

MOTOR-CYCLE OFFERED IN NOVEL COMPETITION!

(See page 21.)

The **MODERN BOY**

EVERY MONDAY.
Week Ending April 6th, 1929.

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of 3.



REFUELLING IN THE AIR! See page 3.



Barney Hall's hand went to the revolver in his belt. "Drop that!" ordered Hudson, from the ketch.

The Luck of the Lugger!

By
**CHARLES
HAMILTON.**

COMPLETE IN
THIS ISSUE.

From Lukatu!

KING OF THE ISLANDS lowered the binoculars, his eyes gleaming.

"It's the lugger, Kit!"

Far away on the sapphire sea a brown patched sail danced on the Pacific. The naked eye might have taken it for a sea-bird skimming the waves. But the boy owner and skipper of the Dawn knew that it was a sail, and he had turned the glasses on it eagerly.

For three days Ken King—the boy trader's correct name—and his Australian mate, Kit Hudson, in the ketch Dawn, had been seeking a lugger that had fled from the Island of Lukatu. On board was Cyrus Coldedge, an American adventurer, who had tricked the shipmates into paying a thousand pounds for a bed of cultured pearls.

News of the boat had been picked up once from a French trading schooner, once from an American whaler, and again from a canoe crew of natives, and yet again from a trader on an atoll where the fugitive had stopped to take in food and water. Difficult as was the search for a tiny vessel in the vast Pacific, King of the Islands had a strong hope of running down the adventurer who had robbed him and fled in the lugger. And now the lugsail was in sight.

The boy trader's face was bright. "We've got him, Kit."

Kit Hudson stared across the shining waters towards the lugsail that danced in the far distance.

"There's a heap of luggers in these seas, Ken!" he answered dubiously.

"Take the glasses, old man, and you'll see a triangular patch in the lug. That's the description they gave me at Lukatu."

Hudson gazed through the binoculars, and nodded.

"Looks like it," he said. "We'll

A topping long and complete story of the South Seas, in which **CHARLES HAMILTON** relates how young Ken King, hunting down a rascal who has cheated him, finds that searching the vast Pacific Ocean for one solitary lugger is not unlike hunting a needle in a haystack!

run her down, anyhow. If Cyrus Coldedge is on board, that will settle it."

"Starboard, Koko," said King of the Islands to the Kanaka bo'sun.

"Yes, sar!" grinned Kaio-lalulalonga—Koko for short—at the wheel.

Ken shouted to the Hiva-Oa crew. More sail was shaken out, and the ketch rushed like a swooping albatross towards the distant lugger. Ken King watched the little vessel intently, as the ketch swept down on it. That the lugger was the one that

had fled from Lukatu, taking Cyrus Coldedge and the thousand pounds he had swindled the boy trader of, Ken was certain. But the movements of the boat perplexed him.

Coldedge, if he was on board, must have recognised the Dawn. If he had not guessed before that the trader whom he had robbed was in pursuit of him, he must know it now. Yet the lugger was making no effort to escape. Ken had expected to see her turn tail and run before the wind. But she kept on the same course, and the ketch, crowded with sail, swept down on her rapidly.

Faces on the lugger were staring towards the ketch—curiously, but not in alarm. There were three natives to be seen; and Ken knew that Coldedge had sailed with a crew of three Lukatu boys. There was one white man, but his face was hidden by an enormous hat of plaited grass.

"If that's Coldedge, he's changed his clobber," remarked Hudson, with a grin.

The man on the lugger was dressed in nothing but a cotton shirt and shorts, in addition to the big grass hat. Coldedge, when the shipmates had last seen him, had been well dressed in white ducks. And the man in the cotton shirt looked bulkier than Coldedge—more like a rough South Sea skipper.

He was sprawling on a tapa mat, smoking, apparently indifferent to the fact that the ketch was running him down. But he rose to his feet at last, pushed back the big hat, and stared

curiously towards the Dawn. In the bright sunlight, Ken had a view of his face.

"Barney Hall!" he exclaimed, recognising the man, whom he had seen on the Lalinge beach, and many other beaches. "But it's Coldedge's lugger. He may have got Barney Hall to sail her for him. Hall generally runs a canoe with a crew of Tonga boys. He calls himself a trader; but he does more kidnapping and pearl-poaching than trading. If Coldedge is on board, he's keeping out of sight!"

The ketch ran closer, and swung alongside the lugger within a biscuit's toss.

"Ahoy, Barney Hall!" shouted Ken. "Ahoy, King of the Islands!" answered the trader, taking the pipe from his mouth.

"That lugger's the Coral Queen from Lukatu!"

"Ain't you got any eyes?" called back the trader. "This lugger's the Jolly Roger from Tonga."

"My hat!" said Hudson. "Her name's painted on her, Ken—looks like fresh paint, too—the Jolly Roger."

"The paint's fresh enough," answered Ken. "Three days ago she was the Coral Queen. Coldedge has painted her name out." He called to the lugger again:

"Heave to, Barney Hall! I'm coming on board."

"I ain't stopping," answered Barney Hall coolly. "Keep on your own deck, King of the Islands."

"You've got Cyrus Coldedge on board?"

"Never heard of him. Nobody on board this hooker excepting me and my niggers."

"I'm coming to see that for myself."

"You ain't!" retorted Hall. "Sheer off, King of the Islands. You ain't wanted here!"

King of the Islands took no heed. He made a sign to Koko and the ketch glided alongside. With an active leap, Ken landed on the lugger!

Not on Board!

BARNEY HALL stared angrily at the boy trader, his brows knitting in a black scowl. His hand went to the heavy Navy revolver in his belt.

"Drop that, you swab!" called out Kit Hudson, from the ketch.

Hall glared at him, and caught the glint of the sun on a revolver in the Australian's hand. He withdrew his hand from his belt.

"Keep your temper, Hall," said King of the Islands coolly. "I'm not looking for trouble with you. I'm after a man who has robbed me of a thousand pounds."

"You won't find him on this hooker," growled Hall. "You can look if you like, and be hanged to you."

He sat down on the taffrail, and put his pipe in his mouth again, smoking and watching the boy trader with a lowering, suspicious brow, as he searched through the lugger. There was little room for any man to hide; and a few minutes

sufficed to convince King of the Islands that the man he sought was not on board.

"Satisfied?" jeered Hall.

"I'm satisfied that the man is not here," said Ken. "I want to know where he is. You've got his lugger."

As Hall did not answer he turned to the native crew, who were eyeing him curiously. "You boy—you Lukatu feller?"

"No, sar," answered the steersman. "Us feller Tonga feller."

Ken turned to Hall again.

"What have you done with Coldedge and his crew of Lukatu boys, Hall?"

"Never heard of the swab," answered Hall stolidly. "I bought this lugger last year from a Dutchman at Java."

Ken stood silent, perplexed. He had never seen the lugger in which Cyrus Coldedge had fled from Lukatu.

But he had been given its name and description. The latter tallied with the appearance of Hall's lugger. And the fact that the name had been recently repainted was suspicious. Hall watched his puzzled face with a sarcastic grin.

"Look here, Hall," said King of the Islands at last. "I've got no quarrel with you! The man I'm looking for has robbed me. You've no call to stand between a thief and the man he's robbed."

"Ay, ay!" answered Hall. "If I knowed anything of the swab I'd give you the news fast enough."

"I'm pretty certain that this is his lugger," said Ken. "If you've bought it from him you can tell me where you left him."

"I bought this lugger at Java last year," answered Hall. "Man named Schultz—a Dutchman."

(Continued on the next page.)

THE NEW STAMP COLLECTING.

STAMP-LOADS OF MISCHIEF.

By F. J. MELVILLE,

President of the Junior Philatelic Society.

YOU would be surprised how big a load of mischief some stamps have carried. When recently King Amanullah resigned the throne of Afghanistan because of the troubles he aroused by introducing Western ideas into that country, it reminded me of the fate which befell the first reformers who tried to introduce a postal service with postage stamps in far-off Corea.

It was in 1884 that Corea was about to join the Universal Postal Union, and all the preliminary arrangements for starting a postal service had been completed. Stamps had been prepared in various designs, but all of them embodying in the centre a curious symbol of Eastern—particularly Chinese—philosophy. These had been printed in the Stamp Bureau of the Japanese Finance Department at Tokio, and supplies of two values were duly received in Seoul, the capital of Corea, in time for the formal opening of the Corean post—and then trouble started!

On the evening of December 4th, 1884, a banquet was held in the new post office building at Seoul to inaugurate it. The evening was chosen by the Progressives for an effort to take complete control of the Government. During the banquet, the confidential agent of the King staggered into the banquetting hall covered with blood and wounded in many places. An attempt had been made to assassinate him because he was supposed to be opposing Corea's progress along Western methods. The incident was the signal for a veritable flare up, and Seoul was for days the scene of riot, bloodshed, and incendiarism. The new post office was looted and burned, and the new stamps were scattered in the streets.

The rising was quelled, but there was no more talk of setting up a postal service in Corea for years. The stamps which were prepared, and which are curious souvenirs of this turbulent time, are not difficult to get.

Sometimes stamps of one country have given offence to a neighbouring country owing to some intentional or accidental allusion in their designs. A set of stamps issued in Bulgaria in 1921 to commemorate the liberation of Macedonia gave such offence to the Government of Jugo-Slavia that they had to be withdrawn after being on sale only for three days.

The map-stamps of the Dominican Republic (1900) had to be withdrawn because the map was inaccurate and made out part of the Haytian Republic to belong to the Dominican Republic! A large stock was withdrawn and burned. And in 1910 Colombia issued a registration stamp bearing a picture of a series of executions at Carthagena on February 24th, 1816, the inscription stating that the executions were "by order of the Spanish Government." Under diplomatic pressure from the Spanish this stamp was withdrawn.



Corea's first stamp. It caused big riots!



Map-stamp which nearly caused war between the Haytian and Dominican Republics.

The Luck of the Lugger!

"You've got a pretty juicy reputation in these waters, Hall. Did you steal this lugger?"

"Have they made you High Commissioner in these seas?" retorted Hall, with a sneer.

"You generally run a canoe. What's become of it?"

"I traded it off when I bought this lugger."

Ken stood silent again. It was possible that the trader was speaking the truth.

"I'd tell you anything I knowed if the swab you speak of has double-crossed you," said Hall more civilly.

"What's the man done, anyhow?"

"He sold me a pearl-bed on Lukatu," answered Ken.

"And the pearls wasn't there?" grinned Hall.

"They were there," growled Ken, "but they turned out to be cultured pearls, and I was taken in."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Hall.

"It's not a laughing matter to me!" snapped the boy trader. "That scoundrel Coldedge left me diving for button pearls, and cleared off with the thousand pounds I paid him."

Barney Hall gave a start.

"You don't mean— When did this happen, King of the Islands?"

"Three days ago, at Lukatu."

"You mean that he had the money on him?" exclaimed Hall, starting up from the taffrail, his eyes blazing.

"What was left of it, after he bought a lugger to run in. Banknotes, stacked in his belt!"

"A thousand pounds, in his belt!" roared Hall. "The hatchet-faced swab! A thousand pounds!"

He choked with rage.

King of the Islands looked at him grimly. There was not much doubt now that the trader knew something of Cyrus Coldedge. Barney Hall seemed to have forgotten entirely that he had denied all knowledge of the adventurer.

"You're owning up that you got this lugger from Coldedge," said Ken. "If you'd known that he had a stack of banknotes in his belt you'd have got that, too! I know you, Barney Hall. How did this lugger come into your hands, and where did you leave Cyrus Coldedge?"

Barney Hall stared at King of the Islands with a black scowl. After his savage outburst it was not much use denying all knowledge of the man who had fled from Lukatu.

"He sold me this lugger," he muttered. "I traded him my canoe. He set a course for Lu'uva."

"Put it plain," snapped Ken.

"You seized this lugger and put him and his boys into your canoe and sent them adrift? Is that it?"

"You can put it like that if you like," sneered Hall. "If I'd knowed the swab had a thousand pounds on him—" He broke out into savage threats. "The swab! He never let on a word! A thousand quid!"

"When did you part company?" asked Ken.

"Sundown yesterday," answered Hall sullenly.

"Right!"

King of the Islands beckoned to Kaio-lalulalonga, and the ketch glided close again. The boy trader leaped lightly back to his own vessel.

Barney Hall watched him with a scowling brow, his eyes gleaming cunningly. The ketch changed her course at once, and, leaving the lugger, stood away on a course for Lu'uva. The Tonga trader watched the tall sails sinking into the horizon, a derisive grin on his rugged face. Not until the ketch was a mere speck on the sea-line did he call an order to the Tonga boys, who were watching him curiously. Then Barney Hall rose from the taffrail, rapped out orders, and the lugger swept round. The trader had been heading for Tonga when King of the Islands ran him down. Now he was tacking back the way he had come.

Marooned!

CYRUS COLDEGE stood on a coral rock and watched the sea. The boundless Pacific was spread before his haggard eyes, red in the slanting rays of the setting sun. Water as far as the eye could

SEND YOUR "TREASURE HUNT" ENTRIES NOW.

Rules Governing This Contest.

The "James" Motor-Cycle will be awarded to the reader who correctly or most nearly correctly solves the series of six puzzles; the other prizes will follow in order of merit.

Every attempt must be separate and distinct in itself, and must consist of the six solutions and labels and the coupon given on the opposite page. The Editor reserves the right to divide the value of the prizes if necessary, and his decision on all matters connected with this contest is final and binding. No correspondence will be allowed, and efforts bearing alterations or alternatives will be disqualified. Solutions must be written IN INK.

No one connected in any way with the proprietors of MODERN BOY may compete.

SEE OPPOSITE PAGE.

reach; and from the tiny, nameless atoll on which he stood Coldedge could see in every direction by merely turning his head. It was a tiny atoll—a circle of coral rocks, a half-mile in circumference, enclosing a little lagoon. One of the tiniest of the ten thousand nameless specks of land that dotted the vast surface of the Pacific Ocean.

In one spot a group of graceful palms nodded in the trade wind. Lizards and land crabs crawled on the hot beach. The coral rocks were hot to the touch. Silence, deep and oppressive, lay on the lonely atoll—silence and solitude that made the brain dizzy. Twenty-four hours had passed since the Yankee adventurer had landed on the atoll. It seemed to Cyrus Coldedge more like twenty-four years. There was subsistence of a sort on the island for one man. And Coldedge was alone there. It was possible to support life for years

—if the lonely castaway found life worth living.

Sun and sea, sea and sun! Coldedge shaded his eyes with his hand and watched the sea. He knew that there was no chance of a ship touching at that uninhabited atoll. He knew that it was unlikely that a sail would even pass within sight. But he watched with aching, restless eyes. He hoped against hope for a sail. He dared not face the prospect of eternal solitude. In his belt were stacked nine hundred pounds in banknotes—what was left of the sum he had obtained from King of the Islands at Lukatu. Coldedge would have given it all for the sight of a sail bearing down on the island.

With utter unscrupulousness, he had swindled the boy trader and fled with the plunder. He had anticipated pursuit, and derided it. King of the Islands was not likely to run him down in the immensity of the Pacific. Now nothing could have gladdened his heart so much as the sight of the Dawn's tall sails.

In dealing with an honest man, the adventurer had been successful all along the line. It was his misfortune that he had fallen foul of another rogue. He had not even suspected danger when a canoe with a white man and three black boys ran alongside his lugger. And with Barney Hall's revolver jammed in his face, he had not dared to resist. His three Lukatu boys had been ordered into the trader's canoe—and they had been glad enough to obey, to get out of sight of the savage white man with the revolver.

But Coldedge had not been allowed to go in the canoe. Where the Kanakas went, and what they might say, the Tonga trader cared nothing. But he dared not set free a white man from whom he had stolen a ship. It was not Barney Hall's first robbery on the high seas—in lonely waters where there was no eye to watch. Had the adventurer resisted, the ruffian would have shot him out of hand. But even the lawless ruffian from Tonga hesitated to throw a prisoner to the sharks. He ran the lugger down to the atoll and landed Coldedge—leaving him his life. But if there had been a chance—even a remote chance—of the castaway being taken off the island, he would not have been left alive. Barney Hall's reputation was already too "juicy" for him to take risks.

Coldedge was left alive on the lonely atoll because it was a safe prison—for years, at least—most likely for ever. He knew it as he stood watching the sea—though he dared not acknowledge it to himself. He hoped and hoped passionately for a sail. Only a winging albatross broke the monotony of the wide-stretching horizon.

Of the fortune that Coldedge carried in his belt—the fruit of his successful trickery—Barney Hall had known and suspected nothing. The adventurer had been glad at first that he had saved his plunder. But after a few hours on the lonely atoll he gave it no further thought. A

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The Luck of the Lugger!

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tapa mat or a calabash would have been more useful to him than nine hundred pounds in his present situation.

Deeper the sun sank in purple and gold and crimson. Shadows rolled over the ocean from the east. The short tropical twilight had come. A groan left the lips of the wretched man who stood on the coral rock watching—watching! Night was at hand! Another night on the lonely atoll—sleep haunted by fear—to wake again to blinding sunlight and hopeless solitude! Darkness rushed on the sea. With limping steps, the castaway crept back from the rock and threw himself on the warm sand of the tiny beach, hoping for sleep in the hours of darkness, during which he could not hope for a sail.

In the golden tropical dawn the wretch crept from his bed hollowed in the sand, gathered shellfish and fallen coconuts, and ate, and slaked his thirst with the milk of a young nut. Then he crept out on the coral rock—the highest point of the atoll—to watch the sea again. Wide and blue it stretched under the sunrise, tenanted only by whirling seabirds. From the deep horizon a speck appeared, growing larger and larger. The castaway watched it, the colour flushing into his haggard cheeks. A sail at last! Nearer and clearer it came, till he could see that it was a giant albatross, winging through the blue!

Higher and higher rose the sun, pouring down burning rays on the ocean and the atoll. The blaze of heat drove him at last from the rock, and he crawled into such shelter as the group of palms afforded. He screened himself from the sun-blaze with palm-leaves, and sank at last into sleep.

Coldedge awoke suddenly. Some sound had come to him. It seemed to him that he heard the creak of spars and cordage on the wind. Was the sail for which he had longed passing while he slept? He leaped to his feet. The sudden blaze of sunshine almost blinded him. He staggered, and clutched at a palm trunk for support. Shading his dizzy eyes with one hand, he gazed out to sea.

"A sail!" The words came from him in a husky croak. While he slept it had come. A brown patched sail was gliding up to the atoll—the sail of a lugger. With a hoarse cry, the castaway rushed down to the coral rocks and, heedless of the sun-glare, stood waving his hands frantically to the lugger that was closing in towards the island.

Barney Hall's Luck!

BARNEY HALL snarled an order to his Tonga crew, and the lugger ran in close by the high rock on which the haggard figure stood, and the lugsail dropped. The Tonga trader's eyes were fixed

with a grim, cynical stare on the waving castaway. Dizzy with sudden hope and feverish excitement, the man on the atoll had not even recognised the lugger. It was not till the little vessel had stopped, and the savage-featured trader stood within ten feet of him, that Coldedge knew that it was Barney Hall who had returned. But even the sight of the man who had robbed him of the lugger, and marooned him, was welcome after the days that seemed like years of solitude on the islet. He stretched out his hands towards the trader.

"You've come back for me?" he panted hoarsely.

Hall smiled grimly.

"Give me a passage on the lugger!" pleaded Coldedge. "Give me a passage—that's all I ask! Keep the lugger—land me anywhere you like—anywhere that I can get a ship!"

"Jump!"

The castaway leaped from the rock and landed in the lugger.

Hall made a sign to his crew. Two of the Tonga men, grinning, grasped the adventurer as he stumbled. His arms were instantly pinioned. Coldedge struggled for a moment; but the two powerful Tonga boys held him fast.

"You swab!" said Barney Hall; and he stepped towards the Yankee adventurer and unbuckled the belt from his waist.

Coldedge gave a groan. He knew now why Hall had returned. It was not from compunction—it was not to save him from the solitude that was worse than death—that the trader had run back to the lonely atoll. Barney Hall examined the belt eagerly. On the inner side were little pockets, and each of them was stuffed with folded banknotes. In all his lawless deeds by land and sea—pearl-poaching, kidnapping, stealthy piracy in lonely waters—the ruffian had never seized upon a prize like this.

"You swab!" he repeated. "I'd never have knowed of this if I hadn't been run down by King of the Islands. You called me some pretty names when I took your lugger. Where did you get it, you swab? And where did you get this belt of money? I reckon it belongs to me as much as to you."

He buckled the belt round his own waist.

"Keep it!" muttered Coldedge. "Only take me away from here. Keep the money—keep the lugger—only take me away!"

"I reckon I wouldn't keep it long if King of the Islands knew where to look for it!" grinned Hall. He signed to the Tonga boys. "You feller boy, you put Melican feller along island."

Coldedge struggled frantically as the Tonga boys dragged him to the side. So desperate were his struggles that even the two powerful islanders had hard work to hold him. But his resistance did not avail. The natives dragged him to the side and flung him bodily on the coral rock. He sprawled there, panting and gasping, whilst the lugger pushed off.

Coldedge staggered to his feet, exhausted, breathless, in despair. He tottered to the edge of the rock as if to make a desperate leap back to the lugger. But the boat was already a score of yards away, and deep water rolled between them. He stopped on the edge of the rock, shaking his fists at the lugger and screaming. The lugsail ran up and filled with wind, and Barney Hall cast hardly a glance back at the wild, gesticulating figure on the rock as he flew before the wind.

He sat on a locker and opened the pockets in the belt to examine his prize, a gleeful look on his hard, tanned face. The rustle of the banknotes in his stumpy fingers was music to his ears. It was such a sum as he had never handled before; and it brought visions to his mind of a handsome schooner that he remembered was for sale at Tonga.

Hall saw himself no longer a small trader in a canoe, eking out petty profits by petty sea-thieving, but master of a fine schooner, with a white mate and a full crew, doing a good trade. He had risked his neck more than once for a tenth part of what he now held in his hands and counted over and over again with miserly greed. But that was at an end now—once he was master of a schooner sea-thieving and its risks would be a thing of the past.

The Tonga crew, who knew too much of his ill-savoured past, should be sold in the Solomons—there was a chief, he knew, who would give him many sacks of copra for them, and would take care that they never saw Tonga again. Barney Hall grinned cheerfully over the prospect of starting afresh, throwing his unsavoury past behind him, taking his place among the substantial traders of the islands, and no longer feeling unquiet at the mention of the High Commissioner at Fiji.

Deep in those pleasant speculations, the trader did not observe the looks that were passing among the three Tonga boys. He was accustomed to ruling his black crew with a hand of iron, and would as soon have expected danger from the cock-roaches that crawled in the lugger as from the three natives.

But he was in danger now. English banknotes were as well known to the Tonga Islanders as to the trader. To the Tonga boys, two or three five-pound notes would have seemed a dazzling fortune. Now they saw scores of such notes in the hands of the trader—and the sight drove them mad for possession.

While Hall counted, and counted again, the Tonga boys exchanged meaning looks and signs. Barney Hall, rustling the banknotes in his fingers, saw himself captain of a fine schooner, trading in the islands. And the Tonga boys, as they watched him, had their visions also—they saw themselves great men on their native island—each the lord of a plantation, with a whaleboat, a coconut-grove, a field of taro, and a field of yams.

They did not speak; not even a whisper. They communicated only by glances and signs. The three understood one another thoroughly,

but their fear of the savage trader was almost as great as their greed. They were unarmed; and the butt of a revolver jutted from the trader's belt. With that weapon in his hand, Barney Hall would have had nothing to fear from the three boys, or from six times as many. He was off his guard now. His attention was concentrated on the banknotes, unconscious of danger.

The outbreak, when it came, came suddenly, with the sudden treachery of the South-Sea savage. Luto, the boat-steerer, gave a silent signal, and in an instant, without warning, with the suddenness of a tiger's spring, the three Tonga boys threw themselves on the trader.

Barney Hall, taken utterly by surprise, went with a crash on the bottom planks, banknotes scattering round him like snow. A roar of rage broke from him. His hand flew to the revolver in his belt, but it was dragged back in a fierce grip, and the revolver torn from his belt and tossed into the sea.

Then, for several minutes, a struggle, desperate, determined, silent save for panting breath and the scuffling of naked feet, was waged in the rocking lugger. Hall was a powerful man, and he fought with desperate strength. But without a weapon he was no match for three brawny islanders.

He was down, and they kept him down. Hands grasped him, and held

him; and at last he lay exhausted, stammering with rage, in the hands of his crew. A tapa rope was run round him, binding his arms down to his sides with cruel tightness. Then the money-belt was taken from him. The Tonga trader lay a helpless prisoner. He glared up at the grinning blacks, inarticulate with rage.

Leaving him lying bound, Luto went back to the tiller, and the other two handled the lugsail. The lugger swept round to the lonely atoll—where the wild, gesticulating figure on the coral rock was still to be seen. For some moments Barney Hall had feared that he was to be thrown, bound and helpless, into the Pacific. But the mutineers did not venture to take the life of the white man. They ran the lugger back to the atoll. Where the other "feller white man" was safe, the "feller skipper" would be equally safe. Luto and his companions were taking a leaf out of the trader's own book. Where he had left Cyrus Coldedge, he was to be left himself—while the Tonga boys sailed away in the lugger.

The trader struggled desperately in his bonds. The tapa cords cut into his flesh. The Tonga boys grinned at him as he wrestled. They had no fear of him now.

"You feller Hall, you plenty poor trash!" said Luto, grinning from ear to ear. "You plenty kill poor

Tonga boy, along foot belong you. Now Tonga bay he feller master, my word."

"You scum!" panted Hall. "You black scum!"

"You shut up mouth belong you, you poor white feller!" grinned Luto. "You no talk feller master talk along us feller. S'pose you no shut mouth belong you, me kill you plenty, foot belong me, all same you kill Tonga boy."

Barney Hall raved out threats, and Luto was as good as his word. He had been kicked by Barney Hall more times than he could remember. Now he planted a heavy foot in the trader's ribs, making him gasp and yell!

Hall lay writhing with fury as the lugger ran under the shadow of the rock, where the castaway stood staring at it with haggard eyes. The bound trader was tossed ashore like a sack of yams, landing almost at his feet.

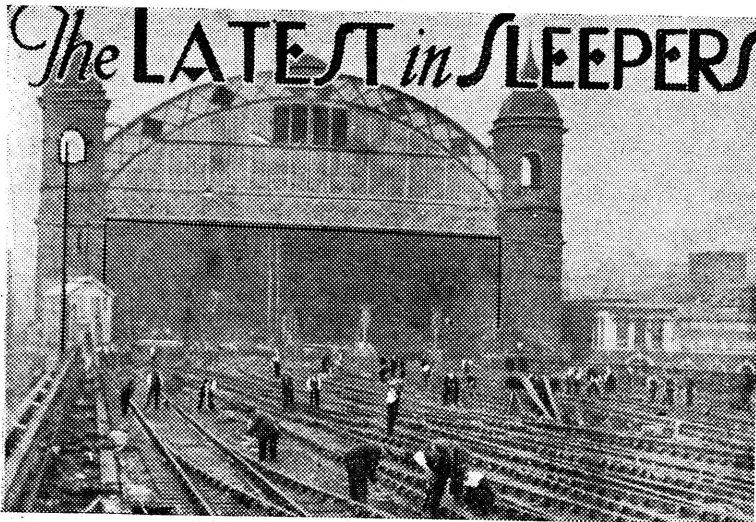
The lugger circled away, and fled seaward.

Luck at Last.

"FELLER lugger he stop!" announced Kaio-lalulalonga.

King of the Islands leaped to his feet and turned his binoculars on the brown patched sail that danced on the Pacific, under the

(Continued on the next page.)



Busy gangs at work on the rails at Cannon Street Station, one of the big London termini of the Southern Railway.

D ID you know that for several years the Southern Railway has been running its heaviest locomotives and trains over a portion of its main London-Portsmouth line equipped with steel sleepers?

This exhaustive testing has proved that steel sleepers have many advantages, and, as a result, the company recently ordered 70,000 of them to equip thirty-five miles of permanent way during the next two years.

Although universally used in tropical lands where heat perishes (and insects eat) wooden sleepers, this is their first appearance in Britain. Here the first consideration is cost, and as the foreign timber imported for the purpose has been rising steadily in price a British steel firm has been given the job to turn out the new sleepers in quantity.

These 70,000 sleepers actually represent 5,000 tons of steel, about fourteen being made from one ton. The price

Here's another revolution on the Railway! Steel sleepers are taking the place of the old wooden ones—and another link with the days of George Stephenson is passing!

of one sleeper complete is about 15s. 6d., and much labour cost is saved, because the "chairs" are made in the same piece with it, instead of being separate and bolted on as with the wooden variety.

The Southern Railway experts estimate that, taking the costs of both types of sleeper at their present figures, and reckoning that steel will have the same life as wood, which is twenty years, there is little variation between their respective installation, maintenance, and renewal expenses. But if—as is extremely likely—only 6d. was added to the cost of each wooden sleeper, then the railway would make a large saving in those three respects on the steel equipment.

There is every reason to believe that steel sleepers will outlast their wooden competitors, for in Germany extensive experience has shown that thirty years is their regular life. If British conditions produce the same length of service, then, of course, still greater economies will result.

Furthermore, if our railways put them into general use, the manufacturers will be making ever-increasing quantities, thus lowering their cost further and increasing railway savings.

Such a revolutionary experiment prompts the question as to whether they will come into universal British use. Our railways, after their heavy business losses in recent times, are on the look-out for every item of equipment more efficient and economical than that now in use. If their conclusions tally with those of the Southern Railway they will soon follow suit, and their tracks will be—more than ever—highways of steel!

The Luck of the Lugger!

burning sun of midday. It was the lugger!

After leaving Barney Hall the previous day, Ken had stood on a course for Lu'uva—the course which, according to Hall, the canoe had taken with the crew of the lugger when he had sent them adrift.

But after a discussion with Hudson, the boy trader had changed his course, for two good reasons. It was likely enough that Hall had deceived him, in the first place; and in the second place, the wind was unfavourable for Lu'uva. Lu'uva lay to the north, while to the south-east the islands of Tonga and Samoa were nearer. It was much more probable that the canoe had run before the wind for the nearest land.

That King of the Islands had judged correctly was proved before nightfall, when the canoe was picked up, making for Samoa. But Coldedge was not on board, and all the Lukatu boys could tell him was that the feller white master had been kept on board the lugger by Hall.

Coldedge's fate was a mystery. Whether the Tonga trader had thrown him into the sea, or marooned him on some lonely island, Ken could not guess.

"If he chucked him overboard, he chucked our thousand pounds along with him," said King of the Islands. "But if he marooned him, he would make for the place where he left him, to pick up the plunder. We've got to find the lugger again, Kit."

And during the night the ketch tacked away in the direction where Hall had been left on the lugger. From the first gleam of sunrise, keen eyes on the ketch scanned the sea for a sign of the Lukatu lugger. Hall had been on a course for Tonga when Ken had met him the day before. But if he had changed his course to seek some lonely atoll where he had left Coldedge, seeking him was like seeking a needle in a haystack. Ken had resolved to search for the lugger till night; and, if he did not sight it, to run down to Tonga and wait for the trader there. Hall's headquarters were at Tonga, and he would be found there sooner or later.

But in the blaze of midday Koko's keen eyes had picked up the lugger, coming down before the wind. Ken watched it through his binoculars. He could make out three figures on board, tiny in the distance. They were the Tonga boys; but Barney Hall was not to be seen.

"Looks as if Hall isn't on board," said King of the Islands, lowering the glasses. "I can't make this out, Kit. Anyhow, we've got the lugger."

"They're running!" said Hudson, his eyes on the dancing speck in the distance.

"That won't help them!" Ken laughed. The lugger was coming down before the wind, on the course for Tonga. The ketch lay directly in her way when she was sighted.

As the Tonga boys discerned the

Dawn making for her, they evidently took alarm, for the course of the lugger was changed. But it was not of much use for the lugger to run from King of the Islands' ketch, and in less than half an hour Ken had run her down.

"Heave to!" shouted Ken, as the ketch ran within speaking distance. "You feller Tonga boy, you stop."

The Tonga boys stared at him, and jabbered to one another. Kit Hudson drew the revolver from his belt. Bang! A bullet flew a yard over the heads of the Tonga boys. But the warning was enough. The lugsail dropped. Ken ran alongside and jumped down on the lugger. The three Tonga boys gathered together, eyeing him.

"You feller boy, what name feller white master he no stop along lugger?" asked Ken.

"No savvy, sar!" answered Luto.

"You no savvy where feller Hall he stop?"

"No, sar."

"You savvy feller shark along sea?" Ken asked grimly. "You likee walk about along sea, makee kai-kai along feller shark?"

The Tonga boys jabbered with alarm. King of the Islands drew his revolver.

"You black feller, you put feller white master along sea," he said. "You plenty bad feller, my word! You no stop any more altogether."

"No put feller white master along sea, sar!" yelled Luto. "Feller white master he along island, along 'nother feller white master, sar."

"My hat!" ejaculated Hudson. "Have they marooned him along with Coldedge? Is that it?"

"Looks like it," said Ken. "You feller boy, you talk good feller talk along me, s'pose you no likee walk about along sea, makee kai-kai along feller shark."

The threatening revolver was enough. In a terrified jabber, the story came out, and the banknotes—crumpled and considerably soiled—were turned out of their hiding-places in the loin-cloths of the Tonga boys.

"Looks like our win, after all," chuckled Hudson. King of the Islands counted the banknotes. Nine hundred pounds was the sum—nineteenths of the amount Cyrus Coldedge had taken when he fled from Lukatu.

"Plenty more feller money he stop!" said Ken.

"No more feller money he stop, sar!" The Tonga boys jabbered together in terrified denial.

"I reckon Coldedge spent the rest," said Kit, after the Tonga boys had been searched. "He bought the lugger at Lukatu. And we've got the lugger."

"The lugger's ours," agreed Ken. "It's certain now that Hall never bought it from Coldedge—he seized it, and marooned that rascal—and now he's marooned along with him. We'll take it back to Lukatu and sell it there."

"Feller white master no kill Tonga boy?" asked Luto anxiously. "Feller white master Hall he plenty kill poor Tonga boy, sar, along foot belong him; he no good feller, sar."

"You good feller boy, you go along Lukatu," said King of the Islands.

"Yes, sar. Us feller boy good feller boy along you, sar," said Luto, greatly relieved. The lugger was taken in tow, and the Dawn set her sails for Lukatu.

"And what about Coldedge and Hall?" asked Kit Hudson, with a grin.

"They've reaped as they've sown," answered King of the Islands, shrugging his shoulders. "They can stop where they are, and be hanged to them."

But a few days later, when the Dawn sailed from Lukatu, after landing the Tonga boys and disposing of the lugger, there was a thoughtful look on the face of King of the Islands, and Kit Hudson guessed what was in his thoughts.

He grinned; and Ken, meeting his eyes, smiled faintly.

"After all, they're white men," said King of the Islands slowly.

"Coldedge and Hall? I suppose they are—of sorts," agreed the mate of the Dawn.

"We can pick up that atoli, from what I got from the Tonga boys. They're not worth wasting our time on; but we can't leave them to it," said Ken.

"A sail!"

A haggard man, limping on a high rock, scanning the sea, croaked out the words. Another haggard wretch crept from under the palms, and joined him on the rock, and stared at the tall sails that rose from the blue.

For more than a week Cyrus Coldedge and Barney Hall had shared the tiny atoll, gathering shellfish and crabs for food, wearily scanning the sea for the sail that they knew never would come. Their distress was too great for enmity to survive. In the terrible solitude each was glad of the other's company. And now the sail for which they had hoped, well knowing that hope was vain, was bearing down on the island. As it drew nearer Hall gave a husky groan.

"It's the Dawn—King of the Islands' ketch!" Barney Hall threw himself on the rock. "King of the Islands hasn't come to help us."

"We're done!" muttered Coldedge, and threw himself down by the trader in despair.

The ketch glided down to the atoll, and the whaleboat was lowered and pulled in. King of the Islands stood up in the boat and waved to the two wretched figures on the rock.

"Ahoy! Come aboard!"

Scarcely believing that it was not a dream, Barney Hall and Cyrus Coldedge found themselves on board the ketch, and the lonely atoll sank into the blue of the Pacific as the Dawn glided swiftly away for Lalange.

(Charles Hamilton will grip you again next Monday with another fine yarn of Ken King and his South Seas adventures. Have you given your newscast that STANDING ORDER for MODERN BOY? If not, Do It Now—TO-DAY!)