

A FORM-MASTER.

Mr. Bull was a young master, and an international foot-ball player. Being one of the few members of the Staff at Eaglescliff who did not possess a first-class degree, he had been entrusted with the care of the most difficult form in the school—the small boys, usually known as the Nippers.

A small boy is as different from a middle-sized boy as chalk from cheese. He possesses none of the latter's curious dignity and self-consciousness. He has the instincts of the puppy, and appreciates being treated as such. That is to say, he is physically incapable of sitting still for more than fifteen minutes at a time; he is never happy except in the company of a drove of other small boys; and he is infinitely more amenable to the *fortiter in re* than to the *suaviter in modo* where the enforcement of discipline is concerned. Above all, he would rather have his head smacked than be ignored. * * * *

Having duly posted up the names and tender ages of his Nippers in his mark-book, Mr. Bull announced—

"Now, we must appoint the Cabinet Ministers for the term."

Instantly there came a piping chorus:

"Please sir, can I be Scavenger?"

"Please sir, can I be Obliterator?"

"Please sir, can I be Window-opener?"

"Please sir, can I be Ink-slinger?"

"Please sir, can I be Coal-heaver?"

"Shut up!" roared Mr. Bull, and the babel was quelled instantly. "We will draw lots as usual."

Lots were duly cast, and the names of the fortunate announced. Mr. Bull was not a great scholar; some of the "highbrow" members of the Staff professed to despise his humble attainments. But he understood the mind of extreme youth. Tell a boy to pick up waste paper, or fill an ink-pot, or clean a blackboard, and he will perform these acts of drudgery with natural reluctance, and shirk them when he can. But appoint him Lord High Scavenger, or Lord High Ink-slinger, or Lord High Obliterator, with sole right to perform these important duties and power to eject usurpers, and he will value and guard his privileges with all the earnestness and tenacity of a permanent official.

Having arranged his executive staff to his satisfaction, Mr. Bull announced—

"We'll do a little English Literature this morning and start fair on ordinary work this afternoon. Sit absolutely still for ten minutes, while I read to you. Listen all the time, for I shall question you when I have finished. After that you shall question me—one question each, and mind it is a sensible one. After that, a breather; then you will write out in your own words a summary of what I have read. Attention!"

He read a hundred lines or so of *The Passing of Arthur*, while the Nippers, restraining itching hands and feet, sat motionless. Then followed question time, which was a lively affair; for questions mean marks, and Nippers will sell their souls for marks. Suddenly Mr. Bull shut the book with a snap.

"Out you get!" he said. "The usual run—round the Founder's Oak and straight back. And no yelling, mind! Remember, there are others." He took out his watch. "I give you one minute. Any boy taking longer will receive five thousand lines and a public flogging. Off!"

There was a sudden upheaval, a scuttle of feet, and then solitude.

The last Nipper returned panting, with his lungs full of oxygen, and the fidgets shaken out of him, within fifty-seven seconds, and the work of the hour proceeded.—From "*The Lighter Side of School Life*," by Ian Hay in *Blackwood's Magazine*.

WESTMORLAND COUNTY TEACHERS' INSTITUTE.

One hundred and twenty teachers enrolled at Sackville on October 8th, for the Annual session of the County Institute. Mr. McPhee, Principal of the Sackville schools, acted as chairman.

Not only was the attendance excellent, but the meetings were marked by the interest of the papers and the vigour of the following discussions: The Teaching of Civics received much attention, being introduced by a paper, written by Mr. R. B. Wallace, of the Education office, and read by Inspector O'Blanes, and followed up by speeches from Miss McSweeney, Principal Oulton, Mr. J. A. Edmonds, and Mr.