

FREE INSIDE!
3 CARDS IN
FULL COLOURS
of
FIGHTING PLANES

MODERN **B**OY

EVERY SATURDAY
WEEK ENDING
OCTOBER 17TH 1936
No 454 VOL 18.

2^D



CAMERA "DETECTIVE" FOLLOWS PLANE CRASH!—*See Page 15*

The SCHOOLBOY DETECTIVE

Who is the "Sussex Man"? Scotland Yard cannot corner him. Len Lex, of the Fifth Form of Oakshott School, determined to succeed where the Yard had failed, encounters Fun as well as Danger!

By
**CHARLES
HAMILTON**

Painful for Pie!

"YOU ass!" roared Harvey.
"You goat!" hooted Banks.

Porrige of the Fifth gave no heed. On his face there was an expression of absolutely inflexible determination.

It was "prep" at Oakshott School. In Study No. 8, in the Fifth, Harvey and Banks had sorted out the books required for the same. Pie Porrige sorted out no books. Pie placed two pairs of boxing gloves on the study table—useful articles, in their way, but obviously not required in prep.

Pie, it was clear, was not thinking of prep. He was thinking of things far more strenuous.

His study-mates surveyed him with intense exasperation. Len Lex, the new fellow in the Fifth, had not yet come into the study—the boxing gloves were ready for him, when he came. A study row, in prep, might have quite serious results. It might bring up a prefect. It might bring up Silverson, the master of the Fifth. Pie cared for none of these things! He was on the warpath, and that was that!

"You — you — you cuckoo!" said Harvey. "Do you think you're going to scrap with that new chap in prep?"
"Not my fault!" answered Pie. "He's been dodging me all day. You jolly well know that I've been hunting him all over Oakshott. He's got to come up for prep. Then I shall get him."

"And what about prep?" hissed Banks.

"Blow prep!" answered Pie recklessly.

"We've got Latin bilge to do for Silverson——"

"Blow Silverson!"

"And maths bilge for Rodd——"

"Blow Rodd!"

"Do you want Silverson to scalp you again in Form?"

"He's always scalping me," said Pie. "He's got a down on me, as you jolly well know. I'd have got my own back on him last night if that new tick hadn't tied me down on my bed with a sheet—and you helped him!



A tendril of ivy broke in Len's hand, and for a moment he was in danger of crashing to the ground, thirty feet below.

Call yourselves pals? I've a jolly good mind to whop you as well as Lex!"

"You couldn't whop one half of Lex, you ass!" hooted Harvey. "He's been keeping out of your way all day because he doesn't want to damage you."

Pie's eyes gleamed. It was true, but it was not tactful.

"You'll see!" said Porrige grimly. "That tick's been funking it all day, and now he's got it coming to him. He doesn't seem in a hurry to come up to prep, anyhow!"

The study door opened, revealing the handsome face and slim, athletic form of Len Lex, the new fellow in the Oakshott Fifth. Pie, who had his back to the door, did not see it open and did not see Len step in.

"I shouldn't wonder," he went on, "if he cuts prep! If he does, I'll get him in the dorm to-night! He can't cut dorm. What are you grinning at, you silly asses? You jolly well know that he's been funking all day, and you jolly well know that he funks coming up to the study now. If he doesn't, why

The Schoolboy Detective

doesn't he come? I'll bet you two to one in doughnuts that he cuts prep and chances it with Silverson. What the thump are you grinning at, blow you?"

Harvey and Banks were not the only ones who were grinning. Len, standing behind Porrynge, was grinning, too.

"You'd lose that bet, Porrynge!" he remarked.

"Oh!" gasped Pie, startled. He spun round. "Oh! You're here, are you?"

"Sort of!" agreed Len.

"Well, now you're here, you know what you're going to get!" said Porrynge. "I've been going to whop you ever since you came, but I've let you off—"

"Carry on with the good work!" suggested Len. "Go on letting me off, old chap. I'll do the same for you."

Harvey and Banks chuckled. Pie did not chuckle. He picked up the gloves. Grimly frowning, he held out a pair to Len.

"I suppose you'd rather have the gloves on?" he said. "We generally do here. But if you prefer the bare knuckles, I'm your man!"

"Now, look here," said Len persuasively, "if we hadn't stopped you going down from the dorm last night to rag Silverson's study, you'd have been up to a Head's flogging to-day. You've got out of that."

"You're not getting out of this!" said Pie. "Will you put those gloves on or not?"

"I can't do my prep with the gloves on!" Len pointed out.

"Never mind prep now!" said Porrynge. "If you're so jolly keen on prep, you shouldn't have dodged out of my way all day. Prep can wait!"

"You howling ass, Pie!" said Harvey.

"You shut up, Harvey!"

"You blithering cuckoo!" said Banks.

"You shut up, Banker!"

Len laughed. There was no help for it. All that day he had dodged the wrathful Pie, hoping that his irate temper would cool down. Instead of which, it had reached boiling point. Len Lex took the gloves and slipped them on. He was glad to have the gloves on. He liked Pie, wrathful as Pie was, and did not want to damage him more than he could help. But in Pie's present exasperated and vengeful mood, it was likely to be difficult to avoid giving him some, at least, of what he was asking for.

"You going to keep time, Banker?" asked Porrynge, shutting the door.

"I'm going to do my prep, fat-head!"

"You going to keep time, Harvey?"

"I'm going to do my prep, ass!"

"Well, we shall have to manage without!" said Pie. "You ready, you tick?"

"Go it!" said Len resignedly.

Porrynge went it. Harvey and Banks had declared that they were going to do their prep; but they did not begin. They sat and watched—and grinned. Old Pie had heaps of pluck, and tons of determination.

But in boxing he had a windmill style that was entertaining as a spectacle, but hardly useful from a pugilistic point of view.

It was obvious to Harvey and Banks, though not to Pie, that the new man in the Fifth could make rings round him if he liked. They had seen Len with the gloves on in the gym with Oliphant of the Sixth, the best boxer at Oakshott, and he had held his own. So they calculated the warlike Pie's chance of a victory at rather less than nothing.

Porrynge made a whirlwind attack. His arms, which were long, laid it on rather like flails. He left the other fellow all the openings he could possibly want, and a few more; and Harvey and Banks looked on, expecting to see him jolted off his feet, and charitably hoping that it would be a lesson to him. But Len, with a cheery smile on his face, contented himself with defence. He did not yield an inch. Neither did he advance. He just stood where he was and brushed off Pie's whacking fists like flies.

This went on for some minutes, till Pie was gasping for breath. He was putting tremendous vigour into that attack, though it did not seem to be getting him anywhere. He gasped, he panted, and finally he dropped his hands and stepped back.

"Time!" he gasped.

"Time we got on with prep?" asked Len.

"No, you tick!" gasped Pie.

"You'd better give him best, old man!" chortled Banks.

"I'll watch it!" gasped Pie.

"You won't give me best?" asked Len.

"No!" roared Porrynge.

"Well, look here, I'll give you best, then, and let's call it a day," suggested Len. "You win!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Harvey and Banks.

Pie foamed. Really, it was quite a generous offer, as it was dawning even on the goat of the Fifth that he could not tap the new fellow unless the new fellow wanted to be tapped! But Pie was not disposed to accept it. He was going to whop that cheeky new tick, whether he could or not!

"Come on!" he hooted.

And Porrynge made a desperate rush. So tremendous was the onslaught this time that Len had either to knock Pie off his feet or give ground. He gave ground, and Pie drove him back to the study door, after which he could retreat no farther.

Now he had to tap Pie to keep him off—and he tapped him on the nose, on the chin, in the eye, and on the ear and on the chest—a series of taps, none of which Pie saw coming till it came. All the while, not one of Pie's frantic punches reached the smiling face in front of him—and chuckle after chuckle came from Harvey and Banks as they watched.

Those taps bewildered and infuriated Pie. Foaming, and regardless of taps, he hurled himself at the new Fifth Former, delivering a terrific drive right at that cheery, smiling face. Had it landed there it would undoubtedly have done a lot of damage, for it would have

jabbed Len's head back against the solid oak of the study door. But Len's head was not in the way when Pie's crashing fist came. That fist passed his ear, with several inches to spare, and landed on the oaken door. And the yell that Porrynge uttered as it crashed awoke many echoes.

"Yooo-hooooo!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked Harvey and Banks, almost in hysterics.

"Ow! Wow! Ooooh!" roared Pie. "Ow! My knuckles! Ow! Oh, you swob! Wow!"

"Not my fault," said Len. "I never asked you to punch the door!"

"Ow! Ooooh! Ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Pie hurled off the gloves. It was lucky for him that he had had them on! Had his bare knuckles given the oak that terrific whop, the result could not have failed to be fearfully painful. It seemed painful enough as it was! Pie's first impression was that all his fingers had been driven back into his wrist, which was broken in several places. On examination, however, it proved to be not so bad as that. Nothing was really damaged, but there was a pain—a very distinct and emphatic pain—and Pie sucked his fingers almost frantically.

"Going on?" asked Len.

"Oooh! Ooogh! Woooooh!" was Pie's only answer. Apparently, he was not going on.

Len peeled off the gloves, and sat down to prep. Harvey and Banks, grinning, started work at last. But it was quite a long time before Pie began. That long time he spent in sucking his aching fingers. And when, at last, he started prep, he left off every now and then to suck those painful fingers and ejaculate "Ow!" or "Wow!" or "Yow!" The whopping of the new man in the Fifth was unavoidably postponed.

Swamped with Glue!

THE Sussex Man!"

Len Lex started, ever so slightly, as he caught that name, coming into hall after prep. Three masters were standing in a group in conversation, and the subject of their conversation was the mysterious burglar who, for nearly two years, had prowled and plundered undetected.

The three masters were Silverson, master of the Fifth, Surtees, master of the Fourth, and Bullivant, the games master. Len's eyes dwelt on them for a moment—Silverson, dark and slim and handsome; Bullivant, stocky, red-faced, with rather bulging light blue eyes; Surtees, sturdy, boyish in looks, the youngest "beak" at Oakshott, a keen footballer, and very popular.

The schoolboy detective was deeply interested in all the three. Unless he had been led astray by the clues he had been able to pick up during his week at Oakshott, one of the three was, in point of fact, the mysterious Sussex Man himself, owner and user of the outfit of burglars' tools

that Len had spotted hidden in the old oak near master's gate.

None of the three glanced at Len—merely one of the fellows coming into hall after prep. Even if they had known that he was the nephew of Detective-Inspector William Nixon, of Scotland Yard, they would not have been likely to guess that it was as a detective that the new fellow had come to Oakshott School.

Only for a split second Len's eyes dwelt on the three. Then he became interested in one of the ancient portraits of former headmasters that adorned the old oak walls. But as he gazed at the dim lineaments of that bygone beak, Len's ears picked up the talk of the three. It was odd to think of the unknown Sussex Man discussing himself with unsuspecting colleagues on the Oakshott staff.

Each of the three was a "suspect" to the schoolboy detective. Of each he knew something that pointed the finger of suspicion. Silverson, secretly a backer of horses at the races, owner of the study which Len knew was the mystery man's way of egress and ingress, when the Sussex Man was on the prowl—Bullivant, whom he had spotted in the dark in Silverson's study, and who had displayed unmistakable terror at being spotted there—Surtees, whom he had recognised, only the previous night, prowling after one o'clock in the silent and sleeping House! One of the three—but which?

Bullivant was speaking in his deep, rolling voice:

"The Sussex Man! Why do they call him that?"

"They must call him something," remarked Mr. Silverson, with his slightly sardonic smile—the smile which made Fifth Form men refer to him often as a sarcastic beast. "Apparently, our efficient police know nothing of him, except that his peculiar enterprises have taken place chiefly in Sussex."

"Entirely in Sussex, Silverson," said Mr. Surtees, "and always within a certain radius."

"Is that the case?" asked the Fifth Form master, indifferently.

"Oh, quite! If you drew a chart from Greenwood, in the north, Loweroft, in the south, Parsley, in the west, and Woodway, in the east, you would enclose the whole sphere of the Sussex Man's activities," said the Fourth Form master.

Porrings let out a terrific drive at Len's grinning face. But his fist missed the mark—and crashed into the heavy oak door with a resounding thud!

"That is his beat—roughly, thirty miles by twenty."

"I believe you are right, Surtees," said the games master. "According to that, Oakshott is the very centre of his beat."

"Exactly," assented Surtees.

"No wonder he gave us a look-in, then!" said Mr. Silverson. "Indeed, we should rather have had a right to feel neglected if he hadn't!"

Surtees laughed, but Bullivant's mastiff face remained quite serious. Mr. Chowne, the master of the Shell, joined the group.

"You would not be amused, Silverson, if he came again," said Mr. Chowne. "He would certainly have cracked the Head's safe that night but for the fact that a boy in your Form was up, playing some silly prank, and there was an alarm. I have advised you to have a bolt placed on your study window."

"They say that lightning does not strike twice in the same place, Chowne. Neither, from what I have heard of him, does the Sussex Man."

"You overlook one thing, Silverson. On all previous occasions, the rascal has succeeded in his object. Here, he failed, owing to the boy Porrings being up that night. He may try again."

"I have said so more than once!" interjected Bullivant.

"And I agree," said the master of the Shell.

"Nevertheless, the simile of the lightning holds good," said Mr. Silverson. "Next time—if there is a next time—why should he pick on my study specially?"

"That is easily answered. Your study has a casement window quite near the ground, in a spot screened by trees. It is perfectly easy to step in and step out, once the casement is open."

"There is an excellent lock on it, Chowne."

"That did not stop him. Locks are nothing to such a man. But if you take my advice, you will have a

strong bolt placed on that casement," said the master of the Shell. "It may prevent you from having a very disagreeable alarm some night, Silverson."

"I will think about it," said the Fifth Form master carelessly. "But such a precaution, my dear Chowne, would only lead him to choose another window if he came again. I should be securing my night's repose at the cost of someone else's."

"Yours, perhaps, Chowne," said Surtees, with his boyish laugh. "You may be asking for trouble, my dear fellow."

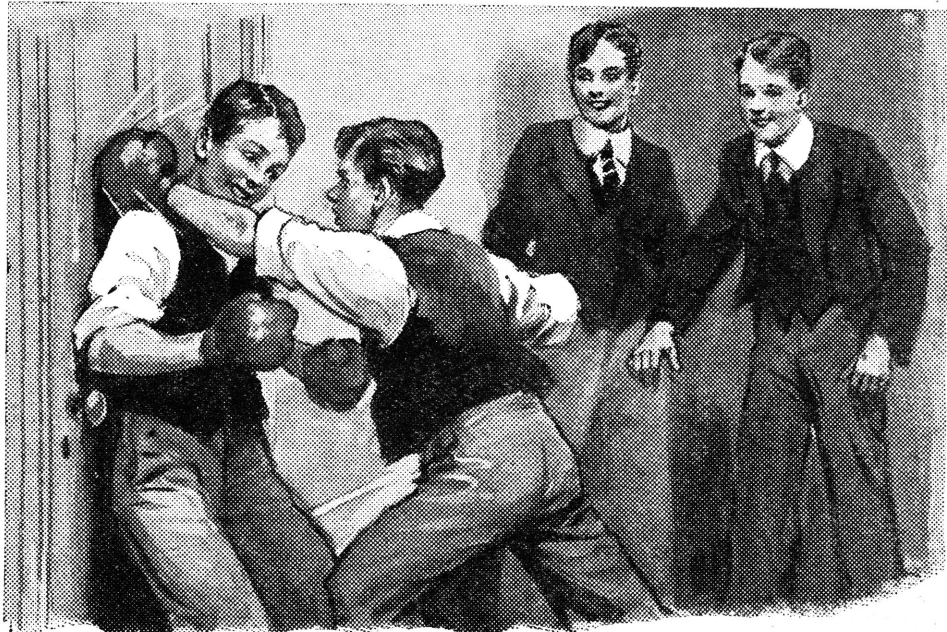
Harvey and Banks came in, and, seeing Len, took him by the arms and walked him up the hall. It was a demonstration of friendliness, to show that they did not share the hostility of their chum, Pie. Len smiled cheerily, though he would willingly have heard more of that interesting conversation among the beaks.

"Where's Porrings?" he asked.

"Busy in the study," Harvey chuckled. "His paw's turning blue, and he's rubbing it with embrocation. Poor old Pie! Jevver hear of such a goat?"

"You're safe for a bit, Lex!" grinned Banks. "Even Pie won't undertake to whop you one handed. Goodness knows what his fist will be like to-morrow. Fancy a chap punching an oak door! Ha, ha, ha!"

Len laughed. He was really sorry for Pie. But there was no doubt that the goat of the Fifth was funny. But while he laughed and chatted with Harvey and Banks, he was thinking of what he had just heard. Why had not Silverson taken the advice of the master of the Shell? Carelessness, because he did not believe that the burglar was likely to come again? Or wariness, because the Sussex Man dared not run the remotest risk of that casement being fastened against him during a nocturnal absence?



The Schoolboy Detective

Porringer was rather late in hall that evening. The goat of the Fifth had been doctoring his bruised "paw," and there was a lingering scent of embrocation about him when he came in—greeted by a general grin from Fifth Form fellows. Harvey and Banks had told the tale of the scrap in the study, and all the Fifth were grinning over "Pie's latest," as Harvey named it. But Pie had not spent the whole time in Study No. 8 doctoring his paw, as his chums soon learned. They joined Pie when he came in, and Harvey, winking at Banks with the eye that was farthest from Pie, asked him how his poor paw was.

"Rotten," said Pie—"absolutely gammy! But I can use my other hand, as that tick will jolly soon see."

"Dear man!" said Banks. "You're not going to whop him one-handed?"

"There's more than one way of killing a cat!" said Porringer darkly. "Wait till we get to the dorm!"

"You've been japing in the dorm!" exclaimed Harvey. "Oh, you ass! You'd get six from Silverson if you were spotted going up to the dorm before time. You jolly well know it's a strict rule."

"Think I turned on a light?" snorted Pie. "I wasn't spotted, anyhow! And my right hand was good enough to shove a quart of liquid glue into that tick's bed."

"Wha-a-t?"

"I've used your bottle of liquid glue, old chap! You don't mind?"

"Lex will!" gasped Banks.

"Well, I want him to!" said Pie. "Perhaps he'll be sorry for being such a cheeky tick, when he shoves his legs into the glue! What? Ha, ha! Wow!"

Pie chuckled, his chuckle turning into a yelp as his damaged paw gave a severe twinge.

"Well, you ass!" said Harvey. "That bottle of liquid glue cost me two-and-six."

"Ask Lex for the two-and-six!" grinned Pie. "He's going to get the glue."

"Oh, you goat!" said Banks. "There'll be a row about it. Sheets and blankets all sticky with glue—oh, you priceless goat! The House dame will get her wool right off to-morrow!"

"Let her!" said Pie cheerfully. "Lex will get his wool off to-night, I fancy—unless the glue sticks it on—ha, ha!"

Pie, in spite of the twinges in his paw, was looking forward rather gleefully to dorm. As he had said, there was more than one way of killing a cat—and that cheeky tick, who had not, after all, been whopped in the study, was going to get a surprise when he went to bed. A fellow who stuck his legs into a sea of liquid glue was absolutely certain to feel sorry for himself.

Other fellows as well as Pie looked forward to dorm—for Pie did not keep his jape a secret. Only Len Lex, in fact, was left in the dark—and when the Fifth Form went up to roost, he rather wondered at the grin-

ning looks on many faces. Harvey and Banks, though they regarded Pie as a priceless goat for even thinking of such a jape, were not going to spoil it by putting the new fellow on his guard. Neither was any other man. Indeed, all the Oakshott Fifth were quite keen to see Len turn in that night—and when Len did turn in, he was puzzled to see every eye in the dormitory fixed on him, with almost breathless anticipation.

Pie gloated as Len's legs disappeared under the bedclothes. Now there was going to be a startled yell, and a wild jump!

But there wasn't! Len stretched out in bed, as usual, and put his head on the pillow. If the glue was there evidently he had missed it so far. Pie could only wait for him to turn over. Yet he was absolutely certain that he had emptied that bottle of liquid glue into the very middle of the bed, to which he had groped in the dark an hour ago. It was amazing that Len had not shoved his legs right into it. But it seemed that he hadn't.

"You priceless ass!" whispered Harvey. "He hasn't got it! Have you shoved it into the wrong bed?"

"Oh, don't be a fathead!" grunted Pie. "I counted the beds from the end, in the dark—Lex's is the seventh—"

Mr. Silverson, whose duty it was to see lights out for his Form, looked in for a moment.

"I am waiting!" he said, and stepped away again.

There was a rush of the fellows not yet in, to tumble into bed. A sudden and startling thought struck Harvey. It was true that Lex's bed was seventh from the end. But from the other end, Pie's was the seventh. If that goat had counted from the wrong end—

Pie was plunging in.

A startled yell woke the echoes of the Fifth Form dormitory. Every eye, hitherto directed at Lex, turned on Pie. His actions were amazing. He yelled. Bedclothes flew off right and left. Porringer sprang from the bed like a jack-in-the-box. He was streaming with sticky fluid. It was sticking the legs of his pyjamas to his long limbs. Swamped with glue, Pie stood spluttering wildly, while from the rest of the Fifth came a roar:

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Evidently the goat of the Fifth had counted the beds from the wrong end of the dormitory.

Locked Out!

ACCORDING to Shakespeare, it is sport to see the engineer hoist by his own petard. The Oakshott Fifth certainly seemed to think so. As Pie stood wriggling, drenched with liquid glue, they roared, and howled, and yelled. The dormitory almost rocked with merriment. Harvey and Banks nearly wept. Len sat up in bed, staring. Every other fellow shrieked.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh dear! Oh dear!" gasped Banks. "Oh, that priceless goat! His own bed! Oh crumbs! Ha, ha, ha!"

"You owe me two-and-six, Pie!" yelled Harvey. "You got the glue. Ha, ha, ha!"

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

"Oh crumbs! Oh scissors!" gasped the hapless Pie. He stared down at his sticky pyjamas, wriggling horribly. Liquid glue was running all over him. There was a sea of it in the bed he had jumped from. Sheets were soaked—blankets horrid to the touch. "Urrgh! I—I say, how—how the thump— My bed, you know! Oh crikey!"

"Which end did you count from?" shrieked Harvey.

"Oh!" gasped Pie.

He understood. He had been hurried, and he had been in the dark, and he had made that little mistake. If ever there was a chance of making a mistake, Porringer of the Fifth was not the man to miss it. He had not missed this!

"Oh!" gasped Porringer. "Oh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Silverson stepped in, frowning. Roars of merriment in the dormitory at bed-time were quite out of place, in the opinion of a beak.

"What is this disturbance?" rapped the master of the Fifth. "What—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence! Silence! What—"

But really it was not easy for the Fifth to be silent. Porringer, the goat of Oakshott, was famous for his blunders; but really, this was the limit. For a fellow to park a quart of liquid glue in his own bed by mistake was altogether too rich, even for the goat of Oakshott. Silverson's voice was drowned by howls of merriment.

"Will you cease this uproar?" exclaimed the Fifth Form master. "What— Why, what is that, Porringer? You are drenched with—with what?"

"Gug-gug-gug-glue, sir!" gasped Pie unhappily.

"Glue! Upon my word! Someone has placed glue in your bed! Will you boys be silent?" shouted the Fifth Form master. "If you are not silent, I will detain the whole Form to-morrow afternoon."

That dire threat restored silence, if not gravity. Only subdued chuckles were heard as the Form-master advanced to Pie's bed, and stared at it, horrified.

"Outrageous!" he exclaimed. "Scandalous! This is not a joke—this is an act of stupidity—of idiocy! Who has done this? Whoever has done this may have fancied it a practical joke—it is nothing of the kind! Porringer, do you know what stupid and senseless boy has done this?"

"I—I—I kik-kik-kik-can't say, sir!" stuttered Pie, while the rest of the Fifth almost suffocated with suppressed laughter. Pie was not likely to give his own name, as the stupid and senseless boy wanted. As it was his own bed that was glued, he was fortunately safe from suspicion, so far as the Form-master was concerned.

"I shall inquire into this to-morrow!" snapped Mr. Silverson. "You cannot sleep in the bed in that state, Porringer. Everything must be

changed. I will give instructions. You had better wash yourself! You are in a revolting state! Whoever has done this shall regret it."

Mr. Silverson strode angrily from the dormitory. During the next quarter of an hour, while Pie was washing off glue and a new bed was being made for him, the Fifth were almost weeping. When, at last, lights were turned out, unusually late, chuckles and chortles continued to run from bed to bed.

"For goodness' sake," exclaimed the exasperated Pie, "shut up, and let a fellow go to sleep! I made a mistake—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, shut up!" roared Pie.

But it was quite a long time before the Fifth shut up. However, slumber claimed them at last, and there was silence in the Fifth Form dormitory.

Pie, at peace at last, could have gone to sleep, but he did not. Generally, Pie was a sound sleeper, and his eyes seldom opened between lights out and rising-bell. But he could not sleep now. There were painful twinges in the fist that had banged on the oak door. And in spite of all his washing, he was still uncomfortably sticky in places. And he was upset generally. Two or three times he dozed off, but he always awakened again, and turned and twisted restlessly.

Giving it up at last, Pie lay sleepless, turning over in his mind the bright idea of getting out of bed and walloping the new tick with a pillow. He was pondering over that bright idea when twelve strokes boomed out from the clock-tower, and the last stroke was followed by a movement in the dark dormitory.

It was only a faint sound, but it was the sound of some fellow getting quietly and cautiously out of bed. It was dark, but there was a starry glimmer from the high windows, and the surprised Pie had a glimpse of a shifting shadow. Lifting his head a few inches from the pillow, he could see that it was the new man, Lex, who was getting out. His eyes gleamed, as his head sank on the pillow again.

That new tick was getting up—at midnight! Pie had just been thinking of getting up and pillowing him. Was that what the new tick was thinking of—the same idea, with Pie as the victim? What else could his game be?

Pie did not know, and was not likely to guess, that Len Lex was a detective as well as a schoolboy; or that every night he left his dormitory for an hour or two, watchful for the Sussex Man to make a move, as sooner or later he was certain to do.

Pie could only connect Len's movements with himself—and he had no doubt what the game was! His eyes gleamed, and he clenched his right fist hard. He was not disposed to punch even that cheeky tick with his left! But his right was ready—and as soon as the tick approached his bed, the tick was going to get a sudden and painful surprise!

But the tick did not approach his bed. Pie waited—but he did not loom

★

**THIS ISSUE CONTAINS
Three More of our Splendid
COLOURED CARDS.**

Don't forget, there's a full
set of **SIXTEEN CARDS**
being given

FREE in MODERN BOY
... **TWO MORE** next week
and **MORE TO COME.** Your

★ Album of ★
**FIGHTING PLANES of
the WORLD**

will look grand when all
the spaces are filled.

Your newsagent, by taking a
REGULAR ORDER from you
for **MODERN BOY** every
week, can make you certain
of not missing any.

★

up by the bed. A whole minute passed—and then Porrynge raised his head from the pillow again and looked. He had a glimpse of a shadow that glided soundlessly towards the door.

In sheer amazement, Pie sat up in bed, staring. There was no sound, or hardly the ghost of a sound, but he knew that the door had opened and shut. Len Lex had left the dormitory! Evidently it was not on Pie's account that he had turned out of bed. He supposed Pie to be fast asleep, as usual, like the rest of the Fifth! Unaware that he had been seen, he had left the dormitory—why? Porrynge stared in blank astonishment.

What the dickens was the fellow up to? A jape—like Pie's own historic raid on Silverson's study the night of the alarm? Pie slipped out and groped to Len's bed—and then, for a moment, he was almost convinced that he had dreamed it, for in the dimness he could make out the outlines of a sleeper in the bed. But the next moment he knew that it was a dummy in the bed, placed there to deceive a casual, wakeful eye. He groped over it—it was a dummy!

"My hat!" gasped Pie.

He trod softly towards the door. He was grinning now. This was Pie's chance to get his own back! For whatever reason, the tick was outside the dormitory, it would give him the scare of his life not to be able to get in again when he came back. Pie chuckled and turned the key.

Click! He crept back to bed, subduing his chuckles. He lay and listened for a sound at the door. What would the tick do when he came back and found the door locked? Tap—whisper through the keyhole—what? Pie pictured him, shivering with scare, finding himself locked out—booked for discovery in the morning. Not that Pie was going to leave him to it. Pie was not the fellow to give

a man away. Having given him a thorough scare, having scared him fairly out of his skin, he would let him in again.

Grinning in the dark, Pie lay and listened and heard the quarter chime. And as he lay and listened his eyelids drooped. At that late hour, Pie's sleeplessness was leaving him, and he was nodding off. When the half-hour chimed, Pie did not hear it—for he was fast asleep; and if there were any frantic whispers through the keyhole, Pie was not likely to hear them!

Two in the Dark!

"**W**HO—who—who is that?" Len started, his heart leaping. He stepped swiftly back from a hand that groped in the dark. The startled voice that panted from the deep gloom was broken, husky—the voice of a man whose nerves were jumping. Unlike the usual, deep, rolling voice of the games master, but Len knew it, all the same. It was Bullivant who had brushed by him in the blackness—and less master of himself than the schoolboy detective, had given startled utterance to his sudden alarm.

"Who—who—" The husky gasp died in silence.

Faint movements told Len that the man was groping, and he backed swiftly but silently. He could hear the suppressed breathing of the big man in the dark. It was in the big corridor, close by the corner of Silverson's passage, that the two, unseeing, silent, had suddenly, unexpectedly, established a second's contact. Swiftly Len backed round the corner. He was only just in time, for the gleam of an electric flashlamp followed. A moment more, and Bullivant would have seen him.

But the gleam came on towards the corner, and from that little side passage there was no exit, save by way of Mr. Silverson's study. Len had a fraction of a second in which to make up his mind, but he did not need to think. Swiftly, soundlessly, he opened the study door, slipped in, and closed it again after him. Another moment, and Bullivant was flashing his light into an empty passage.

Len crossed the study to the window in a split second. That window fastened with a spring lock; easy to open from within, impossible to open from without, save by a key. But he could not afford to hesitate. Bullivant, whatever his game was, innocent or guilty, would look into that study—and the schoolboy detective could not afford to be spotted.

The casement opened. Len stepped over the low sill and shut the window after him. The lock closed without the faintest sound, and even at that moment of thrilling excitement it flashed into Len's mind that Silverson kept that lock well oiled. Why? Len ducked into the deep shadow of oaks near the window, as a gleam of light came within.

Bullivant had either entered the study or had opened the door and looked in. The momentary flash of

The Schoolboy Detective

light showed that. But it was only a momentary flash—darkness followed. Len, half-dressed, shivered in the cold wind of the autumn night. He had escaped unseen—but he had locked himself out of the House—he had had no choice about that. Vaguely, at the back of his mind, was the thought of the old thick ivy under the dormitory window. But he did not think of it now—that could wait. Blotted in the darkness under the oaks, he watched the window of Silverson's study.

But all remained dark and silent. Bullivant knew, he must know, that someone had left that study by the window. What would any Oakshott master—a master who had no secrets to keep—have concluded from that? That an Oakshott boy was breaking bounds at a very late hour? What else? Then it was his duty to ascertain at once what boy was out of the House. If he did his duty, lights would swiftly be glimmering in windows—and Len's absence would inevitably be discovered!

But he did not fear it. He knew that Bullivant had reasons for not revealing that he had been tiptoeing towards Vernon Silverson's study in the dark—though, if he was not the Sussex Man, his reasons were difficult to divine. If he was not, there was something behind this to which the schoolboy detective had no clue. But if he was and if he had intended to leave the House, would he carry on after that alarm? It did not seem likely—but Len Lex remained where he was, heedless of the cold wind, for a good half-hour, watching the study window.

Only silence—darkness! If Bullivant believed that an Oakshott fellow was out of bounds, as surely he must, he was taking no steps in the matter. If he was the Sussex Man, he was not going to carry on that night! Likely enough, he had gone back to his room, abandoning the project, whatever it had been, that had drawn him away from it. Bullivant's rooms were over Silverson's—Len could see the windows from where he stood, glimmering faintly in the dim stars. But there was no light within; if Bullivant had gone back to bed, he had gone in the dark.

Len stirred at last. Softly he crept away, keeping in the shadow of the buildings. There was a patter, and Wegg's mastiff loomed up; and Len stopped to whisper a soothing word and pat Biter's shaggy head. He had taken great care to make friends with the porter's dog, which was let loose at night—as, he knew, the mystery man had also done. If Biter could have spoken, he could have told startling things. Leaving the dog satisfied by the touch of a friendly hand, Len trod on and reached the high wall, massed with ivy almost as ancient as the mossy stones it covered, from which the dormitory windows looked far above.

The schoolboy detective had examined that ivy more than once, from above and below, knowing that at some time he might need a secret

entrance or exit. He was glad of it now. He knew that he could climb it, and he knew that the window above was fastened only by a simple catch—easy enough to the schoolboy detective, though probably not to any other Oakshott fellow.

Certainly any man in the Oakshott Fifth would have stared at the idea of a fellow climbing the ivy, resting on a sill forty feet from the ground, and unfastening a catch from the outside of the window! But that was what Len Lex was going to do—what he had to do, unless he was to give away his game to all Oakshott.

Slowly, steadily, almost silently, Len climbed the ivy. The stout old tendrils gave ample handhold and foothold for an active climber with a cool head and a nerve of tempered steel. Len had both—and he needed them.

Long before he reached the stone sill of the dormitory window, his life was at stake—a slip, a failing grasp, would have hurled him to the earth below, crashing to sudden death.

Once a tendril broke in his hand, and he hung by the other—with thirty feet of space beneath him. But he held on, and regained his grasp—and climbed. Breathing hard, with aching arms, he reached the sill at last—and grasped it. It was wide and deep, and gave him ample room for kneeling, when once he had succeeded in clambering on it. Kneeling on it, pressed to the window, he rested for a long minute, till his breath came back and the strain on his arms was eased.

Then a slim blade slid between two sashes, there was a click, and the catch shot back. With beating heart, he listened. If any wakeful ear had caught that sharp click—But there was likely to be no wakeful ear in an Oakshott dormitory at one in the morning! He pushed up the lower sash, put in his head, and listened—stillness, silence, broken only by the faint sound of regular breathing.

Kneeling on the wide window-ledge within, he closed and fastened the window. Then, holding by his hands, he dropped lightly to the floor from the high window and crept to his bed.

To remove the dummy, rearrange pillow and bolster, throw off his clothes, and slip into bed occupied only moments. A minute after his head touched the pillow, he was asleep—and his eyes did not open again till the rising-bell clanged in the dewy morn.

Not a Dummy!

CLANG! Clang! Banks of the Fifth sat up and yawned. The rising-bell, clanging in the glimmer of morning, woke the echoes of Oakshott School. Banks was the first out of bed in the Fifth. Others followed; two or three slackers lingering to the last. Among them was Len Lex—who certainly was no slacker, but who was tired out by his exertions in the night, and only half-awake, in spite of the penetrating clang of the rising-bell.

Len had made no movement, when

Porringer, turning out, gave a startled exclamation. Fellows looked round at him.

"That paw of yours?" asked Harvey.

"Eh? No! I say, I fell asleep!" gasped Pie.

"You fell asleep!" repeated Harvey, staring at him blankly. Falling asleep, so far as Harvey could see, was a natural proceeding after a fellow had turned in for the night.

"Oh gum!" gasped Pie.

He was dismayed. That cheeky tick, Lex, deserved anything that came to him; anything, that is, short of being given away to beaks! No Oakshott man ever gave a man away to beaks—and now, Pie, unintentionally, had done it! At least, he believed that he had! He had intended—fully intended—to stay awake till that tick came back to the dormitory—to give him a fearful fright, and then let him in. And he had fallen asleep—and the tick had been shut out of the dorm all night! He had not dared, of course, to knock or call loudly!

"What on earth's the row?" asked Banks.

"I—I fell asleep!" babbled Pie. "I never meant to! Oh! There'll be a fearful row now. They must have got him!"

"Who?" yelled Banks. "What are you burbling about, you goat? Who must have got whom?"

"That tick—that new fellow—Lex!" gasped Pie. "Oh, I say—he'll get a Beak's flogging for being out of dorm all night—might be the sack! Oh, great pip!"

"Lex!" gasped Banks. "What do you mean? Lex is in bed—look! Haven't you any eyes?"

"That's only a dummy in his bed!" groaned Pie. "I tell you, I couldn't sleep last night—not when you fellows did—what with the pain in my paw, you know, and being sticky all over—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, shut up!" roared Pie. "This isn't a laughing matter! I meant to give that tick a fright, and serve him jolly well right, too—but I never meant to land him like this! You see, being awake, I saw him go out of the dorm—"

"You saw Lex!" exclaimed Harvey.

"Go out?" gasped Banks.

"Yes, I tell you—and I jolly well locked the door after him, and shut him out!" said Pie. "Of course, I didn't mean to shut him out for keeps! I only meant to give him a scare when he came back and couldn't get in. I was going to let him keep on asking through the key-hole to be let in, you know, and scare him stiff—but, of course, I was going to let him in! But, I—I fell asleep and—and never heard a thing! Oh!"

Which was very interesting for Len Lex to hear as he lay with his head still on the pillow. He had climbed in at the window and gone back to bed without the remotest idea that the dormitory door was locked on the inside—totally unaware that the goat of the Fifth had been playing the goat once more! It would have been

(Continued on page 19)

explosive bullets screaming into their midst again, while the crew of the Flying Cloud cheered themselves hoarse.

The airship was saved!

Faster and faster the monstrosities lurched off across the plain, running stupidly in ragged groups, or tottering aimlessly on alone.

Suddenly the neighbouring geyser exploded deafeningly, and sprayed airship and retreating dinosaurs with liquid mud. Dr. O'Mally collapsed and sank weakly into a laboratory chair. As the mournful bellowing of a demoralised foe faded to a dull roar, Professor Flaznagel switched off his astounding weapon.

"Science conquers brute strength, as always!" purred the old genius, and stood rubbing his bony hands together in triumph.

For a time, none of his comrades could find speech.

"Moanin' moggies, you've done it!" Midge panted at last. "I—I can't believe it yet, but—Whiskers, you're a wonder! You've scattered 'em—thousands of tons of dinosaur, and all with a blinkin' lead tube! What—what on earth did you do to the armoured pantechnicons, anyway?"

The professor beamed as he bowed to the breathless congratulations of Justice, Len and O'Mally. Then he patted the leaden tube affectionately.

"Why, Midge, I merely produced a violent radio-active concussion, or series of myriad vibrations which more or less paralysed the tiny brain and nerve-centres of those creatures," he announced. "In this cylinder, Justice, is my entire store of radium; the emanations from which, acting on a tranzelonite screen, produce

Theta-rays—the shortest, most penetrative ray I have yet experimented with.

"These rays I discharged over a spreading field of fire, in a manner of speaking. The effect, as I say, was to set up a tremendous arc of radio-vibration which overcame the colossal animal vitality opposed to it, and—"

"Shook their ganglions until they went clean crazy and charged off anywhere but at us!" whooped Midge. "Is that it, Flizpopple?"

The professor nodded and stroked his ragged beard.

"That, vulgarly speaking, is it, my good urchin! The unthinking brutes could not possibly face the radio-force directed straight against them, and instinct alone caused them to turn tail in the end.

"Justice, we have made a most valuable discovery—one that considerably strengthens our prospects of safety in this danger-infested land. My Theta-ray weapon, I assure you, will protect us amply in future! I judged that the impact of radium-rays was the only means of breaking down the vitality and strength of the Mesozoic creatures that are liable to attack us constantly. And my experiment, I fancy, is a complete success!"

"As great a success as you've ever achieved, professor!" Justice cried heartily, wringing his scientific adviser's hand. "By James, I feel like a new man now that you've come to the rescue of the airship. It has been my greatest worry. But after this—"

The captain hesitated, looked long and earnestly out at the dreary landscape, then nodded as if he had come to some decision.

"You are sure—quite sure—that these Theta-rays of yours will beat off any more trouble in the mammoth line?" he insisted anxiously. "And could Bingley, for instance, operate the apparatus alone if need be?"

"The apparatus is simplicity itself, Justice," the professor declared. "The answer to both your questions is an unqualified 'yes'."

"Then in that case," Captain Justice cried, "so long as I can leave the Flying Cloud under protection while the repairs are going forward, I intend to lead a search-party out to look for Curtis-Graham and his unfortunate friends as soon as can be! We may find them or we may not, but hang me if I fritter away fourteen days in doing nothing! In short, we'll explore the infernal Tropics of Antarctica on foot instead of by air. Well? Any volunteers?"

"Wow!" exclaimed Midge; and four eager voices, including Dr. O'Mally's, volunteered as one. It was a characteristic decision on Justice's part. Characteristically, it found favour with his comrades.

They were well aware that, in leaving the protection of the Flying Cloud and its Theta-rays, they would be exposing themselves to terrors and perils in a lost land which might make those they had already undergone seem tame by comparison. But, when duty and adventure called, Captain Justice & Co. were ever swift to respond!

Captain Justice leaps into vigorous action next Saturday, when, pursued by a gigantic monster, the MAN FROM THE MISTS comes tottering towards the Flying Cloud!

The Schoolboy Detective

(Continued from page 12)

rather a startling surprise for him, had he come back to the door and found it locked! As it was, there was a startling surprise coming to Pie!

"They must have got him!" groaned Pie. "I—I never meant to fall asleep! I thought I should hear him when he came back! Oh!"

"You burbling ass!" roared Banks. "You dreamed it! Lex never went out of the dorm, and you never locked him out, for he's in bed now."

"That's a dummy, I tell you!" hooted Pie. "I tell you, I looked at his bed, after he was gone, and there was only a dummy in it."

"If he'd looked at yours he'd have found a dummy in it—the silliest dummy at Oakshott!" said Cayley.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, though, he may be still there!" gasped Pie. He rushed across to the door. "If they haven't spotted him, he may be waiting outside for rising-bell—"

He hastily unlocked the door, and threw it open. He stared hopefully into the passage. But no one was to be seen there.

While his back was turned, Len sat up in bed and winked at Harvey and Banks. He sank back again, his head on the pillow, as Poringe turned back into the dormitory.

"He's not there!" said Pie dismally. "Well, he jolly well asked for it! What did he want to break dorm bounds at midnight for? They've got him! I wonder what he'll say to the Head?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Fifth Form.

As everybody in the Form had seen Len sit up, except Pie, this extraordinary delusion of Poringe's struck them as even more pricelessly idiotic than his usual fathheadedness.

"It's no laughing matter for Lex!" said Pie. "I meant to let him in again—I give all you fellows my word I was only pulling his leg by shutting him out."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, shut up!" roared Pie. "It may be the sack for the chap, nailed out of his dorm! That's only a dummy in his bed—I looked at it, and—"

"Better look at it again!" grinned Harvey. "It's a jolly lively dummy, if you ask me—it can sit up and wink."

"Oh, don't be an ass!" snapped Pie. "I'll jolly soon show you that it's only a dummy in that bed."

He rushed to Len's bed, grabbed the bedclothes, and dragged them off in a heap. Len sat up.

"Thanks!" he said. "Time I turned out."

Poringe staggered back. The ex-

pression on his bewildered face made the Fifth Formers shriek. His eyes almost bulged from his head.

"You!" stuttered Pie. "You! I locked you out last night! How did you get in through a locked door?"

"I don't know the answer to that one," said Len. "Any man here good at riddles? How does a man get through a locked door?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked the Fifth. "You silly goat, you dreamed it!"

yelled Banks. "Can't you see that you dreamed it? Think Lex wriggled in through the keyhole, or what?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Len turned out, Pie goggling at him with bewildered eyes. Unless he had dreamed it, he had locked Lex out of the dorm over-night—and here he was. Had he dreamed it? All the Fifth thought that he had—and Pie began to think that they must be right! Yet how could he have dreamed it? It was an amazed and bewildered Pie who went down that morning with the chuckling Fifth!

Be on parade early next Saturday morning for more FREE GIFTS and another topping story of the Schoolboy Detective! Lex's on his toes with excitement, thrilling to mysterious words spoken over a telephone—words that may lead him to the much-wanted Sussex Man!