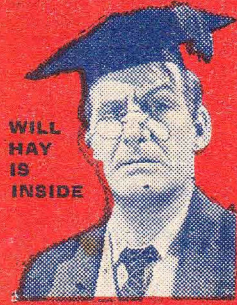


"BUFFALO BILL—KING OF SCOUTS!"—STARTS TO-DAY!



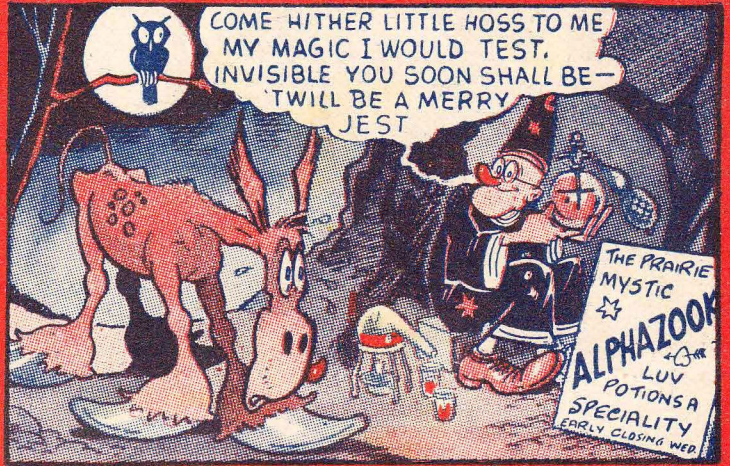
WILL
HAY
IS
INSIDE

The PILOT

EVERY
FRIDAY

2^D

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MIKE,
SPIKE
& GRETA
—OUR CRAZY
GANG IN—
"GRETA'S
VANISHING
TRICK!"





By courtesy of Gainsborough Pictures.

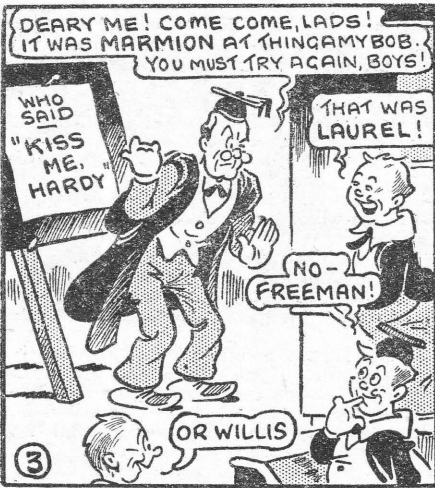
JOIN us, sir!"
 "Oh, do, sir!"
 "We'd be so glad, sir!"
 Will Hay beamed brightly on those members of his Form. On that cold and frosty morning Will was feeling merry and bright. It was really pleasant to be greeted in this hearty way by the Bendover Fourth. No other Form-master at Bendover School ever got such a cheery welcome from his boys.
 The river was frozen hard, and a crowd of the Fourth were sliding on the ice when Will breezed down to the towpath. He had come there to keep an eye on them—especially on Koo, the Kanaka junior, who was in danger from kidnappers.
 "My dear boys, I don't mind if I do!" said Will, beaming at their cordial invitation.
 "Quite an ice idea—ha, ha!"
 "It's ripping, sir!" declared Dicky Bird. "We've got a tremendous long slide—right down to the willows, sir! But don't go past the willows—the ice is thin on the other side."
 Dicky Bird did not add that the ice was also thin on the hither side of the willows! That would have spoiled the joke!
 Will Hay blinked along the river, over his nose-nippers, to the distant clump of willows on the bank.
 "Right!" he said. "I won't go past the willows!"
 "I'm sure you won't!" murmured Jimmy Carboy. And there was a suppressed giggle among the merry Bendoverians. "Come on, sir!"
 Will Hay trod, in a rather gingerly manner, on the ice. Bright and boyish as he felt that frosty morning, it was, as a matter of fact, a considerable time since he had been a boy, and disported himself on icy slides. Once on slippery ice, his feet displayed a tendency to develop each a will of its own, and to travel in different directions.
 "Oh!" ejaculated Will, as his right foot



started on a trip to the westward, while his left shot out to the east. "Ah! Ooooh!"
 He clutched at the nearest juniors for support.
 Dicky Bird and Jimmy Carboy were within easy reach, and he grabbed them. He got Dicky by an ear, and Jimmy by the back of his neck. Their heads came together quite suddenly as he dragged.
 Bang!
 Two fearful yells were blended into one. From the rest of the Fourth came a howl of laughter. This was an unexpected item in the programme; and it seemed funny to all the Fourth, except Bird and Carboy.
 "Oh! Ah! Oh! All right now!" gasped Will. "Steady, the Buffs! Now, stand clear! Here we go! Follow on!"
 Will Hay shot along the slide. He shot like a bullet. His gown billowed out in the breeze, and his mortar-board slid to the back of his head. His arms waved like the sails of a windmill. How he kept his balance nobody knew—least of all, Will Hay. All Will knew was that, once going, he couldn't stop. An arrow in its flight had nothing on Will Hay as he whizzed along the slide.
 Dicky Bird and Jimmy Carboy rubbed their heads—but they grinned while they rubbed. Will shot down to the clump of willows. He was going to clutch at those willows and hang on, to stop himself before he reached the thin ice beyond! But he never reached the willows!
 Crack, crack, crack! Crack-ack-ack!
 "Suffering sardines!" gasped Will Hay as the ice split right and left, a dozen yards short of the willows. "The young asses—the blithering little ticks! Oh crumbs! I've got to go through with it now—oooooh!"
 He went through before he could finish!
 Crack! Splash! Will Hay, in a dazed and dizzy state, found himself up to the armpits in cold water, clinging to a ragged edge of ice. The water was shallow at that spot; there was no danger of drowning. But it was

cold—it was fearfully cold! And it was wet! Will Hay was no whale on natural history, but he knew that water was wet; but if he had doubted it, he would have been sure of it now! It soaked him to the skin.
 "Oh! Ow! Help!" roared Will, trampling mud, splashing water, and grabbing at ice that crumbled in his fingers. "By gum! They're laughing—actually laughing—as if there was something funny in this! Bird, Carboy, Smart, Green, Straw, Podger—come and get me out of this!"
 Dicky Bird produced a rope. He brandished the coil round his head for a throw.
 "Catch, sir!" he shouted.
 Whizz! Both Will's hands were occupied, grabbing at ice. But he caught the end of the rope—with his nose! It banged there!
 "Yurroooooop!" roared Will. "Humming haddocks! I'll make you sit up for this, you wretched little warts! I'll make you sit up till you can't sit down!"
 He grabbed hold of the rope. A crowd of Fourth Formers dragged at the other end. Will Hay went crashing through the ice. Crack, crack, crack! it went, as the juniors dragged him along, breaking a channel for him. It was only a matter of minutes, but it seemed hours to Will before he was landed, gasping, like a fish out of water, on firm ice.
 "Now," gurgled Will, as he sat up, dripping—"now, you young rascals—"
 "Hadn't you better cut in and change, sir?" asked Dicky Bird. "You look a bit damp."
 Will staggered to his feet, slipped, and sat down again.
 "Help him to the bank!" exclaimed Jimmy Carboy.
 "All hands on deck!" chuckled Jerry Smart.
 A dozen pairs of hands grasped the master of the Bendover Fourth, to help him to the bank. They grasped him anywhere and everywhere. Will needed help; but there was no doubt that the zealous juniors overdid it. It





seemed unnecessary—to Will—for them to grasp him by his ears, his hair, his nose, and his neck, as well as his arms and legs.

He gurgled, and gasped, and spluttered as he was rolled, and pushed, and pulled, and hustled, and bumbled. But he was landed on the bank at last, in a wildly winded state.

"All right now, sir!" gasped Dicky Bird.

Will could not speak. He could only gurgle. He stayed only to shake a fist at the Bendover Fourth, and tottered away to the school, followed by a happy sound of boyish laughter!

WILL HAY turned a weary head, at a sound from his study window.

Will had not taken his Form that afternoon. He had not felt equal to taking the Bendover Fourth, after his ducking. The Fourth were given extra French, and spent a happy afternoon ragging Mossos Bong. Will could feel a cold coming on. He was not going to catch that cold, if he could help it.

Will was a believer in the old maxim of feeding a cold and starving a fever. So he had had a very hearty tea, to feed the cold, and now, reclining in his armchair, he was starving the fever! The study fire was banked up almost into the chimney. Will had a couple of blankets draped round him, and a thick woollen muffler over his head. There was, in fact, little to be seen of him, except the tip of a reddened nose, emerging from muffler and blankets. He felt the need of warmth—and there was no doubt that he was keeping warm. He did not stir to turn on the light when the winter darkness fell, and the study was deeply dusky, illuminated only by the glimmer of the fire.

He was quite surprised to hear a sound at his study window. He blinked round at it in the dusk, and was still more surprised to see the lower sash pushed up from without. Against the dimness of the quad outside, a head and shoulders showed in a black silhouette.

Will stared at that startling apparition, then he grinned. As his study was not lighted, anyone would naturally suppose that it was unoccupied. It was past lock-up now, and no Bendover fellow was supposed to be out of the House. But Bendover fellows were sometimes where they were not supposed to be. Will had no doubt for a moment that this was some enterprising japper with a practical joke in view, and he grinned at the idea of catching him in the act.

Then, with a start, he realised that it was a man's head and shoulders—a tall man, from the height. And there was a soft slouched hat on the head. It was no Bendoverian who was at the window. Then in a flash Will understood. It was the kidnapper—after Koo!

Will made no sound and no movement. He knew—from two or three experiences—that Cyrus X. Shook, the Yankee trader from the South Seas, packed a gun. Will disliked the idea of that gun being featured in the scene. He hoped fervently that Cyrus would not notice him there. It was very dusky; the armchair was turned towards the fire, and if the gangster did not turn on a light—which was improbable—he could notice nothing but a bundle of blankets in the armchair. Will, hoping for the best, hardly breathed.

For a long minute the gangster stood inside the room, breathing hard and giving the dusky room the once-over; then Will heard his muttering voice.

"O.K., I guess!"

Will Hay made himself as small as possible in the blankets and muffler; he made no sound. Evidently the gangster did not suspect that those blankets were inhabited. Will heard him chuckle through a long nose as he stepped farther into the room.

"O.K.! Jest pie this time, I guess!" murmured Cyrus X. Shook.

Will did not see it. The gangster was in his study; evidently he had crept into the

school in the winter dusk, unseen and unsuspected. But if he left the study he would be seen at once in the lighted passages; and how he was calculating to get hold of Koo-kalinga-lalulo-ululo-la was rather a mystery to Will.

To Will's surprise, the gangster removed his hat, picked up Will's mortar-board from the table, and put it on his head; then he touched the bell and sat down by the fireside, his back to the door. He was sitting not more than four or five feet from the bundle of blankets in the armchair.

There was a tap at the door and it opened. Toots, the House page, put his head in.

"You rang, sir. Shall I turn on the light, sir?"

In the dusky room all that Toots could see was a figure surmounted by a mortar-board sitting by the fire; naturally he took it for Mr. Hay.

"No!" answered Cyrus in a husky voice, over his shoulder. "Send Koo-kalinga-lalulo-ululo-la to my study at once."

"Yessir!"

Toots withdrew and shut the door. Will Hay barely suppressed a gasp of consternation.

He saw the game now. Cyrus was taking a chance—a long chance. But he guessed that he was getting by with it—and, so far as Will could see, he guessed correctly. Toots would carry that order to Koo; Koo would come to the study; and then— And if Will revealed his presence, one whack from the pistol-butt would push him out of the picture.

The gangster rose to his feet as soon as the door had closed on Toots. He stepped swiftly behind the door, ready to grab the Kanaka junior as soon as he entered. The mortar-board was thrown back on the table, and Cyrus jammed on his hat. He grinned under its slouched brim as he waited.

Will Hay's heart thumped. He had a wild thought of grabbing the poker from the fender and getting at the gangster. He was still



thinking when a tap came at the door and it opened.

A brown face with blue tattoo-marks looked in. Koo's big black eyes opened wider in surprise as he saw that the study was unlighted.

"You sendee for me, sar?" he asked. "Toots say you sendee for me."

A heavy hand grabbed at the boy from the Pacific and jerked him headlong into the study; Cyrus' other hand closed the door.

There was a shrill squeal of amazement from Koo, but it was choked the next moment by a hand clapped over his mouth.

"Pack it up, bo!" drawled Cyrus X. Shook. "I guess you ain't wanted to spill anything!"

"Urrrrgh!" gurgled Koo from under the horny hand clapped over his mouth, and his dark eyes dilated in terror at the shadowy figure of the gangster.

Cyrus grinned at him. "Yep, it's me!" he remarked. "Cyrus X.

Shook, from Ululo—and this time, I guess, I got you by the short hairs! I'll tell a man that Old Man Ka-a, along at Ululo, is going to cough up them pearls. I guess I'm going to trade you for them pearls, big boy!"

In the gangster's iron grasp, Koo-kalingalululo-ululo-la was whirled to the window; he went gurgling and wriggling.

For the first time, Cyrus' back was turned on the bundle of blankets in the armchair; that bundle suddenly stirred.

Blankets fell away, and Will Hay reached the poker. He gripped it and bounded. Cyrus had reached the window with the Kanaka, when Will reached Cyrus with the poker.

Bang!

There was a lot of muscle in Will's right arm, and he put it all into that bang on the back of the gangster's head.

The roar from Cyrus woke a thousand echoes. He let go Koo and pitched forward,

head and shoulders falling out of the open window. From the head, outside, came roar on roar, while the long legs thrashed within. Up went the poker again, and down it came, and the dust rose from the gangster's trousers. It was the first time that Will Hay had used a poker for a cane, but it answered the purpose quite effectually. Crash, crash, crash! came the poker, and yell, yell, yell! came from Cyrus X. Shook. The long legs whisked out of the window, and Cyrus dropped outside, roaring.

Will slammed the window down. Koo flashed on the light and stared at his Form-master with popping eyes. Will grinned at him cheerily, jumped to the door, and shouted the alarm.

In less than a minute a crowd was hunting in the quad for Cyrus—but less than a minute had been enough for the gangster! Cyrus was hitting the open spaces—in a dazed and dizzy state, with the biggest bump on his head that any gangster had ever collected.



He's at it again, lads, and funnier than ever. Tune-in for another rib-tickling broadcast from this radio favourite.

Leonard Henry at the "Mike"

THUS spake Leonard Henry in a voice full of modulation, gratification, and doodah. Howdy, chums? Take the hand of friendship! Go on! Shake! Seize five! And then tell me the difference between the hand of friendship and a bottle of medicine. You don't know? (Printer—a few tuts, please!) Tut-tut-tut—(Right-ho! That's enough to go on with. I don't want to let it grow into a craving, donchoo know!) The diff between the wotsit and the oojah is that one you take before shaking, and the other you shake before taking.

Aren't I a one? Seriously, now, don't you consider I'm a one? The fellow who thinks I'm a two had better sign the pledge. I'm also a scream and a caution and a regular wow. My tailor says so. He says, when he was listening to me, he was laughing so much he could hardly make out the summons for my bill.

Joo know, I've never worn the suit he sent me. I'm orfully ticklish, so when he was measuring me I kept curling up and giggling. He, he, he! Like that, only more so. Well, of course, the measurements were a bit spiffish. I mean, when he was measuring my waist, the tape went round my left ear, through my tonsils, and was twisted round my ankle. So I couldn't wear the suit. I could have camped out in it if he'd sent a pole, but I couldn't wear it because I didn't touch the sides of it anywhere.

I say, joo know, I've just made myself look a frightful ass. I'll tell you all about it in my own words, copyright in every country and twice in Scotland. I went into a motor-supply stores for a dazzle—no, wait! Take a deep breath. A dozen double-dimmer, anti-dazzle prisms!

A shopman asked me what I wanted. "A dazzle dimmle-dubber, anti-dism prazles!" I replied, beaming.

He grabbed a spanner, and told me to keep my distance while he shouted for help. He said he had an uncle who went the same way, and was put in a padded cell. Meanwhile I was wrestling with my jawbone, which had slipped a cog.

"Now, don't be foolish!" I said at last. "All I want is a dazzle—" I stopped,

breathed hard, rubbed out that last word, and tried again. "A dozen dummer-dibble, anti-dizzle dazzle—I mean, a duzzle—"

I mopped my brow feebly. "Yes, yes, yes!" said the man, mopping his brow feebly. "I know where they sell beautiful duzzles. You wait there a minute while I tell them to send round a few nice duzzles—eh?"

"I want prizzles!" I shouted. "I mean prasms! Anti-dizzle prasms! No—anti-prizzle dasms! A double dimmer-dubble, anti-dizzle prasms! Anti-dabble prizzles!" I yelled. "Duzzles—no, dusms! Pruzzles! A duntidazzle, dubber-dizzle, prizzly-dizzle dasms!"

By this time there was a crowd round me. One of them brought out a foreign phrase-book. He gave me a kind nod.

"Bwayno deetas, senior!" he said. "Kee dessier costed?"

"Anti-primmer dasms!" I screamed, waving the money. "A dummer dizzle—a duzzle—a dozen!" I screeched. "A dozen—double-dibble—dozzle—anti-prizzle—dazzles!"

The manager came up—a fat and important bird—who asked me what I wanted. So I said it all again, some of it twice; while the man with the phrase-book tried French instead of Spanish until I got wild with him.

"I refuse to be bong-joored by this man!" I said sternly. "I came in here to buy a dozen perfectly ordinary anti-dibble prammers, and this fool does nothing but bong-joor me, while the other ass talks about his family lunatics!"

"I quite understand," said the manager. "The words are rather tongue-twisters. What you are trying to ask for is a duzzle dummledizzer, anti-dabber pribbles."

"No, no, no! A dizen dabble-duzzler—"

"Precisely! A dazzle dibble-dammer, anti-prism dozzles!" The manager swallowed twice, and wrung moisture out of his hair. "Let us keep quite calm!" he said ponderously. "We are faced with a grave crisis, but let us try to retain our senses, our presence of mind. Now, sir, what you want is—"

"A dizzle dozzle duzzle—" I yelled. "Permit me! Let us take it slowly. To start with, you want a dozen, don't you—one dozen?"

"Make it two!" I yelled. "We can't take all this trouble over a duzzle! Make it two!" "That will be a double-dozen!" said the manager gravely.

It was at that point I hit him on the head with a spanner. And I think you'll admit it was the only thing to do—what?

Your prismless pal,
LEONARD HENRY.

"**N**OT caught a cold, sir?" asked Jimmy Carboy.

"No!" said Will Hay, with a glare.

"Sneezy thing to do, sir," said Dicky Bird. "What? It's an easy— Oh, quite! Take your places, boys. We are going to do some simple science this morning. Bird, Carboy, fetch in the two fire-buckets from the passage, and make sure that they are full of water."

"Yes, sir!"

The Bendover Fourth were really glad that Will hadn't caught a cold. They had not meant it to be so bad as that—and it wasn't. They were still more glad that Will seemed disposed to let the matter drop.

Generally the Fourth began with Latin "con"; but there were few fellows in the Bendover Fourth who were fearfully keen on Latin, and a change in the usual programme was not unwelcome, though the juniors rather wondered what Will was going to show them in the scientific line. They had a strong suspicion that their Form-master knew as much about science as he did about the classics, and that his knowledge of both subjects could have been packed into a nutshell without removing the nut.

Dicky Bird and Jimmy Carboy, the ring-leaders in the jape on the ice, had expected trouble, instead of which they were merely directed to carry in the two buckets of water for a scientific demonstration.

They carried in the buckets, full to the brim, and landed them in front of the class.

"You need not go back to your places, Bird and Carboy," said Will; "I shall require your assistance in this demonstration. Now, my boys, keep your eyes on Bird and Carboy, who are about to demonstrate to you the properties of H₂O—otherwise water. Are you all attention?"

"Yes, sir," answered the wondering Fourth. Will Hay glanced over his class. They all sat with their eyes fixed on Dicky Bird and Jimmy Carboy, who stood wondering what they were required to do. Everybody was quite attentive.

"You are all aware," continued Will Hay, "that a drop of water is inhabited by millions—perhaps tens of millions—of tiny creatures. I forget exactly how many millions; but that is immaterial; in scientific matters, nobody is particular to a million or so. Bird, Carboy, you will now look into those buckets of water, and describe what you can see there!"

Bird and Carboy blinked at him. "Nothing without a microscope, sir!" gasped Dicky.

"Must have a microscope to see anything in water, sir!" gasped Jimmy.

"Nonsense!" thundered Will. "Kindly carry out my directions, without argument!" exclaimed Will. "Look into those buckets! Fix your eyes earnestly on the water, and you will learn something about H₂O, and the Form will benefit by it! Now, then! You are keeping the class waiting."

There was nothing else for it, and Bird and Carboy bent over the buckets, and stared solemnly into the water contained therein. Nothing met their view but the bottoms of

the buckets, seen through the water. The whole class watched them, blankly.

"Well," hooted Will Hay, "what do you see, Bird and Carboy?"

"Nothing but water, sir!"

"Nothing at all, sir!"

"Look closer! You are not looking closely enough! Do you think that the infinitesimal inhabitants of a drop of water jump out and bite you, or what? Look closer!" thundered Will Hay.

"Oh, all right, sir!" said Dicky Bird, resignedly.

And the two juniors knelt on the Form-room floor beside the buckets, and bent over them, with the tips of their noses almost touching the water, and gazed. Will Hay leaned over them.

With a sudden, swift movement he grasped the backs of two necks and shoved them downwards. Splash, splash!

"Gurrrrrrghh!"

"Yurrrrrghh!"

Two heads disappeared into two buckets of water! There was a gasp from the Bendover Fourth! Horrible gurgles came from Dicky Bird and Jimmy Carboy, as they sprawled over the buckets, kicking out frantically.

Will Hay, grinning with all his teeth, released them, and they bounded up, streaming with water and spluttering for breath.

"Urrgh! Ooogh! Crooooooh!" spluttered Dicky Bird.

"Gerrrrrooooooh!" gurgled Jimmy Carboy. "What the thunder-yooohoh! I'm nearly did-did-drowned! Ooogh!"

They dabbed at water in eyes and mouth and nose and ears and hair, and gasped and gurgled wildly. Water ran down them in streams. The Bendover Fourth gazed on, with popping eyes. If this was a scientific demonstration, it was evident that their Form-master had methods of his own.

"Now what discovery have you made, Bird and Carboy?" demanded Will.

"You old ass! Oooooogh!"

"Oh crikey! Woogh!"

"Have you learned nothing from your investigations of those two buckets of H₂O?" demanded Will.

"Urrgh! No! Ooogh!"

"Then we must have the demonstration over again!" said Will. "You must keep this up, Bird and Carboy, till you make the same discovery that I made yesterday—that water, at close quarters, is wet, and very uncomfortable! Now, then—you must keep on till you have learned—"

"Oh!" gasped Dicky Bird. "I—I see! I've learned, sir!"

"I've learned all right, sir!" gasped Jimmy Carboy.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the rest of the Fourth. Will Hay beamed on the two drenched japers.

"You're sure you've got it clear?" he asked, genially. "I wish to have absolutely no mistake about the matter."

"Oh, quite, sir!"

"Quite clear, sir! Urrgh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"In that case, the demonstration is over, and you may go and change, Bird and Carboy! I trust that you will not catch colds! Sneezing thing to do, you know! Take away those buckets with you! Now, my boys, get your Latin books—we are done with science for this

morning! We will have another demonstration next time I have an accident on the ice!"

And Will Hay beamed on a grinning form, while Dicky Bird and Jimmy Carboy tottered away in search of towels.

"STICK 'em up!"

"Wha-a-a-t?" stuttered Will Hay.

He jumped almost clear of the towpath. His eyes bulged over his nose-nippers, as he stared round in the dusk, his hand closing convulsively on his umbrella. From the shadow of a clump of willows, a long, lean figure emerged, and two narrow, sharp eyes glinted at Will over the barrel of a gun. The ghost of Cyrus X. Shook could hardly have startled the master of the Bendover Fourth more.

Koo of the Fourth was gated, to keep him safe from the kidnapping gangster. Will Hay rather wished now that he had gated himself also! He wished that he hadn't walked down to Didham after class. He wished that he hadn't walked back by the towpath. All these wishes, however, came too late to be of any service to Will. There he was, with Cyrus' gun looking him in the face, and Cyrus' pin-points of eyes glaring over it.

"I guess," said Mr. Shook grimly, "that I got you, you double-crossing gerk! I'll say you won't land me a sockdolager on the cazeza with a pesky poker this time, you pie-faced gink! Nope! I'll tell a man I got you just where I want you, you slab-sided mug-wump!"

"My dear sir—" gasped Will.

"Park it!" said Mr. Shook. "I ain't stopped you to hear you say your piece. I guess I'm walking you off to a quiet spot, feller! I ain't had no luck roping in that pesky Koo; but I reckon I got you; and if you don't put that Kanaka into my grip, I'll mention that I'm powerful sorry for you—you got a whole heap of aches and pains coming when I begin twisting you. Get me? I said stick up your hands, hombre."

"Anything to oblige, Mr. Shook!" gasped Will.

"Pronto!" snapped the gangster.

Will Hay's hands went up—the umbrella in one of them. The umbrella crashed on the gun, knocking it whirling from Mr. Shook's lean hand. It spun away into the air and vanished into darkness, dropping somewhere among frozen rushes. At the same moment Will leaped back and bolted.

"Carry me home to die!" yelled Cyrus, and he shot in pursuit.

"Suffering snails!" gasped Will Hay.

He flew! Will was no weakling; but he was no use in the grasp of the long-limbed gangster; once that grasp closed on him, he was done for. Neither was he of much use in a foot race with Cyrus. The gangster's long legs covered the ground at a terrific rate. It was not more than two hundred yards from the spot to Bendover, but Will had no chance of covering two dozen of those yards! But he had another resource.

He shot out from the bank on the ice. The long, lean arm of Cyrus Xerxes Shook was almost grasping him as he shot. Barely escaping the clutching hand, Will slid away like an arrow.

"Search me!" gasped the gangster.

He shot out on the ice after Will. Whiz went Will Hay; whiz came the gangster on his track. Cyrus was gaining! But Will Hay was heading for a certain spot he knew—and that Cyrus naturally did not know.

The spot where Will had gone in a couple of days ago, when he had slid with the merry Fourth Formers, had frozen over again, but the frozen crust of ice was thinner than ever! Right for that spot flew Will, with the enraged gangster shooting on his track.

Just before he reached the danger zone, Will suddenly hurled himself to the left, and went sprawling headlong. Cyrus X. Shook shot past him.

In a moment Cyrus would have whirled round, and his grasp would have been on the master of the Bendover Fourth. But in that moment the thin ice cracked right and left round Cyrus, and he dropped through with a startled roar.

Crack, crack crack! went the ice, smashing far and wide, and Cyrus X. Shook floundered and splashed and gasped in a widening gap, with the water flowing under his arms, and his feet embedded in mud.

"Aw! Doggone my cats! Yaw! I guess I'm wet! Ooogh! Cuss this pesky ice! I guess I got to get outter this somehow! Carry me home to die!"

Will staggered to his feet. He grinned cheerily at the struggling figure in the gap.

"Guess again!" he remarked. "As one who has been there, my good fellow, I may mention that it is impossible—quite impossible—to get out without assistance. You will not drown, Mr. Shook—probably you have heard the ancient proverb that those born to be hanged cannot be drowned! You may draw comfort from reflecting on it! Do you find it wet, Mr. Shook? Such was my experience!"

"You pesky schoolmaster!" yelled Cyrus, scrambling and splashing frantically. "I'll sure beat you up for this! I'll sure sock you a few! I'll sure—"

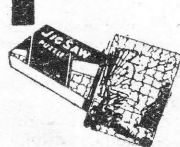
"Now you are getting cross, Mr. Shook!" said Will reprovingly. "I will leave you, and trust to find you in a better temper when I return. Keep cool! The temperature of the water will assist you to do so! For the moment, Mr. Shook, I must tear myself away from the delights of your society and conversation."

Will Hay breezed away to Bendover. Cyrus was left scrambling and splashing, and grabbing frantically at crumbling ice.

Cyrus X. Shook had never expected to feel glad with the grip of a British bobby on his shoulder. But he was glad—very glad indeed—when he was hooked, at last, out of the hole in the ice, nearly frozen. He was glad when he got to Didham police station. It was not the residence he would have selected, but it was a pleasant change from the gap in the ice. And he had to give up the idea of kidnapping Koo. For the next five years Cyrus was going to be too busily occupied to bother about kidnapping stunts.

Winter is still with us, but so is WILL HAY, and the merry antics of this mirth-making master will bring sunshine to the dullest day. Look out for another fine story starring the world's funniest form-master, next Friday.

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