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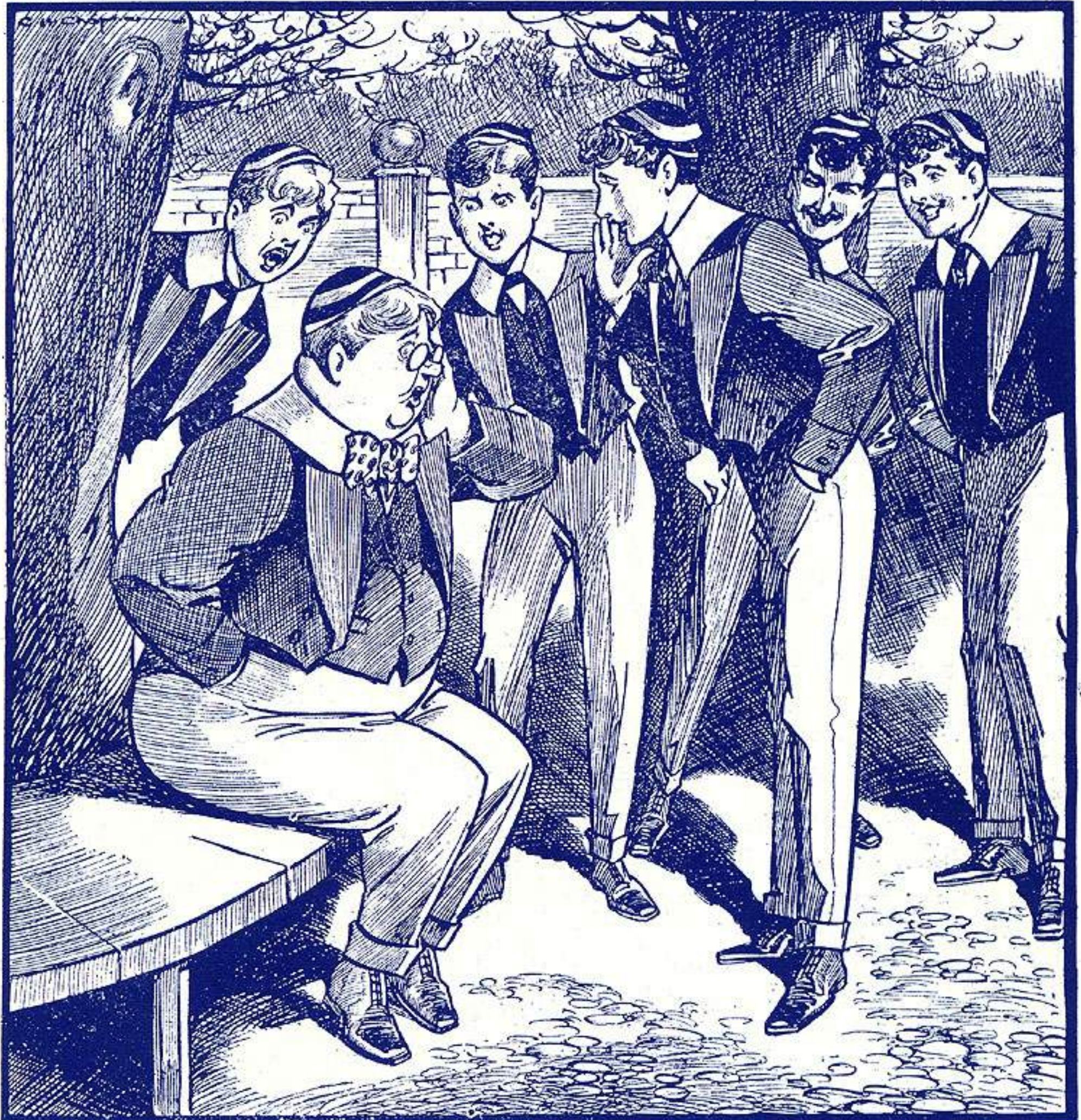
With which is incorporated  
The Greyfriars Herald.

1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>

The graphic features a large, stylized title 'The Magnet Library' in a bold, serif font. To the left is an illustration of a castle or school building with a flag. To the right is a shield-shaped emblem containing the price '1 1/2'. Below the title, smaller text reads 'With which is incorporated The Greyfriars Herald.' The background shows a path leading towards the building under a sky with birds.

No. 689. Vol. XVIII.

April 23rd, 1921.



TRYING TO MAKE "DEAF" BUNTER HEAR! (An amusing incident from the long complete school story in this issue.)



Address all your letters to :  
 The Editor, "The Magnet Library,"  
 The Fleetway House, Farringdon St., London, E.C.4.  
 I am always pleased to hear from my chums.

### FOR NEXT MONDAY.

We have another splendid long complete story of Harry Wharton & Co. for our next issue. It is entitled:

#### "BOB CHERRY'S LUCK!"

By Frank Richards.

In this story we find that Bob Cherry, by the merest accident, falls in with a cinematograph company. Amongst the actors and actresses is a dear, lovable little kiddie, for whom Bob Cherry gives up many hours which might be devoted to cricket or football. When Bob receives an offer to join the company in the making of a picture, the juniors declare that it is just

#### "BOB CHERRY'S LUCK!"

to be the only Greyfriars fellow selected. The story makes very fine reading, boys and girls, so do not miss it on any account. You will like the little kiddie just as much as Bob Cherry does!

#### THE "GREYFRIARS HERALD" SUPPLEMENT.

Harry Wharton is turning out another splendid issue of the "Herald" for our next issue. He—and I—continue to receive a large number of letters from readers all over the world who think that the "Greyfriars Herald" is just fine.

There are many readers who have written to say that they now consider that the MAGNET LIBRARY, with its supplement, the "Greyfriars Herald," is just the finest periodical on the market for boys and girls of all ages. Naturally, with all my other papers to think about, I do not quite agree with these readers. The MAGNET LIBRARY is undoubtedly very good—and I will admit that I have a particular liking for the paper myself—but I must say I think "The Popular" is also a very fine paper. "Billy Bunter's Weekly," which is the name given to our fat friend's weekly paper, and included in "The Popular" every week, amuses me immensely.

Harry Wharton, in the "Greyfriars Herald" supplement, gives us some rattling good stuff, as you will all admit. But Billy and his four fat subs are nothing if not funny.

However, as this paragraph is supposed to be devoted to the "Greyfriars Herald," I will now ask all my chums who have written to Harry Wharton or myself about this supplement, and have not as yet received a reply, to exercise patience. Every letter will be acknowledged as soon as possible.

#### NEW READERS—THIS CONCERNS YOU!

New readers of the MAGNET LIBRARY will be glad to know that our companion paper, "The Popular," contains a fine THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 689.

long complete story of Harry Wharton & Co.'s early days at Greyfriars. If you want to know what happened to the Famous Five, or how some of the boys came to the Remove, then all you have to do is to take in "The Popular" every week.

"The Popular" appears in the newsagents' shops every Friday morning. The Greyfriars story, however, is but one of the many interesting features in the paper. Jimmy Silver & Co., the Fistical Four of the Classical Fourth at Rookwood, have many admirers, and there is contained in "The Popular" a magnificent long complete story of their adventures. Then there is "Billy Bunter's Weekly"—perhaps the most extraordinarily funny supplement ever contained in a weekly periodical.

There is also given you a chance to win money prizes in our companion paper's easy competition—some readers have won two prizes already! And as only a postcard is required to be sent in in connection with this competition—well, you can guess how popular the "Poplets" Competition is.

New readers are therefore requested to make themselves acquainted with "The Popular" to-day—you will not be sorry if you do. It costs just the same as the MAGNET LIBRARY—three half-pence.

#### Model-Making!

Readers who are interested in the hobby of making models, will be interested to know that this week's "Chuckles" contains the first part of a splendid working model called "The Magic Room." Our champion coloured companion paper appears every Friday morning. Get it when you get "The Popular."

#### Are You a Scout?

Readers who are interested in the Boy Scout movement, or otherwise interested in life in the open air, will be glad to know that I have under consideration a series of articles dealing with camping-out. A well-known Camping Commissioner will contribute the articles, so we may expect something special.

More of this when I have something definite to say as to the date of publication. In the meantime, will you tell your Boy Scout friends—and Girl Guide friends, too—that they should keep a watch on the MAGNET LIBRARY for a grand series of very helpful and instructive articles!

#### Correspondence.

Philip A. Redmond, 6, Oakdene Road, Anfield, Liverpool, would like to hear from readers, aged about 11, who live outside Liverpool.

Will Rheeder, Boys' High School, Oudtshoorn, South Africa, would like to hear from readers, age 16 upwards.

Miss Gladys Cooper, 12, Culmore Road, Balham, S.W. 12, wishes to hear from readers willing to join her correspondence club.

G. Benbow Griffiths, Broneirion, 4, Alexandra Road, Aberystwith, Wales, would like to correspond with readers up to the age of 18, especially those interested in football, tennis, and amateur magazines.

W. Holt, 48, Clarence Terrace, Chesham, Bury, Lancs, wishes to correspond with a reader in Blackpool, age about 15. All letters answered.

Miss Sylvia Lazare, 2088, St. Lawrence Street, Montreal, Canada, wishes to correspond with readers, 14-15.

W. T. Smith, c/o Mrs. Walker, Post Office, Maraisburg, Transvaal, South Africa, wishes to correspond with readers in Australia, Canada, and China.

A. Jones, Harrison's Hotel, Donkin Street, Port Elizabeth, South Africa, wishes to correspond with readers in the British Isles.

Miss Doris Orton, 67, Henry Street, Luton, near Chatham, wishes to correspond with readers, 16-18.

John du Plessis, Boys' High School, Oudtshoorn, Cape Colony, South Africa, wishes to correspond with readers, age 16 up.

G. Butler, 20, Britannia Row, Islington, N. 1, asks for correspondents, and also wishes to join a correspondence club. Readers who are members of a correspondence club are invited to write to our friend, G. Butler.

#### Miscellaneous.

##### Robinwood Sports Club.

J. Clegg, Railway Hotel, Lydgate, Todmorden, wishes to hear from London, Glasgow, and Manchester readers of the Companion Papers interested in this club. Readers living elsewhere might write to H. Butterworth, 2, Fern Hill, Knotts Wood, Lydgate, Todmorden.

#### THE CUP FINAL.

The teams playing in Saturday's great Cup-Final Tie at Chelsea are the talk of the hour. Do you know them? Would you like their portraits? If so, purchase this week's wonderful Cup-Final number of "Football Favourite," with which is presented a fine photogravure art plate of the rival elevens, size 11in. by 8½in., suitable for framing. A more suitable memento of the great tussle cannot be purchased anywhere. Be sure you get this wonderful free gift.

# Your Editor.



A Magnificent Long Complete School Story of Harry Wharton & Co., and Billy Bunter of Greyfriars School.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

**THE FIRST CHAPTER.**

**Wigging Walker!**

**S**MACK!  
"Ooooooooh!"  
It was James Walker, prefect of the Sixth Form at Greyfriars, who administered the smack, and it was Dicky Nugent, of the Second Form, who uttered the howl. For the smack had landed on Nugent minor's ear, and it hurt.

Nugent minor staggered away. He clapped one hand to his smitten ear and roared.  
Walker glared at him. Walker of the Sixth had a bad temper sometimes, and just now it seemed very bad indeed. But even a good-tempered prefect might have been annoyed by a muddy football landing fairly on his nose when he was taking a quiet stroll in the quadrangle; and that was what had happened. Dicky Nugent had been thinking of anything but Walker's nose when he punted the footer, and Walker had been thinking of anything but Second Form fags and muddy footers, as he rounded the corner of the path. But the two had met—Walker's nose and Dicky's footer—with a crash! And the wrathful Walker, without stopping to think, had delivered a terrific box on Nugent minor's ear, which sent the fag spinning.

"You young rascal!" roared Walker.  
"Yow-ow-ow!"  
Walker dabbed at the mud with his handkerchief. His face was smothered, and his clothes were spattered. Nugent minor, his head ringing from the smack, spun and howled.

Harry Wharton & Co. were coming off the football ground, and the fag's emphatic howl reached them from afar.

"That's my minor!" said Frank Nugent.

And he quickened his steps. Frank Nugent was always concerned about his minor—unreasonably concerned, in the opinion of some fellows. But his chums got a move on, and followed him loyally. If Nugent minor was in a row, and Nugent major was going to join in the row from motives of brotherly affection,

the rest of the Co. were prepared to take a hand. So Harry Wharton, Bob Cherry, Johnny Bull, and Hurree Singh broke into a run after Nugent, and they all arrived rather breathlessly on the scene, to find Walker dabbing mud and glaring, and Dicky Nugent nursing his ear and yelling, and Billy Bunter standing by and grinning.

"What are you doing to my minor?" demanded Frank Nugent hotly, forgetting in his wrath that he was addressing a Sixth Form prefect.

"Yow-ow-ow!" came from Dicky.  
"You cheeky young sweep!" roared Walker, unappeased. "I've boxed his ears for bunging a footer at me, and I'll box yours if you give me any talk. Clear off!"

"You've no right to box my minor's ears!" exclaimed Nugent.

"What! I'll box yours—"  
"I'll punch your nose if you do!" retorted Nugent.

"By gad!" said Walker. "I'll—"  
He started towards Nugent of the Remove, his wrath transferred from the minor to the major.

Frank Nugent clenched his fists.  
"Nugent, old chap!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"The rotten bully!" exclaimed Nugent. "He's no right to hit a kid like that! Bully!"

"But—but if the kid bunged a footer at him, you know!" murmured Bob.

"Yow-ow! It was an accident!" howled Nugent minor. "Does the silly owl think I did it on purpose?"

"He, he, he!" came from Billy Bunter. Bunter seemed to find the scene entertaining all round.

The Co. lined up with Nugent, and Walker paused. He did not want a rough-and-tumble with five sturdy Removites in the quadrangle.

"Nugent, I shall cane you! Follow me to my study!"

"Rats!" retorted Nugent.

Frank Nugent was generally one of the most pacific fellows in the Remove; but now his temper was roused, and he was reckless. "Rats!" was not really a suit-

able reply to make to a Sixth Form prefect.

Walker flushed with anger.  
"Then I'll take you!" he said. And he grasped Frank's collar.  
"Rescue!" bawled Bob Cherry.  
"Stand back, you fags!"  
"He, he, he!" chortled Bunter.

One moment more, and there would have been a record "scrap" in the quad. But at that moment a deep, stern voice broke in.

"Stop—stop this instantly!"  
Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, came striding from the School House, his gown rustling round him.

The juniors backed off at once. Walker dropped his hand from Frank Nugent's collar.

"Walker!"  
"Yes, sir?" said Walker. "I—I was about to punish Nugent for—"

"I saw you from my study window, Walker," said Mr. Quelch sternly. "You struck Nugent minor—"

"I boxed his ears, sir, for bunging—I mean, punting a muddy footer in my face!" hooted Walker. He had expected support from the Form-master, and he was surprised and annoyed to find that Mr. Quelch turned upon him.

"You should have canded Nugent minor, Walker."  
"I hadn't a cane with me, sir, and—"

Mr. Quelch interrupted him. The Remove master had adopted his most magisterial manner.

"You did not stop to think, Walker. You were angry—justly angry, certainly—and you acted upon the spur of the moment, without reflection."

"Well, sir," mumbled Walker, "if you'd been hit in the face with a footer, sir, and smothered with mud—"

"I quite understand your feelings, Walker; but a prefect is expected to exercise self-control," said Mr. Quelch, with great severity. "You should have acted with perfect calmness. You should not have given way to a gust of passion. You have acted very injudiciously, Walker."

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Walker was silent. From the bottom of his heart he wished that Mr. Quelch had been a Removite, instead of Remove master. In that case, Walker would have "sailed into" him with both hands. But he couldn't sail into a Form-master, so he held his peace.

"Boxing a boy's ears," continued Mr. Quelch, "is a dangerous practice. It is strictly forbidden by the Head, as you are well aware, Walker. A sudden blow on the ear is liable to cause injury to the delicate organisation within. Deafness has been caused by a box on the ear, Walker. What would be your feelings if you had, thoughtlessly and hastily, brought such a terrible infliction as that upon this boy?"

Walker mumbled.

"In the future, Walker," continued Mr. Quelch, "you will exercise more self-restraint. If I should ever hear of your repeating such an action, it will be my duty to make very serious representations to the Head on the subject. Now go, Walker, and kindly reflect upon what I have said to you."

Walker went.

But it is to be feared that he did not reflect very deeply upon what Mr. Quelch had said to him. For as soon as he was out of sight of the Form-master, James Walker began sparring in the air, with a most ferocious look, as if he saw Mr. Quelch's stern face floating in the atmosphere before him. Having thus relieved his feelings, Walker of the Sixth went to a bath-room to clean off the mud.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### Bunter Has a Brain Wave!

HARRY WHARTON & Co. looked at one another, as Mr. Quelch walked away after delivering his little lecture to Walker. They did not smile until the Remove master's back was well turned.

"Poor old Walker!" murmured Bob Cherry. "I believe he'd have given a term's pocket-money to det Quelchy on the hoko."

"Isn't old Quelchy a duck?" said Johnny Bull. "Doesn't he talk like a giddy picture-book, or a merry gramophone? And he thinks he's done Walker good by that little jaw!"

"The jawfulness was terrific!" remarked Hurrce Singh. "But the goodness to the esteemed Walker is a boot on the other foot."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, Quelchy's right," said Harry Wharton. "It's dangerous to box a kid's ear, and the Head would be awfully down on him if he knew. I read in a paper once of a chap who was made deaf by it."

"Must have been soft, that chap!" said Dicky Nugent, with a grin. "Tain't hurt me so awfully much."

"You were yelling loud enough, anyway!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"I thought the beast might give me another!" explained Nugent minor. "They don't pitch into you half so much if you make a thundering row."

"Oh!" said Frank Nugent.

"Didn't Quelchy dress him down a treat?" continued the cheery fag, with a chuckle. "I'd have another slog on the napper to hear that over again! Walky was simply bursting with rage! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Feel all right now, Dicky?" asked Nugent major.

Dicky stared at him.

"Course I'm all right. Think I'm made of putty?"

"Oh!"

"You always are turning the pathos

on, old bean!" said Dicky, with a grin. "You're a bit of an ass, Frank. Think I can't look out for myself? Rats!"

And with that expression of gratitude for his elder brother's solicitude, Dicky Nugent swung away, whistling shrilly. Frank's cheeks flushed.

"Let's go in to tea," said Bob Cherry hastily. "I'm as hungry as a hunter!"

"Let's!" said Wharton.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Buzz off, Bunter!"

The Famous Five went into the school-house, and, having changed, they repaired to Study No. 1 for tea. Billy Bunter blinked in upon them affably before they had fairly started.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! There's Bunter again! Roll away, Bunter!"

"I just want to speak to you fellows," said Bunter, blinking seriously at the Famous Five through his big spectacles.

"I haven't come to tea. Of course, if you press me—"

"The only pressure you will get will be from my boot, dear boy!" said Bob Cherry. "You're welcome to that!"

"I don't care to join you in your measly tea, thanks," said Bunter. "I can do better than that in my own study."

But did you fellows notice what Quelchy said—about a chap being made deaf by a box on the ear, you know. I suppose it might happen."

"It might," said Bob. "Like me to give you a box, and put it to the test?"

Bunter backed to the doorway hastily.

"I say, don't be an ass, you know. 'Tain't really likely that a box on the ear would make a chap deaf, is it?"

The Famous Five regarded Bunter curiously. His interest in that subject astonished them.

"What does it matter, anyhow?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Well, it might," said Bunter cautiously. "After all, 'tain't so jolly bad being deaf, either. Tom Dutton, in my study, is deaf, and he's as cheery as anything. It doesn't worry him half so much as it does Toddy and me. We have to yell at him, and he only has to listen. I think I could stand being deaf."

"If you want to confer a boon and a blessing on all Greyfriars, Bunter, you'll become dumb!" suggested Bob.

"The blessedness would be terrific, my esteemed Bunter."

"He, he, he! I think I'll try that cake—"

"Hand over the poker, Nugent—"

"Here you are!"

"If you think I want any of that rotten, crummy cake, Bob Cherry, you're quite mistaken. Yah!"

And Billy Bunter rolled out of the study. He directed his fat footsteps towards Study No. 7, the study which had the honour of including William George Bunter as a member. Bunter's little round eyes were glimmering behind his glasses; evidently some deep thought was working in his podgy brain.

The Famous Five might have observed it, if they had been interested in Bunter's deep thoughts; but they weren't!

Peter Todd and Tom Dutton were in Study No. 7, beginning tea, when the Owl of the Remove rolled in. Bunter cast a disparaging glance at the tea-table.

"Nothing but sardines?" he asked.

"Nothing, old porpoise!" answered Peter Todd cheerily. "But we'll have a five bob cake to finish with—"

Bunter's mouth watered.

"Will you really, Toddy?"

"If you like to fetch it from the tuck-shop!"

"Certainly. I'd do anything to oblige an old pal like you, Toddy."

"And pay for it!" continued Peter Todd.

"Beast!"

Bunter decided to content himself with the sardines. He sat down at the table and helped himself, his fat brow still very thoughtful. He blinked at Tom Dutton several times through his big spectacles, and Tom noticed it at last.

"What are you blinking at me for, you owl?" inquired the deaf junior politely.

"I say, Dutton, how did you get deaf?"

"Eh?"

"How did you get deaf, old fellow?"

"No need to bellow at me," said Dutton. "Just speak plainly, and that will be all right. I can't hear you when you mumble, of course."

"I didn't say bellow, you ass—"

"Eh?"

"How did you first become deaf?" roared Bunter.

"Eh? I'm not deaf!"

"Wha-a-at!"

"Just a little hard of hearing," said Dutton, "and that's chiefly due to fellows mumbling."

"Oh, my hat! Did anybody box your ears at any time?"

"Crime?" said Dutton. "It's not a crime to be deaf, that I know of. Besides, I'm not deaf."

"Was it caused by a box on the ear?" shrieked Bunter.

"A what?"

"Box!"

"Blessed if I know what you're talking about. Just now you were speaking about deafness, and now you're talking about socks. Well, what about socks?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Peter Todd.

But Dutton did not laugh. He looked irritated.

"What do you mean, Bunter?" he demanded.

"Oh, go and eat coke!" howled Bunter, giving up the task of questioning Tom Dutton on the subject of deafness.

"I don't see the joke," said Dutton. "Where's the joke in socks? Whose socks?"

Billy Bunter did not undertake to explain. He devoted his attention to the sardines.

"Better feed than this in a Sixth Form study, Toddy!" he remarked.

"Drop in on one of your pals in the Sixth, then!" suggested Peter.

"Perhaps I shall. Walker has jolly good spreads in his study," said Bunter. "He has plenty of money."

"I'm sure Walker would ask you to tea, if he knew what a fascinating chap you are," said Peter sarcastically.

"After all, suppose a chap really became deaf—"

"What?"

"Besides, it's not likely—"

"Eh?"

"Just a clump on the ear—"

"Would you mind explaining what you are talking about, Bunter?" asked the astonished Peter. "Sounds to me as if you're wandering in your mind."

But Bunter did not explain. When there was nothing more left to eat, he rolled out of the study, his fat brow still puckered in thought. Bunter's brain—such as it was—was working. The incident in the quad had set it going; Bunter had had a brain-wave. Several times that evening, in the common-room, Billy Bunter surprised the other fellows



Walker made one stride to the guzzling Owl, and smote. The slap ran through the study. Bunter went spinning, and sat down on the study carpet with a bump and a roar. "You guzzling little rotter!" howled the prefect. "How dare you come into my study and scoff my tuck?" (See Chapter 4.)

by bursting into fat chuckles, expressive of inward merriment. But the cause of his inward merriment remained a deep mystery. Nobody was likely to suspect that William George Bunter had had a brain-wave, because they were very doubtful indeed whether he had any brains.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### Looking for Trouble!

"MY only hat!" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

"Bunter——" gasped Nugent.

"Is he potty?" asked Harry Wharton, in wonder.

"The pottyfulness is terrific!"

No wonder the Famous Five were astonished. It was after morning lessons the next day, and the Remove had come out of their Form-room. Walker of the Sixth was in the big corridor, talking to Carne and Loder. Billy Bunter, without any reason that could be guessed, suddenly rushed along the corridor, and bumped right into Walker.

A rush, with Billy Bunter's weight behind it, was no joke! And Walker wasn't prepared for the charge of a human battering-ram.

He went spinning.

Bunter staggered from the shock, and sat down. Walker sat down, too, gasping for breath, and glaring at William George Bunter in speechless rage.

Loder and Carne stared down at the two, and grinned.

"M-m-my hat!" gasped Walker, at last.

"Ow!" spluttered Bunter.

"He's potty!" said Johnny Bull, in quite an awed voice. "Why, he can't

even pretend that it was an accident! Walker will skin him!"

"The skifulness will be——"

"Terrific!" chortled Bob Cherry.

Walker gained his feet. He bent over Bunter, seized him by the collar, and jerked him to his feet. Walker's face was nearly purple.

"You fat villain——" he spluttered.

"Ow!"

"Come to my study!" spluttered Walker. "I'm going to cane you! By Jove, I've a good mind to take you to the Head!"

Bunter's jaw dropped.

"C-c-cane me!" he stammered.

"Yes, you fat rascal!" roared Walker. "I'll teach you to rush me down in the corridor, you potty rhinoceros! Come on!"

"I—I say, Walker——" gasped Bunter, in dismay.

Amazing as it was, Bunter had not seemed to anticipate that result of his bumping the prefect over.

Walker did not even listen to him; he yanked Bunter away, and a minute later there was a sound of swishing in his study, accompanied by loud yells from the Owl of the Remove.

When Billy Bunter emerged, he was looking quite limp.

A crowd of Removeites were waiting for him. For once, they were interested in Bunter. Where the fat junior had found the nerve to bump a prefect over, was a mystery to them. The juniors surrounded him, with a volley of questions.

"Bunter, you potty elephant——"

"What did you do it for?"

"What's Walker done, anyhow?" demanded Squiff.

"And where did you get the nerve?" asked Peter Todd, in wonder.

"Yow-wo-wo-ow-ow!" was Bunter's reply. "How was I to know that the beast would cane me?"

"Did you expect him to take it lying down?" asked Wharton.

"Well, he did take it sitting down!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yow-ow-ow! Why couldn't the beast box my ears, same as he did to Dicky Nugent yesterday?" wailed Bunter. The Removeites stared at the fat junior blankly.

"Did you want him to box your ears?" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Yow-ow-ow!"

"I guess I'll box them for you, Bunter, if you want!" remarked Fisher T. Fish.

"I should be pleased to administer the terrific boxfulness, my esteemed and ridiculous Bunter——"

"Same here——"

"Oh, don't play the goat!" growled Bunter. "I've been caned! Yow-ow-ow! I—I thought the brute would box my ears! All through Quelch jawing him, I suppose. Yow-ow-ow!"

"But what on earth did you want Walker to box your ears for?" shrieked Peter Todd.

"Yow-ow-ow!"

"Are you off your silly rocker?"

"Yow-ow-ow!"

Billy Bunter rolled away, squeezing his podgy hands under his fat arms, in anguish. He left his Form-fellows utterly amazed. It was evident that Bunter had wanted James Walker to box his ears! Why any fellow should want his ears boxed was a mystery. And only a box from Walker, apparently, was any good; Bunter had declined the numerous offers from the Remove fellows!

"Blessed if I understand that porpoise," said Peter Todd, rubbing his long nose thoughtfully. "He keeps on jawing in the study about boxes on the ear and deafness, and so on. Now he wants Walker to box his ears. Blessed if I don't think his brain is going!"

"If any!" remarked Vernon-Smith.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter was still looking dolorous at dinner. Walker had laid on the cane not wisely but too well, and the effects were slow in wearing off. But Bunter's appetite was not impaired; he made his usual Gargantuan repast, and seemed to feel better for it.

But when the Removites came along to the Form-room for the afternoon class, Bunter was squirming uncomfortably and groaning.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's the matter now?" demanded Bob Cherry.

"Ow! Wow!" mumbled Bunter.

"That beast Walker has kicked me!"

"What on earth did he kick you for?" asked Harry Wharton.

"I stamped on his foot—"

"You stamped on Walker's foot?" yelled Bob.

"Ow! Yes!"

"What for?"

"Because I know he has a corn on that foot!" explained Bunter.

"Mad!" said Peter Todd solemnly.

"Mad as a hatter!"

"Oh, really, Toddy—"

"You stamped on Walker's foot because you know he has a corn on it," said Harry Wharton dazedly.

"Yow-ow! Yes!"

"What has Walker done to you?" asked Drake.

"Eh? Nothing."

"Then why did you want to squash his favourite corn? Didn't you think he'd kick you if you did?"

"Yow-ow! I thought he'd box my ears."

"Box your ears!" gasped Wharton.

"Yow-ow! Yes!"

"Quite mad!" said Toddy. "Do you think you ought to see a doctor, Bunter?"

"Yah!"

Billy Bunter rolled into the Form-room, groaning. Walker seemed to have kicked with as much energy as he had laid on the cane before dinner. Bunter sat down in his place, and jumped up again quite suddenly.

"Ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Quelch came into the Form-room, and the chuckling died away. Bunter shifted and squirmed very uncomfortably on the form that afternoon. It was not a happy afternoon for the Owl of the Remove. But when the Lower Fourth were dismissed, Bunter rolled out with a determined blink behind his spectacles, and his footsteps led him in the direction of James Walker's study. For some weird and mysterious reason, William George Bunter was determined upon getting his ears boxed by Walker of the Sixth—and Bunter was a sticker! Undoubtedly he would succeed sooner or later, and then— But, as the novelists say we must not anticipate!

## THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

### Walker Does It!

**S**LAP!

It was a ringing slap. Just as he had done before, James Walker acted on the spur of the moment, without stopping to reflect.

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There was some excuse for Walker.

He had come into his study, and the sight that met his gaze might have angered the best-tempered prefect that ever adorned the Sixth Form of a public school.

A jar of honey had been taken from Walker's cupboard, and stood on the table. A spoon was inserted in the jar; and the spoon was held by a set of fat, grubby fingers. The fat grubby fingers belonged to William George Bunter, of the Remove! Under Walker's very eyes, Bunter was ladling out his honey and devouring it!

One glance was enough for Walker.

He made one stride to the guzzling Owl, and smote.

The slap rang through the study.

Bunter had had his ear boxed by Walker at last. There was no doubt about that! It was a most emphatic box! Bunter went spinning, and sat down on the study carpet with a bump and a roar.

"Yaroooh!"

"You guzzling little beast!" howled Walker. "How dare you come to my study and scoff my tuck?"

"Yooooop!"

"By gad! I'll kick you the length of the passage!" exclaimed the indignant prefect.

Bunter ceased to roar. His head was spinning from that hefty smack on his fat ear. But he had not lost his wits.

He blinked up at the prefect, and said:

"Eh?"

"Roll out of my study!" roared Walker.

"Eh?"

"Getting deaf?" sneered Walker. "I'll make you understand with my boot!"

"Speak louder!" said Bunter.

Walker paused in sheer astonishment.

"What do you mean, you fat idiot?" he demanded.

"Eh?"

"If you 'eh' me, I'll give you the ashplant!" snorted Walker. "Get out of my study!"

Walker remembered, rather late, Mr. Quelch's severe remarks on the subject of boxing juniors' ears. It was only the previous day that Mr. Quelch had taken him to task. True, Mr. Quelch was not his Form-master; but a report to the Head would make matters very uncomfortable for the prefect. For it was undoubtedly the case that such a method of punishment was strictly forbidden at Greyfriars.

So Walker was satisfied to see Bunter roll out of the study and have an end to the incident. But the incident was not ended yet, as James Walker was to discover.

Billy Bunter rose slowly to his feet. He blinked at Walker with a sort of dazed air, and put his hand to his fat ear.

"Did you speak?" he asked.

"I don't know what your game is, Bunter," said the prefect, in measured tones, "but if you don't get out, I'll kick you out!"

"Eh?"

Walker picked up a cane. He wanted the incident closed, certainly; but he was tired of Bunter's peculiar actions.

"Hold out your hand!" he snapped

"Band?" said Bunter.

"Band! What do you mean, hand?" ejaculated Walker, wondering if the fat junior was in his right senses.

"Didn't you say 'band'?"

"I said 'hand'—'hold out your hand,' you fat lunatic!"

"Yes, band!" said Bunter, with a nod. "Do you mean a German band?"

"A—a—a German band?" stammered Walker.

"I can't hear a German band!" said Bunter.

He blinked at Walker with owlish seriousness, and the Sixth-Former began to feel a kind of uneasiness creeping over him. There was something weirdly peculiar in Bunter's manner just then. He spoke as if he were deaf; but Bunter wasn't deaf. Tom Dutton was the only deaf junior at Greyfriars. But the thought startled Walker. It brought back Mr. Quelch's severe warning with unpleasant distinctiveness.

"Leave my study, Bunter!" said Walker, with quite a subdued air.

"If it's muddy, I haven't made it muddy!" said Bunter. "I came here from the Form-room."

"Wha-at?"

"You can see my boots are quite clean," said Bunter.

Walker's uneasiness grew.

"Look here, Bunter, don't play the goat!" he said.

"Is it in the lobby?" asked Bunter.

"The—the lobby? Is what in the lobby?"

"Your coat."

"Mmmmm-my coat?" stammered Walker.

"Didn't you tell me to fetch your coat?" asked Bunter innocently.

"I told you not to play the goat!" howled Walker angrily.

"Float?" asked Bunter.

"Goat!" shrieked Walker.

"Oh, moat!" said Bunter. "I don't seem to hear so well as usual. What about a moat?"

Walker felt a painful palpitation of the heart. Bunter could not hear him; this was exactly Tom Dutton over again! Walker would have given a great deal just then to recall that hasty slap on Bunter's fat ear!

Mr. Quelch had warned him, too! He had told him that a box on the ear sometimes brought on deafness!

And now it had done it!

Walker turned almost pale. Visions of doctors and hospitals for Bunter, and an awful interview with the Head for himself, floated dizzily before his mind.

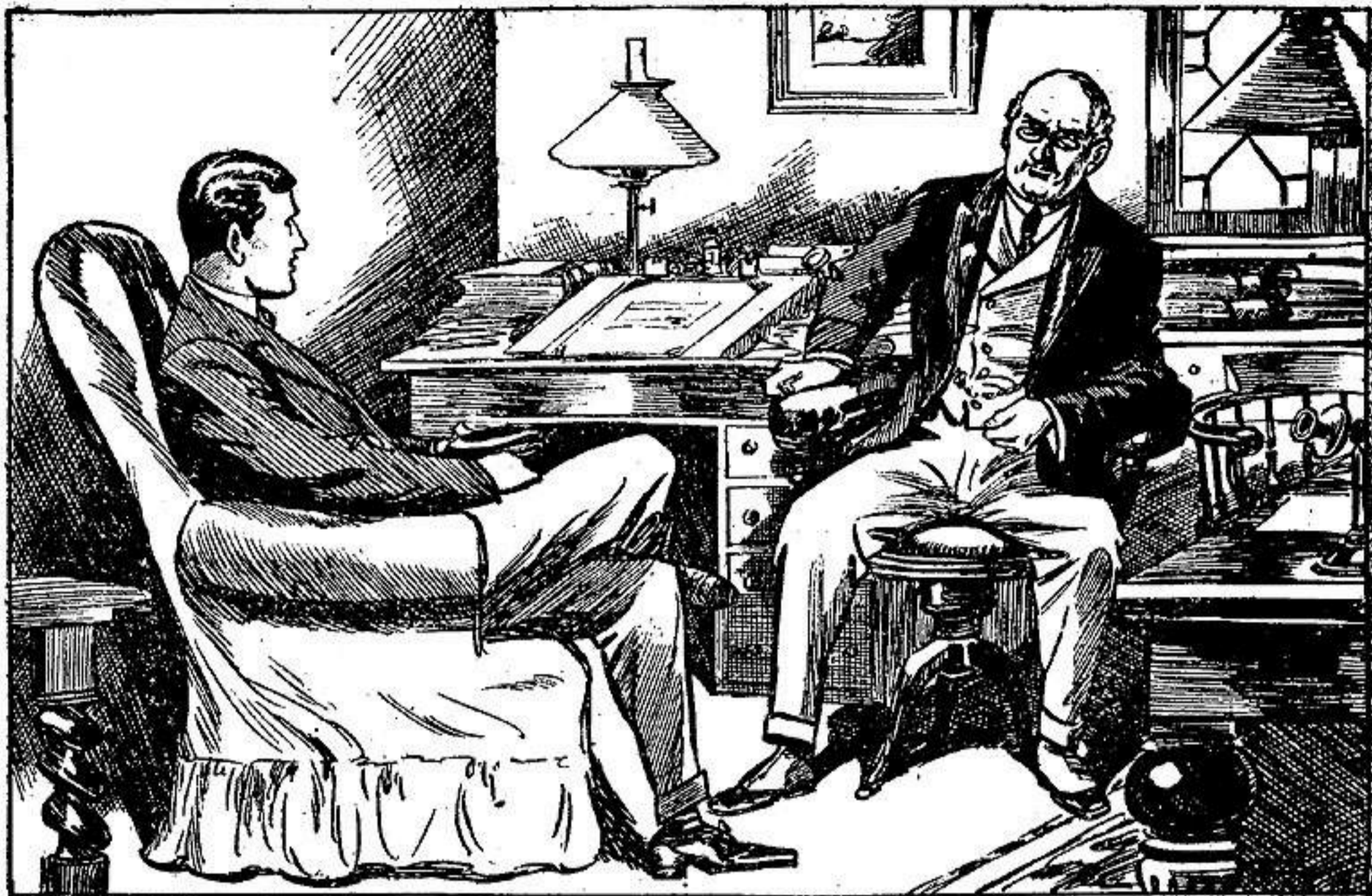
"I—I feel rather queer!" said Bunter, pursuing his advantage. "I can't be getting deaf, can I? There's no deafness in our family. We're mostly a bit short-sighted, but there's no deafness. My head's singing in a rather queer way!"

Walker breathed hard. He would have been sorry for Bunter, under this new and terrible affliction, if he had not been so busy feeling sorry for himself. He scarcely dared ask himself what might be the outcome of this! After Mr. Quelch's warning—after the scene in the quad—he had boxed a junior's ears; and the worst had happened! Walker felt quite sick. Expulsion from Greyfriars—that was what he had to expect! Even to remain would not be much better, with fellows pointing him out as the brute that had made a junior deaf by knocking him about! And Bunter's people, too—what on earth would Bunter's people do? Certainly no family would take such a thing quietly; boys weren't sent to school to have their ears boxed and be made deaf! The wretched Walker sank back and sat on the edge of the table, utterly unnerved. If only he had stopped to think—if only he had laid into Bunter with a cane, instead of boxing his ears!

Bunter was blinking at him owlishly. He was master of the situation now, deaf or not!

"Go away!" said Walker at last, hoarsely. "Get out, Bunter!"

"Eh?"



"Did Bunter come to you about his deafness, sir?" stammered Walker. "I fail to understand you," said Dr. Gooch. "I have no one of the name of Bunter on my books; and no patients at Greyfriars School at all." "What—what! Didn't Bunter come to you to-day?" gasped the prefect. (See Chapter 12.)

"Leave my study!"

"What? Can't you speak louder?"

Walker took Bunter by the collar and led him to the door. At any price, he felt that he had to get rid of Bunter! Perhaps, afterwards, he could deny having smitten that smite, if only Bunter developed his hapless deafness at a safe distance from Walker's study. Walker was in somewhat of the position of a murderer anxious to get rid of the body!

But William George Bunter was not to be got rid of so easily as all that. He allowed himself to be led to the door. There he suddenly stopped, and spun round on Walker.

"I—I know what it is!" he gasped.

"I—I know now! I'm deaf!"

"Go away!" gasped Walker feebly.

"Deaf!" shrieked Bunter. "You've boxed my ears and made me deaf! Help!"

"Bunter!"

"Help!"

"For goodness' sake, Bunter—"

"Help!"

Walker grasped the fat junior and dragged him hurriedly into the study and closed the door.

There was no getting rid of the body—for Walker!

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

### The Awful Consequences!

**B**ILLY BUNTER wriggled out of the Sixth-Former's grasp and backed towards the window. He glared at the scared prefect through his glasses with a glare that bade fair to crack the lenses.

"Deaf!" he shrieked. "You've deafened me—I mean, deafened! Get away from that door, Walker! I'm going to the Head!"

"Bunter—"

"I'm going to the Head!" yelled Bunter.

"Bunter, old chap—"

"Eh?"

"I—I never meant— I—I'm sorry—awfully sorry!" gasped Walker. "I—I never thought for a minute—"

"You beastly bully!" said Bunter. "You're as bad as Loder! You're worse than Carne! You're a rotten bully, Walker!"

Walker took that quietly. He had to propitiate Bunter somehow. The thought of the newly-deaf junior going to the Head made him feel quite cold all over.

"I despise you!" said Bunter.

"I say, old chap—"

"You've made me deaf! I sha'n't be able to hear a word Quelch says in the Form-room to-morrow!"

"Oh dear!" numbled Walker.

"Then he will ask me, and I shall tell him you deafened me—deafened me!" said Bunter. "You'll be sacked! You'll be put in prison! My father will bring an action for damages!"

Walker shivered.

He had already visualised most of the awful consequences that might follow from one rough action! He really did not need Bunter to point them out. But Bunter seemed to find some satisfaction in pointing them out. He was not done with Walker of the Sixth yet!

"You're not going to keep me in this study!" he said. "I'm deaf, and I've got to see a doctor. I may have to go to a hospital. Very likely there will be an operation needed!"

Walker groaned.

"If it's an expensive operation," Bunter went on mercilessly, "your people will get the bill! If it's fatal—"

"Shut up, for goodness' sake!"

"If it's fatal, you'll be arrested and charged with manslaughter—"

"Shut up!" panted Walker.

"Eh?" Bunter was deaf again.

"Did you speak, Walker?"

"Look here, old fellow—"

"What's yellow?"

"Fellow—old fellow!" groaned Walker. "You know jolly well I didn't mean—"

"Green? You said yellow just now!"

"I didn't mean to hurt you—"

"Blue? Do you mean yellow, or green, or blue? And what are you talking about, anyhow?"

"I'm awfully sorry it's turned out like this—"

"You'll be sorrier presently!"

"Hallo! You heard that, did you?" exclaimed Walker, suddenly and suspiciously.

Bunter started.

"Eh?" he ejaculated hurriedly.

"You heard me!" shouted Walker.

"What?"

Walker eyed him wolfishly. The suspicion had crossed his mind that Billy Bunter was pulling his leg, and that his deafness was only assumed for that purpose. After all, it was very unusual indeed for a box on the ear to make a fellow deaf!

If only Walker could have felt sure! If he had felt sure that Bunter was spoofing, the licking Bunter would have got would have constituted a record at Greyfriars.

But he doubted. He really did not think Bunter had wit enough for such a deception—a fat duffer like Bunter! And yet—

Was Bunter deaf? If he was deaf, it had to be kept dark somehow that Walker had had a hand in making him so; for fear of the most direful

consequences. Somehow he would make it worth the fat brute's while to hold his tongue. But if he wasn't deaf—

He eyed Bunter as if he would bite him. Bunter sat down in the prefect's armchair. Evidently he felt entitled to make himself at home in Walker's quarters now. He held the upper hand, in fact, and if he was deaf, Walker had to toe the line. But if he wasn't deaf—Walker clung hungrily to that thought, that faint hope, and his brain worked rapidly. He was going to test Bunter's deafness.

"You haven't had your tea, Bunter?" he asked.

"No."

"You heard me!" shrieked Walker. Bunter breathed quickly.

"Of course I've not been to sea," he said. "What do you mean by asking me if I've been to sea?"

"I asked if you'd had tea!" growled Walker baffled.

"Eh?"

"Have you had tea?"

"Speak louder."

"Tea!" roared Walker. Bunter put his hand to his ear, and leaned his head a little sideways, as if in a supreme effort to listen.

"Oh, tea!" said Bunter. "No, I haven't had tea. I don't feel inclined for any tea now. I've got to see a doctor about my deafness."

"Stay and have tea with me, old fellow."

"I can't help it if you have to bellow. It was you that made me deaf, wasn't it?"

"Will you have tea here?"

"I never drink beer."

"Tea—with me!" shrieked Walker.

"No; nor whisky either. I'm surprised at your suggesting my drinking beer and whisky. They're no good for deafness."

Walker suppressed his feelings. He moved round the study table, and fumbled with some money in his pocket. As he passed behind Bunter's chair he let fall half-a-crown. Walker had heard that that was an infallible test for deaf persons; most people look round if they hear a coin fall. Billy Bunter spun round at once.

"Well?" said Walker, his eyes glinting at Bunter.

"Wharrer you doing behind my chair?" demanded Bunter. "None of your tricks! You've made me deaf already."

"Did you hear anything drop?"

"I don't care much for acid-drops, but I'll have some, if you've got any."

Walker gave it up. If Billy Bunter was spoofing, he was not to be caught easily. But Walker's faint hope that the deafness was spoof was dying away. Bunter blinked at him accusingly.

"Anything more to say before I go to the Head, Walker?" he asked.

"Don't go to the Head, Bunter. There—there's no need to go to the Head," said Walker. "No need at all, old chap!"

"I can hear you a bit if you speak close to my left ear. It's not so deaf as the other one that you thumped. I'm going to the Head now. You see, I've got to see a doctor."

"It—it may pass off by to-morrow, Bunter," said Walker hopefully.

"Eh?"

"Suppose—suppose you go and see the doctor in Friardale on your own, and see what he says?" suggested Walker.

"Speak louder."

Walker shouted his words over again. "It comes to the same thing," said Bunter. "I don't want to be hard on you, Walker. You're a beastly bully, and pretty well hated in the school. But

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I despise you too much to hate you myself, you see. I'd let you off if I could. But if I have to go to Dr. Pillbury about my ear, he's bound to mention it to Mr. Quelch or the Head, so it will come out. You'd better come with me to the Head now, and face it."

"You needn't go to the school doctor. Go to the other man—Dr. Gooch."

"I shall have to pay him a fee."

"I'll stand him the fee."

"I think he charges half-a-guinea."

"Five bob—"

"Eh?"

"Five Bob!" roared Walker.

"I can't hear you!"

"Five bob!" raved Walker.

"Yes, ten bob—more likely half-a-guinea," said Bunter. "Well, I'll do the best I can for you, Walker, though you're a hulking brute, and I despise you. Give me the ten bob, and I'll put the sixpence to it myself, and go to Dr. Gooch."

Walker opened his lips again, but closed them. He placed a ten-shilling note in Bunter's hand, and the fat junior called out of the armchair.

"Come and tell me at once what Dr. Gooch says," said Walker, as Bunter went to the door.

"Eh?"

"Tell me what Gooch says!"

"Oh, all right!"

Bunter rolled out of the study and closed the door after him, leaving James Walker a prey to the most disquieting and harassing thoughts. It was perhaps just as well for Bunter that the Bully of the Sixth couldn't see through the study door. For if he had possessed that unusual optical power, he would have seen Billy Bunter wink into space, with a grin, and then roll away with an air of anything but affliction. For a fellow suddenly rendered deaf, Billy Bunter was remarkably cheery.

## THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

### Bunter's Doctor!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo! Here's the fat beauty!"

"Had your ears boxed yet, Bunter?"

"Like us to do it, if Walker won't oblige?"

"The pleasurefulness will be great, my esteemed Bunter."

"I say, you fellows, which of you is going to lend me a bike?" asked Bunter, taking no notice of the playful remarks of the Famous Five, as he came up to them near the gates.

"Is that a conundrum?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry—" Bunter broke off suddenly, remembering that he was deaf. "I—I mean, what did you say, Cherry?"

"Eh? I asked you if it was a conundrum," said Bob, in surprise.

"Eh?"

"Getting deaf?" demanded Bob. "Is it catching, and has Dutton passed it on to you?"

"What's that about stew?" asked Bunter.

"Stew?" repeated Bob dazedly.

"Didn't you say something about stew?"

"No," said Bob Cherry. "I didn't say anything about stew, and you know jolly well I didn't! What fool game are you playing now, Bunter? Don't make out that you've gone mad—you haven't brains enough to go mad with. Now, what is the game, before I knock your silly napper on the gate?"

Bob took Bunter by the collar, and led him gently but firmly towards the gate. The Co. looked on, wondering. Bunter's

new "stunt" astonished them. Bunter wriggled in Bob's sturdy grasp.

"Hold on, you beast! I'm deaf!"

"You're not deaf!" roared Bob.

"I am, you know!" protested Bunter. Walker of the Sixth struck me a fearful blow on the ear, in his study, and it deafened me—just as Quelch said it might, you know. You heard him, yesterday."

Bob Cherry released the fat junior in sheer astonishment.

"So Walker has boxed your ears at last?" he ejaculated.

"Yes, that's it."

"And you're deaf?"

"Awfully deaf—nearly stone deaf, in fact!"

"You've made Walker believe that?"

"Of course. It's true, you know."

"And that's why you've been trying to worry him into boxing your silly ears?"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

Bob Cherry had sunk his voice a little lower with every remark, until at last he was speaking below his usual tone, and till Bunter had answered every remark, the Famous Five did not need any further information about this "deafness."

"You spoofing bounder!" said Bob.

"I say, old chap, I can't help being deaf, you know!" said Bunter pathetically. "It's an awful affliction! I shall have to go through life without hearing the sweet sounds of Nature, you know, and—and the robin red-breast singing, and the—the nightingale lamenting, you know, and all that. It's awful, when you come to think of it!"

"Which ear did Walker box?"

"The right one."

"Perhaps a good swipe on the other would set the matter right?" suggested Bob Cherry, reaching out.

Bunter jumped back.

"Oh, really, Cherry! Hands off, you beast! I say, I want you fellows to lend me a bike to go to the doctor's."

"Catch us!" said Johnny Bull. "But I'll tell you what, Bunter. We'll club together to hire a Rolls-Royce, and lend it to you to go to your funeral if you like."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beast!" said Bunter.

And he rolled out of the gates, and started for Friardale. The Famous Five stared after him. Bunter had decided to walk. His own bike was in need of so many repairs to be ridden in a hurry.

"Is he spoofing Walker with a yarn about being knocked deaf?" asked Johnny Bull. "Serve Walker right! He's no bizney to box a fellow's ears, he's rather a bully, anyhow."

"Oh, serve him right, all serene!" said Bob Cherry. "I'm not wasting any sympathy on Walker. But that spoofing bounder isn't going to the doctor. I suppose he's told Walker he's going."

"More fool Walker to believe him!" grunted Johnny Bull.

The Famous Five strolled across the quad to the School House. Walker of the Sixth came out, with a worried expression on his face that made the chums of the Remove smile. Walker of the Sixth had had several little troubles with the Famous Five, owing to a little way of his of handing out reckless cuffs; and, as Bob remarked, they had no sympathy to waste on Walker. If he supposed that one of his reckless cuffs had done serious injury, it might be a valuable lesson to him, the Co. thought. They were certainly not inclined to enlighten him.

Walker came up to the Famous Five, and they stopped to speak to him.

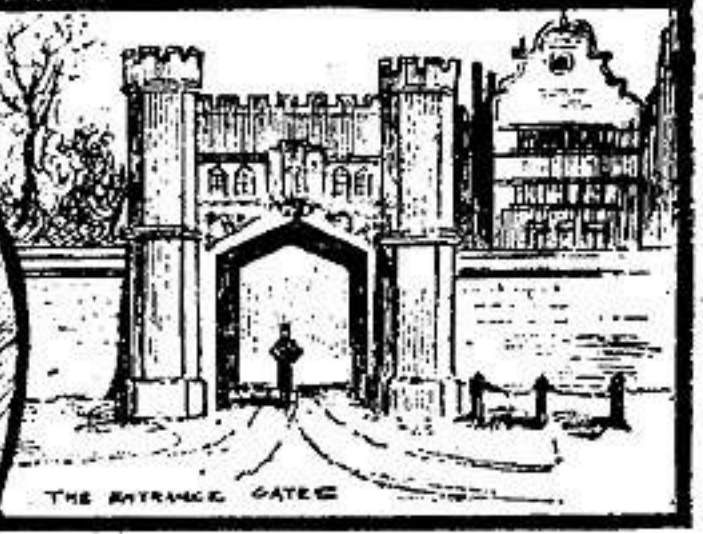
"I saw you kids speaking to Bunter," began Walker.

(Continued on page 9.)



# The Greyfriars HERALD

SUPPLEMENT No. 17.  
Week Ending April 23rd, 1921.



Assisted by BOB CHERRY (Fighting Editor),  
VERNON-SMITH (Sports Editor), MARK  
LINLEY, TOM BROWN, and FRANK JUGENT.

Address all letters to HARRY WHARTON,  
c/o The Magnet Library, The Fleetway House,  
Farringdon Street, E.C. 4.

## FISHERISMS!

By Fisher T. Fish.

I guess the well-known firm of Messrs. Fish, Fish, Fish, & Fish is holding an auction sale in the Rag on Saturday evening at eight sharp. Come early, and avoid the crash!

It is rumoured that Billy Bunter took a boat out the other day and got stranded. I can quite believe this, as Bunter is so frequently "on the rocks"!

I sorter calculates that the circulation of the "Greyfriars Herald" will be perfectly dazzling now that I'm an active contributor. Takes an American citizen to wake things up in this sleepy old show. Yep!

Any galoots who wish to pay back any money they've borrowed from me will find me in Study No. 14. Galoots who want to borrow some more will find me—out!

Guess it's a great pity I haven't got a place on the staff of this hyer journal. I'd make things hum if I had! The "Herald" would be packed with thrilling tales of the Wild West, and there would be an expiring villain in every paragraph!

Say! Are you aware that I've started a school for mind and memory training? If you've a leakage in your think-tank, take a course of Fisherism. It will only cost you a tanner to begin with, and you'll blossom into a bright, bouie, and brainy galoot!

Guess I'm going to pop across the herring-pond to New York for the summer vac. Gee! Won't it be nice to get in touch with civilisation again?

On this same page you will be able to read the testimonials which I have received from grateful clients. Guess they're quite the real goods, you jays!

I went along to see Mrs. Mimble about Fisherism. Guess she was some enthusiastic about it. Took a lesson on the spot. Go in there now. Pull your peepers over the shop and see the result. Sorter calculate you would see some difference. She's a real, live woman now. Told me herself. There's proof!

I kinder sorter guess and calculate—(that it's high time you rang off, Fishy!—Ed.).

## EDITORIAL!

By Harry Wharton.

"Sunny Jim," of Summerstown, is a go-ahead youth. He has written me a cheery letter, in which he says he will be pleased to come down to Greyfriars and assist me in running the "Herald."

"What I don't know about journalism," he writes, "isn't worth knowing! You would find me quite an indispensable sort of merchant. I should scrub your office floor, dust your desk, go through your correspondence, and keep all the members of your staff in order. What about it, Harry?"

My friend omits to state whether he wants a salary of five hundred a year, or whether he would be content with no salary at all. In any case, I don't think I can engage him. A fellow who walks into an editorial sanctum with the object of keeping the staff in order generally ends up by trying to keep the editor in order—in fact, it is his ambition to boss the show.

Moreover, I don't like the idea of someone "going through my correspondence," as "Sunny Jim" coolly suggests. I prefer to go through it myself, or, failing this, to hand over the task to one of my trusty subs.

It is very kind of "Sunny Jim" to volunteer to scrub the floor and dust the desk, but methinks the finest advice I can give him is "K.O.T.G.," which, being interpreted, means "Keep Off the Grass."

I hope, by saying this, that I sha'n't be putting "Sunny Jim's" nose out of joint. But, really, our present staff is quite capable of running the "Greyfriars Herald" smartly and efficiently, and the fellows require no "Sunny Jims" to keep them in order.

If "Sunny Jim" finds time hang heavily on his hands, let me see how many new readers he can obtain for me during the next month. As I remarked at the outset, he is a go-ahead youth, and I rather fancy him in the role of recruiting-sergeant for the "Greyfriars Herald."

Write me again, Comrade James, and report progress.

I cannot be held responsible if any reader takes up Fisherism. From what I have seen of it, it is a wholesale swindle; but if you want to find this out for yourselves—well, you can risk the consequences, whatever they are.

YOUR EDITOR.

## SAY, YOU GALOOTS!

Are You Feeble-Minded?

HAVE YOU GOT BATS IN YOUR BELFRY?  
IS THERE A LEAKAGE IN YOUR  
MEMORY-TANK?

IF SO—

TAKE A COURSE OF MIND AND MEMORY-  
TRAINING

under  
FISHER T. FISH,

AT THE MENTAL INSTITUTE, STUDY  
No. 14.

GUESS HELL SHARPEN YOUR WITS,  
AND SPEED YOU TO FAME AND  
FORTUNE!

Here are a few testimonials from grateful  
clients:

HORACE C. (Fifth Form) writes: "Before I took a course of your Mind and Memory Training I hadn't the intelligence of a black-beetle. Sometimes my mind was a komplet blank. But since studying the Little Yellow Books I have improved beyond all reckernition, and am now mentally developed to such an eggstent that all the felloes say I ought to be kaptein of Greyfriars."

PERCY B. (Remove).—"Before I took up the study of Fisherism I had a napperful of sawdust. The doctors told me that my physical powers were developed far in excess of my mental ones. I used to be labelled a dunce, and made to stand in the corner of the Form-room. Since starting on your system of Mind and Memory Training, however, I have made sweeping strides. My Form-master is awfully backed with my progress, and he says it really looks as if I've got some grey matter in my noddle, after all! I enclose two penny stamps as a token of my gratitude."

CECIL T. (Upper Fourth).—"Not long ago I was a grovelling fag, unhonoured and unknown. Now—thanks to your wonderful system—I am captain of the Upper Fourth, and one of the most prominent persons at Greyfriars. I shall recommend your wonderful system to all my pals who are anxious to get on in the world."

DICKY N. (Second Form).—"My fagg-master used to give me 2d. a weak he said it was all I was worth but now he gives me a bob a weak and he says I'm top-whole and he couldn't do without me this is bekwase I took up the studdy of Fisherism. THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 689.



# The First "Dip" of the Season!

BY MARK LINLEY.

**"FISH!"** Mr. Quelch's voice was not loud, but deep.

Fisher T. Fish, the Yankee junior, who had been steadily gazing out of the Form-room window, turned his head.

"What is the reason for this star-gazing in the middle of the lesson, Fish?" demanded Mr. Quelch.

"I guess they've arrived, sir."

"What?"

"Six of 'em, sir. In first-class condish, too!"

Mr. Quelch frowned.

"Would you be good enough to explain what you are talking about, Fish?" he said drily.

"The bathing-machines, sir."

Mr. Quelch gave a jump.

"The—bathing-machines?" he stammered.

"Yep! I've hired half a dozen, sir, from a place along the coast. Weather's quite O.K. for bathing now, sir. Just look at the sunbeams dancing in the Close—"

"Silence, Fish!"

The Yankee junior was seldom poetical, and Mr. Quelch soon stopped his flow of eloquence.

There was a rumbling of wheels in the Close.

"Do I understand, Fish," said Mr. Quelch, "that you have hired six bathing-machines, and given instructions for them to be brought to Greyfriars?"

"That's so, sir."

"But what is the object of such foolery?"

"Tain't foolery, sir. It's business. I've hired those machines at a dollar a week each, and I shall have 'em planted on Pegg Beach. There's never been any up-to-date bathing facilities at Pegg—the galoots in this island are too sleepy for words! In past seasons, when a fellow wanted an early-morning dip, he had to walk over about half a mile of sharp gravel before he could get to the sea. And when your feet are cut to bits, sir, I guess it takes all the pleasure out of a bath. So I shall fix up my machines at the water's edge, and charge the galoots who use them a tanner a time."

Mr. Quelch gasped—and so did the class!

We knew Fishy as a keen business man, ever on the look-out for an opportunity of "raking in the shillings"; but we had not supposed, even in our wildest dreams, that the Yankee junior would start in business as a bathing-machine proprietor!

Before Mr. Quelch could reply to Fishy's rather long-winded speech, the door of the Form-room opened, and a man in sea-boots and oilskins stumped in. He touched his forelock respectfully to Mr. Quelch.

"Master Fish 'ere, sir?" he inquired.

"Yes. What do you want of him?"

"Thirty bob, as ever was," said the seafaring gentleman.

Mr. Quelch frowned.

"I strongly object to these transactions being carried out in my Form-room," he said. "Still, now you are here, you may collect the money."

"If there's any to collect!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Fishy was in funds all right, and he handed over the thirty shillings.

"Guess you'd better wait outside till after lessons," he said. "Then I'll inspect the machines, and get you and your men to run 'em down to the beach."

"Werry good, sir!"

When the man in the oilskins had gone, Mr. Quelch turned to Fishy.

"The next time you wish to have any transactions of this nature, Fish, you will kindly consult me beforehand!" he said sternly. "Lessons will now proceed."

Fisher T. Fish flung restlessly in his seat until the hands of the clock pointed to the hour of dismissal.

The fellows swarmed out into the Close,

and collected round the bathing-machines like bees round a number of honey-pots.

The machines were certainly up-to-date. Very much so. There were rugs on the floors and mirrors on the walls. There were hooks on which to hang one's togs, and the machines actually contained gas-stoves.

"Bathing being rather chilly at this time of the year," explained Fishy, "I had these stoves installed."

"Gee-whiz!" said Squiff. "You've done things in style, and no mistake!"

"I shall expect to see you all on bathing-parade at seven in the morning," said Fishy, rubbing his skinny hands together. "These six machines will accommodate the whole of the Remove. Forty fellows, at a tanner a time!"

"My hat! That's a quid Fishy will make," said Jack Drake. "If he takes a quid a day, he'll be a blessed millionaire soon!"

"There's a mighty big 'if' about that, I'm thinking!" said Johnny Bull.

"See hyer, you galoots," said Fishy, "mind you turn out to-morrow morning for the first dip of the season. Costumes and towels will be provided by the G.S.P.W.A."

"What on earth's that?" asked Bob Cherry.

"The Greyfriars Swimming, Paddling, and Winkle-catching Association."

"Ha, ha, ha!"



A great crowd of fellows gathered round Fishy's bathing-machines. The Yankee junior had certainly created a sensation at last!

There was a great deal of excitement in the Remove that day, on the subject of Fishy's latest stunt. And that night I don't believe the amateur bathing-machine proprietor slept a wink.

Fishy was up with the lark. He dressed himself briskly, and hurried down to the beach at Pegg.

The bathing-machines had been ranged in a row, and Fishy pushed them, one by one, down to the water's edge. Then he lit the gas-stoves, got the towels and costumes ready, and raced back to Greyfriars.

"Everything's O.K., you fellows!" he said, dashing into the Remove dorm. "Shake a leg, and get ready for the first dip of the season!"

We turned out in a leisurely manner, and took our time about dressing.

Fishy stood by, raving and fuming.

"Get a move on, you guys! It'll be brekker-time before you're ready to take the plunge!"

At last, after a series of long delays, we accompanied Fishy to Pegg.

As we came in sight of the beach a curious expression came over Fishy's countenance. He stopped short, blinking in dismay.

"O Jerusalem crickets!" he ejaculated.

"Anything wrong, Fishy?" inquired Harry Wharton.

"Yep! Some thieving galoot has marched off with my bathing-machines!"

"Rot!"

"Bosh!"

"As if anybody could slip half a dozen bathing-machines into his waistcoat-pocket!" growled Bolsover major. "The blessed things couldn't have been brought here at all!"

"They were hyer early this morning!" hooted Fishy. "Six of 'em, all in a row. I pushed 'em down to the water's edge."

At this there was an uncontrollable burst of laughter from Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha! Ho, ho, ho! Fishy, you prize chump, can't you see what's happened? Since you were here before, the tide's come in!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

We simply shook with merriment, while the expression on Fishy's face was worth a guinea a box.

"Waal, I swow!" he gasped. "I—I guess I didn't make allowances for the tide. All my bathing-machines are under water!"

"We shall have to bathe from the beach, after all," said Nugent. "Afraid you'll lose a quid's worth of business this morning, Fishy!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I guess it's nothing to cackle at, you jays!" said Fish irritably. "Sheer bad luck, that's what it is. Confound that beastly tide!"

We promptly undressed and had our dip, and it proved to be a most enjoyable one.

Fishy went in, too, but he didn't come out with the rest of us. We left him squatting on the roof of one of the bathing-machines, waiting for the tide to go out!

It was nearly midday when Fisher T. Fish turned up in the Form-room, and he met with a warm reception. He told Mr. Quelch that he had been engaged in important salvage work—but that didn't save him from a severe swishing.

Next morning, Fishy took care to keep his bathing-machines well back from the encroaching tide.

Fishy hoped to atone for his bad luck of the previous morning by reaping a handsome profit. To his disgust, however, he found that no fellow was prepared to pay more than twopence for the use of a bathing-machine.

There were twenty bathers, so Fishy realised the princely sum of three-and-fourpence.

For the next five mornings the weather was far too nippy to admit of bathing, and business was at a complete standstill.

Fishy's statement of account for the first week showed a loss of one pound six and eightpence. And he now begins to wonder whether the hiring of a bathing-machine is a paying proposition, after all!

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS!

Thomas Nunn (Colchester).—"How many brothers and sisters have you got, Harry?" - Nunn!

"Straight Left" (Hounslow).—"Do you think Bolsover major could lick me in fair fight?" - We shouldn't advise you to take him on. He's a hefty customer. Skinner took him on the other day, and eventually they had to take Skinner off!

Ethel G. (Bournemouth).—"I enclose a packet of cigarettes for your consumption." - We were glad to discover that they were merely chocolate ones!

(A large number of replies are unavoidably held over.)

## SHOULD BOYS HAVE GIRL CHUMS?

The Majority of our Readers say "YES"—Very Emphatically.

### HORACE COKER:

The fellow who asked this question ought to be shot! Why shouldn't a boy have a girl chum, if he wants? If I like to be pally with Miss Phillis Howell, for instance, who's to prevent me? If any strate-laced prig starts protesting against boy and girl friendships, I—why, I'll berst him!

### BILLY BUNTER:

I don't no about boys being aloud to have girl chums, but I think every boy should be permitted to have "sweet-tarts"! (Any more feeble jokes of this sort, Bunt, and you'll get it where the chicken got the chopper.—Ed.)

### WUN LUNG:

Me tinkee it velly lite and plover that boys should have girl chums. Me just going to lite long letter to Loo Sing Chu, the girl I left behind me in my native countlee.

### MR. QUELCH:

I see no harm in boy and girl friendships, provided they do not develop into sickly, sentimental flirtations, such as that which once existed between Mauleverer, one of my pupils, and a powdered hussy in the village bunshop.

### HAROLD SKINNER:

I shouldn't put my foot down on boy and girl friendships, because I see no 'arm in them.

### HURREE SINGH:

The chumfulness between the esteemed boys and the worthy and ludicrous girls should be terrific!

### WILLIAM GOSLING:

Which it ain't no use torking to me on these here seeks queschnus. Wat I says is this here: All boys orfer be drowneded at berth, and then they wouldn't be able to have no girl chums at all.

### PHYLLIS HOWELL:

What a preposterous question! Of course boys should be allowed to have girl chums! These innocent little romances are the very things that make life worth living. (Hear, hear! May I take you to the pictures this evening, Miss Phyllis?—Ed.)

### BOB CHERRY:

I feel the same as Inky. Let 'em all come. But I also agree with Quelch (for once) "Provided they don't develop into sickly, sentimental flirtations." The dear Coker is a "man" for that sort of rot. That is not unusual, though for him. Now, Miss Clara—well— (Nuff said, Bob, old son.—Ed.)

### LORD MAULEVERER:

Well, my dear fellow, it's a delicate question to ask. You remember, some little time ago, when I had that romance with the Lady of the Bunshop? Quite a harmless pursuit, I assure you, old fellow. But Quelch seemed to think otherwise when it came out. At the present moment I feel too fagged to think. Ask me again to-morrow, old bean.

### DICKY NUGENT:

No, you soft-headed, muddle-faced chunk of humanity, I leave that to you and the major. (Gad, you cheeky lag, just wait till I see you again!—Ed.)

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An Entirely New Series of Stories, featuring Terrors Shocke, the Amazing Detective, and his assistant, Shaker.

## No. 3—THE CASE OF THE UNSEEN SPIRIT!

"Another Greyfriars mystery!" said Terrors Shocke, lighting his Flor de Beano cigar with the telegram he had just received.

I looked up inquiringly from my grilled kipper.

"Somebody has eloped with the cricket funds, Shocke?"

My friend smiled.

"Try again, Shaker."

"The Head has got into financial difficulties?" I ventured.

"That is no mystery, Shaker. Everybody at Greyfriars is aware that the Head has recourse to moneylenders and pawnbrokers."

"Then what—?"

"There is an unseen spirit at Greyfriars," said my friend, flicking his cigar-ash down the back of my neck in his playful manner.

"Wow!" I gasped. "An unseen spirit, Shocke?"

"Yes. But although it is unseen, it is by no means unheard. In fact, it is a most noisy spirit. It causes articles of furniture, and pots, cans, and kettles, to be violently thrown about in the middle of the night."

"Good gracious!" I ejaculated. "This sounds a very interesting, if somewhat gruesome case. But I am certain the spirit will have no terrors for you, Terrors. Nothing can shock Shocke!"

"But I have a powerful pair of hands here which will shake a Shaker if you don't turn off the tap of flattery!" said Shocke. "Come, my friend! Masticate those fish-bones, and proceed with me to Greyfriars."

"Would it not be advisable for me to bring my revolver?" I suggested.

"No. I do not anticipate that the spirit—if any—will give us much trouble."

We journeyed down to Greyfriars together, and found Dr. Locke, the headmaster, in a state of great alarm.

"Good-morning, Mr. Shocke!" he said. "You received my wire?"

"Else I should not be here, my dear sir. Now, what's the trouble? You may speak quite freely before my friend Shaker."

"I am undone!" said Dr. Locke.

"So I observe. This distressing affair has caused you to burst a couple of waistcoat-buttons."

"You misunderstand me, Mr. Shocke. I am distracted—overcome! For several nights past my rest has been rudely disturbed."

"Owing to spirits?"

"Yes; but not the sort of spirits you mean!" said Dr. Locke, with a frown. "I am not in the habit of taking nightcaps, sir! I am convinced that there is a noisy and boisterous spirit in this place—a spirit that delights in wrecking studies, and sending furniture flying in all directions!"

Terrors Shocke looked thoughtful.

"I know I am setting you a most difficult task, Mr. Shocke," said the Head. "This is a supernatural affair, and therefore I think it will be beyond even your extraordinary powers!"

"Say not so," said Terrors Shocke. "One night at Greyfriars will suffice to unravel this mystery. Come, Shaker! We will discuss this over a sausage-roll at the tuck-shop."

My friend treated me to a dozen of Mrs. Mumble's delicious sausage-rolls, completely forgetting to pay for them in his excitement.

"To-night's the night, Shaker!" he said. "We will make a tour of the school building at midnight, and see what happens."

I confess I was in a state of great apprehension on the subject of the unseen spirit who appeared to delight in juggling with the furniture. I half regretted having accompanied my friend on such a perilous mission. But it was now too late to retract.

That evening we were given the hospitality of Mr. Quelch's study.

The master of the Remove worked at his typewriter, whilst Shocke and I took pos-

session of the two easy-chairs, and awaited developments.

Boom!

The first solemn stroke of midnight tolled out on the night air.

At the same instant Mr. Quelch's typewriter gave a sudden leap in the direction of Terrors Shocke.

Always prepared for an emergency, my friend ducked in the nick of time, and the machine whizzed over his head and crashed into my chest.

"Yaroooooh!" I roared.

"The unseen spirit is on the warpath, gentlemen!" said Terrors Shocke calmly. "Mind, your eye, Shaker!"

I swerved aside just in time to avoid the clock, which leapt at me from the mantel-piece.

Mr. Quelch sprang to his feet with terror-stricken eyes.

A perfect pandemonium prevailed in the Form-master's study.

The poker was waltzing with the tongs, the table was rocking from side to side; the chairs went crashing in all directions, and there was an ominous rumbling overhead which suggested that the ceiling might cave in at any moment.

Mr. Quelch and I took refuge in the fireplace. Terrors Shocke, however, remained perfectly calm.

"Whilst you gentlemen are fooling about up the chimney," he said, "I will toddle upstairs and investigate."

My friend told me afterwards that his ascent was a most perilous one.

The air was thick with flying missiles, in the shape of stair-rod, boots, gas-brackets, and large portions of balustrade.

But Terrors Shocke, taking his life in his hands, went steadily on.

It was nearly one o'clock when we saw him again, and the antics of the unseen spirit had ceased.

Mr. Quelch crawled out from the fireplace, and I followed suit.

Dr. Locke, looking deathly pale, and with his knees knocking together, joined us in the study.

And then Terrors Shocke came in. He looked as calm and composed as the boy who stood on the burning deck, when Sawbutter had fled.

"Mr. Shocke," cried the Head, "have you been able to elucidate this mystery?"

The great detective nodded.

"A perfectly simple case," he said, helping himself to one of Mr. Quelch's cigars by means of a sleight-of-hand trick.

"You—you have captured the spirit?"

"There was no spirit to capture."

"What!"

"These violent disturbances have been caused by one of your boys."

"Bless my soul! Am I to understand that this is a practical joke?"

"Not at all. There is a boy in the Fifth Form called Coker, who snores so violently at night that he caused these atmospheric disturbances. Each night his snoring has grown more powerful, and had he been allowed to continue I have no doubt he would have succeeded, sooner or later, in raising the roof!"

The Head shuddered.

"What steps have you taken, Mr. Shocke, to prevent a recurrence of this amazing affair?"

Terrors Shocke smiled.

"I have fitted a silencing dome over Coker's nose and mouth," he said. "It was a painful but necessary operation. In future you will be able to sleep soundly in your beds!"

"Mr. Shocke," said the Head, brimming over with gratitude, "you have unravelled a most baffling mystery, and it is my desire to make you an adequate reward."

So saying, Dr. Locke beckoned my friend into the passage, and I distinctly heard the rustle of a shilling postal-order!

## "DEAF BUNTER!"

Continued from page 8.

"Kids?" repeated Bob Cherry.  
 "You fellows," said Walker. "Did you—did you notice anything unusual about Bunter? Anything—anything funny?"  
 "Funny!" repeated Bob, reflectively.  
 "Yes, a little."  
 "What was it?"  
 "His features," answered Bob innocently.  
 "Don't be a young ass!" Walker of the Sixth was in no mood for Bob's little jokes. "Did he seem at all—ahem!—at all—er—deaf?"  
 "Deaf!" repeated Bob. "He certainly said he was deaf. He asked me to repeat a lot of things I said; but Bunter's not deaf. Dutton's the only deaf chap here, isn't he?"  
 "He may have had a—er—knock, or something, and it may—er—have—have brought it on!" stammered Walker.  
 "I suppose it may have," assented Bob. "Did you give him a knock, Walker?"  
 "I! Oh, certainly not!" said Walker hastily.  
 "You haven't boxed his ears?"  
 "Oh, nothing of the kind!"  
 Walker turned away rather hastily. He did not want to be questioned on that subject. Bob Cherry grinned to his comrades.  
 "Nice example to set us juniors!" he remarked. "I'm afraid Walker hasn't learned to follow in the giddy footsteps of Georgie Washington. Somebody ought to buy him a little hatchet. Fancy a perfect telling fibs like that! I'm shocked at Walker!"  
 "The shockfulness is terrific," remarked Hurree-Jamset Ram Singh. "Here he comes backfully."  
 Walker turned back.  
 "Did Bunter tell you where he was going?" he asked.  
 "He said he was going to the doctor's."  
 "Did—did he say what for?"  
 "I think he meant he was going about his deafness."  
 "Did he say—that—that—?"  
 "That what?"  
 "Oh, nothing!" Walker turned away again, and this time he walked off. The Famous Five smiled. James Walker was evidently in a state of funk, and still the chums of the Remove had no sympathy to waste upon him.  
 "Let's get the bikes out," said Bob. "There's time for a spin before lock-up. We'll drop in at Friardale, and see Bunter calling on the doctor. If he's got any tin out of Walker for the doctor's fee I fancy I know where we shall find him—at Uncle Clegg's."  
 "Ha, ha, ha!"  
 Bob Cherry was among the prophets, as it proved. The Famous Five pedalled into Friardale, in time to see Billy Bunter turning into Uncle Clegg's tuckshop in the High Street. Uncle Clegg was the only doctor Bunter intended to see that afternoon, evidently.  
 Harry Wharton & Co. followed him in, and found Bunter seated at the counter, with a pile of good things before him. Billy Bunter blinked round at them with a rather startled blink.  
 "I—I say, you fellows—"  
 "Hallo, hallo, hallo! Seen the doctor yet?"  
 "Nunno! I—I'm going to see him later."  
 "You seem to be in funds, Bunter."  
 "Yes, Walker—I mean, I've had a postal-order!" explained Bunter hastily.

"You fellows may remember hearing me mention that I was expecting a postal-order?"  
 "Ha, ha! Just a few!"  
 "Well, it's come—ten shillings," said Bunter. "I'd stand treat all round, only there will be only just enough for one. Otherwise, I should be delighted. Don't you fellows wait for me."  
 Harry Wharton & Co. stayed for doughnuts and ginger-pop, and by the time they had finished, Billy Bunter had disposed of his ten shillings' worth. He rolled off the stool, and departed from the village tuckshop. And thence he turned back direct for Greyfriars. Five cyclists came along, and passed him soon after he had started.  
 "Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry. "Giving the merry medical man a miss, after all?"  
 "I—I—I—if you fellows see Walker, you needn't mention—" stammered Bunter.  
 "Needn't mention what?"  
 "Oh, nothing!"  
 "Still deaf?" asked Bob.  
 "Yes, awfully! I can't hear a word you're saying!"  
 "Ha, ha, ha!"  
 The Famous Five rode on to Greyfriars, and Billy Bunter toddled after them, very shiny and sticky and cheerful. He had done well out of James Walker so far, and he meant to do still better out of James Walker in the near future. Walker of the Sixth was jolly well going to learn that he couldn't knock fellows about and make them deaf at his own sweet will, Bunter said to himself indignantly. Billy Bunter almost believed that he really was deaf by that time.  
 Walker met him at the gates when he came in. He eyed Bunter anxiously.  
 "What did the doctor say?" he asked, in a low voice. But William George was getting used to his new role now, and he was not to be caught napping.  
 "Eh? Speak louder!"  
 "What did the doctor say?" hissed Walker.  
 "Boo-hoo!"  
 "Eh, what? What's the matter?" exclaimed Walker, startled by the sight of Billy Bunter bursting into sobs.  
 "I—I can't help it!" sobbed Bunter.  
 "It—it—it's cruel! Dr. Gooch—boo-hoo!—says I shall most likely be permanently deaf in one ear! Boo-hoo! The other may get a little better—boo-hoo!—but he doesn't feel certain! He—he advised me to speak to the Head at once, and have a specialist down."  
 "Good heavens!" muttered Walker, in utter dismay.  
 "I—I said a specialist would be too expensive," said Bunter, "and—and he said there was a chance I might recover—only a chance! It's cruel! I shall never hear the n-n-nightingale again! Boo-hoo!"  
 "For goodness' sake don't blub here!" gasped Walker. Gosling was staring at them curiously from his lodge; and Coker of the Fifth, in the distance, was glancing in their direction. Walker quaked. "Calm yourself, Bunter—"  
 "Boo-hoo!"  
 "Bunter, old chap—"  
 "Boo-hoo!"  
 "My dear old fellow—" panted Walker. "You'll get a crowd round! For goodness' sake—"  
 "I'll try to bear it," said Bunter, calming down. "I'm a plucky chap, and I can bear things. I'll do the best I can for you, Walker! I don't want to see a Greyfriars fellow sent to a reformatory. But don't talk to me any more now; I can't b-b-bear it!"  
 And Bunter rolled on, leaving Walker in a frame of mind that was most decidedly not to be envied.

## THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

### A Temporary Cure!

**B**ILLY BUNTER was the object of much curiosity that evening when he rolled into the Common-room. The story of his deafness was known to all the Remove by that time; and the juniors were quite curious on the subject. Bunter was so well known, that many of the fellows set it down as "spoofo," as a matter of course, though why Bunter should think out-such a stunt was a mystery to most of them. If he supposed that it would "get him off" lessons, it was certain that he was going to be disappointed. Mr. Quelch was about the last man in the world to be taken in. But if that was not his object, what was his object? The Famous Five were aware that the "deafness" was due to a box on the ear received from Walker of the Sixth; but they had not passed the information on, and Bunter, on reflection, had decided not to mention it further. His deafness among his Form-fellows was only to keep up the genuineness of that affliction. If Walker should happen to drop on Bunter engaged in ordinary conversation, evidently Walker's eyes would be opened. Which was not at all what the Owl of the Remove wanted.  
 That attack of deafness was going to be worth a great deal to the astute Owl. Already it had materialised in a ten-shilling note for the doctor's fee—which had been expended at the village tuckshop. But that was only a beginning. Walker's punishment—and Bunter's profit—was to be much more extensive than that!  
 Some of the Removeites amused themselves that evening by trying to catch Bunter out, but he was on his guard. He did not hear a single remark addressed to him, unless it was shouted—and fellows soon grew tired of shouting at him. Shouting at Tom Dutton was sufficient exercise for their lungs. By the time the Remove went up to their dormitory, Bunter had not given himself away.  
 But in the dormitory, Skinner called to him casually:  
 "Have some toffee, Bunter?"  
 "Certainly, old chap!" answered Bunter, without stopping to think.  
 "Ha, ha, ha!"  
 There was a roar of laughter.  
 Bunter remembered himself the next moment.  
 "I—I say, what did you say, Skinner?" he asked. It was too late now, but Bunter was too obtuse to realise that.  
 "I asked you if you'd have some toffee!" grinned Skinner.  
 "Eh?"  
 "Toffee, old top!" grinned Skinner.  
 "Mop!" said Bunter. "What's that about a mop?"  
 "Ha, ha, ha!"  
 "You howling ass!" roared Peter Todd. "Can't you see you've given yourself away, you fat spoofer?"  
 Bunter blinked at him.  
 "Did you speak to me, Toddy? I thought I heard a murmur—"  
 "My only hat! The silly owl!" gasped Peter. "He thinks he's going to take us in again, after giving the show completely away!"  
 "Oh, really, Toddy—"  
 "We know you're not deaf!" shrieked Peter.  
 "Who's left?"  
 "Left! I said deaf!"  
 "Somebody's left?" asked Bunter calmly. "Who's left?"  
 "Well, my hat!" said Peter Todd.  
 "Good-night, you fellows!" said Bunter, settling his head on the pillow.  
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"You can jaw as much as you like to-night; it won't keep me awake. You see, I sha'n't hear you."

"Poor old Bunter!" said Bob Cherry. "What a lot of tricks we can play on him now he's deaf. He's looking this way, Squiff. You go on the other side of his bed and stick a pin in him!"

"Good egg!" said Squiff. Bunter rolled over in bed instantly. "Squiff, you beast— Keep off, you rotter—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Eh! What are you afraid of?" demanded Squiff.

"If you stick a pin in me—"  
"Who's going to stick a pin in you?"  
"You are, you beast! I'll yell to Wingate—"

"And how do you know?" inquired Squiff blandly.

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Oh! I—I mean I guessed—I can see it in your eye!" stammered Bunter. "Look here, you beast, clear off!"

Wingate of the Sixth came in to see lights out, and the juniors tumbled into bed, still chuckling.

The Greyfriars captain glanced rather suspiciously up and down the dormitory. He did not fail to observe the unusual hilarity of the Lower Fourth.

"What's the joke here?" he inquired. "Bunter!" answered Bob Cherry, with a chuckle.

"Bunter! What's the matter with Bunter?"

"The poor chap has gone deaf!" explained Bob Cherry. "He can't hear a word you say, unless you ask him to have something to eat."

"Ha, ha, ha!" "What's all this rot?" said Wingate. He strode along to Billy Bunter's bedside. "Bunter!"

No answer from William George. "Bunter!" snapped Wingate.

Still no reply. Wingate took hold of a fat ear and gave it a tweak. Then Bunter found sudden utterance. "Yaroooop!"

"What do you mean by pretending not to hear me?" exclaimed the Greyfriars captain, with a wrathful glare at Bunter.

"I—I can't hear you, Wingate!"

"Why not?"

"I'm a bit deaf."

"And how did you become deaf all of a sudden?" asked Wingate, sinking his voice.

"It—it came on, you know—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked the juniors. "Did it?" said Wingate grimly.

"Then it had better come off again, Bunter, and sharp. I don't know what you're playing this game of spoof for, but you'd better not play it on me! Take that!"

"That" was a sounding spank on Billy Bunter's fat person. There was a loud and fiendish howl from Bunter.

"Can you hear me now?" asked Wingate.

"Ow! No!"

Spank!

"Yooooop!"

"Can you hear me now?"

"Ow! Yes! Yes! Quite well!" gasped Bunter.

"Good!" said Wingate. "You see, I've cured your deafness, and saved you a medical man's fee. If I see any more signs of it, I'll cure you again, the same way!"

And Wingate put out the light, and quitted the dormitory, leaving the Owl of the Remove groaning dismally, and the rest of the juniors rippling with laughter.

"Quite gone now, Bunter?" asked Jack Drake.

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"Yow-ow-ow!" "Have some toffee, Bunter?" chortled Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Beast!"

Billy Bunter refused to answer any further remarks. He settled himself down to sleep, and his resonant snore was soon audible. But the cure of his affliction by Wingate's drastic methods was only temporary. When the rising-bell clanged out, and the juniors turned out of bed in the morning, Billy Bunter was as deaf as ever.

## THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

### Bunter Recovers Again!

WALKER of the Sixth met Bunter in the quadrangle after breakfast that morning. James Walker was looking worried.

The more he thought over the scrape he had landed himself in, the less he liked it. Bunter eyed the prefect morosely as he came up. Walker was trying to look agreeable—far from what he was feeling. He yearned to kick the Owl of the Remove right round the quadrangle. But in the circumstances, it was more judicious to placate Bunter, and Walker had managed to work up a feeble propitiatory smile.

"Feeling better this morning, kid?" he asked.

"Eh?"

"Feeling better?"

"A letter for me?" asked Bunter. "Is it in the rack? I didn't know the post was in yet."

"I asked you if you felt better," said Walker, raising his voice at last.

"Oh, better! No! Worse!" said Bunter.

"It isn't passing off?"

"Eh?"

"Isn't it passing off?" yelled Walker.

"No! I—I felt a bit better in the dormitory last night—I seemed to hear some things," said Bunter, cautiously.

It was barely possible that Wingate might mention certain circumstances to Walker. It was not likely, for the Greyfriars captain was not on very good terms with Walker; but Bunter felt that he had to be wary. "I—I managed to hear some things, but it came on bad again during the night. I—I don't think the ear-drum is actually broken—"

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Walker.

"Not broken, but damaged," said Bunter calmly. "Dr. Gooch said it might get all right, given time. He said I had received a fearful blow, and that it was my duty really to report the matter at the police-station."

"D-d-did he?"

"I said I wasn't a sneak!" said Bunter nobly. "I said I'd rather bear anything than get a Greyfriars fellow into serious trouble."

"Thank you, old chap!" said Walker feebly.

"The best thing for it, Dr. Gooch said, was syringing," said Bunter. "He said I could get a syringe at the chemist's for a guinea."

"Oh!"

"I'm going to write to my father to-day," continued Bunter, eyeing the Sixth-Former warily and watchfully. "I shall have to ask him to send me the guinea. Of course, I shall have to explain the circumstances. I shall ask him not to make a row about it with the Head. Of course, I don't know what view he will take; I can't answer for that. I can only say that I'll do my best for you."

James Walker gasped.

"D-d-don't write to your father about it, Bunter, old fellow."

"Eh?"

"No need to write to your father!" shrieked Walker.

"But I've got to get a guinea to buy the syringe."

"I—I—I'll stand you the guinea," said the unhappy Walker. "I—I—I'll be pleased to do it."

Bunter looked dubious.

"I don't know whether I can accept it from you, Walker," he said loftily; "especially after the way you've acted."

"As a favour, old chap!" gasped Walker.

"Well, if you put it like that, I don't mind," said Bunter, with a burst of generosity. "Hand it over!"

Perhaps it was fortunate for Walker that he was rather a well-off youth. On the other hand, perhaps it wasn't; for if Walker hadn't had any money, it was highly improbable that Billy Bunter would ever have developed deafness. A pound note and a shilling changed hands.

"Go and get the syringe immediately after lessons, Bunter, and see what it will do for you," urged Walker.

"Certainly! I'm not anxious to remain deaf," said Bunter, with dignity.

"And—and don't mention anything to your Form-master—"

"Eh?"

"Don't mention the matter to Mr. Quelch."

"I'll do my best to keep it dark, Walker! It would be awfully sad to see a Greyfriars prefect taken away to a reformatory."

Walker ground his teeth, but recollecting himself, he tried to smile. The expression on his face, for a moment, was quite startling.

"Then there's your people," continued Bunter sorrowfully. "My father would be certain to bring an action for damages. Your people might have to pay hundreds of pounds; in fact, they would have to. That would be a blow for your family, wouldn't it, Walker? I'm awfully sorry! But if a chap will be a beastly bully, he must take the consequences, mustn't he, Walker?"

Walker did not reply to that question. He walked away quickly; feeling that if he remained any longer with Bunter, that youth would sustain some further damages at his hands. Billy Bunter winked at the morning sky, and grinned at the cash in his fat paw. He cast a longing glance towards the school shop; but the bell for lessons was going now. Reluctantly Billy Bunter rolled away to the Form-room.

In the Form-room that morning, Bunter was watched with almost breathless interest by the Remove fellows. He had set up to be deaf; he was keeping up his deafness, excepting when he forgot; but would he have the nerve to "try it" on Mr. Quelch?

That was a question of burning interest.

Bunter was doubtful himself. He was successful with Walker of the Sixth; but Mr. Quelch was quite a different sort of character. It was, as Hurree Singh would have said, quite a boot on the other leg. The possibility of evading lessons was attractive; and Bunter felt that he ought to work his new affliction for all it was worth. On the other hand, the glint of Mr. Quelch's gimlet-eye was rather disconcerting. Nobody had ever been known to pull the wool successfully over that gimlet-eye.

But William George felt that it was worth trying. The previous evening he had been too busy to do his prep; which was an additional reason for being too deaf to do his construe in the morning.

When Bunter was called on, therefore, he quaked a little, but did not hear.

Mr. Quelch looked at him.

"Bunter!"

The Owl of the Remove blinked at the Form-master, but did not seem to know that he was being addressed.

"BUNTER!"

Even Tom Dutton heard that, and Bunter hastily decided that it was time for him to hear also.

"Yes, sir!" he gasped.

"Why did you not answer me before, Bunter?"

"Eh?"

"Are you deaf this morning?" thundered Mr. Quelch.

"Oh! Yes, sir!"

"Wha-a-at?"

Mr. Quelch had been far from expecting to receive an answer in the affirmative. He came towards Bunter, thoughtfully picking up a pointer from his desk before he started.

"Did you say that you were deaf this morning, Bunter?" he asked, in a low, concentrated voice.

Bunter's heart failed him. The pointer, added to the glint in Mr. Quelch's eye, undermined his resolution. He had a sudden conviction that the chicken wouldn't fight, so to speak.

"Nunno, sir!" he gasped.

"You certainly said so, Bunter."

"I—I meant——"

"Your conduct this morning, Bunter, is very extraordinary," said Mr. Quelch, his gimlet-eye almost burning a hole in the quaking Owl. "Am I to conclude, Bunter, that you are venturing upon foolish and unseemly jests in the Form-room?"

"Ow! No, sir! N-n-not at all, sir! Oh, certainly not!" spluttered Bunter. "I—I wouldn't dream of such a thing, sir!"

"Very well, Bunter," said Mr. Quelch, in a grinding voice. "I trust, Bunter, that you will proceed to conduct yourself with the gravity suitable to the place and the occasion. Otherwise, Bunter, I shall administer such a castigation as will banish from your mind any desire to exercise a misplaced sense of humour. You comprehend me, Bunter?"

"Yes, sir," gasped Bunter. "Oh, quite, sir!"

"Very good. You will now proceed to construe from the place where Wharton left off."

Billy Bunter quaked and proceeded to construe, and as he had not gone over the passage before, as he should have done, his construe was even more remarkable than usual. The pointer came into play, and Bunter sat down, the unhappiest slacker in all Greyfriars.

When the Remove were dismissed several juniors congratulated Bunter, in the corridor, on his splendid recovery from deafness. Their congratulations were punctuated with many chuckles. Billy Bunter blinked at them morosely.

"It's a matter of acoustics," he told them.

"Acoustics!" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

"Yes. I hear better in some places than in others," explained Bunter. "In the Form-room I seemed to hear quite well——"

"That wasn't acoustics," said Skinner; "that was Quelch's pointer."

"Ha, ha ha!"

"Out here I'm quite deaf," said Bunter. "I can't hear a word you fellows are saying. As for your rotten jokes, Skinner, they're wasted on me. I didn't hear what you said."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter rolled away, still deaf. Walker called to him in the quad, but Bunter did not hear. He kept on to the gates. He had some shopping to do at Friardale that couldn't wait.

## THE NINTH CHAPTER.

### Nice for Walker!

**B**ILLY BUNTER turned up at dinner-time in a cheerful mood. There was a certain stickiness about him which revealed the kind of shopping he had done in Friardale. And for once he was satisfied with two helpings at dinner. Even Bunter had his limits.

After dinner he strolled rather heavily in the quad, helping himself from a

"You—you didn't tell him——" stammered Walker.

"Only that I was deaf," said Bunter calmly. "I didn't mention that it was due to the brutal conduct of a bully. I wouldn't!"

"You—you—you——" Walker controlled himself in time. "D-d-d-didn't Mr. Quelch ask you——"

"He put it down to a cold in the head, and thought it would pass off," explained Bunter. "There was no likelihood of Walker comparing notes with the Remove master, so Bunter felt that he could venture a little upon the long-bow in this case. "He was very sympathetic. He patted me on the head and said: 'Poor, poor boy!'"

"I'd like to pat you on the head, too—with a cricket-bat!" muttered Walker.



The provisions that Walker had laid in for the tea-party vanished at a record speed. Billy Bunter blinked at him expressively as the supply began to run out. "Have you got any more grub in the cupboard, Jim?" he asked. "Yes!" gasped the unfortunate Walker. (See Chapter 11.)

packet of chocolates in his pocket. Occasionally he helped himself with unseed-balls, and sometimes with toffee. His pockets seemed to be very well supplied. Billy Bunter was sticky and happy. But he frowned when James Walker bore down upon him. Walker wasn't either sticky or happy; he was anxious and worried. He wanted to know very much whether the syringe had done any good. That was an important matter from Walker's point of view.

"How did you get on in the Form-room, Bunter?" he asked.

"Eh?"

"Hang you——"

"What?"

"I—I mean, did you get on all right with Mr. Quelch?" raved Walker.

"Not very well," said Bunter. "Mr. Quelch was very sympathetic. He seemed quite touched, in fact. He was very kind."

"What about the syringe?" he added, raising his voice.

"The—the what?"

"The syringe Dr. Gooch told you to get. You've got it?"

Bunter breathed rather quickly. One pound one shilling had been expended at Uncle Clegg's shop in Friardale. The purchases made were now inside Bunter, or crammed in his pockets. He had, as a matter of fact, forgotten all about the article he was supposed—by Walker—to have purchased at the chemist's.

"Oh, the syringe!" Bunter was trying to gain time. "You—you mean the—the syringe?"

"Of course I do. You went out before dinner. I saw you. I suppose you got it?" exclaimed Walker.

Hunter debated in his fat mind for a moment whether he had better say that

the chemist was out of syringes. But the guinea was gone!

"Of—of course I got it, Walker! I went down specially to Friardale to get it didn't I?"

"Well, how does it work?" asked Walker.

"I believe it's a jolly good thing, and well worth the money," said Bunter. "But I haven't been able to give it a good trial yet, because I—I dropped it in the dormitory, and it broke—"

"Broke?" exclaimed Walker.

"Yes. It was made of glass, you know," explained Bunter. "Crash! it went on the floor, and broke into a thousand pieces."

"You clumsy young ass!"

"Eh?"

"Then you won't be able to do as the doctor told you!" exclaimed Walker angrily.

"Yes, that's all right. I shall write to my father—"

"You're not to, you fat fool!" hissed Walker.

"If you think I'm going on being deaf all my life to please you, Walker, you're mistaken. I'm jolly well not going to do anything of the sort," said Bunter warmly.

"I—I'll stand you another one—a new one," growled Walker. "But—but be careful not to break it again, Bunter."

"I might drop it, of course, Walker. But I'll be as careful as possible, for your sake. I want to do everything I can to shield you from the consequences of your crime."

"You—you—"

"Yes, Walker?" said Bunter inquiringly.

"Never mind. I haven't got quite a guinea about me now, but I'll get it for you to-morrow morning at latest," said Walker. "Look here! If you like I'll go to the chemist and get it on tick."

Bunter shivered inwardly. An inquiry at the Friardale chemist's by Walker would have revealed rather too much to please Billy Bunter. The chemist was only too likely to let out that Bunter hadn't been there at all so far, which, of course, would never do.

"Don't do anything of the kind, Walker," said Bunter at last. "I'd rather get it myself. It's a very special thing, and I have to describe it just as—as Dr. Gooch described it to me. Leave it till to-morrow. By the way, did you

mention that you wanted me to come to tea in your study this afternoon, Walker?"

"No, I did not!" said Walker, between his teeth.

"Eh?"

"I—I mean, yes. Come, old chap, if you like," said Walker. "I—I—I'll be pleased if you'll come."

"Speak louder."

"Do come!" roared Walker.

"Thanks, I will. I suppose you'll have a fairly decent spread, as I may want to bring a friend or two."

Walker's face was a study.

"Look here, Bunter—"

"It's no good whispering like that, Walker. I can't hear you. Did you say you'd like me to bring a few friends to tea?"

"No!" howled Walker desperately.

"Oh dear! Boo-hoo!" Bunter suddenly burst into sobbing. "I—I can't bear it! Boo-hoo!"

"What's the matter now?" hissed Walker.

"I can't hear!" sobbed Bunter. "I'm deaf! Boo-hoo! When I think of it I can't help giving way to grief. Boo-hoo! I—I think I'll go to the Head and ask him to telephone for a specialist. Your people would have to pay for it, Boo-hoo!"

"For goodness' sake shut up!" panted Walker. Three or four fellows in the quadrangle were staring towards them in astonishment. "Bunter! Quiet! D-d-don't blub, old top! Of—of course I shall be pleased if you bring your friends to tea in my study! Delighted, in fact! I—I shall look forward to it!"

"Will you really, Walker? I'll come," said Bunter. "You mustn't mind my weeping sometimes when a sense of my fearful misfortune rushes over me. But I'll try to bear it with fortitude. Go away now, Walker. I feel I can't stand you any longer. I'll come to tea with my friends, and I hope there will be something decent."

Bunter rolled away, no longer sobbing. His burst of grief was very short-lived—just long enough to scare the hapless bully of the Sixth. When his back was turned to James Walker he smiled.

Walker's mind would have been relieved if he could have seen Billy Bunter in the Remove Form-room that afternoon. There wasn't the slightest sign of deafness about Bunter. If Mr. Quelch had whispered to him, Bunter would have heard. But Walker was in the Sixth Form with the Head, and so, of course, he knew nothing about the remarkable recovery that set in immediately Bunter was under his Form-master's eye.

And Bunter's recovery lasted only as long as lessons. When the Remove came out, Bunter turned a deaf ear to the remarks of his Form-fellows—literally. Even when Skinner humorously asked him to come to tea in his study Bunter did not hear. Bunter had in prospect a much better tea than Skinner could offer, and he could afford to be as deaf as an adder.

**THE TENTH CHAPTER.**

**A Shilling a Time!**

"SAMMY!"

"Hallo!" said Bunter minor.

"I owe you two-and-six!" said Billy Bunter.

"You owe me two-and-six!" repeated Sammy, and his eyes widened behind his glasses.

"Yes, Sammy!" said the Owl of the Remove, in quite an affectionate and brotherly manner. "I owe you two-and-six."

Sammy held out a fat paw.

"Shell out, then!" he said tersely.

"I happen to be out of actual cash just now, Sammy. But—"

"I knew something was coming from the pater," said Bunter minor morosely. "I've been going to ask you about it. Was it five bob?"

Bunter major nodded.

"And he told you to give me half?"

Another nod.

"Then shell out!" said Sammy, with emphasis. "If I don't get my half-crown there will be a row about it, I can tell you that, Billy! Don't spin me a yarn about a postal-order coming! You can't stuff me! Shell out!"

"I'm going to make it up to you, Sammy—"

"Shell out!" said Sammy, with increasing emphasis.

"I—I gave the half-crown to a blind man, Sammy—"

"Cut it out!"

"Well, it went!" said Billy Bunter, abandoning the blind man in the face of Sammy's obvious disbelief. "You know how money goes, kid. But I'm going to make it up to you. How'd you like to come to tea in a Sixth-Form study?"

"Oh, don't be an ass!"

"A friend of mine in the Sixth has asked me to tea—"

"Gammon!"

"And I can bring a few friends—"

"Rot!"

"I'm going to take you, Sammy, if you'll call it square about the two-and-six!" said Bunter. "It's Walker. You know what feeds he has. You'll get more than two-and-six worth. You can eat as much as you like. Walker won't dare to say a word—"

"Why won't he dare?" said Sammy, staring.

"I—I mean, he won't care to say a word, because he's so friendly with me," amended Bunter hastily.

"Rats!"

"I give you my word, Sammy!" said the Owl of the Remove with dignity.

"I'd rather have my half-crown."

"You can stick Walker for three or four bobs' worth of grub," said Bunter temptingly. "More than that, in fact! And it's something to have tea with the Sixth, Sammy. The fags in the Second will envy you no end. Dicky Nugent and Gatty never get any tea with the Sixth. It's rather a distinction."

"But you're gammoning, you fat ass!"

"Honest Injun! If you'll call it square about the half-crown I'll take you to tea with Walker, and you can fairly clear him out, if you like."

Sammy Bunter eyed his affectionate brother dubiously.

"When?" he asked.

"Five o'clock."


"It's a go!" said Sammy. "But if you're gammoning I shall go to Mr. Twigg and tell him you won't give me my two-and-six!"

"Done!" said Bunter at once. "Be at the end of the Sixth Form passage at ten to five. I'll meet you there. And mind, it's square about the half-crown if you got a good tea!"

"All serene!"

Sammy Bunter rolled away, very much puzzled, but quite determined that if his affectionate major was spoofing he would extract the half-crown from him, without mercy or ruth. Billy Bunter smiled with satisfaction. He had been feeling uneasy about that remittance, which he ought to have shared with his minor, but hadn't shared. Now that little account was going to be wiped off at Walker's expense. But that wasn't the only thing that was going to be done at Walker's expense. Billy Bunter was making quite extensive plans in his own mind. He felt that he had quite a gift for business.

*The Young Forester*



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He felt that it was rather rotten that he hadn't been grown-up during the war. He would have done well, he was convinced, as a contractor. His business abilities, however, came in useful for dealing with Walker of the Sixth. That unlucky box on the ear was to cost the prefect dear. In the long run, undoubtedly James Walker would realise that Bunter's was a most expensive ear to box.

The Owl of the Remove rolled off in search of Harry Wharton & Co. He found them in the Rag, discussing amateur theatricals with Wibley.

"I say, you fellows," began Bunter, "I've been going to ask you to tea for some time. Like to come to tea in a Sixth Form study?"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Has Wingate asked us?"

"Not that I know of. But a friend of mine in the Sixth has asked me, and I can take some friends."

"Walker?" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"It happens to be Walker," said Bunter carelessly. "I've several friends in the Sixth Form, but it chances to be Walker this time—Jimmy Walker, you know. I call him Jimmy as we're so pally. You fellows like to come?"

"Well, my hat!" said Frank Nugent.

"I'd like to take you, if you behave yourselves," said Bunter. "You'll try to do me credit, I hope. None of your fag tricks in a prefect's study, of course. It will be a splendid spread. I've told Walker it's got to be good, and plenty of it—"

"And Sixth Form prefects always do as you tell 'em, I suppose?" inquired Johnny Bull, with deep sarcasm.

"We're so friendly, you know. Walker wouldn't care to displease me. It will be a ripping spread. I'm charging a bob ahead," explained Bunter. "Cheap at the price. You'll get more than a bob's worth of tommy. What do you say?"

"You—you're charging fellows a bob ahead to take them to tea with Walker!" exclaimed the captain of the Remove in amazement.

"A shilling a time, Wharton. I think that's quite reasonable. It will be a good tea. I've told Walker specially to have a good tea."

"You thumping owl!" said Bob Cherry. "And why should Walker stand teas for you to peddle round the Remove at a shilling a time?"

"We're so pally, you know—"

"You fat fraud!" said Harry Wharton. "You're getting this out of Walker with your yarn of being deaf! You're spoofing him!"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Kick him out!" said Johnny Bull.

"Hear, hear!"

"I say, you fellows—yaroooh!" Billy Bunter dodged out of the Rag in a great hurry, missing Bob Cherry's boot.

Evidently there was no business to be done with the Famous Five. Billy Bunter was not beaten yet.

Other fellows in the Remove were not so particular. Before five o'clock Billy Bunter had made a round of the Form, and though he got, so to speak, more kicks than halfpence, he found some customers. Fisher T. Fish guessed that it was a cinch, and caught on; Skinner and Stott both considered it a good thing, and gave in their adhesion. That Bunter must possess some sort of a hold over Walker they knew, but that did not trouble them so long as they had two-shillings' worth of tuck for their shilling. They had a shrewd suspicion how matters really stood, in fact, especially as Bunter had warned them very particularly to shout if they addressed him in James Walker's study.

When Billy Bunter joined his minor

at the end of the Sixth Form passage, he had Skinner and Stott and Fishy with him. Wingate came out of his study, and bestowed a surprised stare upon the five juniors.

"What are you fags up to here?" he demanded.

"We're going to tea with Walker," explained Bunter.

"What?"

"Tea with Walker. He asked us."

"Don't give me that rot!" growled Wingate.

"But it's so, Wingate. Ask Walker."

"I will!" said the Greyfriars captain; and he walked along to the study and put his head in. "Walker, is this crowd coming to tea with you?"

Walker gave an almost haggard look at the crowd behind George Wingate.

"Ye-e-es," he stammered. "I—I

asked Bunter to—to bring a few—few friends to tea, Wingate."

"Off your rocker, by any chance?" asked Wingate sarcastically.

"Nunno."

"Well, here's your merry guests. I'll send in a few more fags, if you like. There's lots in the quad."

"N-n-no, thanks."

Wingate walked out, and the five juniors crowded into Walker's study. Walker gave them a smile of welcome—the most hospitable smile he could muster for the occasion.

"Not too many of us for you?" asked Bunter.

"Oh, no! Not at all!" said Walker, with a ghastly grin.

"Eh?"

"No!" roared Walker.

"That's all right, then. I hope there's a good spread."

"I—I've done my best," said the miserable Walker.

"Good! No fellow can do more than that!" said Bunter kindly. "So long as the grub's good, and there's plenty of it, you won't find me complaining, Jim."

Walker jumped.

"What-a-at did you say?" he gasped.

"Jim!" said Bunter firmly.

Walker's eye wandered to his ashplant. But he dared not touch it. Billy Bunter smiled the smile of victory.

"Make yourselves at home, you fellows!" he said.

And Bunter's friends proceeded to make themselves at home.

## THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

### A Happy Tea-party!

**T**O James Walker—Jim, as Bunter called him now—it seemed like some horrid dream—one of those haunting, lingering nightmares. Five hungry fags were making free with the good things in his study, surrounding his table, eating like wolves, and asking cheerfully for anything they wanted. Walker would have given a term's pocket-money to kick them, one after another, through the door—especially Bunter. He would have listened, as to the music of the spheres, to the bumping of five successive bodies in the passage—especially Bunter's! He would have loved to take his ashplant and walk round the crowded table, laying it on back after back—especially Bunter's! Instead of which, he had to grin horribly, and try to look pleased, and watch his expensive tuck wolfed by five insatiable maws—especially Bunter's!

"Jim" had laid in a handsome spread for his friend Bunter—he had not dared to do otherwise. He had expected Bunter to bring a hungry fag or two along with him; but certainly he had not expected a party of five, one of whom had

a half-crown to work off at his expense, and three of whom had paid a shilling a time for as much "grub" as they could devour in Walker's study. Never had five such trenchermen sat round one table at Greyfriars School before.

The provisions laid in by Walker vanished at record speed. Billy Bunter blinked at him expressively as the supply began to run out.

"Something more in the cupboard, I suppose, Jim?" he said.

Walker writhed. Worse than a tea-party of uncivilised fags, was being called "Jim" by the Owl of the Remove. But even that he had to bear, lest worse should befall him!

"Yes," he stammered.

"Trot it out, then!"

"I guess I'll hand it out, if you like," said Fisher T. Fish.

Bunter waved a fat hand.

"Sit still, old chap—sit still! Walker likes waiting on his guests. Don't you, Jim?"

"Yes," gasped Walker.

"Look sharp, old man! We're all pretty peckish."

"Yes, rather!" said Skinner, who was enjoying the situation immensely. He had old grudges against Walker. "Give us something a bit more decent, Walker, or we sha'n't come to tea with you again."

"No, indeed!" said Stott, catching on, as it were. "I'm going to have my bob's worth, or know the reason why!"

"I calculate!" observed Fisher T. Fish emphatically.

Walker stared at them.

"Bob's worth?" he repeated.

"I guess we've paid Bunter a bob a head for this!" said Fisher T. Fish affably. "Didn't you know?"

"Shurrup!" muttered Bunter.

Walker almost wriggled with rage. His study was being turned into a "bob a head" teashop—where you pay your shilling and eat as much as you like! And he was a Sixth Form prefect, and no end of a great man! His yearning to take Bunter by the scruff of the neck and slay him was almost overpowering. His hands trembled as he passed provisions out of the study cupboard.

"Is that the lot?" asked Billy Bunter, with a disparaging blink.

"Yes!" hissed Walker.

"Really, Jim, you must do a little better than this when I bring my friends to tea," said Bunter. "However, it's all right. You can cut down to the tuck-shop while we deal with this trifle."

"I—I—"

"I like strawberry jam," said Sammy Bunter. "Can we have strawberry jam, Billy?"

"Certainly, Sammy! Jim will do anything to please my friends—won't you, Jim?"

"Oh! Ah! Yes!" gasped Walker.

"What about some cocoanut-ice?" said Skinner.

"Bring some cocoanut-ice, Walker! Skinner would like some."

"And some meringues," said Fisher T. Fish. "I guess I'm rather gone on meringues; but they're too expensive for a galoot to buy for himself. Don't overlook the meringues, Walker."

"Plum cake for me, since Walker's so obliging," said Stott. "One of those half-crown plum cakes of Mrs. Mumble's, Walker."

Walker only needed a napkin over his arm to turn him into the complete waiter.

He almost staggered from the study. In the passage he spinned wildly in the air for a few moments to relieve his feelings, before he went to the school shop.

How long was this going to last? he

How long was this going to last? he

How long was this going to last? he

How long was this going to last? he

How long was this going to last? he

How long was this going to last? he

wondered wildly. It would really be better to have it all out—to let Bunter go to the Head! But at that thought he trembled. He could imagine the Head's stern inquiry: "You boxed Bunter's ears violently, after receiving a warning on that very subject from Mr. Quelch! You have rendered this boy deaf! Walker, you are expelled from this school! Bunter's father will undoubtedly prosecute a claim for damages—"

Walker could imagine all that, and a great deal more! He was fairly under the thumb of the Owl of the Remove; at least, if his deafness was genuine. And it looked genuine. All Bunter's friends in the study shouted when they addressed him.

The tea-party had quite cleared the table when Walker returned with fresh supplies. Those supplies had been obtained on "tick." Mrs. Mumble allowed a Sixth Form prefect to run an account. The supply was plentiful—Walker dared not do otherwise! Five pairs of eyes watched him with satisfaction as he came in.

With feelings inexpressible in words James Walker bundled down the supplies on the table. The tea-party set to work again. Most certainly Bunter's friends had already had more than their shilling's-worth. But they were "out" for all they could get. Sammy Bunter, indeed, was slipping things into his pockets, with a thoughtful regard for the future. Sammy's example was soon followed by the other guests, as their appetites flagged. They began to pick out perishable goods for immediate consumption, while such things as biscuits, nuts, apples, little cakes, disappeared into their pockets. Fisher T. Fish even cast a covetous eye on the forks and spoons; but, fortunately, he stopped short of that!

"More tea, Jim!" said Bunter.

Walker made more tea.

"I guess this is a really enjoyable spread," remarked Fisher T. Fish, as Walker poured out the tea. "Good idea

of yours, Bunter! I reckon I'll come again when you have another tea-party."

"Do!" said Bunter.

"Count me in," said Skinner. "Will you often be having tea with Walker, Bunter?"

"Oh, yes! Walker likes me to come, don't you, Walker?"

Walker made some unintelligible sound.

"Speak louder!" said Bunter.

"Yes!" howled Walker.

"Good! We'll come to-morrow," said Bunter. "In fact, I'm not thinking of having tea in my own study any more. Toddy is awfully mean—frightfully mean! Look here, Walker. If you'd really like me to, I'll come regularly to tea with you."

"You little beast!"

"Eh?"

"I—I mean—yes—do—any time you like, Bunter."

"As you're so pressing, Jim, old chap, I will. I'll bring some friends with me every time. That will make it lively and pleasant for you, won't it?"

"I—I—"

"Speak louder, Jim! You know I'm deaf, owing to—"

"I shall be pleased!" shrieked Walker.

"Right-ho! It's a go, then! Pass the strawberry jam."

"Sammy's finished it!" grinned Skinner.

"Well, perhaps I can manage with another meringue or two. I won't send you down to the shop again, Jim."

Walker gasped. He backed away from the table in a perspiration. The horrid thought had come into his mind of braining Billy Bunter with the teapot. Perhaps the Owl of the Remove realised that he had gone far enough. He rose from the festive board at last, happy and sticky, and shiny, and breathing rather stertorously.

"Well, we'll be off!" he said.

"Thanks so much for the feed, Walker!

I'll stand you a feed in my study some time—when my postal-order comes! Ta-ta, Jim, old scout!"

And Billy Bunter led his well-fed flock away.

## THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

### A Surprising Discovery!

**W**ALKER of the Sixth mopped his perspiring brow when he was left alone, with the wreck of the Gargantuan repast.

There was a considerable amount of washing-up to be done in Walker's study after the feast, and crumbs scattered the carpet. Walker's fag was likely to have the job of his life that evening. Walker did not worry about that. He was worrying about himself.

This couldn't go on, it was clear.

If Bunter had had any moderation, any tact, it would have been different. But the Owl of the Remove never knew when to stop. Already he had brought a tea-party to the study at a shilling a head. He was going to bring a fresh lot on the morrow. Walker shuddered at the possibility of a dozen or so hungry fags swarming into his quarters. Why, the affair would become the talk of Greyfriars; all the school would know that he was somehow under Bunter's fat thumb.

The fags would talk, too; they would relate how royally they had fed in Walker's study, and how a Sixth Form prefect had waited on them. At this rate the secret would very soon be known to all Greyfriars, and he would be bribing Bunter for nothing. He owed at the tuckshop for that spread, and on the morrow he had to borrow a guinea for Bunter's new syringe. This couldn't go on. Evidently it couldn't go on. But the alternative—

"And the fat little beast may be spoofing me all the time!" groaned Walker. "Tain't likely really that a clump on the head would make a fellow deaf. I shouldn't wonder if he's only pretending. But all those young ruffians were shouting at him, though! Blessed if I know what to think!"

Loder of the Sixth looked into the study.

He stared at the tea-table.

"Hallo! Had an army to tea?" he asked.

"I—I had a few fags in—"

Walker.

"What on earth for?" demanded the amazed Loder.

"I—I rather liked the—the idea, you know."

"Touched?" asked Loder.

"Oh, go and eat coke!" said Walker irritably. To Loder, at least, he could speak freely. "Buzz off, and don't jaw! Confound you!"

"Well, my only hat!" ejaculated Loder. He decided not to drop into Walker's study for a chat, as he had intended. He walked on.

Walker kicked the door shut after him, and then paced the study, with a puckered brow and in a mood of dismal thought. One thing was clear. If Billy Bunter was really deaf, owing to that box on the ear, Billy Bunter had the upper hand, and was not to be defied. He had only to relate the facts to his Form-master or the Head, to get Walker into fearful trouble. This awful state of affairs had to continue; he would have to write home for some money; he would have to bribe Bunter not to bring fags to tea in the study; he would have to bribe Bunter right and left, to an extent

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that was terrifying to contemplate. But if Bunter was spoofing—

Walker was in a state of mind to catch at any straw, like a drowning man. He hoped fervently that Bunter was spoofing—that the fat young rascal wasn't genuinely deaf! He hoped it so much that he tried to believe it.

"Gooch will know!" he said, at last.

He did not want Dr. Gooch to know that it was he, James Walker, who had made Bunter deaf—if he was deaf. He would have been better pleased to keep at a safe distance from Gooch, lest Gooch should guess the facts. But Walker was desperate now. Dr. Gooch, at least, could give him definite information as to whether it was likely to be permanent, and all that. There must be something the matter with the horrid little bounder, as Dr. Gooch had ordered him a syringe. But very likely Bunter had exaggerated—in fact, almost certainly he had! Walker desperately determined to know the worst, at any risk.

He left the study at last, and went out for his bike. There was time to ride down into Friardale, and return by locking-up.

Walker wheeled out his bicycle. Loder and Carne of the Sixth were chatting by the gates, and Carne called to him.

"Going for a spin?"

"Yes," answered Walker, hurrying on.

"Wait a minute! We'll come!"

"Sorry—can't wait—awful hurry!"

Walker rushed his bike out into the road, mounted, and pedalled away quickly.

He didn't want any company in calling on Dr. Gooch.

He rode rapidly down to the village, and stopped at Dr. Gooch's house. Leaving his bike against the fence, he walked up the path to the house, with a palpitating heart. What was he going to hear—words of relief, or confirmation of his worst fears? Would Dr. Gooch guess that he was the cause of the unhappy junior's deafness? Would he, in that case, consider it his duty to acquaint the Head of Greyfriars with the facts? Walker's heart failed him, and his hand trembled on the bell.

But he rang it desperately. At any risk, he had to know the worst!

A trim maidservant showed him in to Dr. Gooch. He looked so flushed and excited that the good doctor gave him a kindly and sympathetic glance at once.

"Sit down—sit down!" said Dr. Gooch. "A little feverish—yes—yes. You belong to Greyfriars, I think?"

"Yes, sir!" stammered Walker.

"But I understand that Dr. Pillbury—the school doctor—"

"I—I haven't come about myself, sir!" stammered Walker. "It's about Bunter."

"Bunter?"

"Yes, Bunter."

Dr. Gooch adjusted his gold-rimmed glasses, and blinked at Walker very curiously.

"I do not quite follow," he said. "You are interested in some—some person of the name of Bunter—"

"Bunter, sir, of Greyfriars."

"I am unacquainted with the name," said Dr. Gooch. "I do not quite see why you should have come to me. Dr. Pillbury is the proper person—"

"But Bunter came to you, sir—"

"Eh?"

"Bunter came to you about his deafness, sir!" stammered Walker, quite bewildered.

"I fail to understand you," said Dr. Gooch coldly. "I have no one of the name of Bunter on my books, and no patients at Greyfriars School at all. You must apply to Dr. Pillbury."

Walker gasped for breath.

"There—there's some mistake!" he stammered. "Didn't Bunter come to you to-day, sir?"

"Certainly not!"

"About a sudden attack of deafness?" babbled Walker.

"No."

"But—but didn't you order him a syringe?" gasped Walker.

Dr. Gooch rose.

"My time is valuable," he said. "If this is some absurd joke, young sir, I can only say—"

"But—but it isn't! Bunter told me he had come to you, and you ordered him a syringe for his deaf ear, and I gave him a guinea!" babbled Walker.

"If that is the case, you have been deceived and imposed upon; for certainly no boy from Greyfriars has come to me to-day. Good-evening!"

Walker staggered out.

He returned to his bicycle like a fellow in a dream.

A dim realisation of the real state of affairs was dawning on his confused mind. Bunter hadn't called on Dr. Gooch at all; he hadn't bought a syringe and broken it; he had spent Walker's guinea on tuck! Walker remembered now that he had been sticky.

The prefect drew a deep, deep breath.

All was clear now. It was a game of spoof from beginning to end. And Billy Bunter wasn't deaf at all! That box on the ear had put it into his mind, after what he had heard Mr. Quelch say on the occasion when Dicky Nugent's ear had been boxed. Walker started. His suspicions deepened now. Why, this fat rascal had been bothering him on purpose to get a box on the ear! The whole thing had been thought out and planned!

## THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

### Walker's Happy Day!

"I SAY, you fellows—"

"Dry up, Bunter!"

"Don't interrupt me, Bob Cherry! I've got an idea, and I want the fellows to hear it. Who'd like to come on a picnic on the cliffs next half-holiday?" asked Bunter.

The Owl of the Remove blinked round the Common-room as he asked that question. There were a dozen fellows in the room, and they all looked at Bunter.

"Picnic on the cliffs?" repeated Johnny Bull.

"Yes. I'm standing a rather large party," said Bunter airily. "The weather's getting rather decent now, and I think a picnic would be a success. A friend of mine in the Sixth Form—"

"Walker!" howled Bob Cherry.

"Don't interrupt, Cherry! A friend of mine in the Sixth Form would like to come. In fact, he will stand the picnic, and I'm going to make all the arrangements. There will be plenty of grub—first-class quality. Every fellow will eat as much as he likes, of the very best. I'm charging a bob a head for every member of the party. That's merely nominal at the present price of grub—"

"But Walker will pay for the grub, and you'll pocket the bob!" remarked Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

There was a step in the doorway, and Walker of the Sixth looked in. There was an expression on Walker's face that rather startled the juniors, and they noticed that he had his cane under his arm. His eye wandered over the juniors till it rested on Bunter.

"Oh, you're here, Bunter!" said Walker, in a soft, silky voice. "I've been looking for you."

Bunter blinked at him.

"Speak louder!" he said.

"Bunter's deaf, you know," chuckled

Bob Cherry. "He can't hear, excepting in the Form-room."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Try to hear what I say now," said Walker, in the same silky tone. "I know you've been spoofing me, Bunter; I know you're not deaf. I've been down to Friardale, and found out that you never went to Dr. Gooch at all."

Bunter's jaw dropped.

"And you never went to the chemist's and bought a syringe, and you never dropped it and broke it," pursued Walker, with the same deadly smile. "And you're not deaf, Bunter! Not the least little bit in the world! You've been having a little lark with me, dear boy. Isn't that so?"

The juniors looked on breathlessly. In spite of Walker's smile and silky tone, they could see that he was trembling with rage. Nobody envied William George Bunter at that moment.

Bunter made a strategic movement to place the table between himself and James Walker.

Walker made a stride. Billy Bunter flew round the table, and made a desperate dive for the door. Even William George Bunter realised now that the game was up.

Walker spun round after him, and his grasp closed on Bunter before the Owl was half-way to the door.

"Yaroooh! Help!"

The Sixth-Former swung Billy Bunter across a chair. He held him there with his left hand. His right was busy with the cane.

Whack, whack, whack!

"Oh! Ow! Yow-wow! Yoooop!

Whooop!"

Whack, whack, whack!

"Help! Murder! Fire! Thieves!" bawled Bunter.

The celebrated Bull of Bashan would have hidden his diminished head in despairing envy if he could have heard the roars of Billy Bunter just then.

Whack, whack, whack!

"Yoop! Help! Rescue! Fire! I say, you fellows— Yaroooh! Help!" roared Bunter.

Whack, whack, whack!

"That's enough, Walker!" said Harry Wharton.

"Stand back!" snapped Walker.

Whack, whack, whack!

"Yooop! Rescue! Yaroooh!"

Harry Wharton & Co. made a rush. Billy Bunter undoubtedly was deserving of punishment; but there was a limit. Walker, in his enthusiasm, was passing the limit. The rush of the Famous Five shoved Walker away from his victim.

"'Nuff's as good as a feast!" remarked Bob Cherry.

Bunter rolled off the chair, howling.

"Yow-ow-ow-ow-wooop!"

Walker glanced at him. He felt that perhaps Bunter had had enough. He strode out of the Common-room, with a happy feeling of satisfaction. He was quite merry when he dropped into Loder's study for a chat.

But the hapless Owl of the Remove was far from merry.

Billy Bunter did not call on his friend in the Sixth any more. Indeed, he showed a strong inclination to dodge round corners and behind doors whenever he saw Walker coming. And he recovered his hearing completely. Bunter's deafness was evidently a chicken that would no longer fight; and so the Remove heard nothing more of Deaf Bunter.

THE END.

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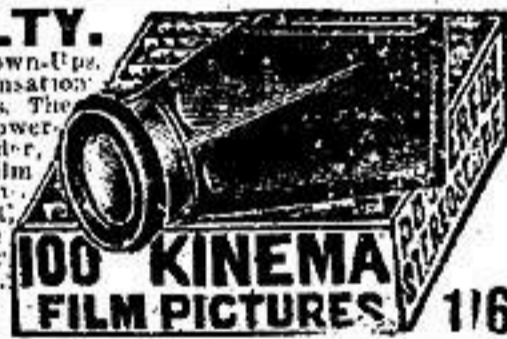
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