

"WILL HAY AT BENDOVER!"

One of the many Star Turns in This Week's Programme of Fun and Adventure.



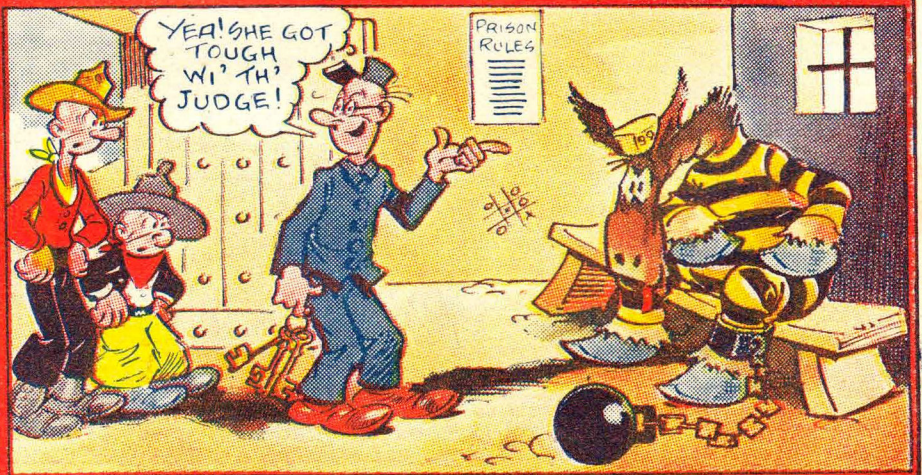
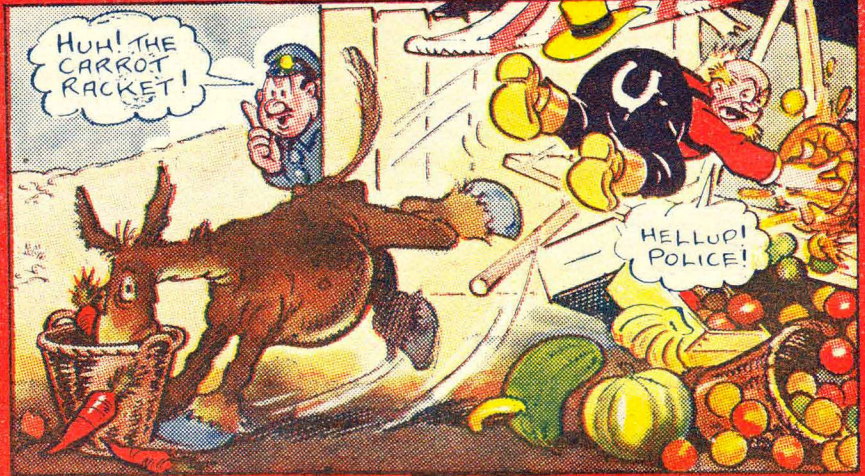
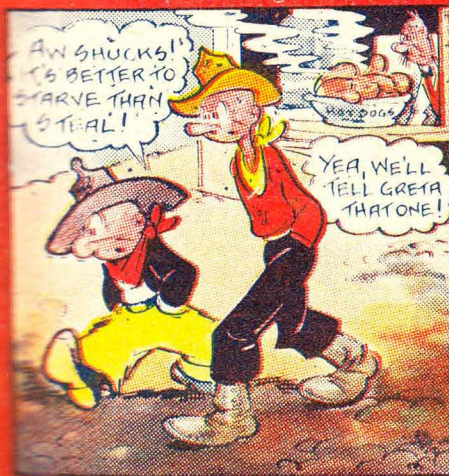
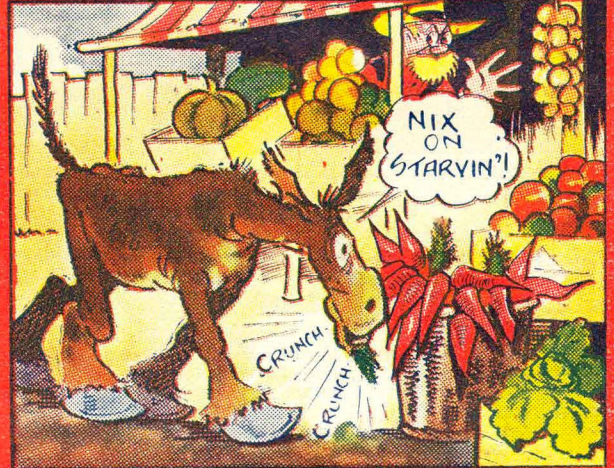
The PILOT

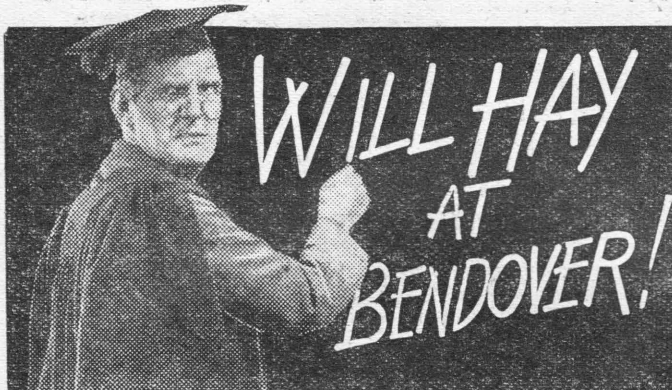
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No. 86. Vol. 4. Week ending May 22nd, 1937.

EVERY FRIDAY

MIKE,
SPIKE
&
GRETA
IN THEIR
LATEST
"Crazy"

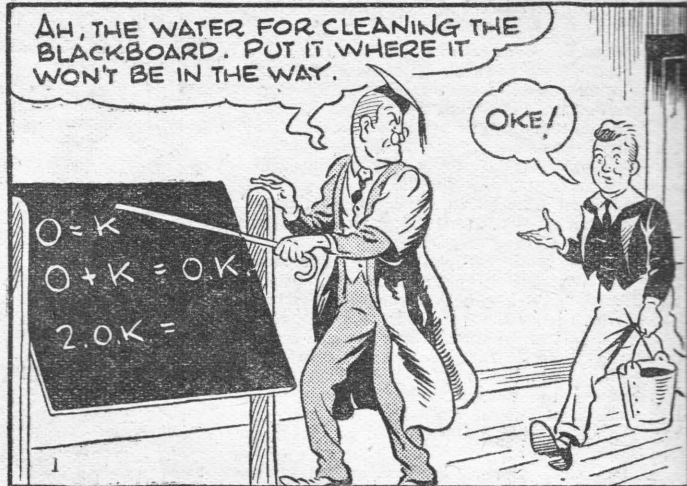




TWO COMPLETE FUN FEATURES . . . Will Hay, the greatest laugh-raiser of the age, presented in a side-splitting picture-strip, and also in a sparkling story . . . SPECIAL to "The PILOT."

(By Courtesy of Gainsborough Pictures.)

BURGLARS!" breathed Will Hay. The master of the Fourth Form at Bendover sat up in bed. All was silent, save for the whisper of the wind in the ancient Bendover beeches, and the melodious voice of Mrs. Mumble's tom-cat on the tiles over Will Hay's room. It was that sound of revelry by night that had awakened Will Hay, and kept him awake for the last half-hour. For thirty minutes, Will had been sleepless, thinking of various ways and means of getting even with that cat on the morrow. But he forgot even Thomas and his musical effects, at the sound of a soft and stealthy footstep passing his door. He listened, with all his ears. There was no mistake about it. Somebody was going up the corridor, treading stealthily, in the direction of the Head's study. There was a safe in that study. Whether there was anything in the safe, Will did not know. But a burglar, naturally, would make for the safe. Will hopped out of bed. Will Hay might be an ass, as the Bendover Fourth believed; or he might be the brainy man of the century, as he believed himself. Anyhow, he had heaps of pluck. Dr. Shrubbs was not going to be burgled, if Will Hay could stop it. Hurriedly he enwrapped himself in a dressing-gown, and hopped into the next room, his study. There he grabbed a poker from the fender, then opened the study door with his left. There was a faint sound from the direction of the Head's study. The midnight marauder was there. Will's eyes gleamed. He was in time to catch the intruder in the very act! He lost no time. He went up the passage, poker in hand, at 60 m.p.h.



Read the picture-strip first.

It was sheer ill-luck that, in his haste, he had omitted to secure the cord of the dressing-gown. What it was that tangled round his feet, all of a sudden, he did not realise for a moment. He had, in fact, other things to think of—for as his legs tangled, he went over headlong, reaching the Head's study door first with the top of his head.

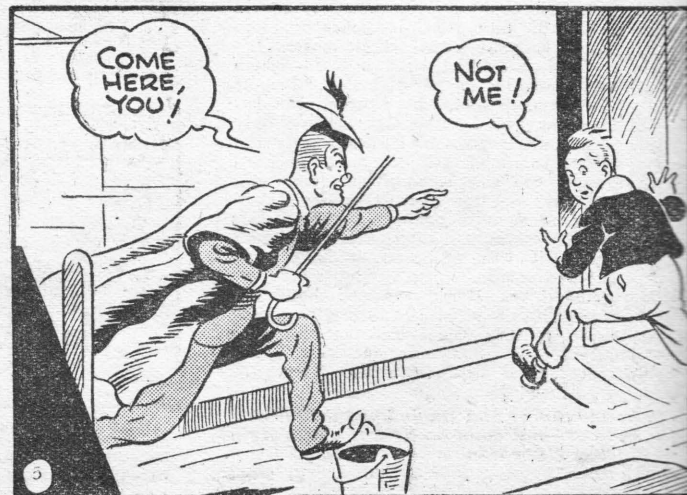
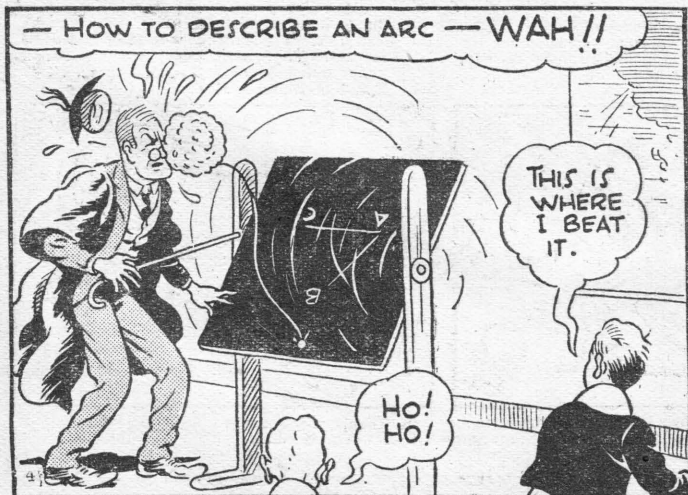
Bang! The door was ajar. Will Hay's head sent it flying open. There was a startled gasp in the dark room. Will did not hear it. He was crashing in the doorway, and the poker crashed on the floor. The din rang far and wide.

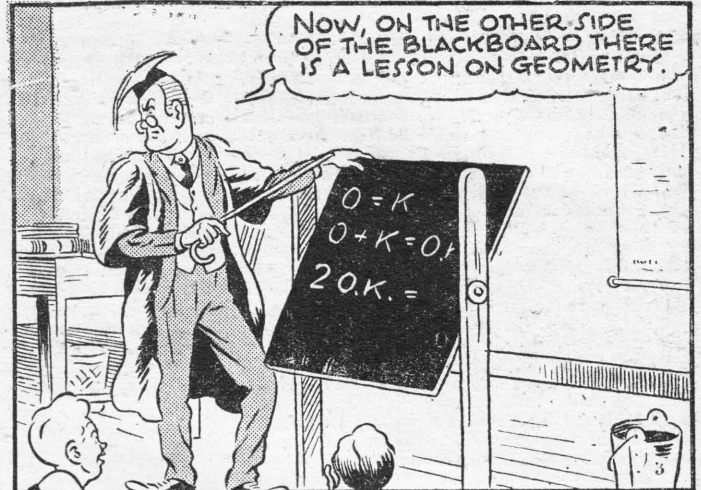
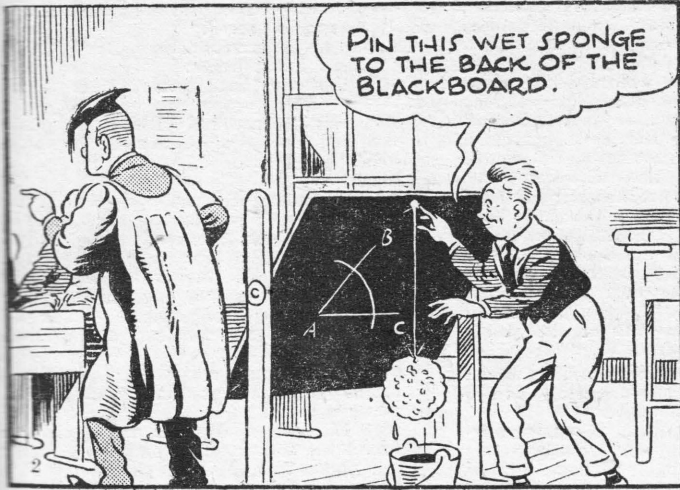
"Ooooooooh!" He sat up dizzily, with his hands to his head. He clasped it in anguish. He forgot the burglar. He felt as if his skull had been pushed down his back. He staggered up.

Too late! The window was wide open—and there was an echo of scurrying feet outside. The midnight marauder was gone. Will Hay jumped to the window, and stared out into the summer starlight. He had a glimpse of a running, shadowy figure, as it vanished under the dark beeches. All he could note was, that it was not tall—that burglar was, in fact, the smallest size in burglars ever. Will hurriedly considered whether to pursue. Then he suddenly whirled round from the window, as a footstep caught his ears from the passage outside the door.

"Two of them!" gasped Will Hay. One had escaped! But he had got the other! He rushed across to the door. In the shadowy passage, a bulky figure loomed up. The other burglar had been very small. This one was large. Will cared nothing for that. He leaped at him and bore him to the floor.

Crash!
 "Gottim!" gasped Will Hay. He had him, there was no doubt about that! The bulky man was down on his back, struggling frantically, and gurgling wildly. His head had hit the floor, and hit it rather hard. He seemed hurt, and excited. He struggled, and spluttered, and gurgled; but he had no chance. Will Hay had the upper hand. He had the villain down, and kept him down. He planted his knee on an extensive waist, hard. He rammed it there. He grasped his prisoner with both hands, and banged his head on the floor again to quieten him. At the same time, he shouted for help. For all Will knew, there might be other burglars about. It was time Bendover College woke up. He woke it up. "Help! Help!" roared Will. "Help! Help!" came an answering yell from the man he had seized. "My only hat and sunshade!" gasped Will Hay, in astonishment. He knew little of the manners and customs of burglars, but it struck him as unusual for a burglar to yell for help when captured. "Help! Help!" "Help! Help!" echoed his prisoner. "Help! Help!" roared Will. Doors opened, lights flashed on, voices called. Mr. Choot, the master of the Fifth, was the first to arrive on the spot. He arrived breathless, and flashed on the passage light. Will Hay shouted to him. "Help here, Choot! I've got one of them! Lend me a hand!" "Goodness gracious!" gasped the master of the Fifth. "What—what—" Will glared at him impatiently. Instead of coming to his help, the Fifth Form master only stared at him, or, rather, goggled at him. "Burglars!" roared Will. "Can't you understand? I've got one—the other got away! Help me to secure this scoundrel—"





"That—that—that what?" stuttered Mr. Choot, still goggling.

"This scoundrel—this midnight pincher—this burglar! Come and grab him, will you?" roared Will. "What are you standing there for, goggling?"

"But—but—but what are you doing to Dr. Shrub?" gasped Mr. Choot.

"Eh?"

"Dr. Shrub!"

Will Hay looked down at his prisoner. He had been looking at Mr. Choot. Now he looked at the man he had captured. His eyes almost popped out of his face, as he recognised the headmaster of Bendover. In the dark, recognition had been impossible. Now that the light was on, the countenance of his chief, crimson with fury, dawned on him.

"Oh, scissors!" gasped Will Hay.

"Help!" shrieked the Head. "Help!"

"Oh, holy smoke!"

Will Hay released the headmaster of Bendover, as suddenly as if Dr. Shrub had become red-hot. He staggered to his feet, caught them in the trailing cord of his dressing-gown, and sat down suddenly. Dr. Shrub sat up as Will Hay sat down. They gazed at one another—for the moment speechless.

FOOL!"

Dr. Shrub found his voice. He proceeded to use it. He used it on its top note. He bawled.

"Idiot!"

"You—you—you're not a—a—a burglar!" scolded Will Hay. "Oh, my hat and check covers! I—I thought—"

"You thought!" bawled Dr. Shrub. "Can you think? Imbecile!"

Mr. Choot gave him a hand up. Two or three other masters, and five or six Sixth Form

fellows were on the scene by this time. Some of them had pokers or cricket stumps in their hands. But their weapons were not needed. They stared—and grinned. Dr. Shrub, leaning on Mr. Choot, and panting for breath, glared at Will Hay as if he could have bitten him.

"You!" he gasped. "You! I heard a noise, and came down thinking it was burglars, and I find it was you—you—you—"

"Me—me—me!" agreed Will Hay. "But there was a burglar—I chased him out of your study—he escaped by the window and I took you for another—"

"Idiot!"

"No, not another idiot—another burglar! You owe it to me, sir," said Will Hay, with dignity, "that your rifle has not been studied—I mean, that your study has not been rifled! Step in, sir, and see if anything is missing, as well as the burglar."

"Pah!" snorted the Head. "There was no burglar! Pah!"

He stalked into the study and switched on the light. There was no sign of damage to be seen—nothing unusual, except that the window was wide open. But the open window indicated that someone had been there.

"Did you see him, Hay?" breathed Mr. Choot.

"A mere glimpse, sir, as he ran—but I am sure that he could be identified, for he was the smallest burglar ever—no taller than a boy—a junior boy—"

There was a sudden roar from Dr. Shrub. His eyes were fixed on the bookcase. The top of that bookcase had been adorned by a marble bust of Shakespeare. Now it was not.

"Any damage, sir?" asked Will Hay.

"Shakespeare's bust!" roared Dr. Shrub.

"Is he?" exclaimed Will Hay. "Who could have burst him?"

"Fool!" shrieked Dr. Shrub.

"My dear sir—" gasped Will.

"Don't you understand, Hay?" exclaimed Mr. Choot. "Dr. Shrub's bust—"

"Eh? He isn't! Look at him! He came down rather a wallop, but he certainly was not bust—"

"Where is it?" roared Dr. Shrub.

"Where's that marble bust?"

Will Hay blinked round the study.

"I see no sign, sir, of marble, or anything else, having bust here," he exclaimed. "I quite fail to see—"

"Fool!" roared Dr. Shrub. "It was no burglar! Nothing has been taken except the marble bust from the bookcase! It is a trick! Some junior boy—"

"Oh, my only hat and sunshade!" gasped Will Hay.

It dawned on him! That was why the escaping burglar was no taller than a Fourth Form boy! It was not a burglar at all! It was some playful member of Will Hay's Form, who had abstracted the marble bust from the Head's study, for a jape on the Head! Probably he had intended to walk it off by the door. Alarmed by Will Hay, he had jumped out of the window with it instead! Merely that, and nothing more.

"A trick—a prank—no doubt by a boy of your Form, Hay!" roared Dr. Shrub.

"While you have been wasting time, the young rascal has made away with the bust, and probably got back to his dormitory!"

"Oh crickey! I—I mean, bless my soul! I—I—I will go to the Fourth Form dormitory at once, and if a boy is absent, I will whop him on the spot—"

"You can scarcely do that if he is absent, Hay," remarked Mr. Choot.

"—on the spot where it will hurt the most," concluded Will Hay. "Leave it to me, Dr. Shrub—"



"I will attend to this!" hooted the Head, and he grabbed up a cane, rushed from the study, and started up the stairs.

Dr. Shrubbs lost no time. He only feared that too much had been lost already. That fear was confirmed, when he hurled open the door of the Fourth Form dormitory, and found that every bed there had an occupant. If a member of Will Hay's Form had been out, he had got in again! Sleepy eyes opened, and stared at the Head, blinking in the light. Dr. Shrubbs cast an eye up and down the row of beds.

"Has any boy left this dormitory since lights out?" he thundered.

"No, sir!" answered all the Bendover Fourth, with one voice.

"Pyke, have you been out of bed?"

Reggie Pyke blinked at him.

"I, sir! Oh, no, sir! I've been fast asleep."

Dr. Shrubbs gave him a suspicious glare. He did not trust that member of Will Hay's Form. However, there was clearly nothing to be done, and the Head shut off the light again, and rustled away from the dormitory.

After he was gone, there was a chuckle from the bed of Bird of the Fourth.

"Wasn't it you I heard come in five minutes ago, Pyke?" he asked.

"No fear!" answered Reggie. "I was fast asleep when that old ass barged in."

"I don't think!" chuckled Dicky Bird.

"What have you been up to, to bring the Head up here? There's been a row going on."

"Nothing!" answered Reggie cheerfully.

Dr. Shrubbs hurried downstairs again. That ass, Will Hay, had started an alarm of burglars, and given some japing junior time to clear off with the Head's marble bust, and no doubt hide it somewhere. The japer, and the bust, were both out of reach; but it was some satisfaction to tell Hay what he thought of him—and the Head was going to get that satisfaction. At least, that was the idea. But he arrived downstairs to learn that Will Hay had gone back to bed. He tapped at the Fourth Form master's door—or rather, banged at it.

"Hay!" he roared.

Snore!

"Do you hear me, Hay?"

Snore!

It sounded like a foghorn from Will Hay's room.

Dr. Shrubbs gave it up.

ALL Bendover was laughing the next morning Will Hay, when he walked in the quad before class, noticed it. He could not help noticing it. He did not need telling the cause. He was the cause! Will had caused a lot of gaiety, in one way or another, at Bendover, since he had become a Form-master there. But as a hunter of burglars, he had brought down the house.

The Head was cross that morning. The marble bust of Shakespeare was missing from his study. For donkey's years, the great bard had looked down on Dr. Shrubbs's scholastic labours, from the top of the bookcase. Now it was gone. Some young rascal had had the bright idea of snaffling that bust, and hiding it somewhere, as a jape on the Head. He had little doubt that it was one of the young rascals in Will Hay's Form.

Will had a similar suspicion; and in break that morning, he dropped into Study No. 3 in the Fourth, which belonged to Pyke and Bird, to give it the once-over. Whenever anything discomfoting happened, his thoughts turned naturally on Reggie Pyke. But if Reggie had snaffled that bust, he had not parked it in his study. Remembering that he had seen the midnight japer dodge away under the ancient Bendover beeches, Will took a walk under the same, looking for William Shakespeare there; but the bust was not to be seen.

Will was not looking his bonniest, when he drifted into the Fourth Form Room for third school. The Bendover Fourth, on the other hand, seemed in great spirits. They greeted Will with a general chuckle. He frowned at them over his nose-nippers. Will saw nothing to chuckle at. The Bendover Fourth did. They saw Will Hay!

When the time came to dismiss the Fourth Form, Will Hay set his nose-nippers straight, and eyed them.

"Now, my boys," he said, "you are aware of what happened in the Head's study last night—"

"Oh, yes, sir!" said Bird. "Somebody mistook the Head for a burglar, and collared him."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I am not alluding to that, Bird!" roared Will Hay. "I am alluding to the abstraction of Shakespeare's bust. The immortal William has been removed. Has any boy here present seen the great bard?"

"Yes, sir, I have!" answered Dicky Bird, at once.

Will Hay beamed on him.

"Where?" he asked eagerly.

"In your study, sir."

"My only summer bonnet!" ejaculated Will Hay. "Is it possible that the beggar who boned the bard parked him in my study? Boys, dismiss! Bird, come with me and point it out!"

"Certainly, sir!"

Reggie Pyke stared blankly at Bird, as the latter followed Will to his study. Reggie had excellent reasons for knowing that the missing bard was not there. He concluded that the playful Dicky was pulling Hay's leg somehow. As a matter of fact, the playful Dicky was!

Will Hay breezed into his study, with Richard Bird at his heels. He stared round the room. No sign of William Shakespeare met his eye.

"Where is it, Bird?" he bleated. "Point it out, my boy! You are sure that you saw it here? Yes! Where is it, then, my good Bird?"

"There, sir," said Dicky, pointing to the fireplace. "There it is!"

Will Hay gazed at the fireplace. The fire was laid there—but, so far as Will Hay could see, the grate contained nothing but sticks and coal. Shakespeare's bust was too large to have been hidden under them. He gazed—and adjusted his nose-nippers, and gazed again. Then he turned to Dicky Bird.

"Is this a joke, Bird?" he rumbled. "Have you come here to have your pants dusted? What do you mean? I cannot see it there!"

"You cannot see the grate barred, sir?" exclaimed Bird. "Perhaps you want some

new specs, sir. Surely you must have noticed that the grate is barred."

"The grate is barred!" repeated Will Hay, like a man in a dream. "Who is talking about grates and bars, you benighted little toad?"

"You, sir!" answered Dicky innocently.

"You asked us in the Form-room if we had seen the 'great bard.'"

"Eh?"

"And I remembered at once that I had noticed your grate was barred, sir. I have a good memory!" said Dicky Bird innocently.

Will Hay gazed at him. His hand strayed to a cane. Richard Bird was looking as if butter would not have melted in his mouth. There was a long, long pause. Then Will waved that innocent member of his Form away.

"I will give you the benefit of the doubt, Bird!" he said. "But you had better go while the going is good!"

Dicky Bird went. He did not chuckle till he turned the corner of the passage.

Until dinner-time, Will Hay was very busy, hunting up and down and round about for the missing bust. It was really surprising that it could have been hidden so completely from sight, for it was quite a large object. But it seemed to have vanished as if it had dissolved into the air. When the bell rang, and Will came in, he met Dr. Shrubbs in the hall. The Head, usually genial, gave him a cold look.

Will Hay wore a worried look as he sat at dinner with his Form. He wore, of course, other things as well; but the worried look was most prominent. It was clear that the Head was going to be shirty till that beastly bust was found. He could not blame the Head for being shirty, for he doubted no more than Dr. Shrubbs that the trick had been played by a fellow in the Fourth. But which of the young rascals had crept down from his dormitory in the night to play that jape? Will had to give it up.

After dinner, he sat in his study thinking it out, when Richard Bird brought in his lines. Richard's face was as sweetly innocent as he could make it, as he laid the lines down before his Form-master.

Will looked at them. Then he jumped. Dicky had written fifty lines, as bidden. But what he had written was: "Will Hay must not cackle in class." Will reached for his cane.

"Is anything wrong with the lines, sir?" asked Bird. "I've written just what you told me, sir!"

"What?" roared Will Hay. "I told you to write: 'I must not cackle in class.'"

"Yes, sir, that's what I've written!"

Will Hay looked at him. Then he rose to his feet.

"Bird," he said, "you appear to have misunderstood me."

"I'm so sorry if I misunderstood you, sir!" murmured Dicky.

"I doubt," remarked Will Hay, "whether you are sorry yet, Bird! But I have no doubt at all that you are going to be. You misunderstand me too often, Bird. You appear to be making a habit of it. I shall now hand over something that even you, I think, cannot possibly misunderstand. Bend over that chair! Thank you!"

Swipe, swipe, swipe!

"Yow-ow-woop!" roared Dicky.

"You don't misunderstand that, Bird?" asked Will Hay genially.

"Ow! Oh! No! Wow! Wow!" gasped Dicky.

"I am so glad we understand one another at last, Bird!" said Will Hay, beaming. "In any doubtful case in the future, Bird, I shall make my meaning clear—in the same way! Got that? Now hop it—I mean, you may leave my study!"

Dicky Bird wriggled away down the passage.

"HERE he comes!" murmured Sammy Straw.

"Oh, boy! Oh, boy! Oh, boy!" chortled Tubby Green.

"Shut up, Tubby!" hissed Dicky Bird.

"Don't let the old ass smell a mouse!"

Nine or ten of the Bendover Fourth were gathered under one of the ancient Bendover beeches. It was a gigantic tree—one of the

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THE PILOT No. 86—22/5/37.

at Bendover—and was called the Baron's Beech. Legend had it that one of the old Barons of Bendover had hidden some deadly foes in that historic beech. Which was probably true, for, as a good many Bendover fellows knew, the ancient trunk was hollow. It looked as solid and substantial as any other beech at Bendover. But where the branches jutted out from the trunk, there was a wide opening, which extended right down the interior of the trunk to the ground. Any fellow tumbling into that hollow trunk had a rather difficult climb to get out again. But what the Fourth knew, the master of the Fourth did not know. Will Hay had not yet learned about that hollow beech. He was going to learn about it now, if all went well with Dicky Bird's little scheme.

Will Hay, spotting that crowd of the Fourth under the old beech branches from a distance, came down on them. They were all gazing up very earnestly into the thick, leafy branches. Something, he could see, was up. It did not seem to him for the moment that that was the impression the young rascals wanted to give him to draw him to the spot.

"Six of the best!" murmured Dicky Bird, wiggling. "I haven't been able to sit down since! But he's got it coming to him, blow him!"

Will Hay breezed up.

"What—" he began.

"Oh, sir," said Dicky Bird, "somebody's stuck a silk hat up in that tree! I—I was wondering if it was yours, sir!"

Will Hay blinked up. Through an opening of the foliage a silk hat was visible, stuck on a high branch. He glanced round at the Fourth Formers. He had little doubt that that tile was his, and less that one of these young rascals had stuck it there. He frowned.

"I'd go up after it, sir," said Dicky artfully, "but it's the Head's orders not to climb the beeches, sir. How are you going to get it, sir? You couldn't possibly climb that tree, I suppose?"

"Rats!" said Will Hay. "I mean, absurd! I could climb it on my head!"

It looked an easy proposition. The gnarled old trunk gave plenty of hold. To clamber up, and stand in the central spot where the branches jutted and reach up to the hat, was simple. Will Hay grasped the trunk. As he swung up and grasped a lower branch, Reggie Pyke came pelting across the quad, with alarm in his face.

"I say, sir, stop!" squeaked Reggie. "I say, sir—yarooooooh!" Reggie was apparently going to warn Will Hay of danger. But he got no further. Dicky Bird and Sammy Straw grasped him together, bumped him on the back, and sat on him.

"You sneaking little tick!" hissed Dicky. "Shut up! Sit on his face, Sammy!"

"Urrrrgh!" was all that came from Reggie, as Sammy Straw sat on his face. His warning to Will Hay remained unfinished.

Will glanced down for a moment, and then resumed climbing. Certainly he did not suspect for a moment that Reggie Pyke had been going to warn him of danger. He would have expected that from the bad hat of the Fourth. He clambered on, grasped a higher branch, and swung himself into the centre of the tree, to stand there and reach up for the topper.

But he did not stand there. His feet found no resting-place. A wild yell floated over Bendover, as he shot down into the hollow trunk, feet first. Then he vanished.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the juniors. The hapless master of the Fourth had been fairly caught! Without a suspicion, he had stepped right into the trap! Reggie Pyke was amazed, as the Fourth Formers stood round and howled with laughter.

Reggie was not laughing, however. His name registered dismay. For some reason—mysterious to the other fellows—Reggie had wanted to stop that trick in time. But he hadn't succeeded! Will Hay was scrambling and spluttering and yelling inside the hollow trunk. Outside that massive trunk the Fourth Formers were yelling, too, with merriment.

"Get him!" chortled Dicky Bird. "That's as good as six on the bags! Ha, ha, ha!"

Pyke, you toad, what were you going to tip him for? You're usually keen on japing old Hay! What the dickens do you mean?"

Reggie Pyke did not answer that. He stood in dismay, staring up into the beech, while the other fellows yelled. Answering yells came from the master of the Fourth, hidden from sight.

"Oh! Ow! Woooooh! Oooh! Groogh! My only hat and sunshade! I'll dust your pants for this! Yoo-oooooh!"

Will Hay struggled to his feet. He had just about enough room to struggle up. Dust of decayed wood almost suffocated him. He gasped, he gurgled, and he sneezed and spluttered. He rubbed a knee, which had knocked on something hard as he dropped in. It was very dusky in the interior of the Baron's Beech. But a gleam or two of sunshine came through the foliage above. It gleamed on something white that lay at his feet.

"Merry mackerels!" he gasped.

He clutched up the hard object that glimmered white. It was large; it was heavy; it was hard. He gazed at it. Amazed, he gazed into the well-known features of William Shakespeare, the great bard! It was the marble bust that was missing from the Head's study. Will Hay had hoped to drop on it sooner or later. Now he had dropped on it!

Will Hay grinned—a dusty grin. He chuckled, and sneezed, and chuckled again. He had not known—before—that that beech was hollow. But the midnight japer evidently had, for that was where he had hidden the missing bust. Grinning, Will Hay clambered up out of the hollow trunk, with the marble bust under his arm. He reached the silk hat, and dropped it neatly on Dicky Bird's head.

"Bird, take that hat to my study! Then

go to your own, and write out a hundred times 'I must not play fatheaded practical jokes.' If you misunderstand me, I will explain as before." Swinging with one hand, with the bust under the other arm, Will dropped from the beech. "Pyke, I think I heard you call to me to stop. Did you desire to prevent me from dropping—"

"Oh! Yes, sir!"

"—on that bust?"

"Oh, no, sir!"

"You did not leave your dormitory after lights out last night?"

"Oh, no!"

"Remember never to do so, Pyke! In order that you may memorise it thoroughly, go to your study and write a thousand times: 'Bendover boys must not leave their dormitories after lights out.'"

Will Hay walked away cheerily to the House, with William Shakespeare under his arm. He tapped at the Head's door. Dr. Shrubbs frowned as he entered. But the frown was replaced by a happy smile as Will Hay stood the bust on his table.

"Mr. Hay, you have found it! Excellent! But where did you find it?"

"In a hollow tree, sir."

"Bless my soul! I should never have thought of that!" exclaimed the Head.

"What made you think of it, Mr. Hay?"

Will tapped his forehead.

"Brains, sir," he said modestly. "Brains will tell!"

And Will Hay winked at William Shakespeare as he breezed out of the Head's study.

A Bendover Old Boy returns to the school to birch the Head! That's next week's yarn—but when Will Hay barges in, then the fun begins. Look out for another big laugh next Friday.

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NOW SCIENTISTS GIVE US

LOOK AT THE TEXTURE!

Patent applied for.

Look at Aero's wonderful new 'honeycomb' texture. This texture is the secret of Aero's delicious taste. It excites the taste-buds on your tongue—gives you the full, rich flavour right away.

1^o & 2^o



AERO

right away—the very first bite tells you what a grand chocolate Aero is!

Aero has a wonderful 'honeycomb' texture, made by an important new process. This process has been specially developed by scientists to make Aero the most exciting chocolate you have ever tasted.

Get some Aero yourself—today. It is wonderful value for your penny.

Smooth, light—easy to bite,
with a new, exciting flavour!