

Bunter's Boxing Bout!

A Play in verse for Amateur Actors
By DICK PENFOLD

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Characters :

BILLY BUNTER..The Fat Boy of Greyfriars.
 PETER TODD
 ALONZO TODD } Study-mates of Billy Bunter.
 TOM DUTTON }
 HARRY WHARTON }
 BOB CHERRY } The Famous Five of
 FRANK NUGENT } the Greyfriars Remove.
 JOHNNY BULL }
 HURREE SINGH }
 SAMBO THE SLOGGER..A Young Negro Pugilist.

ACT I.

SCENE.—No. 7 Study in the Remove Passage.

(BILLY BUNTER is alone in the apartment. His coat is off, and his shirt sleeves rolled back. He is vigorously attacking a punching-ball suspended from the ceiling.)

BUNTER :
 I love to stand and punch this ball,
 It doesn't tire me out at all.
 I'm putting lots of vigour in it
 And growing stronger every minute!
 (*Biff! Thud! Biff! Thud!*)

BUNTER :
 If this ball were a human face
 I'd puncture it in every place!
 I'm not at all a warlike chap,
 But now and then I love a scrap!
 (BUNTER attacks the ball with renewed ferocity. He misses his punch, overbalances, and topples to the floor with a crash. Enter PETER TODD, ALONZO TODD, and TOM DUTTON.)

PETER :
 What ever's going on in here ?
 ALONZO :
 Bunter has come to grief, I fear.
 DUTTON :
 Billy, you chump! What made you fall ?
 BUNTER :
 Ow-ow! I missed my punch, that's all!
 PETER :
 But why this energy and vim ?
 BUNTER :
 I'm fighting some one in the gym.
 PETER :
 Your look of hate is simply Hunnish.
 Pray, whom do you propose to punish ?
 BUNTER (rising to his feet) :
 You've heard of Sambo, that young nigger,
 Who cut a most attractive figure
 In Courtfield Town the other night,
 And never yet has lost a fight ?
 I've challenged him to meet me here,
 And I shall lick him, never fear !
 PETER (*aghast*) :
 You've challenged Sambo to a scrap ?
 BUNTER :
 Right on the wicket, dear old chap !
 PETER :
 Why, Bunter, you will be demolished !
 ALONZO :
 You're neither skilful, strong, nor polished !
 DUTTON (*who is deaf*) :
 What's all this chattering about ?
 Just whisper it ; no need to shout.

PETER :
We were discussing Billy's fight——

DUTTON :
Eh? Did you call me "silly kite?"

PETER (*indignantly*):
I called you nothing of the sort!

DUTTON :
How dare you tell me that I snort?

PETER :
Oh, dear! Your deafness is appalling!

DUTTON :
Are you accusing me of brawling?

PETER :
Help! I shall
soon give up
the ghost.
I might as well
address a post!
Your deafness is a
sore affliction,
It causes quite a
lot of friction.

BUNTER :
I say, you fellows,
just watch me!
I'm going to biff
the punch-ball,
see?

(BUNTER resumes
operations. After giving
the ball several vigorous
thumps, he misses it,
and strikes ALONZO
TODD on the nose.)

ALONZO (*clapping his nose*):
My nasal organ has been smitten!

BUNTER :
Bah! You're as nervous as a kitten.

ALONZO :
You smote me with terrific force——

BUNTER :
I meant to hit the ball, of course!

PETER :
Stand clear of danger, Lonzy dear;
Bunter is most unsafe, I fear.
When is this battle coming off,
My priceless porpoise?

BUNTER :
Do not scoff!
It's coming off on Wednesday night,
And I am ready for it, quite!

When at the ringside I appear
The crowd will cry, "Jack Johnson's
here!"

Or else they'll say, "This chap excels
At boxing, more than Billy Wells!"
I'll give that dusky nigger socks,
And fell him like you'd fell an ox!
I'll make him bite the dust, and feel
That he's completely brought to heel.
I'll give his jaw such hefty punches
That for a week he'll eat no lunches.
He won't survive a single round
Of my hard hitting, I'll be bound!

PETER (*grinning*):
Billy, you'll be the
death of me!

DUTTON :
I vote we all sit
down to tea!

(BILLY BUNTER puts
on his coat, while the
others proceed to lay the
table. A large plum
cake is brought forth,
also a dish of assorted
pastries. One of the
juniors boils a kettle
on a small spirit-stove.
There is plenty of hustle
and bustle in the course
of these preparations,
and ALONZO TODD
causes a diversion by
dropping a tray of

crockeryware. At last everything is in readiness
for the meal, and the juniors seat themselves at
the table.)

ALONZO (*cutting the cake*):
Now, my dear Bunter, will you take
A good, stout slice of this fine cake?

BUNTER :
No, thank you, Lonzy; not for me.

PETER (*in amazement*):
What! Aren't you having cake for tea?

BUNTER :
No, no! If I'm to get quite fit
I mustn't touch a single bit.

ALONZO :
You'll have a doughnut, won't you,
Billy?



Billy Bunter missed his punch, overbalanced,
and toppled to the floor

BUNTER :

To train on doughnuts would be silly !

PETER :

What are you going to have, you duffer ?

BUNTER :

No cakes, or I shall surely suffer.

ALONZO :

Come! Try this succulent jam-tart!

BUNTER :

No fear! It would affect my heart.

DUTTON :

What's Bunter having for his tea?
There's nothing on his plate, I see.

BUNTER :

I'll have a slice
of plain, dry
toast,
Or just a couple,
at the most.
A cup of water I
will drink,
And that will be
enough, I think.
I must be sound
in every limb
When I meet
Sambo in the
gym.

PETER :

You're building
castles in the
air.

You may as well
at once despair
Of winning this
unequal bout:

Sambo will surely knock you out!

BUNTER :

Nonsense! A fighting-man like me
Will win hands down, as you will see.

ALONZO :

You are so bumptious and conceited,
'Twill do you good to be defeated!

BUNTER :

Defeat? I do not know the term!
I'll make that black-faced nigger squirm!
I'll punch him on the nose and chin,
And he'll see stars when I begin!
I'll drive him round and round the ring
And wallop him like anything!
So fiercely I'll chastise the fellow

That he'll be black and blue and yellow!
The crowd will cry, in tones of dread,
"Look! Billy Bunter's seeing red!"
Heigh-ho! What triumph and delight
I shall enjoy on Wednesday night!

PETER :

Dear boy, you're talking tommy-rot.
Sambo will let you have it hot!
He'll lead you such a merry dance
We'll have to fetch the ambulance!

BUNTER :

You think I am a weakling, Toddy,
But I'll stand up to anybody!
I'll give old Sambo such a drubbing

He'll kneel and
beg for mercy,
blubbing.

ALONZO :

Oh, fat and foolish
youth! I fear
You'll be the one
to shed a tear!

DUTTON (*passing the
cake*):

Come, Billy!
Sample this
plum cake.

It's jolly good,
and no mistake.

PETER (*passing the
pastries*):

Come, sample
these delightful
dainties!

Keen hunger —
that's what your complaint is!

ALONZO (*passing the scones*):

No scones in all the world like these,
So try one, Billy, if you please.

BUNTER (*rising from the table*):

Not if you tempt me all the night
Will I enjoy a single bite!

I've had my toast, and water, too,
Now I've more training work to do.
The dumb-bells I shall briskly swing,
Then practise sparring in the ring.
I mean to get myself in trim—
Sound as a bell in wind and limb!

PETER :

You mark my words: on Wednesday
night



Bunter: No, no! If I'm to get quite fit I mustn't
touch a single bit

Your knees will quake with fear and
fright.

The perspiration on your brow
Will stand in hefty beads, I vow.
That nigger boy from Courtfield Town
Will biff you, bump you, knock you down,
Correct you, conquer you, chastise you,
Pommel you, punch you, pulverise you!
He'll chase you round and round the ring,
Then floor you with a strong right swing.
You'll tumble in a huddled heap:
The crowd will say, "Our Bill's asleep!"
Just wait and see if I'm not right.
Tragic your fate on Wednesday night!

BUNTER:

Peter, I scorn your
words of woe!
Unsympathetic
beasts, I go!

(Exit BILLY BUN-
TER, in dignity and
scorn. PETER TODD
and TOM DUTTON throw
cushions after him, and
he disappears from
view, uttering wild yells
of anguish.)

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE. — The gym-
nasium at Grey-
friars. There is a
boxing ring, roped
in, ready for the
big contest. THE

FAMOUS FIVE are seated in chairs at the
ringside. (There are other spectators, but
only THE FAMOUS FIVE are shown on the
stage.)

WHARTON:

The fight begins at seven o'clock—

CHERRY:

And Bunter will receive a shock!

NUGENT:

Sambo will knock him into space—

BULL:

It won't improve poor Bunter's face!

HURREE SINGH:

In my opinion, worthy chums—

WHARTON:

One moment, Inky! Someone comes!

(Enter SAMBO THE SLOGGER. He is a
dusky nigger-boy, wearing a light raincoat over
his boxing attire. He grins broadly at THE
FAMOUS FIVE, and bows to them.)

SAMBO:

Me just arrived from Courtfield Town.
(De taxi fare was half-a-crown.)

CHERRY:

My hat! Against this sturdy nigger
Bunter will cut a sorry figure!

SAMBO (looking round):

Where is dis Bunter? Has he bunked?
Don't tell me dat
de fellah's fun-
ked!

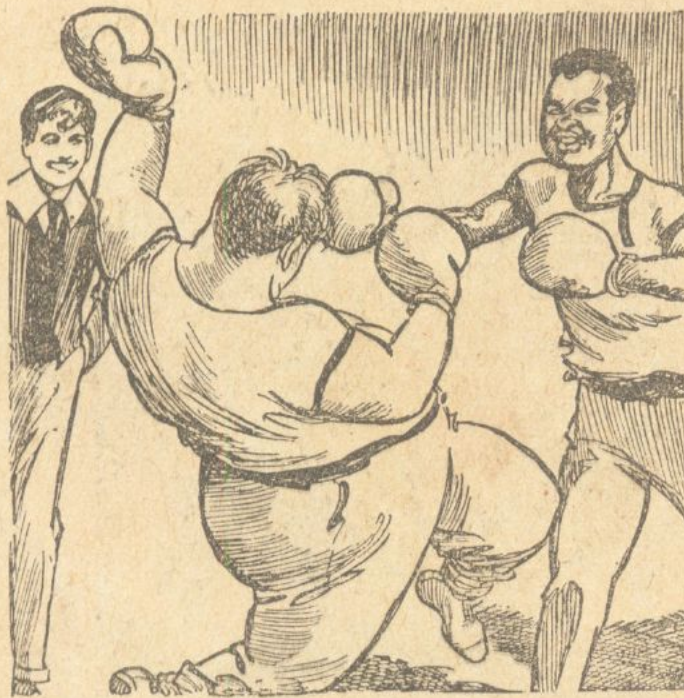
NUGENT:

Oh, he'll be here
in half a min-
ute—

SAMBO (taking off his
raincoat):

De fight! Me
anxious to be-
gin it!

(Sounds of commo-
tion without. There is
a scuffle and voices are
heard saying, "Go
along, Bunter!"
"Don't be a funk!"
"You challenged
Sambo to a fight, and
now you've got to go
through with it!")



Billy Bunter was floored by a powerful drive to the
head.

Cries of protest from BILLY BUNTER, who is
bundled unceremoniously into the gym. He
alights on all fours, amid laughter from THE
FAMOUS FIVE.)

BUNTER (scrambling to his feet):

Oh, dear! I've no desire to fight!

WHARTON:

Yet you arranged it for to-night.

BUNTER:

I planned it when I felt quite fit,
But now I'm not—no, not a bit!

CHERRY:

Why, what's the matter with you, Bill?

BUNTER:

Fact is, I'm feeling very ill!

BULL :
You're suffering from cold feet, you
duffer !

NUGENT :
From which complaint all cowards suffer !

BUNTER :
I'm not a coward—not at all.
I fear no fellow, great or small.
If Wells or Beckett came here now,
I'd fight 'em cheerfully, I vow !

SAMBO :
Well, Massa Bunter, here's your chance !
You said you'd lead me quite a dance.

BUNTER :
And so I will !
Am I afraid ?
Was ever a Bun-
ter weak, dis-
mayed ?
I'll take my coat
off right away
And boldly plunge
into the fray !

*(Removes coat and
puts on boxing-gloves.
SAMBO also dons gloves.)*

WHARTON : I think I'll
act as referee.

CHERRY :
Yes, go ahead !
We all agree.

NUGENT :
We'll want a
stretcher here
for Billy.

BUNTER :
Oh, shut up, Nugent, don't be silly !
*(WHARTON steps into the ring and introduces
the boxers to the public.)*

WHARTON :
Gentlemen ! In this ring you see
A youth named Bunter, W. G.
Also a youth from Courtfield Town,
A coloured boxer of renown.
They wish to try conclusions here,
And Bunter will be licked, I fear.
Rely on me to see fair play,
I've refereed before to-day !

HURREE SINGH :
Cut out the gas, my worthy Harry.
On with the scrapfulness : don't tarry !

CHERRY :
Hear, hear ! I'm waiting, with a grin,
For the performance to begin !

BUNTER :
I say, you chaps ! Before we start,
Let me sit down and rest my heart.
I've got a very queer sensation,
I think it's chronic palpitation !

WHARTON :
You should have thought of that before.
I think it's funk, and nothing more.
Stand boldly up, and meet your man !
Give him a hiding—if you can !

BUNTER *(aside)* :

I wish I'd never
planned this
fight.
That nigger fills
my soul with
fright !

BULL :
You are a coward
and a skunk !

NUGENT :
You are a chicken-
hearted funk !

CHERRY :
You don't possess
an ounce of
gumption—

BUNTER :
That is a very
base assump-
tion !

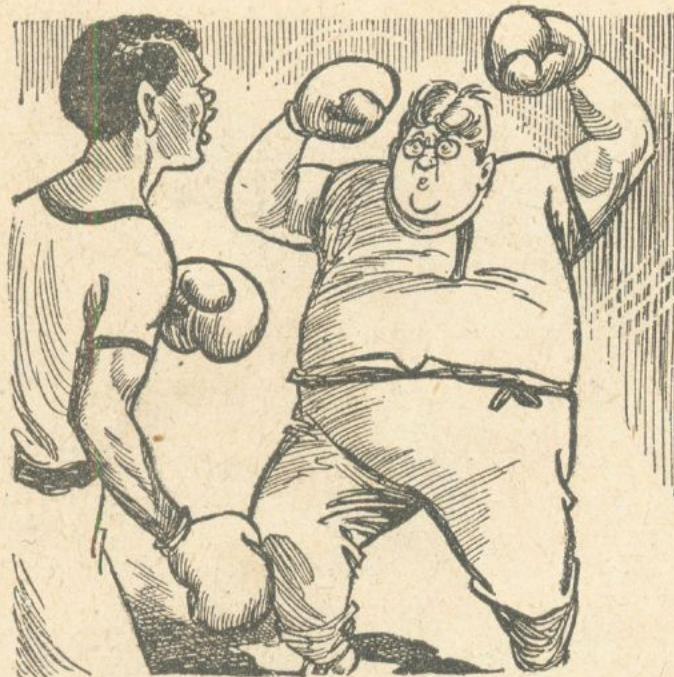
WHARTON :

The hour of seven begins to chime.
We will delay no longer.—TIME !

*(BUNTER rushes blindly towards his op-
ponent. SAMBO, grinning broadly, steps very
smartly to one side, and BUNTER'S fists smite
the air. The fat junior loses his balance, and
crashes to the boards.)*

CHERRY :
“ There, at the foot of Pompey's statue,
Great Cæsar fell ! ” Look out, he's at
you !

*(BUNTER totters to his feet, and for two
minutes he manages to dodge SAMBO'S blows.
Then he is knocked down by a powerful drive
to the head. This time he lies still, and makes no
effort to rise. Bell rings, end of first round, and*



Bunter rushed at Sambo, hitting out wildly

SAMBO retires to corner, BUNTER being dragged to his corner.)

SAMBO :

Dat's done de trick, widout a doubt !

BUNTER :

I'm beaten, Wharton ! Count me out !

WHARTON :

You're simply shamming on the floor.
Get up, you worm, and have some more !

BUNTER :

I can't get up ; my back is broken !

NUGENT :

The biggest fib you've ever spoken !

BUNTER :

My spinal column's rent in sunder—

CHERRY :

Then why are you alive, I wonder?
(Laughter.)

BUNTER (groaning piteously) :

I'm absolutely done, I fear ;
I cannot see, I cannot hear,
I cannot feel, I cannot think,
I cannot eat, I cannot drink,
I cannot speak—

WHARTON :

You're speaking now !

BUNTER :

Oh, come and fan my fevered brow !

SAMBO :

Dis fellah Bunter's telling lies.
Make him get up ; me black his eyes !
Me knock him round and round the ring,
Me make him howl like anyting !

BUNTER :

Black brute ! You've punished me enough !

BULL (scornfully) :

You are not made of heroes' stuff !

CHERRY :

"Charge, Chester, charge !" On, porpoise, on !

BUNTER :

All hopes of victory are gone.

WHARTON :

I'm going to hoist you to your feet.
And make you fight until you're beat !

BUNTER :

Don't be an ass ! I'm licked already !

NUGENT :

Convince yourself you're strong and steady !

CHERRY :

Dash manfully into the fray,
And you are bound to win the day !

(The fat junior shakes off his attack of funk, and glares defiantly at his opponent.)

BUNTER :

I've pulled myself together fine.

I'll fight, and victory shall be mine !

A Bunter's blood flows in my veins,

I'm not afraid of aches or pains.

Did not my grandsire dare and do

Upon the field of Waterloo ?

Did not my father, on his hoss,

Join in the Charge

of Charing Cross ?

Were not the Bunters to the fore

In many thrilling scraps of yore ?

And shall I play a coward's part ?

No, no ! I'll show a fearless heart.

Once more unto the breach, dear friends !

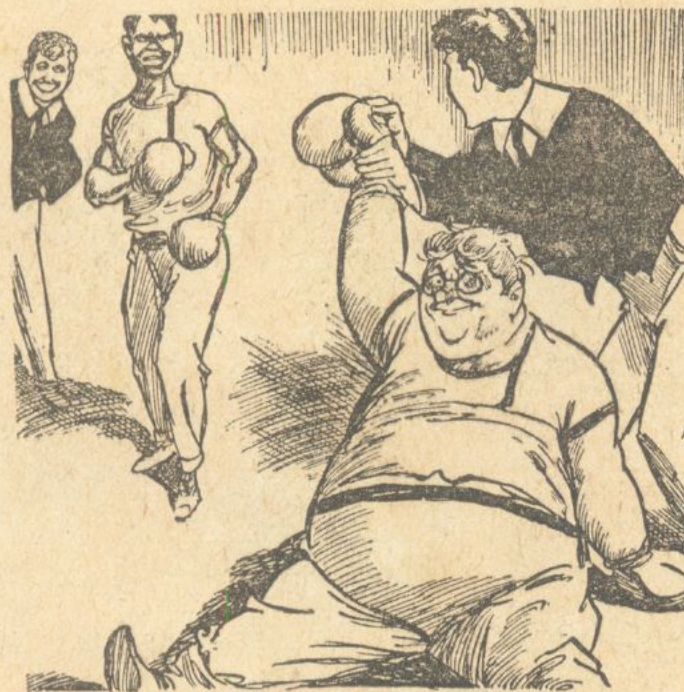
On with the fight, until it ends !

WHARTON :

That is a most courageous speech.

Let's see you practise what you preach !

(Bell rings for next round. BUNTER promptly rushes at SAMBO, hitting out wildly. Most of his blows are dodged, but many get home. SAMBO is amazed at BUNTER'S sudden onslaught, and he gives way before it. It is a



Wharton : A foul ! A foul ! I stop the fight.
Bunter is the winner !

wild and whirling fight, and the onlookers cheer loudly.)

NUGENT :

Wonders will never cease, you chaps !
Bunter will win this fight—

THE OTHERS :

Perhaps !

CHERRY :

He's putting up a splendid show.

BULL :

But Sambo's giving blow for blow !

BUNTER (*breathlessly*) :

Take that—and that—and that—and that !

SAMBO (*retaliating*) :

Take dat—and
dat—and dat
and dat !—

(*The battle proceeds in hammer-and-tongs fashion. Presently SAMBO puts out his foot for his opponent to trip over, and BUNTER goes sprawling.*)

WHARTON :

A foul ! A foul !
I stop the
fight !

SAMBO :

Dat trip was
accidental,
quite !

WHARTON :

Nonsense ! It was
a crafty action.

And Bunter has the satisfaction
Of hereby being hailed as winner !

CHERRY :

We'll treat him to a stunning dinner !

BUNTER (*sitting up dazedly*) :

I say, you fellows, have I won ?

NUGENT :

Yes, what you planned to do, you've
done !

WHARTON :

The nigger is disqualified.

BULL :

I'd like to tan his dusky hide !

SAMBO :

Dis child fought fair and square, you
know !

WHARTON :

Put on your coat, you cad, and go !

(SAMBO shows defiance ; whereupon THE FAMOUS FIVE rush towards him, wrench off his boxing-gloves, hustle him into his coat, and send him whirling through the exit. BOB CHERRY takes a final kick at the retreating figure.)

CHERRY :

Hurrah ! We've sped the parting guest.

BUNTER :

I say, you chaps, I want to rest.

WHARTON :

You've had a jolly strenuous fight—

NUGENT :

And won it, too,
to our delight !

HURREE SINGH :

So now, with joy
and jubilation,
We'll hold a study
celebration.

Bunter shall be
the guest of
honour :

As to the feast,
I'll be the
donor.

WHARTON :

Come, Billy, filled
with joy and
glee,
And taste the
sweets of vic-
tory !

(*Exit EVERYBODY.*)

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE.—No. 1 Study in the Remove Passage.

(BILLY BUNTER is propped up on the sofa by a number of cushions. Various pieces of sticking-plaster adorn his face, and there is a bandage round his head, covering his right eye. But he is smiling and happy.)

BUNTER :

Now that the battle's fought and over
The happy victor is in clover !

Oh, what a ripping stroke of luck.
The Famous Five are buying tuck.
There's going to be a topping feed,
And it's the very thing I need.



Bunter : I've not had such a jolly day since I
was home on holiday !

Lonzy and Dutton are invited,
And Peter also ; I'm delighted !
(Enter a procession of juniors in single file,
as follows) :

HARRY WHARTON (carrying a loaf).

BOB CHERRY (carrying a cake).

FRANK NUGENT (carrying a pie).

JOHNNY BULL (carrying a dish of tarts).

HURREE SINGH (balancing a pile of
plates).

PETER TODD (with a kettle).

ALONZO DUTTON (with a teapot).

TOM DUTTON (with a toasting-fork).

(Each junior deposits his burden on the table,
with the exception of PETER TODD, who places
the kettle on the spirit-stove.)

BUNTER :

I say, you fellows, this is great !

CHERRY :

We did our best, at any rate.

BUNTER :

That is a really ripping pie !

NUGENT :

Selected it myself, that's why.

BUNTER :

That dish of tarts looks simply topping !

BULL :

I am a master hand at shopping.

BUNTER :

It warms the cockles of my heart
To view this tuck. Say, shall we start ?

CHERRY :

Yes ! Here's a slice of cake, friend Bill.
No need to come for it ; lie still !
We'll wait on you with pride and pleasure.
Lie on the couch, and feed at leisure.

BUNTER :

I've not had such a jolly day
Since I was home on holiday !

WHARTON :

You certainly deserve this feed.
For once, we will excuse your greed.

NUGENT :

You knocked out Slogger Sam in style.
Cheers could be heard for quite a mile !

HURREE SINGH :

The shouting and the cheerfulness
Rang sweetly in the earfulness !

PETER TODD :

Billy, you'll be a brave man yet ;
A burly pugilist, I'll bet !

ALONZO :

The manly art of fisticuffs
Will help you conquer louts and roughs.

(BUNTER speedily consumes his slice of cake.
He smacks his lips, and gazes eagerly towards
the table.)

NUGENT :

Finished your cake, old chap ? Then try
A portion of this rabbit pie !

BUNTER :

Thanks, Nugent ! Is it wrong to wish
That I could polish off the dish ?

NUGENT :

Certainly not, my dear old top !
Gorge merrily, and do not stop.

WHARTON :

This is a joyous celebration !
Bunter has won our admiration.
Who would have thought that he could
box,

And give his black opponent shocks ?

But yesterday, he was a funk :

At thoughts of battle, he would bunk.

He was a coward, a poltroon :

When smitten, he would promptly swoon.

But the Bill Bunter of to-day

Is not the funk of yesterday.

Look how he faced and fought his foe !

He was a masterpiece, you know.

BUNTER :

I fear no foe in shining armour——

CHERRY :

We're well aware of that, plump charmer !

BUNTER :

I'd fight Jack Johnson—yes, this minute !

BULL :

Of course ! There would be nothing in it.

BUNTER :

I feel the world is at my feet.
(This rabbit pie is hard to beat !)

PETER TODD :

“ Eat and grow fat ! ” a proverb pleasant.
You're really much too thin at present !
(Laughter.)

BUNTER :

I fasted for a whole long week,
And the experience was unique.
I had to get myself in trim
For that stern contest in the gym.

ALONZO :

But fasting days are over now,

The victor's wreath adorns your brow.
You are a very valiant Bunter,
Not merely a conceited stunter!

DUTTON:

I can't hear what you chaps are saying.
Sounds like a lot of donkeys braying!

WHARTON:

The victor we acclaim with cheering—

DUTTON:

Speak up, my son, I'm hard of hearing!

WHARTON:

Enough to make a fellow groan,
"My kingdom for a megaphone!"

CHERRY:

Let's call on Bunter for a speech!

ALL:

Yes, yes! A speech we do beseech!

BUNTER (*rising with difficulty from the couch*):

Gentlemen, pals, and chums—

ALL:

Hear, hear!

BUNTER.

I am no hand at this, I fear.

NUGENT:

What nonsense! You are simply "IT"!

BULL!

Best orator since William Pitt!

BUNTER:

A fellow of few words am I,
Made drowsy by a rabbit pie.
My thoughts are anything but clear,
But I will try and persevere.
I thank you for this ripping feed,
Which I've devoured with eager greed.
I thank you, too, for your applause.
It's touched my heart—

CHERRY:

Dramatic pause.

BUNTER:

Before you drink my health in tea,
I think you'll all agree with me
That I'm the very best of boxers,
And give my opponents scares and
shocks, sirs!
So you must never taunt or tease,
But always mind your q's and p's.
I've got it wrong way round, but still,
Heed these remarks of Brother Bill!

WHARTON (*proposing the toast*):

A health to Bunter, W. G.!

ALL (*rising*):

A mighty man of valour he!

CURTAIN.

A FINAL WORD.

Those of my readers who have, in the foregoing pages, met for the first time the famous school-boy characters who are the familiar favourites of countless thousands of boys and girls to-day, will doubtless be eager to read more about them at the first opportunity. They will welcome, then, the information—which is no news, of course, to the vast majority of my readers—that Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars School, appear every Monday in the "Magnet" Library, in a long, complete 30,000 word story; that the major portion of the "Gem" Library, published every Wednesday, is devoted to the doings of Tom Merry & Co., of St. Jim's; that every Monday's issue of that old and tried favourite of 28 years' standing, "The Boys' Friend," contains a long story of Jimmy Silver & Co., of Rookwood; while in the "Popular," which enlivens Tuesday mornings throughout the land, complete stories of all three of these famous Schoolboy Co.'s, appear regularly each week, with that world-renowned journal, "Billy Bunter's Weekly," as an additional attraction.

My younger friends are catered for by that cheery picture and story paper, "Chuckles," which is printed in colours and published each Thursday.

Each of the above-named Companion Papers has a great reputation to maintain for wholesome, clean and vigorous fiction, of the sort that has made the "Holiday Annual" the most popular book of its kind in existence. Between them they offer an unequalled range of reading suitable to all tastes, at all times and seasons. To all who have read this issue of the "Holiday Annual" with appreciation, the Companion Papers will appeal with especial force.

THE EDITOR.