

RETURN of THE SCHOOLBOY DETECTIVE!

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DEEP-SEA RESCUE!—See page 28

**LEN LEX, SCHOOLBOY
DETECTIVE, in a New
Series of stories of
Oakshott School**

KICKED OUT!

Guilty or Not Guilty ?

“**A** NOTHER case?” asked Len Lex.
“I don’t know,” was the reply.

The schoolboy detective raised his eyebrows. That, certainly, was not the answer he had expected from his uncle, Detective-Inspector Nixon, of Scotland Yard.

It was the last day of the holidays. Len Lex was spending his last evening with his Uncle Bill. On the morrow morning he was going back to Oakshott School for the new term. Bill Nixon was a busy man, but he had kept that last evening clear for his nephew. The inspector sat at ease in a deep armchair on one side of the crackling log fire; on the other side, Len straddled a chair, leaning his arms on the back and eyeing his uncle.

They had been talking of various matters; but that Mr. Nixon had something special to say, which he had not yet uttered, had been clear for some time to Len.

“You don’t know, Bill?” repeated Len.

“No!” said the inspector. “I don’t know whether Eric Tunstall is a young rascal who has got no more than he deserves, or whether he has been the victim of unscrupulous scheming—with more to come!”

“That,” said Len, “sounds interesting, Bill!”

“If the former is the case,” went on Mr. Nixon, “he is not worth a second thought. If the latter, there is—or may be—a case for you to handle, Len.”

“Me?” said Len.

“Tunstall is going to Oakshott this term. You will see him to-morrow, if you look for him, at your school!” explained the inspector. “He is a boy of your own age, and I understand that he will go into the same Form.”

“Who is he?”

“One of the grandsons of Sir Gilbert Tunstall, baronet.”

“And what has he done?”

“According to himself—nothing!”

“Then what is he supposed to have done?” smiled Len.



“I won’t get out!” said the stranger. Pie gave a bellow of rage and sprang at him. Furniture scattered and the floor shook as they struggled furiously.

“Nearly everything, I think, that he ought not to have done, at his last school,” said Mr. Nixon. “You will be careful, of course, to say nothing of what I am going to tell you. If the boy is innocent, as he maintains, he has a right to a chance—and it would do him a lot of harm at Oakshott to have it known that he was expelled from his last school.”

“Sacked!” Len exclaimed. “But how can a fellow sacked from another school wedge in at Oakshott, Bill? The Head wouldn’t stand for it, surely.”

“Sir Gilbert Tunstall has some influence with the Oakshott governors, and it has been arranged.”

“Um!” said Len, with a grimace. As a detective, he was prepared to believe any man innocent till he was proved guilty. As an Oakshott fellow, he did not like the idea of a fellow sacked from another school butting in at Oakshott!

“What was his school?” he asked.
“Higham, in Yorkshire. Oakshott being in Sussex, he will be a long

way from his previous surroundings, among people who cannot possibly have seen him before, and will be able to make an entirely fresh start. Nobody at Oakshott has ever seen him—and probably only the headmaster has heard his name even. If his own tale is true, he will be able to make good there, unless—”

Bill Nixon paused, and grunted.

“Unless what?”

“I’d better tell you how it stands,” said the inspector. “It’s rather a mix-up. Young Tunstall was taken before his headmaster, last term at Higham, found guilty of betting, breaking out, pub-haunting, and blackguardism generally—and expelled. The evidence must have been complete enough to satisfy his headmaster. He was sent home in disgrace.”

“My hat!” said Len. “And that’s the sportsman they’re landing on us at Oakshott, is it?”

“But—” said the inspector.

“Of course, there’s a ‘but,’ or you wouldn’t be interested in it,” agreed Len. “Where do you come in, Bill?”

“As a friend of old Sir Gilbert—I handled some matters for him when he was a company director in the City, years ago, and he sent for me to ask my advice—unprofessionally, of course. He doesn’t exactly believe, but he hopes, that there may be some truth in what the boy says.”

“What does he say?”

Len was getting deeply interested now.

“His tale is absolute innocence.

By
**CHARLES
HAMILTON**

Kicked Out!

He puts the whole thing on his cousin, Herbert Varney — another Higham boy. He cannot offer a jot of evidence—cannot lay a finger on a single thing that Varney may have done—and has to admit that it is all suspicion on his part—but he feels certain of it. And this," said Mr. Nixon, "is where the shoe pinches! If Sir Gilbert comes to believe that young Tunstall is a disgrace to his name, he will disinherit him like a shot. In which case, twenty thousand pounds a year will, some day, go to the other grandson. They are both orphans, and the old man has no other near relations."

Len Lex whistled again. "Thick, Bill!" he said. "Whatever sort of a merchant this Varney may be, no schoolboy could plan or carry on a scheme like that. Too thick! If there's anything in it, there's a nigger in the woodpile. This is a man's game—a crook's game—and a clever crook at that! Any line on him?"

"None!"
"Was Varney in the same Form at Higham?"

"Yes; both boys in the Fifth Form."

"What sort of a reputation in the school?"

"His school reports have been consistently good—ordinary, but good. But so had young Tunstall's till the last term."

"And Tunstall denies the whole thing?"

"From start to finish—but he can only say that he believes Varney fixed it all on him somehow. They've always barred one another, it seems."

"How much does the old bean swallow?"

"As much as he can! The fact appears to be that he is fond of the grandson who bears his own name and will inherit the title, and has only a sense of duty towards the other. In common justice, he cannot take notice of an accusation against his other grandson, founded on no evidence whatever. At the same time, he clings to the favourite boy, and hopes for the best. Anyhow, he realises that it was a mistake to send them to the same school. Young Tunstall will be on his own at Oakshott."

"And Varney stays at Highham, up in Yorkshire?"

"No! In view of the disgrace reflected on him by his cousin's expulsion, he wanted to leave, and his grandfather consented. He asked to be allowed to go to Oakshott, but that, of course, could not be permitted, in the peculiar circumstances. The idea is to keep them safe apart. He is being allowed to travel with a tutor—a Mr. Stacey—instead of going back to school this term. They have already gone abroad."

"So Varney is safe out of his cousin's way?"

"That's it!" said Mr. Nixon. "And if, by some remote possibility, young Tunstall's tale is true, he should make good at his new school—unless he—"

"Unless," said Len slowly, "there is a nigger in the woodpile—a man behind the scenes, playing Varney's game for him. In which case, he might look for an opportunity of fastening something on Tunstall at his new school—while Varney's keeping up an impeccable alibi, travelling abroad."

"You get me, Len! It sounds a bit fantastic, but—well, I've seen the boy, and liked him!" confessed Bill Nixon. "He struck me as a decent sort of lad, bewildered by the position he found himself in. There's a sporting chance, Len, that he's telling the truth—that the whole thing is an unscrupulous scheme to double-cross him out of a fortune! And if that's the case, and there's any more of it, I want my nephew at Oakshott to have his eyes as wide open for the nigger in the woodpile as he had them open for the Sussex Man once upon a time."

Len nodded slowly. "At Higham, Varney could have worked it, with a man behind to help—but a man outside the school, with no help inside, couldn't have much chance at Oakshott," he said. "But—it's possible! I'll prop my eyes open, Bill!"

"Make Him Leggo!"

PORRINGE of the Oakshott Fifth dropped his ticket, plunged after it, dropped his bag, stumbled over it, and sat down. These performances occupied Poringe exactly one minute; and he had rather less than a minute in which to catch his train. Having fielded his ticket and his bag, "Pie" Poringe rushed on the platform at Westwood, in time to view the guard's van disappearing down the line.

"Blow!" said Pie.

It was, of course, Pie all over. Pie had a genius for losing things, especially trains.

He stood and gazed after the vanishing train in great dismay. Plenty of Oakshott fellows were on that train, going back for the new term—among them Len Lex, who was in his study at Oakshott. Carefully had Pie arranged to pick up the express as it passed through Westwood. Pie was a gregarious fellow, and he wanted the company of his friends on the journey down. This was the result of his careful arranging.

"Blow!" repeated Pie.

He had an hour to wait for the next train. That hour seemed, to Pie, the longest hour he had ever experienced. Walking up and down a windy platform was not exhilarating. Every other minute he glared at the clock. It was no use looking at his watch, which—being Pie's—had stopped. It seemed to Pie that that hour contained more than the usual allowance of minutes, and that all the minutes were unusually lengthy.

But the express boomed in at last. It was like Pie to be at the extreme end of a long platform when it came in and stopped. He rushed for it. Breathless, he grabbed a doorhandle. And it did not turn!

With his bag in one hand and the

doorhandle in the other, Pie wrenched desperately. It was just his rotten luck for the heastly thing to be jammed.

"Blow!" roared Pie.

Another passenger came along, but seeing Pie struggling in vain to get that door open, passed quickly along to the next carriage. Pie wrenched and wrenched.

He could see that there were two passengers in the carriage. One, a boy of his own age, sat on the farther side. On the near side sat a man. The man was looking out through the glass at Pie. Really, seeing the schoolboy's difficulty, he might have helped. But he made no movement. Pie glared at him through the window, thinking him the last word in disagreeable swabs, for sitting there doing nothing, while a fellow in danger of losing the train was struggling to get the door open.

Then it suddenly dawned on Pie that the man was holding the doorhandle on the inside. That was why it would not turn! It was not jammed at all! That unspeakable swab was holding it.

Pie spluttered with wrath.

"Let go!" he roared. "Let me get in, see? Do you want all the railway? My hat! Will you let me get in?"

The man within gave no sign of having heard. Pie gave him deadly looks through the glass. The face within was not a pleasant one. It had a sharp chin, a sharp nose curved rather like a vulture's beak, and close-set eyes of gimlet-like keenness. It was a hard face—the face of a man with a hard and inflexible nature. For some reason, best known to himself, he did not want another passenger in the carriage; and with a ruthless disregard of the rights of the travelling public, he was keeping Pie out.

Pie almost foamed. He was going to lose this train, as he had lost the earlier one, because of that frightful swab!

The boy, on the other side of the carriage, was glancing across. He was a rather nice-looking lad, with pleasant features and dark eyes. He half-rose from his seat, and Pie, encouraged, yelled to him:

"I say, you—make him leggo that handle, will you?"

The dark-eyed lad came across the carriage.

"Look here, let that chap in!" Pie heard him say. "Why can't he come in? Let go that doorhandle."

The vulture-faced man gave no heed. His grasp on the handle inside did not relax. Doors were slamming along the train. There was no time to rush for another carriage.

"Make him leggo, will you?" roared Pie.

The boy in the carriage hesitated a moment. He seemed as puzzled as Pie by the inexplicable ill-nature of the man who was keeping the Oakshott fellow out. Then, suddenly making up his mind, he grasped the man's arm and wrenched his grasp from the doorhandle.

In a split-second, before that grasp

could close again, Pie had the door open. He hurled his bag in and plunged headlong after it. He had hardly landed when a porter slammed the door after him, and the train was in motion.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Pie.

He picked himself up, panting for breath. The dark-eyed boy, with a faint smile, went back to the farther corner, and sat down. Pie plumped into a seat, still gasping, and glaring belligerently at the man who had tried to keep him out.

The look on that individual's hard, vulture-like face was, for a moment, extremely unpleasant and threatening. But that was only for a moment. Apparently accepting the inevitable, the man leaned back in his corner seat, taking no notice whatever of Pie. The Oakshott man's defiant and scornful glares were wasted on an impassive profile.

Having recovered his breath, Porringe picked up his bag and slammed it on the rack. Then he looked across the carriage at the boy who had come to his aid.

"Thanks!" he said.

"Not at all!" The boy smiled. He had a very pleasant smile. "You had a right to come in, if you liked."

"I should jolly well say so!" said Porringe, with another glare at the silent man in the corner. "Keeping a chap out of the train—my hat! I've lost one train already to-day, and I've got to get to Oakshott."

"Oakshott!" repeated the boy. "You're going to Oakshott! You mean Oakshott School?"

"That's it!" said Pie.

"So am I!" said the boy, smiling again.

"Oh!" Porringe regarded him with new interest. "New man?"

"Yes."

"You're joining up rather late, aren't you?" said Pie. The boy looked about sixteen, which was much later than the usual age for joining up at Oakshott. He was as old as Pie, who was in the Fifth. "Been to school before—since your prep school, I mean?"

To Pie's surprise, the boy coloured at that simple remark. Before he could answer, the man in the corner seat broke in:

"Can you tell me what is the next station on this line?"

Porringer looked round at him. The man spoke civilly enough, as if he had already forgotten the little trouble that had occurred. Pie was a placable fellow. As the man spoke civilly, Pie answered civilly.

"Blackwood," he said.

"We stop there?"

"Yes; a minute's stop."

"How long before we get there?"

"Only a few minutes, I believe."

"Thank you!"

Pie transferred his attention to the boy in the other corner again. The latter was looking out of the window at the wintry landscape. He was not smiling now—a clouded and rather moody look had come over his handsome face. Pie was a talkative fellow, and he had taken rather a liking to the boy who had saved him from losing the train. So, as the boy did not speak, Pie started again.

"I say, know anybody at Oakshott?" he asked.

"No!"

"You've seen the beak?"

"No; I've seen nobody at Oakshott. I live at the other end of the country. I've been at school before." The boy coloured again. "I'm going into the Fifth Form."

"That's my Form!" said Pie.

"There's some jolly decent chaps in the Fifth—Lex, and Harvey, and old Banker. I say—"

"You are sure this train stops at Blackwood?" came an interruption from the hard-faced man. Pie looked round again.

"Yes—if you look out of the window, you'll see it by this time," he answered. "The train stops there, all right. I know this line."

"You get out at Blackwood?"

"No." Pie stared at him. "I change at Greenwood for Oakshott—that's thirty miles on yet," he answered. Pie turned to the boy again. "You stick to me," he said. "There's two changes for the school—Greenwood and Bingham. I'll see you

get your train! And, I say—Ow!" howled Pie suddenly.

The man in the corner had risen to his feet, as if in preparation for leaving the carriage when the train stopped at Blackwood. He stumbled as the train jerked, and fell against Pie.

Pie howled as he was squashed back in his seat. His hat fell off, and rolled on the floor.

"Oh, sorry!" gasped the vulture-faced man, as he righted himself. "I lost my footing—"

Pie gave him a glare, and stooped to recover his hat.

The train ran into Blackwood Station, and stopped. The man threw the carriage door open.

What happened next caused Porringe's eyes almost to bulge from his face. The hard-faced man reached up to the rack, grasped Pie's bag, and pitched it out on the platform.

Pie stared at him, as if mesmerised. He was too astounded to move for a moment or two.

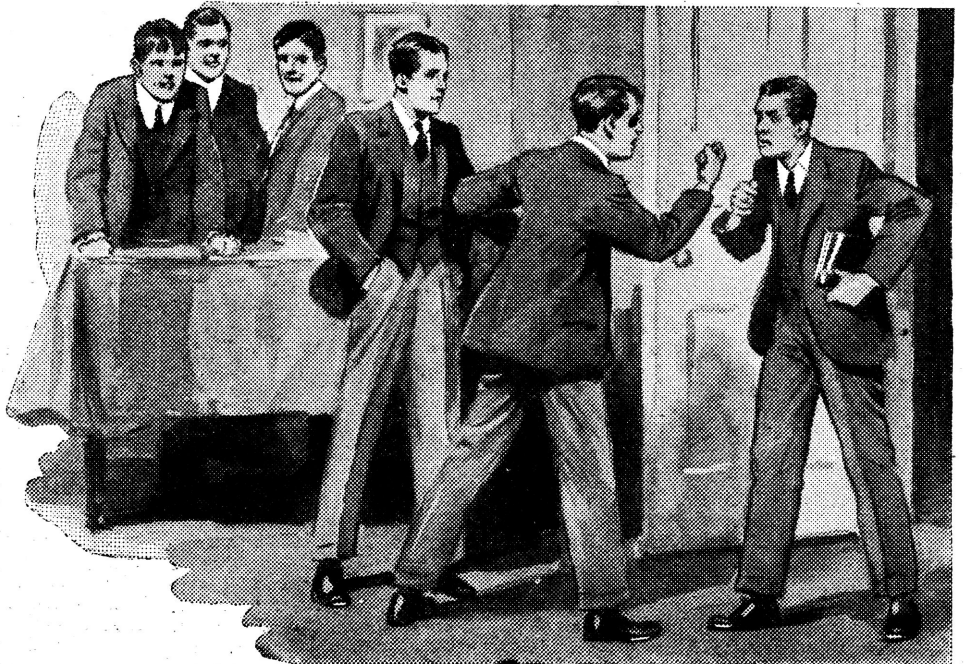
"You—you—you—" gasped Pie at last. "You silly ass! What are you up to? That's my bag! By gum!"

Porringer rushed to the door and leaped out to recover his property.

The bag had rolled across the platform. Pie tore after it, recovered it, and rushed back to the carriage. He had just time to jump in again before the train started, but he found the carriage door shut. The glass in the door was down, and the man inside, reaching out as Pie grasped the handle, gave him a rough push, which sent Porringe sprawling backwards.

Bump!

Pie sat down on the platform, hard and heavy. His bag flew in one direction, his hat in another. He sat and spluttered wildly. The last door slammed, and the train moved on. Pie, still sitting and spluttering breathlessly, had a last glimpse of



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"If you bring your books into this study you'll go out on your neck and I'll sling them after you!" roared Pie. Len Lex studied the new fellow keenly as he came into the room.  
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Kicked Out!

a hard face with a vulture nose looking back at him. Then the train was gone.

Pie staggered up. He was astonished, amazed, but he was more enraged than either! He had lost that train, after all, and he had another hour's wait before him for the next express to Greenwood.

Speechless with amazement and rage, Pie stood and glared after the train. He wondered dizzily whether the man was some lunatic—really, there seemed no other way of accounting for his extraordinary actions! Lunatic or not, Pie would have liked to get within punching distance of his vulture nose! But that nose was far out of his reach, and Pie could only wait for the next train with feelings inexpressible in any known language.

Very Odd!

"SEEN that goat?" Harvey and Banks of the Fifth asked that question together as Len Lex came into Study No. 8. Len grinned as he slammed down a bundle of books on the study table. He could guess that it was Porringe to whom his friends alluded.

"No," he answered. "Hasn't old Pie blown in yet?"

"Haven't seen him. Wasn't he coming with you?" asked Banks.

"He was," agreed Len. "But that depended on Pie picking up my train as it came through his station. Pie's not the man to catch anything but a cold."

"Oh, Pie can catch trains—the wrong trains!" said Harvey. "I dare say he's in the wrong train—perhaps getting to the wrong school. May arrive at Eton or Harrow. Have some of these chestnuts?"

It was a cold day, with a keen wind from the Sussex downs, and a nip of frost in the air. A big fire burned in the grate in Study No. 8, and Harvey had been roasting chestnuts. Len Lex sat on a corner of the table, sawing his legs, and helped to dispose of the chestnuts.

Study No. 8 was looking a little untidy, the first day of term—all sorts of things scattered about and not yet put away—piles of books on table and chairs, open bags on the floor, a Soccer ball on the window-shelf, a pair of football boots on the mantelpiece. But the ruddy glow of the fire, contrasting with the winter dimness without, made it look very cosy and homely, and Len was glad to find himself back in the old study, with his old friends. And "goat" as old Pie undoubtedly was, his three pals wished that he were there, helping with the baked chestnuts.

"Seen anything of a new man, you fellows?" asked Len. He had had an eye open for Eric Tunstall since getting in at the school, but had seen nothing of him so far, or heard of him.

"Eh! I believe there's three or four new ticks this term," answered Banks. "I think I saw some wander-

ing about. Mostly for Surtees, I believe."

"I don't mean a junior," said Len. "I've heard that there's a new man coming into the Fifth."

He did not add that he had heard it from Detective-Inspector William Nixon.

"Oh! First I've heard of it! Man doesn't often come straight into the Fifth! I hope Chalmers won't stick him in here. We're four already, counting Pie only as one—and with his feet he really counts as two!"

"One or two of the studies have five men," said Len casually, "and this is the biggest in the Fifth."

As Lex of the Fifth, Len did not want to be crowded in his study, but as Detective-Inspector Nixon's nephew he rather wanted to have Eric Tunstall under his eye. Len, though his comrades knew it not, was a detective as well as a school-boy.

"Oh, rot!" said Harvey. "We don't want the fellow here, bother him! Chalmers can shove him anywhere else he likes along the passage. I say, let's go down and see if that goat Porringe has blown in yet!"

The chestnuts being finished, the three Fifth Formers went down. Oakshott School was buzzing with the noise of first day of term—trampling footsteps, calling voices, banging doors, and bumping boxes. The three exchanged greetings with a dozen fellows as they went, but did not spot Porringe among them. But when they came to the open door of the senior day-room a well-known voice fell on their ears.

"Lost two trains!" It was Pie's voice. "That's why."

"Only two?" asked Cayley's voice. "That's not up to your average, is it?"

And a chuckle followed. Len and Banks and Harvey went in. There was Porringe newly arrived, and apparently in a state of excitement and indignation.

"Oh, here you are!" said Pie, as he spotted his friends. "I say, would you believe it? Man chucked my bag out of the train, and I had to jump after it and lost the train! Jever hear of anything like that?"

"Never!" grinned Len. "These things only happen to you, Pie, old man!"

"If I ever meet that man," said Pie, "I'm going to pull his nose. He's got a nose like a beak, and I'm going to pull it! Seen the new man yet?"

"Eh? You heard of a new man?" asked Len.

"He was in the carriage," explained Pie. "Decent sort of chap—I liked him. He must have got in long ago on that train. He told me he was coming into the Fifth."

"You liked him?" asked Len.

He had no doubt that it was Tunstall whom Pie had met on the train. It was not likely that two new men were coming into the Fifth that term.

"Oh, yes—jolly decent chap!" said Pie. "That nosy parker was trying to keep me out of the carriage, and the chap helped me to get in. Jolly good-natured, I thought. I'd like him in the study."

"Rot!" said Banks. "If they shove another man in Study No. 8, you'll have to hang your feet out of the window."

"What was the chap's name, Pie?" asked Len.

"Blessed if I know! Might have asked him, only that nosy swab kept on interrupting when I was speaking to him. And then he shifted me out at Blackwood, chucking out a fellow's bag!" Pie breathed hard. "By gum, I'll pull that beaky boko of his if I ever see him again! I say, I'd better go and see Chalmers. I'll ask him if the new man's here! He was jolly decent, and a chap might be friendly."

Harvey and Banks remained in the day-room, talking to other new arrivals, but Len went along with Pie to his Form-master's study. He was rather keen to hear all he could of the new man. Pie's description was that of a rather agreeable fellow, good-natured and obliging. And the fellow, so far as Len could see, could be no other than Tunstall—the real or supposed black sheep of Higham.

Mr. Chalmers, the master of the Fifth, blinked at them through horn-rimmed glasses as they presented themselves. He had already seen Len; but Porringe had to report his arrival and hand over the usual medical certificate which, by some happy chance, he had not lost on his way to Oakshott. After which Mr. Chalmers glanced at a list on his desk.

"All my Form are now in with the exception of a new boy," he said. "Possibly he has arrived and has not yet reported to me." Mr. Chalmers blinked at Pie and Len. "I think you might look for him and send him to my study if he is here."

"Certainly, sir," said Len.

"I was going to ask you about him, sir," said Pie. "I met him on the train coming here—I suppose it was the same chap, though I didn't know his name. He must be here before this. What's his name, sir?"

Mr. Chalmers referred to his paper again.

"Tunstall," he answered—"Eric Tunstall."

"We'll find him, sir," said Pie. "I know him all right. I'd like you to put him in my study, sir, if you haven't arranged anything else."

"Yes, sir, we'd like him in Study No. 8," said Len Lex. He had his own reasons for backing up Pie's request, though inwardly he wondered what Banks and Harvey would have to say about it.

"Eh? Yes! Very good. I will make a note of it," said the Fifth Form master, and Len and Porringe left the study.

"Chap must be here!" said Pie, as they went down the corridor. "He was on the train I lost, and must have got in an hour ahead of me! Come and help me look for him, Lex. Chap wants to be friendly, after he was so jolly good-natured."

Len Lex willingly went with Pie to look for the new man. He was quite keen to see the fellow who had been expelled from Higham for disgraceful conduct, but to whom Pie had taken

a liking. Pie was a goat, and nearly every known kind of an ass; but he was not the fellow to take a liking to any fellow who was not pretty decent. Pie's impression of him was a point in his favour, in the opinion of the schoolboy detective.

But they failed to find Eric Tunstall.

Up and down and round about they went, looking for a new man who did not know his way about. They found, easily enough, half a dozen new "men" for the Third and the Fourth—sheepish new "kids" in the Lower School. But of a new senior man they could learn nothing. They asked every Fifth Form man they met—they inquired of Root of the Fourth and Lamson of the Shell—they even asked Oliphant of the Sixth, captain of Oakshott, and Campion, head boy. They went down to the porter's lodge and asked old Wegg. They went to the matron's room and asked Mrs. Simpson. But nobody had seen or heard anything of Tunstall—and they had to give it up.

"It's weird!" said Pie, quite puzzled. "You see, the chap stayed on the train—Nosy Parker shifted me out, but that chap stayed on, so he must have got to Greenwood an hour ahead of me. Even if he lost a train or two, he ought to be here by now. Some fellows are asses enough to lose trains!"

"They are!" agreed Len gravely.

"Well, then, where the dickens is he?" said Pie. "It must have been Tunstall on the train—he said he was coming into the Fifth here, anyhow. Weird, ain't it?"

"Quite!" said Len. "Better go and tell Chalmers he's not here."

They repaired to their Form-master's study again. Mr. Chalmers gave a rather worried blink through his horn-rimmed spectacles as they made their report.

"It is very odd," he said. "Very odd indeed! I understand that Tunstall travelled down from Yorkshire yesterday, and stayed the night with his grandfather's solicitor in London, who put him on the train for the school this morning. It is very odd that he has not arrived. Please send him to me at once if you see him."

But they did not see him, and they went into Hall with Harvey and Banks, and for a time forgot his existence.

On His Neck!

PORRINGE stared. Then he glared. The winter darkness had closed in on Oakshott School and most of the fellows were downstairs in Hall, though a few were in the studies.

Porringer having forgotten the existence of the new man for some hours, had suddenly remembered him. Leaving his friends in Hall, Pie went round to have another look for the new Fifth Former.

Having been a new man himself once upon a time, Pie knew the value of a helping hand and a friendly word on a fellow's first day at a school. Full of benevolent intentions, there-

Just My Foolin

By THE OLD BOY



THERE'S no doubt that this is the Machine Age. The latest invention is the Supercharged Criminal Nabber, which makes detectives useless. I called to see the machine in action. It was a vast thing, about as big as a printing machine. There was a slot marked CLUES, in which the police were loading fingerprints, cigarette ash, foot-marks, burnt letters, etc. Having put all the clues in the machine, they oiled it, cranked it up, and pulled a lever. There was a fierce roaring for two minutes, then a flap marked NAME OF BAD LAD fell down, and a perforated piece of paper fell out, on which was printed BERT BUGGINS.

The next step was the Teletracer. This was a thing like a cross between a compass and a speedometer. The needle of the compass pointed to the direction in which Buggins was hiding, and the speedometer registered the number of miles he was away. Police set off, guided by this diabolical clock, and soon the ill-starred Buggins was in clink. The greatest triumph, I thought, was when the Criminal Nabber had delivered the bad lad's name. The machine immediately stopped, and from out a loudspeaker affair on top, a loud voice proclaimed:

"Elementary, my dear Watson! Quite childish!" I could have sworn it was Sherlock Holmes speaking!

DOES anyone know the best way to get sardines out of a motor-bike engine? You see, the shops were all shut, and my oil gauge was at zero,

fore, the goat of the Fifth set out on another voyage of discovery. Tunstall, if he had blown in, was certainly not in Hall, so Pie drew the studics.

Hence his stare, and his glare, at the present moment! Throwing open the door of Study No. 8 to give that study the once-over on the chance that the new man might have blown in there, Porringer gave a sudden cough as a strong, thick whiff of tobacco-smoke impinged upon his lungs. It was enough to make any fellow stare and glare!

Smoking, of course, was strictly forbidden at Oakshott. It was also considered bad form in the studies. There were fellows who smoked, like Levett in Study No. 9—a fellow rather barred in the Form. In Study No. 8 it was unheard-of. No man belonging to that study ever put on a cigarette. And whoever was smoking now in Study No. 8 had not smoked one cigarette, but many, to judge by the thickness of the atmosphere therein.

Pie coughed, choked, stared, and glared—and stamped into the study. If that swab Levett fancied that he could do his putrid smoking in Study No. 8, Pie was the man to undeceive him!

But it was not Levett of the Fifth.

and I hadn't any oil, and I wanted to use the bike. Then I remembered the tin of sardines, but forgot to take out the fish. Now they're all over the engine. I want to get them out because they won't do it any good, so please tell me how.

Besides, I want the sardines for supper.

LOST. An old school tie. If you find one, hold it in front of a horse. Should the horse rear up in fright and bolt in the other direction, the tie will be mine. £100 REWARD offered for information leading to the arrest of the thief or thieves—but not by me!

OLD AS THE HILLS.—There are several puzzles which are as old as the hills, yet I am often asked about them still. The ancient one—if a hen and a half lays an egg and a half in a day and a half, how long will it take ten hens to lay ten eggs?—I won't ask if you can get it right, but can anyone get it wrong?

PUT THEM TOGETHER.—Through a river, over a river, the name of a river, and an animal. Put these together and what do you get?

(Solutions on page 29)

The fellow who sprawled in the arm-chair, with a cigarette between his lips, was a stranger to Porringer. He was a fellow of about Pie's own age, but rather weedy in build, extremely well dressed, even to a touch of dandyism. Finding a stranger in the study, Porringer would naturally have expected him to be Tunstall—but this fellow was not the fellow he had met on the train.

Who he was, Pie did not know—and did not care! Whoever he was, and wherever he had come from, he was going to learn at once where he got off. Porringer stood in front of him, glaring at him through a haze of cigarette smoke.

"You putrid tick!" said Pie.

The fellow in the armchair gave him a careless glance. He did not remove the cigarette from his mouth, as he answered:

"Hallo! Who are you, and what's biting you?"

"I'm Porringer," roared Pie, "and this is my study! And if you fancy you're in a tap-room, you swab, you're jolly well mistaken, see? Get out of this, and take your filthy smoking with you."

"I'm quite comfortable here, thanks!" drawled the fellow in the armchair.

Kicked Out!

"You won't be, if I begin on you!" roared the indignant Pie. "Why, you tick, if a beak or a prefect came up, we might all get into a row, with the study recking like this. Get out of it! I tell you, I'll shift you fast enough, if you don't travel quick."

And as the stranger did not stir, Pie wasted no more time in words. He jumped behind the armchair, grasped the high back, and tilted it forward.

The fellow moved fast enough then. He gave a yell as he rolled headlong out of the tilted chair. The cigarette dropped on the carpet, and there was another yell as the fellow put his hand on it. He bounded to his feet, his face red with rage.

"You meddling fool!" he roared. "What the dickens do you fancy you're up to?"

"Get out of this study!" hooted Pie.

"You fool, I won't! Why should I? I——"

"Won't you?" said Pie grimly. "I don't know why you've picked this study specially to smoke in, but I jolly well know that you're going out of it. And if you won't go on your feet, you'll go on your neck."

"I tell you——"

"You needn't tell me anything—I'm telling you! Outside!"

"I tell you——"

"That's enough!" Porrynge rushed at him. Whoever the fellow was—not that Pie cared a hoot who he was!—he was going out of that study, and he was going out on his neck, if Pie could handle him—and Pie fancied that he could. In a twinkling, Pie had a head in chancery and was whirling the fellow doorward.

Weedy as he looked, the fellow did not lack resisting power. He struggled fiercely in Pie's grasp, and punched him furiously in the ribs. Pie punched, in return, at the face under his arm. They trampled wildly about the study. Chairs were knocked over, piles of books upset, the table rocked as they bumped into it. The din rang along the passage, and fellows who happened to be in their studies came along to see what the uproar was about.

"What's the game, Pie?" inquired Cayley of the Fifth. "Which of your pals have you got there, and what's he done?"

"Let go!" came a yell from under Pie's gripping arm. "Will you let go, you mad idiot?"

"Not till you're outside, you putrid tick!" gasped Pie.

"Who is it?" yelled Hobbs of the Fifth. "Is that the new man?"

"I don't know who he is!" gasped Pie. "Never seen him before—but I jolly well know he's not going to smoke in my study! Butting into a man's study to smoke! By gum, I'll show him!"

The other was resisting strongly. But Pie, with a concentrated effort, got him to the door. Five or six Fifth Form men were clustered there, looking in and grinning. They backed away hastily, however, as a whirling figure came flying out, giving it room to fall.

It crashed!

Porrynge stood panting. He had said that the cheeky intruder should go out on his neck, and on his neck he had gone! Pie stood panting, breathless from his exertions, but victorious. He clenched his fists, ready for his enemy if his enemy came on again.

But the fellow who had been hurled headlong out of the study seemed to have had enough. He sat up, spluttering for breath, and Hobbs kindly gave him a helping hand to get on his feet. Then he stood, panting and unsteady, the Fifth Formers eyeing him curiously. He gave Pie a glare of fury, turned, and slouched away down the passage, panting breathlessly as he went.

Porrynge in Study No. 8 opened the window, and waved a newspaper about to clear off the smoke, after which he resumed his search for the new man in the Fifth.

Pie All Over!

"Is he here?" asked Pie.

Len Lex, Harvey, and Banks had come up to the study after the speeches in Hall. They were unpacking a hamper that Harvey had brought back with him, with intent to dispose of the excellent contents of the same. Pie, having rooted all over Oakshott once more, came back to Study No. 8, put his head in at the door, and asked that question. But a glance into the study showed that "he" was not there.

"It's weird!" declared Pie, as he came in. "I've seen Chalmers again, and he says that the man has come. The fellow's seen Chalmers, and the Head, and the dame, and was told that this was his study. You men seen him?"

Three heads were shaken. Harvey turned a cake out of the hamper, and cut it; and Pie thoughtfully helped himself to a slice.

"Beats me!" he said. "What's become of the chap? If he's come, he must be in the House somewhere. If he couldn't find the study, I suppose he's got a tongue in his head to ask. Must be a bit of an ass to get lost like this! I suppose we shall spot him when they call roll again. But it's weird."

"Pie, old man, you've been picking up bad habits in the hols," said Banks sternly.

"Eh? Wharrer you mean?" demanded Pie.

"The study smelt of baccy when we came up."

"Think it was me?" snorted Pie. "I found some swab here smoking, and chucked him out on his neck, too."

"A man smoking in our study?" exclaimed Harvey. "Who?"

"I don't know—never seen him before! Some new tick, I suppose," answered Pie. "But here he was, sitting in that armchair, and smoking away like a furnace. I heaved him out."

Harvey and Banks stared at Pie. Len Lex blinked at him.

"There's only one new man in the Fifth," said Len, "and that is Tunstall."

"Eh?" said Pie. "It wasn't Tunstall—at least, it wasn't the chap I met on the train. That must have been Tunstall. Haven't I told you that he told me he was coming into the Fifth here? That's why I asked Chalmers to put him into this study."

"You got Chalmers to land him on us?" hooted Banks.

"Yes, I jolly well did!" retorted Pie. "Why shouldn't I, when he's a thoroughly decent chap, and did me a good turn? I don't know who that smoky swab was, but he wasn't the chap on the train. Now I come to think of it, he was rather like him, but he wasn't the same chap."

They gazed at Pie. If a new man had planted himself in that study, it was obvious—to the three, if not to Pie—that he must be the new man in the Fifth, whom Mr. Chalmers had sent to Study No. 8. And as there was only one new man in the Fifth, it was equally obvious that the fellow must be Tunstall, whether Pie had met him on the train or not.

"You—you priceless goat!" said Harvey, in measured tones. "You've met somebody on a train, who spun you a yarn, and pulled your silly-leg, and wasn't coming to Oakshott at all—and you've landed a smoky swab on this study in consequence. Is that it?"

"That's it!" said Banks. "Pie all over!"

"Rot!" said Pie. "That chap on the train was straight as a die—he wasn't pulling my leg. Think I'm a fool?"

"Yes, rather!" answered his three friends together.

"I wish I'd asked him his name now," said Pie. "I should have, only that nosey parker kept on interrupting. But that chap was all right. He's the man that's coming here, and Chalmers said his name was Tunstall."

"Then who was the swab you found here?"

"How should I know?" snapped Pie. "Never seen him before. Might be a new man for the Shell—a bit overgrown. I don't know who he was, and don't care—only I know I jolly well shifted him."

"If he wasn't Fifth, you fathead, what was he doing in a Fifth Form study?" shrieked Banks.

"Eh? Smoking," said Pie. "I've told you so!"

"Oh, you goat!"

"Oh, you ass!"

Len Lex grinned. Whomsoever Pie might, or might not, have met on the train, there was no doubt that the fellow he had found in Study No. 8, and shifted therefrom, was the new man in the Oakshott Fifth. So far as Pie's friends could see, somebody on the train had pulled his leg with a yarn about coming to Oakshott—why, was rather a mystery, except that Pie was a fellow born to have his leg pulled, and looked it. And having taken a liking to that leg-puller, Pie had asked the Fifth Form beak to plant the new man in Study No. 8—a fellow he had never seen before, and who was, by his own description, a smoky swab. That was exactly Pie—Pie all over!

(Continued on page 32)

Kicked Out!

(Continued from page 8)

There was a step in the passage, as Pic's friends stood gazing at him. A fellow whom three of the Fifth Formers had never seen before; appeared in the doorway, a parcel of books under his arm. Pie, however, had seen him—it was the "smoky swab." Pie glared at him, and the other three looked at him curiously and inquiringly.

He gave Pie a scowl.

"Look here—" he began.

"So you've come back here?" said Pie. "Want another smoke, you putrid tick? I don't know why you've brought your books here, but if you bring them into this study, you go out on your neck again, and I'll jolly well shy them after you!"

Len Lex watched the new fellow keenly. Pie's brain was not quick on the uptake, and he had not got it yet; but the other three knew that this must be Tunstall of the Fifth! And if he had started at Oakshott, his first day there, by putting on cigarettes in his study, it looked as if

the headmaster of Higham had known what he was about when he sacked him.

Detective-Inspector Nixon had seen Tunstall, at Tunstall Hall up in Yorkshire, and the boy had made a favourable impression on him. Len wondered why, for he himself was by no means favourably impressed by this fellow.

The new fellow glanced at the three.

"You belong to this study?" he asked. "Then you'd better tip that fool, if he's a friend of yours, to stop playing the goat. I've been barged out once, and if it happens again, I shall speak to the Form-master."

"You're Tunstall?" asked Len.

"That's my name."

"I've told you," said Pie, "to keep out! You come in here again, and out you go on your neck, same as before!"

"You silly ass!" roared Banks. "You can't keep a man out of his own study! You asked for him to come here, and he's come."

"I didn't!" howled Pie. "It was that chap on the train—"

"That chap on the train, fathead, if there was a chap on the train at all, and you didn't dream it, ass, was pulling your leg, goat, and isn't coming to Oakshott at all, chump!"

"That smoky swab—"

"That smoky swab, if he's a smoky swab, belongs to this study now, and you've done it, and we're jolly well going to bump you for it! Bag him!" hooted Banks.

"I say— Leggo, you silly asses! I say— Oh! Ow!" roared Pie.

The new fellow came in and landed his books on the table, with a grinning face. Pie did not oppose his entrance. Pie was wriggling wildly in the hands of his exasperated friends, who were bumping him on the carpet—which, in their opinion, was what he richly deserved. Anyhow, it was what he got!

The new fellow in Study No. 8 fails to get what he wants in next week's story, but it's not for want of trying. Deliberately he asks for the sack, and it takes Len all his time to prevent his getting it!

MYSTERY of the BAR Z RANCH!

(Continued from page 2)



10. The next minute Jack was on him, and with one blow sent the revolver flying. "One move and I'll plug you with lead!" grated Jack, drawing his own revolver.



11. But the swaying train sent Jack off his balance. Roger was quick to seize the chance. He leapt to his feet, and grappled with Jack with a grip that disarmed him.



12. They dropped to the roof and Jack's head struck it with a force that stunned him. Roger picked up the fallen revolver and struggled to bring it round for a close aim.



13. In the nick of time Fred reached him, and landed him a punch on the jaw that sent him reeling back. The revolver cracked, but the shot went harmlessly into the air.



14. The next minute Roger Marshall went toppling backwards, plunging from the train as it roared over a trestle bridge above the rapidly flowing river. It was certain death!



15. A few days later Jack and Bennie set off for their ranch, leaving Fred to manage his oil wells. Nothing more was to be feared from the gang. The Mystery of the Bar Z was ended.

RICHARD ARLEN in THE GREAT BARRIER, thrilling railway picture-story, next week!

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