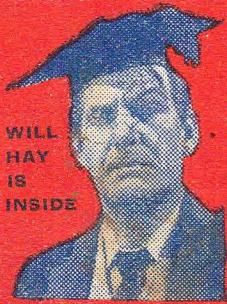


Meet "MIKE, SPIKE & GRETA" OUR COVER STARS IN "A CHRISTMAS CAROL"



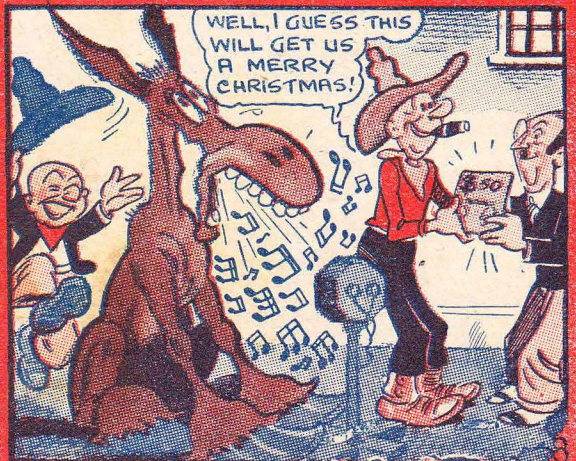
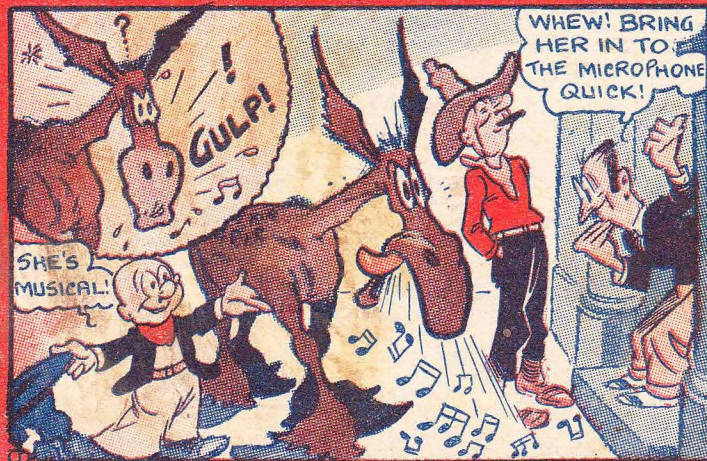
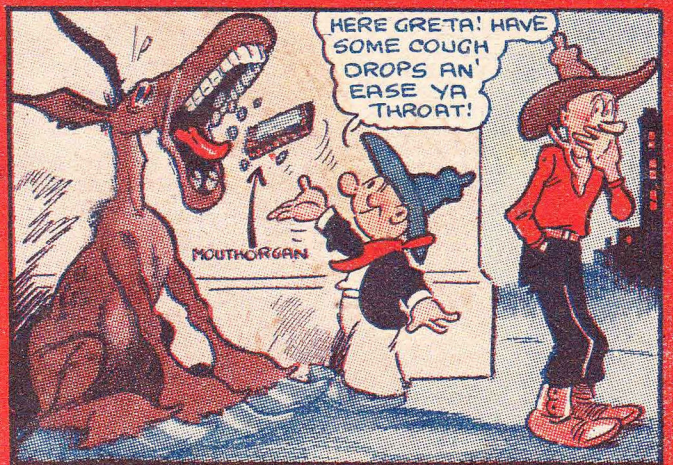
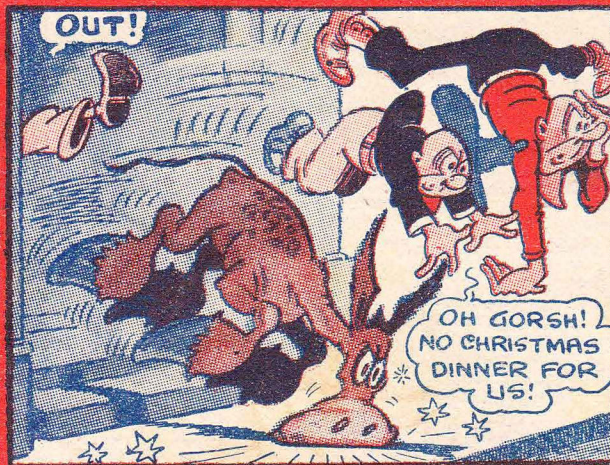
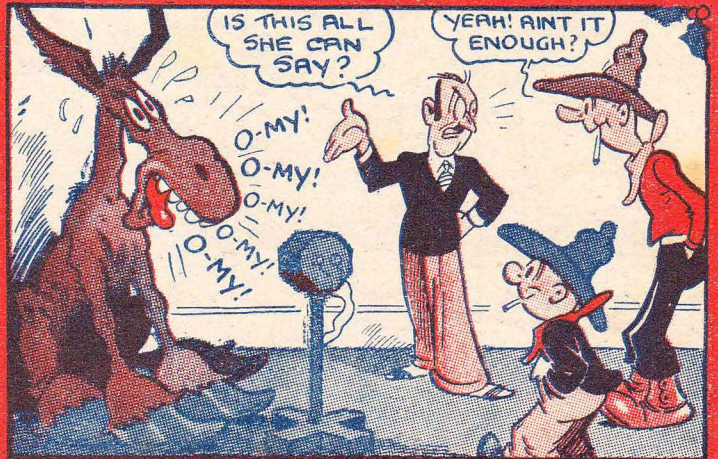
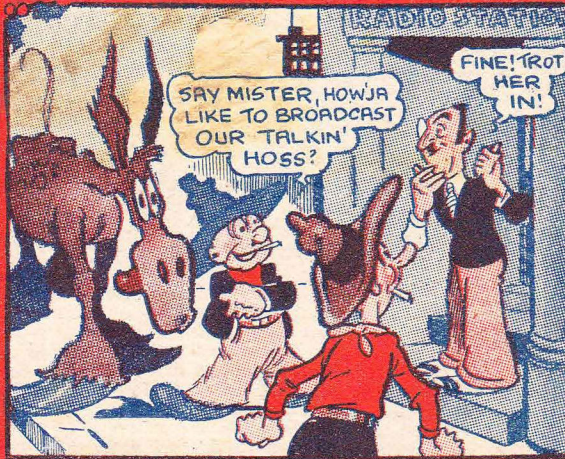
WILL HAY IS INSIDE

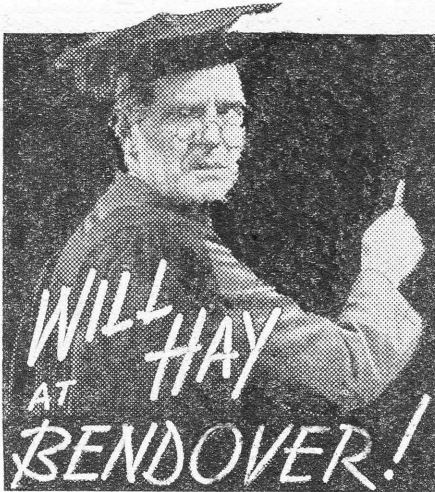
The PILOT

EVERY FRIDAY

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No. 117. Vol. 5. Week ending December 25th, 1937.





By courtesy of Gainsborough Pictures.

“GREEN!” gasped Will Hay. Will’s nose-nippers nearly fell off in his astonishment as he stared at Tubby Green. The one-and-only Will had had quite a lot of surprises since he had become master of the Fourth Form at Bendover School. But never had he been so surprised as now.

What Tubby was up to might have mystified any observer. Standing about a yard in front of the porter’s dog, Green was waving fat hands at him in the most extraordinary manner. Kelly’s dog obviously did not like it! Kelly’s dog was not a good-tempered dog. Bendover fellows never cared to go near that dog when he was off the chain. He had a bad temper, but good teeth. Kelly’s dog was emitting a series of low, savage growls and snarls, and clearly would have given a lot to be within biting distance of Tubby Green’s fat legs. Every now and then the chain rattled and clinked, as Biter made an effort to approximate a little more nearly to the fat Fourth Former. Biter’s temper was getting worse and worse.

Tubby—safe a yard off the open jaws—continued to wave fat hands, at the same time staring hard at the annoyed animal. For a long minute, Will Hay stood watching that member of his Form, utterly amazed. Unless Tubby Green had gone completely off his podgy rocker, there was no accounting for this!

Suddenly—to Will’s increased astonishment—Tubby ceased weaving patterns in the air with his fat hands, grabbed a small book from his jacket pocket, and stared at it intently. Then, jamming the book back again, he resumed weaving patterns—to the intense exasperation of Biter, more and more eager to interrupt him with a good grip.

“Suffering sardines!” gasped Will, at last. “If this isn’t insanity, I’ve forgotten the symp-



toms of the family complaint!” He billowed down on Tubby, and grabbed him by a fat shoulder. “Now, you burbling little blitherer, what do you mean by going mad just before class?”

“Ow!” gasped Tubby. He wriggled in his Form-master’s grasp, and stared round at him. “Oh! Ow! Now you’ve spoiled it! I believe I was just getting him under the ‘fluence.”

“The which?” shrieked Will. “Wharrer you green, Mean—I mean, wharrer you mean, Green? What are you worrying that dog for?”

“I wasn’t!” gasped Tubby. “I was hypnotising him!”

“Whattering him?” gasped Will. “I’ve got a book on it,” explained Tubby eagerly. “I’m learning, and trying it on the dog, see? If I could hypnotise him, I’d make him bite Kelly, see?”

“Oh, my only guinea topper!” ejaculated Will Hay. “You—you’re learning hypnotism from—from a book—”

“I’ve got it here, sir!” said Tubby. He fished out the book. Will Hay blinked at the title on it. “Handy Hypnotism: the Path to Power,” by Professor Brainybloke. “You see, sir, once you’ve learned to make the right passes, you have unlimited power over everybody and everything—and unlimited power is cheap at a shilling, sir—”

“No end of a bargain, I should say!” agreed Will. “I think I would go as far as eighteenpence!”

“That book cost only a shilling, sir!” said Tubby. “I fancy I’m picking up the passes already! As soon as I can do it quite well, I’m going to make Biter bite Kelly. I wasn’t thinking of making him bite you, sir!” added Tubby hastily.

Will Hay chuckled. He jerked the book from Tubby’s fat hand.

“This book,” said Will severely, “will be



confiscated, Green. I’m afraid you are not the boy to be trusted with unlimited power. We don’t want any Mussolinis mussoling about Bendover, or any Hitlers hittling in the Fourth Form! Go!”

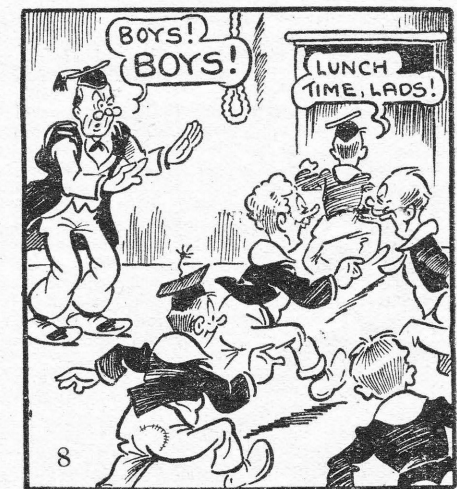
“I—I say, sir—” gasped the dismayed Tubby.

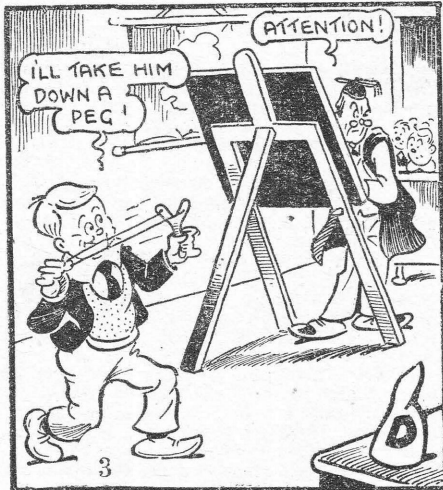
“Hook it! Bunk! Disappear!” rapped Will; and Tubby, with a mournful blink at that valuable handbook, reluctantly disappeared.

Will Hay strolled on, under the ancient Bendover beeches. He glanced at “Handy Hypnotism” as he strolled. Will had, in his time, played many parts, but never, so far, had he dabbled in the mysteries of hypnotism. Neither would he have expended a shilling out of his salary as Fourth Form master at Bendover on Professor Brainybloke’s volume. But as he had picked up that handbook cheap, he looked into it. A sporting chance of obtaining unlimited power over man and beast was worth looking into. It would have helped him, for instance, in managing the Bendover Fourth. When that unruly Form was too much for him—as often it was—how topping it would have been to put the hypnotic influence on, and reduce them to dumb obedience!

That was a very attractive idea—if there was anything in it! Will looked to see whether there was! Diagrams were given of the various passes. Will became deeply interested. He fancied that he could make those passes all right, with a little practice. It was worth trying on! Kind-hearted and good-natured as he was, Will had no objection to possessing unlimited power over his fellow-creatures. Even the nicest man has a spot of “dictator” about him. Deep in that hypnotic volume, Will did not notice where he was walking, and he brought up against a beech with a bang.

“Oh!” gasped Will. “You clumsy ass, walking into a fellow—” He broke off as he blinked at the beech, and grinned feebly.





"Ha, ha, ha!" came a yell, and Will blinked round at Dicky Bird, Jimmy Carboy, Jerry Smart, and several other members of his Form, who seemed quite amused by his collision with the bench.

He frowned severely at the juniors, and breezed off to the House. He was deeply interested in the "Path to Power" by that time, and he was going to give it some quiet, intensive attention. Sitting in his study with the book before him on the table, and a mirror set up against the inkstand, he began to practice the magic passes.

The bell rang for class, and the Bendover fellows scampered in; but Will Hay did not even hear the bell, and he forgot class. He was getting the hang of the thing now, and beginning to get enthusiastic. There was something in this! Already he was able to make a good many of the passes described by the learned professor.

'Tap, came at his door! Toots, the House page, had come to remind Will Hay that his Form were waiting in the Form-room.

"If you please, sir—" began Toots.

"Ah, step in, my boy!" said Will rising to his feet. "Look me in the eyes, Toots!"

According to the professor's instructions, you had to look your victim in the eyes, and then weigh in with the magic passes. This was a chance for Will to try it on. But Toots, who had not the slightest idea that Will Hay was taking up hypnotism, was quite startled.

"Wot—wot—wot did you say, sir?" he stammered.

"Look me in the eyes!" commanded Will. Then, as the astonished page gazed at him in blank wonder, he began weaving his hands in the air—with the corner of his eye on the "Path to Power." Toots almost fell down in his astonishment. He stood rooted, gazing, petrified. Having no doubt that Will had gone insane, he was too terrified to move.

"My only silk socks!" breathed Will. "It's working! I've got him absolutely helpless! Right under the 'fluence! Once they're in that state, you can make them believe anything, or do anything! Toots! Take up that cushion!"

Toots mechanically took up the cushion. "Now," said Will, "that's a cake, Toots! Eat it!"

Will watched eagerly. If he had got the passes right, and if the 'fluence was on, Toots was now the slave of his will—and, believing that the cushion was a cake, he would bite at it! This would be proof! Toots stood with the cushion in his hands, gazing in speechless terror.

"Eat it!" commanded Will. "Bite it!"

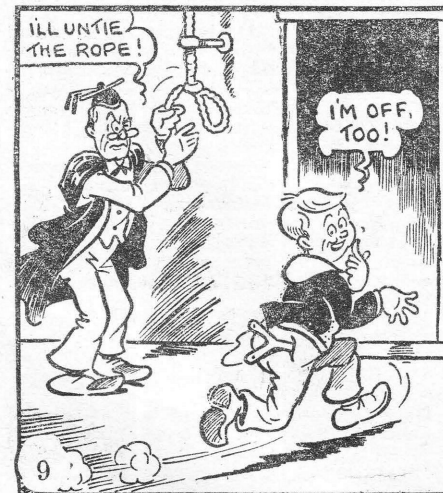
Waving his hands, he advanced a step towards the page. That did it! Toots, with a howl of terror, hurled the cushion with all his force at Will's head, and bolted out of the study!

"Elp!" yelled Toots, as he fled. "He's gorn mad! 'Elp!"

"Yaroo!" roared Will Hay, going over backwards as the cushion crashed on his features. "Whoop-whoop! Oh, my only pink pyjamas! Yoo-hooooop!"

He sat up dizzily. Toots' flying footsteps and alarmed howls died away in the distance. Will Hay picked himself up, rubbing his nose, which had a pain in it. He realised that Toots had not been under the 'fluence after all—more practice, it was clear, was required, before those magic passes made anybody the slave of his will. He slipped the book into his pocket, and, rubbing his nose, billowed out of his study, to go to his class.

"A, ha, ha!" yelled Dicky Bird. Richard Bird staggered into the Fourth Form Room, apparently in a state of convulsion. He yelled, he howled, and he gurgled. He almost wept.



studies on that most entrancing subject—hypnotism.

While the juniors scribbled, Will Hay sat at his desk, with "Handy Hypnotism" open before him, in a deep and intensive mood. The more he studied that priceless volume, the keener he became.

Shortly, he hoped, he would have the Bendover Fourth, if not all Bendover, feeding from his hand!

Deep in that entrancing study, Will did not notice the nods and grins and winks exchanged among the Fourth Formers.

Every now and then there was a suppressed chuckle, as Will, forgetting where he was in his enthusiasm, waved his hands about, practising passes. Two hours passed rapidly to Will, and very pleasantly to his Form, who did not learn much history in those two hours. It came as quite a surprise to Will when a bell rang.

"Humming haddocks—I mean, bless my soul!" exclaimed Will Hay, as he jumped up from his desk. "Buzz off, you little bunions—I mean, dismiss, my boys! Bird!"

"Yes, sir?"

"You may stay behind a few minutes! I have something special to say to you."

"Oh crickey! I mean, yes, sir."

The Bendover Fourth marched out, leaving Richard Bird alone with his Form-master. He waited respectfully. Dicky guessed what was coming, but really he could hardly believe in his good luck. They liked pulling Will Hay's leg in the Bendover Fourth, but really it was quite a windfall for Will to ask for it to be pulled!

"Er—Bird!" bleated Will, blinking at Richard over his slanting nose-nippers. "Kindly fix your eyes on mine! Straight in the eyes! That's right!"

Had not Richard Bird been aware that Will was taking up hypnotism, this unusual command might have startled him. He might even have supposed, like Toots, that it was a case of bats in the belfry. As it was, Richard obeyed with a meekness not at all startled. He was not even startled when Will, with a last glance at "Handy Hypnotism," began to weave patterns in the air with his hands.

He stood quite still, and his eyelids drooped sleepily. Will's eyes sparkled over his nose-nippers. He had read that that was a sign of the victim yielding to the hypnotic influence. So had Dicky!

"By gum," murmured Will, "it's working! Bird!"

"Yes, sir?" said Dicky, in a dreamy voice.

"You are now under my influence, Bird—the slave of my will," said the master of the Fourth. "Your name is not Bird. It is Barker. Now, what is your name?"

"Barker, sir."

Will Hay grinned happily. If this was not success, he would like to know what was.

"Take that inkpot from the desk. Now, Barker, what that pot contains is not ink. It is ginger-beer. Now, what is in that pot, Bird—I mean, Barker?"

"Ginger-beer, sir."

"You may have that ginger-beer, my boy!" grinned Will Hay, and he watched for Dicky to lift the inkpot to his mouth—as, under the hypnotic influence, he was bound to do. "You may do as you like with it, Bird—I mean, Barker."

Swoooosh! Swish! Splash!

"Yurrooop!" yelled Will Hay, staggering back, as the contents of the inkpot suddenly shot into his face. "Groogh! Ooogh! What are you doing, you little tick?"

"Giving you the ginger-beer, sir," answered Dicky meekly.

"Urrgh! Gurrgh! I never asked you to give it to me!" gasped Will, as he dabbed his streaming face with his handkerchief.

"Oh, I thought you were asking for it, sir!" said Dicky.

"Wha-a-t?" Will gave him a very sharp look, as he dabbed ink; but Dicky's face was sublimely innocent. "Oh! Ah! Well! A mistake on your part, my boy! Urrrrgh!" He dabbed and dabbed. "Now, Bird, your name is Hay. What is your name?"

"Hay, sir."

"Good! Now, my name is Bird. What is my name?"

"Bird."

"Now, you are master of the Fourth, and I am one of your pupils," beamed Will. "You will proceed to give me a lesson."

The inky episode was unpleasant, but Will realised that he was getting on. If Richard Bird believed that he was Form-master, and Will a junior, there was no doubt about the efficacy of the 'fluence. Will sat down at Dicky Bird's desk, grinning with all his teeth, and waited for Richard to give him a lesson.

Dicky Bird caught up the cane from the master's desk, gripped it, and stepped towards Will.

Whack, whack, whack!

"Here, I say! Yaroo! Stop that! Wharrer you up to?" Will roared. "Put down that cane, you little wart! I didn't mean to say—Yaroo! Will you stop it! Oh, suffering cats! Yarooooo-hoop!"

Whack, whack, whack!

Will dodged and bounded. Dicky Bird followed him up, laying it on hard and fast.

"Stop it!" shrieked Will. "I didn't mean that sort of a lesson, you mad little idiot! Oh, my only summer hat! Great pip!"

Will Hay dodged round the Form-room. Dicky Bird, still under the 'fluence, landed terrific swipes as he went, and Will roared as he fled. After him scudded Dicky Bird. If he was under the hypnotic 'fluence—and Will had told him that he was—Dicky Bird did not see why he should not make the most of it. He made the very most of it. Whack, whack, whack! rang the cane, as Will fled round the Form-room. He bounded, at last, to the top of the master's desk, and waved Dicky off with frantic hands.

"Stop it! Chuck it! You're not Will Hay!" he shrieked. "You're Bird! Got that? Wake up! The 'fluence is off! Put down that cane! Now, who are you?"

"Bird, sir!" said Dicky cheerfully.

"Oh, good!" gasped Will. "Now, come to yourself, and forget all about it!"

Dicky Bird gave a dramatic start. He seemed to come to himself all of a sudden. He blinked at the cane in his hand.

"Has—has anything happened, sir?" he gasped. "Have I been asleep, or what? Is—is this your cane, sir? How did it come in my hand?"

Really, Dicky did it well!

Will Hay grinned cheerily. He was feeling sore—very sore. But this was success—obviously success. Really, it was like magic—exactly as stated by Professor Brainybloke in that handy handbook!

"What—what has happened, sir?" gasped Dicky.

"Never mind that, Bird!" bleated Will. "Forget all about it! You may leave the Form-room, Bird!"

Dicky Bird left the Form-room, leaving Will rubbing a lot of places where the cane had landed while Dicky was giving him that lesson. This kept Will busy for some time; so he remained happily unaware that Richard Bird, in the quad, was surrounded by a crowd of the Fourth, all of them laughing like hyenas.

GUR-URR-URR-URRR!

Will Hay jumped.

Biter just missed his calf!

Will Hay was strolling round happily—rather like a fellow walking on air. His experiment with Dicky Bird had been a tremendous success. He had mastered the mystic art of hypnotism—difficult to some, easy to Will Hay! Tremendous powers were in his hands—if he chose to use them. In happy meditation, Will did not notice how near he passed to Kelly's dog. Biter did, and tried his luck. Will jumped like a two-year-old.

"Kelly," he roared, "keep that beast away! Do you hear? Why don't you have him drowned? Why don't you let him loose, and tie a cracker to his tail?"

"I'll let 'im loose, if you like, sir!" grunted Kelly. "Jest you wait a tick, Mr. 'Ay!"

Will did not wait. He walked back to the quad—quite quickly. A disappointed snarl from Biter followed him.

"By gum," murmured Will, "I've a jolly good mind to hypnotise that dog, and send him trotting into the next county! But perhaps

I'd better make absolutely certain. It wouldn't do to fail with Biter!"

Will shook his head thoughtfully. One experiment, successful as it had been, was not enough. He had to be quite, quite sure before he tackled such a proposition as Biter!

Still, it was easy to try another experiment. The power was in his hands; it only had to be exercised.

"Ah! How do you do, Mossoo?" asked Will, beaming, as he met the French master on the path under the study windows. "Glad to see you!"

"Bonjour, mon cher 'Ay!" stammered Monsieur le Bon. He eyed Will rather uneasily. The fact was that there were some queer rumours about the master of the Fourth that day at Bendover. Toots, the page, had fled from his study in affright. He had been seen waving his hands about in an altogether unaccountable manner. Mossoo liked Will, as everybody did, but he was rather a nervous gentleman. If Will was getting a little batty, Mossoo preferred him at a safe distance. Still, meeting him face to face, there was no escape for Mossoo. "You look verree 'appy, mon cher!"

"Why should I not?" grinned Will. "I find, Mossoo, that I have wonderful power in my hands. The world is at my feet!"

"Mais oui! But ze world, he is always at ze feet, n'est-ce-pas?" said Mossoo Bong, glancing down at it.

Will chuckled.

"You don't get my meaning, old French bean!" he answered. "What I mean is that, as the poet says, 'I am monarch of all I survey; my right there is none to dispute.' I could walk into a bank and draw out all the money. I could make the income-tax collector believe that my income-tax is paid—and that would want some believing, I can tell you! I could make you believe that you were a monkey!"

"Moi, un singe!" gasped Mossoo Bong.

"Not merely in looks, but actually!" declared Will. "And, by gum, I'll jolly well do it, just to show you! Look me in the eyes—straight!"

"Mon Dieu!" gasped Monsieur le Bon. He had no doubt now! Co pauvre Hay was quite fou! "Mon cher ami—I zink—I zink zat I hear ze Head who call—"

"Stand where you are!" commanded Will. "Look me in the eyes!"

And as the portly Frenchman stood gazing at him, in deep apprehension, Will weaved patterns with his hands under Mossoo's prominent nose.

Absolutely convinced now that the master of the Fourth was as mad as a hatter, Monsieur le Bon goggled at him, his plump knees knocking together. He would have fled, but he dreaded that the maniac would clutch him before he was out of reach. But he knew that maniacs had to be humoured. He hoped fervently that, by humouring Will, he could calm him. It was his only chance.

"Now you're a monkey!" said Will. "Got that? Now, what are you, Monsieur le Bon?"

"Je suis singe!" gasped Monsieur le Bon. "I am monkey!"

Will Hay grinned triumphantly. He had proved it on Dicky Bird; now he was proving it on the French master! Having made Mossoo believe that he was a monkey, what proof could be more complete? Not for a moment did it occur to Will that Mossoo was humouring a lunatic.

"Now, if you're a monkey, you can climb!" continued Will. "Climb on that window-sill!"

"Nom d'un nom!" gasped Mossoo. "Mon cher 'Ay—"

"Never mind about the name of a name!" grinned Will. "You're a monkey! You can climb—climb!" He put in a few more passes.

"Now, then—"

"Mais oui, oui, oui!" shrieked Monsieur le Bon, mistaking the hypnotist's weaving hands for the clutching hands of a lunatic. "Yes, yes! I climb! I am one monkey, and I climb!"

He grasped the wide stone window-sill and clambered. Will watched him in triumphant satisfaction, hardly aware, in his intentness of this experiment, that a crowd of juniors were watching, too. Mossoo clambered frantically.

It was Mr. Choot's study. The master of the Fifth started up out of his armchair at the amazing sight of the French master clambering in.

"Good gracious!" exclaimed Mr. Choot. "What—what—" He rushed to the window.

From a little distance came a ripple of merriment. Dicky Bird leaned on Jimmy Carboy, almost weeping.

"He—he—he—he's hypnotising old Mossoo!" he moaned. "Old Hay's putting the 'fluence on Froggy! Froggy thinks he's balmy—just like Toots! Oh, my only summer straw!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" howled the Bendover Fourth. "What—what—what does this mean?" spluttered Mr. Choot, staring from within.

"Au secours—elp me, sair!" gasped Mossoo, plunging in. "Zat 'Ay he is fou—vat you call potty in a crumplet! Zat you 'elp me escape zat mad one."

"Goodness gracious!" spluttered Mr. Choot. "But— Oh, great Scott— Yoo-hoop!"

Mossoo, plunging headlong in, grabbed at Mr. Choot for support. Mr. Choot staggered under Mossoo's fourteen stone, and went over. Over his were spread fourteen stone of terrified Gaul.

"Ooooooocogh!" moaned Mr. Choot, collapsing under the weight.

"Au secours! A moi! Fermez zat window!" Monsieur le Bon tottered to his feet, inadvertently treading on Mr. Choot's features, and staggered to the window, and slammed down the sash. "Safed!"

There was a thrill of merriment in the quad. The Bendover Fourth had often found their Form-master entertaining. But as a hypnotist, he was bringing down the house!

"**K**ELLY!" roared Will Hay. "Gurrrrr-r-r-r!" came from within the porter's lodge. But the deep growl of Biter had no terrors for

Will Hay now! Biter, inside the lodge, was off the chain! On or off the chain, Will had no fear! The amazing hypnotist who had made Dicky Bird believe that he was a Form-master, and Mossoo that he was a monkey, could have no further doubt of his extraordinary powers. A few of those magic passes, and both Kelly and his dog would be the slaves of Will Hay's will; and Will had made up his mind that Biter was going to be removed far from the temptation to sample a Form-master's calves. Will hoped that Biter might find a happy home in the next county! Anyhow, he was going to head for that county, if there was anything in hypnotic influence!

The Bendover porter opened his door, and looked out, Biter at his heels. Biter looked past his master, with a disavouring eye, at Will.

"Well, Mr. 'Ay!" granted Kelly, "wot—" He broke off, in sheer amazement, as the hypnotist's hands weaved patterns at him. "Look 'ere, what's this game? You gone batchy, Mr. 'Ay? My eye! I 'eard that you was a bit balmy—" Kelly took an alarmed backward step into his lodge, blinking at Will.

Will threw in a few more passes, his eyes fixed on Kelly's.

"Kelly!" he thundered. "Yessir!" gasped Kelly.

"You are no longer a school porter, Kelly! You are an antimacassar! Go and hang yourself over the back of a chair!" rapped Will.

Kelly gave a sort of convulsive jump, and bounded back into his lodge. He bounded into the back room, slammed the door, and turned the key! Behind that locked door, he palpitated, dreading that the maniac might break in at the back window! A man who told a school porter that he was an antimacassar was a man that Kelly preferred to keep at as long a distance as possible!

Will, grinning cheerfully, weaved magic passes at Biter, whom his master had left in the doorway! Biter eyed him disagreeably! For some moments, Biter did not stir. Perhaps he did not realise that he was off the chain, and free to sample calves! Or perhaps Will perplexed him.

Then, all of a sudden, Biter woke up, as it were! He gave a deep cavernous growl, and shot out of the doorway like a thunderbolt.

Will ceased to make hypnotic passes very suddenly! He bounded clear of the ground, as Biter shot at him.

"Down, dog!" yelled Will, as he bounded. "Down! You're the slave of my will, you beast! Down! Quiet!"

Biter, however, was evidently quite unaware that he was the slave of the hypnotist's will! Clearly he had a will of his own! He hurled himself at the hapless hypnotist.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Dicky Bird, "Look out! Run for it!"

Will Hay did not need telling! He was running for his life! Something clearly was wrong with that 'fluence! Biter was after him like a shot! Will Hay covered the ground as it had seldom been covered before. He flew! He whizzed! He shot! After him flew Biter! Will gave one terrified glance behind.

"Oh crumbs! Oh crikey! Help! Blue murder!" shrieked Will, as he careered.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Put it on, sir! He's got you!"

Will Hay felt a ripping and rendering of his gown behind! Biter had got a good mouthful. But it was not the gown that Biter wanted! It was Will Hay! He tore on. Will

rushed under the beeches. He made a wild leap at a branch, and hung on! Biter made a spring, and hung on, at the same moment!

"Yaroo! Help!" roared Will. Will hung to the beech by a branch. Biter hung to Will by a section of trousering. They swung together in the wind! Round them gathered half Bendover howling with laughter.

It was some time before Kelly could be persuaded out of his lodge, to collect Biter. It was quite an enjoyable time for Will Hay's audience—not for Will! When, at last, Biter was collected, Will tottered away to his study—followed by howls of merriment. There, he chucked "Handy Hypnotism" into the fire! He was fed up with the path to power! After which he sorted out his thickest cane, and went to look for Dicky Bird! He did not tell Dicky why he whopped him—but Dicky guessed!

Look out for another Will Hay Laughter-quake in next week's fine issue of the "PILOT." It starts the New Year with a happy swing.



Leonard Henry at the "Mike"

And would you believe it, fellows, he's burst into rhyme "because it's Christmas." But he hasn't forgotten the laughs.

HALLO, AND MERRY CHRISTMAS, CHUMS!—Since once a year the season comes, with Christmas cake and stumma-cake and sausages and sugar-plums, to celebrate the festive time I'll write this weekly chat in rhyme. My usual stuff is bad enough and often little short of crime, but you don't know what I can do until you've read my verses through.

You see, I learnt these feeble rhymes by writing Christmas pantomimes. The B.B.C. came up to me and said: "You're not so bad at times, so why not try to write a play for us to act on Christmas Day? A pantomime we would suggest—whichever panto you like best." Well, joo know, after I had tried, I found I couldn't quite decide which one to choose, and so, "I'll use the whole darned lot!" I loudly cried. And then evolved upon the spot a norfully ingenious plot.

The play would open with a thrill—Aladdin's cave on Highgate Hill, where Robin Hood is taking food to poor Red Riding, who is ill. Before he knocks upon her door he sings a song, and then one more; then knocks and rings, and then he sings another song, and one encore. But—whoa!—old Bluebeard comes along, and (having paused to sing a song), he smiles a smile so full of guilt we know at once this guy's dead wrong.

"Good-morning, Master Hood," sez he. "Now where be gwine so fine and free?" "Get hence, thou cad!" replies the lad. "Thou won't get nunk out o' me!" "Nay, prithee," sez the bearded scamp, "just look at this 'ere luvverly lamp. You rub it once for loads of bounce—I'll swap it for your food and gamp!"

But wait—and from out Aladdin's cellar appears the fairy Cinderella, who wallops poor old Bluebeard sore with Robin's second-best umbrella. Then gives, like many another star, selections from her repertwah! Now, while she's singing just outside, the cavern door is opened wide, and out there comes (to rolling drums) old Blunderbore with

giant stride. "Fe, fi, fo, fum?" the giant cries. "Oh, nerts!" the fairy queen replies, and pauses for old Blunderbore to sing his song before she flies.

Now Robin's rubbin' hard and fast that magic lamp, until, at last, there comes a flash, a fearful crash, and e'er the giant knows what's passed, a goose has laid a golden egg upon his leather-legged leg. Then forty thieves come rushing out to see what all this here's about, and they behold the egg of gold, and give a single mighty shout, and (pausing only while they sing a chorus bold) they grab the thing.

Then Blunderbore goes off the boil with rage at all this strife and toil, and while they fight with all their might, he slaughters them in boiling oil. And little birds drop twigs and leaves upon the fallen forty thieves. But Robin doesn't give two hoots until he comes on Puss-in-Boots, who sinks his teeth right underneath the giant's trousers, till he scoots. "How sharp your teeth are!" Robin howls. "You'll feel 'em soon!" the feline growls.

Amid the sound of Robin's yells we hear the chime of distant bells, and, tramping on, Dick Whittington obliges with a song, which quells the rumpus—for I need not say the others join him right away.

Then Robin rubs his lamp and—crack!—old Sinbad fastens on his back, and beanstalks grow all round the show, on every one of which is Jack! And Crusoe suddenly appears and seizes Robin by the ears, till Pussy grabs him with his claws amid considerable applause, and Dick yells "Open sesame!" when in comes P.-c. 43, who gives his head a tap or two and answers, "Open what, sez you?"

And then our country's gallant son arrests the others one by one. "You're just a night-mare, all you crowd—it didn't oughter be allowed for things like you to flutter through poor Mr. Henry's head," he vowed. "Because he had a dozen pies before he closed his weary eyes he's got to view a mob like you all night—just listen to his sighs!"

And, joo know, what he said was right. As soon as I sat down to write, I fell asleep, and you can keep the plots you dream about at night.

They're no darned good for any show, And, boys, I'll tell you how I know— The B.B.C. have told me so!

LEONARD HENRY.