



Billy Bunter's Fearful Affliction!

By

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THE FIRST
CHAPTER
THE TRIBULATIONS
OF BUNTER!

"WILL you lend
me——"

"No!"

"Lend me——"

"Nix!"

Five voices replied each time to Billy Bunter; and they replied in unison, and with considerable emphasis.

Harry Wharton & Co. of the Greyfriars Remove seemed of one mind in the matter. Billy Bunter had not yet stated what it was he wanted to borrow; but the Famous Five, apparently, weren't lending Bunter anything.

"I say, you fellows—you might lend a chap——" recommenced

When Billy Bunter goes blind, he finds himself the object of much sympathy and no little kindness in the Greyfriars Remove. But, as the juniors discover, there's something a little "fishy" about Bunter's fearful affliction!

Bunter in a tone more of sorrow than of anger.

"Rats!"

"If you think I want to borrow any money off you——" Bunter started again, warmly.

"Eh?"

"What?"

"Don't you?"

"No!" roared Bunter.

"What is it, then?" demanded Bob Cherry. "If it's a boot, I'll lend you a boot, with pleasure. Where will you have it?"

Bunter dodged back.

"Yah! Keep off, you beast!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's a book!" howled Bunter.

"I want you to lend me a book."

"A book!" ejaculated the Famous Five together.

"Just that!" said Bunter.

"Well, my hat!" said Wharton in surprise. "If it's a book, we can lend you a book! What the thump do you want a book for?"

"To read, of course."

"Taking up reading?" asked Bob.

"Well, I dare say you can improve your mind that way; and goodness knows it needs improving. I can lend you my new Latin dictionary."

"I want something interesting, of course, you ass," said Bunter. "You see, I'm detained this afternoon."

"You don't want a book to read in detention," said Wharton. "Mr. Quelch will set you something to do."

Bunter snorted.

"I know he will, the beast; but I jolly well ain't going to do it. I'm not going to mug up filthy deponent verbs on a half-holiday; not if I know it. I shall have to stay in the Form-room; but it won't be so bad if I've got a book. Squiff's given me some toffee, and Smithy's stood me some bulls'-eyes——"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry. "With toffee and bulls'-eyes and a book you ought to be able to get through detention all right."

"Just what I was thinking," said Bunter, blinking sagely at the Famous Five through his big spectacles. "I can spin Quelchy a yarn about not getting the dashed detention task done—I can pull his leg somehow. But I've got to get through the afternoon from three to five. So I want a book a fellow can read. A 'Gem' would do."

"I've lent my 'Gem' to a chap in the Fourth," said Johnny Bull. "I can lend you Todhunter's Algebra!"

"Ow!"

"I've got a Greek lexicon!" said Nugent.

"Wow!"

"We've got some books in the study," said Harry Wharton thoughtfully. The captain of the Remove was quite kind and interested, now that it turned out that Bunter only wanted to borrow a book. It was really a very mild request, especially for William George Bunter. W.G.B. was not often so moderate.

"Something exciting, with murders in it," said Bunter. The fat junior's taste in literature was evidently rather lurid.

"Oh, my hat!" said Wharton. "I haven't anything with murders in it. Some good school stories——"

"Rot!" said Bunter.

A deep voice called from the direction of the School House, and Billy Bunter spun round.

"Bunter!"

Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, was standing in the doorway, beckoning to the fat junior.

"Yes, sir?"

"It is time you were in the Form-room, Bunter."

"Oh, dear!"

Billy Bunter rolled away to the School House; and the Famous Five, for once, regarded him sympathetically.

THE SECOND CHAPTER

COKER SHOWS HOW!

BILLY BUNTER followed Mr. Quelch to the Remove-room with a frowning fat brow and a discontented face.

An afternoon's detention was a heavy blow; all the heavier if it was accompanied by exercises in deponent verbs, as it was in this case.

Bunter didn't care a rap about verbs, deponent or otherwise; but

he cared very much about a half-holiday.

All his usual occupations were knocked on the head. True, he wasn't keen on footer, and he didn't care much about a cycle spin, and nothing would have dragged him out of gates for a walk in the woods or a ramble on the cliffs. But he might have spent the time happily enough in scouting through the studies, while the other fellows were out, on the quest for stray tarts or remnants of cake. He might have dunned the whole Remove and Fourth for a loan, and succeeded in raising the wind sooner or later for a visit to the tuck-shop.

Instead of which he was to sit in the Form-room for two hours, and devote his attention more or less to that troublesome variety of Latin verb, the deponent.

His only consolations were Squiff's toffee and Smithy's bull's eyes. He had not even a book to while away the weary hours.

Mr. Quelch grimly set him his task.

"I shall return here at five o'clock, Bunter," he said. "I shall expect you to have made considerable progress by then."

"Yes, sir," said Bunter dismally.

"I am sorry you are detained this afternoon, Bunter——"

"So am I, sir!" said Bunter, with deep feeling.

The Remove master coughed.

"Doubtless it will impress upon your mind, Bunter, the necessity of bestowing a little attention on your work."

"I—I think it would impress it better on my mind, sir, if—if I was in the quad!" said Bunter.



Potter made a swift and powerful movement, and Coker, to his great astonishment, sat down with a sudden bump on the floor. Potter didn't wait for Horace James to recover; he and Greene scuttled out of the Form-room.

"That will do," said Mr. Quelch. "No doubt after your detention this afternoon, Bunter, you will remember that a deponent verb is passive in form but active in meaning."

"Oh, yes, sir! Certainly!"

"Remember that this is for your own good, Bunter!" added Mr. Quelch as he withdrew.

Bunter snorted when the Form-master was gone.

Possibly it was for his good, but Bunter did not want Mr. Quelch to look after his good in this assiduous way. He would have preferred his Form-master to let him go to the bad a little.

"Oh dear!" groaned Bunter. "Rotten Latin, rotten verbs, rotten bosh! I wish I had a good murder story!"

He dipped his pen in the ink, wrote half a line, adorned it with a blot and a smudge, and then rested from his labours.

He started on the toffee, and found solace in it. The toffee disappeared in record time.

The bull's-eyes followed. By that time Bunter was feeling a little happier and looking a great deal stickier.

He was turning a dreary eye on his Latin grammar again, when the door suddenly opened, and Coker and Potter and Greene of the Fifth Form appeared in the doorway.

"This room will do," said Coker of the Fifth. "There's nobody here. More room here than in the study——"

"I say——" began Potter and Greene simultaneously.

Horace Coker interrupted them with a wave of the hand.

"Don't jaw, you fellows," he said. "I've always said that you talk too much. I'm going to show you that ju-jutsu trick. You first, Potter——"

"But——"

"You first!" rapped out Coker.

Coker of the Fifth prided himself on having what he called a short way with fags. Sometimes he had a short way with his fellow-Formers in the Fifth, too. Potter and Greene were looking very restive.

As a matter of fact, Potter and Greene wanted to be on the footer-field, but the great Horace was quite indifferent to that. He wanted to show them a ju-jutsu trick he had mastered, and he was going to show it to them.

"There's somebody here," said Greene.

Coker glanced carelessly round towards the fat junior sitting in solitary state amid the empty desks.

"Only a fag!" he said. "He doesn't matter!"

"Doesn't he!" said Billy Bunter warmly. "Don't you come playing the goat in this Form-room, Coker! Go into your own Form-room!"

"Prout's there," said Coker. "Besides, I'll come into any Form-room I like! Shut up, Bunter!"

"Look here——"

"If you want a thick ear, Bunter, you've only got to say so."

Bunter sniffed, and was silent. He did not want a thick ear; and Coker was only too liberal in the way he handed out those adornments.

"Come on, Potter!" said Coker impatiently.

George Potter unwillingly submitted to the ordeal. He wasn't interested in the developments of Coker's wrestling, but it was no use arguing with Coker.

"You see, I take a grip on you like this," said Coker, "and then I get you with my left like that—see?"

"I see," assented Potter.

"Now I've got you fairly locked, with scarcely any exertion on my

part!" grinned Coker. "Catch on?"
"Not quite."

"Well, try to get loose, that's all!"
"Right-ho!" said Potter.

He made a swift and rather powerful movement, and to Coker's great astonishment he—Coker—sat down with a sudden bump on the floor of the Form-room.

Potter did not wait for Horace Coker to recover. He joined Greene at the door, and the two Fifth-Formers scuttled away down the corridor. Somehow or other they were keener on football than on Coker's ju-jutsu demonstrations.

"Here, come back!" roared Coker.

He scrambled up rather dazedly.

"Come back, you duffers! I haven't finished yet!" he roared.

But it was clear that Potter and Greene had finished. They had disappeared from view down the passage.

"He, he, he!" cackled Bunter.

Coker, who was striding out in pursuit of the deserters, turned back. That "he, he, he!" seemed to annoy him, somehow. He strode across to Bunter.

"What are you cackling at?" he demanded.

"Well, you looked such an awful ass, you know," said Bunter.

"What?"

"You can't wrestle for toffee!" said the fat junior. "You don't know anything about ju-jutsu, Coker!"

Coker's reply was not in words. Words were quite inadequate to express his feelings. He reached across the desk and took hold of Bunter's fat ear with a sudden grasp.

"Yaroooh!" roared Bunter.

"Ow! Leggo!"

"Don't I know anything about wrestling?" asked Coker grimly, compressing his finger and thumb like a vice.

"Yow-ow! Yes!" gasped Bunter.
"Lots! No end! Yow-ow-ow! Beast! Yah! Oh, my ear! Leggo!"

Coker grinned and released the fat ear, and strode out of the Form-room in search of Potter and Greene. Billy Bunter rubbed his ear, which was crimson in hue, and ejaculated:

"Beast!"

And then he turned his attention once more dolorously to deponent verbs.

THE THIRD CHAPTER

GOOD GILBERT!

SKINNER of the Remove looked into the Form-room a few minutes after Coker was gone. Bunter blinked up drearily at him.

"Nice here?" asked Skinner, with a grin.

"Rotten!" groaned Bunter.

"It's too bad!" said Skinner sympathetically. "I heard you asking Wharton about a book in the quad, Bunter, so——"

"The beast might have brought me one!" said Bunter. "I suppose he's gone down to the footer and forgotten all about me."

"Lucky for you I'm such a kind and thoughtful chap!" said Skinner agreeably. "I've brought you a book, old top!"

"Eh?"

Bunter blinked at him suspiciously. Skinner of the Remove was a youth of very humorous proclivities, but his jokes were not generally good-natured. It was quite unlike Skinner to bother himself about a fellow in distress.

"What's the game?" asked Bunter suspiciously.

Skinner smiled blandly.

"No game!" he said. "I knew you wanted a book to read in detention, so I've brought you one. I call that kind, Bunter."

"If you're not pulling my leg——"
"Here it is!"

Skinner drew a volume out from under his jacket and held it up to view.

"It's a jolly good book," he said. "My Aunt Selina sent it to me for a birthday present. I haven't read it myself; Aunt Selina's taste in books isn't exactly the same as mine. But I'm sure you'll like it no end, Bunter. It's a real good thing!"

"Hand it over," said Bunter.

"Here you are, old fellow!"

Skinner tossed the book on the desk, and quitted the Form-room hurriedly—perhaps to escape Bunter's grateful thanks, or perhaps to escape the danger of being spotted there by Mr. Quelch.

Billy Bunter's fat face looked quite hopeful as he picked up the volume. He felt that it was uncommonly kind of Skinner to think of a fellow in distress like this.

But the next moment Bunter gave a snort of disgust.

The volume was a gilt-edged one, a coloured picture on the front representing a schoolboy, who seemed to be understudying, in expression, an expiring duck in a thunderstorm. The title, in gilt letters, was: "Good Gilbert, the Blind Schoolboy."

Bunter did not want to read any farther.

The adventures of Good Gilbert did not seem to him much more attractive than deponent verbs. And his gratitude to the humorous Skinner was summed up in the one word:

"Beast!"

He found a momentary consolation in shying the volume across the Form-room.

Then he turned to his exercises again.

But deponent verbs could not hold

Bunter's attention. He quitted his desk, and stared out of the window.

He found himself staring at the back of Mr. Quelch's head. The Remove master was standing in the quad talking to Monsieur Charpentier, the French master. Bunter popped back quickly.

"Oh dear!" he groaned.

He wandered round the Form-room like a caged animal and at last, in sheer desperation, picked up Skinner's attractive volume.

He sat down on a form and opened it. Bunter yawned over a few pages dismally. It was not exhilarating reading. Possibly it was edifying. But by no stretch of the imagination could it be considered exhilarating.

"Gilbert was very happy. The affliction of his blindness sometimes caused him to weep. But the serenity of his cherubic face soon returned. His schoolmates vied with one another in showing him acts of kindness. His goodness had won over to the path of virtue many naughty boys. His greatest grief was that his lack of sight interfered with his lessons. The joy he felt in mathematics was cruelly dashed. No longer could he see the beloved Greek characters or the algebraic symbols. This was the hardest to bear."

"Oh crumbs!" groaned Bunter, and once more he shied Good Gilbert across the Form-room. "What a silly owl! I wouldn't mind being blind if I could cut lessons, and everybody would give me things. I jolly well shouldn't find it hard to bear if I had to miss prep, I know that."

Bunter roamed round the Form-room again. It was barely four o'clock, and his detention was till

five. He groaned in anguish of spirit. The deponent verbs remained unattended; it was bad enough being shut up in the Form-room, without worrying over rotten Latin verbs, Bunter felt. In blank boredom he picked up the volume again, and opened it by chance, and read:

"Naughty Georgie, whose cruel and thoughtless blow had caused poor Gilbert's affliction, wept bitter tears of remorse and repentance."

Bang! The volume went to the floor again, to remain there this time. Deponent verbs were better than that!

Billy Bunter sat at his desk, and tried to fix his thoughts upon those dreadful verbs which were not only passive in form, but active in meaning. He rested his head on his fat arms at last, and slumbered.

He was awakened suddenly by a shake.

"Ow!" gasped Bunter.

He blinked up. It was five o'clock, and Mr. Quelch stood frowning before him.

"You have not finished your task, Bunter!" said the Remove master in a voice that resembled the rumble of distant thunder.

"Oh, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"Really, you incorrigibly idle boy

"Not at all, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"I—I—I— The fact is, sir, the—the—I—I fell asleep, sir—"

"I can see that, Bunter."

"The—the fact that I—I haven't done my task, sir, is—is the hardest to bear," said Bunter, with a dim recollection of Good Gilbert in his hazy mind.

"What!"

"My—my sight is—is very bad



Bunter was awakened by a shake. He blinked up, to see Mr. Quelch frowning over him. "You have not finished your task, Bunter!" thundered the Remove master.

to-day, sir," said Bunter, astutely putting to profit what he had just read in "Good Gilbert." "I—I felt that I ought to be careful of it, sir. It would be my greatest grief if lack of sight interfered with my lessons, sir."

Mr. Quelch gazed at him.

"If it is true that you have felt a strain upon your eyesight, Bunter, I will excuse you—"

"It—it was fearful, sir—"

"Nonsense!"

"Oh, sir—"

"I will excuse you this time," said Mr. Quelch. "I shall take measures for your sight to be properly examined, Bunter. If I find that you have been deceiving me, I shall cane you very severely."

"Oh!" gasped Bunter.

"You may go now!"

Billy Bunter went. His chief regret was that Good Gilbert was only a character in a book. Bunter would have given a great deal just then to be able to kick Gilbert.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER

BUNTER'S LATEST!

"HE, he, he!"

That sudden cackle from the Owl of the Remove sounded loud in the junior Common-room that evening. Several fellows glanced round at Billy Bunter.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "What the thump have you got an alarm-clock in your pocket for, Bunter?"

"Eh? I haven't!"

"Then what was that row?" asked Bob, looking puzzled.

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

"What's the merry joke?" asked Peter Todd, looking in surprise at his fat study-mate.

Bunter's sudden merriment was really a little mysterious. The Owl of the Remove had been sitting for some time in deep thought, oblivious of the fellows round him. And the outcome of his deep cogitations had been that sudden unmusical cachinnation.

And Bunter was still grinning. Evidently something of an extremely humorous nature was working in his fat brain.

"Whack it out, Bunter," said Squiff. "What's the screaming joke? Thinking of something awfully funny?"

"He, he! Yes."

"Your face?" asked Squiff innocently.

"Oh, really, Squiff——"

"Well, what is it, Bunty?" asked Bob Cherry. "You oughtn't to go off

suddenly like that without giving a reason. What little game have you been playing now?"

"I was just thinking," said Bunter.

"Gammon!"

"It was his greatest grief——"

"Eh?"

"That he couldn't do his lessons," said Bunter. "It wouldn't be much of a grief to me."

The juniors stared at Bunter. He seemed to be rather following some hidden train of thought than making a communication. But his mysterious remarks naturally caused surprise.

"What are you burbling about?" asked Hazeldene.

Bunter rose from his chair.

"Perhaps I've thought of a stunning stunt, and perhaps I haven't——"

And the Owl of the Remove rolled out of the room, apparently to avoid further questioning.

"Silly owl!" commented Bob Cherry.

And with that Bob dismissed from his mind Billy Bunter and his mysterious "wheeze," whatever it was.

But it wasn't dismissed from Bunter's mind. Bunter was grinning as he went down the passage, and he was grinning in his study when Peter Todd came along to Study No. 7 for prep. And Peter inquired the why and the wherefore of the broad grin in Bunter's fat face.

"Only your features, old chap," said Bunter. "Can't think of you without grinning. Look in a looking-glass, and you'll grin, too."

Peter asked no more questions. He and Tom Dutton worked at their prep.

Bunter sat at ease while his study-mates worked. Evidently he intended to "cut" prep again, in spite of the serious results of his last transgression.

Bunter was rather given to "chancing it with Quelchy" in the matter of prep; and he seemed to have decided to chance it again. Peter Todd finished his work and rose and yawned.

"That's done," he remarked. "You're a silly ass to cut prep, Bunter. You'll get a frightful ragging in the morning from Quelchy."

ought to see a doctor if this goes on! Have you felt it coming on long?"

"Rats!" answered Bunter.

Peter gave a shrug of the shoulders and left the study. Billy Bunter stretched himself luxuriously in the armchair, and again he grinned. Apparently he felt quite safe in cutting prep that evening. A little later he rolled out of Study No. 7, and made



Bob Cherry drew back his powerful right arm. But before he had time to do more, Bunter hopped actively into the passage. "Come back and be punched, you fat goat!" roared Bob.

"I don't think so," said Bunter. "Quelchy's rather a beast, but he's bound to be a bit sympathetic."

"Sympathetic because you've cut prep?" asked Peter, mystified.

"Nunno; I mean on account of my fearful affliction."

"What affliction?" roared Peter.

"Oh, nothing!"

"Mad as a hatter!" said Toddy, in amazement. "Really, Bunter, you

his way along the Remove passage to Study No. 1.

Prep was over there, and the Famous Five had gathered in that celebrated study for a chat on football. Billy Bunter blinked in, and Bob Cherry waved a hand at him.

"Pass on!" he said. "No free suppers here!"

"Oh, really, Cherry——"
Bunter rolled in.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER

HORACE COKER OBLIGES !

HARRY WHARTON & Co. continued to talk football. There was no supper "going" in the study; so it was not clear what Bunter wanted. But the Owl of the Remove evidently wanted something.

"I say, you fellows——"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Haven't I told you there's no supper?" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Go and call on Smithy. He's generally got a bone over for a stray dog!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The fact is, I want you to do something for me, Cherry."

"My dear Owl, I know you're expecting a postal-order by the very next post, and I know I'm not going to lend you anything on it," said Bob. "Roll away!"

"It isn't that! I want you to punch me!"

"Wha-a-at!"

Bob Cherry blinked at the Owl of the Remove. The Co. regarded him with astonishment. Billy Bunter had succeeded in surprising Study No. 1!

"Punch you!" howled Bob.

"Yes, that's it."

Bob doubled a large fist.

"Anything to oblige," he said.

"Where will you have it? I don't often find pleasure in obliging you, Bunter; but this time it will be a real treat!"

Bunter jumped back.

"Hold on——"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Changed your mind already?"

"Nunno. I—I want you to punch my head—not hard. Not hard enough to hurt me," explained Bunter anxiously. "Only hard enough to give me a fearful shock."

"I'm blessed if I understand," said Bob Cherry, staring at the Owl of the

Remove blankly. "If you're not potty, Bunter, what are you pretending to be potty for?"

"The pretendfulness is not terrific," said Hurree Singh. "The esteemed Bunter is realfully potty."

"Blessed if it doesn't look like it," said Frank Nugent in wonder.

"You fellows are awfully dense," said Bunter impatiently. "Gilbert had a shock caused by a punch, and that caused—ahem!——"

"Who on earth's Gilbert?"

"Oh, nobody you know!" said Bunter hastily.

"Great Scott!"

"What I really want is a pretended punch," said Bunter thoughtfully. "Of course, I don't want any real damage done. Then, when I tell the Head——"

"Tell the Head?" said Bob dazedly.

"Yes; when I tell the Head, I can say the calamity was caused by a brutal blow from you, Bob Cherry——"

"My hat!"

"What calamity?" yelled Wharton.

"Oh, nothing!"

Bob Cherry rose to his feet, a rather grim look on his face.

"I don't know what you're driving at, Bunter," he said. "I suppose you're trying to pull our leg, somehow. But you've asked me to punch you, and I'll do it——"

"Soft, you know," gasped Bunter.

"Hard as I can do it!" answered Bob. "Stand steady."

Bob Cherry drew back his powerful right arm. Before he had time to do more William George Bunter had hopped actively into the passage.

"Come back and be punched, you fat goat!" roared Bob.

"Yah!"

Evidently Bunter had decided not

to risk it. He rolled on down the Remove passage, with a frown of deep thought on his fat brow. He left the chums of the Remove deeply puzzled. Bunter's mysterious words really seemed to hint that he was not quite right in his head.

"Silly ass!" muttered Bunter discontentedly. "I've got to work it somehow, though. No good asking Toddy; he would punch me hard. So would any other beast in the Remove, I suppose. But it's got to be worked somehow."

Bunter went down the Remove staircase, still deep in thought on the subject of the strange and mysterious stunt that was working in his fat brain.

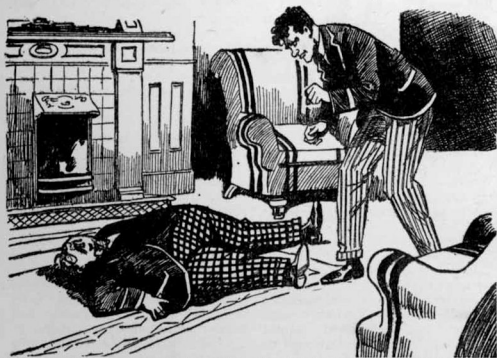
On the lower landing he found Potter and Greene of the Fifth leaning

on the window, and chatting. Potter and Greene were Coker's study-mates in the Fifth, but they were far from their study now, possibly not yearning for the great Horace's company that evening. It was Bunter's usual inquisitiveness that caused him to slacken pace as he passed and hear what the two Fifth-Formers were saying. They paid no heed to Bunter.

"Keep out of the study, for goodness' sake!" said Potter. "That howling ass will be giving us ju-jutsu if we go in. The silly owl doesn't know anything about it, and never will; but he'll take up the rest of the evening in showing us what he can do."

"What he can't do, you mean!" chuckled Greene.

Potter chuckled, too.



Billy Bunter went down on the hearth-rug, and his head banged on the rug with a loud thud. But instead of scrambling to his feet, the Owl of the Remove lay where he had fallen, his eyes closed. "Tumble up!" rapped Coker. "You can't go to sleep on my carpet, Bunter!"

"He jabbed his silly elbow into my eye showing me what he calls ju-jutsu an hour ago," said Potter. "I'm fed up!"

"Same here," said Greene. "The silly owl banged my napper against the mantelpiece. We'll give Coker a miss this evening."

"Yes, rather!"

Billy Bunter rolled on his way, and went down the lower stair. His round eyes were glimmering behind his big spectacles.

That little talk between Potter and Greene, which he had overheard, seemed to have put a new idea into Bunter's head. His steps took him in the direction of the Fifth Form passage.

He tapped at the door of the study that was honoured and distinguished by sheltering the great Coker.

"Come in!"

Bunter went in. Coker was at the table, studying a volume in which were depicted athletic figures in all the stages of wrestling. He glanced up, and frowned at the sight of Bunter.

"You ass, I thought it was Fitzgerald!" he grunted. "Here, Bunter, cut along to Fitzgerald's study and tell him to come here! I want to show him a ju-jutsu trick."

Bunter blinked at him.

"That's what I've come about, Coker!" he said meekly. Coker of the Fifth never had much politeness to waste on anybody, and least of all upon a fag of the Lower Fourth.

But Coker's leg was easy to pull, even by a fag—in fact, it was the easiest leg to pull in all Greyfriars! And William George Bunter was well aware of that fact.

"I'm awfully interested in ju-jutsu, Coker," went on Bunter, with some meekness.

Coker laughed.

"Lot of good you'd be at wrestling; Japanese style or any other style!" he said. "You'd burst!"

"Well, I thought you might be willing to show me a trick or two, as you know the whole thing from start to finish," said Bunter. "Temple of the Fourth thinks he knows something about ju-jutsu; so does Hurree Singh. But I told them I wasn't going to waste time with them if Coker would give me a show. Always best to come to the fountain-head. Don't you think so, Coker?"

Coker regarded Bunter more amiably.

"Of course, it's wasting your time," said Bunter. "But you could show me in a few minutes what would take any other fellow hours."

"That's so," said Coker. "There's precious few things I couldn't show you in ju-jutsu, Bunter, if it was worth my while. Dash it all, I don't mind showing you a trick or two! Come into the study."

Horace Coker rose to his feet, looking quite amiable. Coker could always be softened by flattery, and he liked his flattery in chunks. Bunter had administered it in chunks, and so everything in the garden, so to speak, was lovely.

"I'll show you the arm-lock that I was showing that duffer Potter in your Form-room this afternoon," said Coker, with a smile. "Just stand there, Bunter."

Bunter stood there.

"Now, I hold you like this—see?"

"I see," said Bunter.

"Then I get a grip like that," said Coker.

"Yes."

"Now you're absolutely helpless," smiled Coker. "I'm not exerting my strength—not in the least! But I've got you quite helpless."

"Have you?" gasped Bunter.

He did not feel helpless, but he was willing to take Coker's word for it.

"Quite!" said Coker. "Now, with the slightest turn of my right arm, I could lay you on the floor on your head."

"I—I say, do it!" gasped Bunter. "It will be all right on the hearth-rug, and—and I don't mind getting a—slight shock."

"Sure you don't mind?" asked Coker.

"N-n-not at all!"

"Then I'll show you."

Bump!

Billy Bunter went down on the hearth-rug, and his head banged on the rug with a loud thud.

The rug softened the blow, however, and Coker looked down on him with a smile, expecting to see Bunter scramble up.

But Bunter didn't scramble up.

He lay with his eyes closed behind his big spectacles, and Coker of the Fifth stared at him.

"Tumble up!" he rapped out. "You can't go to sleep on my study carpet, Bunter!"

Bunter sat up.

He put his hand to his eyes and blinked dazedly.

"I—I've had a shock!" he gasped.

"Not much of a shock," grinned Coker. "Tumble up, and I'll show you again, if you like."

"Where are you?"

"Eh?"

"Where are you?" repeated Bunter. "I can't see you."

"Can't see me?" repeated Coker blankly. "What do you mean? You're blinking straight at me with your blinking goggles, you owl!"

"Have you turned the light out?" asked Bunter.

"The light? No; you know I haven't," said Coker, puzzled and beginning to be angry. "What the thump are you driving at, Bunter? Get up before I kick you, you silly owl!"

"I—I can't see the light!"

"Eh?"

"I—I'm blind!"

"B-blind?" stuttered Coker.

"Yes. Oh, dear!"

THE SIXTH CHAPTER AWFUL!

"**B**LIND!" Horace Coker repeated the fearful word, blinking at the Owl of the Remove in blank astonishment.

Bunter rose slowly to his feet.

His eyes were blinking behind his big spectacles, and they certainly looked the same as usual. But, according to his own statement, Billy Bunter was blind—like Gilbert in the volume presented to Skinner of the Remove by Skinner's Aunt Selina.

"Are you trying to pull my leg, Bunter?" asked Coker angrily.

"Nunno! Where are you?"

"Here I am," snapped the irritated Coker. "Standing just in front of you."

"I can't see you."

"Gammon!"

"Will you lead me back to the Remove passage?" demanded Bunter hotly. "I should think you might have a little sympathy, Coker, when you've made me blind."

"I haven't, you silly owl!" hooted Coker. "I'll kick you back to the Remove passage, if you like."

"Oh, really, you know—"

"I give you one minute to get out of my study," said Horace Coker, in great exasperation. "I'll teach you to spin me yarns about being blind, you silly young ass! Get out!"

Bunter groped his way to the door.

If he were not blind, he certainly played his part very creditably. He bumped into a chair, and then into the table. He groped over the table, and sent an inkpot spinning.

There was a yell from Coker.

"Look out, you idiot!"

"Did—did I touch something?" gasped Bunter.

"You— you— you——" panted Coker.

He rushed to rescue the inkpot, which was streaming over a pile of papers. Then he turned on Bunter, who was groping blindly to the door.

"Get out!"

Coker's boot swung up, and was planted fairly behind Bunter. The fat junior did not need to grope his way to the doorway then. He flew through it, headlong.

Bump! Bunter landed in the passage, and roared.

"Now clear off!" shouted Coker. "If I have to come out to you, I'll kick you all the way to the Remove staircase."

"Help!" shouted Bunter.

"Shut up!" hissed Coker. "I'll help you, you fat fraud! Will you hop along, or shall I kick you along the passage?"

"Help!"

"That does it!" growled Coker.

And he rushed out of the study to kick Bunter along the passage as he had promised.

But Bunter's yells had brought several fellows out of the Fifth Form studies, as the Owl of the Remove had sagely calculated. Blundell and Bland and Fitzgerald came on the scene.

"What on earth's the matter?" demanded Blundell, the captain of the Fifth.

"Help!" yelled Bunter. "I'm blind!"

"What?"

"Blind!"

"Only some of his rotten spoofing!" snorted Coker. "He makes out he's been knocked blind by bumping his silly head on my study carpet. I'll blind him! A few kicks will set him right."

"Yaroo! Help!"

"Here, hold on!" exclaimed Blundell, pulling Coker back. "If there's anything wrong with the kid——"

"There isn't!" snapped Coker.

"Well, let's see."

"Rot!"

"Keep back!" said Blundell authoritatively.

And Horace Coker fumed and kept back.

Blundell stooped over Bunter and raised him to his feet. The Owl of the Remove blinked at him.

"Now, what does this mean?" demanded the captain of the Fifth. "Do you mean to say that you can't see me, Bunter?"

"No. Are you Bland?"

"I'm Blundell."

"Yes. I know your voice now," said Bunter. "Would you mind leading me back to the Remove passage, Blundell? I can't see, and I might fall over the stairs. I don't blame Coker. He was showing me a ju-jutsu trick when he banged my head and blinded me. It wasn't his fault. I think he ought to buy me a dog to lead me about."

"My hat!" gasped Coker.

Blundell of the Fifth regarded Bunter very doubtfully.

"Do you really mean to say that you can't see your way, Bunter?" he exclaimed.

"All is dark!" said Bunter.

"There's a light on in the passage, as usual."

"I—I can't see it."

Blundell whistled.

"My hat! That's jolly serious, if it's true," he said. "I don't see why he should say so if it wasn't. I'd better take you to your Form-master, Bunter."

"Yes, do," said Bunter feebly.

"I'd be ever so much obliged to you,

the Remove walked by his side without hesitation. If he was "spoofing," it was clear that the fat junior was prepared to carry out the spoof even in the terrific presence of the Remove master.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" Harry Wharton & Co. were coming down to the Common-room, and they met Blundell and his charge on their way to the Remove master's study. "What's



Bunter groped over Mr. Quelch's writing-desk, and knocked over an inkpot. The Remove master uttered a sharp exclamation as a stream of ink splashed across the desk. "Take care, Bunter!" "D-d-did I touch anything, sir?" asked the fat junior.

Blundell. Don't think I blame Coker. He couldn't help it."

"I believe he's spoofing!" growled Coker. "He'll bunk before you get him to his Form-master."

"I'll take jolly good care he doesn't," said Blundell grimly. "Come with me, Bunter."

He took a firm grip on Bunter's arm and led him away. The Owl of

the matter with Bunter?" demanded Bob Cherry. "What's he buzzing along here with his eyes shut for?"

"He says he's blind," said Blundell shortly.

"Blind!" yelled Bob.

"Bunter—blind!" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"I say, you fellows, don't worry about me," said Bunter faintly.

"Coker did it. He gave me a terrible shock bumping my head on the floor, showing me a ju-jutsu trick. He didn't mean it. I don't blame Coker. But I'm blind. It's awful! My greatest grief is that I shan't be able to do my lessons."

"Come on!" said Blundell.

He marched Billy Bunter on, leaving the Famous Five standing rooted to the passage floor, staring.

"Bunter—blind!" repeated Harry Wharton. "If—if it's true——"

"It's some new spoof," said Johnny Bull suspiciously. "You remember the time once when he made out he was deaf——"

"The blindness is not terrific," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, with a shake of the head.

Bob Cherry looked very serious.

"He always was a short-sighted owl," said Bob, in a low voice. "I—I suppose he might go blind. If it's true—poor old Bunter!"

"I think we'd better find out whether it's true before we waste a lot of sympathy on him," said Harry Wharton, rather dryly. "He says Coker gave him a shock, and that caused it. He was asking you to give him a shock half an hour ago, Bob."

Bob Cherry started.

"My hat! Was that——"

Wharton shrugged his shoulders.

"If Bunter's blind, we'll stand by him, and do everything we can to help," he said. "But I want a little proof first; and I rather think I shan't believe in it till a doctor's seen him, at least."

And the Famous Five waited in the passage, watching the closed door of Mr. Quelch's study. And as other juniors came along and inquired what they were waiting for, the news soon spread. In ten minutes, more than

half the Greyfriars Remove were waiting in the passage in an excited crowd—waiting for news of blind Bunter!

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER

FACING THE MUSIC!

BILLY BUNTER felt an inward tremor as he was marched into Mr. Quelch's study. The Remove master was a very keen gentleman; his pupils often compared his eyes to a pair of gimlets on account of their penetrating qualities. To keep up a "spoof" in Mr. Quelch's presence required nerve; and Bunter had more "cheek" than nerve. But he comforted himself with the reflection that Quelch wasn't a dashed doctor or an oculist, and couldn't know anyhow whether a chap was blind or not. Besides, Bunter calculated a great deal on touching Mr. Quelch's heart. Rusty and crusty as he was considered, it stood to reason that Henry Quelch had a heart somewhere—it couldn't possibly have been left out of his anatomy. If he had a heart surely it must be touched by so terrible a tale of woe. Bunter had observed, in glancing through Skinner's birthday book, that Good Gilbert's kind teachers had been deeply touched by Gilbert's misfortune. There was no reason why Mr. Quelch shouldn't be equally touched. Yet the Owl of the Remove felt a tremor run through him as he found himself standing under the steady gaze of Mr. Quelch's gimlet eyes.

"What is it?" asked Mr. Quelch. "Why have you brought Bunter here, Blundell?"

"He says——" began Blundell.

"One moment! Why are you staring in that peculiar manner, Bunter?"

"Am I, sir?" asked Bunter in an expiring voice.

"You are! What is the meaning of it?"

"I—I'm blind, sir."

Mr. Quelch jumped. Whether his heart was touched or not, undoubtedly he was startled and astonished.

"Blind!" he repeated.

"Yes, sir! It—it's awful, isn't it, sir?"

"Bless my soul!"

"He says it was caused by a shock he received in Coker's study, sir," said Blundell. "Coker was showing him some ju-jutsu tricks, and his head knocked on the floor, I understand. He says that brought it on."

"You speak as if you doubt his statement, Blundell."

"Well, sir——"

The Fifth-Former hesitated.

"Quite so," said Mr. Quelch, with a nod. "I also doubt Bunter's statement, very much indeed. I am not a surgeon, but I apprehend that it is very unlikely that blindness could be caused by knocking one's head on the floor. It would certainly be very unusual."

"All is dark, sir!" said Bunter with dramatic effect. "I—I shall never gaze upon the blessed sunshine, sir——"

"What?"

"I—I shall never hear the little birds singing in the woods, sir," continued Bunter pathetically.

"Why not, Bunter? I presume that this concussion has not caused you to become deaf also?"

Bunter started. He was overdoing it, as usual.

"I—I mean I shall never see the little birds singing, sir," he stammered.

"You would scarcely see them singing in any case, I should imagine," said Mr. Quelch dryly. "Will you be kind enough not to talk nonsense to me, Bunter?"

"Oh! Yes, sir!"

"When did you find that you could not see, Bunter?"

"On the spot, sir; as—as soon as my head banged. Coker had to help me out of his study, sir."

"And you cannot see me at the present moment?"

"No, sir," Bunter said, staring direct at the Remove master, and summoning up all his nerve. "I—I shouldn't know it was you, sir, excepting for your voice. It—it might be the Head, or—or Gosling, sir, for all I can see. I know your voice, sir, of course; it's so musical, sir, and——"

"That will do, Bunter!" snapped Mr. Quelch.

He regarded the fat junior in perplexity for some moments.

It was possible, of course, that Bunter's statement was well founded, and in that case such a tragedy as the loss of sight was deserving of the deepest sympathy.

"I shall have to send for the doctor at once, Bunter," said Mr. Quelch.

"Oh, certainly, sir! I—I want to see him, of course," faltered Bunter.

"It will be very inconvenient for Dr. Pillbury to come up to the school at this late hour, Bunter."

"I—I wouldn't mind leaving it till to-morrow, sir."

"Not a moment must be lost, if what you state is really the case, Bunter. For the last time, I ask you whether you are telling me the truth, or whether you are playing some unscrupulous trick with a view to escaping lessons."

Bunter shivered inwardly. What on earth made Quelch think of such a thing as that, he wondered. He was sure that Good Gilbert had never been suspected in this way by his kind teachers.

"Oh, sir!" he murmured. "I—I

never thought of such a thing, sir. It's my greatest grief that——"

"Very well, Bunter. I will telephone to Dr. Pillbury, and he will come to see you at once. You had better remain here. You may go, Blundell."

Blundell of the Fifth quitted the study, looking very grave. Outside in the passage a score of voices addressed him as he emerged and closed the door behind him.

"How's Bunter, Blundell?"

"Is he really blind?"

Blundell of the Fifth shrugged his shoulders.

"Blessed if I know," he said. "Mr. Quelch is keeping Bunter in his study and is going to ring up Pillbury to come and see him."

"He's keeping up the yarn before Quelch, then?" exclaimed Skinner. "Yes."

"Phew! What a neck!"

Blundell went his way; but the Remove fellows remained crowded in the corridor. Harry Wharton & Co. were very grave now—it looked more and more as if there was truth in "Bunter's latest." They were not convinced, but they were beginning to feel that there was probably something in it. Surely the fat Owl of the Remove would not venture upon such a "spoo" with so exceedingly dangerous a customer as Mr. Quelch! Certainly there was no other fellow in the Remove who would have had the required nerve. They did not remember, for the moment, that according to the proverb, "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread."

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER STICKING TO IT!

"**Y**ou may sit down, Bunter." Mr. Quelch spoke kindly enough.

"Thank you, sir!" said Billy Bunter.

He looked round for a chair.

Fortunately—for Bunter—he remembered in time that, being blind, he couldn't possibly see where there was a chair. And it came into his mind at the same moment that possibly "Quelch" was trying to "catch" him out. If Bunter had walked to a chair and sat down, certainly the Form-master would not have believed that he was blind.

So Bunter put out his fat hands and began to grope. He groped over Mr. Quelch's writing-desk, and knocked over an inkpot. The Remove master uttered a sharp exclamation as a stream of ink shot across the desk.

"Take care, Bunter!"

"D-d-did I touch anything, sir?"

"You have knocked over my inkpot!" snapped Mr. Quelch.

"Oh, dear! Sorry, sir! I—I can't help being blind, sir!" said Bunter pathetically.

Mr. Quelch suppressed his feelings. He rose to his feet, took Bunter by the shoulder, and led him to a chair.

Bunter sat down.

Mr. Quelch was busy for the next few minutes, mopping up spilt ink. There was a twinkle in Bunter's eyes as he watched him. Considering that he was blind, he derived a remarkable amount of entertainment from watching Mr. Quelch mopping up ink.

The Remove master went to the telephone, and rang up Dr. Pillbury in Friardale, and requested him to come up to the school as speedily as he could. Then he returned to his table, took up his pen, and plunged into his work again.

Bunter sat still, not in a very happy mood now. It was likely to be at least half an hour before Dr. Pillbury arrived; and sitting in the Form-

master's study for half an hour was not an exhilarating occupation. So far as Bunter knew, this sort of thing had not happened to Good Gilbert. Good Gilbert was loved by his kind teachers, and his loving schoolfellows were always bringing him little gifts. That would have suited Bunter; but sitting in Mr. Quelch's study was not pleasant at all. Bunter shifted and squirmed and groaned inwardly. Mr. Quelch glanced across at him.

"Kindly keep still, Bunter."

"Oh, yes, sir!"

Bunter resigned himself to his fate.

It was a good half-hour before there was a sound of a car and Dr. Pillbury's voice was heard in the corridor. Mr. Quelch rose and opened the study door. The stout medical gentleman came bustling in; and for a moment Bunter had a view of a crowd

of Remove fellows in the passage. Then the door closed again.

Mr. Quelch shook hands with the school doctor, and proceeded to explain to him what had happened. Dr. Pillbury listened with evident surprise, his eyes fixed on Bunter.

"Extraordinary!" he commented.

"I cannot, of course, pass an opinion on the matter myself," said Mr. Quelch; "I have no scientific knowledge of the subject. I think I should mention, however, that this boy Bunter is exceedingly lazy, and has often been guilty of tricks to escape his lessons. On one occasion at least he affected illness."

"Quite so," said Dr. Pillbury. "I will examine the boy. If the matter is serious, of course, a specialist must be called in."

"Certainly."



Yelling wildly, the Owl of the Remove was yanked to the washstand and washed—thoroughly. It was the most thorough wash Bunter had had for a long time!

"Come here, Bunter," said Dr. Pillbury.

Billy Bunter rose from his chair, and was about to cross over to where the medical gentleman was sitting; but he remembered in time, and walked in the wrong direction. He bumped into a small table before the window, upon which stood a jar of flowers.

Crash!

The table reeled, and the jar went to the floor, and there was a smashing and a splashing.

"Oh dear!" ejaculated Bunter. "Have I—have I knocked something over, sir?"

"You have!" said Mr. Quelch in a grinding voice.

"I—I'm awfully sorry, sir! Being blind, you know—"

Mr. Quelch took Bunter by the shoulder and led him to the doctor. The fat junior stood before Dr. Pillbury, who fixed a very penetrating gaze on him.

"Let me see your eyes, Bunter!"

"Yes, sir."

"Remove your glasses, please!"

Bunter removed his big spectacles. The doctor examined his eyes very keenly. Billy Bunter winked and blinked under his inspection. There was growing disbelief in Dr. Pillbury's face.

"Where did you receive this concussion you speak of, Bunter?" he asked.

"Oh, on the back of the head, sir!"

"And it was immediately followed by the loss of sight?"

"Immediately, sir."

"You have seen nothing since?"

"Nothing, sir."

"You cannot see me at the present moment?"

"No, sir."

Dr. Pillbury coughed. His expression showed that he did not believe

Bunter's statement; but he seemed a little perplexed.

"A more thorough examination will, of course, be necessary," he said, rising. "Bunter suffers from astigmatism, but otherwise his eyes are very strong. If he is actually blind at the present moment it is very surprising to me—very surprising, indeed. If you desire it, Mr. Quelch, I will telephone for a London specialist the first thing in the morning."

"I suppose that is essential, if Bunter persists in his statement," said Mr. Quelch.

"Undoubtedly!" Dr. Pillbury turned to the fat junior again. "If you are exaggerating for any reason, Bunter, I recommend you to tell your Form-master the truth now."

"Oh, sir!" said Bunter.

"The specialist's fee for a visit to Greyfriars will be ten guineas, which your father will be called upon to pay," said Dr. Pillbury. "You realise that that is a serious matter."

Bunter's fat brain swam for a moment. He could imagine the feelings of William Samuel Bunter, Esquire, when he was presented with a bill for ten guineas.

But it was really too late for retreat now. Like other great men mentioned in history, Bunter had burned his boats behind him. To own up now meant at the least a flogging from the Head. He had deceived his Form-master, or attempted to deceive him; he had knocked over Mr. Quelch's inkpot; he had smashed a jar of flowers; he had brought the busy doctor to the school at nine in the evening. That list of sins would call for a flogging at the very least.

A flogging in hand was worse than a bill for ten guineas in the bush, so to speak.

So Bunter stuck to his guns. He



Feeling before him with his hands, Bunter ran into the page, who was carrying a tray to Mr. Prout's study. There was a gasp from Trotter and the tray went to the floor with a crash. "Oh dear!" exclaimed Bunter. "Have I run into somebody?"

had really left himself no choice in the matter.

"You understand?" snapped the school doctor.

"Yes, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"You have nothing to say to Mr. Quelch?"

"Only—only that I'm much obliged to him, sir, for his kind sympathy to me under this terrible affliction."

Mr. Quelch coughed; and Dr. Pillbury made a grimace.

"Very well!" said the medical gentleman. "I will make the appointment with the eye specialist at as early an hour as possible, Mr. Quelch."

"Thank you, Dr. Pillbury!"

And the doctor took his leave.

Mr. Quelch surveyed Bunter with a very keen gaze when the medical gentleman was gone. Even the keen Removemaster's suspicions were

shaken now. His voice was kinder as he addressed Bunter:

"I shall accept your assurance for the present at least, Bunter. If this affliction has really fallen upon you, you may count upon the utmost kindness and consideration. I will ask Wharton to take you in his charge."

Mr. Quelch opened the study door. Nearly all the Remove were crowded in the passage now. There was a buzz of voices, which died away as the Removemaster appeared.

"Wharton!"

"Yes, sir!"

The captain of the Remove stepped forward.

"Bunter is apparently blind, Wharton, and, if this is actually the case, he is in need of care. He will be seen by a specialist to-morrow, when the matter will be placed beyond the shadow of a

doubt. May I ask you, my boy, to take charge of Bunter in the interval?"

"Certainly, sir!"

Bunter made a step towards the door, and remembered again, and began to grope. Mr. Quelch caught him by the collar just before he was able to knock the clock off the mantelpiece.

"This way, Bunter!"

Harry Wharton led the fat junior down the passage, amid a puzzled, perplexed, but sympathetic Remove.

THE NINTH CHAPTER

POOR OLD BUNTER!

"**P**oor old Bunter!"

"Poor old rats!" murmured Skinner.

"Shut up, Skinner!"

"I say, you fellows," said Bunter, "I don't mind Skinner! He can't help being a rotten cad, can he?"

"Why, you fat, cheeky chunk of lard," exclaimed Skinner wrathfully, "I'll jolly well——"

Bob Cherry jerked Skinner back with a grip of iron on his collar.

"Let go!" yelled Skinner. "He's only spoofing, you silly owl!"

"Give him a jolly good hiding, Bob!" said Bunter. "I think even Skinner ought to be decent at such a fearful time——"

Bob Cherry jerked Skinner away, and he fell up against the wall with a bump.

"Look here——" gasped Skinner.

"Shut up!"

"How did Bunter know it was Bob Cherry that collared me, if he can't see?" howled Skinner.

"My hat!" ejaculated Bob. "That's so! How did you know, Bunter?"

Bunter gasped.

"I—I—I——"

"Yes, how did you know, you

bounder?" demanded Vernon-Smith.

"I knew Bob would stand by me, now I'm blind," said Bunter. "Bob Cherry isn't the chap to let Skinner bully me now I'm blind and can't stand up for myself!"

"Well, that's so!" said Bob.

"I guess that won't wash!" said Fisher T. Fish. "I kinder calculate that Bunter can see as well as any other galoot here!"

"You shut up, Fishy!"

"Come on, Bunter, old chap!" said Wharton.

Wharton was perplexed; but the bare possibility of Bunter being blind was enough to make him gentle and kind to the fat junior.

"Where—where are you taking me?" murmured Bunter.

"To your study, old fellow."

"Mind how you get me up the stairs," said Bunter.

"I'll be jolly careful!"

Wharton led the Owl of the Remove away, and very carefully piloted him up the staircase. Half of the Remove followed them. The juniors were very much interested in blind Bunter.

Wharton led him into Study No. 7 and Peter Todd placed him in the armchair. Half a dozen fellows crowded into the study, and a dozen more crowded round the doorway. Most of them were quite keen to do anything they could for blind Bunter, though probably every fellow there was afflicted with a lingering doubt.

Bunter sat down very comfortably in the study armchair, with a fat smile of satisfaction on his face.

To-morrow and the specialist he dismissed from his fat mind. For the present he felt himself in clover. From being the most insignificant fellow in the Remove, he had suddenly become that Form's most

considered member. The benefits that had accrued to Good Gilbert in his affliction were going to accrue to Bad Bunter, if he could contrive it—and he thought he could.

"Anything we can do for you, kid?" asked Bob Cherry.

"I feel a bit hungry," said Bunter. "The—the shock seems to have brought it on."

"My dear chap, we'll have some supper in two ticks!"

"Yes, rather!"

Peter Todd pulled the armchair, with Bunter in it, to the table. A dozen fellows went to their study cupboards to collect tit-bits to grace the supper-board.

In a very short time Billy Bunter was spreading himself in enjoyment for such a supper as did not come his way once in a term.

He was still going strong when Wingate of the Sixth came along the Remove passage with the announcement that it was bed-time.

"Let Bunter finish his supper, Wingate," said Bob Cherry. "He's blind, you know."

"Is he?" said Wingate, with a grunt. "He seems to be helping himself pretty easily for a fellow who can't see."

"Oh, really, Wingate——"

"Anyhow, it's bed-time," said the Greyfriars captain. "Cut off!"

"I say, Wingate, let me finish the last tart——"

"The what?" asked Wingate.

"The last tart," said Bunter, reaching out to the dish that had contained a dozen jam-tarts when his supper started.

Wingate smiled grimly.

"How do you know there's only one more tart, Bunter?" he asked.

"I—I——"

"Because he can jolly well see it!" said Skinner from the passage.

"I—I——" stammered Bunter.

"Well, get off to bed," said Wingate. "Now, then, get a move on, the lot of you!"

Bunter grabbed the last tart, and munched it as Harry Wharton led him out of the study. But Wharton was certainly feeling very suspicious now. So were the other fellows. But they felt that they ought to give Bunter the benefit of the doubt, so long as a vestige of doubt remained, at least.

Wharton led him very carefully to the Remove dormitory. Bunter sat on a bed while Bob Cherry took off one boot for him and Frank Nugent took off the other. The Owl of the Remove rather liked being waited on; and assuredly he was not likely to exert himself so long as sympathetic fellows were prepared to wait on him.

Skinner watched the proceedings with a sarcastic grin. Skinner was a rather cynical youth, and probably would not have believed Bunter's story if it had been true. Certainly he did not believe it now.

"Rather rotten that poor old Bunter shouldn't have been allowed to finish his supper," said Skinner.

"Have some toffee, Bunter?"

"Yes, old chap!" said Bunter at once.

"Here you are!"

Skinner extended a cake of soap to the fat junior.

Bunter glared at him.

"You rotter! What do you mean? Take it away!" he snorted.

"Take what away?" smiled Skinner. "Don't you like toffee? You said you'd have some. It's jolly good toffee, Bunter!"

"I guess Bunter can see jolly well

for a blind man!" chortled Fisher T. Fish. "Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter started. Once more he had given himself away. Rather too late he reached out for the soap.

"Thank you, Skinner——"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Skinner. "You silly owl, can't you see you've just given yourself away now?"

"My hat!" murmured Bob Cherry. "He—he knew it wasn't toffee! How did he know?"

"I—I smelt it was soap!" gasped Bunter.

Skinner chortled.

"Smell this soap, you fellows," he said. "It's unscented, and I wasn't holding it within a yard of Bunter. If anybody here can smell it's soap at a foot off, I'll eat it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Now, then, tumble in!" said Wingate of the Sixth, appearing in the doorway. And the Removites turned in, most of them sceptical by this time as to the genuineness of Bunter's blindness.

THE TENTH CHAPTER

WASHING BUNTER!

CLANG!
The rising-bell sounded in the autumn morning, and the Removites of Greyfriars awoke and yawned. Bob Cherry was usually the first out of bed, after the first clang of the rising-bell. But on this special morning Harold Skinner preceded him.

Generally, Skinner remained in bed as late as possible. Doubtless he had his own reasons for hopping out actively as soon as the rising-bell clanged on this occasion.

He came over to Billy Bunter's bed, and shook the fat junior. He was careful not to speak; but he shook him vigorously.

Bunter's round eyes opened, and he blinked sleepily.

"Leggo!" he murmured. "I'm not going to get up this morning! I can't go in to lessons, as I'm blind! Besides, I feel weak."

Shake, shake, shake!

"Leggo!" yelled Bunter. "Skinner, you rotter——"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Skinner.

"I say, you fellows, make Skinner leggo——"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! How do you know it's Skinner?" roared Bob Cherry.

"The—the beast said—I—I heard his voice——"

"He didn't speak!" shouted Squiff.

"I—I——"

"I was jolly careful not to speak," chuckled Skinner. "I wanted to show up the blessed spoofer!"

"So your sight's come back suddenly, has it, Bunter?" demanded Wharton sarcastically.

"Eh? Certainly not!"

"Then how did you know it was Skinner?"

"I—I recognised his voice—I—I mean, I—I recognised his touch," said Bunter. "His bony claws, you know——"

"Too thin, I guess!" chuckled Fisher T. Fish.

"The thinfulness is terrific!"

"For goodness' sake chuck up that silly gammon now, Bunter!" exclaimed Nugent. "You've given yourself away!"

"I think it's pretty clear now," said Harry Wharton in great disgust. "What put the stunt into your silly head, Bunter?"

"Oh, really, Wharton——"

"Why, this must be the stunt he was thinking out when he started cackling in the Common-room yesterday!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.



"What does this mean?" asked Mr. Quelch in amazement, as Coker marched the squirming Bunter into the Remove master's study. "This fat fraud made out he was blinded in my study last evening!" exclaimed Coker. "It's all spoof, sir!"

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

"It's as plain as anything!" exclaimed Bob. "He got the idea from somewhere yesterday, and——"

"I didn't!" roared Bunter. "I—I never thought of such a thing. You fellows might be a bit sympathetic in my fearful affliction."

"There isn't any affliction!" howled Bob.

"I keep on telling you I'm blind. Some blind chaps' schoolfellows are kind and sympathetic, and bring them little gifts," said Bunter. "Fat lot of that here, I must say. Beasts!"

"Spoof!"

"Who's going to put my boots on for me?"

"Nobody, I fancy!" said Wharton, laughing.

"I say, we'll wash him, though!" said Bob Cherry. "It's time he had

a good wash. He hasn't had one since we ducked him that time when we were caravanning!"

"Hear, hear!"

"We'll all lend a hand at that!" exclaimed Johnny Bull.

There was a roar of protest from Bunter.

"Beasts! I don't want to be washed! Keep off, you rotters!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bob Cherry shook his head.

"We're bound to help a blind chap," he said. "You can't see to wash yourself, can you, Bunty?"

"Nunno!"

"Then we're bound to wash you!"

"Yes, rather!"

"The washfulness is very necessary, Bunter, and it shall be terrific!"

"Beasts! Yarooooogh!"

Billy Bunter dodged round the beds

as half a dozen of the Remove made for him. If any further proof was needed that Bunter's blindness was "spoofo," it was afforded now. Bunter dodged round one bed and scrambled over another and dodged round a third, and then doubled back along the dormitory, with the yelling juniors after him. Certainly a blind fellow would have met with disaster in that hot chase up and down the Remove dormitory; and most certainly Billy Bunter could see where he was going.

But there was no escape for Bunter. If he was blind, he needed washing by his kind schoolfellows; and they were going to wash him. If he wasn't blind, it was his own fault.

The Owl of the Remove was captured and yanked back to his washstand, yelling. There he was washed—thoroughly. It was the most thorough wash Bunter had had for a long, long time. When he opened his mouth to yell, a lather of soap crammed into it, and he spluttered and gasped wildly.

The Removites washed him, with howls of laughter, and howls of quite a different kind from Bunter.

When they had finished the fat junior was certainly much cleaner than he had been at any time during that term. He clutched up a towel—seeing where it was quite easily, in spite of his blindness. He was spluttering with wrath when he rolled out of the dormitory.

"Hold on, Bunter!" shouted Bob Cherry. "You want to be helped downstairs, don't you, now you're blind?"

"Oh! Ah! Yes! Of—of course!" stammered Bunter.

"Hold on a minute; I'm going to lead you down by your ear!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'll take the other ear," said

Johnny Bull. "We must see Bunter safe, now he's blind. Don't be afraid we'll let go, Bunter; we'll hold on jolly tight!"

"Beasts!"

Billy Bunter rolled out.

"After him!" shouted Bob.

Bunter broke into a run, and escaped to the stairs. Not till he was out of the reach of the merry Removites did he begin to grope around and feel his way, step by step, in order to make a proper impression upon anyone who might observe him. The game was up, evidently, so far as the Remove was concerned. Bunter's schoolfellows were not likely to shower kind attentions upon him and bring him little gifts, as Good Gilbert's schoolfellows had done.

But Bunter still hoped to share Good Gilbert's luck so far as getting out of lessons was concerned. The "stunt" had not "panned out" as well as the Owl of the Remove had hoped, but he felt that there was still something in it; and even one day of slacking was so much to the good, from Bunter's point of view. And so, when he caught sight of Mr. Quelch in the distance, Billy Bunter stared straight before him and felt his way along with his fat hands—and made it a point to run into Trotter, the page, who was carrying a tray to Mr. Prout's study. There was a gasp from Trotter, and a crash as the tray went down.

"Oh, dear!" said Bunter. "Have I run into somebody?"

"My heye!" gasped Trotter.

"Bunter!"

"Oh, yes, sir! Is that Mr. Quelch?"

"Why did you run into Trotter like that, Bunter?"

"I'm blind, sir," said Bunter meekly.

Mr. Quelch compressed his lips.

"Why is not Wharton taking care of you, as I directed?"

"I'm afraid Wharton's rather selfish, sir."

"You must not wander about in this way, Bunter. Ah, here is Wharton! Wharton, I asked you to keep Bunter under your care for a time."

"Ye-e-es, sir; but—but——"

"But what?" snapped Mr. Quelch.

"Oh, nothing, sir!" stammered Harry.

He did not feel disposed to give Bunter away to the Form-master.

"You will kindly take care of him, Wharton; at least, until the oculist has seen him."

"Very well, sir."

Mr. Quelch rustled away, and the Owl of the Remove grinned at Wharton.

"You fat fraud——" said Harry.

"Lead me into the quadrangle, please!"

"You fat rotter! You can see your way as well as I can!"

"You heard what Mr. Quelch said," grinned Bunter. "Lead me into the quad, and if you ain't jolly careful with me I shall have to complain to Quelchy. I don't want to get you into trouble with Quelchy, Wharton, but if you ain't jolly careful I shall have to complain."

And the captain of the Remove, suppressing his feelings, led Billy Bunter into the quad, and remained in charge of him until the bell rang for breakfast.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER

THE HISTORY OF THE MYSTERY!

BILLY BUNTER came into the Form-room with the rest of the Remove that morning. Harry

Wharton led him there. When Mr. Quelch came in he glanced very sharply at Bunter.

"You do not feel any better this morning, Bunter?" he asked.

"No, sir! Worse!" said Bunter promptly.

"Do you feel any pain in your eyes, Bunter?"



"Dare you assert to me, at this moment, that you are blind?" thundered Mr. Quelch, swishing the cane.

"I—I believe I can see now, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"Yes, sir—awful! Something like burning hot daggers, sir——"

"What?"

"And something like red-hot gimlets, sir."

Mr. Quelch breathed hard.

"You will be excused lessons this morning, Bunter. You may sit in your place and listen."

Bunter grunted.

He might almost as well have been doing lessons as sitting in his place unoccupied, while the other fellows did theirs. This was not the way a blind chap ought to be treated.

"If you please, sir—" he began.

"Well, Bunter?"

"I—I think I should feel better out of doors, sir——"

"Nonsense!"

"I don't want to cut the Form-work, sir," said Bunter. "It's my greatest grief that I shall have to miss lessons——"

"That will do, Bunter!"

"But I think, sir——"

"You will kindly be silent!"

Lessons commenced in the Remove-room, Billy Bunter sitting in a state of great discontent, and looking on. He heard the other fellows construe in turn, and it was some comfort not to be called on. But he was dreadfully bored. A really sympathetic Form-master would have allowed him to walk in the quad, instead of sitting there; Bunter felt that. Good Gilbert, evidently, had had a much kinder Form-master than Bunter had.

During the morning, Mr. Quelch was called from the Form-room to answer a call on the telephone. And when the Remove was dismissed, he called to Bunter.

"The specialist cannot get here before six, Bunter. You will be ready to see him at that hour."

"Very well, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"You will take Bunter out, Wharton."

"Yes, sir."

The captain of the Remove led Bunter from the Form-room. In the quad he gave the fat junior a very expressive look.

"You fat, spoofing bounder!" said Harry in concentrated tones. "How

long are you going to keep this up?"

"Oh, really, Wharton——"

"The specialist will bowl you out when he comes."

"Rot! I—I say, Wharton, can you lend me five bob?"

"No!" roared Wharton.

"I'm expecting a postal-order tomorrow morning," said Bunter, blinking at him. "I think you might lend me five bob on it, now I'm blind. Of course, I'll hand you the postal-order immediately it comes!"

"I'll hand you a thick ear, you fat fraud!" growled Wharton.

"You might be a bit sympathetic! Gilbert's schoolfellows——"

Bunter stopped in time.

"Who the thump is Gilbert? You've mentioned him a dozen times," said Harry impatiently. "What are you driving at?"

"Oh, nothing!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" came a roar from a dozen Removites who were standing in a group round Skinner in the quad under the elms. Skinner had a book in his hand, and was reading aloud from it. Bunter gave a jump as he recognised the gilt volume which Aunt Selina had presented to her hopeful nephew. Evidently Harold Skinner had remembered it, and had put two and two together.

"Hallo! What's the joke?" called out Wharton.

Skinner roared.

"I lent Bunter this book when he was detained yesterday. It's called 'Good Gilbert, the Blind School-boy'——"

"Oh, my hat!"

"That's where he got the wheeze from!" howled Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's all about a blind schoolboy, whose greatest grief was that his

affliction caused him to miss his lessons," chortled Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Why, Bunter's very words!" exclaimed Wharton.

"I say, you fellows——"

"So now we've got to the bottom of it," grinned Vernon-Smith. "That book ought to be shown to Quelchy!"

Bunter jumped.

"D-d-don't let Quelchy see it!" he gasped. "I—I say, you fellows, Quelchy would—would misunderstand."

"You mean, he would understand!" grinned Squiff.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yah! Beasts!"

Billy Bunter rolled away, leaving the Removites yelling. But Bunter did not heed their yelling. He had caught sight of Coker of the Fifth in the quad—a rather remarkable circumstance, considering that he was blind—and he bore down upon Coker. Billy Bunter had business with Horace Coker.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER

PAYING THE PIPER!

"I SAY, Coker!"

Horace Coker stared grimly at Bunter. Potter and Greene, who were with their chum, grinned.

Coker had been rather worried that day. Since the misadventure of Bunter in his study he had not been showing off any more ju-jutsu tricks. Indeed, Coker wished that he had never heard of ju-jutsu. Certainly, he could not have foreseen the calamity that had happened to Bunter—no fellow could have. But it was awful, all the same.

And Coker, who was a good-hearted fellow, repented that he had kicked Bunter out of his study—after he was blind! Of course, he

hadn't believed it; but now it looked genuine. Bunter had gone before his Form-master; a specialist was coming down. Coker was convinced, and he was sincerely sorry. He was just remarking to Potter and Greene that he thought he ought to do something for Bunter, when the Owl of the Remove astonished him by coming up to him in the quad, with the greeting: "I say, Coker!"

It was said of old that liars should have good memories. And it was Bunter's weakness that he had a very bad memory. He had forgotten, for the moment, that blind fellows couldn't see!

"I've been looking for you," continued Bunter.

"Looking for me?" gasped Coker.

"Yes. I've got a bone to pick with you," said Bunter. "You see, you made me blind. I don't blame you; you couldn't help it, in the circumstances. But that's how it stands. A specialist is coming, and he's going to charge ten guineas. I think you ought to pay it, Coker. You've got plenty of money."

Horace Coker breathed hard.

"I've got plenty of money," he assented.

"You could pay it if you liked," said Bunter.

"I could—if I liked."

"Well, I think you ought to," said Bunter. "There'll be a fearful row at home if that bill goes to my father!"

"I dare say there will," assented Coker.

"As you did it, you ought to pay," argued Bunter. "You've got the money. It's up to you, Coker. You see that?"

"If I did it, I ought to pay, certainly," said Coker, with unusual self-restraint. "I was just saying to

Potter that if you were really blind, I'd see you through somehow."

"Oh, good!" said Bunter. "Well, if you stand the money for the specialist it will be all right. I don't want to worry them at home by letting them know that I'm blind. I may recover, you know."

"You may!" said Coker.

"I think you will!" grinned Potter.

"If you like to hand me the money I'll pay the man when he comes, and it will be all right," said Bunter.

Potter and Greene chuckled. Horace Coker was breathing harder and harder. He seemed to be on the verge of a volcanic eruption.

"You're sure that you're quite blind, Bunter?" he said in a suppressed voice.

Bunter nodded cheerfully.

"Oh, quite sure!" he answered.

"You can't see anything?"

"Nothing at all."

"You can't see me, f'rinstance?"

"Nunno!"

"Then how"—Coker's voice began to resemble thunder—"then how did you know me just now?"

"Eh?"

"You marched right up to me and spoke to me by name," said Coker. "How did you do it, if you were blind?"

"I—I——"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Potter and Greene.

Bunter backed away. He did not like the expression on Horace Coker's face.

"I'm waiting for your answer, Bunter!" said Coker grimly.

"I—I—I—— You see——"

"The question is, whether you see," said Coker, with grim humour. "I think you do."

"Ha, ha, ha!" came in a yell from Potter and Greene.

Billy Bunter blinked at them indignantly.

"I call it rather unfeeling to cackle at a fellow who's blind," he said warmly. "You ought to be a bit sympathetic to a chap suffering under a fearful affliction—— Yaroooh! Leggo, Coker!"

Horace Coker had laid a sudden, powerful grasp on Bunter's collar. His rugged face was crimson with wrath.

"You fat villain!" he gasped.

"Ow! Yow! Help!"

"Come along!" roared Coker.

"Yaroooh! I won't! W-w-where are you going?" gasped Bunter.

"I'm going to take you to your Form-master, and tell him just how blind you are, you spoofing rotter!" said Coker grimly.

"I—I won't go! Yaroooh! Help!" Bunter struggled, but he was an infant in the grasp of the powerful Fifth-Former. Coker of the Fifth marched him directly towards the School House, heedless of his struggling and wriggling and spluttering. Right into the School House he marched him, and on to Mr. Quelch's study.

Coker banged at the door with his disengaged hand.

"Come in!"

Coker threw the door open.

Mr. Quelch was in his study, and he raised his eyebrows at the sight of Bunter squirming, with Horace Coker's iron grip on his collar.

"What does this mean?" exclaimed the Remove master in amazement.

Coker gasped for breath.

"That fat fraud, sir——"

"What?"

"I—I mean, Bunter—Bunter makes out that he was blinded in my study last evening, sir."

"I am aware of that, Coker. A specialist——"

"It's all spoof, sir!" roared Coker.

"It is what?"

"I mean, Bunter was pulling your leg. I—— That is to say, it's all lies, sir!" stammered Coker. "He can see as well as ever he did. He came up to me in the quad and spoke to me by name. He was twenty yards away when he saw me, and he came across——"

"I—I didn't!" gasped Bunter.

"Potter and Greene were with me, sir, and they saw him. It's all spoof!" howled Coker.

Mr. Quelch's jaw set grimly.

"You may release Bunter," he said. "Now, Bunter!"

"If—if you please, sir——" gasped Bunter.

"I have very strong doubts, Bunter, as to the truth of your statements," said Mr. Quelch grimly. "I suspected from the first, Bunter, that it was a trick to escape lessons."

"Oh, sir! My greatest grief——"

"Silence! It now appears to be proved, Bunter, that you have deceived me, or attempted to do so!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

"Oh, no, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"You—you ask any chap in the Remove, sir, and—and they'll tell you I'm utterly incapable of deceit, sir. I've often got into rows by being so truthful. I—I say, wha-a-at are you going to do with that cane, sir?" spluttered Bunter.

"How did you know that I had picked up my cane?" thundered Mr. Quelch.

"I—I—I——"

"Answer me, Bunter."

"I—I saw—I—I mean, I heard you, sir."

"You heard me pick up my cane?"

exclaimed the Remove master, scarcely able to believe his ears.

"Oh dear! Yes, sir," gasped Bunter desperately. "I—I—I'm awfully keen of hearing, sir. Blind people are, you know."

"Upon my word!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch. "This boy's impudence passes all bounds! I have never heard such wicked prevarication in my life."

"Oh, sir!" gasped Bunter. "I—I hope you don't think I'm telling an untruth, sir. I—I'd scorn it, sir."

"You saw me pick up my cane, Bunter?"

"Oh, no, sir! I—I don't know that you've got the cane in your hand at the present moment, sir!" groaned Bunter. "If—if you asked me, sir, I—I shouldn't know whether it was a cane or—or a fishing-rod, sir!"

"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Quelch, quite dazed.

Coker grinned, and sidled to the door. Coker of the Fifth felt that he could safely leave Bunter in Mr. Quelch's hands now.

"Oh, sir, I—I—I'm afraid I'm wasting your time, sir!" stuttered Bunter. "I—I feel that I ought not to waste your time, sir, when you're writing a letter!"

"And how, you wretched boy, do you know that I am writing a letter if you cannot see?"

"Oh dear!" moaned Bunter.

Mr. Quelch rose from his desk. He seemed to tower over the hapless Owl of the Remove.

"Bunter!"

"Oh dear! I—I—— If you don't mind, sir, I—I'd prefer to let the whole matter drop."

"I shall telephone to Dr. Pillbury, Bunter!"

"Oh, good, sir! I—I'd like to see the doctor, sir, as—as I'm blind and—and afflicted!"

" I shall telephone to him, Bunter, to cancel the appointment with the specialist. Fortunately there is yet time. It is now clear to me, you wretched boy, that you have grossly deceived me. You have attempted to make me believe that you had lost your sight, for the miserable and contemptible motive of avoiding your lessons. This miserable cheat, Bunter, would have been discovered as soon as you were examined by a specialist. Did you hope to deceive the oculist, you unscrupulous boy ? "

" Yes, sir. I—I mean, no, sir. "

" Dare you assert to me, at this moment, that you are blind ? " thundered Mr. Quelch, swishing the cane.

Bunter jumped back.

He was not a bright youth. But he could see that it was not much use keeping up the " stunt " any longer. Bunter's blindness was now a chicken that would not fight, so to speak.

" I—I say, sir ! " he said feebly.

" Well ? "

" I—I believe I can see now, sir ! " gasped Bunter. " I—I've recovered my sight, sir. I—I can see you quite plainly. Ain't—ain't it wonderful, sir ? "

Mr. Quelch gazed at him. He was not so much surprised by the fat junior's humbug as by Bunter's absurd belief that such obvious humbug could impose upon anyone—especially Mr. Quelch !

" Bunter, if I did not believe that you were too stupid to realise the turpitude of your conduct, I should take you to the Head and request him to administer a severe flogging ! " exclaimed the Remove master.

" I—I say, sir, d-d-don't do that ! I—I shouldn't like to interrupt the

Head. He—he will be going to dinner now, sir—"

" I shall cane you myself ! "

" Oh ! "

" Severely ! "

" Oh dear ! "

" With the utmost severity, Bunter ! "

" Wow ! "

" Hold out your hand, Bunter ! " thundered the Remove master.

" Oh dear ! I—I say, sir, I—I—I'm not blind now—really ! I've had a wonderful recovery, and—and I—I don't think a chap ought to be caned, sir, for going blind and then making a wonderful recovery ! It—it ain't just, sir ! "

Mr. Quelch took Bunter by the collar. Then the cane rose and fell, with heavy swishes across the Owl's fat shoulders.

Whack, whack, whack !

" Yarooooo—ooo—ooooop ! "

" Bunter's asked for it, " gasped Bob Cherry, hearing the sounds from within as he heard with other Removites in the corridor, " and now he's got it ! He really begged for it ! And he's got it ! "

" The gotfulness is terrific ! "

" Now you may go, Bunter, " said Mr. Quelch. " And if ever you should attempt to deceive me again— " Mr. Quelch did not finish. He left the rest to Bunter's imagination.

The Owl of the Remove limped out of the study. A yell of laughter greeted him as he blinked at the crowd of juniors there.

His next few hours were not happy ones. When he turned up in the Form-room that afternoon, however, he appeared to be able to see his way about quite well. The Remove heard nothing more of Blind Bunter.