

WILL HAY : ALEX JAMES : LEONARD HENRY : STAINLESS STEPHEN etc. **INSIDE!**

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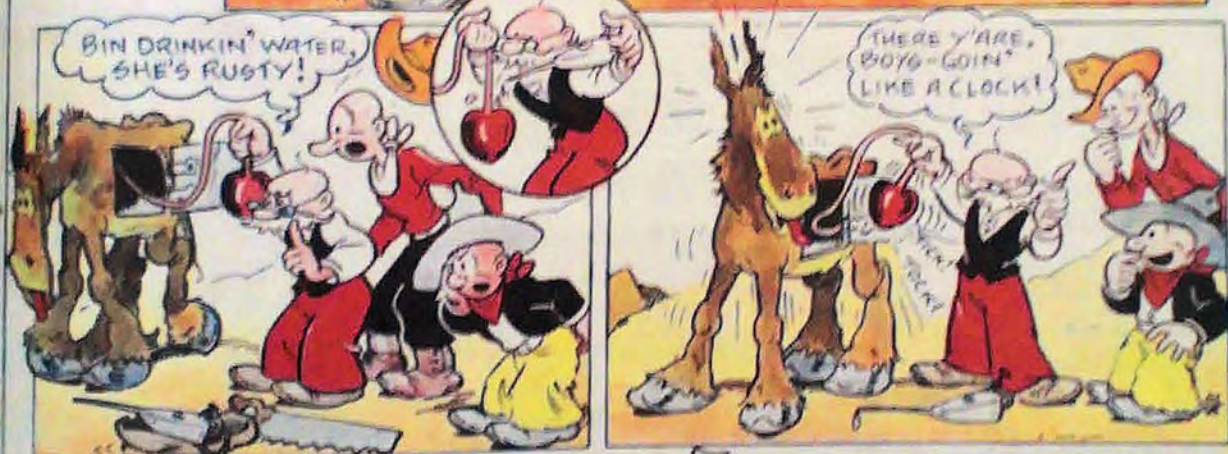
The PILOT

2nd Every Friday

3 NEW
STARS
FOR YOU—

**MIKE,
SPIKE
AND
GRETA**

Watch For
Them Every
Week!



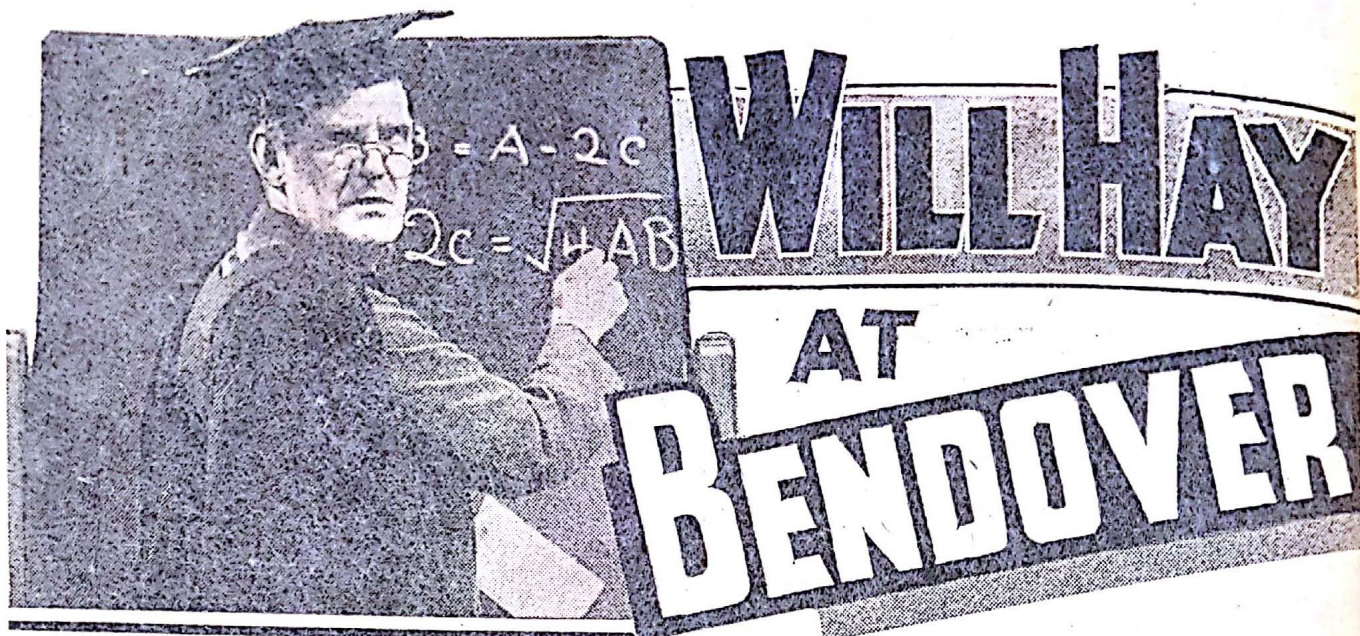


Photo by Courtesy of Gainsborough Pictures, whose latest film starring WILL HAY will shortly be shown at your local cinema. Look out for it.—Ed.

CLICK!

Will Hay arched his eyebrows in an inquiry as that metallic click came from the door of his study, but he did not rise from his chair to investigate—which was a pity. The master of the Fourth Form at Bendover was "brushing up" his knowledge of Latin, and was beginning to wish that he had been buried with that ancient and dead language. Adjusting his nose-nippers to a precarious angle, he bent over a Latin primer and swotted it up to the accompaniment of several yawns.

"I'd like to meet the little wart who invented this lingo!" he muttered. "What it all means, I'm blessed if I know!"

He glanced idly at the clock on the mantel and suddenly snapped the primer shut, for it was time for him to be proceeding to the Form-room. There was to be a governor's inspection that morning—which perhaps explained why Will was "brushing up" his Latin. It was the first lesson of the day, during which period, for a certainty, Colonel Chatterton and his fellow governors of Bendover would "drop in" on the Fourth.

Punctuality at Bendover was strictly observed. Even Form-masters came in for severe censure if they were late, so, stifling a sigh, Will jammed his shabby mortar-board on his head and tracked doorwards. His hand grasped the door handle and he tugged.

Nothing happened—that is, nothing save that Will's nose came into rather violent contact with the panels of the door.

He staggered back, caressing his damaged organ and squinting suspiciously over his nose-nippers. Then he tried the handle again—this time a little less impulsively. But the door refused to budge.

"Locked!" remarked Will, scratching his ear. "Some little wart has locked me in—that was the click I heard just now. Well, when I find out who it was, he'll click—for a hearty dusting of the pants! Now, lemme see!"

With wrinkled brow he stood regarding that locked door, turning over in his mind the likely identity of the boy responsible for having locked him in—for boy it was, he was assured.

"That little wart Reggie Pyke," he murmured grimly. "Yes, he's the culprit! The sort of dirty trick he would play, with a governor's inspection in the offing. I must remember not to leave the key in the door in future."

He crossed to the window and stood staring down into the deserted quad, twenty feet

below. And his thoughts, as they dwelt upon Master Reginald Pyke, were not pleasant. Will knew, without being told, that there was a conspiracy to "shift" Dr. Shrubb from his headmastership of Bendover, so that Dunkley Pyke, Reggie's father, could step in. Any delinquency on the part of a Bendover Form-master helped the plot along, for inefficient Form-masters meant that the headmaster responsible for engaging them was inefficient, too.

"Well, Master Reggie," muttered Will, tapping the side of his nose thoughtfully. "you're not going to score a century here. I've climbed before, so I'll try the ivy."

He raised the sash, and clambered unsteadily over the sill, reaching for the clustered ivy which lined the age-old walls of Bendover. Set of face, he lowered himself away from the window and began a precarious descent. That he lost his hold five feet from the bottom and landed in a heap did not trouble him unduly. He grabbed for his mortar-board, which had gone one way, blinked for his nose-nippers—which, fortunately, hadn't broken as they shot off in another—and rose to his feet.

"Now for Latin!" he grimaced as he tramped towards the Form-room. "It seems that the young rascals are enjoying themselves in my absence," he added, as a terrific commotion sounded from the Fourth Form Room as he approached.

The "young rascals" were enjoying themselves. Jerry Smart and Carstairs were fighting like a couple of tigers, working off an old score. Tubby Green was making inroads into a large bag of puff pastry; Smythe was snoring, with his feet up on the desk, whilst ink pellets, fired at random by the high-spirited youngsters, were doing considerable damage to all and sundry. It was a case of "when the cat's away, et cetera," with a vengeance.

Young Reggie Pyke stalked about, well pleased with himself.

TOP O' THE BILL!

WILL HAY, star of the screen, stage and radio, now starring, exclusively, in side-splitting stories for "The PILOT."

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THE PILOT No. 77-20/3/37.



"I'll bet you that old fool Hay won't turn up this morning," he freely remarked. "The governors will sack him when they find he's missing from the Form-room. Let it go, you chaps!"

The "chaps" let it go. Laughing and howling, joking and fighting, they rushed up and down the Form-room like a lot of young animals. The blackboard went over with a crash, but no one seemed to mind; ink was upset, and sticks of chalk were trodden into the flooring; books were flying all over the place. Then, in the midst of it all, Will Hay appeared.

It was unfortunate that he happened to get in the way of a Latin primer, which was whizzing through the air, for it smote him a hearty wallop on the side of the head and bowled him over. For the second time that morning he sat down involuntarily; for the second time he parted company with his nose-nippers and his tattered mortar-board.

There was a rush and a scamper of many feet as the Fourth Form juniors made a belt for their places; and when Form-master Will Hay scrambled to his feet and retrieved his mortar-board and his nose-nippers, there was not a sound to be heard in the room. Every boy was in his place; every boy wore an angelic expression.

"Hem!" coughed Will, tapping the side of his nose and peering quizzically over his nose-nippers. "Very entertaining—very! So this is what you boys do in my absence, eh? Well, I suppose you all know it's Governors' Inspection this morning?"

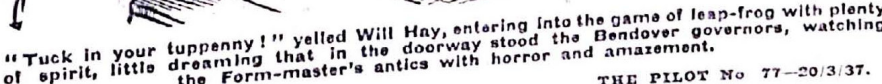
There was a dutiful chorus of "Yessir!" "Then I hope you've all learned your Latin verse," continued Will. His eyes dwelt on Reggie Pyke for a long moment. "Have you anything on your mind, Reginald Pyke—that is, if you have a mind at all," he added sarcastically.

"Me, sir? No-munno, sir!" quavered Reggie, already beginning to wish he hadn't locked his Form-master in the study. He never knew quite how to take Form-master Hay. The man was different from most masters. Seldom did he lose his temper; seldom did he do what was expected of him in the orthodox way. In this case, for instance, he made no further reference to the rumpus the Fourth had been making prior to his arrival, except to complain about the absence of the chalk.

Tapping his nose in thoughtful fashion, he arched an eyebrow, and then remarked very casually:

hullabaloo you were kicking up when

of spirit, little given the Form-master's advice.



"Stop! How dare you?" he roared, brandishing his walking-stick. "Stop!"

But the hissing and boeing did not stop. Only when Dr. Shrubbs, crimson with embarrassment, held up his hand, did the uproar die down.

"Colonel Chatterton, I think you forget yourself," he remarked coldly. "This is not the place—"

"I beg your pardon, sir!" stammered Chatterton. "But, although my remarks appertaining to yourself might be considered out of place, the same does not apply to this man Hay. He is an impostor! What do we find, as governors, on a tour of inspection—what do we find? This man joining in leap-frog with the boys, when they should be studying—ahem!—Latin! He is a rogue, sir, a charlatan, a fool—"

"Shame!" Once again the Fourth took up the challenge, and Colonel Chatterton blushed like a turkey cock. "Shame! Go home, you old—"

"Boys," remarked Will, holding up his hand and winking at the Fourth, "I have always attempted to instruct you in the paths of recti—"

rectitude," said Smart helpfully.

"Go to the top of the Form, Smart, but leave your books—you'll soon be back. Er—rectitude," swallowed Will. "So please refrain from telling this estimable gentleman what you think of him. I wouldn't hear of it. Besides," he added under his breath, "there wouldn't be time."

He flashed a toothy smile on the body of governors.

"If my methods, sir, are a trifle off the beaten track—unorthodox, shall we say," he beamed, "I am sure the results justify them. Look at these boys. When I arrived for Form, they were dispirited—just like that young wart—ahem!—young rascal Pyke. With the exception of Pyke, they are now happy and ready for work. They wanted exercise—they have had exercise; and even Pyke has had what he needed, if you follow me."

Major Heartways twirled his moustaches and nodded ponderously.

"He speaks right. These boys are totally different from the lads in the other Forms, her-ummmph! They're clear-eyed and healthy-looking. In the Fifth and Sixth Forms, by gad, the faces were as long as a street! Dull and listless. Berummmph, Mr. Hay, I congratulate you, sir!"

"Thank you, Major Heartways!"

Dr. Shrubbs began to look relieved. In contrast, Colonel Chatterton looked positively wild.

"Nonsense, major!" he hooted. "These boys are set to learn Latin, not to fool about like a gang of rowdies. What do they know about Latin?"

Will Hay tapped the side of his nose and arched an eyebrow in the colonel's direction.

"You try them, sir. Try any question on them that you like. Give them a hard one—you follow me?"

Colonel Chatterton blinked, and his jaw dropped. What little Latin he had ever learned had long since been forgotten.

"That seems fair, colonel," added Major Heartways. "Try them, as Mr. Hay suggests. By gad, that's a splendid idea!"

It was a little too splendid for the colonel. He fretted, and fussed, and stamped his feet in impotent rage; but he didn't accept the invitation to "try them." With a baleful look at Will Hay, he turned and tramped from the Form-room. After him went the rest of the governors, Dr. Shrubbs staying just long enough to whisper in Form-master Hay's ear:

"I owe you an apology, my dear Hay. I beg of you to forget my hasty words."

"That's O. K.—ahem!—I mean, that's all right, sir!" beamed Will; but he breathed a huge sigh of relief when the door had closed.

"Now, my boys," he remarked easily, "we'd better start work. Any general knowledge questions, first?"

Smythe ambled to his feet.

"Please, sir," he drawled, "which is it correct to say—the 'yolk of an egg is white,' or 'the yolk of an egg are white'?"

Will's forehead wrinkled into a frown and

his eyebrow arched. His hand strayed towards his cane.

"Are you trying to be funny, young Smythe?"

"Oh, no, sir!" replied Smythe. "I really want to know which is correct: 'The yolk of an egg is white, or are white'?"

"Smythe," squinted Will, "you are a young idiot! Everyone knows that the correct rendering is the yolk of an egg is white! Take a hundred lines—"

"Oh, sir! But I always thought the yolk of an egg was yellow, sir!" exclaimed Smythe.

"Wasst!" barked Will, cocking one eye.

"The yolk of an egg—ahem!—the yolk of an egg is— Smythe, take two hundred lines! And, Smythe—"

"Yes, sir!"

"Make it three hundred. I forgot to give you a tanning for being late for classes yesterday afternoon. Now, my boys, let us proceed. Now, lemme see, the lesson is English History. Ahem! Write down everything you know about the conquest of America; who discovered it, why he discovered it, and what he did with it when he discovered it. And," he added under his breath, "if that doesn't keep the little brats busy until twelve o'clock I'll eat my hat!"

Will Hay beamed toothily at the Form, settled himself comfortably in his chair, and



"Did the Tiger win his fight?"
"Nah—but he was second!"

scanning the racing edition of a sporting newspaper, was soon weighing up the chances of Naughty Naughty in the three o'clock race at Hurst Park.

"IS that you, dad?" Reggie Pyke's voice was low and nervy. "I'm speaking from Hay's study. I shall have to look slippy. He'd tan the hide off me if he came and found me using his phone without permission. Still, it'll be another bob on his phone bill!"

There came a questioning voice from the other end of the wire—the voice of Dunkley Pyke.

"How did things go, my son? Did Colonel Chatterton get his way with the governors? Is Shrubbs sacked—and that idiot Hay?"

"Everything went wrong, dad," said Reggie. "The old fool climbed out of the window. Wish he'd broken his neck. And instead of Chatterton being able to sack him, the other governors were on Hay's side. We shall have to do something serious to get rid of the blighter. The fellows are beginning to like him. You should have been here this morning. I— Say, dad, I must ring off. He's such a suspicious beast. He might catch me in here."

Reggie Pyke did not hear the light footstep at the partly open doorway. Yet if he had had eyes in the back of his head he would

have seen Form-master Will Hay blinking there, a curious expression on his face. Now, as Reggie began to slam down the telephone receiver, prior to bolting out of the study, Will softly and quietly closed the door. From his pocket he produced a key—the key which he had taken from Reggie Pyke only that morning. Noiselessly he slipped it in the lock and turned it. Then, pocketing the key again, he withdrew.

Completely unaware of what had happened, Reggie Pyke crossed the carpet and jerked at the door handle. Then, as he realised that he was locked in, the colour drained from his face, leaving his eyes wide with fear.

"Some rotter's locked me in!" he muttered, beginning to shiver; and never did it cross his mind that Will Hay was responsible. "What shall I do?"

His first impulse was to batter on the door, but the noise would of a certainty bring Will Hay upon the scene, and that was something the miserable Reggie wanted to avoid. No junior had a right to enter a master's study without permission.

He glanced about him like a rat in a trap. In five minutes' time afternoon lessons would be due to begin.

"Oh dear!" groaned Reggie Pyke; and he crossed to the window. Peering down into the quad, he told himself that he hadn't the nerve to climb down the ivy. "Oh dear! I can't get out that way, I should break my neck!"

He crossed to the door again and tried the handle. But still the door remained firmly locked. The chiming of the clock on the mantel made him jump; it was the hour for afternoon classes. Shivering with fright now, the wretched young schemer paced up and down the room like a caged animal, trying to think out ways and means of escaping. The minutes ticked by and Pyke knew he was "for it." By now his absence from Form would be "marked down," and he would be reported to Dr. Shrubbs. That would mean a flogging, at least.

Meantime, in the Fourth Form Room, lessons proceeded happily without the society of Reggie Pyke. Will Hay called the roll and raised an eyebrow when the name was not answered.

"Does anyone know where Pyke is?" he rapped.

Silence.
"Very well, it will be my duty to report the little wart," muttered Will. "It is time the young rascal realised he comes to Bendover to learn things." His eyes roved over the class. "Stand up, Green!"

Slowly Tubby Green rolled to his feet. "I am under the impression—correct me if I'm wrong, Green—that I gave you an imposition yesterday. Where are your lines?"

"I put it on your desk, sir," replied Green innocently. "It's there now, sir—just by the register."

Will frowned and squinted over his nose-nippers.

"You put 'it' on my desk, Green?" he queried.

"Yes, sir!"

"Surely you should say I put 'them' on your desk, should you not?" persisted Will, tapping his nose.

"Oh, no, sir! I only used one sheet of paper, sir!" explained Tubby Green innocently.

Will blinked his astonishment.

"You used only one piece of paper for the imposition I gave you?" he hooted, and his arched brows swept over the littered desk. "Ah—this looks like your writing, Green."

He held up a single sheet of paper upon which a solitary line of smudged handwriting appeared.

"Yes, sir, that's my impot," said Tubby.

"I wrote it, just as you said, sir."

"YOU WHAT?" screeched Will, blinking and squinting at the sheet of paper.

"I told you to write out 'I must not talk in class,' a hundred times."

"Yes, sir. That's right, sir," agreed Tubby. "That's what I wrote!"

Will Hay's eyes nearly started from their sockets.

(Continued on page 584.)

and pointed towards the windmill. "Every man here surrounds the windmill. The Buccaneer's mixed up in this counterfeit gang, and we're going to get him and his pals. Double up, there! Grab every man!"

Inspector Bugle was in his glory. He was following a hot trail, and he was burning with resentment against the Buccaneer. It had been nearly an hour before he had freed himself from the muscle vibrator by finally wrenching it away from the wall. Then he walked in a manner which completely upset his dignity, with the machine clamped in his arms to the window of the sitting-room, where his men finally saw him and released him. Thereafter, Bugle had made a bee-line for Mr. Bootle's shop, which he had heard the Buccaneer mention; and there, of course, he had found the Buccaneer's handiwork. A few minutes' brisk questioning of Joe Bootle had sufficed to bring him down here, red-hot on the trail of the Buccaneer.

And as his portly figure lumbered after his policemen, the Buccaneer's brain was working fast. Tim and Bart were in there among the Chinese counterfeiters. Bugle wouldn't recognize them at first. He would believe that the Buccaneer and his pals had got away—until that disguise came off, as it was bound to. The mere fact of capturing Bart and Tim would be enough proof to Bugle that the Buccaneer was mixed up some way with the counterfeiters, and he would hold Tim and Bart captive until he had captured the Buccaneer.

"The old so-and-so," the Buccaneer murmured, as he eyed the two police cars and the Black Maria. "I'd like—"

Maa-aa-aa! Maa-aa-aa-aa! The two plaintive bleats jerked the Buccaneer's head around swiftly. Through a hole in the hedge behind him he saw two bearded faces with pale green eyes staring at him suspiciously.

They were two billy-goats, tethered at the end of a long chain; and as he saw them, a

broad grin lit up the Buccaneer's cheerful countenance. A second later, he was scrambling through the hedge, to return within a few moments, with one of the billy-goats kicking and struggling furiously in his arms.

It needed all the Buccaneer's lithe strength to hold the angry animal until he reached the Black Maria. In the distance, the Buccaneer could hear yells and shouts going on as the police swarmed into the mill and caught the counterfeiters on the job.

Swiftly, the Buccaneer wrenched open the door of the Black Maria and dumped the goat inside. Then, closing it again, he swiftly brought the second goat across and dumped him in with his companion, and scarcely had he shut the door of the prison van, when he heard the trample of feet. Diving across the road, the Buccaneer ducked down behind the fallen tree, as Bugle headed the Chinese crooks and the police out of the mill.

"I'm taking no chances!" Bugle was bellowing. "One of these yaller-faced Chinks is the Buccaneer in disguise; that fellow could disguise himself as a Hottentot, if he wanted to. But he's not going to get away with this. We'll shove 'em all in the Black Maria, and get 'em safe in cells before we start examining 'em."

The Buccaneer grinned as he saw that Bugle was heading the procession—and in Bugle's hand was a fat case. Inside it was packed bundle upon bundle of notes, the real money which the forgers had received in exchange for their counterfeit notes. There was a small fortune in that case, and Bugle held on to the handle as if he'd never let go. Behind the inspector marched half a dozen police officers; behind them marched the yellow crooks in pairs, handcuffed together; and the rear was brought up by the rest of the police. Indeed, Bugle was taking no chances at all—not that he knew of, anyway.

The Buccaneer made out the tall and short figures of Tim and Bart, handcuffed together. He saw that their faces were gloomy.

"Just a tick, laddie!" the Buccaneer breathed. "Only a second—the Buccaneer"

He crouched, tense, as he saw Bugle reach up importantly for the handle of the doors of the Black Maria. The inspector jerked the handle down and went to fling the doors open with a flourish—only they opened before he was ready.

To Bugle, crooks, and police alike, it seemed as if an earthquake had burst around their heads, as two infuriated goats literally hurled themselves out of the Black Maria and butted furiously to right and left.

Bugle went staggering back under two hundredweight of bad-tempered goat, and the precious case went sailing out of his hand. Then, as the second goat charged out, there was a wild confusion of arms and legs, as police and crooks alike went down like ninepins.

In a flash, the Buccaneer was out from behind the fallen tree, racing towards Tim and Bart. As he ran, he swept up the case containing the money, which had flown from Bugle's hand, then grabbed his two pals.

"Come on, lads!" he cheered. "Run for it—"

As they ran towards their hidden car, they could hear Bugle's bellowing voice.

"Don't let anyone get away! Who was it stuck those confounded goats in the Black Maria?"

Then, for an instant, he stood frozen. He heard the sound of a car, shooting away at speed, and high above the engine there came a derisive, mocking sound. Only this time, it was not the Buccaneer's customary cheerful laughter, and Bugle's ears burned a dull red as he heard, long and plaintive:

"Maa-aaa-aaa!"

The Buccaneer joins the police for a day... and what a day! Read of his daring exploit in another grand yarn, next week.... and what a yarn!

WILL HAY AT BENDOVER.

(Continued from page 580.)

sockets as he squinted over the top of his nose-nippers at Tubby Green's "impot"—for all that appeared on it was the one line "I must not talk in class a hundred times."

"What's this?" he hooted. "What's this?"

"What you told me to write, sir," said Tubby. "I must not talk in class a hundred times."

"I didn't say that!" exclaimed Will.

"Oh yes, you did, sir!" answered Tubby.

"Nonsense! All you have written on this grubby sheet of paper is 'I must not talk in class a hundred times!'"

"Yes, sir. That's what you said."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Fourth.

Will Hay's face was a study. He quizzed at Tubby Green suspiciously, then he reached for his cane.

"Green, I don't think you're such an imbecile as you make out. When I give you an imposition of a hundred lines I do not expect this sort of thing. You know perfectly well that I meant you to write out that sentence 'I must not talk in class' a hundred times—not 'I must not talk in class a hundred times'! Is that clear?"

"Nunno, sir!" gulped Tubby. "I always do what a master tells me, sir!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Jerry Smart & Co.—and they wondered whether Tubby Green would get away with it.

"So you always do what a master tells you, eh?" Will shot the question snappily.

"Oh, yes, sir! The first rule of Bendover, sir, is 'All boys must obey orders smartly, implicitly, and with cheerfulness.'"

"Is that so?" grinned Will mirthlessly. "Then be good and cheerful enough to drape yourself over the back of the desk—smartly and implicitly!"

"Oh lor!" gasped Tubby; but he had to obey, for Will Hay's strong left hand was gripping his collar, and very soon Will Hay's

strong right arm was making up for that imposition Tubby hadn't written.

"Now go back to your place, Green," commanded Will Hay—"and, Green—"

"Ow! Yessir!"

"You may stand if you prefer it," said Will, with an arched eyebrow.

THIS is scandalous, my dear Hay!"

It was after classes that day, and the master of the Fourth at Bendover had just made his daily report to Dr. Shrub.

"It is indeed, sir!" agreed Will, back-handing a cough. "The boy has absented himself all the afternoon, without leave. He really is a difficult boy to control. Perhaps, sir, you will make it clear to Reggie Pyke that he cannot do this sort of thing. It isn't good for the rest of the boys."

Dr. Shrub pursed his lips.

"I will make it painfully clear, my dear Hay. Send the wretched boy to me directly he returns. Absenting himself for the entire afternoon—without asking leave—why, it is scandalous! He shall be flogged—flogged severely!"

Will Hay tapped the side of his nose.

"By the way, sir, I wonder if you would care to come along to my study to see a very peculiar natural history specimen I have collected? I'm sure you would be interested."

"Why, of course, my dear Hay. I am always interested in the hobbies of my colleagues. Fact is, Hay, I used to have a rare collection myself once upon a time."

"Ah!" breezed Will, stopping at the door of his study and surreptitiously fitting the key he had taken from his pocket in the lock. "Ah, my dear doctor, I doubt very much whether you ever had a specimen like the one I am about to show you. After you, sir," he added, swinging open the door politely.

"PYKE!" That name came from Dr. Shrub like an exploding rocket. "There is the wretched boy! Asleep, I do believe! The impertinence—the insolence!"

Will Hay smirked over the top of his nose.

nippers. There was Reggie Pyke sprawled out in the armchair.

Dr. Shrub was across the study in two strides; in three, he had grasped the sleeping junior by the scruff of his collar and jerked him out of the chair. Reggie Pyke awoke then, and blinked and gasped in horror.

"What does this mean?" hooted Dr. Shrub. "How dare you? How dare you, I say? Playing truant the entire afternoon, and having the unparalleled audacity to sleep in your Form-master's armchair! This is monstrous—unheard of! Mr. Hay, do me the favour of handing me that cane."

Swish, swish, swish! went the cane.

"Yow-owp! Leggo! Stoppit! Yowp!" bellowed Reggie.

Not until Dr. Shrub's arm was tired, and Reggie Pyke was a wriggling, blubbering mass of youthful unhappiness, did the indignant Head lay aside the cane.

"Now go, wretched boy!" he stormed. "Get out of my sight! And if ever you should have the temptation to play truant again, remember you will receive double that punishment and be expelled into the bargain! Go!"

"Yes, go!" echoed Will Hay, as the hapless Reggie Pyke crawled towards the door. "And don't forget the Latin proverb, 'Serva yujol liwell rice!' my lad, because there's more to follow if you don't watch your step!"

Pyke gave Form-master Will Hay a baleful glare as he passed him, which Will accepted with a perplexing smile. And for the rest of the day young Reggie Pyke spent most of his spare time wriggling and trying to find out who it was at Bendover who had locked him in Will Hay's study.

But he never found out that it was Will Hay himself!

WILL HAY will be back in another bright, breezy Bendover yarn next week. Take a tip... order your "PILOT" now and pass the word to your pals to read these side-splitting stories of WILL HAY, the world's funniest Form-master.