

The World's Most Up-to-date Boys' Paper!

# The MODERN BOY

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2<sup>d</sup>

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**ANNIHILATING SPACE and TIME!** See page 5.

SIR ALAN COBHAM'S Great Yarn—Start Reading It Now!

# King of the

by SIR ALAN COBHAM &



Bound to the stump, Kit Hudson could move neither hand nor foot. But his cries in the darkness guided King of the Islands surely to the spot.

## THE RESCUE!

**K**IT HUDSON shrieked aloud again and again. His face was white as chalk, his eyes almost starting from their sockets. Bound to the stump, he could move neither hand nor foot, and round him, thick, crawling, innumerable, were the hideous crabs, swarming on their prey.

Like some hideous nightmare it seemed to the Australian, as he tugged and wrenched frantically at his bonds.

The black men of the schooner had tied him securely; the ropes were strong and fast knotted. He was helpless to raise a finger to avert his terrible doom.

He hardly knew that he was crying out. Shudders ran through him as he felt the nipping of the crabs at his legs.

They were swarming round him.

Horrible, clinging creatures covered his feet and clambered over his legs. It was only a matter of time—long, long minutes, but only a matter of time—before he was devoured. In shuddering horror he shrieked again.

But for his cries Ken would never have found him in the darkness of the beach. But they guided King of the Islands surely to the spot.

In the midst of his horror, Kit was suddenly conscious of the sound of hurried, tramping footsteps grinding on the sand. But he was almost mad now with fear and pain and

horror, and he did not realise that it was rescue.

Ken King's heavy sea-boots tramped furiously on the crawling crabs, smashing them by dozens. With his bare hands he tore the clinging creatures from their helpless victim, receiving several nips himself as he did so.

Hudson was still calling for help. Koko reached the spot in a few moments more, and his heavy hands dashed the clinging crabs away.

"Cut him loose, Koko!" panted Ken.

The keen bush-knife flashed over the ropes. They dropped in fragments round the stump.

Kit Hudson was free.

He staggered blindly away from the stump, even yet hardly realising what was happening. Ken caught him in a strong arm as he reeled.

"Carry us white marster, Koko!" he rapped out.

"Yes, sar."

The giant Kanaka picked up the rescued prisoner as if he had been a baby and slung him across his shoulder.

Hudson's cries had ceased; half fainting, he lay like a sack of copra across the mighty shoulder of the Kanaka, who bore him swiftly up the beach to the woods. By the stump lay the cut ropes and a hundred smashed crabs.

Ken, following the Kanaka, looked back as he ran. He half expected to see a movement from the Shark,

lying out in the inlet. But there was no motion, no sound of alarm. Evidently Bully Samson and his crew had not seen the rescue, in the darkness of the beach, and did not suspect that help had come to the doomed man. No doubt the 'bully' of the Shark believed that it was death that had stopped the cries of the prisoner he had given to the land-crabs. At that moment Ken would not have been sorry to see Bully Samson in pursuit. He would gladly have sent a bullet from the Winchester through the black heart of the South-Sea ruffian.

In the depths of the palm woods Koko halted and put his burden down. Kit Hudson was himself again now. He lay on the ground, panting, and staring up at the dim figures in the pale glimmer of the stars through the feathery fronds.

"You've saved me," he muttered huskily.

"Yes, sar," grinned Koko. "White marster King of the Islands save um. Me tinkee aitoo when me hear; white marster savvy."

"It was horrible!" he breathed. "I—I think my nerve went when they crawled over me and—and—"  
His voice broke.

"I think anybody's nerve would have gone," said Ken.

Hudson peered at him. "You're King of the Islands?" he asked.

"You've saved my life," said Hudson—"saved me from an awful death."

# Islands!

CHAS. HAMILTON



## Peril Afloat, on Land, and in the Air. A Yarn That Will Thrill You!

You've made a friend who will die for you if need be. I can't believe yet that I've really got away from that horror." He shuddered again and gritted his teeth. "I'll get a chance at Bully Samson some day, with a gun in my hand. I'll go back to the Shark now if you'll lend me a gun!"

"You won't, shipmate," said Ken. "They're too many for us, or I'd go with you and see you through. Bully Samson will keep. You're coming with me to the Dawn now."

"You've got your ship near?"

"In the lagoon across the island. Can you walk? Koko can carry you, if you like."

"I can walk."

Ken helped the Cornstalk to his feet, but Hudson staggered blindly. Ken held him, or he would have fallen.

"You're not fit yet," said Ken. "Carry feller white marster, Koko."

"Yes, sar."

"I reckon I'm played out," said Hudson ruefully.

"Not quite fit now to go back to the Shark and handle Bully Samson—what?" chuckled Ken.

"No."

"Get on, Koko!"

The Kanaka carried Hudson on-

ward with ease. Through the dark palms they threaded their way till they came out at last on the shore of the lagoon.

Hudson's eyes turned on the handsome little ketch floating out on the starlit waters.

"That's your craft?"

"That's it."

**KEN KING, known as King of the Islands, moors his ketch in a coral-fringed lagoon in the Pacific. He rescues a Kanaka called Koko, who tells Ken that he was bo'sun on a Captain Samson's schooner, and that the Captain had ordered him to be killed because he had tried to rescue from the ship an Australian boy, named Kit Hudson. Kit is to be eaten alive by the land-crabs unless he tells Samson a secret that the ruffian is anxious to learn. While Ken is planning to rescue the prisoner, Bully Samson comes to him and demands the return of Koko. Ken refuses, and in the fight which ensues gives the bully a hiding. That night Ken and Koko set out to rescue Hudson. They find him bound to a stump on the shore. (Now read on.)**

"She's a beauty."

"I reckon she is," said Ken. "I reckon she can beat any craft her size in the Pacific, and sail a point nearer the wind than most."

He picked the oars out of the crevice, threw them into the whaleboat, and pushed the boat into the water. Koko dropped the rescued prisoner into it and took the oars.

Hudson sat in the whaleboat, breathing hard and deep.

Even now it was difficult for him to realise that he was out of the

clutches of Bully Samson and saved from the revenge of the ruffian.

Ken regarded him rather curiously. "How did you put Bully Samson's back up to that extent?" he asked. "Samson is the blackest scoundrel in Pacific waters, and that's well known from Nuka-hiva to Honolulu; but I reckon giving a man to the land-crabs is the limit, even for Bully Samson. You must have riled him sore."

"He wanted to know something that I could tell him."

"And you wouldn't?"

"No."

"You've got some nerve."

"I was with John Chin at his pearl island once," said Hudson. "I could take a ship there, and Bully Samson knows it."

Ken whistled.

"John Chin, the richest Chin in the Pacific!" he said. "And you could steer a craft to his pearl island?"

"I could." Hudson gave King of the Islands a quick look. "You're not the man to ask me to do it."

Ken chuckled.

"No; I'm not a South-Sea skipper of Bully Samson's calibre," he said. "I've traded with John Chin, and he's a square man, though he's a Chin, and he's got a keen eye to a bargain. It's John Chin that's going to buy my copra when I've finished this trip among the islands. Koko tells me you were taken off a cattle ship."

"Yes. I was broke to the world, and I shipped on a cattle boat at Sydney. She went down in a typhoon. Bully Samson was glad to get hold of a man who had sailed with John Chin. My name's Kit Hudson, white Australian. If you want a man on the ketch, I can work for my keep till you can put me on the beach somewhere."

The whaleboat bumped on the ketch.

Koko lifted Hudson on board, with the help of the starting Hivala Oa men above.

He was taken down into Ken's cabin and placed in Ken's own bunk. For some time Ken was busy, rubbing the rescued man's bites with a native ointment and bandaging his legs. Hudson watched him in silence.

"You're a white mau, Ken King," he said at last. "I've often heard of King of the Islands, but I

never reckoned I should drop across him like this. You don't ship a white man on this ketch?"

"I've been looking for a mate," answered Ken, "but I haven't found one yet to suit. You've sailed with John Chin?"

"Third mate of the Saraband," answered Hudson. "That is, of course, I acted as third mate. You could put all my certificates into a nutshell, and it would still be empty."

Ken laughed.

"You're looking for a job?"

# King of the Islands!

(Continued from previous page.)

"Yes."

"I'll give you a trial on the Dawn, then. If you were good enough for John Chin, you're good enough for me, and I reckon I should be glad to have a white man aboard. And a fellow who can stand the racket as you've done is a fellow I can trust."

"Done!" said Hudson. "I reckon I shall be able to report for duty to-morrow, sir."

"You can cut out the 'sir,' excepting on duty," said Ken, laughing. "If we sail together we shall be friends. Now you'd better get some sleep."

"You're staying in this lagoon?"

"Only till dawn," answered Ken.

"I was here to pick up copra trade with the natives, if there are any; but I reckon trade's off with Bully Samson hanging around. I doubt if there are any natives, either. I've landed here for water and coconuts before, and I know the island well, but I've never seen any natives. This trip I wanted water chiefly, but I was going to look over the island and see whether there was a native village tucked away somewhere along the shore."

"You'd better up anchor before dawn, if you know your way out of the reefs."

"Why?" asked Ken.

"Because Bully Samson will find out at dawn that you've saved me, and it won't be healthy for you here after that."

"You reckon he will bring his schooner round to the lagoon?"

"I'm sure he will," said Hudson earnestly, "and once he lays you aboard with his crew of black devils you won't have an earthly."

"He hasn't laid me aboard yet," said Ken, with a smile. "And the Dawn isn't easy to catch."

"The schooner's got twice your spread of canvas," said Hudson. "I know she's a good craft, but canvas tells. The Shark will go four knots to your three."

"Just about," assented Ken coolly.

"But I don't think Bully Samson will lay me aboard very easily, for all that. The Shark sails four knots to my three, but she draws ten feet more of water."

He rose from beside the bank.

"You get some sleep now."

"Right!"

Hudson closed his weary eyes, and Ken King returned to the deck of the ketch.

## IN CHASE!

**B**ULLY SAMSON had slept badly that night.

Deep draughts of brandy had failed to produce their accustomed effect; the skipper of the Shark slept ill, and tossed and turned in his bunk through the hot night.

Hardened ruffian as he was, Samson was feeling something like remorse. The fearful cries from the darkened beach, the cries of the man he had consigned to so fearful a doom, still

# What Car Was That?

**HOTCH-KISS.**  
15.9 horse-power, four cylinders. French make.



**CROSBLEY.**  
20.9 horse-power, six cylinders. British make.



**BEAN.**  
14-45 horse-power, four cylinders. British make.



**DELAUNAY BELLE-VILLE.**  
14-40 horse-power, four cylinders. French make.

Recognising cars is a fascinating pastime. This feature will help you to know the different makes by the road.

seemed to echo in his ears. If he did not repent, at least he felt remorse.

The cries had been suddenly stilled, and Samson had no doubt of the cause. His victim's sufferings had been briefer than he had expected. That the Australian had escaped did not even cross his mind. It occurred to him that Koko might have told King of the Islands that there was a white prisoner on board the schooner, but he gave no thought to it. He did not even know that Kaio-lalulounga had overheard him tell the prisoner that he was to be tied up for the land-crabs at night-fall; but, in any case, he would not have expected the skipper of the Dawn to concern himself about the matter.

That the young Cornstalk was dead, and that he had died terribly, Bully Samson had no doubt whatever. It was that certainty that made him shudder to recall the fearful cries that had rung and echoed in the night.

At the first glimmer of dawn Bully Samson left the cuddy, reeking with the fumes of liquor.

He went to the rail and stared at the coral shore, but at the distance his bleared eyes failed to pick out the stump to which Hudson had been bound.

"You feller Kalua, you bring longee glasses!" he snapped.

Kalua brought the glasses promptly. The laggard ferocity in Bully Samson's face had scared the chattering blacks into awed silence the moment he appeared on deck.

Under the powerful glasses the beach and the coral rocks rushed into close view at once.

Samson focused them on the stump to which Hudson had been bound.

He hardly knew what he expected to see—fragments of clothing and sagging bones left in the ropes, perhaps. But what he actually saw was the bare stump with dead crabs lying about it.

The skipper of the Shark rubbed his bleared eyes and stared again. He could scarcely believe his eyes or the glasses. Not a trace of clothing remained on the stump—not a trace of a rope. But as he stared he picked out the ropes that lay round the stump among the dead crabs. Of the prisoner, dead or alive, there was no sign.

The change that came over Bully Samson's face was terrifying to his crew.

He knew now that the prisoner had escaped. It was not death, but rescue, that had stilled the cries in the night. The land-crabs could not have left the spot without a trace of their victim.

Samson dashed down the glasses with an oath.

"By hokey! He got away! Lower the boat!" he roared.

All the way to the beach Bully Samson cursed volubly. Not a trace of remorse remained now. His only feeling was one of demonic rage at his victim's escape.

He leaped out before the boat reached the sand, and trampled furiously to the stump.

There his bloodshot eyes quickly detected what had happened. The clean cuts of a keen knife showed plainly on the fragments of rope. Footprints were deep in the sand, and the track led away up the beach towards the palm woods.

Bully Samson raved with rage. "King of the Islands!" he hissed. "By hokey! King of the Islands! He's taken him! By hokey!"

It was the only explanation, and Bully Samson knew the truth at once. King of the Islands had rescued the prisoner, and Kit Hudson was at that moment undoubtedly safe on board the ketch.

Safe? The bully of the Shark swore furiously that he should not be safe from his vengeance, on the ketch or anywhere else. He had more than one account to settle with King of the Islands now. He passed his hand over his bruised face and blackened eye. King of the Islands had handled him, beaten and bruised him, and Bully Samson had been brooding over revenge. And now King of the Islands had rescued his prisoner—might even learn from him the location of John Chin's pearl island and lift the fortune that Bully Samson had hoped to lift. Once that idea entered his mind, Bully Samson had no doubt. He judged others by himself.

He returned to the schooner in a raging temper.

His first thought was to lead his whole savage crew across the island and attack the Dawn as she lay anchored in the lagoon.

But, enraged as he was, Bully Samson had not lost his caution.

At close quarters, hand to hand, he and his wild crew would have made short work of the ketch's company, but an attack on the ketch from the beach was not likely to reach close quarters. Samson knew that Ken was a crack shot with the Winchester.

He shook his head.

But there were other ways. The ketch was swift—swift as a seabird in her flight. But she could not perform miracles. The schooner was twice her size, and had twice her spread of canvas, and was a good boat—and Bully Samson, brute and ruffian as he was, was as skillful a skipper as any that sailed the Pacific, and he knew how to get the last ounce of speed out of his craft.

On the open seas, Bully Samson would have undertaken to run down the Dawn almost in the teeth of the wind.

A scramble on board from the open beach, exposed to the fire of a Winchester repeating-rifle in a sure hand, was one matter. A rush alongside in his schooner, and his whole savage crew leaping down on the low deck of the Dawn in a yelling bunch, was quite another. Why, he told himself furiously, the Shark was big enough and heavy enough to run down the little ketch and cut her in two with its prow, as Samson had run down and cut in two many a native war-canoe in his time. Once in sight of the ketch on the open waters, sea or lagoon, and King of the Islands would be utterly at his mercy—and Hudson, too, and the Kanaka deserter. Only the seabirds

would bolder the savage deed—only the sharks would know what became of the victims. The black crew of the schooner would tell no tales; it would not be the first crime in which they had shared with their skipper.

Samson roared orders for the anchor to be weighed, and the rusty iron chain creaked and rattled up.

Only one doubt assailed him.

The ketch had been anchored in the lagoon, and few skippers would have cared to take her out through the reefs in the dark. But he knew that King of the Islands was a master of his craft, and would not have feared to run the reefs by the light of the stars. If he had done so, if he had fled, the ketch was beyond the reach of Bully Samson's vengeance.

On that point alone was the South-Sea ruffian anxious.

If the ketch was in sight, at any distance, he would run her down; but if King of the Islands had fled by starlight, the vast Pacific might have swallowed her from all discovery.

The next meeting might be at Papeete, or Taioi-hae, or under the hills of Samoa, where Bully Samson would not dare to use such methods. Only in the lone waters of deserted seas, with no human eyes to witness his deeds, did he dare to sink a white man's ship.

Had King of the Islands fled under the stars? That was the question that Bully Samson asked himself savagely, as he toiled the schooner out of the inlet into the open sea.

But the reefs were rounded at last,



"Look!" cried Ken. At one moment the schooner was coming on like some gigantic seabird. The next—CRASH! Mainmast and foremast went like stikks as she struck!

## King of the Islands!

(Continued from previous page.)

and he came round the island with almost every stipe' of canvas on the Shark full and drawing, his black crew standing keen and watchful at sheet and halyard.

A shout of triumph, like the roar of some savage beast, burst from the brawny throat of Bully Samson.

There was the Dawn!

Bully Samson's deep-set, inflamed eyes danced with glee.

There she was—on the deep waters, under his savage stare—quitting her anchorage—too late! Too late—with an enemy on her track that sailed four knots to her three!

### THE FATE OF BULLY SAMSON.

**K**ING OF THE ISLANDS looked back, with a smile on his lips.

Like a mountain of belying canvas, the Shark was tearing through the water in his wake. Fast as was the little ketch, the pursuer was coming up hand over fist.

"Feller Samson him killee every feller um Dawn!" said Kai-o-lalulalonga. "Him crew makee kai-kai every feller, my word!"

That was the fixed opinion of Kai-o-lalulalonga; but he spoke coolly enough, his brawny hand on the heavy bush-knife slung at his hip. When the finish came, Koko the Kanaka would be ready for it. Watching the tearing schooner behind, he calculated how many minutes it would be before she swooped down on the ketch and her wild crew came leaping aboard, to slay every soul on the Dawn after a fierce and hopeless fight against overwhelming odds. That must be the end now, so far as Koko could see, and he was ready for the last desperate struggle.

Kit Hudson shared his opinion, and his face was shadowed as he stood, pale and bandaged, on the tiny after-deck of the ketch. His eyes lingered on King of the Islands' smiling face, and he could not understand his smile.

Ken looked his questioning eye. "Four knots to our three—what?" he said.

"Quite—and more," said Kit Hudson. "You're not getting all that you could out of the Dawn, even now."

"That's so."

"You've left it too late, King," said Kit Hudson gloomily. "We're for it now. Bully Samson will not spare a soul aboard. He dare not! He daren't leave a man alive to tell among the islands what he did to the Dawn."

"We're not sunk yet," said Ken. He regarded the Cornstalk curiously.

"You think we're done for?"

"I know we are," answered Hudson grimly. "I'd have risked taking the ketch out through the reefs in the dark. Better pile her up on the rocks than give Bully Samson a chance at us."

"I could have taken the Dawn out

in the dark without scraping an inch of paint off her," answered Ken.

"And you didn't? You waited for daylight—why?"

"To give Bully Samson a chance."

Hudson stared at him.

"You can see that you'll never get the heels of him?"

"Quite."

Hudson looked back at the towering canvas of the Shark.

"She's got the wind of us. There's not a dog's chance of getting clear. In ten minutes she'll swoop, and either lay us alongside or run us down and cut us in half."

"Looks like it, doesn't it?" said Ken.

Hudson bit his lip.

He simply could not understand the careless recklessness of the boy skipper of the Dawn.

Ken stared back at the swooping schooner with a cool, calculating eye.

The Shark was near enough now for him to make out the towering figure of Bully Samson, shaking a brawny fist at the ketch, and the stirring forms of the black crew. He caught the glint of sunlight on the points of spears and the flashing steel of bared knives.

Yet he still smiled, but his smile was grim. Murder on the high seas was what Bully Samson intended, and it seemed to Hudson and the Kanaka that no human agency could now avert that fate.

"I know what I'm doing, shipmate," said Ken quietly. "I sailed at daylight to give Bully Samson a chance. I knew he would bring his schooner round the island after me—I hoped he would, at least."

"Give me your rifle," said Hudson. "I might pick the scoundrel off when they close in."

Ken shook his head.

"No need!"

"Oh, you're asking for death!" exclaimed Hudson. "We're for the jaws of the sharks in under ten minutes from now."

"I know what I'm doing. The Shark sails four knots to our three—and draws twenty feet of water to our ten."

"What difference does that make?"

Ken's smile was grim.

"You don't know these seas?" he asked.

"I've never sailed here before. That island yonder is marked on no chart," answered Hudson.

"I've sailed here a dozen times and more. I was in a wreck here when I stood no higher than that teak rail," said Ken, "and if the Dawn drew twenty feet, I reckon we should be food for fishes at this very minute, shipmate."

Hudson started.

A glimmering came into his mind of what the boy skipper of the Dawn had planned, of what he intended.

"Bully Samson has got to pay for tying up a white man for the land-crabs," said Ken, and his blue eyes glinted. "That's why I waited for daylight, shipmate; that's why I gave Samson a chance to get after me. The Pacific has seen enough of Bully Samson and his crew—I reckon the sharks are going to see the last of them!"

"Oh!" gasped Hudson.

He stared over the rail.

The Dawn cut through blue, rolling waters, keen as a knife. Hudson, had he been asked, would have said that clear water ran to a bottom at least a hundred yards below, and more likely a thousand. But he knew of the hidden deadly reefs of the Pacific—he knew the lurking perils of uncharted seas. What Ken knew Bully Samson did not know; but Kit Hudson realised now that the boy skipper of the Dawn knew what he was about, and that he was leading on the South-Sea desperado to his doom.

Bang!

A trade-gun roared on the schooner, and the lump of old iron with which it had been loaded sang through the shrouds of the ketch.

Ken laughed aloud.

"That's the last word of Bully Samson!" he said.

He was right.

"Look!" he said.

Hudson watched with dazzled eyes. At one moment the schooner was coming on like some gigantic scabber, sweeping under belying canvas, rushing down on her prey like a giant albatross. The next—

Crash!

Mainmast and foremast on the schooner went like sticks as she struck. Topmasts and canvas sprawled over the side in a maze of tangled rigging. The Shark heeled over to port, and a fearful yell rang from her slanting decks.

Bully Samson clutched at a stanchion, his black-bearded face suddenly white, hoarse curses streaming from his lips. His ship was reeling and staggering under his feet as the sharp teeth of the hidden reef tore the copper bottom out of her.

Wild and shrill, in a terrified falsetto, rose the shrieks and yells of the Solomon Islanders and Tonga men, already splashing in the water that rushed into the schooner.

King of the Islands stared back. His handsome face was grim, his eyes glinting. From Koko the Kanaka came a yell of glee.

"Him feller schooner sinkee! Feller Samson makee kai-kai um shark!"

Kit Hudson stared with fixed eyes.

The schooner heeled over on the sunken reef. Wilder rose the cries of the black crew, swimming among the wreckage in terror of the tiger sharks.

The Hiva-Oa men watched with indifferent faces. Koko the Kanaka was grinning with glee. But Kit Hudson's eyes turned on King of the Islands. He did not speak; but his look was a mute appeal.

Ken met his eyes, and the grim sternness of his face relaxed.

For a long moment he hesitated, and then he rapped out an order. The Dawn, tacking almost in the teeth of the wind, swept back towards the reef and the wrecked schooner. And the voice of King of the Islands rang out again:

"Lower the whaleboat!"

(King of the Islands finds life growing more exciting still in next week's thrill-packed instalment. Order No. 1 of THE MODERN BOY TO-DAY—before you forget!)