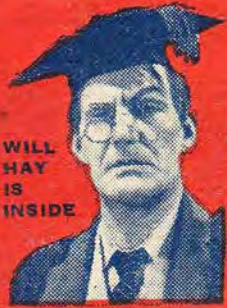


Tarzan, Will Hay, "Bluey" Wilkinson, Stainless Stephen, etc., INSIDE!



WILL HAY IS INSIDE

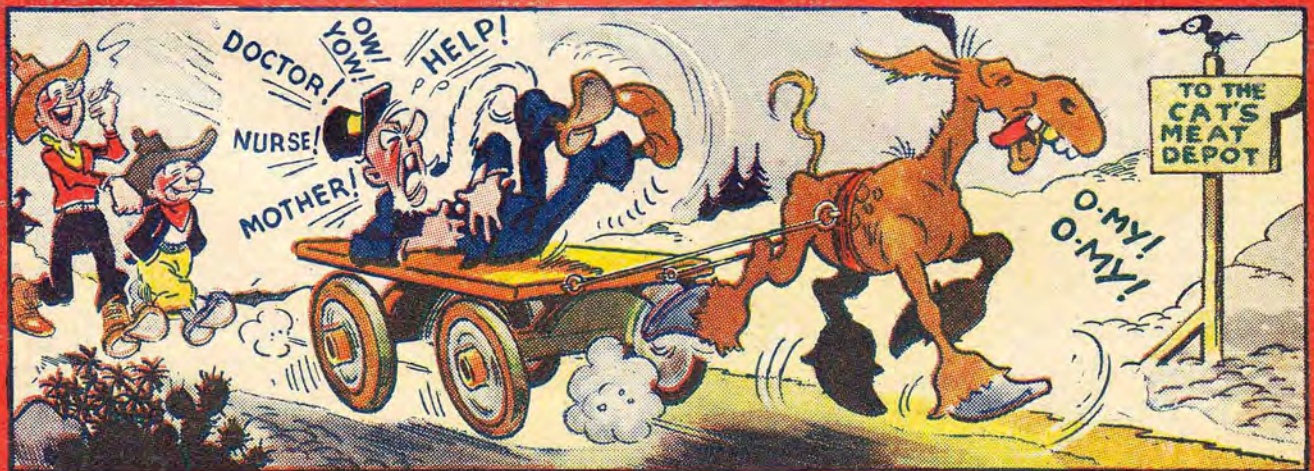
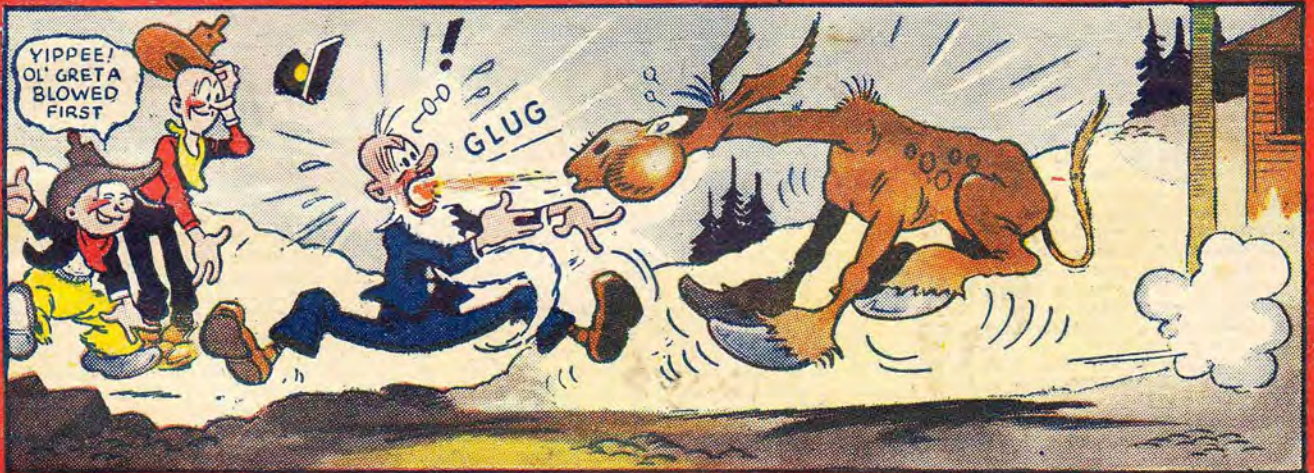
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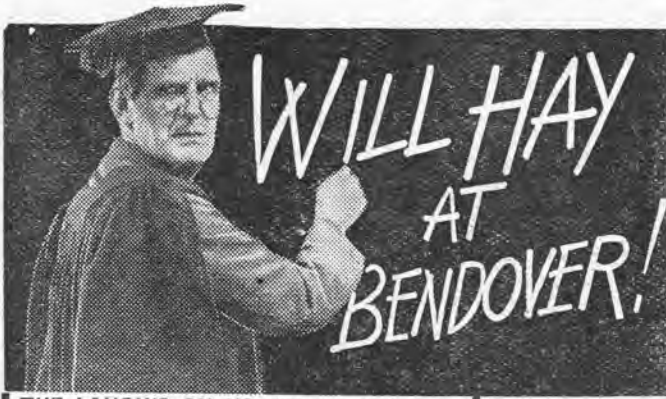
EVERY FRIDAY

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No. 103. Vol. 4. Week ending September 18th, 1937.

MIKE,
SPIKE
& GRETA
OUR KRAZY GANG
in:
"SHE GOT
HER BLOW
IN FUST"





THE LAUGH'S ON US—because once again we give you another side-splitting story of WILL HAY, master of the Fourth and first in the field for fun. You'll smile, you'll grin you'll ROAR at the latest rollicking exploits of the one-and-only Will and the Bendover rebels.

(By Courtesy of Gainsborough Pictures.)



“GOOD!” said Dunkley Pyke. The new headmaster of Bendover School beamed on his hopeful son Reggie of the Fourth.

A few minutes ago Mr. Pyke had been scowling from his study window at the Head's house across the quad, where Will Hay and the merry men of the Bendover Fourth were barring him out.

Now he beamed. Reggie had come out with a bright idea. It was such a bright idea that Mr. Pyke wondered that he had not thought of it before.

Reggie smirked. “I fancy that will put paid to old Hay, pater,” he said.

“Not the slightest doubt of it,” said Mr. Pyke. “Go and call the prefects here, Reginald; tell them all to come to my study.” “What-ho!” said Reggie. He left the study, grinning.

Mr. Pyke waited impatiently. Matters were getting critical at Bendover. Dr. Shrubbs was getting well, and any day he might blow in from the nursing-home at Didham. If the temporary headmaster of Bendover was going to turn his post into a permanent one, he had not much more time left. His plans had been carefully laid; but the Fourth Form barring-out, led by the Fourth Form master, had knocked them into a cocked hat. Really, he could not expect the school governors to approve, and to confirm him in that post, with the school in a state of rebellion and uproar.

There was a tramp of feet in the passage, and Crocker, the captain of Bendover, came in, followed by Stuckey, Parker, and the rest of the Sixth Form prefects. Reggie Pyke followed them in, still grinning. But the prefects were not grinning; they were looking

serious, not to say sulky. Like all the rest of Bendover School, they were fed-up with the new headmaster. They still gave him their support, as in duty bound, but their patience was wearing very thin.

“You sent for us, sir,” grunted Crocker.

“Precisely!” said Mr. Pyke. “I require your assistance in dealing with that iniquitous villain Hay.”

“Old Hay's not a bad sort,” said Crocker.

“What?” hooted Dunkley Pyke. “How dare you say so, Crocker! That—that unspeakable scoundrel, who, instead of leaving Bendover when dismissed, has barred me out of my own House, with the assistance of his rebellious Form—”

“Well, if he wasn't a pretty good sort they wouldn't stand by him like that,” said the captain of Bendover; and there was a murmur of assent from the other prefects.

“Silence!” roared Dunkley Pyke. “Am I to have insolence from the Sixth Form, as well as rebellion from the Fourth? Silence, I say! Now, listen to me! My son has made a suggestion—a very valuable suggestion—for putting an end to this disorderly state of affairs. All that is necessary is for someone to obtain admittance to the building and open a door, or a window; the rest will be easy. One of you will do so—”

“You think they'll let us?” asked Stuckey.

“I have told you to listen to me! My son's very clever and valuable suggestion clears up that difficulty,” said Mr. Pyke. “One of you—it does not matter which—will go across to the House and speak to Hay. He will tell Hay that he is dissatisfied with me; that there has been some dispute; and that he has come to join in the barring-out. Once that person has gained Hay's confidence, he can let the others in by some means.”

“What?” “And the rebellion will be put down by force,” said Mr. Pyke. “Now, do you understand? All that remains for you to do is to act on it. Now, which of you is going?”

The Bendover prefects gazed at their new headmaster; they did not speak. Mr. Pyke seemed to have taken their breath away.

“You understand?” rapped Mr. Pyke irritably.

“Oh, crumbs!” gasped Crocker. “Let's have it clear, Mr. Pyke. One of us is to go over to old Hay and tell him a lot of rotten lies and pull his leg; and then play a dirty, sneaking trick on him. That's the programme, is it? You call yourself a headmaster?”

“What?” roared Dunkley Pyke.

Crocker looked round at the other prefects. “If any man here is willing to do what Mr. Pyke wants, let him say so,” he snorted. “I'll knock his face through the back of his head the next minute!”

“Crocker, how dare you! Be silent! You—”

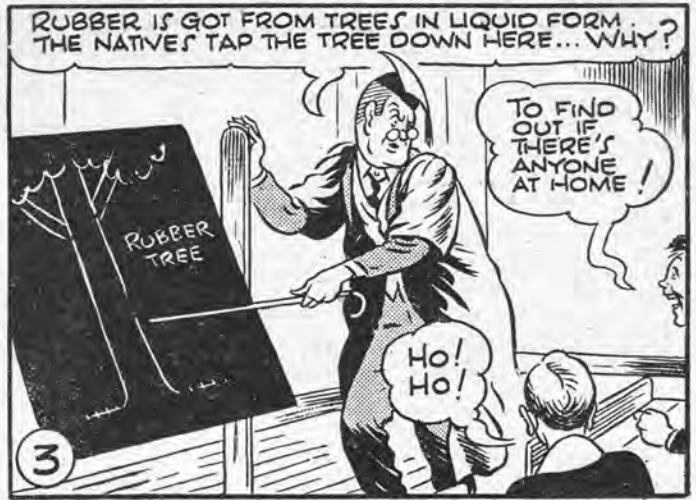
“Shut up!” roared Crocker. “Now you listen to me, Mr. Pyke! You've sneaked in here while our Head's away by pulling the leg of an old donkey on the governing board. You're trying to bag the job while Dr. Shrubbs is on his beam-ends. You're a worm and a rotter and a sneaking toad! We've backed you up so far because you're headmaster, but this is the limit! We're not backing you up any longer! See?”

Dunkley Pyke spluttered with rage. He ceased to grin. It looked as if that bright idea of his was going to cause more trouble, instead of solving the problem.

“I order you—” roared Mr. Pyke.

“Oh, shut up!” said Stuckey. Mr. Pyke glared at his prefects; they glared





at him. Almost foaming, he grabbed a cane from his desk.

"Bend over that chair, Crocker! I shall cane you—"

"I don't think!" said the Bendover captain. "Why, you cheeky old ass— Oh! Ah! Ow! Yarooooooh!"

Crocker roared as the cane came down on him with a terrific swipe. The next moment he collared Mr. Pyke.

Bump!
Dunkley Pyke, roaring, hit the study floor in a heap. Crocker grabbed the cane as he sprawled and roared; then Mr. Pyke roared still more strenuously as the cane came swiping down.

Swipe, swipe, swipe!
"There!" gasped Crocker. "I've wanted to hand you that for a long time, you measly worm; now you've got it!" He turned to Reggie. "So it was your idea, was it? It was your sort of idea, you sneaking little tick! Take that—and that—and that—and that!"

"Yaroooh!" roared Reggie, as he took them. "I say, keep off! Yoo-hoop!"

Reggie dodged wildly round the study, the cane swiping on his trousers as he dodged. Stuckey of the Sixth caught him by the collar and pitched him headlong across Mr. Pyke. They sprawled together, mingling their yells. Parker grabbed the inkpot from the desk and up-ended it over both of them. Ink streamed and splashed over them as they squirmed.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Bendover prefects.

"That's that!" grinned Crocker. "You've been asking for that a long time, Mr. Pyke! I hope you enjoy it now you've got it! From now on we're backing up Will Hay! Got that?"

"Urrrrgh!" gurgled Mr. Pyke.

"Come on, you men!" said Crocker. The Bendover prefects tramped out of the study, and Stuckey slammed the door. Mr.

Pyke sat up; Reggie sat up. Wiggling, they blinked at one another's inky faces. The plot had fallen through with a bump.

WILL HAY grinned; so did the Bendover Fourth. Looking from the windows of the Head's house, they beheld Mr. Dunkley Pyke—not now carrying his head high, and his bony nose in the air, but in an obviously moulting state. They saw him speak to Crocker of the Sixth, and saw Crocker of the Sixth turn his back on him. They saw Gunter of the Fifth burst into a laugh as Mr. Pyke came on him—quite a rude and derisive guffaw. And Mr. Pyke walked on, pretending not to notice. All Bendover, in fact, was ready to back up the rebel Form; and Mr. Pyke was in momentary dread of the barring-out spreading from the Fourth to all the other Forms.

"My beloved 'earers," said Will, "the glory has departed from the house of Israel, or, more colloquially, Pyke's number is up. I don't think we shall have a lot more trouble from that quarter."

"Not half!" grinned Dicky Bird.

"By gum!" said Jimmy Carboy, with a gleam in his eyes. "Nobody's standing by the old bony bean now, sir. What about mopping him up?"

"Hear, hear!" chorused the Fourth.

Will Hay rubbed his nose thoughtfully. Hitherto the rebels of Bendover had garrisoned their stronghold, and kept watch and ward, and held the fort. But holding the fort really did not seem necessary now. Dunkley Pyke, on his own, was powerless, and he had not a single backer left in the school, unless it was Reggie. Really, it was Mr. Pyke now who needed to keep watch and ward.

"My only hat and sunshade!" exclaimed

Will. "Why not? Pyke sacked me, and one good turn deserves another. Why should I not sack Pyke, and make it even? Even so—what?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Hallo! He's coming here!" exclaimed Tubby Green.

Mr. Pyke had been walking in the quad for some time, his brows wrinkled in thought. Everybody at Bendover knew that he was at the end of his tether—and none knew it better than Dunkley Pyke himself. Sacking Will Hay had seemed to him quite a good move; but it had been his undoing. Since then, disaster had followed fast and followed faster. But now some idea seemed to have occurred to the tyrant of Bendover. He came directly towards the Head's house, and the rebels from the windows eyed him curiously.

"Good-morning, boys—I mean, good-morning, sir!" said Will Hay genially, putting his head out of the window as Mr. Pyke came to a halt in the garden. "Nice morning for a walk, sir. Do you think you could walk to Didham?"

Mr. Pyke stared at him.
"I have no intention of walking to Didham!" he snapped.

"Oh, quite, quite!" agreed Will. "I was not referring to your intentions, sir, but to my own. My intention is that you should walk to Didham. I am prepared to give you a start, Mr. Pyke. I am coming out to do it now. My boots are number elevens."

Mr. Pyke breathed hard.

"One word with you, Mr. Hay," he said.

"Two, if you like," said Will generously.

"Or, dash it all, make it three!"
"The dispute here," said Mr. Pyke, glaring at him, "is between you and me, Mr. Hay. I am going to make you a sporting offer—"

"The last thing in the world I should have



expected from you, sir," grinned Will. "But carry on."

"This disgraceful and outrageous state of affairs must end," said Mr. Pyke. "I propose that the dispute should be settled between us two, Mr. Hay, without interference from anyone at Bendover. I challenge you, sir, and if you call yourself a sportsman, you will not refuse my challenge."

"Great pip," ejaculated Will. "I mean, bless my soul! Never shall it be said that a Hay refused a challenge! Perish the thought!"

"You agree?" asked Dunkley Pyke. "I'm an agreeable chap, sir, as you may have noticed," answered Will. "I agree—with, or without gloves?"

"Three to one on old Hay!" chuckled Dicky Bird.

"Let us make it clear," said Mr. Pyke, his narrow eyes gleaming. "You accept my challenging to an equal contest. The winner stays at Bendover; the loser leaves the school immediately. That is agreed—and we both give our word on it?"

"I agree!" said Will. "To the victor, the spoils, and woe to the jolly old vanquished! I'm your haricot."

"I hold you to your word, sir," said Mr. Pyke. "But I am not referring to a bout of fisticuffs, as you appear to imagine. I refer to a fair and equal contest, but of a less strenuous nature."

"Coffee and pistols for two?" asked Will. "Any old thing, Mr. Pyke. Machine-guns, if you like. Swords or maces. Bows and arrows, if you prefer them, though it's only fair to warn you that I've had a lot of practice in drawing the long bow—"

"Nothing of the kind, Mr. Hay. We shall toss up a coin, and abide by the result," said Mr. Pyke.

"Oh, crikey!" gasped Will Hay. "You mean to say— Oh, my hat!"

Will stared blankly at Mr. Pyke. He was ready—more than ready—to engage that gentleman in combat with, or without gloves. In fact, he was rather keen on it. But the idea of staking the success of the Bendover barring-out on the toss of a coin did not appeal to him at all.

Mr. Pyke sneered. "Are you backing out, Mr. Hay? You have agreed—you have given your word! The contest is as fair for one as the other. I will abide by it."

Will made a grimace. "It's a catch," he said. "But if you're going to be sporting, for the first time in your life, I'm not the man to discourage you. If you'll face it, I'll face it! Done!"

"Look here, sir—" exclaimed Dicky Bird. "Nuff said!" said Will. "Haven't I taken the challenge? A Hay's bird is his wand—"

"Wha-a-t?" "I mean, a Hay's word is his bond! Fair's fair!" said Will. "Get that door open."

"Look here, you old ass!" yelled Jimmy Carboy. "Think that measly old worm will play fair? Bet you he can toss head or tail just as he likes."

"So can I," said Will cheerily. "And as the challenged party, I have the choice of weapons. I shall toss the jolly old penny."

"Oh, crumbs!" "Come on, my merry little pippins!" said Will, and he dragged open the front door of the Head's house, so long carefully bolted and barred, and billowed out, with the Bendover Fourth at his heels.

Mr. Pyke stood in the garden, with a penny held between finger and thumb. At the sight of Will Hay & Co. emerging from their fortress, all Bendover crowded across the quad to the spot. Probably there was an impression that the rebels were going to handle the new headmaster, in which case, nobody at Bendover wanted to miss it. From the Sixth to the Second all Bendover lined the garden railing, or crowded in at the gateway—seniors and juniors and masters. Will Hay made a graceful bow to the numerous audience.

"Gentlemen, blokes, and coveys!" said Will. "Lend me your ears! You are all witnesses to this little transaction. Mr.

Pyke and I are going to let our little trouble be decided by the boss of a town—"

"By what?" yelled Crocker. "I mean, by the toss of a brown! Heads, Mr. Pyke carries on; tails, he hits the horizon! That right, Pyke?"

"Quite!" said Mr. Pyke. "Upon my word!" exclaimed Mr. Cheet, the Fifth Form-master. "Hay, I wish you luck!"

"Mais oui—mais oui!" squeaked Monsieur Le Bon. "Zat Pyke, he give me a sack! He give me a sack like he give you, mon cher 'Ay! Species of animal, he give me a sack!"

"Kindly give me room!" said Mr. Pyke. "Now, Hay, I will toss the coin—heads I win, tails I lose! I will—"

"One moment, sir!" said Will affably. "Kindly look me in the eye!"

"Eh! What?" "Can you see any green there?" asked Will. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"If you do not trust me, sir—" hooted Mr. Pyke.



Prof. Barnacle Offers Prizes



FOR GOOD JOKES

Every week I am giving away a 576-page book of adventure stories to the PILOT reader who sends me the best joke. In addition, I am awarding a special prize of half-a-crown to the Overseas reader whose joke takes my fancy. All you have to do is to write your joke on a postcard and address it to: Professor Barnacle, The PILOT, Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

THIS WEEK'S WINNERS ARE:
Teacher: "Now, Johnny, if you have a sixpence in one pocket and a shilling in the other, what would you have?"
Johnny: "Somebody else's coat, sir!"

This week's special prize of 2s. 6d. is on its way to: P. Antlett, 136, Hatfield Street Gardens, Cape Town, S.A.

Boarder: "Look here, I haven't got a decent towel, sponge or piece of soap."
Landlady: "Well, you have a tongue, haven't you?"
Boarder: "Sure; but I'm not a blinkin' cat!"

This rib-tickler wins a 576-page book of adventure stories for: J. Davies, 66, Burges Road, Thorpe Bay, Essex.

"Not so's you'd notice it!" agreed Will. "The tossing of the coin may safely be left in my hands!"

"If you refuse to trust me, sir, I refuse to trust you!" yapped Mr. Pyke. "The coin shall be tossed by a neutral hand, and allowed to fall to the ground, that all may see it! Monsieur le Bon will oblige."

"Mais oui!" The portly French master pushed forward. "Laissez moi faire! You shall trust me, mon cher 'Ay, isn't it?"

"I'd trust you with untold frogs, Mossoo Bong," answered Will. "Go it! Carry on!"

Mr. Pyke placed the penny in Mossoo Bong's portly paw. He seemed unwilling to part with it, but there was no help for it. There was a hush, and all Bendover caught its breath, as Mossoo Bong tossed the coin into the air and it glimmered in the sunshine and fell. It dropped, with a clink, on the paved garden path, rolled into a soft, clayey patch, and lay still. Then there was a general craning of heads to look. And there was something like a groan from all present, except Mr. Pyke, when all eyes beheld the effigy of King George.

"Heads!" said Mr. Pyke. "Fan me!" murmured Will Hay. "Oh, lor!" groaned Dicky Bird.

There would have been wild cheers all over the school had Will Hay won that contest. But there was grim silence as Mr. Pyke, all anxiety to retrieve his penny, fell over his own feet, and was unaware for a second or so that he was actually standing on the penny.

It was the dutiful Reggie who pointed out where it was, and, with a smile of satisfaction on his bony face, Mr. Pyke picked up his double-headed penny and put it in his waistcoat pocket!

"ASS!" said Will Hay. He was addressing himself.

Ever since Will Hay had been a Form-master at Bendover, all the New Will had come round to the general opinion.

He had been done—done brown! After that great and glorious barring-out, after beating Dunkley Pyke all along the line—with Dr. Shrubbs due at the school in a day or two—he had been shipwrecked within sight of land! His sporting instinct had done him! But he had taken the challenge—and he was bound to abide by the result! It had been fair play—so far as Will knew, at least! Monsieur le Bon, who was sacked if Dunkley Pyke remained headmaster, certainly would not have favoured Pyke. It had been even chances—and Will had come out at the little end of the horn! But as he walked in the quad, taking his last look at Bendover, Will could have kicked himself—and as he saw Dunkley Pyke grinning at him from his study window, still more enjoyably could he have kicked Dunkley Pyke.

He had to go. The Bendover Fourth were in a state of dismay—all Bendover looked dismal. Crocker, Stuckey, dozens of fellows, came up to Will to tell him they were sorry he was going. In all the Fourth Form, only one fellow looked cheerful. That one was Reggie Pyke. But Reggie was careful not to let the other fellows see his cheerfulness. They would soon have made him look quite otherwise.

"Ass!" said Will Hay. "Fathead! Chump!" "Mon cher 'Ay, vat you call me?" exclaimed Monsieur le Bon. He came rushing up excitedly to say something, when Will spoke. "You zink zat it is my fault zat vun of zose tetes—zose heads—he come up?"

"Eh, what?" ejaculated Will. "I was speaking to myself, Mossoo—the biggest ass going! I don't mind being the biggest ass—it's the going that worries me! I've let myself be done brown by that pie-faced apology for a polecat! Now, if the tail had come up, I should be staying at Bendover and Pyke would be hitting the high spots for home!"

"Ze tail?" said Monsieur le Bon. "Zat penny, he have no tail!" Monsieur le Bon blinked at him excitedly. "Zat penny he have head bofe sides!"

Will Hay jumped clear of the Bendover quadrangle. "WHAT?" he yelled.

"Bofe sides!" babbled Mossoo. "I gaze at ze spot where ze coin it fell, and yet I see in ze soft clay anozer head. How can zat be so, I asks myself, when ze zide of ze coin that was atop was also ze head?"

"Show me!" exclaimed Will fiercely. "Show me where you saw this!"

"Oui, oui! Certainment!" beamed Mossoo, and he rushed the master of the Fourth to the spot where the fate of the rebellion had been decided by the single spin of Mr. Pyke's coin. There, clear enough for anyone to see, was the unmistakable imprint of a "head" in the soft, clayey soil. Undoubtedly, in stepping on that coin, in his anxiety to retrieve it, Mr. Dunkley Pyke had "ditched" himself!

"Diddled!" yelled Will. "Dished! Done! Bamboozled! Taken in by a confidence-man's double-headed penny! Oh, my only hat and umbrella! Oh, my solitary check trousers! Oh, holy smoke! Mosso, you've shamed me—I mean saved me! Hurrah! I'll let that double-crossing pican know whether he can diddle Will Hay! I'm going to see that

penny! Here! Bird—Carboy—Smart! Follow your leader!" roared Will Hay. "Here! Crocker—Stuckey—Gunter—Mr. Choot—everybody! Come with me and see fair play!"

Will Hay billowed off to the House, leaving Mossoo Bong staring in amazement. An excited crowd followed him.

"What's up, sir?" shouted Dicky Bird. "Pyke's game!" answered Will Hay. "Come on, all of you! I want all Bendover to witness!"

"But what—" gasped Crocker. "Follow me!" bawled Will, and he hurled open the door of the Head's study. Mr. Pyke jumped to his feet, in surprise and alarm. Reggie, who was in the study, dodged round the desk. Both of them had been grinning—now there was not the ghost of a grin on either face.

"What—what does this mean?" gasped Mr. Pyke. "Hay, you have given your word—" roared Will. "Trot out that double-headed penny!"

"Wha-a-t?" gasped Mr. Pyke. "Oh, crikey!" gasped Reggie. "Oh, my hat!" yelled Jimmy Carboy. "Is that it? Didn't I tell you that that measly old worm wouldn't play fair?"

"You did!" gasped Will. "Trot it out, Mr. Pyke! You put it in your waistcoat pocket! Out with it!"

"I—I refuse! I—I— Yaroooooh!" roared Mr. Pyke, as Will hooked his leg and he sat down on the study floor with a heavy bump. "Let go! Release me! I refuse to allow my pockets to be searched—I refuse—" "Snaffle it, Bird!" grinned Will Hay. He

grasped Mr. Pyke's wrists, and dragged his hands over his head as he sat gasping on the floor. "Now, then!"

Dicky Bird inserted finger and thumb into the waistcoat pocket and drew out the coin he found there. He held it up for all to see.

Bendover fellows, had, perhaps, heard of tricks played by tricksters with double-headed pennies; but they had never seen such an article. Now they saw one! On each side of the penny held up to view by Richard Bird was a head!

WILL HAY released Mr. Pyke, and the temporary headmaster of Bendover staggered to his feet. He glared at Will as if he could have bitten him.

Will smiled at him genially.

"A near thing, Pyke!" he remarked. "But a miss is as good as a mile! We wash that right out, Mr. Pyke! Don't make me any more sporting offers—I've absolutely no use for them. But I'm going to make you one! We'll settle that matter between ourselves, as you suggested—and all Bendover shall see fair play! The winner stays—the loser goes! Stand clear, you fellows, and give us room!"

"Hear, hear!" chortled the Bendover Fourth. "Go it!"

Will squared up to the new headmaster. A terrific punch landed on Mr. Pyke's long, sharp nose. Another caught him in the ear. At that stage in the proceedings, Mr. Pyke decided not to leave all the scrapping to Will Hay!

He jumped at him with bony fists. Will caught one with his eye and one with his nose. He blinked and snorted. But he car-

ried on hot and strong. He punched hard—and he punched often. Dunkley Pyke was driven right round the study, amid cheers from the spectators. For five minutes the battle raged; and then Mr. Pyke, on the floor, clasped a darkening eye and a streaming nose, and howled for mercy. Will Hay grinned at him cheerily.

"That's that!" he remarked. "You lose, Mr. Pyke! You mizzle! You quit! You hit the horizon! Half an hour to pack—and if you're at Bendover later than that, look out for a No. 11!"

Mr. Pyke was allowed half an hour. He was not gone at the end of thirty minutes. But at the end of thirty-one minutes he was gone—for sixty seconds sufficed for Will Hay to hook him down to the gates and plant a boot that lifted Mr. Pyke into the road.

All Bendover, from the Second to the Sixth, looked on and roared with laughter as he went. After him went Reggie—Dicky Bird's boot performing the same service for him as Will Hay's for his pater. The gateway of Bendover was packed with laughing faces, as the two Pykes disappeared down the road to Didham.

The great barring-out had come to a victorious end—and when, a day or two later, Dr. Shrubbs blew in, all was calm and bright!

Colonel Chatterton crops up again, and that means further trouble for Will Hay. But Will can take it, and you'll be tickled to death when you read next week's side-splitting exploits of the world's funniest Form-master.



YOUR EDITOR.

Harvey Keen, Sub-Editor.

Prof. Barnacle, Joke Merchant.

Tilly Tappett, The Typist.

Lightning, the office boy, and his dog.

Address your letters to: The Editor, The PILOT, Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

HALLO, chums.—Harvey Keen speaking. It was my birthday yesterday, but it's not because of that that I'm feeling so merry and bright, but because that we of the PILOT staff are confident that we are delivering the stuff you like. I'm sure you will agree with me, when you have read this week's issue through, that there is no better value for the money on the market.

But better than that, we keep it up, and next week again, there will be another super-story programme for you of fun and adventure with the PILOT's famous team of celebrities. So take my tip and place a regular order for this best-of-all boys' papers, and not be left in the cold.

Talking about that reminds me of my birthday, and I'm going to tell you how a white mouse got us all left out in the cold on that day. You wouldn't believe that, would you? But it's true—and I don't mean maybe!

You see, I decided to have a bit of a beano to celebrate, I told the staff I would treat them to dinner and a show. They were all very bucked, and Lightning went without lunch in order to be ready for it. Even the Barnacle combed his whiskers, while Tilly went to the chemist's to buy the things she makes her face up with. She came back with a bottle of scent—a big bottle it was, too. She was sitting at her desk, sniffing the powerful stuff, when we saw Lightning prowling round the room anxiously.

"Have you seen Cholmondeley, eating anything lately?" asked Lightning, giving his

cheesehound a dirty look. "Y'see, I bought a white mouse at a shop in the market, and it's run out of the box!"

Tilly uttered a screech like a factory siren and bounded on to her desk. The bottle of scent flew out of her hand, banged Barnacle on the dome, and crashed in ruins on the floor. And over everything spread a powerful, awful, horrible, fearful reek of scent! It was ghastly stuff—I tied a hanky round my face before I was suffocated.

The Ed came rushing into the office—then staggered back again, gasping for air. As for the Barnacle, who'd got the worst of it, he was at his last gasp. We hurriedly opened a window and stuck his head out, fanning him with his own whiskers.

"Mop that stuff up, somebody!" yelled the Ed.

Lightning got a pail of hot water and scrubbed the floor, but the room was reeking with scent—and so were we! Our clothes were saturated with it. When I walked down the corridor to the postage department, other men I met giggled at me like idiots and asked me if I bought my scent at the same place as my face-powder.

Dismally we washed and brushed ourselves, ready for the evening out. When we all four marched into a posh restaurant, the reek of scent was enough to stop the band. People hurriedly scrambled out of their seats on all sides of us. There were loud requests for the manager, and he soon appeared.

"M'sieur," he gurgled, "I am desolated to

intrude, but might I ask the lady to remove herself? My customers complain of the scent she is using."

Scarlet-faced, Tilly got up and walked out. The people came back to their seats, sniffed, glared at us, and then bawled for the manager again. Up he came.

"M'sieurs," he gasped, "it grieves me to ask again, but do you mind if the lady comes in and you go out?"

"We're all going out!" I snorted, and we marched out to join Tilly.

If we hadn't booked the seats at the theatre, I should have chucked up the idea. The theatre was hot and crowded, and the odour of the scent spread over it like gas. The people in the row behind us rose as one man.

"Scandalous!" hooted some fat old citizen. "The management should be prevented from scenting the theatre with this stuff."

"Quite so, my good sir!" cried the Barnacle, rising quickly. "The smell of it is making me feel ill."

The manager came, and before anyone could speak, the Barnacle began complaining.

"What do you mean, sir," wheezed the old whelk, "by spreading this beastly scent over the theatre and spoiling the pleasure of other people?"

The manager raised his hands hopelessly.

"I assure you this awful scent is not used in the theatre. I must be on somebody here." He gave me a look, sniffed at my clothes, and staggered back, choking. "It's this gentleman!" he gasped. "And that lady—and that boy!"

He pointed to Tilly and Lightning.

We looked at each other, then got up and walked out. As we went, we heard the Barnacle saying: "Scandalous! People ought to have better sense—I can still smell it!"

When we got outside, Tilly asked me dismally:

"What are you going to do now?" "I'm going to wait here," I said, grinding my teeth, "until the Professor come out."

And I did, too—and he knows it!

Yours,

Harvey Keen