across at Bob. Nugent stared at him. Carboy, who was finishing his prep, grinned over his books, but did not look up. Bob Cherry turned from the cupboard grinning.

"The tack's there——" began Nugent. "If it is, it's become invisible," answered Bob. "There's been a giddy burglar here. The grab's gone."





Carboy took careful aim with the rooter, with Bolsover's gleaming silk hat as the objective. Whiz! The football flew, and there was a crash as Bolsover major's beautiful hat sailed from his head, and the muddy footer followed it. "Why, what—what—what—what—what—what—" spluttered Bolsover. (See Chapter 5.)

"The gonefulness is complete and terrific," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, glancing into the cupboard.

Wharton uttered an exclamation, and strode across the room. Only empty shelves met his gaze in the cupboard.

His glance turned darkly on Carboy. But he did not speak to him. Carboy was not the fellow to raid another fellow's tuck, and Wharton, little as he liked him, realised that.

"Well, we're done," said Bob cheerily. Bob Cherry always took a cheery view of things. "Lucky we're not too late for supper in Hall, if anybody wants it."

Wharton compressed his lips. "I'm going to find out who's raided the tuck," he said. "This is rather too thick."

"Then let's go and see Bunter." Billy Bunter, of course, was the first fellow to think of in such circumstances. Anybody in the Remove who missed anything in the eatable line thought of Bunter at once. Generally he was right.

The Famous Five left Study No. 1, and proceeded along the Remove passage to Study No. 7. They found Peter Todd and Billy Bunter there, and on the study table stood a jam-jar—empty—and a large sultana-cake. There was no need to inquire whether Bunter was the guilty party; Wharton knew that cake.

Bunter blinked at the five as they presented themselves. Somewhat to their surprise he showed no sign of alarm. His blink was quite benevolent.

"I say, you fellows, trot in!" he said. "Have some cake!"

"Some ass," said Peter Todd, "said that the age of miracles was past. But here's Bunter standing a cake for supper!"

"Oh, really, Toddy—" "He's been scoffing jam all through prep," went on Toddy. "He's jammy, his books are jammy, the table's jammy—everything's jammy except the jar. Bunter's cleaned that out as clean as a whistle. But he's standing the cake to all comers. Sit up and take notice."

"Oh, chuck it, Toddy!" said Bunter. "If that's what you call gratitude, you can chuck it! 'Tain't every fellow that would whack out a splendid cake like this. Pile in, you fellows—you're all welcome! I'd like you to sample the cakes I get from home. They're ripping! Our cook—"

"You got that cake from home?" gasped Harry Wharton. "Yes, old chap! Specially made by our chef at Bunter Court," explained Bunter. "A good bit better than Mrs. Mible's cakes, as you'll find!"

"You fat villain!" said the captain of the Remove, in measured tones. "That is one of Mrs. Mible's cakes."

"Oh, really, Wharton—" "And you bagged it from the cupboard in my study!"

"Collar him!" said Bob. "We'll make an example of him this time! This is outside the limit!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—" "Where's the rest of the tuck?" demanded Wharton. "I suppose even you

haven't been able to scoff the lot of it already."

Peter Todd gave a chuckle. "I wondered where he got the cake," he remarked.

"You beast!" roared Bunter. "I told you I got it from home—specially made by our cook!"

"Yes; that's how I knew you hadn't."

"Why, you rotter—" "We're in time to save the cake, at least!" said Nugent. "I suppose that cormorant has scoffed the rest!"

"You leave that cake alone!" bawled Bunter, in great indignation. "I suppose Carboy can give me a cake if he likes!"

"Carboy!" exclaimed all the juniors together.

"Not that Carboy gave me that cake," added Bunter hastily. "I got it from home, as I said. You fellows make out that I never get cakes from home. Well, there's the cake!"

"You fat chump!" roared Wharton. "It's our cake!"

Bunter jumped. "What rot! How could Carboy give it to me if it's your cake? Don't talk rot, Wharton!"

"So Carboy gave you our cake, did he?" said Harry. "Another of his precious practical jokes, I suppose. Did he give you the rest of the tuck?"

"Yes, he jolly well did! I suppose he can give his own tuck away if he likes?" snorted Bunter.

"It wasn't his, you fat idiot; it was ours!" hooted Nugent.

"Gammon! You went to tea in Hall," answered Bunter. "Why did you tea in Hall if you had a spread in the study? That's rot!"

"Rot or not, that's how it is," said Frank; "and I don't believe Carboy gave you the tuck. You raided it, as you're always doing."

Billy Bunter blinked uneasily at the juniors. Carboy's amazing generosity with that spread was explained—if it did not belong to him. The Owl of the Remove began to understand how matters stood.

He was thankful—deply thankful—that he had already consumed everything but the cake. The cake would have been consumed also, had Bunter had anywhere to put it. But the fat junior was now loaded to capacity.

"It's gammon, of course," said Toddy. "Carboy never gave him the tuck!"

"I tell you he did!" roared Bunter. "Think I'm the fellow to bag another fellow's things?"

"Yes, rather!"

"Beast!"

"This may be one more of Carboy's jests," said Harry Wharton, setting his lips. "If it is, I'll make him answer for it. You can come along with us and see Carboy, Bunter."

"What about the cake, though?" asked Bunter. "I'm willing to whack it out with you fellows! I ain't hungry—I mean, I'm not the fellow to keep a cake to himself!"

"Bother the cake!"

Harry Wharton left Study No. 7, and the look on his face made his chums follow him at once. Billy Bunter rolled after them. For once Billy Bunter was quite prepared to answer for what he had done. Indeed, he was indignant at the way Carboy had pulled his leg. Now that he had placed the spread where it could not possibly be recovered, Bunter could afford to feel indignant.

Carboy was no longer in Study No. 1 when the juniors returned there. He had gone down; and Harry Wharton & Co. followed him to the Rag. They found Christopher Clarence Carboy in the Rag, chatting with Skinner and some other fellows. Out of the corner of his eye Carboy observed the entrance of the Co., but he took no open heed of them until the captain of the Remove strode up to him with a dark brow.

"It seems that you gave Bunter the tuck from our study cupboard, Carboy," said Wharton quietly.

Carboy raised his eyebrows in surprise. "Not at all," he answered. "How could I give him the tuck, when it wasn't mine?"

"You did!" roared Bunter. "I say, you fellows, he's fibbing! I asked him, and he gave it to me. I thought it was his!"

"That was a little mistake," said Carboy calmly. "I don't mind explaining, you fellows, if you want to know."

"I'm waiting!" said Wharton angrily.

"Bunter asked me if I minded him scoffing the tuck?" explained Carboy airily. "I told him I didn't! Why should I mind when it wasn't mine?"

There was a yell of laughter from Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If Bunter had asked me to give him the stuff, of course, I should have refused," said Carboy, in the same airy way. "I couldn't give away what didn't belong to me. In fact, if it had been mine I should have scoffed it myself. But he only asked me if I minded

him scoffing it and whether I had any objection. I hadn't, and told him so!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Skinner.

"You beast!" roared Bunter. "You jolly well knew what I meant!"

"Of course I did; you meant to scoff the tuck!" grinned Carboy.

"I mean——"

"So it's another of your japes, Carboy?" said the captain of the Remove.

Carboy shook his head.

"I don't see any jape in it. I had no objection to Bunter scoffing the tuck. I said so. Why not?"

"I say, you fellows, the beast took me in!" said Bunter, blinking anxiously at the chums of the Remove.

Skinner seemed to be on the verge of hysterics, and the other fellows in the Rag were laughing. Bunter had acted in good faith; still, Carboy had certainly been within his rights in stating that he did not object to Bunter's proceedings in Study No. 1 at tea-time.

"You're too funny, Carboy!" said Bob Cherry, but he was grinning, too. "You knew jolly well you were taking Bunter in!"

"But why should I have objected——"

"Oh, shut up!" exclaimed Wharton, and he turned and walked out of the Rag. A roar of laughter followed him.

"His Majesty has got his back up again!" chuckled Skinner. "The dear fellow doesn't like having his leg pulled!"

"But I haven't been pulling his leg," said Carboy. "I merely told Bunter I didn't object——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Remove fellows were still chuckling over the story of Bunter's feed in Study No. 1 when they went to the dormitory. And the expression they observed on Harry Wharton's face made them chuckle still more. And the impression was that before long there would be serious trouble between the japer of the Remove and the captain of the Form.

Carboy, who certainly did not want trouble with Wharton, murmured to himself as he turned in:

"Careful, Christopher!"

But it was very doubtful whether he would heed his own warning.

## THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

### Trouble Brewing!

"HE can kick!" remarked Bob Cherry.

"Can he?" grunted Wharton.

"Well, look how he landed that footer on Bolsover's topper the other day."

"A rotten trick!"

"Not nice for Bolsover," agreed Bob. "Thoughtless, if you like——"

"That sort of thoughtlessness is rotten."

"Hem! Still, it was a ripping kick," urged Bob. "a silk topper, at a good distance, isn't a jolly easy mark, and Carboy hit it fair and square. If he kicked for goal like that——"

"He looks as if he could play, from his build," said Johnny Bull. "I fancy he'd be fast."

Harry Wharton set his lips.

He did not like the new fellow—in fact, he disliked him extremely. And he was not pleased to find his own friends so very tolerant of the japer of the Remove. From Wharton's point of view, the new fellow had gone out of his way to be offensive to a fellow who had not offended him. He did not, and could not, make allowances for the irrepressible humour of the born practical

joker. Wharton did not like practical jokes, and no doubt he was right. Still less did he like them when he was their object and victim.

Carboy had made him look a fool before all the Form, and Wharton could not forget it. If Carboy had not actually intended to give offence, at least he had acted with unpardonable levity. Still, Carboy's practical joking tendencies, and Wharton's personal dislike of him, had nothing to do with games. Wharton admitted that. If the new fellow was a good man in Soccer, he had to have his chance. Only Wharton was quite unwilling to believe that he was a good man at Soccer, or at anything else except playing idiotic japes.

"Well, we shall see how he shapes in games practice," said the captain of the Remove at last. "I don't think there's much in him, I think he's simply a footling ass. Still, we shall see."

"After all, I dare say he means no harm," said Johnny Bull. "No use owing a grudge over a fool joke."

"I don't owe him any grudge that I know of. I suppose I'm not bound to take a liking to him because you fellows think so much of him?"

"My esteemed Wharton, the muchfulness is not terrific," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh gently.

"I suppose he knows it's compulsory practice this afternoon?" said Bob.

"It's posted in the Rag for the Remove. He knows where to look."

"I mean, being a new fellow——"

"You can tell him, if you like. I'm not speaking to him if I can help it," said Harry. "Hallo, there's Temple—I've got to speak to Temple about the Form match."

And Wharton left his comrades—leaving them feeling rather uncomfortable. They really could not dislike the new fellow simply because Wharton did, but the situation was rather awkward. Bob, in fact, rather liked Carboy; his exuberant spirits made him rather sympathise with a fellow who liked things to happen.

Wharton, as head of the Form, was responsible for the attendance of the Removites at games practice on compulsory days. It was true that time and place were posted in the Rag as usual, and Carboy had been long enough at Greyfriars now to know where to look for information if he desired it. Still, he was a new fellow, and Bob decided to give him a word on the subject. If he did not turn up, Wharton would have to report him to Wingate, as head of the Games, and that probably would mean "six." There were plenty of fellows who would say, or at least, think, that the captain of the Form had jumped at the chance of getting the new fellow into trouble with a prefect, in return for the episode of the cigar in Study No. 1. Wharton carried his head too high to give a thought to that; so Bob kindly thought of it for him, and went to look for Carboy.

He found that cheery youth in Study No. 1 writing. Carboy had allowed his sense of humour to get out of hand in class that morning. Having been asked by Mr. Quelch to define a deponent verb, which any fellow in the Remove, even Bunter, could have stated was passive in form but active in meaning, Carboy had cheerfully stated that it was proper in form but improper in meaning, a reply that made the Remove gasp, and caused Henry Samuel Quelch to regard him with an eye like a basilisk.

Fortunately—very fortunately—for Carboy, Mr. Quelch had not realised that Carboy was jesting. Had he understood that, there would have been an

extremely painful execution in the Form-room.

Taking it for granted that Carboy was densely ignorant on the subject of deponent verbs—never popular with Lower boys—Mr. Quelch had set him an exercise on that entrancing subject, and ordered him to stay in and write it out that afternoon.

Carboy, in point of fact, was a quick pupil, and he found the exercise easy work. Still, it took time; and he had not finished it when Bob came into the study.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" boomed Bob. "Busy?"

"Horrid busy," answered Carboy. "Like to do this exercise for me?"

"Wouldn't barge in for worlds, old bean," answered Bob. "But you've got to be on Little Side at three."

"Lots of time for that—it doesn't tie me up as Quelch thinks it will," grinned Carboy. "But what's on?"

"Games practice."

"Oh! I was going out of gates when I'd got this finished," said Carboy. "I suppose I can cut it?"

"Better suppose again," said Bob. "It's a compulsory day. The whole Form has to turn up."

"And if a fellow doesn't, it's lines, I suppose?"

"More likely a licking. Wingate doesn't like slackers."

"What's Wingate got to do with it?"

"Of course, you're a new fellow," said Bob. "Wingate of the Sixth is Head of the Games. The captain of the Form has to take the names of absentees, and report them to Wingate. Unless you're let off by a master, or plead sick, you get six for cutting games practice."

"I'll ask the captain of the Form to let me off, then," said Carboy. "The

fact is, I really want to go down to Courtfield to-day."

"Anything specially attractive in Courtfield?"

"Only a chap I want to see."

Bob looked at him curiously. Carboy was new at Greyfriars, and hardly knew all the Remove fellows yet, and there were a crowd of other fellows he did not know even by sight. It was odd if he had acquaintances outside the school already.

Carboy did not give any details, however; and as it was not Bob's business he asked no questions.

"Well," he said, "the rule's strict, and Wharton will have to report you if you cut."

"I've made an appointment at the bunshop," said Carboy. "I can't let a pal down and keep him waiting."

"I fancy you can and must," said Bob. "Don't play the goat, Carboy. You shouldn't have made any appointment without knowing whether your time was your own."

"A fellow naturally thinks his time's his own on a half-holiday. I suppose Wharton will let me off if I explain?"

"Not likely!"

"He can stretch a point if he likes, I suppose. The rules aren't made of cast-iron. A Form captain must be allowed some discretion."

Bob Cherry nodded rather slowly. It was true that the captain of the Form had discretion, within limits, to excuse a man for good reasons. But it was very doubtful indeed whether Harry Wharton would feel disposed to oblige Carboy to that extent.

"Better chuck it and turn up to games practice, Carboy," said Bob. "If you wanted to ask favours of Wharton, you should have gone to work in a rather different way."

Christopher Clarence Carboy made a grimace.

"The chap must be an ass to get his back up over a jest," he said.

"Fellows don't always like your giddy jests," said Bob. "Bolsover swears that he's going to smash your best topper the first time he sees it on your napper. And he means it."

"Oh, bless Bolsover!" said Carboy. "Nobody at this school seems to see a joke really. It was the same at—"

He paused.

"At your last school?" grinned Bob. "I don't wonder at it! You're much too funny for any school, I fancy."

"Anyhow, I've got to get out this afternoon," said Carboy. "I'm keen enough on footer; but an appointment is an appointment, and that fellow at Courtfield has come a long way to see me. I suppose Wharton will let me off if I ask him nicely?"

"Better not try," advised Bob, and with that he left the study.

Carboy shrugged his shoulders and went on with his exercise.

## THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

### The Way Out!

HARRY WHARTON was in the changing-room, with most of the Remove, when Christopher Clarence Carboy came in.

Wharton saw him, but gave him no heed. Carboy, however, after glancing round, came across to the captain of the Remove.

"I hear that it's compulsory footer this afternoon," he remarked amiably.

"Yes," Wharton's answer was monosyllabic.

"I wasn't aware of it, and I've arranged to go out of gates," said Carboy.

(Continued on next page.)



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"I suppose you can let me off for once? It's rather important."

"No."

Carboy coloured a little.

Wharton's curt reply was quite uncompromising. He turned away as he answered and proceeded to fasten his football boots.

Some of the fellows grinned. Their opinion was that Carboy was an ass to ask, after putting the Form captain's back up as he had done.

"You see, I wasn't aware——" said Carboy, after a pause.

"You should have been."

"Perhaps so," conceded Carboy. "Still, I wasn't; and I've made an arrangement. Can't you stretch a point for once?"

"No."

"He, he, he!" came from Billy Bunter.

Bunter was changing for footer—very slowly. He had already asked to be let off, on account of a severe pain in his inside. The severe pain having failed to move Wharton's sympathy, Bunter had asked to be let off on account of a sprain in his leg. The sprain having missed fire, so to speak, Bunter desired to be let off because he wanted to swot at Latin that afternoon. The idea of Bunter swotting made the whole changing-room roar; and the answer was still in the negative. Bunter had to give it up. As he was not getting off himself, he was naturally indignant at any other fellow trying to get off.

"I say, you fellows, what a beastly slacker!" said Bunter. "Trying to dodge his first games practice!"

"I'm not slacking, you fat idiot!" said Carboy. "I've got an appointment. Look here, Wharton——"

"Chuck it!" answered the captain of the Remove.

Carboy set his lips.

"I suppose I can ask Wingate?" he said.

Wharton laughed shortly.

"Ask him if you like. If he lets you off I shall be glad to see the last of you for the day. But it's not likely."

"I suppose not; but you can stretch a point if you choose," said Carboy angrily. "If you like I'll explain how I'm fixed——"

"I don't want to hear. Your affairs don't interest me. You'll turn up to games practice at three, or I shall report you to the head of the games, the same as I should any other slacker or frowster."

With that Wharton walked away, and the subject should have been dropped. But Carboy was angry now.

"Well, report—and be blown!" he shouted after the captain of the Remove. "I won't come down to games practice to-day, and I jolly well will go to Courtfield—and you can put that in your pipe and smoke it!"

Wharton did not turn his head, or give any other sign that he had heard Carboy's words. But all the fellows knew that he had heard and taken note of Carboy's defiance.

"Better change, old chap!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"I'm not going to change, as I'm not going to play footer!" snapped Carboy.

"The betterfulness would be terrific, my esteemed Carboy," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "You are bound to turn upfully on Little Side."

"Well, I shan't be there!"

"Gammon!" grunted Johnny Bull, and he walked out of the changing-room, which most of the fellows were leaving now.

"Rubbish!" said Bob Cherry. "Think it over again, kid. Three or

four fellows wanted to be let off to-day, on one excuse or another; you can't expect to be treated differently from the rest."

"I won't go to games practice," answered Carboy. "I'm not going to be dictated to by a little tin god on wheels!"

"Hear, hear!" said Skinner cordially. "More power to your jolly old elbow, old bean!"

"Wish you luck!" said Snoop.

"I say, you fellows, if Carboy ain't going to games practice, I jolly well ain't going!" exclaimed Billy Bunter warmly. "I've got a sprain in my inside—I mean a pain in my leg—I mean——"

"Carboy will get six from Wingate!" said Frank Nugent. "If you want the same you'd better follow his example."

Bunter decided not to follow Carboy's example. Apparently he did not want six from an ashplant. And Skinner and Snoop, though they wished Carboy luck in his contention with the captain of the Remove, were careful not to follow his example, either. Two or three better-natured fellows paused to give Carboy a word of good advice before they went, and their counsel was all to the same effect—that he had better line up with the rest. But Carboy did not change for footer; and when the other fellows were gone he left the changing-room and went up slowly to the Remove passage.

Without exactly intending it, he found himself committed now to a tussle with the captain of his Form. Carboy's appointment in Courtfield, whatever it was, seemed important to him, but that was not his only reason for adhering to the position he had taken up. He had said loudly and angrily, before a crowd of fellows in the changing-room, that he would not go down to games practice. To eat his own words within a few minutes, and turn up obediently there, was too disagreeable a pill for him to swallow. Six from a prefect for slacking at games would not be pleasant—especially as Carboy was by no means a slacker, and disliked very much the idea of being reputed one. But he was not going to give in; he had made up his mind to that. He was very thoughtful as he went to his study and picked up the finished exercise which was to be taken to Mr. Quelch.

With the exercise in his hand, he went down to Masters passage and tapped at the Remove master's door.

As he opened it he heard Mr. Quelch's voice speaking at the telephone. He paused in the doorway, uncertain whether to retire or not.

"But the delivery of the watch was promised for to-day!" Mr. Quelch was saying in a very cross tone of voice.

The reply was inaudible to Carboy.

"I am aware that to-day is early-closing in Courtfield," went on Mr. Quelch. "That, however, does not affect the matter. It is most annoying; I need the watch. Possibly I can find someone to send."

He replaced the receiver, turned from the telephone, and became aware that Christopher Clarence Carboy was standing in the doorway with a paper in his hand.

He frowned at Carboy. The new junior had irritated him that morning, and he was still more irritated by the failure of the Courtfield watchmaker to deliver the timepiece that had been sent for repair. The latter, assuredly, was not Carboy's fault, but it made Mr. Quelch's frown darker as he regarded the new fellow.

"What is it, Carboy?" he snapped.

"My exercise, sir," said Carboy meekly.

"Indeed! Have you finished it so soon?"

"Yes, sir."

"Very good, if it is satisfactory," said Mr. Quelch. "If not you will write another exercise, Carboy."

"I hope it will be satisfactory, sir."

Mr. Quelch took the exercise and looked at it. His frowning brow cleared very considerably. Carboy had done his work quickly and done it well. He seemed in a short time to have assimilated a good deal of knowledge of deponent verbs.

"This is very good, Carboy!" he said.

"Thank you, sir."

"Your absurd reply in the Form-room this morning was perhaps a slip of the tongue," said Mr. Quelch, quite benignly. "I am pleased with this, Carboy. You may go, my boy; and I trust you will enjoy the remainder of your half-holiday."

"Thank you, sir," said Carboy. "But if you please, sir——"

"Well?"

"I'm sorry I couldn't help hearing what you were saying on the telephone, sir. I mention it because, if you wish to send someone down to Courtfield, I should be willing to go, sir."

"Well, well, that is very obliging and thoughtful of you, Carboy," said Mr. Quelch, his face quite clear now. "There is always some little difficulty in taking a servant away from his duties; but I should not have cared to ask one of my boys to give up his half-holiday. But since you make the offer, my boy——"

Carboy's eyes glimmered.

"I should be very happy, sir, if I could be of any use."

"Very good, Carboy. I left my watch with Goodge, in the High Street, and it should have been delivered here to-day. It is ready; but Mr. Goodge has just explained that, as it is early closing, he has no one available to send with it. I will give you a note to Mr. Goodge, and you will knock at the side door, and ask for the watch."

"Certainly, sir."

Mr. Quelch wrote a brief note, sealed it, and handed it to the new junior.

"I am very much obliged, Carboy," he said graciously.

"Not at all, sir."

Carboy stepped out of the study. The next moment he stepped in again.

"Oh, sir, perhaps I ought to mention that there's games practice this afternoon. I don't mind missing it at all; but as I'm new here, I—I thought I'd better ask you, sir, if I'm allowed——"

"Oh, quite!" said Mr. Quelch. "You will explain to Wingate, if he questions you, that I gave you leave; and, if necessary, refer him to me."

"Thank you, sir."

Christopher Clarence Carboy left the study. His eyes were twinkling as he walked down the passage.

When he went out into the quad Billy Bunter spotted him. Bunter's progress towards Little Side was slow—as slow as he could make it. A tortoise would have seemed quite a hurried, breathless sort of creature in comparison with Bunter at such times.

"I say, Carboy, you haven't changed!" squeaked Bunter.

Carboy grinned.

"I'm going out," he explained.

"Gammon! You're coming down to games practice. Wharton will be jolly waxy if you don't."

"Let him wax!"

"Shall I tell him you're not coming?" jeered Bunter.

"Please do."

"Gammon!"



"I've just seen Carboy, Wingate," said Harry Wharton abruptly. "And he says that he was let off after cutting games practice. Now he's got away with it, fellows will do exactly as they like. You've let me down—and if you call that doing your duty, I don't!" Wingate gazed at the junior captain speechlessly. (See Chapter 10.)

Carboy laughed, and walked away to the gates. Bunter's big spectacles were fixed on him till he disappeared. Then the Owl of the Remove had to realise that it was not "gammon."

Billy Bunter rolled away to Little Side. He was quicker now in his motions. He had news to impart. Footer was going on when Bunter arrived on the Lower Fourth ground.

"You fat slacker, get a move on!" called out Harry Wharton.

"I say, Wharton, Carboy ain't coming!" squeaked Bunter. "He told me to tell you he wasn't coming."

Wharton made no reply, and did not seem to hear. But his eyes glinted.

"I say, you fellows, that new chap means it," said Bunter. "He's gone out of gates. He said he would go to Courtfield, and he's gone."

And Bunter evidently was right, for games practice proceeded on Little Side, without Carboy coming on the scene. Skinner and Snoop grinned at one another. Any fellow who proved a thorn in the side of the captain of the Form was sure of Skinner & Co.'s sympathy and support—active sympathy and passive support, for Skinner & Co. did not like taking risks themselves.

Wharton made no remark whatever on the matter. When games practice was over, he reported the absentee to the head of the games, as in duty bound; and, so far as he was concerned, the matter ended. It was not, however, ended yet, by any means, as the Remove fellows were to discover.

Meanwhile, Carboy had called for Mr.

Quelch's watch at the jeweller's in Courtfield High Street; and, having faithfully executed that commission, he strolled to the bunshop to keep his somewhat mysterious appointment there. It was past tea-time when Christopher Clarence Carboy came back to Greyfriars.

## THE NINTH CHAPTER.

### Not a Licking!

**T**UBB of the Third came up the Remove passage with a scowl. He stared into Study No. 1 and grunted:

"Man named Carboy here?"

Wharton and Nugent were finishing tea in the study. No "man" named Carboy was present.

"Well, where is he?" demanded Tubb resentfully, after a look round. "Wingate wants him, and he's had the cheek to send me for him. I'm not standing the cheek of these Sixth Form men much longer."

Whereat the two Removites smiled. George Tubb of the Third Form, no doubt found some solace in that lofty declaration, but there was still less doubt that he would never venture to make it in the presence of a Sixth-Former. Such remarks were purely for personal consumption.

"I think he went out of gates," said Nugent.

Snort from Tubb.

"If he's out of gates, how the jolly old dickens am I going to find him and

send him to the prefects' room?" he demanded.

"Ask me another!"

"Oh, blow you Remove kids!" said Tubb. "Lot of slackers, dodging games practice and frowsting about, and giving a man a lot of trouble."

And the Third Form man, who was so annoyed by the delinquencies of the Remove went his way, looking for Christopher Clarence Carboy. Wharton and Nugent went on with their tea, without making a remark on the subject. Tubb's errand indicated that the Head of the Games was sending for Carboy to take "six" for cutting games practice, as was naturally to be expected. Nugent, who was all good-nature, had a faint feeling that Wharton might have gone a little easier with a new kid; and Wharton, having some perception of that feeling on Nugent's part, resented it to the extent of falling into a morose silence.

Tubb of the Third, with increasing wrath, sought for Carboy. He asked Bolsover major and Skinner for news of him, and, when they could give him none, announced that he was jolly well going to tell Wingate to do his own piffing errands in the future. Whereat Skinner chuckled, and Bolsover major laughed, and offered to come along to the prefects' room with Tubb to hear him tell Wingate so. Tubb, declining this offer, went on his way fuming.

Luckily, he found Carboy in the quad a few minutes later. Really, it was

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(Continued from page 13.)

fortunate, for all Tubb's important occupations—whatever they may have been—were being put off on account of this new fellow. He bore down on Carboy with a black frown.

"Look here, you new mug," he said, "you're wanted in the prefects' room for thrashing, and I hope it will be a jolly stiff one. Go in at once, and be blowed to you!"

Having thus delivered the head-prefect's message, Tubb marched indignantly off, possibly leaving the new fellow with a pleasing impression of Third Form manners, but more probably not.

Carboy strolled into the House. Billy Bunter greeted him with a fat cackling as he came in.

"You're for it," he said.

"How do you make that out?" asked Carboy.

"Hasn't Tubb told you you've got to go to Wingate?"

"Yes. What about it?"

"That means six."

Carboy shook his head.

"Oh, I dare say I can fix it with Wingate," he said carelessly. "I rather think it won't be a licking."

"My hat! Wharton will be waxy if it isn't," said Bunter.

"At the risk of making Wharton waxy, I think I shall get off the licking," grinned Carboy. "Come and watch."

"What-ho!" said Bunter.

And he rolled along to the prefects' room with Carboy. The new fellow went in alone, Bunter waiting at the doorway. Lower boys were not allowed to enter that sacred apartment, unless specially sent for. Not that any Lower boys ever wanted to enter it; the prefects' room was a room indissolubly associated with the official ashplant, in Lower boys' minds. From the door, however, Bunter had a full view of what passed.

He watched with the keenest interest.

The new fellow had cut games practice, and was booked, by all the laws and customs of the school, for a licking. If he got off the licking, undoubtedly it would be a sore point with Wharton, who would feel that he was not being upheld by the Head of the Games. Certainly it was useless for him to count heads on Little Side and report absentees, if the absentees were not a penny the worse for it. No licking, in fact, meant either carelessness or favouritism. If Carboy got off, Bunter was eager to carry the news to the Remove—especially to Harry Wharton. It would make the beast sit up, as a just punishment for not having let Bunter off games practice.

Bunter watched eagerly through his big spectacles. Wingate was seated by the window at the end of the room, talking to his chum, Gwynne of the Sixth Form. As Carboy presented himself, Wingate glanced at him, reached out for his ashplant, and motioned the junior to bend over. It was going to be a licking.

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Then Carboy, instead of bending over, said something to the Greyfriars captain which Bunter was too far away to hear.

Wingate listened to him, nodded, and laid down the cane.

Carboy walked out of the prefects' room, unlicked.

"My hat!" gasped Bunter.

The new fellow had made good his boast. Bunter was a witness that he had not been licked; it did not occur to his fat brain that Carboy had brought him along especially as a witness and a bearer of news to the Remove.

"I say, Carboy, how did you do it?" he gasped, as the new junior rejoined him in the passage.

"I explained that I had to go to Courtfield."

"But Wingate wouldn't let you off for that!" argued Bunter. "If a fellow was let off games practice for that, half the Remove would find that they had to go to Courtfield on compulsory days."

Carboy laughed.

"Well, he did!" he answered.

And, having no further use for William George Bunter, Carboy accelerated, and William George was left on his own.

Bunter proceeded to the Remove passage. He was full of news now, news that would surprise the Remove, and irritate at least one member of that Form.

"I say, you fellows! Carboy's not licked!" exclaimed Bunter to half a dozen Removites in the passage.

"Wingate's let him off!"

"Gammon!" said Peter Todd.

"I went with him, and saw it!" said Bunter. "'Tain't fair play, you know—letting one fellow off. I'd have cut games practice, too, if Wingate would have let me off. So would you, Skinner."

"Right on the nail!" agreed Skinner. "I would!"

"Same here!" said Snoop.

Bunter rolled into Study No. 1, Wharton and Nugent were about to leave when he arrived. Carboy had just come in. Wharton had fallen into the way of late of leaving the study when Carboy entered it, and Frank, though he felt rather uncomfortable, naturally went with his friend. But William George Bunter barged into them at the door.

"I say, you fellows, fancy Wingate letting Carboy off a licking!" he exclaimed. "I call it favouritism. Look here, Wharton, you can jolly well let me off next Saturday—if Wingate ain't going to lick a chap for it, I'm going to chance it, anyway!"

Wharton looked at him, and his face flushed red. It was a matter of duty and routine for the captain of a Form to report absentees from games practice on compulsory days. It was not a pleasant duty, and certainly Wharton, in most cases, was not at all anxious to hear that the delinquent had been licked. But this was not an ordinary case. Carboy had deliberately defied him in the changing-room before a crowd of fellows, and if the Head of the Games had not backed him up, as in duty bound, it was a blow both to Wharton's pride and to his prestige. Whether Carboy was licked or not, he did not care a straw, but he did care very seriously whether his captaincy was turned into ridicule.

He wasted no time on Bunter, but turned round and fixed his eyes on Carboy.

"Is that true, Carboy?" he asked.

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Shut up, Bunter! Is it true, Carboy?"

"Is what true?" drawled Carboy.

"That you haven't been given six for cutting games practice?"

"Quite."

Wharton controlled his temper. He was surprised himself by the deep, passionate anger that welled up in his breast, and he would not give it rein.

From the Remove passage came Skinner's sarcastic voice.

"Rather a facer for his High Mightiness, what?"

And a laugh followed.

Wharton gave Carboy a long look, meeting only a cheery smile in reply. Then he left the study without another word. Nugent followed him quickly. The expression on Harry's face rather alarmed him. Half a dozen fellows put their heads into the study, to look curiously at Carboy.

"What whopper did you tell Wingate to get let off?" asked Snoop.

"None, old bean! Whoppers aren't in my line—I leave them to you, as they're in yours," answered Carboy.

"Then what did you tell Wingate?" asked Skinner.

"I told him I had to go to Courtfield."

"You told Wharton that in the changing-room, and it didn't wash. Mean to say it was good enough for Wingate?"

"Looks like it, doesn't it?" yawned Carboy.

"My hat! Wharton will be wild," said Bolsover major.

"He's got jolly good reason to be wild, if Carboy's telling the truth!" exclaimed Johnny Bull. "Wingate's let him down—and if I were Wharton, I'd never report another chap for cutting games practice, after this."

"What a happy life that would be for the Remove!" chuckled Skinner. "Only Wingate would soon barge him out of the captaincy of the Form. Perhaps that's what he wants. He must have a down on Wharton to treat him like this! Beloved 'earers, we may be going to witness the fall of the mighty—and there will be a lot of dry eyes in the Remove if it happens."

And Skinner, at least, rejoiced. Obviously, there was trouble brewing, and when trouble brewed—for others—the amiable Skinner found life really worth living.

## THE TENTH CHAPTER.

### Not Nice for Wharton!

HARRY WHARTON'S face was white with anger as he went down the Remove staircase.

Nugent, at his side, was looking, and feeling, extremely uneasy. From the stairs, Wharton turned in the direction of the prefects' room, and as soon as Frank realised his destination, he laid a detaining hand on his chum's arm.

"You're not going to Wingate, Harry?"

"I am!"

"He must have had some reason—"

"He can tell me the reason, then."

"Old chap, you can't call the captain of the school to account. Leave it till you've thought it over."

"I'm going to him now."

"Hold on!" exclaimed Nugent anxiously. "Think how it will look, old chap. Everybody knows you dislike Carboy—and it will look as if you're keen to get him a prefect's licking—"

"I don't care how it looks! I know I'm not going to carry out a single order from Wingate after this if he has really let me down!"

"That means giving up the captaincy of the Remove!"

"I wouldn't keep it another hour on these terms!" said Wharton passionately. "If any cad can defy the Form captain, and be backed up in doing it by the Head of the Games, no self-respecting fellow would captain a Form. If Wingate doesn't explain, I'm going to resign at once!"

"I wish you would think it over first—there may be a lot of reasons—"

"Rubbish!"

And, breaking from Nugent's detaining hand, Wharton hurried on to the prefects' room, leaving Frank feeling utterly dismayed.

Wingate of the Sixth gave Wharton a nod as he entered the apartment sacred to the Sixth. He supposed that the captain of the Remove had come about some matter connected with the Lower games, as he often had to do. But he gave him a second, and rather curious glance, as he noted the expression on his face. Lower boys were expected to approach the captain of the school, if not exactly with fear and trembling, at least with a good deal of respect. Wharton came in as if he were a prefect himself, and was evidently angry—a frame of mind which, in a junior, was utterly out of place in the prefects' room. Wharton, certainly, did not intend to offend, but he was too angry to reflect.

"I've just seen Carboy, Wingate," he said abruptly.

"Well?" said the captain of Greyfriars curtly. He liked neither Wharton's tone nor his manner.

"He says he was let off, after cutting games practice."

"That's so."

Wharton breathed hard.

"Well, I'm only asking for information," he said. "But will you tell me what use it is reporting absentees if they're let off?"

Wingate looked grim.

"Have you come here to instruct the captain of the school how to carry out his duties?" he asked.

"You haven't carried out your duty."

"What?" roared Wingate.

"Don't I speak plainly?" said Wharton. Every senior in the room was staring at him blankly. No junior had ever been heard to speak to the captain of the school like that before. But Wharton was intensely angry, and utterly reckless. He went on: "Carboy told me before all the changing-room that he refused to come down to games practice, and he kept his word. He's got away with it. After this, the fellows will do exactly as they like, and I shall never make a single report again. You've let me down, and if you call that doing your duty, I don't."

Wingate gazed at him speechlessly.

He reached out for his ashplant, but let it go again.

"Let's have this clear," he said.

"You say you've seen Carboy?"

"Yes."

"He's told you, I suppose, that he had to go down to Courtfield for Mr. Quelch?"

Wharton started.

"For Quelch?"

"Yes."

"He's told me nothing of the sort. This is the first I've heard of it, and I don't believe it."

"He should have told you. Anyhow, he told me, and as he was on a message for Quelch, of course he was let off."

"Oh!" gasped Wharton.

"And you've come here to call the captain of the school over the coals, it seems!" said Wingate.

Wharton flushed crimson.

"You couldn't take it for granted that I had a good reason for letting the kid off, even if he didn't tell you?"

Wharton could not speak. He was overwhelmed with confusion. His anger had led him astray—not for the first time in his school career.

"Well?" snapped Wingate.

"I—I—I'm sorry!" Wharton got out the words with an effort. "I—I never guessed that the fellow had taken you in, of course. I thought—he let me think—" The unfortunate junior gasped. "I apologise, Wingate. I might have known—"

"I think you might," said Wingate. "I've taken the kid's word that he was on a message for Quelch; but if you think he was lying, I shall of course look into the matter. It's odd that he never told you."

"Oh, it's some more of his leg-pulling," said Wharton bitterly. "He wanted me to come here and make a fool of myself—it's his idea of a joke. I dare say he wangled some message for Quelch to let himself out."

"He referred me to Quelch," said Wingate. "I should say he was a fellow whose word could be taken. But I shall look into it. Wait here."

Wingate left the prefects' room and went to the Remove master's study. Wharton waited with burning cheeks. His outburst in that room, before six or seven seniors, was an unheard-of happening, and he knew now that he was in the wrong, and that Wingate was dealing with him very kindly and patiently. A less kind and patient prefect would have given him six for his cheek, and bundled him neck and crop out of the room.

Wingate came back in a few minutes.

"I've asked

Quelch," he said.

"It's quite correct.

Carboy fetched a

watch for him that

was left in Court-

field to be repaired.

Quelch excused him

from games practice

for the purpose.

He's told me so.

Anything more to

complain of?"

"No!" stammered

Wharton, only

anxious to escape

from the room and

from the staring,

amused eyes of the

seniors there.

"Very well!

Next time you're

not satisfied with

the captain of the

school, let me

advise you to think

twice before you

speak once," said

Wingate, with a

laugh. "You're a

good kid, Wharton,

and I think a lot of

you; but you can't

come here and rag

the head of the

games, you know."

"I'm sorry!"

stammered Whar-

ton.

"That's all right.

Cut!"

The captain of

the Remove was

only too glad to

cut.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Coming to Blows!

"JEVER get left?" Fisher T. Fish asked Harry Wharton that question, later in the day, when he passed him in the quad.

Fishy was grinning.

Wharton passed on without replying. He was powerfully inclined to take Fisher T. Fish by his skinny neck and knock his Transatlantic head against the trunk of an elm. But it was rather futile to bang Fishy's head for grinning when all the Remove were grinning. He couldn't bang all the heads in the Remove.

"Thus are the mighty fallen!" sighed Skinner, when Wharton came within hearing of his voice. And Snoop giggled.

"I say, Wharton, you've been a goat, and no mistake!" Hazeldene remarked, when he met the captain of the Remove. "I hear that you went to rag Wingate—"

"Mind your own business!"

Hazel stared. He had been speaking as the kind officious friend who rubs a thing in from friendly motives. But Wharton's reply roused Hazel's ire.

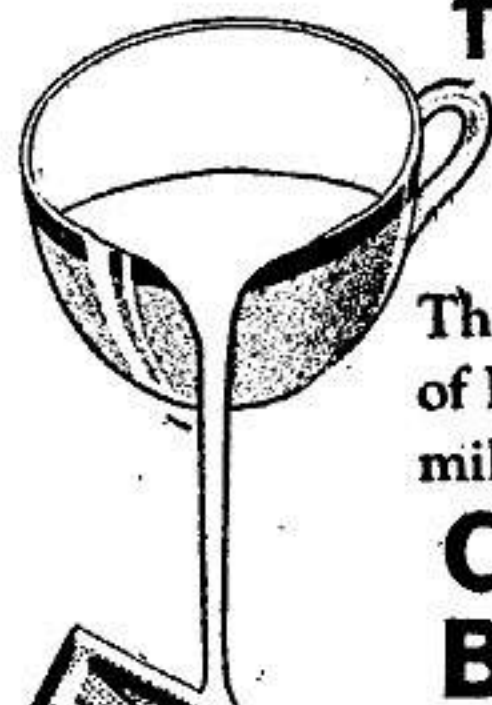
"Well, you've made a thumping fool of yourself!" he snapped tartly. "The whole Form's cackling over it. I think—"

Wharton did not wait to hear what Hazel thought. He turned his back on him and went into the House.

There was a laugh when he came into the Rag. All the fellows knew the story by this time—that Carboy had pulled Wharton's leg once more to such an extent that the Form captain had kicked

(Continued on next page.)

ATHLETES TRAIN ON IT



There is half a cup of English full cream milk in every

CADBURY BIG MILK BAR 2<sup>D</sup>



up a row in a prefects' room. Carboy had not, after all, defied authority by cutting games practice. He had leave from his Form master—a circumstance that he had carefully kept dark until Wharton had made a fool of himself. After which he kept it dark no longer, doubtless from a kind desire to add to the gaiety of existence in the Remove. Certainly the fellows laughed over it, loud and long.

It was a jest in the Remove, but to Harry Wharton it was as gall and wormwood. Twice Carboy had made him look a fool before all the Remove; and the second time, at least, Wharton could not fail to realize that his own hasty and passionate temper had helped. He was quite well aware, on reflection, that he ought to have taken it for granted that the captain of Greyfriars had good grounds for whatever decision he might make. Unluckily, reflection came too late, as it so often does.

His cheeks burned when he recalled the scene in the prefects' room. He could almost have wished that Wingate had indeed treated him unjustly, as he had supposed; he would rather have felt angry than foolish. The laugh that greeted his entrance into the Rag made his eyes glint. The fellows were laughing over the joke—and it might last for days. His feelings towards Carboy were bitter now. Wharton had had trouble with more than one fellow since he had been at Greyfriars School, but he had never disliked any fellow so deeply as he disliked the japer of the Form. Even in the days when the Bounder had been his enemy, he had never felt such a keen and savage dislike. It added to his discomfort, too, to realize that he disliked a fellow so much, who was after all only a reckless and inconsiderate practical joker.

"I say, you fellows," squeaked Billy Bunter, "here he is! I say, Wharton, did Wingate give you six for checking him?"

Wharton left the Rag again. The company there, at the present time, was not attractive to him.

He went up to his study.

Carboy was there.

Wharton did not see him till he had entered, or he would not have entered the room. Christopher Clarence Carboy was seated on the locker under the window and he had a letter in his hand, which he was reading with an expression of unusual thoughtfulness. There was a pucker in his brow as if something in the letter worried him.

But he looked up as Wharton came in, and grinned. Probably he did not mean any special offence. The black look on Wharton's face had made other fellows grin.

But Wharton, who was turning to leave the study, turned back as he caught that grin. It was the last straw. Wharton had resolved not to quarrel with the fellow being quite well aware that a fight on the subject would only make him look more ridiculous. But his sorely-trying temper was at boiling-point already, and Carboy grinned at an unfortunate moment. The captain of the Remove strode across the study to him.

"You've made me look a precious fool with your trickery," he said, between his teeth.

"You've made yourself look a fool, you mean," answered Carboy. "I never asked you to butt into the prefects' room and rag Wingate, did I? I never thought you would be such a hot-headed ass."

"You wangled that business in Courtfield for Quelch this afternoon."

"Of course. Quelch fell to it like a nice little man," yawned Carboy. "I'd have told you, only—"

"Only you preferred a rotten jape."

"Well, yes," admitted Carboy. "You really ask for it, you know. You carry your head so jolly high; it's a temptation for a fellow to give you a fall. You might have let me off this afternoon. You could have done it if you'd liked. And I told you I had an appointment. You took the high hand, and if you got your leg pulled in return, you've only got yourself to thank—see?"

"You find it amusing, I suppose?"

"Oh, quite!"

"Well, I'm no match for you in leg-pulling, but I can lick a fellow who goes out of his way to bother me. Put up your hands, you rotter!"

"My dear chap, I'm not going to fight you," said Carboy. "What the thump is there to fight about?"

"It's rather too late to think of that. You got off a licking from Wingate by a trick. I'm going to give you one. You can either put up your hands, or take six from a fives bat!"

Carboy laughed.

"Hoity-toity!" he said. "Have they made you captain of the school by any chance? Or Headmaster? Or great Panjandrum?"

Smack!

Wharton's open hand coming across Carboy's cheek with a crack like a pistol-shot interrupted him.

"Is that enough for you, you cad?" snapped the captain of the Remove.

Carboy's eyes blazed as he leaped to his feet.

"Quite!" he answered.

The next moment they were fighting.

"I say, you fellows!" It was Billy Bunter's squeak on the Remove staircase. "I say, you fellows, they're going it in No. 1. Wharton and the new chap scrapping like billy-oh!"

Most of the Remove were downstairs after tea, but in a very short space of time there was a crowd outside No. 1 Study. Most of the fellows had, in fact, expected that there would be a fight sooner or later between the japer of the Remove and the Form captain. It had come sooner instead of later, that was all. And it was not a scuffle such as had occurred in the study a few days before. It was a fierce fight, and in grim earnest.

"Hallo! Hallo! Hallo!" shouted Bob Cherry. "What about the gloves, you men?"

Neither of the combatants heeded him. They were fighting with bare knuckles, which was considered bad form at Greyfriars. But both were too angry and excited to brook interference. There were no gloves, neither were there any rounds. It was a fight quite out of keeping with all the traditions of the Remove. But it was, as all the fellows agreed, a scrap worth watching.

Harry Wharton, good fighting man as he was, seemed to have his hands full with Christopher Clarence Carboy.

The new fellow evidently was not merely a practical joker and nothing more. He was strong, he was a good boxer, and he was able to stand punishment. He was getting punishment now that would have made many a fellow weaken, and he was standing up to it gamely.

Possibly Carboy's peculiar manners and customs had landed him in trouble at his previous school, and made it necessary for him to study the manly art of self-defence. At all events, it was clear that he had been in a good

many scraps in his time, and knew how to handle one.

He was not perhaps a match for Wharton—few fellows in the Remove were. But he was giving the captain of the Remove plenty to do. And if he was beaten it was likely that Wharton's victory would be a Pyrrhic one—not much better than a defeat. In a ringed space with plenty of room to move, no doubt Wharton would have asserted his superiority more easily; but in the study the element of chance entered. Wharton stumbled over a hassock, and a crash caught him on the jaw as he stumbled, and he went headlong.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Man down!" said Ogilvy.

"Down and out!" said Skinner, his eyes gleaming. "Oh, my hat! Fancy Wharton knocked out by a new kid!"

"Shut up, you worm!" growled Bob. "He would be counted out if they had a referee," said Skinner. "He's as good as licked."

The words reached Wharton as he lay dazed and breathless. He scrambled to his feet, and closed in on Carboy, and the fight was instantly resumed, hotter than ever.

## THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

### Bunter Makes a Discovery!

**C**RASH!

Carboy went sprawling on the floor of No. 1 Study.

There was a gasp from the crowd of juniors at the doorway as he went.

Wharton's face was white and furious. The mere thought of defeat at the hands of the japer of the Remove had exasperated him beyond endurance. He had pressed the new fellow hard, and Carboy, good man as he was, had found that his quality was not quite up to that of the captain of the Remove. He fought well, and he fought hard; but the knock-out blow came home, and it came with all Wharton's strength behind it.

Harry Wharton dropped his hands, and stood panting as Carboy sprawled. He knew that his enemy was knocked out. And with that knowledge a great deal of his anger passed. At that moment he would have recalled the whole thing if he could have done so. And he wished that he had not come to the study and found Carboy there. The new fellow sprawled helplessly on the floor, gasping for breath, and blinking dizzily. Bob Cherry came into the study and bent over him.

"Bring some water, somebody," said Bob, very quietly.

Nugent hurried with a tin basin.

Harry Wharton leaned on the table, trying to get back his breath. Carboy was knocked out, but the victor in that fierce fight was very nearly spent. His face was deeply marked, and he was likely to bear the signs of the fight for several days to come, at least. Certainly Carboy was still more deeply marked, and looked as if his eyes would blacken. More and more Wharton was repentant of having lost his temper and started the fight; but it was too late to think of that now.

Bob bathed the fallen junior's face, and Carboy was lifted into a chair. He still seemed dazed.

"My hat! There'll be a row about this!" remarked Skinner. "Look at his chivvy!"

Skinner had been disappointed about the result of the fight. Still it was a consolation to reflect that there would be a "row" about it.



Mr. Quelch almost jumped out of his seat when he caught sight of the highly decorative countenances of Wharton and Carboy, and a frown corrugated his brow. "Wharton—Carboy—" he gasped in astonishment, "you've been fighting! What does it mean?" (See Chapter 13.)



"Rotten to pitch into a new kid like that," remarked Snoop.

Wharton flushed crimson.

He looked round at the Removites. He noted now that no one had given him a cheer or a congratulation. Knocking out Carboy did not seem to have been a popular proceeding. Carboy was beaten; and he was hurt. And the fellows remembered that he was, after all, a new chap, and not a bad chap in his way. And a fight without gloves was against all the traditions of the school.

"You fellows know that Carboy asked for this," said Wharton, in a low voice. "I never wanted any trouble with him."

"We all know that!" said Nugent loyally.

But there was no reply from any other fellow, and the juniors cleared away from the door.

Carboy was on his feet now, leaning heavily on Bob Cherry's arm.

Bob piloted him from the study. Wharton's glance followed them.

Bob had said nothing to him, and he was helping Carboy. Certainly, Carboy needed help, and Bob was the fellow to aid friend or foe when he needed it. But it gave Wharton a pang. The thought that the fellows condemned him had speedily banished the feeling of repentance for having lost his temper with Carboy. He looked at Nugent, and it seemed to him that even Frank avoided his eyes.

Wharton compressed his lips. He was feeling very severely himself the effects of that fierce fight, but his chums, apparently, were thinking of the other fellow.

"Are you blaming me, too, Frank?" he asked.

"Well, no," said Nugent. "The chap was enough to exasperate anybody. I wish you hadn't gone for him like that, though, without the gloves. Why couldn't you have had a scrap fixed up in the usual way, in the Rag or behind the gym? It would have been better."

"I suppose I lost my temper."

"I suppose you did," said Frank, with a faint smile. "I wish you hadn't."

"Well, I wish I hadn't, if you come to that," said Wharton tartly. "But there's a limit; the fellow asked for it over and over again."

"I know, but—"

"But what?"

"Oh, nothing."

"Look here, Frank—"

"Come and bathe your face, old chap," interrupted Nugent. "It wants it. You'll have a prize chivvy, anyway—"

"I can do without help," snapped Wharton, and he went out of the study.

Nugent paused a moment or two before he followed him. Wharton went to a bath-room to bathe his damaged face, and when Nugent arrived there he found the door locked. Apparently Wharton did not want any help from his chum.

"I say, you fellows—"

Billy Bunter blinked into Study No. 1. Having blinked round the room, Bunter discovered it was empty.

Bunter grinned as he surveyed the room.

Most of the furniture had been knocked over, books and papers strewed the floor, and the study presented a rather remarkable aspect. Had Mr. Quelch looked in just then he would certainly have wanted an explanation.

Bunter was about to roll out again when he caught sight of a letter lying

on the floor, near the locker under the window.

Naturally, he picked it up. That proceeding was eminently natural in William George Bunter. Bunter's interest in other fellows' correspondence was deep and permanent. He was not troubled by any scruples about reading another fellow's letter. It was a matter of course, with the Owl of the Remove, to pick up the letter and read it.

"Dear Christopher," it began.

Evidently, it belonged to Carboy. It was, in fact, the letter that Carboy had been reading when Wharton entered the study, and which he had dropped when the trouble began, and quite forgotten in the excitement of the fight.

Billy Bunter's fat face became intensely interested as he perused the letter. Probably it would have interested other fellows in the Remove, though there were few who would have done as William George Bunter was doing.

Billy Bunter read it through and ejaculated:

"Oh, crikey!"

Then he fixed his big spectacles on it and read it through again from end to end.

"Oh, crikey!" repeated Bunter. "I wonder what the fellows would say if they saw this. Ho, he, he!"

The letter, written by Carboy's father, from home, ran:

"Dear Christopher.—I am glad to hear that you like your new school. I hope and trust that you have not forgotten my warning to be careful at Greyfriars. If you should have to leave Greyfriars, as you had to leave Oldcroft, your school career must be regarded as definitely at an end. I shall be glad to receive the term's report from your Form master, in the hope that it will be a favourable one. If I have doubts you must blame yourself.

"I repeat, be careful, Christopher.—Your affectionate father,

"C. CARBOY."

For a third time William George Bunter read that letter through, as if he were trying to learn it by heart.

His fat face wore an expansive grin.

"So that chap had to leave his last school, eh?" murmured Bunter. "I

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wonder what he did? I'll bet they never let the Head know. The Beak wouldn't have let him come to Greyfriars if he'd known the fellow had been kicked out of another school. He, he, he!"

There was a footstep in the Remove passage.

Bunter hastily dropped the letter on the floor and became busy in setting up an overturned chair.

Carboy came rather hurriedly into the study.

He glanced at Bunter, and then round the room. Billy Bunter, who could guess easily enough that he had remembered the letter and had returned for it, grinned a fat grin.

"Just setting your study to rights for you, old chap," he said. "You and Wharton have fairly wrecked it."

Carboy did not answer. He saw the letter on the floor and almost pounced upon it.

With obvious relief he slipped it into his pocket.

Bunter rolled out of the study. He chuckled as he went down the Remove passage. Bunter knew something now, that nobody else in the Remove knew. Of course, he was not going to give away information he had gained by reading a private letter. He was not going to show the fellow up. Nothing of the sort! He might tell one or two fellows, in strict confidence—half-a-dozen fellows—perhaps a dozen—all in confidence.

Carboy, apparently, had a secret. By the time Billy Bunter had finished telling fellows—in strict confidence—it was not likely to be a secret much longer.

## THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

### Crunch!

SKINNER had sagely predicted that there would be a "row," and Skinner's prediction was fulfilled.

It was not till the following morning that Mr. Quelch had a view of the highly decorative countenances of two members of his Form. They had shyly avoided his eye as long as possible. But the Form master's eye was not to be eluded for long, and when that eye fell on two bruised and darkened faces an Olympian frown corrugated the brow of Harry Samuel Quelch.

It was not uncommon for a Remove man to display signs of combat, and as a rule Mr. Quelch turned a judiciously blind eye to such symptoms. But black eyes and swollen noses were not to be passed over, and both Wharton and Carboy were called strictly to account.

Mr. Quelch might have considered that they had punished one another sufficiently; but he did not so consider. Both the juniors were severely lectured before all the Form. Carboy was given three cuts on the hand with the cane—which made him wriggle. Wharton, as head boy of the Form, who should have known better, was made to bend over and take six. After which, Mr. Quelch gave them the pleasing information that they were a disgrace to the Form, and a disgrace to the school, and ordered them to remain within gates until their faces were, as he expressed it, fit to be seen in public. Which meant gating for at least a week.

Carboy, with a black eye and a nose that looked like an over-ripe tomato, did not seem to have lost his cheery spirits.

On Sunday morning, when all the fellows sported silk hats for church parade, Bolsover major's eyes dwelt longingly on the handsome topper that

adorned the head of the new junior. Bolsover major had not forgotten the disaster to his own topper on the occasion of the tea with the Head, or the vengeance he had vowed. On Sunday, of course, smashing a fellow's topper was out of the question. Even the bully of the Remove would not have thought of being guilty of such bad form. But he cast a yearning eye on the topper; and Carboy contrived to keep quite near him, as if to tantalise him. Which showed that a black eye and a swollen nose had had no effect on Carboy's japing tendencies.

Bolsover major was almost the only fellow in the Remove who fully and heartily approved of the thrashing Carboy had had in Study No. 1. He loudly proclaimed his opinion that it was exactly what he would have given the fellow himself sooner or later, if Wharton hadn't.

Support from Bolsover major was rather a novelty to Wharton, and he did not appreciate it in the least. The fact that Bolsover major approved made him feel uncomfortably that he had been in the wrong. Certainly it was not a pleasant position, to be backed up only by the overbearing bully of the Form.

In Study No. 1 Wharton now made it a rule to ignore Carboy's presence absolutely. So far as he could, he kept away from the study when Carboy was there, and when he could not avoid the new fellow's presence he treated him exactly as if he were not there. It made matters rather uncomfortable for Frank Nugent, who was a peaceable and good-natured fellow, and detested anything in the nature of a feud. Between a desire to show ordinary civility to a fellow in his study, and an unwillingness to offend his own chum, Nugent found that he had to tread a rather thorny path, and, like Agag of old, to walk delicately.

After class on Monday Billy Bunter put an excited face and a pair of large spectacles into the doorway of the Rag.

"I say, you fellows!" he squeaked. "I say, he's got it on."

"Eh? What?"

"Who's got what on, fathead?" asked the Bounder.

"Carboy!" gasped Bunter. "He's got it on—in the quad."

"What?" roared Peter Todd.

"His hat!"

"You frumptious fathead, is there anything new in a fellow having his hat on in the quad?"

"His Sunday topper!" shrieked Bunter.

"Oh!"

There was a rush to the window of the Rag. Bolsover major was present, and he was the first to reach the window.

Full in view there walked Christopher Clarence Carboy. On his head gleamed and shone a handsome topper.

Obviously, it was a Sunday topper. Week-day toppers, as a rule, showed signs of service. Sunday toppers were always newly swept and garnished, as it were. In the progress of time a Sunday topper became a week-day topper; but while it remained a Sunday topper, used only on special occasions, it was always calm and bright. The topper that adorned Carboy's head was without speck or blemish. It reflected the rays of the autumn sun like a mirror. It was as handsome a topper as any in the Lower School at Greyfriars. And it was obvious that Carboy was sporting it in the quad simply to catch the eye of Bolsover major. He could have had no other reason for walking up and down under the windows of the Rag in his best topper on Monday afternoon.

Bolsover major glared at him from the window. It was his chance at last—rags

were barred on a Sunday, but on a Monday there was no reason against smashing a fellow's hat. Carboy was fairly asking for it.

"I'm on this!" said Bolsover major; and he rushed out of the Rag.

"Well, that cheeky ass is asking for it," remarked Vernon-Smith. "He knows that Bolsover's after his topper."

And the juniors followed Bolsover major to see what would happen. There was little doubt of what would happen to the topper, at all events. Bolsover major was a fellow of his word.

"Bet you he'll cut before Bolsover gets to him," said Skinner. "He's only leg-pulling again."

But Skinner was wrong. Christopher Clarence Carboy was still sedately parading before the windows of the Rag when Bolsover major rushed up to him, with a dozen Removites at his heels.

"Got you at last!" said Bolsover major.

Carboy glanced at him.

"Yes; here I am, if you want me," he said innocently.

"You biffed my topper the other day with a muddy footer. I had a lot of trouble getting that topper clean again," said Bolsover major. "I dare say you thought it was awfully funny."

"Right on the wicket," agreed Carboy. "I did."

"I told you I'd smash your topper next time I saw it on you."

"I remember."

"Well, that's what's going to happen now," grinned Bolsover major. "If you've got any objections to make, I'll jolly well lick you first, see?"

Carboy laughed.

"I've done enough scrapping to last me for some time," he answered. "But I'd advise you not to smash this topper. It's a jolly good topper."

"So was mine, and you didn't mind biffing a muddy footer at it."

"But your topper got over it," argued Carboy. "If you smash a topper it's never any good again."

"That's your look-out."

Bolsover major clenched a big fist, jumped at Carboy, and smote. Right on the crown of the topper landed his heavy fist.

There was a horrid crunch.

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Skinner. "That does it!"

There was no doubt that it did it! Never had a topper been more completely smashed than that topper was by that hefty smite. The hat, which seemed a size too large for Carboy, went down over his ears—the crown was smashed completely in. Bolsover major, not content to leave a deed half done, smote again. There was another crunch.

"Here, hold on!" gasped Carboy.

He extracted his head from the crunched topper. As he held it in his hands, staring at it, Bolsover major knocked it out of his grasp. It fell to the ground, and Bolsover planted a heavy foot on it.

Crunch!

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The topper had already looked like a concertina. Now it looked like a limp rag. All the king's horses and all the king's men could never have put that topper together again.

"That's done it, I think!" chuckled Bolsover major.

Carboy gazed at the ruined hat.

"Looks like it," he agreed.

"You don't seem to mind," said Bolsover major, staring at him, puzzled.

"Why should I mind?" asked Carboy cheerfully. "It wasn't my topper."

"What?"

"You see, I borrowed that topper," explained Carboy calmly. "I don't see

why I should mind you smashing it. The fellow it belongs to may mind."

"Oh crumbs!" ejaculated Skinner. "Not your topper!" gasped Bolsover major.

"No."  
"Whose was it, then?"  
"Yours!"

Bolsover major jumped. "Mine!" he shrieked.

Carboy nodded cheerfully. "My—my—my topper!" said Bolsover major dazedly. "You—you—you took my topper out of the box and—and put it on because—because I was going to smash your hat! You—you—you—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
There was a yell of merriment from the Removites. The expression on Bolsover major's face was really excruciating.

"My topper!" repeated Bolsover major, gazing at the wreck. "My—my best topper! Why, I—I—I—"

Words failed Bolsover major. "Ha, ha, ha!"  
"I say, you fellows, he's smashed his own topper!" shrieked Billy Bunter. "His own best hat! He, he, he!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
Bolsover major picked up the wrecked hat. He gazed at it with feelings too deep for words. The juniors yelled. Carboy—no doubt considering that some other spot would be more healthy for him in the circumstances—walked away, leaving Bolsover major still gazing with a fascinated gaze at the smashed hat, and the other fellows yelling with laughter.

## THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

### Be Careful, Christopher!

"**R**OTTEN!"

Carboy made that remark, as he looked into the glass in Study No. 1, and scanned the reflection of his black eye.

Black eyes may be beautiful. Indeed, there was once a song that celebrated the beauty of "Two Lovely Black Eyes!" But much depends on the variety of blackness, and how acquired. Carboy's variety of black eye was not beautiful. It was exceedingly unbeautiful. Moreover, it had ceased to be quite black, and was turning unwholesome shades of blue and green.

Carboy surveyed it, and scowled at it. There was no doubt that it was an eyesore. His nose was beginning to settle down, as it were, and look more like a nose than a tomato. But his eye was still a little painful, and it was undeniably disagreeable to look at.

"Rotten!" repeated Carboy. "Can't get out of gates with that eye! No good telling Quelchly it's well when it looks like that! Blow Quelchly! Blow Wharton, the silly ass! Blow that eye! Blow everybody and everything!"

"He, ho, he!"  
Carboy looked round as he heard that cachinnation, and beheld a pair of large spectacles and a fat face grinning into the study.

He stared at Bunter morosely. He wanted to go out of gates, and he was gated so long as his eye was darkened. It was no comfort to reflect that Wharton was gated, too. He did not care a straw whether Wharton was gated or not. He was annoyed, and not pleased to see Bunter. He looked round for a missile.

"I say, old chap—" began Bunter, watching him warily. It was not uncommon for fellows to throw things at Bunter when he butted into a study, and he had developed wary habits.

"Seat!" snapped Carboy.

## WAS HE SACKED FROM OLDCROFT?

Christopher Carboy was sacked from his last school!

That's the rumour that gets about—and Billy Bunter is responsible for its circulation. As a rule no one takes any notice of Bunter's stories—but, strange to say, they take notice of this one. Before long this amazing new boy—Carboy—is besieged with inquisitive questioners. Why was he sacked? What did he do?

How Christopher deals with the extraordinary situation you will learn in:

### "THE BOY WITH A PAST!"

By  
**FRANK RICHARDS**  
next week's rousing long complete story of Greyfriars.



"What an eye!" said Bunter agreeably. "Worse than Wharton's! Do you call it black or blue? Or a mixture? He, he, he!"

Bunter dodged a cushion. "The fact is, I came here to speak to you, Carboy," he said. "No larks, you know. It's rather important."

Bunter came farther into the study, closed the door, and put his back to it. Carboy, with his hand on an inkpot, paused. Bunter's look and manner were mysterious—a mysterious as if he had just been to the pictures and absorbed film drama not wisely but too well. Carboy, wondering what was coming, stared at him inquiringly.

"Well, what does that mean, you fat frump?" he asked. "What are you grimacing at?"

Bunter coloured with wrath. He had not been grimacing; he had been giving Carboy a look of solemn and mysterious import, conveying that he was, so to speak, a fellow who knew what he knew. It was just like that beast to think he was grimacing. No doubt it had looked like a grimace. Bunter's fat features were not moulded for the drama.

"Look here, you cheeky ass—" he began. Then he broke off, grinned, and added: "Be careful, Christopher."

Carboy jumped. That phrase from his father's letter struck him at once. His hand went to his pocket; it felt the crumpled letter there. But he knew that Bunter must have seen it.

"You fat rotter—" he began hotly. "Be careful, Christopher!" grinned Bunter.

"You've been prying into my letters, you fat freak!" exclaimed Carboy, greatly incensed.

"I may have seen a line or two on a letter by chance, when it was lying on a floor!" said Bunter, with dignity. "I should disdain to read a fellow's letter, as any man in the Remove could tell you. I hope I'm rather above it."

Carboy had no such hope.

"I've a jolly good mind—" he began, and his fingers closed on the inkpot.

"Be careful, Christopher!" chuckled Bunter. "Fellows who are kicked out of a school and sneak into another school without telling the Beak, ought to be jolly careful. What?"

"You fat frump, what on earth makes you think I was kicked out of my school?" demanded Carboy.

"He, he, he!"  
"And what business is it of yours, anyhow?"

"Well, as a Greyfriars man, you can't expect me to approve of your coming here, in the circumstances, you know," said Bunter, wagging his head at Carboy. "It's rather thick! Jolly serious for you if I told the fellows—as your pater doesn't mean to send you to school again if you get barged out of Greyfriars, as you were out of Oldcroft."

Carboy breathed hard. "You seem to have read a lot of a letter that was lying on the floor," he said.

"The fact is, I felt it my duty to look into the matter," said Bunter loftily. "You're a bad hat, Carboy. You've treated me badly. You led me on to bag Wharton's grab last week—"

"You wanted such a lot of leading on?"

"I might have got a ragging. You've treated Wharton badly, too, and he's a friend of mine. I know he's a swanking ass, and a hot-headed chump, and all that. Still, he's a friend of mine. I'm not sure whether it's not my duty to take you to Quelch this very minute, and make you own up!"

"Idiot!"  
"You can call a fellow names, but that won't alter the fact that you were pushed out of your last school. Now, I want to know what you were pushed out for. You've got to confess."

"Confess?" repeated Carboy.

"Yes. Was it stealing?"  
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"You benighted ass!"

It was not a direct answer, but Bunter could gather from it that Carboy had not been sacked for stealing.

"Was it breaking bounds and pub-haunting?"

Carboy picked up the inkpot.

"Be careful, Christopher," said Bunter. "You chuck that inkpot at me, and I'll let all the Remove know jolly quick that you were kicked out of Oldcroft, wherever that may be. You can't afford to ride the high horse with me, I can tell you. What were you sacked for?"

"You—you—you burbling chump, I wasn't sacked!" hooted Carboy. "I left Oldcroft for reasons I don't intend to explain to you, or to any other inquisitive idiot."

Bunter winked, a fat wink.

"You can tell that to the Marines!" he answered. "Anyhow, I suppose you'd only tell me whoppers, if you told me anything. Now, I'm going to give you a chance, Carboy. I'm not the chap to give a man away. But one good turn deserves another. You see that?"

"What do you mean?" asked Carboy quietly. There was no doubt that Carboy would have preferred Bunter not to talk up and down the Remove passage about what he had read in the letter from Mr. Carboy. For whatsoever reason Carboy had left his last school, he did not want the matter to become the talk of the Greyfriars Remove.

"I mean what I say," answered Bunter. "One good turn deserves another. I'm willing to be friendly."

Carboy gave a snort, which implied that he did not attach a high value to the friendship of William George Bunter.

"But, of course, I shall expect you to do the decent thing," said Bunter. "That's understood. Have I mentioned to you that I'm expecting a postal-order?"

Carboy grinned involuntarily. He had not been long at Greyfriars, but he did not need to be there long to hear all about Billy Bunter's celebrated postal-order.

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at. But, as I was saying, I'm expecting a postal-order, and there's been some delay in the post," Bunter went on. "It's scandalous! But there it is. It's not the first time it's happened. I've had to wait for postal-orders before this, and it's often placed me in an awkward position. At the present moment I'm absolutely stony."

"Are you wound up?" asked Carboy. "If you are, the sooner you run down the better."

"The postal-order will be for a pound," said Bunter calmly. "It will get here shortly. I suppose you could lend me a pound till it comes?"

Carboy looked at him fixedly.

"If you had as much sense as a bunny rabbit," he said, "I should think you a thumping rascal. But I suppose you haven't."

"Oh, really, Carboy—"

"If you've finished, get out!"

"Of course, if you decline to oblige a fellow in a little matter like that, a fellow isn't bound to keep your shady secrets," said Bunter. "I dare say Wharton would be glad to hear what I could tell him, as he's down on you. Most likely he would report to Quelch. In fact, it would be his duty as captain of the Form. Now—"

"Get out!"

"I don't want any cheek from a fellow

who's been sacked from school for stealing, or whatever it was, and I can say— Yaroooooop!"

Bunter had not intended to say "Yaroooooop!" He said it as he received the ink. Carboy jerked the inkpot with unerring aim, and the contents smote Bunter's fat face in a flood.

"Groooooooooogh! Ooooh!"

Billy Bunter staggered against the door, spluttering ink. Carboy made a jump at him.

Bang, bang!

Bunter's bullet head smote the door in a postman's knock.

"Yow-ow-ow-ow! Help!" yelled Bunter.

"There, you fat rascal!" panted Carboy. "Take that—and that!"

Bang, bang!

"Yarough! Help! Fire! Murder!" roared Bunter. "I say, I won't tell anybody—yooop! I was only j-j-o-joking—yow-ow-ow! C-c-c-can't you take a j-j-o-joke? Yarooooogh! Leggo! Beast! Help! Whooop!"

Grasping Bunter's collar in one hand, Carboy opened the study door with the other. The Owl of the Remove was whirled into the passage.

Then Carboy's boot smote his tight trousers.

Bunter flew.

The study door slammed after him.

The voice of William George Bunter faded away down the Remove passage. But—left alone in the study—Carboy drove his hands deep into his pockets, and moved about restlessly, with a deep wrinkle of thought in his brow. He was no longer thinking of his black eye; he had more serious matters to think of now. He gave a long, long whistle of dismay. For once the japer of Greyfriars was in a mood of absolute seriousness. Mr. Carboy had enjoined his son to be careful at his new school; but evidently Christopher had not been sufficiently careful.

## THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

### Black Ingratitude!

"COMING up to the study?"

"That cad will be there."

"If you mean Carboy—"

"You know I mean Carboy."

Nugent's lips set a little.

"I think this is rot," he said.

"Carboy may be an annoying ass, but he's not worth making all this fuss about. Most of the fellows think you're rather a duffer to be drawn."

"You among them, I dare say," said Wharton bitterly.

"I think it's rot," repeated Nugent.

"Making a mountain out of a molehill. I can't see that the fellow's anything more than a harmless ass, when all's said and done."

"I think he's a rotter."

"Well, I don't," said Nugent tartly;

"and you wouldn't if you weren't so dashed pigheaded."

"You're welcome to your opinion; I'll keep mine."

Wharton swung away from his friend and walked across the dusky quad.

"Look here, Harry—"

The captain of the Remove walked on without heeding. Frank Nugent compressed his lips and turned towards the House. Frank's temper, equable as it was, was beginning to suffer a little. There had not been much peace in No. 1 Study since Christopher Clarence Carboy had arrived, and Nugent could not see by any means that it was all the new fellow's fault.

Wharton walked under the old elms, his hands in his pockets, a black and bitter expression on his face. The evening was closing in, and it was time for

juniors to be in the House, but Wharton did not heed. He wanted to be alone just then.

The feud with Carboy had started from a frivolous cause, but it had become serious enough. Carboy had made a fool of him; and his friends thought him foolish for taking the fellow's antics seriously; and, though they said nothing on that subject, he knew that they did not like the way he had handled Carboy in the study. It was true that he had lost his temper—with provocation enough—but it had been a fair fight, and he had received very nearly as much punishment as he had given. But the fellows seemed to make out that he had acted like Bolsover major, bullying a new kid.

But a little difference of opinion with his friends was not all that was on Wharton's mind now. He was gated till his face had resumed its normal aspect, and he could not blame Quelch for that. The Remove master, naturally, did not care for his boys to appear in public looking like prizefighters. But on Wednesday the football match with Highcliffe was due, and it was an away match. Wharton had no hope that his darkened eye would have "come round" by Wednesday, which meant that he would not be able to go over to Highcliffe with the Remove eleven.

As he was captain of the Remove eleven, it was exceedingly awkward. Even if the fellows did not think that he was to blame, that would not alter the fact that the footballers had to go over to play Highcliffe without their skipper. Vernon-Smith could skipper the team, and a new man could be put in. But the difference might very well mean the loss of the match. To miss, and perhaps lose, an important fixture, was galling enough, and to think that he owed it to Carboy made Wharton's feelings exceedingly bitter towards that youth. It was not a judicious time for his friends to say anything to him in Carboy's favour.

"I say, Harry, old chap—"

Wharton stopped, with an impatient exclamation, as Billy Bunter rolled towards him under the dusk of the elms. He did not want any fellow's company just then, and least of all William George Bunter's.

Bunter rolled up and joined him.

"Harry, old bean—"

"Oh, clear off, Bunter!" exclaimed the captain of the Remove irritably. "Don't bother now."

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"For goodness' sake, hook it!"

"I don't call that grateful, when I've been looking for you a thumping long time, specially to tell you something," said Bunter indignantly.

"Oh, rats!"

"That beast, Carboy—"

"Hang Carboy."

"He ought to be jolly well hanged, drawn, and quartered," said Bunter.

"You didn't give him enough the other day. You ought to have blacked his other eye as well."

Wharton laughed shortly.

"You're the only fellow in the Remove that thinks so," he snapped.

"I'm backing you up, old chap—"

"Fathead!"

It was not a gracious reply: Wharton did not seem grateful for William George Bunter's generous backing.

"The beast smothered me with ink, and—"

"I dare say it served you right."

"He kicked me!" roared Bunter.

"Good!"

"Why, you beast—"

"If you don't cut off, I'll kick you, too."



"I don't want any cheek from a fellow who has been sacked from the school for stealing, or whatever it was," said Bunter, "and I can say— Yarooop!" Bunter had not intended to say "Yarooop," until Carboy jerked the inkpot with unerring aim, and the contents smote his fat face in a flood. (See Chapter 14.)

"I say, old fellow, don't be waxy!" urged Bunter. "I've come here to tell you about the beast. You never knew he was sacked from his last school, did you?"

Wharton stared at the fat junior.

"What the thump do you mean, you ass? He wasn't—he couldn't have come to Greyfriars if he had been. What idiotic yarn have you got hold of now?"

Bunter chuckled.

"Well, he was, and he did!" he answered. "I've found it out. He used to be at a school called Oldcroft—"

"I don't care where he was. Dry up."

"He had to leave—"

"Rubbish!"

"It was in a letter from his pater!" hooted Bunter.

"How the thump do you know what was in a letter from his pater?"

"I happened to see it—quite by chance, of course. He dropped the letter that time you were scrapping with him in the study—"

"You prying little beast!"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Will you dry up?" exclaimed Wharton, in great exasperation. "Can't you understand that I don't want to hear what you've found out by prying into a fellow's letter?"

"Of course, I've done nothing of the sort," said Bunter, with dignity. "I saw a few lines of the letter, quite by chance. Besides, I considered it my duty to read it, considering what was in it."

"You fat idiot!"

"It said that he was sacked from his last school—"

"Bosh!"

"I think it was for stealing—"

"What?" yelled Wharton.

"It didn't say stealing," said Bunter hastily. "But look at the way he smothered me with ink—kicked me, too—"

Evidently Bunter considered that a fellow who inked him and kicked him was capable of anything. It was not what would have been regarded as evidence in a court of law, perhaps; but it was good enough for William George Bunter.

"My idea is, that he ought to be shown up," said Bunter. "I'm not going to deal with the fellow myself—he kicks so jolly hard—I mean, I disdain to take any notice of him. He's beneath it. But as captain of the Form, you can take the matter up. I mean, you can put it like that—he, he, he! You're down on him, and all the fellows think you're a silly fool to get your rag out as you've done—"

"Do they?" said Harry, breathing hard.

"Yes, old chap—and they think it was rather rotten of you to wallop him as you did, with bare knuckles—in fact, the whole Form's down on you, more or less. Well, this will give you a chance to get your own back," said Bunter eagerly. "See?"

In his eagerness to use the captain of the Remove as a catspaw, to pull his chestnuts out of the fire, Bunter did not heed the expression that was gathering on Wharton's face. He rattled on happily:

"It's all in the letter, and I know which pocket he's got it in, too. You being in his study, can get at the letter easily enough."

"Get at the letter!" gasped Wharton.

"Yes, old fellow—and read it—"

"Read it?"

"And tell all the chaps. That will

be proof, see? It will get round the school, and jolly well show him up. That will make the rotter sit up—and that's what you want, isn't it? He's made you look no end of a fool—what with pulling your leg, and you being a hot-headed ass, if you don't mind my mentioning it. Now you can get your own back, and I'm telling you how to do it—out of pure friendship, of course. You get hold of that letter—yaroooh!"

Shake! Shake! Shake!

"Groogh! Leggo!" spluttered Bunter. "Wharrer you shaking me for, you beast, when I'm—groogh—trying to help you—ooooch!—out of pure friendship! Ow! Wow! Yow! Beast!"

Shake! Shake! Shake!

"Yaroooh! If you mum-mum-make my gig-gig-glasses fall off—ow!—you'll have to pip-pip-pay for them—wow—wow! Groogh! Leggo! Ow! Help!"

Bump!

Bunter sat down in the quad—hard! He sat and blinked after the departing figure of the captain of the Remove, who was striding away towards the House.

"Ow!" gasped Bunter. "Wow! Beast! Why, he's a worse beast than Carboy—ow! Catch me backing him up after this—yow-ow-wow! I wonder what he got his rag out for—ooooch—when I was only being friendly! Ow!"

And the Owl of the Remove picked himself up and limped away to the House, a sadder if not a wiser Bunter.

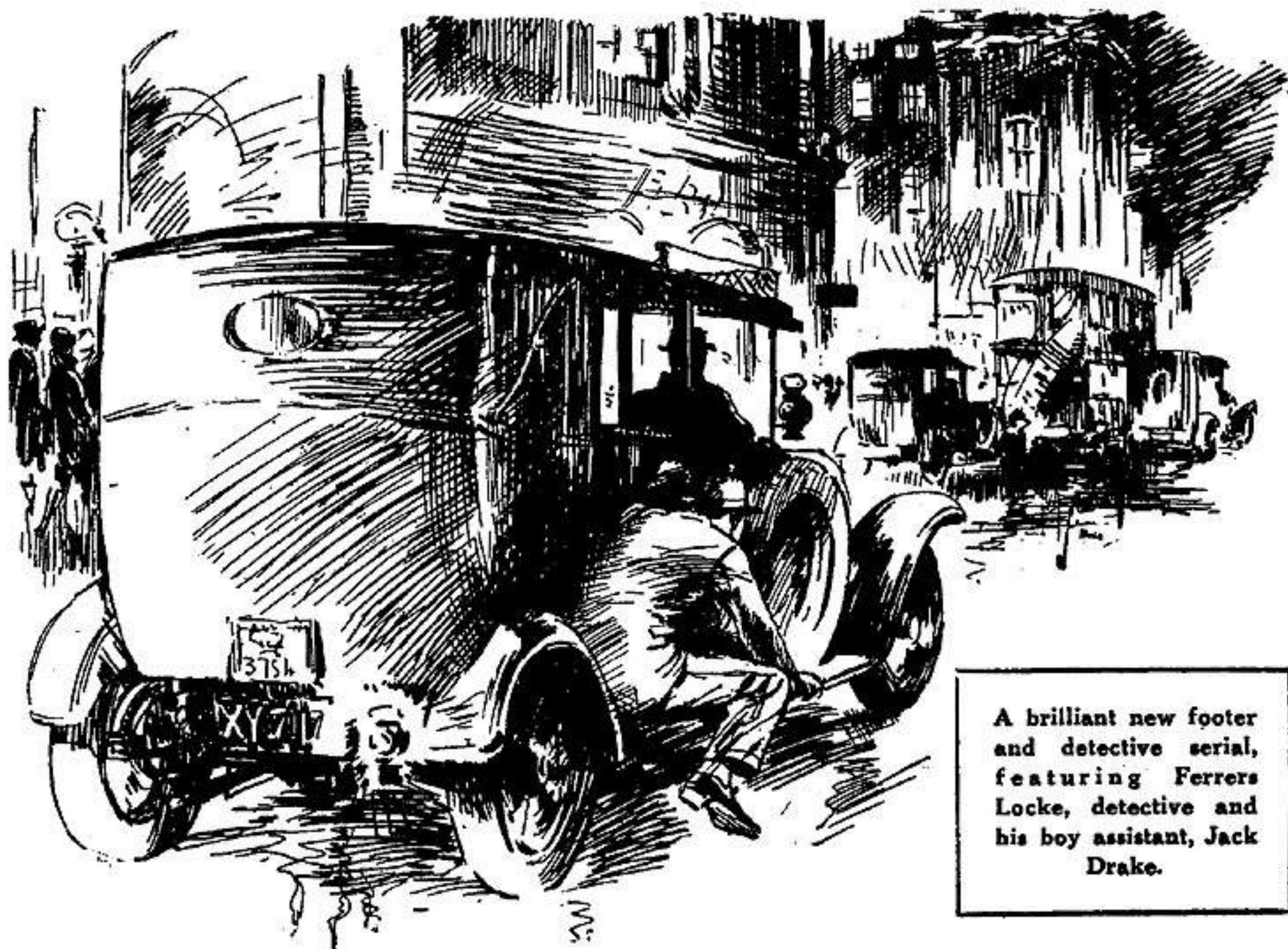
THE END.

(There will be another ripping long story of Harry Wharton & Co. in next week's MAGNET. chums, entitled: "THE BOY WITH A PAST!" You can only make sure of reading it by ordering your copy WELL IN ADVANCE!)

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**A HYPNOTIST IN THE PLOT!** Like everyone else, Lal Begwum, the world's cleverest hypnotist, thinks Samuel Bigways is a wealthy man, and he readily takes part in one of the most diabolical plots ever engineered by the rascally Managing Director of Sparsdale Athletic.

## THE TOUGHEST TEAM IN THE LEAGUE!



A brilliant new footer and detective serial, featuring Ferrers Locke, detective and his boy assistant, Jack Drake.

### Trapped!

“JOLLY good show!”

That summed up Jack Drake's opinion of the Douglas Fairbanks film he had just seen, for Locke's assistant had great admiration for Fairbanks' agility and daring. So great indeed was that admiration that Drake had watched two performances of “The Gaucho,” much to the annoyance of a pompous attendant who, with monotonous regularity, tramped up and down the gangway of the cinema, directing patrons to their seats and frowning heavily on those who, by reason of the fact that they had seen the film through once, should have vacated their seats.

Drake, however, had sat on regardless of the open disapproval of the portly attendant. But all things come to an end some time, and at eleven o'clock precisely Drake found himself standing on the pavement outside the cinema, one of a happy throng homeward bound.

Locke's assistant set off for Baker Street at a leisurely pace. But he hadn't progressed far when a well set-up figure brushed by him and strode on into the night. There was something vaguely familiar about that broad-backed figure which aroused Drake's interest. He found himself walking along at an increased speed and then, as he studied the man in front more closely, Jack gave a gasp.

The man was Jonas Hebbel, the Sparsdale Athletic's right-half.

In the ordinary course of events, Drake would merely have congratulated himself on his memory and passed on his own way. But since such amazing revelations of the inner history of the Sparsdale Athletic had come to light

to have lost sight of Jonas Hebbel would not have been in keeping with Jack's profession.

Where was Jonas Hebbel bound for? Was he on some nefarious errand?

All manner of suspicious thoughts chased themselves through Drake's youthful mind as, at a discreet distance, he trailed the Athletic's right half-back. And it came as no great surprise when Jonas eventually headed for Eaton Square.

Drake felt a thrill running through him. He remembered that Sir Milton Havers was entertaining that night. The

### WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE.

Barely has Ferrers Locke, the Baker Street detective, taken on the job of rounding up a mysterious gang of crackmen when a chance clue leads him to the Sparsdale Athletic Football Ground. During the home team's match with the Arsenal, Westworth, the Athletic's outside-right is seen to collapse with a gun-shot wound in the chest. Before he can make a statement, however, he is whirled away in a car belonging to Samuel Bigways, the Managing Director of the Athletic. Convinced that the shot had been fired from the stand in which Bigways had been sitting, Ferrers Locke signs on as a playing-member with the Sparsdale team. An attempt on his life which immediately follows assures the London sleuth that the team is composed of a gang of toughs under the leadership of Bigways. Later Ferrers Locke catches sight of Bigways at a party at Sir Milton Havers' house at Eaton Square, where a daring attempt is made to steal the famous Bosworth Emerald which Sir Milton had purchased as a present for his daughter's twenty-first birthday. The tell-tale track of a protruding nail arouses Locke's suspicions, and he forthwith requests the gentlemen present to remove their dress shoes. During the examination, however, Bigways makes himself scarce, removes the nail from his shoe, and succeeds in destroying the evidence that would undoubtedly have convicted him.

(Now read on.)

thrill intensified when Jonas Hebbel, after a cautious glance round him, strolled past Sir Milton Havers' palatial mansion twice.

From the safety of a friendly doorway, some twenty yards distant, Drake watched Hebbel's every movement.

Suddenly the Athletic's right-half made for a section of the big wall surrounding Sir Milton Havers' house. Drake saw him stretch a hand upwards and feel along the top of the wall. What exactly happened next Drake could not quite see, for the light was none too good. But two minutes later Jonas Hebbel was racing down the square like the wind.

“Well, I'm blessed!” muttered Drake, emerging from his hiding-place. “What's his little game?”

He glanced towards the lighted house, looked at the wall, and then at the fast receding figure of Jonas Hebbel.

“Reckon I'll keep an eye on Mister Hebbel,” grunted Drake, setting off at a swinging stride in the wake of the footballer.

But Jack had not gone far before he saw Hebbel hail a taxi.

Drake almost broke into a run. At all costs he meant to keep Jonas Hebbel in sight. A glance to right and left told him that Hebbel had chartered the only taxi available.

Slam!

The taxi-driver slammed home the door of the cab and wedged himself into his driving-seat at a leisurely pace. Next second Drake had leapt forward for the running-board. His hand clawed at the handle on the off-side of the cab and found a hold, just as the taxi began to move. Then, in approved Douglas Fairbanks style, Drake hauled himself on to the narrow running-board and

crouched down out of sight of the cab window.

There was exultation in his heart for instinctively Drake knew he was on the track of something big, and he was not surprised when the taxi began to slow up as it turned into Cavendish Square. Long before it drew up at Samuel Bigways' house, however, Drake had dropped off the running board, and by the time the taxi-driver had been paid he was sauntering slowly along the square, ears and eyes on the alert.

He saw Jonas Hebbel ring the bell; saw him admitted.

"What's the next move?" Drake asked himself. "Do I go in?"

The boy considered for a few moments.

"I'll chance it!"

With that decision Drake marched boldly up to the door and pressed the bell.

A portly footman loomed up.

"Is my guv'nor here?" asked Drake.

The footman frowned.

"I think, young man, you have made some mistake. This is Cavendish Square!"

"Is it really?" said Drake cheerily.

"I thought it was Princes Street, Edinburgh." But that gentle sarcasm was wasted on the footman.

"Be off!" he commanded, and made to shut the door.

But Drake was quicker, and a youthful foot shot out and wedged itself between the door post and the door.

"Not so swift," said Drake. "I want to know if my guv'nor is here—Ferrers Locke."

"Oh!"

The footman opened the door again at mention of Ferrers Locke, but he still eyed Drake suspiciously.

"Your master, if he is Mr. Ferrers Locke, is not here!"

"Is Mr. Bigways here?" Drake didn't quite know why he asked the question.

"Mr. Bigways is not at home," said the footman. "Mr. Bigways will not be returning for some time."

While he was speaking a door along the hall opened and Fred Bulsome appeared in sight. His face lit up with surprise as he caught sight of Drake.

"Young Drake," he exclaimed, coming forward. "And what brings you here?"

Drake gave the Athletic's centre-half a cheery grin.

"I'm trying to find the guv'nor," he replied. "Thought he might have looked in here."

Bulsome shook his head.

"He's not been here. But won't you come in—the boys are all here?"

Drake rightly or wrongly did not hesitate. By the "boys" he knew Bulsome meant the Sparsdale Athletic.

"They'll be pleased to see you," said Bulsome, with an engaging smile.

"Good egg!" exclaimed Drake, with well feigned enthusiasm, although his heart was beating a tattoo against his ribs.

The footman stood back and Drake passed in. Bulsome took him by the arm and piloted him to a large room. The room was hazy with cigar and cigarette smoke, but even so Drake had no difficulty in recognising the Sparsdale Athletic players. They were lounging in easy chairs and settees, apparently making a "night" of it. A decanter of whisky and crystal glasses stood on several small lacquered tables close handy to each little group of players, whilst boxes of cigars and cigarettes were everywhere in evidence. That such indulgence, and at so late an hour of night, was hardly the correct training for professional footballers was

Drake's first thought, and then he remembered that the Athletic were not footballers in the true sense.

"Come in," said Bulsome, and Drake noticed now a subtle difference in his tone. "The boys'll be pleased to see you!"

If the "boys" were indeed glad to see Locke's assistant they had a peculiar method of showing it.

A dead silence reigned as Bulsome closed the door and put his back to it.

"Good-evening, all," said Drake, for want of something better to say.

And then, swift as light, three revolvers suddenly leaped into view. Each glinting muzzle was directed at Locke's assistant.

"Move, and you're a gonner!" hissed Jonas Hebbel, making a menacing gesture with his revolver.

There was a growl of approval from the entire assembly, and Drake paled. Here were the real men of the Sparsdale Athletic—the "Raffles" of the Soccer world—ruthless and cruel.

"A very pretty sight," said Drake coolly. "What a picture for the footer fans; men of the Sparsdale Athletic in—in fancy dress."

"Quiet, you spy!" said Jonas Hebbel hoarsely. "Where did you hit my trail to-night?"

Drake looked him straight in the eyes.

"I'm answering no questions," he returned coldly.

"Then you'll never leave this house alive!"

There was a low chorus of approval at Hebbel's words, and, for all his outward calm, Drake felt his blood run cold.

"I answer no questions!"

A signal passed between Hebbel and Bulsome. Suddenly the latter pinioned Drake's arms. Jack struggled, although he knew the futility of doing so. A pungent odour assailed his nostrils as one of the scoundrels produced a bottle of chloroform and a pad. Fighting like a wild cat Drake tried to dodge the sickly

pad that was jammed over his nose; tried hard to shout for help. But the chloroform soon did its deadly work. Drake's senses began to reel, the room seemed to revolve in an inextricable mass until it was blotted out entirely. And then Drake knew no more.

Bulsome stood looking down at Drake's inanimate figure with a grim expression on his rugged face.

"Good job, Jonas," he remarked softly, "that you spotted this young spy dropping off the taxi!"

Jonas Hebbel nodded and stirred Drake's huddled figure with the toe of his boot.

"I don't know whether the cub trailed me along the square, but he must have seen me, obviously, when I hailed the taxi. Not that it matters much, anyway—that accursed Ferrers Locke has beaten us!"

"What are we going to do with this kid?" asked Tapling, the Athletic's goalkeeper uneasily.

"Do with him?" hissed Hebbel. "Why, shove him with that durned fool, Wentworth!"

He stooped as he spoke, and with consummate ease lifted Drake across his shoulder. Crossing over to the mantelpiece, he pressed a button in the wall. A section of the panelling swung back, to reveal a miniature lift. Still carrying Drake, Hebbel stepped into the lift and ascended, what time Bulsome swung back the movable section of the wall.

There was a lengthy silence in the room. Tapling was the first to break it.

"I don't like the way things are going," he muttered. "I've got an uneasy feeling that Ferrers Locke has got the lot of us taped—including Bigways. Locke didn't see Hebbel when they grabbed each other over Havers' wall; but if Hebbel was quick enough to recognise Locke's voice, it's quite on the cards that Locke recognised him."

Bulsome nodded.

(Continued on next page.)



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"True," he said, licking his lips. "But even so, where's Locke's proof? I think we are worrying ourselves like a set of silly funks at the very mention of the name of 'Locke.' We've tried to out him on more than one occasion and failed; but next time there will be no failure."

There was a growl from the assembled players. Everyone of them would have given all he possessed to know that Ferrers Locke, the sleuth, was definitely out of their path for all time. But, alas for their hopes, for such was not yet, or likely to be, the case.

They smoked and drank in moody silence for the space of another hour; but their faces tensed as they heard the sound of the outer door being opened and closed. They were on their feet as a heavy tramp set the echoes rolling in the marble hall.

Next moment the door opened, and Samuel Bigways strode in.

He stood in the doorway, looking a massive, domineering figure in his evening clothes. There was an ugly glint in his eyes as they passed from one to other of the assembly.

"Where's Hebbel?" he rapped out. "Bulsome jerked a finger ceilingwards."

"The fool!" rumbled Bigways. "The bungling fool! He was five minutes late for his appointment. The crib was in our hands, and that bungling fool let it go!"

"But Hebbel said that Ferrers Locke—"

Bigways smashed a heavy fist on one of the ornamental tables standing nearby that shivered its delicate lacquered surface, and sent a decanter and a tray of glasses crashing to the floor.

"Ferrers Locke!" he hissed. "He all but caught me! Ferrers Locke has got to be given a swift exit from this world, and also that accursed puppy of an assistant!"

"He's here!" said Bulsomo quietly. Bigways started.

"Here?" The gang nodded, and Bulsomo explained. Bigway's face went livid, and then a crafty expression took possession of it.

"Here!" he muttered, half to himself. "Then perhaps the Fates are playing kindly for us at last. If we've got Drake, Locke should be easy."

He gazed round at the gang, a steely glitter in his grey eyes, and a murderous expression distorting his heavy features. Similar expressions settled on the faces of the gang. Certainly no enthusiastic supporter of the Athletic would have recognised his favourites in that rascally assembly, for they were beings transformed.

"Fill your glasses!" said Bigways, with a short laugh. "And let us drink to the continued success of the—The Athletic, and the end of Ferrers Locke!"

The glasses were charged, and the toast was drunk with great fervour. The individual to whom these glasses had been raised was at that precise moment keying himself into his rooms in Baker Street, well content with his night's work. But a deal of that contentment vanished when, peering into Drake's room to see if the youngster were asleep, Ferrers Locke discovered that the bed had not been slept in.

Certain it is that if the Baker Street detective could have seen his assistant's plight at that moment his uneasiness and anxiety would have increased tenfold.

"Go and Kill Your Master!"

JACK DRAKE stirred as consciousness began to return to him. His eyes flickered open and blinked in puzzled amazement at his surroundings. Then, as his full senses came into operation Drake sat up.

He was not bound in any way, yet for several moments he sat there staring. It was a well-furnished room he was in, obviously at the top of the house, for a small window, heavily barred, gave a glimpse of the darkened sky.

A cluster of electric bulbs suspended from the ceiling showed the youngster that he was in a bed-room. In one corner stood a mahogany bed, and as Drake got to his feet he saw, to his astonishment, that the bed was occupied.

"Well I'm jiggered!" Drake moved forward, and peered at the sleeping figure.

It was Harold Wentworth, the wounded Sparsdale outside-right.

Jack could hardly repress the murmur of sympathy that rose to his lips as he beheld that drawn, pale face and the drooping mouth that spoke so eloquently of deep suffering.

Wentworth's breathing was deep, but it seemed unnatural. Gently Drake shook him by the shoulder.

The sleeper did not stir, and it became born in on Jack's mind that he was under the influence of some potent sleeping-draught.

Full of curiosity Drake peered about him then. He tensed, and a glint came to his eyes as he saw the burly figure of Jonas Hebbel seated in one corner of the room, almost in shadow.

Hebbel stirred on his chair.

"No tricks, my lad," he growled, "or you'll get a taste of this!"

He flourished a dog-whip as he spoke.

Jack turned over in his mind his chances if it came to a struggle with the Sparsdale right-half, and realised, with a sinking feeling at his heart, that they were practically nil.

"Why are you keeping me here?" he demanded.

Hebbel laughed.

"Guess it ain't for me to explain, except that I'm waiting for the chief."

"Bigways, you mean?" said Drake.

Hebbel nodded.

"I see you know, and it's pretty obvious that you know too much, my lad," he said. "That's unlucky for you, because you're fond of life, and you ain't got a great deal longer to live."

"You villain!"

"None o' that, unless you want this whip round your shoulders! Just keep quiet! I—"

Hebbel broke off sharply and started to his feet, as a square section in the wall suddenly moved.

Drake watched the moving wall fascinatedly, but he was not surprised when, having swung back to its maximum, the secret aperture revealed the bulky figure of Samuel Bigways.

The Managing Director of the Sparsdale Athletic gave Drake a glare of hatred, and stood regarding him thus for the space of three or four minutes.

"So you've pierced our secret," he said at length. "Well, my young friend, you'll have to pay the penalty."

"You scoundrel—you double-dyed scoundrel!"

Bigways' heavy face went purple.

"I'll stand no lip from you, you young puppy! People who cross my

path have to be removed." He made a gesture towards the sleeping figure of Wentworth. "He's lucky, in a way, for he lives. But his memory has gone. He would have split, he would have ruined my plans; but a bullet is a wonderful thing, and a little knowledge of the science of hypnotism is still more wonderful."

"Hypnotism—" began Drake.

Bigways laughed much in the manner of a madman.

"All sorts of derelicts come within my scope," he chuckled. "Doctors, and—er—footballers, scientists, and—er—hypnotists. All of my acquaintances are clever in their various ways, but they have developed criminal tendencies. Presently you shall be introduced to Lal Begwum—a Hindu."

He crossed to the wall and pressed a bell-push. Three or four moments later the lift shot up to a level with the concealed bed-room, and an olive-skinned individual, obviously of Indian extraction, padded silently into the room.

Drake was at once attracted and repelled by the man's peculiar eyes. They were like coals of fire, but beyond that expressionless.

"Lal Begwum," said Bigways, with a wave of the hand.

The Hindu salaamed, and Bigways, in low accents, spoke to him for the space of three minutes in a language Drake knew to be Hindustani. Then, in English, he spoke to Drake.

"Lal Begwum here doesn't understand a word of English," he explained. "He can repeat English like a parrot, but he knows not the meaning of what he says. I have told him that you are suffering from delusions, and that as a friend I want him to try and cure you. He will try, never fear, for Lal Begwum thinks, like the rest of the world, that I am a philanthropist."

"What are you driving at?" asked Drake, a spasm of fear plucking at his boyish heart as he sensed some fiendish purpose behind Bigways' words. "Is that man a hypnotist?"

Bigways nodded.

"I shall tell him to repeat five words—the five words that will cure you—cure you and your accursed chief for all time!"

Drake could not suppress a shudder.

"Lal Begwum," went on Bigways, turning to the impassive Hindu. "You are ready?"—this, in Hindustani.

The Hindu bowed and fixed his burning orbs on Drake's white face.

"Go and kill your master!" Bigways uttered the words slowly, and Begwum listened intently, still as impassive as ever.

"Go and kill your master!" Lal Begwum repeated the words several times until he had got them to Bigways' liking. Then, at a signal from the latter, he advanced upon Jack Drake.

The moment the youngster felt those glittering eyes bent upon him he nerved himself. His every instinct told him to fight. His hands clenched, his fist swung back as if to smash full into the face of the olive-skinned Hindu. But some power greater than his own compelled that fist to relax and fall harmlessly by his side.

"Go—and—kill—your—master!" It was a crooning voice, and it sent a thrill down Drake's spine.

As if in a haze he saw Bigways and Hebbel swaying before him; then they were blotted out completely, and all he could see was those two terrifying,



glittering eyes—compelling, sinister, burning like live coals.

"Go—and—kill—your—master!"

The crooning voice of the Hindu went on.

Drake felt his whole being slowly going to the control of the man with the burning eyes. He had experienced hypnotism before, but never to such a degree as this.

From somewhere out of the distance it seemed he heard the maniacal laughter of Bigways; heard the gruff cackle of Jonas Hebbel. Try as he might, he could not avoid those terrifying eyes.

"Go—and—kill—your—master!"

Drake found himself backing to a chair. The eyes pursued him relentlessly. Then the youngster sunk into the chair, his face as pale as death, his eyes wide and staring.

Something was pressed into his hand.

He endeavoured to pull himself together; he tried his utmost to identify just what the object was that Lal Begwum had given him.

But he couldn't—he did not know that it was a revolver, fully loaded.

"GO AND KILL YOUR MASTER!"

It was the last time Lal Begwum reiterated those sinister words, for with a faint moan Drake collapsed in a heap, and for a few moments was well-nigh insensible.

When his eyes opened again Drake heard Bigways and Hebbel talking animatedly to each other, but they ceased as Drake sat up in the chair.

"Where am I?" asked the youngster, passing a hand over his forehead and wrinkling his brows.

"Oh, you came to see—see Wentworth," said Bigways, with a forced smile. "I expect you want to be going now—to your master!"

Bigways' last word seemed to wake something in Jack Drake's mind. His right hand felt for and found something that reposed in his jacket pocket. It was the revolver.

"Yes, I must go at once!" he said, walking straight towards the concealed door.

Bigways touched Drake on the arm and eyed him shrewdly. But he seemed satisfied. To one side stood Lal Begwum, still as impassive as ever.

Near him was Jonas Hebbel, but as he caught sight of the strained and peculiar expression on Drake's face, and then saw the burning brightness of Lal Begwum's eyes, Hebbel backed away nervously and licked his lips.

"I will get a cab, Drake," said Bigways, with a cheerfulness that made Jonas Hebbel, callous as he was, marvel. "You must carry out your instructions quickly."

Drake nodded and stepped into the lift.

The others followed him in.

The lift descended, and the little group passed through the sitting-room, leaving behind them an awed and silent crowd of men known as the Sparsdale Athletic. Wind of Bigways' diabolical plot had evidently reached them, for they shrank away from the Hindu as he padded softly past them.

In the hall Bigways instructed Hebbel to call a cab, and despatch Drake in it to Baker Street. It was a job that Hebbel would like to have refused, but he was so much under the thumb of Samuel Bigways that he complied.

The taxi was hired in due course at a convenient distance from Cavendish Square. Drake stepped into it without a word to Hebbel.

The taxi drove off.

Hebbel stood staring after it for quite three minutes, fighting a battle with himself. Should he stop the taxi and warn Drake? But Hebbel, with a peculiar feeling of despair, knew that it was useless to warn Drake of what he was about to do, for Drake was not himself; he was completely in the power of the man whom Samuel Bigways called Lal Begwum.

The taxi stopped outside Ferrers Locke's rooms in Baker Street, and Drake alighted. In a perfectly normal fashion he paid the driver, and then keyed himself into the house.

Ferrers Locke was not at home. With that same set expression on his face Drake sat down in the armchair to await his chief's coming, his right hand resting lightly on his jacket pocket. Ever and anon a frown of bewilderment would pucker his youthful brow, and occasionally he would murmur his diabolical instructions:

"Go and kill your master!"

There was the sound of a key in the outer door. It was Ferrers Locke returning. Drake's face grew strangely white and drawn as he heard his beloved governor mounting the stairs. Something—some remaining vestige of his own personality told him that what he was about to do was wrong.

He stiffened in his chair as Ferrers Locke turned the handle of the door and came into the room.

The detective started at sight of his assistant, and his eyes grew wide as they observed the difference in the lad's appearance.

"Where on earth have you been, lad?" he asked anxiously. "I've been searching for you everywhere."

Drake did not reply.

A shudder shook his frame, and his right hand delved into the jacket pocket. Ferrers Locke crossed over to him and shook him by the shoulder gently.

"What on earth's wrong with you, Jack?" he asked anxiously. "You look positively ill?"

"I'm all right!" The reply came in a toneless voice. "But I have my work to do!"

Locke stood back from his assistant, for the moment nonplussed. Then he started, for it became apparent to him on closer inspection that Drake was in a hypnotic trance.

Drake's eyes, still expressionless, fixed on his chief's face.

His hand closed on the loaded revolver, and slowly it came into view.

Ferrers Locke eyed that movement in horror.

"Go and kill your master!" Drake spoke the words tonelessly, and his fingers curled round the trigger.

At the same moment Ferrers Locke leaped forward.

Crack!

A messenger of death sped from the blue muzzle of the revolver, and with a heartrending moan, Drake, in a dead faint, collapsed in his chair.

(But what of Ferrers Locke? Has the celebrated detective fallen a victim of this dastardly plot? You will find out when you read next week's gripping instalment of this powerful serial, chums!)

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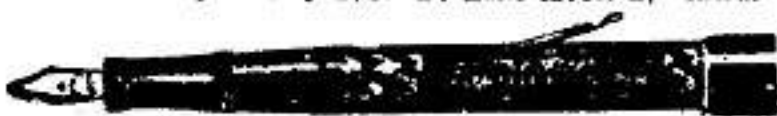
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# The Reward of VIRTUE

£10,000 at least is the reward Dr. Birchamall hopes to inherit from his Aunt Betsy's will. But what he does eventually get is a staggering surprise packet!

Mr. Cheatem wore a thoughtful look on his dial as he accompanied Dr. Birchamall into the House, and the latter was glad to notice it, for he took it as an encouraging sign. And so it proved to be. While they were ravenously wading into jinger-pop and doonuts in Dr. Birchamall's study, Mr. Cheatem suddenly looked up, with a friendly grin. "You'll be glad to learn that I have at last come to a decision regarding the legacy," he announced, between grato mouthfuls of doonut.

Dr. Birchamall's beady eyes nearly dropped out of his head with egg-sation.

"Go on!" he cried hoarsely.

"On dew reflection, I have decided that the terms of Betsy Birchamall's will are fulfilled, for no skoolmaster could be more kind and gentle than yourself. That being so, I have no hesitation in awarding you the legacy. The whole of your diseased aunt's fortune will now be yours!"

For a moment Dr. Birchamall could hardly believe his ears. Then he leaped out of his chair with a howl of triumph. "Hoorey!" yelled Dr. Birchamall, grasping the lawyer by the waist and waiting him round the room. "Rich at last! Sing ho for a life of luxury and ease for the rest of my days! Bullseyes and doonuts unlimited now, and a seat in the pictures every nite! Hoorey!"

It certainly looked as if the Head's fortunes had changed for the better at last!

"Wait and hear the details of my amazing wealth, Lickham. You will never cease to envy me my luck!"

"I'll stay with pleasure, sir!" said Mr. Lickham, with thoughts of possible free jinger-pop and bulleeyes to come.

"Good! Have you completed your investigations, Cheatem?" asked Dr. Birchamall, turning to that gentleman.

The lawyer nodded.

"Name the figger, then! Am I a millionaire, or duzzent my aunt's fortune amount to that much?"

"I'm afraid it duzzent," answered Mr. Cheatem, apologetically. "You see, sir—"

"Surely, Aunt Betsy left ten thousand, at least?"

Mr. Cheatem sorrowfully shook his head, and Dr. Birchamall began to look rather alarmed.

"Is it a mizzereble hundred pounds, then?" he asked scornfully.

"It is even less than that!"

"Then it must be almost nothing at all!" roared the Head.

"As a matter of fact, sir, it is less than nothing," said the lawyer. "You see, sir, it's like this here. Your diseased aunt left ten pounds, altogether; and as my fees amount to ten guineas the position is that you inherit a debt of ten shillings."

Never before in the course of his checkered career had Dr. Birchamall been in such a frightful wax.

"Then all my trouble and worry have been in vain!" he roared, a grato notted vain standing out on his forehead as he spoke.

"For the sake of the legacy I have been kind-hearted and gentle, when I longed to dish out foggings right and left! Oh, grato pip, it duzzent bear thinking about!"

"But I thought you were kind-hearted, to begin with!" said Mr. Cheatem, in surprise.

"Surely, sir, you haven't been deceiving me all the time? Surely you're not a booby at heart, after all?"

"No, I'm not!" roared the Head.

"Nevertheless, I am booby enuff to give you something paneful to take back with you to London! Take that!"

"Yaroooooo!" roared Mr. Cheatem, as he accepted a fearful bash on the nose.

"And that!"

"Yooooooop!"

Yelling in awfish, Mr. Cheatem took a flying leap out of the Head's study and ran for his life. And he didn't trouble to come back for his ten shillings.

So enraged was Dr. Birchamall, that for the rest of that evening the air resounded with the swishing of his birch and the yells of his victims. And by bed-time the whole skool knew that Birchamall the Good had gone for good, and the same Head they knew of old was reigning in his stead once more!

by **DICKY NUGENT**

Wait and hear the details of my amazing wealth, Lickham. You will never cease to envy me my luck!"

Mr. Cheatem wore a thoughtful look on his dial as he accompanied Dr. Birchamall into the House, and the latter was glad to notice it, for he took it as an encouraging sign.

"Good old Jack Jolly!"

The crowd round Little Side cheered wildly, as the captain of the Fourth scored his tenth goal in the grato junior match with St. Pete's.

St. Sam's were simply all over their rivals. With five minits still to go, the score was already 15-0, and the St. Pete's men were whacked to the wide, both morally and fizzically. Never had the St. Sam's junior eleven played better football.

Naturally, the spectators were debilitated. Every time a St. Sam's man kicked a St. Pete's man, they yelled and kicked in the face, they roared with laughter. But it was a clean, sporting game, for all that.

Among the spectators round the ropes, was Dr. Birchamall, the headmaster of St. Sam's, with his guest, Mr. Cheatem, the London lawyer. They cheered as loudly as anyone at the juniors' magnificent display.

"You certainly have some fine footballers at St. Sam's, Dr. Birchamall," remarked Mr. Cheatem, as the players lined up after Jack Jolly had notched another goal. "To what do you attribute their superiority, sir?"

"Oh, that's easy!" grinned the Head. "My boys play better simply because they have nothing to worry about. At other skools, the unforchunite boys are birched black and blue, and have all the spirit knocked out of them, whereas at St. Sam's, under my kind and affectionate care, their youthful ardour is allowed to develop as it likes."

The Head didn't add that the St. Sam's boys had been birched black and blue until Mr. Cheatem's arrival. For that would have ruined his plans completely.

Once the lawyer found out that Dr. Birchamall was a firant and a booby, the fortune left by the Head's diseased aunt would go to the Society for the Persecution of Skoolmasters. On the other hand, if Mr. Cheatem became convinced that Dr. Birchamall was a kind

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and considerate headmaster, the Head would inherit the fortune. Hence the latter's efforts to make the lawyer believe that he was a sweet-tempered and amiable old pedagogue.

"E-e-e-ep!"

The referee, whistle sounded, signifying that the game had come to an end, and with thunderous cheers, the spectators invaded the field of play and "chaired" the victorious team, while the unhappy St. Pete's players were carried off into the waiting ambulances.

It was then that the Head stepped forward, grinning all over his dial, and held up his hand for silence.

"Boys!" he cried. "Let Uncle Birchamall congratulate you on a splendid victory. Without a shadow of doubt, you have to-day akwitted your selves with honour and glory, and brought fame to St. Sam's. In every weigh you were better than your opponents."

"Hear, hear!"

"Your headwork was smarter," continued the Head enthusiastically. "The weigh you kept on butting them with your napper was trooly deliffut. And furthermore, your fists were used to the grato possible advantage."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"A grato victory is ours! Gentlemen, I think under the circumstances, something ought to be done to celebrate the event."

The spectators crowded round the Head in a stato of grato curiosity, wondering what was coming.

Dr. Birchamall glansed round with a benevolent smile, and his eyes rested on the handsom kaplin of the victorious team, who was resting on the shoulders of Loylo and Trew of the Fourth.

"Jolly! Would you mind stepping forward?" he cried.

"With pleasure, sir!" responded the hero of the Fourth, cheerily kicking Loylo and Trew aside, and dropping happily to the ground.

Dr. Birchamall patted the victorious

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