

MIKE, SPIKE & GRETA—OUR COVER STARS—AT THE BALL!



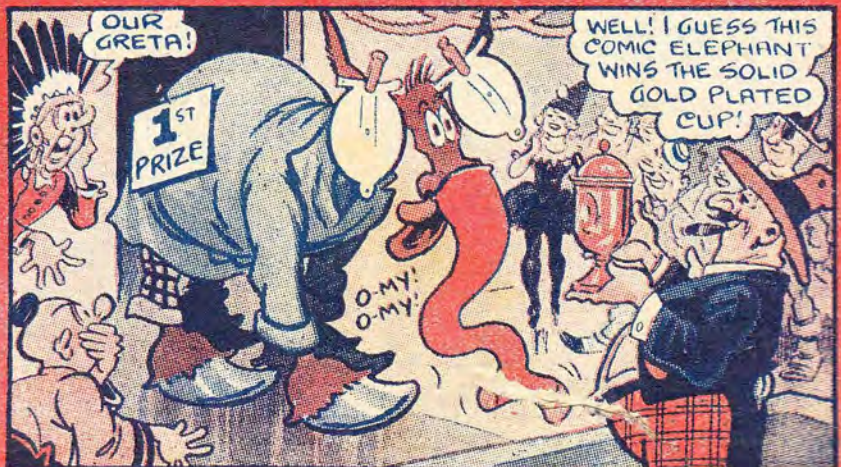
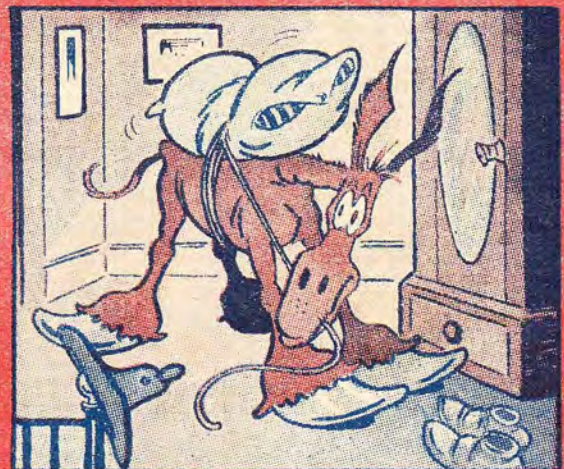
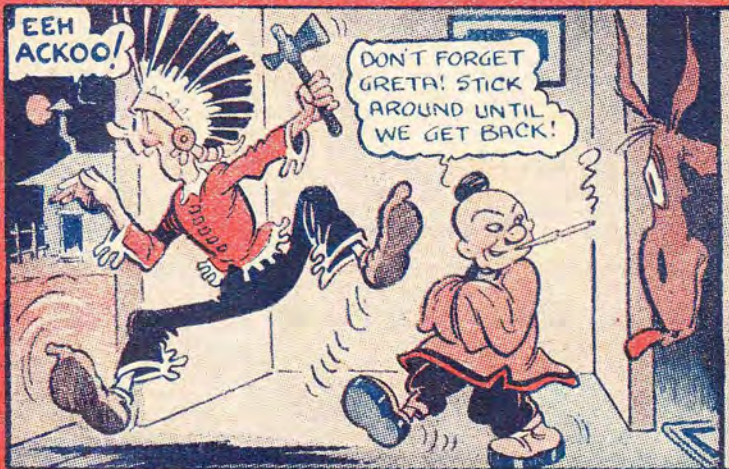
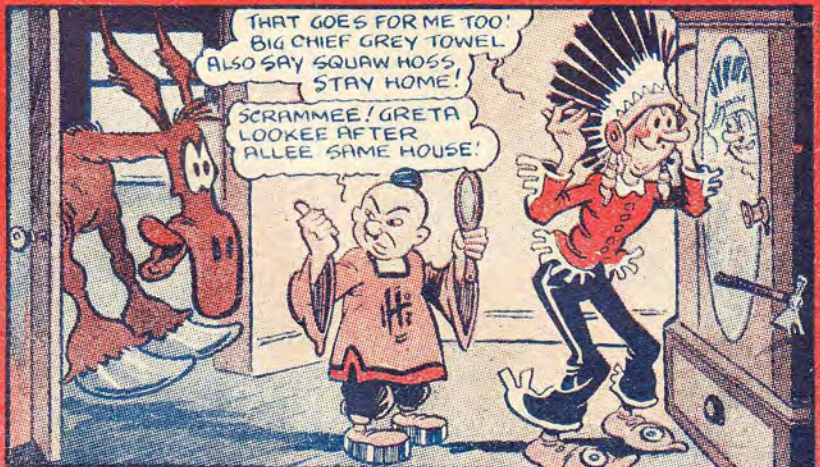
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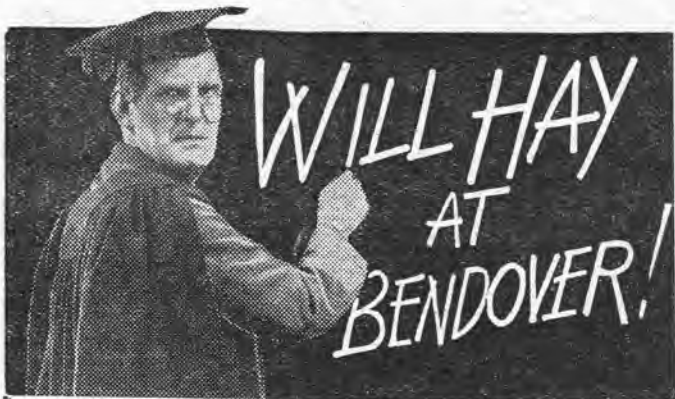
The PILOT

EVERY
FRIDAY

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Telling how Will Hay, the human mirthquake, is mistaken for a kidnapper! Laughs—thrills—and more laughs!

(By Courtesy of Gainsborough Pictures.)



"KOO!" roared Will Hay. "Yessar!" said the new boy at Bendover.

"What do you mean by this?" demanded Will indignantly. He held up a blank sheet of paper.

The Bendover Fourth grinned at it. For the last hour Will Hay's Form had been busy with those papers. Will Hay had been busy toasting his toes at the Form-room fire. Now the master of the Fourth had to look over the papers. He did not expect very much from Koo-kalinga-lalulo-ululo-la, the tattooed junior from the South Sea Islands. But he expected something. Koo's paper was a beautiful blank. In his own happy island of Ululo, Koo, like other Kanakas, was accustomed to making a fine art of laziness. He was very keen on keeping up this happy custom at Bendover School.

"Don't you know that we are here to work?" hooted Will.

"This feller Koo no likee work, sar!" said the Kanaka junior simply.

"I admit," said Will, "that it is an acquired taste. But I'm the man to help you acquire it! Bird, hand me that cane from my desk! Koo, step out from the class. Do me the favour to bend over and touch your toes."

Koo blinked at him with his big black eyes. "What name me bend over, touch feller finger belong foot belong me?" he asked.

"Ha, ha, ha!" chortled the Bendover Fourth. Koo's variety of the English language added considerably to the gaiety of existence in Will Hay's Form. Koo said "what name" when he meant "why"; and to Koo, a toe was a "finger belong foot." It wanted some getting used to.

"What which?" gasped Will Hay. "You little coffee-coloured tick, I'm going to whop you! This feller Form-master whop you plenty

too much along pants belong you! Understand that?" grinned Will.

"Me savvy, sar!" admitted Koo. "This feller Koo no likee big feller stick along pants belong him, sar."

"You're not expected to like it," explained Will. "You take it like medicine—nasty, but it does you good. Bend over!"

Koo bent over, and touched his toes. Up went the cane. One hefty whop. Will considered, would meet the case. Koo really had to learn that manners and customs in a North Sea island were different from those in the South Sea Islands. Will put considerable beef into that whop. The cane came swiping down.

At the same moment, Koo twisted away, with the litherness of an eel. He had truly stated that he did not like it; and, not liking it, he dodged it. The cane swept through empty space.

Meeting with no resistance, it swept on, and landed, hard, on Will's own knee. It landed there with a terrific crack. A report like a pistol-shot rang through the Form-room. Immediately afterwards, and louder, rang the voice of Will Hay, on its top note.

"Yaroooooop!" Will dropped the cane. He hopped on one leg, clasping the knee of the other with both hands. He hopped and howled.

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked the Bendover Fourth.

"Hoo, hoo, hoo!" chuckled Koo. "Oh! Ah! Ow! Suffering sardines! Yoo-hoop!" yelled Will Hay, in anguish, dancing wildly on one leg. "You little—yaroooh!—tick—you mahogany-coloured wart—yoo-hoooh! Oh crumbs! Yow-ow-ow! Wow!"

"You likee, sar?" asked Koo. "This feller no likee! Plaps you likee, sar?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'll show you in a minute!" gasped Will. "Just wait a tick! Ow, ow! Wow! If I don't bake the skin off your tack—I mean, take the skin off your back—Yow! Ow! Wow!"

Will set his damaged leg gingerly on the floor, and ceased to hop. Then, grasping the cane with a business-like grip, he started for Koo. His previous idea had been that one whop would meet the case. Now he was thinking in hundreds. Koo dodged promptly round the desks. He did not like the expression on Will Hay's speaking countenance. After him rushed Will, with billowing gown, his eyes gleaming over his slanting nose-nippers.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Dicky Bird. "Put it on!" yelled Jimmy Carboy. "Ha, ha, ha!"

Round the desks flew Koo—after him flew Will Hay. The Bendover Fourth watched the chase with great enjoyment. This was better than lessons, any day.

"Gottin!" gasped Will, as he chased the elusive Kanaka into a corner of the Form-room. "Now, then, you little pimple—Oh, my only summer hat!"

Will had not quite got him! Koo, backing into the corner, crammed his elbows and feet against the walls, his back in the angle, and climbed. Never in the history of Bendover School had there been a fellow who could climb the corner of the room! But Koo could! The junior from the South Sea Islands could climb anywhere—the nimblest monkey in the Zoo had nothing on Koo-kalinga-lalulo-ululo-la. Up he went, out of Will's reach, and the master of the Bendover Fourth stared up at him blankly.

The Fourth Form shrieked with merriment. Wedged in the corner, high over Will's astonished head, the Kanaka grinned down at him. Will brandished the cane.





"Come down!" he roared. "This feller Koo no likee stick belong you, sar!" grinned Koo. "This feller tinkee stop along this place."

"Humming haddocks!" gasped Will. "Wait till I get a chair!"

He rushed across to his desk to fetch the high chair that stood behind it. But Koo did not wait for him. Once mounted on that high chair, Will would have been within reach with the cane.

Koo slid down from the corner, and cut across to the Form-room door. The door opened, and banged behind Koo.

"Stop!" roared Will Hay.

He relinquished the chair, and rushed in pursuit. He billowed down the passage, and glimpsed Koo vanishing into the dusky quadrangle.

"Stop!" shrieked Will.

He billowed out into the quad. But he did not see Koo again. The only sign he found of Koo was a handkerchief, lying at the foot of the school wall. It caught his eye in the falling dusk, and he swooped on it. The South Sea islander, whose taste in colour was gorgeous, sported a handkerchief with green spots and a red border. It was unmistakable. Will Hay blinked at the handkerchief, and blinked at the wall. No fellow at Bendover could have climbed that wall—excepting Koo.

"My only pink-striped pyjamas!" gasped Will.

Koo was gone! Will had no doubt that he had climbed the wall and dropped outside! And he breezed back to the Form-room—never guessing that Koo-kalinga-lalulo-ululo-la was, at that moment, safely parked in Study No. 3 in the Fourth, and that he had left the handkerchief under the wall to give his Form-master exactly the impression he had got.

"MY dear Hay," said Dr. Shrubbs, "one moment!"

The venerable Head of Bendover gave the master of the Fourth a friendly tap on the shoulder.

"Two, if you like, sir," said Will, "even three!"

Will Hay was feeling worried. Since class, he had seen and heard nothing of the new boy in his Form. Judging by the sounds of laughter he had heard from the direction of the Fourth Form studies, his Form looked on the matter as a joke. But it was no joke to Will. A boy in his Form had cleared out of Bendover. Will was responsible for him. It was rather hard that he should be responsible for a Fourth Former's actions, when he was hardly responsible for his own! But there it was!

"I am sure, my dear Hay, that you are taking every care of the new boy in your Form, Koo-kalangle-vangle—I mean, Koo-kaloodle-woodle—that is to say, Koo! Since we have learned that a kidnapper is attempting to lay hands on the boy, we cannot be too careful!" said Dr. Shrubbs. "Under no circumstances is he to be allowed out of gates, Hay, and I rely upon you to see to this!"

"Oh! Quite!" gasped Will. "But—"

"There are no 'buts' in the matter, Hay!" said the Head of Bendover, with a touch of sternness. "You yourself made the discovery that a desperate gangster is seeking to kidnap the boy. If he leaves the school, we may never see him again! I place the responsibility wholly on you, as the boy's Form-master."

"But—" gasped Will.

"You repeat yourself, Hay!" said Dr. Shrubbs. "Let it be clearly understood that if the boy, for any reason whatever, sets a foot outside the school, you will be held absolutely responsible."

Dr. Shrubbs rustled on, leaving Will Hay blinking.

"That tears it!" murmured Will.

Unaware of the cause of the merriment in the Fourth Form studies Will had no doubt that Koo had not only set a foot outside Bendover, but had set both of them! Will rubbed his nose thoughtfully. He was not keen to take a walk abroad on a misty winter's evening, but clearly it was up to him to run that young rascal down and march him in before the Head discovered that he was outside Bendover at all. Unwillingly, but resolutely, Will breezed away to the gates and fared forth in search of Koo.

After all, he could not be far away. Probably he was only waiting for his Form-master's temper to cool before he showed up again. Which, in fact, was exactly what Koo was doing—only he was doing it before the fire in Study No. 3, had Will only known!

"Koo!" shouted Will, as he billowed down Didham Lane. "Koo! Where are you, Koo? Koo! Koo! Oh my only silk socks! Where's that dashed Koo?"

"Hi, measter!" said a voice.

Will Hay came to a halt and blinked at a rustic gentleman who was leaning on an open field gate, smoking a pipe. The countryman nodded affably to Will.

"I 'ear you calling, sir!" he said. "You looking for that coo?"

"Exactly!" exclaimed Will eagerly. "If you can give me any information, I shall be frightfully obliged."

"I see 'un!" said the rustic gentleman, nodding. "I see un in this field, zur! You go straight across, you'll find un."

"Thanks!" exclaimed Will.

He hurried through the gateway. He took it for granted that the rustic gentleman was



a local resident who knew Koo by sight. Koo had attracted a lot of attention in the neighbourhood of Bendover. It did not occur to Will for the moment that the local pronunciation of "cow" was "coo." That rustic gentleman knew nothing about Koo-kalingalalulo-lululo-la. He had given obliging information, in the belief that Will was looking for a cow!

In happy ignorance of that circumstance, Will Hay billowed across the dark field, looking for Koo. He would have preferred to keep to the roads. The fields were frightfully wet and misty and muddy. But he had to find Koo, and he had no doubt that Koo was lurking in that field. He could not doubt that, after the information he had received!

"Koo!" shouted Will, peering round in the gloom over his nose-nippers. "Koo! Show up, will you? I jolly well know you're here! By gum, won't I dust your pants for this? Koo! Koo!"

There was a sound of a movement under a fringe of willows by a muddy brook. Will Hay heard it, and came to a halt, peering into the shadow of the willows. Distinctly a sound of movement came to his ears, and he breathed hard through his nose. Obviously, he had run the young rascal down, and Koo was skulking there in the deep shadow of the willows!

"Come out!" roared Will. "Do you hear me, you young scoundrel? Will you come out of that, or do you want me to fetch you?"

There was another movement under the willows. Something living was certainly there, and Will had disturbed it. Will had no doubt what it was! As Koo did not come out, he groped into the darkness under the willows in quest of him. A dim shape moved before him in the gloom, and Will grabbed at it.

"Gottim!" he gasped. "Now, you young swob—why—what—who—how—which—"

"Mooooo-oooo!" came from the unseen one. Will's astonished grasp closed on a crumpled horn!

"Wha-a-t—" stuttered Will. The cow shook her head violently. She was as astonished as Will Hay! Will's grasp was shaken off. He tottered, in amazement. A huge, hairy body heaved against him, as the cow got into motion. Will stumbled, his foot slipped in the mud, and he went over.

Squelch!
"Ooooooh!" gasped Will Hay.

"Moooooo-oooo!" remarked the cow. The cow waddled away. Will being in the way, she waddled over Will! It seemed to Will like a horrid dream, as the cow trod on him, and lumbered over him, squashing him down in mud. It was quite a relief when the cow had finished walking on him.

"Oooogh!" gasped Will Hay, as the quadruped lumbered on. "It—it's a kik-kik-kik-cow! It isn't Kik-Kik-Kik-Koo at all—it's a kik-kik-cow! Suffering sardines!"

He sat up dizzily. The cow disappeared in the gloom, a faint "moo" floating back to Will's muddy ears. Will tottered to his feet. How much mud he had collected, he did not exactly know—but he knew it was a lot! He tottered out from under the willows. Mud clothed him like a garment. He squelched and streamed, as he limped back to the field gate on Didham Lane, where the rural gentleman was still leaning, smoking his pipe. The rural one gazed at that moving pillar of mud with interest.

"You fund that coo, zur?" he asked. "You blithering, blithering, blithering blockhead!" gurgled Will. "Wharrer you mean by telling me Koo was there?" "Eh? I see un, zur?" "There was nothing but a cow!" roared Will.

"Wasn't you looking for a cow, zur?" asked the rural gentleman, in surprise.

"A—a—a—what?" gasped Will. "A coo, zur! I 'ear you say, wharr's that coo—"

"Oh! Ah! Oh humming haddock and scented sardines!" gasped Will Hay. "I—I—I see! My mistake! I was looking for a Koo—quite another sort of Koo! Not that sort of coo! Not at all! You can keep that coo!"

Will tottered away towards the school. He was fed-up with looking for Koo. What he wanted chiefly was a change and a wash, and Koo had to wait till he had had them. He arrived at the school gates—but he paused, before he rang for Kelly to let him in. He was in no state to meet the eyes of all Bendover. Judging by the state he was in, he had not left that cow much mud for a wallow. He decided to get in quietly, and sneak unseen to his rooms.

That was easy enough. He knew a certain spot where the wall could be easily climbed—he had found it out through spotting Fruity Snell getting out of bounds there one evening. Will breezed along to that spot, clambered over, and dropped within—he stumbled as he dropped, and sat down.

"QUIET!" whispered Dicky Bird. "It's all serene!" answered Jimmy Carboy. "Old Hay's gone out—and there are no prefects about."

"Quiet, all the same! It's six for breaking bounds!"

"I—I say—" squeaked Tubby Green.

"Quiet, you fat ass!" hissed Bird.

"But, I say, I can hear somebody!" breathed Tubby.

Three of the Fourth had crept across the shadowy quad, and stopped under the wall—at a spot well known to Will Hay's pupils. It seemed to the Bendover Fourth no end of a joke for Will Hay to trot out of gates, looking for Koo, who was sitting in his study; and, at the same time, his absence came in useful, as it gave Dicky Bird & Co. a chance of smuggling in supplies for a dormitory spread. But Tubby's whispered warning came just in time, as they were about to clamber over the wall. From the other side of the wall, which abutted on the Didham road, came an unmistakable sound—someone was climbing over!

"Oh crikey!" breathed Dicky Bird, and he backed promptly into the shadow of a Bendover beech. Carboy and Green backed with him. It was startling to hear somebody climbing surreptitiously into the school under cover of the winter darkness.

"That kidnapper!" whispered Tubby Green.

"Oh, my hat! Quiet!"

All Bendover knew about the kidnapper who was after Koo. Keeping in deep shadow, the three juniors watched anxiously to see who was climbing over the wall. A head rose into view, dimly seen in the glimmer of the evening stars. Three pairs of startled eyes stared at a face which was quite unrecognisable. It looked as if it had been thickly smothered with mud. That, for all Dicky Bird & Co. knew, might be a gangster's way of disguising himself. Anyhow, it was clearly not a Bendover fellow who had been out of bounds; it was a man who clambered over the wall and dropped inside. Who could it be but the kidnapper?

Dicky Bird & Co. had no doubt about it. They hugged cover and watched with beating hearts. They heard the man drop only a few feet from them, they saw him stumble and sit down with a bump. They heard him grunt as he sat. Then Richard Bird acted—swiftly! Tackling a kidnapping gangster, probably armed, was no light matter; but at the moment he was at a disadvantage, and Dicky Bird did not lose that moment. He made a sudden spring, grasped the sitting man round the neck from behind, and dragged him over wallowing on his back.

"Back up, you fellows!" panted Dicky.

"Collar him!"

"What-ho!" gasped Jimmy Carboy, quick to follow his leader.

He leaped at the sprawling man, and grasped him.

Tubby Green was only a second later. Tubby was fat; but he was plucky as he was podgy. He hurled himself on the sprawler. He landed on the muddy one's waistcoat; he landed there like a ton of bricks. There was a horrible gasp from the sprawling man, like air escaping from a punctured tyre, as every ounce of wind was

driven out of him by Tubby's weight dropping on his equator.

"Oooooogh!"

"We've got him!" panted Dicky Bird.

"We've got the scoundrel! Hold his arms! Drag him along! Take him to the Head!"

"Oooooogh!" came a faint moan from the prisoner.

He wriggled feebly, but he did not struggle. There was no struggle in Will Hay till he got his second wind. He moaned and gurgled faintly. What was happening to him, Will hardly knew. But he knew that he was winded, and he tried in vain to find his voice. All he could emit was a feeble moaning gurgle.

Three pairs of hands dragged him along. There was a shout as he was dragged into the light from the windows of the House. A dozen fellows rushed up; there was a roar of startled voices. Dr. Shrubbs threw open his study window. He stared in amazement and alarm at the figure that wriggled feebly in the hefty grasp of Dicky Bird & Co.

"Who—what—who is that?" stuttered the Head of Bendover.

"The kidnapper, sir!" gasped Dicky Bird.

"What?"

"At least, we caught him sneaking into the school, and collared him, sir!" panted Jimmy Carboy.

"Bless my soul! It must be the kidnapper! Crocker, Stuckey, Gunter, help those boys! Seize that scoundrel; secure him! Mr. Choot, Monsieur le Bon, pray lend your aid! Take care! He had a revolver when Mr. Hay encountered him a few nights ago! Take care! Seize him; secure him! Bring him here! Secure that miscreant!"

If the miscreant had a revolver, he had no chance of pulling it. Hands grasped him on all sides. There was hardly room for so many clutching hands. Half-dragged, half-carried, the miscreant was bundled, gurgling, into the House, and bundled along to Dr. Shrubbs's study.

Dicky Bird & Co., not to be shoved aside by the seniors, still held on. Dicky Bird and Jimmy Carboy had an ear each, and Tubby Green had a grip on the miscreant's hair. Horrible gurgles and moans and squeaks came from the unhappy miscreant.

"You have him secure?" gasped Dr. Shrubbs. He gazed at the face of the moaning miscreant. A thick coating of mud hid the master of the Bendover Fourth. Want of wind stifled his voice. Will Hay could only blink and gurgle. "The scoundrel—hold him tight! He is disguised! Evidently that mud has been plastered over his face to conceal his identity! No doubt he is well known to the police, however. Scoundrel! Who are you? Answer me!"

"Oooooogh!"

"What? What did you say?"

"Woocooogh!"

"What do you mean? Explain yourself at once! For what purpose did you enter this school?"

"Goooooogh!"

"He refuses to answer!" gasped Dr. Shrubbs. "He will answer the police! I will telephone to Didham Police Station immediately!"

"I think he's winded, sir!" gasped Dicky Bird. "Green dropped right on his breadbasket—"

"His—his what?"

"I—I mean, his tummy, sir."

"Oooooogh—I—I—grocogh—ooogh—urrgh!" came moaning from the prisoner. "Woogh!"

"Hold him securely while I phone. Disguised as he is, it is plain that he is a desperate character. His features have a most villainous cast. I have seldom seen so absolutely depraved-looking a ruffian!" exclaimed Dr. Shrubbs. "Keep him safe while I telephone for the police."

"We've got him, sir!"

"We've got him all right!"

"Urrrrgh!" gurgled the prisoner, as Dr. Shrubbs grabbed up the receiver from the telephone. "Gurrgh! D-d-don't—urrgh—did-did-did-don't fuf-fuf-phon, sir! Urrgh!"

"Don't phone!" repeated Dr. Shrubbs. "I shall certainly phone this instant! You shall be given into immediate custody! I—"

"Wurrgh! Gurrgh! I—I—urrgh—I—I—I'm not a kick-kick-kidnapper, sir! I—I—I'm Will Hay!" Will got his voice at last. "I—I—I'm Will Hay, sir! Groogh! Just—oooh—Will Hay!"

"Wha-a-at?" The receiver dropped from Dr. Shrubbs' hand. "Wha-a-at? Did—did you say Will Hay—I mean say Will Hay?"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Dicky Bird. "Groogh! Ooogh! Just Will Hay!" gurgled Will. "I—I got rather muddy, and I was coming in quietly, when those little—groogh—ticks collared me; and—and—Ooogh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" There was a yell in the Head's study. The study almost rocked with the roar of laughter from the Bendover fellows.

Will Hay was released. He sat up and dabbed his face with his handkerchief. Dr. Shrubbs stared at him like a man petrified.

"Mr. Hay!" he spluttered. "Can I believe my ears? A member of my staff—in this state! I do not blame these boys for their mistake. They had every right to suppose you a lawless intruder. Upon my word! Leave my study, sir! As soon as you are in a fit state for your headmaster to address you, I will speak to you again! Go!"

Will Hay crawled away. Howls of laughter followed him to his rooms. They echoed in his ears as he cleaned off the mud. It was a long process. It was quite a long time before Will Hay was newly swept and garnished.

"ONE hour, sir!" thundered Dr. Shrubbs. "My dear sir—" gasped Will. The Head of Bendover raised a commanding hand.

"One hour," he repeated. "You tell me that, in spite of my strict commands, the boy Koo is outside the walls of Bendover! You tell me that you got into that disgraceful state searching for him in a muddy field! Probably he is already in the hands of the kidnapper! If so, I hold you responsible! Mark me, Mr. Hay! If in one hour from now you do not bring the boy Koo to my study, you are dismissed from Bendover!"

"But, sir," gasped Will Hay, "the boy may be miles away! He may be lost, stolen, or strayed!"

"One hour, sir!" repeated Dr. Shrubbs. "If he is lost, find him! If he is stolen, rescue him! If he is strayed, trace him. I give you one hour! Otherwise, you are dismissed from my staff, Mr. Hay!"

Dr. Shrubbs swept out of Will Hay's study, leaving the master of the Fourth blinking.

"It's the sack!" soliloquised Will dismally. "Goodness knows where that furniture-polish-complexioned little tick is by this time! If that gangster's got him, I hope he will wallop him. That would be a comfort. Something must have happened to him, or he would have come back before this. One can only hope that it was something painful."

Will selected his stoutest cane. "If this is going to my last hour at Bendover, I've none too much time for dusting the pants of those little ticks who snaffled me in the quad," he murmured. "I mustn't forget them. I must really give them something to remember me by."

Somewhat comforted by that reflection, Will put his cane under his arm, and breezed out of the study. He billowed up the stairs to the Fourth Form passage. Sounds of revelry by night greeted his ears as he approached the door of Study No. 3. There was a loud chortling from that study.

"That old ass Hay!" came Dicky Bird's voice. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Poor old Hay!" giggled Tubby Green.

Will Hay smiled grimly as he arrived at the study door. He had an idea that these merry youths were going to laugh on the other side of their mouths shortly. Then, all of a sudden, he jumped.

"Hoo, hoo, hoo!" came a chuckle from the study. "Ole feller Hay plenty too much funny! He tinkes this feller Koo climb over wall, along he findes feller hanky stop along wall. Hoo, hoo, hoo!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Dicky Bird. "I

wonder when old Hay will find out that Koo has been here all the time?"

"Right now!" said Will, as he pushed open the study door. "Take that, please, Bird!"

"Yaroo!"

"Kindly take that, Green!"

"Yoo-hoop!"

"One for you, Carboy!"

"Whoop!"

"Koo, you little tick, follow me at once! Your headmaster desires to see you. I think I had better take you by the ear, to make all safe—"

"Ooogh! You no pull feller ear belong me!" yelled Koo. "Me comey plenty too quick! Me likee comey along nice old Hay!"

"Come on!" grinned Will. "You won't dodge this time, you coffee-coloured pimple, or, if you do, you'll leave me your ear as a souvenir!"

DR. SHRUBBS jumped.

"My dear Hay!" he exclaimed. The Head of Bendover gazed with great relief at the brown face of Kookalinga-lalulo-ululo-la, and beamed on Will Hay. His relief was immense.

"My dear fellow, it is not twenty minutes since I saw you in your study," he exclaimed, "and you have already found the boy! You must excuse the emphasis with which I expressed myself, my dear Hay. I was very anxious about him. And you have already found him. This is really wonderful!"

"In another, sir, perhaps so," said Will; "but the Hays can do these things. A mere trifle to me, sir. Koo, you may go. Shut the door after you. My dear sir, you may be sure that, after receiving your commands, I lost no time in carrying them out. It was no easy matter; but I did it, sir. You have seen the boy, safe and sound. You directed me to find him. I—hem!—found him!"

"It is wonderful!" declared Dr. Shrubbs. "Not at all, sir. I can do these things on the back of my neck," said Will Hay; and he left the Head's study, and winked at the door after he had closed it.

Next week the genuine kidnapper turns up at Bendover and Will Hay is in the thick of the excitement that follows. Laughs as well as thrills are in store for you.



Leonard Henry at the "Mike"

Here's some more cheery chatter from a "PILOT" celebrity who believes that "Laughter makes the world go round."

HALLO, EVERYONE!—Joo know, I've just had my dinner at a new restaurant with a notice outside: "YOU CAN'T BEAT OUR FOOD." Somebody put a B in that notice by mistake. I went in and I said, "Do you serve shrimps here?" And the waiter said, "Yes, we serve anyone. Sit right down."

I started with fish. After trying to tear the creature with my teeth I called the waiter. "I say, you know, I can't eat this beastly fish." He said sadly, "Well, you asked for the fish course, and that's the coarsest we've got." I gave him one of my looks. "I admit I ordered a sole," I said, "but I didn't want it for my boots." The waiter was dignified. "There's a great difference between fish and leather," he said. "You can get a nail into leather. Why not try an egg?"

So I tried an egg—and found it guilty. "Take it away," I sighed. "I'd rather have a poor fish than a tough egg."

"You ain't seen nothing yet," sighed the waiter. "Wait till I bring the meat." He brought me a cold shoulder and I cut it dead. "You've got the wrong address," I said. "I'm not the dustbin. I'm a customer wanting food."

"You've got the wrong address, too!" he replied. "You ought to try a restaurant."

He did really! What a lad! The next thing I ordered was fowl. "It's spelt F O W L," I pointed out quickly. "Not here it ain't," said the waiter, and it wasn't. It was the foulest fowl I've ever seen. Absolutely blue round the edges.

"That's owing to its blue blood," said the waiter. "Its grandson came over with William the Conqueror."

"What was its name?" I asked. "Methuselah!"

He said it was named Popeyeson, being the son of a bird named Popeye. He told me its history. From the very start it was a bad egg. It was so often in hot water that it grew completely hard-boiled. Finally it broke its mother's heart and, overwhelmed with debts

and folly, wrung its own neck in a corner of the chicken run. There it was found in the morning, cold and stiff on the ground.

And, joo know, the waiter actually fetched a jug to catch the scalding tears dropping from my eyes. He said they'd do for hot water.

"Why do you tell me these harrowing details?" I groaned.

"Manager's orders," said the waiter gloomily. "It sets the customers' teeth on edge, so as they can eat our food."

"Well, take this chicken's body away and bring me a college pudding."

When I tasted the college pudding, I knew at once that all the eggs in it ought to have been expelled.

"Can't eat this," I gasped. "Bring me a trifle and custard."

The custard was so thin that its ribs were sticking out.

"I say, look here you know, there's a fly eating my custard."

"Yes," said the waiter. "I hadn't the heart to kill it. I admired its pluck."

"And where's the trifle?" I demanded.

The waiter shook his head. "It was such a trifle it wasn't worth putting in," he explained.

"Shall I lead your cheese to you, sir?"

When the cheese came, it had a collar on, and the waiter fastened its lead to the chair. Hastily donning my gas-mask, I tried to grab a mouthful, but the cheesemites were too quick for me. The last I saw of the cheese it was rushing in the direction of Manchester at a fast speed.

"Bring me some coffee," I said faintly.

He brought the coffee and a big bunch of lilies. I told him I hadn't ordered any flowers.

"These are for when you've drunk the coffee," he explained. "With the deepest sorrow of the management."

"Joo know," I said, "I don't think much of this restaurant. And the more I think of it, the less I think of it. I've come here and ordered fish, eggs, meat and everything else—and all for nothing."

"No, sir, not for nothing," replied the waiter. "The bill is eighteen-and-six. Please pay at the desk."

And they made me do it! Well, perhaps it was only fair—because I was empty when I went in, but completely fed-up when I came out. Eh?

LEONARD HENRY.