

CAPT. CAMPBELL writes within: "MY FLYING THRILLS!"

The MODERN BOY

EVERY MONDAY,
Week Ending May 26th, 1928.

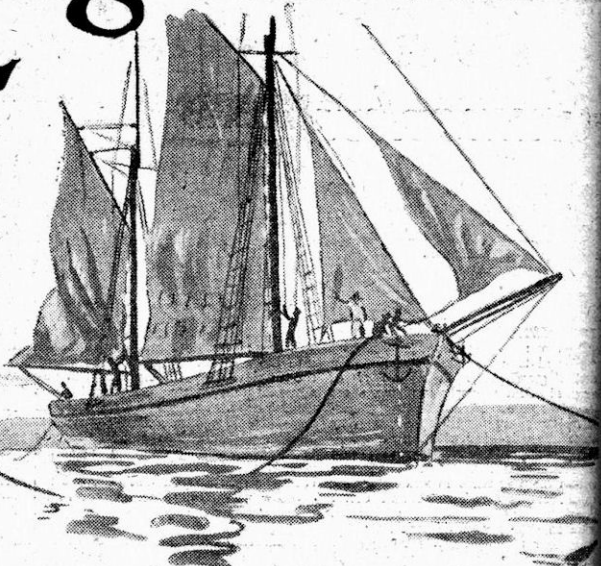
No. 16.
Vol. 1.

2^D



THE WINDJAMMERS' SECOND CHANCE! (See page 11.)

King of the



The moorings were cast off, the whaleboat manned, and, with the brown-skinned oarsmen pulling, the ketch glided out to the reef!

Cast Up by the Sea!

KING OF THE ISLANDS stepped ashore from the ketch and walked along the beach to John Chin's office in the fresh morning.

Lalinge lay bright and fresh under the rising sun. A crowd of Kanakas were already bathing in the bay, their brown skins gleaming in the sunlight. Black boys, in the bungalows, were taking their masters the morning coffee—in some cases the morning cocktail.

Manager Belnap, of the Burns Line, hailed King of the Islands from his veranda as he came swinging along with a sailorman's easy gait. Mr. Belnap held up the long glass that his black boy had just filled.

"This way, King! Here, you feller bey, you fill glass along King of the Islands!"

Ken shook his head, with a smile, as he stopped and looked into the shady veranda.

"Not for me, thanks! Any news of John Chin?"

"I hear that he never turned up at all last night," answered the manager. "His people are in a fuster about it. They're sending over a canoe to Kufa to inquire—it started at dawn."

"Then I'll get along to the office. Something must have happened to the Chin," said Ken.

Manager Belnap nodded. But he was more deeply interested in the contents of his long glass than in the fate of John Chin.

Ken walked on to the Chinese merchant's office, his brows knitted with thought. It was extremely unusual—in fact, unknown—for the Chinese merchant to fail to keep an appointment, and he had failed Ken the

previous evening. That he had also failed to return to Lalinge at all was proof that something had happened to him.

Ken had a friendly regard for the Chinaman. Even Kit Hudson, who had little use for the yellow race, made an exception in favour of John Chin. King of the Islands, who he invested his share of the treasure of Faloo in a new cargo for the Dawn, was anxious to get to sea. By matters of trade faded from his mind now. If some misfortune had happened to John Chin, Ken intended to look into the matter before he sailed.

John Chin's office was generally an example of quiet order and precision. But it was in great confusion now. The inexplicable absence of the merchant had disturbed and alarmed all his numerous staff. The Eurasian chief clerk met Ken with a long face, almost forgetting to be an elegant and civilised white man in his agitation.

"Honourable master no returning!" he exclaimed. "I sending canoe to Kufa inquiring questions of esteemed master."

"The canoe's not back yet?" The Eurasian pointed a finger towards the shining bay.

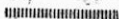
"Canoe coming to arrive," he said. Ken looked across the bay, canoe was paddling swiftly in from the outer reef.

KEN KING, known as King of the Islands, sails the South Seas in his ketch, the Dawn, in search of trade. With him is Kit Hudson, an Australian youngster, who acts as mate. They fall foul of a rascally skipper named Samson, and managing to get the better of him they sink his boat and leave him stranded. Samson is aware that John Chin, a Chinese trader on the Island of Lalinge for whom Kit once worked, has discovered a rich pearling ground. He plans to kidnap Chin and wrest the secret from him. To this end Samson joins forces with a Dutch skipper, Van Tromp of the Oom Pieter. They run down Chin's boat, take him and his crew aboard, and run for it! Meanwhile the Dawn is tied up at Lalinge, with Ken and Kit waiting for the trader's return. (Now read on.)

Islands!

By **SIR ALAN COBHAM**
and **C. HAMILTON**

SIR ALAN COBHAM'S
Great Yarn of Adventure
by **AIR—LAND—AND SEA**
in the Tropics!



drew the attention of the shipmates of the Dawn. A crowd of natives had gathered, and were jabbering excitedly. Manager Belnap had come down from his bungalow, and two or three other white men had joined the throng. The Eurasian clerk could be seen wringing his hands in exaggerated grief.

King of the Islands and Kit Hudson hurried along the coral wharf, and ran down the beach to see what was toward. They could guess that it was news of some kind of John Chin.

"The Chink's gone!" said Manager Belnap.

"Gone?" exclaimed Ken.
"His whaleboat has been run down. Some of the natives found this thrown up by the tide, and brought it here."

King of the Islands stared at the object that lay on the beach, in the midst of the excited crowd. It was the stern half of a whaleboat, cut clean in two by the crashing bows of some ship that had run it down at sea. King of the Islands stared at it, and felt a lump in his throat. That fragment of wreckage, tossed ashore by the Pacific tides, was all that remained to tell of the fate of John Chin!

"Koko Savvy!"

KOKO, the Kanaka, ceased to twang his ukulele and to hum a Hawaiian song. The cheery grin died off his brown face.

The tropic sun was blazing down on Lalinge.

Koko, seated at the foot of the mainmast of the ketch Dawn, with his long, brown legs, in striped calico shorts, stretched out on the hot deck, had been enjoying life.

While the Dawn lay by the coral wharf of Lalinge there was little or nothing for Koko-lalulalonga to do, and, like a true Kanaka, he liked doing little, and loved doing nothing.

Lazy hours of sitting in the shade or basking in the sun were all that Koko needed to make him happy.

He stretched his long brown legs on the deck, leaned lazily against the mast, twanged his ukulele, and hummed a song, and asked nothing more of Fate.

His utmost exertion was to shift his position as the sun moved in the cloudless heavens, so that the mast was constantly behind him and the tall cedar shaded him from the glare.

But as King of the Islands stepped over the low teak rail, from the wharf to the ketch, the happy, careless contentment faded from Koko's brown face.

King of the Islands was frowning darkly—not with anger, but with troubled thought.



He went down to the margin of the bay, the Eurasian with him. The canoe came swiftly on, paddled by black men, with no sign of a Chinaman in it. If John Chin had stayed the night on Kufa he had not returned to Lalinge in the canoe. With a flashing of paddles the canoe ran at last upon the beach. A breathless Kanaka jumped ashore.

"Honourable master—" began the Eurasian.

"Master he no stop along Kufa!" announced the Kanaka.

"He started back yesterday?" asked Ken. "Feller John Chin he washy-washy along Lalinge day before?"

"Yessar! Feller along Kufa no savvy what name John Chin no comey along Lalinge."

Ken compressed his lips. Something had happened to John Chin's whaleboat on the short run from Kufa to Lalinge—on a calm sea. It was impossible not to surmise that there had been foul play of some sort.

Ken walked back to the ketch, with a deeply corrugated brow. Kit Hudson met him with an inquiring glance as he stepped on board.

"No news of the Chink?" he asked, reading the answer in the troubled face of King of the Islands.

"No. He hasn't come back, and they don't know anything on Kufa.

He left for Lalinge in the whaleboat as usual."

Hudson wrinkled his brows.
"But what can have happened to him? The weather's been calm—he had a good boat and a good crew, and he's made the trip a hundred times at least. What—"

"Foul play of some sort," said Ken.

"But what—who—"

"That beats me, so far."

"We're not pulling out yet?" asked Hudson.

Ken shook his head.

"Not till we know what's become of John Chin. He's stood by me more than once, like a white man, Chink as he is; and I'm standing by him if he's got fouled by some seelawyer."

"His niggers?" suggested Hudson.

"I've thought of that, but it's not likely. John Chin's men are all good boys. A man like that Dutch smuggler, Van Tromp, or a brute like Bully Samson might be kai-kaied by his men—but never John Chin. I can't get on to it at all," confessed Ken. "But if we don't get any news to-day I shall drum round in the Dawn looking for him. You agree?" he added.

"You bet!"

It was an anxious morning for King of the Islands. It was towards noon that a hubbub on the beach

King of the Islands!

(Continued from previous page.)

The fate of John Chin, the Chinese merchant, lay heavy on his mind and on his heart.

The wreck of the whaleboat, washed ashore by the tide, told that John Chin had been run down at sea, on his return from Kufa to Lalange. That there had been foul play Ken was assured. In the sunlight of a tropic day the boat could scarcely have been run down by accident. And what had become of John Chin and his native boat-crew? The sea was alive with sharks—but surely at least one of the boat's crew would have gained the shore, if abandoned by the vessel that had run down the boat. If John Chin and his men had been picked up by the vessel that had run them down, where were they? In bad hands, it was certain; for Ken had no doubt whatever that the whaleboat had been run down deliberately.

King of the Islands and Kit Hudson thought the matter over and over again and again, with painful intensity; and, meanwhile, the ketch lay idly moored at the wharf. Idleness, which appealed so strongly to Kaio-lalulalonga, did not appeal to King of the Islands in the least. He was ready for sea, and anxious to get to sea. But while the fate of John Chin remained unknown, he would not and could not lift his anchor.

Koko, the Kanaka, gave the fate of John Chin no thought whatever. Like all Kanakas, he thought very little, and people who passed out of his sight ceased to exist, so far as he was concerned.

But the clouded face of King of the Islands made a great difference. That cloud was immediately reflected upon the brown face of the boatswain. Like the sea reflecting the sunshine or the clouds, Koko reflected the moods of his master. The dark trouble on Ken's handsome, sunburnt face was sufficient to shadow the sunny sky for Koko; and

as he knew the cause of it, the fate of John Chin, instead of being a trifle light as air, became a matter of importance to the Kanaka.

He watched King of the Islands in silence as Ken dropped into a long chair on the after-deck. Kit Hudson, who had been seated on the rail idly coiling his stockwhip, gave his shipmate an inquiring look.

"No news?"

Ken shook his head. "It beats me," said Hudson. "The whaleboat was run down intentionally. There can't be much doubt about that."

"None at all," answered Ken moodily. "Some enemy of John Chin met him on his way back from Kufa, and ran him down. If he's alive, he's in some sea-lawyer's hands." King of the Islands moved restlessly. "I owe a lot to that Chink, Kit. When I first sailed the Dawn he stood me my first cargo on my bare word, and took the risk. If he's in danger—and he must be—I can't leave him to it."

"I've sailed with him, and he was a good skipper to me," said Hudson. "I'm with you all the way, Ken. But what can we do?"

"Wait for news first—and then drum round in the ketch looking for him," said King of the Islands. "I know it means the trade going to pot. After all, we can afford it—for once. The gold we lifted on Faloo will see us through. We haven't got to drum hard for copra to pay the running expenses—for a time, at least. We're in luck, so far as that goes."

Hudson nodded.

"I'm with you all the way, as I said. Let the trade go, so long as we can keep afloat without it."

"We can stand it for a few weeks, at least, without having to mortgage the Dawn to the Jew broker at Lukwe," said Ken, with a faint smile. "Old Mafoo never knew how useful his sovereigns would be when he stacked them away in the tapa sack under the banyan-tree on Faloo."

Kaio-lalulalonga had laid down his ukulele and was coming aft, his big

bare feet pattering on the glisten-
teak deck.

"Trouble he stop along little white master?" asked the Kanaka.

"Plenty too much trouble he stop along me," answered Ken.

"Little white master he tinkee along John Chin?"

"Yes."

"He tinkee along John Chin head belong me," said the Kanaka, "Koko savvy."

Ken smiled.

He had little faith in the mental processes in the head of a Kanaka.

Koko smiled, too—not because he saw any reason for smiling, but because the "little white master" smiled.

"Well, what do you think with head belong you, Koko?" asked King of the Islands good-humouredly. "What feller thing Koko savvy?" "Tinkee back long way," said Koko. "Feller King of the Islands tinkee back along Koko."

"What do you want me to remember?" asked Ken, puzzled. "What name me tinkee back along you?"

Koko made a gesture towards Kit Hudson.

"Tinkee back along feller Hudson prisoner along schooner belong Bully Samson," he said.

"I remember."

"Bully Samson he wantee make feller Hudson steer course along pearl island belong John Chin?"

"Well?"

"Feller King of the Islands snake Shark along reef. Feller Hudson be no stop along Bully Samson. Bully Samson wantee find pearl island belong John Chin. S'pose Bully Samson get John Chin, makee guide along pearl island?"

Ken stared at the Kanaka.

"My Sam!" he almost shouted. It was light on the mystery at last—and it came from Kaio-lalulalonga, in whose mental processes King of the Islands placed so little faith! Only to clear the cloud from the face of his little white master, with absolute unconcern for the fate of John Chin, had Koko set his wits to work. A hundred John Chins might have vanished into the

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vastness of the Pacific without causing Koko to cease twanging his musical ukulele for a moment—but for the fact that his master's face was clouded with trouble.

Kit Hudson jumped clear of the rail.

"Koko's hit it!" he exclaimed.

"My Sam!" repeated King of the Islands. "Bully Samson was on board that Dutch schooner—Van Tromp's ship—that was towed out of the bay yesterday. Koko saw him there. Samson wanted you to guide him to John Chin's pearl island. Is it possible that he has kidnapped John Chin for the same reason?"

"Me tinkeed head belong me," said Koko proudly. "Dussman he one rascal allee same Bully Samson."

King of the Islands rose to his feet. His face was full of excitement now. Koko had given him the clue.

"Samson was on board Van Tromp's ship, Kit. If they're in league, that settles the matter. Van Tromp is a smuggler and a thief, but I never reckoned he had the nerve for a kidnapping game—he's a coward, and afraid of his own shadow almost. But Samson may have bucked him up to it. You remember we wondered why that Dutchman was so anxious to tow out of the bay, when there was hardly a breath of wind to be picked up outside the reef. If he knew that John Chin was coming back from Kufa in this whaleboat—and all Lalinge knew that—he was towing out in time to meet the whaleboat."

"And to run her down and kidnap John Chin!" said Hudson.

"Koko's bit the nail on the head. It's Bully Samson's work—he's got the Dutchman to join with him; Van Tromp's rascal enough, and he may have borrowed a little nerve from Bully Samson. Samson was mad on getting a clue to the pearl island—he tied me up for the land-crabs because I refused to guide him. He's got hold of John Chin himself now."

Ken paced the deck, thinking it out.

Koko's suggestion had let a flood of light into his mind. He was almost certain now that he knew the truth.

His glance swept across the shining bay to the outer reef and the boundless Pacific beyond.

"We've got it now!" he said. "It's a hundred to one that that is what happened. But Captain van Tromp is twenty-four hours ahead of us. His old tub can't sail like the Dawn. If we could raise her topsails, I'd undertake to run her down in the teeth of the wind. But—where is he?"

"S'pose John Chin he set a course, feller Dussman sail along pearl island," said Koko. "Feller Hudson he savvy pearl island."

"That's true," said Hudson. "I can set a course for John Chin's pearl island, as Bully Samson knew when he had me in his hands. I can take you there, Ken, if you think—"

"Is John Chin the man to guide him there?" said Ken dubiously. "I don't believe he would do it, to save his life."

"Bully Samson won't stand on ceremony with him—any more than he did with me," answered Hudson. "John Chin may guide him to save

his life, or to save himself from Malaita tortures."

Ken set his lips.

"I know! The villain is capable of anything! You're sure you can raise the pearl island, Kit?"

"Quite. It's plain sailing," answered the Cornstalk. "I sailed there as mate in John Chin's brig once. I could steer a course there with my eyes shut."

"Then that's our course," said King of the Islands. "If John Chin has set a course for him, that's where we shall find him—if not, we'll search the Pacific for the Dutchman's schooner. We know now what craft John Chin is on, at least, and we know it will never come near Lalinge, so we're wasting time here. The pearl island first—and if we don't find them there, we'll drum the Pacific from Tahiti to the Solomon Islands hunting for the Oom Pieter!"

He slapped Koko's brawny shoulder.

"Good man, Koko! You've set us a course, at least, and we can get to sea."

The Kanaka grinned.

"Koko no common Kanaka," he said. "Tinkee plenty too much head belong him, sar!"

Ken shouted to the Hiva-Oa crew, lolling idly on the coral wharf.

"You feller boy, you show a leg plenty quick! Tumble up!"

Lompo and Danny and Lufa and the rest clambered on board. The ketch, a minute before a scene of lazy idleness, was now buzzing with haste. The moorings were cast off, the whaleboat manned, the tow-ropes bent, and with the brown-skinned oarsmen pulling hard, the ketch glided out to the reef.

The cloud had passed from Ken's face now that he was active again. Outside the barrier reef, the canvas was shaken out, and the copper-sheathed prow of the Dawn cut the rollers of the Pacific. Koko, at the helm, hummed his Hawaiian song, his brown face happy and contented again, now that his "little white master" no longer frowned.

The Secret!

HIS huge bulk jammed in the cross-trees of the Oom Pieter, Bully Samson swept the Pacific with a searching eye. Captain van Tromp watched him from below, his little piggy eyes fixed on the bulky figure in the red sarong. The fat Dutchman's face was anxious. Ghisbrecht van Tromp, in fact, passed his whole life in a state of more or less anxiety. There were few laws of the Seven Seas that he had not broken, but he had not the courage of his misdeeds, and lived in fear of justice overtaking him.

He envied the reckless hardihood of his associate, and hated him for it. He looked forward greedily to grasping at John Chin's pearls, and yet half the time he was wishing that he had never seen Bully Samson, and never heard of John Chin and his pearl island. Smuggling rubber out of Malaya, stealing blacks from lonely islands, robbing native traders on solitary atolls were exploits

(Continued on page 28.)

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The Editor Talks

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All letters must bear full name and address of the writer.

BY now all you winners in our great "What Is It?" Competition, the result of which was announced in last week's **MODERN BOY**, will have received your awards. And I would like to renew the congratulations in this competition to all competitors on the high standard of excellence shown by their solutions.

I have shown my appreciation of this by presenting a large number of extra prizes, the grand total of prizes awarded to **MODERN BOY** readers in this competition amounting to no less a figure than six hundred and ninety-seven!

You may remember that the number of prizes originally offered was five hundred and seventy-two, which figure I have now increased by one hundred and twenty-five, making 697 awards!

That's something like a prize-list, isn't it? And here's my special congrats to all the clever 697 winners!

I am following up with another competition of an entirely different kind, and one that I know will interest you all. It is called "Autographs," and full particulars of it will be published in

next Monday's **MODERN BOY**—so look out for them!

Your letters are rolling into this office at a steadily increasing rate, and the reason for this, undoubtedly, is because it is our care and pride to send a careful and accurate reply to every letter and query received, as far as it is possible to do so.

The amount of reliable information already supplied to readers of **MODERN BOY**, on every conceivable variety of subject, if laid end to end in letter form, would reach from Brighton to the North Pole probably—or, anyway, I don't see why it shouldn't! It is not always possible for me to answer every letter "by return," of course, but replies are sent just as soon as possible.

The idea of printing some "general interest" queries and replies on this page is very popular with you all—at least, I gather as much from your letters. So here are a few more of them.

A. Rimmer has just gone to live at Newmarket, and he writes: "What

does it mean when anybody says a horse is fifteen hands high?" A "hand" is a term used for measuring horses, and it stands for four inches. So a horse fifteen hands high would be sixty inches, or five feet, high. The measurement is usually taken from the ground to the withers—that bony bump just where his mane ends.

A salamander does not live in fire, John M. (Leeds). A salamander is very much like a lizard, and is native to some parts of Europe and Western Asia. There is a legendary salamander which was supposed to live in fire; this was a full-sized dragon!

The longest tunnel in the world is the Simplon—not the Severn, D. Y. (Bristol). The Simplon Tunnel—which is in Switzerland, as you probably know—is 12-1/3 miles long; it took seven years to build and cost three million pounds. The Severn is only 4 1/2 miles long; it cost two million pounds, and was opened forty-two years ago.

"I have heard that during the Great War the Germans had an aeroplane which looked like a bird," says P. R. L. (Croydon). "I don't believe it. It is true?" It is perfectly true, P. R. L. This machine was a monoplane, known as a "Gotha Taube." The wings were swept backwards at the ends, and, seen from the ground, the plane had the distinct appearance of a big hawk.

THE EDITOR.

King of the Islands!

(Continued from page 25.)

dangerous enough for Van Tromp by way of variation to his regular trade in copra and pearl shell.

Bully Sanson's savage determination of character dominated him, added to his own lawless greed, but his nerves had been in a jangle ever since the Oom Pieter had towed out of the bay at Lalinge, run down Chin's whaleboat and taken the Chinaman on board.

Bully Sanson swung himself out of the cross-trees with an activity strangely in contrast with his heavy bulk, and slithered down the ratlines.

"Feller sail?" asked the Dutch skipper.

"Nix."

"Feller steamer he come?"

"Nothing."

The Dutchman looked relieved.

The black-bearded freebooter gave him a glance of sardonic contempt.

"I tell you they know nothing at Lalinge. How are they going to know? And if they did, there wasn't a craft in the harbour, excepting King of the Islands' ten-cent yawl. I guess Ken King is too busy drumming for copra to waste time on a Chink, even if he knew—and how's he to know? We've done fifty knots since we dropped Lalinge. We've seen no sail except the lug of a Lukwe canoe."

"Ja, ja," muttered Van Tromp.

"If we raise a sail, or the smoke of a steamer, what then?" snarled Bully Sanson. "Are they going to see through a teak deck into your cabin and sight a Chink there? Are they going to hear him yell?"

Sanson was snarling with impatience.

He was anxious to drag the secret of the pearl island from John Chin, but the uneasy fears of the Dutchman had held him back so far.

On his own ship, Sanson would not have wasted an hour. But his own ship was at the bottom of the Pacific, and on the Oom Pieter Van Tromp was master. It irked the fierce freebooter to be under another man's orders, but he knew that he had been fortunate in

securing Van Tromp's alliance in his scheme. Without a ship and a crew, he was powerless; and Sanson had no reserve laid by against a rainy day. The sinking of the Shark had left him little to call his own, and the last of his resources had been spent in the expedition to Faloo, where he had failed to lift Mafoo's treasure. John Chin's pearl island was all that stood between him and beggary, and only by Van Tromp's aid could he hope to raise the pearl island and lay his greedy hands upon the pearls.

The Dutchman was still hesitating. Fifty knots out of Lalinge, on a deserted ocean, with no sign of pursuit, no sign of a passing sail, even Van Tromp felt that all was safe; yet he hesitated to let the bully of the Shark go ahead.

John Chin, the richest merchant in the islands, had many friends—many business associates whose interests were bound up with his. His disappearance was certain to cause a sensation. If it was believed that he had been drowned at sea, all was well. But—many a "but" haunted the uneasy mind of the Dutch smuggler.

"I tell you," said Bully Sanson, between his teeth—"I tell you, shipmate, there's half a million in pearls on John Chin's island. Every man in the islands knows as much. It's the chance of a lifetime. We've got the Chink now; we've only got to make him talk."

"Feller Samson go ahead!" said Van Tromp at last. Sanson turned away at once and tramped heavily down the companion into the stuffy cabin of the Oom Pieter.

John Chin was there. The little ivory-complexioned Chinaman sat on a locker, impassive as ever. A brawny Tonga man was in the cabin—a guard over the Chinaman. There was no escape for the prisoner from the schooner, whose bluff Dutch bows were cleaving the Pacific far from any land. But Sanson knew the peculiar nature of the Chinese, and he would not have been surprised had John Chin thrown himself overboard, to save his secret from his enemy at the cost of his life. The big Tonga native had been incessantly on guard!

(What happens next? VERY thrilling things—for which see Sir Alan Cobham's great instalment next week!)