

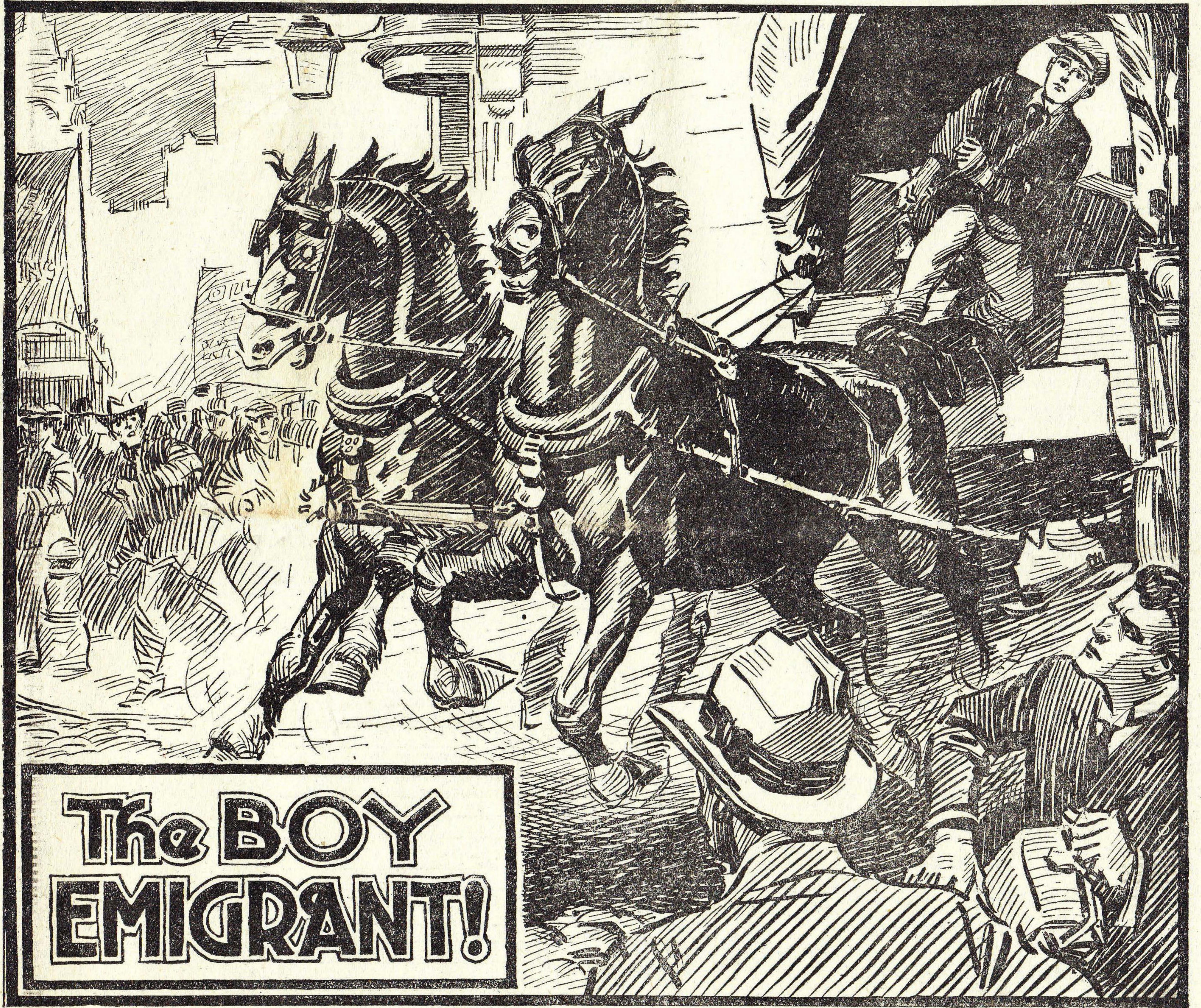
# The BOYS' FRIEND

TWELVE PAGES! TWENTY-SEVENTH YEAR! 1<sup>1d</sup>/<sub>2</sub>

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THREE HALFPENCE.

[Week Ending January 21st, 1922.



## The BOY EMIGRANT!

A GRAND STORY OF A YOUNG BRITISHER WHO WENT "DOWN UNDER" IN SEARCH OF A FORTUNE!

### PROLOGUE—1870.

Under the stunted mallee bush a hollow had been made in the sandy soil: over the bush a ragged blanket had been spread to form a shadow, yet it was hot, very hot in that hollow, and the lean, emaciated figure lying on its back had not shifted its position for many hours. The scene around was desolate enough; low lying hills and dried, barren country. Here and there a clump of mallee broke the surface, casting black shadows on the thirsty soil, and far in the distance arose the shoulders of higher hills.

A typical stretch of Australian back-block country; dreary, desolate, bare.

As the sun climbed steadily into the brazen sky, it struck down on the figure lying in the hollow, and

its scorching rays brought a feeble movement from the inert shape. The man stirred, shifting his position uneasily, trying to work his way deeper into the heart of the bush.

His lips were blackened and dried: the eyes were mere pin points of faded light set in the deep sunken sockets: the hands were so thin that the veins and bones could be seen through the shrivelled skin.

Close to the bush a small fire had been lighted on the previous night, and round its grey ashes were scattered a few articles, a pick, a knapsack, a rusted revolver, a belt, and one or two garments, together with a blanket roll.

On the bush above the man's head was suspended a water-bottle, but its sides were dried and the useless cork hung from its cord.

Presently, from beyond the slope another man came toiling up. He was naked to the waist and his shorts were ragged and torn, while for footwear he had wrapped strips of canvas round his feet. A battered wide-awake was on his head and his beard reached almost to his naked, bony breast.

He, too, seemed to have suffered, yet there was a suggestion of reserved strength behind his movements as he came across the lonely scrubland.

He rounded the bush and, as his slanting shadow crossed the hollow, the gaunt figure lying there stirred, then raised itself on one thin arm and from the cracked lips there came a voice which was little more than a croak.

"That you, Len?"

"Yes."

"Any luck?"

The eyes peered out from the hollow sockets, and by way of reply the standing figure reached for the water-bottle which hung by its side and held it out, upside down!

The emaciated form under the bush dropped back with a sigh.

"That settles it, Len. I'm done!"

"I have searched everywhere for water."

"Yes, yes, I know it!" the man croaked. "Can't be helped, Len. Just my luck."

The other man seated himself under the shadow of the bush close to where his companion lay.

"Perhaps you will be better when night comes," he said.

"No, Len, I won't—I'm going! Bad luck, too, old man—just hand

me that—that nugget again—show it to me, old son."

The seated figure slipped his hand into his belt, and drew out a small, leather bag, from which he produced a piece of glinting metal. It was a nugget, rough shaped and corrugated, but a perfect specimen.

The lean fingers reached out for it, and closed over the lump.

"Gold, Len, gold, and there's millions of pounds' worth back there, which you and I could have."

The shape dropped back into the hollow holding the nugget between his fingers.

"You will have to go on, Len. I'm done, but—you seem to be stronger. Dunno how it is, for I was always reckoned toughest of the two, Len."

A shadow crossed the face of the

## A SPLENDID COMPLETE ROOKWOOD SCHOOL STORY BY OWEN CONQUEST.



## The 1st Chapter.

## Mr. Manders Puts His Foot Down!

"Rotten news!"  
"Yes, rather!"  
"Poor old Head!"  
Jimmy Silver & Co. of the Fourth Form at Rookwood were quite concerned.

As a rule, they did not bother much about the Head. They hardly came within that great man's orbit. Still, they respected Dr. Chisholm very much, and they liked him more or less.

And anybody could feel sympathetic towards a chap who was down with the flu. Matters might have been worse, of course. It might have been one of the Fistical Four themselves. Still, it was rough on the Head.

"Then he won't be coming back for the new term!" said Arthur Edward Lovell, very thoughtfully.

"Can't, if he's got the flu!" said Raby.

"I suppose that means that Mr. Manders will carry on!"

"Phew!"

The chums of the Fourth looked graver than ever.

They were sorry for the Head! But they were still more sorry for themselves, if Mr. Manders, the extremely unpopular Modern master, "carried on" in the Head's place.

"I say, that will be awfully rotten," said Jimmy Silver seriously.

"We simply can't stand Manders!"

"Not at any price!" said Newcome.

"Still, he won't have much to do with the Classical side," said Jimmy.

"And our merry Form-master, Mr. Dalton, will keep him in his place if he kicks over the traces. Lucky Dalton's out of sunny. Poor old Head! I never thought the time would come when we should miss the Head! But it has!"

"Yes, rather!"

"I've been thinking," continued Jimmy Silver. "As a rule, we don't have much to do with the Head! Not to put too fine a point on it, we're rather glad of that. It's a bit disconcerting when the headmaster drops on a chap suddenly and asks him how many beans make five. Still, the Head is a good old sort—ever so much better than Manders at the worst—"

"Hear, hear!"

"I think it's up to us to sympathise," said Jimmy Silver. "My idea is a telegram from the Fourth Form—"

"Telegrams cost money!" remarked Newcome, in a thoughtful sort of way.

"I know they do, fathead; but the Head doesn't catch flu every term! Besides, it won't amount to much spread over the whole Form. Again, it's only a case of sympathising with the Head!" went on Jimmy Silver sagely.

"Your Uncle James has been cogitating. If there's trouble with Manders while the Head's away, there'll be trouble with the Head when he comes back. And a telegram of sympathy will show him, in advance, what really nice chaps we are, and how what we really want is law and order and our headmaster at home—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I've got a telegraph-form here, somewhere," said Jimmy, groping in his pocket for a stump of pencil.

"We'll make it a really nice message, and all the Fourth shall sign it and pay for their signatures, so it won't come so very heavy on this study."

"Good!"

Jimmy Silver sorted the telegraph-form out of a drawer, and chewed his stump of pencil, and reflected. Then, as the spirit moved him, he scribbled on the form:

"Dear Head.—Sorry to hear you are crocked. Buck up and get well,

# Too Much Manders!



and come back to Rookwood. We miss you awfully.

"JIMMY SILVER."

"He ought to feel jolly flattered when he gets that!" said Lovell.

"May even do him good, you know," said George Raby, with a nod. "Invalids get bucked, you know, by kind wishes and sympathy, and so on."

"You fellows sign after me," said Jimmy.

"Right-ho!"

Three signatures were added to the telegram. Arthur Edward Lovell wrote his name in full; but on second thoughts crossed out the "Arthur Edward." At a penny a word, "Lovell" sufficed.

Jimmy Silver took the telegram, and walked along the Fourth Form passage with it. He dropped into study after study, gathering signatures.

"Now, what about the Moderns?" asked Lovell, as Jimmy stood in the Fourth Form passage with the well-filled form in his hand.

Jimmy Silver nodded.

"Of course, the Modern fellows are outsiders," he remarked. "But they may as well come into this! It will look better coming from the whole Form—Modern as well as Classical. Let's take it over to their side."

And the Fistical Four left the School House, and walked across the quad to Mr. Manders' House, to obtain the signatures of Tommy Dodd & Co. of the Modern Fourth to that sympathetic telegram.

As they came into Mr. Manders' House, the first person they met was Mr. Roger Manders himself.

The Fistical Four would have willingly passed on without seeing Mr. Manders; but that cross-tempered gentleman was not to be passed unseen. He called on them to stop. They stopped.

"Kindly tell me what you are doing here, Silver," said Mr. Manders crossly. "I have already warned you—"

"We—"

"Another disturbance, I have no doubt," said Mr. Manders acidly. "What is that in your hand, Silver?"

"A— a telegram, sir. We—we want the Modern chaps to sign it. It's a telegram of sympathy to the Head."

"Ridiculous!"

"Oh, sir!" murmured Jimmy.

"Give it to me!"

The captain of the Fourth obediently handed the sympathetic telegram to Mr. Manders, though his eyes glinted. Mr. Manders glanced at it, the four juniors watching him, and ejaculated:

"Rubbish!"

"We'd like the Head to know—"

began Jimmy.

"I shall not allow any such ridiculous proceeding!" said Mr. Manders, and he tore the telegraph-form across. "I forbid you to do anything of the kind, Silver!"

"Oh!" gasped Lovell.

"Now return to your own house, and let me hear no more of this nonsense," commanded Mr. Manders.

And the chums of the Classical Fourth went out into the quadrangle in silence, with feelings that could not have been expressed in words.

## The 2nd Chapter.

## Roger Manders Takes a Hand!

The new term had not opened auspiciously at Rookwood.

Mr. Manders was satisfied, but probably no one else in the old school shared his happy state.

The influenza epidemic which had detained the Rookwooders at school through the Christmas vacation, was happily over. The Rookwooders had stood that with fortitude, especially the Rookwooders who hadn't been down with the flu.

Now that it was over, and the new term had started, Rookwood had expected to proceed upon the former even tenor of its way. Instead of which, there was more trouble.

Patty of the Fourth remarked that it would have been more considerate of the Head to have had his influenza at the same time as the other fellows.

Then he could have come back for the new term.

Unluckily, the Head was beginning where the others left off, so to speak; and he wasn't coming back. It might be a week, or it might be months before Dr. Chisholm was seen at Rookwood again. In the meantime, Mr. Manders, as senior master, took the head of affairs.

Any other master would have been preferred. Jimmy Silver & Co., talking it over, agreed upon that.

"There's old Greely, the master of the Fifth," said Jimmy. "Pompous old bloater, of course; but we could have stood him. He's quite tame so long as you don't pull his leg."

"The Shell master isn't bad," said Lovell. "Of course, Mooney is a bit of an ass! But we could stand Mooney."

"Bohun of the Third is all right," said Raby. "He plays footer, for one thing. We could have stood Mr. Bohun."

"Even Wiggins!" said Newcome. "It would be a bit infra dig to have the Second Form master for Head; but we could have stood Wiggins at a pinch."

"Of course, our own Form-master ought to have been the man," said Jimmy Silver. "Mr. Dalton would have been IT."

"Hear, hear!" said the Co. cordially.

"He's the youngest master," continued Jimmy. "Manders is the oldest. It goes by seniority. In a properly-constituted school it would go by juniority."

"Oh, my hat!" said Lovell.

"Dicky Dalton would play the game," said Jimmy. "Dalton's a good sort, and a sportsman. Manders is a beast!"

"The last word in beasts!" agreed Lovell.

"The masters don't like him, either. I've heard that he's been interfering with Mr. Greely in the Fifth: I saw Greely stalking along the corridor as red as a turkey-cock. Hansom of the Fifth said there was a row."

"He'd better not interfere with Dicky Dalton!" said Lovell warmly. "I'll back Dicky up against the old crow."

"Yes, rather!"

"Ahem!"

The Fistical Four were holding that little discussion outside the Form-room door a few days after the beginning of term. The cough that reached their ears warned them that their Form-master was coming along. The discussion ceased at once, and Jimmy Silver & Co. glanced rather apprehensively at Mr. Dalton as he passed into the Form-room. Mr. Richard Dalton gave them a rather severe glance, but he went in without a word. Dicky Dalton could always be relied upon to take no notice of remarks that were not meant for his ears.

The Fourth Form—Modern and Classical—took their places in the Form-room. It was English History next; and on that subject the Moderns studied with the Classics. After English History, the Modern juniors had to clear off for German on the Modern side, while the Classics devoted their attention to Latin Syntax.

English History was well under way, when the Form-room door opened, and Mr. Roger Manders walked in.

Mr. Dalton saluted him politely, supposing that the Modern master had dropped in to speak about some casual matter.

He was mistaken in that.

Sometimes the Head of Rookwood dropped into a class-room and listened for a time to the lesson, and "chipped in" occasionally with a few words. By that means the Head kept both masters and boys well up to the mark. But the Head had tact and grace, and he could always drop in without giving offence, especially as his high position entitled him to do so. Mr. Manders, being

temporarily in the position of the Head, was adopting Dr. Chisholm's manners and customs, without the prestige of his high authority, and, indeed, without excuse at all, for the other masters had nothing whatever to learn from Roger Manders.

"Proceed, proceed!" said Mr. Manders, with a slight wave of the hand, as if encouraging the young master who was in charge of the Fourth. "I am not going to interrupt—at present. I will take a seat."

Mr. Dalton looked at him.

"Do you wish to be present during the lesson, Mr. Manders?" he asked.

"Exactly."

"Surely you will find it rather tiresome?" said Mr. Dalton politely.

"I am the best judge of that, Mr. Dalton."

The Fourth Form master coughed.

"The fact is," continued Mr. Manders, "I am not wholly satisfied with this Form, Mr. Dalton."

"Indeed!"

"I fear that there is considerable slackness among some of the boys, and I intend to satisfy myself upon that point."

Mr. Dalton's look at the Modern master became fixed.

"Dr. Chisholm honours me with his confidence, Mr. Manders," he said. "His belief is that I am quite capable of conducting my Form unaided."

The Fourth-Formers exchanged glances of satisfaction. Mr. Manders was "butting in," but they hoped, and believed, that Dicky Dalton would give as good as he got.

"No doubt, no doubt," said Mr. Manders calmly. "But it is my duty to exercise some supervision, and that is my intention."

"With the single exception of the Head, sir, a Form-master is supreme in his own Form-room."

"Quite so. And as I am now in the place of the Head, I intend to carry out the Head's duties in his absence, Mr. Dalton."

Mr. Manders spoke in a tone of finality, and plumped himself down on a chair. The Fourth Form master looked at him grimly, for some moments, and seemed to reflect. Then he turned away quietly, without answering, and proceeded with the lesson. It was his desire to avoid an unseemly altercation in the presence of the boys.

Mr. Manders looked on and listened, his sharp eyes scanning the juniors only too evidently in the hope of finding fault.

Unluckily, there was plenty of fault to be found. Some of the Fourth were well up in their subject, some weren't. Mr. Manders was not silent for more than five minutes. He chipped in with a remark, and then with another remark, and then with a third, all of which Mr. Dalton bore with exemplary patience. But the Fourth Form master turned to him at last.

"Really, Mr. Manders, I must remind you that I am conducting this lesson!" he said tartly.

"Not quite to my satisfaction, Mr. Dalton."

"So long as I satisfy the Head I am content."

"You will kindly regard me as headmaster so long as I occupy the Head's position."

Mr. Dalton drew a deep breath.

"I cannot undertake to instruct my class with another person interfering," he said, coming out quite into the open at last. "If you wish to conduct the lesson yourself, Mr. Manders, kindly do so."

Mr. Manders rose.

"The fact is, I think I had better do so," he said. "Some of these boys are shockingly backward—Muffin especially. Give me your book, Mr. Dalton. Now, you may listen to me for a time."

Mr. Dalton stood silent. The Modern master's intervention was in bad taste; yet the young man could not quite see how it was to be dealt with. For undoubtedly Mr. Manders was, for the present, in the position of headmaster; the Head's mantle had fallen upon him temporarily, so to speak. Tact and good taste would have made Mr. Manders extremely delicate in handling his new powers. But Roger Manders had never been famous for tact or good taste.

"Muffin!" he rapped out.

"Oh dear! Yes, sir!" mumbled Muffin, preparing for the worst.

Mr. Manders had obviously selected Muffin, as the dunce of the class, in order to make out a case, as it were.

"I shall ask you a few questions, Muffin," said Mr. Manders.

"Thank you, sir!" mumbled Tubby.

"Kindly tell me the date of the Spanish Armada."

Tubby Muffin looked at Jimmy Silver helplessly. Tubby never was strong on dates—excepting the kind that were bought in boxes at the tuckshop. Tubby could have dealt

with any number of dates of that kind. But historical dates worried him.

"Silver, you will not speak to Muffin!"

"Oh! Yes! No, sir!" stammered Jimmy.

"Answer me, Muffin!"

Tubby blinked helplessly. Then suddenly he yelped out:

"1588, sir!"

Mr. Manders ought to have looked pleased. As a matter of absolute fact, he looked disappointed. Every fellow in the Fourth could see that he had hoped to catch Muffin "out."

"Very good!" said Mr. Manders, whose expression really indicated that it was very bad. "I will try you on a few more dates, Muffin!"

"Certainly, sir!" said Muffin cheerfully.

Muffin's despondency, when called on by Mr. Manders, had left him. He looked quite merry and bright.

The reason was obvious to some of the Fourth, who grinned. Valentine Mcruington was seated in the desk before Muffin. Morny had quietly jotted the required date on a piece of paper, and held it behind him—Morny was great on dates. Tubby Muffin, with a full view of the paper behind Morny's back, was therefore unusually well-informed; while Mr. Manders, standing well in front of the class, was quite ignorant of what was going on. Mr. Dalton may have observed it, but it was no business of his to teach his instructor how to conduct a history class.

Mr. Manders paused a moment or two; in actual fact, he was not strong on dates himself. But he had the advantage of a book in his hand.

"The date of the English Revolution, Muffin?"

Tubby Muffin reflected—or appeared to reflect. He was gaining time while Morny scribbled a date on his paper, under his desk, and put his hand behind him again.

"1688, sir."

"Ah! Hem! Very good! Your memory seems to have improved, Muffin. You did not answer Mr. Dalton so readily. Now, give me the date of the—the—the Battle of Waterloo."

"1815, sir."

"Hem! The exact date, please!"

A slight pause.

"June 18th, sir."

"Very good! Apparently you can remember, Muffin, when you are dealing with a master who is not to be trifled with."

Mr. Dalton bit his lip.

"We will try your knowledge a little further, Muffin. Can you give me the year of the Reform Bill?"

"1832, sir."

"What king succeeded Richard the Third upon the throne?"

"Henry the Seventh, sir."

"Which king preceded Richard the Third?"

"Edward the Fourth, sir."

There was a titter in the class, every fellow now being aware of the source of Tubby's remarkable stock of information. Mr. Manders frowned, and proceeded:

"One more question, Muffin—the date of the Conquest?"

Tubby Muffin's answer was astounding:

"9901, sir."

## The 3rd Chapter.

## Trouble in the Form-Room!

"Nine thousand, nine hundred and one!"

That was Tubby Muffin's amazing answer, made with as much confidence as his previous answers.

Mr. Manders jumped. There was a giggle in the class.

If Tubby had said 1060, or 1070, or even 1266, it would have been comprehensible. But 9901 was too much—the present year of grace being only 1922. Tubby had post-dated the Norman Conquest much too extensively.

"What!" gasped Mr. Manders.

"What did you say, Muffin?"

"Nine thousand, nine hundred and one, sir!"

"Is the boy mad?"

Tubby blinked in surprise. He had done well, so far, and he did not see what was wrong now. That 9901 had not yet arrived, and was not likely to arrive in Reginald Muffin's lifetime, he did not take into account. Dates, to Muffin, were horrid things that he had to remember somehow; he never connected them in his fat mind with realities. He did not see why 9901 would not do.

Probably it had never occurred to Muffin that 1066 was a real period, when things had actually happened; to him it was a "date." And one date was as good as another to Muffin, so long as he escaped "lines" or detention.

Mr. Manders glanced at Mr. Dalton. That gentleman shrugged his shoulders, leaving the Modern

master to it. He had been super-seded, and he declined to be drawn in. As a matter of fact, he could see perfectly well from where he stood what was going on; and was aware that Mornington, having scribbled "1066" on his fragment of paper and held it behind him, had inadvertently held it upside-down, so that the hapless Muffin read it as 9901!

"Is the boy out of his senses?" exclaimed Mr. Manders. "Or is this sheer impertinence? Muffin, repeat your statement!"

"9901, sir!" stammered Muffin, less confidently than before.

"Are you aware, Muffin, that we are at present only in the twentieth century?" thundered Mr. Manders.

"Eh? Oh! Yes, sir!"

"And you tell me that the Conquest took place in the hundredth century?" shrieked Mr. Manders.

Tubby Muffin jumped.

"Oh, no, sir! Not at all, sir!"

"What is 9901, then, you crass boy?"

"Eh? It's a date, sir!" stuttered Tubby.

"Upon my word!" Mr. Manders, in his wrath and excitement, strode towards the class, to come to close quarters with Tubby. He had picked up Mr. Dalton's cane. "Boy—"

"Ten sixty-six, sir!" suddenly yelled Tubby.

Mornington had realised what must have happened, and he had reversed his indicator. 9901 became 1066 just in time, and Tubby Muffin yelled it out in a great hurry.

"OH!" ejaculated Mr. Manders. "You were quite aware of the real date all the time, then?"

"Not all the time, sir—I've only just—I mean—I—I—" babbled Tubby helplessly.

"Your former answer was intended for impertinence, Muffin!"

"Oh, no, sir!" groaned Tubby. "I—I wouldn't be impertinent to you, sir. I—I'd rather be impertinent to a wild tiger in the jungle, sir!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence!" thundered Mr. Manders.

Morny had slipped the paper on his form as Mr. Manders came near, and he sat on it to conceal it. Unfortunately a corner showed, and Mr. Manders' keen eyes spotted it.

"Give me that paper, Mornington!"

"What paper, sir?"

"The paper you are trying to conceal!" hooted Mr. Manders. "I think I can divine what has been happening—under my eyes. That paper—at once!"

Mornington, with a grimace, handed over the paper. Mr. Manders looked at the "1066" scribbled on it, and smiled bitterly.

"So that is how work is done in this Form-room!" he said caustically. "I am scarcely surprised at this, Mr. Dalton. It is evidently high time that someone supervised work in this room!"

"Such a trick has never been played on me, Mr. Manders," said the Fourth Form master coldly.

"We shouldn't think of playing tricks on our own Form-master, sir," said Mornington, with cheerful coolness.

"Silence, Mornington! You will take a hundred lines, and you will do the same, Muffin!" Mr. Manders returned to his place before the class.

"And now, Mornington, as you seem so well informed that you give information to others by trickery, we will test your knowledge."

Valentine Mornington had a dogged look. He was in nowise prepared to knuckle under to the interfering Modern master. Jimmy Silver, as he caught the expression on Morny's face, guessed that trouble was coming.

"I will ask you a few questions, Mornington. You are well up in dates, apparently," said Mr. Manders bitterly. "What is the date of the Battle of Sedgemoor, and who was in command on either side?"

"Nineteen-ninety, sir!" said Mornington coolly. "The French were commanded by General Foch, and the Abyssinians by Lord Roberts."

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Fourth, in great delight.

And even Mr. Dalton smiled at that answer. Mr. Manders seemed transfixed.

"Are you not aware that the Battle of Sedgemoor was during Monmouth's rebellion in England, Mornington?" he thundered.

"Was it really, sir? Wasn't it during Napoleon's campaign in Russia?" asked Morny innocently.

"This is impertinence, Mornington!"

"Oh, sir!"

"I will give you one more chance," said Mr. Manders, snapping his teeth. "You are probably aware that Queen Mary came after Edward VI. Who came after Queen Mary?"

"Philip of Spain, sir."

"What?"

"Isn't that right, sir?"

"You must be perfectly aware that Philip of Spain was never King of England, Mornington."

"You didn't ask me that, sir! You asked me who came after Queen Mary. Philip of Spain must have come after her, because she married him."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Manders looked at the cheerful Morny like a basilisk. Evidently Morny was putting his own construction on the words "came after."

"Are you venturing to jest with me, Mornington?" gasped Mr. Manders at last.

"Jest so, sir!"

"Wha-a-a-at?"

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

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed Mr. Manders. "The—the wretched boy is actually venturing to—to make puns—frivolous and idiotic puns—in the course of a lesson! Is this how the class is conducted in this Form-room, Mr. Dalton?"

"Not by me, sir," said Mr. Dalton. "Doubtless you have your own methods. They are not mine."

"Mornington, stand out here!"

"What for, sir?"

"I am going to cane you with the utmost severity!"

"You're not, sir!"

"What?" spluttered Mr. Manders, scarcely crediting that he had heard

"Oh—ah—ow! Groogh—wow!" spluttered Mr. Manders. "Upon my word, I—I have been assaulted, and—and battered! Oh—ow! The boy shall be expelled for this! Oh dear! Yooop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Mr. Dalton, take that cane and administer a sound thrashing to that wretched, ruffianly boy!"

"I decline to do so, sir!"

"You support him in his insolence and violence!" shrieked Mr. Manders. "Very well, Mr. Dalton—very well—very well, indeed! I shall not overlook this, sir! I—I will deal with that—that young hooligan later! Ow!"

Mr. Manders was evidently not then in a state to deal with anything but his damaged shin. He limped out of the Form-room, gasping—doubtless in search of embrocation. He needed it.

"Silence!" said Mr. Dalton quietly, and the roar of laughter died away quite suddenly. "Mornington, go to your place. We will now—ahem!—proceed."

And they proceeded!

**The 4th Chapter.  
War!**

"Good old Morny!"

That was the verdict of all the Fourth when Mr. Dalton's class was dismissed.



**MORNINGTON KICKS!** Suddenly there was a wild howl from the infuriated Modern master as Morny launched out at his shins. The dandy of the Fourth did not mean to be caned—and he kicked!

aright. "What did you say? Repeat your words, Mornington."

"You're not, sir!" repeated Mornington calmly.

"Do you venture to disobey me, Mornington?"

"Just a few!" answered Mornington.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"So this is the state of discipline in this class, Mr. Dalton!" thundered the Modern master. "This is a pretty state of affairs! But I will alter it, sir. I will see an improvement. Mornington, once more I command you to stand forth!"

"Who's to come first and second and third, then, sir?"

"What! What do you mean?"

"I mean, if I stand fourth!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Evidently it was another frivolous and idiotic pun, quite out of place in a Form-room in lesson-time.

Mr. Manders did not answer Morny's question. He made a furious stride at the dandy of the Fourth, grasped him by the collar, and whirled him out before the class.

"Let go, confound you!" roared Mornington.

"Whack, whack, whack!"

The cane came down on Mornington's shoulders with terrific vim. Then there was a sudden wild howl from Mr. Manders as the infuriated Mornington hacked his shin.

The cane dropped to the floor, and Mr. Manders staggered back in anguish. He hopped on one leg, clasping the other with both hands.

The sight was too much for the Fourth. The Form-room fairly rocked with laughter.

Even Tommy Dodd & Co., who as Moderns were more inclined to back up Mr. Manders, had nothing to say for him. The "cheek" of the Modern master in butting into Mr. Dalton's Form-room roused the indignation of all the Fourth. Even slackers like Townsend and Topham joined in the general indignation.

"If there's any more of it," Jimmy Silver declared, "there will be trouble! We can't stand too much Manders!"

"There will be more of it!" said Mornington. "The old donkey is outside himself with his giddy new authority. He will be meddling with everybody until the Head comes back."

"Look out for squalls, Morny!" grinned Arthur Edward Lovell. "As temporary Head, old Manders has the giddy power of the birch, you know. And you must have raised a bit of a lump on his shin."

Mornington shrugged his shoulders.

"He won't flog me!" he answered.

"All very well to talk!" remarked Cyril Peele. "But Manders is boss now, and he'll flog you as sure as a gun."

Wilkinson of the Modern Third

came into the Common-room, where the juniors were talking, and looked round.

"Mornington here!" he called out. "Adsum!" said Morny.

"Mr. Manders wants you."

"Really?" drawled Mornington. "And what does he want me for? Is it an invitation to tea?"

The fag chortled.

"He's got the Head's birch on his study table," he answered. "Looks to me like a walloping."

"Give my kindest regards to Mr. Manders," said Mornington politely, "and mention that he can go and eat coke."

Wilkinson stared.

"If you want a message like that taken to Manders, you can jolly well take it yourself," he said. "I'm not going to ask for a record licking. Shall I say you won't come?"

"Say anything you like, my dear child, but certainly I won't come!"

Wilkinson departed whistling. There were grave faces now in the junior Common-room on the Classical side. Nobody knew exactly to what limits Mr. Manders' new powers extended. But it was to be presumed that, in the Head's place, he had the Head's authority to use the birch. Morny's defiance of his command was a rather serious matter.

Jimmy Silver looked round.

"The Form is standing by Mornington in this!" he said quietly. "It's a case of shoulder to shoulder."

in the passage would have given a good deal to see that missive.

It was a brief one. It ran:

"Kindly conduct Mornington of the IVth Form to my study. You are authorised to use force if necessary."  
R. MANDERS."

Mr. Dalton pursed his lips, and knitted his brows over that note. The young Form-master, naturally, did not approve of hacking a master's shins. But he disapproved also of Mr. Manders' interference with his class. He had no intention whatever of backing up the Modern master in his new assumption of lofty authority. After a few minutes' reflection he threw the note into the fire.

"You will tell Mr. Manders that I am sorry I cannot do as he requests, Wilkinson."

"Yes, sir."

Wilkinson marched out, and all the juniors in the passage grinned with satisfaction. Dicky Dalton was evidently standing up for his rights against the new tyrant!

"What next?" murmured Mornington.

The "next" was the appearance of Mr. Roger Manders himself, with a frowning brow, striding across the quadrangle. The Classical juniors hastily backed out of the doorway, and returned to the Common-room. They had a glimpse of Mr. Manders striding into the Fourth Form-master's study from a distance.

"Going to beard the giddy lion in his den!" murmured Lovell.

And some of the juniors ventured back along the passage, as soon as Mr. Manders was in Richard Dalton's study. They could hear the loud, strident tones of the irritated Modern master, fairly booming in his wrath.

"What does this mean, Mr. Dalton? Am I to understand that you refuse me your support, which you are in duty bound to render?"

"I cannot consent to your interference between my boys and myself, Mr. Manders," answered the quieter voice of Richard Dalton. "If it continues, I shall have no alternative but to resign my duties here at least until the Head returns."

"Resign!" sneered Mr. Manders. "If you do not render me the support I have a right to expect, it will not be a question of resignation—I shall dismiss you!"

"I shall refuse to take my dismissal from you, Mr. Manders. I shall, however, resign my functions here until the Head returns, or his wishes are known."

"Very good, Mr. Dalton!" snapped the Modern master. "I shall make arrangements for taking the Fourth Form. I intend to reduce that Form to a proper state of discipline. I shall commence by flogging Mornington. I forbid you to enter the Fourth Form-room again, or to assume any authority over the boys!"

"I believe your position here entitles you to act so, if you choose, and I shall therefore accept your decision, so far," said Mr. Dalton. "Beyond that I shall not go."

Mr. Manders stamped out of the study and closed the door after him with a bang. There was a scuffling of feet in the corridor as the Classical juniors retreated to the Common-room.

"He's coming here!" squeaked Tubby Muffin, in great excitement, peering out of the Common-room doorway.

"Let him come!" said Mornington recklessly. "We can handle him!"

"Handle him!" said Oswald. "A master! Oh, my hat!"

Jimmy Silver drew a deep breath.

"Better keep him out!" he said. He ran to the door.

Mr. Manders had almost reached it as the captain of the Fourth swung it shut!

Bang!

Mr. Manders jumped back. Then he jumped forward again, as the key turned in the lock.

"Open this door at once!" he thundered.

"Upon my word! I—I—" Mr. Manders spluttered. But the big oak door was fast, with a crowd of breathlessly excited juniors behind it, and for the present Roger Manders was baffled.

Most of the juniors were relieved when they heard his footsteps die away in the distance. Jimmy Silver breathed hard.

"We've done it now!" he remarked.

And there was no doubt on that point. The Classical Fourth certainly had "done it," and it only remained to be seen what would come of it!

THE END.

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