

STARTING TO-DAY: "THE BEASTS OF TARZAN!"



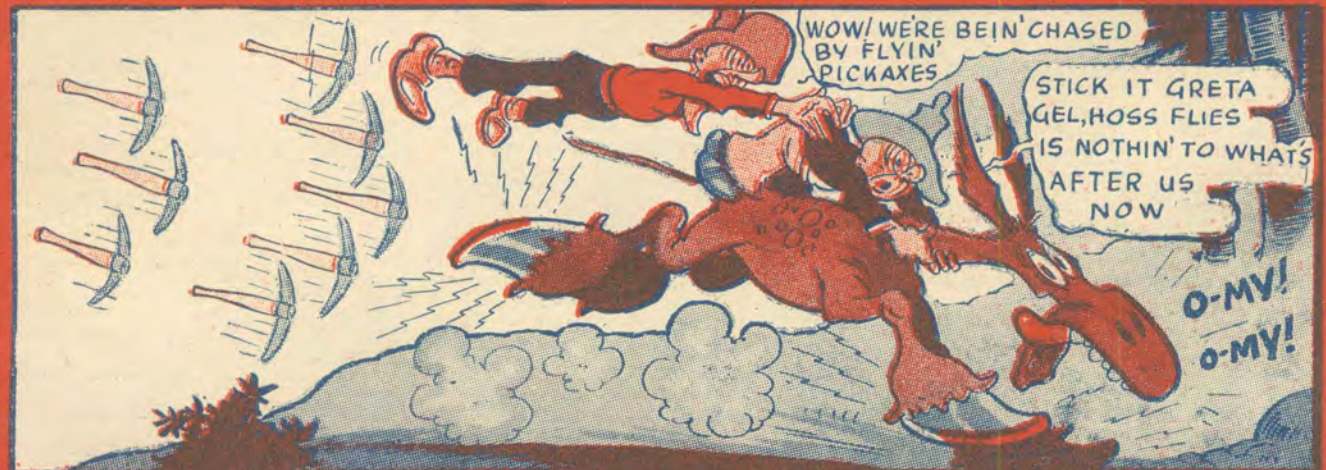
The PILOT

EVERY FRIDAY

2⁰

No. 118. Vol. 5. Week ending January 1st, 1938.

MIKE,
SPIKE
& GRETA
—OUR CRAZY
GANG— IN
"UNLUCKY
HORSE-
SHOES"
THEIR LATEST
"ATTRACTION."





By courtesy of Gainsborough Pictures.

CLICK, click, click!
 "My only purple socks!" murmured Will Hay.

Will knew that Dr. Shrubbs had gone out. He had, in fact, watched him go, before he breezed along to his study to borrow his typewriter. So it was quite a surprise, when he arrived at the door of the Head's study, to hear that typewriter clicking within.

Will grinned. Clearly, someone else had also had the idea of borrowing Dr. Shrubbs's typewriter while he was out. Will turned the handle of the study door quietly, and peered in. Then he had a back view of Dicky Bird, of his Form, sitting at the Head's desk, typing away industriously.

Click, click! went the typer. Will Hay stepped softly into the study. Richard Bird was booked for a surprise. Will hadn't his cane with him, but he had a heavy hand. He raised that hand, as he stepped behind the busy junior, for a sudden smite that would undoubtedly have surprised Richard.

Unfortunately for Will—though not for Richard—Dicky Bird moved just as Will smacked! He leaned over the machine to look at what he had written. Will's hand swept down, just missing the top of Dicky's head. Meeting with no resistance, the hand naturally swept on, and banged on the back of the chair.

The next moment there was a sound of roaring in the Head's study as if a mad bull had got loose there.

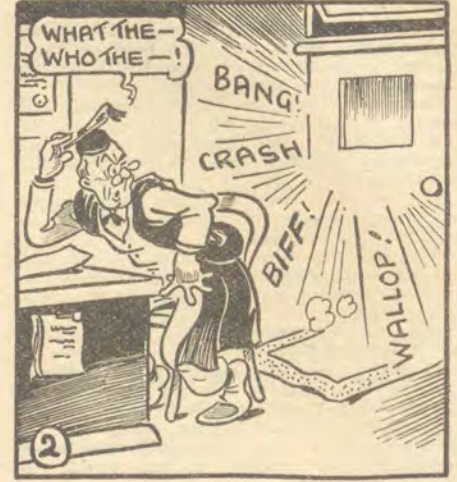
"Yah-hoo-hoop!" roared Will Hay.

He sucked his fingers frantically.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Dicky Bird, spinning round in the chair in surprise and dismay.

"Oh! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ow-ow! Yow!" spluttered Will. "Oogh! You little tick! You iniquitous little wart! You—Yow-ow! Wow! What do you



mean by shifting your nut when your Form-master is smacking it? What? Wow! Woogh!"

Will's right hand was damaged. It had a severe pain in it. But he was able to use his left. He used it, with rapidity and vigour.

Then it was Dicky's turn to do a bit of roaring. Dicky Bird roared, and dodged, and yelled as a series of hefty smacks descended. He made a bolt for the door; but Will grabbed him by the collar, and jerked him back.

"Not so fast, my little pippin!" bleated Will. "As you are so handy with the typewriter, you can type my note for me. Sit down!"

Dicky Bird sat at the Head's desk again, red with wrath. Really it was not his fault that Will had damaged his hand. He had not asked his Form-master to smack his head. Will, rubbing his right hand tenderly with his left, proceeded to dictate. He could not use that hand for the present, so Dicky came in useful.

"First, address an envelope to the 'Doddlebury Gazette,' That's right. Now take down this letter. 'Dear sir—' Got that?"

"Yes," snorted Dicky. Will blinked over his shoulder. Then he glared. Dicky Bird had typed:

"Dear sir,
 Got that?"

Smack!
 "Wow!" roared Dicky, as Will's left hand resumed play after the interval. "Ow! Yow! Leave off smacking my head, will you? Ow!"

"You don't quite catch my meaning, Bird," beamed Will. "A smack or two may—may help. We will see. Now try again. 'Dear sir—' Got that?"

This time Dicky typed "Dear sir," and

left it at that. Will grinned genially over his shoulder.

"We are getting on," he remarked. "Now go on. 'Kindly insert enclosed advertisement in the current number of the 'Doddlebury Gazette.' Postal order 1s. 6d. also enclosed. Your truly—"

Will's left was ready for action; and Dicky Bird typed that letter without a fault. Will nodded approval as he removed it from the machine, and, taking up the Head's pen, signed it "Will Hay"—with some difficulty, for his fingers were very painful.

"Now put in a single sheet, and take down the advertisement," said Will. "Errors will be dealt with as before."

There were no errors. Richard Bird took it down with meticulous care. His napper was quite tired of Will's left.

"Second-hand typewriter required. Must be in good condition, and cheap. W. Hay, Bendover School."

"Good!" beamed Will. "You are quite a good typist, Bird, though you must not, on future occasions, use your headmaster's machine, except, of course, to oblige your Form-master. Now put the letter and the advert into the envelope. Here is eighteenpence. You will walk down to the post office at Didham, and purchase a postal order for that amount—"

"I'm going to play footer—" began Dicky Bird. Then, as Will's left hand rose, he added hastily: "I mean, I—I'd like to walk to Didham."

"Excellent!" said Will. "As you would like a walk to Didham, Bird, both of us are going to be satisfied. Put the postal order in, seal the envelope, and post it—and lose no time. Now I must go and rub something on my hand, or I shall not be able to handle the cane next time you deserve it,





which, I am sure, would be a disappointment to you."

And Will billowed out of the Head's study, leaving Dicky Bird to hurry away and carry out his instructions.

But Dicky Bird did not hurry. Will disappeared, leaving him with the letter in one hand, and rubbing his smacked head with the other. Dicky Bird was doing some thinking, while he rubbed his head.

A grin overspread his face. He stepped softly to the door, and closed it. Then he sat down to the typewriter again, and put in a fresh sheet. In about a minute the machine had clicked off a new edition of Will Hay's advertisement:

"Bachelor Form-master desires to meet single lady of mature years, with view to matrimony. Only personal interviews; no correspondence. Call any time Saturday afternoon. Will Hay, Fourth Form-master, Bendover School."

Grinning, Dicky Bird abstracted the original advertisement from the envelope, and dropped it into the fire. In its place, he inserted the new one, which, from Dicky's point of view, was likely to have much more interesting results. As it was going to be accompanied by Will's signed letter, the "Doddlebury Gazette" could have no doubts—that remarkable advertisement would appear in the "Gazette" on Friday morning. And on Saturday morning, Dicky thought, Will might wish that he hadn't smacked the head of that member of his Form.

In cheery mood, Dicky left the Head's study, and walked down to Didham, where the postal order was duly purchased and inserted, and the letter duly posted. And when Dicky Bird came back, there were sounds

of loud laughter in Study No. 3 in the Fourth.

WILL HAY rubbed his nose thoughtfully. He blinked over his nose-nippers at his Form in class on Saturday morning, and blinked again, and yet again. Will was puzzled; he was perplexed. He could not make it out. That there was some merry jest on, in the Bendover Fourth, was clear. Every face in the Form wore a grin. Every now and then there was a chuckle or a chortle. But what was the jest? What were the little ticks up to? Will could not begin to guess.

The Bendover Fourth were a cheery Form. They liked to pull their Form-master's leg. Sometimes they got by with it; sometimes they didn't. Will Hay was "wise" to those young rascals—and he was wary. But this time, Will was quite at a loss.

"You are laughing, Carboy!" he rapped. "Was I, sir?" gasped Jimmy Carboy. "I didn't mean to. Ha, ha!"

"Take fifty lines for laughing in class, Carboy!"

"Yes, sir. Ha, ha!"

"What are you sniggering at, Green?" roared Will.

"Oh, nothing, sir!" stammered Tubby Green. "I haven't seen the 'Doddlebury Gazette,' sir. Yaroo!" added Tubby, in a wild roar, as Dicky Bird kicked him under the desk.

"The 'Doddlebury Gazette!'" repeated Will. "I was unaware that that was a humorous journal. I have always supposed it to be a serious periodical. What are you giggling about, Koo?" Will turned his glare on the brown face of Koo-kalingalulo-ululo-la, the Kanaka junior.

"Hoo, hoo, hoo!" chuckled Koo. "Me laugh along me see something velly funnee, sar!"

"And what's that?" demanded Will.

"Face belong you, sar," answered Koo. "What-a-t?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled all the Bendover Fourth. The "face belong" Will Hay was quite a study at that moment.

"Oh," gasped Will, "that's it, is it? Well, if face belong me makes you laugh, you tattooed tick, perhaps came belong me will make you do the other thing. Let us see!"

Whack, whack, whack!

"Yoo-hooop!" roared Koo. "Me no laugh any more altogether! Yoo-hooop!"

"Stick to that!" snorted Will. "Now, I don't know what's amusing you little ticks, but any more sniggering and I'll detain the whole Form this afternoon."

Sudden gravity descended on the Bendover Fourth. That awful threat had its effect. Detention that afternoon would mean missing the results of the matrimonial advertisement in the "Doddlebury Gazette." Dicky Bird gave his comrades a warning look. But they did not need it. Every face became grave and solemn at once.

Which puzzled Will more than ever. Certainly no fellow liked a detention class on a half-holiday. Still, he had not expected that threat to have the effect of a thunderclap; but it had.

Not a snigger, not a giggle, not a chuckle, was heard in the Fourth Form Room till the lesson ended. Hardly a grin flickered over a face. Selgum had Will had so quiet a class.

But the juniors, who had all seen that remarkable advertisement in the copy of the Doddlebury paper Dicky had brought in on Friday afternoon, only suppressed their feelings with difficulty. The moment their Form-master dismissed them, they broke out again. They were all chuckling and chortling as they streamed out into the quad, and Will Hay gazed after them, over his slanting nose-nippers, in perplexity.

At dinner that day there were smiling faces



all along the Fourth Form table. Other fellows were grinning, too. Luggie of the Shell was whispering and giggling; Gunter of the Fifth was gurgling, and every time he looked across at Will Hay, he gurgled again. Mr. Choot, the master of the Fifth, had a very grave face, and when Bendover went out of Hall, he joined Will Hay in the quad, and touched him on the arm. Mr. Choot had seen that ad. in the local paper, and had been much surprised and rather scandalised by the idea of a Bendover beak advertising for a bride.

"My dear Hay," he said, "far—I repeat, far—"

"Tommy?" asked Will, with interest.

"Eh, what?" ejaculated Mr. Choot, taken aback. "Tommy what?"

"Tommy Farr," said Will, blinking at him. "I don't know any other Farr."

"You misapprehend me, Hay. I was about to say, far as it is from me to intervene in a colleague's personal affairs—"

"Oh, I get you!" agreed Will. "Not Tommy Farr? Tommy-rot! What?"

"Mr. Hay, I feel bound to speak on this subject. Do you think it really judicious, in your position as a Form-master in this school, to insert such an advertisement in the local paper—"

"Eh? Why not?" asked Will, in surprise. "If you want a thing, advertise for it. Sweet are the uses of advertisement, as Shakespeare very nearly said."

"But—but such a very unusual thing—"

"Every man ought to have one," said Will. "I've had several in my time, and found them very useful."

"Wha-a-t?" gasped Mr. Choot blankly. "Impossible! My dear Hay, what are you saying? You—you have had several? Goodness gracious! Not—not—not all at once, I trust!"

"Why not?" asked Will. "It's a good idea to have a couple at once, if you can afford it, in case one goes wonky."

"Upon my word!" gasped Mr. Choot. "If—if—if such are your views, Hay, I have nothing more to say—nothing whatever! Goodness gracious!"

Will blinked after the Fifth Form master in astonishment as he faded away. Happily unaware of Dicky Bird's alteration, he supposed that Mr. Choot was referring to his advertisement for a second-class typewriter. Mr. Choot, who was referring to the advertisement for a single lady, with a view to matrimony, was naturally very much shocked.

Will, unaware that he had given Mr. Choot the impression that he was a wild and reckless bigamist, was only perplexed. Really, he could not see anything to surprise Mr. Choot in the idea of having two typewriters at once, in case one went wonky!

Will, as he strolled in the quad, could not help noticing that he was getting quite a good deal of attention. Several masters glanced at him rather queerly; lots of fellows looked at him and grinned at one another, and a crowd of the Fourth seemed really almost in hysterics. More and more fellows had been shown that advertisement in the "Matrimonial" column of the "Doddlebury Gazette," but only a chosen few knew the real authorship.

Will retired to his study at last, and sat down to read "The PILOT," but he was fated to be interrupted. There was a tap at the door, and it opened to reveal the grinning face of Toots, the House page.

"This way, mum!" said Toots. "This is Mr. Ay's study, mum! Mrs. Blunch, sir!"

And Will took his feet hastily from the table and rose to them, as Mrs. Blunch, the widowed lady who presided over the Young Ladies' School at Doddlebury, entered the study with the light and airy tread of a hippopotamus. And the closing door shut off a howl of merriment from along the passage.

MRS. BLUNCH smiled at Will Hay. Will smiled back politely. He had seen Mrs. Blunch a few times, without yearning for closer acquaintance; and he had not the faintest idea why she had called, unless she had a second-hand typewriter to dispose of. But Will was always polite.

"Good-morning, boys—I mean, good-after-

noon, madam!" bleated Will. "Pray be seated! To what do I owe this pleasure, madam?"

"Your advertisement, Mr. Hay."

"Oh, exactly!" assented Will.

"I trust," said Mrs. Blunch, with a winning smile that revealed an expensive outfit of the Doddlebury dentist's best work—"I trust that you do not regard my action in calling as—hem!—bold, Mr. Hay?"

"Not at all," assured Will. "Glad to do business, madam. If you can supply the article I require—"

"That is a very odd way of putting it, Mr. Hay," said Mrs. Blunch. "But perhaps it is better to discuss the matter on a business-like footing. After all, we are both of a serious age. Certainly I can do so—that, of course, is why I am here."

"Second-hand?" asked Will.

Mrs. Blunch blinked at him.

"Did you say second-hand?" she ejaculated.

"Certainly, madam! I don't think I could afford a new one!" explained Will. "A second-hand one, if in good condition, will suit me admirably."

"Upon my word, you express yourself most extraordinarily, Mr. Hay! Second-hand, indeed! I am a widow, if that is what you mean, but what a very odd way of expressing it!"

"My dear madam, I don't quite follow—"

"Let us come to the point, Mr. Hay. I have seen you several times, and I may say that I like you personally—"

"Eh?"

"Looks, after all, are not everything," said Mrs. Blunch.

"Wha-a-t?"

"That is really immaterial. But before we decide anything, there are certain serious considerations to be discussed. In the first place, the question of means—"

"Means!" gasped Will.

"Certainly! Frankness surely is best," said Mrs. Blunch. "If you are thinking of taking the step stated in your advertisement in the 'Doddlebury Gazette,' surely the question of means enters into the matter."

"Oh, quite! But," gasped Will, "I wasn't expecting to be put through a means test, madam; but I assure you that my means are quite adequate—"

"Very good," said Mrs. Blunch. "Details, of course, we can discuss later. You think, then, that we may arrange the matter?"

"Why not?" said Will. "I'm not awfully particular, if you come to that."

"Really, Mr. Hay—"

"But, of course, I want one that will work."

"Work!" exclaimed Mrs. Blunch.

"Naturally," said Will. "One that would not work would be of no use to me. I have a great deal of correspondence."

"Oh, I see! If you mean correspondence, well and good. But if you were thinking of cooking or mending—"

"Eh? What? Hardly?" stuttered Will, quite bewildered. "How the dickens—"

"You were not?"

"Eh? No, of course not! How—"

"Very well, then; I have no doubt that we shall come to an agreement," said Mrs. Blunch, with another winning smile. "Will you call, say, on Monday—"

"Certainly!" said Will. "I shall have to give the goods the once-over before I decide to buy, of course."

"How very oddly you express it, Mr. Hay! But I quite understand! I shall expect you to tea on Monday—William!"

"Eh? My dear madam—"

"You may call me Amelia!"

Will Hay blinked. "Mum-mum-may I?" he stammered. "Oh, my hat! I mean to say—suffering sardines! That is to say—I wouldn't think of it—"

There was a tap at the door, and Toots looked in.

"Lady to see you, sir—"

"Oh dear! Tell her I'm engaged!" gasped Will.

"Yessir!" The door closed on Toots.

"Dear William!" said Mrs. Blunch, beaming.

"Eh?"

"How very, very eager you are, William! I should not have dreamed of becoming engaged so hurriedly—"

"What?"

"Still, if you insist—"

"Wha-a-t?"

"You are accepted! You may announce the engagement as soon as you wish!"

"Help!"

"You may kiss me, William!"

"No fear!" Will Hay dodged round the study table. "I say—what—how—which—"

Help! Oh, moulting mackerels! Go away! Buzz off! Wharrer you mean, I'd like to know? I jolly well shan't come and look at that typewriter now."

"That what?"

"I advertised for a typewriter, and you come here and—"

"A typewriter! What do you mean, Mr. Hay? You advertised for a single lady with a view to matrimony!"

"Eh? What? I didn't!" yelled Will Hay.

"Nothing of the kind! Who says I did? If I did I was dreaming! Go away!"

"You did not?" shrieked Mrs. Blunch.

"Certainly I did not—never—oh, humming haddocks—nothing of the sort! Look here, keep on that side of the table—"

Mrs. Blunch did not keep on that side of the table! She knew what Will Hay had advertised for, if Will Hay didn't! But it was clear that there was nothing doing—and Mrs. Blunch looked evidently annoyed. She came round the table, and Will retreated in terror round the end. His billowing gown caught in a chair, and the next moment Mrs. Blunch had him.

Smack!

"Yaroooh!" roared Will Hay. "That's my ear, madam!"

Smack!

"Oh crikey! Help! Mercy! Rescue! Oh, suffering sardines!"

"Insulting man! Take that!" gasped Mrs. Blunch. "And that!"

Smack, smack!

"Yaroooooooop!"

Will Hay stumbled over and sat on the floor. His nose-nippers slipped down his nose, and he blinked over them wildly as the indignant lady swept from the study.

"Oh, my only pink pyjamas!" groaned Will Hay, as he rubbed his ears. "What the thump—mad as a hatter—what the dickens—mad as a hornet—they ought not to let these insane females loose— Oh, suffering shellfish! Wow!"

"Miss Pepper, sir!" said Toots, at the door. And Will Hay scrambled to his feet, gasping, to blink at his new visitor.

MISS PEPPER was tall and angular. She fulfilled the requirements stated in Dicky Bird's edition of Will's advertisement, being, evidently, a single lady of mature years—very mature! She looked Will over with a disparaging eye—with his ears crimson from smacks and gasping for breath, the master of the Bendover Fourth did not look his bonniest.

"Mr. Hay?" she inquired.

"Exactly!" gasped Will. "That is," he added cautiously, "if you have called with reference to a second-hand typewriter! Otherwise, not."

"I have called," said Miss Pepper, "with reference to your advertisement in the 'Doddlebury Gazette.' I am prepared to discuss the matter with you, Mr. Hay, and to make your better acquaintance, with a view to—"

"Not matrimony!" gasped Will.

"Certainly, as stated in your advertisement

FRIDAY is
"PILOT" DAY—
The Best Day of the Week!

in the matrimonial column of the 'Doddlebury Gazette'—"

"But I—I never—I didn't—I wasn't—I wouldn't—"

"It would have been in better taste, Mr. Hay, to offer to call, instead of requesting ladies to call on you! However, as I am here, I was prepared to discuss—"

"But I never!" shrieked Will. "There is some mistake! They must have got it mixed at the office! I advertised for a tripewriter—I mean, a typewriter—"

"I fail to understand you!" said Miss Pepper coldly. "Here is your advertisement, which I have cut out of the paper—"

"Whiskered winkles!" gasped Will Hay, as he gazed at it. "That's not it—that—that—Oh! That young villain Bird—now I catch on! This is what they have all been sniggering about—it's a joke—it's one of me! Oh, suffering centipedes!"

"A joke!" repeated Miss Pepper, contracting her brows grimly.

"Yes, that's just it!" explained Will eagerly. "Don't you take that seriously, Miss Mustard—I mean, Pepper! It's a joke—a jest—a leg-pull—a jape—a trick—a merry jest—a—"

"You bad, unfeeling man, you dare to say that you have inserted such an advertisement as a joke at the expense of the single ladies of this neighbourhood!" exclaimed Miss Pepper. "Oh! No! I mean, it's jest a jest—that is, just a jest—"

"A jest! You, a Form-master, you dare to tell me that you have brought me here for a jest—a joke! Do you fancy, for one moment, that you will escape unpunished after playing such a foolish trick?" Miss Pepper had a rolled umbrella under her arm. She slipped it into her hand. "You utterly foolish, unthinking, unfeeling, inconsiderate nincompoop!"

"I—I—I mean—"

"Rascal!" thundered Miss Pepper. "Impertinent rascal! A jest—upon my word! I have called here, to be told that it is a joke! Such impertinence—such insolence—such unfeeling buffoonery—"

"Not mine!" gasped Will. "Dicky Bird—"

"Don't talk to me about dicky-birds! Buffoon! Knave! Impertinent nincompoop! I passed five or six ladies on the way here—all victims, I presume, of your imbecile jest! You shall not play such tricks with impunity, Mr. Hay!"

Swipe!

Will's mortar-board slanted under the whop from the umbrella. He gave a roar and bounded out of the study.

But one swipe did not satisfy the indignant Miss Pepper. She darted after Will and swiped again—and yet again!

"Oh, humming haddocks!" yelled Will. "Help! Keep off! Yaroooh!"

Will Hay did the passage like a cinder-path, his gown billowing out behind him. The swiping umbrella followed fast. A bunch of Fourth Formers at the corner of the passage looked on with great delight.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Dicky Bird & Co.

"Yaroooh! Help! Who-hoop!" roared Will Hay.

Swipe, swipe, swipe!

"Go it, ma'am!" yelled Jimmy Carboy.

"Ha, ha, ha! Give him beans, miss!" shrieked Dicky Bird.

"You little ticks—grab her—collar her—snaffle her—stop her!" yelled Will Hay, as he barged through the crowd of yelling juniors.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Miss Pepper looked rather too dangerous to stop—if any fellow there had wanted to stop her! With flashing eyes, she pursued the master of the Fourth, putting in rapid work with the umbrella. Will flew out of the open doorway into the quadrangle. After him flew Miss Pepper. Swipe, swipe, swipe!

"Ha, ha, ha!" came a roar from all over the quad.

"Help! Yaroooh! Oh crikey! Stoppit!"

Swipe, swipe!

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked all Bendover.

The whole school stared and roared. Never had Bendover enjoyed such an entertainment on a half-holiday. There was only one fellow

present who did not enjoy it. That one was Will Hay.

Will twisted and dodged and turned, and finally made a jump for a branch of one of the Bendover beeches and swung up out of reach. A final swipe from the umbrella landed as he swung, and Will sent back a yell that woke all the echoes of Bendover.

"Yarooo-hoooop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ladies to see you, sir—"

"What?" yelled Will Hay.

"Three, sir—" said Toots.

Will Hay had retired to his study after Miss Pepper had gone, leaving all Bendover in convulsions. But there was no rest for the master of the Fourth. That advertisement was still doing its fell work!

"Three!" gasped Will.

"And four more at the porter's lodge, sir!"

"Oh! Ah! Tell them I'm engaged—no, tell them I'm dead and invite them to the funeral!"



He's full of nonsense again this week, fellows, which means that he's full o' laughs. So mind your waist-coat buttons!

Leonard Henry at the "Mike"

WHOOPEE!—The year 1938 is about to break, and we're all waiting to gather up the pieces. Here's a Happy New Year to all and sundry,

from your old pal Leonard. Joo know, I'm watching 1937 fade away in a state of sober gravity, full stop. Whoa! Sorry, I'm Leonard, not Stainless. Especially my shirt-front. We've just finished the soup course.

A shate of shober gravity, I shaid—ahem! Just a minute! There seems to be something wrong with the tonsils. Izzun't-tit-torful? I expect I've been eating too many parsh-parnsips—and they've gone to my head. Parnsips do, y'know. Absolutely!

A state of sober gravity—that's better. I always think it right to spend the last night of the old year in solemn thought, so that's what's the matter with me now. People are nudging each other and whispering: "No, no, it isn't a fit! It's solemn thought!" Then they walk away on tiptoe.

Of course, the false nose I'm wearing gets in the way of the solemn stuff a bit, but you simply have to wear a false nose at a Noo Year Party. I mean, what would people think if you turned up with your ordinary naked beezee? They'd probably send for the police.

I was nearly caught once. I was going to a New Year Party, and had forgotten to buy a false nose. It was terrible! I could imagine myself being hoofed out into the cold and stormy night by menials, while the host pointed a quivering finger at me and cried: "How dare you come here without a false nose? You ill-bred cad! Go, and nevah darken my tablecloth again!" So, in desperation, I put my nose in the door-hinges and slammed the door.

Joo know, it was marvellous! The old bulb swelled up like a marrow, and was red enough to light cigarettes on. I took first prize for it, though it was fearfully awkward when the host wanted to take it off to see how it fitted him. The worst of it was, it hadn't gone down next morning, and I had a date at the B.B.C.

"Here they come, sir!"

"Oh! Help!"

Will Hay made a bound for his study window. He hurled up the sash and bounded out! He did the quad at forty miles per hour. He leaped at a wall, clutched and clambered, and disappeared. He was feeling the call of the open spaces. Yells of laughter followed him as he went. Will did not heed. He just went! And he stayed went!

"It means a whopping!" said Dicky Bird.

"But it was worth a whopping—what?"

All the Bendover Fourth agreed that it was!

But when, at long last, Will Hay had leisure to attend to that bright member of his Form, and got going on the whopping, Dicky Bird did not feel so sure about it!

There's no limit to the zopes of the Bendover Fourth and there's no limit to the laughs when WILL HAY is the schoolmaster. Join in the fun with the one-and-only WILL HAY in another mirthquake story next week.

They all thought I'd had too many dry fingers, and forgotten to take my nose off. I tried to tell 'em it wouldn't come off, but they wouldn't believe me till they pinched it. Well, there's about 6,877,555 people at the B.B.C.—6,877,555, counting me—and by the time they'd all had a pinch, the bulge of my face didn't look like a nose at all. When I started to walk home, the police phoned for an ambulance, and asked if I'd taken the number of the car that hit me.

Tut-tut-tut! What's all this about noses? I've come here for a spot of solemn thought, so let's get on with it. Now stand back and give me room to think.

The old year is going, alas! Which reminds me—where's it going? Here we are, all sitting round while it slides off, and none of us bothers to see where it's going. Quick! Find out which direction it's taking. We may see some of the other years hanging about. If I could get hold of 1925 for a minute, I'd like to see the feller who persuaded me to lend him a ten-pun-note till he saw me next time, not knowing he was sailing for South America next day. I'd lend him something I've been keeping for him for years. Bonk!

What I'm looking for chiefly is a nigger. You know it's supposed to be lucky for you if a dark man is the first to cross your threshold on New Year's Day. Of course, all the niggers are booked up by now—and, anyway, I haven't a threshold. I'll have to get one right away. Somebody go out and buy me a threshold—and mind it's a good one, guaranteed to let a dark man cross it.

I do think superstitions are silly—don't choo? F'rinstance, it's supposed to be unlucky if a lunatic armed with a razor is the first man into your house in the New Year—though why, I can never make out. Then it's also unlucky to walk under a steamhammer on Fridays, and to drive a racing-car with your eyes shut. Just as though any sensible person pays any attention to such stoooid things.

Dash it, now I've spilt the salt! Wait a tick—over the left shoulder—whoosh! My dear sir, I didn't aim it at you! I'm sorry if you got an eye-ful, but—Wow! Stoppit!

Which just shows you how senseless these superstitions are. And if I can't find a nigger, I suppose I'll have to get busy with a bottle of Indian ink. Wot a life!

LEONARD HENRY.